

# TROOP 457 OPERATIONS

Sponsored by the Saline Kiwanis

Welcome to Troop 457! The Scoutmaster and other adult leaders and parents as well as the Scouts hope that you will enjoy being an active part of the troop. Scouting can be an enjoyable and rewarding experience for boys and their families if the Scout and his family become involved in the various troop activities.

The Boy Scout program involves skill and leadership development for the Scout as he advances through the ranks. There are many differences between Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts with the major difference being the way the boys advance in rank. There is a "Hands Off" approach with the boy doing as much as possible on his own. The Scoutmaster, other trained adults and older boy leaders will encourage and guide your son along the advancement trail, but *your interest and encouragement is needed* for your son to enjoy his Scouting experiences.

Many parents become involved in the operation of the troop. The troop operates a full year program and must have parent involvement in many areas. Assistant Scoutmasters, Troop Committee members and many other adult volunteer opportunities are available. Some positions are for a week or two a couple times a year such as Refreshment Coordinators for the Courts of Honor and others are much more involved such as the Advancement Chair. The Scoutmaster or Committee Chair can help each parent find the right way to be actively involved in the troop program.

## Basic Troop Operation

Adult leadership consists of Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters and Committee Members. Many training programs are available for these volunteer leaders so they have a better understanding of the program. Parent involvement is a must if the program is to be a quality program for the boys!

Boys in youth leadership positions make up the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC), which consists of:

- SPL (Senior Patrol Leader), who is elected by all the boys in the troop once a year,
- 2 or more ASPLs (Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders), who are appointed by the SPL,
- Troop Guides, who volunteer and are approved by the Scoutmaster,
- PLs (Patrol Leaders) and APLs (Assistant Patrol Leaders), who are elected by patrol members
- Troop Scribe, who volunteers and is approved by the Scoutmaster and has the job of maintaining some records for the troop.

These youth leaders plan troop meetings and outings, and handle the basic operation of the troop under the supervision of adult leaders. There are other Scout leadership positions within the troop and those boys support the PLC at meetings and outings.

## Troop Calendar

Troop meetings are held every Monday evening except when there is no school on that day. Meetings are in the Liberty School Cafeteria from 7:30-9:00 PM during the school year. Summer meetings are usually held from 7:00-8:30 PM at a location that is determined each late spring. **Parents should arrive about 10 minutes before dismissal time each week so they can hear announcements.**

The calendar is planned by the PLC with adult guidance each year. Mainly, the monthly campouts (dates and locations) are scheduled along with the weekly meetings. Once again, active parent involvement in these events is important to the success of the troop program.

## Rank Advancement/Merit Badges

It is the responsibility of each Scout to be sure that all completed requirements are signed off and recorded with the proper adult. Each Scout needs a Boy Scout Handbook in which to keep his records (parents may **NOT** sign off requirements). First year Scouts generally do not work on merit badges (other than at Summer Camp) until they reach First Class, but may do so if they choose.

Older Scouts serve as Troop Guides or Instructors and assist the Scoutmaster during troop meetings and on outings to help the lower rank Scouts advance, especially those with Scout through First Class rank. There are extra activities at troop meetings and on outings to ensure Scouts progress through the ranks of Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class.

It is the policy of Troop 457 that **ONLY** the following leaders may sign off on rank requirements:

Adult Leaders:

- Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters

Youth Leaders:

- Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPL), Patrol Leaders (PL), Assistant Patrol Leaders (APL), Troop Guides and Instructors

To earn a merit badge, the Scout must get the Scoutmaster's signature on a merit badge application form (blue card) and locate a currently registered Merit Badge Counselor with whom to work. We have many counselors within our troop but if a Scout wishes to work on a merit badge that does not have a counselor in our troop, the Advancement Chair will provide a list of counselors in our area.

*Adults are always needed to serve as Merit Badge Counselors. Any adult with some area of expertise or interest is encouraged to see the Advancement Chairperson for more information on registering to be a BSA Merit Badge Counselor.*

A weeklong summer camp opportunity is available each year for the boys. Summer camp is a very important experience for all Scouts, especially first year Scouts. The boys not only get to know one another better, but they also have a wide range of activities available to help them grow as a Scout, and to complete rank and merit badge requirements.

### **Scoutmaster's Conference and Board of Review**

To advance in rank, a Scout must complete all requirements for the rank including the last two requirements, a Scoutmaster's Conference and a Board of Review. The exception is a Board of Review for "Scout" rank is optional.

Procedures for Completion of these Last Two Requirements are:

1. Scout must be dressed in Class A uniform and have his Scout Handbook with all rank records completed for the rank to which he expects to advance.
2. Scout registers for a Scoutmaster's Conference on sign-up sheet available at troop meetings so he can arrange a time to meet with the Scoutmaster/Assistant SM. If not sign-up sheet is not available, ask the Scoutmaster or an Assistant SM.
3. Scout registers on Board of Review sign-up sheet (next to SM Conference list) when Scoutmaster's Conference and all other requirements have been completed for a rank. If a sign-up sheet is not available, ask an Advancement Chair.
  - The Advancement Chairperson or Board of Review Coordinator will arrange to have a panel of at least 3 adults conduct the Board of Review in an area away from other troop activities.
  - Board of Review dates are generally scheduled at least twice a month — more often in the 1 or 2 months before a Court of Honor.
  - Board of Review panel consists of at least 1 registered adult member and 2 other adults who are not related to the Scout or serve as Scoutmaster/Assistant Scoutmaster.
4. The Advancement Chairperson will see that the Scout receives recognition as soon as possible for his advancement and that his advancement is properly recorded.

