

TROOP 359 HANDBOOK

Troop 359
Marthasville Missouri



Revised 1-15-14

WELCOME TO TROOP 359

Troop 359 consists of local boys, aged 11 to 17 years old, mainly from the Warren County area. We are referred to as the Marthasville Boy Scouts, but that does not mean only young men from Marthasville can join our Troop. We have Scouts from many area towns and we welcome Scouts from anywhere. The majority of our Scouts range in age from 11 to 15 years old. With the guidance of trained Leaders, we are a boy-run Troop with a vibrant outdoor program and we always try to remember that Scouting is “a game with a purpose.”

To join Boy Scouts, a boy must be at least 11 years old, or have earned the Arrow of Light award, or have completed the fifth grade.

We are sponsored by St. Paul’s United Church of Christ in Marthasville. Although they sponsor our Troop and we hold our meetings there, membership in St. Paul’s Church is not a requirement of participation in the Troop.

In aiding your son in choosing which Troop is best for him, consider the Troop’s program and where his friends are. All of the local Boy Scout Troops in this area have good programs. What makes our Troop different is that we are a young Troop and our program currently caters to the younger Boy Scout, we are an active and family-friendly Troop, and we strive to be youth-run in alignment with the traditional core beliefs and values of Scouting.

Welcome to Boy Scouts,

Dave Chisholm (Mr. C)

Scoutmaster - Troop 359
Associate Advisor - Crew 359
PO Box 1475
Lake Sherwood, Missouri
63357
[636-398-4141](tel:636-398-4141) Home
[314-397-9241](tel:314-397-9241) Cell
scoutmaster@troop359.net
<http://www.troop359.net>

INTRODUCTION

Troop 359 extends a warm welcome to you and your son. By joining Boy Scout Troop 359 you have given permission for your son to participate in an organization whose purpose is to provide an effective program designed to build the desirable qualities of moral strength and character, the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and the development of strong physical, mental and emotional fitness.

First off, this is not Cub Scouts anymore! The Boy Scouts program is intended to teach Scouts how to succeed and take responsibility. Please understand that the additional adventures that Boy Scouts offers only works when we let go of holding their hands and let them succeed or fail on their own. Every invention in history was preceded by many failures. The Boy Scouting program operates much the same way. Boy Scouts encourages the Scout to make those attempts, and although we try to guide them to success, there will be failures along the way. If a Scout can learn from his failures he will become a stronger person for it. So let your son step outside of the box and experience all the adventures and life lessons that only Scouting can offer.

The following is critical for the Scout parent to understand: Things change in the program and while we really strive to minimize those changes, things do change. If the Scout parents will work with us then the program will always be top notch for your Scout.

THE AIMS OF SCOUTING

Boy Scouts has three aims that it works toward. One aim is growth in moral strength and character. We may define this as what the Boy is himself – his personal qualities, his values, and his outlook. A second aim is participating in citizenship. Used broadly, citizenship means the Boy's relationship to others. He comes to learn of his obligations to other people, to the society he lives in, to the government that presides over that society. A third aim of Boy Scouting is development of physical, mental, and emotional fitness. Fitness includes the body (well tuned and healthy), the mind (able to think and solve problems), and the emotions (self control, courage, and self respect).

THE IDEALS OF SCOUTING

The ideals of scouting are spelled out in the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout Motto, and the Scout Slogan. The Scout measures himself against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and as he reaches for them he has some control over what he becomes. Showing Scout Spirit, which is a requirement for rank advancement, means living up to these ideals.

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.

Scout Law: A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brace, clean and reverent.

Scout Motto: Be Prepared

Scout Slogan: Do a good turn daily.

SCOUT HANDBOOK

Each Scout must have his own copy of the current version (i.e., the Eleventh Edition) of the Boy Scout Handbook and he should bring it to all meetings, activities, and campouts. Be sure he writes his name on it. The Boy Scout Handbook contains all the basic information that a scout needs to know. It may be purchased at any Boy Scout store (the Scout Shop), through the BSA catalog or in at other area stores (such as Thro's in St. Charles) that carry BSA items and uniforms. Items may also be purchased from www.scoutstuff.org if you prefer to shop online.

SCOUT UNIFORM

The Scout uniform is an important part of being a scout. The uniform makes the Scout Troop visible as a force for good and creates a positive youth image in the community. Boy Scouts is an action program, and wearing the uniform gives the Scout identity in a worldwide brotherhood of youth who believe in the same ideals. Boys wear uniforms when playing organized sports and when performing in the school band or choir, Scouting is the same. It shows that they belong to a group. It also provides a way for Scouts to wear the badges that show what they have accomplished. The Scout handbook is also an essential part of the Scout uniform in Troop 359. A Scout should have their handbook with them whenever they are in uniform. Scouts should wear the Class A Scout uniform at Troop

meetings, at Court of Honor's, on Scout Sunday, when attending Council or District events, and on designated occasions. At Summer Camp, Class A uniforms are required to be worn at dinner.

