



Dear Scouts and Parents,

Welcome to Troop 479! We are thrilled that your family has chosen Troop 479 for your Scouting adventure! This welcome package has lots of helpful information, and here are the key items we can address right away:

1. **Troop Meetings:** Please attend the next upcoming Troop Meeting and Court of Honor. Normally our Troop meetings are held from 7:00pm to 8:00pm on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. Meetings are typically held at Pax Christi Church, and these will be updated on our TroopWebHost calendar (www.Troop479.org). Troop meetings are typically held in Room 111 (Bonhoeffer Room). Park in the lower lot of Pax Christi off Homeward Hills Road and enter through Door 6 in the Northwest corner of the building.
2. **Registration:** If your Scout is crossing over from Cub Scouts and already registered with a Pack, you can go online to transfer, at no charge, to Troop 479 using this link: <https://www.adventureiscalling.org/>. Detailed instructions can be found here: <https://scoutingevent.com/Download/25077029/OR/Walk Thru Webelos Transition.pdf>.

If your Scout is not currently registered with a Pack then you should register as a New Scout in Troop 479 using this link: <https://www.northernstar.org/news/enavigator/annual-program-registration-renewal>. If you have any problems, please contact membership@Troop479.org and we will help facilitate the process.

If your Scout is transferring from another troop, you can go online to transfer, at no charge, to Troop 479 using this link: <https://www.adventureiscalling.org/>. Detailed instructions can be found here: <https://scoutingevent.com/Download/25077028/OR/Walk Thru Transfers.pdf>.

3. **Health Forms:** All Scouts are required to complete a health form every year. Go to <http://www.northernstarbsa.org/resources/healthforms.aspx> and download the Annual Health and Medical Record Form No. 680-001. Complete at least parts A and B and return by the first Troop meeting. Complete part C (requiring a doctor signature) before summer camp.
4. **Contact Information:** Once we have you added to our TroopWebHost system, you will be able to log in, complete your personal contact and other information, and make future updates any time. If you have any problems, please contact webmaster@Troop479.org.
5. **First Rank Advancement:** Our goal is to have all new Troop 479 Scouts to achieve the "Scout" rank as soon as possible. The requirements are in your Scout Handbook and your SPL and Troop Guide will help you get there!
6. **Troop Communications:** It is vital that we obtain current e-mail addresses, cell and carrier information for each Scout and their parents. Troop communication and notifications are sent out frequently. TroopWebHost (www.Troop479.org) contains the latest news and forms that you can download. Email can be sent to anyone in the Troop from the web site.
7. **Troop Calendar:** A Troop calendar is included in your packet for planning purposes. It is also on TroopWebHost (www.Troop479.org). Dates may occasionally change (we try to keep this to a minimum); check the web site for the most current information.
8. **Adult Involvement:** There are many opportunities for adults to be involved in the Troop, and it is vital that new families participate and help make the Troop theirs also. Assistant Scoutmasters, Merit Badge Counselors, Troop Committee members and other roles provide opportunities to volunteer. Please contact me if you are willing to help.



Parents, if you have any questions, please ask me, our Troop Committee Chair Angie Palmer, or any of the adult leaders. Scouts, you can ask your Senior Patrol Leader or Troop Guide.

Sincerely,
Jason Bidwell
Scoutmaster, Troop 479

Troop 479 Welcome Package

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Whom to Contact

Scout Leaders

All new Scouts should contact Scout leaders for help – this is part of being Scout led!

You will have a Troop Guide assigned to you and your Patrol. This Scout will be announced at the Troop meeting and will be your “go-to” person for all questions and help.

You can also get help from your Senior Patrol Leader (SPL). Grant Orr is the current SPL. Contact Grant through TroopWebHost email.

Adult Leaders

Parents can find a current list of our adult leaders at www.TroopWebHost.com. Here are some of the key contacts you should know when you are starting out with the Troop:

Name	Cell Phone	Email	Position
Jason Bidwell	952-210-4816	bidw0009@gmail.com	Scoutmaster
Angie Palmer	612-750-6434	angiepalmer@comcast.net	Committee Chair
Rob Neumann	952-388-4024	neumanrc@hotmail.com	Assistant Scoutmaster, Recruiting & Membership
Renee Rushdy	760-994-7629	reneerushdy@gmail.com	Advancement Chair
Mike Tarpey	952-220-5917	mtarpey@live.com	Treasurer
Vicki Barton	612-237-7969	evbarton@barleyfarm.com	Health and Safety Coordinator
Dennis Amundson	952-484-7622	djamunds@yahoo.com	Webmaster

Guide for Scouts

You are now a BSA Scout! We hope this packet answers many of your questions and gives you an idea of how Scouting happens in Troop 479.

How Does a New Scout Fit into a Patrol?

