



**Troop 55  
Boy Scouts of America  
Troop Handbook  
Table of Contents**

- Section 1: General Troop Information – Pages 1-5
- Fact Sheet
  - Required and Recommended Adult Training
- Section 2: Troop Roster – Only in Printed Version
- Section 3: Troop Organization – Pages 6-25
- Troop 55 Organization Overview
  - How Troop 55 Works
  - Troop Leadership Chain of Command
  - Troop Committee Roles and Responsibilities
  - Assistant Scoutmaster Roles and Responsibilities
  - Troop 55 Guidelines
- Section 4: Advancement and Awards – Pages 26 - 27
- Section 5: Community Service and Other Activities - Pages 28-31
- President's Volunteer Service Award
- Section 6: Equipment – Pages 32-42
- Person & Patrol Gear for Backpacking and Car Camping
  - Clothes, the layering system, Rain Gear and Foot Wear
  - Sleeping Bags and Backpacks
- Section 7: FAQs and Forms – Pages – 43-47
- Frequently Asked Questions
  - Blank Medical Forms – see web site

*Updated: February 2016*



## Boy Scout Troop 55 Fact Sheet



Serving area youth since 1978 Sponsored by St. Francis Episcopal Church 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, Virginia

**Philosophy** – Troop 55 is dedicated to the fulfillment of the Mission and Vision of the Boy Scouts of America and places a strong emphasis on providing the tools and training for young men to learn to make ethical decisions while having fun and adventure.

**Mission** – The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the 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.

**Vision** – The Boy Scouts of America is the nation’s foremost youth program of character development and values based leadership training. In the future scouting will continue to:

- Offer young people responsible fun and adventure.
- Instill in young people lifetime values and develop in them ethical character as expressed in the Scout Oath and Law.
- Train young people in citizenship, service, and leadership.
- Serve America’s communities and families with its quality, values-based program.

**Organization** – Troop 55 strongly endorses and rigorously implements the Boy-Led concept of troop leadership. With the guidance, encouragement and training from the adult leaders, the scouts of Troop 55 plan and implement the program of the troop through the utilization of the patrol method. Scouts function in patrols of 7 to 10 boys without the direct participation of adults and learn to depend on each other. While parents are encouraged to contribute to the troop in many ways, Scouting is not a father/mother and son program. Boys learn the skills of self-sufficiency and independence, working with other boys their age.

**Leadership** – Every uniformed adult leader of Troop 55 has completed the minimum suite of training courses proscribed by the Boy Scouts of America. This includes “Fast Start,” [Youth Protection](#), and Assistant/Scoutmaster training. Most of the (non-uniformed) Troop Committee members have also completed one or more of these programs. Several leaders have completed more advanced training courses.

**Requirements** – A youth may join Troop 55 upon reaching age 11, or upon completing the 2nd Year Webelos Cub Scout program, or upon completing fifth grade. We expect of each scout the following:

- Attendance: Regular attendances at all scout activities including weekly meetings and monthly overnight outings. Troop 55 meets on Wednesday evenings from 7:30 until 9:00 PM in the St. Francis parish hall.
- Full Scout Uniform- We stress the importance of PROPER UNIFORMING. Scouts should wear official scout pants (or shorts), scout belt, scout socks, and a scout shirt with proper insignia. The troop neckerchief with slide is

worn for Court of Honors and other special events. A troop T-shirt may be worn in lieu of the scout shirt on certain occasions as authorized by the Scoutmaster.

- Behavior: Scouts are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the principles of the Scout Oath and Law.
- Handbook – Scouts should bring their copy of the official Boy Scout handbook to every troop meeting and campout.

**Advancement** - Troop 55 is very proud of the accomplishments of our scouts. The goal of every scout is to become an Eagle Scout, Boy Scout's highest rank. More than 45 scouts in Troop 55 have reached this pinnacle. The troop's activities are centered on learning and doing the things that scouts need to do to advance. A scout who has completed requirements for a rank may advance after participation in a conference with the Scoutmaster and a review by the Troop Committee's Board of Review. It's the scout's responsibility to ask for this review. We present awards at a quarterly "Court of Honor" attended by all parents and other family members.

**We keep the "Outing" in "Scouting"** – The Troop's annual program consists of weekly troop meetings, quarterly Courts of Honor, at least 9 weekend campouts or day hikes, and a one-week summer camp. Older scouts also may attend "High Adventure" camps during the summer.

- Troop-Provided Equipment - The troop owns a trailer and camping equipment that provides each patrol with a dining fly, cooking equipment, axes, saws, shovels, stoves and lanterns.
- Scout-Provided Equipment – please refer to the Equipment section of this handbook for detailed information on materials scouts need to obtain. Please note that absolutely no camouflage attire or electronic devices of any kind are permitted on trips. This includes cell phones.

**Troop Dues** - The Troop is funded through annual dues paid by each Scout. The amount of the annual dues are established each fall by the Troop Committee and pay for all Troop camping equipment, awards presented to Scouts in recognition of their advancement, training programs provided to youth and adults, Troop administration expenses, Boys Life Magazine for each scout, registration fees paid to the National Scout office, and other miscellaneous expenses. Scout's transferring from other units (even Cub Scout Packs) need to pay a pro-rated fee at the time they join.

**Fundraising** - The troop focuses its fundraising efforts on one or more events in the spring. It is a requirement of scouts to participate in this fundraiser as it raises funds for the troop as well as the scouts. Scouts earnings are based on the amount of sales they obtain, and on their level of participation in the activity. The profit earned during the drive is divided between the Troop and those scouts who participated. In past years, several Scouts have earned hundreds of dollars through their efforts.

**A Scout is Thrifty** - Troop 55 provides opportunities for scouts to "pay their own way." We maintain an account, within the troop, on behalf of each scout who participates in the annual fundraisers. Withdrawals can be used to pay for any scout-related expenses such as dues or summer camp fees.

**Parent Participation** - We expect all parents to contribute in some fashion for the betterment of the Scouting program of Troop 55. Troop 55 is a large organization and areas where we need parent help may be found in this handbook.

If you have any questions about our program, please feel free to ask any of the uniformed leaders you see at a troop meeting. In addition, you may call the following individuals at any time:

Gary Pan, Scoutmaster  
Lisa Hodge, Committee Chairman

## BSA TROOP 55 REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TRAINING

Troop 55 encourages all of our adult volunteers (scout leaders, committee members, and parents) to get training in Boy Scout programs, [Youth Protection](#), and first aid. Our troop policy is consistent with the Powhatan District program, which states: “It is of paramount importance to have all adult leadership (including Troop Committee members) of all troops in our District trained”. To participate in troop or patrol outdoor activities, adults must, as a minimum, have Fast Start and [Youth Protection Training](#). For activities including water sports, Safe Swim and Safety Afloat are required. For high adventure trips other special requirements may apply.

By attending training you can help support the troop, support the boys in their journey to Eagle, and promote a safe learning environment. Listed below are the recommended classes. Periodic updates are provided for upcoming course offerings, and some courses are offered on-site during the scout meetings.

If you do take training – please let the Troop Committee’s “Membership and Communications Subcommittee” chair know so we can keep our records up to date.

### TRAINING COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

**Fast Start Orientation:** Orientation video for new scout parents – you probably have some questions on how this all works? What are the roles of the committee members? How are the patrols organized? How does the “boy-led” troop concept work? The Fast Start video provides excellent summary of how the Boy Scout program works including troop meetings, the outdoor program, and the role of the troop committee. The video is shown periodically during the weekly scout meetings.

**[Youth Protection Training](#):** This training is highly recommended for all adults who will be working with the boys. BSA Youth Protection Training is now required for at least one adult present during any event or activities needing a local or national tour permit. Further, every adult participating in nationally sponsored events and activities must be trained in BSA Youth Protection. The training must also be renewed every two years. Troop 55’s policy is that all adults attending activities with the boys have current Youth Protection training. Youth Protection is offered periodically on-site and at District Roundtable meetings. This course is now also offered online. Check the following link.  
<http://www.scouting.org/Training/YouthProtection.aspx>.

**Leadership Training:** Useful for all adults, highly recommended for adult leaders and committee members, this course is a continuum of training offered by the District including New Leader Essentials, Leader Specific Training, and Outdoor Leader Skills. To be considered “Trained” and receive a “Trained” patch for uniforms a Committee Member must take Leader

**Essentials and Leader Specific Training for Committee Members.** Committee members are encouraged to take the entire sequence. For a Scoutmaster/Assistant Scoutmaster to be considered “trained” they must complete all three components. The Powhatan District web site has a good description of the training continuum and what’s covered in each. To find out more about upcoming Powhatan District activities, visit the District’s home page at <http://www.ncacbsa.org/group/powhatan>. The District typically offers the full sequence in the fall and spring.

**New Leader Essentials:** This “walk-in” class is offered to brand new leaders in the Cub Scout, Boy Scout and Venturing program. From now on, if you take this course as a Cub-level leader, this course does not need to be taken when becoming a Boy Scout leader.

**Boy Scout Leader Specific Training:** Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster Training: A ½ day class. All Scoutmasters are required to, and all Assistant Scoutmasters are encouraged to, attend the Troop Committee training, which will also be offered on the same day at a time that does not overlap their training time. There is no extra charge for them to attend that training.

**Troop Committee Training:** A 3-hour class. This class reviews the roles of the committee and strategies for working with volunteers. All Troop Committee members are welcome and highly encouraged to take all of the leader-specific training for Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters.

**Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills:** Typically offered in spring and fall, this is a Friday night to Saturday night course, including camping at Lake Fairfax, which puts YOU through most of the skills required for a first class scout. This session is a hands-on training program to prepare leaders to take their units camping. The students are organized into patrols and have to plan the campout, practice knots, lashing, orienteering and other basic skills. There's even some patrol competition at the end. The course is fun and informative and provides lots of useful training materials.

**NO WALK-INS FOR THIS OUTDOOR SESSION!** Pre-Registration and attendance at the Orientation/Planning Session is required!!

**Safe Swim Defense/Safety Afloat:** This is a 1-½ hour course reviewing safety and procedures involving water sports. Typically this training is required for adults attending summer camps and water related high adventure activities. A summary is provided in "Guide to Safe Scouting" publication that can be accessed on-line (<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx>). The course is offered periodically at the District.

**CPR for Adults:** Recommended for adults attending outdoor activities, and required for high adventure activities. This training is available from the City of Fairfax Fire Department and Reston Hospital. We also expect to offer CPR on-site periodically.

#### **Other Advanced Training:**

- **Wood Badge:** Boy Scout sponsored course providing advanced training in troop management and leadership skills. Training is provided over two consecutive weekends.
- **Wilderness First Aid:** Training in first aid oriented to the special challenges of remote locations. A privately offered course is available in Alexandria through the Wilderness Safety Council. For more information see [www.wfa.net](http://www.wfa.net)

For more information on Leadership Training, check for fliers and registration forms at: <http://www.boyscouts-ncac.org/district/powhatan/>

## SECTION 3 – TROOP ORGANIZATION

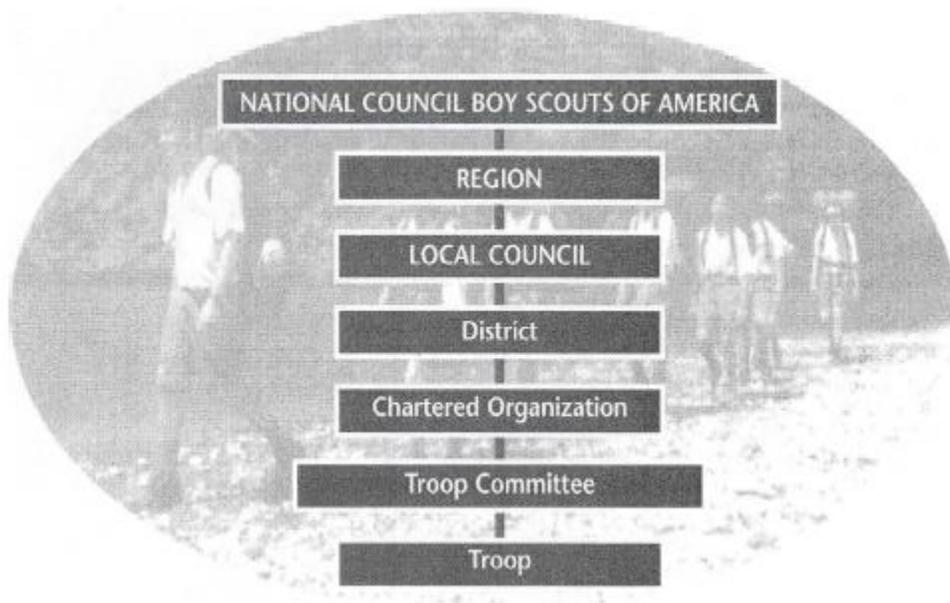
### BSA Troop 55 Organization Overview

#### The Organization of Scouting

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. S. Baden-Powell in England in 1908.

#### National Council

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 Scouts in Minnesota, Florida, and New Mexico. It also organizes a national Scout jamboree every four years.

#### Local Councils

Given there are 50,000 registered Boy Scout troops, the National Council issues a charter to local councils to help administer the program. The United States and its territories are divided into more than 300 local councils. Each council has a headquarters city from which it administers the Scouting program within its geographical boundaries. Like the National Council, volunteers lead the local council, 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:

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

#### Scouting Districts

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. 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

Troop 55 is "owned" by its chartered organization, St. Francis Episcopal Church, which receives a national charter yearly to use the Scouting program as a part of its youth work. 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 Chair and a committee of at least three adults, and chooses a Chartered Organization Representative.

