

Troop 277
Parent Handbook

Purpose

The intent of this handbook is to familiarize parents with the effective and efficient operation of our Boy Scout Troop. Joining a Boy Scout Troop is a big transition, even for those veteran Cub Scouts crossing over from an existing Pack. One of the fundamental differences from Cub Scouts is the concept of a “Boy-led Troop.” Our hope is that procedural questions about Troop 277 and our Scouting Program can be answered within this handbook. If you have any additional questions, please don’t hesitate to contact one of our adult leaders.

BSA Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America to serve others by helping to instill values in young people and in other ways prepare them to make ethical choices over their lifetime in achieving their full potential. The values we strive to instill are based on those found in the Boy Scout Oath and Law.

Scout Oath - On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

Scout Law - A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent

Scout Motto - Be prepared.

Scout Slogan - Do a good turn daily.

Troop Organization

Let’s take a look at how Scouting is organized. Our troop’s specific governing bodies are noted in parenthesis below.



The Boy Scouts of America was incorporated on February 8, 1910, and chartered by Congress in 1916 to provide an educational program for boys and young adults. Boy Scouting was modeled after the Scouting movement founded by Robert S. Baden-Powell in England in 1908. A volunteer board of directors, the National Executive Board, leads the BSA's National Council. A staff of professional Scouters performs the administration. Among its major functions, the National Council develops program; sets and maintains quality standards in training, leadership selection, uniforming, registration records, literature development, and advancement requirements; and publishes *Boys' Life* and *Scouting* magazines.

The National Council maintains national high-adventure bases for use by the Scouts in Minnesota, Florida, West Virginia, and New Mexico. It also organizes a national Scout jamboree every four years.

Of course, it would be nearly impossible to administer directly the more than 50,000 registered Boy Scout troops and teams from a centrally located national office. To achieve this, the National Council issues a charter to each *local council*. The United States and its territories are divided into nearly 300 local councils. Each council has a headquarters city from which it administers the Scouting program within its geographical boundaries. Like the National Council, the local council is led by volunteers, with administration performed by a staff of professional Scouters. The council president is the top volunteer; the Scout executive is the top professional.

The *local council's* responsibilities include:

- Granting charters to community organizations
- Promoting the Scouting program
- Registration of units and council personnel
- Providing facilities and leadership for a year-round outdoor program, including summer camp
- Offering training in a timely manner

A *Scouting district* is a geographical area within the local council as determined by the council executive board. District leaders mobilize resources to ensure the growth and success of Scouting units within the district's territory.

Each district has a district committee composed of key district Scouters. This committee does not make policy, but rather works through chartered organizations to assure the success of troops. A district committee does this by forming a number of subcommittees, each specializing in an area of concern:

- Membership
- Finance
- Training
- Advancement and Recognition

- Camp and outdoor promotion
- Activities and civic service

Members of the district committee are volunteers. The district trains adult volunteers, provides district programs for troops such as camporees and Scouting shows, assists in the formation of new troops, and helps coordinate the Friends of Scouting campaign.

The district also has a commissioner staff that assigns a *unit commissioner* to give direct coaching and consultation to the troop committee and the Scoutmaster.

The Scouting professional who provides district service is the *district executive*.

The Chartered Organization

Your troop is “owned” by a chartered organization, which receives a national charter yearly to use the Scouting program as a part of its youth work. These chartered organizations, which have goals compatible with those of the Boy Scouts of America, include religious, educational, civic, fraternal, business, labor, governmental bodies, and professional associations.

Each chartered organization using the Scouting program provides a meeting place, selects a Scoutmaster, appoints a troop committee of at least three adults, and chooses a *chartered organization representative*.

Duties:

- Be a member of the chartered organization.
- Serve as head of “Scouting department” in the organization.
- Secure a troop committee chair and encourage training.
- Maintain a close liaison with the troop committee chair.
- Help recruit other adult leaders.
- Serve as liaison between your troop and your organization.
- Assist with unit rechartering.
- Encourage service to the organization.
- Be an active and involved member of the district committee.
- Can multiple-register as a troop committee member.

As the troop committee works on behalf of the chartered organization, your troop must be operated within the organization’s policies.

The chartered organization must also approve all adult leaders. The chartered organization representative is your liaison to the troop’s operating organization. As a member of the chartered organization, that person will guide the troop committee on the organization’s policy. The representative will also know the most effective ways to get the organization’s assistance and maintain a mutually satisfactory working relationship with the chartered organization.

In the chartered organization relationship, the Boy Scouts of America provides the program and support services, and the chartered organization provides the adult leadership and uses the program to accomplish its goals for youth.

The troop committee's primary responsibilities are supporting the Scoutmaster in delivering a quality troop program, and handling troop administration.

The Scoutmaster

The Scoutmaster is the adult leader responsible for the image and program of the troop. The Scoutmaster and assistant Scoutmasters work directly with the Scouts. The importance of the Scoutmaster's role is reflected in the fact that the quality of guidance will affect every youth and adult involved in the troop.

The Scoutmaster can be male or female, but must be at least 21 years old. The Scoutmaster is selected and recruited by the troop committee and approved by the chartered organization representative.

The Scoutmaster's duties include:

GENERAL

- Train and guide youth leaders.
- Work with other responsible adults to bring Scouting to boys.
- Use the methods of Scouting to achieve the aims of Scouting.

MEETINGS

- Meet regularly with the patrol leaders' council for training and coordination in planning troop activities.
- Attend all troop meetings or, when necessary, arrange for a qualified adult substitute.
- Attend troop committee meetings.
- Conduct periodic parents' sessions to share the program and encourage parent participation and cooperation.
- Take part in annual membership inventory and uniform inspection, charter review meeting, and charter presentation.

GUIDANCE

- Conduct Scoutmaster conferences for all rank advancements.
- Provide a systematic recruiting plan for new members and see that they are promptly registered.
- Delegate responsibility to other adults and groups (assistants, troop committee) so that they have a real part in troop operations.
- Supervise troop elections for the Order of the Arrow.

ACTIVITIES

- Make it possible for each Scout to experience at least 10 days and nights of camping each year. Participate in council and district events.
- Build a strong program by using proven methods presented in Scouting literature.
- Conduct all activities under qualified leadership, safe conditions, and the policies of the chartered organization and the Boy Scouts of America.

Assistant Scoutmasters

To fulfill obligations to the troop, the Scoutmaster, with the assistance of the troop committee, recruits assistant Scoutmasters to help operate the troop. Each assistant Scoutmaster is assigned specific program duties and reports to the Scoutmaster. They also provide the required two-deep leadership standards set by the Boy Scouts of America. An assistant Scoutmaster may be 18 years old, but at least one in each troop should be 21 or older, so he or she can serve in the Scoutmaster's absence.

Types of assistant Scoutmasters include:

- Assistant Scoutmaster—New-Scout patrol
- Assistant Scoutmaster—Venture patrol

A troop should recruit as many assistant Scoutmasters as possible. It has been found that many successful troops have three or more.

Patrols

The Scout troop is made up of patrols. A patrol is a grouping of six to eight boys who work together. Each patrol elects its own youth leader, called a patrol leader.

- The *new-Scout patrol* is composed of new members who have not entered the seventh grade.
- The *experienced-Scout patrol* is for those boys who are age 12 and older.
- *Venture patrols* are made up of boys who are age 13 and older who want more challenging high-adventure experiences.

Youth Leader Positions and Troop Meetings

The troop is actually run by its youth leaders. With the guidance of the Scoutmaster and assistants, they plan the program, conduct troop meetings, and provide leadership among their peers. Troop meetings routinely occur each Monday from 6:30pm – 8:00pm at Shepherd's Gate at St. Patrick Catholic Church of Mount Dora. Due to the number of holidays observed on Mondays, Troop meetings are generally still conducted on holidays but may be canceled at the discretion of the patrol leaders' council. Troop meetings are generally suspended during summer months, in line with local school schedules. While the Scoutmaster and qualified assistants are generally present to help guide Troop meetings, participation and distraction by parents and other adult leaders is discouraged. Meetings generally open with recitations of the Pledge of Allegiance, Scout Oath, and Scout Law. Meetings also generally open and close with a

prayer by the Chaplain's Aide.

