



Boy Scout Parents Orientation and Reference Guide

Rev. 2010

www.troop343.us

Executive Summary



TROOP 343 MISSION STATEMENT

Troop 343 will develop leaders for the future of America according to the principles and values learned and lived in the Scout Oath and Scout Law combined with high adventure outdoor activities, community service, and leadership training and opportunities.

TROOP 343 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- * Attract scouts who are leaders in academics, athletics and other extra-curricular activities and to encourage such scouts to excel in scouting endeavors;
- * Provide fun, and challenging high adventure experiences;
- * Provide leadership opportunities and experience for scouts of every age and rank;
- * Teach the scouts to become responsible, fair and effective leaders;
- * Instill the values of the Scout Law and the Scout Oath and encourage these values to be core to the scout's character;
- * Provide highly qualified and well trained leadership who, by example and counsel, will strive to instill these values in the scouts;
- * Instill an awareness of nature and conservation and to practice the Outdoor Code

WHAT MAKES BOY SCOUT TROOP 343 DIFFERENT FROM CUB SCOUT PACK 343?

This is a **BOY-LED TROOP**. The Senior Patrol Leader, not the Scoutmaster, leads the **troop**. He is elected, by the troop, to head the Patrol Leaders Council. **All of the elected and appointed Scouts in leadership positions must be allowed to do their jobs (and potentially make some mistakes) without interference from well-meaning parents and Scoutmasters.**

This is a high adventure troop. The scouts choose activities which offer plenty of excitement without sacrificing the safety of each participant. For example, Troop 343 has:

- * Spent 6 days and 5 nights on the Appalachian trail, hiking over 30 miles
- * Spent 10 days and 9 nights at Philmont, hiking approximately 100 miles
- * Spent 3 days and 2 nights on the Arkansas River, white water rafting
- * Rode 62 road miles on bikes in one day
- * Rode 20 mountain trail miles on bikes in one day
- * Spent 2 days and 1 night in a wild cave, *underground*
- * Snow skied for 3 days, staying in condos and shared facilities (thank goodness!)
- * Cycled 300 miles in 5 days down the Natchez Trace
- * Canoed 51 miles in 3 days on the Current River in Missouri
- * Many other hiking, camping and other outdoor adventure activities

Scouts progressing through the various patrol and troop positions will learn **LEADERSHIP SKILLS** that benefit them as citizens in whatever their chosen profession. A Scout develops leadership skills as he advances from the relatively straightforward jobs within a patrol, to the more complicated and demanding jobs at troop level. Peer pressure is the greatest incentive for the Scout to do a good job. If the Grubmaster fails to buy enough food for a campout, someone goes hungry. He is unlikely to make that mistake twice! **The hardest thing for adults closely associated with the troop to do is to let the boys make mistakes, and realize the consequences.** There is no better way for a Scout to learn a sense of responsibility! Of course, we are not going to let a Scout get hurt, but going hungry or getting cold teaches a valuable lesson better than any lecture.

WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM THE SCOUT?

The scout is expected to come to meetings and activities with an attitude of wanting to learn, to help, and to grow through the experience of scouting. Scouting is designed around three aims: (1) building character, (2) fostering citizenship, and (3) developing mental, moral, and physical fitness. Each boy will have the opportunity to learn leadership and teamwork. The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) program helps boys grow into honorable men. It is designed to work in conjunction with family, school, and church activities.

MEETINGS

Troop 343 (All scouts) meets every Monday evening at 7:00 p.m. at Cove United Methodist Church. Meetings begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. and last until 8:30 p.m. We realize that all Scouts have schoolwork to be done, and make every effort to finish on time. **The Class A uniform should be worn to all meetings.** If a patrol is designated as the Service Patrol, they should come 15 minutes early to set up the room.

Boy Scout Leaders on the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) meet monthly on the second Monday of each month, at 6:00 p.m., prior to the Troop meeting. All adult leaders and committee members may attend this meeting, but the Senior Patrol Leader who conducts the meeting sets the agenda in consultation with the Scoutmaster. **Adults are welcome to attend, but suggestions and comments should be made to the Senior Patrol Leader or the Scoutmaster, before or after the meeting.** Each Patrol Leader or his Assistant Patrol Leader is required to attend.

Scoutmaster Meetings meet monthly or as determined by the Scoutmaster. Topics and agenda are determined by the Scoutmaster. Participants include Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, Committee Chair, and Charter Organization Representative.

The Troop Committee meets monthly or as determined by the Committee Chairman. The Troop Committee is the troop's board of directors and supports the troop program. This meeting is open to all parents. The committee consists of a Chairperson, a Records Coordinator, a Treasurer, an Advancement Coordinator, Chaplain, an Equipment Coordinator, Outdoor Activities Coordinator and other members charged with supporting the troop infrastructure. The Scoutmaster attends all Troop Committee meetings. Committee members should be familiar with the *Troop Committee Guidebooks*, and should complete **Troop Committee Challenge** training available online at www.1bsa.org.

WHO TO CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION

Boy Scout:

Gunner Hulebak
Senior Patrol Leader
(256) 539-5687

Adult Leaders:

Jeff Seale	Mark Christopher
Scoutmaster	Committee Chairman
(256) 539-5388	(256) 539-3067

GENERAL INFORMATION

WELCOME TO BOY SCOUT TROOP 343!

INTRODUCTION:

Scouting is an adventure that can last a lifetime. The boys learn skills and are exposed to learning experiences that will help them make better decisions in the future. Many of the activities are aimed at leadership and team work skills and to stimulate interest in educational activities and careers. Even with the educational emphasis, the entire program is aimed at the boys having fun while they learn from each other and the adult leadership.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this guide is to tell parents about the program in Troop 343 so that they will have a better understanding of what scouting is about, how your son's Troop operates and what they, as parents, can do to help their boys gain the most from their scouting experience.

WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM THE SCOUT?

The scout is expected to attend meetings and activities with an attitude of wanting to learn, to help, and to grow through the experience of scouting. Scouting is designed around three aims: (1) building character, (2) fostering citizenship, and (3) developing mental, moral, and physical fitness. Each boy will have the opportunity to learn leadership and teamwork. The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) program helps boys grow into honorable men. It is designed to work in conjunction with family, school, and religious activities.¹

HOW DOES SCOUTING WORK?

The **IDEALS** of Scouting are stated in the Scout Oath, the Scout Law, the Scout Motto, and the Scout Slogan. These are a requirement for the Scout rank, and are repeated by the scout at almost every Board of Review. The Scout is expected to repeat them from memory each time he presents himself to a Board of Review for rank advancement. He is required to exhibit the ideals as he holds progressively more responsible positions in the troop.

- **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

- **Scout Law:** A Scout is:

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

- **Scout Motto:** Be Prepared!

- **Scout Slogan:** Do a Good Turn Daily!

¹ Boy Scouts of America. *Troop Committee Guide books* (BSA, 1998)

Wearing the **SCOUT UNIFORM** helps Scouts identify more closely with the group, and affirms their commitment to the goals of the Boy Scouts. Properly wearing the Scout uniform should give each Scout a sense of pride in his appearance as well. Uniform standards for Troop 343 are strictly enforced. Scouts are expected to wear the Class-A Scout uniform to all meetings, advancement boards of review, ceremonies, and travel to and from all outings unless directed otherwise by the Scoutmaster. The Class "A" uniform consists of the Scout shirt with the correct badges and rank, Scout pants (long or short depending on the season), Scout belt and Scout socks and Scout neckerchief (on special occasions). The "Class B" uniform is generally worn during outings or active events and comprises a Scout T-shirt with the Scout pants and socks. The T-shirt may be one specially printed for the troop or from a Scout camp. More detail on uniform standards for Troop 343 are discussed in a separate section below.

The **PATROL METHOD** is used to establish a peer group, to allow the boys to learn elected representation in the troop business, and to structure participation in all troop activities. The patrol method, as developed by Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of the Boy Scout movement, assumes that boys from ages 11 to 18 naturally form into groups or gangs, which he designated as Patrols. Within that group or patrol, the Patrol leader is elected by a democratic vote, and he in turn, appoints the Assistant Patrol Leader, the Patrol Quartermaster, the Patrol Scribe, and the Grubmaster. The Patrol selects a Patrol name, makes a Patrol Flag, and uses a Patrol Yell.

Initially, a new Scout will be placed in the transitional **Panther Patrol**. This patrol is specifically established to help him learn the skills necessary to achieve the Scout and the Tenderfoot ranks in an encouraging and non-intimidating environment. A Senior Scout has been assigned as Troop Guide and an Assistant Scout Master assigned to help with the patrol. Once the new Scout has reached the Tenderfoot rank he will be assigned to one of the regular patrols.

The **OUTDOOR PROGRAM** teaches outdoor skills, and challenges the boys to use them in a variety of settings. The outdoor program is the backbone of Scouting, and the doorway to adventure for the boys. All Scouts are eligible for participation in monthly campouts, camporees, and resident summer camps. Troop 343 is a **HIGH ADVENTURE** troop meaning the boys participate in many exciting programs teaching a variety of outdoor skills (e.g. caving, canoeing, etc). Troop 343 has adopted a two tier outing strategy. For outings where the level of skill or difficulty may exceed the new Scout's ability, a related and parallel activity will be planned so that all the boys will participate in related activities during the day. At the end of the day ALL Scouts will end up together to eat and camp as a group. Scouts are encouraged to attend one of the summer resident Boy Scout camps to learn new skills, to advance in rank, and to learn how other Scout troops attending camp carry out their program. The national Council of the Boy Scouts of America maintains high-adventure bases for Scouts age 14 and older at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, at the Florida National High Adventure Sea Base in the Florida Keys, and at the Northern Tier National High Adventure Program in the boundary waters in Minnesota.

ADVANCEMENT IN RANK encourages boys to learn self-reliance, to provide service to others, and to be recognized for their work. Not every Scout will attain the Eagle rank, but all can aspire to it, and gain from working toward it. Rank advancement requires that a Scout learn essential skills enabling him to go safely into the wilderness, and gives him a sense of pride in his accomplishment as he reaches each successive goal. The Scout who earns the Eagle rank has not only established himself as an outdoorsman, but as a leader within the troop who has devoted many hours of service in a project for the community. Parents should encourage their sons to

advance in rank, and facilitate their participation in all troop activities, but should not do the work for him.

ADULT LEADERS, men and women, provide role models who teach by example, and show that the adventures of the Scout troop can be enjoyed by all age groups. Adult leaders are expected to set an example for the troop, and are selected with care. All adults that participate with the troop must complete Youth Protection Training and **Fast Start training**. All adults having contact with Scouts should also be familiar with the publication, **Guide to Safe Scouting**². These and many other training opportunities are available online from The Greater Alabama District web site www.1bsa.org.

