

# **Boy Scout Troop 62 Lewisville, Texas**

## **New Scout Information Packet**

**Updated: May 29, 2012**

## Welcome to Troop 62!

When your son bridges to a Boy Scout Troop, we know you will have many questions. We hope that this will help you and your son understand how a Boy Scout Troop is run and specifically, how Troop 62 is run. This is a great troop with great adult leadership and a lot of energetic and fun boys!

## Meetings

Troop 62 meets on Tuesdays from 7 to 8:30 PM (unless it is a LISD school holiday) at the Vista Ridge United Methodist Church in Lewisville. We meet in Wesley Hall which is the largest portable building on the back side of the main building. Boys need to attend weekly meetings as often as possible, but we understand that conflicts sometimes occur.

During Troop meetings, the boys normally work on skills needed to advance in rank, work on merit badges that have been chosen by the boys earlier in the year, and get to know the other boys. During the school year, the boys should always wear their Class A uniform which consists of a tan Boy Scout shirt, Troop 62 neckerchief, and Boy Scout belt to the meetings, plus bring their Boy Scout Handbook and a pencil. During the summer, the boys are allowed to wear a Class B uniform, which consists of a Troop 62 t-shirt. The boys are also responsible for paying \$5 in dues per month. Dues should be paid to the Troop Scribe either on a weekly basis, or they can be paid in advance.

The boys may be dropped off, or you may stick around for the meeting as well. However, they should always be picked up by 8:30. The adults typically meet in the back of the room while the meeting is in session, unless the adult is involved in teaching a skill or merit badge. The Troop Committee which consists of all the adult leaders and parents meets formally once a month on the Monday following the second Thursday of the month (when the district Round Table occurs). During this meeting, we discuss what's happening in the Troop, upcoming events, any issues, etc.

A typical meeting begins with an opening flag ceremony led by the boys, followed by reciting of the Scout Oath and Law. The Senior Patrol Leader and the Scoutmaster make any announcements for the week. At this point, Scout skills and merit badges are typically taught. If the weather permits, the boys usually participate in some physical activity for a few minutes toward the end of the meeting. Once this is complete, the boys come back together for "circle-up" time, where a wrap-up of the meeting is conducted and any last minute announcements are made.

## Camping

Campouts are scheduled for nearly every month of the year. The Troop calendar on our website ([www.troop62.org](http://www.troop62.org)) lists the dates for all campouts as well as all planned activities. If you have questions about required equipment, please see the equipment list or ask a leader. The boys plan their own menus by Patrol and need to pay for food at least a week in advance. Cost for the boys is usually \$10, and for adults usually \$15-\$20. Money is collected by the Scribe. Parents are invited to attend campouts. However, the adults eat and tent separately from the boys.

After determining the menu, each Patrol selects a "grubmaster" who will be responsible for purchasing food for the campout. Other members of the Patrol are encouraged to shop as well, and this is usually done on Thursday evening prior to the campout.

We usually depart for a campout on Friday evening. We meet at the church at 6 PM to load up gear and assign seats in vehicles, and depart shortly after. We typically return from a campout on Sunday morning, usually before noon. Return time can vary depending on location of the campout, weather conditions, etc., so please be flexible. **Phone calls will be made to parents approximately 30 minutes before we arrive back at the church. Please be available to receive this call. We understand that this may interrupt religious activities for you and your family, but it is important that the boys are picked up on time.**

## **Mystery Campout**

Troop 62 does what we call a “Mystery Campout” each year. The Mystery Campout is not a typical campout. We call it a mystery, because we do not tell the boys where we are going until we get there. However, we do share the information with parents before we leave in case of emergency. Recent Mystery Campouts were done at the NASA Space Center in Houston and at Longhorn Caverns National Park near Austin. At Longhorn Caverns, we went cave exploring in a section of the cave where most visitors are not allowed. We wore hard hats, gloves and knee pads, and crawled through several areas. It was a lot of fun.

