

Troop 442

Union, Missouri

Parent Handbook

(February 2015)



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Be Prepared!

Welcome to Troop 442

Greetings and welcome to BSA Troop 442 of Union, Missouri. The Troop meets Monday nights throughout the year at the St. Paul Lutheran Church in Union, Missouri. Occasionally we will have an activity that requires us to meet elsewhere, but that is our "home". Meeting time is 7PM, but your Scout will find it beneficial to show up at least a few minutes earlier to be able to participate in the "pre-meeting" discussions and activities that are often taking place.

Our leaders have put together answers to some of the most common questions we get from new parents to a Boy Scout Troop. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to ask any of the leaders for assistance or guidance. We are here to help make this a positive experience for you and your son.

What is Scouting?

Scouting teaches positive values to boys your son's age. The program builds character, fosters citizenship, and develops fitness. Boy Scouts of America offers time-tested activities that have helped to produce outstanding citizens, family men and community leaders since 1907.

"Scouting is a Game with a Purpose" Lord Baden-Powell

The activities used to achieve the goals of Scouting are varied. They include learning to live outdoors, growing to respect nature, working in a patrol environment, giving service to others, and having fun.

We use the "Aims and Methods" of Scouting

The three aims of Scouting are:

1. **To build character.** Scouting develops four "self" qualities -- self-reliance, self-discipline, self-confidence, and self-respect.
2. **To foster citizenship.** Scouting encourages each boy to honor his duties as a good citizen in his community.
3. **To develop fitness.** Scouting recognizes four kinds of fitness -- physical, mental, emotional, and moral.

The three aims of Scouting are the foundation of the Boy Scouts of America.

The following eight methods are the building blocks.

1. **Ideals**
2. **Patrols**
3. **Outdoors**
4. **Advancement**
5. **Personal growth**
6. **Adult association**
7. **Leadership development**
8. **Uniform**

Ideals

Scouting ideals are defined by the Scout motto, slogan, oath, and laws.

The Motto: "*Be Prepared*"

The Slogan: "*Do a Good Turn Daily*"

The 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.*

The Scout Law: *A Scout is... Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful,
Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave,
Clean and Reverent.*

Patrols

The heart of a Boy Scout Troop is the Patrol. This is the group your son will work most closely with. A Patrol is a group of at least 5 and no more than 10 boys that function together in all Scout activities.

The Patrol Method is an important part of your son's Scouting experience. Patrols work because:

- **Friends.** Patrols permit a Scout to be in a group with his friends.
- **Small size.** Patrols are small so that each boy is needed and must be involved for the patrol to succeed.
- **Responsibility.** Patrol jobs for everyone means everyone gets a chance to learn and practice responsibility. This provides real life experience working with others toward a common goal.
- **Democratic.** Patrols expose a Scout to the democratic way of doing things.

Outdoors

Outdoor activities are the focal point of Scouting. While in the outdoors, boys share responsibilities and learn to live with each other. They learn how to care for themselves. They prepare campsites, build fires, and cook their own meals.

Advancement

The advancement program spurs a Scout to learn, to achieve, and to mature.

Personal Growth

Scouting strives in many different ways to help Scouts grow. Personal growth is an outcome of the Scout program. As your son sets out to master skills in the advancement program, he will experience personal growth. Troop 442 helps our boys grow by giving service to others through service projects. Projects are varied in scope and allow the troop to participate in local civic activities. This also improves the image of Scouting within our community and fosters goodwill.

Adult association

Boys learn from the examples set by adult leaders. Association with adults of high character is critical at this stage of a young man's development. Providing positive examples is one of the methods of Scouting and one of the responsibilities of adult leadership. All members of Troop 442 are expected to adhere to Scouting's ideals and follow the guidelines contained in this handbook and our Discipline Policy.

Leadership development

The development of leadership skills is a very special feature of the Scouting program. Boys are continually given opportunities to learn and practice leadership skills. When your son first joins, he will be a patrol member. He will be instructed and coached by the older Scouts in the patrol as he learns and masters the skills he needs as a Scout. After he masters these basic skills and gains

experience, he can become a leader and help younger Scouts. This opportunity for leadership also helps him grow.