PERSONAL GROWTH results not only from rank advancement and learning outdoor skills, but also from developing a sense of altruism by service to others. It is encouraged, indeed required, by having Scouts do a good turn daily, participate in service projects to benefit those outside the troop, and develop reverence toward God through their church, synagogue, or mosque. Scouts have always been known for "doing a good turn daily," and helping other people. Service projects for the sponsoring organization, for community groups, and for the Scout's religious organization are required for advancement to Second Class Star, Life, and Eagle ranks. Scouts can demonstrate their reverence to God by earning the religious emblem of their faith. These are not Scouting awards, but are awards for service to their religious organization that may be worn, with pride, on the Scout uniform.

Scouts progressing through the various patrol and troop positions will learn **LEADERSHIP SKILLS** that benefit them as citizens in whatever their chosen profession. A Scout develops leadership skills as he advances from the relatively straightforward jobs within a patrol, to the more complicated and demanding jobs at troop level. Peer pressure is the greatest incentive for the Scout to do a good job. If the Grubmaster fails to buy enough food for a campout, someone goes hungry. He is unlikely to make that mistake twice! **The hardest thing for adults closely associated with the troop to do is to let the boys make mistakes, and realize the consequences.** There is no better way for a Scout to learn a sense of responsibility! Of course, we are not going to let a Scout get hurt, but going hungry or getting cold will teach a valuable lesson better than any lecture. This is a **BOY-LEAD TROOP. The Senior Patrol Leader, not the Scoutmaster, leads the troop.** He is elected, by the troop, to head the Patrol Leaders Council. **All of the elected and appointed Scouts in leadership positions must be allowed to do their jobs without assistance, or interference from well-meaning parents and Scoutmasters.**

CAMPOUTS

Troop 343 schedules a weekend activity or campout monthly, except for the month the troop goes to Summer Scout Camp. The troop usually assembles in the parking lot of Cove United Methodist Church on Old Highway 431 at 6:00 p.m. on Friday evening to distribute camping gear and food. Food is purchased prior to the outing by the Patrol Grubmasters. Depending on the distance covered, the troop will return in the early afternoon on Sunday. Class A Scout uniforms are worn to and from the camping or activity area unless otherwise specified by the Scoutmaster. Scouts should be packed and ready to leave as soon as the food and patrol gear can be distributed and packed.

² Boy Scouts of America, *Guide to Safe Scouting* (Not specified: BSA, 1999)

PERMISSION SLIPS:

To accompany the troop on any outing, a Scout must be registered with the Greater Alabama Council. This is to ensure that all available insurance is in force before the outing. **A medical form must be on file with the troop for the outing Scoutmaster to take on the trip.** Permission slips are generally distributed three weeks in advance of an outing, and must be returned, with the fee for the campout, at the next regular Scout meeting (two weeks in advance of the outing). Menus cannot be planned and food bought unless the precise number of Scouts is known.

Please read the permission slips carefully. It will give the time and date of departure, approximate time and date of return, the location of the campout, and an emergency telephone number, if available. It will indicate the fee charged for the campout covering the cost of food, travel, and admission charges. The Scout's parent or legal guardian must sign it. Checks should be made to **BSA Troop 343.**

PACKING FOR CAMPOUTS:

Please help your son pack for his first few campouts. You can find a list of recommended gear to pack in the Boy Scout Handbook and on the troop website at www.troop343.us. The trip leaders may suggest other equipment. It is very important to consider the weather conditions, i.e., cold or rainy weather. On a backpacking trip, all of the Scout's gear must fit in his backpack, and the weight of that pack should not exceed 25% of the Scout's body weight. Please consider that he will be asked to carry his share of the patrol equipment and food. Therefore, it is a good policy to pack only 20% of his total body weight, allowing the additional 5% for the patrol gear and food. On winter campouts, he must take warm clothes so that he can **dress in layers** instead of one heavy coat and take necessary rain gear.

It is generally not necessary or desirable to pack additional personal food, especially sweets and junk food. The menu is carefully planned to provide ample food for each Scout, and the junk food cuts his appetite without supplying the necessary nutrition. If additional food is taken for emergency use, it should be a freeze-dried product that represents a complete meal.

Sheath knives or axes, radios, and other electronic games are NOT allowed on a hike or in a camping area. Cell phones also must generally remain OFF during scout activities.

On long trips, an electronic game or a Discman CD player (or a small radio) with headphones will be allowed in the car.

Your Scout will need the following basic equipment on campouts:

1. A sleeping bag appropriate for the expected temperature (usually 20 to 30° range for fall, spring and winter and 55-60° range in the summer)
2. A small (AA) flashlight with fresh batteries and an extra set of batteries.
3. A pocket knife (Scout size): must have earned the Totin' Chit.
4. Eating utensils (a plastic cup, a bowl or plate, and a fork and spoon or a spork)
5. Personal hygiene kit with biodegradable soap, toothpaste, a toothbrush, a comb, a small, lightweight pack towel, and toilet paper
6. Wet Weather gear (rain suit with hood or poncho with hat)
7. A plastic canteen or water bottle (1 quart minimum) leak-proof
8. A plastic garden trowel for digging a "cat hole" for a latrine

TROOP GEAR:

For most campouts, the troop supplies the cook sets and cooking utensils, as well as tents and dining flies. These are assigned to a patrol or to two to four individual Scouts. After the campout the Scouts are required to take the tents and cooking equipment home, set the tent up (in a garage) to allow it to dry completely, and wash the cooking equipment. The Scouts should share this responsibility, and return it to the troop Quartermaster at the next meeting in good condition.

If equipment has been damaged or a tent torn, it should be reported to the Quartermaster, at that time, so that it can be repaired before the next campout. It is a Scout's responsibility to replace any equipment checked out to him that is lost or damaged through negligence. Tents must not be allowed to remain wet as they will mildew and rot, even nylon.