Senior patrol leader—top youth leader in the troop. He leads the patrol leaders' council and, in consultation with the Scoutmaster, appoints other youth leaders and assigns specific responsibilities as needed. Troop members elect the senior patrol leader for a six-month term. Elections for senior patrol leader and patrol leader positions normally occur at the troop's first meetings in April and October.

Patrol leader – gives leadership to members of his patrol and represents them on the patrol leaders' council.

Assistant senior patrol leader—fills in for the senior patrol leader in his absence. He also is responsible for training and giving direction to the quartermaster, scribe, Order of the Arrow troop representative, historian, librarian, and instructors. The assistant senior patrol leader and all other junior leadership positions (below) are assigned by the senior patrol leader.

Assistant patrol leader – fills in for the patrol leader in his absence.

Historian – collects and maintains troop memorabilia and information on former troop members.

Librarian – keeps the troop's books, pamphlets, magazines, and audiovisuals.

Instructor – teaches one or more advancement skills to troop members.

Chaplain aide – assists in troop religious services and promotes religious emblem programs.

Junior assistant Scoutmaster – a Scout 16 or older who supervises and supports other boy leaders as assigned.

Order of the Arrow troop representative – keeps the troop informed on all Order of the Arrow activities.

Troop guide – adviser and guide to the new-Scout patrol.

Den chief – works with a Cub Scout or Webelos Scout den as a guide.

Quartermaster – responsible for troop supplies and equipment.

Scribe – the troop secretary.

The Patrol Leaders' Council

The patrol leaders' council, *not the adult leaders or troop committee*, is responsible for planning and conducting the troop's activities. The patrol leaders' council is composed of the following

voting members: senior patrol leader, assistance senior patrol leader, patrol leaders, troop guide.

At its monthly meetings, the patrol leaders' council organizes and assigns activity responsibilities for the weekly troop meetings. The troop committee interacts with the patrol leaders' council through the Scoutmaster.

Annual Program Planning Conference

The troop's activities are selected and planned by the patrol leaders' council at the annual program planning conference. The patrol leaders' council should then submit the troop's yearly plan to the troop committee for its support. At this time, the troop committee may make alternative suggestions for the patrol leaders' council to consider. To avoid conflicts between troop plans and activities of the chartered organization, clear the program calendar in advance with the chartered organization representative.

Troop Committee

The Troop Committee is composed of a minimum of three adults (age 21 and older) interested in providing the Scouting program for the community's youth; there is no maximum limit to the number of troop committee members. They may be parents of Scouts or anyone with a sincere desire to promote youth development through Scouting. The troop committee is the troop's board of directors and supports the troop program. The Troop committee has two key duties - to select the best possible person as the Scoutmaster and to help them provide a sound Scouting program to the boys. The troop committee also does the following:

- Ensures that quality adult leadership is recruited and trained. In case the Scoutmaster is absent, a qualified assistant Scoutmaster is assigned. If the Scoutmaster is unable to serve, a replacement is recruited.
- Provides adequate meeting facilities.
- Advises the Scoutmaster on policies relating to Boy Scouting and the chartered organization.
- Supports leaders in carrying out the program.
- Is responsible for finances, adequate funds, and disbursements in line with the approved budget plan.
- Obtains, maintains, and properly cares for troop property.
- Ensures the troop has an outdoor program (minimum 10 days and nights per year).
- Serves on boards of review and courts of honor.
- Supports the Scoutmaster in working with individual boys and problems that may affect the overall troop program.
- Provides for the special needs and assistance some boys may require
- Helps with the Friends of Scouting campaign
- Assists the Scoutmaster with handling boy behavioral problems

Parents are encouraged to become involved in the committee and register as members. Troop

committee members generally serve for a year at a time. At charter renewal time, a manpower inventory should be conducted to identify leadership needs. The troop committee chair should fill each committee position. Every committee member should be asked to serve in a specific capacity. No one, including the troop committee chair, automatically retains the same position beyond the one-year life of the charter.

The first five positions (below) are essential for quality troop operation. *Troop Committee Challenge* is an online training session that usually can be completed in an hour. It explains the various committee positions and duties in detail.

Chair duties:

- Organize the committee to see that all functions are delegated, coordinated, and completed.
- Maintain a close relationship with the chartered organization representative and the Scoutmaster.
- Interpret national and local policies to the troop.
- Prepare troop committee meeting agendas.
- Call, preside over, and promote attendance at monthly troop committee meetings and any special meetings that may be called.
- Ensure troop representation at monthly roundtables.
- Secure top-notch, trained individuals for camp leadership.
- Arrange for charter review and recharter annually.
- Plan the charter presentation.

Secretary duties:

- Keep minutes of meetings and send out committee meeting notices.
- Handle publicity.
- Prepare a family newsletter or web page of troop events and activities.
- Conduct the troop resource survey.
- Plan for family night programs and family activities.
- At each meeting, report the minutes of the previous meeting.

Treasurer duties:

- Handle all troop funds. Pay bills on recommendation of the Scoutmaster and authorization of the troop committee.
- Maintain checking and savings accounts.
- Train and supervise the troop scribe in record keeping.
- Keep adequate records in the Troop/Team Record Book.
- Supervise money-earning projects, including obtaining proper authorizations.
- Supervise the camp savings plan.
- Lead in the preparation of the annual troop budget.
- Lead the Friends of Scouting campaign.
- Report to the troop committee at each meeting.

Outdoor/Activities Coordinator duties:

- Help in securing permission to use camping sites.
- Serve as transportation coordinator.
- Ensure a monthly outdoor program.
- Promote the National Camping Award.
- Promote, through family meetings, attendance at troop campouts, camporees, and summer camp to reach the goal of an outing per month.
- Secure tour permits for all troop activities.
- Report to the troop committee at each meeting.

Advancement Coordinator duties:

- Encourage Scouts to advance in rank.
- Work with the troop scribe to maintain all Scout advancement records.
- Arrange quarterly troop boards of review and courts of honor.
- Develop and maintain a merit badge counselor list.
- Make a prompt report on the correct form to the council service center when a troop board of review is held. Secure badges and certificates.
- Work with the troop librarian to build and maintain a troop library of merit badge pamphlets and other advancement literature.
- Report to the troop committee at each meeting.

Chaplain duties:

- Provide spiritual tone for troop meetings and activities.
- Give guidance to the chaplain aide.
- Promote regular participation of each member in the activities of the religious organization of his choice.
- Visit homes of Scouts in time of sickness or need.
- Give spiritual counseling service when needed or requested.
- Encourage Scouts to earn their appropriate religious emblems.
- Report to the troop committee at each meeting.
- Plan Scout Sunday ceremony.

Training Coordinator duties:

- Ensure troop leaders and committee members have opportunities for training.
- Maintain an inventory of up-to-date training materials, videos, and other training resources.
- Work with the district training team in scheduling Fast Start training for all new leaders.
- Be responsible for BSA Youth Protection training within the Troop
- Encourage periodic youth leader training within the troop and at the council and national levels.
- Report to the troop committee at each meeting.
- Be watchful that the troop is taking all steps to ensure the boys' safety.

Equipment Coordinator duties:

- Supervise and help the troop procure camping equipment.
- Work with the quartermaster on inventory and proper storage and maintenance of all troop equipment.
- Make periodic safety checks on all troop camping gear, and encourage troops in the safe use of all outdoor equipment.
- Report to the troop committee at each meeting.