Uniform

Whenever a Scout wears his uniform, it reminds him that he is a Scout and that people will expect him to act like one.

What takes place at meetings? Do parents need to stick around?

Troop meetings are often very chaotic. It will sometimes seem like no one is in charge. This is part of the switch from the Cub Scout model with the adults leading to the Boy Scout model where the boys lead. Every meeting should follow a similar pattern to what takes place at the Cub level. There is a planned opening, a skill session, an activity for the entire group, there may be Patrol meetings, and there will be announcements and other administrative business taking place. We try to meet from 7PM to 8PM, but we will give the boys until 8:30 to finish up things that might take longer than they expected. Again, this is part of the learning process that comes of putting boys “in charge” of the meetings. We call this *Boy Led*. While it doesn’t appear to be very efficient, the boys are gaining valuable knowledge and experience that will serve them very well in their future Scouting careers.

For some parents this chaos can be a bit of a shock, but we encourage you to stick around and watch the gradual adjustment the new Scouts make to conducting their own

activities they have planned and organized. The reward of a *Boy Led Troop* isn't immediately obvious, particularly when the room seems like a 3 ring circus. We say "trust the program". You will eventually see a change once the younger boys come into their own leadership roles, and you start to see the method to the madness.

What are the costs?

Scouting isn't cheap or free, that's a certainty.

The fee to be a Boy Scout is currently \$24 a year. This is typically paid at recharter time in December or during the Fall at School Night for Scouting.

The Troop dues are \$40 annually and are collected in quarterly payments of \$10 at each of our 4 Courts of Honor we hold close to the first day of each season. The dues are used to pay for awards and program materials that are directly returned to the Scouts.

Summer camp is a big expense and a single camp will cost from \$240-275 a session and might include other fees depending on additional programs in which your Scout might want to participate.

We typically attend two District Camporees which will cost from \$15-30 including registration and food costs.

Our Troop takes a fishing trip to Montauk State Park every March for a weekend and this will cost \$30+10-15 for \$40-50 total with food and gas money.

There are multiple Merit Badge Universities and Merit Badge skill centers through the year that can range from free to \$30.

Additional expenses might come from putting together a complete uniform, camping equipment, special awards, material costs for projects, or entrance fees for various activities.

A solid estimate of the cost for a basic year of participation in a good selection of the Troop activities is from \$350 to \$450. This may seem like quite an expense, but we do organize and participate in a variety of fund-raisers throughout the year to help offset the family contribution to the fees. It is definitely true that *A Scout is Thrifty* and we need to be mindful of what we intend to spend our funds on and how we come by those funds in the first place. This is intentionally part of the program to help the boys understand that fun is not free and the more things they wish to do, the more work and planning it will take them to get there.

This is especially true when we start discussing High Adventure. That is a subject to discuss when you are more comfortable with the Troop and Boy Scouts in general. The one thing that needs to be said is while it is a further expense over and above what is mentioned here, it is well worth the time and effort put into it.

What is a Board of Review and Court of Honor?

These are part of the Advancement method. They also include aspects of the Uniform method and of course the Ideals. Boards of Review (BOR) are sit-down sessions the Scout will experience with a group of at least 3 of our registered adult leaders in the Troop. We conduct a Board of Review for rank advancement after a Scoutmaster Conference to make sure the Scout is ready for the BOR. This includes wearing a complete uniform, living up to the Scout Oath and Law, and being ready to take on the challenges of a new and higher rank.

The questioning isn't difficult and isn't intended to test or verify the knowledge and skills gained in completing the advancement requirements, but those can be subjects that are asked.

The point is to make sure the Scout fits in with the Troop and the other Scouts. It is about seeing if he is advancing in a timely and proper way that he and the Troop leadership can be satisfied with. We want to know what he thinks about things in the Troop. What can we do better or different? It's an opportunity for him to explore his growth while earning his rank, and help plan to improve himself and the Troop in the future. It is not intended to be humiliating or intimidating at all. In fact, if that is a concern for the Scout, part of the BOR can be to discuss what would make that less of a concern. We always want to be growing along with the Scouts. We look at the BORs as a snapshot of what can be expected at an Eagle BOR or a job interview when the boy becomes an adult. Our goal is to help him Be Prepared for life and give him an opportunity to test himself and set challenging goals for the next stage of his development.

