

# Boy Scout Troop #56



## Informational Guide



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## 1.0 Welcome to Boy Scout Troop 56

We would like to take the opportunity to welcome you to the Troop 56 Scouting family. The Scouting family consists of a large part of the Scouting movement. Without the Scouts there would be no need for a Scouting program and without the parents there would be no Scouting program.

The purpose of the following is to provide you with general information about our Troop. We hope this provides you with answers to common questions, give guidelines as to what is expected from the Junior Leadership, Adult leadership, and Parents, and to outline how the Troop operates. Please use this as a quick-start to Scouting.

After you have read the following *Please complete the enclosed comment sheet and return it with your son to the next Troop Meeting.* This sheet is very important in helping us produce an improved revised version of this information.

The purpose of Troop 56 is very simple, to provide a solid program where Scouts can learn, develop, and most importantly, have fun while achieving the “aims and methods of the Scouting program.” The way such a program can be achieved is through challenging the Scouts. In addition, the Troop places emphasis on several important goals which include development, leadership, self-reliance, and self-esteem. The goals are attainable through the presence of a solid Scouting program, one which Troop 56 is pleased to offer.

So what is it that Boy Scouts do anyway? Well, the answer to that question is anything. One of the most important concepts to understand about Scouting is that it is a program run by the Scouts. Activities that the Scouts do are all decided by the Patrol Leaders’ Council (PLC). They decide what topics should be covered at the meetings, what campouts they want to attend each month, where they want to camp, and what skills or topics they want to cover.

Our Troop holds weekly meetings every Wednesday evening from 7:00 to 8:30 PM in the basement of St. James Lutheran Church. The meetings run from September to June with the only exceptions being major holidays, religious days or school closings due to inclement weather.

The Troop holds a monthly camping trip, hiking trip and/or community service. In July, the Troop attends summer camp at Camp Minsi or Camp Trexler in the Pocono Mts. PA.

The Troop also holds fund-raisers throughout the year. We try to offer an ambitious program, and as you can see, we think we live up to that.

## 2.0 Aims and Methods of Scouting

The objectives and aims of Troop 56 is guided by the “aims and methods of the Scouting program” set forth by the Boy Scouts of America. As with most organizations, the BSA has a purpose or mission statement that outlines who and what they are as an organization. The Boy Scouts mission Statement is as follows:

*“The Boy Scouts of America was incorporated to provide a program for community organizations that offers effective character, citizenship, and personal fitness training for youth. Specifically, the BSA endeavors to develop America citizens who are physically, mentally, and emotionally fit; have a high degree of self-reliance as evidenced in such qualities as initiative, courage, and resourcefulness; have personal values based on religious concepts; have the desire and skills to help others; understand the principles of the American social, economic, and governmental systems; are knowledgeable about and take pride in their American heritage and understand our nation’s role in the world; have a keen respect for the basic rights of all people; and are prepared to participate in and give leadership to the American society.”*

The aims of the Scouting program are to build character, foster citizenship, and develop fitness. These aims are achieved through a series of Scouting methods that consist of ideals, patrol method, outdoors, advancement, personal growth, adult association, leadership development, and uniform.

The ideals of Scouting are found in the Scout Oath, Law, Motto, and Slogan. All Scouts are expected to live by these ideals. The patrol method develops leadership and teamwork abilities in a small group setting before it is applied on a larger Troop setting. The outdoors is the key setting where the aims and methods are achieved. Weekend camping establishes self-reliance as the Scouts learn to work together and survive on their own.

Advancement creates a challenge to all Scouts by providing them with a series of obstacles to overcome. Furthermore, it provides a rewarded sense of accomplishment for the Scouts hard work and determination. Personal growth is developed as Scouts provide service, advance, and develop a plan for the Scouting years. All these activities provide an opportunity for the Scouts to grow as individuals and members of their community and religious organizations.

Adult association provides role models for the Scouts to observe and also creates setting where adults and boys work together to achieve common goals and have fun while doing so. Leadership development is formed as each Scout assumes a Junior Leader position. The development starts with patrol positions on a smaller level, and fully develops as Scouts assume Troop junior leader positions that are essential to the operation of the entire Troop. Remember, your sons as leaders, run the Troop. Finally, the uniform gives Scouts an identity.

