

Troop 650
Summit District
Alamo Area Council
Boy Scouts of America

New Scout Information Packet

(For new Scouts and their Parents)

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What is Boy Scouting?

The Path to Eagle

The Boy Scouts of America is a program that will teach you outdoor skills and leadership skills. The knowledge gained from working on merit badges will help you learn about a variety of subjects and expose you to interests which may influence your future choice of career. Your first advancement step is to achieve your Scout rank. In the Boy Scouts, you will earn different ranks based upon your skills and experience if you work hard enough and have the initiative. The ranks to Eagle are as follows:

SCOUT ⇒ TENDERFOOT ⇒ SECOND CLASS ⇒ FIRST CLASS
⇒ STAR ⇒ LIFE ⇒ EAGLE

Merit Badges

Merit Badges are earned at summer camp or with registered merit badge counselors in your troop or district. They are worn on the green merit badge sash that is available through the Scout Shop. The merit badge sash is to be worn at all court of honors and any scout function that requires FULL “Class A” uniform. A court of honor is a special ceremony that is held usually every 4 months where you are awarded the rank advancements and merit badges you have earned.

There are over 100 merit badges in all. Twelve of these are mandatory to achieve the Eagle Scout rank. The Eagle required merit badges are: First Aid, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World, Communications, Personal Fitness, Lifesaving or Emergency Preparedness, Environmental Science, Personal Management, Swimming or Hiking or Cycling, Camping, and Family Life. You also must earn nine additional elective merit badges to complete the merit badge requirement for the Eagle Scout rank.

Eagle Scout

Eagle Scout is a tremendous honor and achievement that is highly recognized and valued by colleges and future employers. Every scout is capable of achieving this rank/award if he puts the effort into it. You must complete all of the requirements and pass your Eagle Board of Review before your eighteenth birthday. The requirements include:

- The merit badges described above;
- Complete six months in a troop leadership position as a Life Scout; and
- Complete an “Eagle Scout Project”, demonstrating leadership, organization, and planning. These projects are substantial (typically 100-200 hours) and must be something that benefits the community: a school, public park, religious institution, etc. Even though it will be a large project, you’ll learn all about what it takes as you participate in the projects of other scouts in the troop. You should keep your eyes open and be thinking about what your project will be even this early in the game.

Once someone has achieved Eagle Scout rank, the troop will hold a special Eagle Scout Court of Honor in which they are recognized for their accomplishment. The troop is present at the court of honor to show our support and witness the honor as it is presented to the candidate.

How is the Boy Scouts of America Structured?

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) is broken down by geographic region into several different groupings:

BSA: Almost every country in the world has a Boy Scout program. The Boy Scouts of America was first started in 1910 with a single troop, Troop 1, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. There are different uniforms for every country's scout program. For more information about the uniform, refer to the Boy Scout Handbook.

Council: The BSA is further divided across the country into councils. The council that your troop is from is indicated on the council patch on your right sleeve shoulder. There are different patches and different names for every council. Ours is the Alamo Area Council and the council office and scout store are located at McGimsey Scout Park at the corner of Northwest Military Highway and Lockhill Selma Road.

District: Each council is further divided into districts. Troop 650 is in the Summit District.

Unit (Troop): this is the next division group. It is called the unit because there are more than just troops:

- **Explorer** scouts are organized into posts. They specialize in areas such as law enforcement, EMS, and other career areas
- **Venture Crews** are extensions of boy scout troops for High School age boys and girls that do more high adventure activities
- **Cub Scout Packs** – you already know about these

Troop 650 Philosophy

Troop 650 is a “boy run, boy lead” troop. This means that the boys make many of the decisions about campouts, hikes, and other activities. It also means that the boys are expected to be self-disciplined and handle issues in a Scout-like manner. The adults are present largely to provide overall direction and the benefit of their experiences to guide the boys to make correct decisions. We believe that this approach is consistent with the leadership objectives of BSA and gives the boys the greatest opportunity to learn from their experiences.

New Scout Program

If several new scouts join Troop 650 simultaneously (e.g. transitioning from Webelos), these scouts may be grouped into their own patrol for an initial period of time to help focus on orientation and initial camping skills and rank advancement. A Troop Guide (veteran scout) will serve as the patrol leader and an adult advisor will also be selected to oversee this group. The new scout patrol is typically split up into the regular patrols after summer camp so that each patrol contains a range of ages and experience levels.

Troop Campouts

Most months, the troop goes on a two-night campout to different places. On Friday night, we meet at Crown of Life, (Scouts should be fed dinner before they are dropped off) and then depart after the scouts are accounted for. When we arrive at the campsite, we set up the patrol cooking areas and our personal tents; eat a small snack and either play games or go to sleep (but most likely the first one!!).