TOUR PERMITS:

The local council has the responsibility to authorize the plans of any Scouting group to conduct a tour or expedition. Approval is based on meeting high standards for leadership, transportation, equipment, program, health and safety, and business management as established by the Boy Scouts of America.³ There are two types of tour permits. A local tour permit is used for tours of less than 500 miles, and a national tour permit is used for tours of 500 miles or more, or for tours that cross national boundaries. The local permit may be approved by the local council (Greater Alabama Council, Birmingham, Alabama), but the national permit must be approved by the regional service center (Southeastern Region, Atlanta, Georgia). A Tour group must have its permit in its possession at all times, and must display it when requested.

SUMMER SCOUT CAMP:

Troop 343 attends Summer Scout Camp for at least one week each summer. The troop selects from a list of Scout Camps within reasonable traveling distance, and goes as a unit. Some summers, Scouts who have a conflict with the chosen date can attend another camp with a Scoutmaster attached to another unit. The Summer Scout Camp is an excellent opportunity for new Scouts to fulfill the requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and most of the First Class requirements. Basic camping skills are emphasized to the first year Scouts, and Scouts come together as a group quickly in the resident camp atmosphere. Older Scouts can earn up to five merit badges per week, and water front badges for swimming, canoeing, rowing, sailing, and life saving are available. **Summer Camp information will be distributed in February or March of each year.**

³ Boy Scouts of America. *Tours and Expeditions* (Irvine, Texas: BSA, 1999) 19.

TROOP 343 UNIFORM STANDARDS

This **Troop 343 Uniform Policy** is in accordance with Troop 343 Committee and Scoutmaster guidelines. If these policies are not followed the scout **will not be allowed** to participate in an event. Any circumstances which require special consideration or modification will be discussed at the SM/SPL level. The Committee Chair shall also be kept informed of any such exceptions. Any violations outside of this uniform policy will be brought before the scout leadership for action.

CLASS A Uniform

- Long or short sleeve Scout dress shirt
- Scout pants or shorts
- Scout belt
- Scout socks
- Scout neckerchief and slide (for special occasions)
- Merit Badge Sash (for special occasions)
- Order of the Arrow Sash

CLASS B Uniform

- Troop 343 or other BSA T-shirt substituted for Scout dress shirt
- Scout pants or shorts
- Scout belt
- Scout socks

Proper placement and orientation of patches, badges, neckerchief, and sashes are included in the Boy Scout Handbook.

UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR VARIOUS EVINTS

- **Scout Meetings, New Leaders Training, and PLCs:** Scouts will wear the Class A uniform No sandals, flip flops, or boat shoes without socks are allowed. Exception: Sport or Band uniforms will be allowed if insufficient time exists for the scout to change uniforms before the start of the scout meeting.
- **Special Events:** (Court of Honors, Scout Sundays, Scouting Banquets, etc.) Scouts will wear the Class A uniform including Scoutt neckerchief, neckerchief slide, merit badge sash, OA sash (if appropriate), and black or brown shoes.
- **Board of Reviews:** Scouts will wear the Class A uniform including neckerchief, neckerchief slide, merit badge sash (for Star BOR and above), OA sash (if appropriate), and black or brown shoes. Scouts will also have all current rank, patrol, leadership patches, and merit badges sewn onto uniform and sash, respectively. Scouts will not be allowed to begin a BOR for any uniform violation.
- **Outings:** Scouts will wear the Class A uniform en-route and on-return from all outings. Exception - Class B shirts only may be worn on local Troop 343 hikes of less than 25 miles travel time to hiking location.

- **Talakto District Events:** Scouts will wear the Class A uniform. No sandals, flip flops, or boat shoes without socks are allowed).
- **After Arrival at Outing Location:** Troop 343 Class B uniform. No sandals, flip flops, or boat shoes without socks are allowed. Exception: With some outings certain attire will be required such as swim wear for canoeing or swimming, bicycle attire for biking, hiking pants for extended hiking treks, etc. Some events at Camporees and Scout Camp, such as morning assembly, flag retirement ceremony, or vespers, require Class A uniforms.

Note: Certain outings such as the swim test, certain merit badge meetings, high adventure, and other outings may require that the SPL with consultation with of the SM make exceptions. Generally, these discussions will be held in advance of the outing in an appropriate setting and announced prior to the outing so that everyone will understand the rules.

TROOP 343 CODE OF BEHAVIOR

If followed faithfully the Scout Oath and Law provide adequate guidelines for behavior by Scouts and Scouters. However, as with many activities, lapses do occur. Therefore the following Code of Behavior has been established. Every effort will be made to correct minor problems before they are brought to the attention of the Scout's parents. **The use of drugs and alcohol is prohibited and will result in the immediate dismissal of the offending Scout or adult Scouter, from the troop. Stealing and hazing in any form is not permitted, and if the problem cannot be immediately corrected by conference with the Scout, the Scout's parents will be asked to meet with the Scoutmaster and members of the Committee. If this conference does not correct the problem, the Scout will be dismissed from the troop. No physical punishment of a Scout by another Scout or by an adult is permitted. If this occurs, the Scout or the adult will be dismissed from the troop.**

The following guidelines relate to less serious problems, but if a Scout persists after reasonable warning that he is in violation of these guidelines, a conference with his parents will be called. Again, if that does not correct the problem, or if the parents decline to meet with the Scoutmaster and members of the Committee, the Scout may be dismissed from the troop. The Scout troop and Scout meetings are not a baby-sitting service. The Scoutmasters and member of the Troop Committee are dedicated to helping boys grow into honest, moral adults. For them to do this, they must have the cooperation of the parents. Scouts who violate these guidelines may be restricted from participating in future outings and events at the discretion of the Scoutmaster and may be dismissed from the troop.

