

Troop 778

Parents' Survival Guide



Boy Scouts of America

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CHAPTER 1 *What Have I Gotten Into?*

Introduction

Your son has just joined Troop 778 and you have a lot of questions. We hope this booklet will help answer most of them. If, however, it falls short, please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the of the Troop Committee members. Our goal is to make sure that your son's membership in Troop 778 is rewarding for both him and you.

Our Troop's Philosophy

Troop 778 subscribes fully to the three principals of the Scouting movement:

Character – Citizenship -- Physical Fitness.

We will provide our Scouts with every opportunity to develop from a boy to a young man who has a strong set of ethical values and the skills to implement them. During his tenure in Troop 778 there will be times when your Scout experiences both success and failure. Our philosophy is to praise and build upon his successes and help him see the challenge in his failures.

The first and most important principal of the Boy Scout and Troop 778's program is this:

Boy Scouting is a Boy Run Program

We're here because our boys wanted to become Scouts. Experience has shown that the most successful programs are those that allow the Scouts to run the Troop. This may sound alarming at first, but when the program is properly followed the boys emerge with a great sense of pride and self esteem. A properly structured Troop gives each Scout a chance to participate at a level that he can handle. As an example, a new Scout may have his first leadership opportunity as one of the leaders of a new Scout patrol, while an experienced Scout may be elected the new Senior Patrol Leader. Other positions, such as Troop Guide, Instructor, Scribe, Quartermaster, Historian, Chaplain Aide and Librarian help to round out a Troop where everyone is important.

Troop 778 allows its Scouts to plan, develop and operate their own program, both within the Troop and the individual patrols. Adult leaders are always present to provide guidance and to make sure the BSA rules and guidelines are followed. Our goal is to keep adult involvement in the program to a minimum and consequently provide as much opportunity as possible to the Scouts to run the Troop.

The Patrol Method

The Troop is made up of several patrols and is led by the Senior Patrol Leader. The Senior Patrol Leader is elected by the Scouts, and appoints an Assistant Senior Patrol Leader.

Each patrol consists of between four and eight Scouts and is led by a Patrol Leader. The Patrol Leader is elected by his patrol, and in turn, appoints an Assistant Patrol Leader.

The Patrol has its own name, flag and yell, and functions as a unit participating in activities with the Troop or on its own. Since there is a great deal of variety within the Troop, it makes sense that all the patrols would not be the same. There are several different types of patrols that can be used by the Troop to accommodate boys with different needs and capabilities:

- New Scout patrols are used to provide beginning Scouts with additional guidance and leadership opportunities
- Regular patrols provide a team atmosphere for the Scouts, allowing them to advance at their own pace
- Venture patrols allow older Scouts to participate in activities that are designed just for them. Examples could be high-adventure-low-impact camping, multiple-day canoe trips while camping on gravel bars, or something as simple as attendance at a baseball game.
- Leadership patrols are formed to concentrate the Troop's leaders into one patrol. These Scouts are then required to provide leadership and guidance to the other patrols

The Scouts of Troop 778 have consistently elected to use two types of Patrols:

- The New Scout patrol for 1st year Scouts
- Regular Patrols for all other Scouts in the Troop

In addition, our Scouts have decided that the regular patrols should be made up of Scouts who joined together and are within 1 or 2 years in age. As a result, a Troop 778 Scout is quite likely to belong to the same patrol and have the same fellow patrol members for his entire Troop 778 tenure. Patrols are sometimes reformed or realigned as required to solve personality conflicts or if a patrol's size falls below acceptable minimums. For the most part, however, a patrol that works well and has fun together will stay together.

Boys need a constant challenge in order to grow, but it must be one that they are ready for. New Scouts will have their hands full preparing for a cold weather campout while the older Scouts might be ready for a winter canoe trip. It is for this reason that some activities may be restricted to the more experienced patrols.

In addition to the elected Senior Patrol Leader and Patrol Leaders, Troop 778 annually elects a Scribe, Chaplain Aide, Quartermaster, Historian and Librarian. Members of the Order of the Arrow elect their own OA Troop Representative. Elections take place during the two or three weeks leading up to start of our Charter Year on February 1.

Appointed officers within the Troop include the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (appointed by the Senior Patrol Leader), Assistant Patrol Leader (appointed by the Patrol Leader) and Troop Guides and Instructors (appointed by the Scoutmaster). Troop Guides are responsible for providing guidance and training for the 1st year Scouts during their entire first year. They will help plan menus, develop food lists, set up and take down tents and dining flies, build fires, cook meals, and clean up. They will also provide the instructions during Troop meetings for the Tenderfoot, 2nd Class and 1st Class requirements. Troop Instructors provide the weekly program for the Scouts working on the advanced ranks.

The Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Troop Guides, Patrol Leaders, and OA Troop Representative form the Patrol Leaders Council. This group meets in August of every year to evaluate the previous year, discuss what is good and what needs work within the Troop, and plan the Troop's program for the next twelve months. Then they meet monthly during the year to plan individual Troop meetings, work on campout activities and events and maintain the Troop's goals for the current year.

CHAPTER 2 *Dues and What They Do*

Dues Policy

Youth members will pay annual Troop dues to help cover the cost of operating the Troop and its activities. Active adult members of the Troop will not pay annual dues. The Troop will help Scouts who have graduated from the Troop maintain continuous membership in BSA by carrying them on its roster. These members will pay dues equal to the annual BSA membership cost.

Annual dues for youth members are \$75.00. The first year's dues for new members will be calculated at \$6.25 per month or partial month of membership through the end of the current registration year. This simply means, if your son joins in the middle of the year, he will only pay for the months left in the year.

Dues are payable by the deadline announced at Troop meetings and in parent communications. Generally, we encourage dues payment in November. A new members partial year dues are payable immediately upon joining the Troop.

Membership dues are neither transferable nor refundable.

Where Does the Money Go?

Boy Scouts offers many ways for its boys to be acknowledged. This acknowledgement usually involves a patch or some other uniform item. The list on the next page shows the items that Troop 778 provides its Scouts. Some of the items are paid for annually and some depend on advancement or participation in a given activity. In most cases, all of the items that a Scout will need are on this list.

| Item | Cost | Notes |
|------------------------------------|------------|--|
| Annual BSA Membership | 15.00 | |
| Troop Neckerchief | 10.50 | One Only |
| Neckerchief Slide | 2.20 | One Only |
| Green Shoulder Loops | 1.65 | One Pair Only |
| Troop 778 Patch | 1.50 | One Only |
| Annual Service Star | 1.00 | Includes backing |
| Quality Unit/Top of the Arch Patch | 1.50 | When earned by the Troop |
| Office Patches | 2.20 | |
| Patrol Emblems | 1.75 | Scout pays difference for custom designs |
| Training Fees | 5.00 est. | |
| Rank Patches | 2.50 | |
| Mothers Pins | 1.50 | |
| Religious Awards | 5.00 | |
| Merit Badges | 1.60 | Varies by badge |
| Eagle Scout Neckerchief | 11.60 | |
| Eagle Neckerchief Slide | 8.25 | |
| Eagle Scout Presentation Kit | 25.00 | |
| Order of the Arrow Emblem | 3.50 | |
| Adult Awards | 10.00 est. | |
| District/Council Camping Patches | 10.00 | When earned |
| NYLT Recognition | 25.00 | When earned |
| Memorial Day Good Turn Patches | 3.00 est. | Varies depending on years of participation |
| OA Induction/Advancement Costs | 15.00 | |

Replacement of lost or damaged items is the responsibility of the Scout

The Troop uses funds in its general fund for a number of other items. These include:

- Providing and maintaining a collection of high quality camping equipment for each Patrol, including tents, tarps, patrol boxes, cast iron ovens and griddles, cooking utensils and cleaning equipment
- Costs associated with maintaining and licensing the Troop's trailer
- Registration for Council and District camping activities (Camporees, Pacaos, etc.)

Some expenses are the responsibility of the Troop members. These may include:

- Summer Camp fees
- High Adventure program expenses
- Personal expenses while on troop activities or outings
- Personal equipment
- Patrol cooking and meal expenses while on Troop outings
- Extra costs associated with camping....canoe rental fees, campsite fees, etc

Fund Raising and Scout Accounts

Individual Scout Accounts

Fund raising opportunities will be made available to the boys throughout the year to help pay for their Scout activities. Proceeds can be used by the Scout to help pay for anything that is Scout or camping related. Examples include Summer Camp, High Adventure programs and Troop campouts such as a canoe trip. Other examples include using these funds to pay for the annual dues, dinner at the annual Holiday Party, new uniforms or additions to a uniform and any camping equipment the Scout requires to participate in Troop programs.

Using the funds in a Scout account to pay for any of these items is easy. At the appropriate time, just notify the Scoutmaster in writing (handwritten or via email) that a Scout account is to be used. Purchases of camping equipment, uniform parts, etc. can be reimbursed by giving the Scoutmaster a request in writing, along with the receipt for the item.