At the time a Boy joins the Troop, he should wear the certain basic parts of the uniform:

- BSA Tan Scout Shirt (either short or long sleeves) with shoulder loops.
- Scout Neckerchief
- Neckerchief Slide
- Green BSA pants/shorts, khaki pants/shorts, or denim pants/shorts

A Class B uniform is sometimes required. It consists of an appropriate Troop T-shirt in place of the BSA Class A Uniform Shirt. In Troop 359, we generally wear Class B uniforms on weekend campouts. One Troop 359-designed Class B T-shirt is given to each new Scout upon crossing over from a Cub Scout Pack. See the Scoutmaster to purchase additional Troop Class B t-shirts.

It is the policy of Troop 359 that if a Scout is involved in a sports or other extracurricular activity prior to a meeting he may attend the meeting in his sports gear or other clothing as though he were in uniform.

If purchasing the required Class A uniform causes a financial hardship, please contact the Scoutmaster or Troop Committee Chairperson. Used uniforms are sometimes available, and are available to anyone, regardless of financial need.

BOY LEADERSHIP

Troop 359 is a Boy-run Troop; however a certain amount of adult intervention is still required. Boy Leaders still plan and carry out their own programs and agendas – with adult participation and support. For the Boys, demonstrating leadership is required for advancement to the higher ranks of Scouting (i.e., Star, Life, and Eagle).

With adult guidance, the Scouts plan the monthly program and activities at the monthly Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) meeting which is usually held on the first Thursday of the month at our typical meeting location. The PLC consists of the Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leaders, and other Troop Leaders. The Troop's program and activities relate to learning and practicing Scouting skills, getting ready for campouts, advancement, and games. The PLC also plans the camping

schedule and other special activities on a long-range basis. Learning leadership skills is one of the most important aspects of being a Boy Scout.

The Senior Patrol Leader is the Boy who leads the Troop, and the Boys elect the Senior Patrol Leader on a preset scheduled rotation every 6 months. The Patrol Leaders are the Boys who lead the three Patrols (Great Whites, Thunderbirds, and Alpha Dogs) and they are also elected.

Other Troop-wide leaders are Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leaders, Assistant Patrol Leaders, Quartermaster, Assistant Quartermaster, Scribe, Historian, Bugler, Librarian, Chaplain, Chaplain's aide, and Troop guides. Many times the first leadership position that a boy undertakes is that of den chief for a Cub Scout den in one of the local packs. Older boys (typically aged 16 or 17) can serve as Junior Assistant Scoutmasters within some Troops and provide guidance to the younger Boy Leaders. Junior Assistant Scoutmasters need to be an Eagle Scout but they do not need to be 18.

Many of the older boys will attend a weeklong National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) program during the summer sponsored by the local Scout Council. Some boys who excel in the NYLT program are invited back to teach in the following years. Effective Summer 2009, any Scout wishing to be a Senior Patrol Leader or a Patrol Leader will have to have attended NYLT.

Each Scout will learn the skills needed to carry out his job in the Troop and will learn to pass those skills on to other Scouts. New Scouts begin with small jobs under the guidance of more experienced Scouts, as their skills and knowledge improve new responsibilities are given to them.

SERVICE

An important part of Scouting is providing service to others. As a Troop we engage in various service projects including: Scouting for Food, working on trails, food drives for the community food pantries, litter clean-up, beautification/restoration projects, etc. Service is required for rank advancement. The service projects for advancement must be a project that benefits the community. Additionally, to attain the rank of Eagle Scout the Scout must plan and complete a major service project for the community, a school, and/ or charitable organization. Other Scouts in the Troop provide most of the manpower, organization, and coordination necessary to help complete these projects.

TROOP FUNDING, DUES, AND FUNDRAISING

When a Boy crosses over to or joins Troop 359 we charge a **registration fee of \$20**. This covers fees paid to the Boy Scouts of America organization until the next Recharter in December.

Running a Boy Scout Troop is a costly venture and because of this we have adopted a quarterly dues program as follows: At the first troop meeting following the beginning of each fiscal quarter each family will be charged **\$35**. These dues can be paid by cash or check (made payable to “Troop 359”) to the Troop Treasurer or deducted from the Scouts account. The fiscal quarters are:

January 1st

April 1st

July 1st

October 1st

These dues are used to pay for Troop registration, advancement for the Scouts, Troop gear (purchase, repair, & replace), and miscellaneous expenses that arise.

In order to help the Scouts earn money for camping and dues, there are several fundraisers throughout the year that Scouts can participate in. Money from these fundraisers is money that has been raised at a Scouting event and therefore is only to be used for the sole purpose of Scouting. The Scouts get 100% of this money. Scouts are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities since we can never fully know how well a fundraiser will do. All Scouts and their families are expected to support these fundraising activities. This way the Scouts can learn that with work comes rewards. This way the Boys are actually learning to “pay their own way”.

