

PARENTS HANDBOOK



A guide to lead us all through the basics of Boy Scouting.

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I. THE ADVENTURE OF SCOUTING

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Boy Scouts of America organization and specifically the experience of Troop 524. Troop 524, which was founded in 1964, has a proud heritage. Members of the Troop work hard to promote the excellence in the program that has allowed the Troop to attain this tenure. This handbook has been developed to help answer questions that parents may have about the Troop, how it functions and what is expected from the family, the boy, and the Troop.

Troop 524 has a large number of Scouts and the support of strong adult participation. Parental involvement is one of the major keys to success in Scouting. Parents are welcome to attend any meeting, but are especially encouraged to attend all Courts of Honor and Committee Meetings. Presence at the Court of Honor is particularly important to the effectiveness of the Troop's programs.

In Cub Scouts, to a very great extent, advancement is the product of adults running the program. If a Scout attends his den meetings and takes part in the activities, then he will advance. In Boy Scouts, a Scout's advancement is his own responsibility -- his advancement is in his own hands.

Selecting a Boy Scout Troop to join is an individual decision for each family. Every Troop is different. In selecting a Troop, consider the following: Are the Troop activities the kind that the boy would enjoy? How do the Scouts interact with each other? How do the older Scouts interact with the younger Scouts? Are there older Scouts active in the Troop? Is the Troop boy-led or is it led by the adults? (The best answer is boy-led.) Are you comfortable with the adult leaders in the Troop? Are the adult leaders trained, do they follow BSA policy, and do they welcome input and participation by all parents? A Scout does have the freedom to transfer to another Troop if, for any reason, he changes his mind after joining a Troop.

When comparing Troops, it is not too important how large a Troop is, how many Eagle Scouts it has, or how many high-adventure trips they go on. The measure of a successful Troop is how well it meets the aims of Scouting which include: encouraging participatory citizenship, building strong moral character, and helping boys to grow physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. In other words, do boys leave the Troop a better person than they were when they joined? By joining the Boy Scout program, parents give permission for their son to participate in an organization whose purpose is to provide an effective program designed to build these desirable qualities into the boy. How this is accomplished involves a diverse program of methods and activities. The path to Eagle Scout, even though a lot of fun, is a big challenge.

The Troop is not a baby sitter for those parents wanting to dump their sons off for a while to gain more free time for themselves. The Scouting program works at its best when generous amounts of parental involvement and encouragement are there to help the Scout along the way. From time to time, parents will be called upon to provide assistance to the Troop. For those who would like to become more active in the organization, there are openings in the leadership and committee positions.

Scouting will teach young men to be masters of their own destiny and give them the self-respect and confidence to make their own decisions. The only way to do so is for the adults to step back and allow them to do so. Train them - trust them, even if they choose a path other than our *own*. *It is better to build boys... than to mend men!*

PURPOSE OF SCOUTING

It is easy to become a Scout ... it is not easy to BE ONE. To be a good Scout a boy needs courage and determination. It means knowing and living the Scout Oath, Law, Motto, and Slogan. A Scout's words and actions should be consistent with these ideals. It means PARTICIPATING and playing by the rules of the game in order to be a good member of the team.

The Scouting program is built on the theme that education should be fun. The program must be fun in order to keep boys interested in Scouting. The program works toward four basic aims or goals referred to as the purpose of Scouting:

- Character can be defined as who the boy is: his personal qualities, his values, and his outlook. Scouting builds a boy's character by emphasizing (1) the basic values defined by the Ten Commandments, (2) respect for fellow man and (3) a love of nature. Troop 524 also strives to build self-confidence and self-reliance through participation in the Scouting program.
- Citizenship is more than just having knowledge of this country's history and government. It can be more broadly defined as a person's relationship with his fellow man. A Scout learns the full meaning of citizenship from the emphasis of helping others, from the shared efforts within the Troop and Patrol, from the knowledge gained in the advancement program, and from the service projects required for rank advancement.
- Personal fitness is mental and emotional fitness as well as physical fitness. Troop 524 strives to improve a Scout's overall personal fitness through the outdoor and advancement programs, through his relationship with fellow Scouts and adult leaders and through the satisfaction of overcoming the challenges that the Scouting program presents.
- Leadership -- one of the most important parts of the Scouting program is developing a Scout's leadership skills or abilities and his confidence in managing others to complete a task or to meet a goal. Several leadership-training opportunities are available to the Scouts each year. A Scout's success in growing in leadership is a result of his desire to learn and grow, his dedication to doing the best job that can be done and in the respect he gives to and gets from his fellow Scouts in the Troop. Often, Scouting is a boy's first experience in dealing with peer supervision and leadership. Many of today's leaders in business and in the public sector gained the basic concepts and self-confidence of leadership from Scouting.

