



## Parent information packet

Your family is probably asking how their Scout makes the transition to Boy Scouts. This document is designed to help with that process. The fifth grade year is the time to be visiting Scout troops, asking questions, thinking about what you are looking for in a Scout troop, and deciding which one to join.

Choosing the right troop for you is an individual decision. Troops vary somewhat in their focus and makeup. Members of a single den may end up going to two or three different troops.

Encourage your Scout to join a troop. After four to five years of Cub Scouts, your Scout may feel that he has experienced all there is in the program. But Boy Scouts is a very different program full of new experiences. Encourage him to try it for a year to observe the differences.

Your fifth grade Webelos (AOL) Scout is able to join as soon as they have finished the Arrow of Light requirements. Your Scout will still be able to participate in the Arrow of Light crossover ceremony at the blue and gold in the spring.

National Scout policy requires the boy to visit at least one troop meeting before joining Boy Scouts. We would encourage you to visit several troops to learn the uniqueness of each. Select a troop that fits the needs of your family. Below you will find Troop 42s answers to some very important questions; we encourage you to ask the same questions of other troops. For your convenience we have put these questions in a [downloadable form](#). We also would like you to complete the [visitation form](#) to arrange for a visit.

### MEMBERSHIP

**Question:** How many registered Scouts?

**T42 Response:** In 2016 we have 73 scouts registered. This is a very active time around the troop and this number is changing weekly because of new scouts.

**Question:** How many are active?

**T42 Response:** On a weekly basis we will have 35-45 scouts at a meeting. The younger scouts attend almost all meetings. The older scouts have a lot of other weekly commitments but attend when they can. Some of these are high school age scouts still working towards their Eagle rank. We also have a number of every active Eagle scouts.

**Question:** How many registered adults?

**T42 Response:** In 2016 we have 48 registered adults with the troop.

**Question:** How many are active?

**T42 Response:** All of our adults are extremely active in all of Boy Scouting not just at the troop level. We have two that are on the Hawkeye Area Council Boy Scouts of America Board of Directors, others who hold Red Cedar District positions and Council leadership positions, several act as merit badge counselors for the council Adapt-a-Merit-Badge program, and yet others act as volunteers throughout the year.

**Question:** What is the age distribution within the troop?

**T42 Response:** Boy Scouting is for young men between the ages of 11 and 18. Most of our youth are at the lower end of that scale but we have some still working towards their Eagle up to 18.

### FUNDING

**Question:** How is the troop funded?

**T42 Response:** We are funded in several ways. Our primary funding comes from our annual pancake breakfast held on Super Bowl Sunday. Other funding comes from very small dues for each scout for the year and we get numerous donations from both companies and individuals.

**Question:** Is there an opportunity for the boys to earn money toward their expenses?

**T42 Response:** Yes, this is a very important part of the scouting program. We offer one main fundraising opportunity for the youth and others as they become available. Scouts can sell popcorn during the council's annual popcorn sale. With this fundraiser the scout keeps 100% of the profit which is about 31% of his total sales. We have had scouts earn over \$1000 per year for their personal scouting use.

## **MEETINGS**

**Question:** When, where and how often?

**T42 Response:** We hold troop meetings every Monday from 7:00 to 8:30 P.M., except the Monday following a campout when we hold a troop committee meeting. Meetings are at St. Pius X church hall, 4949 Council St. N.E. (just west of Noelridge Park). Uniforms are "required" at all troop meetings. Troop meetings are not held during the months of June, July, and August to facilitate long-term camp, High Adventure activities, and to accommodate family vacations that are often planned for this time.

**Question:** What is done at the meetings?

**T42 Response:** Our meetings are designed to have three parts: gathering and sharing of information, advancement requirements, and full troop activity. We work on merit badges and requirements for advancement at almost all troop meetings. The leaders feel it is our obligation to help all youth get to the rank of 1st Class by the end of their first year with the troop. We also work on this advancement at our monthly campouts. We hold Scoutmaster conferences and boards of review during our weekly meetings.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

**Question:** What involvement is expected of the parent?

**T42 Response:** Your son will not have a chance to succeed at anything in his life without the support and guidance of his parents. Some feel this support is coming to all meetings and not missing an activity. Some feel this support is just getting him to meetings and campouts. We would like all parents to come to the three Court of Honor meetings and any special Parent meetings called during the year as a minimum.

**Question:** Can I be an adult leader in the troop?

**T42 Response:** Simple answer is Yes. Troop 42 would not exist if adults did not step up and volunteer. Additional dedicated and trained adult leaders can only make the program stronger. Any volunteer must agree to take training and pay their own registration. Registration includes a council level background check.

## **COMMUNICATION**

**Question:** How does the troop communicate with the families?

**T42 Response:** Our primary method of communication is via email and our Web site. We also hold parent meetings each year. If necessary we will make phone calls. We have a text message system as an additional method.

**Question:** How do the families communicate with the troop?

**T42 Response:** We believe highly in communication. We publicize the phone numbers, email addresses and physical addresses of all troop committee members and encourage you to communicate any questions or concerns you have. You are always welcome to attend a weekly meeting or voice your concern at our monthly committee meetings.

**Question:** Who makes the decisions?

**T42 Response:** A Boy Scout troop is run by the youth leaders. These youth leaders make up what is called a PLC (Patrol Leaders Council). The heads of this council are the Senior Patrol Leader and Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders. These scouts run all the meetings and activities at campouts. They convene with the other members of the PLC once a month for a planning meeting where they decide what to do during the meetings and where to go and what to do at the campouts. Other members of the PLC include each patrol leader, junior assistant scoutmaster, quartermaster and scribe. Most of these members are elected by their fellow scouts and serve six month terms.

