

# BSA Troop 606

## Handbook for Families

### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Boy Scouts of America! By joining Troop 606 you are setting out on the grand adventure of Scouting, and becoming part of a well established Troop that has served as a large and positive part of this community for over 36 years. We are generously supported and chartered by the Gateway Elks Association. We are also lucky enough to have the continued guidance and support from many 606 alumni. Since it's founding, Troop 606 has graduated just over 100 boys to the rank of Eagle Scout. This guide is intended to give Scouts and their parents an understanding of what to expect from their Scouting experience, what is expected of the boys and the key role that parents play in making the troop a continued success.

Check out our wonderful website at [www.troop606.com](http://www.troop606.com)

### SCOUTMASTER'S MINUTE

Thank you for considering membership in Troop 606. The decision to join a troop is a very exciting one. This handbook is a brief overview of how we operate as an organization. Please ask questions about how the troop operates, and arrange to attend a camping experience with us to see how your child fits with Troop 606. All the boys in the troop are provided opportunities to mature both physically and developmentally. We promote teamwork, leadership and character building in all that we do. It will be critical to your son's success to become personally involved in your son's scouting experience. Not all parents need to be Assistant Scoutmasters, but experience has shown that parental involvement is a critical ingredient for a boy's success.

### WHAT IS BOY SCOUTING?

It is the purpose of the Boy Scouts of America to provide an effective program designed to instill within the youth desirable qualities of character, to train them in the responsibilities of participating in citizenship and to help develop their personal fitness, providing this country with citizens who:

1. Are physically, mentally and emotionally fit.
2. Have a high degree of self-reliance as evidenced in such qualities as initiative, courage and resourcefulness.
3. Have personal and stable values firmly identified and followed
4. Have the desire and skill to help others.
5. Are knowledgeable about and take pride in their American heritage and understand America's role in the world.
6. Have a keen respect for the basic rights of all people.
7. Are prepared to fulfill the varied responsibilities of participating in and giving leadership to American society

## **BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA MISSION STATEMENT**

It is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America to serve others by helping to instill values in young people and in other ways, to prepare them to make ethical choices during their lifetime in achieving their full potential. The values we strive to instill are based on those found in the Scout Oath and Law.

### **THE SCOUT OATH**

On my honor, I will do my best  
To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law;  
To help other people at all times;  
To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight

### **THE SCOUT LAW**

A Scout is Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful  
Thrifty, Brave, Clean and Reverent.

### **THE SCOUT MOTTO**

Be prepared.

### **THE SCOUT SLOGAN**

Do a good turn daily.

## **JOINING TROOP 606**

The B.S.A. occasionally modifies eligibility rules, but currently boys can participate in

Scouting from age 11 until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Currently, in order to join Boy Scouts, a boy must either be 11 or have completed the fifth grade, or have earned the Arrow of Light Award as a Webelos Cub Scout.

We invite parents and boys to visit Troop meetings and ask questions prior to committing to join the troop. A boy may visit our troop meetings as many times as he wishes without joining. We also encourage prospective members to attend an overnight camp with the troop to see how we operate in the Outdoors to further evaluate the type of fit that exists with the troop. However he must join the troop to participate in special activities and camping trips regularly.

To become a member of Troop 606, you need to turn in the following items to the Scoutmaster:

1. Completed BSA membership form with parent/guardian signature (remember to fill out the health history on back of form)
2. \$10.00 registration fee (includes council fee, insurance, & troop neckerchief & slide). Boy's Life subscription optionally available for an additional \$9.00/yr.
3. Completed Personal Health and Medical Record with parent/guardian signature
4. Completed Troop Resource Survey. Our troop requires the help of all parents so that it may provide a quality program.

## **DUES AND FUNDRAISERS**

Dues are a one-time fee due in January of each year of \$25. All money that goes to the troop helps to pay for rank advancement insignia, merit badges, equipment and upkeep of equipment and supplies, camp site/reservations, off setting cost of camp, leadership training, and other costs associated with making the troop go.

There will also be fees due for individual campouts to offset the cost of food. This ranges between \$10.00-\$15.00 depending on the length and nature of the campout/event.

