

# Troop 5 Handbook

Troop 5  
Actively Serving Scouts on  
the North Shore since 1922

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## Introduction

Welcome to the Boy Scouts of America! By becoming a parent of a Boy Scout, you are setting your son out on the grand adventure of Scouting. This is a tremendously important and rewarding endeavor that you will be able to share with him.

What is it all about? What will you be expected to do? What does it cost? We have prepared this booklet to answer these questions.

The following pages describe the organization of Troops and the advancement pattern that each boy will follow. Reading this will help you understand how your boy can progress through the ranks with your help. It will help you understand how you can help and what the various adult volunteers are doing to help Troops.

## What Is It All About?

The founder of Scouting said it best: Scouting is "fun with a purpose."

Three aims describe the purpose of Scouting:

- Aim I -- To build character
- Aim II -- To foster citizenship
- Aim III -- To develop fitness

These three aims are the bedrock of the American Scouting movement. It is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America to serve others by helping to instill values in young people, and in other ways to prepare them to make ethical choices over their lifetime in achieving their full potential.

The values we strive to instill are based on those found in the Boy Scout Oath and Law.

<b>SCOUT LAW</b>	<b>SCOUT OATH</b>
<i>A Scout is:</i> Trustworthy Loyal Helpful Friendly Courteous Kind Obedient Cheerful Thrifty Brave Clean Reverent	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.

Since 1910, these principles have been taught in an atmosphere of recreation and fun which allows young people to develop self confidence, leadership and moral character. The long list of famous scouts includes:

President John F. Kennedy	Boy Scout	Neil A. Armstrong, First person to set foot on the Moon	Eagle Scout
President Gerald Ford	Eagle Scout	Steven Spielberg	Eagle Scout
J. Willard Marriott, Jr. President of Marriott Corporation	Eagle Scout	William C. Devries, M.D.; Transplanted First Artificial Heart	Eagle Scout
Sam M. Walton Chairman/CEO, Wal-Mart	Eagle Scout	Barber B. Conable, Jr. Former President, World Bank	Eagle Scout

The Boy Scouts of America is the largest youth oriented organization in the United States. More than 4 million boys and leaders are currently registered in the Boy Scouts of America.

Unlike Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting is a youth-led organization. The boys learn how to organize and lead the Troop. After training, and with supervision from the adult leaders, the boys run the show.

Boy Scouting also provides for growth of moral strength and character, teaches citizenship, and enhances the development of physical, mental and emotional fitness! This is all done in the spirit of fun and adventure!

Please take a few minutes to read Chapter 1 of your son's Boy Scout Handbook.

## **Organization**

Troop 5 is a participating member of the Northeast Illinois Council (NEIC), Boy Scouts of America. The Troop's organization consists of a Chartering Organization, a Troop Committee, the Troop, and the Troop's Parents.

### ***Chartering Organization (Sponsor)***

Every Troop belongs to an organization. The Chartering Organization for Troop 5 is the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette. The Chartering Organization shares our objectives for the boys and seeks to insure that there is adequate trained leadership. A Chartering Organization Representative acts a liaison between us and the church. There is no requirement that troop members attend First Presbyterian or subscribe to any particular religious views.

### ***Troop Committee***

The Troop Committee Functions as an administrative and support organization for the Troop. The Troop Committee takes care of the non-program issues, for example

newsletters, Troop funds, fund raising activities, membership drives, advancement records, and procurement and maintenance of Troop equipment.

Troop Committee meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month, August – June. All adults are welcome. The meetings are open and parents are encouraged to attend.

### ***Troop***

**“Boy Run”**. Troop 5 is a “boy run” troop. The Boy Scouts provides young men with real-life opportunities to learn leadership through participation. The Scout leadership of the Troop includes the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), who is elected by his fellow Scouts. The SPL chooses one or more Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPLs) to assist. There are other (Scout) leadership positions as well.

