

Troop 368 Parent's Guide



All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind are convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth.

--Aristotle

"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 help you understand how you can help and what the various adult volunteers are doing to help the Troop.

You are joining a great organization that includes tens of thousands of adult leaders, interested parents, and the BSA professional staff. Scouting is much more than enjoying the outdoors. The Troop teaches leadership skills and community skills. Scouting also shows the boys how they can keep themselves strong and healthy and make the most of school. With hard work and dedication, your son will be able to serve as a leader in the Troop and advance in rank along the trail to Eagle. Above and beyond anything else said in this package, the boys and us "big kids" are in Scouts to have fun!

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 they represent the long term outcomes we want for every boy. 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		SCOUT OATH
<i>A Scout is:</i>		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
Trustworthy	Loyal	
Helpful	Friendly	
Courteous	Kind	
Obedient	Cheerful	
Thrifty	Brave	
Clean	Reverent	

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. More and more men, trained as Scouts, are taking their places in today's world as responsible adult leaders. Men, who earned badges as

Scouts, sit on the Supreme Court and in the chambers of Congress. Others hold important offices in our government, business and industry. Most of the members of congress were Scouts, as well as most of the astronauts who have walked on the moon.

The Boy Scouts of America is the largest youth oriented organization in the United States. More than 4 million boys and leaders are currently registered in the Boy Scouts of America. Unlike Cub Scouting, which many of you are familiar with; Boy Scouting is a youth-lead 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 1st class and then Eagle ranks. As they travel on their 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. Many Eagle Scouts put their accomplishments on their resumes and find they are often considered in obtaining acceptance into college or the workforce. Boy Scouting also provides for growth of moral strength and character, teaches Citizenship, and enhances the development of physical, mental and emotional fitness. This is all done in the spirit of fun and adventure.

Please take a few minutes to read Chapter 1 of your son's Boy Scout Handbook.

ORGANIZATION

Troop 368 is a member of the Blackhawk Area Council of the 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 in BSA is "Chartered" by a civic organization. The Chartered Organization for Troop 368 is Light of Christ Church in Algonquin. The Chartered Organization shares our objectives for the boys and insures that there is adequate, trained leadership. A Chartered Organization Representative acts a liaison between us 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 surrounding the Troop. For example: newsletters, Troop funds, fund raising activities, membership drives and Troop coordination, activity permits and coordination, advancement records, procurement and maintenance of Troop equipment. The Committee meets regularly. The meetings are informal and are open to all concerned parents and other interested adults. Troop Committee meetings are usually held on the first Tuesday of each month at Light of Christ Church.

Troop Meetings

Troop 368 holds meetings weekly. Meetings are held every Monday from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Neubert Elementary School. There are no troop meetings on days that District 300 does not hold classes. In our Troop meetings we will work on rank advancement, skills development, and preparation for upcoming activities.

Adult Leadership

The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters work with the boys to design and deliver the scouting program for Troop 368.

Patrols and Patrol Leaders

The Troop is a group made up of patrols. Each Patrol usually consists of a Patrol Leader six to eight Scouts. The boys in a patrol elect their patrol leader and the assistant patrol leader. The Senior Patrol Leader and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader are elected by the boys in the troop. The Patrol Leaders, with the Senior Patrol Leader as their head, form the Patrol Leaders' Council, which plans the weekly activities and runs the Troop meetings. Elections for Patrol Leader and Senior Patrol Leader are held in March and September of each year. Major activities (campouts, etc) are selected by all of the boys at a planning meeting sometime in the spring. We plan our major activities for the entire coming year.

Troop Parents

The role of parents within Troop 368 is to be supportive of the Troop's efforts and to provide the atmosphere Scouts need to learn and excel. Parents should try to:

1. Read their Scout's handbook and understand the purpose and methods of Scouting.
2. Actively follow their Scout's progress (or lack thereof) and offer encouragement and a push when needed.
3. Show support to both the individual Scout and the Troop by attending all Troop Courts of Honor.
4. Assist, as requested, in all Troop fund-raisers and other such activities. All such assistance lowers the cost of the program we offer to the Scouts and, therefore, lowers each family's cash outlay for their Scout(s).
5. Be aware of the Troop program and annual calendar.

ADVANCEMENT

There are many definitions of advancement, but the Scouting definition might well be, simply, "the art of meeting a challenge." For that is exactly what the Boy Scout advancement program asks the boys to do. The Boy Scout advancement program provides a ladder of skills that a Scout climbs at his own pace. As he acquires these skills he moves up through a series of ranks, for which he is awarded badges; Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle. The higher he climbs the more challenging his tasks -- and the more rewarding.

Achievements include:

- Learning skills that qualify for Scouting's more rugged and exciting outdoor challenges.
- Developing body and mind, growing self-confidence, and helping younger Scouts climb the advancement ladder.
- Discovering how it feels to go further -- in so many ways -- than he ever thought he could.

We don't look at advancement as a goal, but as a natural outcome of a planned, quality Troop program. There are four steps of advancement:

- The Boy Scout *Learns*
- The Boy Scout is *tested*.
- The Boy Scout is *reviewed*.
- The Boy Scout is *recognized*.

Advancement through First Class

From the time the Scout enters the Troop through the time he earns advancement to First Class, he is learning basic scouting skills to enable him to camp, hike, swim, cook, tie knots, administer first aid, and perform other tasks in the outdoors and to work as a member of a team. With those first steps the scout begins to build themselves physically, mentally, and morally.