Our troop holds fundraisers throughout the year to help Scouts earn money for their scouting expenses such as dues, campouts, summer camp etc. Our fund raising committee meets at the beginning of each year to evaluate what will be offered. Currently, our largest and only fundraiser where **participation is mandatory** is our Christmas Tree Recycling Program. All profits from this go to the troop general fund for troop expenses, and to help keep individual costs as low as possible. Look under "Camping" for costs of summer camp.

Food costs at each campout are handled by each patrol's grub-master. Otherwise money exchanges go through our treasurer who keeps track of each boy's individual accounts, as well as troop expenses and earnings. Our treasurer is available at most meetings to give a financial report, answer questions, and handle transactions on individual scout's accounts.

Each scout should maintain a positive balance in his account at all times. If a scout becomes delinquent for a period of 90 days, the scout may not be allowed to participate in monthly campouts until the balance is brought back above zero. The fees for summer camp must be paid in full before the boy departs, otherwise he will not be allowed to go.

## **SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

BSA council offers an opportunity fund for scouts needing financial assistance. Troop 606 also sets aside funds to aid Scouts that need financial help with any facet of being a Scout. Scouts needing financial assistance should contact the Scoutmaster. All requests and disbursements are kept confidential.

## **UNIFORM POLICY**

When smartly worn, the uniform helps build troop spirit and a scout's pride in himself. Scouts in uniform create a strong, positive youth image in the neighborhood, thus helping to counteract the negative feelings that some adults have about youth. The uniform makes the troop visible as a force for good in the community. As scouts wear the uniform, they are declaring their intent to support the principles which scouting stands for.

Troop 606 takes great pride in being a full uniform troop. The class "A" uniform is to be worn to ALL SCOUT ACTIVITIES, including meetings, camp outs, and outing unless specified by the Scoutmaster or other adult leader in charge. When the troop is traveling to or from a Scouting function or event, we require all members to wear a "class A" uniform. Once we arrive, we normally allow scouts to change into a "class B" uniform or other shirt depending on the conditions. Troop 606 does not allow scouts to wear clothing that advertises alcoholic beverages, cigarettes or other derogatory or offensive messages.

### **Class A:**

1. Official tan scout shirt worn tucked in. (We recommend short sleeve for better year round wearing) with green shoulder tabs and proper insignia.
2. Official olive long or short pants (red topped scout socks of any length are to be worn when the shorts are worn)
3. Official Scout green web belt or BSA leather belt
4. Troop or Scout neckerchief
5. Scout Sash (to be worn at formal occasions such as courts of honor)
6. BSA hat, or Troop 606 hat (optional)

### **Class B:**

1. Troop t-shirt or sweatshirt

\*Troop hats, t-shirts, and sweatshirts are available for purchase from our uniform exchange person.

Troop 606 has a uniform exchange to help defray cost of uniforms for new scouts & growing kids! Families are allowed to look over items in this pool and use for free. We would also like to encourage you to donate out grown items to keep this pool intact for

future generations of scouts. This pool includes clothing, boots and any equipment.

## **SCOUT HANDBOOK**

All boys are required to have the Boy Scout Handbook. The handbook is a valuable guide for many aspects of scouting. Scouts should bring their handbook to **all** meetings and camping trips to record their accomplishments.

## **EQUIPMENT**

It takes a lot of equipment to run a troop. The troop has adult equipment managers to keep track of what we have and what is needed. The scouts have an appointed Quartermaster to keep track of the equipment. All scouts must be responsible for the troop equipment they use and care for this equipment properly. Any Scout or group of Scouts that damages any troop owned equipment is responsible for fixing or replacing that piece of equipment. Troop 606 is equipped with stoves, lanterns, dining tarps, patrol cooking gear, food and drink coolers, etc, and a trailer for hauling the equipment to our activity and camping locations.

A certain amount of personal equipment is needed by each scout for participation in the camping and outdoor activities conducted by the troop. The BSA handbook does an excellent job reviewing equipment that each boy should have. The cost of personal equipment can be high, but if you focus on the necessities and gradually add to these, before long the scout will be well equipped.

Necessary equipment will be listed on the permission slips provided prior to each campout so that the scout doesn't burden himself with gear he doesn't need. Scouts need to be responsible for their own equipment at all times and may need to carry their gear for long distances. Parents should help the scouts pack for a trip, but do not do it for them! They need to know what they have and what they don't, where their gear is, and how to repack it themselves when the trip is over. Experienced troop adults will provide guidance on acquiring equipment in a cost-effective manner.

