



Several families have asked how their Scout makes the transition to Boy Scouts. 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 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 42 answers to some very important questions; we encourage you to ask the same questions of other troops.

MEMBERSHIP

Question: How many registered Scouts?

T42 Response: As of Feb 2003 we have 38 scouts registered. This is a very active time around the troop and this number is changing weekly because of new scouts.

Other Troop Responses: _____

Question: How many are active?

T42 Response: As with most Boy Scout troops we have about half of the youth active on a weekly basis. The other scouts are older and have a lot of other weekly commitments but are still working towards their Eagle rank. One of our active scouts is what I believe is the only 7 palm Eagle in the council.

Other Troop Responses: _____

Question: How many registered adults?

T42 Response: As of Feb 2003 we have 16 registered adults with the troop.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 sit as chairman of five different council committees, several act as merit badge counselors for the council Adapt-a-Merit-Badge program, and yet others act as volunteers throughout the year.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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.

Other Troop Responses: _____

FUNDING

Question: How is the troop funded?

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

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 two fund raising opportunities for the youth. The first is selling popcorn during the council's annual popcorn sale. With this fund raiser the scout keeps 100% of the profit which is about 30% of his total sales. The other opportunity is selling pancake tickets during our pancake breakfast. During this fundraiser the scout earns much needed supplies and equipment that they may need. We have had scouts earn over \$600 per year for their personal use.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 after a campout, when the Patrol Leadership Council (PLC) meets. Meetings are at St. Pius X School, 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.

Other Troop Responses: _____

Question: What is done at the meetings?

T42 Response: We work on merit badges at almost all troop meetings. If needed we will work on two merit badges, one for the younger youth and one for the older. It is our obligation to get all youth the rank of 1st Class by the end of their first year with the troop. We work on this advancement at our monthly campouts. We also hold Scoutmaster conferences and boards of review during our weekly meetings.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 appreciate those that attend almost everything with their boys but understand that with some they have other youth and getting them to the meetings is about all they

can do. We would like all parents to come to our parent meeting held the third Tuesday of every month.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 have a parent meeting the third Tuesday of every month. We have some things that are just easier sent through the mail and if necessary we will make phone calls.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 parent meeting.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 Leader. These two run all the meetings and activities at campouts. They convene 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. All of these members are elected by their fellow scouts and serve six month terms.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 western Illinois. 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.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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. Now we 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.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 their 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.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 something to eat with.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 is not required. The biggest thing is make sure your boy comes to the campouts because this is where we work on advancement.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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; Seabase, located in the beautiful Florida Keys where we explore the world underneath; National Jamboree, we join 40,000 other scouts at Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia with a side trip to Washington D.C.; our final high adventure trip is to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in northern Minnesota for a week of canoeing. We rotate between these with and will attend Philmont in 2003 and every four years after, Seabase in 2004 and every four years after, National Jamboree in 2005 and every four years after and BWCA in 2006 and every four years after.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 get \$1000 in one year to both cover the trip and necessary gear.

Other Troop Responses: _____

ADVANCEMENT

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

T42 Response: As mentioned above it is 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.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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

T42 Response: We work on advancement up to 1st class at our monthly campouts. We also hold Scoutmaster conferences and boards of review during our weekly meetings.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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. If needed we will work on two merit

badges, one for the younger youth and one for the older. We also attend three merit badge workshops throughout the year where they can usually earn a merit badge in one day. The council also has an Adopt-a-Merit-Badge program where scouts earn merit badges. We have had over 70 scouts reach the rank of Eagle, probably more than any other troop in the area. We can guarantee the rank of Eagle to any scout that attends our campouts on a regular basis. This is a tribute to our strong leadership and quest in this area.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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 do a yearly service project of putting flags on the graves of veterans at Cedar Memorial and encourage everyone to take part in the yearly Scouting for Food where we get food for the local food banks. We also have 3-4 Eagle projects every year where our troop alone gives over 500 hours to the community.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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. These two run all the meetings and activities at campouts. They convene 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. 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.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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. Most of these are in the Order of the Arrow which is a Boy Scout honor society.

Other Troop Responses: _____

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