

*Camp Old Indian Centennial 1926–2026, 100 years*

# **Mountain Leadership: Pinnacle High Adventure at Camp Old Indian for Summer Camp 2026**

A Once-in-a-Lifetime \*\*Centennial Summer\*\*  
Honoring 100 Years of Camp Old Indian



## Why Camp Old Indian?

For 100 years, Camp Old Indian has been the safe place where Scouts from across the Southeast discover adventure, build lifelong friendships, and push their limits in the outdoors. Nestled on 550 acres at the gateway to the Blue Ridge Mountains, the camp sits between two majestic, nearly half-mile-high ridges—an unforgettable setting where nature, history, and Scouting come alive. Here's why hundreds of thousands of Scouts and leaders across the southeast call Camp Old Indian their favorite week of the year:

- **7+ miles of manicured trails that lead to a giant waterfall, hidden valleys, and breathtaking mountain overlooks**
- Three lakes, including one stocked with bass and trout for unforgettable fishing and aquatics adventures
- **Wildlife everywhere—deer, turkey, and even the occasional black bear**
- Adjacent to the historic Poinsett Bridge Heritage Preserve (1820), the oldest bridge in South Carolina
- **All Adirondack campsites—one with tree cabins—modern bathhouses with full privacy doors, and hot water**
- Gender-neutral facilities with full door privacy and adaptive Scout areas—Camp Old Indian is a Special Needs Ready Camp
- **Native American Heritage**
- Central air-conditioned dining hall and dedicated program centers (Ecology & Conservation, STEM & Innovation, Range & Targets, Arts & Crafts)
- **13 consecutive years nationally accredited by Scouting America; 5 National Camp School certified directors; winner of two national marketing awards**



## Mountain Leadership: Pinnacle High Adventure at Camp Old Indian | Offered for Each Week of Camp

**For older Scouts (14+ years old or 13 and finished 8th grade) who are ready to stop just “going to camp” and start leading the expedition**

**Mission:** Deliver a transformational high-adventure experience for Scouts ages 14+ that develops wilderness leadership, technical outdoor skills, and team-based problem-solving through progressive challenge and authentic responsibility.

**Program Model:** Cohort-based expedition-style week built around whitewater, vertical progression, backcountry overnight, and Search and Rescue-integrated scenarios, aligned with Scouting America high adventure best practices and National Camp Accreditation Program standards.



**Darkness.** Flashlights cut through the trees as your patrol spreads out, following faint tracks off the trail. Someone calls out— “Got them!”—and **suddenly you’re assessing injuries, building a plan, and leading a real-feeling rescue mission in the middle of the night.** The next day you’re on whitewater, then rappelling off a mountain, and all-the-while developing leadership skills, more self-confidence and learning how successful teams are formed and operate. This is Pinnacle High Adventure: Mountain Leadership at Camp Old Indian—**the week older Scouts talk about for years.**

### **For Scouts: Not Just Camp— An Expedition**

Instead of bouncing between unrelated classes, you join a dedicated high-adventure cohort and spend the week operating as a mountain

expedition team. You’ll climb, rappel, raft whitewater, run wilderness search-and-rescue style missions, go for advanced targets, and complete a backcountry overnight where your decisions matter. Merit badges offered will be Climbing, Orienteering, Wilderness Survival, Hiking and Search and Rescue.

You won't be with your home troop. Pinnacle Scouts form mixed patrols with other older youth, living and working together. That means new friends, new dynamics, and new chances to lead. Every day, youth leadership roles rotate—Navigation Lead, Medical/Response Lead, Quartermaster, Camp Lead—so everyone gets real responsibility, not just a patch.



Leadership at Camp Old Indian is the next step.

## Program Snapshot

**Who:** Scouts age 14+ (or 13 and finished 8th grade); minimum 12 Scouts for two patrols of six  
**When:** Sunday evening through Friday at 5:00 p.m. and back in time for Friday night campfire  
**Where:** Camp Old Indian, in a dedicated high-adventure campsite

### **What's Included:**

- Whitewater rafting day
- Climbing, zip lining and rappelling tower progression and Glassy Mountain rappel
- Backcountry overnight expedition
- Wilderness response and SAR-style missions
- Advanced marksmanship, navigation, and survival skills
- Program-specific high-adventure T-shirts and recognition item

For Scouts who are ready to stop just “going to camp” and start leading the expedition, Pinnacle High Adventure: Mountain

## What You'll Do

### **Whitewater Rafting Day**

Spend a full day on a guided river, running rapids as a crew. You'll learn paddle commands, practice reading the river, and rotate leadership on the boat so everyone feels the pressure of calling the shots when the water gets loud.