New Scout Patrols are formed of all new Scouts entering the Troop. You will be in a Patrol with about four to eight Scouts your own age. You will have older, more experienced Scouts as *Troop Guides* to teach you how things work, explain what is expected, and provide leadership. An important part of Scouting is growing in leadership skills, and you are expected to take on leadership positions to practice your skills.

Your Patrol works together, learns together, and grows together. It supports and directs itself with guidance from the older Scouts and adult leaders.

In addition to the Troop meetings, your Patrol should plan monthly Patrol meetings. The term “meeting” doesn’t mean you have to sit around a table – go out and DO STUFF and HAVE FUN. The Troop Guide is responsible for scheduling and planning these meetings with input from the rest of the Patrol. The third Monday of each month at 7:00pm is a great time to hold Patrol meetings. A goal of these meetings is to learn skills that fulfill rank advancement requirements so the Patrol members can reach *Second Class Scout* rank in their first 12-18 months in the Troop. Later on, when you get a turn as your Patrol’s leader, do your very best to plan interesting meetings and communicate with your Patrol mates.

All BSA Scout Patrols are *Scout-Led* so the Troop Guide should take ownership of the scheduling, planning, and running of the Patrol meetings. Your Patrol will have an adult *Assistant Scoutmaster* (ASM) assigned to it to be a resource for Scouting rules, requirements, and regulations. If it seems that adults are too involved, mention it to your Troop Guide. Later on, if you are the Patrol leader, politely ask the adult (or adults) to let the Scouts run the Patrol.

Your Patrol meetings are great opportunities for a bunch of Scouts to become a good team.

How Does a New Scout Fit into the Troop?

As a new Scout, you need to find your place in the Troop. Some Scouts have a natural tendency to lead while others are content to follow; some love fires; some enjoy knots. There are many ways you can improve your abilities in areas that most interest you.

Here are some good tips to help make things easier for you as a new Scout:

- Be Prepared. It’s the Scout Motto, and it is very important. Always be in uniform, bring your Scout Handbook, a notebook, and pen to every meeting.
- Perform all of the tasks defined in the Troop’s New Scout Guide on the next page as quickly and thoroughly as possible. This builds a solid foundation.
- Be open to trying new things, even things you don’t think you’ll be good at.
- Don’t worry about failing. Every Scout and every adult has failed – a lot!
- Make a real effort to live the Scout Law, especially Helpful, Friendly, Kind, and Cheerful, not only at Scout meetings and activities but in every part of your life.

New Scout Guide

This is a list of things you can start working on right away. The more effort you put into accomplishing these tasks, the sooner you will get used to being a Scout and the better your Patrol will do.

- With your parents, figure out how you can go to Many Point Summer Camp – it is important, and most Scouts will tell you it's the best camping of the year.
- With your parents and the Troop calendar, schedule which outings you will attend.
- Look through your Scout Handbook. Set aside ½ hour every week to read it and work on specific requirements.
- Read the requirements in your handbook for earning your Scout rank and prepare to fulfill them with the help of your Troop Guide and Scoutmaster.
- Learn the sayings we use: Scout Oath, Scout Law, Outdoor Code, Scout Motto, Scout Slogan, Scout Vespers, and Benediction.
- Using the sheet of Patrol emblems (distributed at a later date), help your Patrol choose a Patrol name.
- With your Patrol, create a Patrol yell and Patrol flag.
- With your parents, buy the uniform parts that you need:
 - Tan shirt (tan Webelos shirt is fine with old patches removed)
 - Scout zip-off pants, socks, and belt

Important to Memorize

1. Scout Oath
On my honor, I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country;
To obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.
2. Scout Law
A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.
3. Outdoor Code
As an American, I will do my best to:
Be Clean in my outdoor manners,
Be Careful with fire,
Be Considerate in the outdoors,
Be Conservation-minded.
4. Scout Motto
Be prepared
5. Scout Slogan
Do a good turn daily

6. Scout Vespers (tune of “Oh, Christmas Tree”)

Softly falls the light of day,
As our campfire fades away.
Silently each Scout should ask,
Have I done my daily task?
Have I kept my honor bright?
Can I guiltless sleep tonight?
Oh, have I done and have I dared,
Everything to be prepared?

7. Scout Benediction

And now, may the Great Master of all Scouts be with us until we meet again.

Troop Meetings

Troop Meeting Format

- Opening: Sit by Patrols, Flag-in, Recite Scout Oath, Law, and Outdoor Code
- Announcements
- Skills Instruction
- Patrol Time – plan Patrol events and work on advancement
- Troop activities / games
- Closing: Flag-out, Scoutmaster Minute, Scout Vespers, Scout Benediction

Meeting Schedules

- The Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) meets the first Monday of each month from 7:00 – 8:00 pm at Pax Christi Church. (Occasionally, this may be rescheduled to an online meeting, details on TWH).
- The Troop typically meets every 2nd and 4th Monday of each month from 7:00 – 8:00 pm at Pax. (Check the Troop calendar for each meeting’s location.)
- Your Patrol meets as often as you want, whenever and wherever you want. Pax will be available from 7:00 – 8:00 pm the 3rd Monday of each month for Patrol meetings.
- The Troop committee/parents meeting is the third Monday of the month from 7:00 – 8:00 at Pax, unless noted otherwise. All parents are welcome!