## **Rank Advancements**

The troop schedules activities that support advancement. We also have specific adult leaders assigned to work with the new boys to make sure they are advancing toward the Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks. You can help your son with advancement as well by reviewing the requirements with him, and making sure he attends all Scouting activities including meeting, campouts, service projects, fundraisers, etc. You are not allowed to sign off on requirements like you were in Cub Scouts. Rank advancements, skills and merit badges must be signed off by an older Scout, or by one of the adult leaders.

Once the requirements for rank have been met and signed off in the handbook, the Scout should meet with the Assistant Scoutmaster in charge of Advancement to confirm that all requirements for the rank have been met. Once this is complete, the Scout should request a Scoutmaster conference with the Scoutmaster, and a Board of Review with the Assistant Scoutmaster in charge of Board of Reviews. All of these final requirements must be completed a minimum of 2 weeks prior to a Court of Honor to ensure that all paperwork can be completed. A Court of Honor is similar to a Pack meeting in Cub Scouts, except that they only occur quarterly rather than every month.

The rank advancement is signed off when the Scout passes the Board of Review. The rank is generally awarded at the next Court of Honor. However, if the rank is earned early in the quarterly cycle, the patch may be given at a regular weekly meeting depending on the circumstances. The rank will then be formally recognized at the Court of Honor.

## **Merit Badges**

Merit Badges are a fun part of Scouting, and many are required for advancement to the upper ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle. Various merit badges are chosen by the boys each year during the planning session, based on what is needed for Eagle required Merit Badges and what they think will be interesting and fun. These Merit Badges are taught at the Monday evening meetings. Your son may also choose to work independently on Merit Badges based on things he finds interesting. However, he must choose a counselor to work with him, and the Scoutmaster must approve by signing a blue card. Blue cards are used by our Troop to help track requirements for Merit Badges including information on the counselor. The counselor may be one of the adult leaders in the Troop, a friend of the family, etc. Some Merit Badges are required to attain the rank of Eagle. These are noted in the Handbook. Star and Life also require a certain number of Eagle required Merit Badges to advance as well. The Troop generally schedules several of these Merit Badges each year to be taught for the whole Troop. Additional opportunities for earning Merit Badges are available throughout the year, including Merit Badge colleges and summer camp.

## **Service Hours**

Each Scout will need service hours as part of rank advancement. Community service is a significant part of Scouting, and our Troop regularly participates as a whole in various efforts. There are many opportunities such as Scouting for Food, helping with Eagle service projects, etc. that will be available.

Your son may also participate in service activities outside the Troop with groups such as Churches, non-profit organizations, etc. Please have these service hours pre-approved by the Scoutmaster before the activity occurs. Once it is complete, the Scout should bring a letter or form from the organization stating the nature of the service and the amount of time spent, and present this to the Assistant Scoutmaster in charge of advancement.

## **Summer Camp**

This is a great and exciting time for the boys, and we definitely encourage all new Scouts to attend summer camp during their first year. Being away from home for a week may be a challenge for some boys, so we also encourage the boys to attend as many of the Spring campouts as possible, so that they can get used to being away from home and parents. This also gives the adult leaders a chance to gain a comfort level with the boys to make sure that they think they can handle a week away from home.

A parent meeting to discuss summer camp is scheduled every year prior to camp. Please plan to attend, as there will be a lot of information provided regarding the camp. It may be necessary to purchase some items for summer camp as well such as a cot.

The general rule for our Troop is to attend a camp close by within the Longhorn Council, every other year. We typically go out of council on the other year. We have recently gone to summer camp in Colorado and New Mexico. Summer camps usually offer a new Scout program that will help them advance to First Class which is in addition to the program provided by the Troop. There will also be many Merit Badges offered, but we typically advise the first year boys to take Swimming and First Aid, as these cover skills that are needed to meet the early rank requirements.

## **Communications**

Most communications outside of meetings are done via email. These will typically come from the Scoutmaster or one of the other adult leaders in charge of various activities. Troop 62 also has a website at [www.Troop62.org](http://www.Troop62.org). There is a lot of additional information about the troop, including the calendar of planned events, contact information, troop history, etc.