### **Prohibited items:**

1. Sheath or large "Bowie Type" knives.
2. Any weapons- including laser pointer, sling shots, guns, peashooters, Brass knuckles, fireworks, etc.
3. Radios, CD players, electronic games
4. Any obscene, vulgar or questionable material.

## TROOP ORGANIZATION

Each boy will be assigned to a patrol at his age/peer group level. Patrols will be made up of approximately 8-10 boys. The patrol members elect patrol leaders and positions are noted to provide leadership and advancement opportunities. Elections are held twice a year. Patrols work as a unit in preparing for and attending troop events.

The following is an outline of the duties of the key leaders within the troop:

### **Scoutmaster:**

The Scoutmaster is the adult leader responsible for the image and program of the troop. The Scoutmaster and his Assistant Scoutmasters work directly with the Scouts. His general responsibilities include:

- Train and guide boy leaders to further their advancement
- Work with other adult leaders to bring Scouting to boys
- Use the methods of Scouting to achieve the aims of Scouting

### **Assistant Scoutmasters:**

Are recruited by the Scoutmaster and approved by the troop committee to assist the Scoutmaster in the operation of the troop. They are assigned program tasks by the Scoutmaster and provide guidance to the boy leadership.

### **Senior Patrol Leader:**

The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) is the top boy leader in the troop. He leads the patrol leaders' council and, in consultation with the Scoutmaster, appoints other junior leaders and assigns specific responsibilities as needed. (It is the job of the Patrol Leaders' Council to plan and run the troop program)

### **Assistant SPL:**

The ASPL(s) fills in for the SPL in his absence. He is also responsible for training and giving direction to the quartermaster, scribe, historian, librarian and other instructors.

### **Patrol Leaders:**

The Patrol Leaders are responsible for giving guidance to the members of their patrols. They are their representation on the patrol leaders' council. He is also responsible for organizing individual patrol activities outside of regular troop meetings.

### **Assistant Patrol Leaders:**

Assistant Patrol Leaders help the PL run the patrol and fill in for him in his absence.

### **Other positions:**

Other positions a scout can hold in his patrol or at the troop level have a variable level of responsibility and are designed to give the boy leadership experience he can apply to advancement. Some of the positions include grub-master, quartermaster, chaplain, etc.

## MEETINGS

- Regular troop meetings are held every Monday night at Russell Learning Academy (formerly Russell Elementary School), located at 2700 NE 127th. Meeting time is 6:45-8:00 PM. Each month, a patrol is responsible both in helping with the flag

ceremony and with set-up & clean up. This patrol should be at the school **by 6:30pm**

- Courts of Honor are held quarterly in place of regular meetings. At these meetings, Scouts are presented with their rank advancements and merit badges. The entire family and any special guests are encouraged to attend!
- Committee meetings are held in conjunction with the Adult Leader meetings, every month on the first Tuesday after the Patrol Leader Council (which is the first Thursday of the month). Any parent that is registered with the troop is encouraged to attend. The adult leader portion of the meeting is for those parents who are either the Scoutmaster or
- Assistant Scoutmasters and parents who are directly involved with scout activities. Parent meetings are generally the first Monday meeting of the month. This is an informational meeting for parents to keep abreast of committee decisions, upcoming activities, troop needs and parent concerns. All parents are encouraged to attend this meeting.
- Patrol Leaders' Council meets monthly at Rivercrest Community Church from 6:30-8PM. This includes the SPL, ASPL's, PL's, APL's and Scoutmaster.
- Scoutmaster's meeting monthly for adult leaders.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Good communication is essential for a well-run troop. Scouts should have good attendance at weekly meetings in order to be well informed. Announcements, schedule changes and new opportunities are generally conveyed at the beginning of each Monday night meeting immediately after the flag ceremony. Parents are encouraged to stay for the first part of the meeting to hear these. It is always a good idea to have pen and paper with you.

As stated previously, parent meetings are held during the first Monday night of the month while the boys are in their regular meeting.

A calendar with events, meetings and campouts can always be found on our wonderful web site which is updated regularly: [www.troop606.com](http://www.troop606.com). We have a regularly published newsletter that can be picked up at scout meeting or downloaded from our web site.