Advancement

Unlike Cub Scouts, you are in charge of your own path to advancement! It is an important skill to learn and develop, but don’t worry; you have lots of support with the Troop. In this welcome package, please read the section about **Advancement and Merit Badges**, which has all the information about how to advance through the ranks.

Your first goal is to earn the rank of Scout.

In your Scout Handbook, you will find all the information and requirements for reaching your first goal. Read about advancement to the Scout rank, and your Troop Guides can help you. You can also ask your Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) for help. Your Scout Handbook is used to track your rank advancement with qualified signatures and dates as you satisfy each requirement. You should have your handbook with you at all times to make it easier to get these signatures. The handbook has to last for several years (until you are 18 years old), so you must take good care



of it. Your parents or family members do not sign off on requirements – only the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scout Master, or trained high-ranking Scouts are qualified to sign off.

Guide for Parents

Your child is now a Scout! As a Scout Parent, we expect that you have questions about how you can best support your Scout to be successful in Scouting. We hope that this list answers many of your questions and gives you an idea of the parent's role in Troop 479.

General Role of Adults in BSA Scouting

Scouts camp with their buddies in Patrols. They do their own cooking, cleaning, planning, activities and play. They tent with other Scouts, not with their parents. Parents are critical to the success of a Scout, but in a much different way than in Cub Scouts.

Scout camping centers on the Patrol, where Scouts learn teamwork, leadership, and Scout skills. It is important that adults not be in the middle of Patrol activities such as site selection, tent pitching, meal preparation, and anything else where Scouts practice decision-making.

A key difference between BSA Scouting and Cub Scouting is leadership. Look for the word "leader" in a job title, and you will see the difference. The responsible person for a den is the adult Den Leader. The responsible person for a Scout Patrol is the Scout Patrol Leader.

This isn't token leadership. A Patrol Leader has real authority, and much of the success of the other Scouts in the Patrol depends directly on the Patrol Leader. BSA Scouting teaches leadership, and Scouts learn leadership by practicing it, not by watching adults lead.

We allow Scouts to grow by practicing leadership and by learning from their mistakes. And while Scout skills are an important part of the program, what ultimately matters when our Scouts become adults is not whether they can use a map and compass, but whether they can offer leadership to others in tough situations and can live by a code that centers on honest, honorable, and ethical behavior.

Adults cook, eat, and tent separately from the Scouts. We are safely nearby, but not too close. Go ahead and visit the Patrol sites, talk to your son (and the other Scouts), ask what's going on or how things are going. But give the guys room to grow while you enjoy the view. Show a Scout how to do something, but don't do it for him. Avoid the temptation to give advice, and don't jump in just to prevent a mistake from happening (unless it's serious). Let the Patrol leader lead.

If you do feel something should be done but aren't sure if you should step in or not, ask the Scoutmaster or adult in charge for advice.

How Can a Parent Fit into the New Patrol?

In BSA Scouts, we do not have Den Leaders; there is no adult leader running a Patrol or the Troop. Adult assistance comes from an Assistant Scout Master (ASM) who is a registered adult Scouting volunteer who wears a Scout uniform. More ASMs means that adult participation in activities can be better distributed. If you would like to become an ASM, please let the Scoutmaster know since he appoints ASMs.

Parents supporting the Patrol have three main tasks:

- Provide a safe environment.
- Provide services that the Scouts cannot. Driving is the main thing. Also, many activities require an adult "in charge."
- Monitor advancement. Help in tracking the requirements completed by the Scouts.

Any task that *can* be done by a Scout, *should* be done by a Scout. ASMs are like chaperones at dances, except that we also get to participate and learn along with the Scouts.

A difficult thing for a new Scouting parent is to ***watch the Scouts fail safely***, but this is an extremely important thing to do. You are needed to make sure that they are failing safely. You are not there to fix it for them or to prevent them from failing. This robs them of a tremendous learning opportunity.

An example is the Troop's first campout with a new Patrol. The Patrol has a Patrol Leader, has been given tents and a Patrol box, has had the Patrol method explained, and is now setting up their first campsite. Chances are good that every other Patrol will have their tents up and be waiting for the new Patrol to finish, even with their Troop Guide offering direction. This was the most frustrating thing for me to watch as a new ASM. But, no one got hurt, nothing got destroyed, and most importantly, the Patrol solved its own problem and accomplished its goal! The second time was less traumatic. After a while, this became routine for them.

