



Guide to Scouting in Troop 281

2014 – 2015 Edition

Anderson Hills United Methodist Church

Blue Jacket District – Dan Beard Council

Cincinnati, Ohio

Special Note

This guide has been written to supplement other publications of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). The material contained in this guide describes additional standards that Troop 281 and the Anderson Hills United Methodist Church have outlined in order to provide the best possible experience for all members of the troop.

Because BSA standards frequently change, any contradiction to this publication should be noted and the BSA standard should be followed. These contradictions should be communicated to the Troop Committee Chairman.

This ***Guide to Scouting in Troop 281*** will be provided to each Scout as he joins the troop. Revisions will be provided as the Troop Committee deems necessary. This guide will be reviewed by the Troop Committee annually.

Other valuable resources that will help a Scout and his family are available on the troop's website:
www.troop281.org

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Dan Beard Council ~ Cincinnati, Ohio

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Overview of the Boy Scouts of America

It is the purpose of the Boy Scouts of America to provide an effective program designed to instill within the youth desirable qualities of character, to train them in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to help develop their personal fitness, providing this country with **citizens who:**

- 1** Are physically, mentally and emotionally fit.
- 2** Have a high degree of self-reliance as evidenced in such qualities as initiative, courage and resourcefulness.
- 3** Have personal and stable values firmly based on religious concepts.
- 4** Have the desire and skills to help others.
- 5** Understand the principles of the American social, economic, and government systems.
- 6** Are knowledgeable about and take pride in their American heritage and understand America's role in the world.
- 7** Have a keen respect for the basic rights of all people.
- 8** Are prepared to fulfill the varied responsibilities of participating in and giving leadership to American society and in other forums of the world.

BSA Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) to serve others by helping to instill values in young people and, in other ways, to prepare them to make ethical choices during their lifetime in achieving their full potential. The values we strive to instill are based on those found in the Scout Oath and Law.

The Boy Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.



Boy Scout Motto

“Be Prepared”

Boy Scout Slogan

“Do a Good Turn Daily”

The Scout Law

A Scout is:

Trustworthy
Loyal
Helpful
Friendly
Courteous
Kind
Obedient
Cheerful
Thrifty
Brave
Clean
Reverent



Aims and Methods of the Boy Scout Program

Aims

Boy Scouting works toward three aims. One is growth in **moral strength and character**. We define this as the boy's personal qualities, his values, and his outlook.

A second aim is **participating citizenship**. Used broadly, citizenship means the boy's relationship to others. He comes to learn of his obligations to other people, to the society in which he lives, to the government that presides over that society.

A third aim of Boy Scouting is **development of physical, mental, and emotional fitness**. Fitness includes the body (well-tuned and healthy), the mind (able to think and solve problems), and emotions (self control, courage and self-respect).

Methods

Advancement – Scouting provides a series of surmountable obstacles and steps to overcome them through the advancement process. The Scout plans his advancement and progresses at his own pace as he overcomes each challenge. More is discussed about Advancement later in this guide.

Adult Association – Boys learn from the examples set by their adult leaders. Troop leadership may be male or female and association with adults of high character is encouraged at this stage in a young man's development.

Personal Growth – As Scouts plan their activity and progress toward their goals, they experience personal growth. The good turn concept is a major part of the personal growth method of Scouting. Boys grow as they participate in community service projects and as they do good turns for others.

Ideals – The Ideals of Scouting are spelled out in the Scout Oath, Law, Motto and Slogan. The Scout measures himself against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and as he reaches for them, he has some control over what he becomes.

Patrols – The patrol method gives Scouts an experience in group living and participating in citizenship. It places a certain amount of responsibility on young shoulders and teaches boys how to accept it. The patrol method allows Scouts to act in small groups where they can easily relate to each other. These small groups determine troop activities through their elected leaders.

Outdoors – Boy Scouting is designed to take place in the outdoors. It is in the outdoors that Scouts share responsibilities and learn to live with each other. It is here where the skills and activities practiced at troop meetings come alive. More is discussed about the outdoor program later in this guide.

Leadership Development – Boy Scouting encourages boys to learn and practice leadership skills. Every Scout has the opportunity to participate in both shared and total leadership situations. Understanding the concepts of leadership helps a boy accept the leadership roles of others and guides him toward the citizenship aim of Scouting.

Uniform – The uniform makes the Scout troop visible as a force of good and creates a positive youth image in the community. Boy Scouting is an action program, and wearing the uniform is an action that shows each Scout's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting. The uniform gives the Scout identity in a world brotherhood of youth who believe in the same ideals. More is discussed about the uniform later in this guide.

Policies Specific to Troop 281

The Boy Scouts of America have numerous guidelines and procedures outlined in the *Guide to Safe Scouting* to assist chartered organizations in providing the best possible program to Scouts. The adult and youth leadership of Troop 281 dedicate numerous hours each year to maintaining an awareness of these policies.

The Boy Scouts of America recognizes that each Boy Scout troop is different. The BSA supports chartered organizations in developing additional guidelines, assuming they don't contradict existing policies. Troop 281 and the Anderson Hills United Methodist Church have adopted the following policies to better serve the youth in our care:

Discipline Policy

It is the responsibility of each Scout, as exemplified by members of the Patrol Leaders' Council and the youth staff, to adhere to the code of conduct prescribed by the Boy Scouts of America in the Scout Oath and Law and to preserve the safety and dignity of himself, his brother Scouts and others.

It is the responsibility of the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters to provide adequate discipline while supervising Scouts on any troop activity; and to take whatever disciplinary measures they believe appropriate in the circumstances to assure proper control and safety. *As responsible adults, parents (or other adults) who participate in troop and patrol activities are expected to respond in the same manner.*

The Scoutmaster is to assure that Scouts are kept safe and secure using Scouting's methods. Troop 281's Policy on Discipline must be strictly adhered to and enforced when the Scouts do not, or can not, police themselves.

Procedure for Disciplinary Action

If the Scoutmaster or any other adult observes behavior on the part of any Scout that requires disciplinary action and requires the notification of the Scout's parent(s), the following procedure is to apply:

Level One – The Scoutmaster (or if absent, Assistant Scoutmaster) is to give a “1st Warning” to the Scout and counsel him as to the nature of the offense. The Scout and his parent(s) review this policy. Warnings expire after 6 months.

Level Two – Upon the “2nd Warning” or at the discretion of the Scoutmaster, the Scout is to be reported to the Troop Committee Chairperson for a Disciplinary Review. The Chairperson conducts this review with the Scoutmaster and other adults who were not involved in the incident. The Scout may not participate in any future activities of Troop 281 other than weekly troop meetings until after this review. The review board will make one of the following decisions:

- a) The Scout may continue in the troop with or without conditions.
- b) The Scout is suspended from all troop activities for a defined period.
- c) The Scout is suspended from all troop activities and Level Three is recommended to the Troop Committee.

The parent(s) of the Scout will be asked, but not required, to attend the Disciplinary Review meeting.

Level Three – The official members of the Troop Committee (see the Troop Committee Guidebook), including the Scoutmaster, will further review the individual’s involvement in Troop 281. They will evaluate whether or not to confirm the recommendation of the Disciplinary Review board. If confirmed by 2/3 of the Troop Committee, the Scout will no longer be welcome to participate in Troop 281 activities and his membership will be permanently withdrawn. It is at this level that the Troop Committee considers *only* the best interest of the troop rather than the best interest of the individual.

Equipment Policy

As a member of Troop 281, each Scout has the responsibility to maintain the troop’s inventory of shared equipment. This Equipment Policy is designed to extend the life and maintain the safety of this gear well beyond the membership term of any single Scout.

Equipment Maintenance Procedures: Proper care of troop equipment is the responsibility of each Scout in Troop 281. These maintenance procedures are general guidelines and may not include specific details required for the proper and safe operation of a particular item.

