

TROOP 76, INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

KEEPING INFORMED

- **Weekly Newsletter** - The Weekly Newsletter is emailed to both Scouts and parents (usually on Sunday evenings). It is the primary source of communication and information about the Troop. It contains important dates and links.
- **Troop Google Calendar** - The Google Calendar is linked in the Weekly Newsletter; subscribe so updates go straight to your own calendar app.
- **Troop Website** - www.troop76.org The Troop Website is another spot for finding Troop information.
- **Troop Directory** - The link for the Directory can be found in the Weekly Newsletter. It contains contact information for Scouts, families, Troop Adult Leadership, and Merit Badge Counselors.
- **Closed Facebook Group** - "Ridgefield CT Boy Scout Troop 76" is a place for Scouts and families to post photos from our meetings, trips and events.

HOW CAN I HELP?

- **Uniformed Adult Leadership:** Support the Scout program and work directly with the Scouts from camping trips to Merit Badge activities to rank advancement. Training is required. Positions: Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters. Contact Michael Pearl, Scoutmaster.
- **Troop Committee:** This is the business unit responsible for non-program aspects of the Troop such as finances, fundraising, record keeping, policies, and registration. The Committee meets on the 1st Wednesday of the month (Sept.-June, usually via Zoom). Below are the positions, those in red need to be filled ASAP or starting in the fall of 2023. Online training is required. Contact David Luhman, Troop Committee Chairperson.

Positions:

- Chairperson
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Advancement
 - Community Service
 - Communications
 - Training Coordinator
 - Troopmaster Administrator
 - Recruitment
 - Hospitality
 - Eagle Advisor
 - Webmaster
- **Merit Badge Counselor:** Volunteer to help oversee a Merit Badge project. Merit Badges can be earned in everything from salesmanship to photography to swimming. Online training is required. Contact Michael Pearl, Scoutmaster.
 - **Wreath Sale Coordinator:** Our Wreath Sale begins in October. It is usually our only fundraiser of the year. There is a well oiled and easily manageable system in place for running the sale. Contact John Mooney, Wreath Sale Coordinator.
 - **Camp Sequassen Coordinator:** Our Troop attends summer camp as a group every July. The camp in New Hartford, CT is run by the CT Yankee Council. The coordinator is responsible for the paperwork needed in order for the Scouts to have a successful week at camp. Contact Nicole Genna, Camp Sequassen Coordinator.
 - **General Volunteering:** Volunteer at a meeting, run a service project, assist in planning a scout event, provide refreshments for a Court of Honor, etc. Look for opportunities in the Weekly Newsletter.

HOW IS THE TROOP ORGANIZED?

The national organization, The Boy Scouts of America (BSA), is divided into councils. Troop 76 is a member of the Connecticut Yankee Council (www.ctyankee.org). Within councils are districts. Our district, Scatacook (www.scatacook.org), consists of Troops in northern Fairfield County. Our sponsoring organization is Jesse Lee United Methodist Church, which provides us a meeting hall and large storage room (The QM) for troop equipment. As part of the church, Troop 76 is a non-profit organization.

Within the Troop, the Scouts are organized by patrols. There are 6 or so Scouts per patrol, typically organized by age and rank attainment. For each patrol there is a Patrol Leader, Assistant Patrol Leader and Patrol Quartermaster. These are rotating positions elected by each patrol. It is expected that a Patrol Leader will attend most of the camping trips that occur during their leadership. Scouts should consider being a Patrol Leader when their schedule will allow for regular attendance at meetings, camping, and events. Think of a patrol as a “Troop within a Troop.”

The Patrol Leadership Committee (PLC) is the Scout-run leadership of the Troop. The PLC includes: Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), 2-3 Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders, Troop Guide, Instructor, Scribe, Historian, Quartermaster and the Patrol Leaders. The PLC typically meets the last Tuesday of the month (when there is not a regular Troop meeting). Scouts who hold leadership positions are expected to attend the PLC meetings.

TROOP MEETINGS

Troop 76 meets every Tuesday from September through early June in the Carriage House at Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church from 7:30 to 8:30 pm. (except for the last Tuesday of the month for PLC meetings) Generally, if there is no school, there will be no Troop meeting. Check the weekly Troop Newsletter or the Troop Google Calendar for the latest information. Scouts should wear their complete Class A uniforms and bring their Scout Handbook to all Tuesday meetings. This handbook is their record of advancement through Scouting; they should know where it is at all times.

Three times a year, the Troop will hold a Court of Honor (CoH) during our regular Troop meeting time. During the CoH, scouts are recognized for rank advancement and Merit Badge achievement. Class A uniforms are required and family members are encouraged to attend.

