

TROOP 50 FAMILY HANDBOOK

<http://www.RandolphTroop50.com>

Welcome

Welcome to Boy Scout Troop 50 in Randolph, NJ!!

Our Family Handbook was created for all Scouts and their parents or guardians, particularly those who are new to Troop 50. We have tried to give you the information necessary for a Scout as he proceeds along his journey to “Eagle” in Troop 50. This handbook is intended to accompany the information in the Official Boy Scout Handbook.

BSA Troop 50 is part of the Black River District, Patriots’ Path Council. Troop 50 has been continuously active since 1984. It was founded by parents who wanted to give their sons a firm foundation in life and to help prepare them for adulthood. It was originally chartered to Resurrection Parish, but in 1985 the sponsor was changed to VFW Post 7333.

The Purpose and Methods of Scouting

The purpose of Scouting is the preparation of young men for an adult life that reflects the values in the Scout Oath and Law. Every Scouting activity moves boys toward three basic aims: Character Development, Citizenship, and Mental and Physical Fitness.

The Boy Scouts of America uses eight fundamental methods to achieve these aims, and to meet the boys’ hopes for fun and adventure:

1. The **Ideals**, as spelled out in the Scout Oath and Law.
2. The **Patrol Method**, which helps boys share in the satisfaction of accepting and fulfilling group responsibilities.
3. The **Outdoors**, where boys can find real adventure.
4. **Advancement**, which allows boys to set their own positive goals and earn recognition for their achievements.
5. **Association with Adults**, who provide positive role models.
6. **Personal Growth**, with boys given an arena in which to explore, try out new ideas, and sometimes to simply embark on adventures with no design other than having a good time with good people.
7. **Leadership Development**, with hands-on lessons in planning, organization, and decision-making.
8. The **Uniform**, which helps boys develop a sense of belonging and reinforces the equality of all.

Troop Organization

Troop 50 is a boy-run Troop. The Scouts of Troop 50, under the guidance of the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters and the Troop Committee plan the program; conduct troop meetings, campouts and other events; and provide leadership among their peers.

The Scoutmaster is the adult leader responsible for the image and program of the Troop. Assistant Scoutmasters aid the Scoutmaster in program delivery and supervision of the Scouts.

The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) is the senior boy leader. The SPL is responsible for the overall running of the Troop. He selects 1 or 2 Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders.

The Patrol is the basic unit of the Scout Troop. Each scout is member of a patrol. Each Patrol is led by a Patrol Leader and an Assistant. The Patrol Leader represents his Patrol at meetings of the Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC), made up of the Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders and Patrol Leaders.

The Patrol Leader's Council is in charge of planning and implementing the ideas of the Patrols. Each month, the Senior Patrol Leader, his assistant and the Patrol Leaders get together at a Patrol Leaders' Council meeting, and plan for the coming month's activities. These meetings take place monthly. Long-range planning is also part of the Patrol Leaders' Council Meetings.

The information and decisions from this meeting are passed from the Patrol Leaders to the members in the Patrol. It is the Patrol Leader's duty to keep his Patrol updated on all issues. Each Scout should receive an informative call each week from his Patrol Leader or Assistant.

The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters meet, monthly to determine the support they need to provide to the program designed by the PLC. These adult leaders act as mentors to the boy leaders, and are responsible for adequate adult supervision of all Troop meetings and activities.

The Troop Committee is comprised of concerned adults in the Troop who meet, monthly, to help fulfill the desires of the Patrol Leaders' Council. This usually involves securing the necessary funding, equipment, permits, technical expertise, and adult supervision for upcoming events. Committee meetings are open to any parent or guardian who wants to be more involved in their son's program.

A complete list of Committee Members and Assistant Scoutmasters can be found on the Troop 50 roster, which is periodically distributed to all Troop families.

Parents are encouraged to help the Troop by registering with the Boy Scouts of America as an Assistant Scoutmaster, a member of the Troop Committee, or a Merit Badge Counselor. Parents may also volunteer to help with events, drive Scouts to and/or from events, or share their individual skills. Scouts need the guidance of involved parents not only to learn the required skills for rank advancement, but also to learn real-life skills from positive adult role models.

Troop Meetings and Calendar

Troop 50 meetings are held on every **Thursday evening** when school is in session from **7:30-9:00 PM**. Scouts should arrive between 7:15 and 7:30 to complete any event sign-ups or other business before the meeting starts- promptly at 7:30. Usually there are Troop leaders present at 7 PM to test Scouts on requirements. We ordinarily meet in the **Fernbrook School** cafeteria. If the Randolph Township Public Schools are closed for any reason, the Troop meeting will not be held. When the school is in use for other purposes, such as Pack 50 meetings, arrangements to meet somewhere else are normally made well in advance. This information can be found on the Troop calendar. Feel free to have your Scout call the SPL or the Scoutmaster if you are unsure.