## **3.0 Troop Organization**

### **3.1 Adult Organization**

The adult organization of Troop 56 consists of two key segments. The first is the Troop Committee and the second is the Scoutmaster and his Assistants. The committee meets on the third Monday of every month (except July) and works on helping the Scoutmaster with delivering the Troop Program. The Troop committee consists of:

- Scoutmaster,
- Assistant Scoutmasters,
- Committee Chairperson,
- Chartered Organization Representative,
- Membership Chairperson,
- Secretary,
- Treasurer,
- Advancement Chairperson,
- Fund-Raising Chairperson,
- Outdoors/Activities Chairperson,
- Equipment Chairperson

The Committee Chairperson oversees the entire Troop committee. The Chartered Organization Representative is responsible for working with both the Troop and the Church as the chartered organization, or sponsor of the Troop. The Secretary is responsible for the minutes of every committee meeting and any correspondence, letters of donations, etc. that are issued. The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing the financial details of the Troop and for keeping records and tabs on the Troop budget. The Advancement chairperson is responsible for keeping track of all the advancement records for all Scouts. The Fund-Raising Chairperson is responsible for coordinating the fund-raisers held by the Troop throughout the year. The Outdoors Chairperson works on coordinating all Troop activities and oversees the maintenance of Troop equipment. The Troop Social Chairperson provides refreshments at all Courts of Honor and oversees the planning of Eagle courts of Honor and other recognition dinners.

While the Troop committee represents the behind the scenes operations of the Troop, the Scoutmaster and his Assistants are responsible for overseeing the operations of the Troop. According to the Boy Scouts of America, the Scoutmaster is responsible for training and guiding Scout leaders to run their Troop, work with and through the Assistant Scoutmasters to bring the Scouting program to the Troop, help the Scouts to develop by challenging them and encouraging them to learn new things, guide the Scouts in planning the Troop program, help the Troop committee to recruit new Assistant Scoutmasters, and to conduct Scoutmaster Conferences. The Scoutmaster has several Assistants to help him develop the Scouting program.

## 3.2 Scout Organization

The Troop is organized into a series of patrols consisting of anywhere from five to eight boys. Each Patrol has a Patrol Leader and an appointed Patrol Position that helps the Patrol operate as a unit. Each patrol elects a patrol leader that acts as the head of the patrol. The Patrol Leader is responsible for appointing an assistant patrol leader, patrol scribe, quartermaster, and historian. (depending on the size of the troop and/or patrol). Each patrol represents a portion of the entire Troop and works under the guidance of the Senior Patrol Leader.

In addition to the patrols, there are additional positions that aid in the functioning of the Troop. Every May, the Troop elects a Senior Patrol Leader. He is responsible for the overall success of the Troop and will appoint an Assistant Senior Patrol that takes over in the Senior Patrol Leaders absence.

In addition, the Senior Patrol Leader appoints a Troop Guide who is responsible for guiding the New Scout Patrol through their first Scouting year and to help new scouts earn First Class by the end of their first year.

The Troop Junior Leaders, as with the Patrol Leaders, have other scouts working with him. They consists of members in the patrols that also assume a Troop Junior Leader position. They consists of a Troop Scribe, Quartermaster, Historian, Librarian, and Chaplains Aide. As with the Patrol, the Junior Leaders have their own position to help with the functioning and operation of the Troop. The following are descriptions of Troop Junior Leader Positions:

- **Senior Patrol Leader:** Runs all Troop meetings, events, activities, annual program planning conference, and Patrol Leaders' Council meetings(2nd Monday of every month with the exception July). He keeps Patrols informed, helps scouts advance and acts as the chief recruiter of new scouts. He also appoints Troop Junior Leaders and assists in their training and assignment of duties.
- **Assistant Senior Patrol Leader:** Helps the Senior Patrol Leader run all Troop activities. In the absence of the SPL, the Assistant takes over. He helps to train and supervise the Troop Scribe, Quartermaster, Historian, Librarian, and Chaplain Aide. He also serves as a member of the Patrol Leaders Council.
- **Troop Guide:** Trains, guides, and monitors new scouts progress through their first Scouting year. He supervises and assists the new Scout Patrol Leader in making Patrol decisions. Helps new Scouts earn First Class in their first year. Teaches basic scout skills to the patrols and attends Patrol Leaders Council meetings.
- **Patrol Leader:** Guides and represents the Patrol on the Patrol Leaders' Council and on all Patrol activities. He appoints an Assistant Patrol Leader and the other patrol positions in his patrol. He knows the advancement needs and outing interests of all Scouts and works to satisfy those needs and interests. Together

with his assistant, he plans their Patrol meetings and keeps Patrol members informed.

- **Scribe:** Attends and keeps logs on the Patrol Leader's Council meetings. Records attendance at meetings and delivers the final sheet to the Senior Patrol Leader. Keeps advancement records, and collects permission slips.
- **Quartermaster:** Maintains records on Troop and Patrol equipment. Makes sure that all equipment is in good working condition. Issues all equipment needed for weekend outings and assures that it is returned in good condition. Makes suggestions for new and/or replacement items. Gets the US, Troop & Patrol Flags for meetings and ceremonies and puts them away afterwards.
- **Historian:** Gathers pictures and facts about past Troop activities and keeps them in a historical scrapbook and/or ready for our troop website. In charge of troop display boards of past troop experiences for certain events. Takes care of Troop trophies, ribbons and souvenirs of Troop activities.
- **Librarian:** Sets up and maintains the Troop library. Oversees the loan out process of Troop literature and makes suggestions on material to be purchased.
- **Den Chief:** Has full knowledge of Cub Scouting. Help the Cub scouts advance through the Cub Scout ranks. Encourages the cub scouts to continue with Boy Scouts by joining a troop upon graduation. Assists with activities at the den meetings. Is a friend to the boys in cub scouts. Meets with the adult members of the den and pack as necessary.
- **Chaplain Aide:** Plans and leads non-denominational services at Troop outings. Works with the Troop Chaplin with religious services at troop activities. Encourages all Scouts to take part in the religious emblems program.