The Scouting program offered by Troop 524 accomplishes its aims and goals through:

- The ideals of Scouting are stated in the Scout Oath, Law, Slogan, and Motto. Each Scout in the Troop is encouraged to strive for these ideals, and must understand them to begin his advancement program.
 - **Scout Oath**
On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.
 - **Scout Law**
A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.

- **Scout Slogan**
Do a Good Turn Daily.
- **Scout Motto**
Be prepared.
- The outdoor experience is ideal for the Troop's program because:
 - it develops physical fitness;
 - it allows a Scout to develop new skills;
 - it allows a series of new and unique challenges to be presented to each Scout that are demanding, yet fun;
 - it provides a laboratory for the study of conservation and ecology, two very important concepts in today's world; and
 - it demonstrates the magnitude of God's handiwork and improves the Scout's appreciation of it.
- Troop 524 endorses the patrol method of Scouting and uses it for organization. Some objectives of the Patrol Method are to:
 - emphasize the importance of teamwork,
 - create a sense of camaraderie and community,
 - assign specific responsibilities and require performance,
 - and provide a format for practicing leadership skills.
- The advancement program of the Troop is designed to present a series of increasingly difficult challenges for the Scout to master. Advancement rewards individual effort and accomplishment. Benefits of the advancement program include:
 - increased self-confidence and self-reliance, and
 - improved goal setting skills and better planning techniques.

Rank advancement criteria are set forth by the national Boy Scout organization. Advancement is not mandatory in Troop 524, however, it is strongly encouraged at every opportunity.

PATROL METHOD

Troop 524 strives to use the Patrol Method in all of its activities. The Patrol Method promotes a feeling of belonging and allows the boys to experience leadership and responsibility. The boys really need some space to try things out. And to paraphrase Baden-Powell... We *shouldn't do anything for the Scouts that they can do for themselves*. For example, Scouts should plan their meals, cook them, and police their kitchens. They will make mistakes, maybe have less than stellar menus, and sometimes suffer through the results. These can be great learning opportunities if an adult leader is there to coach them through the process.

The adult leader can help at difficult moments, encourage the boys when things get tough, give helpful advice when needed, and still keep enough distance to allow the boys to take on the chunks of leadership that they can handle

The trick is to find a happy medium between simply ignoring the Scouts, and becoming so involved that they don't have a chance to learn on their own. Remember that each Scout is different and consequently each Patrol is different. Each will need varying degrees of coaching support and room to grow. Adult leaders are there to give them the support they need while restraining enthusiasm enough to let them try out things and learn along the way.

TROOP GOAL: A BOY-LED TROOP

Troop 524 has a basic set of goals that are focused toward giving each Scout who participates in the Troop's program a rich and unforgettable Scouting *experience*. These goals are to:

- Operate Troop 524 true to the purpose of Scouting.
- Provide a Scouting program that is fun and challenging through:
 - Troop meetings that are interesting, activity oriented, planned and implemented by the boys.
 - Regular outdoor activities that stimulate, challenge and educate every Scout in the Troop. The outdoor program will include a minimum of 12 days and nights of camping each year.
 - An annual one-week summer camp that is adequately staffed by adult leaders.
- Offer an advancement program for all Troop members and regularly recognize their achievements.
- Have a **boy-planned and boy-led** Troop program with appropriate adult guidance.
- Offer a leadership development program to provide personal growth for each Scout and to ensure continuity of leadership.
- Work toward BSA aims through growth in moral strength and character, participating citizenship, and development of physical, mental, and emotional fitness.
- Promote individual and family involvement in Scouting.
- Place special emphasis on duty to God, duty to country, and instilling the values of the Scout Oath, Law, Slogan, and Outdoor Code.
- HAVE FUN!

These goals develop character, citizenship and leadership ability and can best be achieved by giving members responsibility for organizing themselves to plan and implement the Troop programs. To the maximum extent and being consistent with safety and the National BSA Policy, Troop 524 Scouts learn by having the opportunity to try, occasionally fail, and more often succeed -- but to do so while the adults stand aside and let the Scouts take the initiative and have the experience and pride that comes from their own efforts. This is what we mean by a BOY-LED TROOP -- THIS IS TROOP 524'S ULTIMATE GOAL!

II. MEMBERSHIP

There are general responsibilities that need to be followed by both the boys and the adults. It is very important that the boys receive a consistent message that is in line with the goals of the Boy Scouts of America and Troop 524.

BOY RESPONSIBILITIES

By following and practicing these responsibilities, the boys can and will grow into mature, responsible, young men.

- Live the Scout Oath and Scout Law daily.
- Follow the Boy Scout rules and guidelines at all times.
- Respect all adult leaders and fellow scouts.
- Provide a "Safe Haven" at all times.
- Actively participate in Scouting activities.
- Assist in the coordination of Scouting activities.
- Respect all troop and other persons equipment.
- Be a team player within the Patrol and the Troop.
- HAVE FUN!