The Troop Calendar is updated monthly and is distributed at Troop meetings. The current Calendar can also be found on the Troop 50 website. Troop activities are detailed for a three-month period; all major events for the year are listed.

Troop Website

The Troop maintains a website at- <http://www.RandolphTroop50.com>. All calendars, permission slips, and most necessary Scout forms can be found there. If you feel we are missing something that would be helpful to you, please E-mail the Troop Committee Chairperson or Scoutmaster at troop50@gmail.com and make a suggestion.

Much communication is done by E-mail. Please ensure that your Patrol Leader and the Webmaster have your correct address. Also if you change your E-mail address, please let your Patrol Leader know and also notify the Webmaster. Please check your Emails on Wednesday evenings.

Uniforms

The Scout uniform makes the Troop visible and creates a positive youth image in the community. Boy Scouts is an action program and wearing the uniform is an action that shows each Scout's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting.

All Scouts are required to wear a full Field (Class A) uniform at all Troop Meetings, Court of Honors, and most Scout events and outings unless otherwise specified. Field (Class A) uniforms **with neckerchiefs** must be worn at all Scoutmaster Conferences, Boards of Review, and Courts of Honor.

Troop 50 collects and redistributes "experienced" uniforms. Contact the Uniform Recycling Coordinator for used uniform parts. Parents are encouraged to contribute outgrown or unused items to the Troop. If the cost of purchasing the uniform presents a hardship for any family, financial assistance can be arranged by talking with the Scoutmaster, Committee Chairman, Troop Treasurer, or Family Liaison Committee Chairman. There is no reason for a Scout to not have a full uniform.

Field (**Class "A" Uniform**) consists of:

- Official Boy Scout Shirt – **short sleeved** preferred for year-round wear (Not supplex nylon)
- Correct Insignia – Patriots' Path Council Patch, Green Numerals "50", Patrol Patch, Leadership Patch (presented by Troop), Current rank badge
- Green Shoulder Loops – Presented to Scout when he enters the Troop (Leave them on the shirt when you launder it.)
- Boy Scout Pants – For year-round wear. Nylon switchbacks are **not** acceptable. (Canvas zip-offs are OK)
- Boy Scout Shorts – Required for Summer Camp (Canvas zip-offs are OK)
- Boy Scout Belt – Required for both pants and shorts
- Boy Scout Socks – Red topped, (or new green, without red stripes) required when wearing shorts. White or gray activity socks are **not** acceptable.
- Troop 50 Neckerchief - Required for Scoutmaster Conferences, Boards of Review and Courts of Honor. Presented by the Troop.
- Boy Scout Handbook – Necessary reading material, advancement information and record book

Activity (Class “B”) Uniform

Activity (Class “B”) uniforms are permitted at some outings and service projects. Activity (Class “B”) uniform consists of a Troop 50 t-shirt, Scout pants or short socks, Scout belt and Scout socks (if in shorts).

All items may be purchased at the Council Scout Service Center, at Camp Allamuchy, at Ramsey Outdoor Store on Rt. 46, and at other BSA locations. Most Scout items can be ordered through the Boy Scout Catalog, or online at www.scoutstuff.org.

Troop Finances

The collection of dues allows the Troop to plan for capital investments of tents and equipment, and keeps the Troop on a sound financial base. Troop 50 dues are due by the Fall Court of Honor (October) and the amount is determined by the Troop Committee on an annual basis. Additional family members are at a reduced rate. If necessary, financial assistance can be procured through the Troop Treasurer for payment of dues or any Troop activities. A Scout should not miss an event because of financial reasons. Corporate and personal donations are always welcome.

Each Scout has a personal “Scout account” with the Troop where monies earned in various Troop fund raising events are “credited” to the Scout’s account. These monies may be used to fund camp and event fees, and to reimburse expenditures for uniforms and other Scout gear. They may never be withdrawn for cash. If the Scout leaves the Troop, these monies are forfeited to the general Troop account. Money may also be taken out of a Scout’s account to pay for damages that the Scout has caused to Troop equipment, as determined by the Troop Committee.

Participation

There is no minimum participation requirement for membership in the Troop; however, each segment of the Troop Program builds on skills previously taught. Every meeting and event is a unique opportunity to learn and grow. If possible, a Scout should attend **every** meeting and event. It is understood that, periodically, outside commitments will necessitate missing a meeting or event. For the Scout to get the full benefit from the Scouting program, this should be kept to a minimum. If your Scout is going to miss a meeting, he should notify his patrol leader.

