

Advice for New Scouts and Parents

We normally have 3 to 4 merit badges going on at each meeting except for the last meeting in each month which is board of review night. At the completion of each rank, each scout will have a scoutmaster's conference with me or with one of the assistant scoutmasters. They will then have a board of review with three adults who are committee members. You are very welcome to participate in these. Some merit badges are required for Eagle -- Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World, Family Life, First Aid, Swimming or Hiking or Cycling, Personal Fitness, Personal Management, Lifesaving or Emergency Preparedness, Environmental Science, Camping, Communication. Each of these merit badges or one from the two groups (Swimming, Hiking, Cycling) and (Emergency Preparedness or Lifesaving) must be earned for Eagle with some of these required for Star and some more for Life and all for Eagle with some optional merit badges for each of these badges. We will have optional merit badges each night. The scout should select the ones he wishes to earn. In addition we have learning sessions for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. Parts of each of these badges can be earned in the meeting and other parts must be completed in the outdoors at campouts. Last night I worked with many of the new scouts on Tenderfoot requirements. I try to do this when I am not meeting with WEBELOS and other visitors or doing a merit badge. I will be starting with Personal Fitness merit badge at the next meeting. The merit badges are all in three-week sessions with some requiring two three-week sessions. At 8:00 each meeting we will announce the merit badges and their locations. The locations vary somewhat depending on how many rooms are available to us at each meeting. At some campouts scouts may also earn merit badges as in Wilderness Survival at that campout or Cooking, Pioneering, and Orienteering at the Troop 236 Leadership and Scout Skills Camp held each summer in August. We have the scouts select what they wish to do. If I am not available to teach, we have older scouts teach these sessions for Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class. We let the new scouts select what they wish to do. Some will first work on the basics of Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class which helps to get these ranks sooner. Others will elect to work on merit badges early on. These scouts don't earn the initial badges quite as quickly but then have the merit badges for Star, Life, and Eagle sooner. We sort of watch the progress and help guide them as needed. However, this is as time in their lives when they are starting to grow up and mature emotionally as well as physically, and we want them to start increasingly to make their own decisions. The Scout Handbook lists all of the merit badges. The ones with the silver border are the Eagle-required badges. If you wish you may also purchase a book at the Scout Service Center which lists the requirements for all badges. Periodically I have scouts come over to my house on a Saturday to work on merit badges. At most campouts we make time available to work on the outdoor skills for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. If a scout wants to work on a merit badge not included in the ones provided at the meetings or at summer camp, he should talk with me or Brendan Greaney, and we will locate a merit badge counselor for that badge. For reasons of youth protection both for the scout and the merit badges counselor, we would like for that scout to have a buddy to work with him on the merit badges. Hopefully this has clarified the advancement process. If not please let me know. I think we have an outstanding leadership organization from both the older scouts and the adult volunteers which makes the program run very smoothly.

As to summer camp, we want each scout to attend. There is a campership through the council which will cover half of the cost the basic summer camp fee. We do add in a little to this to cover giving each scout two troop tee-shirts and as snack each night. For the new scouts who we recommend take the Kit Cricket Adventure program, there is an additional \$6.00 added in for the kits for their handicraft badge and for food for the cooking requirements. In addition to the council campership, we have some funding through the George Carson Campership fund. This money comes in from donations and from all

proceeds from the book I wrote, Scout Shorts. Funding for the campership fund through the council is raised at the Cookout for Scouting held the second Friday of June. Scouts and adults from Troop 236 help staff this event. For each of these, we like for the scouts to do some kind of service project, so they have earned the campership rather than just having it given to them. Just talk with me, the registrars -- Scott Welch and Angie Cavanaugh, Bill Byers, Mark Feuer, or Dave Lapp. We will also be working at the camp on Beaver Day on May 6 which is a nice way for all of our scouts, campership or not, to give something to our camp. We have two major fund raisers each fall -- popcorn through the council and Christmas wreath sales through the troop. Scouts who wish to take advantage of these opportunities can earn a great deal of their campout money. 90% of all profits go into a scout account for each scout. When a scout signs up for a campout, he may elect to take the money out of his scout account. This money may also be used for scout equipment, such as a warm sleeping bag, etc.

The most time consuming part of the Tenderfoot requirements are the exercises. The purpose of this requirement is to show the scout that a regular program of physical activity makes him physically fit. These activities are running 1/4 mile, sit ups, pull ups, push ups, and the standing broad jump. The scout should test himself on each of these and document it in his book. He should then practice these activities about 3-4 times per week and at the end of a month retest himself and record the results in his book. There are no set goals for this, merely to see if there is improvement.

GETTING A HEAD START ON TENDERFOOT

1. Practice the Scout Oath and Laws. You will need to know these for Tenderfoot. We will go over them during the opening ceremony at each meeting which should help you. As a trick to learn the Scout Oath, there are three parts, just like the three fingers in the scout sign. The first part is what you will do for God and your country. "On my honor

I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country." The second part is what you will do to be a good scout. "To obey the Scout Laws and to help other people at all times. The third part is what you will do to be a good kid. "To keep myself physically fit, mentally awake, and morally straight.

The 12 Scout Laws can be more easily learned by breaking them up into groups of three. The first three can be remembered by TLC (Tender Loving Care. Modify the TLC to TLH -- Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful. The second three are like Fried Chicken Kentucky -- Friendly, Courteous, Kind. The next three can be remembered from OCTober -- Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty. The last three can be remembered from almost like a VCR, but BCR -- Brave, Clean, and Reverent.

2. Begin working on an exercise program. Do them now and record the results. Work on them at least 3 to 4 times per week for the next 4 weeks and record your results. I think you'll be surprised at how you improve.
 - Push ups
 - Pull ups
 - Sit ups
 - Standing long jump (_____feet, _____inches)
 - 1/4 mile walk/run
3. We will go over the other requirements at the meetings and on your first campouts.

4. Any time you have a question, call me at 885-3804, Greg Schoeppner, the First Assistant Scoutmaster at 396-0966, or Jeff Nagel, our Senior Patrol Leader at 293-2336.
5. We'll try to assign you and older boy as a "Troop Big Brother" soon. His job is to get to know you, to become your friend and resource person, and to help guide you up to First Class. We will have a Big Brother Campout in the fall. This will give you an opportunity to get to know the new scouts and some of our older scouts who have made a commitment to work with the new scouts.
6. The more actively you participate in meetings and campouts, the quicker you will advance, and the quicker you will make new friends.
7. The George Carson Fund is always available to help with camp out funding. We only ask that any scout who uses this, do a service project for any organization to earn it.
8. You are now older and more mature. You will be, to a great extent, making your own decisions on what you work on. This is all part of your growing up and learning to be a leader. Boy Scouts is very different in this respect than Cub Scouts in which the leaders work everyone through the same activities.
9. Make a real effort to attend Summer Camp. This is a great opportunity to get to know the boys, work on rank advancement, and just have fun.

Best wishes to you in Boy Scouts. I look forward to standing up with each and everyone of you in a few years and presenting you with your Eagle badge.

Please let me know any time you have additional questions.

"Doc"