How Can a Parent Fit into the Troop?

Troop 479 is "Scout Led." That means, as an adult, you have very little say in how the Troop operates, what they do for activities, and what mistakes they make. You provide safety and adult-only services. The Scoutmaster provides guidance as needed, and members of the Troop Committee provide assistance in making the Scout's program happen, perform administrative duties, and assist in long-term direction.

At the Troop level, an ASM's role is to support the Scoutmaster and the Scouts. These are traits you should develop in yourself:

- Be open to trying new things. As a new ASM, for the first time in my life, I kayaked whitewater, climbed rocks, and snow camped.
- Be ready to fail at something new. A good way for a Scout to learn how to deal with and grow from failure is to see it happen to a mature person.
- Make the best of challenging situations. If you are not enjoying yourself, the Scouts will know. Keep a positive attitude.
- Support a team rather than individual accomplishment. Each Scout advances and grows individually, but the larger goal is to prepare the Scout for a leadership role in society, which means leading a team of some size.
- Look for small positives in large negatives. For example, if an entire structure of lashings collapsed except for one well-done square lashing, that one knot was a success and it should be recognized.

What Else Can I Do?

There are many other roles you can play as adult. Here are some of them:

- Merit Badge Counselor: Lead the Scouts through the requirements to earn a merit badge. Look through the merit badge list and find some that interest you and that you are qualified to teach. Ask the Merit Badge Coordinator about signing up to become a counselor for a specific merit badge. There are BSA forms to fill out.
- Troop Committee Member: We often need people to help conduct boards of review and fill committee positions such as activity coordinators, secretary, treasurer, fundraising coordinators, advancement chair, etc. The Troop relies on a strong, supportive committee for its success.



- Board of Review Member: As the Scouts advance in rank, they must appear before a board of review. This is typically composed of parents and the Advancement Chair. ASMs and the Scoutmaster are not permitted to sit on the Boards, but it is a great opportunity for parents to meet the Scouts in the Troop.
- Attend some outings: We always need drivers. Not all outings involve camping. Get involved in those that interest you.
- Help plan special ceremonies.

Know the Lingo

Your Scout will be doing a lot of memorizing at the start. You can help by showing your interest and helping to apply the words in everyday life. The Scout Oath and Law provide important rules to live by. Our goal is to help the Scout build these character qualities into the Scout's value system so that they become part of who the Scout is.

These are some of the important things that a Scout will be expected to memorize:

- Scout Oath
- Scout Law
- Scout Motto
- Scout Slogan
- Scout Benediction
- Scout Vespers
- Outdoor Code

If you are an Assistant Scout Master, you should memorize these as well since we say them at Troop meetings. They are a way to bind us together as a common group.

Costs and Fundraising

Scouting Costs

The youth registration fee with BSA Northern Star Council is \$180 as of the most recent program year. You can pay all at once or in two installments of \$90 each. Financial assistance is available through the Council for those families who need it, and this is kept confidential at the Council level.

The full cost of a Scout uniform is about \$100, including a BSA shirt, convertible pants, socks and a belt. Weekend Trips typically run from \$30 to \$100 each, depending on the event. For example, renting kayaks or ski passes costs more than backpacking through a forest.

The annual summary Many Point Scout Camp is about \$350 to \$375. Outings are all paid for through the Scout's account, which can be funded through the Troop fundraiser.

Fund Raising

Troop 479's fundraiser is sales of wreaths and chocolates by the Scouts in the fall. Scouts individually sell these items to their customers (neighbors, friends, family, etc.) over the course of a month and then pick up and deliver the items the weekend before Thanksgiving. About 1/3 of what the Scout sells goes to their Scout account to be used for outings (e.g. \$600 in sales = \$200 in the Scout account).

In addition, each Scout is required to contribute \$40 through fundraising to the Troop account each year they are registered with the BSA. If a Scout does not participate in fundraising, a \$40 buyout will be charged to their Scout account. If a Scout participates in fundraising but does not reach \$40, the difference will be charged to their Scout account.

Many Point Scout Camp

The most important event of the first year is participation at Many Point. Your Scout will spend a week camping with the Troop and learning by immersion and will also complete a very large part of the advancement requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks.

If your Scout misses this camp, it will require quite a bit of extra effort to catch up with the rest of the Patrol that did attend and the team building that occurs cannot be “made up.” It is also the best way to keep Scouts engaged. Scouts who go to Many Point almost always stay in Scouting for many years to come.

Advancement and Merit Badges

Rank Advancement

Each Scout is responsible for their own rank advancement.

Troop 479 holds Courts of Honor toward the end of March, June, September, and early December. At these Troop events, Scouts are recognized for their advancement accomplishments and rank insignia are distributed to Scouts who have completed the entire process. If any of the process is not completed, the Scout has 3 months to complete it for the next Court of Honor.