There is a chain of command in scout communication. If a scout has a question he should:

1. Call his patrol leader or assistant patrol leader!
2. If there is still a question, call the Senior Patrol Leader or one of his assistants
3. If none of the boy leaders can help, you can call the Scoutmaster

The Scoutmaster should not be inundated by all of the questions that Junior Leaders should be answering. Part of the Junior Leader's job is to be available to provide information and answer questions. Parents are asked to help with this.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

One of the things that make Troop 606 **great** is the quality and quantity of our adult volunteers! Parents and family play the most important role in the success of our Scouting program. If the support and encouragement are not there, the boy will not succeed or progress through the ranks. The more involved a parent is, the more successful the boy is in Scouting. Even if the only involvement you can provide is to drive occasionally, this demonstrates to your son that you feel Scouting is a worthwhile activity, and you are supporting his involvement.

Scouting prepares the boys for leadership and independence, but parent involvement at all levels is needed and expected to provide the opportunities for scouts to excel. There is a long list of opportunities and ways to help. **Although everyone is busy, every family in Troop 606 is expected to participate in some fashion.**

Consider your skills, interests, and hobbies to help determine how you could help with merit badges too.

***\*\*It is troop policy for all adults participating in camping activities to have training in Scoutmaster Essentials and Youth Protection. This is paid for by the troop. Parents of "New Boys" have a grace period of no longer than one year to receive the training making them eligible to go on overnight outings.***

***Any parent registered with the troop may attend camping activities as an "observer." They will camp with the adult patrol and may participate when invited by the scoutmaster.***

Due to the importance of the safety of all boys in our troop, one parent from each family is asked to attend Youth Protection Training annually.

## TRANSPORTATION

For outings and campouts, the usual transportation policy is to meet at Russell Academy at the time assigned on the permission slip designed for that outing. Adults who have volunteered to drive will have been assigned boys to drive with them by our Transportation Coordinator. In addition, on the permission slip, there will be a spot to inform the driver where to drop your child off. (usually at the boy's home) It is usually easier to drop the boys off at their own home than to accurately predict the exact time when they will be back at a designated place.

Our troop keeps a list of all potential drivers' vehicle information to keep on file for our Trip Permit application that must be current and provided every time we transport children. Please make sure the trip permit coordinator has all of your current information.

## **CAMPING**

Generally, Troop 606 goes on an overnight camping experience monthly. We try to provide a variety of different experiences. Some favorite spots are reserved annually, but we are always looking for new changes of scenery and welcome your input and resources.

Troop 606 goes to a Scout Camp for a week each summer as a troop. We are required to bring our own adult leadership, so we try to have plans made early in the fall so everyone can plan and get time off. Every Scout should plan to attend. Summer camp is the most important program experience of the entire year, because they provide an incredible variety of activities as well as opportunities to work on advancement.

Fees for summer camp at most BSA camps usually run around \$200 for the week. Council requires fees be paid in full by May. Fees are paid through the Troop account, and you will be informed of deadlines by the Troop in advance. Some discounts may apply such as Friends Of Scouting (FOS) discount, or Troop contributions.

## **SERVICE**

Service to others is at the heart of Boy Scouting. Teaching the boys how to actively make the world a better place is an important life skill. Troop 606 participates in many service projects throughout the year. These include flag ceremonies and helping out at community events.

There are several required service events that are regularly scheduled each year. Each scout must attend them all unless prior arrangements can be made. They are: Scouting for Food, Good Will/Good Turn, and Memorial Day flag plant.

## **RANK AND ADVANCEMENT**

Advancement is the process by which Scouts progress through the ranks in the Scouting program by the gradual mastery of scouting skills.

RANKS:

1. Boy Scout
2. Tenderfoot
3. Second Class
4. First Class
5. Star
6. Life
7. Eagle

Requirements for advancement are outlined in the Scout Handbook. The requirements are designed progressively and require merit badges, scout skills, outdoors skills, service

to others, and taking on leadership positions in the troop.

Advancement is the responsibility of the Scout and it is self paced. Troop 606 provides all the opportunities for the Scout to advance to First Class within the first year, but there are no deadlines. Troop 606 has proudly sent nearly 100 Eagle Scouts out into the world!

