

WANTED: SCOUT OR EXPLORER FOR U.S. ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION

An older Scout or Explorer will go to Antarctica next year for three months or more of polar research with American scientists working at the bottom of the world.

He will be selected through an elimination process beginning in local councils and ending with the final choice next summer. His Antarctic adventure will start sometime next fall.

Applications are now available at local council service centers. They must be completed and returned to the council by Feb. 15, 1978. Each council will choose its nominee by March 1. Council candidates will then be winnowed to 29 area choices and then finally narrowed down to six regional nominees by May 1.

The six finalists will go to Washington during the summer for a week of interviews by a committee chosen by the joint sponsors—the Boy Scouts of America, the Reader's Digest Association and the National Science Foundation, which manages America's scientific work in Antarctica. The winner will join scientists for three days of training before leaving for the southernmost continent in September, October or November. The expedition will last at least three months. All five of the remaining finalists will go to Charles L. Sommers Wilderness Canoe Base in northern Minnesota for Okpik Adventure, a winter camping and survival course.

The Antarctic Scout project will commemorate the 50th anniversary of Eagle Scout Paul A. Siple's participation in the first expedition of polar explorer Richard E. Byrd from 1928 to 1930. Paul Siple, who was 19 when the Byrd expedition began, was a full-fledged member of the exploration team. He later became a famous explorer in his own right and made five more expeditions to Antarctica before his death in 1968.

The 1978-79 Antarctic Scout will be fully involved in polar research, too. Said a spokesman for the National Science Foundation: "We want him to be a full participant in the scientific program. He won't be just a bottle washer."

Among members of the final selection committee will be Paul Siple's widow and Richard Lee Chappell, an Eagle Scout who spent a year in Antarctica as a member of Siple's International Geophysical Year expedition in 1956-57.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ANTARCTIC SCOUT

1. The candidate must be a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America.
 2. The candidate must have had a minimum of two years' membership in the Boy Scouts of America. A list of merit badges earned must be submitted. Preference will be given to candidates who hold merit badges in Personal Fitness, Astronomy, Aviation, Electricity, Home Repairs, Hiking, Photography, Pioneering, Environmental Science, Radio, Woodwork, Soil and Water Conservation, Citizenship in the World, Journalism, Leatherwork, Machinery, Surveying, General Science, Bird Study, Communications, Computers, Electronics, Emergency Preparedness, Engineering, Geology, Oceanography, Skiing, Weather, and Public Speaking. Explorers who have not participated in the Scout advancement program should submit evidence of abilities in similar disciplines.
 3. The candidate must be between the ages of 17 and 19½ years as of June 1, 1978.
 4. The candidate must present a certificate from his unit leader and the chairman of the unit committee, showing his record as a member of the Boy Scouts of America. It must include length of service, rank, leadership experiences, detailed camping or high-adventure experiences and his own service in relation to the outdoor experiences. The candidate must have had a camping or cruising experience of at least one week during each of three years. Special emphasis shall also be placed on winter camping and cold-weather experiences. The certification shall also include the reason for recommending him for selection. Naturally, such a statement will certify as to his practice of the ideals of Scouting and his effort to develop and demonstrate leadership ability.
 5. A letter from school authorities describing the intellectual capabilities of the candidate, as well as interest in and aptitude for the physical sciences is required. This letter will include his past selection of science courses, participation in science projects and fairs, etc. It should also enumerate such formal items as academic standing, grades and class rank.
 6. The candidate must submit a letter outlining his hobbies and other interests for the past two years. Included should be all non-Scout-related civic and community involvement.
 7. The candidate must present a complete health history and a physician's certificate of a thorough physical examination. The council selectee will be required to attach a physical examination form with his final application. This examination must be of the same level and as detailed as that required of candidates for the service academies.
- A high state of physical fitness is required. One must be capable of physical activity with 30 pounds of cold-weather gear at extremely low temperatures at altitudes of more than 10,000 feet. Meals may be irregular. Such stressful environmental conditions, potential hazards and extreme remoteness from major medical facilities make Antarctic physical screening mandatory to ensure freedom from any kind of disability which might imperil health, restrict activities or create a burden for one's associates.
8. The candidate must present a certificate signed by his parents or guardian approving his application and attesting to the correctness of the statements made.
 9. The candidate must submit a statement of 500 to 1,000 words as to why he wishes to become a member of the expedition and why he feels qualified.
 10. Letters and other evidence should be submitted from persons in his community to testify to the character of the candidate, his courage, resourcefulness, leadership ability, adaptability, quality of endurance, initiative, industry and experience in action under stress. ■