Our Scouts choose, organize, and lead their own meetings, programs, and activities.Â Our Scouts govern democratically and vote on their own issues.Â After voting, Scouts use consensus, meaning they discuss the issue until all agree in order to come to a decision.Â

Voting in our Scout ProgramsÂ

Voting in our Scout Programs helps our Scouts understand the democratic process and their place in it.Â Our Scouts know their votes count and that one vote can make a difference.Â But in order to vote responsibly, our Scouts need to know who they are voting for and why.Â

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We encourage our Scouts to ask questions of those who are running for Scout offices.Â Candidates should be able to say what they stand for, what they would like to change or keep the same, how they will govern, and why.Â We also instill in our Scouts the importance of voting for the best candidate, not necessarily for a friend.Â Â

Our Scouts should also look for candidates who are true leaders.Â For example, if a Scout is elected Secretary, most of the time that means taking notes or sending letters.Â However, if a candidate also has plans to add a regular online post and create a website for the team as well expand advertising for new members and other ideas, that candidate clearly has a vision of how they can do more.Â

All Scouts are encouraged to run for office.Â We want many great candidates and great leaders to choose from.Â Every

Scout who feels the desire to run for office should, including those who normally do not get involved.Â We make it clear to our Scouts this is not a popularity contest, but the chance to gain a real leader.Â

Voting as AdultsÂ

We also instill in our Scouts the knowledge necessary to make responsible decisions at the polls as adults.Â Our Scouts need to know who is running, what they stand for, what they would change or keep the same, how they plan to govern and why.Â There are various ways to get this information.Â

The internet is a great source of information.Â To find information about a candidate, our Scouts can use a search engine to input the candidateâ€™s name.Â Many people have the same name however, so more information may be needed, including adding the office the person is running for and possibly the state they are running from.Â The candidate may also have their own website.Â Scouts should seek out information offered by the candidate and information offered by others who agree and disagree with the candidate.Â All information should be taken for what it is worth however.Â Consequently, although information is provided by the candidate or someone else, it may not be accurate.Â

Another way to find a candidate on the internet is to input an issue our Scouts agree with. For example, â€œCalifornia

Senate candidates nondiscrimination.â€Â Â Â

News articles are also great sources of information.Â It is important however to differentiate between news articles and opinion articles.Â News articles are meant to be factual without the author expressing his or her point of view.Â If a news article is biased, our Scouts should consider whether the author wrote the piece properly or to disregard what they have to say.Â Opinion articles on the other hand are intended to express one authorâ€™s opinion.Â Editorials are opinion articles which represent the view of the editors of a newspaper.Â

Scouts also should listen to the candidate themselves.Â They can find out where a particular candidate is speaking.Â Before going, Scouts will need to inquire if the meeting is open to the public.Â Some campaign events are only for invited guests who donate money.Â However, if none of the events are open the public, Scouts may take that into consideration when voting.Â Candidates also speak for themselves in commercials.Â If the candidate uses the commercial to say what they

stand for or whether they use their time to attack another candidate can also play a part in our Scouts making up their minds whether to support that candidate.Â

Youth VotingÂ

The 2006 election saw an enormous jump in voting in Americans under the age of 30.Â When young people vote, they can and do make a real difference in the world.Â We encourage our Scouts to get out there and do their civic duty upon turning 18.Â The best way to ensure those elected pay attention to the unique needs and concerns of the youngest Americans is for them to show up and vote.