The Troop is responsible for carrying out the Troop program plan. But who plans the Troop activities? The Patrol Leaders' Council.

At these meetings the PLC plans the monthly meetings and the activities on the Scout weekend. Planning the monthly meetings entails coming up with a preopening, opening ceremony, skill session, game, patrol meeting topic, inter-patrol activity, and closing session. The PLC will usually plan the meetings for the month based on a monthly program feature that was decided upon in August at our Planning Conference.

In addition, the PLC plans the monthly outing which reflects the skills that were taught during the meetings. The outing provides the Scouts with an Outdoor experience in which they can have hands on practice with the skills they learned during the month. The PLC is *ultimately responsible* for the functioning of the entire Troop. Without their hard work, there would be no meetings or outings.

Finally, one point worth mentioning again is the notion in Scouting of “The Patrol Method.” The Scoutmaster Handbook seems to best present this idea when it talks about patrols. “Every Boy Scout Troop, we said earlier, is made up of patrols, groupings of six or eight boys who together form a team. Each patrol elects its own leader. The patrol leaders, with an elected senior patrol leader as their head, form the patrol leaders’ council. It is the council’s job to plan and run the Troop program. Each Patrol Leader represents his Patrol on the council, and interprets to his patrol the plans and decisions the council makes. Patrols also have their own meetings, elect their own officers, and plan and carry out their patrol activities.”

The Patrol method has been proven to be very successful in fostering four important points amongst the members of the patrols.

First, they promote friendship by grouping friends together. Second, the small sizes allows each Scout to get involved because he is needed in helping the Patrol function. Third, the Patrol Method develops responsibility as each member of the Patrol takes on a leadership position within the patrol. Fourth, the Patrol Method introduces a democratic process to decision making.

## **4.0 Scout Conduct**

All Scouts are expected to live by the Scout Oath and Law. Those ideals should dictate all Scouts behavior. Any behavior that goes against the Scout Oath and Law, the Scout, his parents, the adult leaders, and the Troop. Adult leaders also ensure that the procedures in the “Guide to Safe Scouting” are followed.

Please, have fun, but behave appropriately.

While we anticipate no problems with inappropriate behavior, it is still necessary to have a discipline policy, and more importantly, let all the Scouts and their parents know about such a policy. Behavior problems are first to be dealt with by the Patrol Leader.

In the event that the PL is having a problem with a patrol member and it can not be resolved, he should report it to the Senior Patrol Leader. If a behavior problem becomes uncontrollable, the Scoutmaster or an Assistant will step in to determine the appropriate discipline in conjunction with the Senior Patrol Leader. Such actions might include, suspension from a Troop game, additional Troop chores, and so on.

Any major behavioral problems that occur will result in any of the following actions:

- 1) Parental contact and pick-up from the meeting or outing;
- 2) No participation in Troop meetings or outings;
- 3) Delaying rank advancement because a Scouts inappropriate behavior does not demonstrate the last requirement of living by the Scout Oath and Law.

We hope that we will never have to use such discipline actions, however, it is important for all Scouts and parents to know what courses of action will be taken.

#### **4.1 Advancement**

Advancement is an important part of every Scout's career. The Troop has adopted an advancement policy that will insure that all Scouts are knowledgeable in the given requirements needed for advancement. The Troop program is set around opportunities for Scouts to learn and advance. The process consists of skill instruction, demonstration and practice, and a testing period.

All skills that are taught to Scouts should be practiced immediately by those Scouts, however, requirements are not to be signed off immediately. At least one day must elapse between when a Scout is taught a skill and when they are tested and signed off for knowledge of that skill.

As means to help keep accurate advancement records, we encourage the Scouts to have the skill "signed-off" within a two week period after successful demonstration. We also encourage Scouts to set a goal of having at least one skill requirement completed per week on average. This also helps the Scout plan his progress toward reaching First Class by the end of his first year in Scouting.

In Troop 56, any Patrol Leaders' Council member or Adult Leader can sign off another Scout's handbook. If any questions arise regarding certain requirements, an adult should be seen before the requirement is signed-off. The purpose of advancement is knowledge. Signing off requirements that are not completed only defeats the purpose.