- Equipment is requisitioned from the troop Quartermaster. This is typically done when the patrol submits its requisition form prior to a troop event (campout, etc.).
- At the time of departure for the outing, the Quartermaster distributes the requisitioned equipment to each patrol.
- When the troop / patrol returns from the event, the Quartermaster returns equipment to the troop’s storage unit and signs out tents that need to be cleaned and / or dried. The Scout signs his name by the item on the “Equipment Control Roster”. **Special attention should be given to the care of tents.** (See “Tent Care” in Operations Section)
- All equipment must be returned the following troop meeting. This is usually the Tuesday after the weekend outing. Equipment must be returned clean, dry, and in good order. Returned equipment must be personally presented to the Quartermaster by the Scout - not left unattended. If the gear passes inspection by the Quartermaster, he returns it to troop inventory and signs it in as “returned”. If the gear does not pass inspection, the Scout will be asked to take the item(s) home again to be cleaned. Should the equipment be damaged, the Quartermaster will inform the Equipment Coordinator.

Equipment Replacement: If equipment is damaged or lost, the Scout(s) involved must pay Troop 281 to have the item(s) replaced. If sufficient funds are available, the cost will be automatically deducted from the Scout’s account. The troop maintains a cost associated with each inventoried item. Troop 281’s Equipment Coordinator will handle brand selection, purchase, and inventory of the equipment.

Conservation & Cleanliness: Scouting promotes conservation through “Leave No Trace Camping” and other practices. To support a clean environment, we discourage the use of disposable dishes and utensils whenever possible. From time to time, the Scoutmaster or Senior Patrol Leader may make an exception where cleaning is not feasible. However, patrols are expected to utilize the dishes provided in their patrol box. Patrol Leaders are required to post a

duty roster that helps the patrol share responsibility for cleaning patrol and troop equipment on campouts. Dishes, pots, pans, and utensils should be cleaned as they are used. Scouts are not permitted to simply store dirty dishes and clean them at home.

Troop Tents: Troop 281 maintains backpacking tents to be used by the Scouts on troop campouts. Personal tents are not to be used. An exception would be if special circumstances make it necessary for the troop Quartermaster to request the use of personal tents. This policy was adopted for the following reasons:

- Care for patrol and troop equipment is an exercise in teamwork, leadership and personal responsibility.
- Troop oversight of tents ensures proper shelter for campouts in difficult weather conditions.
- Use of personal tents puts undue financial pressure on families to purchase tents.
- Uniform tents provide a good public image for Troop 281.

Each patrol is assigned a group of tents to use and maintain. Every five years, or as deemed necessary, Troop 281 purchases new tents for the entire troop. The troop budget includes a tent savings fund to support this effort. Retired tents are either donated or sold as determined by the Troop Committee.

Transportation Policy

The following are rules prescribed by the Boy Scouts of America to maintain safe driving conditions.

- Seat belts are required for all passengers.
- All drivers must have a valid driver's license that has not been suspended or revoked for any reason, and must be at least 18 years of age.
- An adult leader (at least 21 years of age) must be in charge and accompany the group.
- Trucks may not be used for transporting passengers except in the cab.
- All driving, except short trips, should be done in daylight.
- All vehicles must be covered by automobile liability insurance with limits that meet or exceed requirements of the state in which the vehicle is licensed (Liability insurance = \$50,000 each person; \$100,000 each accident; \$50,000 property damage or \$100,000 combined single limit). Additional rules apply for extended trips.
- Do not exceed the speed limit.
- Do not travel in convoy (tailgate, follow the leader...).
- Driving time is limited to a maximum of 10 hours daily and must be interrupted by frequent rest, food, and recreation stops.

These requirements apply any time Scouts are transported from our meeting place (Anderson Hills United Methodist Church or other designated meeting place) to an outing destination. They also apply during the return to the meeting place and any transportation in-between. It is the responsibility of the Scoutmaster, his assistants, the Troop Committee and all drivers to adhere to these requirements.

The Troop Committee adds the following additional requirements: *Drivers between the ages 18 and 21, must be a registered leader with Troop 281. This driver must have the permission of the Scoutmaster before driving on any outing. This driver should carry passengers only if necessary.*

Training Policy

Training is not only an excellent resource for leaders – it is also a statement of commitment in time and to continuous improvement. For these reasons, Troop 281 requires adults to be trained in their position before officially taking on a leadership position. The troop reimburses any adult who wishes to participate in basic training to benefit the Scouts of Troop 281. Each year, the Troop Committee may select individuals to participate in advanced **adult leader training** such as Wood Badge. In these cases, the troop reimburses part of the expenses with the expectation of completion to the troop's benefit. Also, each year the Scoutmaster may select individual Scouts to participate in the Dan Beard Council's weeklong **National Youth Leader Training** course. In these cases, the Scout is only required to pay the non-refundable deposit – the troop will pay the balance. The Scout is expected to use his training to the benefit of the troop. The Scoutmaster selects Scouts based on their maturity level, current and future involvement in the troop and age. **Youth Protection** training is provided to adults in the troop on a regular basis and is available from the BSA online. Registered adult leaders are expected to refresh their understanding of the BSA's Youth Protection Guidelines no less than every other year.

Advancement Policy

Senior Scout Advancement Sign-offs: Troop 281 recognizes the value of the Tenderfoot thru First Class Scout outdoor skills and wishes all Scouts to maintain these skills. We designate any Scout who is First Class or above as a "Senior Scout" and allow him to test and sign-off rank requirements up to First Class. This excludes parental sign-off of the Youth Protection booklet, lighting a lightweight stove, "living the Oath and Law", and the Scoutmaster Conference. Only the Scoutmaster can sign-off the requirements from Star to Eagle.

Parent Merit Badge Counselors: The Boy Scouts of America have no official policy either allowing or disallowing parents counseling their own Scouts in merit badges. However, the Dan Beard Council and the Blue Jacket District discourage this practice because of the risk that the parent counselor may be perceived as having been more lenient on his / her son. In order to avoid this perception, it is the policy of Troop 281 to discourage parent counselors. Scouts are encouraged to use other counselors whenever possible. In group situations, e.g. the troop goes backpacking and works on Backpacking merit badge, it may be acceptable to have a parent sign off on the completion of the merit badge. Parents should never be selected as counselors for Eagle required merit badges.

Merit badge counselors are often experts in their field – in fact this is why they are selected as counselors. In an area in which a parent has a great deal of knowledge or skill, it is normal to want to share this knowledge or skill with his / her son. These counselors are encouraged to work with their sons to transfer their knowledge and serve as coaches, but the act of approving the merit badge should be done by another counselor.

Before a Scout begins a merit badge, he needs to have a blue card approved by the Scoutmaster or an adult leader that the Scoutmaster designates. One aspect of this approval process is the approval of the selected counselor. Whenever a Scout seeks approval for a merit badge counseled by one of his parents, he will be encouraged to seek another counselor. In the case of an Eagle required merit badge, the counselor must be someone other than a parent.

Group Merit Badge Counseling Sessions: The Boy Scouts of America has adopted the following policy on group merit badge counseling:

To the fullest extent possible, the merit badge counseling relationship is a counselor-Scout arrangement in which the boy is not only judged on his performance of the requirements, but receives maximum benefit from the knowledge, skill, character, and personal interest of his counselor. Group instruction and orientation are encouraged where special facilities and expert personnel make this most practical, or when Scouts are dependent on only a few counselors for assistance. However, this group experience should be followed by attention to each individual candidate's projects and his ability to fulfill all requirements.

Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, an official publication of the Boy Scouts of America, interprets this policy statement as follows:

In harmony with this policy, a troop or team may use merit badge counselors in unit meetings. The merit badge counselor can make a presentation covering the highlights of a merit badge subject. Scouts should then be given an opportunity to try some skill related to the badge. This introduction to a merit badge can spark an interest in the subject.

Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures also states that "Earning merit badges gives a Scout the kind of self-confidence that comes from overcoming obstacles to achieve a goal."

Troop 281 believes that group merit badge sessions generally do not fulfill the objectives of the advancement program. There are limited circumstances in which group instruction of merit badge skills may be warranted. For example, merit badge skills such as skiing or canoeing present an opportunity to be taught in a group setting, but each Scout must practice his own skills individually. However, even in these circumstances, the use of group instruction may result in removing some of the other critical elements of the merit badge program, like the need to call an adult counselor or the opportunity to work one-on-one with a knowledgeable adult. The Troop does not want to reduce the learning experiences of the merit badge program by introducing situations that will limit the opportunities for growth.

Group merit badge sessions will be offered by Troop 281 only where special facilities and expert personnel make this most practical, or when Scouts are dependent on only a few counselors for assistance. Examples of merit badges requiring special facilities include swimming, canoeing, and skiing.

Scout Buddy System for Merit Badges: A Scout must have a buddy with him at each meeting with a merit badge counselor. A Scout's buddy can be another Scout, a parent or guardian, a brother or sister, or a relative or friend.

Finance Policy

Joining Fee: Upon joining Troop 281, new members will pay \$75 (\$100 for 2015) to cover the cost of joining materials. Included in the fee is a Troop 281 t-shirt, BSA fees, Boy's Life subscription, Troop 281 shoulder numeral patch, name badge, and other administrative materials.

Dues:

Dues are subject to review and may change due to rising costs or unexpected troop expenses. Each year the Troop Committee determines a necessary amount of money needed for each Scout to finance basic troop operations. This includes rechartering fees, leadership training, administrative supplies, and other expenses. These moneys are collected as dues in the fall and the spring. Dues are \$100 in the fall and \$100 in the spring. Each year, the troop organizes a troop-wide fundraiser for the purpose of supporting Scouts in raising fees for the payment of dues and other personal Scouting activities. The event also helps in the funding capital investments (such as tents and equipment). Each Scout may choose to pay his dues directly or, if sufficient funds are available, withdraw his dues from his Scout Account (see below).

Event Costs: The cost of each event will vary and will be publicized when the event is announced three troop meetings before the event. In general, the troop pays for campsite fees on outings. The cost of the event usually does not include the cost of food. In cases where food needs to be purchased and prepared by the patrol, the cost of food is paid in cash separate from the activity fee. Unless otherwise indicated, this amount is \$10 and is paid directly to the patrol's Grubmaster at the time of sign-up two troop meetings before the event.

Scout Account: Each Scout has a Scout account, which is managed by the troop Treasurer. Money in the personal account may be deposited by means of earnings from the troop fundraiser or, in special circumstances, by deposit from the individual Scout. The purpose of the Scout Account is to provide funds for Scouting activities. For example, if a Scout signs up for the annual ski trip, his deposit and full payment may come out of his Scout account. If the Scout would prefer to pay for the event rather than withdraw from the account – he does so at time of sign-up. If a Scout requires money for Scouting equipment, he may submit his receipts with an expense form printed from the troop website and will receive reimbursement for his purchases from his Scout Account. Upon request, an account balance will be provided to the Scout and his family. The Scout account balances are kept updated on the troop website. If at the end of a Scout's involvement in Troop 281 there is still money remaining in the Scout's account, then the Scout may choose to either donate the money to the troop or to another charitable organization. Since Troop 281 and the Anderson Hills United Methodist Church are non-profit organizations, we are bound by various rules which limit how this money may be spent.

Refund Policy: In the event that a Scout is unable to attend an event, for any reason, Troop 281 may choose to refund all money paid except money paid as a deposit. In cases where a third party

has a more strict refund policy, that policy will be followed. Decisions regarding refunds are made by vote of the Troop Committee.

Friends of Scouting Campaign: To support the Dan Beard Council and the Boy Scouts of America in providing facilities, training and leadership to the program, Troop 281 participates in a Friends of Scouting Campaign each year. Through this campaign, a “fair share” amount may be defined and each family is asked to consider meeting or exceeding their giving in that amount.

Financial Assistance: For many years, Troop 281 has maintained that no Scout should be left behind because of financial difficulties. Because of this, the troop provides exceptional opportunities for Scouts to “earn their way”. It is known that a Scout who pays for his own activities will participate in a more meaningful way. Regardless of financial status, parents should consider this philosophy as part of their son’s Scouting experience.

Telephones & Cellular Phones

Adults carrying cellular phones should limit their use of the phone while on an outing. A Scout is required to get permission from the Scoutmaster before using a telephone or cellphone for any purpose other than an emergency. Cellphones and smartphones are only permitted to be used by Scouts during prolonged travel to events, and must be turned off during all Troop activities. The only exception to this rule is the youth staff who may use cellphones (voice or text) for communication among themselves and their adult leaders about troop activities only. Cellphones are not to be used on outings to call home, text friends, listen to music, etc. If a Scout violates these rules, their cellphone will be confiscated by an adult leader for the rest of the event.

Electronic Devices

One of the key elements of a successful Scouting program is the retreat from civilization into a natural outdoor environment. Electronic devices such as games, radios, televisions, etc, are not permitted on Troop 281 outings. On occasion, the troop will permit these items while Scouts are being transported to and from an event. In these cases, the electronic device must never disturb anyone else and may not be removed from the vehicle. The troop is not responsible for these items being lost, damaged or stolen.

Caffeinated and Carbonated Beverages

Troop 281 wants its members to stay healthy on outings. Scouts who drink caffeinated beverages often have trouble sleeping and controlling their behavior. Carbonated beverages are not appropriate to maintain hydration. Therefore, Scouts may not bring or purchase caffeinated beverages during travel or outings, and may not drink carbonated beverages during outings. Scouts are allowed to purchase and drink non-caffeinated carbonated beverages during travel.

Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, Fireworks, Gas & Aerosol Cans

Alcoholic beverages are strictly forbidden by the Boy Scouts of America. Though discouraged, the legal use of **tobacco products** is permitted for adults but never in the presence of Scouts. **Firearms**, regardless of licenses, are not permitted on Troop 281 activities. The only exception to

this rule is when rifles or shotguns are a part of the program. In this case, see the certified instructor for guidelines that pertain to bringing your own firearm. Unless you are certified, insured and invited – **fireworks** are strictly prohibited. It is strictly forbidden to use **combustible gas** of any type to create fire other than in a lantern or stove. Due to laws requiring specific storage and handling of gas, Troop 281 has procured equipment which exclusively uses propane gas. Therefore, unless the troop / patrol is using backpacking stoves, white gas (Coleman fuel or other liquid fuels) should not be brought on outings. In cases where a Scout or adult wishes to bring liquid fuel on an outing – he / she must first have permission from the Scoutmaster. Also, lighter fluid is to be used only under adult supervision. Liquid and gas firestarters (including cigarette lighters) are not allowed since they are unnecessary for firestarting. Troop 281 provides lighters for starting propane stoves only.

Scouts cannot have **aerosol cans** of any kind in their possession on any Troop 281 activity. This includes deodorant, insect repellent, cooking sprays, etc. This rule is to prevent dangerous fires and explosions. To ensure the safety of all troop members, **any Scout or adult who disregards these rules will be expelled from the troop event and will not be permitted to return until after a review by the Troop Committee.**

Adults Participating in Troop Outings

All adults (age 18 and up) participating in troop outings must understand the Scouting program. Troop 281 requires that all such adults have training that at a minimum includes **This is Scouting** and up-to-date **Youth Protection**. Both of these are available online at www.myscouting.org. A printed certificate of completion presented to the Scoutmaster or Committee Chairman documents completion of this training. If an adult will participate in more than one troop outing per year, Troop 281 also requires that they be registered with the BSA and will pay for their “Adult Volunteer” registration.

