

# The Parents Guide to Scouting

Troop 26  
West Central Florida Council

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## **Aims and Methods of Scouting**

### **Aims**

- Character
- Citizenship
- Fitness

### **Methods**

- Adult Role Models
- Advancement
- Outdoor Program
- Uniform
- Patrol Method
- Ideals
- Leadership Development
- Personal Growth

### **Safe Haven**

- Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco
- Responsibilities and Behavior

# **Troop Meetings and Program**

## **Troop Meetings**

The Troop meets every Tuesday from 7:00 PM to around 8:30 PM except for dates noted on the annual calendar (Labor Day, Memorial Day, etc.). We meet in the Scout Hut in down town Palm Harbor, sponsored by the Palm Harbor United Methodist Church. It is important that the boys make it to the meetings just prior to 7:00 and it is important that parents pick the boys up at 8:30. (The adult leaders are required to stay around until the last boy has been picked up.) The proverbial “drive by and drop” is discouraged. There are many things that a scouting family can become aware of by coming into the hut during the meetings. Getting involved in scouting yourself is the single most important factor in your son’s success in the program.

The Troop runs from a guidebook that is organized by a theme each month. We try to set the theme in such a way so that it jives with our campout, etc. Because the guidebook provides an outline for four meetings each month, there will be a couple of time each year in which we have a fifth Tuesday. We try to make this meeting a special event such as swimming, bowling, etc.

Each Quarter we have a Court of Honor. Sometimes the Court of Honor after summer camp will be at a special location like a Scout Camp (Soule), but most of the time the Court of Honor will be at the Palm Harbor United Methodist Church at the regular scout day and time. Your son will expect to be in full uniform that day. It is a great time to celebrate the accomplishment of the members of the troop. Eagle Scout Courts of Honor are usually held as a separate event celebrating that individual boy’s accomplishment.

At the close of each meeting you will hear the boys yell “Circle up”. In that circle, last minute instructions will be given and there will be an opportunity for each Scout and Scouter to have his say. Following going around the circle there will be a “Scoutmaster’s Minute” and then we will grasp hands “right over left” and the following song will be sung, known as Scout Vespers:

Softly falls the light of day, as our campfire fades away;  
Silently each Scout should ask, “Have I done my daily task?”  
Have I kept my Honor bright? Can I guiltless sleep tonight?  
Have I done and have I dared everything to be prepared?

AND NOW, MAY THE GREAT SCOUTMASTER OF ALL GOOD SCOUTS BE WITH US UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN, TROOP 26 DISMISSED!

## **Troop Organization**

The Troop organization is very important to the Scouting program. The organization starts with the Charter Organization, which in our case is the Palm Harbor United Methodist Church. The Charter Organization has a contract with the National Office of the Boy Scouts of America to create a Troop. The Charter Organization agrees to provide facilities, leadership, and guidance. The Charter Organization assigns a Charter Organization Representative as a liaison to the Troop Committee who is the governing body of the Troop. The Troop Committee authorizes the Scoutmaster to execute the program. The Scoutmaster works through the Senior Patrol Leader to run the Scouting program as planned by the Patrol Leader Council. The Senior Patrol Leader directs the Patrol Leaders (and other

boy leaders) in specific tasks of the plan. The Patrol Leaders are responsible for groups of 6-8 boys called patrols.

It is important to understand that the leadership growth aspect of Scouting is best fostered through something called “The Patrol Method”. A Patrol is a group of boys of similar age that operates as a unit for most troop functions. They will typically camp together and will elect from their ranks a Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader. Scouting tries to remain a youth run organization. The boys make their own program with the guidance of the adult volunteers. Scouting trains LEADERS. This means that the meetings and events may seem a little less organized than some other functions that your son may be involved in. That is because there is not an adult in the front of the room with a bull horn. There is a young man at the front of the room running the meeting and building the program and his leadership skills. It may be a bit “messy” at times, but it is a tried and tested program without parallel in the various activities in which your son could be involved. The cornerstone of the patrol method is the Patrol Leader Council.(PLC).