- The Chartered Organization Representative:
- Is a member of the chartered organization
- Serves as head of "Scouting department" in the organization.
- Secures the troop committee chair and encourages training. Maintains a close liaison with the troop committee chair.
- Helps recruit other adult leaders.
- Serves as liaison between Troop 55 and St Francis.
- Assists with unit re-chartering.
- Encourages service to St Francis.
- Is an active and involved member of the district committee.

The chartered organization also approves all adult leaders. As the Chartered Organization Representative is the liaison to the troop's chartering organization, that person will guide the Troop on St Francis' policy. The representative will seek 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.

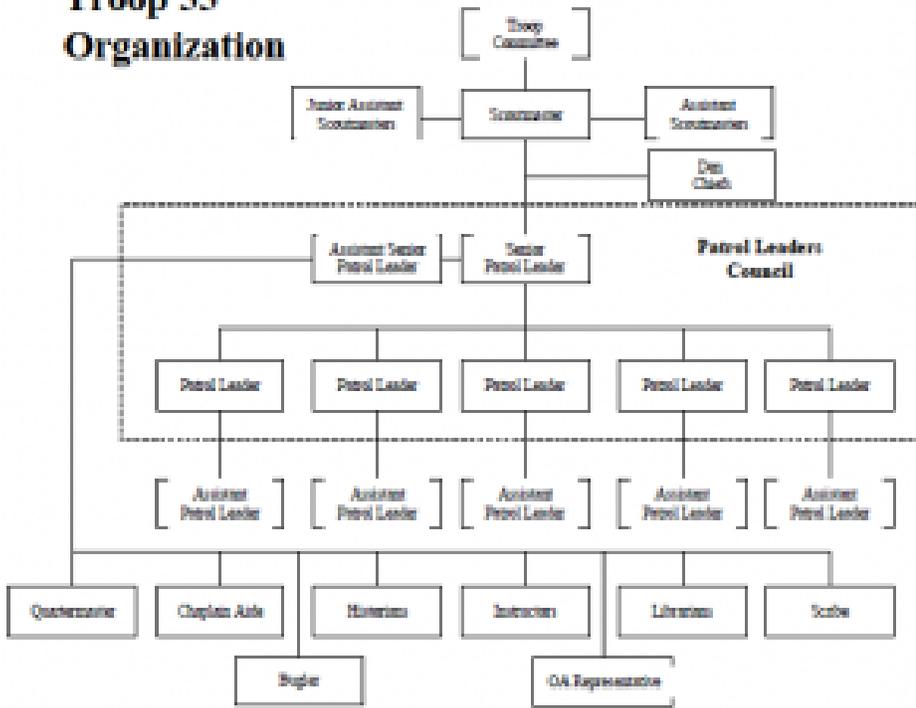
### The Troop Committee

The troop committee's primary responsibilities are supporting the Scoutmaster in delivering quality troop program, and handling troop administration. As the troop committee works on behalf of the chartered organization, it must be operated within the organization's policies. Any parent or adult may become a member of the committee by submitting an adult application to the Troop Committee Chair. The committee meets once a month at St. Francis Church at 7:30 PM on the second Monday of every month. See the troop calendar for dates, as dates may be changed due to holidays or other events.

### Uniformed Adult Leadership

Uniformed Adult Leadership of the Troop consisting of the Scoutmaster, and several Assistant Scoutmasters. These adults attend all troop functions and provide guidance, assistance, and support to allow the scouts to implement the Boy-Led concept. All leaders of Troop 55 are required to complete the full regimen of training appropriate for their positions.

# Troop 55 Organization



Generic Organizational Chart

## How Troop 55 Works

### 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 job 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 boy leaders.
- Work with other responsible adults to bring Scouting to boys.
- Use the eight 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. (This is a direct responsibility of the assistant Scoutmaster for new Scouts.)
- 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 concurrence 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. The troop should recruit as many assistant Scoutmasters as possible.

### **Scout Membership**

The flow of new Scouts is an essential element of a healthy Scout troop. Boys joining a troop bring fresh enthusiasm and energy to the entire program. The troop committee's "Membership & Communications" subcommittee is responsible for recruiting new scouts into Troop 55.

### **The Patrol Method**

The troop adheres to the Boy-Led concept utilizing the patrol method as required by the policies of the Boy Scouts of America. As stated by the founding father of scouting, Baden-Powell, "the patrol system is not one method in which scouting for boys can be carried on. It is the only method." The patrol method utilizing the Boy-Led concept allows, with the direction, assistance and guidance of the uniformed adult leadership, the scouts to plan and implement the program of Scouting.

The Scout troop is made up of patrols. A patrol is a grouping of six to ten boys who work together. The boys themselves elect a patrol leader, assign the jobs to be done, and share in the satisfaction of accepting and fulfilling group responsibilities. Within the larger community of the troop, the patrol is a Scout's family circle. The patrol helps its members develop a sense of pride and identity.

### **The Troop's Youth Leaders**

The troop is actually led by its boy leaders. With the guidance of the Scoutmaster and assistants, they plan the program, conduct troop meetings, and provide leadership among their peers.

### **Junior Leadership Positions**

The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) is the top junior leader in the troop. He leads the patrol leaders' council and, in consultation with the Scoutmaster, appoints other junior leaders and assigns specific responsibilities as needed. Troop members elect the senior patrol leader, usually for a six-month term.

Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL) 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, troop historian, librarian, and instructors.

### **The Patrol Leaders' Council**

The Patrol Leaders' Council, not the adult leaders, is responsible for planning and conducting the troop's activities. The Patrol Leaders' Council is composed of the following voting members:

Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leaders, and Troop Scribe (nonvoting member). At its monthly meetings, the Patrol Leaders' Council organizes and assigns activity. 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.

The Patrol Leaders Council meets once a year in August for the Annual Planning Session to plan the year's activities. The Senior Patrol Leader presents the proposed calendar of activities to the Troop Committee in August for its approval. Thereafter, the Patrol Leaders Council meets once a month to plan the meetings, outings and special events.

### **QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS**

If you, as a parent, have a question or issue, it should be directed to the Scoutmaster or the Assistant Scoutmaster serving at the Patrol Advisor for your son's patrol. As a scout, if you have questions or concerns, you should address the issue first with your Patrol Leader, and thereafter if necessary with the Senior Patrol Leader, followed by your Patrol Advisor (an Assistant Scoutmaster).

### **Troop 55 Leadership Chain of Command**

Scoutmaster → Senior Patrol Leader → Patrol Leader → Scouts in Patrols

### **Troop 55 Responsible Positions Chain of Command**

Scoutmaster -> Senior Patrol Leader -> Assistant Senior Patrol Leader -> Responsible Positions (Scribe, Quartermaster, Historian, Instructor, Den Chief, Librarian, Chaplain Aide, O/A Representative)

### **Uniformed Adult Leadership Chain of Command**

Scoutmaster -> Assistant Scoutmasters

### **Parental Chain of Command**

Scoutmaster -> Scout Parents

**Troop 55 Leadership**

**Chain of Command**



**Scoutmaster**



**Senior Patrol Leader**



**Patrol Leaders**



**Scouts (in patrols)**

## Responsible Positions Chain of Command



**Scoutmaster**



**Senior Patrol Leader**



**Assistant Senior Patrol Leader**



**Responsible Positions**

**(Scribe, Quartermaster, Historian, Instructor,  
Den Chief, Librarian, Chaplain Aide, O/A Representative)**

## Uniformed Adult Leadership Chain of Command



**Scoutmaster**



**Assistant Scoutmasters**

**(Patrol Advisors)**

---

## Parental Chain of Command



**Scoutmaster**



**Scout Parents**

## Troop 55

### Troop Committee Roles and Responsibilities

**Troop Committee Chair:** The committee is the troop's "Board of Directors" and the Committee Chair oversees all committee operations necessary to support the Scoutmaster in administration of the Troop's program. The chair organizes the committee to see that all functions are delegated, coordinated and completed, and presides over the monthly troop committee meetings. The chair is responsible for ensuring that quality adult leadership is recruited and trained; advises the Scoutmaster on policies relating to Boy Scouting and the chartered organization; supports leaders in carrying out the program; is responsible for finances; obtains, maintains and properly cares for troop property; ensures the troop has an outdoor program; supports the Scoutmaster in working with problems that may affect the overall program; and provides for the special needs and assistance some boys may require. The Chair "hosts" the Troop's Court of Honor and Eagle ceremonies.

**Secretary:** The Troop Committee Secretary keeps the minutes of meetings and distributes meeting notices. At each monthly troop committee meeting, the Secretary reports the minutes of the previous meeting. This person is responsible for maintaining the official copy of record for all of Troop 55's documents such as the Guidelines, meeting minutes and agendas, and policy or guideline documentation.

**Treasurer:** The Troop Committee Treasurer handles all troop funds, and pays bills on the recommendation of the Scoutmaster and authorization of the troop committee. The treasurer makes the annual budget submission, as specified in the Troop By-Laws, to the Troop Committee for adoption. The Treasurer also maintains adequate financial records; maintains checking and savings accounts; supervises money-earning projects, including fundraising accounts (e.g. "mulch" and "parental" accounts); and reports to the troop committee at each monthly meeting on the status of the Troop's financial condition.

**Scouting Activities Sub-committee Chair:** This committee is responsible for overseeing the planning, coordination, and execution of all logistical functions that support troop outdoor activities and outings. This includes monthly camping trips, day trips, and special events such as Scout Camporees, summer camps, and High Adventure programs. This subcommittee supports the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters by contacting destination campsites, arranging payments and registration, arranging and coordinating transportation, requesting and securing required tour permits, performing equipment dry-out after return from camping, and providing communications with parents before, during, and after each camping activity.

**Public Relations, Communications and Uniform Supply Sub-committee:** This committee is responsible, in consultation with the Scoutmaster, for the Troop's internal/external communications and membership relations. The chair oversees activities to facilitate efficient and effective communications to ensure timely parent knowledge of troop activities and events. The committee promotes public relations communications to the outside public that promote Troop 55's image in the community. The committee works with the Assistant Scoutmaster for Communications to ensure the website provides an effective and efficient means of keeping all scouts and parents informed and providing for the retention of historical information and materials. The chair also ensures the Troop procures and maintains a supply of troop T-shirts and hats, and makes them available periodically for purchase. Finally, the committee chair is responsible for ensuring troop leaders and committee members have opportunities for BSA-required training, and works with the district training team in scheduling Fast Start training for all new leaders.

**Summer Camp Sub-committee:** This committee is responsible, in consultation with the Scout Leadership, all aspects for Troop 55 to attend Summer Camp. This includes: securing the location, registration, reservations, payment, transportation, departure and arrival schedule, merit badge registration, trip report, as well as the details behind Troop 55

participation in summer camp annually. The committee also ensures all scouts registration, health forms, and payment are complete and accurate.

**Membership Sub-committee Chair:** This committee organizes the applications, training certifications and other paperwork for all members of the troop including Youth, Adult Leaders, Adult Volunteers and others. The Membership chair maintains the troop membership binders with applications, training certifications, and similar forms. The Membership Chair publishes the Troop Roster, coordinates new scouts entry into the troop and coordinates the paperwork and admission for the Webelos crossing over from local Cub Scout Packs.

**Advancement Sub-committee Chair:** This committee supports the Scoutmaster in his/her lead role implementing the Advancement program of the troop. The Advancement chair works with the Assistant Scoutmaster for Advancement to encourage scouts to advance in rank. In addition, the chair coordinates, oversees and implements the scheduling of periodic (at a minimum, quarterly) Boards of Review for advancement of candidates recommended by the Scoutmaster. The committee also conducts Boards of Review and Court of Honor for Eagle candidates as required. The committee plans, schedules, and runs the Troop's quarterly Court of Honors, to include submission of advancement reports to the council office, securing the applicable insignia and certifications, preparing an agenda, ensuring participation of appropriate personnel, arranging refreshments, and providing oversight of scout set-up and clean-up of meeting facilities. The committee also plans, schedules, and executes the annual troop picnic. Finally, the Advancement chair is responsible for maintaining the Troop's merit badge counselor list.

**Eagle Advancement Sub-committee Chair:** This committee organizes and coordinates scouts seeking the rank of Eagle. The chair coordinates with the Troop Leadership, Committee Chair and the Scout to organize the details of this important advancement process.

**Special Events Sub-committee Chair:** This committee supports the Scoutmaster by planning, coordinating, managing, and executing the Troop's 'special events', to include all fundraising activities, the annual Scouting for Food drive, the annual Friends of Scouting campaign, and Community Service events. The chair of the committee is responsible for ensuring that all fundraising events comply with the objectives of providing an opportunity for scouts to raise funds for scout activities for the troop and themselves, and providing for a team-building experience. Fundraising events may be directed to general troop activities or to specialized drives as authorized by the Troop Committee (e.g. High Adventure programs). At the direction of the Troop Committee the chair coordinates, manages, and executes annual "Scouting for Food" drive in November, and the annual Friends of Scouting drive in the spring. In consultation with the Scoutmaster, the chair is responsible for identifying, coordinating and executing appropriate Boy Scout Community Service projects such as the Troop's Adopt-a-Highway program with VDOT.

**High Adventure Sub-committee Chair:** This committee is responsible for overseeing the planning, coordination, and execution of all logistical functions that support troop High Adventure Trips. This subcommittee supports the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters by contacting High Adventure Locations, arranging payments and registration, arranging and coordinating transportation, requesting and securing required tour permits, and providing communications with parents before, during, and after each High Adventure Trip.