New Scout Program

Each spring, as Webelos Scouts cross over the bridge into Boy Scouts, Troop 281 forms a New Scout Patrol. This patrol is made up of boys of the same age. An older Scout who has been trained as a Troop Guide coaches the patrol. An Assistant Scoutmaster for New Scouts is assigned to support new Scouts and their parents in their first year with Troop 281. The goal of the New Scout Patrol is to help orient new Scouts in troop operations and provide opportunities to learn basic Scouting skills with the objective to earn the rank of First Class in the first year with Troop 281. As with all patrols, the New Scout Patrol elects a Patrol Leader to represent the patrol on the Patrol Leaders' Council. The New Scout Patrol Leader position is rotated more often (normally every 2 months) to allow a greater number of Scouts to experience the position. Members of the patrol will share responsibility for patrol equipment, cooking, cleaning, cheers, skits, songs, food, patrol flag and other key necessities of a great patrol.

Advancement

“Advancement” is the term used by Boy Scouting to describe a Scout’s progression in maturity and growth through the Scouting program. It is the “journey”, not the “destination”, that is most important in this Scouting tool. A Scout who simply is “given” a badge – without a sense of accomplishment – has not advanced. When done properly, a Scout moves at his own pace and finds direction and motivation in the interest of self-improvement. Service to others often provides another motivation for Scouts to progress through Scouting’s ranks. The Boy Scouts of America describe four important steps in a Scout’s advancement through the ranks of Scouting:

The Boy Scout learns. A Scout learns by doing. As he learns, he grows in ability to do his part as a member of the patrol and the troop. As he develops knowledge and skill, he is asked to teach others. In this way, he begins to develop leadership.

The Boy Scout is tested. A Scout may be tested on requirements by his Patrol Leader, Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, a Troop Committee member and other members of the troop. The Scoutmaster maintains a list of those qualified to test and pass candidates.

The Boy Scout is reviewed. After a Scout has completed all requirements for a rank, he has a Board of Review. The Board of Review is conducted by members of the Troop Committee and parents of Troop 281. The Eagle Board of Review is chaired by the District Advancement Chairman.

The Boy Scout is recognized. When the Board of Review has certified a Scout's rank advancement, he deserves to receive recognition as soon as possible. This is often done during the same troop meeting. His newly earned rank badge will be presented at the next troop meeting, and a certificate will be presented at the next troop Court of Honor.

Troop 281 provides opportunities and much encouragement for Scouts to earn First Class in the first year of their Boy Scout experience. After First Class, the ranks take on far more meaning than basic skills. While he continues to receive guidance and direction, once a Scout reaches the rank of First Class, he is left more to rely on his own motivation to earn additional honors and ranks.

High Adventure Participation

Troop 281 regularly participates in high-adventure activities such as Philmont, Sea Base, National Jamboree, and Boundary Waters trips. We follow the age and rank requirements imposed by the BSA high-adventure bases. When a Troop 281 high-adventure trip does not go to one of the BSA facilities, we follow these guidelines:

- 1) Scouts must be First Class rank to participate in a high-adventure activity.
- 2) Scouts must be age 14 or completed 8th grade on the day the trip starts.
- 3) Scouts going on a high-adventure activity must be registered and active in the troop.
- 4) Exceptions may be made if recommended by the Scoutmaster and agreed to by the adult leaders for the trip and by the Committee.

Venture Program for Older Scouts

As a Scout advances through the Scouting program, he has become proficient in Scouting's basic skills and has become a leader in the troop and patrol. Naturally, as he becomes more experienced and responsible, the Scout often seeks newer and richer experiences. Some older Scouts seek higher challenge and may desire more activities that only more mature and skilled Scouts can enjoy. Troop 281 offers additional program opportunities for these Scouts. This is the Venture Program. This program is offered to Scouts who meet the following qualifications:

- Achieved at least the rank of First Class
- At least 14 years of age or completed 8th grade by the first day of the trip.
- Be active in troop / patrol activities to the satisfaction of the Patrol Leaders' Council and the Scoutmaster. Scouts who have earned the Eagle Scout Award are automatically approved.

According to the Boy Scout Handbook, each troop defines its own program for older Scouts. Our Venture Program is designed to supplement troop activities. Scouts participating in our Venture Program are members of patrols or Youth Staff and perform important leadership roles in troop / patrol operations. If a long-term trip is being planned, Scouts who are participating in the event will be organized into patrols for that event. They will elect a Patrol Leader for the trek / event. Whenever possible, planning and preparation for Venture events should take place outside of normal troop activities. Ideally, Scouts who participate in the Venture Program should be given a great deal of flexibility and support to organize and plan an annual Venture Trip. This activity is primarily developed by the Scouts themselves. For this reason, a Venture Trip may not happen every year. In some cases, there may be more than one Venture Trip. **A Venture Trip is initiated by the Scouts.** Working with the Scoutmaster, they develop a preliminary plan and, when ready, they seek approval by presenting their plan to the Troop Committee. A good plan should be given all possible support.

Summer Camp

Each year, Troop 281 provides the resources necessary to support a week at a Boy Scout summer camp. The Scouts select a location and the Troop Committee selects the dates. Normally, summer camp is held in late June. If at all possible, the dates for summer camp should not overlap with the summer Venture trip. Summer camp is a special setting in which a Scout can completely remove himself from his normal surroundings. While at summer camp, Scouts have no contact

with the “outside world” except for Parents’ Night where parents and family members are invited to come to camp on the last evening. The only other contact is by way of mail – there’s nothing like a piece of mail or a “care” package from home when you’re at camp. Scouts are urged to come prepared... and come to stay! New Scouts are encouraged to attend summer camp provided they have had successful experience in being away from home for an extended period of time.

Visitation of Troop Activities

Troop 281 welcomes visitors to their activities, but must follow BSA guidelines for liability issues. Any youth who is visiting a Troop 281 activity and is not a registered member of the Troop must be accompanied by a parent during the entire visit. No overnight visits with the Troop are allowed unless 1) it is a Webelos-Scout campout and the Cub Scout is BSA-registered, or 2) the visiting Scout is BSA-registered in another Troop. No visitor is allowed to participate in potentially dangerous activities such as firebuilding, use of knife, axe or saw, swimming, boating, climbing, rappelling, etc. Every adult participating in a troop overnight event must have taken Youth Protection training within the past two years.

Troop Youth Leadership Training

Before the Scoutmaster approves any Scout for an elected or appointed position, he assures that the position is 1) defined, 2) measurable and 3) supported by a qualified counselor / leader. Training youth leaders is the highest responsibility of the Scoutmaster. Each year the troop will host at least one Youth Leadership training session. Also, each year the Scoutmaster has the ability to send at least one Scout to the Dan Beard Council's weeklong National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) course.

Courts of Honor

A Court of Honor is held three times a year to honor the accomplishments of troop members. These accomplishments may be rank advancement, special awards earned, leadership, service and activity milestones, outdoor adventures, etc. Normally, during the fall Troop 281 hosts a formal Court of Honor that includes a review of the past year and summer activities. Refreshments are usually served. In winter, the troop celebrates another year of Scouting by hosting a formal Court of Honor / Banquet. Traditionally this Court of Honor highlights rank advancement within the past year. To end the school year and Scouting season, Troop 281 hosts an outdoor semi-formal Court of Honor. This event is typically a fun activity that focuses not only on advancement but also appreciation of troop leadership.

Camp Achewon

In the winter of 2001, several Scouts from Troop 281 got together and over a 6 month period prepared a presentation to Mr. Thomas F. Schimpff to propose developing the majority of his undeveloped farm land into a camp for the troop to use in the development of patrol and troop spirit. Mr. Schimpff's land is located just north of Batavia. Mr. Schimpff approved the proposal and today the camp includes a patrol campsite for each patrol that meets the patrol camping requirements (see troop website Resources tab). The goals of the original Scouts remain at the forefront of the Achewon theme: Have fun while promoting the patrol method to develop troop

spirit. There are standards that must be followed in order to maintain not only a safe camp, but also the best traditions of Scouting. See Achewon Camp Standards on the troop website for more information. Please note: Camp Achewon is not open to the public – it is private property. The camp is equipped by Troop 281 and is maintained by Troop 281 in cooperation with Mr. Schimpff. Mr. Schimpff, and his family, are not responsible for accidents or injuries incurred as a result of being at Camp Achewon. Campers and guests use the property at their own risk. See the Scoutmaster for permission to visit or use Camp Achewon.