1. Fighting is not permitted. Since it is not always possible to know who or what started a fight, both Scouts may be prohibited from participating in future events for a time.
2. Scouts should not run, slam doors, engage in horseplay, shout, or make loud noises while entering or leaving the church building, going to and from patrol meetings, or going to or from the restroom.
3. Scouts are expected to be courteous and respectful to adults regardless of their status or position. The use of "Sir" or "Ma'am" is expected and encouraged. The use of vulgar language or profanity is not acceptable.
4. While riding in vehicles on a troop trip, scouts will not litter, engaged in horseplay, and make faces or inappropriate gestures to people outside or in other vehicles. The senior

Scout in each vehicle is expected to correct any disruptive or loud behavior so as not to distract the driver and endanger the entire vehicle.

5. Personal electronic boom boxes, CD players, and radios are not allowed on troop outings, except in cars on long trips, and then only if personal earphones are utilized and the use does not distract the driver. Also, fireworks, tobacco products, and obscene literature or tapes are strictly forbidden on troop outings and campouts.
6. Respect for church and Scout property at Scout Camps is required. This includes keeping the bathrooms and showers clean, flushing toilets, turning off lights, picking up litter, and leaving the property of other Scouts undisturbed.
7. Patrol meetings and outside games during the regular troop meeting at the church will include at least one adult advisor.
8. Scouts in uniform are expected to behave in such a way as to reflect credit on the troop and the Boy Scouts of America. This is especially true while traveling on troop activities. Loud and boisterous behavior even in the woods and backcountry will not be tolerated.

Scout Spirit refers to the effort a Scout makes to live up to the ideals of Scouting. The Oath, Law, motto, and slogan serve as everyday guidelines for a good life.⁴ This is manifested by a cheerful, helpful attitude. A Scout with a negative attitude who constantly complains and causes problems with other Scouts, disrupts meetings or outings, consistently skips outings (not including excused absences due to normal conflict issues, such as academics, sports, illness and other activities) does not exhibit the Scout spirit, and this may have an adverse effect on his advancement.

REGISTRATION AND DUES

Our troop re-registers with the Greater Alabama Council each year in December. The registration fee for this year (2010) is \$100.00. This includes one adult registration for each Scout registered, insurance, a charter renewal fee, and a subscription to Boy's Life Magazine. **In order to achieve a Quality Unit Award for the troop, this registration must be on time and complete.** If a Scout from another registered unit transfers into Troop 343, the registration fee will be prorated. Your check for registration should be made to Troop 343 BSA. Registration fees for 2011 are due by November 30, 2010.

FUND RAISING EVENTS

From time to time, the troop will participate in fund raising events. The type of fund raising event may vary from year to year, but it is expected that the entire troop participate, including the adult leaders and the parents. Fund raising activities are selected to be appropriate for Boy Scouts. For each fund raising event, one half of the proceeds from the event are distributed evenly among the participating Scouts in the form of outing credits. The credits can be used to defray the cost of any outing or annual registration dues. The remainder of the proceeds are used as general funds by the troop to buy and maintain equipment, subsidize outings, purchase materials for courts of honor and other ceremonies, etc.

ADVANCEMENT

Scouting provides a series of surmountable obstacles and steps to overcome them through the advancement method. The Scout plans his advancement and progresses at his own pace as he

⁴ Boy Scouts of America, *The Scoutmaster Handbook*. (Printed in USA: Boy Scouts of America, 1988) 47.

overcomes each challenge. The Scout is rewarded for each achievement, which helps him gain self confidence. The steps in advancement help a boy grow in self reliance and the ability to help others.

Unlike Webelos, a parent cannot sign off the requirements for rank advancement in the Boy Scout Handbook. The requirement must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster will then date and initial the appropriate box on the list of requirements for each rank in the Boy Scout Handbook.⁵ **The rank requirement lists found in the first part of the Scout Handbook are for use by the Scout while working on his advancement, but to obtain credit for having completed a requirement, the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster must initial and date the list in the rear of the book.** Requirements for rank advancement and merit badges may change from year to year. Be sure that the latest edition of **Boy Scout Requirements**⁶ is consulted before beginning work on a merit badge. A rank advancement is not complete until successful participation in a Board of Review consisting of the Committee Advancement Coordinator and other members of the troop committee. Any conflict with the requirements associated with any rank advancement or merit badge will be resolved by the Committee Advancement Coordinator.

MERIT BADGES:

To begin work on a merit badge, a Scout must obtain an Application for Merit Badge (blue card), signed by the Scoutmaster, and the name of a qualified counselor for that merit badge. This is to ensure that a Scout selects a merit badge appropriate for his age and rank, and does not work on too many merit badges at the same time. With another Scout, a relative, or a friend, the Scout sets up and attends his first appointment with the merit badge counselor. (**A Scout must have a buddy with him at each meeting**). The counselor explains the requirements to the scout, and helps him plan how he will fulfill those requirements. The Scout will benefit from reading the Merit Badge pamphlet before beginning work. The Scout works on the requirements until he completes them. He then demonstrates to his counselor that he has finished the requirements. The counselor signs the blue card, and it is returned to the troop records chair for the Scoutmaster's signature.

