

Troop 374 New Member Information Sheet

We are happy that you have chosen to put your boy into the wonderful world of Scouting. Scouting has much to offer and it gives him excellent training and experiences that he will remember and use the rest of his life.

Here is a list of questions frequently asked by new parents (and Scouts not familiar with the way our program is run). We encourage that both parents and Scout read this carefully and direct any questions you may have to the Scoutmaster.

- 1) Where and when does your troop meet?** We are sponsored by North County Christian School and Friends of Troop 374. NCCS is located at 845 Dunn Road in Florissant Missouri, 63031. Drive around the East side of the School and park in the NW corner near the garage. Meetings are from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. every Tuesday evening. There is usually a short activity from 6:45 to 7:00. PLEASE plan to arrive and leave on time unless you have made special arrangements with the Scoutmaster. We meet primarily only on school nights. If school is canceled due to bad weather, we do not have a meeting. In addition, we usually have alternative meetings in the summer.
- 2) What do I bring to each troop meeting?** The Scout Motto is: "Be Prepared." Come "Prepared" to each meeting with pencil and paper, your Scout Handbook, and wearing the full BSA "Field Uniform". "Field" (Sometimes called "Class A") means: shirt pants, neckerchief, socks and belt. Note: The school has requested that the boys not wear any shoes that can mark the floor. It is not proper uniform, but we allow the boys to wear tennis shoes if they do not own "no scuff" shoes. (Brown or black is preferred, but not absolutely necessary). Wearing the shirt alone is not "in uniform."
- 3) What do I need to buy to be in Scouts?** The only thing that you need right away is a "Scout Handbook." It is inexpensive, and a valuable tool that is absolutely necessary to advance in rank.
- 4) Dress Code & Uniform?** We also hope you will obtain a full Scout Uniform. It is difficult to feel like you belong without one. Uniforms help promote a team effort and they also seem to encourage good behavior. They may be purchased at the Scout Shop located at 4568 West Pine Blvd. 314-361-0600 or the one located on 13347 Manchester Rd. Des Peres, MO 63131 314-984-0014. Sometimes we allow the BSA "Activity Uniform" (sometimes called "Class B"). This is a Scout related t-shirt with Scout pants and socks. On campouts where no uniform is needed, we expect the scouts to properly wear their clothing with the pants pulled up and little to no underwear showing. Logos must be G-rated and appropriate for all ages.
- 5) But, they are so expensive!** Yes, we agree... Due to the cost of buying both a winter and summer uniform, most Scouts only buy a summer uniform. When traveling while it is cold, they wear sweat pants over their summer shorts. Then they remove them while inside. We may have some recycled uniforms in our Troop storage area that the older boys have outgrown. We buy them back. So you may wish to check our stock. There is also a new style pants called "Switchback pants" that have zip off legs. They are not the best for formal occasions but are generally accepted.
- 6) What do I do to advance in rank?** After completing the "Joining Requirements," the first rank to earn is called "Tenderfoot." Unlike Cub Scouts, we expect for all advancement to be initiated by the boy, NOT THE TROOP. Everything you need to know about advancement is covered in the "Official Scout Handbook." When a Scout feels he is ready to pass a requirement, he meets with an adult or a Venture Scout. They will initial their book when it is completed. Parents may not sign off a requirement unless they are working with several scouts and the committee has approved the action. To earn a merit badge is a little more difficult. You must first contact an adult that specializes in that Merit Badge. A list of councilors can be found on <http://www.stlbsa.org> (under Advancement, Merit Badge Councilor Directory). This counselor will cover the requirements with you, and then will set up one or more appointments. We may occasionally cover a Merit Badge during a troop meeting, but this is only to get the boy interested. We expect him to finish on his own.
- 7) How much are dues?** We do not feel that it is necessary to collect weekly dues. Instead, we collect \$25.00 twice a year. (September and February). The money is not to support the troop. It is used to cover each boy's National registration fee. We will mark you inactive if you are not paid up.
- 8) Some things are so expensive. How can I save money?** Be cautious about buying everything in the store just because it says "Official BSA." Many of these things are not needed, or can be acquired elsewhere, cheaper. Newspaper ads, garage sales, ex-Boy Scouts, and Goodwill stores usually have good buys. But, be sure you get a good sleeping bag! Much of our camping season is late fall and early spring when it can get very cold at night.
- 9) Personal Fundraisers.** From time to time, we offer opportunities for Scouts to sell things. Popcorn, Camp Cards, TJ's Pizza, etc. At least 90% of the profit is put into an account for the Scout to spend on "Scouting" activities. The Scout Uniform may NOT be worn for selling anything but Popcorn and Camp Cards. Because these items are sold under the name of Scouting, if your son leaves Scouting, then the balance of the account becomes the property of the Troop.