### **Climbing Tower to Mountain Rappel**

Start on Camp Old Indian's tower to sharpen knot tying skills, belays, and safety checks. Next, you and your patrol are rappelling off Glassy Mountain under the guidance of trained staff, using systems modeled on national high-adventure climbing programs.

### **Backcountry Overnight Expedition**

Plan and carry out a patrol-style overnight track. You'll navigate to your campsite, set up as a team, cook your own meals, and complete a night challenge—like low-light navigation or a short Search and Rescue-style



scenario—before crashing under the stars.

### **Wilderness Response and Search and Rescue-Style Missions**

Learn how to find someone who is lost or hurt, assess their condition, and get them out. Then test yourself in timed scenarios that combine navigation, first aid concepts, teamwork, and communication in real terrain. These missions feel real because they are built from proven wilderness leadership and high-adventure program models.

### **Advanced Marksmanship and Outdoor Skills**

Throughout the week you'll sharpen land-navigation, campcraft, and survival skills, logging a few trail miles building comfort in rough conditions and wilderness marksmanship: shotgun, advanced archery, and black powder muzzleloading. Options like focused Orienteering, Wilderness Survival, and related skills are offered in a way that supports real learning and, where appropriate, authentic merit badge progress—not just

box-checking. By the time you finish, you'll have stories no one else at school can tell: ***"We ran a rescue mission at night."*** ***"We rappelled off a mountain."*** ***"Our patrol solved problems when things went sideways."***

## Program Overview

**Mission:** Deliver a transformational high-adventure experience for Scouts ages 14+ that develops wilderness leadership, technical outdoor skills, and team-based problem-solving through progressive challenge and authentic responsibility.

**Program Model:** Cohort-based expedition-style week built around whitewater, vertical progression, backcountry overnight, and Search and Rescue–integrated scenarios, aligned with Scouting America high adventure best practices and NCAP standards.

Capacity:

- Optimal: 18–24 Scouts (3–4 patrols of 5–6 Scouts each)
- Minimum: 6 Scouts (1 patrol of 6)
- Maximum: 24 Scouts (4 patrols of 6)
- Small Crew Mode: 6–8 Scouts (single expedition crew)

Duration: Sunday evening (arrival 4:00 PM) through Friday campfire

Day 1: first ½ day is orienteering and navigation intensive and second ½ is climbing fundamentals

Day 2: first is aerial tower and second is rope rescue and mechanics

Day 3: all day is whitewater and back in time for campfire

Day 4: first is Glassy rappel and second is hike to overnight

Day 5: first is return from overnight and second is advanced marksmanship

Each day except Friday has an evening session of day recap and overview of next day

## **For Parents and Leaders: Serious Adventure, Serious Development**

Pinnacle High Adventure is designed for older youth who are otherwise at risk of drifting away from traditional summer camp. It blends the best of national high-adventure approaches with the accessibility and familiarity of a council camp environment.

### **Why Parents Approve**

#### **Safety and Standards**

The program is built in line with Scouting America outdoor and camp accreditation standards, including trained climbing staff, vetted outfitters for whitewater, and structured risk management in all high-adventure elements. It reflects practices used at Philmont, Northern Tier, Sea Base, and other national programs, scaled appropriately for Camp Old Indian’s setting.

#### **Leadership and Life Skills**

Research on adventure programs shows that teens gain confidence, resilience, and stronger identity when they are given real responsibility in challenging outdoor settings. Pinnacle intentionally places youth in rotating leadership roles, followed by guided reflection, to maximize those benefits.

#### **Genuine Skill Building and Advancement**

Rather than chasing a long list of badges, Pinnacle focuses on doing a few things well. Scouts can make meaningful progress—or even complete—merit badges such as Climbing, Wilderness Survival, Search and Rescue, or Orienteering through authentic fieldwork, with some Hiking miles logged along the way. Requirements are met through real activity, not rushed classroom time.

### **High Value Compared to Other Options**

At a week-long price point that is higher than standard camp but far below national high-adventure bases or private adventure programs, Pinnacle offers whitewater rafting, mountain rappelling, specialized instruction, and a staff-intensive schedule. Families see a clear return: a serious leadership and outdoor challenge experience close to home.