The official Troop 778 policy regarding individual fundraisers is as follows: 75% of the profits earned by a Scout are deposited in his account, 25% go into the Troop's general fund.

The current (January, 2006) Troop 778 practice is to deposit 100% of the profits earned by a Scout in his account. This practice is subject to change at any time depending upon the financial status of the Troop's general fund.

A Scout who transfers from Troop 778 to a different Troop can take the funds in his account with him. A check will be written to the new Troop and mailed to the Scoutmaster of the new Troop.

Funds in a Scout account are non-refundable if your son drops out of Scouting.

The Troop's Account and Budget

Troop fund-raising activities will take place during the year to help pay for necessary items. These fund-raisers are either voluntary or mandatory (with a buyout if you cannot attend). In addition, they may be for adults only or require that both a parent and Scout attend. Sometimes the purpose of the funds will be established in advance. As an example, the proceeds may be earmarked for new merit badge books or tent replacement.

For several years, the Troop's budget has exceeded the amount generated by dues payments. The Troop has used one annual fund-raiser to fill the gap, which in turn has allowed 100% of the profits generated by individual Scout fund-raisers to be deposited in Scout accounts. The importance of this annual fund-raiser cannot be overstated. Its success is based upon the willingness of parents and Scouts to participate.

CHAPTER 3 *What Do They Need and When Do They Need It?*

Introduction

Scouting involves many different activities and parents may be unsure at first as to what their son might need. Proper uniforms and personal camping equipment are very important components of a boy's Scouting career.

Shown below are two lists, one for Uniform Items and one for Camping/Outdoor Items. Each is an attempt to show the items a Scout will need, and most importantly **when** he will need them.

Uniforms

Troop 778's official uniform is from the waist up, and consists of the shirt (with patches), neckerchief and slide. We ask all Scouts to wear decent, solid color pants or shorts (no warm-ups or nylon pants) with a belt, good shoes and socks.

Scouts may elect to wear the complete uniform (Scout pants or shorts, Scout belt, Scout socks). This is optional and at the discretion of each Scout. Scouts elected to the Order of the Arrow must wear a complete uniform to all OA activities.

| <u>Item</u> | <u>When Needed</u> |
|--|--------------------|
| Boy Scout Uniform Shirt (recommended short sleeve) | Immediately |
| St. Louis Area Council Patch | Immediately |
| World Crest Scout Emblem | Immediately |
| Boy Scout Handbook | Immediately |
| Boy Scout Pants or Shorts | Optional |
| Boy Scout Belt and Socks | Optional |
| Custom Neckerchief Slide | Optional |

(These items are not provided by the Troop)

All other patches and uniform items are provided by the Troop, either when a Scout joins the Troop or as he earns them. The above items can be purchased at either of the Scout Shops.

Camping/Outdoor Items

Sending a boy off on his first campout can be an unsettling experience if you're not sure what to send with him.

The Troop will provide each Scout with recommended equipment lists for Warm Weather Camping, Cold Weather Camping and Summer Camp. We strongly recommend that parents assist first year Scouts in preparing for their first several campouts. Common sense should prevail. Nylon pants do not work well around a campfire.

| <u>Item</u> | <u>When Needed</u> |
|---|--------------------|
| Sleeping Bag | By first campout |
| Sleeping Pad | By first campout |
| Small folding camp seat | Optional |
| Backpack or gear bag | By first campout |
| Mess kit and knife, fork and spoon | By first campout |
| Cup or mug | By first campout |
| Flashlight (small) with extra batteries | By first campout |
| Canteen or water bottles | By first campout |
| Personal grooming items (tooth brush, soap, etc.) | By first campout |
| Personal first aid kit | By first campout |
| Bug repellent and sun screen | As needed |
| Compass | When requested |
| Matches | When requested |
| Pocket knife | When qualified |

All of the items above can be purchased at the Scout Shop or at any of the local discount and sports stores. Many of the stores (Uncle Sams, Dick's, Alpine Shop) offer discounts to Scouts who have a current membership card. It's important to realize that good equipment can last a lifetime but equally important to realize that a boy will be using it. Younger Scouts can be hard on equipment, so durability should be considered. The older Scout may be involved in more advanced activities such as extended hikes and may need lighter, more specialized equipment. If you have questions, be sure to give the Scoutmaster or any of the Assistant Scoutmasters a call.