1. Complete all rank requirements in Scout Handbook. As each requirement is completed, have an authorized senior Scout or uniformed adult leader sign off the completion in the back of the Scout Handbook. The date is required on all sign-offs. The requirements to “Demonstrate Scout Spirit” and “Scoutmaster Conference” will be signed off by the Scoutmaster when you complete your conference with him. Adult leaders can not sign off on their own child’s rank requirements.
2. When all Scout Handbook requirements are complete, the Scout should contact the Scoutmaster to schedule a Scoutmaster Conference. This meeting is between the Scoutmaster and Scout to review the Scout’s progress, see how he is doing with Scouting, and share ideas. It is courteous to arrange a conference at least a week ahead of time, preferably two weeks. Waiting until the last minute may make it impossible to fit the conference into the Scoutmaster’s schedule. You can use email or the phone to arrange a conference.
3. Attend the Scoutmaster Conference in full uniform, with your handbook and pen, and on time. A parent should plan to stay for the conference.
4. After the Scoutmaster Conference is completed (like as soon as you get home!) the Scout should contact the Advancement Chair to arrange a Board of Review. It may take two weeks or more to arrange a Board of Review time.
5. Attend the Board of Review in full uniform, with your handbook and pen, and on time. Arrive 10 minutes before your scheduled review time.
6. Attend the Court of Honor to receive your rank patch. Your rank advancement date is the day that the Board of Review signs off, not the date of the Court of Honor.

A minimal timeline to use would look like this, but allowing additional time is a good idea:

Time to Court of Honor	Activity
4 weeks	Have ALL requirements signed off in handbook with Dates
4 weeks	Contact Scoutmaster to arrange conference
3 weeks	Scoutmaster Conference
3 weeks	Contact Advancement Chair to arrange Board of Review
1 week	Board of Review
0	Court of Honor

In the past, some Scouts have put off these advancement steps and then expected the adult volunteers to rush them through the process. This puts unfair burden on the volunteers and does not promote the leadership and personal management skills that good Scouts develop. If a Scout is not able to complete his Board of Review in time for the upcoming Court of Honor, he can schedule a Board of Review for the next month. His rank advancement date will only be one month later, not three months when the next Court of Honor occurs.

Scoutmaster: Jason Bidwell bidw0009@gmail.com

Advancement Chair: Renee Rushdy advancement@Troop479.org

Sign Offs

In the BSA Scout handbook, it states that “your Scoutmaster or someone designated by your Scoutmaster” will initial each completed requirement for advancement. There are no further guidelines on whom a Scoutmaster should designate, so it is up to each Troop to decide how much assistance is needed and what qualifications are necessary. Some Troops just have the Scoutmaster do all sign offs, some have all First Class and above Scouts sign off, and others use only registered adults.

In Troop 479, the following guidelines explain how we will handle advancement sign offs:

Rank	Can Sign Off
Scout	Troop Guide, trained and currently in position, or Troop 479 Assistant Scout Master (but not the Scout's parent), or Scoutmaster
Tenderfoot, 2 nd Class, and 1 st Class	Troop Guide, trained and currently in position, or Eagle, Life, or Star Scouts - members in the “Order of the Golden Pen”, or Troop 479 Assistant Scout Master (but not the Scout's parent), or Scoutmaster
Star, Life	Troop 479 Assistant Scoutmaster (but not the Scout's parent) or Scoutmaster
Eagle, Eagle Palm	Scoutmaster

- The person signing should be an expert in the skill being signed off. If you do not feel qualified, do not sign off. This ensures you know the skill is being done correctly and can provide guidance if done incorrectly. Then, the Scout can try again at a future time.
- Scouts and adults do not sign off for family members.
- 1st Class Scouts do not sign off unless currently a Troop Guide and trained.
- The “Order of the Golden Pen” is just a fun reminder for experienced Scouts to take their mentoring role seriously.

Merit Badge Process

Troop 479 follows the BSA merit badge procedure. We have a booklet of all available merit badges. We have a list of registered merit badge counselors. It is the responsibility of each Scout to select and earn merit badges that interest him.

Pick a Subject: Look through the Scouts BSA Requirements booklet at the available merit badges and their requirements, or review the merit badges on a web site. Talk to your Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster about your interests. Pick a merit badge to earn.

Find a Buddy: You must have another person with you at every meeting with the merit badge counselor. This person can be another Scout, your parent, a brother or sister, or a friend. It is more fun if you have a Scout buddy earning the merit badge with you.

Request a Blue Card: Request a blue card using Troop Web Host to send an email to the advancement chair. You must request a blue card before proceeding with your merit badge.