### **Patrol Leader Council**

The Patrol Leader Council (PLC) consists of the Patrol Leaders, Senior Patrol Leader and other select boy leaders. The mission of the PLC is to plan a program based on the interests of the individual boys of the Troop. The Patrol Leaders responsibility is to represent the scouts of his patrol in planning the next month’s activities. The Scribe, Quartermaster, and Guides also attend the PLC. The Senior Patrol Leader presides over the PLC. The PLC is held on the first Thursday of each month. Based on the annual calendar, the PLC plans in detail the meetings and activities for the up-coming month. The PLC uses a standard meeting planning form as their guide. Each patrol and some individuals are assigned responsibility for parts of the up-coming month’s program. It is essential for the boys to remember and fulfill their assignments from the PLC.

### **Senior Patrol Leader Responsibilities**

The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) is the “General” of the Troop. The SPL is elected to a term, typically 6 months, by the boys in the Troop. He is responsible for all activities and actions of the Troop. He leads all Troop meetings and camp outs. He is responsible for keeping Patrol Leaders, other boy leaders, and adult leaders informed of all upcoming activities and responsibilities assigned during the PLC or as they arise. The SPL reports directly to the Scoutmaster. If a Patrol Leader has a question or can not answer a question posed by a patrol member he should ask the SPL. If the SPL has a question he should ask the Scoutmaster. The SPL leads the PLC.

### **Patrol Leader Responsibilities**

The Patrol Leader is the most important leadership position in the Troop. The members of his patrol elect the Patrol Leader for a 6-month to a year term. He is responsible for all activities and actions of the patrol. He leads all patrol activities during meetings and camp out. He is responsible for keeping patrol members informed of all upcoming events and responsibilities assigned to the patrol. The Patrol Leader reports directly to the SPL. If any boy has a question about anything he should ask his Patrol Leader (not other boys or adults). The Patrol Leader is a member of the PLC.

To help us all remember our civic duties, elections occur on the “First Tuesday in November” and the first Tuesday in May.

## Other Boy Leader Responsibilities

A number of other leadership roles are required to effectively run the Troop. The boy leaders manage paperwork, gear, special skill development, and other activities. The Senior Patrol Leader and the Scoutmaster select the boy leaders based on skill, maturity, desire, and their personal advancement requirements. The following is a list of the leadership positions most commonly used in our Troop and some of their responsibilities. All the boy leadership positions are described in detail in the Junior Leader Handbook

### Scribe:

- Record attendance
- Record dues
- record advancements
- maintain data base

### Quartermaster:

- check out gear
- check in gear
- inspect gear for cleanliness etc.
- organize trailer
- report missing or damaged gear

### Guide:

- assist patrol leader
- sign off lower rank advancement
- skill training for new Scouts
- Assist with Patrol of New Scouts

### Chaplain's Aid:

- open special events
- Sunday service on camp out

### Librarian:

- check out books
- check in books
- recover over-due books
- organize books
- catalog all books and literature

### Junior Assistant Scoutmaster:

- special programs
- advanced teaching skills

## Weekly Troop Meeting Plans

Tuesday night meetings are guided by a standard meeting plan. The plan is designed to fill the one and one half hour meeting with a balance of planning, learning, skills development, and competitive activities. All segments of the meeting are lead by boy leaders who have prepared their portion of the program. The meeting plan is established by the PLC during their previous monthly meeting.

## Charter Organization Responsibilities

The Charter Organization is the community body (in our case, Palm Harbor United Methodist Church) which has determined that Scouting is an essential part of their mission. They establish a yearly contract with the Boy Scouts of America to sponsor a Boy Scout Troop. With the contract the Charter

Organization agrees to provide facilities, utilities, logistics, and financial support to the Troop. The Charter Organization establishes the Troop Committee and authorizes them to administer the Troop.