**Fundraiser Sub-committee Chair:** This committee supports the Scoutmaster by planning, coordinating, managing, and executing the Troop's fundraising activities. The chair of the committee is responsible for ensuring that all fundraising events comply with the objectives of providing an opportunity for scouts to raise funds for scout activities for the troop and themselves, and providing for a team-building experience. Fundraising events may be directed to general troop activities or to specialized drives as authorized by the Troop Committee (e.g. High Adventure programs).

**Other Volunteer Opportunities:** There are other opportunities for parents to volunteer to assist Troop 55. Some specific areas are: the uniform and equipment SWAP, participating in Board of Reviews, helping organize the Annual Fall Picnic, Court of Honors and other Troop 55 events. Please contact Lisa Hodge at LHodge88@verizon.net if you are interested in helping.

## **Assistant Scoutmaster Responsibilities**

Assistant Scoutmaster for Advancement - This Assistant Scoutmaster, in consultation with the Scoutmaster, is responsible for monitoring, encouraging and fostering the advancement of scouts from the rank of Scout to First Class. He/she will attend all Patrol Leaders Council meetings and the Annual Planning Session to encourage the regular and frequent inclusion of advancement related activities in the outings and meetings of the troop. This Assistant Scoutmaster works with the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader to insure the utilization of all Troop Instructors in the fulfillment of advancement objectives and assists in the provision of instructional programs of the troop.

Assistant Scoutmaster for Den Chiefs and Scout Recruitment - This Assistant Scoutmaster is responsible, in consultation with the Scoutmaster and the Subcommittee for Membership and Communications of the Troop Committee, for the recruitment, placement and training of the Den Chiefs of the troop. He/she is responsible for identifying and communicating with the adult leadership of all nearby Cub Scouts packs to identify and satisfy their needs for Den Chiefs. He/she will monitor the activities of the assigned Den Chiefs to insure consistency and quality of service. As an alternative to building the ranks of our troop through Cub Scouts, this Assistant Scoutmaster will oversee the implementation of other recruitment activities (such as open houses) as may be necessary to ensure the health of the troop.

Assistant Scoutmaster for Special Events, Equipment and Monthly Venturing Program - This Assistant Scoutmaster's responsibility is multi-faceted to (1) provide non-logistical planning and implementation of the troop's participation in the District Camporee(s) and Scouting on the Mall (2) foster the inclusion of venturing activities during the monthly activities to encourage greater older scout participation and (3) work with the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader to assist in the oversight of the troop Quartermasters to ensure that the proper troop and patrol equipment is acquired, maintained and properly stored. This Assistant Scoutmaster will attend all Patrol Leaders Council meetings and the Annual Planning Session to provide suggestions, recommendations and ideas for venturing troop activities as a means of encouraging greater older scout participation.

Assistant Scoutmaster for Inter-Patrol Competition - This Assistant Scoutmaster works with the Patrol Leaders Council to develop, establish and maintain a system of inter-patrol competition that will foster reliance on the Patrol Method of Scouting, reward teamwork and participation and develop interpersonal skills and leadership. This Assistant Scoutmaster should attend all Patrol Leader Council meetings to ensure the inclusion of an inter-patrol competition activity in all troop meetings and outings. He/she will monitor and oversee the planning of these activities and attend the troop meetings and outings to ensure the quality implementation of these activities. As deemed appropriate, this ASM will work with the Scoutmaster to provide opportunities for the recognition of patrol achievements.

Assistant Scoutmaster for Inter-Patrol Competition - This Assistant Scoutmaster works with the Patrol Leaders Council to develop, establish and maintain a system of inter-patrol competition that will foster reliance on the Patrol Method of Scouting, reward teamwork and participation and develop interpersonal skills and leadership. This Assistant Scoutmaster should attend all Patrol Leader Council meetings to ensure the inclusion of an inter-patrol competition activity in all troop meetings and outings. He/she will monitor and oversee the planning of these activities and attend the troop meetings and outings to ensure the quality implementation of these activities. As deemed appropriate, this ASM will work with the Scoutmaster to provide opportunities for the recognition of patrol achievements.

Assistant Scoutmaster for Program & Leadership Development - This Assistant Scoutmaster is responsible for working with the Patrol Leaders Council to provide assistance with troop and monthly outing planning to foster the provision of a quality program for all scouts of the troop. He/she attends all Patrol Leaders Councils as the council's primary advisor in the process of developing plans for the provision of the scout program. As necessary, this Assistant Scoutmaster conducts special sessions with the council to develop leadership and planning skills of the youth leadership of the troop. This ASM is responsible for planning and implementing the twice a year Junior Leaders Training sessions for the youth leadership and monitoring the performance of youth leadership to provide remedial assistance as may be necessary.

Assistant Scoutmaster – Eagle Advisor - This ASM, preferably himself an Eagle Scout, is responsible for encouraging and guiding scouts to the ultimate scout achievement of Eagle Scout rank. With information provided by the Scoutmaster, he

monitors the advancement progress of scouts and provides to them guidance and assistance in understanding the procedural process for attainment of Eagle Scout. In consultation with the Scoutmaster, he works with scouts to insure that scouts properly plan, implement and complete their Eagle Scout project and advises scouts on the formalities of the Eagle application process. This Assistant Scoutmaster has lead responsibility for Eagle Court of Honors to coordinate, with the assistance of the troop Committee Advancement Chair and the Eagle Scout parents, the completion of a well-planned program.

Assistant Scoutmaster for Communications - This Assistant Scoutmaster, in consultation with the Scoutmaster and Membership and Communications Subcommittee of the Troop Committee, works with the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader to oversee the appointed positions of Librarian, Historian(s), Scribe and Webmaster to provide an effective and efficient means of keeping all scouts and parents informed and providing for the retention of historical information and materials. He/she shall be responsible for insuring that the aforementioned youth leaders are active participants in the process of providing information to parents and scouts through the Troop Committee approved procedures for communication and retention of information.

Assistant Scoutmasters as Patrol Advisors - An Assistant Scoutmaster assigned to a patrol as its Patrol Advisor is responsible for mentoring, guiding and assisting the Patrol Leader in implementing the boy-led concept of troop operations. Attention should be given to insuring that all activities of the patrol are in accord with the general program policies of the Boy Scouts of America and are consistent with all applicable BSA guidelines for the protection of health and safety. Patrol Advisors should be present for patrol meetings (during the troop meetings and otherwise), monthly outings and other activities to provide, as needed, advice and consultation to the Patrol Leader or members of the patrol. Patrol Advisors should be available to parents to answer any inquiries relating to the activities of the patrol or their son.

# **Troop 55 Guidelines: Introduction, Review and Adoption, Philosophy, Membership**

## **I. Introduction**

This document establishes guidelines and policies for the operation of Troop 55. The troop is governed in accordance with the provisions of the Congressional Charter of 1916 and the policies of the Boy Scouts of America (the “BSA”). Those policies are established and described in the most recent editions of the following BSA publications:

- The Scoutmaster Handbook
- Guide to Safe Scouting
- Insignia Guide
- Boy Scout Requirements
- Troop Committee Guidebook For Successful Troop Operation
- National BSA Advancement Policies and Procedures

The publications listed above are hereby included by reference in the Guidelines of Troop 55.

## **II. Review and Adoption**

- These Guidelines are proposed by the Troop Committee with the approval of the Chartered Organization. These Guidelines may be amended with the consent of the Chartered Organization Representative and a two-thirds majority vote of the Troop Committee members present at a regularly scheduled Troop Committee meeting. Notice of proposed amendments must be provided to Troop Committee members 30 days in advance and must be adopted at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Troop Committee.
- The current approved copy of these Guidelines is maintained by the Troop Committee Secretary. A copy of these Guidelines will be given to the family of each Scout registered with the troop and all registered adult members of Troop 55.
- The parliamentary authority for the Troop Committee shall be Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised and shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Guidelines or BSA policies.

## **III. Philosophy**

The objectives of the Boy Scout program are growth in moral strength and character, participation in our society as a citizen, and development of physical, mental and emotional fitness. Scouting provides an enjoyable and challenging environment that enables each scout to learn about himself, about others, and about the world around him. Learning to lead is the core of scouting. We are a boy-led troop. Most learning occurs by doing and, should one err, doing again. Leaders and parents provide guidance and support to help the boys learn by doing.

## **IV. Membership**

- Youth membership in Troop 55 is open to all males who are at least 11 years of age or who have completed the fifth grade or who have received the Arrow of Light but who have not reached the age of 18.
- Adult membership in Troop 55 is open to all members of the following groups who properly register with the BSA: parents of youth members, members of the sponsoring organization, and other persons interested in serving the youth of this troop. The Chartered Organization Representative, the Troop Committee Chairperson, and the Scoutmaster must approve adult membership.

### **Troop 55 Guidelines: Troop Organization and Responsibilities:**

General Overview: The organization of Scouting is described in the Troop Committee Guidebook. Troop 55 is a chartered unit of the Powhatan District of the National Capitol Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

## 1. Chartered Organization

- St. Francis Episcopal Church, Great Falls, VA, the “Chartered Organization”, sponsors Troop 55. The Troop is rechartered in February of each year.
- The Chartered Organization Representative is the liaison between Troop 55 and the Chartered Organization.

## 2. Troop Committee

- The Troop Committee Chairperson is appointed by the Chartered Organization Representative and approved by the Chartered Organization annually. The Troop Committee chairperson is required to be the parent or guardian of an active scout in Troop 55. The term limit for the Chairperson is four years.
- Troop Committee consists of volunteer adults who are members of Troop 55. The duties and responsibilities of the Troop Committee are set forth in the Troop Committee Guidebook. The Troop Committee Chairman appoints Troop Committee members on an annual basis with the approval of the Chartered Organization representative. The Troop Committee’s operating year will be August 1 to July 31.
- The Troop Committee Chairman is responsible for organizing the Troop Committee to see that all functions of the committee are delegated, coordinated and completed. The Troop Committee may be composed of, but is not limited to the appointment of the following individuals: Troop Committee Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Advancement Chairman, Scouting Activities Chairman, Special Events Chairman, Fundraising Chairman, High Adventure Chairman, Communications and Membership Chairman, Chaplain, and two additional members appointed by the Troop Committee Chairman. These members comprise the voting membership of the Troop Committee, except that the Scoutmaster serves without vote. A quorum for the purpose of conducting business shall be a majority of the Troop Committee Membership.
- Committee Meetings
  1. Troop committee meetings are held monthly at St. Francis Episcopal Church during the program year. Troop Committee meetings are open to any registered adult member of Troop 55.
  2. Special meetings may be called by the Troop Committee Chairperson to respond to circumstances that in the chairperson’s judgment require a special meeting or to respond to a special request from the Scoutmaster. In the case of business that needs to be addressed between regularly scheduled meetings, the Chairman may solicit votes by electronic means.
- At least one parent of every scout in Troop 55 must play an active role in supporting the troop program. Failure to participate will result in the scout being placed in an inactive status and therefore unable to participate in Troop 55 meetings, outings and events. The Troop Committee will regularly review parental participation and act to ensure that opportunities to support the troop are shared equitably.

## 3. Adult Leadership

- The Scoutmaster is the adult leader responsible for the image and program of the troop. The Scoutmaster is appointed by the head of the Chartered Organization with the advice and assistance of the Troop Committee. The Scoutmaster is required to be the parent or guardian of an active scout in Troop 55. The term limit for the Scoutmaster is four years. He is responsible to the Troop Committee and the Chartered Organization for overall supervision of and operation of the troop. He selects and is assisted by adult Assistant Scoutmasters and appoints all youth Junior Assistant Scoutmasters. The Scoutmaster will assign Assistant Scoutmasters who will mentor and assist the Patrol Leaders in all patrol activities.
- All registered adult leaders are authorized and encouraged to wear the official uniform. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters are expected to wear the official uniform to all scouting functions.
- Training
  1. District and Council Junior Leader Training may be held at various times during the year.
  2. The Troop will conduct youth leadership training after troop elections. All troop leaders are expected to attend.
  3. All adults involved in troop activities must comply with the training policies of the Boy Scouts of America, the National Capital Area Council, and the Powhatan District. A BSA-prescribed course of training is mandatory for the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, and the Troop Committee Chairperson. Other required adult training sessions are held throughout the year and information can be obtained from the Troop Committee Chairperson.