All family members should attend all Courts of Honor.

All Troop members are expected to participate in all Troop service projects and fund raisers. Scouts may be excused by the Scoutmaster if a family emergency or other commitment precludes attendance and participation.

Participation Requirements for Advancement to Star Rank and Above

Active participation is encouraged for all Scouts, regardless of rank; however, in order for a Scout to advance in rank beyond First Class, BSA requires “active participation in the Troop and Patrol” and a period of service in a leadership position. In Troop 50 this is referred to as the “50% Rule”.

To fulfill the attendance and leadership requirements for Star, Life, Eagle, or Eagle Palms:

1. A Scout must participate in, as a bare minimum, 50% of the Troop and Patrol meetings during the time being “counted” for advancement. (Courts of Honor, regardless of when scheduled, “count as Troop meetings” in this context.)
2. He must also participate in Troop or Patrol campouts and other Troop or Patrol events according to the following table:

RANK	LEADERSHIP TERM	ABSOLUTE MIMIMUM REQUIRED EVENTS
Star	4 Months	2 (At least one campout)
Life or Eagle	6 Months	3 (At least two campouts)
Eagle Palm	3 Months	2 (At least one campout)

An event, for the above advancement purposes, is a Troop activity. A Patrol activity that is approved in advance by the Scoutmaster can be considered an event for the participation requirement. (Other Scouting activities, outside the Troop, while encouraged, do not count for Troop and Patrol participation.)

Participation in an “event” means the Scout is present for the whole event, from beginning to end of the event. This includes the preparation/staging of gear and supplies at the start of the trip, as well as the cleanup and stowing of the gear at the end of the trip. The Scout must also actively participate in the event. (Scouts may be excused for a limited period of time during the event, for sporting events or other commitments, but only with the prior approval of the Scoutmaster.)

All Scouts who want to advance are responsible for ensuring they meet the attendance requirements. The SPL is responsible for ensuring that attendance is recorded at regular troop meetings. The Boy Leader-in-charge is responsible for taking attendance at other Troop and Council events.

Scout Spirit

In order for the Scoutmaster to evaluate Scout Spirit for rank advancement beyond first class, a Scout who has not participated in any Troop functions (events, activities, troop meetings, etc.) for a period of six months or more, must fulfill the requirements of active participation (50% Rule) for a period of four months immediately prior to a Scoutmaster Conference. This is not to be confused with the Participation and Leadership Requirements as stated above.

Advancement in Rank

Joining

A boy who is 11 years old or who has completed the 5th Grade, or earned the Arrow of Light and is at least 10 years old can become a Boy Scout. He is not required to have ever been in Cub Scouts and can be a Boy Scout until his 18th birthday.

Ranks

Boy Scouts recognizes the Scout’s achievements by awarding badges of rank:

- Scout Badge
- Tenderfoot

- Second Class
- First Class
- Star
- Life
- Eagle

For Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class, the requirements are usually achieved at campouts and Troop meetings. Requirements must be signed off by the Scoutmaster, an Assistant Scoutmaster, or a Senior Boy Leader. Unlike in Cub Scouting, there are no grade or age requirements for a boy to earn his next Scout rank. There is no time requirement for moving from one rank to the next, up to and including First Class.

Each rank builds on the knowledge and skills learned in the previous rank, and the requirements are increasingly more difficult and complicated. By the time the Scout has earned the rank of First Class, he should have all the basic skills to be a safe, competent camper. Refer to The Official Boy Scout Handbook for specifics of each rank.

The final three ranks (Star, Life, and Eagle) require the Scout to earn Merit Badges (Eagle-required and optional ones), hold positions of responsibility in the Troop, and perform community service. The specific requirements can be found in the Official Boy Scout Handbook.

To achieve the Eagle Rank a Scout must complete all rank requirements, in the process earning 12 required Merit Badges plus 9 more of his choosing, for a total of 21. When a Scout reaches Life Rank, he should obtain a *Life to Eagle Packet* from the Advancement Chairman. This guide gives detailed information on the Life-to-Eagle process in Troop 50.

Merit Badges Required for Eagle:

Camping	Environmental Science
Citizenship in the Community	Family Life
Citizenship in the Nation	First Aid
Citizenship in the World	Personal Fitness
Communications	Personal Management
Lifesaving OR Emergency Preparedness	Swimming OR Hiking OR Cycling
Plus 9 additional Merit Badges from the more than 150 offered by BSA.	