### **Troop Committee Responsibilities**

The Troop Committee is like the Board of Directors to a Corporation. They set the policies and rules for the Troop. More importantly they set the overall direction and personality of the Troop. The Troop Committee is not necessarily involved in the daily activities of the Troop but looks at the larger picture, such as; are the boys advancing, are the boys camping, is there sufficient leadership, what are the long term equipment need, how are the finances, etc. (see other Adult Responsibilities for additional details).

### **Scoutmaster Responsibilities**

The Scoutmaster is the overall adult leader of the Troop. The Scoutmaster has two main responsibilities. First, the Scoutmaster must make sure there are sufficient adult leaders in place to make the program run. The Scoutmaster does this by recruiting Assistant Scoutmasters and event coordinators. Second, the Scoutmaster must make sure the boy leadership of the Troop is properly trained to perform the duties of their positions and have the resources to execute the program. The Senior Patrol Leader reports to the Scoutmaster and the Scoutmaster steers the execution of the program through the Senior Patrol Leader. To alleviate discrepancies in policy and to present a consistent set of expectations to the boys, all questions of policy and procedure should be deferred to the Scoutmaster by the other adult leaders. The Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, and Troop Committee establish the policies and procedures.

### **Assistant Scoutmaster Responsibilities**

The Assistant Scoutmasters divide up the responsibilities of running the program within the Troop. They help the boys in areas of~ nightly meeting plan, younger boy advancement, older boy advancement, camping, older boy high adventure, quartermaster, scribe, etc. The Assistant Scoutmasters' job is to *show* the boys how to run the program, not to actually run the program. The Assistant Scoutmasters help teach skills so the boys can advance. More importantly, they teach the older boys how to teach those skills.

### **Other Adult Leader Responsibilities**

A number of other adult leadership roles are required to effectively run the Troop. The adult leaders manage activities, paperwork, transportation, finances, and boy training. While it may be more efficient to allow the adults to do tasks within the Troop, we often have the adult supervise and assist a boy leader who has the actual responsibilities. The following is a list of the leadership positions used in our Troop and some of their responsibilities.

#### **Popcorn Colonel:**

- attend organization meetings
- collect order forms
- organize boys
- pick up popcorn

#### **Outdoor Chairperson:**

- arrange permits or reservations
- plan program
- organize drivers
- recruit outside resources

### Scouting for Food Coordinator:

- get bags
- arrange drivers
- establish schedule

### Troop Dinner/Court of Honor Coordinator:

- establish menu
- estimate attendance
- get food donations
- cook and cleanup

### Secretary/Treasurer:

- assist boy Scribe
- keep meeting minutes
- publish news letter
- keep Troop check book

### Quartermaster:

- assist boy Quartermaster
- maintain Troop assets

### Youth Protection:

- provide Youth Protection training
- keep records

### Chaplain:

- Assist Youth Chaplain
- Support for Sunday Camp out Services

### Special Activities Chairs:

- attend organization meetings
- work with boys to plan program
- arrange registration and permits
- recruit outside participants

## Camping

### Annual Plan

Our Troop operates from an annual plan that goes from October to September of each year. The annual plan helps everyone in the Troop take the best advantage of our activities by setting their schedule and calendar well in advance. The annual plan allows leaders to take responsibility and plan for an event and make sure all the arrangements are made well in advance.

### Campout Planning

Camping and other outdoor activities are an important part of the Boy Scout program. Camping is the main reason boys stay in the Scouting program, therefore we try to have 11 campouts each year, including two long term (1 week) camping trip in the summer. The Troop sets the dates and general themes of the campout in the annual plan. Detailed planning occurs during the month or two before the campout. An adult, not necessarily a committee member, will be assigned as the point of contact for each camp out.

Generally, any special requirements, fees, skill level, or rank advancements are established three weeks before the campout. Menus and approved food lists are generated by the patrols two weeks before the campout. All attendance and fees are collected one week before the campout. The Troop maintains a policy such that boys who do not sign-up and pay-up the week before the trip are not permitted to attend.