### **Uniform**

Troop Requirements:

- Shirt--Official BSA khaki shirt with proper insignia *Patches provided by the troop are patrol patches, rank patches, leadership position patches, merit badges and any special event patches. "457" all-in-one patch may be purchased from Advancement Chairperson for about \$2.00.*
- Pants--Official BSA long pants and/or shorts with Scout belt. *The new zip-off pants/shorts combo with a belt is what most boys prefer now.*
- Socks--BSA with BSA shorts; Dark or BSA with long pants
- Neckerchief--Red BSA or Scout related Bolo Tie (BSA Neckerchief is gift to Scout from troop when he attains rank of Scout.)
- Optional Additions: Scout Hat (only Scout hats should be worn with BSA uniform) and red Troop 457 T-shirt or Sweatshirt (Class B Uniform)

***NOTE:** Complete class A uniform is required to participate in formal ceremonies. The troop maintains a uniform exchange box where parents donate outgrown uniform items. Everyone is free to give, take and return items. A red Troop T-shirt (Class B) is ordered through the Troop in the spring each year. Uniform items may be purchased at the Scout Service Center or online at [www.scoutstuff.org](http://www.scoutstuff.org). Uniforms should be worn to all meetings unless otherwise instructed and to most activities, so it does get considerable use.*

### **Basic Costs**

**Dues:** Dues are \$30 for the first Scout in a family and \$25 for each additional Scout in the same family. Dues are paid when a Scout joins the troop and in January of each year. Adult volunteers pay a registration fee of \$10 each year.

**Summer Camp:** Usually between \$200-\$300 plus spending money for Scouts and \$100-\$150 for adults who attend.

**Campouts:** Fees vary from \$24 to \$52 to cover registration, patches, transportation and food.

*During the year each Scout has several opportunities to earn money to help with these costs. Each Scout may earn money by participating in the sale of pop and popcorn at the community fair and Trail's End popcorn sale during the year. This money, kept in Scout accounts by the troop treasurer, is available for the Scouts to use for approved expenses such as outings and/or equipment. We are always on the lookout for other money earning opportunities.*

Boys Life: A free subscription of Boys Life will be given to your Scout, if dues are paid in full.

### Equipment

The troop furnishes tents and patrol cooking equipment for the boys. Each Scout is responsible for personal gear such as the following:

- Proper uniform and weather appropriate clothing
- Flashlight
- Scout Handbook
- Rain Poncho
- Sleeping Bag with stuff sack
- Canteen/Water Bottle
- Sleeping Pad
- Compass and Knife
- Mess Kit (plate, bowl, cup and utensils)
- Backpack (duffel or sport bag OK for beginning Scouts)

Individual Scout needs and preferences will cause this list to vary some. All equipment should be properly marked with the Scout's name. (NOTE: Scout account money can be used to purchase Scout items with Scoutmaster approval.)

### General Campout/Activity Procedures

- All Scouts are required to wear Class A uniform when traveling to and from all events.
- All activities require a signed permission slips to be returned with fees by the date stated on each activity flyer. All required health forms must be current and on file with the troop to cover health emergencies.
- Scouts need to be on time for departures!!
- Scouts are returned to their homes after activities unless other arrangements are made.
- Drivers (must be 21 or older) are needed to support troop activities. Usually the adults attending each event can provide enough transportation, but there may be times when other adults will be called upon to help (extra drivers are not required to stay so please try to help if asked). Drivers for troop trips that are over 100 miles one way, will receive full or partial reimbursement for their expenses if they turn all receipts into the troop treasurer within 3 weeks of the trip (See VI. E under Troop 457 Policies section). This expense is deductible on your income tax.
- If you must pick up your son from an activity or campout before the scheduled return time or need to bring him at a later time than regular departure time, you must notify the leader-in-charge as soon as possible AND be sure to let the leader-in-charge know when he actually departs early/arrives late to the outing site.
- If your son is taking any medications, the leader-in-charge must be notified so that proper arrangements can be made. An appointed adult leader holds and dispenses prescription meds in the absence of the Scout's parents. Exceptions include inhalers, epi pens and other meds that should be kept with the Scout.

### Troop Guidelines *Some basic do's and don'ts for Scouts and adults*

Campouts-- **DO NOT:**

- Keep food or drink (except water) in tents
- Bring personal snack items (food or beverage)
- Put cots in troop tents (exceptions noted by Scoutmaster)
- Personal electronic equipment (TVs, radios, CD/DVD players, electronic games, cell phones) is **not allowed** on campouts. On longer trips, these items may be used in cars with permission of the driver. The troop is not responsible for lost or damaged items. If found during a campout, items will be confiscated and may be claimed at the next troop meeting. Exceptions to this are made by the SM-in-charge.

BSA "Guideline Mandates" **MUST BE FOLLOWED** on all campouts:

- Keep flames of any kind out of and away from tents and equipment
- NO alcohol or tobacco — Adults that must smoke, should do so out of sight of Scouts and NEVER in tents.
- Respect others and their property, and follow the rules and directions of the troop leadership.
- Youth Protection guidelines are to be followed by Scouts and adults at all times.
- Scouts and adults are accountable for their actions so act responsibly at all times.
- Be prepared! Be ready, punctual and properly equipped. Bring your best attitude and Scout Spirit!