



Welcome to Troop 420!!!

Information for New Scouts and Their Families

We are very pleased that you have decided to join Troop 420 and to be in Scouting. We hope that you have tons of fun, learn lifetime skills, and look back on this as one of the greatest experiences of your life. This guide has information about how Troop 420 runs and what you'll need to know and do as a Scout.

Troop Website

Our troop website has valuable information and is updated with information on a regular basis as to outings, schedule and other pertinent information: www.Troop420.org.

Meetings and Monthly Activities

Our regular Troop meetings are Monday evenings, 7:15-8:30 p.m. in the cafeteria at Hamilton Middle School (unless a different location is announced). The Troop meets every Monday that school is open except for about 3-4 times a year after monthly outings which is reserved for a Patrol Leaders Council (PLC), at which the youth leadership of the Troop meets to plan activities for the following months. Scouts should **bring their Scout Handbook to Troop meetings**; we will use them for advancement activities.

Each month except July, we have a weekend outing. Note that even though we do not have Troop meetings during the summer there are outings in June and August. In July, we attend a week-long Scout camp rather than having a weekend outing. As soon as Scouts turn in their registration form for Scouting BSA and completed their joining requirements they are eligible to attend monthly outings.

Scout Uniform

As soon as a Scout is registered, they have privilege of wearing the Scout uniform, which in Troop 420 we wear to **all Troop meetings** and **travel to and from all outings**. Scouts wear a "Class A" uniform to all Troop meetings and for travel to and from outings including summer camp: Scout pants/shorts, scout belt, Scout shirt (short- or long-sleeved), neckerchief and neckerchief slide (required for Scoutmaster conferences and Court of Honors) or Scout bolo, and the following insignia: Glacier's Edge Council patch, green epaulets, and the Troop numerals 420. Scout socks are encouraged, but not mandatory; Scouts can wear white socks instead. Optional patches include the quality unit patch and the International Scouting patch. Each Scout will receive a neckerchief, epaulets, 420 numeral strip and if appropriate the quality unit patch when they join the Troop. Once the Scout is assigned to a patrol, they will receive a patrol patch.

The Scout uniform, pants/shorts, socks, etc. are available for purchase from the Scout Office at 5846 Manufactures Drive, Madison, WI 53704-6278. In addition, the Troop operates a uniform exchange, to which Scouts can donate Scout shirts, pants, shorts, and belts they have outgrown for use (free of charge) by younger Scouts. We understand that there can be problems and delays getting a uniform, but as soon as a Scout gets their uniform, they should wear it. If you have any questions about where patches go on the uniform, please ask before they are sewn on so that they won't need to be moved. The Scout Handbook and the uniform information sheet (attached) show where most of the patches go onto the uniform.

Monthly Outings (Campouts)

The Troop's monthly outings are almost always in the state of Wisconsin and involve a variety of activities. These outings are a combination of adventure and learning. On most outings, especially for First Year Scouts, we work on requirements for advancements. Therefore, ***it is important for First Year Scouts to attend as many outings as possible***. Scouts need to accumulate five activities (outings, Eagle Court of Honors, service projects, and other troop activities other than troop meetings and regular Court of Honors) to advance to Second Class rank and 10 activities to advance to First Class rank.

Except for the day trip in December, outings will typically run from Saturday morning through early Sunday afternoon, although approximately 2 times per year we will have outings that start on Friday evening. At the end of each outing, Scouts are dropped off ***at home***. On winter outings (January-March) we stay indoors; the other months feature overnight campouts. Transportation is provided by parents; usually, drivers stay for the overnight. **Parents are expected to attend at least once a year** but are welcome to come along on more outings. There is a nominal cost for each outing to cover food expenses (\$3-\$4 per meal), reservation costs and special activities (such as museum fee).

Sign-up deadlines for the outings are always announced at the Troop meetings and on the invitations/itinerary when sent out. The outing information is also posted on the Troop website. They are usually the Monday night Troop meeting 11-12 days before the campout, see Mark Werner, Treasurer. Last minute sign-ups are discouraged so that we can recruit the appropriate leadership and give the Scouts enough time to make necessary preparations (e.g. planning patrol meals and group activities). The Scout contacts Mr. Werner to sign up for the outings and makes arrangements for paying the outing fees (i.e. asks that funds be taken out of his troop account or provides a check) when he signs up. If the Scout cannot make a Troop meeting to sign up he should e-mail Mr. Werner (mwerner@chorus.net) or Mr. Hundal (sarbpal_hundal@hotmail.com) before the deadline. Scouts who sign up are committing themselves to the food charges; refunds are not provided unless the Scout becomes ill. If a Scout must miss an outing for which he has signed up, ***notify Mr. Hundal before the outing*** (556-1287).