**Adult Leaders**. Boy leaders run the Troop. The Scoutmaster and the Assistant Scoutmasters help guide the boy leaders in planning and running Troop meetings and other activities. However, the Scouts plan Troop activities and control Troop meetings.

**Patrols and Patrol Leaders**. Every activity that Troop 5 does is based on the “patrol method”. Each patrol has five to ten boys. Scouts gather at the Troop meetings in patrols. At campouts, Scouts camp and cook their meals in patrols. Each patrol is led by a Scout who is the elected Patrol Leader. The Patrol Leader is aided by an Assistant Patrol Leader who is also elected by the patrol members.

Troop 5 has three different types of patrols, based on a Scout's age:

**Trailblazer Patrols**: Trailblazer Patrols are formed with new Scouts in the spring of their 5<sup>th</sup> grade year. Trailblazer Patrols stay together through December of the boys' 6<sup>th</sup> grade year. These patrols are led by Troop Guides, who are older Scouts.

**Experienced Scout Patrols**: A Scout will move to an Experienced Scout Patrol in January of his 6<sup>th</sup> grade year. These patrols typically have a mix of boys in 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades (and 9<sup>th</sup> graders, in the fall).

**Venturing Crew**: In January of his 9<sup>th</sup> grade year, a Scout will move into the Venturing Crew, composed of high school-aged Scouts.

### ***Troop Parents***

The role of Troop 5 parents is to be supportive of the Troop's efforts and to provide the atmosphere Scouts need to learn and excel. Parents should try to:

- a. Actively follow their Scout's progress and offer encouragement and a push when needed.
- b. Show support to both the individual Scout and the Troop by attending all Troop Courts of Honor.

- c. Assist, as requested, in all Troop fund-raisers and other such activities. Such assistance lowers the cost of the program we offer to the Scouts and, therefore, lowers each family's cash outlay for their Scouts.
- d. Be aware of the Troop program and annual calendar.

## **Troop Schedule**

Troop 5 meets every Monday during the school year, except during vacations and holidays, at the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette at 9<sup>th</sup> and Greenleaf, Wilmette. There are usually "gathering activities" from 7:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., focusing on a particular skill or event. The troop meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. and end at 8:45 p.m.

The third Monday of each month is "Patrol Night". Patrols meet privately and choose their evening activity.

## **Rank Advancement**

### ***Advancement to First Class – The Trailblazer Program***

In the Boy Scouts, a Scout's advancement is his own responsibility. Troop 5 encourages, but does not require, each New Scout to set a personal goal of advancing to the rank of First Class Scout by the end of the summer after his 6<sup>th</sup> grade year. Through the Trailblazer program, the Troop provides ample advancement opportunities to aid each Scout in meeting his personal goals.

All new Scouts become part of Troop 5's Trailblazer Program. As Trailblazers, new Scouts form their own patrols separate from the older Scouts in the Troop. Under the leadership of other Scouts who act as Troop Guides, Trailblazer Patrols focus on developing Scouting skills and on rank advancement. Each Trailblazer serves as the Patrol Leader of his Patrol on a rotating basis.

Trailblazers start by earning the rank of Scout. The requirements for this and all other ranks can be found in the *Boy Scout Handbook*. Each Trailblazer must demonstrate the skills necessary to be awarded the rank of Scout to a Troop Guide, other designated Scouts, the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster, who will then initial and date the Scout's handbook.

Most new Scouts, especially those who have earned the Arrow of Light as a Webelos Cub Scout, can complete the requirements for the rank of Scout within the first few meetings.

The ranks of Tenderfoot Scout, Second Class Scout, and First Class Scout require skills learned at campouts, hikes, and Troop meetings. As with all rank advancement, a Troop Guide, other designated Scouts, the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster must sign off on the requirements for these ranks.

A Scout may work on the requirements for all three ranks in any order, but must complete and will receive the ranks in order (*i.e.*, Tenderfoot before Second Class, Second Class before First Class).