Membership Coordinator duties:

- Develop a plan for year-round membership flow into the troop.
- Work closely with the Cubmaster and Webelos Den Leader of neighboring Cub Scout packs to provide a smooth transition from pack to troop. Assist in developing and recruiting den chiefs and assist in the crossover ceremony from Webelos Scouts to Boy Scouts.
- Plan and coordinate a troop open house to invite non-Scouts into the troop.
- Encourage Scouts to invite their friends to join the troop.
- Keep track of Scouts who drop out of the troop, and develop a plan to encourage them to rejoin.

New Scout Parent Unit Coordinator duties:

- Welcome new Scout parents and provide them with information about the troop.
- Provide an orientation for new Scout parents about how the troop works.
- Assign parents to help with at least one specific task, assignment, or project annually.
- Keep parents updated on the troop's program and their involvement.
- Act as the keeper of record for new Scout/Parent applications; enter new Scouts and parents into Scoutbook.

The *Chair* may also assign additional positions, as desired, such as *Fundraising Coordinator*, *Eagle Advisor*, *Webmaster*, and *STEM Coordinator*.

Recruiting and Selecting Adult Leaders

Scoutmaster

A key function of the troop committee is assisting in the selection of the best possible person to be your Scoutmaster. Your Scoutmaster will be a role model for the boys and will reflect the character of the chartered organization. The Scoutmaster must be the kind of person you would want your own sons to be influenced by and whose judgment will always be in their best interest.

The troop committee has the responsibility to make leadership changes when it is in the best interest of the troop. Leadership changes are best done at the time of the troop recharter. They should be handled diplomatically with thanks and gratitude expressed to the leaders for their service.

To find the right person, it is strongly recommended that you use the following steps:

STEP 1

The head of the chartered organization, or the chartered organization representative should be briefed by a representative from the local council who can provide recruiting techniques, videos, and other support materials such as the brochure *Selecting Quality Leaders*, No. 522-981.

STEP 2

Meet with the other troop committee members to develop a prospect list, and follow these steps:

- a. Review part one of the videotape *Selecting Quality Leaders*.
- b. Develop a list of prospects who closely fit the descriptions you heard in the video tape. Be prepared by obtaining lists of the chartered organization membership and parent rosters. Choose prospects who live up to the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law in their daily lives. Do not make assumptions about whether or not prospects will accept or have the time to take on the position. Give them the opportunity to make their own decision.

What are the personal characteristics of a successful Scoutmaster?

These 10 characteristics have been found:

- Commitment to the ideals of Scouting
- High moral standards
- Ability to relate to boys
- Ability to keep a “cool head” under pressure
- Good organizational skills
- Ability to relate to and interact with adults
- Flexibility and the ability to compromise
- Good planning ability
- High energy level
- Good attention to detail

- c. Rank the prospects. The committee should agree on and rank the top three prospects, in preferential order.
- d. Clear the list of prospects with the head of the chartered organization before making any contact.
- e. Preview part two of the videotape *Selecting Quality Leaders*. It explains the vision of Scouting to the prospective Scoutmaster. You should preview it to become familiar with the points it makes.
- f. Select at least three people from the committee to call on the number one prospect. These persons should know the prospect quite well and have influence in the prospect’s decision.

STEP 3

Make an appointment with the number one prospect. The person who knows the prospect best and has this person’s respect should do this. It can usually be done on the phone. Set a

date and time to meet, preferably at the prospect's home. You will want to involve this person's spouse since it will affect the prospect's time at home. If the prospect questions the purpose of the meeting, frankly state that it is to discuss a matter important to the youth of the community. Confirm the date and time with the other members who will be making the visit.

STEP 4

Call on the prospect as a group. Gather at a convenient place and arrive at the prospect's home as a group. Review the steps that have been taken, explain how the qualifications were reviewed, and let the prospect know that he or she was considered by all to be the number one prospect for the position.

Give the prospect a true and realistic picture of the position: time demands, adult leadership support, special problems the troop is facing, and other relevant information. After all questions have been answered, a member of the committee extends the invitation to serve the organization as its Scoutmaster (subject to approval) and pledges the organization's full support.

If for some reason the prospect is unable to accept the position, you should repeat the process with the number two prospect (who now becomes number one).

STEP 5

Give the prospect an application to join the Boy Scouts of America. Advise him or her that Youth Protection training is required. Explain how the training can be taken online at www.My.Scouting.org or through the local council. For more information, see the back of the BSA adult membership application, No. 524-501.

References should be checked in a discrete, nonthreatening manner, and previous Scouting experience should be confirmed. After committee approval, the chartered organization conducts a reference check. The application is signed by the chartered organization head or the chartered organization representative and submitted to the local council. All leaders registered with the Boy Scouts of America must meet its standards for leadership.

STEP 6

Once the prospect has accepted the position and has been approved as a leader, the head of the chartered organization should personally welcome the new leader. An announcement should be placed in the local newspaper and the chartered organization's publication, if applicable. A formal induction ceremony should take place soon possible at meeting of the chartered organization.

STEP 7

A representative from the local council will contact the new leader to schedule *This Is Scouting* and *Fast Start* training. Remind the new leader that Youth Protection training must be taken every two years. Attendance at the next roundtable is encouraged as well as participation in Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader-Specific Training.

ASSISTANT SCOUTMASTERS

The same standards used to determine the best prospect for Scoutmaster should also be used to qualify assistant Scoutmasters. The majority of successful troops have three or more assistant Scoutmasters. This is not an unrealistic goal. The guide *Selecting Quality Leaders*, No. 522-981, can help you through the selection process. The video presentation *Selecting Quality Leaders*, No. AV-02V009, is also a useful tool.

RECRUITING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Experience has shown that troops with committees of seven or more members work more effectively and provide better troop program support. The minimum number of committee members required is three adults age 21 or older. If the committee is well run and active, you should have little difficulty getting others to join. But again, be sure that each member has meaningful responsibility and kept actively involved.

As with securing a Scoutmaster, to get qualified adults involved with your troop, you must first identify good people, select and rank the top prospects, and then use all available influence to recruit them. Where do you find new committee members? The best source is the parents of troop members. Parents have natural interest in their sons having a successful Scouting experience. They are also an excellent resource for troop program assistance. Every troop member's parents should complete the Troop Resource Survey. This task is the responsibility of the assistant Scoutmaster of the new-Scout patrol.

The survey will inform the committee what professions, special interests, skills, and resources are available to your troop. For example, a parent who works at printing shop could help the troop scribe produce a first-rate troop newsletter. Another parent might be banker. Obviously, this person would likely be considered for the position of committee treasurer. But their hobbies may be cycling and fishing. If asked, they may well be more than willing to work with the boys in either of these activities.

The troop committee secretary should have a copy of every Troop Resource Survey conducted by the assistant Scoutmaster for new Scouts or by other committee members. At the monthly committee meeting, the Scoutmaster should be consulted as to what adult help and talents are needed for the coming month's program. A careful review of the collected resource surveys should begin the committee's search.

Not every parent will be able to serve on the troop committee or make a similar long-term commitment, but every parent should have the responsibility to perform a short-term task sometime during the year. Baking cookies for a bake sale, providing transportation to campouts, giving skill demonstrations at troop meetings, and accompanying the troop on a hike are all examples of help that is expected of troop members' parents. Let the parents know that the troop will call on them occasionally for help. Keep parents involved!

Troop committee members should also use the Troop Resource Survey with interested members of the chartered organization, personal friends, Eagle Scouts, and Scouting supporters in your community. Once your resources are identified, don't hesitate to use them.

Uniforms

Standard BSA uniforms include the BSA olive or tan button-down shirt with insignia properly positioned, BSA belt, BSA pants or shorts, socks, and closed-toed/closed-heel shoes and should be worn during meetings and formal events. During more formal events, Scouts are encouraged to also wear a merit badge sash, Order of the Arrow sash (for OA members), or the Troop neckerchief. During informal outdoor events and activities, Scouts may wear Troop or Patrol shirts.