#### **4.2 Merit Badges**

Merit Badges offer additional skill advancement that allows a Scout to specialize in a particular skill area such as Camping, Cooking, Backpacking, Orienteering, etc. Summer Camp offers an ideal time for a Scout to work on Merit Badges. Typically, a Scout can earn, with a reasonable amount of work and effort, 3 to 5 badges by the end of his week long camping experience. It should be noted that pre-work is required for several Merit Badges that are offered during summer camp.

Other opportunities do exist throughout the year when a Scout can take of advantage of this advancement. Boy Scouts offer over 100 of these merit badges that Scouts can earn.

From past experience, the Troop recommends that Scouts work on a maximum of 5 Merit Badges at any given time. This recommendation helps keep the Scout focused on completing the requirements for the Merit Badges that he is currently working on, before taking on additional work assignments. The following is the process a Scout should follow to work on Merit Badges:

- ⇒ A Scout should decide which merit badge he wishes to take. Scouts should pair with at least another Scout when working on Merit Badges. Basic requirements for each Merit Badge are found in the Boy Scout Requirements Book. In addition, each Merit Badge has a pamphlet that addresses the requirements specifically for that badge.
- ⇒ Scouts should discuss with their Scoutmaster the Merit Badge that they wish to complete and request a blue card. The Scoutmaster will then advise on the list of counselors for that badge and provide a blue card for the Scout. No work on a merit badge may be completed prior to obtaining approval and a blue card form the Scoutmaster.
- ⇒ Scouts at this point should consider obtaining the Merit Badge pamphlet for the particular badge. Check to see if the Troop has a copy available or in the Library. If no copies are available, Scouts can purchase pamphlets at the Council store or go on-line to [http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Merit\\_Badges](http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Merit_Badges)
- ⇒ Scouts should then contact the Merit Badge Counselor approved by the Scoutmaster and make arrangements to meet and go over the requirements. Remember that all requirements must be completed to the counselor's satisfaction. If a requirements states "show" or "demonstrate" that is what the Scout must do. (As with all advancement requirements, parents cannot approve their son's fulfillment of a requirement).
- ⇒ Once the requirements have been completed, returned the signed blue card to the Scoutmaster. Upon review, the "Applicant's Record" section will be given to the Scout for his records and the Troop's record will be forwarded to the Advancement Chairman. The badge will be awarded at a subsequent Troop meeting and recognition given at the Court of Honor.

### **4.3 Troop Elections**

The only two positions within the Troop that require an election process are the Senior Patrol Leader and Patrol Leaders. Troop elections will be held in April/May for Senior Patrol Leader. The entire Troop votes in this election.

The Senior Patrol Leader then appoints the other Junior Leader Positions, with the approval of the Scoutmaster, consisting of an Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Troop Guide, Scribe, Quartermaster, Historian, Librarian, and Chaplain Aide.

Patrol Leader elections will be held after the positions of Senior and Asst. Senior Patrol Leader are done. Only those members within a particular Patrol will vote for their Patrol Leader. The Patrol Leader then appoints the other Junior Leader Positions, (with Scoutmaster approval), consisting of Assistant Patrol Leader, Scribe, Quartermaster & Historian.

All votes in Troop elections are cast by silent ballot with the winner being that individual with the majority of votes. In the event of a tie, another vote will be held that same evening to determine the winner. All Troop Junior Leader positions, both those that are elected and those that are appointed, run for a one year term starting June 1st and ending May 31st.

#### **4.4 Junior Leader Training**

Troop 56 offers an annual Junior Leader Training Session for all members of the Patrol Leaders' Council. The training session is designed to give the Scouts the tools to be effective leaders.

#### **4.5 Traveling**

When traveling to and from outings, all Scouts are to be in seat belts at all times. Not only is it smart, it is the law. All Scouts are instructed to leave all vehicles cleaner than they found them. Any disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. If any Scout behaves in such a way that is disruptive to the driver, he will be asked to be picked up by a parent when we arrive at the campsite.

#### **4.6 Uniforms**

The Scout uniform represents an important part of who we are and should be worn with pride by all Scouts at all Scouting functions. In Boy Scouts, two different uniforms exist.

**Class A(Field)** uniforms consist of a Scout shirt with proper insignia, Scout pants or shorts, a Scout belt, Scout socks, troop neckerchief, hiking boots or sneakers, Scout Handbook, and a pad and pen.

**Class B(Activity)** uniform is considered more of an activity uniform and consists of a Troop T-shirt or other BSA shirt, Scout pants or shorts, Scout Belt, sneakers, Scout Handbook, and a pad and pen.

Scouts should attend the Troop meeting of every month in Class A(Field) uniform. Periodic uniform inspections will be held.