Patrol Campouts

One of the liberties that has survived our modern day standards is the opportunity for a group of boys, formed into a working patrol, to go camping on their own. The Boy Scouts of America give the Scoutmaster the authority to give approval to a patrol of Scouts to plan and participate in a patrol campout without adult supervision. Any patrol wishing to have a patrol campout must discuss their plan with the Scoutmaster and get approval. The Scoutmaster's approval is recognition of the patrol's knowledge, skill and ability to be put on their honor. Written parental permission will be required if adult supervision is not provided. Patrols are encouraged to plan patrol campouts. This is where some of the greatest Scouting experiences happen.

“Train them, trust them, & turn them loose”

from Lord Baden-Powell

Youth Protection Guidelines

Child abuse is a major problem affecting our society. Each year more than 2 million cases of suspected child abuse are reported. This means that 1 percent of American children are experiencing physical abuse, 1 percent are experiencing sexual abuse, and 2 to 5 percent are experiencing emotional maltreatment or some form of neglect. Because of the significance of this social problem, The Boy Scouts of America has declared child abuse as one of the "unacceptables" to receive special attention by those involved in the Scouting program. The BSA has developed a five-point plan to combat child abuse and to improve the environment in which young people live. The key elements of this strategy include the following points:

- Education of Scouting volunteers, parents and Scouts themselves to aid in the detection and prevention of child abuse.
- Leader-selection procedures to prevent individuals with a history of child abuse from entering the BSA leadership ranks.
- Establishment of policies that minimize the opportunities for child abuse to occur in the program of the Boy Scouts of America.
- Encouragement of Scouts to report improper behavior in order to identify offenders quickly.
- Swift removal and reporting of alleged offenders.

The troop will provide at least two adults (at least one of them 21 years of age, trained and registered) for each troop event. For the protection of youth and adults, ***at no time should an adult (registered or not) be alone with a Scout other than his / her son.*** The Boy Scouts of America has developed materials for use in the Scouting program that provide essential information to members and their families. A detachable booklet in the front of The Boy Scout Handbook, *"How to Protect Your Child from Child Abuse and Drug Abuse: A Parents Guide"*, provides information to help families to increase self-protection skills. Each Scout, before earning his first rank in Troop 281, must review this booklet with his parents. Every adult participating in a troop overnight event must have taken Youth Protection training within the past two years.

Troop 281 is committed to following all guidelines of the Youth Protection program. Any suspected offenses of the youth protection program must be reported to the Committee Chairman, the Scoutmaster or the Dan Beard Council Executive. All incidents reported to the Committee Chairman or Scoutmaster will be reported to the Council Executive and the church pastor. All reports are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken to ensure the safety of the youth. To provide a high level of awareness of these guidelines, Troop 281 provides training for all interested adults. In addition, a review of this information is provided to registered adult leaders every two years.

Medical Forms and Medication

The **medical form** is an important tool in providing a safe and quick response to an emergency situation. The form includes contact information, medical data, insurance and permissions that are necessary if there is need for treatment. Each Scout and adult leader is required to keep an up-to-date BSA Medical Form (supplied by the Boy Scouts of America) on file with Troop 281. BSA

policy requires that the form be redone by a doctor every year. These medical forms will accompany the troop at each troop event.

It is the responsibility of each parent to notify the Scoutmaster of all medical issues that may affect a Scout's ability to cope with activities. It is up to the discretion of the Scoutmaster (or other adult designated by the Scoutmaster) how to administer **prescription medication**. Prescription medication should remain in its original container. For everyone's safety, an adult assigned by the Scoutmaster will hold prescription medication and distribute it according to directions provided by the parents. Scouts are expected to show discipline in seeking their medication at the designated times. Scouts will not be given any form of medication by an adult leader without first checking the Scout's medical form.

Fire Safety

Before a Scout may handle fire in any way, he is required to earn **and carry** the "Firem'n Chit" card. The card is a license showing that he has been trained in proper handling of fire and agrees not to play with fire. Any demonstration of improper handling of fire will result in a corner being removed from the card. When all four corners have been removed, the Scout must re-earn his "Firem'n Chit". If a Scout is found playing with fire (removing from fire ring, causing danger, or other blatant misuses), he will lose his card and will be subject to disciplinary action. Please read the "gas" and "aerosol can" policy for additional standards in fire safety. Scouts and adults must use common sense when handling fire. Carelessness is taken very seriously.

Woods Tool Safety

Before a Scout may handle woods tools (knife, axe, saw, etc.) in any way, he is required to earn **and carry** the "Tot'n Chip" card. The card is a license showing he has been trained in proper handling of woods tools and agrees to use them properly. Any demonstration of improper handling of woods tools will result in a corner being removed from the card. When all four corners have been removed, the Scout must re-earn his "Tot'n Chip". If a Scout is found playing with woods tools, he will lose his card and will be subject to disciplinary action. Scouts and adults must use common sense when using woods tools. Carelessness is taken very seriously.

Permission Slips

In order to promote a greater amount of parental awareness of activities that are more dangerous or difficult, Troop 281 only requires a parental permission slip for special activities. For activities where a parental permission slip is not required, Troop 281 assumes that a Scout has permission from his parent to participate in the activity simply by the fact that he has paid his fee and has been brought to the meeting place. If a permission slip is required for an activity, no exceptions will be made if a parent has not supplied written permission.

Troop Organization

According to the Aims & Methods of the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 281 uses the patrol method. This is the backbone of a boy-led troop. An overview of how the troop is organized is as follows:

- Scout
- Patrol (family unit within the troop)
- Patrol Leaders' Council (program and leadership)
- Youth Staff (leadership of key troop functions)
- Scoutmaster's Staff (coach / counseling, training, program support)
- Troop Committee (policy, coach / counseling, support and administration)
- Sponsoring institution (Anderson Hills United Methodist Church)

* For more information, see "Organization of Troop Leadership" chart and "Description of Troop Leadership Positions" on the troop website.

Patrol Method & Boy-Led Troop

Quoting Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting, "The Patrol System is the one essential feature in which Scout training differs from that of all other organizations, and where the System is properly applied, it is absolutely bound to bring success." In other words, the patrol method must be trusted and allowed to be managed by the boys. Struggles are often gateways to opportunities.

"Within the larger community of the troop, the patrol is a Scout's *family circle*. The patrol, often made up of boys of similar ages and experience levels, helps its members develop a sense of pride and identity. The Scouts themselves elect a Patrol Leader, assign jobs to be done, and share in the satisfaction of accepting and fulfilling group responsibilities." (Troop Committee Guidebook 1998)

In *Scouting for Boys*, the original Scout handbook, Baden-Powell wrote:

Each Scout troop consists of two or more Patrols of six to eight boys. The main object of the Patrol System is to give real responsibility to as many boys as possible. It leads each boy to see that he has some individual responsibility for the good of his Patrol. It leads each Patrol to see that it has definite responsibility for the good of the Troop. Through the Patrol System the Scouts learn that they have considerable say in what the Troop does.

Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC)

"The Patrol Leaders' Council, *not the adult leaders*, is responsible for planning and conducting the troop's activities." "At its monthly meetings, the Patrol Leaders' Council organizes and assigns activity responsibilities for the weekly troop meetings. The Troop Committee interacts with the Patrol Leaders' Council through the Scoutmaster." (Troop Committee Guidebook 1998) The PLC is composed of the following members: Senior Patrol Leader (chairman), Patrol Leaders (vote representing patrol members), Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (votes on issues related to youth leader responsibilities), Troop Guide (does not vote, but advises the Patrol Leader of the new Scout patrol) and the Scribe (non-voting member who acts as secretary). Other youth leaders may be asked to participate in PLC meetings as necessary. However, they only offer advice – they do not have a vote. In addition to monthly Patrol Leaders' Council meetings (which are often held on outings if possible), the PLC will meet briefly after each troop meeting to review the meeting and

prepare for the events in the next week. The PLC also meets on outings to communicate problems, opportunities and general program details.

Youth Staff

The Youth Staff is made up of Scouts who, because of their leadership position, are not a member of a patrol. These positions include: Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders, and Troop Guide. *It is very important that members of the Youth Staff recognize the value of the patrol method.* In turn, their sole purpose is to support this method. The Youth Staff is **not** a patrol. For purposes of organization and preparation, the Youth Staff often combines with the Scoutmaster's Staff for food preparation, camping, etc.

Scoutmaster's Staff

"Scoutmaster's Staff" is a name adopted by Troop 281 to identify Assistant Scoutmasters (and Junior Assistant Scoutmasters) as a group. These individuals support the Scoutmaster in his / her duties. When on outings, all adults present (Troop Committee, parents, etc...) are considered part of the Scoutmaster's Staff.

Troop Committee

The Troop Committee Guidebook (1998) gives a great overview of the Troop Committee and what it does. "The Troop Committee is the troop's board of directors and supports the troop program."

"The Troop Committee does the following:

- Ensures the quality of adult leadership is recruited and trained. In case the Scoutmaster is absent, a qualified Assistant Scoutmaster is assigned. If the Scoutmaster is unable to serve, a replacement is recruited.
- Provides adequate meeting facilities.
- Advises the Scoutmaster on policies relating to Boy Scouting and the Anderson Hills United Methodist Church.
- Supports leaders in carrying out the program.
- Is responsible for finances, adequate funds, and disbursement in line with the approved budget plan.
- Obtains, maintains and properly cares for troop property.
- Ensures the troop has an outdoor program (minimum of 10 days and nights per year).
- Serves on Boards of Review and Courts of Honor.
- Supports the Scoutmaster in working with individual boys and problems that may affect the overall troop program.
- Provides for the special needs and assistance some boys may require.
- Helps with the Friends of Scouting campaign.
- Assists the Scoutmaster with handling boy behavioral problems."

Our Troop Committee meets monthly throughout the school year. All parents are welcome to participate in Committee meetings and are encouraged to be involved. An overview of each official Troop Committee position is provided in the *Description of Troop Leadership Positions* (see troop website). It is common for Committee members to delegate parts of their obligations to other parents. In cases where a vote is required, only official members of the Troop Committee may

vote. Others present, including the Scoutmaster, are encouraged to give input before the issue is brought to a vote.

Annual Program Planning Conference

“The troop’s activities are selected and planned at the annual program planning conference. (The Patrol Leaders’ Council will) submit the troop’s yearly plan to the Troop Committee for its support. At this time, the Troop Committee may make alternative suggestions for the Patrol Leaders’ Council to consider. To avoid conflict between troop plans and activities of the (Anderson Hills United Methodist Church, the troop should) clear the program calendar in advance with the Chartered Organization Representative.” (Troop Committee Guidebook 1998) The troop begins this process in April or May with a survey of troop members. During the early summer months, the Scoutmaster and Senior Patrol Leader begin to assemble a plan for the conference. Also during the summer, the Troop Committee gathers important dates in order to provide a “skeleton” calendar of dates from which the PLC can work. The Annual Program Planning Conference is held at a location and date agreed upon by the Senior Patrol Leader and Scoutmaster. The Committee then meets to approve the PLC’s annual plan.

Selection of Scouts for Leadership Positions

Some youth leader positions are elected and some are appointed. These details are explained in the “*Description of Troop Leadership Positions*” on the troop website, www.troop281.org.

The 5-step process by which a Scout is **elected** to a position is as follows:

- The Scoutmaster, working with the Patrol Leaders’ Council, gives eligibility requirements.
- Eligible Scouts are nominated by the troop.
- Scoutmaster’s Conference with nominated Scouts and, if necessary, his parents.
- Nominated Scouts who wish to seek election deliver a speech to the patrol / troop and an impartial individual approved by the Scoutmaster administers an election.
- Announcement to the patrol / troop followed by an induction ceremony at the beginning of the Scout’s term.

Appointed leaders, for troop leadership positions, are selected using the following 5-step process:

- The Scoutmaster, working with the Patrol Leaders’ Council, gives eligibility requirements.
- An announcement is made to the entire troop at least one month before the beginning of each term, including a deadline for letters of application.
- Interested Scouts write a letter of application requesting consideration for the appointed position. The letter should include: 1) a brief description of the job responsibilities; 2) reasons for why he should be appointed; and 3) any other comments the Scout believes will help the Senior Patrol Leader in his decision.
- The Senior Patrol Leader reviews each application and discusses his options with the Scoutmaster. It is very important that no commitments be made to any Scout until after this discussion with the Scoutmaster.
- With the Scoutmaster’s approval, the Senior Patrol Leader makes announcement of the appointments to the troop followed by an induction ceremony at the beginning of the Scout’s term.

The appointment of Den Chiefs, Troop Guide, and Junior Assistant Scoutmasters are the responsibility of the Scoutmaster. The process is similar to the one stated above except that interested Scouts write a letter of application to the Scoutmaster instead of the Senior Patrol Leader. Also, the Scoutmaster may seek the input of the Senior Patrol Leader and other key leaders before appointing Scouts to these positions. The appointment of Assistant Patrol Leader is the responsibility of the Patrol Leader, who is encouraged to use the same process that the Senior Patrol Leader uses to appoint Scouts to troop leadership positions.

Terms of Leadership for Youth Leaders

According to the Boy Scout Handbook, terms of leadership for Scouts range from 4 to 12 months. To optimize detailed development of youth leaders, Troop 281 expects Scouts in leadership positions to serve a minimum of 6 months. An exception to the rule is the Senior Patrol Leader who serves a full year (12 Months) beginning with the June Court of Honor. Also, the troop Quartermaster, technically serves as Assistant Quartermaster for 6 months followed by 6 months as Quartermaster. This assumes that while Assistant Quartermaster he has learned the position well enough to be promoted. Nevertheless, when a Scout is considering the position of Assistant Quartermaster, he is asked to commit to one full year term (12 Months). Term dates are as follows:

Summer / Fall	Begins with June Court of Honor Ends with Winter Court of Honor (January)
Winter / Spring	Begins at the Winter Court of Honor (January) Ends before June Court of Honor

As you can see, significant events rather than number of days define the terms. It is the opinion of Troop 281 that the experience of the position is more important than the actual dates of the term, therefore, it is not necessary to measure the term in days.

Selection of Adults for Leadership Positions

Each year, the Boy Scouts of America awards the troop's charter to the Anderson Hills United Methodist Church with the expectation that the church will provide leadership and support to the troop. One of the church's primary responsibilities is to select qualified adult leadership, starting with a Chartered Organization Representative. The United Methodist Church refers to this person as the Scouting Coordinator. Working with the church leadership, this person appoints a Troop Committee Chairman and assists in the recruitment of other adult leaders. No adult may serve Troop 281 as a registered adult leader without the approval of the Pastor of the Anderson Hills United Methodist Church.

The Scoutmaster and official members of the Troop Committee (see "Leadership Job Descriptions" on the troop website) are appointed by the Troop Committee Chairman. The Pastor of the Anderson Hills United Methodist Church must approve each candidate for the position **before** the position is offered to the candidate for consideration. The Troop Committee Chairman may choose to have the Troop Committee review candidates and take part in the selection process. After a selection is made, the Troop Committee must approve the appointments. The Scoutmaster and

members of the Committee may appoint assistants with the approval of the Troop Committee. Assistant Scoutmasters must also be approved by the church and registered with the BSA.

