



Boy Scout Troop 654
Alexandria, Virginia

Guide for
Scouts, Parents, and Leaders

March 2014



Welcome to Troop 654!

The purpose of this booklet is to describe the operation of Troop 654 to assist parents, scouts and scouters (the adult leaders in Scouting). Its objective is to set forth the basic guidelines and procedures of the Troop so the new Scout and his family can quickly become involved. It also serves as a ready-reference for families already engaged in Scouting. If you have questions or comments, please ask the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, the Committee Chair, or any member of the Troop Committee.

The Mission of Boy Scouts

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

The Aims of Boy Scouting

“Every Scouting activity moves boys toward three basic aims: character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness.”

- Scoutmaster Handbook

About Boy Scouting

The Boy Scouts of America was founded in 1910 to prepare young men to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

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, Brave, Clean and
Reverent.*

Scout Motto

Be Prepared!

Scouting Philosophy & Methods

More than a billion boys around the world have answered the call of Scouting over the past one hundred years. The challenge and adventure of Scouting are as strong as they have always been.

The Boy Scouts of America is the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training. Since 1910, Scouting:

- offers young people responsible fun and adventure;
- instills in young people lifetime values and develop in them ethical character;
- trains young people in citizenship, service, and leadership; and
- serves America's communities and families with a quality, values-based program.

Scouting is a youth organization that uses a fun program to promote its aims: character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness for every member. As stated by the founder of Scouting, Lord Baden-Powell, "Scouting is a game with a purpose." The "game" of Scouting is played by eight unique methods:

- Ideals
- Patrol Method
- Outdoor Program
- Advancement
- Personal Growth
- Adult Association
- Leadership Training
- Uniform

Within Scouting, our boys learn to work together using the established Methods of Scouting, developing the Scout's character, as outlined by the Scout Law.

The Troop is the basic Boy Scouting organizational unit that puts these methods into practice for youth development. The Boy Scouts of America makes Scouting available to our nation's youth by chartering our local community organizations to operate Cub Scout Packs, Boy Scout Troops, Venturing Crews, Varsity Teams, and Explorer Posts.

A youth who wants to join the Boy Scouts must be least 11 years of age (or have completed the fifth grade), or earned the Arrow of Light Award and be at least 10 years of age, but not yet 18. Most special needs of youth members can be accommodated by the Scouting Program, which can be adapted to address specific conditions.

Adult membership in the Troop is open to both women and men, and both may serve in any adult Scouting position or role.

About Troop 654

Troop 654 is part of Washington D.C.'s National Capital Area Council (NCAC) and falls under NCAC's Colonial District. The Council and District are subordinate functions of the National Organization of the Boy Scouts of America, and serve as the link between BSA at the National level and our Troop. Among many functions, the Council also runs Boy Scout Camps that you may be aware of, including Goshen Scout Reservation in southwest Virginia and Camp

Snyder out near Haymarket, VA. The District is especially active hosting various training sessions for Adult Leaders, monthly “Roundtable” gatherings of Scouting leaders, as well as hosting Merit Badge Jamborees and optional Youth Leader Training.

Troop 654, Boy Scouts of America, has served Mount Vernon area boys, families, and communities continuously since July 7th, 1951. Troop 654 meets weekly at Saint Luke’s Episcopal Church in Alexandria. The Troop conducts three kinds of meetings, each with different objectives.

1. troop meetings, for all Scouts
2. Patrol Leader’s Council (PLC), meetings only for the Troop’s youth leadership team
3. committee meetings, for adults who support the daily operation of the Troop.

Troop 654 offers a wide range of outdoor activities for our boys to share in adventure, build individual scouting skills, learn and practice values, and develop followership and leadership skills. Each year, our scouts have the opportunity to attend a one week Boy Scout summer camp and participate in monthly overnight outings. During these, each patrol of Scouts participates as a group in the outing and for their meals, prepares its own menu, buys its food, and cooks as a unit. The outing and the opportunity to cook and share meals helps the boys to develop self-confidence, personal responsibility, outdoor skills, camaraderie, and to accomplish tasks that help them advance in rank. Experience has shown that boys who actively participate in the outdoor program generally advance more quickly, and are more likely to remain in Scouting.

Have Fun: Scouts and Families!

Scouting presents a highly effective environment in which parents watch their boys develop, learn, and grow into confident and accomplished young men. As Scouts learn the twelve points of the Scout Law, they are then challenged to incorporate those aspects into everyday life. Trained adult leaders educate and mentor our scouts, often in the context of the outdoors. The Scouts learn possible future job skills while earning Merit Badges and interacting with Merit Badge Counselors. As a boy sets out on his personal Scouting journey and his “Trail to Eagle,” he masters skills and learns lessons along the way. Among these are learning to persevere in the face of setbacks and obstacles. Along this path, he will be influenced by older Scouts and his adult leaders. Parents have every opportunity to participate in this process by becoming Scouters assisting with Troop activities.

