

New Parent Orientation

Troop 290
San Jose, CA
April 2009

What It's All About

- Training the Leaders of Tomorrow.
- The Boys Run the Troop...Sort Of.
 - They still need a lot of help from us.
- First 1-2 Years: Trail to First Class (Basic Training).
- After that, emphasis is on leadership. This is the true value of Scouting.
- If Scouts focus on Leadership, they will get to Eagle as a matter of course. (No need to rush.)

Participation: Boys

- Weekly meetings:
 - Monday 7:30 pm, Bret Harte Cafeteria (Tuesday if Monday is a holiday)
 - Full “Class A” Uniform. (Buzzard shirt and Scout Shirt.)
 - Work on TTFC, Merit Badges.
 - Special events and presentations
- Outings:
 - Usually monthly.
 - Fellowship, leadership, fun! (And advancement.)
- **All boys are expected to attend both.**

Participation: Parents

- You are expected to:
 - Attend quarterly Parent Meetings (no boys).
 - Participate in Boards of Review
- We hope you will also attend:
 - At least two outings per year.
 - At least one meeting per month.
- Please also consider at some point:
 - Lead or co-lead an Outing
 - A Troop leadership position (e.g. Scoutmaster, Outings Committee, etc.). You are the troop's future adult leaders!
 - Becoming a Merit Badge Counselor (requires weekly attendance).
- Keep in mind that if no one volunteers to lead the troop, there is no troop. **Someone in this room will eventually need to volunteer to be the Scoutmaster and/or Committee Chair.**
- **Your sons will only make Eagle Scout if we all pull together!**

Discipline

- Scout leaders are encouraged to deal with discipline issues without intervention from adults.
- Occasionally this is not sufficient and an adult leader must step in and formally warn the scout that behavior is unacceptable. Parents will be contacted if possible.
- If poor behavior persists, parents may be contacted to retrieve their scout from the activity (meeting, campout, summer camp, etc.).
- Scoutmaster may impose further disciplinary actions, such as barring the scout from troop activities.

Advancement

Responsibility

- Ultimately the scout is responsible for his own advancement.
- The scout must take the initiative to learn and demonstrate the skills needed to advance.
- The scout must take the initiative to find merit badge counselors and perform the necessary tasks to obtain the badge.
- We (as parents are leaders) are here to help them.
- You (as new parents) should encourage your scout to take responsibility and manage this on their own.

Ranks

- Trail to First Class
 - Scout, Tenderfoot, 2nd Class, 1st Class.
 - Lots of skills requirements.
 - Typically 1-2 years.
 - Keep track of outings, service hours.
- Higher Ranks
 - Star, Life, Eagle
 - Merit Badges (21 for Eagle) plus leadership and service.

Scout Handbook

- Lots of good info, plus...
- All rank requirements signed off here.
- Book is the final authority/record on rank advancement. **Don't Lose It.** Needed for Eagle advancement.

How to Advance

- Perform each requirement and get signed off in the scout book. Only senior scouts, Scoutmaster, Assistant SM, Committee Chair, Advancement Chair, or designee can sign off. **Parents do not sign off** except as above.
- Parents and/or senior scouts help the younger scouts master the necessary skills.
- Once all requirements signed off, scout must have conference with Scoutmaster.
- Then Board of Review of three parents.

Merit Badges

- Required for higher ranks.
- Can work on/complete at any rank level.
- Many (> 100) badges exist but 11 are “Eagle required”.
- Each has a set of requirements; achievement recorded on “Blue Cards” and signed off by MB counselor.
- Part of Blue Card given to scout on completion (“receipt”). Don’t lose them! (Needed for Eagle advancement.)
- Parents teach merit badges during the troop meetings and/or on outings. Must take a Merit Badge Training Class offered by the Council.
- Which badges are taught? Scouts vote on which ones they would like about twice a year.

Court of Honor

- A ceremony to recognize rank advancements and MBs.
- 3-4 CoHs per year.
- Deadline for all completed Boards of Review and Blue cards is one week before CoH.
- CoH is not required for rank advancement. Don't obsess!

Loon Lake Summer Camp

- Troop 290 runs its own summer camp in even years at Loon Lake (just west of Desolation Wilderness).
- “High Adventure” outing. 12 years age and older, 1st Class Rank and above.
- Parents pull together to set up camp, provide food and advancement opportunities. Hard work, but...
- Totally fun and unique experience! Not to be missed, even for parents!

Council Summer Camps

- Troop 290 goes to different camps each year.
- Summer camps provide huge opportunity for advancement.
- First summer camp attendance is best indicator of future success in Boy Scouts.

Home Sickness

What is home sickness?

- The feeling of wanting to go home or missing their parents or family
- Common among young Scouts at long-term camps (week or longer)
- A couple of boys experience this at every summer camp
- These boys tend to have fun during the day and want to go home or call their parents at night. They sometimes complain of a stomach ache

Troop 290 Policy

- It is recommend that the boy tough it out but it will be the parent's decision
- Scout leaders will not allow the Scout to call home . . . the boy will ask
- After a couple days, an adult leader will contact the parent(s) to advise of the situation
- It will be the parent's decision whether to talk to their son or not
- It will also be the parent's decision whether to pick-up their son or not
- If you decide to speak to your son on the phone, expect that you will need to pick him up
- All travel expenses will be the responsibility of the parents
- Parent(s) will normally not be contacted if this is experienced in the last couple days of camp

An adult leader will contact the parent(s) anytime a Scout becomes ill or is injured

Finances/Sponsorship

- Troop sponsor is Almaden Rotary Club. We help with their annual Kids Fishing Day (May).
- Also supported by Cupertino Host Lions Club. We help with annual Fishathon (April/May).
- Troop 290 has an eScrip account that helps fund annual BSA registration. (#137823677)
- Boys collect aluminum cans for “fun” money for boy sponsored events (~10 cans per meeting).
- Outings/summer camps are pay as you go.
- Strong financial support means no annual dues!
- **BUT...**We request parents to give generously to Friends of Scouting (BSA annual fundraiser).

Troop Assets

- Troop storage
 - Located at a private residence off McKean road.
 - Provided as a favor to the troop at no charge. Be respectful and behave appropriately!
 - Not accessible after heavy rains.
- Troop owns two motor boats (one water ski capable), five canoes, one sailboat, one motor/rowboat. (A small navy.)
- Troop has extensive supply of camping gear.
- These assets need to be well maintained and cared for!

Scout Gear for Outings

- Uniform (scout shirt and Buzzard shirt)
- Backpack
- Tent (small 2-person is best)
- Sleeping bag (consider weight, good synthetic is best all-around)
- Sleeping pad
- Hiking boots
- “Cotton is rotten,” synthetics and fleece are better
- Layers for warmth
- First-Aid kit
- 10 essentials
- Etc . . .

- *Borrow or rent*
- *Gear list available on Troop 290 website*

Safety

- Trained adult leaders
- Minimum 2-deep adult leadership on all outings
- Biannual CPR and Red Cross First-Aid training offered for scouts and adults prior to Loon Lake
- Red Cross Wilderness First-Aid and CPR training.
- Swimming Merit Badge requirement for Loon Lake participation
- “Safe Swim Defense” training
- “Safety Afloat” training
- High adventure outings . . . Must be 14 years of age and First Class to participate

More Info...

- Troop web site: www.troop290.org
- Santa Clara County Council:
<http://www.scccbsa.org/html/index.html>
- US Scouting Service Project:
<http://usscouts.org/usscouts/start.asp>
- Mailing list:
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