#### **4.7 Equipment Policy**

Troop 56 owns a substantial amount of camping equipment that over the years has all been purchased with Troop funds. As a result, we have a very strict policy regarding all camping equipment. Any equipment in a Patrol Box is the responsibility of the Patrol.

In September a starting inventory will be taken by the Quartermaster and Equipment Chairperson. They will also hold periodic inspections will be held throughout the year. Any equipment that is lost on weekend outings becomes the responsibility of the entire Patrol to replace. If equipment is damaged, through no fault of any Patrol member, the Troop will replace

the equipment. However, if any equipment is damaged through fooling around or direct abuse, it becomes the Patrol's responsibility to replace.

#### **4.8 Permission Slips**

Permission slips and money for all Troop activities are due back on the designated date. No exceptions will be made on permission slip deadlines unless a parent or Scout has notified the Scoutmaster in advance of the deadline. If for any reason a Scout is unable to attend an activity after payment has been made, the Troop will refund whatever portion of the cost that *has not been committed* to site fees, food, or registration fees.

### **5.0 Troop Meetings**

#### **5.1 Meetings**

Our Troop meets every Wednesday evening in the basement of the St. James Lutheran Church rt. 22, Pohatcong, NJ from September to June from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. Troop meetings follow a monthly theme that is chosen during the August planning conference. During the Patrol Leaders' Council meetings, plans for the meetings and outings are established.

At 7:00 the Opening Ceremony takes place. The opening varies weekly as each patrol rotates on a weekly schedule. After the opening is a 20 to 25 minute skill session based on the monthly feature. The skill sessions are broken down into two different groups based on level of experience. The Experienced Scouts work on more advanced and challenging skills, while the new Scouts concentrate on the basic skills needed to work on advancement toward First Class.

The Scouts take a 15 minute break to play a game. (Games usually include Ultimate Frisbee, Football, Steal the Bacon, etc.) After the game is over the Scouts meet in Patrols to discuss any Patrol related issues. They may work on advancement within the Patrol, planning a Patrol meeting or activity, planning Patrol menus, etc. After they meet in Patrols, the Scouts take part in an Inter-Patrol Activity where friendly competitions take place that are usually based upon important skills.

After the activity is the Closing Ceremony where the Scoutmaster addresses the Scouts and any other information is relayed to the Scouts. After the flag ceremony, the set-up Patrol remains to clean up the room while the Patrol Leaders Council meets in the back room to briefly review the meeting and prepare for the next weeks meeting.

#### **5.2 Court of Honors**

Court of Honors will be held... Sept, Dec, Mar, June.

Court of Honors are for: Recognizing scouts, leaders and parents. Provides opportunity for youth to plan and lead. Special guests or speakers are brought in to cover topics of interest.

## **6.0 Troop Outings and Activities**

Troop 56 holds on average 6 to 8 weekend outings per year. In addition, we have Troop day hikes or other activities throughout the year as well as Patrol events. On average, the Troop participates in three competition Camporees throughout the year. Camporees provide the opportunity for Troops from around the District and Council to get together and demonstrate their proficiency in learned Scouting skills.

Our camping trips normally run from Friday to Sunday. Scouts are expected at the church basement by 5:45 PM for a 6:00 departure, unless otherwise noted on the permission slip. We usually arrive home anywhere between 12 Noon and 3 PM. on Sunday.

All outings and activities require a permission slip to be signed by a parent or legal guardian. Permission slips and money are due one to two weeks prior to the camping trip. **No exceptions** will be made on permission slip deadlines. If for any reason you are unable to attend a camping trip after payment is made, the Troop will refund whatever portion of the cost has not been committed to site fees, food, or registration fees.

In order to reduce our impact on the environment, the Troop asks that all Scouts bring their own cup, plate, fork, knife, and spoon. In the past, some Scouts have brought along travel coffee mugs that can serve as a cup or bowl if necessary. The best plates tend to be plastic ones made by Tupperware or Rubbermaid. As for eating utensils, either a heavy duty plastic set, or an old kitchen set will do. Most sporting stores now carry the non-breakable, lightweight plastic eating utensils.

## **7.0 Troop Campout Routine**

Preparations for all campouts begin two weeks in advance when permission slips and money are due. Around the same time, Patrols will plan their Patrol Menu and Grocery List during the Troop meeting or Patrol meeting. After the menu is planned and approved, the Patrol may go shopping. Most patrols usually go the week before the camping trip, however, all shopping must be done by the Thursday before we go camping. Patrols know to plan a menu based on \$10 per Scout.

When we arrive back at the church on Sunday, no Scout leaves until all equipment is properly stored, unless previous arrangements have been made with an adult leader. Again, the Quartermaster is in charge of seeing that all Patrol and Troop equipment is signed back in and properly stored.