**The process:**

1. *The Scout learns* – A Scout learns by doing. As he learns, he grows in ability to do his part as a member of the patrol and the troop. As he develops knowledge and skill, he is asked to teach others. In this way, he begins to develop leadership.
2. *The Scout is tested* – his SPL, Instructor, Troop Guide, Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster or a troop committee may test A Scout on requirements. The Scoutmaster maintains a list of those qualified to test and pass candidates.
3. *The boy is reviewed* - After a Scout has completed all requirements for rank, he has a Scoutmaster conference, then a board of review. It is the boy's responsibility to arrange a conference with the Scoutmaster. The reviews are offered periodically and are done by members of the troop committee (except for Eagle rank which is done by members of the district advancement committee).
4. *The boy is recognized* – Boys are recognized for their achievements in rank and merit badges at quarterly courts of honor.

## **MERIT BADGES**

Merit badges are awarded to Scouts for fulfilling requirements in specific areas of interest. There are more than a hundred merit badges in subject areas including careers, sports, hobbies, and Scouting skills. There are 21 merit badges required for the rank of Eagle. 12 of these are specific, “required” badges.

Merit badge counselors have expertise in their chosen subject and have registered with the council. Scouts work with a counselor who guides the Scout and verifies that the work has been completed.

To work on a Merit Badge, a Scout must first obtain a “Blue Card” from the Scoutmaster or Advancement Chairperson, locate a qualified counselor, and return the completed “Blue Card” to the Advancement Chairperson.

Troop 606 has a troop library containing merit badge books on many of the offered merit badges. In some cases, we have several copies. One of the boys acts as the troop librarian to check these books in and out. You are invited to check the library before buying any individually. An excellent web site to investigate merit badge requirements is: [www.meritbadge.com](http://www.meritbadge.com).

## **RECORD KEEPING**

Scouts should be diligent in keeping records of their participation in Troop activities and personal achievements. The Scout Handbook is organized to record rank

advancement achievements; it is probably the most convenient place to record participation in troop activities as well. Keeping an accurate participation history will ensure that complete records can be provided to the Assistant Scout Master for Advancement, thereby, making sure Scouts are recognized in a timely manner

## **DISCIPLINE**

The Scouting program is not designed to solve youth discipline problems. It is designed to build the necessary character and responsibility to prevent discipline problems. We believe it is the PARENTS who should have the direct responsibility to instill and reinforce good manners, socially acceptable behavior, and respect for authority in their boys. The troop has a written, formal disciplinary policy in place that needs to be reviewed by boys and parents, agreed to and signed at the start of each scouting year. A copy may be requested from the Troop Committee or Scoutmaster at any time. The policy is designed to support Scouts to do their best and to live by the Scout Oath and Law. Discipline is progressive in nature, and can be minimized for time spans of appropriate behavior.

## **TROOP 606 ADVENTURE CREW**

Troop 606 has a newly formed Venture Crew starting fall of 2003. It is an extension of the troop for older scouts who would like to participate in additional, more rigorous outdoor program with the possibility of a number of high adventure activities.

## **HINTS FOR SCOUT PARENTS WE ALL WISH WE HAD KNOWN SOONER!**

1. How to keep those sashes on those shoulder and looking smart: First, if you have a new scout interested in going "all the way"... don't buy a small size sash!! Second, sew a small buttonhole on the inside center top of the sash the size of the button on the shoulder of the scout shirt. This keeps the sash from falling off and helps the sash, and outfit, looking smart. (And keeps the boy from struggling with the sash all night!)
2. Packing boys for camp: Have you ever seen 2-gallon zip-lock bags! They are great for packing boys for camp. They can put underwear and socks in one, shower equipment/toiletries in another etc. it help them to keep things organized in a small backpack and tent.
3. \*It is really important for boys to pack themselves. If they don't, they won't know where things are and what they do/don't have.
4. Keep a scout memory book. A simple 3-ring binder. Put pages for sports cards in it for collecting merit badge cards and rank advancement cards. Also keep pages for collecting pictures of activities along his path, and certificates of

accomplishment. This helps to keep a great record, and someday when that Eagle award comes along, everything you need will be in one place. (No fancy scrap booking needed unless you want to!)

5. Remember to keep photos! Our web site is a great place to see out boys in action! Please put your photos on our web site and check to see others there!