- 10) Where does the Troop get its money?** Our primary source of income is through the sale of Christmas Trees. This fundraiser has been a tradition since the late 1950's and it has been extremely successful for our unit. Unfortunately this comes during a very busy time of the year. You, as a parent and son team will be scheduled to work 6 to 8, three hour shifts. In addition, everyone is expected to help set up and tear down the lot. A successful project requires 100% participation by everyone. Selling trees is a lot of fun! We are currently experimenting with other fundraisers too. Lastly, we also offer optional fundraisers for the scout to earn money for their "Scouting Only" budget!
- 11) Why such an elaborate permission slip?** We hope that the permission slip does not seem too complicated. It is for the boy's protection if an accident would happen, and the parents could not be reached.
- 12) What do I need to go camping?** This varies a great deal depending upon the time of year. At the very least, you should have a sleeping bag, raincoat or poncho, silverware, a flashlight with fresh batteries, and a change of clothes. Attached is a list of things that you may want to bring. In addition, usually your son will need money for a fast food restaurant for the trip home on Sunday. Also, have your son eat Friday supper before leaving home, or bring it with him. We rarely stop on the way down and setting up camp does not allow time to fix supper. **BATTERY OPERATED DEVICES THAT PROVIDE ENTERTAINMENT ARE NOT ALLOWED!** They do not belong in the outdoors! **(This includes Cell Phones)**
- 13) What do I need for a hike?** The average hike is done in one day, so all that is needed is a 1-quart canteen (that clips on your belt), and usually a sack lunch. Boots are recommended, however, boots purchased only a few days ago, should not be worn. Brand new boots can cause blisters. Wear them around the house for at least a week!!!
- 14) Do I need any extra money on weekend activities?** Meals are usually covered from Saturday breakfast through Sunday breakfast. Friday supper is to be eaten BEFORE leaving. If we are traveling more than an hour home, it is fairly common for us to stop for lunch on the way home. Your son WILL need cash for this meal.
- 15) How do we deal with discipline problems?** The Boy Scout program is set up to mold the youth into a well-rounded young adult. All Scouts are expected to follow the Scout Oath and Law. Non-conforming, abusive, or insubordinate behavior directed towards other boys, youth leaders or adults create a bad learning environment. Discipline is constantly a problem when working with youth. Many people feel that problem youth should be merely thrown out. However, we feel that sometimes "problem youth" actually need Scouting the most. Attached you will find a set of guidelines covering how we deal with discipline issues.
- 16) How do parents learn what is going on?** Parents picking up their children should come inside and attend the last 15 minutes of every meeting. We cover announcements of activities and changes not on the calendar. Parents are rarely informed what is happening by their own children. Come on in and check us out. Better yet, visit the whole meeting! Also, we have our web page mentioned in the step below.
- 17) Where can I get the latest information?** Phone call trees are difficult to keep working, but we still try to use them. Most people now have access to a computer. We have our own web page. The URL is: <http://www.troop374.org>. Calendars are available, birthdays are announced and last minute changes are posted. The only information not available is the names and phone numbers of our members. This information is sensitive and is not available online to non-members.
- 18) Can I pay the Troop with a personal check?** When there is a large payment such as Summer Camp or there is an activity that is to happen more than just a few days away, paying with a personal check is not a problem. It is impossible for us to cash a check anywhere but the bank. If you are making a payment for a weekend campout someone will need "cash" to buy the groceries. A personal check will not work. Also, when paying with cash, remember that a youth member is usually buying the food and he cannot be expected to make change.
- 19) We would like to pick up my son early from the campout.** Although we understand that this is sometimes absolutely necessary, we strongly discourage this from happening. All the boys are expected to help take down camp and clean the area up. Picking up trash needs to be the last thing done. If it is absolutely necessary for your son to leave early, make sure that we understand completely so that your son can do extra chores on Saturday.
- 20) Why does it seem that the adults are not running the troop?** The objective of our Scouting program is to build leaders. This is accomplished in many ways. Most importantly we insist that the program be run by the youth. The youth leaders often make mistakes and don't always make the right decisions. However we hope that they learn by their mistakes and become better leaders. If your son has a problem, he may be asked to try to have the youth Senior Patrol Leader attempt to resolve it first. Don't get the impression that we do not supervise the youth, we just want the youth to have first pass at controlling the program.

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- 21) What do I do if I have a problem?** When dealing with so many families, we are bound to overlook someone's needs. After all, we are only human. Many times, people complain among themselves about a problem they have observed, and the troop doesn't hear about it until it is too late to correct. This Q&A sheet cannot possibly cover everything. Most advancement related questions can be answered in the "Official Scout Handbook." All questions or CONSTRUCTIVE comments can be directed to the Scoutmaster or any Committee member. (Check the roster for phone #'s)
- 22) What is 1st class 1st Year?** Any scout that achieves the rank of 1st Class within one year of joining receives a special "1st Class 1st Year Award". This is not difficult to achieve, but the Scout must WANT to advance.
- 23) What is an Eagle Scout?** Eagle is the highest rank that a Scout can achieve. The National average says that only two in a hundred scouts make it to the rank of Eagle Scout... Unless you are a member of Troop 374. We are proud to say that we have a much higher average. Every Scout that reaches the rank of Eagle receives a gift of partial admission to a high adventure base (with some exceptions) . This is paid by the Troop and is another benefit of the Troop Christmas Tree lot.
- 24) What about your Neckerchief and T-Shirt?** The troop has their own Troop Neckerchief and T-shirt. You will receive a neckerchief after you complete the joining requirements and achieve the rank of Scout. You can purchase a t-shirt immediately upon joining. If you lose your neckerchief, you may purchase a replacement.
- 25) My son plays sports and will miss some scout meetings and weekend camping events. Can he still participate?**
Absolutely YES, he can participate. BUT by missing many of the meetings and weekend events, his advancement through the ranks may be slowed down considerably. There MAY be times when the scout will have to choose between a sports event and a Scouting event. The troop leaders can help (parents and) scouts choose which events are very important and can give the scout the greatest return for the time spent.
- 26) What can my parents do?** Answer: ALMOST EVERYTHING. Dads are STRONGLY encouraged to attend all activities and moms are welcome too. However, we must caution you that the nature of the program is very difficult for some women. Adults are also needed to help with transportation on activities. Transportation is always a sore subject because there are always a few parents that are never willing to drive. You should plan on driving on two to three activities a year. Help is also needed for troop banquets, phone calling, making arrangements, etc. Both parents are encouraged to become active members of the troop committee, which meets once a month, and makes important decisions about the troop. Both parents ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED to attend all Courts of Honor. We need people to be Merit Badge Counselors that have expertise in many areas such as cooking, first aid, finances, aviation, hobbies and many more topics. To have an exciting unit, we need your enthusiastic, constructive help. If a parent is not active in assisting their son, then he will not advance much and probably never become an Eagle Scout. We (the active leaders in the troop can not do it alone). This does not say to do it for him. But, if you want your son to stay interested in Scouting, then YOU need to show an interest in Scouting too! Ask him how he is doing on advancement! Ask him to show you how to tie a knot or to cook something. Ask him what he did at Troop meeting. Ask him to tell you stories about the campouts.
- 27) What is a Court of Honor?** A Ct. of Honor is a special meeting where awards are presented. It is similar to a Cub Scout Blue and Gold. We have three of these a year (Fall, February and Spring). The February banquet is a huge extravaganza that includes a meal and entertainment. Parents need to attend these Courts of Honor. When a Scout advances a rank, mom should be present to receive her advancement pin too!
- 28) Can I send a cell phone with my son?** Cell Phones and other electronic devices are extremely disruptive to the camping program. When coverage is available we try to leave an adult owned emergency phone turned on in a vehicle. If you feel your son MUST bring a phone to arrange for a pick-up, it must be turned off and locked up by a leader in charge.
- 29) My son has indicated to me that he wants to quit Scouting! What should I do?** From time to time this happens. It can be pressure from peers at school, a soccer coach or even something that happened at a troop meeting or on a campout. He might merely be discouraged with being a rank behind his best friend. DO NOT merely allow your son to just gradually stop attending! Scouting may not be right for every boy in this universe, but quitting is the easy way out! Quitting things can easily become habit and will soon become the favorite solution to all problems in the future! Find out what the problem is and find out for sure if dropping the program is really the right answer. If quitting seems to be the answer, tell your son that before he quits that he must personally (not mom or dad) discuss the problem with the Scoutmaster or Committee Chairman. This discussion needs to be a face to face meeting should NOT happen on a Troop meeting night.
- 30) Why do the Scout Leaders expect so much from us?** Being a volunteer and running a Troop requires a great deal of passion. Sometimes this passion

TROOP 374 SCOUT DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an issue that we do not like, however we are forced to deal with the problem. We used the outline of a program practiced in most of the St. Louis County school systems called "Assertive Discipline". Basically, the boys are used to identify several things that they consider problems in the troop. Then they also (with guidance) come up with a list of consequences for improper conduct. Below you will find a list of "Rules" and "Consequences".

RULES

- 1) No verbal abuse, harassment or profanity allowed.
- 2) Listen to all leaders (both youth and adult):
 - Only one person talks at a time.
 - Raise hand and wait to be recognized.
 - Insubordination is not allowed.
- 3) Follow Scout Oath and Scout Law at all times.
- 4) Keep hands, feet, and other objects to yourself.
- 5) No fighting.
- 6) Respect other people and their property.
 - No contact with other people's property without permission.
- 7) On outings, everyone is to help set-up and takedown camp.
- 8) No electronic forms of entertainment allowed. (i.e. radios, toys)
- 9) No complete uniform: - No board of review for advancement.
 - No Scoutmasters conference.
 - Can't afford one? Let us know.

CONSEQUENCES

- 1) Verbal warning, or name posted on board.
- 2) Semi-private talk with SPL or Venture Scout.
- 3) Separated from patrol or troop.
 - Sent to SM and time alone by self in certain area.
- 4) Notify parents, depending on severity or frequency:
 - Scout calls parent and informs them of problem.
 - Scout calls parent for a pickup from meeting or camp-out.
 - Parent must attend next meeting or activity.
- 5) Suspension from game, IPC, meeting, or future activity.
- 6) Extra duty or service that will inconvenience the Scout.
- 7) A last resort: Expulsion from the troop (requires a committee decision).

Note: There are obviously many more problems that come up, however, these are the things that the Scouts themselves identified as real problems. It should also be noted that each Scout does NOT get a clean slate every week. Repeat offenders will usually always get a warning, however, we may elect to skip a step. (i.e. An adult after having given several warnings may elect to skip steps 2 & 3 by having a Scout call his parents for a pickup from a meeting.) Not every Scout will be dealt with the same way.

(10/2013)

Troop 374 Weekend Equipment List

Important: MARK ALL EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING WITH YOUR NAME

RECOMMENDED ITEMS: You will probably not need all of these items. It is merely a suggested list.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Scout shirt (<i>Uniform is needed at Summer-</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Scout shorts <i>Camp, Shiloh and Camporees.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Scout socks (<i>It is not needed for every campout.</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/> Official belt and buckle
<input type="checkbox"/> Neckerchief(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Neckerchief slide
<input type="checkbox"/> Shoes suitable for hiking
<input type="checkbox"/> Tennis shoes
<input type="checkbox"/> Raincoat or good quality poncho
<input type="checkbox"/> Wet weather headgear and footwear
<input type="checkbox"/> Sweater or jacket
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra underwear (shirts and shorts)
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra socks
<input type="checkbox"/> Hiking socks (1 pair)
<input type="checkbox"/> Deodorant
<input type="checkbox"/> T-shirts (no beer or other questionable slogans)
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra change of clothes
<input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush and paste
<input type="checkbox"/> Hand-soap and container
<input type="checkbox"/> Mirror
<input type="checkbox"/> Brush or comb
<input type="checkbox"/> Mess Kit or plate, bowl and cup
<input type="checkbox"/> Knife, fork and spoon (very important)
<input type="checkbox"/> Pocket knife (Toten-chip required)
<input type="checkbox"/> 1qt. canteen (or bottle)
<input type="checkbox"/> Backpack or something adequate for
Carrying gear (ask before buying one) | <input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof ground cloth
<input type="checkbox"/> Good quality sleeping bag or blankets
<input type="checkbox"/> Pillow (if desired)
<input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping pad (foam etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight (new batteries)
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra batteries
<input type="checkbox"/> Pen, pencil and paper
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal first aid kit
<input type="checkbox"/> Boy Scout Handbook
<input type="checkbox"/> Toten-chip card (if earned)
<input type="checkbox"/> Watertight matches

OPTIONAL ITEMS:
<input type="checkbox"/> Handkerchiefs
<input type="checkbox"/> Sewing kit
<input type="checkbox"/> Bible or Prayer Book
<input type="checkbox"/> Swimming trunks
<input type="checkbox"/> Hat or cap
<input type="checkbox"/> Hand ax, with sheath
<input type="checkbox"/> Compass
<input type="checkbox"/> Pajamas
<input type="checkbox"/> Camera with extra film
<input type="checkbox"/> Insect repellent
<input type="checkbox"/> Musical instrument
<input type="checkbox"/> Sheets and pillow case
<input type="checkbox"/> Alarm clock
<input type="checkbox"/> Small folding stool (<i>NO lawnchairs</i>) *see note
<input type="checkbox"/> O.A. Items
<input type="checkbox"/> Work Gloves |
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(Plastic trash bags are great for keeping things dry, but are very poor for carrying gear)

* A small folding stool is OK, but lawn chairs are not allowed by the youth because we do not have room to transport 25 chairs. Even if you have a dad willing to drive, there is not room for everyone to have one. (It is not fair for the scouts that do not have a parent there.) For the same reason, dads attending a campout should not provide their son with other special perks (like soda) just because he is there.

Note: In the spirit of being outdoors, no cell phones, battery operated forms of entertainment are allowed! We will not take any responsibility for ANY damaged radios or toys.

(Accidentally damaged or not)

(10/2013)