Unless you are otherwise informed, we stop for dinner while traveling on Friday nights to the camping location. We do this because most boys are squeezed between the time school gets out and the time we leave for the campout. Plan on your boy having some money (outside the money they prepaid for food) for Friday dinner. Drivers will be required for each scouting activity we attend. Each parent will be assigned as a driver for at least one activity each year. It is that parents responsibility to find a replacement if he or she has a conflict. Class A uniforms are to be worn going to and from all campouts for insurance liability purposes and to show Troop unity.

The Patrol Leaders are responsible for keeping everyone in the patrol informed about the campout, compiling the patrol attendance list, collecting money for food, making sure the patrol shops for food, and informing the patrol of changes. Usually the patrol will meet a few days before departure at a local grocery store to purchase food for the campout. If your boy has a question about a campout he should call his patrol leader. Patrol leaders should call the Senior Patrol Leader.

A flyer will be distributed two weeks prior to any campout, with the point of contact and the drivers for that campout. Also, departure time and place, and pick-up time and place will be listed. The money for the campout and food will be collected on the Tuesday night before the weekend campout so the patrols can handle their shopping effectively (typically carried out on the Thursday before the campout).

All parents are welcome to attend and join the scouts on any campout. The parents have their own separate tent and dining area, supplied by the troop, and special menus are prepared by the parents. There is an annual family campout for which siblings are welcome to attend.

## **Camping Equipment**

Sleeping out in a tent and preparing meals is a part of the camping experience and is required to earn several merit badges and to advance in rank. To help the boys meet these requirements Troop 26 has assembled a fair supply of camping equipment. We have enough gear to supply all the boys in a patrol with tents, stoves, lanterns, pots and pans, plates, cups, silverware, etc. Therefore we recommend a boy not bring any of these items. Below is a list of some of the items a boy should and should not bring. A complete list can be found in the Boy Scout handbook.

### **Bring:**

- sleeping bag
- extra socks
- extra T-shirts
- Boy Scout shirt
- Boy Scout Handbook
- paper & pencil
- toiletries
- towels

### **Don't Bring:**

- radios
- Video games (headphones required)
- Camouflage Clothes (unless preapproved)
- sandals (or any other open toe shoe)
- magazines
- unapproved knives
- skateboards, yo-yos, etc

To carry a knife, a scout must have earned, and carry his Toteñ Chit card. Likewise, knives must not be sheath knives, or switch blades, and the folding blade can be no longer than the width of three fingers of the Scout Master.

## Menus

To advance in rank, boys are required to plan their meals, shop for the food, prepare the meals (which involves cooking), and cleaning up afterwards. We try to get the boys to prepare their menu two weeks in advance, collect money 1 week in advance, and shop 1 day in advance. At least two boys out of each patrol volunteer to do the shopping and must be accompanied by at least 1 adult. By screening the menus we try to keep the cost within the limit of \$10 per boy per camp out. To help us keep the costs down we ask that parents make sure the food purchased matches the items on the approved menu. Avoid “instant” foods because they are expensive and the boys are required to cook. Below is a list of some of the items a patrol needs to buy (with the \$10 per boy collected the previous week) and not to buy for a camp out.

### Do Buy:

- food on approved menu
- healthy snacks
- paper towel (1 roll per patrol)
- unusual condiments

### Don't Buy: (except as necessary to replenish the “Patrol Box”)

- dish soap
- aluminum foil or matches
- oil
- soda (in cans)
- paper plates
- Junk Food
- plastic utensils
- Salt & Pepper

## Long Term Summer Camp Preparation

Each boy needs to prepare in advance to make his long term summer camp experience the best possible. The boy needs to determine what skills he would like to develop (swimming, archery, survival, environment, etc.), which merit badges he needs for advancement (required and not required), how much money is required to meet his goals, and the value gained for each dollar spent.