## **Scoutmaster's Conference**

The last two requirements for each rank advancement are participation in a Scoutmaster's Conference and a Board of Review. At the Scoutmaster's Conference, the Scout and the Scoutmaster review the requirements for that rank and any previous ranks. They talk about the Scout's involvement in the Troop and the extent to which the Scout exhibits "Scout Spirit," meaning whether the Scout acts in accordance with the principles of the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. If the Scoutmaster feels confident that the Scout demonstrates the knowledge, skills and spirit required for the rank, he will initial and date the Scout's handbook. The Scout will then be ready to participate in the Board of Review.

## **Board Of Review**

At a Board of Review, the Scout must present himself in a neat, clean uniform with his *Boy Scout Handbook*. The three members of the Board (i.e. adults in the Troop who are not Scoutmasters) will ask him questions about Scouting, the Troop, any activities he has attended, and advancement requirements pertaining to the rank that he is completing. The Board will confer after meeting with the Scout and announce the results to the Scout and the Scoutmaster. Boards of Review are generally held monthly; the dates are announced in Bugle Notes.

## **Court Of Honor**

Individual Scout achievements are recognized at a ceremony called a Court of Honor. At the Court of Honor, awards--including rank advancement, merit badges and special awards--are formally presented.

The Troop holds a Court of Honor three times a year. Parents are urged to attend.

## **Further Advancement**

After achieving the rank of First Class Scout, Scouts are ready to move on to the ranks of Star Scout, Life Scout, and Eagle Scout. The requirements for these ranks are listed in the *Boy Scout Handbook*. A more detailed packet is given to the Scout before he begins working on the Eagle requirements.

## **Merit Badges**

Once a boy obtains the rank of Scout, he may begin working on merit badges. A list of all available merit badges is near the back of the *Boy Scout Handbook*. The Troop maintains a library of merit badge pamphlets that members of the Troop may borrow while working on a merit badge.

When a Scout decides to begin working on a particular merit badge, he must first discuss his choice with the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster. If the Scoutmaster approves of the choice, the Scout is given a blue merit badge

record card and is instructed to contact a Merit Badge Counselor for that merit badge. All badges require that the Scout work with a Merit Badge Counselor who is registered with the Northeast Illinois Council. The Merit Badge Chair can provide the names of registered counselors. The records for all Eagle Scout candidates will be examined by the Council. Therefore, the Scout should make sure his counselors are registered.

After the Scout completes the requirements for a particular merit badge, the counselor will sign the blue merit badge record card. The Scout presents the completed card to the Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair. The Scout will receive his merit badge at the next Court of Honor. The Scout should keep all advancement cards as additional proof of completion.

## Youth Protection

The Boy Scouts of America has adopted a number of policies aimed at eliminating opportunities for abuse within the Scouting program. These policies focus on leadership selection and on placing barriers to abuse within the program. Troop 5's Youth Protection program includes the following:

- Troop 5 follows the BSA youth protection policies.
- These policies are outlined at the following website: [www.usscouts.org](http://www.usscouts.org)
- Scouts are shown the BSA film, "A Time to Tell," which is an age-appropriate video about preventing sexual abuse.
- Adult volunteers are expected to participate in BSA Youth Protection training.

## Record Keeping

All requirements for rank advancement are tracked using each Scout's *Boy Scout Handbook*. Each Scout also receives a three-ring binder where he is expected to record his camping, service and merit badge activities. Information is also maintained by an adult volunteer using a database program called "Troopmaster".

The Scout should bring his *Boy Scout Handbook* to all meetings and activities in order for requirements to be initialed and dated as he completes them ("Be Prepared"). Troop 5 also encourages each Scout to carry a pen and small notebook or memo pad in his uniform shirt pocket in order to take notes.

## Uniforms

The Boy Scout uniform makes Troop 5 visible as a group and demonstrates the Troop's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting. Troop 5 requires that each Scout wear an appropriate Boy Scout uniform to all Troop-sponsored activities. Presently, the complete dress uniform is required for all Troop meetings (although this rule could be modified in the future, at the discretion of

the boy leaders). With the approval of the Senior Patrol Leader, Scouts may wear a field uniform to patrol meetings which are not part of regular Troop meetings, during campouts and at other times when the dress uniform is likely to be soiled.