The goal of this Troop is for the Scout to achieve the rank of First Class within his first year in the Troop. This is a sign that the scout has mastered the fundamentals of scouting and can begin to start the long process of learning to lead others, refining the learned skills and learning additional skills.

Advancement from First Class to Eagle

From the achievement of First Class through Eagle, the Scout will be demonstrating leadership, performing service projects, earning merit badges and using the skills learned while achieving the rank of First Class.

The next ranks he will earn are Star and Life. These ranks are harder to obtain than the earlier ranks, but are also more interesting for the older scouts. Upon completion of all the requirements for Star and Life the Scout will be eligible to work for Eagle. The original principals, the Scout Oath and Law now have fuller meaning for the Scout and their understanding of them is much greater.

The final steps towards Eagle are filled with leadership experiences. Details for advancement are contained in the Boy Scout Handbook, which every Scout should obtain as soon as possible after joining the Troop. Take a look at Chapter 1. This short chapter has an advancement summary through First Class.

Merit Badges

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. The Council chooses people to council Merit Badges on superior expertise in a given subject. This gives the Scouts a chance to speak to an expert in a field they find interesting. Many adults today have found their careers while earning a particular Merit Badge. The Scout is required to contact the counselor to arrange for times and places to meet with the counselor. When the Scout completes the work on the merit badge the counselor will inform the Scoutmaster that the Scout has completed the requirements for that badge. Merit Badges earned will be presented to the Scout during the Troop's Court of Honor.

Scoutmaster Conferences and Boards of review

When a Scout has completed all the requirements for a rank he meets with the scoutmaster who reviews his achievements and discusses the boy's experience in the troop since his last rank advancement. After the Scoutmaster signs the scout's book, 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 discuss the Scout's experiences in the Troop and the Troop's program, to encourage him to keep working towards advancement, and to seek boy input to how we can improve the program.

Courts of Honor

Troop 368 conducts a Court of Honor four times a year. Our Courts of Honor are held at Light of Christ Church. The Court of Honor recognizes all Scout appointments, elections, awards, and advancements since the last Court of Honor. It is also an opportunity for us to communicate directly with parents who might not be with us on our Monday meetings.

The Troop's Patrol Leaders' Council plans and conduct the Troop Courts of Honor. The Scoutmaster provides guidance and the Troop Committee will support the Courts of Honor as requested. The Court of Honor is a public ceremony, and is a chance for the Scouts to be publicly recognized for their achievements.

Parents and all other interested individuals are encouraged to attend.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Annual Registration Fees

How much does Boy Scouting cost? As little as possible, but nothing worthwhile is free. The annual fee for each Scout in Troop 368 is: \$65.00

- \$7.00 for national BSA membership
- \$1.60 insurance
- \$23.60 for Troop membership (Pays for badges, awards, and other expenses incurred by the Troop as a whole.)
- \$7.80 for *Boys Life* magazine
- \$25 for miscellaneous costs of delivering the program, rank patches, merit badges, etc.

Fees for Outings / Activities

Individual activities may have fees associated with them. These fees are calculated based on the costs of the activities. Our basic camp outs typically cost about \$25 for the weekend. Depending on the activities that we do (whitewater rafting, skiing) the fees will be more

Fundraising

Additional funds can be raised by the boys through our fundraising projects for the year – our annual wreath sales and popcorn sales.

UNIFORM

The Scout uniform helps to achieve the objectives of Scouting. The uniform by itself can 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:

Field or "Class A" Uniform

- Tan scout shirt with appropriate insignia and patches (Blackhawk Council strip, red shoulder loops, and patrol emblem.)
- Troop number
- Optional Olive Scout pants or shorts (otherwise, neat blue jeans or khaki's may be worn).
- Boy Scout Socks, for wearing with shorts (again optional)
- Boy Scout Hat (Optional).
- Scout web belt and buckle.
- Sensible shoes or hiking boots. Socks are required.
- A neckerchief is an optional part of the scout's uniform and is encouraged. Our neckerchief color is black they are sold in scout shop along with a "slide" to hold the neckerchief in place.

Inside the cover of the Handbook there are guides for badge placement.

Activity or "Class B" Uniforms are worn, as instructed by Troop leadership, when activities may cause damage to the field uniform.

- Scout Appropriate T-shirt
- Shorts or Jeans.
- Sensible Shoes or hiking boots. Socks are required.

SCOUT SHOPS

Scouting uniforms, books, badges, and other supplies are available at the scout shop in J Scott Menswear in Crystal Lake or at the council trading post in Rockford.

For more information

The adult leadership is committed to delivering the best scouting program possible for your sons. If you have any questions or inputs you can contact any adult leader in the troop.

Committee Chairman

Keith Soldner
1235 Windy Knoll Drive
Algonquin, IL 60102
847-854-6651

Scoutmaster

Francisco Barrios/Troop 368
PO Box 7234
Algonquin, IL 60102
847-458-0721

We maintain a web site with current information (<http://www.troop368.com>) and we send regular emails to our troop families. You can email us at scouting@troop368.com .

A final word...Volunteer

The strength of our scouting program depends on the helping hands of you, the parents of our scouts.

We invite you to volunteer and join with us in any capacity that you can. Whether it is attending courts of honor, pitching in to help drive to activities, camping with us, volunteering your time as a Merit Badge counselor, or joining our Troop Committee experience has shown that scouts whose parents are engaged in the program have a significantly higher probability of reaching the rank of Eagle Scout.