

Troop 1 Littleton Boy Scouts of America Parent Guide

"Scouting is a game with a purpose"
Lord Baden-Powell

Introduction

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

What is it all about? What will you be expected to do? What does it cost? We have prepared this booklet to answer these questions. The following pages describe the organization of a Troop and the advancement pattern that each boy will follow. Reading this will help you understand how your boy can progress through the ranks with your help. It will also help you understand how you can share in the adventure.

What Is It All About?

There are three aims to scouting:

- Aim I -- To build character
- Aim II --To foster citizenship
- Aim III -- To develop fitness

These three aims are the bedrock of the American Scouting movement. It is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America to serve others by helping to instill values in young people, and in other ways to prepare them to make ethical choices over their lifetime in achieving their full potential.

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

Scout Law

A Scout is:
Trustworthy
Loyal
Helpful
Friendly
Courteous
Kind
Obedient
Cheerful

Thrifty
Brave
Clean
Reverent

Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight

Since 1910, these principles have been taught in an atmosphere of recreation and fun which allows young people to develop self confidence, leadership and moral character. Troop 1 Littleton was formed in 1918 and continues today with its proud 90 year history in Scouting.

Boy Led Organization

Boy Scouting is a youth led organization. The boys learn how to organize and lead the Troop. After training, and with supervision from the adult leaders, the boys run the show.

The boys in the Troop will be working towards their First Class and then Eagle ranks. As they travel on the trail to Eagle they will not only learn how to lead a team to a goal, but they will actually lead teams of scouts in a number of situations.

Boys however do not join scouting for character development and leadership. They join for friendship, fun and adventure. They want to camp, hike, boat, swim and spend time outdoors. They want to enjoy campfires, whittling and to be independent. The outdoors, adventure and fun are the methods of scouting.

Organization

Troop 1 is a participating member of the Nashua Valley Council Boy Scouts of America. The Troop's organization consists of a Chartered Organization, a Troop Committee, the Troop, and the Troop's Parents.

Chartered Organization (Sponsor)

Every Troop belongs to a chartered organization. The Chartered Organization for Troop 1 is the Littleton Congregational Church. A Chartered Organization Representative acts a liaison between the troop and the church.

Troop Committee

The Troop Committee functions as an administration and support organization for the Troop. The Troop Committee takes care of the non-program issues related to the troop. For example, fund raising activities, advancement records, procurement and maintenance of troop equipment. The Committee meets monthly. The meetings are informal and open to all parents and committee members.

Troop Meetings

Troop 1 holds meetings weekly on Tuesdays from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM at the Russell St. School. There are no meetings on days when school is not in session. Meetings are run by the boys and typically include activities related to the monthly theme. During patrol time they may also prepare and plan for camping trips and activities. The boys usually enjoy a game or athletic activity prior to the close of each meeting. The typical format of a troop meeting is –

- Opening
- Skills Instruction
- Patrol Meeting
- Patrol Competition (game time)
- Closing

The Outdoor Program

An important component of any successful Troop is the outdoor program. Troop 1 will plan and participate in an outdoor trip or event approximately once each month. We also spend a week at Camp Wanocksett each July. In addition to the basic program, we may also add additional High Adventure trips or specific events to the program based on the requirements and interests of the Scouts.

Adult Leadership

Two registered adult leaders, or one adult leader and a Scout parent, both of whom must be at least 21 years of age are required for all Troop 1 meetings, trips and outings. We have a Scoutmaster, several registered Assistant Scoutmasters, Committee Members and active parents who assist with meetings and outings. Parental participation is highly encouraged.

Patrols and Patrol Leaders

The Troop is a group made up of patrols. Each patrol usually consists of a Patrol Leader and no more than eight Scouts. The boys in a patrol elect their patrol leader who in turn appoints the assistant patrol leader. Troop 1 currently consists of five patrols and over thirty active registered scouts. As new boys join the Troop, additional patrols are added. When crossing over from Cub Scouts, the boys may join a New Scout Patrol with a Troop Guide assigned to assist them.

Patrol Leaders Council (PLC)

The Senior Patrol Leader is an elected position and the Senior Patrol Leader selects his Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. The Patrol Leaders, with the Senior Patrol Leader as their head, form the Patrol Leaders' Council, which plans the activities and runs the Troop meetings. Elections for Patrol Leader and Senior Patrol Leader are held twice each year.

Advancement

New Boy Scouts advance through the ranks of Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class. During this time they focus on basic skills such as first aid, orienteering, camping and cooking. Each boy advances at his own pace and there is no set schedule for advancement. Merit badges can be earned at anytime but they are not required for advancement until after First Class is earned.

After First Class, advancement through the ranks of Star, Life and Eagle are based on earning merit badges, leadership and community service.

The goal of the merit badge program is to expand a Scout's areas of interest and to encourage the Scout to meet and work with adults in a chosen subject. Merit badges are earned by a Scout working with a registered merit badge counselor. Parents and adult leaders are encouraged to register as merit badge counselors for topics in which they are trained or have experience. Merit Badge college and summer camp are also excellent opportunities for Scouts to earn merit badges.

Board of Review

When a Scout has completed all the requirements for a rank, he appears before a board of review composed of members of the Troop committee. The purpose of the review is not an examination. Rather it is to determine the Scout's attitude and acceptance of Scouting's ideals; to ensure that the requirements have been met for advancement, to discuss the Scout's experiences in the Troop's program and to encourage him to keep working towards advancement.

Court of Honor

Troop 1 conducts a Court of Honor about three times each year. The Court of Honor recognizes all Scout appointments, elections, awards, and advancements since the last Court of Honor. The Court of Honor is a public ceremony, and is a chance for the Scouts to be publicly recognized for their achievements. Parents, family and friends are encouraged to attend.

Annual Registration Fees

The annual fee for each Scout in Troop 1 is \$80.00.

Fees for Outings / Activities

Camping trips usually have fees associated with them. These fees cover the cost of campsite reservations and the food which the boys plan and purchase for the trip. The cost of a typical weekend trip is usually between \$20 and \$30 per boy.

Fundraising

The boys sell popcorn each fall and unlike Cub Scouts, each boy keeps 30% of his sales in "Scout Bucks". These funds are held in the troop treasury and may be used by the boy for any scout related expense such as equipment needs, monthly outings or for summer camp. We also host an annual pancake breakfast and may occasionally add additional fund raising activities.

Uniform

The Scout uniform helps to achieve the objectives of Scouting. The uniform by itself does not make a good Scout or a good Troop, but its use has been proven to improve both the Scout and the Troop because it is a visible symbol of Scouting and unity.

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

- Tan scout shirt with appropriate insignia and patches
- Troop Neckerchief (provided by the Troop)
- Activity or "Class B" T-shirt
- Boy Scout pants are encouraged but not required.

Equipment

Troop 1 owns all of the tents, stoves and other equipment required for patrol camping. Your son will require the following personal gear.

Required

Sleeping bag and ground pad

Personal mess kit

Flashlight or headlamp

Recommended

Hiking boots (sneakers are not appropriate for many hikes)

Backpack