New Scouts will receive lots of instruction prior to their first campout on how to prepare and what to take. They will learn tricks that help make camping easier and more comfortable, such as plastic bags for both clean and dirty clothes, boots versus tennis shoes, etc. Proper clothing depends upon the nature of both the campout and the weather. Some items are used on every campout. Good, experienced campers can gather all of their personal items within 10-15 minutes.

A note regarding footwear:

Troop 778 encourages boots for all outdoor activities. They provide the physical protection necessary for Scouts hiking in the outdoors, climbing trees and wading through creeks. They also provide protection from the wet and cold. Many of our Scouts will wear boots for most of a campout, but have a pair of comfortable sneakers to slip into around the campsite. Please do not allow your Scout to attend a winter campout with nothing but the pair of sneakers he has on. Common sense, again, should be your guide.

At the same time, we recommend against purchasing expensive boots for normal Troop camping and outdoor activities. Boys will quickly outgrow any footwear. Save your money for the time when they will need a good pair of boots for a High Adventure activity.

CHAPTER 4 *Ranks and Privileges*

Scout Ranks



Scout ranks and privileges are earned by the Scout as he progresses through the program. The ranks that a Scout may receive are:

- Scout
- Tenderfoot
- Second Class
- First Class
- Star
- Life
- Eagle

Advancement through the ranks is an extremely important component of the Troop's program. However, each Scout will progress through the ranks at his own pace. **The Troop will encourage each Scout to advance to First Class within the first year, and has a program in place to accomplish this.** By doing this the Troop increases the chances that a Scout will stay active in Scouting, while at the same time ensure that it will have a good supply of seasoned Scouts to help welcome and teach and inspire the new Scouts.

The rank of Eagle is the most difficult to attain and is highly regarded both in and out of the Scouting program. A Scout must complete **all** of the requirements for Eagle **prior** to his 18th birthday.

Advancement requirements are clearly spelled out in the Boy Scout Handbook. Normally, they fall into four categories:

1. Skills such as First Aid, knot tying or merit badges
2. Activities such as attending campouts
3. Service activities
4. A willingness to live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law

Positions of Responsibility

In addition to the normal ranks, a Scout may be elected or appointed to one of the following positions within the Troop or a Patrol:

- Senior or Assistant Senior Patrol Leader – Lead the Troop during all activities
- Patrol Leader or Assistant Patrol Leader – Leads the patrol during all activities and represents the Patrol to the Troop
- Den Chief – Assists Cub Scout dens
- Troop Guide – Helps new Scouts during their first year
- Troop Instructor – Provides skills instruction and programs for the Troop
- Quartermaster – Keeps track of troop equipment and the Troop's trailer
- Historian – Keeps a record of Troop events
- Scribe – Keeps meeting records such as attendance
- Librarian – Maintains the troop library
- Chaplain Aide - Directs the Troop's religious activities

Privileges

Some of the activities in Scouting require a certain degree of skill and maturity in order to ensure safety. Three of these are:

- Use or possession of matches or a lighter – Requires the Fireman Chit card
- Use or possession of a knife, hatchet or bow saw – Requires the Totin Chip Card
- Use of pressurized fuel – Requires the Toasted Chit card

If your son wishes to bring these items to a campout, he must have the proper card with him or he will not be allowed to use the items. Experience has shown that Scouts who have earned these privileges seldom abuse them. It is, however, important to note that these privileges can be revoked if the Scout acts in a careless or reckless manner.

These skills are best practiced outdoors. Therefore the Scout will be asked to bring the item to a campout or other activity. Some follow through will normally be required on the part of the Scout in order to complete his requirements.

Troop 778 does not allow Scouts to earn the Toasted Chit card unless they are participating in a High Adventure activity that requires it.

Order of the Arrow

The Order of the Arrow is a special group within Scouting. Members are elected by their fellow Scouts based on how well they exhibit the values of Scouting. Elections take place yearly at Summer Camp. Boys become eligible after they have completed 15 days and nights of camping under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America within a two-year period, including one previous long-term camp during one of the previous two summers.

A Scout must be First Class to be eligible, and be in attendance at long-term camp when elected. Scouts not in attendance at long-term camp are eligible if they attend another week-long Boy Scout camping or training program during the same summer.

Elections are held at Summer Camp. An eligible Scout is elected to the Order if he receives 50% of the votes of those registered and active Scouts participating in the election. There is no maximum number of candidates a unit may elec.

Older Boy (Venture) Program

As Scouts grow in age and skill they need a constant challenge or they will lose interest in the Scouting program. The Venture program provides them with these challenges. Boys must be 14 years old and Star rank to participate. The Venture activities will be based on outings or projects planned and executed by the Crew.