Lord Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, wrote: “The sport in Scouting is to find the good in every boy and develop it.” This is exactly what the leaders in Troop 654 strive to achieve. With strong leadership, Scouts from Troop 654 grow into upstanding young Americans.

Record Keeping

Troop 654 utilizes software from **TroopMaster Inc.** to do two things - record contact information about Scouts and parents, and track every aspect of your son’s involvement in Scouting. The items we track in “TroopMaster” (TM) include your scout’s participation in outings, his completed merit badges, and his progress towards rank advancement. Personal information is held in confidence and is seen only by those few adults who maintain the

database with a “need to know” (e.g., Scoutmaster and Advancement Coordinator). Additionally TM is used to periodically update a national Boy Scout database called “Scout Net”. This national internet advancement data base becomes a very important tool when a Boy Scout becomes an Eagle Scout Candidate.

The advancement databases are considered as “backups” of a Scout’s progress toward ranks. The *Scout Handbook* is the ultimate record of a Scout’s advancement, and each Scout is strongly encouraged to make every effort to protect and maintain his Handbook. However, the databases can be used to provide documentation of a Scout’s progress should the handbook be misplaced.

The records we keep on adults are minimal. The Troop requires name and phone number, date of birth, driver’s license number, automobile license plate number and auto insurance coverage information. The transportation related information is leveraged when an adult drives to an outing. We have to file a travel permit that proves to BSA that all our parents are adequately covered by auto insurance. NOTE: Only the database administrator, adult trip coordinator (or “Trip Captain”) and Transportation Coordinator regularly see this information, except for driver’s license information, which must be shared with Council for trip permits.

One note – while the Troop maintains a binder with youth and parent health forms, we do not track any health information using computer databases.

Advancement

**“Advancement is simply a means to an end,
not an end in itself. It is one of several methods
designed to help unit leadership carry out the aims
and mission of the Boy Scouts of America”**

- BSA Guide to Advancement,

Boy Scouts of America has a very specific advancement plan. Advancement is the process by which a young man progresses from rank to rank in Scouting. Everything done to advance and earn high Advancement is the process by which a young man progresses from rank to rank in Scouting. Everything done to advance and earn higher ranks in Boy Scouting, including earning merit badges, is designed to help youths have an exciting and meaningful experience. The advancement method encourages young men to accomplish a progression of fun and motivational tasks. Earning these recognitions allows Scouts to explore many fields, helps them round out their skills, and perhaps introduces them to subjects that will become lifelong interests or rewarding careers. There are five steps Scouts take to advance in rank:

Learning by Doing

The Scout practices scout skills, participates in an activity, and completes advancement-related tasks with his Patrol, Counselor, or through independent study.

Being tested

The Scout is tested on the requirements he has completed. Once a Scout completes a skill requirement, his Patrol Leader or Troop Guide tests his knowledge and upon passage, signs-off on the requirement in the *Boy Scout Handbook*. The handbook contains a list of all requirements for advancement in rank and a record of the Scout's progress.

Differences between Cub Scout and Boy Scout Advancement

In Cub Scouts, adult Scouters lead the boys and sign-off on all requirements, to include advancement. In Boy Scouts, much training is done by older boys teaching younger boys, with Adult leaders providing oversight. This enables older Scouts the opportunity to impart knowledge to younger Scouts in a learn-by-doing approach. In addition to imparting knowledge, older Scouts test younger Scouts on scouting skills and have the responsibility for signing-off completed requirements in the back of a Scout's handbook. The role of adult Scouters transitions to one of oversight, ensuring the total safety of the Scouting program. Significantly, Boy Scout parents do not sign off advancement requirements in their boy's Scout Handbook. This function is reserved for youth leaders on the Troop's Patrol Leader's Council (PLC).

Merit Badges

Merit Badges are opportunities for a Scout to broaden his knowledge and interests. They require independent study and introduce the Scout to specialized subjects. A key aspect of the merit badge program is the opportunity to work with adult Merit Badge (MB) Counselors. A merit badge counselor serves as both a teacher and mentor as Scouts work on a merit badge. In one way, he or she is an examiner. In a larger sense, the counselor uses this opportunity for coaching—helping young men overcome the hurdles of the different requirements and making Scouts aware of the deeper aspects of the subject from their knowledge and experience. MB counselors are BSA-trained adults who have unique skills or experiences by direction from the Colonial District, Troop 654 Merit Badge Counselors are listed in a larger District developed list and it is available on the National Capital Area Council (NCAC) website under Colonial District or available from the Troop Merit Badge Counselor Coordinator. The new Troop website has a link to the current District MB Counselor list. See "Additional Info – Merit Badges" for details on how merit badges are earned.

Participating in a Scoutmaster Conference

When a Scout completes all requirements for a rank as outlined in the back of the Scout Handbook, he is required to contact the Scoutmaster to schedule a Scoutmaster conference (email is preferred). This conference is designed to involve the Scout in a review of his progress. The Scout and Scoutmaster also work together in setting goals for further development and personal growth.