Medications: All medication that a Scout needs to take during the outing should be checked in to the Scoutmaster leading the outing, who will make sure that it is given to the Scout at the appropriate time. Inform the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster in charge of the First Year Scouts if there is anything else about your Scout that we should be aware of for outings or meetings (food allergies).

Equipment: The Troop provides most of the equipment necessary for outings. Scouts will need a sleeping bag (rated at 20-30°F or so; put in an extra blanket if needed), flashlight (headlamps are popular) and personal hygiene gear. Scouts need to be ***prepared for bad weather*** on campouts (cold, wind, rain, snow).

Rain gear is always required for campouts, regardless of the weather forecast. The rain gear should be packed near the top of the bag or backpack because ***Scouts will be required to show the Senior Patrol Leader rain gear*** before departing on the outing. Depending on weather, the Scout should also pack warm clothing, adequate jacket, gloves or mittens, and (especially for sleeping) a knit hat. Scouts without appropriate gear will not be permitted to leave on the outing. Gear is easily carried in a duffel bag or a backpack.

Prohibited items: First year Scouts should not bring any bladed instruments (knives, etc.) to outings (or Troop meetings) until they have earned their Totin Chip. They must carry their Totin Chip with them whenever they have a bladed instrument. In addition, these items are prohibited by Troop policy: electronic gear (game units, PSPs, MP-3 players, radios, electronic games, laser pens, etc.), aerosol cans, firearms, ammunition, archery gear, fireworks of any kind, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, liquid fuel (including cigarette lighters), candles, skateboards, martial arts devices and some kinds of knives.

Parents/guardians of Scouts who bring prohibited items may be asked to pick up their Scout to take him home. Prohibited items will be confiscated and returned to the Scout's parents.

Summer Camp

All new Scouts are eligible to go to Camp Phillips this summer, and we strongly hope that all will go! Going to summer camp is one of the biggest events of our entire Scout year and new Scouts are able to complete over half of the requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class ranks as well as earn a merit badge! Camp Phillips is located near Haugen, WI, about 10 miles north of Rice Lake.

It is an excellent Scout Camp with great aquatics, nature area, Indian lore, a handicraft area, Scoutcraft skills, an archery range, rifle and shotgun ranges and tons of opportunities to earn merit badges. The camp is set on a 1,450 acre site, including 5 lakes with fishing and excellent swimming. We stay in screened cabins (housing four Scouts each) in 1-2 beautiful campsites. See <http://www.bsa-cvc.org/Camping.aspx>.

Troop 420 always attends Camp Phillips the third or last week of every July. The camp fee (approximately \$365) covers round trip transportation (on a chartered school bus), meals, waterfront, activity areas, use of boats, canoes and sail craft, and camp patch. Some merit badge classes have additional fees. The Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters and other parents will be in camp the full week -in addition to a fine camp staff.

Finances

Like all organizations, it costs money to run a Scout Troop. We have extensive camping equipment to buy and maintain for the patrols, camping fees along with national dues to pay, merit and advancement badges to acquire, mailing costs, etc. The three major sources of revenue for the troop are (1) member dues, (2) outing fees, and (3) fund-raising.

Dues: The dues for Scouts are approximately \$18/month. Generally, dues are collected quarterly (\$54) and the dues for new Scouts begin in the month that they join the troop. We will set up a **Troop Account** for each Scout and additional money (beyond dues) can be deposited in this account, then used for various expenses such as outing fees, summer camp, etc. Every Scout will receive a statement each quarter which has deposits and expenses with current account value.

Outing fees: The cost for outings is the cost of the food (\$10 for three meals and \$15 for four meals) plus the cost of the reservation, entrance fees and special activities. Outing fees are collected when Scouts sign up for the outing. The outing fee will be refunded only if the Scout is too ill to attend.

Fund-raising: The Troop also raises a considerable portion of its budget through fund-raising. We sell popcorn and wreaths, with the Troop's proceeds from the individual sales going into the Scout's Troop account. Generally this has been about 30% of sales. For example if a Scout sells \$900 worth of popcorn and wreaths then all of the profits (about 30%) would go into the Troop account for the Scout, about \$300. There are a few Scouts who sell enough popcorn and wreaths that it covers their dues, outings and activities fees for the year. The other major fund-raiser we have for the Troop finances is Bratfest. The proceeds from Bratfest go to the Troop and help pay for the bus to summer camp and equipment. Another fundraising event is a restaurant day, where a portion of the proceeds go to the Troop.