BOARDS OF REVIEW:

After a Scout has completed all of the requirements for any rank from Tenderfoot through Life, and has had a Scoutmaster conference for that rank, he appears before a board of review composed of three to six members of the troop committee. The membership of the board of review for an Eagle Scout candidate is determined by local council policy. The purpose of the board of review is to ensure that he has completed all of the requirements, to determine the quality of his troop experience, and to encourage him to advance toward the next rank. Each review should also include a discussion of ways in which the Scout sees himself living up to the Scout Oath and Law in his everyday life.⁷

Board of review for the ranks of Tenderfoot through Life should each last about fifteen minutes. An Eagle Scout board of review might take half an hour or more.⁸

TROOP LEADERSHIP TRAINING:

⁵ Boy Scouts of America. *The Scoutmaster Handbook* (Printed in USA: Boy Scouts of America, 1998). 438-449.

⁶ Boy Scouts of America. *Boy Scout Requirements 2001*. (Not specified: BSA, 2001)

⁷ Boy Scouts of America. *The Scoutmaster Handbook* (Printed in USA: Boy Scouts of America, 1998), 122.

⁸ Boy Scouts of America. *The Scoutmaster Handbook* (Printed in USA: Boy Scouts of America, 1998), 121.

Twice a year, soon after troop elections for leadership positions, a program for training the new leaders for their position is held. This follows the course prescribed in the **Scoutmaster's Junior Leader Training Kit**⁹. This includes the use of the video that teaches elements of leadership to the new leaders. Each Scout elected to a position of troop or patrol responsibility should have a copy of the **Junior Leader Handbook**¹⁰ for reference. When a Scout completes this daylong course, he is eligible to wear the "Trained" badge on his left sleeve below the badge of his position. It should be noted that the "Trained" badge is specific for that position, and when a Scout changes troop or patrol job, he must attend the Junior Leader-Training course for that job. **This training is most important for the smooth functioning of the troop, and is mandatory.**

The Patrol Leader's Council (PLC) is composed of the Senior Patrol Leader, the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, the Troop Guide, and the Patrol Leaders of all patrols, including the Panther Patrol of the newest Scouts. The Council meets at least yearly in an Annual Program Planning Conference to map out that year's activities, and to plan the monthly troop programs. The PLC meets on the second Monday night of each month to review the annual plan and make necessary adjustments. These meetings are open to any Scout or adult leaders, but the Senior Patrol Leader chairs the meeting, and decisions are made by the vote of the entire council. **Parents or Scouts who are not members of the Council must avoid interfering with the meeting. Suggestions and advice should be made to the Scoutmaster or the Senior Patrol Leader before or after the meeting.**

The North Alabama Service area of the Greater Alabama Council conducts a weekly, intensive Junior Leader Training course each year at Camp Westmoreland. This is called "**The Nendawen Journey - NYLT**," (formerly called "Whitefire") and is comparable to the adult "**Wood Badge**" course. This is intended for First Class Scouts, 13 years old or older, who can be expected to hold positions of troop leadership such as Patrol Leader, Senior Patrol Leader, or Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. The course is usually taught the first week in June. This course is known by other names, such as Whitefire, Takachsin Quest or Alohakasin Challenge, in other districts, and is sometimes taught in three parts on weekends during the school year.

COURT OF HONOR:

Twice a year, usually August and March, the troop holds a Court of Honor. These Courts of Honor are for the Scouts, their families, and their friends. Individual scouts are recognized for their personal achievements, awards, and advancements in rank. Parents are encouraged to attend these Courts of Honor to show their support for their Scout. Even though Scouts are given the badge of the new rank achieved as soon as it is earned, each Scout is recognized, and a Mother's Pin is presented to the Scout's mother. These are festive occasions with refreshments, and Scouts wear their class "A" uniforms. Currently the court of Honor is held in the same meeting room at Cove United Methodist Church as the Scouts meet on Monday nights.

EAGLE COURT OF HONOR:

The Eagle Court of Honor is a very special event when a Scout is awarded his Eagle Badge. The Scout and his family are involved in planning the ceremony, and selecting those who will participate. The Eagle Court of Honor may be held at Cove United Methodist Church, or at a church or other location of the Scout's choosing. These ceremonies are formal and dignified, and usually very meaningful to all Scouts and parents attending.

⁹ Boy Scouts of America, *Scoutmaster's Junior Leader Training Kit* (published in USA: BSA, 2001)

¹⁰ Boy Scouts of America, *Junior Leader Handbook*. (Not specified: BSA, 2000).

THE ORDER OF THE ARROW

The Order of the Arrow is an Honor Camper organization within the Boy Scouts of America whose purpose it is "To recognize those campers - Scouts and Scouters - who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives and by such recognition cause other campers to conduct themselves in such manner as to warrant recognition."¹¹ An eligible Scout is selected to become a member of the Order of the Arrow by members of his own troop. As part of his induction, he undergoes an Ordeal. "It is the purpose of the Ordeal to have the candidate reflect on his own Scout life and character and come to a deeper understanding of the Scout Oath or Promise and the principles of the Order."¹² The ceremonies of the Order are held in private, but it in no way constitutes a secret society. There is no hazing during the Ordeal, just as no hazing is allowed in any other Scouting activity. Candidates do meaningful labor on a service project during the Ordeal. Although the ceremonies are based on American Indian lore, they are written to avoid offending any religious belief and have received the approval of religious leaders.¹³ After becoming a member of the Order, the Scout together with other members, will participate in service projects usually benefiting of the Council camps.