The Court of Honor(COH) is a quarterly ceremony that is held to recognize the growth and acknowledge the skills and experience the Scouts have gained over the previous months. We will present rank advancement badges, merit badges, and any other awards the Scout has earned since the previous COH. Some of our COH ceremonies will have a specific theme, such as Camp Promotion, or the December Christmas Party. Usually we want to focus on the Scouts and what new experiences they have had and how they can bring what they've learned back to the Troop.

Occasionally we will have a Scout earn the Eagle rank and this may be presented at a special Eagle Court of Honor if the Eagle Scout and his family so choose to plan one. The lower ranks are always welcome to these special events because it offers them the chance to see what they can some day achieve themselves. We want the boys to grow into conscientious, considerate, and competent young men and seeing their fellow Scouts rise on the trail to Eagle is probably the best way for them to gain some of that confidence on their own, thus we have the regular and special Courts of Honor.

How to Earn a Merit Badge

(Guidelines for Scouts)

1. Find a Merit Badge you want to work on in the MB guidebook or at www.meritbadge.org
2. Read the requirements and see if it's something you can complete in a reasonable amount of time.
3. Download the worksheets and see if you will be able to do the work to fulfill the requirements
4. If you've decided to do the MB, talk to the Scoutmaster about it. He may have some advice or ask that you get a certain rank or reach a certain age before attempting specific Merit Badges. In any case, you will need his approval and signature on a MB card before you complete it. Many counselors require a signed card before they will meet with you.
5. Once you have a MB card, you need to find a counselor. The Scoutmaster should be able to help you with this, and there is usually a Merit Badge counselor directory at www.stlbsa.org. Look for a counselor for the Merit Badge in the Osage District. They will be closest to home.
6. Use the "How to make a cold call" guide to write a script for your call.
7. You can email the counselor to let them know you want to do the MB, but **YOU MUST CALL THEM AND TALK IN PERSON** to finalize your meeting plans.
8. When you go to your meeting, **BE DRESSED IN FULL**

UNIFORM. Look neat. Be polite. Pay attention. Have all your materials with you: worksheets, MB book, MB card, any other supplies or documents the counselor has requested. An adult should take you to the meeting, but they should sit a little distance away, or at least at the end of the table. You are the one getting the Merit Badge, NOT your adult guardian. They should watch, but avoid interfering.

9. Most of the time you will need to meet with the counselor more than once. Make sure you know where and when you are going to follow up.
 10. Make sure you know what the counselor expects you to have done to complete the Merit Badge. Take notes.
 11. Ask the counselor if there is anything else that you should do. Then do it.
 12. When you have your final meeting, make sure the counselor signs and dates your MB card.
 13. **Thank your counselor.** Ask if they would be willing to help other members of your troop get the MB. Ask if they do other Merit Badges you could work on.
 14. **Thank your counselor again.**
 15. Turn in your Merit Badge card to the Scoutmaster.
- You should get the Merit Badge card back at the next Court of Honor with the Merit Badge attached to it.
16. Sew it on your MB Sash for use at ceremonial Scout-ing events. Wear with pride--you earned it!



How to Make a Cold Call

1. Prepare a script (write out what you plan to say)
2. Dial the right number--be ready to take notes
3. Identify yourself
4. What organization you are with
5. Purpose of your call
6. What you want from the person you're calling
7. Specific time, date, location arrangements
8. Ask what you need to do to be prepared for the meeting
9. Review your notes, update your calendar

For a sample script, talk to your Patrol Leader or SPL

How is Our Troop Organized?

The adult side is composed of the Troop Committee

The Committee has a Committee Chair who presides at Committee meetings and prepares the agenda. The Chair makes sure all sub-committees and activities are progressing effectively. The Chair supervises the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Subcommittee chairs and other officers in the adult organization. The Committee Chair can be in direct contact and serves as a bridge with the Chartered Organization Representative, the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters, the Committee members, and any adult or Scouts involved with the Troop.