Keeping track of the Scout’s and the Troop’s money is an ongoing task and is handled by the Troop Treasurer. In order to make things easier for them the following policies have been approved by the Troop Committee:

1. Each Scout has a Troop account where his money is stored and accessible for weekend camping or long term camps.

2. Weekend campout monies will be collected before or at the Load Up. If the money is not collected at that time the Scout's account will be charged for the trip immediately.
3. Summer Camp fee's must be collected per the schedule posted at the beginning of the year, or sooner if the camp we are attending dictates it.
4. All money for Summer Camp will be run thru the Troop account so that we have a paper trail. We want to keep track of your Scout's money just as much as you do.
5. When a Scouts account reaches a negative balance the Scout and his parents will be notified and they are expected to make the account current by bring it up to at least a minimum of a zero balance. This keeps the Troop money from being used for individual expenses or banking fees.
6. If a Scout leaves or is ejected from the troop, they have up to six months to transfer money from their Scout account to another B.S.A. Troop. If this does not occur with six months, they will forfeit the money left in the Scout's account and it will then be absorbed into the Troop account. If a Scout leaves and there is a negative balance in their account, the Scout and/or his family is required to bring the account current by paying the remaining balance to bring the account up to zero.

TROOP COMMUNICATION

As our Troop gets larger and we have more families involved, good communication becomes critical. However, it is also a known weak link in many Troops. To keep everyone informed and aware of upcoming events and changes we have the following policies:

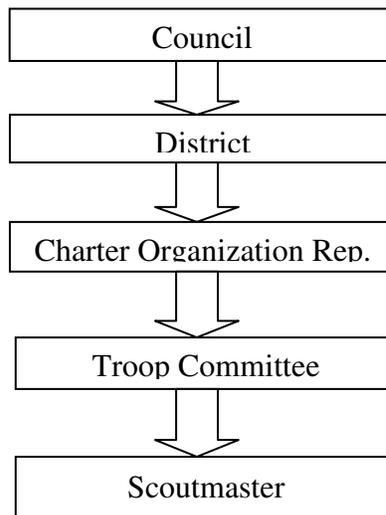
1. **Scouts will always be expected to have a pen and paper with them.** They are young men now and are expected to keep up to date with troop announcements.
2. When a sudden change does occur a phone tree method will be used. The Scoutmaster will call the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) then the SPL will contact his Patrol Leaders and they in turn will contact their Patrols.

3. The Scoutmaster or Troop Secretary will occasionally send out Troop updates via email to keep everyone informed and up to date. All are encouraged to check their emails regularly and often.

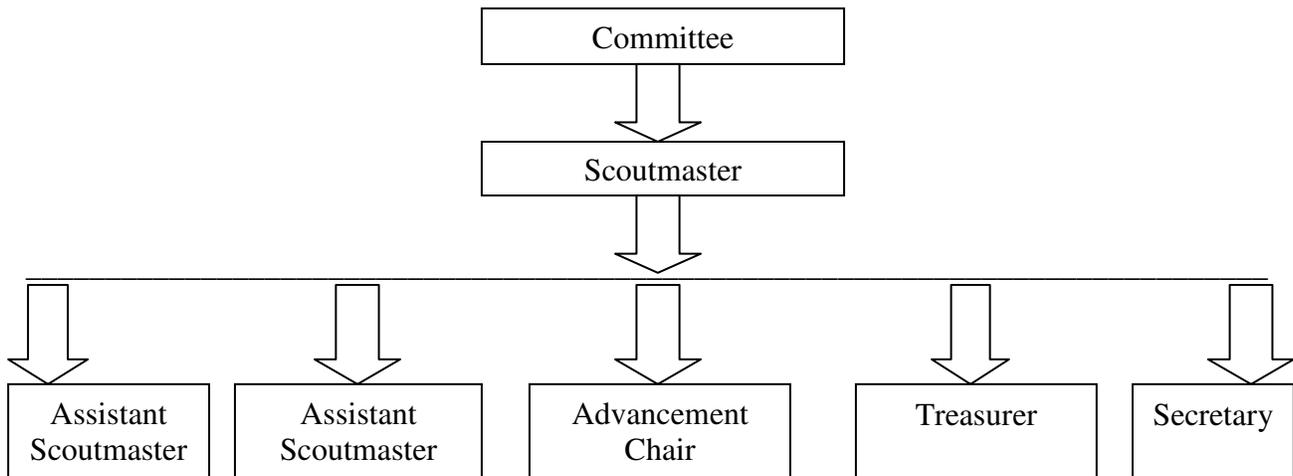
With that being said we realize not all families have access to the internet, so it is even more important for the Scout to take notes during the meetings. Another option is for the parents to attend the Troop Committee meetings which are held the first Thursday of every month. This is when all decisions are made.