Merit Badges: There are over 150 Merit Badges in all; the full list can be found in the Boy Scout Handbook.

To Earn a Merit Badge a Scout must:

- 1) Obtain and read the appropriate, current Merit Badge book.
- 2) Obtain a signed Merit Badge card (“blue card”) from the Scoutmaster.
- 3) Obtain a Merit Badge Counselor’s name and phone number from the Scoutmaster.
- 4) Contact the Merit Badge Counselor and arrange to review the requirements.
- 5) Complete the requirements found in the Merit Badge book, per the instructions of the Counselor.
- 6) Meet with the Merit Badge Counselor to get the Merit Badge signed off.

- 7) Return the completed merit badge card to the Advancement Chairman, who will sign the Applicant's portion of the card and return it to the Scout.. It will serve as a receipt. Save it!!

Please note: It is recommended, per the requirements of the BSA Youth Protection Policies, that Scouts pursue Merit Badges with a buddy. It is not permissible for any Scout to be alone with an adult during any Scout activity; if the buddy system is not used, a parent should be present during any counseling session.

Also note: If the Merit Badge Counselor does not return the Scout's calls, fails to show up for arranged counseling sessions, or requires more or less work than the Merit Badge Book specifies, the Scoutmaster should be informed so the Counselor can be contacted by the District Advancement Chairman and/or not used by the Troop.

Courts of Honor

Family Courts of Honor are held quarterly to recognize the Scouts' achievements (rank advancements, merit badges and special awards) and to promote Scout Spirit among the Troop 50 families. These are Family events and all family members are encouraged and expected to attend, whether or not their Scout is receiving an award.

Troop 50 has a tradition of honoring an Eagle Scout through an Eagle Court of Honor which is conducted by the Troop separately from normal ones. Planning and coordination for this important event are done by the Committee Chairman, in conjunction with the Advancement Committee. The families of the Eagle Candidate(s) will be presented an *Eagle Court of Honor Guide*, containing, among other things, their responsibilities and specific personalization opportunities for the ceremony. All Troop 50 families should attend these events, to honor the new Eagle Scout and his family for this incredible accomplishment.

Campouts and Other Activities

Campouts and other adventures are scheduled for each month of the school year, plus a weeklong summer Camp in July. Campouts are a lot of fun, but they are also geared towards advancement in rank of the Scout. Monthly campouts help younger Scouts achieve the requirements necessary for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks. Older Scouts are given an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and Scout Spirit towards the younger Scouts.

Troop 50 provides equipment, such as tents, stoves, cooking supplies, etc. for the benefit and use of the entire Troop. Scouts are responsible for proper care of all Troop equipment. Anyone who deliberately damages or abuses Troop equipment will be responsible for its repair or replacement.

Recommended Personal Camping Gear- PUT SCOUT'S NAME ON EVERYTHING! **(Detailed list of camping gear can be found in the Scout Handbook)**

- Cold weather sleeping bag (Carry in a stuff sack lined with a garbage bag to keep it dry)
- Sleeping Pad
- Hiking boots/Sturdy Shoes. (Snow boots for winter wear.)
- Rain Gear. (Good quality ponchos or rain suits.)
- Flashlight with extra batteries. (Mini-mag is sufficient for most uses)
- Personal First Aid Kit- Per the Second Class requirement
- Personal Toilet Articles

- Clothing for Season (Placing items in zip lock bags or garbage bags will keep them dry in case of rain, flood, etc.)
- Compass
- Scout Handbook (Keep in a zip lock bag)

Monthly Campouts and other activities require the parent or guardian to complete the appropriate permission slip and pay the required fee by the deadline stated on the permission slip. Permission slips and money **MUST** be handed in before any Scout is allowed to participate in any event or outing. Permission slips for all activities are distributed at weekly Troop meetings. They can also be found and printed off of the Troop 50 website.

Camping fees cover the cost of the activity and food unless otherwise stated on the permission slip. Camping fees are non-refundable, and can only be “bought out” by substituting another Scout to obtain a refund.

Electronic Devices (radios, TV’s, game boy, cell phones, beeper, etc.) are **NOT** allowed on campouts or at Troop meetings.

Service Time

The service requirement can be met in many ways. The Troop and the Council sponsor service projects. The adult leader in charge of such projects maintains the participation log. Eagle projects are a popular source of service hours. The Eagle candidate is required to log the hours by participant as a part of the leadership requirement.

Scouts are encouraged to earn service hours in the community, their school, or church as approved by the Scoutmaster. Documentation for service is required for inclusion in advancement. All Scouts must obtain a Service Project Report Form from the Scoutmaster (or the web site) before participating in a service project. The Scout is then required to bring this form to his next Scoutmaster Conference and Board of Review for documentation. Service time must be earned during the period since the last advancement was achieved.