Prior to scheduling a conference, the Scoutmaster will review to the Scout's record in TM to ensure the Scout has met all requirements. Should the Scoutmaster find any gaps or discrepancies, he will work with the Scout and the Troop's Advancement Coordinator (as necessary) to resolve any issues - prior to the conference. In advance, the Scoutmaster may delegate the execution of Scoutmaster Conferences for Tenderfoot, Second, and First Class ranks to an Assistant Scoutmaster as necessary. The Scoutmaster will always conduct Scoutmaster Conferences for Star, Life, and Eagle ranks.

In preparation for his Scoutmaster Conference, a Scout should:

- Be on time
- Bring his Boy Scout handbook
- Be in his Class "A" Boy Scout uniform
- Be prepared to discuss how he endeavors to live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law in his everyday life.

Appearing before a Board of Review

After a successful Scoutmaster Conference, the Scout requests a board from the Troop's Board of Review (BoR) Coordinator. At that time, the BoR Coordinator will work with the Advancement Coordinator who will update the TM database and verify that all requirements for the BoR have been met. The BoR Coordinator will set up a formal review for all ranks except for the Eagle rank. The Troop Committee Chair will organize the Eagle BoR as part of the Eagle Scout administrative process. Council and District General Advancement and Eagle Guides are available on the NCAC website and from the Life to Eagle Coach.

The BoR's objective is not to re-test the Scout but rather to:

- Determine the extent to which the boy has had a positive and effective experience in the Troop;
- Make certain that all advancement standards have been met;
- Encourage further progress; and
- Evaluate the Troop's program.

Troop 654 offers a BoR to scouts once the Scout requests one and when adult members are available. A Board is comprised of Committee members and parents. However, parents may not sit on a BoR for their own son. Additionally, **the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters should not be members of a BoR (but are allowed to observe).**

General guidelines for a Scout's eligibility to participate in a BoR are attached in Appendix A of this handbook. Advancement in rank is not automatic. If the Scoutmaster or the Board feels that the Scout is not ready to advance, they will offer constructive suggestions designed to strengthen perceived areas of weakness. Typically, a Scout will not be recommended for a BoR by the Scoutmaster unless he is deemed ready for it.

Recognition

Celebrating a Scout's achievement is essential to the Scouting program and its objectives of building confidence, respect, and recognizing the value of accomplishment. Troop 654 typically recognizes rank achievements immediately following a successful BoR. Appropriate rank cards documenting advancement are presented at the next Court of Honor. The Court is a gathering of the entire Troop and their families to celebrate the accomplishments of the Scouts. It is typically held on a weekend evening, once in the spring and once in the fall, and usually includes a pot luck dinner for all to enjoy. A family's attendance at Courts of Honor (even if their son is not receiving an award) is encouraged and sends an important, positive signal to all the boys about the importance of Scouting.

Additional Information - Merit Badges

Scouts may earn merit badges from the time they first become Boy Scouts. Once a Scout reaches First Class, merit badges become one of five components of advancement -- the other four are to: (1) be active in the Troop, (2) demonstrate Scout spirit, (3) participate in service projects, (4) serve in positions of Troop responsibility and leadership.

There are approximately 133 merit badges from which to choose in Boy Scouts. To achieve Eagle Rank, a Scout is required to earn 21 Badges, of which 13 are "Eagle required" (with the addition of the Cooking Merit Badge Requirement starting in 2014). Before starting a merit badge, the Scout must request authorization to do so from the Scoutmaster. If the Scoutmaster agrees that it is appropriate for the Scout to begin the merit badge, the Scout will be given a scoutmaster-endorsed 'Blue Card.' This card indicates the Troop's permission for the Scout to begin a particular merit badge. Scouts must personally contact the merit badge councilor and work independently on the merit badges. With the approval of their Merit Badge Counselor, Scouts may be able to use school classes, sports, or home projects to meet Merit Badge requirements. It is the responsibility of the Scout to maintain contact with the councilor throughout the effort and to have the requirements signed off. Camping offers many opportunities as well. If Troop 654 does not have a counselor for a specific badge, the Merit Badge Counselor Coordinator(s) can assist in finding one from another area Troop as listed in the District Merit Badge Counselor List. Merit Badge workbooks are available at the Scout Store, online, and through the Troop Librarian.

Patrols

Troop 654 is organized into Patrols. Each patrol will elect its own Patrol Leader. Each Patrol Leader represents the youth in his Patrol, and he relates its needs and concerns to the Patrol Leaders' Council. He participates in the Troop's planning and decision-making and helps plan outdoor events.

Scouts camp and eat with other Scouts in their Patrol, led by the Patrol Leader. Adults tent and eat nearby as a separate adult Patrol. Boy leaders plan, execute, and evaluate the Troop Activity Program, guided by our BSA-trained adult leaders. The result is a consistently high-quality program.

The Troop organizes patrols primarily based on the age of the Scouts. Following the first ("Brownsea") year of Scouting, the adult and scout leadership may determine the need to re-organize the patrols for an optimum scouting experience.