4. The troop will pay youth and adult training fees for official Boy Scout training provided resources are available.
    - Adult troop leaders are expected to attend troop meetings. A minimum of two adult leaders must be in attendance at all troop meetings to provide safe supervision of the Scouts.
- 4. Youth Leadership**
- The youth leadership structure of Troop 55 is organized in accordance with the junior leader organization chart set forth in the Scoutmaster Handbook published by the BSA.
  - The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) is the elected boy scout leader of the troop. He is responsible to the Scoutmaster for all troop scout functions. The Senior Patrol Leader generally must have been a registered member of Troop 55 for at least six months, advanced to the rank of Star, been approved by the Scoutmaster, and been elected to the position of Senior Patrol Leader by a majority vote of boy scouts present at a regularly scheduled troop election meeting. The Scoutmaster may modify these requirements.
  - Other troop positions of responsibility are Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Troop Guide, Scribe, Librarian, Historian, Quartermaster, Bugler, Chaplain Aide, Den Chief, Instructor or any other positions described in the current edition of Boy Scout Requirements. The Senior Patrol Leader with the approval of the Scoutmaster appoints boy scouts to these positions.
  - The Patrol Leader (PL) is the elected boy scout leader of the patrol. He is responsible to the Senior Patrol Leader for the overall operation and conduct of his patrol at all patrol and troop functions. The Patrol Leader generally must have been a registered member of Troop 55 for at least six months, advanced to the rank of First Class, been approved by the Scoutmaster, and been elected to the position of Patrol Leader by a majority vote of the boy scouts in his patrol present at a scheduled patrol meeting. The Scoutmaster may modify these requirements.
  - The Patrol Leader appoints one Assistant Patrol Leader (APL) for that patrol with the counsel of the Assistant Scoutmaster assigned oversight to that patrol.
  - The Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) is the governing body of the boy scouts of Troop 55. The PLC plans the troop program, delivers the program, and deals with troop and patrol problems. Its voting membership is the Senior Patrol Leader (Chairman), all Patrol Leaders, and the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. The Scribe attends PLC meetings as a non-voting member. The Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, and Junior Assistant Scoutmasters also attend the PLC. Any other scouts in leadership positions may be invited, when appropriate, by the SPL to attend and make contributions to the PLC but do not have a vote.
  - Patrol Leaders Council Meetings
    1. PLC meetings will generally be held the fourth Wednesday of each month at the St. Francis Episcopal Church from 7:30 to 9:00 PM.
    2. All members of the PLC are expected to attend all PLC meetings. The Scoutmaster or his representative and at least one other adult leader must also be present.
    3. An Annual Planning Session of the PLC is held each July or August to plan the next year's program in its entirety. When ready, the program is submitted to the Troop Committee for approval in August or September.
  - The term of office for all positions of responsibility is six months. A boy scout may hold an office for no longer than two consecutive terms with the exception of the Junior Assistant Scoutmaster, who may serve as long as the Scoutmaster determines. Regular troop elections will be held semiannually in June (for positions to be effective in August) and February.
  - Troop 55 will annually hold elections to recognize youth and adult candidates for the Order of the Arrow. Elections will be held at a regularly scheduled troop meeting and be supervised by representatives of the Order of the Arrow.

## **Troop 55 Guidelines: Scouts**

### **1. Troop Meetings**

- Troop meetings are held during the school year at St. Francis Episcopal Church on Wednesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:00. During the summer, a schedule of meeting places will be issued. Check the troop calendar for each month for troop meeting dates. Generally, the troop meets each Wednesday except the fourth Wednesday of the month.

- Special troop meetings may be held to meet the needs of the troop program. Special meetings must be approved by the Scoutmaster and generally must be announced at least one week in advance.
  - Boy scouts are expected to attend troop meetings. We realize that homework, religious instruction, sports activities, music, and other activities may interfere with regular attendance. It is incumbent upon the boy scout to inform the Scoutmaster if there will be a protracted period of absence. Unexcused absence may delay advancement in rank.
- 2. Patrol Meetings**
- The Patrol Leader should schedule patrol meetings at least once a month to plan for upcoming outings and to conduct patrol business. They may be held in conjunction with regular troop meetings.
  - All members of the patrol are expected to attend patrol meetings
- 3. Special Events and Campouts**
- All troop special events and camp outs will be planned by the PLC including the determination of associated fees.
    - Each patrol will assess food costs in advance to each participating Boy Scout.
    - Boy scouts may be responsible for additional fees for special activities.
    - Refunds may be available on request if the troop has not unrecoverable spent the funds on behalf of a boy scout who does not attend the event.
    - A scout is obligated to repay expenditures made on his behalf, by the troop or others, though the Scoutmaster, in his discretion, may relieve the obligation
  - The troop intends to conduct an outdoor overnight camping trip each month except July and August. Occasionally, as in the case of a ski trip, indoor accommodations may be used
  - A long-term camp (one week) is scheduled in the summer of each year, normally in June
  - Patrols are encouraged to schedule special patrol activities including overnight campouts. The Scoutmaster must be advised of and approve these activities in advance
  - A minimum of two adult leaders must be present at every troop activity, except approved patrol activities
  - A parent's permission is required for a scout to attend each troop or patrol activity conducted at a location other than the normal meeting place. A Parent Permission Form must be filled out and submitted to the Scoutmaster prior to attending any such event. Event coordinators will prepare permission forms for distribution to the scouts.
  - Parents must inform the Scoutmaster or his representative of the need for scouts to receive medication while on a troop or patrol activity. This notification must be in writing with the medication and the dosage listed.
  - A Local or National Tour Permit Application will be submitted to and approved by the NCAC prior to overnight troop or patrol events. Tour permits are not required for District or Council activities such as camporees.
  - The parents of the troop's scouts provide transportation for scouts to and from troop and patrol activities. Carpooling is encouraged. The Troop Committee Transportation Coordinator maintains a list of drivers so that Tour Permits can be properly filed.
- 4. Personal Equipment**
- Each Scout must provide his own uniform, outdoor clothing including boots, personal items, eating utensils and mess kit, sleeping bag, and backpack or bag.
  - Prohibited and Controlled Items for Scouts on Troop or Patrol activities:
    - Prohibited items:
      - Sheath knives
      - Electronic entertainment or communication devices (ex. radio, CD players, cell phones)
    - Controlled items, subject to the stated conditions:
      - Folding knives with a blade of less than 4 inches provided the Scout has earned and is in possession of his Totin' Chip certification.
      - Hatchets and axes, properly sheathed, and with the specific knowledge of the Scoutmaster, provided the Scout has earned and is in possession of his Totin' Chip certification.
      - Matches, provided the scout has earned and is in possession of his Fireman Chit certification.

**5. Uniform**

- All Scouts are expected to have and wear an official Boy Scout uniform. The official uniform consists of a scout long or short sleeve shirt with all insignia properly in place, a scout belt, scout long or short pants, scout socks, neckerchief, and slide. Camouflage apparel is never part of any scout uniform nor is it to be worn during any scouting function. Scouts are expected to wear the official uniform to official scouting functions including troop, patrol, PLC meetings, and outings.
- The Scoutmaster may specify an alternative Uniform of the Day for certain events.
- Scouts who are not in the required uniform for an event may be sent home. Scouts who are not in uniform should provide a reason to the Scoutmaster and Senior Patrol Leader as to why they are not in uniform.
- The troop shall maintain a program to promote the reuse of donated uniform components. The Scoutmaster shall recruit an adult coordinator for this program and, with the consent of the Troop Committee, the coordinator shall establish guidelines and implement the program.

## 6. Behavior and Discipline

- The Scouting program is designed for group activity in a team environment, with appropriately trained youth and adult leadership. Each Scout is expected to conduct himself at all Scout activities according to the Boy Scout Oath and the Boy Scout Law.
- Scouts whose behavior is disruptive or inappropriate will be addressed first by their Patrol Leader. If the problem continues, it will be brought to the attention of the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader and Senior Patrol Leader. Should they be unable to resolve the situation, they will bring the problem to the attention of the Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster may conduct an informal Scoutmaster's Conference with the Scout concerned or suggest that an immediate Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) be called to review the problem and options. **If the disruption is serious enough, the Scout's parents or guardian will be informed. If the problem is interfering with troop activities, the parent or guardian will be called to come and pick up the Scout immediately, even if the Troop is on a trip, regardless of distance or time of day or night.** Persistent behavior problems will be referred to the Troop Committee.
- Parents or guardians of Scouts who are taking behavioral medication are asked to provide the Scoutmaster with the necessary medication. This will help everyone have a good trip and will lessen the likelihood of discipline problems.
- The following behaviors are prohibited at any Boy Scout activity:
  - Physical contact: touching, slapping, punching, kicking, shoving, and wrestling.  
Exceptions: the Scout handshake; a "pat on the back" for a job well done; practicing skills such as first aid bandaging on another Scout or rescue carries; supervised physical skill games such as "wheelbarrow" races, etc.
  - Touching an item that belongs to another individual without first asking their permission.
  - Use of inappropriate language or name-calling.
  - Smoking.
  - Drinking of alcoholic beverages.
  - Use of any controlled substances, not in accordance with a medical prescription.

## Troop 55 Guidelines: Finances

1. **Dues are assessed to each boy scout** on an annual basis for the troop program year. This is every boy scout's equity in the troop and is non-refundable. The Troop Committee, based on the troop's budgeted expenditures for the program year, sets dues annually. Dues are payable by September 30 of each year for a scout to remain active in the troop. Failure to pay dues will result in the scout being placed in an inactive status and therefore unable to participate in Troop 55 meetings, outings and events. The dues cover registration with the Boy Scouts of America, an annual subscription to Boys Life magazine, and budgeted troop expenses such as gear and advancement patches. Whenever a new scout enters the troop, his dues will be prorated to cover registration and other budgeted expenses for the remainder of the program year. Fees for special events, campouts, and food are collected prior to the event and are in addition to troop dues.
2. **The Treasurer will prepare an annual budget**, to include all of Troop 55's projected operating costs and estimated income from all sources, for presentation at the regularly scheduled September Troop Committee meeting. The budget will be developed with the assistance of the Troop Committee Chairman and Scoutmaster

after the PLC has planned the year's program. The Troop Committee must approve the budget. Once approved, the budget is the troop's guideline for monitoring and controlling operational costs through the program year.

3. **Money-earning projects may be conducted** to offer boy scouts the opportunity to earn funds that may be applied to costs of designated scout activities. If required, a unit money-earning application will be submitted to and approved by the National Capital Area Council before the start of any Troop fund raising activity. These fund raising activities are supported by the Troop Committee, which determines the distribution of profits. The Treasurer will record and maintain individual accounts of each scout's funds. Any unused monies left in a scout's individual account when that scout resigns from the troop will be credited to the troop general fund. Any scout transferring to another troop may have monies from his individual account transferred to the receiving troop upon written request from the transferring scout and the Scoutmaster of the scout's new troop
4. **All checks or cash** received from dues, special money earning functions, donations, etc., shall be properly receipted and deposited in the troop checking account to ensure an audit trail for income.
5. **The Troop shall maintain a checking account** for operational expenses. The Treasurer shall reconcile any and all bank accounts monthly. The Treasurer should submit a written report to the Troop Committee at each monthly meeting and should submit the report to the Scoutmaster and the Committee Chairman before the meeting.
6. **The National Capital Area Council provides supplemental medical insurance coverage** for the registered members, both youth and adult, of Troop 55. If this coverage is ever suspended or terminated, the Committee Chairperson will ensure that Troop 55 maintains secondary medical coverage for all of its registered members.
7. **In an effort to ensure that all scouts in the troop are able to participate in scouting activities**, the Scoutmaster may, in consultation with the Troop Treasurer, provide troop financial assistance for scouts when other means of assistance are not available. Annually as part of the budget review process, the Troop Committee shall establish a budget for this assistance, and the Scoutmaster may from time to time petition the Troop Committee for approval of additional funds. The Scoutmaster and Treasurer shall maintain strict confidentiality of the provision of this assistance. The provision of assistance can be initiated by the scout, his parents, the Scoutmaster, or Troop Treasurer.
8. **The troop committee will perform an independent audit** of the troop financial records every two years.

## **Troop 55 Guidelines: Troop Equipment and Advancement**

### **Troop Equipment**

1. Troop 55 maintains an inventory of equipment, which is equitably allocated to the patrols and stored in the troop's trailer. Scouts desiring to use this equipment must check with the troop Quartermaster for availability. Any gear borrowed must be promptly returned to the Quartermaster clean, dry, and in good condition.
2. The troop adult and scout Quartermasters are responsible for maintaining the troop's equipment and making recommendations to the Scoutmaster regarding repairs and replacements.

### **Advancement**

1. Each scout is expected to initiate his own advancement with the support and encouragement of parents and troop leaders. Rank requirements can be found in the Boy Scout Handbook.
2. The Troop Committee and the Scoutmaster have created a document, which may be amended from time to time, entitled "BSA Troop 55 Advancement Guidelines, Policies and Procedures," all of the provisions of which are included herein by reference. All of the provisions in this document must adhere to current BSA policy and at no time attempt to supersede BSA policy.
3. Scouts seeking to complete a merit badge must obtain a Blue Card from the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster prior to beginning the merit badge.
4. The troop maintains a list of troop and other merit badge counselors. Scouts should contact a merit badge counselor prior to beginning work on the merit badge. Scouts should arrange for a buddy to accompany them on merit badge counseling sessions.
5. The Troop Librarian maintains a limited number of merit badge books. Scouts may borrow these books.

6. When the scout has completed all requirements for advancement, he must contact the Scoutmaster and request a Scoutmaster's Conference. Following the conference, the scout will contact the Advancement Coordinator to schedule a Board of Review.
7. Boards of Review will be conducted periodically as soon as possible after the requirements for the rank advancement and the Scoutmaster's Conference are completed. The Scoutmaster will advise the Troop Committee Advancement Coordinator when the Scoutmaster's Conference is completed.
8. The Troop Committee Advancement Coordinator will maintain complete advancement records.
9. Courts of Honor
  - o At least three Courts of Honor will be held during the year.
  - o Courts of Honor are held to formally recognize a boy scout's achievement and advancement. Leadership induction and other troop recognitions may be conducted at these times.
  - o All boy scouts, parents, troop leaders, and troop committee members are expected to attend. A troop member's family and friends are welcome to attend.

## SECTION 4 – ADVANCEMENT AND AWARDS

### Advancement Requirements, Policies and Procedures

This material has been prepared in an effort to foster and encourage the advancement of all scouts. While it is the ultimate responsibility of each scout to pursue his own advancement, the troop leadership is desirous of establishing an environment in which scouts have the support and encouragement necessary to succeed.

**I. REQUIREMENTS:** There are three stages in the advancement process.

New Scout: You must demonstrate your understanding of the scouting program by knowing the scout oath, law, motto and slogan and agreeing to live by them.

Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class: During this stage you will become a well-rounded scout to prepare yourself for the adventure of Scouting. You will be required to (1) learn and demonstrate basic scouting skills such as camping, orienteering, hiking, first aid, swimming, cooking, and physical fitness, (2) participate in a specified number of activities, (3) demonstrate Scout Spirit by living the scout oath and law, and (4) successfully complete a Scoutmaster's Conference and a Board of Review for each rank.

Star, Life and Eagle: Service to your troop and community, as well as personal enrichment through the merit badge program, is the emphasis of this stage. For each rank, you must (1) be active in the troop for a specified period of time, (2) demonstrate Scout Spirit by living the scout oath and law, (3) earn a specified number of merit badges including a specified number of Eagle required merit badges, (4) actively serve in a position of responsibility in the troop, (5) complete a specified number of hours of community service (or an Eagle Project), and (6) successfully complete a Scoutmaster Conference and Board of Review.

### II. PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

New Scouts - After submitting an application to become a Boy Scout, the Scoutmaster will assign you to a patrol. The Scoutmaster will work with each new Scout to complete the requirements for the rank of Scout.

Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class - Each scout should have a Boy Scout Handbook and should review the requirements of each rank. Only scouts who have completed the Skills Training Program can verify the completion of a requirement and sign the scout's handbook when he successfully completes a requirement. A list of skills trained scouts is posted on the troop bulletin board. If scouts have questions concerning advancement, they should ask their Patrol Leader, an Instructor, the Senior Patrol Leader or their Patrol Advisor (see your printed troop roster).

Generally, most requirements can be divided into the following four categories:

- Knowledge about a subject – You should study the material in the handbook sufficiently to satisfy the requirement and then talk to a skills trained scout to review the material with you.
- Demonstrate a skill – You should study the material in the handbook and then talk to your patrol leader to plan the opportunity to complete the requirement. Because some of these requirements cannot be entirely learned just reading the manual, the patrol leader should arrange a time to teach the scout this skill. The patrol leader may ask one of the Instructors, or the Troop Guide, to help him with this task.
- Knowledge about a subject and demonstrate a skill – Same as “Demonstrate a skill” above.
- Participation in a specified number of activities and demonstrating Scout Spirit – During your Scoutmaster Conference, the Scoutmaster will review with you a copy of your Individual Activity Participation Record to verify your participation in the required number of activities and discuss with you your Scout Spirit.

Star, Life and Eagle -It is the responsibility of each scout First Class and above to pursue his own advancement. At any time, you may discuss with the Scoutmaster your progress and the extent of the remaining requirements for completion of the next rank. Upon completion of the rank of Life, each Scout must contact our Eagle Advisor (see roster).

**Merit Badge Completion** -After deciding on a particular merit badge, you should get the book from the troop library (or the Scout Store if the library doesn't have a copy) and then select a counselor from the Powhatan District Merit Badge Counselor List, also in the troop library. Then ask the Scoutmaster for a blue card, fill in the general information of the blue card, including the name of the merit badge, and ask the Scoutmaster to sign it. After studying the requirements, you should contact the counselor. The counselor will discuss with you his or her process for completing the requirements. Take your blue card with you when you meet with the counselor. After the counselor signs the blue card, return the signed blue card to the Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster's signature is required to complete the merit badge.

**Note:** With a few exceptions (e.g. Camping MB 20 nights of camping), any activity completed prior to the issuance of a blue card may be used for fulfillment of a merit badge requirement if approved by the Merit Badge Counselor.

**Community Service** -You must have the community service approved by the Scoutmaster before you complete work toward this requirement. The service work cannot be for the benefit of the troop or Boy Scouts of America, nor can it be for a commercial establishment or purpose. Try to stay with projects for a church, a non-profit organization or the community. Hours for Adopt-a-Highway program count toward this requirement and do not require prior approval.

**Position of Responsibility** -You must serve in a position or positions of responsibility for a period of time and it is within the discretion of the Scoutmaster to decide if you have satisfactorily completed the requirements of the position. After your election or appointment, you will receive a copy of your position description and you will be asked to set goals for completion during your term. Achieving the goals you established will assist in satisfying the position of responsibility requirement.

### **All Ranks**

**Scoutmaster Conference** -After completing all the requirements, you should contact the Scoutmaster to schedule a Scoutmaster Conference. Although there are multiple purposes of the conference, the Scoutmaster may use this opportunity to verify that you have successfully completed specific requirements. You should come to the conference prepared to state or demonstrate any of the requirements. In addition, you will be asked to explain why you feel you have demonstrated Scout Spirit (at scout meetings and functions, at home, at school and proudly wearing the full scout uniform at scout functions) and what you have done to successfully fulfill your Position of Responsibility. Upon successful completion of a Scoutmaster Conference, the Scoutmaster will advise the Chairperson of the Advancement Committee.

The Scoutmaster, or designated Assistant Scoutmaster, retains the discretion to consider many factors to determine if a scout has successfully completed a particular requirement for all ranks. For the rank of Eagle, in the event the Scoutmaster declines to approve a scout, the scout may appeal the decision to the Troop Committee and a declination by the Troop Committee may be appealed to the Powhatan District.

**Board of Review** – After successfully completing a Scoutmaster Conference, each scout should contact the Chairperson of the Advancement Committee and request a Board of Review. You must bring your handbook to the Board of Review with all required signatures. The Board of Review is an opportunity for you to meet with adults, other than the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters, to discuss your Scouting experience.

Rank requirements can be found in the Scout Manual or Go to [www.scouting.org/advancement](http://www.scouting.org/advancement) for access to more information and resources.

## SECTION 5 – COMMUNITY SERVICE AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

### Community Service and Other Activities

Service to your community and others is an important aspect of Scouting as evidenced by its inclusion in the Scout Oath wherein a scout pledges “to help other people at all times”. As each scout pursues advancement from Tenderfoot to Eagle, community service is implicitly included in the requirement for each rank wherein a scout is required to “demonstrate Scout spirit by living the Scout Oath and Scout Law in [his] everyday life”. Even more specifically, the requirements for Second Class, Star, and Life include the requirement that a scout participate in a service project with specified number of hours. For the rank of Eagle Scout, a Scout must plan and complete an Eagle Scout project.

The following guidance is provided to assist in getting started and successfully completing your service project:

1. You can complete the service project requirement for Second Class, Star or Life on your own or do it with others in your troop or patrol.
2. The project must be for the benefit of others outside of Scouting and may not be for your immediate family, but Scouts are certainly encouraged to participate in activities such as the Pinewood Derby and other Cub Scout programs.
3. For Star and Life projects, the service project must be approved by your Scoutmaster before you start. If you plan to participate in Troop 55’s Adopt-a-Highway or an Eagle project for a Troop 55 Scout, prior approval is not required.
4. You should prepare a timesheet to keep track of your service hours and provide it at your Scoutmaster Conference.
5. If your service hours were for a project other than those specified in 2 above, you must present a signed note from a parent or the leader of the organization benefited by your service.

Here are some examples of appropriate service projects:

1. Adopt-a-Highway or Troop 55 Eagle Scout projects.
2. Assist in community-wide “clean-up, paint-up or fix-up” days.
3. Maintenance and clean-up of (1) community parks and recreation facilities, (2) cemeteries, (3) historic sites, and (4) monuments.
4. Shoveling snow from sidewalks or homes of senior citizens.
5. Clothing drives.
6. Nonpartisan get-out-the-vote drives.
7. Becoming an Emergency Service Unit or participation in lost-person or backcountry searches.
8. Visiting nursing homes, assisting senior citizens with chores or aiding shut-ins.
9. Collecting toys.
10. Participation in conservation work.
11. Volunteer work at public libraries, shelters for the homeless or soup kitchens.
12. Volunteer service for our sponsoring organization St. Francis Church or your church, synagogue or mosque. This should be other than your normal duties as church member.

Please contact the Scoutmaster before proceeding with a project for St. Francis.

### BSA55 COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Adopt-a-Highway\*. Troop 55 has “adopted” a 2-mile stretch of Walker Road (between Georgetown Pike and Beech Mill Road). Four times a year we pick up trash along the road and provide a report to the Virginia Department of Transportation’s Adopt-a-Highway program. Pick-up days are posted on the troop calendar, and are assigned to patrols. Scouts and parents from other patrols are also welcome to attend. Volunteers should coordinate with the designated Patrol Leader and the designated Adopt-a-Highway Coordinator. This activity can be used by the scouts toward community

service hours – a requirement for advancement. More important, this is an opportunity for the boys to take pride in helping the community!

Scouting for Food\*. We are active participants in the National Capitol Area Council's (over 70,000 strong!) annual food drive, collecting food products for donation to needy people and families in the community (<http://www.boyscouts-nacac.org/camps/food.html> ). Last year Troop 55 collected over 2,000 pounds of food for donation. Scouting for Food takes place over two weekends. The first Saturday donation bags are handed out at a pre-selected area. The following Saturday donation bags are collected, weighed, and the donations delivered to designated collection points. Participation is welcome from all scouts and parents, under the direction of the designated Scouting for Food Coordinator for the troop.

District Camporee. Twice a year (Fall, Spring) we participate in the National Capitol Area Council, Powhatan District's Camporee. This event provides an opportunity to interact with all the other troops in the District, participate in patrol and troop competitions, and demonstrate new skills. This event also shows the community scouting spirit. Older Cub Scouts, Webelos, and their parents are also invited to the Camporee, providing an opportunity for cubs to meet scout troops, and scouts to provide training or demonstrations of scouting skills for the younger boys. Depending on the theme of the Camporee, our troop will usually design a game or activity for the inter-patrol competitions. Active scout participation and adult volunteers are needed to help with planning and presentation of our troop's role at the Camporee.

Scouting on the Mall. Every other year we participate in the National Capitol Area Council event on the national mall adjacent to the Washington Monument. Each troop can display Scouting skills, provide games, or other activity demonstrations. Previous years our troop has built structures using lashings and staves – such as a 30' signal tower in 2002. Active scout participation and adult volunteers are needed to help with planning and construction of our project. This is an excellent opportunity to show troop pride, patriotic spirit, and provide a public demonstration of what Scouting is all about. It is also a unique opportunity to spend time at the center of nation's capital.

Eagle Projects\*. Periodically your son will receive invitations or fliers for Eagle Scout projects. This is a project that the scout must design, organize, and complete to meet the requirement for Eagle. This project must provide a community service benefit. The scout relies on his troop (fellow scouts and parents) to help him complete this requirement while providing a community service. All scouts and parents are encouraged to attend – it's a great way to help the community, get to know the troop, and learn some new skills! Some recent projects have included: landscaping at a local church, steps along a trail in Riverbend Park, and a dock at a camp for disadvantaged children.

And... over 80 scouts doing a good turn every day!

\*Scout participation is counted toward community service advancement requirements

## President's Volunteer Service Award



On Jan. 7th 2014, six scouts from Troop 55 were presented with “President’s Volunteer Service Award” for their extraordinary community service during year 2013 and 2014.

The President’s Volunteer Award was established in 2003 to recognize the community volunteers and encourage more people to serve. The President’s Volunteer Service Award recognizes **United States citizens and lawfully admitted permanent residents** of the United States who have achieved the required number of hours of service over a 12-month time period , or cumulative hours over the course of a lifetime.

Service to our community and others is an important aspect of Scouting as evidenced by its inclusion in the Scout Oath wherein a scout pledges “to help other people at all times”. Although, the President’s Volunteer Service Award is not an official Boy Scout program, we want to encourage scouts and scouts family members to service the community, BSA Troop 55 became “Certifying Organization” in July 2014 to establish the “The President’s Volunteer Award” program at BSA Troop 55. Troop 55 will also establish accounts for different patrols; individual scout’s community service hours will be aggregated into his patrol. At Court of Honor, we will award “President’s Volunteer Service Award” not only to scouts who achieve it, but also we will award individual patrols who meet the award criteria. We encourage a “friendly” competition among different patrols in term of serving our communities. To create an account to keep track of your community service hours, please go to this URL <https://www.presidentserviceawards.gov/register-vo>, once you create your web account, please contact Mr. Ye ([yejeff@hotmail.com](mailto:yejeff@hotmail.com)) for “**Record of Service Key**” to help link your account to Troop 55 as your certifying organization, as well the group key for your patrol.

For youth members, the following guidance is provided to assist in getting started and successfully log the community service hours:

1. You can volunteer the service as any scout rank.
2. The project must be for the benefit of others outside of troop 55 and may not be for your immediate family, but Scouts are certainly encouraged to participate in activities such as the Pinewood Derby and other Cub Scout programs.
3. If you plan to participate in Troop 55’s Adopt-a-Highway or an Eagle project for a Troop 55 Scout, prior approval is not required.
4. You should prepare a timesheet to keep track of your service hours and provide it for review and audit.
5. If your service hours were for a project other than those specified in 2 above, you must present a signed note from a parent or the leader of the organization benefited by your service.

Here are some examples of appropriate service projects for youth scouts (11 – 18 years old):

1. Adopt-a-Highway
2. “Scout for Food” service hours
3. Troop 55 Eagle Scout projects
4. Help with another scout’s Eagle project
5. Service projects during Camporee and Summer Camp
6. Help cub scout packs with Pinewood Derby event, Pack Olympics etc.
7. Council level or district level events such as “Day to Serve” and other community and international events, such as helping out Cherry Blossom Festival for Washington DC.
8. Support community schools with events
9. Provide honor guard duties for community
10. Assist in community-wide “clean-up, paint-up or fix-up” days.