Meet with Your Counselor: Email or speak with the merit badge counselor and tell him/her that you would like to earn the merit badge. Tell the counselor you have your blue card. The counselor will set up a time to meet with you and your buddy to explain what is expected of you and to start helping you meet the requirements. When you know what is expected, start to learn and do the things required. Read the merit badge pamphlet to learn a lot about the subject. You can check a pamphlet out from the Troop librarian by sending him a request by email, or search for the merit badge requirements online. Ask your counselor to help with the things you need help to complete.

Show Your Stuff: When you are ready, call or email the counselor again to make an appointment to meet the requirements. Take the projects you've made and the work you've done so you can demonstrate your completion of the requirements. If projects are too big, arrange to have the counselor come and see them or ask if you can bring a photograph of the project instead. The counselor will ask you to do each and every requirement to make sure that you know your stuff and have done or can do the things required.

Turn in the Blue Card: When the counselor is satisfied that you have met the requirements, s/he will sign your blue merit badge card. Turn in the completed blue merit badge card to your Advancement Chair so the merit badge patch can be ordered.

Requirements: You are expected to meet the requirements as they are stated. You are expected to do exactly what is stated. If it says, "show or demonstrate," that is what you must do; just telling about it isn't enough. The same is true for requirements such as "make," "collect," "identify," and "label".

Scoutmaster: Steve Johnson Scoutmaster@Troop479.org

Advancement Chair: Renee Rushdy advancement@Troop479.org

Merit Badge Guidelines

Each Scout has a Scout Handbook in which he should track the completion of his merit badges for rank advancement. It is the responsibility of the Scout to select and earn the merit badges he needs.

The Troop will make everything available to Scouts that they need for selecting merit badges and providing merit badge counselors:

- The Merit Badge Counselor list is in the Troop Library and on Troop Webhost
- The Merit Badge Pamphlets are in the Troop Library and online
- The Scouts BSA Requirements booklet is in the Troop Library and online
- Blue merit badge cards are with the Advancement Chair

Scouts in a Patrol can decide together to do a particular merit badge. This fulfills the Scout buddy requirement and does not create a classroom environment for the merit badge.

Each merit badge counselor will set the limit of number of Scouts s/he will counsel at a time. This takes precedence over Patrols taking a merit badge as a group.

Merit badge counselors for merit badges that are popular year to year may offer those merit badges on a regular schedule. These are typically Eagle-required merit badges. Scouts should not expect merit badges to be offered but should proactively pursue merit badges needed for advancement or for the enjoyment of learning something new.

The Troop may offer specific merit badges at some events, such as the Snow Sports merit badge on a skiing campout or the Railroading merit badge at an afternoon fieldtrip.

The Troop will not participate in “Merit Badge Clinics” or events set up specifically for the quick completion of multiple merit badges.

Troop meetings will not be used for merit badge work. All merit badge meetings will be held separate from Troop meetings, at the convenience of the merit badge counselor.

Eagle Merit Badges

To complete the 21 merit badge requirement for Eagle rank, the following schedule would fulfill that requirement in four years.

This is most certainly **NOT** an expectation or recommendation. This is only an example of how a Scout *could* complete the Eagle merit badge requirements by doing two badges each year plus three at summer camp.

R=Required for Eagle E=Elective

The “Time” is a practical estimate of how long it should take a Scout to complete the badge.

Badges done at summer camp may have prerequisite requirements or items to finish up after camp.

	Merit Badge	R/E	Time	Notes
5 th Grade – earn Scout & Tenderfoot:				
1	Camping	R	2 yr	Start immediately – get a blue card NOW
2	E #1	E	1 wk	Summer Camp 1 st year
3	E #2	E	1 wk	Summer Camp 1 st year
6 th Grade – Second Class & First Class:				
4	Personal Fitness	R	4 mon	start at spring break, finish before summer camp
5	First Aid	R	1 wk	Summer Camp 2 nd year
6	Swimming	R	1 wk	Summer Camp 2 nd year
7	E #3	E	1 wk	Summer Camp 2 nd year
7 th grade – earn Star:				
8	Citizenship in the Community	R	3 mon	start with school, finish before Christmas break
9	Communications	R	2 mon	start after Christmas, finish by spring break
10	Family Life	R	4 mon	start at spring break, finish before summer camp
11	Hiking	E	1 yr	prepare for high adventure treks
12	Backpacking	E	1 yr	prepare for high adventure treks
13	Environmental Science	R	1 wk	Summer Camp 3 rd year
14	E #4	E	1 wk	Summer Camp 3 rd year
15	E #5	E	1 wk	Summer Camp 3 rd year
8 th grade – earn Life:				
16	Citizenship in the Nation	R	3 mon	start with school, finish before Christmas break
17	Personal Management	R	4 mon	start at spring break, finish before summer camp
18	Lifesaving or Emergency Prep	R	1 wk	Summer Camp 4 th year
19	E #6	E	1 wk	Summer Camp 4 th year
9 th grade – earn Eagle:				
20	Cooking	R	3 mon	Summer Camp 5 th year
21	Citizenship in the World	R	3 mon	start with school, finish before Christmas break

Depending on what merit badges are offered at summer camp, these would be good ones to choose based on the instructor skills and equipment needed, Scout abilities needed, and fun factor.