Troop Finances

Proper management of the troop's finances will allow your troop to achieve its program goals. The recording, disbursing, and budgeting of troop funds, along with unit money-earning project assistance, is the responsibility of the troop committee and treasurer.

TROOP BANK ACCOUNT

Every troop should have checking account at local bank. An account that requires two signatures on each check, those of the committee treasurer and Scoutmaster, is recommended. Troop funds need to be recorded and deposited weekly into the troop's checking account. The *Troop/Team Record Book*, No. 34508, is an indispensable tool for this purpose. Disbursements from the checking account are made from the recommendation of the Scoutmaster with authorization from the troop committee.

UNPLANNED EXPENSES

Occasionally in the course of troop activities, the Scoutmaster will need unplanned miscellaneous articles. Rather than utilizing a petty cash fund for this purpose, Troop 277 will refund the Scoutmaster for legitimate and unplanned Troop-related expenses, provided that an original and itemized receipt accompanies the reimbursement request and that such expenditures do not exceed \$50 per occurrence.

THE ANNUAL BUDGET

The troop budget is a plan for receiving and spending troop funds. Immediately after approval of the troop's annual program plan, the Scoutmaster and committee treasurer should start the preparation of the annual budget. The Unit Budget Plan and the Troop/Team Record Book are useful guides.

Troop expenses will include:

- Membership registration fees
- Boys' Life subscriptions
- Unit accident insurance
- Advancement and rank badges
- Literature for the troop library and record keeping

- Unit charter fee (which goes to the general liability insurance program)
- Reserve fund (for unexpected expenses)
- Program materials (including unit flags, new camping gear, and program supplies)
- Activities funds for summer camps and high-adventure trips (usually paid by the participating boy and his parents or raised through special troop money-earning projects)

SOURCES OF INCOME

When the cost estimates for expenses have been calculated, the next step is to identify sources of income. These include:

- Dues. At the first meeting of each calendar month, dues of \$10 are to be paid by troop members, collected by the Troop scribe, and delivered to the committee treasurer. To help the Scouts learn how to budget, Scouts are encouraged to earn the monies for dues and parents are discouraged from paying dues for the Scouts. While dues may be paid in advance, collection of dues in annual lump-sum payments is discouraged as the fee could prohibit many potential Scouts from joining the troop for economic reasons.
- Troop money-earning projects. The remainder of the anticipated expenses not covered by dues and surpluses from the previous year must be raised through troop money-earning projects.

TROOP MONEY-EARNING PROJECTS

These projects can be large or small, depending on the amount of money that is needed. Some suggestions are:

- Troop-sponsored dinners
- Council-sponsored fund-raisers (popcorn sales, Scouting show tickets, etc.)
- Collecting aluminum cans for recycling
- Bake sales
- Car washes
- Lawn care service
- Product sales (ink pens, candy, greeting cards, etc.)

Project selection should begin with the patrol leaders' council and the Scoutmaster. They will bring their ideas to the troop committee.

Here are some guidelines to help you determine whether your project conforms to Scouting standards.

1. Have your troop committee, chartered organization, and local council approved your project, including the dates and methods?
2. Do your plan and its projected dates avoid competition with money-raising programs and policies of your chartered organization, local council, community chest, and United Way?
3. Is your plan in harmony with local ordinances, free from any stigma of gambling, and consistent with the ideals and the purposes of the Boy Scouts of America?

4. If a commercial product to be sold, will it be sold on its own merits and without reference to the needs of Scouting either directly (during sales presentation) or indirectly?
5. If tickets are sold for any function other than a Scouting event, will they be sold by your Scouts as individuals without depending on the goodwill of Scouting to make the sale possible?
6. When sales are confined to parents and friends, will they get their money's worth from any product they purchase, function they attend, or services they receive from your unit?
7. If a project is planned for particular area, do you respect the rights of other Scouting units in the same neighborhood?
8. Is it reasonably certain people who need work or business will not lose it as result of your troop's plan?
9. Will your plan protect the name and goodwill of the Boy Scouts of America and prevent it from being capitalized on by promoters of shows, benefits, or sales campaigns?
10. If any contracts are signed by your troop, will they be signed by an individual without reference to the Boy Scouts of America and in no way appear to bind the local council or the Boy Scouts of America to any agreement of financial responsibility?

FRIENDS OF SCOUTING

The local council provides many services to make the Scouting program possible for your troop. These services include programs, support materials, training, advancement programs, activities, camping facilities, high-adventure opportunities, and personnel readily available to assist in making possible better program for your troop.

Friends of Scouting (or "Sustaining Membership Enrollment" in some councils) is a primary source of operating income for the council. Friends are those individuals with an interest in the Boy Scouts of America and a desire to support the program financially. When properly informed and given the opportunity, many families of youth members wish to become Friends of Scouting.

SCOUT ACCOUNTS

Troop 277 recognizes that participation in Scouting and Scouting events can be an expensive endeavor. To help reduce the individual out-of-pocket expenses for events such as summer camp, the troop has established a 'Scout Account' process whereby individual Scouts may earn and save funds via BSA fundraisers to be applied to Scouting events. Unless otherwise specified by the BSA, Council, District, or Chartering Organization, the following guidelines will apply to fundraisers for Troop 277.

With the exception of annual BSA Camp Card sales, the proceeds (profits after all expenses, Council payments, etc.) including donations from fundraising events will be split evenly between Scout Accounts and the Troop. In sales events, the specific amount applied to an individual's Scout Account will be commensurate to the Scout's individual sales. For annual Camp Card sales, 100% of the final unit proceeds other than donations will go towards Scout

Accounts; donations will be split evenly between Scout Accounts and the Troop. In unit-level fundraising efforts which require group labor (such as car washes and parking events), proceeds will be distributed proportionally across Scout Accounts based on the individual number of hours worked as compared to the total number of hours worked. Hours worked by adults are to be considered volunteer hours to benefit the Troop and should not be considered in the calculation of hours worked.

The Troop commonly arranges 'Show and Sell' events as opportunities for individual Scouts to perform sales alongside other Scouts. The Troop maintains the right to limit the number of participants at each event and to provide reasonable rules regarding sign-ups for such opportunities (such as equitable distribution or first-come, first-served).

While Scout Accounts are intended to provide individual Scouts with an opportunity to reduce out-of-pocket expenses (sometimes significantly), Scouts and families should not expect fundraising efforts to completely eliminate all costs related to Scouting. Nor should Scout Accounts be expected to result in individual profits. Towards that end, the unit has established a cap or maximum earned value for individual Scout Accounts during fundraising events. The maximum amount dedicated to any one Scout Account will be \$1,000 per Scouting year (Aug 1 – July 31); any additional earned value will be dedicated to the Troop. On a case-by-case basis, the committee may opt (by majority vote) to permit raising a Scout's individual cap when savings will be applied to high-cost/BSA high-adventure camp experiences.

Distributions from a Scout Account may not be made directly to the Scout or parent but instead are made in the form of payments by the Troop on the Scout's behalf for qualifying expenses. Qualifying expenses include monthly dues and BSA-, Council-, District-, or unit-level campout registration or food costs. Merit badge fees and incremental fees for special courses at camp are also qualifying expenses. Specifically excluded are any purchases of goods (such as camping equipment) to be retained by any individual. Additionally, Scout Accounts may not be used to provide individual Scouts with store credit at Scout Shops, snack bars, or any other store.

It will be the responsibility of the Fundraising Coordinator (or their designee) to accurately track hours worked, to collect funds, to separate any donations from funds earned, to remit all funds and reports to the Committee Treasurer, and to do so in a timely fashion and with integrity. It will be the responsibility of the Committee Treasurer to perform calculations of proceeds and their division.

If a Scout becomes delinquent in the payment of dues beyond a period of three months or is otherwise delinquent on other payments for a period exceeding 30 days and the Scout maintains a positive balance in his individual Scout Account, the Committee Treasurer is authorized and compelled to perform a transfer of funds from the Scout Account to rectify the delinquency.