Some activities like boating and canoeing require a boy to first earn the swimming merit badge. Some activities like High Adventure Camp require the rank of First Class. All long term camps require some sort of cash outlay. The yearly program is designed to give each boy ample opportunity to earn the merit badges or ranks for the summer camp programs. The Troop provides one or two opportunities for the boy to earn money toward the summer camp programs.

We have been fortunate in the past with adults who are willing to commit the time to allow us to offer two long-term camping activities every summer. We generally call these two long-term camp out Advancement Camp and High Adventure Camp.

Advancement Camp takes place at our local council camp (Sand Hill Scout Reservation near Brooksville, FL) and is geared toward younger boys and boys who want to concentrate on merit badges and rank advancement. A diligent boy can earn 3-10 merit badges and advance one or two ranks with the skills he learns at Advancement Camp. The Troop requires the boys to sign-up for summer camp merit badges about 3 weeks in advance. This camp offers a wide set of opportunities including a pool, rifle/shotgun range, biking, 3 lakes, boating/sailing, and nature activities. This camp is generally costs around \$130 plus spending money (\$30).

High Adventure Camp takes place anywhere the boys of the Troop decide to go and is geared toward older boys (ages 13 and up, First Class and above) who want to do hiking, boating, climbing, kayaking, etc. as part of a week long adventure. There are fewer opportunities to work on merit badges and rank advancement but more opportunities for fun, confidence building, and life long experiences. This camps

cost depends on the location and activity chosen but is usually costs at least \$185. Troop 26 has a policy that a boy may not attend an out of state camp until the summer following his attendance at the local Sand Hill summer camp.

### **The Camp Phone, Pagers and Other Gizmos**

Most of our camping locations are remote and do not have any type of phone service. Many of the adult leaders carry cell phones which are used to call out in case of emergencies. There is no reason for boys to carry phones or pagers on campouts and any that are discovered will be confiscated. A few of the places we go camping (especially summer camp) have pay phones. We STRONGLY recommend that boys do not call out on these phones at any time and that parents do not accept calls from their boys from these phones. If there is a reason to call a parent an adult will be placing the call, not the boy.

### **Drivers and Driving**

With so many boys in our Troop, it is critical to have transportation support from all the parents. Getting to/from our activities can sometimes require two or three hours. Parents who drive are certainly encouraged to stay for the entire camp out. For most camp out we typically leave about 5:00 on Friday from the Scout Hut and return on Sunday about 1:00.

We strongly discourage parents who wish to drop their boys off late (e.g. Saturday morning) or pick them up early (e.g. Sunday morning). As outlined in the previous section, we will require that all parents drive for a minimum of one activity per year!

### **Camp and Activity Fees**

Some places we camp charge fees (such as state parks) and some activities require admission fees (such as a baseball game). We try to negotiate discount rates for all these activities and sometimes are allowed to trade service hours for the fees. However, if a fee is required we try to inform the boys several weeks in advance so parents are not caught off guard.

### **Boy Scout Policy and Safety Requirements**

#### **Scout Books**

The Scout Book is the most important thing a boy can bring to every Troop meeting or outing. The Scout Book is the primary resource for you son in all aspects of Scouting, from the uniform, to first aid, to identifying stars. The Scout Book is also the primary way to keep track of your boy's advancement. At every meeting or event, we work on something the boy can use for advancement. If your boy does not have his Scout Book at every meeting and camp out the credit may not get recorded and your son may not advance as quickly as he could.

#### **Uniforms**

The Scout uniform is an important part of the Scouting program. The uniform is a great equalizer amongst the boys and provides a great sense of belonging. The "Class A" Scout uniform should be worn at all Scouting events including Tuesday night meetings and to/from all campouts. The "Class A" Scout uniform consists of the Scout shirt (with all the appropriate insignia), Scout shorts, Scout belt, belt buckle, and Scout socks. Accessories such as hats, jackets, etc. are also available but not required. (These make good Birthday/Christmas gifts). Uniform items are available from the Scout office at 11046 Johnson Blvd. in Seminole.

