

Boy Scout
Troop 17
Welcome Booklet



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INTRODUCTION

Dear Scout and Parents,

Congratulations on the step you and your son have taken. We welcome you to Troop 17.

This booklet has been prepared by the Troop Committee in response to the interest that has been expressed about knowing more about Scouting and the Troop 17 program. It is intended to serve as an informative guide for both new Scouts and their parents as well as for current members of our Troop.

Included is information about Troop Organization, Meetings, Uniform, Advancement, our Outdoor Program, Equipment, Financing, Rosters, and miscellaneous.

While it will serve to orient you to Scouting, a booklet of this size obviously cannot provide all of the answers. We hope it will give you a degree of familiarity with the organization and its activities, but we know there will be unanswered questions. Members of the Troop 17 Committee stand by ready to assist you in these areas and will be happy to provide answers.

A SPECIAL NOTE TO PARENTS

Like anything else in life, your son will get as much out of Scouting as he puts into it. You, as parents, can help your son in many ways to achieve his goals. For this reason, we would like to extend to you an invitation to join us in planning and conducting the Troop's many activities. We are always looking for additional volunteers such as Committee members and Assistant Scoutmasters. If you have the time - and this ranges from a couple of hours to a couple of days a month - and are interested, please contact any of our Troop Committee members.

Participating in the Troop along with your son can offer you a rich and rewarding experience. We hope you will consider such participation seriously and look forward to meeting and working with you in the future.

TROOP 17 COMMITTEE

TROOP ORGANIZATION

The governing body of the Troop is the Troop Committee, which is comprised of adults who have received the approval of the Charter Organization (St. Francis Knights of Columbus) and of the local Council (Central New Jersey Council). The responsibilities of the Committee are many. In brief, it provides leadership, facilities, policies, guidance, and rules and maintains a solvent financial status for the Troop.

The Troop Committee and Adult Leadership Staff meet on the third Monday of each month, 7:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, 270 Woodbridge Avenue, Metuchen, NJ 08840.

The central figure or Unit Leader of the Troop is the Scoutmaster. Hardly of lesser importance are the Assistant Scoutmasters. They direct the operation of the Unit and usually accompany the Unit on outings and Scout functions.

The program of Troop 17 is entirely dependent on the degree of assistance given by the parents.

In addition to Committee work, the following are areas where we will need assistance from parents:

1. Help at Troop Meetings: If you have previous experience in Scouting, or enjoy working with boys of Scout age, volunteer to give a talk at a Troop meeting.
2. Transportation: Cars and drivers (over 21) are needed to take Scouts on trips. These trips are seldom more than an hour or two from Metuchen.
3. Merit Badge Counselor: There are currently 120 Merit Badges the Scouts can earn. Parents are needed to become Merit Badge Counselors. To find out more information on this please log onto the Central New Jersey Council Website
4. Camping Trips: If you enjoy the outdoors and can spare an occasional weekend at camp with the boys, you are encouraged to help with our outdoor program.

TROOP MEETINGS

Troop 17 meets every Monday night of the school year, except the third Monday, unless otherwise notified. These meetings are held from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the CYO building of St. Francis Cathedral on 521 Main Street in Metuchen, second floor. Please come into the CYO no later than 8:55 to pick up your son. In fairness to your son and to the leaders that must wait for your arrival, your son should not be waiting for you to pick him up after 9:00 PM.

All Scouts are to be in a Class A uniform at the meetings. Each Scout should bring his Scout Handbook, pencil or pen, and any other important Scout documents needed to the meeting.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend Troop meetings, and are requested to attend all of the special Troop events such as Courts of Honor.

NEWSLETTERS AND TRIP INFORMATION

Newsletters and trip information are given or e-mailed to the Scout or his parents as needed.

THE UNIFORM

The uniform has been part of Scouting since its beginning. The uniform may be purchased at any Scout Supply Store, such as:

Central New Jersey Scout Shop
2245 US Highway 130 Suite 106
Dayton, NJ 08810
Tel: (732) 438-0600

Efinger Sporting Goods
513 West Union Ave.
Bound Brook, NJ 08805
732 356-0604

Route 18 Sporting Goods
691 Route 18 South
East Brunswick, NJ
732 238-8417

Main Street Sports Inc.
82-A Main Street
Woodbridge, NJ
732 634-7474

A Class A uniform consists of the following:

1. Scout Shirt-(long or short sleeve)
2. Scout Trousers or Scout Shorts
3. Neckerchief-(given to your son upon joining our Troop)
4. Boy Scout issued Belt with Boy Scout Buckle
5. Shoulder Loops for Scout Shirt
6. Patches-Council, Patrol(supplied by the Troop), "17"
7. Cap (optional)
8. Footwear-appropriate for different events

For positioning of patches, etc. on the uniform, refer to the Scout handbook.