New Scout Patrol

New Scouts are formed into a New Scout Patrol for their first year. Here, the new Scouts receive instruction and guidance on advancement and basic Scouting skills from selected older Scouts called Troop Guides. The New Scout Patrol also has an adult Assistant Scoutmaster assigned to help guide and support them. . A key objective for the Troop Guides in this first year is to teach the idea and spirit of the Patrol method with the new Scouts. Camp Rodney, our traditional Boy Scout summer camp location, has a very good New Scout or "Brownsea Scout" training program that provides an excellent starting point for New Scouts who have just transitioned from Webelos or entered Scouting for the first time.

A Short Note about Summer Camp for Parents of New Scouts:

Experience has shown that attendance at summer camp in the first year enables new Scouts to quickly build a strong foundation in scouting skills and therefore compete for advancement more quickly.

Youth Leadership

Youth leaders usually are elected by their peers twice each year to help run Troop 654.

Youth Leaders

Senior Patrol Leader (SPL):

SPL is the highest youth-leadership position. The SPL is in charge of the Troop under the guidance of the Scoutmaster. He chairs the Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) meetings, and with PLC assistance, he plans and executes the Troop Activity Program. The Troop Scouts elect this position semi-annually.

Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL):

The Assistant Senior Patrol Leader assists the SPL and serves in his absence. He supervises the non-leadership positions such as Scribe, Librarian, Historian, Quartermaster, and Chaplain's Aide. He assists in planning and executing the Troop program, and takes on special projects assigned by the Senior Patrol Leader.

Patrol Leaders (PL):

The Patrol Leader is elected by his Patrol to lead the Patrol and represent it at the PLC. He is responsible for planning and executing Patrol events, and Troop activities on the Patrol level. The Patrol Leader is responsible for advancement help, task assignment, information dissemination, and leading his Patrol in Scouting. The patrol members elect this position semi-annually.

Quartermaster (QM):

The Troop QM is responsible for controlling the care and distribution of Troop equipment. He is responsible for signing out Troop equipment to each Patrol Leader. The Patrol Leader and his Patrol are responsible for returning all Troop equipment in good condition, or otherwise replacing it. The Troop QM will list deficiencies and submit them to the SPL and work with the adult quartermaster for resolution. The Senior Patrol Leader appoints this position, with approval from the Scoutmaster.

Scribe:

The Troop Scribe records the results of the Patrol Leaders' Council, records attendance at Troop activities, updates Scout attendance within TM (under adult supervision), and periodically publishes articles in the Troop website. The Senior Patrol Leader appoints this position, with approval from the Scoutmaster.

Librarian:

The Troop Librarian is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the Troop library of merit badge books. The Senior Patrol Leader appoints this position, with approval from the Scoutmaster.

Historian:

The Troop historian gathers pictures and facts about troop/team activities and keeps them in a historical file or scrapbook. He also takes care of troop/team trophies, ribbons, and souvenirs of troop/team activities. Finally, he keeps information about former members of the troop/team. The Senior Patrol Leader appoints this position, with approval from the Scoutmaster. He uploads pictures into the Troop's Photobucket site.

Troop Guide:

The Troop Guide is both a leader and a mentor to the members of the new-Scout (Brownsea) patrol. Troop Guides are responsible for assisting Scouts in their first year with their rank advancement and camping preparation. The Guide also assists younger Scouts with fitting into the Troop and their Patrol. The Senior Patrol Leader appoints this position, with approval from the Scoutmaster. In the event that the Troop requires more than two (due to large numbers of new Scouts), there will be additional Troop Guides appointed.

Chaplain's Aide:

The Chaplain's Aide is responsible for encouraging the spiritual growth and awareness of the troop and assisting the Troop Chaplain (and adult committee members). The Chaplain Aide works with the Troop Chaplain (usually an adult from the troop committee or the chartered organization) to plan appropriate interfaith religious services during troop outings. The Chaplain's Aide will participate in Patrol Leaders Council planning sessions to ensure that spiritual emphasis is included in troop activities. The Senior Patrol Leader appoints this position, with approval from the Scoutmaster.

Den Chief:

The Den Chief works with a local Cub Scout or Webelos den and assists the Den Leader or Webelos Leader with den and pack activities. This position is appointed by the Scoutmaster.

Troop Webmaster:

The Troop Webmaster updates and generally maintains the Troop Website under the supervision of the Adult Webmaster. The Senior Patrol Leader appoints this position, with approval from the Scoutmaster.

Instructor:

A Troop Instructor is an older Scout proficient in a Scouting skill with the ability to teach that skill to others. An instructor typically teaches subjects that Scouts are eager to learn—e.g. first aid, camping, and backpacking—that are required for outdoor activities and rank advancement. The Senior Patrol Leader appoints this position, with approval from the Scoutmaster.

Junior Assistant Scoutmaster:

A Scout at least 16 years of age who has shown outstanding leadership skills may be appointed by the senior patrol leader, with the advice and consent of the Scoutmaster, to serve as a junior assistant Scoutmaster. These young men (a troop may have more than one junior assistant Scoutmaster) follow the guidance of the Scoutmaster in providing support and supervision to other boy leaders in the troop. Upon his 18th birthday, a junior assistant Scoutmaster will be eligible to become an assistant Scoutmaster.