Issues or Complaints with the Program: Please refrain from discussing complaints/issues that you may have with the program or with the Leaders to other adults in the Troop. The Scoutmaster has an open door policy regarding lines of communication with all families. Families/parents/Scouts need to discuss concerns with the Scoutmaster in order for those concerns to be addressed. We cannot address concerns that we do not know about. We cannot promise that the wants and desires of every family in the Troop will be satisfied at all times, however a great many issues/concerns can be resolved without conflict if they are addressed to the Scoutmaster promptly.

In the event of a problem, it is imperative to follow the chain of command which begins with the Scoutmaster. If the Scoutmaster cannot satisfactorily resolve your issue, follow this chart as a guideline (start at the bottom and work your way up):



The order for Troop Operations is as follows:



FIRST YEAR SCOUTS

To help new Scouts learn more about Scouting and the Troop, we blend the new Scouts into the already existing Patrols. The Patrol is a group of 4 to 8 Boys who work together to learn and practice basic Scouting skills. The first year Boys will stay in those patrols unless personal differences make it practical to move a Scout. A more experienced Scout will act as a Patrol Leader and will work with the new Scouts. He will be assisted by other older Boys who will help introduce the new Boys to the Boy Scout program and teach basic Scouting skills. From the time the Boys cross over and join the Troop until they leave for that year's Summer Camp, the program for the new Scouts will focus on the mastery of basic Scouting skills through practice at meetings and campouts.

In the first few weeks, the Boys will complete their joining requirements so they can earn the right to wear the Scout badge. Each Boy is responsible for his own advancement, but encouragement from home is helpful as they transition to the Troop environment where they will increasingly take on more personal responsibility. By the time of their second or third Court of Honor, all of the boys who actively participate in the program will have had the opportunity to earn the Tenderfoot badge and will have also completed many of the requirements for the Second Class badge.

By the time they have been in the Troop for one year, they will have been provided the opportunity to have completed all of the requirements for the Second

Class rank if they have been attending and actively participating at most of the meetings, campouts and other activities. When they have completed the requirements for First Class, they will have learned all of the basic scouting skills and be considered Senior Scouts.

In the first year we strongly encourage each new Scout to attend Summer Camp. We believe Summer Camp is one of the most important experiences for all first year Scouts. Any Summer Camp we will attend offers a first year program and all new Scouts will participate in this program. It is a wonderful advancement opportunity. Most Boys love Summer Camp. It is a week during which Boys make friendships with other Scouts (both first year and older Scouts) and create many memories. Often it is the first time a Boy is away from his parents and family for that long of a period of time. It can also be an event that helps Boys to determine if they really like Scouting as a Boy Scout. If a Boy is ambivalent about Scouting, Summer Camp will help him decide if he will continue or not.

ADVANCEMENT

Note: Parents are not authorized to sign off any requirements for their own son. This is to insure that the Scouts are actually completing the requirements to the Troops satisfaction.

The requirements for rank advancement are all in the Scout Handbook and there is a place for the Older Scouts and other Scout Leaders to sign off on the completion of each requirement. After a boy has completed all of the requirements for a rank, he must advise the Scoutmaster that he is ready for a Scoutmaster's Conference. After a successful Scoutmaster's Conference, the Boy then meets with members of the Troop committee for his Board of Review.

Every three months the Troop conducts a Court of Honor, where the Boys are publicly recognized for rank advancement, merit badges earned, and other special recognition. Court of Honor is a special event and all Scouts and their parents are expected to attend the Court of Honor. Families are asked to bring a finger food dish to Court of Honor.

Also, when a Boy advances in rank or completes a merit badge, he is provided with an advancement card commonly called a "blue card". Keep these because they may be necessary to demonstrate that he achieved the rank or merit badge if the Troop or Council records are not complete.

Steps for advancement are as follows:

1. Complete all requirements except Scouting Spirit and Scoutmaster's Conference.
2. Contact Scoutmaster and schedule Conference. Scouting Spirit will be signed off on during this conference, provided the Scout has been living by the Scout Oath, Law, and Promise both inside and outside of Scouting activities.
3. Contact four members of the Troop Committee and schedule a Board of Review. It is recommended that this happens earlier in the evening on the same night as a Troop meeting, not the night of a PLC meeting. **NOTE: Class A uniform is required for Board of Review.**
4. Upon completion of the Board of Review, you will have completed everything needed for advancement for that particular rank.
5. The Committee will require that the Scout do a service project before the Scout is allowed to call another Board of Review.

After all the above items are done the scout will receive their advancement and recognition at the next Court of Honor. Troop policy is that only one rank at a time may be earned at a Court of Honor.

ATTENDANCE

There are no attendance requirements for regular Troop activities. However, to participate in a High Adventure activity (i.e. Philmont, Sea Base, etc.) or a High Adventure activity with the Venture Crew the following must be met: 80% attendance at Troop meetings and 75% attendance at Troop activities.

CAMPING PROGRAM

We believe camping and outdoor fun is an important part of Scouting. Troop 359 usually has one Troop camping trip each month, plus we have High Adventure programs for older boys throughout the year via the Venture Crew. The Troop monthly camping trip usually begins on Friday evening and ends by mid-day on Sunday; the locations vary greatly.

One of the most important events is Summer Camp. Each year the Scouts get to help decide where we go. Summer Camp typically begins on one weekend and goes thru to the following one (dates for summer camp, monthly campouts, courts of honors, and other key events are posted on the Troop's website www.troop359.net). Attendance at summer camp is a great way for new Scouts to learn basic Scouting skills required for advancement and earn merit badges that they would otherwise not readily be able to earn during the school year (e.g., swimming, canoeing, basketry, etc.). We strive for 100% Troop attendance for Summer Camp. It is a fun and memorable event. There is a parent's meeting early each year to provide information about summer camp and to answer questions. Many Troop 359 adult Leaders attend camp with the Troop, so that at least 3 adults are present at camp at all times.

Camping is a major focus of Troop 359's activities, whether it is our monthly Troop campout or a High Adventure trip. Your son will have the opportunity to camp immediately after he joins the Troop. We have Troop campouts scheduled thru every season. Troop 359 is not a sunshine only Troop. In June, we usually camp with the Cub Scouts of Pack 359 to assist with their Graduation Campfire activities.

Before you know it, another class of Webelos is joining the troop and last year's "new" Scouts will become the veterans.

As far as fees go, we charge each Boy and adult attending a campout a fee to cover the cost of any camping fees, food, and/or other miscellaneous fees. We attempt to break-even on each campout. We also try to keep the cost per person down to an affordable range so that everyone can enjoy our activities. This fee is collected at the "Load Up" before we leave. Each Boy is expected to bring cash (a \$10, a \$5, and 5 \$1's) to count towards the fees at Load Up. If you choose to pay by check, checks should be made payable to "Troop 359". In the event that the fees will need to be deducted from the Scout's account, leadership and the treasurer needs to be informed in advance.

An updated BSA medical form and a permission slip are required annually for each Boy attending a camping event. Any parent who plans on transporting Boys at any time for any Scouting event must supply the Troop with auto insurance information and keep the Troop updated with any changes in their auto insurance. Ideally, when a Scout crosses over and/or when it is time for Recharter are good times to supply new or updated BSA medical forms, permission slips, and auto insurance information.

CAMPING TRIPS – PREPARATION & CLEANUP

Troop 359 plans many camping trips and attendance on these trips is strongly encouraged, as it is necessary for advancement and it builds the bond of brotherhood that makes each Scout a part of the unit as a whole. But camping involves more than showing up on Friday and returning home on Sunday. Here's some basic information to help everyone understand the camping program better: After the location is selected one of the adult Leaders will reserve the site by submitting the necessary application and fees. The Leaders will then set the price for the campout, prepare and distribute the permission slips, collect the fees and permission slips, prepare the roster, arrange for the appropriate number of drivers (both to and from the campout), and ensure that there are a sufficient number of adult Leaders to attend. On the day of the campout, one of the Leaders will collect all of the Scout's medications, checks/cash for expenses, and make sure that the tour permit, the medicals, the permission slips, the gear and the Boys are ready to go. (Thank goodness it is a Boy-led troop!).

In the month prior to a campout the Boys prepare menus for their Patrols. A Boy is appointed to be the food buyer (the Grubmaster) and he is responsible for purchasing the necessary quantities to feed the Patrol members plus any additional people. If your Boy is assigned to this task, please help your Boy with it, but do not do the purchasing for him even though it may be easier for you. Your son will need you to take him to the store and help him to make informed decisions. He must take into account the cost (estimate no more than \$7 to \$10 per person for the weekend), the need and the means to transport and store the food, and the amount of waste generated. The Boys may also need to purchase paper towels, garbage bags, scouring pads, matches and other similar items. They should not be purchasing paper plates, soda, energy drinks or "junk" foods. You will be reimbursed for food and supplies purchased. Please submit expenses as they are incurred so you can be reimbursed. The Grubmaster should keep the food at home until the campout, and bring all perishables to the campout in a cooler. (If he becomes ill, he is still responsible for getting the food to his Patrol in advance of the campout.)

When the Troop assembles to leave on the campout, please arrive at the scheduled time so the Boys can load the gear. Sometimes we transport the gear in a trailer and sometimes we load all of the gear in the cars. It's important that the Boys report immediately to their Patrol Leader and find out what needs to be done. The Boys then load the gear, with minimal assistance from the parents. It is okay to

and it is a good opportunity to chat with and get to know the other parents while the Boys are working at loading up the gear.

If you are driving (and the Boys need all families to provide transportation at one time or another), you must complete the auto information request form in advance (this is one-time requirement) and return it to the Troop Committee Chairperson so that our records with the Council are accurate. When transporting the Boys to and from events, there must be a seatbelt for each person and it must be used. Also, please remember to obey all traffic laws when transporting the Boys, and do not drive as a convoy. If you need directions to the campout, ask the Assistant Scoutmaster in charge for directions.

At the end of each campout, everyone is expected to return to the church to unload and put the gear back in storage. Some of the gear will be dirty or wet and will need to go home with some of the Boys for cleaning and drying out. **NO BOY SHOULD LEAVE UNTIL HE IS DISMISSED BY AN ADULT LEADER FROM THAT TRIP.**

If your son registers for any campout, and for any reason is late or a no-show for the event, he is still responsible for the cost and he should advise his Patrol Leader and arrange for someone else to complete his responsibilities.

Although we encourage Boys to attend the entire campout, sometimes Boys come late, leave early, or leave for a period of time to participate in other activities. If a Boy will not be attending for the entire time, his parents should put a note on the permission slip and also advise the Scoutmaster. No Boy will be permitted to leave the campout early with an adult other than his parent unless the parent has advised the Scoutmaster in advance and provided his or her written consent for the Boy to leave with the designated adult.

One additional request: When you are with the Boys, let the Boys lead. At times it may appear to be chaos, and often it will seem to be more expeditious if an adult or older Boy would complete the task for the Boy, but if you step in and do the task or usurp the role of the Boy leader, the Boys will not learn the lessons of responsibility and leadership.

TROOP CAMPING PLANS

Summer Camp (Long Term Camps)

Along with the monthly activities the Troop has, there is an annual Summer Camp every year which is considered a “long term camp”. Our rotation is as follows: every other year we will go outside of Council and visit new places. In-Council Summer Camp is a great place and over the next few years our Scouts will

have many Summer Camps here and it will become a Home camp for them. However, on the alternating years that we will go out of Council it will be a chance for our scouts to experience things that many only dream of. These out of Council camps are important for a couple of reasons:

1. If we attend out local Summer Camp every year the scouts WILL become bored with the program and we will begin to lose scouts after only a few years.
2. Going out of Council offers great opportunities to experience new and existing adventures which will keep your son excited about the Scouting program.

If a scout is unable to attend the out of Council Summer Camp for any reason they will be able to attend the local Summer Camp as a provisional Scout attached to another Troop in Summer Camp.

We will strive to keep the costs of out of Council trips to \$350. Please keep in mind that this, as mentioned before is a goal not a promise.

Weekend Campouts

We strive to offer a wide variety of adventures for the Scouts. However, being an outdoor program-driven Troop, activities are occasionally affected by weather. So just as the weather in Missouri changes, you can expect some changes in scheduling due to the weather. Please be patient and work with the Troop, not against us to keep our program thriving and fun for our Scouts.

EQUIPMENT

Although a few basic items are required for campouts, Scouting should not become a financial burden. It is not necessary to purchase a lot of equipment or the best and most expensive equipment. **Make sure your son is going to make a commitment to Scouting before making any major investment in equipment.** Also, don't buy gear without asking advice from others. The adult Leaders can answer your questions or steer you to the right source to answer your questions. We have resources for quality gear at affordable prices.

The major items that are required are a *sleeping bag, sleeping pad, hiking boots, flashlight and rain gear*. Boys need to be able to carry their gear, so a backpack or bag is also required. Initially you may want to borrow gear from family, friends, or older Scouts. Some families may have equipment they want to sell. The Troop supplies the tents for new Scouts to use, stoves and other Patrol gear. However, most of the scouts have their own Backpacking tent.

For a sleeping bag, we recommend one with a 20° rating and a synthetic fill. Don't buy a down-filled bag because down does not insulate when it is wet. The sleeping pad provides insulation between your sleeping bag and the ground, and is necessary year-round. It should be a full-length pad (many types are available at various costs). Cots are also allowed on some of the campouts.

Boots are recommended because they protect your feet by providing support and they keep your feet drier than sneakers. It is most important to **make sure they fit properly**. Try them on and walk around. Don't worry about how they look. Make sure the person fitting you is experienced in fitting boots. Boots can be either leather or canvas. We recommend both a liner sock and a regular synthetic sock be worn with the boots.

IMPORTANT NOTE: We do hike a lot, so always give your Scout time to break in his boots BEFORE a campout or hike. New boots are brutal on a hike.

Rain gear is important because if a Scout gets wet he runs the risk of hypothermia, regardless of the season. A rain jacket or a slicker with rain pants is ideal. Ponchos can be used, but are not recommended. You don't need the most expensive gear. The rain gear is going to take a beating and all of our Scouts are still growing like weeds.

Don't buy a backpack yet. Take some time and get input from other Scouts AND the Troop Leaders, we often have special pricing arranged or have specific equipment that has proven itself well. The most frequent mistake is purchasing a backpack from a catalog or store that does not fit the pack to the Boy. Most young Scouts do not have hips big enough to support a standard backpack belt, and often a smaller, women's size or youth belt must be substituted on the backpack. Also, you need to understand the pro's and con's of both internal and external frame packs before you purchase a pack.

Other miscellaneous gear will be required for campouts, mess kits with utensils, Ziploc plastic bags to store clothing and small items, an extra flashlight, and batteries.

Knives are not permitted to be carried until the Scout earns his “Totin Chip”. Sheath knives are never permitted.

Lighters are also are not permitted to be carried by scouts.

MEDICAL

We are an active troop and while we take precautions and practice “Safe Scouting”, situations may arise where First Aid is needed for your son. This may include an application of antibiotic ointment and a band-aid to treating for a life threatening situation when we are far from a local hospital. As Leaders we learn and stay current on CPR and basic First Aid. Leaders have the “right to treat” which means that they can administer treatment to the best of their knowledge/ability when it is needed.

If you have medication for your son, please have it in a labeled bag for each outing. Note the name of the Scout, name of medication, dose, date, and time to be given so that leaders do not have to call you or rely on your son for that information. Make sure to give the Scoutmaster current contact information before each outing. Also, make sure that the Scoutmaster or temporary appointed Scoutmaster is aware of any medical condition or allergies **before any outing**.

Note that if any emergency situation should arise, Leaders will make every attempt possible to contact the parents and to transfer the Scout to seek further medical attention.

THE ROLE OF THE PARENT IS CRITICAL

Even a Boy-run Troop does not operate without the active support of the parents. The nature and quality of Troop 359 and the breadth of the programs it offers also depends upon the active support and involvement of the parents. That

support and involvement allows the Boys to run a dynamic program that is fun and full of opportunities for personal growth.

We welcome parents to support the Troop in a more active way as a “registered” adult Leader, either as a uniformed Leader, a member of the Troop Committee and/or as a Merit Badge Counselor. We also encourage parents that want to be involved even without taking an official position. These opportunities are described in subsequent sections of this Handbook. We expect all parents to become actively involved in one way or another.

Even if you do not become a registered adult Leader, each parent has a role to play. At a minimum you are expected to provide transportation to and from camping events, to drop-off and pick-up the boys on time, to provide transportation and advance funds when your son is buying the food, to help your son timely register and pay for campouts, and to attend Court of Honor’s and other special events.

Most importantly, encourage your son by showing interest (but not taking over) in what he is doing as a Scout. Talk to the Scoutmaster if you have questions or if there is something we should know about your son (e.g., he is facing illness, death of a relative, or issues at school).

Parents also are invited and needed to camp with the troop from time to time in order that sufficient adult leadership is present. Your presence will free up time for the uniformed Leaders to work with the Boy Leaders. No prior experience is needed, just a desire to spend time with your son and his friends. We only ask that you follow the lead of the uniformed Leaders and let the Boys lead. You’ll be amazed at what they can and will do within a Boy-led Troop given the opportunity.

One of the toughest problems the Troop faces is that a select few adults step up and do everything while other parents use the Troop as a form of a babysitting service. This is not the intention or purpose of Boy Scouts. We understand that not all parents are outdoor people; however there are many other opportunities to assist the Troop. It has been proven time and time again that adult involvement is crucial to the development of today’s youth and likewise the success of the Scouting program depends on parent involvement to survive.

ADULT SCOUT LEADERS

The Scoutmaster is the adult Leader who “pulls it all together”. He is responsible for ensuring that the Boy Leaders are trained to run the Troop and for managing and supporting the Assistant Scoutmasters in their roles. The Scoutmaster is the only Troop Leader who interacts closely to all of the other people in the Troop’s operational structure: the Scouts, the junior Leaders, the Patrol Leaders’ Council, the Assistant Scoutmasters, the Troop Committee and through the Troop Committee, the Chartered Organization Representative and the Chartered Organization. Your Scoutmaster is **Dave Chisholm**.

The Assistant Scoutmasters work with the Scoutmaster. Most Assistant Scoutmasters have specific strengths that benefit the program, such as working with the “new Scout Patrol”, supporting the Venture program for older scouts, undertaking specific functional roles, and/ or supporting discreet skill areas. Assistant Scoutmasters also assume the role of “Camp Scoutmaster” for specific months and camping trips; which means they undertake the primary adult Leadership role for those activities.

All adult Leaders are expected to obtain and maintain “Youth Protection” training. Adult Leaders are also encouraged to obtain other BSA training (such as Basic Adult Leader Training and Wood Badge) and to maintain current Red Cross certifications in CPR and Basic First Aid. Any adult with direct contact with the youth (direct engaging with the youth, regardless of whether they are a registered Leader) must have “Youth Protection Training”.

TROOP COMMITTEE

The Troop Committee is the group of parents and other adults responsible for the overall welfare of the Boys and the Troop. The Troop Committee meets monthly. Although the Scoutmaster may attend portions of those meetings from time to time as required, he does not have a vote in Committee decisions. All other adults and Committee members that attend the monthly Committee meeting will have a vote on decisions. There may be occasion that a vote is made by only adult registered Leaders. Such occasion may include disciplinary action or dismissal of a Scout or policy changes. Through its members, the Troop Committee:

- Ensures that quality adult leadership is recruited and trained.
- Supports the adult Leaders in carrying out the program.
- Helps obtain and maintain Troop property.

- Conducts Board of Review's. Board of Review's are held for each Boy before each rank advancement or if the Boy is not advancing to find out how the boy is getting along in the Troop and to review his requirements to ensure they have been met.

CODE OF CONDUCT

We expect each scout to live in accordance with the Scout Oath and Scout Law - not just at scout activities, but also during his daily life.

Troop 359 also has a code of conduct for all Scouts. Recognizing that being a part of this Troop is a privilege, and not a right, the Troop will take disciplinary action if a Scout is not abiding by the Scout Oath, Scout Law or Code of Conduct.

We require that each Scout and his parents review the code of conduct together and return a signed copy (see last page of this handbook) to the Scoutmaster. Contact the Scoutmaster if you have any questions.

Discipline – The registered adult Leaders are responsible for the health and welfare of each and every Scout at Scout activities. Therefore, it is necessary that they have the means to control the Scouts during those activities. If an adult deems discipline is required, two adults must be present before any action can be moved forward on. Actions can range from a discussion with the Scout to ejecting a Scout from the specific activity or even from the Troop completely. A Scout may be suspended from the Troop for a specified time period for an offense. A permanent ejection from the troop requires the approval of all registered adult Leaders. The Scout will have a formal chance to defend their position with their parents present.

As adult leaders the only real action we have at our disposal is to take Scouting activities away from the scout.

If a scout is not living up to his part of Troop responsibilities and duties, or behaving per the Scout Oath, Law & Promise he can expect to be asked not to attend scouting activities, as specified above.

TROOP WEBSITE

Visit our website at <http://www.troop359.net>. It's a good source of information about our activities. It is also a way to share your Scout's adventures with friends and family through our photo album.

With their parent's permission, each Scout is also assigned his own email address through the Troop website. The Scouts are welcome to use this form of communication as much as they choose. Any Troop emails will be sent to these mailboxes as well as to the parent's email that they have provided. This is an ad-free safe email that you can feel comfortable with your Scout using. The email will be set up as such similar to the example for "Fred Buck":

fredb@troop359.net

On the Troop website there is a link for "Scoutmail" just click on the link and log in using your assigned password. This password can be changed at your request.

*We also have a Facebook page that can be found under Troop 359 in the Community.

FAMILY VALUES

Troop 359 is a strong supporter of family values. All family members are welcome at Troop activities, with the understanding that those members not registered with the BSA are not covered by BSA insurance.

TROOP 359 CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT

We expect each scout to live in accordance with the Scout Oath and Scout Law - not just at scout activities, but also during his daily life. The following items are required of each Scout & Parent:

- **No other person has a right to put their hands on you, nor do you have a right to lay hands on anyone else.** It is understood that with this many young men together there will always be playing around and/or rough housing. However fighting, picking on, name calling, teasing, prodding, tormenting, and the always familiar “I was just playing” is not allowed. In short, keep your hands to your self and everyone else will too.
(Scoutmaster Note: We have a zero tolerance level on this matter. If you hit, strike, punch, or any other variation of such actions you can expect to be sent home and ask not to return.)
- **No HAZING or INITIATIONS** of any kind will be allowed. This is one time when a little fun can go very wrong. This is also a zero tolerance matter. Every Scout deserves to have a good time.
- **0% Sexual Representation** – that is not what Scouting is about. This includes being made to feel or making other Scouts feel uncomfortable by unwanted sexual/physical contact. This is also a zero tolerance matter.
- **Treat all adults and Scouts with respect, and we will return respect in kind.** Adults will be referred to and spoken to as Mr. or Mrs. Please and thank you are also required terms in this Troop. Telling someone to shut-up, calling them names, and/or making fun of others are not welcome behaviors. Neither is willfully ignoring the directions of any person in a leadership position.
- **Body Piercing will be left home.** We understand that this is a time of free choice; however any piercings or body modification is not an acceptable part of the Troop Uniform.
- **Language and Courtesy work together.** Please refrain from using any words, gestures, and actions that are profane or offending. Not only by your standards but to anyone else in our Troop. This includes our guests.
- **No sheath knives are allowed.** You must have earned your “Totin’ Chip” prior to carrying a folding pocket knife, or using an axe or saw.
- **No Lighters** are to be used by Scouts