ADULT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is important that all adults do everything in their power to help the boys grow up to become mature, responsible, young men!

- Follow the directions of the Scouting leadership at all activities.
- Treat all boys equally and fairly.
- Act as an ADULT LEADER ... NOT as a PARENT during Scouting activities.
- Provide a "Safe Haven" at all times.
- Volunteer your time and talents.
- Assist in the coordination of scouting activities when requested.
- Practice courtesy, respect, restraint and set a good example for the boys at all times.
- Attend adult meetings when possible.
- Consider becoming a "Trained Scouter."
- HAVE FUN!

REGISTRATION FEES AND DUES

Registration fees collected each year are a major income source for the Boy Scouts of America National Organization. Troop 524 recharter and pays registration fees to the National Organization in February of each year. The entire registration fee is forwarded to National. Boy's Life magazine is an optional expense that is strongly encouraged as it reinforces that Scouts participate in a world-wide organization.

When a youth joins the Troop he initially pays the registration fee and a Troop fee. The Troop fee is used to help defray the cost of the initial items provided to the Scout by the Troop. Scouts pay monthly dues. The fee structure is outlined in the back of the Troop By-Laws.

YOUTH PROTECTION

Boy Scouts of America actively promotes training and awareness to protect Scouts from modern risks of verbal and physical abuse, kidnapping, assault, and drug abuse.

It is National Boy Scout Policy that no Scout should be alone or alone with any adult leader or parent, other than their own. There must be a "buddy" (another Scout, adult, relative or friend) *present at* all times.

Troop 524 offers both the adult and youth versions of the Youth Protection Training produced by National. It is highly recommended that all Scouts, adult leaders, and parents attend a Youth Protection Training program no less than once every other year.

SAFE HAVEN

It is important to create a safe haven, a place where everyone feels physically and emotionally secure. There are several things required for this:

- Set the example by always behaving, as a Scout should. Live the Scout Oath and Scout law to the best of one's ability.
- Refuse to tolerate any kind of inappropriate put-downs, name-calling, physical aggression, hazing or any type of discrimination.
- Communicate acceptance of each member through expressions of concern for them and by showing appreciation whenever possible
- Create an environment based on learning and fun. Seek the best from all members and strive to help them achieve it.

DISCIPLINE AND SUPERVISION

The Scouting program is not designed to solve youth discipline problems. The program is designed to build into the youth the necessary character and responsibility to prevent discipline problems. The program needs all of the time available to it to accomplish these aims. Administering the program to Troop 524's membership does not provide the Troop leadership any extra time to waste in dealing with discipline problems. We believe it is the PARENTS who should have the direct responsibility to instill and reinforce, in their sons, good manners, socially acceptable behavior, and the respect for authority.

All Troop activities will be under the supervision of the Scoutmaster with assistance from the Assistant Scoutmasters. Committee members and parents shall participate and assist in Troop activities when requested by the Scoutmaster.

A Scout is responsible and will be held accountable for his own behavior.

See Appendix A: Behavior Plan

PARENT COMPLAINTS

In the event that an issue arises and a parent or Scout has a complaint it should be addressed through the following chain-of-command. If the issue is with one of those in the chain-of-command, that person would probably not be initially involved.

- Scoutmaster
- Committee Chairperson
- Unit Commissioner
- District Executive
- Council Headquarters
- National Headquarters of the Boy Scouts of America

The Troop will not permit the use of inappropriate language, abusive attitudes, or threatening physical behavior while attempting to resolve a problem. The lack of a constructive attitude by any party may lead to separation of the boy or the family from the Troop.

HEALTH FORMS

A good part of the Scouting program consists of an active outdoor program and it is necessary to take basic steps to protect the health and welfare of the Scouts and the Troop.

It is imperative that the uniformed leaders have a thorough knowledge of the Scout's medical background, including authorization for treatment should the need arise. Each youth member and adult Troop leader is to have the appropriate medical examination form on file with the Troop. The following describes the three medical forms in use and which one is appropriate for the situation.

Class 1: Required for all new Scouts and is filled out by the parent. Includes treatment authorization and medical history. Needs to be updated annually.

Class 2: Includes the above plus a physician's examination. Required for summer and/or winter camp. Needs to be updated every thirty-six months.

Class 3: Similar to the class 2, including the physician's examination. Required for high adventure activities and for any adult over 40 years old, Updated annually.

In addition to the Health Form, on each outing, each Scout is required to have a parent or guardian's signature on a 'Permission to Participate' form that includes a medical release for the time period of that outing.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Troop 524 and the Northern Star Council maintains a Unit Accident Insurance Policy as required by the Boy Scouts of America. Parents should be aware of the fact that this is a SUPPLEMENTAL accident insurance policy, and as such has limited coverage. It only pays costs that are not covered by the individuals' existing medical insurance, and the injury must occur at a Scout function.