The Troop has also invested in designing a troop T-shirt which the boys can wear during camp-outs and other strenuous activities. We sell these T-shirts at cost (approximately \$8) to boys and adults alike. Check with the Scoutmaster. A “Class B” uniform, consisting of a Scout T Shirt, Scout shorts, Scout socks, a Scout Belt, and belt buckle are acceptable for Troop meetings from the time school dismisses for the summer, until school resumes again.

### **Safety Requirements**

National policy states that everyone must wear closed toe shoes at all times during outdoor activities. Sandals, flip-flops, or any other open toe footwear are not permitted.

Troop policy states that shoes must be worn during all water activities in lakes and rivers. This includes swimming and canoeing. We recommend sending old shoes instead of the newest pair of Air Jordans.

### **Two Deep Leadership Policy**

National policy requires us to have at least two adults together at any Scout meeting or activity. Likewise, there must be two boys together. A boy and an adult can never be alone together under any circumstance. Any violation of this should be reported to the Troop leader. This training is available for all adults interested at a Troop meeting once a year. There is also training available on the BSA website. West Florida Council has an excellent website where you can take this training online..

### **Medical Policy**

Every boy and adult is required to have a Class I and a Class 2 medical form filled out by a physician and on record with the Troop during any activity or meeting. These forms are good for 2 years for boys and adults under 40 years old. A Class 3 form must be completed every year for those over 40 years old. The Troop keeps a red 3-ring binder with all the medical forms and permission slips with us at all times.

### **Permission Slip Policy**

National policy and federal law requires us to have a document, signed by a parent or guardian, which grants permission to the adult leaders of Troop 26 to authorize emergency medical procedures for you boy while on a campout or other activity. The BSA has a blanket insurance policy that covers medical and liability during the time of any Scouting event for both boys and adults. The premiums for this policy are paid by the Troop.

### **Travel Policy**

Travel to/from campouts and other activities often require parents shuttling groups of boy in cars, trucks, or vans. While our medical/liability insurance covers the boys and adults, the drivers are required to carry auto insurance. Drivers must be 21 years old and have a valid Florida drivers license. If a parent is going to drive for any Scouting event, they must submit their vehicle make and year, drivers license number, and insurance coverage level to a leader of Troop 26 for our data base.

National policy prohibits anyone from riding in the back of a pickup during a Scouting event. National policy requires every passenger in a vehicle be wearing a seat belt at all times.

Our Troop committee has set a policy that boys who are licensed drivers may generally drive their own vehicles to/from Scout activities. On certain case by case basis this policy may be relaxed at the discretion of the scoutmaster.

Boys may not have other boys as passengers when driving to/from activities unless the parents of the passenger have submitted a signed letter to the Troop granting the boy the right to be a passenger of an underage driver.

Boys must wear full uniform while traveling in a vehicle to/from any Scout activity. If an accident were to happen the boys would be easily identified as having full Boy Scout medical coverage.

Every adult must drive for a minimum of one event per year.

### **Safe Swim and Safety Afloat Requirements**

National policy requires that at least one adult who is a part of a water-related camp out be trained in the Boy Scout Safe Swim and Safety Afloat procedures. Safe Swim regulations include establishing a buddy system, clearing a safe swim area, and establishing swimming proficiency groups with strictly enforced depth limits. Safety Afloat regulations include always wearing life jackets, filing float plans in advance, and all participants must be certified swimmers.

### **Merit Badges, Rank Advancement, and Cool Patches**

#### **Merit Badge Requirements**

There are well over 100 merit badges on everything from aviation to zoology. A merit badge is a study of a topic which may be a skill, character development, or career interest. Twelve of the merit badges have been singled out as required for all the boys to earn. To earn the rank of Star a boy must earn six merit badges including four from the required list. To earn the rank of Life a boy must earn 11 merit badges including 7 from the required list. To earn the rank of Eagle a boy must earn 21 merit badges including all the required badges. A list of all the merit badges is in the back of the Scout Handbook. The requirements for the 12 required merit badges are also printed in the back of the Scout Handbook. Requirements and reference material for individual merit badges are available in individual merit badge booklets. The Troop has a good selection of merit badge booklets available from the librarian (and all books can be purchased at the Scout Shop or at [www.scoutstuff.org](http://www.scoutstuff.org) for approximately \$3). The Troop offers merit badge counseling training for interested adults (typically at the same time as Youth Protection Training, and this is possibly the least painful of all BSA Training!). The work on a merit badge can be completed at home, and is encouraged to be teamed with parental guidance and supervision. To begin a merit badge, the scout must complete a Blue Card and have it signed by the Scoutmaster, attesting it is fine for the scout to start. Following this approval, the scout must then select a certified counselor. Following the completion of all requirements, the counselor will sign the Blue Card as complete and submit it to the Advancement Chairman for recognition of the scout.

#### **Rank Advancement Requirements**

There are 6 ranks that a boy can earn in the Boy Scout program; Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle. The ranks are designed to progressively challenge a boy as he matures in the Scouting program. The three lower ranks require mastering of basic skills such as first aid, cooking, and knot tying. The three upper ranks require advanced knowledge of those skills including the ability to teach those skills. The upper ranks also concentrate on qualities like citizenship, community service,

and leadership. The requirements for each rank are outlined in the Scout Handbook. All rank advancements must be approved through a formal Board of Review by the Troop Committee consisting of at least 3 adults, and a Scout Master Conference. The purpose of the Board of Review is to review the completed requirements, and the purpose of the Scout Master Conference is to look forward at the requirements for the next rank. In order to complete these Conferences, the scout must sign up a minimum of one week prior to his review, and must present himself to the committee and Scout Master in full Class A uniform.

### **Religious Awards**

Duty to God is an important part of the Scouting program as evident in the Scout Oath and Laws. Most religious organizations and denominations recognize the importance of the Scouting program and have developed special Medals or Awards that the boy can earn. The requirements for these awards are very specific to the religious organization. If you are interested in these awards you should check with your religious leader for details

### **Camp-O Ree Patches**

Quite often we go to camping events that are sponsored by the Boy Scout district, council, or national organization. Quite often your boy receives, or can earn, patches from these events that can be worn on the uniform. These patches go on the right breast pocket and are valid to be a part of the Class A uniform for a maximum of 6 months.

### **Trail Patches**

Many historic trails and special council trails sponsor a special patch awarded to boys who hike the trail and/or meet other requirements. These patches can be worn on the right breast pocket of the uniform and are valid to be a part of the Class A uniform for a maximum of 6 months.

### **Other Stuff**

#### **Troop Finances**

Just like any other organization, a Boy Scout troop requires capital to operate. We are very lucky to be sponsored by the Palm Harbor United Methodist church that provides us with a meeting place, electricity, etc. However, we must come up with our own money to spend on camping equipment, badges, registration and insurance, activities, mailings, etc. Depending on the size of the troop and our activities we can require from \$4000-\$7000 per year in operating capital which translates into about \$150 per boy. These monies come from dues and fund raising activities.

#### **Dues**

Our Troop committee has established a policy requiring weekly Troop dues of \$1 per boy per week or \$52 per year. The money is due which the boy attends the meeting or not. For administrative purposes the Troop committee has established a policy that these dues are payable in two semiannual payments of \$26 on August 1st and February 1st of each year. Checks should be made payable to Troop 26 BSA. Prepayment of \$50 in one lump sum provides a discount.

## **Feasts and Dinners**

A few times a year the Troop hosts a dinner for the parents in honor of some special event, usually a Court of Honor or Crossover. This is an event where boys get to show off their skills and accomplishments to their parents. This is also an opportunity for parents get to meet each other. We charge a minimal fee for these dinners and any excess monies go into the Troop fund.

## **Court of Honor**

The Court of Honor is the forum for recognizing the boys for their accomplishments. We hold a Court of Honor two or three times a year, usually in conjunction with a parent dinner. The Court of Honor is the time when the boys receive formal recognition for the merit badges and rank advancements they have earned since the previous Court of Honor. The Scouting program believes each boy deserves his due so we make a special attempt to recognize each boy individually during the Court of Honor. When a boy earns the rank of Eagle a special Court of Honor is generally held just for that boy.

## **Crossover**

In March of each year we have a Crossover camp out which honors the boys who are graduating from the Webelos program into the Boy Scout program. The boys in the Troop put on a special ceremony to welcome the new boys into the Troop.

## **Webelos Camp out**

Between December and March of each year we have a Webelos camp out where we invite the boys and parents of the Webelos den to join us for a weekend outing. This camp out is meant to help the Webelos boys get a taste of the Boy Scout program as well as to meet the other boys and adults. This helps ease the transition into the Troop for the new boys. This is also an opportunity for the adult leaders of the Troop to encourage parents of the new boys to join the Troop.

## **Special Family Needs**

Boys or their families sometimes have special needs or restrictions with their diet, activity, religion, scholastic activity, schedule, etc. The Boy Scouts have made special provisions in the program to meet many of these needs. Please let the Scoutmaster know in advance and accommodations will be made. Likewise, we have a collection of various components of scout uniforms at the building. These parts may be used by any scout in need. If older scouts no longer wear certain sizes, we always welcome donations of any good, clean, usable, scouting clothing.

## **Additional Adult Information and Training**

The Boy Scout program excels at providing information and training to the adult leaders so that they can do their best at executing the program. There is information or training available for any role that you wish to play in Boy Scouts. Programs such as Fast Start, youth protection, merit badge counselor, Roundtable, Scout Leader Fundamentals, and Wood Badge are examples of opportunities for you to learn more.

## **Discipline and Behavior**

The Troop 26 Boy Scout program is designed to teach young men to be leaders. However, because of past behavior issues, we must establish rules regarding behavior and discipline. The scouts are to be encouraged to be on their Best Scout Behavior at all times, especially when in uniform and at all meetings. ALL scouts must stay in the buildings unless supervised by two adults outside. Any scout leaving the property will be asked to go home and not return (we are not a baby sitting service). If any scout disobeys any of the rules laid out in this manual, he will receive a single warning by the Scoutmaster. If a second warning is issued, he will be given a phone, and told to call his parents to pick him up **IMMEDIATELY**. This will apply to all meetings, activities, and even campouts (no matter the distance from the parents!).

The Troop Committee and Scout Master want these young men to grow, and to understand manners, discipline, behavior and consequences. Unless our meetings can be run orderly, we cannot help these young men to learn and advance in a timely manner. The attached form will acknowledge that both the parent and scout understand these rules.

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## PARENT/SCOUT ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

This manual is provided to both the Scout and his parent to read and understand the policies as set forth by the Troop Committee for Troop 26 of Palm Harbor, FL. The purpose of this manual is to establish troop polices and practices so that anyone contemplating joining Troop 26 can understand our goals, our activities, and our discipline practices. Each Scout and parent must read this manual, and sign the attached form in both locations, acknowledging their understanding of expectations. One portion will be retained in the troop files, and the other portion will remain with .the parent and scout. The Troop Committee desires to have a well-organized, boy-led scout program, and recognizes that along with understanding the Scout Oath and Scout law, come responsibilities and consequences that each scout MUST understand prior to participating. The Troop Committee is more than willing to answer any questions, discuss any sections, or work with parents to revise or refine any of the sections as established in this manual. However, we do not anticipate making any exceptions to the rules after-the-fact.

By signing the attached form, each scout and his parent or guardian acknowledge in writing that they are willing to abide by these guidelines and practices as set forth in the previous pages of this manual.

Scout Signature and date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature and date: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing the attached form, each scout and his parent or guardian acknowledge in writing that they are willing to abide by these guidelines and practices as set forth in the previous pages of this manual.

Scout Signature and date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature and date: \_\_\_\_\_