ADULT TRAINING

All Assistant Scoutmasters should take the **Basic Training Course** and the **Outdoor Leader Skills** course taught by the North Alabama District of the Greater Alabama Council. These courses are usually taught twice a year. The basic training is taught in two parts: New leaders Essentials and Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training. Normally they are taught in an all-day course on a Saturday once in the fall and spring. They provide further insight into Scouting philosophy and methods. The Outdoor Leader Skills course is a three-day course taught over a weekend at Camp Westmoreland. All three modules must be completed to be recognized by BSA as a Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster. After completing these courses, Scout leaders are strongly encouraged to take the advanced leadership course, **Wood Badge**. Wood Badge is taught over three weekends at Camp Comer, and is highly regarded for teaching management skills and communication. The **University of Scouting** is held on a Saturday in March, and allows Scout leaders to choose courses from a variety of Scouting subjects that interest them. The location varies between Birmingham and Huntsville. Information about these courses (and all of these publications) is available at the North Alabama Service Center Scout Shop at 2111 Drake Avenue, S.W., Huntsville, Alabama.

YOUTH PROTECTION:

All Scouts are expected to use the **Buddy System** at all times on outings and at fixed-base Scout camp. When a Scout is assigned a buddy, he must always know where his buddy is and how he is doing. Now and then a Scout leader will call for a **buddy check**. The buddy system should always be used when a troop or patrol is hiking, camping, or participating in any aquatic activities.¹⁴

¹¹ Boy Scouts of America, *Order of the Arrow Handbook*. (published in USA: Boy Scouts of America, 1988) 6.

¹² Boy Scouts of America, *Order of the Arrow Handbook*. (published in USA: Boy Scouts of America, 1988) 22.

¹³ Boy Scouts of America, *Order of the Arrow Handbook*. (published in USA: Boy Scouts of America, 1988) 30.

¹⁴ Boy Scouts of America, *The Boy Scout Handbook*. (published in USA: Boy Scouts of America, 1988) 57.

BSA is very concerned with child and drug abuse. All parents, mothers and fathers, are strongly encouraged to participate in troop activities. Soon after a Scout joins the troop, his parents should read the pamphlet inside the Boy Scout Handbook, *How to Protect Your Children from Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide*,¹⁵ and the family should discuss it. This is the only requirement in the Boy Scout Handbook that a parent may sign off. All volunteer leaders and parents should read the *Youth Protection Guidelines*¹⁶ pamphlet published by the Boy Scouts of America, and see the video, *A Time to Tell*. The Greater Alabama Council provides training for all adult leaders in Youth Protection on line at www.1BSA.org. Scouting prohibits hazing.

Any adult who works directly with the Scouts must be registered with the Boy Scouts of America. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact any of the adult leaders.

STANDARDS OF YOUTH PROTECTION

- **Two-deep leadership:** Two registered adult leaders or one registered adult leader and a parent of a participant, one of whom must be 21 years of age or older, are required on all trips and outing.
- **No one-on-one contact:** One-on-one contact between adults and youth members is not permitted. In situations that require personal interaction such as a Scoutmaster's conference, the meeting should be conducted in view of at least one adult.
- **Respect for privacy:** Adult leadership must respect the privacy of youth members in situations such as changing into swimming suits or taking showers at camp.
- **Separate accommodations:** When camping, no youth is permitted to sleep in the tent of an adult who is not that youth's own parent or guardian.
- **No secret organizations:** There are no "secret" organizations recognized with the Boy Scouts of America.
- **No hazing:** Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited by the Boy Scouts of America, and may not be included as part of any Scouting activity.
- **Appropriate attire:** Proper clothing is required for all Scouting activities. Skinny-dipping is prohibited by BSA.
- **Appropriate behavior:** Adult leadership must set an example of appropriate behavior for the Scouts. Thus, vulgar language (or profanity), vulgar jokes, inappropriate displays of anger (yelling, screaming, physical actions or other actions taken in anger) are prohibited during all scout activities, whether by an adult leader or by a Scout. Violation of this policy may cause the adult leader or the Scout to be dismissed from the troop. Drinking and Smoking by adults is not permitted on any Scout Outing

¹⁵ Boy Scouts of America, *The Boy Scout Handbook*. (published in USA: Boy Scouts of America, 1988) insert.

¹⁶ Boy Scouts of America, *Youth Protection Guidelines*. (not specified: BSA, 2001) 1-13.

Scouting Policy states there must be two adult leaders at all Troop activities. Our Troop needs many adult volunteers to keep the program running. Please consider sharing your talents with the Troop.

MEDICAL

Each Scout is required to have a physical exam by a physician prior to attending monthly outings or summer camp. The forms required for this exam are the "Class I and Class II. This exam is valid for three years and is updated by a parent each year. High Adventure outings require a Class III form which is valid for only one year. These forms are available on the troop website www.troop343.us. We will also have each parent sign a medical release allowing doctors to begin emergency treatment if their son needs it. Please let us know if your son has any medical problems. It is very hard to deal with medical surprises when we are miles from home, especially in a wilderness area. If you son has a severe medial issue, please immediately notify the Scoutmaster and the Committee Chair. While the Troop may not be able to accommodate all such issues, the Committee will review these issues and determine which, if any, actions should be taken to accommodate such. If an accommodation is made, the Scoutmaster and the adult leaders are expected to support such accommodation. For example, we currently have a Scout who has a deadly allergy to peanuts. In response, the Troop has modified its diet to accommodate this issue.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Those parents who have previously been associated with Cub Scouts, Webelos, or Boy Scouts know that the quality of a Scout's experience is directly related to adult participation. We have always been blessed in Troop 343 with outstanding parent participation, and know what an excellent resource you are. Please fill out the Troop Resource Survey form attached and return it to the troop secretary or the Scoutmaster.

Scouting is a family activity and parents are encouraged to participate, both "one-on-one" with your son and with the troop. Parents should support their Scout and encourage him to do his best. All parents will be called upon to support troop activities, such as providing transportation, merit badge instruction, counseling, or sharing special skills. The scouting experience should not be withheld from the boys as a punishment. The leaders are dedicated to providing a positive learning environment that will benefit the boys in the future.