## 8.0 Adult Leadership Responsibilities

Troop 56 is very fortunate to have a solid group of adult leadership working to provide the Scouting program to all members of the Troop. Adult leaders with Troop 56, are primarily responsible for achieving two major goals: 1) Training and guidance of the Scouts consistent with the Aims and Objectives of the BSA; 2) Providing a safe outdoor program to all Scouts. Assuming these two key responsibilities are satisfied, the adult leaders provide the Scouts with the tools to actually deliver the Scouting program to themselves and their fellow Scouts.

The Troop is always seeking new adult leaders. Any parents interested in getting involved as an adult leaders should speak with the Scoutmaster or the Committee Chairperson for an application. Troop Leaders are required to attend BSA Leadership Training available through Minsi Trails Council.

## 9.0 Parental Support

As we work on providing a Scouting program for your son, there is a lot of hard work and time that goes into planning such a program. The Troop asks that all parents accept certain responsibilities in helping to make the program work. The Troop Committee is only part of the help needed by the Troop Leaders to supply a quality program for your son

The Court of Honor is a very important moment in *your sons' Scouting career* as he is awarded and recognized for his hard work and determination. In addition, important information about the Troop is relayed at these special ceremonies. Please make every effort to attend, your son needs your support.

Also, we ask that all parents are involved in Troop fund-raisers. Everyone's involvement is required so that a select few are not always running fund-raisers. Troop funds raised are used to purchase equipment, awards, and provide other experiences to carry out the scouting program.

We also need you to help with meeting deadlines and scheduled times. Deadlines on permission slips, money, or any other item it is usually done for the purpose of planning logistics of trips or activities. Please do your best to encourage your son to meet such deadlines.

If a financial reason arises, please see one of the adults and we can work something out within the Troop. Under no circumstances should a family be priced out of Scouting.

The Troop will need your help in providing transportation to and from campouts/activities. (Please remember, adult leaders *do not* get reimbursed for gas, mileage, or wear and tear, therefore it becomes everyone's responsibilities to make sure everyone does their share.)

Finally, we ask for *your support* of your son as he advances in Scouting. Your support is extremely important, let him know your interest and support in his involvement in Scouting. Look over your sons handbook with him and encourage him to finish what is needed.

We encourage that all parents do get involved. Remember, Scouting is a family oriented organization. You can serve on the Troop committee, attend camping trips, become a merit badge counselor, or serve the Troop in some other capacity. Periodically, we announce special needs, if you are available and able, please contact us.

Attached is a Resource Survey that we are asking all parents to complete so we can learn a little more about you and what resources you might be able to make available to the Troop. Please return to the Troop Resource Survey with your son to the next meeting along with the handbook comment sheet. If you have any questions about serving the Troop in some position, please talk to the Troop Committee Chairperson or Committee Member at anytime . We look forward to working with you in the near future.

## **10.0 Equipment Information**

### **10.1 Troop Equipment**

Troop 56 is currently fully equipped with three operational Patrols. All equipment is stored in the Troop storage room at the church in individual Patrol boxes. Each Patrol is outfitted with the necessary equipment for a weekend camping trip. All Troop equipment is purchased with funds generated during fund-raisers.

All Scouts are expected to treat Troop equipment as if it were their own personal equipment. Each Patrol is equipped with the following equipment:

- Backpacking Tents
- Dining Fly
- Patrol Table
- Double Burner Propane Stove
- Propane Lanterns
- Cook Kits
- Griddle
- Dutch Ovens
- Chef Utensil Kits
- Wash Basins
- Patrol Water Jug and Cooler
- Camp Shovel

In addition to individual Patrol equipment, the Troop also has other equipment that is available to the Patrols if requested. The following is a list of other Troop equipment:

- Propane Canisters
- Rope in 15 ft, 20 ft, and 25 ft lengths.
- Ax Yard Equipment: Bow Saws, Hatchets, Sharpening Tools, Gloves, and Goggles.
- Troop First Aid Kit
- Knot Tying Boards
- Klondike Derby Sleds

The Troop also has a library that consists of Merit Badge books and other important Scouting resources. All books can be signed out by Scouts through the Troop Librarian.

## 10.2 Personal Equipment

Scouts are responsible for their own personal equipment. In order to help those that are just purchasing equipment, the Troop has the following recommendations on specific equipment. While we do not recommend going out and purchasing all the equipment at one time, the list is intended to provide parents with specific types of equipment that we have found to be more usable or appropriate for camping trips.

