

TROOP 626

Windwood Presbyterian Church

Parent and Scout Guide

Polaris District
Sam Houston Area Council

Version 5.1 (January 2007)



Table of Contents

I. Welcome to...

- A. Scouting
- B. Troop 626

II. Troop Organization

- A. Chartered Organization
- B. Troop Committee
- C. Scoutmaster
- D. Assistant Scoutmaster

III. Troop Parents

- A. Participation
- B. Troop Committee
- C. Assistant Scoutmasters
- D. Merit Badge Counselors

IV. Troop Meetings

- A. Patrols, Patrol leaders and the Patrol method
- B. Uniforms and Scout Shops

V. Advancement and Recognition

- A. Participation and Ranks
- B. First Class Emphasis – Scout to First Class
- C. Older Scout – First Class to Life
- D. Senior Scout – Life to Eagle Scout and Venture Crew
- E. Steps to gain Advancements
 - i. Scoutmaster Conference
 - ii. Board of Review
 - iii. Court of Honor

VI. Merit Badges

- A. Purpose
- B. Process
- C. Helpful Hints

VII. Service Hours

VIII. Scouting Achievement Programs

- A. Order of the Arrow
- B. NYLT

IX. Troop Activities

- A. Troop Campouts
- B. Summer and Winter Camps

X. Adult / Scout Safety and Supervision

- A. Two deep leadership
- B. Rule of 4
- C. Transportation
- D. Sleeping Accommodations
- E. Knives, Axes, Guns and Firearms
- F. Restricted and Unauthorized Activities
- G. Health Forms

XI. Behavior Adult and Scout

- A. Inappropriate
- B. Discipline Procedures

XII. Financial Responsibilities and Opportunities

- A. Annual Registration Fees
- B. Fees for Outings and Activities
- C. Fundraising and Scout Accounts
- D. Allowed Reimbursements
- E. Grants
- F. Scholarships
- G. Friends of Scouting (FOS)

XIII. Closing

XIV. Appendices

- A. Parent Guide Change Log
- B. Organizational Chart
- C. Adult Roles and Description

I. WELCOME...

***All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind
are convinced that the fate of empires
depends on the education of youth.
–Aristotle***

***Scouting is "a game with a Purpose"
Robert Lord Baden-Powell***

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Boy Scouts of America and Troop 626! By becoming a parent of a Boy Scout or Venturing Scout, you are setting your son out on the grand adventure of Scouting. This is a tremendously important and rewarding endeavor that you will be able to share with him.

Troop Mission: Troop 626 is committed to providing opportunities for the individual growth of young men, by supporting a boy-led troop that strives to get all new scouts to the rank of First Class within a year, to provide high-adventure, leadership roles, and an excellent merit badge program for our older scouts while they develop into fine young men on the road to the Eagle Scout rank and beyond.

The following pages describe what the program is all about, how much it will cost, and the organization of our Troop. Reading this guide will help you understand how, with your help, your son can progress through the Scout ranks. This guide is also designed to help you understand how you can be of help to your son and the Troop, and what the various adult volunteers are doing to help the Troop. There is a Parent Form for you to fill out at the end of this guide, please return it to the Membership Coordinator.

WHAT IS BOY SCOUTING ALL ABOUT?

There are three aims to Boy Scouting:

- **To build character:** building self-reliance, self-discipline, self-confidence and self-respect.
- **To foster citizenship:** fostering love of community, country and world, along with a commitment of service to others and an understanding of democratic principles.
- **To develop fitness:** developing physical, mental, emotional, and moral fitness that will stay with a Scout for the rest of his life.

These three aims are the bedrock of the American Scouting movement. They represent the long-term outcomes desired for every boy.

It is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) to serve others by helping to instill values in young people, and in other ways to prepare them to make ethical choices over their lifetime in achieving their full potential. This involves building desirable qualities of character, a high degree of self-reliance, a sense of responsibility, a respect for others the desire and skills to help others, leadership skills and a desire to be a good citizen of our nation and community.

The values we strive to instill are found in the Boy Scout Oath and Law.

Scout Law

A Scout is:
Trustworthy
Loyal
Helpful
Friendly
Courteous
Kind
Obedient
Cheerful
Thrifty
Brave
Clean
Reverent

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.

Since 1910, these principles have been taught in an atmosphere of recreation and fun, which allows young people to develop self-confidence, leadership and moral character. More and more men, trained as Scouts, are taking their places in today's world as responsible adult leaders. Men, who earned badges as Scouts, sit on the Supreme Court of the United States. Others hold important offices in our government, business and industry. Most of the members of the present U.S. Congress were Scouts. Of the 214 pilots and scientists selected as astronauts since 1959, more than 125 were Scouts or have been active in Scouting, as well as most of the astronauts who have walked on the moon.

President John F. Kennedy, Boy Scout	Neil A. Armstrong, First person on the moon: Eagle Scout	President Gerald Ford: Eagle Scout
Steven Spielberg, Director/Producer: Eagle Scout	J. Willard Marriott, Jr.; President of Marriott Corp.: Eagle Scout	William C. Devries, MD; transplanted first artificial heart: Eagle Scout
Sam M. Walton, Chairman/CEO, Wal-Mart: Eagle Scout	Barber B. Conable, Jr.; President of the World Bank: Eagle Scout	Bill Bradley, United States Senator: Eagle Scout

The Boy Scouts of America is the largest youth oriented organization in the United States. More than 4.5 million young people and leaders are currently registered in the Boy Scouts of America. Unlike Cub Scouting, which many of you are familiar with; Boy Scouting is a youth-led organization. The boys learn responsibility and how to organize and lead the Troop. Sometimes these lessons are hard. However we try to make sure that all challenges we place before the Scouts are challenges they can, with a little effort, overcome. After training, and with adult supervision, the boys run the show.

We use the following methods to accomplish our aims:

Ideals - Each Scout commits himself to the personal behavior guides and standards in the Scout motto, the slogan, the Oath and the Law

Patrols - Patrols give Scouts experience in teamwork, democracy and leadership

Outdoors - Scouting emphasizes outdoors activities, which foster an appreciation of nature and our ecology. Along the way, Scouts practice and learn new skills and develop confidence in their own abilities to cope with obstacles. Scouting is outing! Your son will advance and enjoy Scouting more if they go on the outings, otherwise there is a very good chance they will loose interest in the program.

Advancement - The advancement program provides Scouts with a ladder of skills to climb at their own pace. On the way up, they have many opportunities to learn and to make achievements that they will be recognized for.

Personal growth - All of the other methods contribute to the personal growth of a Scout through experience. The quest for growth is a method, too.

Adult association - Adult leaders, male and female, provide an example to Scouts of the high character they should strive for in their personal growth.

Leadership development – Ensuring that the boys get leadership experience is one of the most valuable learning opportunities that Scouting provides.

Uniform - The uniform reminds a Scout of who he is and what is expected of him. It identifies him as part of a patrol, troop, council and worldwide youth movement. He can take pride in being a Scout and in the achievements shown on his uniform and sash.

The boys in the Troop will initially work towards their First Class Rank and then will work on the ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle Scout. As they travel on the trail to Eagle and beyond, they not only learn how to lead a team to a goal, they will actually lead teams of Scouts in a number of challenging situations. This is all done in the spirit of fun and adventure!

Please take a few minutes to read Chapter One and Two of your son's Boy Scout Handbook. For families to achieve the full benefit from the program, parents should realize that Scouting can be more educational than sitting in a classroom because of the hands-on experience the Scouting program provides.

II. TROOP ORGANIZATION

Troop 626 is a participating member of the Polaris District of the Sam Houston Area Council, Boy Scouts of America. The Troop's organization consists of a Chartered Organization, a Troop Committee, the Troop, and the Troop's Parents. See Appendix for an organizational chart.

Chartered Organization (Sponsor)

Troop 626 is "owned" by a *Chartered Organization*. It receives a national charter *which must be renewed yearly* to use the Scouting Program as part of its youth work. These groups which have goals compatible with those of the Boy Scouts of America, include religious, educational, civic, fraternal, business, labor, governmental bodies, and professional organizations.

Each chartered organization using the Scouting program provides a meeting place, selects a Scoutmaster, appoints a troop committee of at least three adults, and chooses a Chartered Organization Representative whose duties include:

- Is a member of the chartered organization
- Serves as head of "Scouting Department" in the organization
- Maintains a close liaison with the troop committee chairman
- Helps recruit other adult leaders
- Serves as a liaison between the troop and the chartered organization
- Assists with Unit rechartering
- Encourages service to the organization
- Is an active and involved member of the district committee

Since 1969, Windwood Presbyterian Church has been the Chartered Organization for Troop 626. Windwood shares our objectives for the boys, provides service opportunities and ensures that there is adequate, trained leadership. Windwood also provides Troop 626 with a meeting location and a storage facility for the Troop equipment and Troop trailer.

The **Troop Committee** works on behalf of the chartered organization and the troop must be operated within the organization's policies. The chartered organization must also approve all adult leaders. The **Chartered Organization Representative** is our liaison to the troop's operating organization. As a member of the chartered organization, that person acts to guide the Troop on the organization's policy.

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 use the program to accomplish its goals for youth.

The Troop must follow and respect the Charter Organizations policies and by-laws. Which include:

- Troop 626 will not hold religious non-Christian meetings, training, or activities on the premises.
- Troop 626 respects the use Christian prayer on the facilities and during a Troop activity.
- Troop 626 will respect and maintain the facilities and property.
- Troop 626 will work hand in hand with the church on carrying out religious programs that align with the church's mission and goals. A Scout is reverent.

Troop Committee (Committee Chair & Committee members)

The **Troop Committee's** primary responsibilities are supporting the Scoutmaster in delivering a quality troop program and handling troop administration.

The Troop Committee functions as an administration and support organization for the Troop. The Troop Committee takes care of the non-program activities for the Troop. For example: newsletters, Troop funds, fund raising, membership drives, coordination with local Packs, tour permits, advancement records, procurement and maintenance of Troop equipment.

The Committee meets monthly (usually the second Thursday of the month). The meetings are open and all parents and other interested adults are encouraged to attend. Call the Troop Committee Chairperson for more information (see the last page of this guide).

Scoutmaster (Unit Leader)

The Scoutmaster is the adult responsible for the image and program of the troop. The Scoutmaster and his Assistant Scoutmasters work directly with the Scouts. The importance of the Scoutmaster's job is reflected in the fact that the quality of his 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 appointed by the head of the chartered organization.

The Scoutmaster's duties include:

- Use the methods of Scouting to achieve the aims of Scouting.
- Work with other responsible adults to bring Scouting to boys.
- Work with the Committee and ASMs to plan and implement an active boy-led Troop program.
- Provide a program that supports rank advancement while meeting the goals of Scouting.
- Train and guide boy leaders.
- Act as an advisor to the patrol leaders' council (PLC) 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.
- Provides a Youth Leadership Training Program to the boy leaders of the Troop to teach the Patrol Method and how to run the Troop.
- Conduct Scoutmaster conferences for all rank advancements.
- Provide a systematic recruiting plan for new members and see that they are properly registered.
- Delegate responsibility to other adults and groups (assistants, troop committee) so that they have a real part in troop operations.
- Supervise troop elections for the Order of the Arrow.
- 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 (ASMs)

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

Troop 626 has three types of Assistant Scoutmasters:

- Assistant Scoutmaster--New Scout patrol
- Assistant Scoutmaster--Venture patrol (senior Scout Patrol)
- Assistant Scoutmaster—Scoutmaster (act as Scoutmaster)

A troop should recruit as many assistant Scoutmasters as possible.

The Assistant Scoutmasters' job includes:

- To work as Patrol Advisors assigned to specific Patrols with the duty of advising the Scout Patrols
- To work directly with the boy leaders of the Troop in providing training and support to the boys for planning and implementing an active boy-led Troop program.
- Provide a program that supports rank advancement while meeting the goals of Scouting.
- Works with the Scoutmaster and Committee to provide a Youth Leadership Training Program to the boy leaders of the Troop where the boys learn the Patrol Method and how to run the Troop.
- Provide support for Troop meetings, campouts and event programs.
- Advisors to the Patrol Leaders Council
- Provides leadership for overall Troop safety and Troop rank advancement of the Scouts.

Troop 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. Membership should be a shared concern of all adult leaders.

Troop 626 assigns a Committee member and an Assistant Scoutmaster to be responsible for troop membership growth such as the Webelos-to-Scout plan, recruiting new Scouts, and troop rallies for new members.

Troop 626 plans and participates in Troop and District activities each year in order to recruit new Scouts:

- District Webelos to Scouts campouts
- Annual Troop 626 Webelos Campout – inviting Webelos from surrounding Packs
- Webelos Cross-Over ceremonies – to receive Webelos into Boy Scouting and Troop 626

III. Troop Parents

Parent participation in Scouting

It is Troop 626 policy that every family has at least one registered adult Assistant Scoutmaster or Troop Committee member. The troop holds Orientation Sessions for parents so that they can better understand the operations of the troop and how their involvement can make the Scouting experience a better one for their sons. Check the troop's web site for the next scheduled session.

Our success in delivering the promise of Scouting to the boys of Troop 626 is due to the involvement of parents.

THE QUALITY OF THE BOY SCOUT PROGRAM DEPENDS ON THE NUMBER AND THE COMMITMENT OF THE VOLUNTEER ADULT LEADERS.

The vital role of parents within Troop 626 is to be supportive of the Troop's efforts and to provide the atmosphere Scouts need to learn and excel. Parents should:

- Read your son's Scout handbook, specifically the Parent pullout section and Chapters 1 and 2. Know the purpose and methods of Scouting.
- Attend an informal Boy Scout Fast Start training conducted by the Troop Committee. Information on the FastStart program is available at this site: <http://www.scouting.org/boyscouts/faststart/>
- Actively follow your Scout's progress (or lack thereof) and offer encouragement and a push when needed.
- Help coordinate a campout or event.
- Show support to your Scout and the Troop by attending the Courts of Honor.
- Attend Troop meetings or activities. (Why let the boys have all the fun?)
- Be a merit badge counselor in your job discipline, hobby subject or other interest.
- Provide rides to or from campouts.
- Provide transportation for equipment to or from a campout.
- Be the extra adult on a campout.
- Help organize refreshments for Courts of Honor.
- Be a guest speaker on an advancement related subject at a troop meeting.
- Supervise a fund raising activity.
- Help build or maintain patrol boxes. (wood working skills and tools required)
- Attend a Troop Committee meeting to see where you can best assist the Troop.

Each of these tasks and many more are important to the success of the troop. Without them we could not be what we are. Talk to the Committee Chairman or Scoutmaster about the contribution you can make. Without your assistance the troop and your son will not be as successful as can be. We realize that there are considerable demands on your time. One cannot however, make a better investment of this time than into the operation of your sons' troop and the greater community it serves.

Merit Badge Counselor

Merit Badge counselors are the key to success in the merit badge plan. They offer their time, experience, and knowledge to help guide Scouts in one or more of the merit badge subjects.

All parents of Troop 626 Scouts are needed and encouraged to become Merit Badge Counselors.

To be a Merit Badge Counselor for Troop 626, you must:

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Be proficient in the merit badge subject by vocation or avocation.
- Be registered with the Boy Scouts of America
- Complete and submit the BSA Merit Badge Counselor Information Form

The Merit Badge Counselor's responsibility is to:

1. Assist the Scout as he plans the assigned projects and activities to meet the merit badge requirements.
2. Coach Scouts through interviews and demonstrations on how to do the required skills of the craft, business, or hobby.
3. Certify the Scout after determining whether he is qualified for the merit badge.

As a Merit badge Counselor, your task is to satisfy yourself that each Scout who comes to you meets all the requirements for the merit badge. In this sense you are an examiner, though your larger opportunity lies in coaching-helping the Scout meet the challenge of the requirements and making him aware of the deeper aspects of the subject through your knowledge and experience.

As a merit badge counselor, I agree to:

- Follow the requirements of the merit badge, making no deletions or additions, ensuring that the advancement standards are fair and uniform for all Scouts. **NOTE:** Merit Badge requirements are periodically updated and need to be verified before approving a Scout to start work. <http://www.usscouts.org/mb/mbbooks.html>
- Have a buddy present with each Scout at all instructional sessions.
- Renew my registration as a merit badge counselor annually with the Troop if I plan to continue serving as a merit badge counselor.

IV. Troop Meetings

Troop 626 holds meetings weekly. Meetings are held every Monday from 7:00 p.m. to approximately 8:30 p.m., except on some Klein ISD or Cy-Fair ISD holidays (see calendars at the respective web sites). Changes to the meeting schedule will be announced as early as possible to allow for proper planning. It is expected that the Scouts will communicate changes among themselves and that Scouts will tell parents of any changes.

One patrol is assigned and responsible for each meeting. This includes conducting the opening ceremony, the meeting program, a game or contest, and the closing ceremony. Another patrol acts as the service patrol each week and is responsible for setting up and restoring the room to its initial condition after the meeting.

The Troop meeting requires careful planning and organization. The theme of the meeting and the patrol assignment (program or service) is set in advance. Every patrol is required to meet outside of the normal troop meetings to prepare for an activity (i.e. meeting planning, planning menus, rosters and camp assignments).

The Patrol, Patrol Leader, & the Patrol Method

Scouting is for boys, led by boys, under the guidance of responsible adults. The Troop is made up of a number of Patrols that are led by a boy leadership team. This leadership team is made up of a **Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL), Troop Quartermaster, Troop Camp-master, Troop Trainers, and Troop Guides.**

Patrols: A Patrol is a team of Scouts who will work together on the Scouting objectives. Patrols are made up of six to ten Scouts which are led by an elected Patrol Leader. The Scoutmaster works with the Assistant Scoutmasters to assign boys to patrols. Assignments are made to assure patrols that can function as effective teams. All youth leaders are leaders-in-training, training leaders. They are learning to be leaders and at the same time training others in skills that will allow them to also become leaders.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *Not all leadership positions meet the requirements for rank advancement. It is up to the Scout to verify with the Scoutmaster if a specific leadership position can apply to rank requirements.*

The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL): The SPL along with the Patrol Leaders and other youth officers, run the Troop. The SPL is either elected by the Scouts of the Troop or is chosen by the Scoutmasters. The Senior Patrol Leader with approval of the Scoutmaster appoints the other Troop officers which may include an Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Troop Quartermaster, Librarian, Scribe, Historian, Bugler, Cheer-master, and Chaplain's Aide.

Patrol Leaders: The Patrol Leader is an active member of the patrol and is elected by the scouts in each specific patrol. The Patrol Leader in turn appoints an Assistant Patrol Leader. The Patrol Leader assigns all positions and assignments in the Patrol which may include Quartermaster, Scribe, Historian, Cheer-master and a Patrol Chaplain's Aide.

Troop Elections: Troop 626 holds elections for Senior Patrol Leader and Patrol Leaders every six months. A scout may not hold the same office for a consecutive term. The exception to this rule is if there are no other Scouts eligible or available for that position during the election. A scout should be at least Second Class rank to be a Patrol Leader or Assistant Patrol Leader. The Patrol Leader for a first year Patrol will be appointed by the Scoutmaster through an interview process, Older Scouts called Troop Guides, work with the first year Patrols. The Senior Patrol Leader and the ASPL positions require a Scout that is at Star or Life rank. Elected and appointed patrol and troop officers are expected to fulfill the responsibilities of their offices.

The Patrol Leaders Council: The Patrol Leaders, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, and Scribe with the Senior Patrol Leader as their team-leader, form the Patrol Leaders' Council, which plans the Troop meetings, campouts and other activities. The PLC meets briefly before each Troop Meeting and meets for one hour on the first Tuesday of each month. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters attend the PLC to act as advisors. The PLC is run by the boy leaders of the Troop.

Troop 626 Youth Leadership Training: Troop 626 holds Youth Leadership Training after each Troop election. This conference is for all Troop 626 Scouts to attend. Scouts will learn how to use the Boy Scout Patrol Method and basics of leadership. Newly elected boy leaders will learn the responsibilities of their new positions and participate in a Patrol Leader Council. All Scouts are encouraged to attend and all Troop boy leaders are required to attend in order to qualify for their Troop leadership position.

Troop 626 Planning Conference: As part of our commitment to a Boy-Led Troop, Troop 626 holds an annual Troop Planning Conference in February or March. This conference is for all Troop 626 Scouts to attend. Scouts will contribute ideas on Troop activities and campouts. All Scouts are encouraged to attend.

UNIFORMS AND SCOUT SHOPS

Uniforms

The Scout uniform is one of the eight methods used to achieve the three aims of Scouting. The uniform by itself cannot make a good Scout or a good Troop, but its use has been proven to improve both the Scout and the Troop because it is a visible symbol of Scouting and unity. Scouts and Adult Leaders who wear the proper BSA Uniform will look like, and in turn feel like a proud member of the Boy Scouts of America. The scout uniform is "*...the thing to wear!*"

The Official uniform is the proper clothing for any and all Scout activities and meetings. It is designed to be worn outdoors as well as indoors. Scouts are encouraged to acquire a uniform as soon as possible after joining and to begin wearing it completely and correctly. The inside covers of the Official Boy Scout Handbook indicate precisely where the various badges are to be placed on the shirt.

Each Scout is required to have and wear, within a reasonable amount of time after joining the Troop, the following uniform items:

Field uniforms (Class A uniforms) are required to be worn at all troop meetings and when the troop is traveling as a group. The Class A uniform consists of the following official BSA items:

- Tan Scout shirts with appropriate insignia and patches (Sam Houston Area Council strip, red shoulder loops, and patrol emblem.) This shirt must be tucked in when worn.
- Troop number (purchased from Troop)
- Troop 626 neckerchief (obtained from Troop)
- Neckerchief slide scout bolo tie (can be purchased or made by Scout).
- Olive Scout pants or shorts.
- Boy Scout socks, for wearing with shorts.
- Tennis shoes or hiking boots. Socks are required
- Boy Scout Hat (Optional)

The Boy Scout Field Uniform (Class A uniform) with the troop neckerchief and official BSA merit badge sash is required for Court of Honor's, Board of Reviews, Scoutmaster Conferences, and Troop travel. The Sash is not required for Scoutmaster Conferences or Troop travel. Scout's who are not in proper uniform will not be allowed to participate in a Board of Review. Scout's who are not in proper uniform will not be allowed to receive awards at any Court of Honor.

The Activity or "Class B" Uniform is worn during outings after arrival at the outing location. Class B uniforms consist of:

- Troop 626 T-shirt (obtain from Troop 626) or other Scouting shirt, tucked in.
- Tennis shoes or hiking boots. Socks are required.
- Official Scout uniform pants/short or other solid color pants or shorts

In the summertime, as announced by the Scoutmaster, Activity uniforms (Class B uniforms) can be worn to troop meetings. Troop behavior will affect the decision to allow Class B uniform at summertime Troop meetings.

Uniforms and insignia are worn a specific way. Troop Leaders and Scout Shop staff will be able to answer any questions you might have on badge placement. Inside the cover of the Boy Scout Handbook, there are guides for badge placement.

Applying Patches: You can apply merit badge patches in a variety of ways (see explanation under Merit Badge Patches on page 14 of this handbook).

Applying Merit Badge Patches to the Scout Sash: When applying the merit badges to the sash, the eagle-required silver-edged badges should go along the right side (closest to the heart), leaving about 2" or so along the top for pins. Below that apply the badges in rows of three.

Service stars: The star is worn centered just above the left pocket with the green Boy Scout backing disc. You may also wear your service star with the gold backing disc from Cub Scouts; if wearing both, place them side by side. If you already have a service star from the previous year(s), the troop can recycle them, so please bring it in to exchange if you so desire.

Uniform wear in Scouting is similar to uniform wear in sports activities. Unless specified otherwise, Scouts must arrive in at least troop T-shirt for ALL Troop activities, including campouts. Parents and Scouts should not be surprised if a Scout is sent home to change into the proper uniform. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

Travel Uniform: Scouts will wear their Field Uniform (Class A) when traveling unless instructed otherwise by the Scoutmaster or by the Adult Campmaster.

Camouflage & Inappropriate symbols

National BSA policy and its Congressional Charter forbid the imitation of US Army, Navy, or Marine uniforms by members of the organization while participating in a BSA activity. Camouflage clothing is highly discouraged. There are no Boy Scout activities where camouflage clothing is appropriate. The Boy Scouts of America is not associated with any form of Para-military groups. Leave your camo stuff at home, and instead look like, and in turn feel like, a proud member of the Boy Scouts of America. The scout uniform is "*...the thing to wear!*"

Part of the Scout Law is that a "Scout is Reverent." This is defined as also defending another person's right to their beliefs. No symbols or flags (gang symbols, nazi or confederate symbols/flags) will be worn, shown, or flown that would cause a person to feel racial intolerance or racial hatred.

Scout Shops

There are several Scout Shops in the Houston Metropolitan area where you can purchase Scout uniforms and supplies. The two closest are:

FM 1960 Service Center

6512 FM 1960 West (at Champion Dr)

Houston, TX 77069

(281) 444-1152

Mon - Fri: 10 AM - 8 PM

Sat.: 10 AM - 5 PM

Closed Sunday

SHAC Council Service Center

610 North and East T.C. Jester

713-865-5190

Camp Strake Service Center

11322 I- 45 South

Conroe, TX 77304

(800) 864-1568

Tue- Fri: 8:30 AM - 5 PM

Sat: 10 AM - 3 PM

Closed Sunday

V. ADVANCEMENT AND RECOGNITION

There are many definitions of advancement, but the Scouting definition might well be, simply, "the art of meeting a challenge." For that is exactly what the Boy Scout advancement program asks the boys to do. The Boy Scout advancement program provides a ladder of skills that a Scout climbs at his own pace. As he acquires these skills, he moves up through a series of ranks.

PARTICIPATION

The benefits of Scouting to boys are many, but only with active participation. Partial participation will result in partial results! Surely if boys expect to receive the best Scouting has to offer, they must put their best into Scouting. Advancement along the Scouting trail requires active participation at each step (see requirements in the Official Boy Scout Handbook). If the rank calls for 4 months of active service, the Scout's record will be reviewed for the immediate past 4 months. To miss 2 meetings in any one month is only half-time participation and is NOT satisfactory for advancement. To consistently miss 1 meeting a month is also NOT satisfactory for advancement. Active participation in other Troop activities, including camping trips, hikes, and patrol activities is also required of Scouts for advancement.

Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle

The higher he climbs the more challenging his tasks -- and the more rewarding. Unlike in Cub Scouts, a Boy Scout must accomplish the requirement exactly as written; simply 'doing your best' will not satisfy a requirement. All Boy Scout requirements are designed to be challenging to a Scout, and age was taken under consideration when the requirement was written. The program is written to take 12 months to advance from Tenderfoot to 1st Class.

Achievement Goals include:

- Learning skills that qualify for Scouting's more rugged and exciting outdoor challenges.
- Developing body and mind, growing self-confidence, and helping younger Scouts climb the advancement ladder.
- Discovering how it feels to go further – in so many ways – than he ever thought he could.
- We don't look at advancement as a goal, but as a natural outcome of a planned, quality Troop program and it is integrated with our outdoor activities.
- Details for advancement are contained in the Boy Scout Handbook, which every Scout should obtain as soon as possible after joining the Troop.

First Class Emphasis Program: *Scout through First Class*

A scout should bring his Scout handbook to every meeting and campout.

From the time the Scout enters the Troop through the time he advances to First Class, he is learning basic Scouting skills which enable him to camp, hike, swim, cook, tie knots, administer first aid, perform other tasks in the outdoors, and to work as a member of a team.

With those first steps, the Scout begins to build himself physically, mentally, and morally. He will start to live with the Scout Oath and Law. Soon he will learn the symbolism inherent in the Scout badge; he will learn that there are three points of the trefoil that stand for the three parts of the Scout Oath: Duty to God and Country, duty to other people, and duty to one's self.

Most ranks require a specific amount of time in which the scout must display his Scout Spirit. Scout Spirit is where the scout demonstrates his participation at troop meetings, patrol functions, troop campouts and how he is living the Scout oath and law through his actions. Attendance at the meetings and other activities does not mean that there is an immediate sign off, if in the opinion of the scoutmaster the scout is not living to his scouting spirit potential. A Scout that does not attend at or over 50% of the Troop meetings and Troop Campouts may not receive sign-off for Scout Spirit towards the next rank.

The goal of this Troop is for the Scout to achieve the rank of First Class within his first year in the Troop. This is a sign that the Scout has mastered the fundamentals of Scouting and can begin to start the long process of learning to lead others, refining the learned skills and learning more advanced skills. It is important that parents realize that this is a goal, not a requirement. There is a lot to Scouting besides earning rank, and some Scouts take longer to earn First Class, than others which does not mean that they are not benefiting from the program. The leaders understand this and will work with each boy accordingly.

Older Scout Program: *Advancement First Class through Life*

The Star & Life Emphasis program is focused on moving the First Class Scout to Star Scout, then to Life Scout and into our Eagle Scout program. The Star rank is sometimes referred to as the Star-slump. Our goal is to motivate these Scouts with a challenging program that keeps them out of the slump. The Life rank is most often where a Scout will drop out. Our goal is to encourage these Scouts to make it to the rank of Eagle Scout.

From the achievement of First Class through Life rank, the Scout will be demonstrating leadership, performing service projects, earning merit badges and using the skills learned while achieving the rank of First Class. The next ranks he will earn are Star and Life. These ranks are harder to obtain than the earlier ranks but are also more interesting for the older Scouts.

A leadership position is required in the advanced ranks. Some of the positions are elected and some are appointed. The positions usually run for a 6-month term. During this term, the Scoutmasters are looking to the scout to fulfill the obligations and responsibility of his position. If the scout successfully completes his tenure, then the Scoutmaster will sign off this portion of his rank requirements.

Senior Scout Program: Advancement Life to Eagle

Upon completion of all requirements for Star and Life, the Scout will be eligible to work towards Eagle. The original principles, the Scout Oath and Law now have fuller meaning for the Scout and the understanding of them is much greater. The final steps towards Eagle are filled with leadership experiences.

Troop 626 has a team of adult advisors that are focused on the Life to Eagle Program. These advisors are:

- Eagle Advancement Chairman: Paul Roberts
- Eagle Advancement Program Advisors: Bryan Weldon, James Richardson, Skip Browning
- Eagle Project Mentor: Any adult in the Troop that shares an interest or expertise in the Eagle Project subject matter.

Eagle Project: The Life Scout is required to plan and lead a service project that will benefit the community. This project must be a substantial enough challenge so that the Scout can clearly demonstrate leadership capabilities. The Project must be approved by Troop 626 Scoutmaster, the Committee Chairman, the Polaris District, and the benefiting group.

The Eagle project has several phases:

Phase 1 – Identify a project

Phase 2 – Research and planning

Phase 3 – Presenting the project plan

Phase 4 – Implementation of the project

Phase 5 – Project completion

The fact that a boy is an Eagle Scout has always carried with it a special significance, not only in Scouting, but also as he enters higher education, business or industry, and community service. The award is a performance-based achievement whose standards have been well maintained over the years.

Not every boy who joins a Boy Scout troop earns the Eagle Scout rank; only about 2.5 percent of all Boy Scouts do so. This represents more than one million Boy Scouts who have earned the rank since 1911. Nevertheless, the goals of Scouting – citizenship, training, character development and personal fitness – remain important for all Scouts, whether or not they attain the Eagle Scout rank.

For those attaining the rank, a special group has been established by the BSA. The Eagles Nest is an organization that enables Eagles to network with others who have attained this honorable rank. For more information, please visit the site http://www.troop626.com/eagle_page.html

Senior Scout Program: Venturing Crew 1626

Venture Crew 1626

Venturing is a youth development program of the Boy Scouts of America for young men and women who are 14 (and have completed the eighth grade) through 20 years of age. Venturing's purpose is to provide positive experiences to help young people mature and to prepare them to become responsible and caring adults. Venturing Crew 1626 provides a high adventure program of exciting and meaningful activities that helps youth pursue their special interests, to grow, to develop leadership skills, and to become good citizens. Troop 626 and Crew 1626 work together to provide a unified program of interest to the older Scout.

The Crew's web site has a calendar and will be updated regularly:

<http://venturecrew1626.tripod.com/index.html>

Venture Crew Meetings

Venture Crew 1626 holds meetings every two weeks. Meetings currently are held every other Monday from 7:00 p.m. to approximately 8:30 p.m., except on Klein ISD or Cy-Fair ISD holidays (see calendars at the respective web sites). Changes to the meeting schedule will be announced as early as possible to allow for proper planning. It is expected that the Scouts will communicate changes among themselves and that their Scouts will tell parents of changes.

Venturing Advisors

The Scouts run Venturing Crew 1626. Adults are advisors and work as facilitators and advisors.

Venturing Awards

Advancement has been an important part of the Boy Scouts of America since the issuance of the first 12 merit badges in 1911. In that same tradition, a variety of awards are available to Venturers who accomplish specific advancement achievements. These awards include:

- Venturing Bronze Award
- Venturing Gold Award
- Venturing Silver Award
- Venturing Ranger Award

There are also two awards designed to provide recognition for youth and adults:

- Venturing Leadership Award
- Venturing Advisor Award of Merit

Steps to Advancements

Scoutmaster Conference

The Scoutmaster conference provides a review and test of the skills that the scout has learned at which he must show, to the Scoutmaster's satisfaction, that he has the skills and knowledge of that particular rank. Once the Scoutmaster is satisfied that the scout knows his material, the scoutmaster will signoff the scout's book under the specific rank. The Scout is required to wear the Boy Scout Field Uniform (class "A") at the Scoutmaster Reviews. A Scoutmaster can make exception to the uniform requirement as deemed necessary while on campouts or other events.

Board of Review

After the Scoutmaster Conference is completed and signed-off, the Scout will request a Board of Review. The Board of Review is composed of members of the Troop Committee. The Scout is required to wear the Boy Scout Field Uniform (class "A") including his Sash, at any Board of Review. The purpose of the review is not an examination. Rather it is to determine the Scout's attitude and acceptance of Scouting's ideals; to discuss the Scout's experiences in the Troop and the Troop's program, and to encourage him to keep working towards advancement. A Board of Review may also be held to counsel a boy about his lack of progress toward advancement.

Court of Honor:

Troop 626 conducts a Court of Honor as scheduled by the Scoutmaster or at least twice a year. The Court of Honor recognizes all Scout appointments, elections, awards, and advancements since the last Court of Honor. Adult recognition may be presented before the opening of the Troop Court of Honor. It is the responsibility of the Troop's Patrol Leaders' Council to plan and conduct the Troop Court of Honor. The Troop Committee will support the Court of Honor as requested.

The Court of Honor is a public ceremony, and is a chance for the Scouts to be publicly recognized for their achievements. Parents and all other interested individuals are encouraged to attend. Also, mothers receive a pin for every rank that their son earns.

Advancement Records

Troop 626 uses TroopMaster, an Internet-based tool for tracking rank and merit badge advancements. This software enables leaders and parents to see the records the troop has of their son's achievements at anytime.

The Scout handbook is another record of the Scout's accomplishments and holds the approval signatures. It is important that the Scout maintain his Scout Handbook with signatures. This book is needed at every Troop meeting and Troop campout.

VI. Merit Badges

There are 120 different merit badges that a Scout can earn. Merit badges enable a Scout to learn about sports, crafts, science, trades, business and future careers. Any Boy Scout may earn any merit badge at any time. You don't need to have had rank advancement to be eligible.

A Scout is responsible for earning his own merit badges. The goal of the merit badge program is to expand a Scout's areas of interest and to encourage the Scout to meet and work with adults on a chosen subject. Merit badges are also earned for advancement to Star and above ranks. Star and Life ranks require a certain number of Eagle required merit badges.

A Scout working with a registered merit badge counselor earns merit badges. It is *not* the role of the troop or the parents to get a Scout through a merit badge. A Scout wishing to start a merit badge must go to the Scoutmaster and request to begin the badge. The Scoutmaster will determine if the Scout has initiated too many merit badges, and really should complete one before starting an additional one. If the scoutmaster agrees that the Scout should begin the new badge, he will recommend a merit badge counselor. Normally, the merit badge counselor will not be the Scout's parent. The Scout is required to contact the counselor to arrange for times and places to meet with the counselor. All work on the merit badge is supposed to start after the Scout meets with the merit badge counselor. When the Scout completes the work on the merit badge the counselor will inform the Advancement Chairman by signing a certificate known as a 'blue card'. Merit Badges earned will be presented to the Scout and recognized during the Troop's Court of Honors.

To qualify for the Eagle Scout Award, Scouting's highest advancement rank, a Scout must—along with meeting five other requirements—earn a total of 21 merit badges, including First Aid, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World, Communications, Personal Fitness, Emergency Preparedness OR Lifesaving, Environmental Science, Personal Management, Camping, Hiking OR Cycling OR Swimming and Family Life.

Troop 626 Merit Badge Process:

- 1. Scout picks a subject** – Talk to your Scoutmaster about your interests.
- 2. Get a Merit Badge Card (Blue Card)** – The Scout must first ask the Scoutmaster for a *signed* merit badge card. The Scout is required to explain to the Scoutmaster his plan and timeline to complete the Merit Badge.
- 3. Contact the Counselor** – Get in touch with the merit badge counselor. Agree on a plan and schedule for completing the requirements and meeting with the counselor.
- 4. Learn and do the things required** – Ask your counselor to help you review the things you need to know or do. You should read the merit badge pamphlet on the subject. When you are ready, call the counselor to make an appointment to show or demonstrate the completed requirements.

- 5. Get the sign-offs** – When the counselor is satisfied that the Scout has met each requirement, he or she will sign the merit badge card. The Scout then takes the merit badge card to the Scoutmaster. Once the card is signed by the Counselor and Scoutmaster then it is given to the Advancement Chair so that the merit badge emblem can be secured.

Merit Badge Requirements – Scouts are expected to meet the requirements as they are stated. If it says "show or demonstrate," that is what the Scout must do. Just telling about it isn't enough. The same thing holds true for such words as "make," "list," "in the field," and "collect," "identify," and "label."

Some helpful suggestions about Merit Badges

Merit Badge Cards: Keep ALL of your merit badge cards, rank cards and rank badges in a safe place. We recommend getting a pack of the clear trading card sheets and placing in a notebook where you can keep important Boy Scout information - cards, certificates, etc. This will also help serve as your record of accomplishments! When a previous rank badge is removed from the uniform, place it next to the card in the binder. This binder will also be used to be displayed at your son's Eagle Scout Court of Honor.

Merit Badge Patches: When applying the merit badges to the sash, the eagle-required silver-edged badges should go along the right side (closest to the heart), leaving about 2" or so along the top for pins. The badges are arranged in rows of three.

Merit badge patches can be applied in a variety of ways (sewing, canned badge bond adhesive from the scout shop, etc.), an easy and effective way to attach them is by using "BADGE MAGIC." It comes in sheets already pre-cut with merit badge circles, as well as the regular shirt patches templates. It is available at the Scout Shop. It is easy to use, even a scout can do it himself by peeling away the protective paper, pressing the badge on the adhesive, carefully removing, and then firmly pressing onto the sash. You can purchase kits or cut to fit pages, which is handy for the different sized camp patches applied to the back of the Scout sash.

Service stars: The star is worn centered just above the left pocket with the green Boy Scout backing disc. You may also wear your service star with the gold backing disc from Cub Scouts; if wearing both, place them side by side. If you already have a service star from the previous year(s), the troop can recycle them, so please bring it in to exchange if you so desire.

Service Hours

Troop 626 believes strongly in the need for Scouts to provide volunteer service to their community. This service can take a variety of forms and be under the sponsorship of a variety of organizations. The troop recognizes service hours during Courts of Honor.

Service projects sponsored by the troop are under the supervision of an adult, the Volunteer/Service Activities Coordinator. The coordinator is responsible for maintaining records of Scout service hours. Service hours may be accumulated in a variety of ways. They may be organized by the troop, a church or other agency, or by the individual Scout. Non-troop sponsored service projects must be approved by the Volunteer/Service Activities Coordinator or Scoutmaster prior to the project if he wishes to use the project for advancement requirements. The Scout is on his honor to correctly communicate the number of hours, type of service, and organization/person served. A Scout may be asked to provide documentation of the time spent and projects accomplished (such as a simple note from the sponsoring organization helped by the scout). Service projects may include:

- Troop - trash pickup, blood drive, Eagle project help, Cub Scout Day Camp, Cub Scout Pack activities, Special Olympics, service to children or senior citizens; projects focusing on safety, conservation, or neighborhood improvement; emergency service, and the Scouting for Food National Good Turn.
- Church - Sunday School assistant, youth group activity, nursery help
- School - volunteer activity, school sponsored assistance
- Hospital - volunteer program
- Red Cross - blood drive, disaster assistance

There are many other potential service activities. To qualify as a service activity, the Scout must be helping his community, and the Scout cannot receive payment or other types of credit for the service by another group.

Order of the Arrow: *The Honor Society of Scouting*

In 1998, the Order of the Arrow was recognized as Scouting's National Honor Society when it expanded its reach beyond camping to include a greater focus on leadership development, membership extension, adventurous programming, and broader service to Scouting and the community. Today, its service, activities, adventures, and training for youth and adults, are models of quality leadership development and programming that enrich, support, and help extend Scouting to America's youth

A member of the Order of the Arrow is recognized by their distinctive red arrow on white sash and right pocket-flap patch. The purpose of the Order of the Arrow is four-fold:

- To recognize those Scout campers who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives
- To develop and maintain camping traditions and spirit
- To promote Scout camping
- To crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others

The Order of the Arrow is open to both Scouts and adults and has strict entrance requirements. To become a member, a youth must be a registered member of a Boy Scout troop or Varsity Scout team and hold First Class rank. The youth must have experienced fifteen days and nights of camping during the two-year period before his election. The fifteen days and nights must include six consecutive days (including five nights) of resident camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America. The balance of the camping must be overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps. Fellow Troop or Crew members elect Scouts to the Order. The unit committee elects adults.

IX. TROOP ACTIVITIES

Troop Campouts

The key to successful rank advancement for Scouts is an active Troop program.

Troop 626 strives to have one outing per month. Most of the outings are one to two night campouts. The Troop has camping gear and trailers to transport the gear. Troop gear consists of dining flies, tools, lanterns, cooking gear, and stoves. Each patrol is assigned a box containing patrol gear. Patrol gear includes cooking utensils, a griddle, a Dutch oven and a Coleman stove. The patrol is responsible for keeping its assigned gear clean and in good condition. Each patrol will be assigned water coolers, stoves, chuck box, lantern and a toolbox. The patrol is responsible for their equipment and the proper maintenance of these items. A chuck box checklist is available at the troop web site. Additionally, each scout does his share to keep the general troop gear and the patrol gear in good condition.

In addition to troop outings, patrols are encouraged to plan and accomplish outings as a patrol. Patrol outings have ranged from a day at the rock climbing gym to a weekend cleaning up the beach in Galveston. Troop gear is available for patrols to use on their outings. On a campout there should be at least five adults, and at least one adult for every five scouts. Fathers and mothers should appreciate these opportunities to spend some quality time with their sons and their son's friends. Typically, parents have as much fun as the scouts on these outings.

Summer & Winter Camps

We have found that it is very important for new Scouts to attend summer camp the first year or two that they are in the program. It is equally important that Scouts attend Winter Camp after their first year and in subsequent years. Not only does summer and winter camps provide a number of advancement opportunities for your son, it also provides a week-long team building activity for your son's patrol.

We have found that patrols are much stronger after summer and winter camps than they were before the experience. At these extended camps, the scouts sleep on cots (either personal or rented by the scout) and in wall tents provided by the camp (some camps charge a nominal fee for the use of their wall tents). Some meals are prepared in camp and others are eaten in the camp-dining hall.

Troop 626 attends a variety of summer camps including El Rancho CIMA in Texas. Troop 626 attends winter camp each year at Camp Strake near Conroe, TX. This camp is a shortened camp (6 days) and occurs between Christmas and New Years.

We have some of the best council camp programs in the nation and we know your son will enjoy the experience!

Fund raising opportunities are available to all scouts and additional financial assistance is available for Scouts who cannot afford to attend summer or winter camp on their own. Contact the Scoutmaster for more information.

X. ADULT / SCOUT SUPERVISION and SAFETY

Troop 626 regards safety as the number one Priority. In order to maintain safety at Troop functions we strictly follow BSA safety guidelines and we expect all of our Troop leaders to ‘think safety’ all of the time.

We require our leaders to be trained
We follow the BSA Guide to Safe Scouting
We ask all adults to ‘Think Safety’ all of the time
We empower all adults to intervene when they see something unsafe
We have a Troop discipline policy

Two-Deep Leadership

Two registered adult leaders, or one adult and a parent of a participating Scout, one of whom must be at least 21 years of age or older, are required for all trips or outings. There are a few instances, such as patrol activities, when no adult leadership is required. Coed overnight activities require male and female adult leaders, both of whom must be 21 years of age or older.

Safety Rule of Four

No fewer than four individuals (always with the minimum of two adults) go on any backcountry expedition or campout. If an accident occurs, one person stays with the injured, and two go for help. Additional adult leadership requirements must reflect an awareness of such factors as size and skill level of the group, anticipated environmental conditions, and overall degree of challenge.

Transportation - Automobiles

It is essential that adequate, safe, and responsible transportation be used for all Scouting activities. Because most accidents occur within a short distance from home, safety precautions are necessary, even on short trips. BSA regulations are as follows:

- Seat belts are required for all occupants.
- All drivers must have a valid driver's license that has not been suspended or revoked for any reason. The driver must be currently licensed and at least 18 years of age. Youth member exception: When traveling to an area, regional, or national Boy Scout activity or any Venturing event under the leadership of an adult (at least 21 years of age) tour leader, a youth member at least 16 years of age may be a driver, subject to the following conditions:
 - Vehicles designed to carry more than 15 persons, including the driver, the driver must have a commercial driver's license (CDL).
 - An adult leader (at least 21 years of age) must be in charge and accompany the group.
 - Six months' driving experience as a licensed driver (time on a learner's permit or equivalent is not to be counted)
 - No record of accidents or moving violations
 - Parental permission granted to the leader, driver, and riders
 - All passengers must have and wear a seatbelt
 - Trucks may not be used for transporting passengers except in the cab.
 - All driving, except short trips, should be done in daylight.
 - All vehicles must be covered by automobile liability insurance with limits that meet or exceed requirements of the state in which the vehicle is licensed. It is recommended that coverage limits are at least \$50,000/\$100,000/\$50,000. Any vehicle designed to carry 10 or more passengers is required to have limits of \$100,000 / \$500,000 / \$100,000.
- Do not exceed the speed limit.

- Do not travel in convoy.
- Driving time is limited to a maximum of 10 hours and must be interrupted by frequent rest, food, and recreation stops. If there is only one driver, the driving time should be reduced and stops should be made more frequently.

Please refer to 'The Guide to Safe Scouting' for updates to this list of requirements.

Sleeping Accommodations

Male and female leaders require separate sleeping facilities. Married couples may share the same quarters if appropriate facilities are available.

Male and female youth participants will not share the same sleeping facility. When staying in tents, no youth will stay in the tent of an adult other than his or her parent or guardian.

If separate shower and latrine facilities are not available, separate times for male and female use should be scheduled and posted for showers. Privacy should be ensured by using the buddy system for the latrines by having one person wait outside the entrance, by providing Occupied / Unoccupied signs or using inside door latches.

Knives

A sharp pocketknife with a can opener is an invaluable backcountry tool. After earning the Totin' Chip a Scout should have one with them on all outings. It should be kept clean, sharp, and handy. Avoid large sheath knives. They are heavy, awkward to carry, and unnecessary for most camp chores except for cleaning fish. Scouts are not allowed to carry or use large sheath knives. Large sheath knives such as a fillet knife can only be used with adult supervision.

Since its inception, Boy Scouting has relied heavily on an outdoor program to achieve its objectives. This program meets more of the purposes of Scouting than any other single feature. We believe we have a duty to instill in our members, youth and adult, the knowledge of how to use, handle, and store legally owned knives with the highest concern for safety and responsibility.

Axes

There is limited use for hatchets and axes. Scouts are discouraged from buying one for personal use. It is the responsibility of the Troop to provide hatchets or axes as necessary.

Scouts without a Totin' Chip card may use a hatchet only under instruction. Scouts with a Totin' Chip card may use a hatchet without supervision. Scouts with a Totin' Chip card and Paul Bunyan Axeman Award may use a 3/4 axe without supervision. Otherwise Scouts with a Totin' Chip card may use a 3/4 axe under instruction for the Paul Bunyan Axeman Award.

Guns and Firearms

Except for law enforcement officers required to carry firearms within their jurisdiction, firearms shall not be brought on camping, hiking, backpacking, or other Scouting activities. Firearms may be carried if specifically announced by the troop and planned for target shooting under the supervision of a certified BSA or National Rifle Association firearms instructor. If the troop does not officially notify you that you can bring your own firearms, keep them at home.

Restricted Activities

A number of activities are restricted, for safety reasons, to Scouts 14 years and older. There will be no exceptions made.

Unauthorized Activities

There are a number of activities that are not authorized in Scouting. They include, but are not limited to the following. Before planning any activity, please consult with the Scoutmaster.

All-terrain vehicles (ATV's)

Boxing, karate, and related martial arts - except judo, Aikido, and Tai Chi

Exploration of abandoned mines

Flying in hang gliders, ultralights, experimental class aircraft, or hot-air balloons; parachuting

All motorized speed events, including motorcycles, boats, drag racing, demolition derbies, and related events, are not authorized activities for any program level.

Participation in amateur or professional rodeo events

The activity commonly referred to as "War Game" or "Paintball" - in which individuals shoot paint or dye at one another

Motorized personal watercraft, such as jet-skis

Parasailing, or any activity in which a person is carried aloft by a parachute, parasail, kite, or other device towed by a motorboat or by any other means

All activities related to bungee cord jumping (sometimes called shock cord jumping)

Health Forms

There are three health forms used by BSA: Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3. All scouts need a Class 1 annually updated and signed by a parent. Our troop is requiring that the signature be notarized as some hospitals now require a notarized signature to treat minors.

A Class 2 (medical examination signed by a doctor or licensed health care practitioner) is required once every 36 months for all participants under 40 years of age for camps lasting 72 hours or more. A current medical evaluation is required if your child is currently under medical care, takes a prescribed medication, requires a medically prescribed diet, has had an injury or illness during the past 6 months that limited activity for a week or more, has ever lost consciousness during a physical activity, or has suffered a concussion from a head injury.

A Class 3 (includes a medical examination and physician clearance to participate in high adventure) is required for high adventure camping. Adults over 40 also need this form as well. It needs to be completed and signed by the doctor annually. All Class 3 activities require a health examination within the past 12 months by a licensed health-care practitioner. This includes youth and adult members participating in high-adventure activities, athletic competition, and world jamborees. This form must be updated annually. This form is to be used by adults over 40 for all activities requiring a physical examination and applies to **all** Wood Badge participants/staff regardless of age. Other activities include Resident camp, backpacking, tour camping, or recreational sports involving events lasting longer than 72 consecutive hours, with level of activity similar to that at home or school.

XI. BEHAVIOR - ADULT AND SCOUT

A Scout lives by a strict moral code. It is outlined in the Scout Oath and Law. Every Scout and adult participant is expected to live by this code at all times. Failure to do so may result in being asked to leave the activity (no matter how late at night), having a parent pick up the Scout, and a restriction on future activities until the behavior changes. Further, the leadership of Troop 626 will not allow the conduct of individuals to detract from other Scouts' enjoyment of Scout activities. Consequences will range from verbal warnings to suspension from the Troop.

Swearing and Jokes

At every meeting, Boy Scouts promise to keep themselves "morally straight" and "clean." The Boy Scout Handbook advises boys that being "clean" goes beyond washing off dirt; it means getting in with a "clean crowd," having a "clean outlook on life" and staying away from "swearing and telling dirty stories." Adults and Scouts are asked not to participate in swearing, lewd behavior or telling dirty stories.

Part of the Scout Law is that a "Scout is Reverent." This is defined as also defending another person's right to their beliefs. No jokes or skits related to a person's faith, handicap, orientation, race or creed will be tolerated in the troop.

Hazing, Initiations, Snipe Hunts, Harassment

All forms of hazing, initiations, ridicule, or inappropriate teasing are prohibited and will not be allowed. Snipe hunts are a form of hazing and are not allowed in the troop.

Other Unacceptable Behavior

The following are examples of other behavior that is unacceptable under any circumstances and that may result in the most severe consequences, including dismissal from the Troop without prior warning:

1. Verbal or physical abuse or intimidation of others
2. Theft
3. Dishonesty, lying or cheating
4. Intentional damage or destruction of property
5. Violence of any nature
6. Possession of weapons or drugs
7. Disrespectful behavior -toward others
8. Refusal to follow reasonable instructions from Troop Officers or Adult Leaders
9. Behavior that causes the disruption of any Troop Activity

Troop 626 Discipline Procedures

The discipline procedure is a three-step action plan. Step One is a verbal warning. Step Two is a written warning, explained to the Scout and mailed to his parent(s). Step Three will be a suspension from the Troop. This is a progressive system to handle discipline problems that are not considered major violations. Major violations will result in immediate suspension without Step One or Two. Also any type of problem could escalate to the next step even if the last step was taken for a different reason or misconduct. Records of each step will not be kept after six months have elapsed from the time of the misconduct.

Examples of Major Discipline Issues:

- Purposely causing injury to another person.
- Purposely miss-handling fuels, matches, propane and or white gas.
- Hazing
- Inappropriate behavior

STEP ONE - Verbal Warning: An Adult Leader will complete the Discipline Form and will discuss the misconduct with the Scout in the presence of another Adult Leader. All three should sign the discipline Form. The incident is registered and the form is filed in the Scoutmaster's office.

STEP TWO - Written Warning & Scoutmaster Conference: An Adult Leader will complete the Discipline Form and turn in to the Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster calls a Scoutmaster Conference with any involved adult Leaders, the Scout, and the Scout's parents. At this time the Scoutmaster will listen to what the problem is, how it is affecting the Troop or Patrol, and after discussions with the Adult Leaders and Parents, set a probationary period. The agreed on probation terms are documented and signed by all adults and Scouts involved. Should the behavior continue, the process will move to Step Three. This should be a cooperative effort to maintain consistency with the terms of suspension for similar misconduct by other scouts.

STEP THREE - Suspension from Troop: The Adult Leader will complete the discipline Form. Three Adult Leaders (the Scoutmaster and two Assistant Scoutmaster), including the Scout's Patrol Coach if available, will decide the term. The term of suspension will be whole months from one to six months. Once the term is set, the Scout will be told why and how long he is suspended. The agreed on term of suspension will be documented and signed by all adults and Scouts involved.

The suspension stops all time related advancement activities such as time in rank. The Scout forfeits his leadership position and will not be allowed to attend any Troop activities. If he is a Den Chief, he will not be allowed to continue that activity.

After the term of suspension has been completed, the Scout must return to a Troop meeting first. At this Troop meeting the Scout will meet with the Scoutmaster and his Patrol Coach to discuss his intentions of rejoining normal Troop activities. It is possible that the Scoutmaster and Patrol Coach may feel that a probation period is required if they feel there is still a potential problem. This will be discussed with the Scout on an individual basis. If the Scout has learned from his experience and the Scoutmaster and Patrol Coach feel the Scout is ready to return to normal Troop activities, then the Scout is allowed to return.

XII. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Rechartering and Fees

The process of re-chartering is the annual collection of registration fees for the Scouts and Leaders. Rechartering starts in November and is completed by mid-December. This process is done to ensure that the quality of the Troop is maintained. The chartering organization, Windwood Presbyterian Church, must report to the Boy Scouts of America on what the Troop did during the past year and what is planned for the coming year. All members of the Troop, boys and adults, are required to register for the coming year.

Annual Registration Fees

The Troop Committee sets registration fees on an annual basis. The annual fee for each Scout in Troop 626 is \$100.00 total and is broken out as follows:

Description	Amount
National BSA membership	\$ 10.00
Insurance	\$ 1.00
Troop membership (Pays for badges, awards, and other expenses incurred by the Troop as a whole.)	\$ 77.00
<i>Boys Life</i> magazine	\$ 12.00
TOTAL	\$ 100.00

A second scout from a family pays \$90. Troop fees for transferring WEBELOS are pro-rated for the first year. Checks are to be made out to Troop 626. All fees are non-refundable.

Adult Fees:

The fee for each registered adult is \$11.00. 100% of this fee goes to the Council. At least one adult from each scout family is required to be registered as a Troop Committee member or Assistant Scoutmaster.

All Scouts deserve a trained leader.

Fees for Outings and Activities

Individual activities may have fees associated with them and will be announced as soon as possible. All fees paid for Outings and Activities are non-refundable unless the troop is reimbursed or another Scout takes the open spot over and above the required number of Scouts required to pay.

Trailer Pulling Reimbursement

These policies pertain to troop trips with destinations of at least 50 miles away.

1. Only drivers pulling trailers will be reimbursed from the troop's general funds.

The drivers pulling trailers with Troop gear will be reimbursed at the rate of the miles traveled roundtrip divided by 10 mpg x the market price of gas per gallon.

Example - Hammon Backpacking Campout:

260 miles one way

10 mpg

Current market ppg = \$2.00

$260/10 = 26 \times \$2 = \52.00 one way

\$104.00 roundtrip per trailer

2. Each scout hitching a ride with an adult, **other than his own parent**, will reimburse their designated driver, **\$10.00** (\$5.00 going and \$5.00 returning), to help defray the cost of gasoline. **A scout should have exact cash to pay his driver going and coming.** If a scout rides up with a designated driver and home with a late-arriving parent, then that scout owes only the one way \$5.00 to his designated driver. Also, a scout riding up with one driver and home with another driver will need to pay each of his drivers \$5.00. This transaction takes place between the scout and his driver. The treasurer will not need to track these funds.

Fundraising & Scout Accounts

The boys raise additional funds through various fundraising activities. The Troop plans to do two to three major fundraising projects a year. Our fund-raisers will be designed so that once the Troop's budget is met, additional funds raised by your son will be put into his individual account to defray Scouting costs. The individual scout funds can only be used for scouting activities or personal gear that will be used at scouting activities.

To use the individual scout funds for scouting activities, the parent or guardian shall state, in writing, to the troop treasurer what the funds are to be used for and the amount to be used. For reimbursements for personal gear, parents are to submit receipts to the troop treasurer to receive reimbursement for approved items.

If the scout leaves the troop or is inactive for more than 6 months, all individual scout funds left in the account will convert to the troop general fund. Details on the year's fund-raisers will be available at future Troop meetings.

One of the major fund raising methods of the troop is the construction of “tinker toys”. These small, plastic parts are molded in the troop’s molding machine. A local company pays the troop to clean the parts by shaving off small plastic remnants of the molding. All tools are provided and parents are encouraged to help out during the scout meeting. The final product is sold to oil field companies who use the sets to train their employees or to educate their customers. The funds received from this activity support the majority of the troop’s budget. *NOTE: This fundraiser will most likely end in 2006, after twenty years. The Troop will provide information on new fundraisers.*

Allowed Reimbursements

For reimbursements, parents are to submit a written request to the troop treasurer to receive reimbursement. The request should include the following:

1. Note explaining the expense
2. Signature or other written approval from the Committee for pre-approving the expense. Obtain approval from the committee or committee chairman before making any purchases.
3. Receipts for the expense

Normally, reimbursements will only be given with receipt. Items without receipts will require approval from the Committee Chairperson. All outlined reimbursements will be reimbursed by the troop as long as the troop remains financially able and unless a change in policy has been voted-in at a committee meeting.

- District Junior Leader Training (JLT): A small portion of the cost of a boy going to JLT will be reimbursed by the troop (maximum \$25.00). Parents are to submit receipts to the troop treasurer to receive reimbursement if camp was completed.
- Adult training: The troop will pay the yearly, national BSA membership for re-chartering Adults who have been trained for their registered position

Troop 626 Grants

Troop 626 wants to do everything possible to help Scout families by making grants available to help those that are in need. Availability of Troop funds for grants are based on the success of Troop fundraisers and the amount of money that the Troop has in the Troop general fund at that time. The Troop welcomes and will also ask for any Troop families that would like to participate as a benefactor for funding Troop grants.

1. **Troop membership grant:** Troop 626 believes that every boy should have the opportunity to be a Boy Scout. For families who are in need of financial assistance, Troop 626 will waive a portion of the Troop joining fee. A Membership Financial Assistance application must be completed and submitted to the Troop Committee for approval.
2. **Eagle Court of Honor grant:** Every Eagle deserves a Court of Honor to celebrate the achievement of the Eagle Scout Rank. For families who need financial help in order to cover the costs of an Eagle Court of Honor, the Troop will assist with a maximum of \$100 per boy. The \$100 will be reimbursed to the parents for their son's Eagle Court of Honor expenses. Parents are to submit the Eagle COH grant application to the Troop Committee for approval and reimbursement. All receipts must be turned in to the Troop treasurer in order to be reimbursed for the costs.
3. **Extended Camp grant:** Troop 626 believes that every boy should have the opportunity to attend a Summer Camp and/or Winter Camp. For families who are in need of financial assistance, Troop 626 will waive a portion of the Camp fee. An Extended Camp Financial Assistance application must be completed and submitted to the Troop Committee for approval.

Application for a Troop 626 Grant:

In order to qualify for a Troop 626 Grant, the Scout and parents will complete the following steps:

1. The Scout and or his parents will contact the Troop Committee Chair and or the Troop Unit Leader to discuss the need for the Grant.
2. The Scout and or his parents will write a letter to the Troop Committee to explain the need for the Grant:
 - a. Include type of grant: membership, camp, or Eagle COH.
 - b. Include reasons that financial aid is needed
 - c. Include the Troop fundraisers that the Scout and parents have participated.
3. The Committee Chair will present the need for the grant and the letter to the Troop Committee at a scheduled Troop Committee meeting to be voted on. The Scout's parents can attend and speak at the Committee meeting if they so chose.
4. In the case that there is a need for confidentiality, then the Committee Chair will form a smaller Committee that will include:
 - a. The Troop Committee Chair
 - b. The Troop Charter Organization Representative
 - c. The Troop Treasurer
 - d. The Troop Unit Leader

Troop 626 Scholarship

Eagle Scout College scholarship: The Troop 626 Eagle Scout Scholarship offers a one time monetary award towards college expenses to a Troop 626 Eagle Scout. While the focus is on scouts in high school, the scholarship is open to applications from Troop 626 alumni who are already attending college, so long as they are currently active in Scouting. The selection is based on the applicant's contributions to Troop 626, Venture Crew 1626, or a Boy Scout affiliated organization after having attained the rank of Eagle.

The purpose of the Eagle Scout College Scholarship is to recognize exceptional dedication to Troop 626 and Scouting by an Eagle Scout after the achievement of the rank of Eagle. The scholarship hopes to encourage Troop 626 Eagle Scouts to continue their involvement in the Scouting program, and especially to provide leadership to Troop 626 after achieving the Eagle Scout rank. Eagle Scouts who remain active in the Troop set an exemplary example to the younger Scouts in the Troop. The scholarship attempts to recognize the Eagle Scout for supporting the Troop beyond Eagle and to recognize early potential for a lifetime involvement with Scouting.

The Eagle Scout College Scholarship Award

- A one time financial disbursement will be made the summer previous to enrollment in the recipient's next school year*
- The monetary amount of the award will vary year to year between based on benefactor contributions and Troop contributions.
- The recipient's name will go on a plaque that is displayed at Windwood Presbyterian Church
- The recipient and all applicants will receive a scouting memento during a Troop 626 Court of Honor in recognition of their achievements.
- An announcement will be submitted to the Windwood Presbyterian Church newspaper and Troop 626 newsletter.

Application Criteria:

- Scoutmaster and Committee nomination
- Have achieved the rank of Eagle Scout
- Be considered a member of active standing of Troop 626, Venture Crew 1626 or affiliated scouting group
- Be enrolled as a part-time or full-time student in a university
- Demonstrate high moral character and Scout Spirit

Applicants must:

- 1) Complete the Troop 626 Eagle Scholarship application.
- 2) Write an essay, a minimum 500 words, on your Scouting participation after attaining Eagle.
- 3) Submit two (2) letters of recommendation – one being a letter from a scouting leader.

Friends of Scouting

Each year, the Council operates its Friends of Scouting (F.O.S.) campaign to raise money for the Council operations. The Council is responsible for maintaining the Council Camps, the Council Scout Fair, the Council Camporees, as well as other Council activities, local BSA administration, leader materials and local advertising. Contributions are voluntary, but the Troop has a good record of support for this activity. F.O.S. has become a critical source of BSA funding.

AND FINALLY

You are joining a great organization that includes tens of thousands of adult leaders, interested parents, and the BSA professional staff. Scouting is much more than enjoying the outdoors. Troop 626 has already been very active and earned a good reputation for teaching leadership skills and community skills. Scouting also shows the boys how they can keep themselves strong and healthy and make the most of school. With hard work and dedication, your son will be able to serve as a leader in the Troop and advance in rank along the trail to Eagle, and beyond!

Beyond anything else said in this package, the boys and us "big kids" are also in Scouting to have fun!

The troop website is at:

www.troop626.com

For more information on Boy Scout Troop 626, contact our Scoutmaster:

[Bryan Weldon](#)

[281-858-4550](tel:281-858-4550)

scoutmaster@troop626.com

Appendix A - Change Log

Date of Change	Person making change	Description of Change	Published under Revision #:
Nov 2005	Lorraine Penczak	Addition of Scout Track software reference, clean up on sections, reformatting, general new release	1.0
January 2006	Committee	Rewrite sections and update entire document	2.0
May 2006	Committee	Revise sections as approved by the Committee	3.0
October 2006	Committee	Revise sections as approved by the Committee	4.0
January 2007	Committee	Committee revisions & re-order the guide	5.0