### **Why Leaders Appreciate It**

#### **Keeps Older Scouts Engaged**

Pinnacle gives older youth a reason to stay involved—especially those who feel “done” with first-year programs and regular merit badge weeks. It also helps prepare them for NYLT, national bases, and leadership roles back in the troop.

#### **Flexible Crew Options**

Units can send an entire group of their own older Scouts, or a handful of youth who join a council-wide Pinnacle patrol. Either way, the program is built around the Patrol Method, with adults present for support and safety while youth lead.

#### **Clear Expectations and Support**

Pre-camp materials outline a suggested conditioning hike and packing guidance, mirroring national high-adventure practice, and helping families send Scouts prepared. Leaders know up front what kind of week their youth will experience.

### **Camperships: Support for Scouts in Need**

The Blue Ridge Council offers financial support of up to 50% of the Early Bird registration fee for summer camp at Camp Old Indian. Families, unit product sales (popcorn/peanuts and/or camp cards), and camperships can combine to make camp possible.

#### **Eligibility & Notes:**

- Camperships available to registered youth of the Council; non-transferable; not contingent on deposits
- Scouts should “earn their way” via Council fundraisers (popcorn/peanuts and/or camp cards)
- Awards based on available funds and verified need; information remains confidential

#### **Application Instructions:**

- Participate in at least one Council fundraiser (popcorn/peanuts and/or camp cards)
- Apply by April 15, 2026, allowing time for Unit Endorsement and committee review before registration closes

Questions? Contact: Charlie Caldwell, Camp Director • [Charlie.Caldwell@scouting.org](mailto:Charlie.Caldwell@scouting.org) • 864-637-8308

## **What to Bring for the Pinnacle High Adventure: Mountain Leadership Program**

#### **Hiking Shorts:**

- Lightweight nylon or synthetic (not heavy canvas-style shorts)

- Looser fit better for ventilation than compression-style shorts
- Length: Above knee for maximum air flow

#### Socks:

- Synthetic or merino wool blend mandatory
- Bring 5–6 pairs due to sweat and daily changes
- Mid-weight or light-weight hiking socks (not heavy winter-weight wool)
- Scout should change socks at lunch if feet are soaked

#### Underwear:

- Synthetic or merino wool mandatory (cotton underwear in heat + humidity = chafing and misery)
- Bring 8–10 pairs (daily changes essential; may need to change twice/day)
- Athletic boxer-briefs or performance underwear strongly recommended

#### Sleep Clothes:

- Lightweight synthetic shorts + moisture-wicking T-shirt (NOT long-sleeve shirt + pants)
- Many Scouts will sleep in just shorts and T-shirt given SC summer heat in open-air shelter
- Keep long-sleeve layer and pants available as backup for unexpected cool night or rain

#### Rain Gear:

##### Rain Jacket (Upgrade Specification):

- Must be breathable/waterproof (not just water-resistant)
- Pit zips or venting essential
- Lightweight packable style

##### Rain Pants

##### Poncho (Alternative):

- Some Scouts prefer poncho over rain jacket in summer heat (better ventilation)
- Must be lightweight backpacking poncho, not disposable emergency poncho
- Can double as tarp/groundsheet

#### Other:

- Sunscreen: SPF 50+
- Bug spray strength: 30–40% DEET + permethrin-treated clothing
- Wide-brim hat (required)
- Neck gaiter/buff for sun protection
- Cooling towel (recommended)
- Gaiters (strongly recommended for tick protection)
- Sleeping bag and bedding/mattress cover for twin mattress & pillow
- Toiletries (soap, shampoo, toothbrush, deodorant, etc.)
- Swimming suit(s) & two or more towels
- Shower shoes
- Hiking boots and athletic shoes
- Uniform(s) on hanger
- Backpack
- Water bottle
- Pocket knife
- Camp chair
- Spending money

### Program Cost:

- In council participant: Early Bird discount by April 17 is \$590; after April 17 is \$610.
- Out of council participant: Early Bird discount by April 17 is \$600; after April 17 is \$620.

### Important Dates

- March 6, 2026: \$100 per Scout due (required to register for programs)
- April 17, 2026: Remainder of fees due to keep Early Bird discount

## **Contact Information**

Charlie Caldwell  
Professional Scouter  
Camp Director  
Blue Ridge Council  
charlie.caldwell@scouting.org  
864-637-8308

Art Taylor  
Camp Program Director  
Taylortroop603@gmail.com  
864-979-8055