Recommended Terms of Leadership for Adults

An adult who has received training for their desired position is asked to commit to a term of at least one year. In order to provide consistency and to maximize the time and resources spent in the development of great adult leadership, Troop 281 *recommends* that adults serving as Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster or Troop Committee Chairman *consider* serving in their position for a minimum of 3 years. All other adult leaders are recommended to consider serving at least 2 years in their positions.

Troop & Patrol Size

Lord Robert Baden-Powell once described the ideal size of a troop as “a gathering of 4 to 5 patrols”. He cautioned that a troop should not be so big that it cannot be effectively boy-led. Considering our meeting facilities, Typically, Troop 281 supports a maximum of 5 to 6 patrols. In the event of increased interest in the troop, that number can be as high as 7 patrols. Each patrol should maintain an active membership of six to eight Scouts. In today’s world where many other activities are in competition with Scouting, patrols should strive to have between 8 and 10 members to be sure that the patrol can rely on 6 to 8 members for each activity. The youth staff is formed of a minimal number of Scouts who, by the nature of their position, do not have membership in a patrol. Therefore, if the troop has 5 patrols with 10 Scouts in each patrol and 4 Scouts in the youth staff, the troop reaches maximum capacity at approximately 54 Scouts. When the troop grows beyond that point, the troop Committee and the Anderson Hills United Methodist Church should work closely with the Blue Jacket District to consider options for the expanding membership.

Moving to Another Patrol

The following procedure must be followed if a Scout wants to move to another patrol within Troop 281.

- 1) Only the Scout wishing to be moved can start the process.
- 2) The Scout wishing to be moved must request the move in writing to the Scoutmaster. The reason for the request must be included.
- 3) The Scout cannot move to a patrol that is more than one school grade higher or lower than his present grade.
- 4) Both the patrol that he is leaving and the one that he is moving to must accept the move.
- 5) The Scout moving to another patrol cannot become the only Scout of First Class or above rank in his new patrol.

Recruiting

Troop 281 gives first opportunity for troop membership to members of Cub Scout Pack 281 and youth members of the Anderson Hills United Methodist Church. Applicants who have a sibling that is already a member of the troop will also get priority. Traditionally, our troop believes that it is best for visiting Webelos dens to see a typical troop meeting rather than one that is designed specially

for recruiting. In addition, the troop may plan an annual open house event that is designed to have a primary focus on prospective members and their family members. It is critical that Troop 281 bring in a new patrol of Scouts each year in order to maintain a balance of age groups. It can be very harmful to a troop's future to have a large gap in age groups.

Merit Badge Card Process

If interested, Scouts of any rank or age may work on merit badges. Some merit badge subjects are more suitable for older, more mature Scouts. New Scouts are encouraged to remain focused on basic Scouting skills before getting heavily involved with merit badges. A Scout may begin working on a merit badge **only after he has received permission** from the Scoutmaster or adult leader designated by the Scoutmaster. Permission is given in the form of a signed Merit Badge "Blue Card". Following is the process to be followed in order to get approval to begin work on a merit badge:

1. Get a buddy – Counselors are required never to be alone with a Scout during sessions.
2. Select a counselor – Dan Beard Council maintains an online database of approved merit badge counselors whose Youth Protection training is up-to-date. This database can be accessed by the Advancement Coordinator. The Scout should ask the Advancement Coordinator for a current list of merit badge counselors when he requests a Blue Card. He can select any counselor from the list. This can be based on location or may be someone the Scout already knows, like one of the parents or adults in our troop.
3. Request a Blue Card – The Advancement Coordinator (and the Scoutmaster / Assistant Scoutmasters during summer camp) keeps a supply of Blue Cards and will fill them out and sign them upon request.
4. Call the counselor and request a meeting.
5. When finished with all the requirements, have the counselor sign the Blue Card and keep the "Counselors Record" portion.
6. Turn in the "Application for Merit Badge" and "Applicants Record" portions to the Advancement Coordinator or the Scoutmaster. The "Applicants Record" portion will be signed and returned to the Scout to keep in his Trail to Eagle book (just in case!).
7. The merit badge will be presented at the next Court of Honor.

Be sure to read the Advancement Policy included in this guidebook for additional guidelines. Scouts who do not complete all of the requirements with a particular counselor may request **partial** credit (found on the back of the Applicant's Record portion). The Scout may then search for another counselor and complete the merit badge any time up until his 18th birthday.

Parental Participation

As Troop 281 strives to be a boy-led troop, parents are asked to remain familiar with the aims and methods of Boy Scouting and to support the troop as described in this *Guide to Scouting in Troop 281*. Parents are also expected to commit to support the Scouts by participating in Courts of Honor, parent meetings and other activities where parents' participation is requested. Parents are expected to keep the Scoutmaster aware of special needs and characteristics that their son may have. Also, parents are expected to be attentive to Troop 281 weekly emails, newsletters, mailings and the troop Calendar of Events. It is the responsibility of each parent to help prepare his / her

son for troop outings while he is a new Scout. It is also the responsibility of each parent to gradually back away and allow his / her Scout to struggle through the early steps of self-reliance. Each Scout moves at his own pace. However, once a Scout reaches First Class he should require less hands-on involvement. Parental encouragement, trust and communication will remain important all along the trail to Eagle.

Levels of Adult Involvement

In order to support a strong boy-led troop, outstanding adult support is needed. The following list explains a general description of several levels of adult involvement. Each level is vital in providing a great Scouting experience for each boy:

Scoutmaster

Rarely absent, advanced training required, full uniform required

Assistant Scoutmaster

Strives to participate in at least ¾ of all troop activities, basic training required, role defined by Scoutmaster, full uniform required

Troop Committee

Participate in monthly Troop Committee meetings, uniform preferred, basic training required, responsibility for specific role

Program Support Person

Participate on a regular basis, uniform preferred, training preferred, registration as Committee Member preferred

Parent

Participate in family activities & support troop / Scout with individual projects and tasks such as transportation, program support, etc.

Communications

Event Promotion: Troop 281 publishes a seasonal Calendar of Events which includes key dates and locations of troop events between September and August. As an event approaches, information may be distributed through a variety of ways including mailers, website, e-mails, announcements at troop meetings, etc. Each Patrol Leader has reviewed the details about upcoming events at the monthly Patrol Leaders' Council meetings and is charged with reporting this information to his patrol. To ensure clear communication, information on every event will be provided through a handout distributed at the troop meeting, which falls three weeks before the event. This handout will include information regarding time, place, cost and a brief description of the event. The announcement handout is intended to aid the Patrol Leaders in preparing his Scouts for sign-up at the following troop meeting. This handout is ideal as a refrigerator reminder. It is the Scout's responsibility to take the handout home and share it with his parent. Also, if a Scout is unable to attend the meeting where the announcement is made, it is his responsibility to get the information. Announcement dates are included on the troop's Calendar of Events. An up-to-date Google calendar and copies of the event announcements are also posted on the troop website.

Event Worksheets: Preparation for upcoming events requires a great deal of coordination and communication from all members of the troop. To aid the troop in communicating key information,

Troop 281 has created a packet of forms called Event Worksheets. This packet includes the following documents:

- ❑ Sign-Up Sheet (Due 2 meetings before outing. This is a 3 part form – copies for Scoutmaster, SPL & Patrol Leader). The Scoutmaster will provide his / her copy to the Outdoor / Activities Coordinator to assist in preparation of appropriate transportation.
- ❑ Equipment Requisition Form (Due two meetings before outing)
- ❑ Grubmaster's Worksheet (assists in development of balanced menu)
- ❑ Shopping List
- ❑ Patrol Menu (to be posted in patrol campsite)
- ❑ Patrol Duty Roster (to be posted in patrol campsite)

Some events do not require a number of these forms. However, all events require a completed sign-up sheet at least two meetings before outing. Event Worksheet packets are distributed at each Patrol Leaders' Council meeting by the troop Scribe. Forms from within these packets can be found at www.troop281.org.

