

Arrow of Light - information packet

Choosing the right Troop 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. The fifth-grade year is the time to visit as many Scout Troops as you like, ask questions, and think about what you want in a Scout Troop as you decide which one to join.

After many years of Cub Scouts, your Scout may think they've experienced all that scouting has to offer, but Scouts BSA is a very different program. Encourage your Scout to join a Troop and try the many experiences Scouts BSA has to offer.

Your fifth grade AOL Scout can join a Troop 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 at their Blue and Gold Ceremony in the spring even if they are actively participating in a Troop.

We believe Scouting is THE best youth leadership training program. What is most important to us is that Scouts continue on with a Troop. All Troops are different, visit as many as you can or until you find the fit for you and your Scout!

CAMPING

Question: How often and where?

→ If you take Scouting and drop the "SC" you have outing. Camping is an important and popular activity in Scouts BSA. Troop 42/422 has campouts every month during the school year at camping facilities all around eastern Iowa and surrounding states. 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: How are the Scouts transported?

→ 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 and ride to and from each activity.

Question: What equipment is provided?

→ 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. Attendees (youth and adult) only need to bring their personal gear (sleeping bag, clothes, personal grooming supplies, etc).

HIGH ADVENTURE

Question: Does the Troop attend National High Adventure camps?

→ Absolutely! We have four high adventures we rotate. Planning for these starts more than a year 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; our final high adventure trip is to the **Boundary Waters Canoe Area** (BWCA) in northern Minnesota for a week of backcountry canoeing.

SERVICE

Question: Does the Troop do service for the community?

→ Service is one of the requirements for every rank in Scouts BSA from 2nd Class to Eagle. We perform service projects for churches, schools, camps, and nature areas just to mention a few. We also have multiple Eagle projects every year where our Troop alone gives over 1000 hours to the community.

MEETINGS

Question: When, where and how often?

→ 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 Parent 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. During school summer break meetings shift to roughly every other week and are held to provide help on specific advancement activities.

Question: What happens at meetings?

→ 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 rank advancement at almost all Troop meetings. We also work on advancement at our monthly campouts. We hold Scoutmaster conferences and boards of review during both weekly meetings and campouts.

ADVANCEMENT

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

→ We strive to help our Scouts reach the rank of 1st Class by the end of their first year. If a scout shows up to meetings, campouts, and brings their scout book, our history shows they will succeed.

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

→ We work on advancement up to 1st Class at our weekly meetings and monthly campouts. Please note, some requirements need to be done on a campout and some need to be done at home. We also hold Scoutmaster conferences and boards of review during both our weekly meetings and campouts.

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

→ Some merit badges can be earned over a few Troop meetings. We also attend multiple merit badge workshops throughout the year. Many adults in the Troop are registered merit badge councilors (hopefully some of you soon). We have had over 167 scouts reach the rank of Eagle. The Rank of Eagle Scout is elite and must be earned. It is also a significant challenge. We cannot guarantee the rank of Eagle, but history shows those who are active in the Troop and have the desire will reach the top rank.

LEADERSHIP

Question: What opportunities does the Scout have for leadership?

→ Our Troop is run by the youth and guided by the adults. Our youth leaders have a monthly 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), and scribe. Most of these members are elected by their fellow scouts and serve six-month terms. Other leadership opportunities are quartermaster, chaplain's aide, historian, bugler, librarian, Troop guide, den chief, OA Troop representative and assistant patrol leader.

Question: Within the Troop? Outside the Troop?

→ 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 several opportunities within the Order of the Arrow which is a Scouting honor society.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Question: Can I attend campouts, summer camp, High Adventures, and other longer-term outings with my Scout?

→ Yes! One big difference between Cub Scouting and Scouts BSA is that in order to attend any outing that includes an overnight, adults must be registered adults in a fee paid position who are trained (Youth Protection Training and any other training appropriate with their position with the Troop).

Question: What involvement is expected of the parent?

→ We hope you will want to support your Scout. Some feel this support is coming to all meetings and not missing an activity. Some feel this support is just getting them 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. For campouts, the adults plan and cook meals separately from the youth patrols. This is done as an example to the youth and also because the adults like to eat well. Please consider attending one of campouts shortly after crossover to get to know the other adults and see how the Troop operates. We really do have a great time together!

Question: Can I be an adult leader in the Troop?

→ Troop 42/422 would not exist if adults did not volunteer. Additional dedicated and trained adult leaders make the program stronger. Volunteers need to take some training (mostly online), pay their registration fee, and have a background check.

MEMBERSHIP

Question: How many registered Scouts?

→ Troop 42/422's average is 50 registered Scouts. As of 11/2024 we have 45. Each spring we'll see many new recruits. Throughout the year we'll have ebbs and flows in attendance based on competing activities.

Question: How many are active?

→ On a weekly basis we will have 20-30 scouts at a meeting. The younger scouts attend almost all meetings. As scouts age they accumulate other weekly commitments but attend when they can. Some of these are high school age scouts still working towards their Eagle rank.

Question: How many registered adults?

→ As of 11/2024 we have 58 registered adults with positions in the Troop, most functioning as committee members and merit badge counsellors. Being a registered adult with current Youth Protection Training (YPT) is a requirement to attend campouts under Scouting America rules.

Question: What is the age distribution within the Troop?

→ Scouts BSA is for young adults 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?

→ Our primary funding comes from our annual pancake breakfast held the 1st Sunday in February. The entire Troop participates selling tickets, gathering donations, and working the day of the Breakfast. We have been fortunate that this singular event typically will fund our Troop for the entire year.

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

→ Yes, this is a very important part of the scouting program. 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 total sales. We have had scouts earn over \$1000 per year for their personal scouting use. Additional opportunities are offered as they become available.

COMMUNICATION

Question: How does the Troop communicate with the families?

→ Our primary method of communication is via email and our website. We also hold parent meetings each year and every parent is invited to the monthly Troop Committee Meeting. When on campouts or activities, if needed, we make phone calls.

Question: Who makes the decisions?

→ A Scouting America Troop is run by the youth leaders. These youth leaders make up the 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. The PLC meets once monthly to decide what to do during the upcoming meetings and where to go and what to do at the campouts. Other members of the PLC include each patrol leader, junior assistant scoutmaster, and scribe. These members are elected by their fellow scouts and serve six-month terms.

Welcome to the world of Scouts BSA!

Key contacts within the Troop concerning membership are:

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