1st year camp badges: Art, Leatherwork and Basketry, Fishing, Woodcarving, Nature, Pottery, Sculpture

2nd year camp badges: Archery, Canoeing, Climbing, Indian Lore, Orienteering, Rowing, Sailing, Wilderness Survival

3rd year camp badges: Pioneering, Rifle Shooting, Shotgun Shooting, Flyfishing

Camping

How We Run Camping Trips

- Drivers: we are always in need of more drivers. You do not need to commit to being an ASM in order to go on the outings. Costs for gas are reimbursed when receipts are submitted.
- The Troop's Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) sets the calendar for the coming year. Each month, they meet and make sure preparations are under way for the next few months' outings and that this month's outing is ready.
- The Troop uses TroopWebHost (www.Troop479.org) to manage its activities and outings. Medical forms (completed annually) contain parent permission to provide aid as needed and are required for attendance at any Scout outing.
- Meet at the church at the specified departure time for the outing.
- Bring a snack for the drive and/or money to buy a snack at a gas stop. The event registration will tell you when you need to bring extra money for "on-the-road" meals. For outings that begin on Friday evening, eat dinner at home.
- When returning from an outing, Scouts are returned to the Church at the approximate return time as noted for the event.
- Each Patrol plans their own meals. Typically, one Scout in a Patrol will be responsible for purchasing the food for the Scout's Patrol for a trip (the Grub Master). It is the Scout's responsibility to turn in receipts to the Treasurer for reimbursement of expenses.

The Adult Patrol (a.k.a. The Old Goat Patrol) on Camping Trips:

- All adults on an outing make up the Adult Patrol. We work together just like the Scout Patrols, pitching tents, preparing meals, and performing clean-up as a group.
- When you go on a trip, you may be asked to plan a meal. You will determine the menu for that meal, purchase the food, and be the head cook preparing it, although other adults will be happy to assist. Costs for meals are reimbursed by the Troop when you submit receipts.
- The Troop has a nice supply of high quality tents for adults to use. By using these tents, we maintain a consistent campsite. However, if you have special needs or prefer your own tent, you are welcome to bring it. Female leaders will have tents separate from male leaders.

Things Scouts Should Know About Camping and Food

General goals to keep in mind when dealing with food for camping are to minimize space, weight, waste, and cost while maximizing nutrition and cooking fun. Menu planning for a campout should be done about two weeks before the trip at a Patrol meeting. When it is your turn to purchase food, there are some main things to remember:

1. Ask your parent for help only when you need it. Do as much as you can on your own. Ask one of your Patrol mates to go shopping with you. When your menu is ready, the Senior Patrol Leader will review and approve it.
2. Follow the menu that has been approved by the Senior Patrol Leader. The Patrol decided on the menu and your role is to make the plan happen. Use the food pyramid (or food plate) when making your menus.
3. Figure out the food items needed and the amount of each item based on the number of Scouts going. Make a shopping list of items and amounts needed.
4. When buying the food, buy just enough for the trip. "Thrifty" is a point of the Scout Law, and this is an opportunity to practice that point. Compare brands and prices to find good deals.



5. You should select the food items and be responsible for the shopping cart.
6. Calculate the cost per Scout. The cost per Scout should stay under \$16 for 4 meals.
7. Some food comes excessively packaged and takes up a lot of space. Decide if it makes sense to repackage some items to reduce garbage and make the trip easier.
8. Buying pre-cooked meat is very expensive and prevents you from learning how to cook it correctly yourself. If a Scout is cooking meals for rank advancement, the meals need to have real cooking involved, not just heating food.
9. Fruit and vegetables are healthy but sometimes noticeably absent from Patrol menus. Part of the Scout Oath is to keep "physically fit," which includes a good diet. Include fruit and vegetables in your Patrol menus. Dried fruit is expensive to buy but easy to make if you have a food dryer.
10. Buy lightweight drink mix instead of bottles of liquid. Your Patrol has its own water jug and pitcher. Pre-measuring mix into baggies is a good idea. **Bottled water or drinks is not recommended due to weight, waste volume and litter problems.**
11. Pack perishable foods in an appropriate cooler.
12. Put dry goods in a plastic container or cardboard box.

New Scout Camping Gear

This is what a Scout should have when he goes camping for the weekend. Items with "***" are things he may need to purchase specifically for Scouts. Synthetic materials maintain warmth and loft better than cotton when wet. Bring polyester fleece rather than cotton sweatshirt, polypropylene rather than cotton long underwear, nylon pants rather than cotton blue jeans. See the hiking, camping, and cooking sections in the Scout Handbook.