11. Maintenance and clean-up of (1) community parks and recreation facilities, (2) cemeteries, (3) historic sites, and (4) monuments.
12. Shoveling snow from sidewalks or homes of senior citizens.
13. Clothing drives.
14. Nonpartisan get-out-the-vote drives.
15. Becoming an Emergency Service Unit or participation in lost-person or backcountry searches.
16. Visiting nursing homes, assisting senior citizens with chores or aiding shut-ins.
17. Collecting toys.
18. Participation in conservation work.
19. Volunteer work at public libraries, shelters for the homeless or soup kitchens.
20. Volunteer service for our sponsoring organization St. Francis Church or your church, synagogue or mosque. This should be other than your normal duties as church member.

Please contact the Scoutmaster before proceeding with a project for St. Francis. For more information about troop 55 community service, [check here](#).

For adult members, committee members and parent volunteers, all service hours are qualified for the “President’s Volunteer Service Award” program requirement.

**Program Structure** ( [click here to learn more about the award](#)):

The qualified person will receive a **Congratulatory Letter from US President**, **Personalized Certificate**, and **Award Medal**. Any individual, family, or group can receive Presidential recognition for volunteer hours earned over a 12-month period or over the course of a lifetime at home or abroad. The following are the eligibility requirements for each age group:

- **Teens: Age 11-15**
- **Young Adults: Individual Age 16-25**
- **Adults: Individual Age 26 +**

Presidential Volunteer Service Award Criteria:

**Bronze Level:** Teens: 50 to 74 hours, Young Adults: 100 to 174 hours, Adults: 100 to 249 hours, *Family & Groups: 200 to 499 hours*

**Silver Level:** Teens: 75 to 99 hours, Young Adults: 175 to 249 hours, *Adults: 250 to 499 hours, Family & Groups: 500 to 999 hours*

**Gold Level:** Teens: 100 hours or more, Young Adults: 250 hours or more, Adults: 500 hours or more, *Family & Groups: 1000 hours or more*

**President’s Call to Service Award:** *All Ages, 4,000 hours or more of volunteer service (**over a lifetime**).*

**EQUIPMENT**

**Personal Gear for Backpacking**

**Personal Gear**

Pack with padded hip strap  
Sturdy waterproof pack cover  
Assorted Ziploc Freezer Bags  
Sleeping Bag with Waterproof stuff sack  
Straps for pack attachments  
Sleep clothes – 1 set very lightweight  
Sleeping Pad  
Good outdoor shoes, 2 pair  
Wool Socks  
BROKEN IN Hiking Boots  
Underwear  
Shorts  
Long Pants  
T-shirts-Troop 55 & Long-sleeve-shirt  
Warm sweater/jacket  
Poncho or sturdy rain jacket  
Deep bowl, mug/cup  
Utensil set, fork, spoon & knife  
Water Bottles, 2 to 3  
Personal First Aid Kit, including Moleskin  
Small pocket knife  
Toothpaste and brush  
Hand towel  
Sunscreen  
Insect Repellent

**Patrol Equipment**

Backpacking Stove  
Fuel & Fuel Bottle  
Tents (1 per 2 scouts) with Ground Cloth  
Cooking Set with plastic bowl insert with  
utensils and cleaning supplies  
Matches  
Bear Bag  
Towel and Toilet Paper  
Trash bags & Paper towels  
Water Filtration bottles or filters  
Mess bag for dish and utensil drying

**Troop Equipment**

First Aid Kit  
Compass and Topo Maps  
Nylon Cord, two 50' lengths  
Leatherman or substitute  
3 Dining Flies with Poles

**Other Optional Equipment**

Camp shoes  
Hat  
Gaiters  
Lip balm  
Sunglasses  
Camera & extra film

**Other Optional Equipment (con't)**

Watch with alarm  
Frisbee/cards/ball/hacky sack  
Reading Material  
Small Camping Pillow  
Bandanna

**Cold Weather Additions or Substitutes**

Pull over hat and gloves  
Warm jacket and warm long pants  
Wool long-sleeve shirt  
Long underwear

## **Personal Gear for Car Camping**

### **Personal Gear**

Pack with waterproof pack cover  
Sleeping Bag with waterproof stuff sack  
Sleep clothes  
Sleeping Pad  
Walking Shoes, two pair  
Socks, preferably wool  
Underwear  
Shorts  
Long pants  
T-shirts, Troop 55 & Long sleeved-shirt  
Warm sweater/jacket  
Poncho or sturdy rain jacket  
Deep bowl, mug/cup  
Utensil set, spoon, fork and knife  
Water Bottle, One  
Personal First Aid Kit  
Small pocketknife  
Flashlight with extra batteries  
Toothpaste/brush, soap & deodorant  
Hand towel  
Sunscreen

### **Patrol Equipment**

Patrol Box including:  
Cook set  
Cooking Utensils  
Cleaning Containers & Supplies  
Patrol Stove and Fuel  
Lantern  
Dining Fly with poles and line  
Tent (1 per 2 scouts) with ground cloth  
Trash bags and Paper towels  
Matches

### **Troop Equipment**

First Aid Kit  
Compass and Top Maps  
Troop Flags  
Twine

### **Other Optional Equipment Cold Weather Additions**

Hat  
Lip Balm  
Sunglasses  
Camera & extra film  
Watch

Small Camping Pillow  
Frisbee/cards/ball/hacky sack  
Small musical instrument  
Scout Handbook, if not First Class or above  
Camping chair  
Fishing Rod or sports gear as applicable  
Swimsuit as applicable  
Pencil and paper

### **Cold Weather Additions and Substitutes**

Pull over hat and gloves  
Warm jacket and long warm pants

## **Clothing, Layering, Rain Gear, Foot Gear**

In the outdoors, clothing is the first line of defense. It keeps you warm in the winter, cool in the summer, dry in storms, and shielded from insects, sun and wind. To help decide what you need, learn about which clothing is made:

### **Wool**

The long, red underwear of the miners and settlers was made of wool and for a good reason. Wool is durable and water resistant, and even when soaked it can keep you warm. Wool clothing is ideal in cold weather, and a wool shirt or sweater will ward off the chill of summer evenings, too. Wool makes excellent blankets, hiking socks, hats, and mittens. If wool irritates your skin, you may be able to wear wool blends or substitutes such as polypropylene.

### **Cotton**

Cotton is cool, comfortable, and sturdy, but unlike wool it will not keep you warm when it is wet. Of course in hot weather that may be an advantage. Underwear and liner socks often are made of cotton, as are caps, shirts, and bandannas. However, in the winter cotton should not be selected for outer clothing as cotton breaths. A common saying among seasoned winter campers is, "Cool comfortable cotton kills." Use a substitute in the winter.

### **Synthetics**

Manufactured fabrics such as nylon, Orlon, and polypropylene have plenty of outdoor uses. Many are waterproof, and some are good insulation. Strong, lightweight, and easy to clean, they are used in rain gear, windbreakers, tents, packs, parkas, and sleeping bags.

### **Blends**

Blended fabrics combine the advantages of several materials in a single piece of cloth. For example, a blend of synthetics and cotton makes shirts and shorts that are neat in appearance, yet tough enough for any wilderness adventure. A mixture of synthetics and wool goes into long wearing socks, shrink-resistant shirts, and warm jackets.

### **LAYERING SYSTEM:**

For the most comfort in the outdoors use the layering system. Choose loose-fitting clothing that will meet the most extreme weather you expect to encounter, and be sure you can put it on and take it off a layer at a time. For example, on a chilly autumn day you might leave home wearing a long-sleeve shirt, long pants, a wool shirt, a sweater, mittens, and a stocking cap. As you hike, exercise will cause your body to generate more heat than it needs. Peel off the sweater and stuff it into your pack. If you are still too warm, unbutton the wool shirt or slip off the mittens and hat.

When you reach your campsite and are no longer exerting yourself, stay warm by reversing the procedure, pulling on just enough layers of clothing to stay comfortable. After the sun goes down, you may want to add an insulated parka and wool trousers or long underwear.

You can also use the layering system to keep cool in the summer by stripping down to hiking shorts, a T-shirt, and a brimmed hat. Despite the heat, always carry long pants and a long sleeve shirt for protection against sunburn, bugs, and brush.

Versatility in your clothing is the key to a successful layering system. Several shirts, a sweater, and a jacket will allow you to adjust your garb in many ways than a single heavy coat.

### **RAIN GEAR:**

No matter how clear the skies as you pack for a trek, prepare for nasty weather. That means always taking along a poncho or raincoat, a pack cover, and perhaps rain pants and gaiters. Choose raingear that fits loosely enough to give you freedom of movement and allow perspiration to evaporate without condensation on the inside of the fabric.

Long a favorite of adventurers, ponchos provide wet-weather security for both hikers and their gear. In emergencies, ponchos can serve as temporary shelters. They can, however, blow around in a strong wind, and thus may not give full protection in severe storms.

Backpacker rain suits are almost invincible. Many feature hoods and large cargo pockets. Rain pants and rain chaps will protect your legs from wind, rain, and heavy dew, while gaiters will keep pebbles, water, mud, and snow out of your boots and away from socks.

Although most packs can repel rain for a time, make sure your gear stays dry by taking along a pack cover. You may make a simple one by cutting a slit in a garbage bag and tucking the loose ends around your pack frame, or you can buy or sew a cover especially contoured to fit your pack.

### **FOOT GEAR:**

Many back-country treks involve miles of trail hiking. Others, such as kayaking, rafting, mountain climbing, and cross country skiing, require specialized shoes or boots, but even then you may find that you need to walk some distance to reach a river, a mountain, or a snowfield. No matter how you spend your time in the outdoors, you'll probably want to have a pair of good, durable hiking boots.

#### Leather Boots

When you are hiking, your feet and ankles take a tremendous pounding. Quality hiking boots will give them support and protection they need to withstand the jarring of each step. The best leather boots are made of top grain leather, which breathes, allowing moisture from your feet to escape. A minimum of seams keeps wetness from penetrating. Lug soles provide the most traction, though smoother soles are usually adequate, frequently lighter, and often less damaging to trails. Since a pound of weight on your feet is equal to 5 pounds on your back, stick with boots that weigh no more than 3 to 5 pounds a pair for trail wear. Mountaineering boots are heavier and more rigid, and appropriate only for the specialized needs of climbers.

#### Ultra light Trail Boots

Made with the same synthetic materials and high performance designs as running shoes, ultra light trail boots weigh just a few pounds a pair, need little breaking in, dry quickly, and are fine for walking well-maintained trails. They may not be sufficiently waterproofed for wet, muddy trails or sturdy enough for rugged backcountry use, especially if you are carrying a heavy pack.

#### Selecting Footwear

When you go into a store to try on boots, wear the socks in which you plan to hike. Unlace a boot, slip in your foot, and kick your toes forward. If the boot is the right length, you should be able to slide two fingers between you heel and the back of the boot.

Next, kick your heel back into the heel pocket and with the boot snugly laced, walk around the shop, go up and down some stairs, and do a few deep knee bends. You want to be sure your heel isn't sliding up and down inside the boot, and that the widest part of your foot isn't swimming around or being squeezed. After you've tried out one pair, redo the same tests on several other models, taking plenty of time to get a real feel for the fit. Inspect each boot for quality workmanship, and get the opinions of experienced hikers. Before you buy, make sure the store will allow you to bring the boots back, undamaged, if they don't fit. That way you can take them home and wear them for several days inside the house. If they still feel good, you've probably got a pair that's right for you.

#### Breaking in Leather Boots

Like new baseball gloves, new leather boots usually are stiff. They must be broken in before you wear them on an extended trek or you're in for a crop of blisters. First, treat your boots with the dressing recommended by the manufacturer. Rub it thoroughly into the leather with a rag or you hand. This will protect the boots and help them repel water. You may also want to guard the boot seams against moisture and abrasion by applying a commercial seam sealer.

Wear the boots around the house and on short hikes until they have loosened. Gradually extend the length of the walks on which you wear them, and soon they'll feel like a natural part of your feet.

### Caring for Boots

No matter what kind of boots you have, clean them after every outing. When boots are muddy, use a stiff brush to remove the mud, then apply more dressing to the leather. If they become wet, dry them at room temperature. Never expose them to more heat than you can tolerate on the back of your hand. Synthetics may melt, and leather can become hardened and cracked. Take care of your boots and they'll give you years of good service.

### Running Shoes, Moccasins, Mukluks, and Booties

When you reach camp after a long hike, it's sheer heaven to get your feet out of the boots that encased them all day and slip into moccasins or running shoes. On the trail, you can also change into running shoes if you need to wade across a stream. You'll have the foot protection you need, and your boots will stay dry. In the winter, mukluks and insulated booties with nonskid soles are great for wearing around camp and in your tent.

## Sleeping Bags and Backpacks

### SLEEPING BAGS

In addition to staying dry and having a good pair of study shoes, an important ingredient for a successful camping trip is a good night's sleep. The selection of the proper sleeping bag can be a confusing experience so we offer some guidelines. There are two classes of sleeping bags on the market, the day-bag intended to be used inside as an alternative to bedding and a sleeping bag designed to be used outside when camping. We are concerned only about the later. BEWARE of day bags; they are NOT suitable for camping use.

#### Types of Sleeping Bags:

There are several types of sleeping bags on the market. The types are distinguished by their shape. The full rectangular sleeping bag is that it is the same width the full length of the bag. These bags are considered the comfortable by many as they more closely duplicate your bed at home. They are not as warm in the winter as your body has to heat a greater volume inside the bag. Every time you move you have to heat a different area of the sleeping bag, robbing your body of valuable heat. These bags are bulky and heavy compared to the other types of bags.