CAMPING/ACTIVITIES

Monthly camping trips and outings are decided on and planned by our Scouts and have included: hikes, backpacking trips, beach camping, trips to historical sites, an annual ski-trip, winter/spring “Camporees” with other area Troops, orienteering, offshore fishing, and the multi-night “big trip” at the end of the school year. Many of our Scouts also participate in sleep-away summer camp at Camp Sequassen. Older scouts have opportunities to attend BSA High Adventure Camps, which vary year to year based on Scouts’ interest. The procedure for most camping/activities is as follows:

- **Time to Sign Up (TTSU)** - This is the online signup service that the Troop uses to keep track of Scouts who plan to attend an activity. All sign-ups are linked in the Weekly Newsletter and are on the website under the ‘Activities’ section.
- **Permission Slips** - Shortly before the trip, a Permission Slip (as a Google Form) is e-mailed to the Scouts/parents on the TTSU by the Scoutmaster/ASM. This must be completed before the trip.
- **Equipment/Gear Lists** - The Equipment/Gear List is e-mailed to the Scouts on the TTSU by the Scoutmaster/ASM, and the Scouts should pack accordingly.
- **Parent Chaperones** - In order to ensure the safety of the Scouts and maintain 2 deep leadership (or more) parents are needed to go on trips and supervise events. Parent volunteers must complete Youth Protection Training (YPT) online at www.scouting.org. Parent chaperones should be prepared to assist the Scoutmaster/ASM and SPL in whatever way they need, provide transportation for the Scouts, and plan to stay for the duration of the activity/shift.
- **The QM** - For camping/activities that require Troop supplies, Scouts meet at Jesse Lee before departure to load the items from the QM into the cars. The Troop returns to the QM at the end of the trip to assist in the unloading of the supplies.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Our Scouts are involved in a number of community-focused service projects. It is expected that Scouts will complete a total of 12 hours of community service during the Scouting year. At least 6 service hours earned between June and February are required to attend the annual Troop ski trip. (at least 4 hours from Troop-Sponsored projects). An additional 6 service hours earned after the annual ski trip until June, (at least 4 hours from Troop-Sponsored projects) are required to attend the annual end-of-the school-year “big trip”.

- **Troop-Sponsored Projects** are organized and run by the Troop (example: unload pumpkins for Jesse Lee Pumpkin Patch or help an Eagle candidate with their Eagle Project)
- **Non-Troop Projects** are any service activities completed by a Scout on their own (example: pick up litter within their neighborhood or shovel out fire hydrants). Scouts should receive prior approval from the Scoutmaster before starting a Non-Troop project. Up to 2 hours per term of Non-Troop projects can go towards the required community service hours.

ADVANCEMENT AND MERIT BADGES

Specific information on **rank advancement** is located in the Boy Scout Handbook. Once a Scout has completed the requirements for rank advancement, they must first have a Scoutmaster’s Conference to confirm their completion of all the rank’s requirements. He will then schedule participation in a Board of Review (BoR). BoRs are run by Tiffany Carlson, Advancement Chair and parent volunteers. The BoR is essentially a “job interview” for the rank that the Scout is looking to achieve. A complete Class A uniform is required for a BoR. (Note that for Eagle, a special Scatcook District level Board of Review will be scheduled.)

Merit Badge requirements can be found in the current BSA Merit Badge pamphlets. Our troop maintains a lending library for Merit Badge booklets; check the home page of the Troop Website for details. A Merit Badge Counselor coordinates Merit Badge activities. The general process to earn a Merit Badge is as follows:

- The Scout obtains a signed Merit Badge application (Merit Badge “blue card”) from the Scoutmaster and the name of the Merit Badge Counselor
- He sets up a time to meet with the Merit Badge Counselor to discuss requirements and schedules BEFORE doing any work on the Badge
- He completes the requirements (tracked on the “blue card”) until the requirements are met, meeting with the Merit Badge counselor as needed
- It is the Scout’s responsibility to manage this process – not Mom, Dad, or the Merit Badge Counselor.
- Completed Merit Badges and other advancements are presented to Scouts at a Court of Honor.
- The Scout will receive the Merit Badge patch (which may be displayed on a sash) and completed “blue card.” DO NOT THROW THIS CARD OUT. It should be kept in his “Advancement Records” binder. The “blue card” acts as the official record for earning Merit Badges, and is needed for rank advancement.

IMPORTANT: Your Scout’s Boy Scout Handbook becomes the official record of their advancement history. It is critical that your Scout not lose his handbook! Your son will use the same handbook for his entire Scouting career especially for advancement.