Financial Help: The Troop Committee wants to ensure that limited family finances don't interfere with any Scout's opportunity to be a Scout and participate fully in the program, including going to summer camp. We have money set aside in the Troop treasury to help out in these cases. If you are interested, please talk to the Scoutmaster, Committee Chair or Treasurer.

Advancement

As the Scouts continue to participate in the Troop they will advance in rank from Scout to Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class, then on to the advanced ranks of Star, Life and Eagle. The specific requirements for each rank are listed in the Scout Handbook. We work on these requirements during the Troop meetings and outings as well as at summer camp. Therefore, the key to advancement is **participation**. Scouts who regularly attend meetings **and outings** will advance more quickly than those who do not. There is enough variation among Scouts in interests, skills, and motivation that there will be quite a bit of variation in how quickly they move through the ranks. It is important to understand that the *advancement program is not a race*. There is no premium placed on achieving a rank or the Eagle rank in the least time possible. The idea is to make **regular, planned progress toward goals**. The First Year Scout program is designed to help Scouts advance from Scout to First Class rank during 24 months for the typical Scout.

Some Scouts who participate in most outings including summer camp will be able to complete rank to First Class in about 18 months other Scouts will take 30 months. This is a very structured program closely guided by a few Assistant Scoutmasters, Troop Guides (older scouts who work with the first year Scouts) and some parents. **Requirements for these initial Scout ranks are completed at troop meetings and outings** under the supervision of an adult and Scout leadership in the Troop. So, regular participation is needed to advance through these lower ranks. Scouts must participate in 5 activities (outings and service projects) to achieve Second Class rank and 5 more for First Class. Each of the ranks also has a very important *Scout Spirit* requirement. This means living by the Scout Oath and Law at all times. The meaning of this requirement is discussed in the Scout Handbook.

Summer camp offers excellent opportunities for advancement work, particularly for First Year Scouts. **Our advancement program is built around the expectation that Scouts will attend summer camp**. Scouts are able to complete over half of the Tenderfoot, Second and First Class advancement requirements at Camp Phillips.

Beyond First class, Scouts have much more freedom in selecting the activities (mostly merit badge work) that they will use for advancement. At this point, Scouts can tailor the program to their individual interests; they also take on more responsibility for scheduling their advancement work at summer camp and during the year. Most Troop meetings are generally devoted to merit badge work for older Scouts and rank advancement for the First Year Scouts.

How Adults Can Help

We couldn't be a Scout Troop without the support and assistance of parents and guardians. Please consider becoming an Assistant Scoutmaster or volunteer for another position. You don't need to be an outdoor expert or a former Scout: the Council provides excellent training. You don't need to devote a huge amount of time: there are many others with whom you will share responsibilities. Women as well as men are welcome in all troop activities. The Troop provides all camping equipment except for personal gear (sleeping bag, clothes, etc.). Serving as an Assistant Scoutmaster provides you with a unique opportunity to watch your Scout develop, to share experience with them, and to have a lasting influence on many other lives.

We also need adults to serve on the Troop Committee that oversees all the activities of the troop, to be merit badge counselors, to help drive on campouts, to go to summer camp (Camp Phillips) as an adult

leader, and to assist in a variety of other ways. One especially important way that parents and guardians can help is by encouraging their Scout to attend regularly and praising their work on advancement. Also, from time to time we have special nights for parents to visit the Troop. Parents are welcome anytime, but we particularly encourage parents and guardians to attend these events.

Problems or Concerns

The first month or two in the Troop is a prime time for problems to occur. There can be paperwork errors, misunderstandings about expectations, and challenges adjusting to the different organization of a Scout Troop. If problems do arise, **call the Scoutmaster, Sarbpal S. Hundal (556-1287) or Assistant Scoutmaster** who coordinates the First Year Scout program for Troop 420. We will do everything we can to make the transition to Scouts a successful one! Please understand that **no** form of hazing or harassment is acceptable in this Troop. There are no initiation nor are other such events tolerated. If a Scout does not feel welcome because of the actions of someone else in the Troop they and/or you should discuss it with the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster as soon as possible.

Finally, Thank You!

We consider it a privilege to be working with your child. It is exciting to watch each of the Scouts grow as they acquire new skills and take on leadership positions. We hope this will be a fun and meaningful adventure for your entire family.



Notes:
