

# Merit Badges



A dearth of qualified espionage agents has recently prompted the U.S. counter-intelligence community to look to a younger pool of candidates. No longer do CIA, NSA, NRO, DIA, FBI and NHL recruiters draft solely from the college ranks. These days, a simple Boy Scout activity award can open the door to a rewarding career in spookdom. Billy, Chip and Scooter, for instance, had earned their merit badges in Espionage by successfully penetrating the security firewall of the First National Bank of Darnville, where Scooter's dad worked. Now on the NSA payroll, they were recording a highly incriminating conversation between Bank President Dinklaker and a cabal of foreign investors. At the same time, however, they were peddling their information to the Ministry of State Security (China), the National Intelligence Organization (Turkey), the Federal Protective Service (Russia) and Badan Intelijen Negara (Indonesia) – which gave them a lock on another merit badge: Coin Collecting. Such *clever* boys!