Blog: The troop Historian (a youth leader), working with an adult coach / counselor, writes an ongoing account of troop activities, including weekly meetings and outdoor events. The blog is published on the troop website and may include photographs, trivia, jokes and other fun information. At the end of his term, the Historian compiles his writings into an anthology that may be printed out as a permanent record of the troop's activities.

Website: Visit www.troop281.org to find key resources for troop activities. The website is maintained by the troop Website Coordinator and includes general troop information and resources, troop Calendar of Events, the blog, a picture gallery and links to other Scouting resources. The troop Librarian (a youth leader) assists the Website Coordinator in maintaining an up-to-date site.

Parental Awareness: The troop Secretary sends out a weekly e-mail to parents of the troop each Monday throughout the school season. This e-mail is not intended to replace the Scout's responsibility to communicate – only to supplement in order to maintain clear expectations. These e-mails may also include key safety information and resources for parents to help their son in having a successful experience in Scouting. The weekly e-mails are kept short and all parents are expected to be attentive to their details. To maximize the ceremonial and program atmosphere of troop Courts of Honor, each September the troop will call a parents meeting to launch the new Scouting season, troop Calendar of Events and other key information. All parents are asked to make every effort to attend this meeting. Also, the Scoutmaster will periodically host a "coffee hour" during a troop meeting. This is an opportunity to meet with the Scoutmaster's Staff and Troop Committee to enjoy fellowship or to address concerns or issues.

Uniform Exchange Program

Troop 281 recognizes the high cost of Boy Scout uniforms and acknowledges the fact that boys grow at a rapid rate when they are Boy Scout age. Annually, each Scout has the opportunity to earn money to pay for their uniform through our troop fundraiser. Also, for your convenience, the

Quartermaster maintains a Uniform Exchange in the Scout Room. As Scouts outgrow their uniform they are encouraged to donate them to the Uniform Exchange so that future Scouts can wear them. Scouts are encouraged to save their money by using uniforms from the exchange. This service is free of charge.

Troop Standards

Troop standards are set by the Patrol Leaders' Council to provide an overall tone and image for the troop. These standards have been carefully considered by the troop's leadership and approved by the Scoutmaster. Because consistency provides stability to a troop, it is important that these standards be changed only after serious consideration and discussion.

Uniform

As one of the methods of Scouting, the uniform is a simple tool that can be used to measure sense of belonging, discipline, planning and many other attributes found in a good Scout. Quoting from the Aims & Methods of Scouting, here's how the BSA describes the importance of uniformity. *"The uniform makes the Scout troop visible as a force of good and creates a positive youth image in the community. Boy Scouting is an action program, and wearing the uniform is an action that shows each Scout's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting. The uniform gives the Scout identity in a world brotherhood of youth who believe in the same ideals."* Each troop may choose details about the uniform to best suit the troop's needs and desires. A number of options are to be defined by the troop:

Neckerchief – over or under the collar... see "Dress Uniform" for Troop 281's choice.

Belt – leather or web belt... Troop 281 chooses either belt.

Shirt – long sleeve or short sleeve... Troop 281 chooses short year round.

Trousers – pants or shorts... Troop 281 will accept either unless in a color guard (then all same).

Socks – long, crew or short... Troop 281 doesn't specify type other than they **must** be official BSA issue.

Headgear – what kind of hat, if any... Troop 281 chooses not to include a hat with the uniform.

Class A Uniform

Definition: Official BSA khaki uniform shirt (short sleeve & patches sewn according to the Boy Scout Handbook), BSA pants or shorts, BSA web belt & buckle, BSA socks.

To be worn for the following occasions:

- Troop Meetings
- Travel to and from activities and outings
- Flag Ceremonies
- Other activities designated by the Patrol Leaders' Council

Note: It is wise to wear the troop t-shirt under the uniform shirt so that switching to a Class B uniform is possible.

Class B Uniform

Definition: "Class A" uniform with the exception of the BSA khaki uniform shirt. This is replaced with the troop t-shirt.

To be worn for the following occasions:

- As designated by the Patrol Leaders' Council

Activity Uniform

Definition: Troop t-shirt worn with "civilian" clothing.

To be worn for the following occasions:

- Campouts (usually during the day)
- Service projects that may get the uniform dirty
- As designated by the Patrol Leaders' Council

Dress Uniform

Definition: “Class A” uniform with shirt collar turned under. Add the troop neckerchief with ends tied in an overhand knot (Scout may choose his own neckerchief slide). Uniformed members are encouraged to wear medals, merit badge sash and other special awards with this uniform. However, the white Order of the Arrow sash is only to be worn on OA occasions, such as on an OA election night.

To be worn for the following occasions:

- Courts of Honor
- Scout Sunday
- Boards of Review
- Special Ceremonies (New Scout Induction, Eagle Ceremonies, etc)
- Formal Occasions as designated by the Patrol Leaders’ Council

Patrol Identity

Patrol Color: To give distinct recognition to each group of Scouts, each patrol should choose a color that will represent their patrol. This color should be a common color – one that can easily be reproduced (printed or purchased). The patrol color must be significantly different from other patrol colors. Patrol colors must be approved by the Patrol Leaders’ Council.

Patrol Name and Yell: Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of the Scouting program, encouraged Scouts to choose a name for their patrol representing an animal or bird. He encouraged Scouts to give their name a description as well. For example: “Screaming Eagles”. Patrol names are not limited to an animal or bird but must represent a respectable image. Recognition of evil or disrespectful images is not appropriate. The patrol yell or cheer is used by the patrol to show their spirit of unity. The patrol name and yell must be approved by the Patrol Leaders’ Council.

Patrol Flag: Using their approved color, each patrol will prominently display their patrol name on a flag or banner which is no more than 2’x2’. The flag must include the following:

- ❑ Patrol Name & Image
- ❑ Patrol Color
- ❑ “Troop 281”
- ❑ Names of each patrol member (it is wise to attach these independently and may be attached to flag pole)

The troop provides a 6’ pole and stand with an optional dowel rod (for banner type flags). This pole may or may not be used. However, if the patrol decides to make their own pole it must be 6’ tall and fit in patrol flag stands which are also provided by the troop. ***A new Patrol Flag is required to be made whenever a new Patrol Leader is elected.*** The best patrols are known for always having their patrol flag with the patrol (troop meetings, Courts of Honor, campsite, competitions, etc.)

Program Patrol

The Senior Patrol Leader assigns the duty of Program Patrol on a monthly basis. This patrol is expected to perform the following duties:

- ✓ Prepare and lead special ceremonies for the troop. Each month, the patrol is required to present at least one unique opening ceremony for a troop meeting or Court of Honor.
- ✓ Respectfully raise and lower the American (and troop if appropriate) flag on all troop outings.
- ✓ Provide other program support at the direction of the Senior Patrol Leader.

Service Patrol

The Senior Patrol Leader assigns the duty of Service Patrol on a monthly basis. This patrol is expected to perform the following duties:

- ✓ Set up meeting room for troop meetings at least 10 minutes before the meeting
 - American & troop flags with stands
 - Tables and chairs for each patrol when necessary
 - Other program needs described by the Senior Patrol Leader, Quartermaster or the Program Patrol.
- ✓ Clean up meeting room after troop meetings
 - Tables & Floors
 - Report broken items or damage caused to room to the Scoutmaster
 - Return troop flags and stands to their storage place in the meeting room
 - Take leftover items to lost and found
- ✓ Coordinate set up and clean up of Courts of Honor and other special troop functions
- ✓ At the direction of the Senior Patrol Leader, build campfires where necessary
- ✓ Provide other services at the direction of the Senior Patrol Leader