The Scout is expected to wear the Class A uniform at the following functions:

1. All Troop Meetings
2. Boards of Review, Scoutmaster's Conferences (A MUST – If the Scout is not in full uniform he will not be given the Scoutmaster Conference or Board of Review).
3. Courts of Honor
4. When traveling to and from all camping and Scouting functions
5. Scout Sunday
6. When appearing before a Merit Badge Counselor

A Class B uniform consists of the Troop 17 T-shirt, Scout pants or Scout Shorts, and Scout Belt. The Scout will be told when to wear the Class B uniform.

The Troop has established a uniform exchange program. Anyone interested in contributing to or borrowing from the exchange program should contact the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair.

If, for reasons beyond the Scouts control he cannot acquire a uniform shirt, please contact the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair.

When contemplating the purchase of other Scout equipment such as sleeping bag, foam pad, poncho, backpack frames and bags, etc., please feel free to discuss these items with our leaders in order to determine the most suitable equipment available for our program.

The Troop offers a variety of items for sale; they include the Class B T-shirt, Sweatshirt, Troop 17 Baseball Cap, and Winter Cap. See a Committee member to purchase.

ADVANCEMENT

To assist in evaluating a boy's progress through the Scouting program, certain measures of accomplishment have been found helpful. In the individual case, they are a partial measure of the boy's achievement; in total, they are the hallmarks of a good Troop.

The subdivisions of Scouting---Scout teamwork, Scout-craft, Scout spirit---may, in practice, be funneled into advancement, field trips, camping exercises and the Troop contest.

The ranks of Scouting from Tenderfoot to Eagle plus the requirements for achieving each rank are shown in the Scout Handbook. To find out exactly how your son is progressing, visit the Troop and ask to see the Troop Advancement Chart.

There are three types of advancement that are indicative of a Scout's progress:

1. Skill Awards: These are the foundation of Scout-craft and the Scout is tested by other Scouts. For example: knot tying.
2. Merit Badges: Work in specific areas of interest with final evaluation by a Merit Badge Counselor who provides the Scout with techniques which may mold his future interest areas. Certain Merit Badges are required for Rank Advancement.
3. Rank Advancement: These are the steps of the ladder starting with the Scout Rank and ending up with the Eagle Rank.

The specific requirements of each Progress Award are outlined in the Scout Handbook.

As a parent, please take some time to look through the Boy Scout Handbook. Particularly, the chapters on beginning your adventure, merit badges, the history of the BSA and list of requirements for each rank.

OUR OUTDOOR PROGRAM

Outdoor activities are the highlight of Scouting. The values of camping and backpacking are many - Scout-craft, adventure, advancement, fun, and fellowship, just to mention the more obvious. Of even greater importance is the training and experience that a boy receives in self-reliance, leadership, acceptance of responsibility, and the building of a sound body adaptable to all elements.

Each Scout attending a monthly trip is charged a fee, which is applied towards campsite accommodations and food purchases for the weekend.

PLEASE NOTE: Every Troop trip requires a Troop 17 permission slip, signed by the Scout's parent or guardian. The permission slip can be downloaded from the Forms page of the Troop 17 web site, www.njtroop17.org.

In addition, both the parents and the Scout should read and be familiar with the Troop's Code of Conduct policy.

Our outdoor program includes:

1. Regular Camping: Using tents, cooking equipment, propane lamps provided by the Troop, the Troop travels to campsites within a few hours from Metuchen.
2. Summer Camp Program: Troop 17 goes to camp for one week each summer. A summer camp orientation meeting for Scouts and their parents is scheduled for early to late spring.

3. High Adventure: Events designed to be challenging for older scouts. Activities such as winter camping, backpacking, National Jamboree, Sea Base and Philmont are some examples. Most high adventure activities have a minimum age of 14, however there are some exceptions.
4. Special Events: Usually day trips, such as hikes, ski trips, visits to points of interest, are scheduled at various times during the year.

The Troop has a trailer and will provide: tents, cooking stoves, patrol boxes, lanterns, cooking equipment, and ground cloths. The Troop does not provide personal gear.

The Scout responsible for: mess kit, utensils, sleeping bag, foam pad (we do not recommend air mattresses), camp chair, water bottle, backpack (only needed for backpacking trips), poncho, flash lights, pocket knife (providing they have received at least their Tote n' Chit), compass, pillow, cloths, and toiletry kit. Please check with our Scout Leaders before making any major equipment purchases to find out just what your son will need for a specific trip.

Items Not Allowed

Electronic devices (such as cell phones, iPods, etc.)

Candles, punks, matches or lighters

Any items which may be considered possible dangerous or injurious to a Scout

RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR TROOP 17 ELECTIONS

Please refer to the Troop 17 Elections Guidelines. See Scoutmaster for a copy.