While camping, you will prepare all meals with your patrol. Your patrol leader (PL) will assign a “grubmaster” or person in charge of purchasing the food within the designated budget for your patrol on the campout. Receipts must be kept and turned into the Troop's Treasure for reimbursement. Your PL will have prepared a “duty roster” which is a posted list of the essential duties of the members of your patrol at the campout. The duties that are delegated on a rotating basis are as follows:

- **Cook:** in charge of preparing the meals and correctly handling the ingredients, decides who needs to be in the kitchen area while food is being prepared.
- **Assistant Cook:** gets the ingredients that the cook needs, monitors whatever needs watching while on the fire or whatever, and does anything else that the cook might need help with.
- **Fireman:** is the first to wake up in the mornings, prepares the fire for the cook and makes sure that the fire is out when the cooking is done and when we leave the camp.
- **Assistant Fireman:** gets the water for the person building the fire and helps gather wood to keep the fire going.
- **Kitchen Patrol (KP):** scrubs the equipment that the cooks use to prepare the patrol’s meal. THE KP DOES NOT CLEAN OTHER PEOPLES PERSONAL EATING UTENSILS such as plates, forks, bowls etc.
- **Assistant KP:** gets the water heated for the KP. Dumps the water out of the KP buckets when all of the equipment has been cleaned, scrubs the buckets, and picks up the area where the KP was done.

Each of these duties is changed to different people for different meals so that the same person isn’t doing the same chore for every meal.

At the end of the campout, the entire troop does a “police line” which means simply to slowly walk in a straight line, side-by-side with each other and picking up trash in the campsite.

There are one or two weekend campouts that are different from most others, the Fall and Spring District Camporees. These are usually held in a large boy scout camp and all troops and patrols in the district come to compete in different events and compete for awards for their troop. All other campouts (other than summer camp) are with the troop only. However, the same rules for ANY campout WILL apply, including upholding the Troop Code of Conduct.

How Troop Meetings Are Organized

Meeting Frequency

Regular troop meetings are held on the 2nd-4th (or 5th) SUNDAY of the month. The 3rd Sunday of the month, the Troop meeting will be held at the Campout. In case of bad weather or campout cancellation, meeting will be held at Concordia Lutheran Church, Worship Center. The 1st Sunday of the month is reserved for Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) meetings and Board of Reviews (BOR). The PLC meetings are only for members of the PLC (i.e., SPL, ASPL's, PL's, & Scribe). The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), who is the highest boy authority under the adults, conducts the regular troop meetings and PLC meetings. The troop chain of command is as follows:

Scoutmaster: always an adult, the highest authority in the troop

Assistant Scoutmaster: always an adult, helps out with certain tasks in the troop

Junior Assistant Scoutmaster: under age 18, assists the scoutmasters in their tasks

Senior Patrol Leader (SPL): the highest boy authority under the adults

Assistant Patrol Leader (APL): helps out the SPL with whatever is needed

Troop Guide: serves as Patrol Leader of new boy patrols

Patrol Leader: provides leadership in an individual patrol

Scribe: handles the paperwork and troop records for the troop

Quartermaster: is responsible for maintaining the troop-owned equipment primarily stored in the troop trailer

OA Representative: attends monthly OA chapter meetings and keeps troop OA members informed and involved in OA activities

Den Chief: assist assigned Den Leaders and Cubmasters during Den and Pack meetings

Chaplan's Aide: provides grace before meals and worship service during campouts, inspirational talks during meetings

Service Project Coordinator: coordinates troop service projects

The SPL and ASPL's sit at the front of the meeting room. The patrols are divided into sections and they sit with each other.

Scoutmaster's Benediction

We always conclude our meeting with the repeating of the Scoutmaster's Benediction:
May the great Master of all Scouts be with us 'til we meet again.

Individual Equipment for Campouts

RECOMMENDED

Class “B” T-Shirt or Class “A” Uniform & jeans

(Will be specified which – depends on event)

Extra shirts, pants, socks, shoes, underwear

Weather gear (poncho, jacket, sweatshirt, etc.)

Sleeping bag (& pillow for summer camp)

Ground pad (or cot for summer camp)

Backpack/duffel bag for ALL personal gear

Plastic cup, bowl

Spoon & fork (or spork)

Canteen or Nalgene water bottle

Watch

Towel

Soap/Shampoo/deodorant

Toothbrush/toothpaste

Comb/brush/mirror

Flashlight w/extra batteries

Pocket knife and Totin’ Chip card

Insect Repellent

Sunscreen

Boy Scout Handbook

Not Permitted on Any Troop 650 Campout

Sheath knives and any other knife with blade greater than 3’

Hatchets/axes

Radios/electronic games (may be allowed in vehicles only with drivers permission during trips to/from camp)

Departure Time and Place

Crown of Life Lutheran Church, usually 6:00 p.m. on Friday evenings

Please feed your Scout before you drop him off at the Church (no Friday night dinner provided)

Wear your “Class A” uniform or “Class B” Troop 650 t-shirt depending on which is specified (Class A for all district or Council events and for summer camp, Class B for all others)