

# Spiral Scouts

## information sheet

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**History:** Started officially in 1999, the Spiral Scouts are the ATC's (Aquarian Tabernacle Church – Church of Caduceus in NJ) answer to the Boy Scouts™, Campfire™ and the other organizations formed around the raising of children into a tradition. We are creating the whole concept on our own, based on many different sources and ideas.

### **Purpose:**

- ☆ to provide an opportunity for pagan families to interact with their children
- ☆ for pagan children to interact with each other
- ☆ to instill in our children the concepts of
  - ☆ inclusivity,
  - ☆ the balance of gender energies,
  - ☆ tolerance for differences of belief and
  - ☆ other useful cultural customs and values
- ☆ to promote the growth and development of interpersonal skills and life skills in these children.

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### **Programs** will include

- ☆ teaching of many classical mythologies both popular and obscure
- ☆ basic commonalities of pagan faith beliefs
- ☆ usual scouting and woodland lore, aimed at promoting the practice of sound ecology in daily life.

While the orientation of the Spiral Scouts program is based in paganism, the organization should be designed so that it can be utilized by other groups, both nonsectarian as well as other minority faith groups. Religious-based programs will be designed to be easily replaced by alternates based in other non-hostile minority faith traditions.

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### **Structure:**

**We are just beginning.** Obviously, because some start-up groups, of necessity, will have to include a range of ages, we need to remain very flexible and allow activities to include

these age ranges as much as possible. Eventually, we expect the membership participation will expand enough to have more age-specific groups of activities. So that we can learn by experience, we would like to charter some groups across the country, from the traffic on the Spiral Scouts open eGroups list.

The latest proposal for organizational structure is presented below:

A **Hearth** is the smallest unit, led by one (or two) parents known as "Fire Tenders." This is a "solitary" or isolated small single family group. A Hearth requires at least one parent to lead it, but both parents are preferable if there are two available. When a Hearth grows to include at least 3 unrelated children, it must become a Circle and have two leaders as described below for legal and safety reasons.

A **Circle** is the basic unit, led by two "Circle Leaders" who are of opposite genders. They may or may not be related to each other. This is larger than a single-family group and is an "open group" charter to which others may belong and in which other parents are encouraged to actively participate. A Circle can be part of a larger area group or Clan. This group can be thought of as a "pack" within a "troop" of traditional scouting.

A **Clan** is a larger group within a regional geographic area such as a neighborhood in a city, a smaller town, etc. and is made up of two or more "Circles." It shall be the local area governing unit, and shall be guided by a Council made up of active leaders of Circles and representatives of any sponsoring organization such as a church, a local area pagan Council, or other sponsoring organization.

A **Tribe** is the larger area governing organization, made up of localized "Clans" and shall be responsible for the administration of Spiral Scouts programs within its area of authority, such as a foreign country, a state or

province. The Tribal Council shall be formed from the member circles and hearths.

There should be a single, overarching governing council to oversee and coordinate the activities of the entire program. This will, for the foreseeable future, rest with the founding church, the ATC, which is an interfaith church of Wicca and Earth Religion in which all positive paths are accepted. This probably ought to be the "Spiral Scouts Council" or some such.

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### **Age Groups:**

We have identified three different levels of child development, and are designing sections around each of them. Of course, these programs are for girls and boys learning together.

**FireFlies** is intended for preschoolers through age 8 or 9. This is the time for stories and dancing, of learning the core meanings behind the basic symbols and of learning how to get along with others in a friendly and spiritual manner appealing to both the children and our traditions. This is not as much a daycare during adult ritual time, but a special time for the kids themselves.

**Spiral Scouts**, besides being the overall name for the program, is specifically designed for the older children, getting them involved in plays and productions to teach them the mythology and what it really means in our world.

**Pathfinders** (an independent study program) for the teens, is where our young students begin to learn how to apply the knowledge into practical applications.

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### **Membership**

Membership is open to children of all ages and backgrounds, including wicca, paganism, or other faith traditions. Children are not born with prejudices, they have to learn prejudice and intolerance from others (or NOT!). It is our job to see that they learn acceptance and tolerance as the norm. It is our job to teach them the life skills they will need to have healthy, productive and happy lives and steady relationships during those lives. We can do no less.

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### **Leaders**

Each unit of the program should be led by both a male and a female working together, to teach the concept of balance of gender energies. We teach best through example.

Before leaders can be installed in a chartered Circle, the results of a background check (such as required in many states for childcare professionals) must be filed with the central Spiral Scouts organization as a part of the Charter Request.

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### **Uniforms**

Scouts will have some sort of tabard, vest or apron to display their merit badges and awards. While a uniform is very much encouraged to instill a sense of group identity and purpose, the inability of a family to afford the expense shall not keep a child from participating. To this end, local area Circles, Clans or Tribes will be encouraged to maintain supplies of recyclable uniforms donated by families whose children may have outgrown them.

It has been proposed that a uniform be composed of a tan chino twill pant, short, or skirt and a forest (dark) green shirt, tee shirt and perhaps a matching tan jacket. We will attempt to provide a reasonably priced source for these if no local source can be found, but would prefer not to get into the uniform business. The value of uniforms for both children and leaders should not be overlooked.

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### **In conclusion**

It is from actually doing this that we will all learn how best to be doing it. If we are to do this well, we have to do it together.

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