VEHICLE INSURANCE

Proof of insurance is required for all vehicles used in Scout functions for transportation.

The following DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS will be adhered to when Scouts are transported by a motor vehicle:

- All drivers must have a valid drivers license and be at least 18 years of age.
- Driving time is limited to a maximum of 12 hours per day and must be interrupted by frequent rest, food, and recreation stops.
- Seat belts are provided, and MUST BE USED, by all passengers and the driver. Exception: A school or commercial bus.
- Passengers will ride only in the cab if trucks are used.
- The Troop will enforce reasonable travel speed in accordance with state and local laws in all motor vehic

A PUBLIC LIABILITY AND PROPERTY DAMAGE LIABILITY INSURANCE POLICY MUST COVER ALL VEHICLES USED FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF TROOP MEMBERS.

The amount of this coverage must meet or exceed the insurance requirement of the state in which the vehicle is licensed and the state where travel will occur. It is recommended that coverage limits are at least \$50,000 | \$100,000 | \$50,000. Buses and vans must carry \$100,000 | \$300,000 | \$100,000 automobile liability. Vehicles not meeting at least the minimum insurance requirement CANNOT be used to transport Scouts to Scouting Activities.

III. ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

PATROL ORGANIZATION

Patrols consist of groups of 8 to 12 boys. The patrol size will depend upon the number of boys available and the number of patrols that are set up. Ages of the boys may vary within each patrol so that the older, more experienced boys can teach and guide the younger ones. New boys entering the Troop are kept in their own patrols until they have become accustomed to how the troop operates and then those boys are put into the other patrols. New Scout Patrols have a Troop Guide (older Scout) assigned to them by the Scoutmaster. The Troop Guide serves as the Patrol leader and mentor for the Patrol.

Each regular Patrol elects their own Patrol leader (PL) and Assistant Patrol Leader (APL).

The Senior Patrol Leader and Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders are in their own patrol called the Leadership Corps. When the members of the Leadership Corps are no longer in one of these leadership positions, they return to a regular Patrol.

The Troop adult leaders have their own patrol called the Growly Bears. The Growly Bears set the example of how to set up camp, cook and interact as a patrol. Teaching by example and making occasional suggestions are two of the best ways to help the boys learn.

PATROL LEADERS' COUNCIL

Boy Scouting encourages boys to learn and practice leadership skills. Every Scout has the opportunity to participate in both shared and total leadership situations. Understanding the concept of leadership helps a boy accept the leadership roles of others and guides him towards the citizenship aim of Scouting.

The Boy Scout program is for boys and therefore is led by boys with guidance and assistance from the Scoutmaster/Assistant Scoutmasters Team and the Troop Committee. The Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) is charged with the responsibility of deciding what the Troop wants to do, planning it, and carrying it out. Every Scout, through his Patrol Leader, has a voice in the planning and execution of the Troop activities. The Patrol Leaders' Council is composed of the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPL), Scribe, Historian, Librarian, Chaplain's Aide, Order of the Arrow Representative, Troop Guides, and the Patrol Leaders.

These leadership positions are considered very important and are not to be taken lightly. A Scout is REQUIRED to be involved in leadership if he is to advance in the higher ranks of Star, Life and Eagle. Some leadership positions are elected and some are Scoutmaster appointments. Elections are held twice a year.

See Appendix D for Election Process See Appendix E for Leadership Position Descriptions and Speech Guidelines

SCOUTMASTER/ASSISTANT SCOUTMASTER TEAM

The Scoutmaster is the adult leader responsible for the actions of the Troop. This job is summed up in the following basic duties:

- train and guide boy leaders,
- work with other responsible adults to assist in teaching Scouting to the boys,
- help boys to grow by encouraging them to learn for themselves, and
- use the methods of Scouting to achieve the aims of Scouting.

The Scoutmaster is backed up by the Assistant Scoutmasters. Some of the Assistant Scoutmasters serve as Patrol Advisors.

TROOP COMMITTEE

The Troop Committee consists of adults who are interested in and wish to make a contribution to the Scouting program. These adults are parents of Scouts in the Troop and other adults with an active interest in Scouting.

The Troop Committee's primary responsibilities are to support the Scoutmaster in delivering a quality Troop program and handling the Troop's administrative functions. The Troop Committee has a number of administrative roles as follows:

- They are the "Board of Directors" of the Troop, making sure that the Troop has a good Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters.
- They ensure that the scouting program complies with the Boy Scouts of America's rules and regulations along with the needs and desires of the Charter Organization.
- They see that the Troop has sufficient resources (financial, facilities, equipment and personnel) to carry out the program. This includes ensuring that there is adequate administrative support to maintain Troop operations. These operations include maintaining membership and advancement records, handling finances, coordinating camping events and other scouting activities along with transportation arrangements etc.
- The Committee also develops a set of Troop Operational Guidelines to assist in providing guidance for the safe and efficient operation of the troop.