## Scout Terms and Definitions

**Court of Honor** – Ceremony where the Scouts are recognized for their rank advancements and merit badges. The Court of Honor is usually held quarterly in the sanctuary of Vista Ridge United Methodist Church on Monday evenings starting at 6:30 with refreshments.

**Scoutmaster Conference** – This is a time when the Scoutmaster meets with your son to review progress for rank advancement. This conference must occur immediately prior to rank advancement, but can occur periodically at other times to ensure that progress is being made.

**Board of Review** – After a successful Scoutmaster conference, several committee members usually including the Assistant Scoutmaster in charge of Board of Reviews, will meet with your son to review his advancement requirements. They will ask questions concerning advancement and how your son is adjusting within the Troop. The questions may also cover skills that your son has learned, how he is doing in school, with his family, etc.

**Scout Spirit** – Scout Spirit is always a part of rank advancement and is demonstrated by participation in meetings, service projects, camping trips, at school, at home, etc. It is an attitude that the Scout demonstrates to show that he is proud to be part of the Boys Scouts as well as part of Troop 62. The Scoutmaster typically signs off on this requirement during the Scoutmaster conference.

**Blue Card** – A blue multi-part card is used to keep track of merit badge requirements. The adult counselor leading the badge and the Scoutmaster must sign off on the card indicating that all requirements have been met. One part of the card is for Troop records, and the other part is given with merit badge for the Scouts records. **It is important that the Scout retains this record, as it will be needed later for advancement toward Eagle Scout.** Many boys use a binder with plastic baseball card sleeve protectors.

**Senior Patrol Leader (SPL)** – The SPL is the “boy leader” of the Troop.

**Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL)** – The ASPL takes charge if the SPL is unavailable.

**Patrol Leader (PL)** – Each patrol has a leader and assistant responsible for leading the smaller group of boys.

**Patrol Leader Council (PLC)** – All of the Patrol Leaders, along with the SPL, ASPL, and other elected positions meet once a month to review what is going on, and plan for the next month.

**Class A/B Uniforms** – Class A uniform for our Troop is the tan Scout shirt, Scout Belt, Troop 62 neckerchief and slide, and proper insignia such as red shoulder loops. Class A uniform is required for all meetings during the school year, travel to and from campouts, and other Scout functions. Class B uniform for our Troop is the Troop 62 t-shirt. This should be worn to meetings during the summer, on campouts once we reach the destination, and during physical activities where Class A uniforms might get dirty.

**Order of the Arrow (OA)** – The OA is Scouting’s National Honor Society for campers. Boys are elected in each year that best exemplify the Scout Spirit through the Scout Oath and Law.

**Chartered Organization** – This is the group that sponsors our Troop. We are sponsored by Vista Ridge United Methodist Church.

**Committee Members** – This is comprised of all the adult leaders and parents. The committee meets monthly on the Monday following the second Thursday of the month (when the district Round Table occurs) to discuss Troop activities, finances, concerns, etc. We welcome all parents to participate and take on responsibilities to help the boys.

# **New Scout Camping Checklist**

## **Recommended Gear (adjust as appropriate for the Scout)**

- Canteen or Nalgene type water bottle
- Mess kit with silverware and cup (suggest Boy Scout's lexan set)
- Flashlight or head lamp with extra batteries
- Sleeping bag(s) appropriate for both cold (20 degrees) and warm weather
- Backpack or duffel bag to carry equipment in
- Sun screen
- Insect repellent
- Scout Handbook
- Class A and B uniforms (must be in Class A for travel)
- Other clothes appropriate for the weather conditions. Be sure to bring layers of clothes during the winter, including gloves, knit hats, sweatshirts, coats, thermal underwear, etc.
- Scout hat
- Hiking boots or other closed toe shoes appropriate for hiking
- Poncho or rain suit
- Personal toiletries such as toothbrush and tooth paste, comb or brush, lip balm, contact case and solutions, etc.

## **Optional items**

- Pillow
- Folding camp chair
- Sleeping pad
- Paper and pencil
- Compass

**The Troop provides tents, stoves, lanterns, cooking gear, etc.**