1. All Scouts are strongly encouraged to have a Junior size **external frame backpack**. Most camping done by the Troop will use backpacks. Backpacks can range in price from \$75 to \$125 for Junior packs, but offer a great way to consolidate and store all personal gear. There are some packs available to borrow in the scout room until you can purchase one. (See the Quartermaster)
2. Sleeping Bags are necessary for all camping trips. The Troop recommends a **three season mummy bag** rated for 15°F weather. Sleeping bags can get a little expensive. The warmer the rating on the bag, the more expensive. If you have an adequate sleeping bag currently, do not purchase a new one, consider purchasing a better quality at a later date as your son advances in Scouting.
3. **Hiking boots** are a must on all outdoor Scouting activities. Again, inexpensive hiking boots are more than sufficient for the average growing Scout. As your son stops growing, you may wish to purchase better quality, more expensive boots. In the meantime, Hi-tech boots are a durable, inexpensive pair of boots that are available at most sporting goods stores.
4. Weather gear is a must on all camping trips. One thing we have learned is that \$0.99 rain ponchos are worth exactly what you pay for them. Consider purchasing a **Backpacking Poncho**. They cost a little more than .99, but will last for years to come.
5. **Pocketknives** are used by all Scouts when they earn their Totin' Chip card, which shows they have been trained in the use of knives and other ax yard equipment. Please do not spend \$65 on a Swiss Army Knife - it will only get lost. Most

Scouting pocketknives run under \$20 and are more than adequate for your sons use.

6. Flashlights should be carried by all Scouts. The best buy on flashlights are the **mini-maglites** that come with a carrying holster. They cost \$10 at Home Depot, are lightweight, and give off a lot of light. There is no need for a 6 cell, 4ft flashlight on camping trips.
7. **Compasses** are important on all camping trips and something every Scout should eventually have. As with the pocketknives, there is no need for elaborate compasses.
8. **Foam Pads** are extremely important for a good nights sleep. Closed cell pads are inexpensive and more than adequate.
9. **Water bottles** are necessary on all backpacking trips and most camping trips where water is limited.
10. A Scout is clean. All Scouts should have a **small toiletry kit** containing travel size toothpaste, deodorant, soap, toothbrush, and towel. All toiletries can be kept in a small zip-lock bag.
11. Every Scout should carry a small first aid kit with them. Requirement 6b for Second Class requires that all Scouts make a personal **First Aid kit**. Again, use a zip-lock bag or old Band-Aid container for storing supplies. Page 289 in the Scout Handbook suggests items that should be placed in the First Aid kit.
12. As mentioned before, all Scouts should have a personal **mess kit** consisting of a cup, plate, and eating utensils.

The above list represents specific, suggested equipment for camping trips. While every Scout should eventually have the equipment, please do not go out and purchase all the equipment at one time. Ask around, you would be surprised at how many people might have some of the equipment you could borrow.

The above items represent suggested items that you might want to consider purchasing for your sons future Scouting years. Many of the items will last a lifetime and are a good investment if your son enjoys camping and the outdoors. The Boy Scout Handbook provides a clothing and equipment checklists that should be reviewed for all camping trips.

## **11.0 Finance and Fund-Raisers**

Troop 56 is a completely self-sufficient Troop that supports itself through fund-raisers and the annual registration fee.

In January, an annual registration fee with the Boy Scouts of America of \$25.00 is collected for Council registration fees, subscriptions to Boy's Life, and insurance. At that time we will also be collecting a yearly dues of \$20.00. This fee will go towards awards and advancements earned by the scouts.

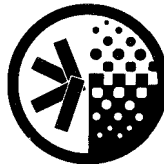
Checks should be made payable to Troop 56 and when possible, separate checks should be used if funds for several "events" are due on the same night. This helps us tremendously in keeping our records correct. Fees associated with returned checks due to insufficient funds will be charged to the individual for reimbursement.

Every year in August, the Troop Committee meets to set a budget for the upcoming Scouting year. The Budget sets provisions for Junior Leader Training, awards and advancement, equipment purchases, awards and recognition dinners, adult training, newsletters and photography, etc. The Troop's Budget process is set-up in such a way that any excess funds can be used for trip subsidization. The Troop Budget is based upon expected dues for the following year and expected income from the Troops main fund-raisers.

In order for the Troop to be self-sufficient, we hold several important fund-raisers throughout the year. Our first fund-raiser of the Scouting year is our Trails-End Popcorn Campaign which starts in Sept. and ends in Nov. During the Fall/Spring, we will hold a car wash. The day provides a good income for the Troop and a lot of fun for Scouts and their parents.

We ask that in addition to working the fund-raisers, please talk them up amongst your family, neighbors, and co-workers. Remember, the more successful are the fund-raisers, the easier it becomes for the Troop to subsidize trips. There is a double benefit to having friends and neighbors participate in our fund-raisers: 1) they receive great value for the money spent and 2) they help support your son in Scouting and help take the financial burden off your shoulders.

And finally, we thank you in advance for all your help and support.



# TROOP RESOURCE

Boy Scouting is for adults as well as boys. We invite you to share your skills and interests so the best possible program can be developed for the Boy Scouts in this troop. In making this survey the committee wishes to find ways you can enjoy using your talents to help our Scouts. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Welcome to the Scout family of Troop No. 56 in the Minsi Trails Council.  
(Please print)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_ Business phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your favorite hobby? \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

2. In what sports do you take an active part? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Would you be willing to assist the troop leaders and committee members occasionally? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Please check the areas in which you would be willing to help.