The dress uniform consists of the Boy Scout khaki shirt (either long or short sleeves) with proper patches, green Boy Scout shorts or pants, a belt, and Scout socks (worn with shorts). After earning the rank of Scout, each new Scout will be given a Troop 5 neckerchief which should be worn with the dress uniform at all times. The *Boy Scout Handbook* contains information about the uniform and placement of insignia.

The field uniform consists of the Troop 5 t-shirt or another Scout-related shirt, sweat shirt or sweater with jeans or shorts.

Uniforms and other Scouting items can be purchased at the Northeast Illinois Council store located just off Route 41 at 2745 Skokie Valley Rd, Highland Park (847-433-1813), or through the BSA catalog. The Troop also maintains an inventory of Scout uniforms (Uniform Exchange) which Scouts have outgrown.

## **Camping Activities**

### **Camping**

Troop 5 has an active outdoor program and goes camping nearly every month. Weather conditions are variable and all Scouts must be adequately prepared for each campout. Each Scout must provide his own clothing which is appropriate to the season and weather, a sleeping bag, a mess kit with eating utensils, and a duffel bag or backpack. A list of appropriate camping equipment is found on p. 224-25 of the *Boy Scout Handbook*.

Each Patrol uses troop-owned tents, stoves, cooking pots, lanterns and other common camping equipment. With the proper equipment, all Scouts will be dry and warm regardless of the weather.

Before a Scout may camp with the Troop, parents must complete a liability waiver and submit insurance information to the Troop's Camping Chair.

### **Summer Camp**

Troop 5 attends two weeks of summer camp at the end of July and beginning of August at Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan near Antigo, Wisconsin. Troop 5 attends Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan for two consecutive weeks – although Scouts may choose to stay only one week. Camp activities include crafts, swimming, rank advancement, merit badges, and boating.

Older Scouts can participate in “high adventure” activities like backpacking in the New Mexico, scuba diving in the Florida Keys, kayaking in the Apostle Islands (Wisconsin), or canoeing through the Flambeau Flowage (Wisconsin).

## **Cost**

### ***Fees***

The annual membership fee for 2005 - 2006 is \$70.00. The fee for new Scouts who join mid-year is \$40.00. These fees cover each Scout's participation in all Troop activities, including camping. Occasionally, Troop or Patrol activities require additional charges. These fees may change over time. The Troop Committee is presently considering alternative ways to fund the Troop's activities.

The annual fee also includes a subscription to *Boys Life* magazine, the Troop 5 newsletter known as *Bugle Notes*, and all patches and badges awarded to the Scouts. Assistance is available from the Troop.

### ***Fundraising***

In order to adequately finance the Troop's activities, Troop 5 sponsors a Pancake Breakfast each fall. This is presently our only fundraising activity and all Scouts and parents are expected to participate.

Scouts are required to sell at least 30 Pancake Breakfast tickets.

## **How Can You Get Involved?**

### ***Parent Volunteers***

While the Troop program is run by the Scouts, it takes plenty of adult support to keep the Troop running. Troop 5 welcomes adults who want to participate as Assistant Scoutmasters, Committee Members, Merit Badge Counselors, drivers, phone callers and various other positions. There is a direct correlation between parental/family involvement and Scout success: The more you are involved, the more likely it will be that your son will be successful.

The Troop needs your support. What can you do to help?

### ***Committee Meeting***

One easy way to become involved in Troop 5 is to attend a committee meeting. You are strongly encouraged to attend. Meetings are open to all troop families.

### ***Merit Badge Counselors***

Merit Badge Counselors are adults who work with Scouts to teach them skills and help them obtain knowledge in a specific area. Merit Badge Counselors

must participate in Merit Badge Counselor Training and be registered with the Northeast Illinois Council.