In the event that a Scout transfers to a new unit and maintains a positive balance in his Scout Account with no other payment delinquencies, the Committee Treasurer is authorized to

transfer the Scout Account funds to the new unit. Requests for such transfers are the responsibility of the individual Scout or parent, must be made directly to the Committee Treasurer, and must be made within 6 months of the Scout's application with a new unit. If a Scout becomes inactive with the Troop for a period of six months and no transfer request is made, the Scout Account is considered forfeit and the Committee Treasurer is authorized to transfer any positive Scout Account balance to the Troop.

In the event of a dispute, determinations by a 75% majority of a committee quorum consistent with these guidelines will prevail. In the event that committee consensus is less than 75%, a decision by the Chartered Organization Representative will be final. When in conflict, BSA guidelines will prevail over these unit guidelines.

ADVANCEMENT

Ranks are simply a means to an end, not an end in themselves. Everything Scouts do to advance and earn these ranks, from the day they join until they leave the program, should be designed to help them have an exciting and meaningful experience. This means providing your Scouts with a stimulating and active troop program.

Education and fun are functions of Scouting, and they are the basis of the advancement program. In the Scouting program, recognition is gained through leadership in the unit; attending and participating in the activities; living the ideals of Scouting; and developing a proficiency in outdoor living and useful skills.

No council, district, troop, or individual has the authority to add or subtract from any advancement requirement. The advancement requirements have been carefully developed to achieve the aims of Boy Scouting. To alter the requirements would defeat that purpose and would also be unfair to the Scout.

Boy Scout advancement is a four-step process:

1. The Boy Scout learns. A Scout learns by doing. As he learns, he grows in ability to do his part as a member of the patrol and the troop. As he develops knowledge and skill, he is asked to teach others. In this way, he begins to develop leadership.
2. The Boy Scout is tested. A Scout may be tested on requirements by his patrol leader, Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmaster, a troop committee member, or a member of his troop. The Scoutmaster maintains a list of those qualified to give tests and to pass candidates.
3. The Boy Scout is reviewed. After a Scout has completed all requirements for a rank, he has a board of review. For Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle Palms, members of the troop Committee conduct the review. The Eagle board of review is conducted in accordance with local council procedures.
4. The Boy Scout is recognized. When the board of review has certified a boy's advancement, he deserves to receive recognition as soon as possible. This should be done at a ceremony at the next troop meeting. The certificate for his new rank may be presented later at a formal court of honor.

The committee member responsible for advancement must become familiar with the video presentation Boy Scout Advancement; the booklet Guide to Advancement; and the booklet Boy Scout Requirements. These three resources are indispensable tools to use in your troop's advancement program. The entire troop committee should review the Boy Scout Advancement video.

Many advancements require active participation by the Scout. The troop will follow the *Guide to Advancement* (4.2.3.1) with regard to requirements for Active Participation. The unit's reasonable expectations shall be: active participation in a troop activity (including, but not limited to, meetings, campouts, fundraisers, and service events) an average of twice per calendar month over the prior six months.

Any registered Boy Scout may earn merit badges, badges of rank, and Eagle Palms until his 18th birthday. A Scout with a disability may work toward rank advancement after he is 18 years old (review "Advancement for Members With Special Needs" in the Guide to Advancement).

If a Scout foresees that he will be unable to complete the requirements for the Eagle rank prior to his 18th birthday, a petition may be filed in writing with the national Boy Scout Committee through the local council for special permission to continue to work toward the award after reaching age 18. The petition must show good and sufficient evidence and detail extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances are defined as conditions or situations that are totally beyond the control of the Scout. If circumstances should also prevent a Scout from requesting the extension before he is 18, it is still permissible to ask for the extension, detailing the circumstances that prevented him from completing the requirements and from requesting the extension before age 18. The national Advancement Team may grant a limited extension.

SCOUTMASTER CONFERENCE

You will notice that participation in a Scoutmaster conference is a requirement for every rank. The purpose of the conference is to ensure that the Scout is ready for his board of review. An increasing level of trust between the Scoutmaster and each Scout develops during these conferences. In time, the Scoutmaster is allowed by the Scout to become a positive guide and influence in his life. The conference is also an opportunity for the Scoutmaster to review the Scout's personal growth and set goals for further advancement.

MERIT BADGE PROGRAM

The ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle require that a Scout earn a certain number of merit badges. Merit badges are awarded to Scouts for fulfilling requirements in specific fields of interest. The subjects range from American Business to Woodwork and cover areas such as hobbies, careers, sports, science, and Scouting skills. In all, there are more than 100 merit badges. (See Boy Scout Requirements.)

A Scout, along with a buddy, works closely with a council-approved merit badge counselor to complete the requirements for the merit badge. Each counselor must be a registered adult

member of the Boy Scouts of America and an expert in the chosen subject. When a boy feels that he is ready to earn a merit badge, the Scoutmaster will give him the name and telephone number of an approved counselor from the merit badge counselor list, usually provided by the local council or district.

Because the Boy Scouts of America does not permit a youth member to work alone with an adult, each Scout must have a “buddy” to accompany him. (See Boy Scout Requirements.) If an approved list is not provided, or if the Scoutmaster feels that some of the popular merit badges need additional counselors, the troop committee advancement coordinator has the primary responsibility for developing the troop’s own counselor list. Troop merit badge counselors must meet the same qualifications as persons serving district- and council-wide, and they must be approved by the district or council.

The requirements for merit badge counselors are:

1. Be 18 years of age or older and of good character.
2. Be recognized as having sufficient skills and education in the subjects for which they are to serve as merit badge counselors.
3. Be registered as adult members of the Boy Scouts of America.

Potential sources for counselors are parents (review your troop resource survey), former Scouts, committee members, local schoolteachers, government agencies, labor unions, special-interest clubs, technical and industrial organizations, and serious hobbyists. A useful tool is the *Work Sheet for Building a Merit Badge Counselor List*. Other tools include:

- Merit Badge Counselor Orientation - A practical training aid for adult leaders
- Merit Badge Counselor Information - Qualifications and background information for counselors
- Recommending Merit Badge Counselors - A forum for suggesting names of potential counselors

SERVICE PROJECTS

To help foster a sense of personal responsibility and citizenship, Scouts are required to participate in a service project approved by their Scoutmaster for the ranks of Second Class, Star, Life, and Eagle.

The time of service must be a minimum of one hour for Second Class and six hours for Star and Life ranks. This may be done as an individual project or as a member of a patrol or troop project. Star and Life service projects may be approved for Scouts assisting on Eagle service projects. The Scoutmaster approves the project before it is started.

Eagle Scout - For the Eagle service project, a boy must plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project for any religious institution, school, or his community while he is a Life Scout. The Eagle service project provides the opportunity for the Eagle Scout candidate to demonstrate the leadership skills he has learned in Scouting. He does the project outside the

sphere of Scouting. Before any Eagle service project is begun, it must be approved by the district or council advancement chair and the recipient of the project.

BOARDS OF REVIEW (EXCEPT FOR EAGLE SCOUT)

When a Scout has completed all the requirements for a rank, he appears before a board of review composed of at least three and not more than six committee members.

The review has three purposes:

1. To make sure that the work has been learned and completed.
2. To find out what kind of experience the Scout is having in his patrol and troop.
3. To encourage the Scout to progress further.

The board of review is not a time to retest the Scout, but to determine the Scout's attitude and his acceptance of Scouting ideals. It is also important to review those Scouts who are not advancing. The guidance and care shown could motivate these Scouts to further achievement. The review should be conducted at a convenient time and location, such as a troop meeting, summer camp, or the home of a member of the troop committee. Scoutmasters and assistant Scoutmasters do not participate in the board of review.

The board of review members should feel free to refer to the Boy Scout Handbook, Scoutmaster Handbook, or any other references during the review.