- Individual Committee Members serve as advisors for various youth leaders of the Troop, such as the Scribe, Historian, and Librarian.

It is the function of the Troop Committee to support the Troop program, not to operate it. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters are responsible for directing the Troop program, and for guiding the boy leadership who execute the Troop program.

See Appendix B for Member Duties and Responsibilities.

See Appendix C for *Troop By-Laws*

CHARTER ORGANIZATION

The organization of any Troop begins with a charter organization. The Church of Epiphany Usher's Club charts Troop 524. This organization, in effect, owns the Troop equipment and is responsible for seeing that Scouting Principles are fully employed in the Troop's operation. The Usher's Club is represented in the Troop organization by the Charter Organization Representative.

IV. ADVANCEMENT

Boy Scouts provides each boy with the opportunity to learn skills and receive recognition in the form of ranks and merit badges. This advancement in the Scouting program rewards achievement and allows a Scout to be recognized for his work. The requirements for each of the seven ranks and the required merit badges are contained in the Boy Scout Handbook.

Boys attain rank by earning merit badges, performing service activities, demonstrating the leadership skills that they have learned, and by participating in routine troop activities such as meetings and campouts.

Requirements for rank are often earned during Patrol and Troop activities and some requirements are covered during campouts. Merit badge counselors, Junior Assistant Scoutmasters, and registered adult leaders (with the exception of parents and siblings) are qualified to approve a Scout's skill mastery. Summer camp is an excellent time for a boy to demonstrate many of the basic Scouting skills needed on his road to the rank of First Class and to earn merit badges.

RANKS

The following are the Boy Scout Ranks and general criteria for their attainment:

The first rank earned is Scout. The joining requirements require the boy to learn the basics of Boy Scouts, like the Scout Oath, Law, Slogan, etc. One requirement is to work with his parents through an abuse exercise contained in the front of the Boy Scout Handbook. Once the boy completes these requirements, he participates in a Scoutmaster Conference. The Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster reviews the boy's progress, makes sure the boy knows the basics, and discusses what the boy would like to do in Scouting.

The next three ranks are Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. These three ranks concentrate on outdoor, first aid, citizenship, swimming, and patrol skills. The requirements for these three ranks can be earned in any order, i.e., a boy could complete the cooking requirements for First Class rank before he earns the Tenderfoot or Second Class ranks. However, the ranks must be earned in order. Troop 524's activities are oriented to giving the boys opportunities to complete these requirements. The summer camp that the Troop attends also will offer a full program for these ranks. After completing each rank's requirements, the boy will then participate in a Scoutmaster's Conference and a Board of Review.

The next two ranks, Star and Life, require the boy to participate in Troop activities, be in a leadership position, perform service hours, and earn merit badges. After completing each rank's requirements, the boy will then participate in a Scoutmaster's Conference and a Board of Review.

The highest rank in Boy Scouts is Eagle. These requirements are the most demanding and specific. The Eagle Rank Advisor works directly with each Life Scout to help them understand these requirements. After being in a leadership position, earning 21 merit badges, participating in Troop activities, and completing an Eagle Scout Service Project, the boy will complete an Eagle Application and have a Scoutmaster's Conference. The Eagle Board of Review will then be conducted under the direction of the Eagle Rank Advisor. Then the application is sent to the Council and National Offices for approval.

MERIT BADGES

Merit badges provide the boy an opportunity to learn skills or to be introduced to many subjects. There are specific requirements to earn each merit badge. The Troop maintains a library of merit badge pamphlets which a boy may borrow when working on a merit badge. Merit badge pamphlets may also be purchased at the Scout Shop.

There are three ways for boys to earn merit badges:

- Many merit badges can be earned at summer camp. A boy signs up for badges and attends classes taught by camp counselors. Merit badges partially completed at camp can be completed by the Scout at a later date when back home.
- Through a merit badge counselor. Adults are encouraged to become counselors. Some counselors will have the boys work on their merit badge at Troop meetings or campouts. Others will schedule time for the boys to work on the badge away from Troop activities. Counselors will not conduct meetings one-on-one, another Scout or adult must be present.
- Merit badge classes are offered at Troop Meetings, generally the merit badge taught is the required badge needed by the most Scouts.

SERVICE PROJECTS

Another desirable characteristic of a Boy Scout is his ability to demonstrate and perform meaningful service to others as part of his home, school, religious and community activities: Service projects are means to teach boys the value and importance of being a giving and helpful person without the want or need for some type of financial or material reward. Service projects **MUST BE** approved by the Scoutmaster. There is a special service project for the rank of Eagle which will be discussed in detail with the boy when he has earned Life Rank.

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Boys also earn credit toward rank advancement through the holding of leadership positions within the Troop and their Patrol. These positions are either elected or appointed positions and must be approved by the Scoutmaster.

SCOUTMASTER'S CONFERENCE

A Scoutmaster's Conference is required after a Scout completes all of the rank requirements and before the Board of Review for promotion to the next rank. This is an opportunity to review accomplishments, set goals, and deal with concerns and problems. A Scoutmaster Conference can only be performed by the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster. All Eagle Rank Scoutmaster Conferences must be performed by the Scoutmaster, unless the Scoutmaster appoints an Assistant Scoutmaster to perform the Conference. It is the Scout's responsibility to arrange the Scoutmaster Conference. The Scout wears his full Class A uniform and brings his handbook with all advancement requirements properly approved.

BOARD OF REVIEW

A Board of Review is required after the Scoutmaster's Conference for promotion to the next rank. The purpose of the Board of Review is to make sure the Scout has completed the requirements for the rank, to see how good an experience the Scout is having in the Troop, and to encourage the Scout to progress further. The Board of Review provides "quality control" on advancement within the Troop, it provides an opportunity for the Scout to develop and practice those skills needed in an interview situation, and it is an opportunity for the Scout to review his accomplishments.

The Board of Review is NOT a retest. The Scout has already been tested on the skills and activities required for the rank. This is a check of the Scout's attitude and practice of the ideals of Scouting. Care is taken to see that the review does not become a re-examination. The Board should ensure that all the requirements have been signed off in the Scout's handbook and that leadership and merit badge records are consistent with the requirements for the rank.

The Board of Review for Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star Scout and Life Scout are conducted by three or more members of the Troop Committee and Chaired by the Advancement Chairperson. This can include any combination of members of the committee. The Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters are not present unless requested by the Board. Parents may NOT be present at the Board of Review. It is the Scout's responsibility to arrange for a Board of Review with the Advancement Chairperson. The Scout wears his full Class A uniform and brings his handbook with all advancement requirements properly approved.

Eagle Rank Boards of Review are chaired by the Eagle Rank Advisor. A 3 Rivers District Advancement Committee Member is required as one of the Board members. The Chair will determine the other participants on the Board, a minimum of 3. The Scoutmaster presents the Eagle Rank Candidate to the Board and remains in the room during the Review, but only speaks if asked to do so by the Board. The parents are not present for this Board of Review, but are usually eagerly waiting outside the room to hear the decision of the Board. It is the Scout's responsibility to arrange the Eagle Rank Board of Review with the Eagle Rank Advisor. The Scout wears his full Class A uniform and brings his handbook with all advancement requirements properly approved.

RELIGIOUS EMBLEMS 12th Point of the Scout Law: A Scout is Reverent

Troop 524 encourages Scouts to earn their religious emblems. The Ad Altare Dei is the religious emblem for Catholic boys in 7th and 8th grades and the Pope Pius XII is for Catholic boys in 9th-12th grades. Information about religious emblems for other faiths is also available from the Troop.

ORDER OF THE ARROW

The Order of the Arrow is a national brotherhood of Scout campers. The honor of becoming a member of the Order of the Arrow is one that a Scout cannot set out to earn. The members of the Troop bestow this honor on those who have proven themselves worthy of receiving it through active participation in Troop activities and by being an outstanding and unselfish camper. Scouts must also be at least First Class in rank.

V. ACTIVITIES

Activities include camping events, service projects, training activities, tours, and just plain fun activities. It is very important that the Scouts attend activities on a regular basis.

TROOP MEETINGS

Troop meetings are on Monday nights from 7:00 to 8:30 at the Church of the Epiphany in Coon Rapids. Summertime meetings are at the discretion of the Patrol Leader's Council and may be held at other locations. Throughout the year other special meetings are scheduled, such as Courts of Honor and Patrol Leaders' Council Meetings.

The Troop meeting agenda is the responsibility of the Senior Patrol Leader with Patrol Leader's Council and Scoutmaster input. Meetings are held:

- to provide leadership opportunities for the Scouts,
- to plan outings and other Troop activities,
- to enjoy lively games and competitions,
- to provide experiences towards earning rank advancement and merit badges,
- to feature occasional outside speakers on a variety of topics of interest to the boys, and
- to reinforce the principles of Scouting.

PATROL LEADER'S COUNCIL MEETING

The Senior Patrol Leader chairs the meeting and may invite others to attend as necessary. The Scoutmaster attends all Patrol Leaders' Council meetings.

COURTS OF HONOR

These are conducted Quarterly in September, December, February, and Summer Camp to provide the achievement of advancement to everyone.

TROOP OUTINGS

Exciting outings provide the environment Scouts need to develop their *self-reliance and leadership skills*. In many cases, a young Scout may have never before had to depend on himself and his peers for his food, shelter, and *recreation*.