Clothing

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ** Scout Uniform with neckerchief | <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking boots or sturdy walking shoes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ** Rain Jacket with attached hood | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermal underwear - top and bottoms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ** Rain Pants | <input type="checkbox"/> Stocking hat for warmth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fleece Jacket | <input type="checkbox"/> T-shirt (2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra pair of nylon pants | <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball or brimmed hat for sun |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Underwear (1-2 pair) | <input type="checkbox"/> Warm gloves |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Socks (2 pair) | |

Scout Gear

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scout Handbook and cover | <input type="checkbox"/> ** Flashlight – small LED headlamp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small notebook and pencil or pen | <input type="checkbox"/> ** Whistle – small plastic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping bag and pad | <input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush & toothpaste |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mess kit/plastic bowl and spoon | <input type="checkbox"/> Washcloth, soap, & hand towel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water bottle | <input type="checkbox"/> Bug spray & sunscreen |

Gear to Wait On (if you don't already have it)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ** Hiking boots – if you don't have them | <input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit – will make one soon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Backpack – research first | <input type="checkbox"/> Pocket knife – earn Totin' Chip first |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compass – see what others have | <input type="checkbox"/> Firestarter – earn Firem'n Chit first |

Gear Supplied by the Troop

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patrol Box – pots, stove, all cooking gear | <input type="checkbox"/> Rope bag – lots of various ropes |
|---|---|

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patrol Tents – 2-man and/or 4-man tents | <input type="checkbox"/> Axes, saws |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patrol Rainfly – pop-up shelter | <input type="checkbox"/> Backpacking stoves |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dutch Ovens | <input type="checkbox"/> Water filters |

Guidelines for Adult Campers

- **Scout Tenting & Meals:** Scouts tent with their Patrol in a Patrol site separate from the other Patrols. Patrols plan their own menus, and cook and eat together as a team.
- **Adult Tenting & Meals:** Adults tent in a Patrol site separate from the Scout Patrols. We plan our own menu, and cook and eat together as a team.
- **Adult/Youth Tenting:** BSA youth protection policies forbid an adult and a youth sharing the same tent. It is extremely important that a Scout camp with his Patrol, not with his dad.
- **Youth Protection:** Complete the BSA Youth Protection training before interacting with Scouts on campouts or other Scout activities.
- **Safety:** Our main duty is to keep Scouting safe. Stay alert for dangerous situations.
- **Smoking/Drinking:** Smoking, use of tobacco products, and drinking of alcoholic beverages during a Scout activity, while transporting Scouts, or anywhere around Scouts is prohibited.
- **Scout Leadership:** Adults should not interfere with the functioning of Scout leaders, even if they make mistakes. Step in only if it is a matter of immediate safety or if the mistake will be costly. If possible, involve a uniformed adult leader first.
- **Scout Transportation:** The trip to and from camp is the most dangerous part of a weekend. To ensure our Scouts are kept safe, please:
 - a. Turn in vehicle, driver, and insurance information to Scoutmaster.
 - b. Do not use cell phone while driving.
 - c. Drive the speed limit.
 - d. Do not drive when feeling fatigued, which impairs ability to avoid accidents.
 - e. Make trip preparations in advance so last-minute preparations don't interfere with your rest.

The Troop provides tents for all adult campers with 2 or 3 people per tent. You are welcome to bring your own tent. The adults have a Patrol box of cooking gear that comes on all campouts. You do not need to bring any other cooking equipment.

The adult in charge will either handle the entire menu for a campout or solicit other adults to plan and lead the cooking of one meal per campout. We expect new adults to just participate, learn, and enjoy the experience for the first 6 months or so. When you would like to lead a meal, please let the adult-in-charge know.

Costs & Reimbursements: A limited number of adults are required on campouts to transport Scouts and provide safety. Those adults should have no personal expense to support the program, so their camping costs are distributed across the Scouts' fees. There will be some outings that include participation fees which adults will also be asked to pay, such as snow skiing.

Turn in receipts for food and gas expenses to the Troop treasurer. This helps track the true cost of the program. You may prefer to take the expenses as tax deductions.

This is certainly not an exhaustive list. Please ask any questions you have about your role in the Scouting program. If you want to learn more or don't understand something, just ask.

A Special Note About Covid-19

This welcome package is how the Troop runs the Scouting program under normal times. Of course, with Covid-19, times are not normal. The information in this welcome package should be read along with the current important supplemental Covid-19 related information available on TroopWebHost.

A Safety Subcommittee has been formed to address the challenge of how to keep our Troop safe and connected while still gathering for outings and meetings during these challenging times.

Please refer to TroopWebHost (www.Troop479.org) for our current Covid-19 safety protocols under the "Forms & Documents" menu item for the latest information.