## **CAMPING**

**Question:** How often and where?

**T42 Response:** If you take scouting and drop the "sc" you have outing. Camping is a major part and one of the most popular parts of Boy Scouts. Troop 42 has campouts every month during the school year at camping facilities all around eastern Iowa and surrounding states. Again these decisions are made by the youth and are subject to change. We also attend a week at Boy Scout Summer Camp at the Howard H. Cherry Scout Reservation just south of Central City, Iowa. Also review our high adventure section below for some of the best experiences in your life.

**Question:** Is this done through individual troop planning and/or as participation at a district event?

**T42 Response:** The short answer is all of the above. Remember that everything is planned by the current PLC. We may give the PLC some guidance and encourage them to attend certain council and district events along the way. We also suggest some camping facilities around that they may not be aware of.

**Question:** How are the Scouts transported?

**T42 Response:** This is one of the biggest differences between us and other Boy Scout troops. Our troop owns its own bus and custom equipment trailer. This allows everyone to attend activities as one. Everyone has a chance to share with the rest of the troop to and from each activity. This also saves wear and tear on personal vehicles and saves the troop from finding vehicles to get to each activity.

**Question:** What equipment is provided?

**T42 Response:** The troop has a huge inventory of camping equipment that is used each month. We provide all tents, stoves and cooking items, axes and saws, ropes, lanterns and anything else needed by the general troop. The youth only need to bring their sleeping bag, clothes, and personal grooming supplies.

**Question:** What parent participation is expected?

**T42 Response:** We usually have several parents attend our campouts. We encourage all to do so at some point but this is not required. The biggest thing is to make sure your boy comes to the campouts because this is where we work on advancement. Scouts that camp stay in the program and reap the benefits.

## **HIGH ADVENTURE**

**Question:** Does the troop attend National High Adventure camps?

**T42 Response:** Absolutely! This again is one of the biggest differences between us and the others. We have a four year high adventure rotation that allows families to plan well in advance. We attend Philmont, the pinnacle of all scouting high adventures, located in the rocky mountains of northern New Mexico; Sea Base, located in the beautiful Florida Keys where we explore the world underneath; National Jamboree, we join 40,000 other scouts at The Summit in West Virginia with a side trip too; our final high adventure trip is to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA) in northern Minnesota for a week of canoeing. We rotate between these and will attend the following on the year noted and the rotation continues going forward: National Jamboree in 2017, Philmont in 2018, Sea Base in 2019, and BWCA in 2020.

**Question:** How is participation funded?

**T42 Response:** Some pay for this entirely with the funds they have earned through popcorn sales and others have most paid by their parents. We have several places that we can steer families for scholarships. This usually will not cover everything but we have had scouts earn \$1000 in one year to both cover the trip and necessary gear.

## **ADVANCEMENT**

**Question:** Is there a plan to help the Scout earn the requirements for the lower ranks?

**T42 Response:** As mentioned, we consider it our obligation to get all youth the rank of 1st Class by the end of their first year with the troop. All adult advisors of the troop take this very seriously and help in many ways. If a scout shows up to meetings and campouts our history shows we will get him there.

**Question:** Is this done at meetings, extra meetings, campouts etc.?

**T42 Response:** We work on advancement up to 1st class at our weekly meetings and monthly campouts. Please note, many requirements need to be done on a campout. If a scout doesn't attend campouts regularly he will fall behind our advancement goal. We also hold Scoutmaster conferences and boards of review during our weekly meetings.

**Question:** Is there a plan to help the Scout obtain merit badges for the upper ranks?

**T42 Response:** We work on merit badges at almost all troop meetings. We also attend multiple merit badge workshops throughout the year where they can usually earn a merit badge in one day. Troop 42 has a merit badge coordinator who will help arrange for any merit badge a scout has interest in. Many adults in the troop are registered merit badge councilors. We have had over 135 scouts reach the rank of Eagle. We cannot guarantee the rank of Eagle to any scout but history shows those that attend our campouts and meetings and have the desire will reach the top rank in Troop 42. This is a tribute to our strong leadership and quest in this area.

## **SERVICE**

**Question:** Does the troop do service for the community?

**T42 Response:** Service is one of the requirements for every rank in scouting from 2nd Class to Eagle. We perform service projects for churches, schools, camps and nature areas just to mention a few. We also have 8-10 Eagle projects every year where our troop alone gives over 1000 hours to the community.

## **LEADERSHIP**

**Question:** What opportunities does the Scout have for leadership?

**T42 Response:** As we mentioned above a Boy Scout troop is run by the youth. These youth leaders make up what is called a PLC (Patrol Leaders Council). The heads of this council are the Senior Patrol Leader and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. They run all the meetings and activities at campouts. They convene with the other members of the PLC once a month for a planning meeting where they decide what to do during the meetings, and where to go and what to do at the campouts. Other members of the PLC include each patrol leader, junior assistant scoutmaster (appointed by SM), quartermaster, and scribe. All of these members are elected by their fellow scouts and serve six-month terms. Other leadership opportunities are chaplain aide, historian, bugler, librarian, troop guide, den chief, OA troop representative and assistant patrol leader.

**Question:** Within the troop? Outside the troop?

**T42 Response:** The above mentioned leadership opportunities are within the troop but there are numerous opportunities outside as well. Den Chief is a popular leadership position that doesn't require election and there are a number of opportunities within the Order of the Arrow which is a Boy Scout honor society.

**Welcome to the world of Boy Scouts - where outdoor adventure, service projects, and opportunities for leadership will give youth the experiences and responsibilities that will help them mature. The knowledge and attitudes they develop as a Scout will spill over into the rest of their life. And this is all accomplished through fun and friendship.**

Please contact any Troop 42 family and ask them about their experience with Troop 42.  
Key contacts within the troop concerning membership are:

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