Parental Support and Encouragement

When a boy becomes a member of Troop 50, his Parent(s)/Guardian(s) also become members, and agree to participate and help in some of the Troop’s activities. This participation may consist of being an Assistant Scoutmaster, Committee Member, or Merit Badge Counselor, or providing adult supervision of Troop activities, driving to and/or from various Troop activities, etc.

We rely on parents to encourage their son in his responsibility to be an active member of the Troop. We ask that you also help your son in the advancement program of the Boy Scouts of America. While teaching Scout skills to the boys and testing them on what they know is the responsibility of the Troop leadership, parents can work with their son on his advancement by reviewing the requirements with the Scout, and help to inspire and motivate their son to do his best in all that he does.

Parents have the responsibility of keeping themselves informed about the Troop program. They should ask their Scout about his Scouting progress, and should also keep themselves informed about the Troop’s

activities by reading the calendar updates, event permission forms, and various flyers that come home from Troop Meetings and appear on the Troop website.

Leadership

Boy Scouts 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 prepares him for adult leadership roles in later life.

Descriptions of the responsibilities of the various Leadership positions in the Troop can be found on the Troop Web Site.

To be a leader presumes attendance. When a scout is serving in a leadership position required for rank advancement, additional participation will be required, depending upon the type of leadership position taken. For example, the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) is expected to be present and run most of the troop meetings, organize the events, oversee the PLC meetings and interface regularly with the Scoutmaster. In a similar manor, the patrol leaders have the added responsibility to notify (by phone calls, E-mails, etc.) their respective patrols about meetings and deadlines, attend the Patrol Leader Council (PLC) meetings, and assist the Scoutmaster. Simply holding a leadership position is not sufficient for advancement. Satisfactory execution of the duties is required for advancement.

Fund-Raising Projects

Various fund-raising projects are held throughout the year to assist in the procurement and maintenance of Troop 50 equipment and help defray costs of events. These projects also offer opportunity for the Scout to earn money for his Scout Account, which can be used to pay for campouts and other activities. To be fair, it is expected that ALL Scouts will participate in the fund-raising to benefit the Troop.

Scout Behavior

Troop 50 Scout behavior is governed by a set of rules or guidelines: the Scout Oath and Law. While attending Scout meetings and activities, all boys are expected to act in a manner becoming Scouts. Each Scout is a representative of both the Boy Scouts of America and Troop 50. Each Scout must understand the importance of appropriate behavior at home and especially at Troop, Patrol meetings, camping trips and excursions.

Expectations

What we expect from the Scouts:

- 1) Every Scout should behave like a Scout at all times, following the Scout Oath and Law.
- 2) Each Scout should attend all possible Troop meetings and other events.
- 3) Each Scout should attend summer camp, a high adventure camp, or other summer Scouting activity.
- 4) Each Scout should wear a full uniform when required.
- 5) Each Scout should attend every Court of Honor.

What we expect from the parents:

- 1) Parents should drop off their sons promptly between 7:15 and 7:25 on meeting nights.
- 2) Parents should pick up their sons promptly at 9 PM.
- 3) Parents should read the permission forms and ensure they are returned before the deadline, review updated calendars handed out at the meetings, and periodically check the Troop website.
- 4) Parents should monitor their sons' progress toward the goal of Eagle Scout.
- 5) Parents should attend all Courts of Honor with their sons.
- 6) Parents must contribute time to at least one Scouting Event per year.

What Scouts and parents can expect from our Leaders:

- 1) We will provide the Scout with a fun program, full of new challenges and adventures.
- 2) We will provide you with a yearly calendar, with timely updates.
- 3) We will teach the Scout leadership and practical skills.
- 4) We will provide adult supervision, by at least two adult leaders, at every meeting or activity.
- 5) We will set a good example, following the Scout Oath and Law.
- 6) We will complete the BSA Youth Protection Training, and be re-certified every three years.

A Final Word

The Boy Scouts of America offers a well researched, progressively more challenging, FUN-with-a-purpose program to provide boys with the skills, values, and attitudes that will help them be the kind of adults in whom we can be proud! "Eagle Scout" is an honor earned by a boy, through goal setting, planning, and hard work, with increasing self-initiative, over many years. The best way to help your boy in Scouting is to participate as a caring adult, allowing him to take on increasing responsibility and independence as he moves along the Scouting Trail... **Support him as he participates in the program and enjoy the FUN of being part of the Troop 50 Boy Scout Family!**