Some outings are skill or education oriented and others are just to have a good time. Equipment varies from virtually nothing; to lightweight equipment for backpacking trips; to coolers, Dutch ovens, and patrol boxes for camping at sites accessible by vehicles.

By the deadline set for an activity, Scouts must turn in the registration form/permission slip or they will not be allowed to participate.

The cost of food at campouts is the responsibility of the Scout or adult attending, and currently *averages \$10.00* per campout. The Troop provides the major pieces of equipment that the Scouts will require for camping.

Any member who turns in the registration form and then at the last minute is not able to attend will forfeit their payment. Once the food has been purchased, the *member not attending* will still be responsible for their portion of the expenses.

Parents are always welcome at Troop campouts, whether for a short visit or camping with the Troop. If a parent plans to camp with the Troop or stay for meals we ask that they notify the adult leaders in advance so that tents can be provided and they can be figured in the food budget. Adults camp in a separate area from the Scouts. The adult role is to stay close enough to observe, but far enough away to not interfere with the boy's Patrol functions.

See Appendix F for Camping Rules

Day Trips

Business tours, bike trips, nature hikes, sledding, bowling, and skating are examples of day trips that are periodically scheduled. Some of these day trips may involve the participation of other groups such as 1st or 2nd year Webelos or members of another Troop.

Camporees

The Troop participates in the 3 Rivers District spring and/or fall camporees. The sites for these events are selected by the district. At these events we use the Patrol Method. Camporees have a registration fee to cover the cost of running the camporee, and providing a camporee patch. Participants share the cost of the food for their patrol.

Weekend Campouts

Other weekends are scheduled to camp at various locations. These weekends may be just for fun or are planned around working on a merit badge or for training. These weekends are sometimes operated by the Patrol Method and sometimes are operated as one large patrol.

Summer Camp

The Troop participates in the Northern Star Council summer camp program, which is a six day camping program held at Tomahawk Scout Camp, near Rice Lake, Wisconsin. Attending this camp is VERY IMPORTANT to the advancement and growth of the Troop's members. A youth member is provided with the facilities and trained leadership to earn rank advancements and merit badges. This opportunity is especially important to new Scouts as it provides a quick start on the Boy Scout program, and gives these Scouts 80 to 90 percent of the requirements they need to achieve the advancement ranks up through First Class.

TRANSPORTATION

The adult leadership will provide transportation for all Troop equipment, as much personal gear as possible, and as many of the Scouts as possible. The normal procedure is for parents to volunteer to drive when possible. The other alternative is that each parent will be responsible for delivering his or her Scout to the site of the outing. Some special long distance campouts may require that the drivers camp with the Troop.

It is imperative that everyone traveling with the Troop be at the departure location by the designated time. Often activities are on a timetable and it is necessary that the group departs at the designated time or the Scouts may miss out on an activity or have to set-up camp in undesirable conditions.

It is also imperative that Scouts are picked up at the designated location time. Adults have volunteered their time to provide this outing opportunity for the Scouts, please be considerate of their time. Every effort is made by the group to return on time. If the group is late, it was unavoidable.

The Scoutmaster must be advised ahead of time if someone other than the Scout's parent/guardian will be picking them up or of some other arrangement. The adult leaders cannot release a Scout to someone other than the parent/guardian without prior notification. Unless otherwise instructed, Scouts and registered adult leaders will travel to and from activities in a Class A uniform.

FUNDRAISING 9th *Point of the Scout Law*; A Scout is Thrifty

The Troop Committee recognizes that Scouting costs money and may be a strain on a household budget. No Scout will be prevented from participating for financial reasons. Financial assistance is available for any Scout who is unable to be fully involved in Scouts due to financial difficulty. For assistance, contact either the Scoutmaster or the Committee Chairperson.

The cost of maintaining Troop equipment and Troop operation is funded entirely by fundraising projects and donations.

Troop 524 has only a couple fundraising projects that are strictly for the Troop. All families are highly encouraged to participate in the Troop-fundraising projects.

Several fundraising projects are available for the Scouts. Participating in Scout-fundraising projects is optional. The monies earned by Scouts are held in the Campfund by the Troop Treasurer. Scouts can learn the balance of the Campfund account by contacting the Troop Treasurer. Campfunds can be used for any Scout-related expenses. See the Reimbursement Policy for further information.

Donations are tax-deductible. The Troop Treasurer will provide receipts for donations upon request. Many employers offer matching (time and/or monetary) funds. The Troop Treasurer has the information an employer will need regarding the identification number and payment directions.

TRAINING

Boys - JILT, Pine Tree, Troop 524's multi-troop training program etc.

Adults - Smrf Trng, Wood Badge, Merit badge counselors? Etc.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Held Monthly on Specified day, time, and location.