The second type of bag is the tapered bag. The style is narrower at the foot of the bag. This bag is lighter, less bulky and will be warmer than a full cut sleeping bag. It is a good alternative to the third type, the mummy style bag.

The mummy style sleeping bag takes some getting used to. You wear a mummy bag, that is, when you roll over it moves with you just like your clothing. Since a mummy bag has an interior volume that matches your body, there is no extra space your body has to heat. This bag is very efficient and is used on all high mountain treks by professionals. It packs small and weighs less.

#### Type of Insulation:

There are two basic types of insulation used in sleeping bags, synthetic and down. Down bags have the best insulating value per pound than any other type. However, they are very expensive costing several hundred dollars for a good bag. Down has very poor insulating properties when wet. Because of this possibility, we do not recommend this type of bag.

There a great variety of synthetic insulating materials available. The one that we highly recommend is Dupont Quallofil. It is a synthetic fiber that has 6 hollow, air filled tubes in every strand of fiber. Its insulating properties are very close to down and it has a good rating when wet.

#### Construction:

It is important that the stitching that makes up the quilting of a sleeping bag not go straight through the bag layer. This causes thin spots the insulation which will make cold spots when sleeping.

Look for a bag that has the quilting offset from one side to the other on both the top and bottom. A well made bag will have a tubal insulating barrier on the inside of the bag along the zipper to keep heat from leaking out through the zipper. A bag that has a full length zipper is better because the temperature inside the bag can be more easily regulated in warm weather. They are also easier to keep clean. Some bags have a pocket at the head to put your jacket or other clothing to make a pillow.

#### Temperature Rating:

Most of the better bags will have a temperature rating attached. This is NOT a “comfort” rating although some sales people may tell you so. This is the lowest outside temperature that the average healthy person could survive in the rated bag. This does not mean that you will be comfortable; it means you will not perish at that temperature. However, the use of a fleece liner or synthetic long johns may allow you to use this bag comfortably at the rated temperature.

#### Selection of the Appropriate Bag for Seasonal Camping:

Troop 55 camps in hot weather, sometimes near or above 100 degrees, and cold weather, sometimes below zero. We camp in rain, snow, sleet and sometimes even when there isn't a cloud in the sky. It is not possible to purchase a bag that is good for all these conditions. However, there are things that can be done to extend the range of your bag.

The best solution is to have two sleeping bags. The first is a light weight summer bag, with a light synthetic insulation. It should be a full cut rectangular bag with a zipper that allows the bag to be opened like a blanket. It should be constructed so that it doesn't have a top or a bottom allowing the bag to be used with the zipper on either side. Some models have different thickness of materials on each side allowing the bag to be used for different temperature by reversing the side you put under you and on top of you. These bags are very inexpensive and are very useful on very hot evenings.

The second sleeping bag should be a tapered or mummy bag depending on your personal preference. We recommend a 20 degree rated bag allowing the bag to be upgraded on very cold nights through the use of synthetic long johns, a fleece sleeping bag liner or using both bags. It should have zipper baffles and a hood or pouch for clothes. It should also have a draw-string around the top so you can pull it tight around your face.

#### Use and Cleaning of Sleeping Bags:

Most synthetic bags can be laundered with care, but be sure to consult the cleaning instructions on the bag. Beware that they may take a considerable amount of time to dry as synthetic materials do not do well in the dryer with high heat. In fact, most manufacturers recommend air-drying the bag or using the dryer on air only. The frequency of cleaning can be reduced by the use of a sleeping bag liner.

Besides the correct bag, you can improve the quality of your evening by waiting just before you go to bed to unroll your sleeping bag and NEVER sleeping in clothes you wore during the day. Your clothes absorb moisture as you sweat during the day (summer or winter) and the moisture will lower the temperature rating of your bag. So be sure to have some clean and dry sleeping clothes on all outings.

#### **BACKPACKS:**

Each scout is expected to have a backpack for all outdoor overnight outings. There are many styles, but essentially there are three sizes and two types. Each has its advantages and disadvantages.

As a rule of thumb, packs with a capacity of less than 2,500 cubic inches are considered day packs, weekend packs have a capacity of 2,500 to 4,000 cubic inches and weeklong packs have capacities in excess of 4,000 cubic inches. Packs for weekend or weeklong use are either internal or external frame packs.

#### Day Packs:

These small, light-weight packs are designed to hold a lunch, a water bottle, raingear, first aid kit, map and compass. They do not have a frame, no hip belt and are designed to wear on the back, over your shoulder, or as fanny pack. They are inexpensive and are sometimes referred to as book bags. The quality of these bags varies so look for sturdy stitching and reinforced anchor points for the shoulder straps.

### External Frame Packs:

Until advent of the internal frame pack about 10 years ago, these were the most common backpack. However, it is still an excellent choice for a starter pack for younger scouts. The pack is attached to a frame made of space age plastics to high tech metals and usually provides several adjustable points to adjust the center of balance to your body size. At the very minimum, it should have a padded hip belt and adjustable padded shoulder straps. Some manufacturers offer two or more sizes to improve the comfort of the fit.

The most commonly cited advantage of this pack is that the frame keeps the pack from touching your back thereby improving the airflow around your back and improving the comfort in warm weather. Also these packs usually provide top loading with multiple pockets on the side for easy access to items during hikes. Sleeping pads and sleeping bags are usually tied to the frame in lieu of storage within the bag.

### Internal Frame Packs:

Most, if not all, older scouts now use the internal frame packs. The frame is integrated into the pack and is intended to hold the pack as close to your back as possible. Because of this feature, most models come in two or more sizes to fit the size of the user. When first introduced on the market, all were top loading without side compartments, but most models now have addressed that concern with the addition of pockets for water bottles and other items that would be required on the trail.

The internal frame packs allows the user to keep the center of gravity of the pack closer to your natural center of gravity making movement with the pack more balanced and normal. The only concern is the absence of air space between your back and the pack increasing the heat buildup in warm weather.

As with external packs, at the very minimum it should have a padded hip belt and adjustable padded shoulder straps.



## Camping Checklist – Cold Weather Car Camping

### NOTE:

- All clothing items should be made of warm synthetic fabric and/or wool.
- If you are a Patrol Leader you should review these requirements with your patrol and make sure all new scouts are aware of the cold weather camping gear requirements.
- Typically a car camping outing has no specific gear restrictions so BRING EXTRA, especially during cold weather.

### **COLD WEATHER CLOTHING**

- Long-sleeved shirt (ie under armor)
- Long scout pants
- Long underwear (shirt and pants)
- Hat/Cap to go over ears or ski mask
- Warm Gloves
- Warm jacket
- Fleece or light outer shell
- Rain gear (jacket & pants)
- Class-B scout shirts
- Scout socks (2-3 pairs)
- Undergarments

### **PERSONAL GEAR & CAMPING ESSENTIALS**

- Nalgene / Water bottle
- Hiking boots
- Mess kit (bowl, plate, cup, utensils, etc.)
- Toiletry kit (toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.)
- Fleece or light outer shell
- Flashlight / head-lamp
- Fleece or light outer shell
- Hand towel / Shower towel
- Fleece or light outer shell
- Money for food during car ride

### **TENT & SLEEPING**

- Tent
- Cold weather-rated sleeping bag

**Note:** If you are sleeping bag is not rated below 20 degrees

### **CAR CAMPING EXTRAS**

- Personal First Aid Kit
- Watch
- Camera
- Notebook, pen and pencil
- Extra flashlight / headlamp and batteries
- Additional Fleece or light outer shell
- Pocketknife or multi-tool (Totin' Chip required)
- Insect repellent
- Daypack (may be required on a hiking outing)
- Extra Nalgenes/water bottles
- Pillow
- Cold weather sleeping bag insert (fleece)
- Extra shirts, pants, jackets, layers, etc.
- Camp shoes or tennis shoes
- Neckerchief
- Snacks
- Sunscreen / protection
- Sunglasses
- Scout hat with brim
- Scout handbook
- Compass
- Rope to practice knots

### **PERSONAL COLD WEATHER EXTRAS**

- 180 ear covers
- Hand / Foot warmer packs
- Additional warm undergarments

Long underwear and a closed-cell pad are a must!

Air mattress or sleeping pad

Long shirts / pants

Fleece or wool blanket

Extra Gloves

Ski Pants / Jacket

Fleece jacket or pullover

## Cold Weather Camping Tips & Tricks

- *If you are car camping, always bring extra gear, especially clothing.*
- If your clothes are clean and dry, they will breathe better and you'll stay warmer. If you overheat, your clothes will be wet and you will easily chill.
- Layering your clothes will keep you clean, warm and dry and will prevent overheating. If you start to feel warm, simply remove a layer of clothing. If you start to feel cold, add another layer of clothing.
- An example of proper layering starting from the layer closest to your skin on the upper half of your body would be thermal top, t-shirt, shirt, sweater and jacket. For your head, a scarf and a ski hat.
- Make sure that you have a good knowledge of the signs of frostbite and hypothermia. You should be able to recognize it in others and in yourself. Tell someone right away if you or another scout is showing signs of cold-related problems.
- Stay hydrated. It's easy to get dehydrated in the winter. Eat and drink plenty of carbs.
- Keep out of the wind if you can. A rain fly for a tent can be pitched to serve as a wind break. The wind chill factor can often be considerable and can result in effective temperatures being much lower than nominal.
- Always eat hot meals (breakfast, lunch, & dinner.) Don't get too fancy with the meals - it's hard to chop onions & carrots at -10°F with gloves on. Prep all meals at home in the warmth of the kitchen. Slow burning carb dinners are best (spaghetti, noodles, potatoes, rice, etc.) These will provide heat while sleeping.
- COTTON KILLS! Do not bring cotton.
- Remember the 3 W's of layering - Wicking inside layer, Warmth middle layer(s) and Wind/Water outer layer. Wicking should be a polypropylene material as long underwear and also sock liner. Warmth layer(s) should be fleece or wool. The Wind/Water layer should be Gore-Tex or at least 60/40 nylon.
- Bring extra hand covering - mittens are warmer than gloves.
- Bring 2 changes of socks per day.
- Everyone must be dry by sundown. No wet (sweaty) bodies or wet inner clothing.
- Use plastic grocery bags or bread bags over socks. This keeps your boots dry and you can easily change those wet socks.
- Keep your hands and feet warm. Your body will always protect the core, so if your hands and feet are warm, your core will also likely be warm. If your hands or feet are cold, put on more layers, and put on a hat!
- Dress right while sleeping. Change into clean, dry clothes before bed. Your body makes moisture and your clothes hold it in - by changing into dry clothes you will stay warmer and it will help keep the inside of your sleeping bag dry. Wearing wool socks and long underwear (tops and bottoms) in the sleeping bag is OK.
- Put on tomorrow's t-shirt and underwear at bedtime. That way you won't be starting with everything cold next to your skin in the morning.
- Wear a stocking cap to bed, even if you have a mummy bag.
- Put tomorrow's clothes in your bag with you. This is especially important if you're small of stature. It can be pretty hard to warm up a big bag with a little body, the clothes cut down on that work.
- Put a couple of long-lasting hand warmers into your boots after you take them off. Your boots will dry out during the night.
- Fill a couple of Nalgene water bottles with warm water and sleep with one between your legs (warms the femoral artery) and with one at your feet. Or use toe/hand warmers. Toss them into your sleeping bag before you get in. Some of the toe/hand warmers will last 8 hours.
- Eat a high-energy snack before bed, then brush your teeth. The extra fuel will help your body stay warm. Take a Snickers bar to bed and eat it if you wake up chilly in the night.
- Use a sleeping bag that is appropriate for the conditions. Two +20°F sleeping bags, one inside the other will work to lower the rating of both bags.

- Use a bivy sack to wrap around your sleeping bag. You can make a cheap version of this by getting an inexpensive fleece sleeping bag. It isn't much more than a blanket with a zipper but it helps lower the rating by as much as 10 degrees.
- Use a sleeping bag liner. There are silk and fleece liners that go inside the sleeping bag. They will lower your sleeping bag's rating by up to 10 degrees. Or buy an inexpensive fleece throw or blanket and wrap yourself in it inside the sleeping bag.
- Most cold weather bags are designed to trap heat. The proper way to do this is to pull the drawstrings until the sleeping bag is around your face, not around your neck. If the bag also has a draft harness make sure to use it above the shoulders and it snugs up to your neck to keep cold air from coming in and warm air from going out.
- Don't burrow in - keep your mouth and nose outside the bag. Moisture from your breath collecting in your bag is a quick way to get real cold. Keep the inside of the bag dry.
- Put a trash bag over the bottom half of your sleeping bag to help hold in the heat. A zipped up coat pulled over the foot of a sleeping bag makes an extra layer of insulation.
- No liquids after 8pm. Drain your bladder before you go to bed. Having to go in the middle of the night when it is 5 degrees out chills your entire body. Drink all day, but stop two hours before bed.

### Frequently Asked Questions and Forms:

#### **Does my son need a uniform?**

Troop 55 requires all scouts to own a complete scout uniform consisting of scout shirt with proper insignia, scout pants, scout belt, scout socks, troop neckerchief with slide and troop hat. See the calendar of yearly events for the uniform required for each meeting or activity. The troop has instituted a uniform sway and during the 03-04 school year more details will be provided to all members of the troop.