Because many boys are ill at ease when talking to adults, it is important that the board of review be held in a relaxed atmosphere. A certain amount of formality and meaningful questioning should be used during the review. Use questions that require a narrative answer. Examples of the kinds of questions that might be asked are:

- What do you like most in troop outdoor activities?
- What new things did you do/learn on your latest campout/service project/troop meeting?
- What did you learn/feel in giving service to others?
- Why is being a Boy Scout important to you?
- What are your goals in Scouting?
- How will fulfilling requirement number help you?

These types of questions will help the Scout to see the value and practical application of his efforts.

At the conclusion of the review, the board should know whether a Scout is qualified for the rank or Palm. The Scout is asked to leave the room while the board members discuss his achievements. The decision of the board of review is arrived at through discussion and must be unanimous. If members are satisfied that the Scout is ready to advance, he is called in, congratulated, notified as to when he will receive his recognition, and encouraged to continue his advancement or earn the next Palm.

Scouts who are not advancing should also come before the board of review. The board should

show interest in each Scout's rank progress. Ask the kind of questions that may reveal why a Scout has not been advancing:

- Do you enjoy the outings/troop meetings?
- Which of the requirements are most difficult for you?
- Do you find that school activities are taking more of your time? Which ones?

Let the Scout know that he has the support of the board of review members and that there is no doubt that he can achieve the next rank. The board's concern and supportive manner will both help the Scout's confidence and impress upon him the importance of advancement in his Scouting experience.

At the conclusion of every board of review, it is the committee's responsibility to prepare and turn in to the local council office a copy of the Advancement Report, and ensure that the badges earned by the boys are obtained and awarded in a timely fashion.

EAGLE BOARD OF REVIEW

Council advancement committees must determine—and make known—methods for conducting Eagle Scout boards of review: whether unit committees or the council or district advancement committees administer them, as well as how board chairpersons are selected. If conducted at the unit level, at least one district or council representative must serve as a member. If the unit requests it, more than one may do so.

There shall be no fewer than three and no more than six members, all at least 21 years old. They need not be on an advancement committee or registered with the Boy Scouts of America, but they must have an understanding of the rank and the purpose and importance of the review.

An Eagle candidate may have only one board of review. Subsequent action falls under the appeals process. (See "Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0, in the Guide to Advancement, No. 33088, for more detailed information.)

COURTS OF HONOR

When a Scout advances, he should be recognized as soon as possible—preferably at the next troop meeting. He is recognized a second time at a public ceremony called a court of honor. The main purposes of the court of honor are to furnish formal recognition for achievement and to provide incentive for other Scouts to advance.

Formal courts of honor should be conducted at least four times a year. All Scouts who have advanced since the previous court of honor are honored. Their parents and friends should be invited to attend the ceremony.

Suggestions on court of honor agendas and ceremonies are found in *Troop Program Resources for Scout Troops and Varsity Teams*.

TROOP COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Troop Committee meeting is scheduled for the 1st Thursday of each month from 7pm-9pm. All troop committee meetings should be announced, and all members of the committee and the Scoutmaster should be invited to attend. Occasionally you may want to invite guests such as your chartered organization representative and unit commissioner. All issues should be discussed and resolved in an open dialogue.

Adult leaders filling committee positions are considered voting members of the committee. The Scoutmaster (or assistant Scoutmaster) is not a member of the troop committee and has no vote. Qualified assistant Scoutmasters should select a primary adult leadership role either as Assistant Scoutmaster or Committee Member. To conduct troop business, a quorum must be present. The quorum for committee meetings shall be defined as a majority of the membership.

The committee should not forget that its primary responsibility is supporting the troop program. The importance of mutual cooperation between the two groups of leaders is critical for the smooth and successful operation of the troop.

The support and administration of an active troop requires the participation of every committee member. Every member should have a working assignment. This will not only help the troop to operate effectively, but will help assure team spirit and promote attendance at meetings. When people feel that it doesn't matter if they attend or not, often they will choose to do something else.

Suggested Troop Committee Meeting Agenda

1. Call the meeting to order—Chair
2. Welcome and introduction of new members and guests—Chair
3. Approval of previous meeting's minutes—Secretary
4. Reports
 - Scoutmaster (troop progress, actions of patrol leaders' council, disciplinary problems, attendance, monthly outing plans, other troop needs)
 - Secretary (newsletter or website, additional resource surveys)
 - Outdoor/Activities Coordinator (outdoor plans, special activities, district and council activities, summer camp update)
 - Treasurer (report on current financial standing, money-earning projects, Friends of Scouting)
 - Advancement Coordinator (troop advancement progress, boards of review, courts of honor)
 - Chaplain (update on chaplain support to troop members, religious emblems program, participation of boys in the religious emblems program)
 - Training Coordinator (new training materials, youth leader and adult volunteer opportunities for training)
 - Equipment Coordinator (status of new and existing troop equipment and of troop

- needs, new procedures for safe use and storage of equipment)
 - Membership Coordinator (update status of Webelos crossover ceremonies, troop open houses, and boy-to-boy recruiting)
 - New Scout Parent Unit Coordinator (update status of new Scout parents and their involvement in the troop)
5. Old business (reports on task assignments from previous meeting)
 6. New business (assign tasks as issues are discussed)
 7. Announcements (including date of next month's troop committee meeting)
 8. Adjournment

If everyone is prepared, troop committee meetings should not last longer than 2 hours. It is the chair's responsibility to keep the meeting moving swiftly. There is no better way to discourage attendance than to conduct meetings that last too long with too little accomplished. The video *The Barbecue: Working With the Troop Committee* will also give you some helpful hints on conducting committee meetings.

OUTDOOR PROGRAM, RECHARTERING, TRAINING, AND POLICY

The troop committee, working in support of the Scoutmaster, should make every effort to give their Scouts an outdoor experience every month. This goal is not easy to accomplish. It takes people (leaders, transportation) and money (food, equipment), but this challenge can be met with the help of the troop committee.

Two registered adult leaders, or one adult leader and a parent of a participating Scout, one of whom must be at least 21 years of age or older, are required for all trips or outings. For complete information on current policies and procedures for safe activities, consult the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, available from the local council or the BSA website at <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/GSS/toc.aspx>.

TOUR PLAN

The tour plan is an important tool for conducting local, national, or international activities and is a checklist for best practices to be prepared for safe and fun adventure. Completing the tour plan might not address all possible challenges but can help ensure that appropriate planning has been conducted, that qualified and trained leadership is in place, and that the right equipment is available for the adventure. In addition, the plan helps to organize safe and appropriate transportation to and from an event, and defines driver qualifications and minimum limits of insurance coverage for drivers and vehicles to transport participants. Times when a tour plan must be submitted for council review include:

- Trips of 500 miles or more
- Trips outside of council borders not to a council-owned property
- Trips to any national high-adventure base, national Scout jamboree, National Order of the Arrow Conference, or regionally sponsored event
- When conducting the following activities outside of council or district events:
 - Aquatics activities (swimming, boating, floating, scuba, etc.)

- Climbing and rappelling
- Shooting sports
- Any activities involving motorized vehicles as part of the program (snowmobiles, boating, etc.)
- At a local council's request.

Tour plans must be submitted at least 21 days in advance to ensure the local council has enough time to review the plan and assist the unit in updating the plan if it is found to be defective.

TRANSPORTATION

Safety is the number one concern when arranging transportation for troop outings. For trips beyond hiking distance, you may need to arrange for private cars. Trucks may not be used for transporting boys except inside the cab. Insurance companies may refuse to accept responsibility if this rule is violated. Private cars or licensed buses should be used. Make certain that the condition of each car to be used is safe and that each is properly insured.