VI. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

BOY SCOUT UNIFORM

Troop 524 is committed to the concept of the uniform as established by the Boy Scouts of America. The wearing of the uniform helps the Troop in a number of ways. When smartly worn, the uniform helps build Troop spirit and a Scout's pride in himself. By wearing the uniform the Scouts give each other support, and when properly worn on the correct occasions, it can attract new members. Scouts in uniform create a strong, positive youth image, thus helping to counteract the negative feelings some adults have about youth, and the uniform makes the Troop visible as a force for good in the community. By investing in a uniform, a Scout and his parents are really making a commitment to take Scouting seriously. By wearing the uniform, Scouts declare their faith and commitment in important beliefs that bind them together. And finally, as Scouts wear the uniform, they are standing for the Scouting principles, in the open, where everyone can see. Scouts are standing with each other, not alone, declaring their intent to support the principles that Scouting stands for.

Troop 524 adheres to the normally required uniform parts that are listed in the Boy Scout Handbook. Some parts are optional or provide more than one choice, and due to the cost of the uniform the Troop has worked out some alternatives. The Scoutmaster or Senior Patrol Leader will announce the uniform prior to each activity. At a minimum, Scouts will travel to and from Troop activities in Class A uniform.

See Appendix G for Uniform Standards

Troop 524 strives to look sharp at all times. In addition to the uniform, personal appearance is important. Haircuts, cleanliness, and good general hygiene are also part of the uniform. Personal appearance reflects Troop pride and spirit.

TROOP EQUIPMENT

The Epiphany Usher's Club, the Troop's Charter Organization, owns a large amount of equipment of substantial monetary value. This equipment is for the Troop's use and it is the Troop's responsibility to store and maintain this equipment. The Troop is well equipped with tents, stoves and lanterns, propane fuel tanks, patrol cooking gear, dining canopies, food and drink coolers, etc. and a trailer for hauling this equipment to the activities. The Troop having this equipment saves the individual Scouts from having to buy this equipment, but it carries with it the responsibility of each Scout taking care and maintaining this equipment for use by future members of the Troop.

A series of rules pertaining to Troop owned equipment have been established:

- It is the responsibility of each Scout to use and maintain any Troop equipment in the manner for which it is intended in order to keep it in working order. Any malfunctioning or damaged equipment should be reported to the Leadership Corps immediately.
- Any Scout who damages Troop equipment is responsible for fixing or replacing that piece of equipment. If a specific person can't be isolated, or the damage was by several members, then those members will be responsible for the cost or repair.
- Damage through ignorance of how to use a piece of equipment is NO EXCUSE for a Scout not replacing the damaged item.
- During campouts, all cooking equipment is to be thoroughly cleaned by the Scouts before it is stored away.
- Troop owned equipment MAY NOT be borrowed by Scouts for non-Scouting events.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

While the Troop maintains a sizable inventory of equipment, the Scout will need to provide some personal gear. The Boy Scout Handbook provides good equipment lists for backpacking as well as basic campouts. Some Scouts get by with homemade or borrowed gear keeping their expenses down to a minimum. Others with an interest in high-tech gear can spend several hundred dollars. There is no reason to spend beyond ones budget. Any of the Assistant Scoutmasters will be glad to assist and advise in properly equipping a Scout. A minimum investment is recommended for a new Scout. Better equipment can be purchased over time as the Scout's knowledge and preferences grow and as gift giving occasions occur.

A certain amount of personal equipment is needed by each Scout for participation in the camping and outdoor activities conducted by the Troop. All personal equipment items, except for the sleeping bag, should fit in a pack and must be light enough for the Scout to carry for some distance where a long hike or "pack in" is required.

See *Appendix H* for Personal Equipment List

PROHIBITED ITEMS

The following items will be confiscated and returned only to the parents.

- Sheath, fixed-blade, or large "Bowie Type" knives. BSA has banned all use of these type of knives. Note: **Accepted knives include any Official Scout Knife, or any folding blade knife with blades no longer than 3+ inches.**
- Weapons, including slingshots, pellet or BB guns, squirt/water guns, pea-shooters, blackjacks, brass knuckles, etc.
- Electronic gear, such as radios, T.V.'s, tape/CD players, or electronic games.
- Any obscene, vulgar, or questionable material.
- Soft drinks and candy/snacks are not to be brought by individuals.

VII. OTHER

COMMUNICATIONS

Each Scout is responsible for keeping informed of what is going on in the Troop and in his Patrol. If a Scout misses a meeting, it is the Scout's responsibility to find out what went on at the missed meeting.

At each meeting the "Troop Mailbox" will be available for dissemination of written materials. It is each individual's responsibility to check for their own mail.

Troop Committee Meeting Minutes will be mailed to each family's home address the week following the meeting.

On the internet at Troop524mn.org is the Troop's website.

INTERPRETATIONS

Items not covered in this Parents Handbook will be interpreted by the Scoutmaster when on an outing and taken up by the Troop Committee at the next meeting. This handbook will be updated as appropriate.

VIII. APPENDIXES