It is said, in jest, that Scouting only takes one hour a week. Most of us involved in this troop know that's not true. We will gladly take one hour a week if that's all you can spare, but many of us believe that Scouting is one of the best activities for teaching morality and citizenship to our sons. That leads us to become progressively more involved as we recognize needs within the troop. We hope that's true with you. After all, it's a big job, building boys into men of character.

TROOP 343 ADULT JOB DESCRIPTIONS

CHARTERING ORGANIZATION REP

SCOTT LUDWIG

Serves as head of the scouting organization at Cove Church
Helps recruit adult leaders
Serves as liaison between Cove Church and the troop

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

MARK CHRISTOPHER

Support Scout Master
Interpret BSA Policy
Coordinate Committee Activities
Lead Recruitment of Adult Leaders

SCOUT MASTER

JEFF SEALE

Responsible for the Image and Program of the Troop
Train and Guide Youth Leaders
Work with other Adult Leaders to bring Scouting to the Boys
Coordinate Scout Recruiting Activities
Maintain Event Schedule
Attend District Round Table

ASSISTANT SCOUTMASTERS

Work directly with the Scoutmaster in directing, leading and teaching boy leaders
Assists the Scoutmaster during meetings with events and exercises
Assists the Scoutmaster by focusing on the specific needs of assigned patrol
Assures that advancement opportunities are available and coordinated
Work individually with patrol members on advancement and related learning
Train and guide boy leaders to run their patrol
Conduct Scoutmaster conferences
Guide boys in planning the troop/patrol program
Help boys to grow by encouraging them to learn for themselves

TREASURER

CINDY SEALE

Collect Troop Funds
Maintain Bank Accounts
Collect Patrol Funds
Produce Treasury Report
Develop Annual Troop Budget
Work with Troop Scribe

RECORDS COORDINATOR

Maintain all records for the troop via Troopmaster
Advancement Records
Advancements
Medical Records
Troop Roster

JIM AND LISA JOHNSON**ADVANCEMENT COORDINATOR**

Set Review Standards
Manage Advancement Boards of Review
Maintain Merit Badge Counselors List
Review and Resolve Requirements Conflicts

RON DAVENPORT**EQUIPMENT COORDINATOR**

Sets Inventory Equipment Procedures
Prepares Equipment Orders
Work w/ Troop Quartermaster to maintain troop equipment
Need Inventory System
Need Regular Replacement System

LEE ZOOK**TRANSPORTATION**

Obtain Camp Site Permission
Coordinate transportation
Obtain Tour Permit
Work w/ Troop Scribe and Outing Masters

ROB COOK**CHAPLAIN**

Promote and provide guidance on BSA Religious Awards
Provide Spiritual Counseling
Conduct God & Country

MARK JOHNSON**EAGLE COORDINATOR**

Review Scout records
Identify Potential Projects
Review Project Workbook for Approval
Coordinate w/ District

DAN FUGIT**TRAINING COORDINATOR**

Ensure Adult leaders trained
Maintain up to date training Materials
Encourage Junior Leader training

CHARLIE PACKARD**WEBMASTER**

Maintain Troop Web Site/Coordinate
with SPL/Troop Webmaster on Scribe

MIKE LYMAN**COURT of HONOR COORDINATOR**

Organize semi-annual Court of Honor with support by the Records Chair

JANICE CROSBY

Suggested Reading

The following material may be obtained at the **North Service Area Scout Shop** at 2211 Drake Avenue, S.W., Huntsville, Alabama 35805, telephone (256) 883-7071. Store hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM, and the first Saturday of each month, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

The Boy Scout Handbook

Boy Scout Requirements 2007 (or later)

The Scoutmaster's Handbook (for adults working with Scouts)

The Troop Committee Guidebook (for Scoutmasters and Troop Committee members)

Youth Protection Guidelines (for all adults working with Scouts)

Guide to Safe Scouting (for all adults working with Scouts)

Tours and Expeditions (for Scoutmasters and Troop Committee members)

The Junior Leader Handbook

The Scoutmaster's Junior Leader Training Kit

The Troop Program Planning Workbook

Troop Program Planning Resources

Troop Program Features, Volumes I, II, and III (Replaces **Wood's Wisdom**)

Passport to High Adventure (for Scoutmasters and adults working with older Scouts)

LOCAL SOURCES FOR EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

- **Alabama Outdoors, Inc.**- 2030 Cecil Ashburn, Drive, SE, Huntsville, AL, 885-4278.
- **North Service Area Scout Shop** - 2211 Drake Avenue SW, Huntsville, AL 35805, 883-7071. Has Scout uniforms and camping equipment.
- **Dick's Sporting Goods**, 6275 University Drive W (Westside Shopping Centre, Highway 72 West), Huntsville, AL, 922-9912. Has camping equipment.
- **REI (Recreational Equipment Inc.)** stores in Franklin, TN and Atlanta, GA. Has complete line of camping equipment.
- **Wal-Mart Stores**

INTERNET AND MAIL ORDER SOURCES FOR EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

CAMP MOR, INC., Saddle River, NJ. www.campmor.com

REI, Sumner, WA. www.rei.com

L.L. Bean, Freeport, ME. www.llbean.com

Cabela's, Oshkosh, NE. www.cabelas.com

Travel Country, Altamonte Springs, FL. www.travelcountry.com

Summit Hut, Tucson, Arizona. www.summithut.com

Patagonia. www.patagonia.com

Smartwool. www.smartwool.com