General guidelines are:

1. Seat belts are required for all occupants.
2. All drivers must have a valid driver's license that has not been suspended or revoked for any reason. If the vehicle to be used is designed to carry more than 15 persons, including the driver (more than 10 persons, including the driver, in California), the driver must have a commercial driver's license (CDL).
3. The driver must be currently licensed and at least 18 years of age. Youth member exception: When traveling to an area, regional, or national Boy Scout activity or any Venturing event under the leadership of an adult (at least 21 years of age) tour leader, a youth member at least 16 years of age may be a driver, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Six months' driving experience as a licensed driver (time on a learner's permit or equivalent is not to be counted)
 - b. No record of accidents or moving violations
 - c. Parental permission granted to the leader, driver, and riders
4. Trucks may not be used for transporting passengers except in the cab.
5. All vehicles must be covered by automobile liability insurance with limits that meet or exceed requirements of the state in which the vehicle is licensed. It is recommended that coverage limits are at least \$50,000/\$100,000/\$50,000. Any vehicle designed to carry 10 or more passengers is required to have limits of \$100,000/\$500,000/\$100,000.
6. Obey all laws, including the speed limit.
7. Driving time is limited to a maximum of 10 hours and must be interrupted by frequent rest, food, and recreation stops. If there is only one driver, the driving time should be reduced and stops should be made more frequently.
8. Travel and rest time is limited to a maximum of 10 hours in one 24-hour period, regardless of the number of drivers available. The intention is to include sleep and thorough rest breaks while traveling long distances.
9. Drivers should refrain from using cell phones (including hands-free units) and text-messaging

devices while driving.

If you use the troop resource survey to identify willing drivers and ask for their help well in advance, you should be able to secure the needed cars.

TYPES OF TROOP CAMPING

Short-term camping is usually done over one or two nights on the weekend. The troop equipment must be adequate for the number of boys involved. These short-term camps allow advancement opportunity, fun, and fitness. As we pointed out earlier, troops should camp monthly.

Resident camping lasts at least a week and sometimes longer. This will be at a council summer camp facility.

CAMPING EQUIPMENT

It is the troop committee's responsibility, in cooperation with the Scoutmaster, to secure adequate numbers of tents, cook kits, and other outdoor gear. Because of the cost of this equipment, a troop money-earning project will usually be organized. The equipment coordinator should work closely with the troop quartermaster to maintain the troop's equipment with adequate repair and storage.

RECHARTERING

Near the end of your charter year, your council will provide an application for charter renewal. This is a computer print out of information previously furnished. Your task of reregistering the troop is much easier than when registering it initially. You need only update the printed information. An instruction sheet will accompany the renewal papers. You will receive a printout with all youth and adults presently registered, from which the unit commissioner and troop committee will conduct a membership inventory.

The commissioner and committee chair then hold a charter renewal meeting attended by the commissioner, chartered organization representative, executive officer of the chartered organization, Scoutmaster, and all other adult volunteers. At this time, they identify which youth and adults to reregister. Your completed charter renewal application is then submitted to the local council.

JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE

Scouting's Journey to Excellence is the BSA's council performance recognition program designed to encourage and reward success and measure the performance of our units, districts, and councils. It is a means of encouraging excellence in providing a quality program at all levels of the BSA. The program has a point system and variety of criteria to attain bronze, silver, gold, or platinum levels of recognition.

TRAINING

All troop committee members should take advantage of the available training opportunities. *Fast Start* training can be done in your home or, if a new troop, at your first committee meeting

by a district or council representative. The next level of training, the *Troop Committee Challenge*, can be completed in one evening.

ROUNDTABLES

On a monthly basis, districts conduct roundtable meetings, which emphasize troop programs. Adult leaders, including troop committee members, meet and learn new program ideas, get information on upcoming events, and share solutions to common problems. Roundtable meetings are excellent training opportunities. Each month has a program feature and a training feature.

UNAUTHORIZED AND RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

The following activities have been declared unauthorized and restricted by the Boy Scouts of America:

- Except for participation in authorized programs at Camp LaNoChe, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are banned from program use. ATVs are defined as motorized recreational cycles with three or four large, soft tires, designed for off-road use on a variety of terrains.
- Boxing, karate, and related martial arts – except judo and aikido – are not authorized activities
- Chainsaws and mechanical log splitters may be authorized for use only by trained individuals who are over the age of 18, using proper protective gear in accordance with local laws.
- Exploration of abandoned mines is an unauthorized activity.
- Varsity football teams and interscholastic or club football competition and activities are unauthorized activities.
- Fireworks secured, used, or displayed in conjunction with program and activities is unauthorized except where the fireworks display is conducted under the auspices of a certified or licensed fireworks control expert.
- The selling of fireworks at a fund-raising or money-earning opportunity by any group acting for or on the behalf of members, units, or districts may not be authorized by councils.
- Flying in hang-gliders, ultralights, experimental class aircraft, hot-air balloons, parachuting, and flying in aircraft as a part of search and rescue missions are unauthorized activities.
- Motorized go-carts and motorbike activities are unauthorized for Cub Scout and Boy Scout programs. All motorized speed events, including motorcycles, boats, drag racing, demolition derbies, and related events, are not authorized activities for any program level.
- Participation in amateur or professional rodeo events and council or district sponsorship of rodeos are not authorized.
- The activity commonly referred to as “war games” – in which individuals shoot paint or dye at one another – is an unauthorized activity.
- Hunting is not an authorized Cub Scout or Boy Scout activity, although hunting safety is a part of program curriculum.

- Motorized personal watercraft, such as jet-skis, are not authorized for use in Scouting aquatics, and their use should not be permitted in or near BSA program areas.
- Except for (1) law enforcement officers required to carry firearms within their jurisdiction, and (2) circumstances within the scope of the BSA hunting policy statement, firearms should not be in the possession of any person engaged in camping, hiking, backpacking, or any other Scouting activity other than those specifically planned for target shooting under the supervision of a certified fire arms instructor. (Among the purposes of this policy is to prohibit adult leaders from bringing firearms on BSA camping and hiking activities or to unit meetings.)
- Parasailing, or any activity in which a person is carried aloft by a parachute, parasail, kite, or other device towed by a motorboat or by any other means, is unauthorized.
- All activities related to bungee cord jumping (sometimes called shock cord jumping) are unauthorized.

For detailed information, consult the Guide to Safe Scouting.

YOUTH PROTECTION IN SCOUTING

The Boy Scouts of America places the greatest importance on creating the most secure environment possible for its youth members. To maintain such an environment, the BSA has developed numerous procedural and leadership selection and training policies, and provides parents and leaders with numerous online and print resources for the Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Venturing programs.

The Boy Scouts of America has adopted a number of policies aimed at preventing abuse within the Scouting program. These policies focus on leadership selection, on raising awareness, and on creating barriers to abuse beyond what have previously existed in Scouting.

Youth Protection training is a requirement for all BSA registered volunteers.

New leaders are required to complete *Youth Protection* training. To take the training online, they should go to www.My.Scouting.org and establish an account using the member number they received when registering for BSA membership. If individuals take the training online before obtaining a member number, they should return to My.Scouting and enter their number for training record credit. For individuals who cannot take *Youth Protection* training online, BSA local councils also provide this training on a regular basis. For more information, refer to the back of the BSA adult membership application, No. 524-501.

If an adult volunteer's application is fully completed, submitted to the council service center, and approved, the fee is paid, and the *Youth Protection* training certificate has been received by and acknowledged by the council, that volunteer will then be permitted to interact with youth members.

Youth Protection training must be taken every two years. If a volunteer's *Youth Protection* training record is not current at the time of recharter, the volunteer will not be reregistered.

To find out more about the Youth Protection policies of the Boy Scouts of America and how to help Scouting keep your family safe, see the *Parent's Guide* in any of the Cub Scouting or Boy Scouting handbooks, or go to <http://www.scouting.org/Training/YouthProtection.aspx>.

MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE

All persons involved in Scouting shall report to local authorities any good faith suspicion or belief that any child or has been physically or sexually abused, physically or emotionally neglected, exposed to any form of violence or threat, exposed to any form of sexual exploitation including the possession, manufacture, or distribution of child pornography, online solicitation, enticement, or showing of obscene material. No person may abdicate this reporting responsibility to any other person.

