

On the 13th and 14th of September Andrew Russell, Mark Ernst, and myself (Matt Petkiewicz) completed our Ordeal at Camp Raymond, which is located in Flagstaff. Our new Scoutmaster Mr. Gieseemann, who was along for the ride, was surprised when Mr. Ballou suggested that he complete his ordeal too, and so he joined us. For those of you that don't know what an Ordeal is, it is the first step in the Order of the Arrow process.

The OA is the honor society of Scouting, and its purpose is to:



"To recognize those campers -- Scouts and Scouters -- who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives, and by such recognition cause other campers to conduct themselves in such manner as to warrant recognition.

To develop and maintain camping traditions and spirit.

To promote Scout camping, which reaches its greatest effectiveness as a part of the unit's camping program, both year-round and in the summer camp, as directed by the camping committee of the council.

To crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others." (<http://www.oa-bsa.org/misc/basics/purpose-mission.htm>)

Once a year our troop holds elections (usually in the early Spring), to be Elected to the OA. To be eligible you need to be a first class scout, and have 15 nights of camping, six of which must be a long term camp. Once elected you have a couple of opportunities throughout the next year to complete your Ordeal. Then you have another 10 months to complete some additional OA requirements and become eligible for Brotherhood. After Brotherhood comes Vigil, the final step in the Order of the Arrow.

Although I can't tell you exactly what happened at the Ordeal, I would encourage anyone and everyone who is eligible for the OA to try and get elected, because it was a great experience.

If you're interested in finding out more about the OA, click [here](#).