#### **What is a class A+, class A, or class B uniform?**

(A+) Full Uniform & Neckerchief

(A) Full Uniform

(B) Troop T-Shirt and scout pants or shorts

#### **When is the Boy Scout Handbook used?**

The Boy Scout Handbook contains information pertaining to the basic skills of scouting, advancement and general information about the organization of Boy Scouts. A scout should bring his handbook to meetings when the meeting agenda includes an opportunity to be tested on requirements for Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class or First Class or outings when similar opportunities exist. His Patrol Leader will sign the book evidencing completion of a requirement. A scout should always bring his Handbook to Scoutmaster Conferences and Board of Reviews.

#### **What are the ranks and what do they mean?**

A scout is recognized for his achievements by the utilization of rank awards. After becoming a Scout, the next rank is Tenderfoot, followed by Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle. From the stage of Tenderfoot to First Class scouts learn the basic skills of first aid, citizenship, camping, cooking, orienteering and other outdoor skills. After completing First Class, a scout then turns his attention to helping others through community service and service to his troop by serving in one of the several positions of responsibility. Also after becoming First Class, a scout must earn a specified number of merit badges to advance to Star, Life and Eagle.

#### **Is there a schedule for rank advancement?**

No, a scout can set his own pace for advancement although many scouts complete First Class within a year to a year and a half after becoming a scout. After reaching the rank of First Class, a scout is required to be active in each rank for a specified period of time before he can advance to the next rank (see the Scout Handbook for specific periods of time).

#### **How does the Troop keep track of each boy's advancement?**

The Scoutmaster is responsible for all troop advancement and works with the Advancement Chairperson to insure that permanent records are maintained. However, a scout is responsible for the retention of his Scout Handbook, which is also a record of his advancement and all blue cards for merit badges. The retention of completed blue cards is very important as they must all be submitted with a scout's Eagle Scout application.

#### **What is the Scoutmaster Conference? Board of Review?**

After completing all of the requirements of a rank, a scout must complete a conference with the Scoutmaster. This is a short conference with the Scoutmaster to discuss a scout's progress and scout spirit. After completing a Scoutmaster Conference, a scout must attend a Board of Review to complete his rank. The Board of Review is composed of 3 or more registered adults of troop who meet with the scout to discuss with him his progress and experiences in Scouting. For the details of setting up a Scoutmaster Conference or Board of Review, see the Advancement Requirements, Policies and Procedures document under the Advancement tab of this Troop Handbook.

### **How and when are Scoutmaster Conferences and Boards of Review scheduled?**

At the request of a Scout, the Scoutmaster will set up a time for a Scoutmaster Conference. Scoutmaster Conferences are generally not held during troop meetings or other functions, but can be scheduled for overnight outings. Boards of Review will be held periodically, usually during a troop meeting, to accommodate the needs of scouts. To schedule a Board of Review contact: troop55bor@gmail.com

### **What are merit badges and when should boys work on them?**

Merit Badges are earned by mastering basic skills in over one hundred areas of interest and can be earned by scouts at anytime. However, merit badges are not required for advancement until a scout reaches First Class. It is recommended that scouts concentrate on attaining First Class before working on more than the introductory merit badges such as Swimming, Basketry, Wood Carving, and Leatherwork. For a complete list of merit badges and those required for advancement beyond First Class <http://www.scouting.org/About/FactSheets/MeritBadges.aspx>

### **How do I find out what merit badges are available?**

The Scout Handbook lists all the available merit badges and pamphlets for many of them are maintained in our troop library. Speak to the Troop Librarian for access to the library. You can also check online.

### **What is the process for merit badges?**

Please consult the Advancement Requirements, Policies and Procedures document found in this Handbook under the Advancement tab.

### **What is a blue card and how do I get one?**

A blue card is the document used to record the completion of the requirements of a merit badge. When you've decided to pursue completion of a merit badge, ask the Scoutmaster for a blue card and then fill it out with your name and the name of the merit badge you intend to pursue and return it the Scoutmaster for his signature. You must have a blue card signed by the Scoutmaster before you begin work on a merit badge. Upon completion of the requirements for a merit badge, the counselor will sign the card and return it to you. The Scoutmaster's signature is also required so give the blue card to the Scoutmaster and he will forward it to the Advancement Chairperson.

### **How do I find a merit badge counselor?**

A listing of merit badge counselors is maintained in the troop library. How do I sign up to be a merit badge counselor? Contact the troop Advancement Chairman for the appropriate forms.

### **What are the religious awards? How do they work?**

The twelfth scout law is a Scout is Reverent and the Boy Scouts of America has a religious awards program to allow any scout to earn a religious award in a religion of his choice. To earn the award, a scout works with his own church to complete the award. For more information consult our Religious Awards Coordinator (adult) or our Chaplain Aide (youth).

### **What is a Court of Honor?**

In the process of advancement, a scout first learns, then is tested, then is reviewed (Board of Review) and then is recognized (the Court of Honor). A Court of Honor is a formal ceremony to recognize the achievements of our scouts and is held four times a year. All parents are urged to attend regardless whether they have a son being recognized.

### **What is the PLC? Where and how often does it meet?**

PLC stands for Patrol Leaders Council and is comprised of the youth leaders in the troop who are responsible for planning and implementing the troop program. The membership includes the Senior Patrol Leader, the Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders, all Patrol Leaders and the Scribe. The PLC meets once a year for the Annual Planning Session and once every month at St. Francis Church to plan the weekly meetings.

### **What does Patrol Leader do? Assistant Patrol Leader?**

The Patrol Leader is responsible for working with the scouts of his patrol to plan and implement the activities of the

patrol. He reports directly to the Senior Patrol Leader and works with the other Patrol Leaders to present the program of Scouting. An Assistant Patrol Leader is available to serve in the Patrol Leaders absence.

### **What is the process of sign-ups for outings?**

Each month a permission slip will be forwarded to each scout with the details of the monthly outing. The permission should be signed by a parent and returned during one of troop meetings prior to the outing. A box for return of the forms and checks is available at each troop meeting.

### **How are meals paid for on overnight outings?**

Each patrol is responsible for planning, purchasing and preparing its own food for the overnight outings. The cost is borne by the entire patrol attending the outing according to the meal costs as outlined in the permission slip. Patrols will be reimbursed for costs by the Treasurer. Parents who have not been reimbursed for patrol food expenses should contact their son's Patrol Advisor. (See the printed roster for identity of this Assistant Scoutmaster).

### **Are there guidelines for food and snacks on outings?**

Scouts eat as patrols on overnight outings except when specifically stated as otherwise in the permission slip. Generally when on backpacking trips, scouts are responsible for their lunches on the trail, but other meals are provided by the patrols. Consequently, scouts should not bring additional food as it just attracts animals and insects. Please no soft drinks and excessive amounts of candy.

### **What equipment does my son need?**

See the Equipment Section (Section 6) of this Troop Handbook. As a new scout, work on the essentials first, a good sleeping bag, a closed cell ground pad, good pair of hiking boots, a backpack and rain gear. Delay purchase of a tent until your son has had the opportunity to attend several campouts. Scouts sleep in two-person tents and before purchasing one, your son will sleep with scouts who have a tent. If you do purchase a tent, please no tents larger than two-person tents.

### **Is there a lost and found?**

We do not have a formal lost and found, but check with the Scoutmaster after an event for the best chance of locating a lost item.

### **Are adults welcome on outings?**

Adults interested in attending overnight outings should contact the Scoutmaster. Inasmuch as Scouting is not a Father/Son or Mother/Son organization, you are welcome to attend if you are interested in assisting the uniformed leadership of the troop. Adults attending are encouraged to have completed Fast Start and Youth Protection training.

### **What do adults do on the outings?**

As explained in the Troop Organization section of this Troop Handbook, Scouting uses a Boy-Led concept. Consequently, on outings adults are principally there for health and safety purposes. Of course, the uniformed adult leadership works with the youth leadership to provide advice and assistance when necessary to insure the delivery of the program. The adults sleep in an area away from the scouts and are responsible for their own meals. Adults do not sleep with their sons unless there are very compelling circumstances to do so and with the approval of the Scoutmaster.

### **What is summer camp?**

Each summer all scouts attend a week at a Boy Scout camp. Scouts sleep in two person tents on wooden platforms and participate in a week of activities for fun and advancement. Activities include swimming, boating, rifle, shotgun, archery, hiking, orienteering and many others. Scouts can work on advancement for Tenderfoot to First Class, as well as earn several merit badges. Attendance at summer camp, although not mandatory, is strongly encouraged, as scouts who do not attend will fall behind, possibly irreparably, in their advancement.

### **What if my son has a conflict with the date for summer camp?**

You are strongly urged to amend your plans to allow your son to attend summer camp with his troop. However, if that is impossible, we strongly recommend sending him to summer camp during another week to as a provisional camper. He will be placed in a provisional troop with other scouts who are also not attending with their troop.

**Why are there different types of medical forms and which one am I supposed to use?**

The medical forms provided and required by the Boy Scouts of America are classified in three categories, Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3. The Class 1 is simply a medical history provided by a parent and must be updated every year. A Class 2 requires a physical exam by a physician. To attend summer camp, a scout must have a current Class 1 and a Class 2 dated within the last three years. For scouts attending high adventure activities, or any adults who are over 40, a Class 3 is required. A Class 3 is a more thorough physical exam and must be completed within one year of the activity.

**How are medications for scouts handled?**

If your son is taking a medication, please advise the Scoutmaster before any overnight activity. If it is summer camp, a specific form must be completed granting the camp permission to administer the medication. For other outings, please discuss the issue with the Scoutmaster and he or one of the Assistant Scoutmasters will administer the medication if appropriate.

**Are there requirements for attendance at activities?**

The troop Scribe records the attendance at all troop meetings and the Scoutmaster records attendance at all other activities. Every rank requires a scout to demonstrate scout spirit and the Scoutmaster utilizes the attendance records to assist in making that determination. Please carefully review the troop Advancement Requirements, Policies and Procedures document found under the Advancement and Awards Tab (section 4) of this Troop Handbook.

**What are service hours and how are they earned? Reported?**

To earn service hours the project must not benefit scouting, but rather must be for a nonprofit organization such as a church, school or other community organization. Please review the Service Hours guidelines found under the Community Service Tab (section 5) of this Troop Handbook.

**Is there a discipline policy?**

Yes, see the Troop by-laws under the Troop Organization tab of this Troop Handbook. Generally speaking, the youth leadership of the troop handles the customary issues of discipline. Although the Scoutmaster expects all scouts to follow the Scout Oath and Laws, profanity, hitting or touching each other and any form of oral or physical hazing is strictly prohibited.

**What is High Adventure?**

High Adventure refers to special activities that are available for scouts 13 years and older. Generally, this includes trips to one of three National BSA High Adventure facilities at Philmont Scout Reservation in New Mexico, Northern Tier in the Boundary Lakes of Minnesota or Florida Sea Base in the Florida Keys. It also includes special activities such as rock climbing, rappelling, use of a COPE (Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience) course, long term backpacking trips, scuba diving and many others.

**What is the Order of the Arrow (OA)?**

The Order of the Arrow is an honor camper organization within the Boy Scouts of America. Scouts who have completed 15 days and nights of camping are eligible to be elected by their fellow scouts to join the OA. Troop elections of OA are conducted once a year in February or March. If a scout is elected, he must complete an ordeal weekend before he officially becomes a member of the OA. If a scout is elected by his troop, but fails to complete one of the two ordeals offered each year, he must be re-elected to join the OA. See the troop calendar for the dates of the ordeal weekends.

**We pay annual dues. Why is there also an annual fundraiser, the mulch sale?**

The dues cover the administrative costs of operating the troop such as awards, insignia and Court of Honor expenses. The mulch sale provides additional funds for the troop for large expenses such as equipment while allowing scouts to earn money for their own account. The money earned by a scout during the mulch account can be used by a scout for the expense of any scout activity.

**What if we cannot afford the expense of an activity?**

Scouts can earn mulch credits during the annual mulch sale that can be used for any scouting activity or expense. If the mulch credits are inadequate, the troop budgets for several camperships each year to make all events available to all scouts. Please speak privately with the Scoutmaster about your needs and a procedure is in place to insure the confidentiality of this financial support.

**What is the Troop Committee? When does it meet?**

It is the adult organization responsible for supporting the program of the troop. It meets the first Monday of every month, but check the annual calendar for changes attributable to holidays. See the Troop Organization section of the Troop Handbook for more information.

**How can I help?**

Ask the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair for a volunteer form. There are many ways you can help.

**Why does a blue adult leader application require permission for a background check?**

As a means of insuring that all adult volunteers are qualified and suitable for service scouting, the Boy Scouts of America has instituted a policy to require all adults undergo a background check before being able to serve as volunteer.

**How do we find out about outings, activities, meetings, etc.?**

At the beginning of each school year you will be provided with an annual specifying the date and time of all planned scouting activities. You are strongly urged to transfer these dates to your family calendar and to note the dates of summer camp and high adventure when planning family vacations. Please pay special note to the troop meetings and Patrol Leaders Council meetings as the PLC is not always the last Wednesday of the month. And of course, you will find this information and more on the website.

**What can I do to make sure my son gets the most out of this program?**

Familiarize yourself with the material in this Troop Handbook and the Official Scout Handbook, specifically the advancement program so you can provide encouragement to your son. Join the troop committee and volunteer to support the program of the troop.

**Are we reimbursed for food we purchase for a Troop outing?**

Your son will be expected to participate in planning and purchasing food for an outing during his tenure in the troop. You will be reimbursed for these expenses. Please hang on to your receipts, write the name of the scout and parent and include the details of which outing. Give that to the Treasurer – or at the table of volunteers at the weekly meeting and you will be reimbursed.