Notify your Scout executive of this report, or of any violation of Youth Protection policies, so that he or she may take appropriate action for the safety of our Scouts, make appropriate notifications, and follow-up with investigating agencies.

How does BSA help prevent child abuse in Scouting? The Boy Scouts of America has adopted number of policies aimed at eliminating opportunities for abuse within the Scouting program. These policies focus on leadership selection and on placing even greater barriers to abuse already exist today in Scouting.

Effective June 2010, Youth Protection training was made requirement for all BSA registered volunteers, regardless of their position.

New leaders are required to take Youth Protection training. A BSA application should be collected from prospective leader only with the fully completed form and a copy of the individual's Youth Protection certificate of completion. Both documents should be submitted together to the council service center.

If an adult volunteer's application is fully completed, submitted to the council service center and approved, their fee paid, and their Youth Protection training has been received by and acknowledged by the council, volunteer will be able to interact with youth members while the criminal background check (CBC) is still pending.

The BSA Youth Protection training has been in existence long enough for it to be understood and accepted as mandated training for all registered adult volunteers. Youth Protection training must be taken every two years. If a volunteer's Youth Protection training record not current at the time of recharter, the volunteer will not be reregistered.

LEADERSHIP SELECTION

The Boy Scouts of America takes great pride in the quality of its adult leadership. Being a leader is a privilege, not a right. The quality of the program and the safety of youth members call for high-quality adult leaders. We work closely with chartered organizations to help recruit the

best possible leaders for their units.

The adult application requests background information that should be checked by the unit committee or the chartered organization before accepting an applicant for unit leadership. While no current screening techniques exist that can identify every potential child abuser, we can help reduce the risk of accepting child abuser by learning all we can about an applicant for leadership position—including his or her experience working with children and why he or she wants to be Scout leader.

Youth safety is of paramount importance to the Boy Scouts of America. It is important to implement this training at all levels of the organization. The BSA is always reevaluating and reassessing its policies and training to provide the most secure environment possible for its youth members.

BARRIERS TO ABUSE WITHIN SCOUTING

The BSA has adopted the following policies for the safety and well-being of its members. These policies are primarily for the protection of its youth members; however, they also serve to protect adult leaders.

Two deep leadership. Two registered adult leaders, or one registered leader and a parent of a participating Scout or other adult, one of whom must be 21 years of age or older, are required for all trips and outings. There are a few instances, such as patrol activities, when the presence of adult leaders is not required and adult leadership may be limited to training and guidance of the patrol leadership. With the proper training, guidance, and approval by the troop leaders, the patrol can conduct day hikes and service projects. Appropriate adult leadership must be present for all overnight Scouting activities; coed overnight activities—even those including parent and child—require male and female adult leaders, both of whom must be 21 years of age or older, and one of whom must be a registered member of the BSA. The chartered organization is responsible for ensuring that sufficient leadership is provided for all activities.

No one-on-one contact. One-on-one contact between adults and youth members is not permitted. In situations that require personal conferences, such as a Scoutmaster's conference, the meeting is to be conducted in view of other adults and youths.

Separate accommodations. When camping, no youth is permitted to sleep in the tent of an adult other than his or her own parent or guardian. Councils are strongly encouraged to have separate shower and latrine facilities for females. When separate facilities are not available, separate times for male and female use should be scheduled and posted for showers. Likewise, youth and adults must shower at different times.

Respect of privacy. Adult leaders must respect the privacy of youth members in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers at camp, and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.

Cameras, imaging, and digital devices. While most campers and leaders use cameras and other imaging devices responsibly, it has become very easy to invade the privacy of individuals. It is inappropriate to use any device capable of recording or transmitting visual images in shower houses, restrooms, or other areas where privacy is expected by participants.

No secret organizations. The Boy Scouts of America does not recognize any secret organizations as part of its program. All aspects of the Scouting program are open to observation by parents and leaders.

Hazing prohibited. Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any Scouting activity.

Bullying prohibited. Verbal, physical, and cyber bullying are prohibited in Scouting.

Youth leader training. Adult leaders must monitor and guide the leadership techniques used by youth leaders and ensure that BSA policies are followed.

Constructive discipline. Discipline used in Scouting should be constructive and reflect Scouting's values. Corporal punishment is never permitted.

Appropriate attire. Proper clothing for activities is required. For example, skinny-dipping or revealing bathing suits are not appropriate in Scouting.

Member responsibilities. All members of the Boy Scouts of America are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Physical violence, theft, verbal insults, drugs, and alcohol have no place in the Scouting program and may result in the revocation of a Scout's membership.

Unit responsibilities. The head of the chartered organization or chartered organization representative and the local council must approve the registration of the unit's adult leader. Adult leaders of Scouting units are responsible for monitoring the behavior of youth members and interceding when necessary. Parents of youth members who misbehave should be informed and asked for assistance. Any violations of the BSA's Youth Protection policies must immediately be reported to the Scout executive.

YOUTH MEMBER BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

The Boy Scouts of America is a values-based youth development organization that helps young people learn positive attributes of character, citizenship, and personal fitness. The BSA has the expectation that all participants in the Scouting program will relate to each other in accord with the principles embodied in the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

One of the developmental tasks of childhood is to learn appropriate behavior. Children are not born with an innate sense of propriety and they need guidance and direction. The example set by positive adult role models is a powerful tool for shaping behavior and a tool that is stressed

in Scouting.

Misbehavior by a single youth member in a Scouting unit may constitute a threat to the safety of the individual who misbehaves as well as to the safety of other unit members. Such misbehavior constitutes an unreasonable burden on a Scout unit and cannot be ignored.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the Boy Scouts of America are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Physical violence, hazing, bullying, theft, verbal insults, and drugs and alcohol have no place in the Scouting program and may result in the revocation of a Scout's membership.

If confronted by threats of violence or other forms of bullying from other youth members, Scouts should seek help from their unit leaders, parents, or the council.

UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

Adult leaders of Scouting units are responsible for monitoring the behavior of youth members and interceding when necessary. Parents of youth members who misbehave should be informed and asked for assistance.

The BSA does not permit the use of corporal punishment by unit leaders when disciplining youth members.

The unit committee should review repetitive or serious incidents of misbehavior in consultation with the parents of the child to determine a course of corrective action including possible revocation of the youth's membership in the unit.

If problem behavior persists, units may revoke a Scout's membership in that unit. When a unit revokes a Scout's membership, it should promptly notify the council of the action.

The unit should inform the Scout executive of any violations of the BSA's Youth Protection policies.

Each Boy Scout troop shall have one leader, 21 years of age or older, who shall be registered and serve as the unit leader. The head of the chartered organization or chartered organization representative and the local council must approve the registration of the unit leader on the appropriate form.

BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

Occasionally the troop committee may be asked by the Scoutmaster to deal with a problem which might involve disciplinary action or a health issue of an individual youth or adult member. These issues should be dealt with in strict confidence. If the subject concerns a Scout, his parents should be fully informed of the issue.

Because serious or recurring behavioral problems may require the troop committee's involvement, the Scoutmaster should share discipline problems with the committee. Such problems should be addressed in a firm, fair manner with the goal to integrate the youth into the Scouting program. Problems that may lead to a youth's permanent removal from the troop should be handled by the Scoutmaster and the troop committee, and should involve the Scout's parents or guardians. Together, the troop committee, parents, and Scoutmaster should work toward a solution with the troop's best interest in mind.

SMOKING AND DRINKING

It is the policy of the Boy Scouts of America that the use of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances is not permitted at encampments or activities on property owned and/or operated by the Boy Scouts of America, or at any activity involving participation of youth members. Health is a most valuable possession. Smoking will dangerously impair a person's health. The BSA recommends that leaders maintain the attitude that young adults are much better off without tobacco. Leaders are encouraged not to use tobacco products in any form nor allow their use at any BSA activity.