The Treasurer maintains the financial records for the Troop and keeps track of each individual Scout's account. These accounts are used to collect Troop dues and pay for activities such as Camporees and Summer camp. When fund

raisers return money to the Troop or Scout, the Treasurer makes sure each participating Scout gets proper credit for their contributions. The Treasurer reports the assets and liabilities for the Troop and provides a balance sheet for submission to the Committee at each meeting.

The Secretary makes notes of the decisions made and business undertaken at the Troop Committee meetings. When the Committee votes on an issue, the Secretary records the results and this is reflected in the minutes. The minutes of the meetings are prepared by the Secretary for each Committee meeting. The minutes are read, then the Chair asks for additions or amendments to the minutes. The minutes are eventually approved and serve as an on-going record of business the Committee has conducted.

Committee members. All parents are invited to serve on the Committee. There are formal and informal votes, and input from everyone is valuable. The Committee receives the Program plan from the Scouts and makes it possible for the activities and events to take place. On the Scout side, the Patrol Leaders Council will have a Program Planning Conference to decide what they want to do for the year. The list of activities is submitted to the Troop Committee to determine feasibility and scheduling. When the Committee has determined what activities are reasonable and appropriate, they will return the schedule to the PLC for coordination with the rest of the Program Calendar. For those events that require significant financial commitment, the Committee provides opportunities to the Scouts to raise funds to ensure their participation. There will be several fund-raisers through the year that the Committee coordinates. The de-

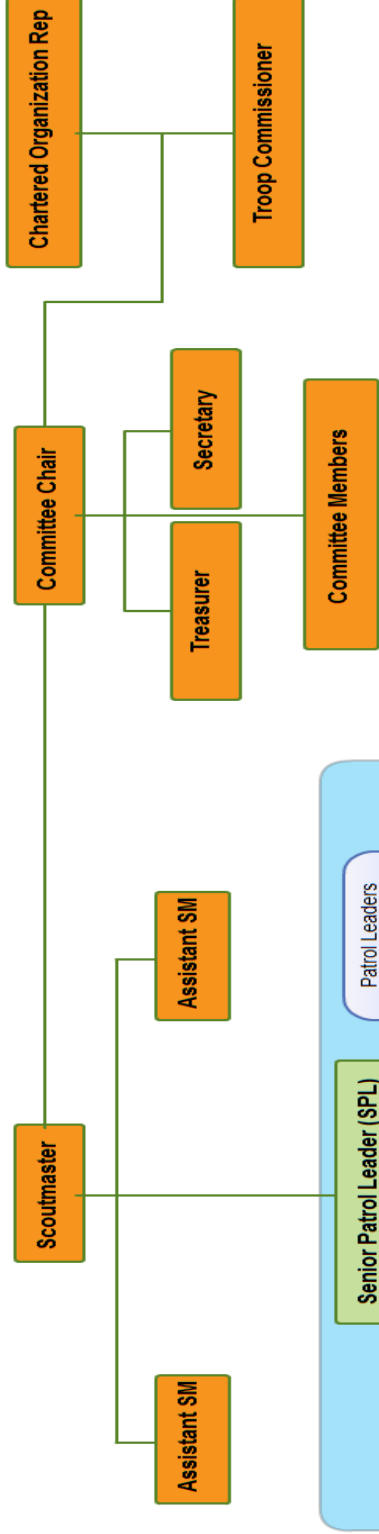
tails and scheduling for these events must also be returned to the PLC for inclusion on the Program Calendar.

Between the Troop Committee on the Adult side and the Scouts is the Scoutmaster.

The Scoutmaster serves as a facilitator for the Scout side of the organization. The SM will provide leadership, guidance, and mentoring to the youth leadership in the Troop. The Scoutmaster is the top of the chain of command to the youth side of the program. The program's success or failure depends on the Scoutmaster's ability to effectively implement the Scouting Program to yield the desired results.

The youth side of the Troop organization is headed by the Senior Patrol Leader. The SPL works with the SM to coordinate and organize all aspects of the Program. The SPL supervises the Troop officers, Patrol Leaders, Den Chiefs, and is the top of the youth chain of command.

More to come...



Troop 442 Organizational Chart

February 2015

Orange boxes are adult positions
Green Boxes are youth positions