### General Activities

- Campouts
- Hikes
- Outdoor activities
- Troop meetings
- Bookkeeping
- Typing
- Drawing/art
- Transportation of Scouts
- Transportation of equipment

Other \_\_\_\_\_  
please print

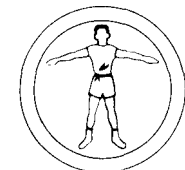
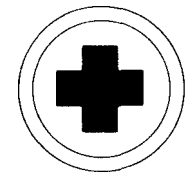
### Special Program Assistance

- I can participate as a committee member
- I have a mini-van or \_\_\_\_\_ truck.
- I have a workshop.
- I have family camping gear.
- I have access to camping property.
- I can make contacts for special trips and activities.
- I can help with troop equipment,
- I have access to a personal computer.

5. Please check any Scouting skills you would be willing to teach.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rope work (knots and lashings) | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor cooking                | <input type="checkbox"/> Aquatics              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First-aid                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Knife and ax handling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Star study                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Map and compass use            | <input type="checkbox"/> Camping               |

Check-the merit badges on the other side of this sheet that you are willing to help our Boy Scouts earn.



# MERIT BADGES

Check the merit badges that you can help Boy Scouts earn.

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agribusiness                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Cycling                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Law                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Rifle Shooting              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Business            | <input type="checkbox"/> Dentistry                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Leatherwork               | <input type="checkbox"/> Rowing                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Cultures            | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog Care                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifesaving                | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Heritage            | <input type="checkbox"/> Drafting                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Machinery                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Salesmanship                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Labor               | <input type="checkbox"/> Electricity                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Mammal Study              | <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Science               | <input type="checkbox"/> Electronics                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Masonry                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archery                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Preparedness       | <input type="checkbox"/> Metals Engineering        | <input type="checkbox"/> Shotgun Shooting            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Metalwork                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Signaling                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Model Design and Building | <input type="checkbox"/> Skating                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Astronomy                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Science        | <input type="checkbox"/> Motorboating              | <input type="checkbox"/> Skiing                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athletics                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Farm Mechanics               | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Small-Boat Sailing          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atomic Energy                | <input type="checkbox"/> Fingerprinting               | <input type="checkbox"/> Nature                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Soil and Water Conservation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aviation                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Firemanship                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Oceanography              | <input type="checkbox"/> Space Exploration           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Backpacking                  | <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Orienteering              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basketry                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Fish and Wildlife Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Painting                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Stamp Collecting            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beekeeping                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Fitness          | <input type="checkbox"/> Surveying                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird Study                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Forestry                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Management       | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Botany                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Pets                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Textile                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bugling                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Genealogy                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography               | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camping                      | <input type="checkbox"/> General Science              | <input type="checkbox"/> Pioneering                | <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Safety              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Plant Science             | <input type="checkbox"/> Truck Transportation        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Golf                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterinary Science          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cinematography               | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Arts                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Pottery                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Waterskiing                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship in the Community | <input type="checkbox"/> Handicap Awareness           | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Health             | <input type="checkbox"/> Weather                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship in the Nation    | <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Speaking           | <input type="checkbox"/> Whitewater                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship in the World     | <input type="checkbox"/> Home Repairs                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Pulp and Paper            | <input type="checkbox"/> Wilderness Survival         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coin Collecting              | <input type="checkbox"/> Horsemanship                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Rabbit Raising            | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Carving                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications               | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian Lore                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Woodwork                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computers                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Insect Study                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Railroadng                |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer Buying              | <input type="checkbox"/> Journalism                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading                   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture       | <input type="checkbox"/> Reptile Study             |  |

Other skills and activities I could assist in for the older-Scout program:

- |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Backpacking          | <input type="checkbox"/> Free-style biking | <input type="checkbox"/> Rappelling          | <input type="checkbox"/> Survival            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball           | <input type="checkbox"/> Golf              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sailing             | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowling              | <input type="checkbox"/> Hockey            | <input type="checkbox"/> Scuba diving        | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business             | <input type="checkbox"/> Kayaking          | <input type="checkbox"/> Shooting sports     | <input type="checkbox"/> Video/photography   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-country skiing | <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanics         | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow-pitch softball | <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cycling              | <input type="checkbox"/> Mountain man      | <input type="checkbox"/> Snow camping        | <input type="checkbox"/> Whitewater canoeing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Downhill skiing      | <input type="checkbox"/> Orienteering      | <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer              | <input type="checkbox"/> Windsurfing         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing              | <input type="checkbox"/> Rafting           | <input type="checkbox"/> Spelunking          |  |