Other Positions of Responsibility:

Special projects or positions of responsibility can be assigned by the Senior Patrol Leader to fill needs in the Troop Organizational Structure. A Scout may submit a description of the project or a list of duties for the special position to the Senior Patrol Leader, who will consult with the Scoutmaster for approval.

Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC)

The Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) consists of the youth leaders of the Troop and, under the guidance of the Scoutmaster, is responsible for planning and conducting the Troop's activities. The PLC is responsible for the Troop program including planning and carrying out Troop meetings and outdoor programs. The PLC meets once a month (normally on a Monday, in lieu of a Troop meeting), or at the discretion of the SPL.

Annual Program Planning

Each year, the youth leaders within the PLC will hold an annual planning meeting to establish activity plans for the upcoming year. This planning meeting will be led by the SPL under the guidance of the Scoutmaster and ASMs.

Expectations of Scouts in Leadership Positions

Youth holding leadership positions are an example to younger Scouts. It is vital to the smooth operation of the Troop that all Scouts in leadership positions regularly participate and fulfill their leadership roles to the other members of the Troop. In the event of excessive absences or other performance issues, the Scoutmaster may counsel the Scout about his performance. If performance does not improve after counseling, the Scoutmaster may extend the Scout in his role to gain additional evaluation time or remove the Scout from his leadership position. . Once removed from a leadership position, a Scout may not run for any leadership position again until approved by the Scoutmaster.

Adult Leadership

Led by the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters support him and the Troop. All Scoutmasters must be trained in Scoutmaster Specific Training (including an Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills weekend course) and Youth Protection Training. In addition, Scoutmasters should participate in District and Council training programs designed to impart additional training skills.

Scoutmaster

The Scoutmaster is the adult leader responsible for working directly with the Scouts to help them create the program for the Troop. The Scoutmaster trains boy leaders to run the Troop by providing direction, coaching and support. The importance of the Scoutmaster's job is reflected in the fact that the quality of his guidance will affect every youth and adult involved in the Troop. The Scoutmaster serves at the pleasure of the Chartered Organization; the procedures for selection and affirmation are detailed in Appendix C of this handbook.

Assistant Scoutmasters

Assistant Scoutmasters help the Scoutmaster work with the boy leaders as they conduct the Troop program. Candidates for Assistant Scoutmaster are registered and trained adult Scouters who are familiar with the methods and procedures of the Boy Scouts of America and Troop 654 operations. Many have prior Scouting experience. Assistant Scoutmasters often have specific, ongoing duties that the Scoutmaster has delegated to them, including mentoring a Patrol leader, attending Troop outings, summer camp, high adventure, etc. Assistant Scoutmasters serve at the pleasure of the Scoutmaster.

Troop Committee

The Troop Committee is a group of registered adult Scouters that function to:

- provide adequate facilities;
- advise the Scoutmaster on policies relating to Boy Scouting and the chartered organization;
- carries out the policies and regulations of Boy Scouts of America;
- encourages leaders in carrying out the program;
- is responsible for finances, adequate funds, and disbursements in line with the approved budget plan;
- obtains, maintains, and properly cares for troop property;
- provides adequate camping and outdoor program (minimum 10 days and nights per year); and
- ensure quality adult leadership is recruited and trained. A qualified substitute is assigned in case the Scoutmaster is absent or is unable to serve.

Troop 654's Committee supports Troop activities and performs Troop operations. The Committee currently meets monthly (normally on a Monday). The Committee helps with recordkeeping, advancement (including Boards of Review), and long-range planning. Committee members work with the Scoutmaster and other Troop leaders to insure an interesting, successful, and safe Troop. The Committee welcomes parents' comments. More information about the Troop Committee is contained in Appendix C of this handbook.

Merit Badge Counselors

The Merit Badge Counselor's role is to bring about learning on the part of the Boy Scout. As a "coach," the Counselor advises the Scout concerning steps he should take to fulfill the requirements for the Merit Badge. As a "counselor," the adult evaluates the Scout's performance and determines whether the Scout has met the prescribed objectives in the

requirements. The Merit Badge Counselor is not authorized to modify any of the merit badge requirements; the counselor must adhere to the BSA requirements as described in the current edit of the merit badge pamphlet. He or she must be registered separately with the Council as a Merit Badge Counselor and must maintain current Youth Protection Training certification.

The Counselor's responsibility is to:

- assist the Scout as he plans the assigned projects and activities to meet the merit badge requirements;
- coach Scouts through interviews and demonstrations on how to do the required skills of the craft, business, or hobby;
- certify the Scout after determining whether he is qualified for the Merit Badge.

As with all adult leadership positions that work directly with Scouts, youth protection must be practiced. In this case, instead of the normal two-deep leadership requirement, a Scout must always have at least one buddy (who could be another Scout, a sibling, a parent or guardian, relative or friend) present when working with the Merit Badge Counselor.

Unit Commissioner

The Unit Commissioner is the liaison between the Troop and the District. While the commissioner can be assigned by the District Commissioner, it is often helpful to the District to have a volunteer from within the Troop serve in this capacity. The Unit Commissioner is a member of the District, rather than the Troop, and often serves as a liaison between several units, such as a Troop, Pack, and Crew. The Unit Commissioner also serves as a resource, providing advice and guidance when asked.

Chartered Organization Representative

The Chartered Organization is the organization that sponsors the Troop. In Troop 654's case, the Chartered Organization is Saint Luke's Episcopal Church. The church selects a member of the church to be the Chartered Organization Representative (COR). The Charter Organization Representative:

- is a member of the chartered organization;
- serves as head of the "Scouting Department" in the organization;
- Appoints the Scoutmaster
- secures a Troop Committee chair and encourages training;
- maintains a close liaison with the Troop Committee chair;
- helps recruit other adult leaders;
- serves as the liaison between the Troop and the church;
- assists with unit re-chartering;
- encourages service to both the organization and the community;
- represents the Troop to the District Committee; and
- can be a Troop Committee member.

Youth Protection Guidelines

Because of the great concern the Boy Scouts of America has for the problem of child abuse in our society, the Youth Protection program has been developed to help safeguard both our

youth and adult members. These guidelines also help ensure adequate adult leadership is available in routine operations and in an emergency. The training course is available online and is mandatory for all adult leaders and Merit Badge Counselors. All adults in contact with Troop 654 youth must complete BSA Youth Protection Training.

Adult Leadership Requirements

Troop Meetings:	At least two registered adult leaders must be present, at least one of them over the age of 21.
Outings:	At least two registered adult leaders must be present, at least one of them over the age of 21.
Merit Badges:	At least one registered adult leader, at least two scouts or one Scout and one other adult.

Parental Involvement

When a boy joins Troop 654, his parents should feel obligated to contribute to the program of the Troop. This directly contributes to their son's success. They should:

- **Be aware of their son's progress in rank advancement**
Successful Scouts tend to have actively involved parents. The more the parents are involved, the more success their son will find in Scouting, and the family involvement benefits the entire Troop.
- **Attend Troop and Eagle Courts of Honor**
Troop 654 has Courts of Honor approximately two to three times per year. These are family events, usually preceded by a potluck supper and all are welcome. Eagle Courts of Honor are individually scheduled.
- **Participate**
Many of the best ideas come from parents who get involved. Troop 654 needs parents to assist as Assistant Scoutmasters, help counsel Merit Badges, assist with special events, and drive to and from activities. Trips are at the risk of being cancelled if there are not have enough adults that volunteer to drive. Parents should aim to attend at least one major activity with their Scout each year.
- **Know their son's adult and boy leaders**
In addition to Scoutmaster and Committee Chair, parents should know the Assistant Scoutmasters, the Senior Patrol Leader, and the Patrol Leader of your son's Patrol.

Adult Training

BSA provides excellent adult leader training. The Colonial District offers Adult Leader Specific Training each fall and spring for Assistant Scoutmasters and Committee members. NCAC offers a one-day "University of Scouting" each year. In addition, BSA has other training online,

including Youth Protection, FastStart, and Safe Swim Defense-Safety Afloat. Troop 654's continuing success is largely a result of having a sufficient number of trained adults.

Communications & Staying Informed

Troop 654 Website

A great deal of information about Troop 654 is online at <http://troop654.org/>. General information is public.

Meetings & Events

Troop Meetings

Troop meetings are held every Monday from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., September through June unless otherwise announced. Details are distributed by email. Weather closings will be announced via email. Meetings are held in the activity room of Saint Luke's unless stated otherwise. Parents who stay through the Troop meeting will gather separately from the Scouts and use this time to accomplish Troop matters.

Service Projects

Service to the community is an essential part of Scouting. Attendance at Patrol and Troop service projects is highly encouraged, and "service hours" are required for advancement to some of the ranks. Scouts are also encouraged to provide service to groups on their own. For this service to count toward rank advancement, the Scoutmaster usually must approve it in advance. In general, service projects should be performed in Scout uniform (either Class "A" or "B"), unless the nature of the work would damage the uniform. Participation in Eagle Scout Leadership Service projects is an honor and a privilege that each Scout should take advantage of at every opportunity.

Attendance

A Scout is strongly encouraged to attend most Troop meetings and activities. A "Scoutmaster Minute" closes a Troop meeting and is something parents may want to observe. Attending and participating in Scout functions to demonstrate Scout spirit is an integral part of advancement. **Scouts will have a difficult time advancing if they have a pattern of not attending meetings and outings.** Additionally, summer camp is a vital part of the Troop outdoor program. Scouts should make every effort to attend at least one week of summer camp or our annual 'High Adventure' activity.

Sports, Activities and Scouting

Experience teaches that the most successful Scouts are those with a variety of activities and interests. Scouts are encouraged to be active in church, music, sports, school, and other activities as they choose. Many of these activities may contribute to certain Merit Badge requirements. If these activities will significantly affect a Scout's ability to participate in Scout functions, the Scout should advise the Scoutmaster and his Patrol Leader.

On those occasions where Scouts are coming directly from a school/sporting activity to a Troop meeting they should be reminded to pack their Scout uniforms ahead of time and change at the church, if necessary.

Uniform and Handbook

Upon joining the Troop, Scouts are presented with a Troop 654 patch, green uniform epaulettes, a maroon Activity / "Class-B" uniform tee shirt, and an official *Boy Scout Handbook*. Just as a sports uniform identifies a boy with a team, the Scout uniform identifies a boy with the largest voluntary youth movement in the world.

Scouts are expected to wear their Field / "Class A" Boy Scout shirt and closed-toed shoes to all meetings unless otherwise informed by the Scoutmaster or SPL. He should also bring his *Boy Scout Handbook* to all meetings, to summer camp, and on all outings. The *Boy Scout Handbook* records progress towards ranks from the first meeting. When in uniform, the shirt will be tucked in and only official insignia and patches may be affixed. The *Boy Scout Handbook* has sewing templates on the inside front and back covers. Questions about uniforms should be directed to the Patrol Leader or adult leaders.

Note on the Merit Badge Sash: The Merit Badge Sash is worn on formal activities and events and NOT during troop meetings or campouts. A "Formal Activity" is a Troop Court of Honor, an awards ceremony, a Blue and Gold Banquet, or a recognition dinner staged by a unit, District, Council or region. It is a good idea to purchase the larger badge sash to accommodate the Scout's growth as he gets older.

Field Uniform / Class "A" Shirt (Formal Uniform)

The Field / Class "A" uniform shirt is worn to all Troop meetings and on formal outings unless directed otherwise by the Scoutmaster. Field / Class "A" uniform shirt is also mandatory for Boards of Review, Courts of Honor, District- and Council-sponsored events, parades, fundraisers, traveling to and from summer camp, and on all high-adventure trips. When in doubt, Scouts should wear the Field / Class "A" shirt. Close-toed shoes ('slides' or flip-flops are not permitted). At each Troop meeting, the Scoutmaster and SPL conduct informal uniform inspections.

Activity Uniform / Class "B" Shirt (Informal Uniform)

- Maroon Troop 654 tee shirt
- Close-toed shoes and socks

Class "B" is worn as instructed by the SPL, as well as occasional work projects or outings.

Usually a member of the Committee volunteers as the tee shirt Coordinator and will provide opportunities to exchange sizes as required.

Official Scout uniforms and other official items may be purchased at the Northern Virginia Scout Store (5234 Port Royal Rd, Springfield, VA 22151-2102 (Near Braddock Rd and I-495); (703) 321-4836, Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., closed on Sundays). The National Capital Area Scout shop is located in Bethesda (9190

Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20814); (301) 564-1091. Purchases can also be made online at the official BSA online sales/store.

Boy Scout Handbook

Each new Troop 654 Scout is presented a *Boy Scout Handbook* upon joining the Troop. If lost, the Scout should replace the handbook as soon as possible. The handbook documents all of a Scout's rank advancement. It is used as reference at all Boards of Review and carries the signatures of the review personnel. Even though the Troop maintains a database of advancements, if it loses information, that information cannot be duplicated so please guard the handbook against loss. It is a good idea to photocopy the rank advancement pages periodically and store them in a safe place.

The Outdoor Program

Summary

The Scoutmaster works with the Assistant Scoutmasters to identify an ASM planner who will work with a PLC Youth Planner to plan each Troop campout and outing. The Troop 654 approach is that Scouts are responsible for organization, planning, and leading our trips. Adult uniformed leaders are responsible for counseling our youth planners and for health and safety. The Senior Patrol Leader or his designee is in charge of executing our outing, with the support of the Scoutmaster or his designated representative. The Scoutmaster and the ASM planner communicate with the Senior Patrol Leader. The SPL will ensure items like troop packing lists and any required special duties are assigned prior tour events.

A Scout's Responsibility

The Troop endeavors to focus its energy on creating a meaningful experience for all our Scouts. With this commitment to our Scouts comes the need for Scouts to stay apprised of approaching Troop activities and take responsibility for their own commitments. To ensure effective final planning for troop events can be accomplished by both our youth planners and ASM planners, each Troop activity will have an advertised cutoff-date. Only scouts signed-up for an activity by the advertised cutoff date will be permitted to attend. This focus on a Scouts responsibility to make choices and commitments in advance is in keeping with the tenants of the Scout Law to be *Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, and Obedient*.

Fees

Each outing we attend will have some fee that participants will pay to defray any related costs. Our most common fee is for food. Generally, food costs for each local outing are \$4-\$5 per meal per Scout. On specialized outings or outings involving distant travel, such as canoeing, skiing, summer camp, or caving, an additional fee is typically required. Financial scholarships are available to those who require assistance to attend summer camp.

Safety

The Troop will always endeavor to keep our Scouts safe at all times. Some Boy Scout activities involve risk though. Use of knives, fire, and cooking stoves all have associated risks, as do, water sports, skiing, caving, etc. The level of risk in all these cases is greatly reduced by knowledge, skill, and discipline in following safe practices. The Boy Scouts of America has guidelines for safety in all of these activities, which the Troop follows closely.

Patrol Method

Troop 654 follows the Patrol Method of camping where each Patrol is responsible for its own menu planning, purchasing, cooking, and cleanup. Each Patrol will check out its own equipment from the Troop Quartermaster. Patrol members set up tents, establish cooking facilities, cook for themselves, gather wood, and build campfires. Each Patrol lives as a group on outings; adults camp separately, but, close enough to observe, offer training, and ensure safety. Provisional patrols may be organized for particular outings based upon attendance at the event.

Meals

All Patrol menus should endeavor to reflect a fully balanced meal and should be approved by the Senior Patrol Leader prior to an outing. Parents are encouraged to know what their son eats on outings and should feel free to help their sons in suggesting easily made dishes. Sometimes the boy-planned menus are a little unusual and include "learning experiences." Occasionally a Scout will be asked to be the "*Grubmaster*" and *lead the meal planning and cooking for his patrol*. Parents are requested to ensure their son understands the tenants of staying within a budget and understand the number of people he is purchasing food for, and to help him stay within those guidelines.

Departures>Returns

Most outings leave from the lower parking lot of Saint Luke's. Scouts should have eaten a meal prior to departure unless otherwise notified. The Troop generally returns mid-afternoon on Sundays and Scouts are normally returned to the Church unless prior arrangements are made to return them directly home. The Scoutmaster or acting Scoutmaster and the SPL for the outing coordinate Scouts with drivers to and from events. After volunteering to drive to an event, parents will be asked to provide driver's license number, car tags, make and model of car (including number of seat belts), and insurance information. This information will be submitted to the Council in the troop's 'Tour Plan' submitted online by an adult leader/participant.

Informed Consent Form

Without exception, an Informed Consent Form is required of all Scouts and adults before they are allowed to attend any outing. A parent volunteer coordinates these forms and has them available usually two-three weeks ahead of an outing. A Scout is required to return his completed, signed permission slip by the Troop meeting preceding the scheduled event. The form contains basic health and contact information. Health and Physical forms parts A and B must be current, submitted, and on file (updated annually) before a Scout may attend an outing. An additional part C must be signed by a medical professional and submitted prior to summer camp, and there are additional sections applicable to High Adventure trips.

Transportation

Events must be cancelled when adequate transportation is not available. There must be enough seats, with proper safety restraints (seatbelts) to carry all participating Scouts and Adult leaders. One significant way that Parents can contribute is by driving the Scouts to and from events and outings. Parents should plan on driving Scouts to and from at least one outdoor activity per year.

Camping Equipment

Parents are discouraged from purchasing expensive personal equipment when their son is younger. Experienced adult leaders can be a helpful resource to ensure the equipment families purchase is up to the rigors of Scout-style camping. Leaders can also suggest low-cost substitutes for some items. Some vendors offer discounts for Scouts.

The Troop provides some common gear, tents, and stoves. Scouts may be assigned gear to take home and clean after an outing. Please be sure any Troop equipment that gets taken home is dried, cleaned, and returned at the next Monday's Troop meeting. Scouts might be held financially accountable for lost or damaged Troop gear for which they were responsible. Scouts who have attained the rank of First Class are authorized to utilize their own tents on campouts.

Adults on Outings

Troop 654 requires at least two registered and trained adults, one of whom is at least 21 years old, on all Troop outings. For an adult to participate with the Troop on a weekend camping trip, the following requirements must be met:

- Notify Scoutmaster
- adhere to BSA and Troop 654 rules and the Boy Scout method of camping, including "Leave No Trace" camping. Information on Leave No Trace camping can be found in the *Boy Scout Handbook*;
- be familiar with Youth Protection. At a minimum, complete the pamphlet exercises in the *Boy Scout Handbook* entitled, "How to Protect Your Children from Child Abuse";
- provide the Troop with a valid Informed Consent form;
- when vehicle space for adults is limited, trained adult uniformed leaders are given preference; and
- Should we have limits on how many participants we can support on a particular outing, the Scoutmaster will focus first on ensuring the Scouts interests are met and then do his best to accommodate the desires of accompanying parents.

Advanced Scouting Programs

The Boy Scouts of America has several programs to keep Scouting interesting for youth as they gain experience, progress in rank, and develop through the teenage years. Some of these programs include:

'High Adventure' Trips

Troop 654 makes available when possible a trip that tests the mettle of eligible older Scouts who have achieved First Class Rank and meet BSA age requirements. Scouts who participate often call these high-adventure trips "life changing adventures" or "trips of a lifetime." Historically, many of the Scouts who participate in these trips go on to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout. BSA runs four high adventure bases: Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, Sea Base in Florida, Northern Tier in Minnesota and into Canada and the 'Summit' in West Virginia.

Philmont Scout Ranch:

Located in New Mexico in the Sangre DeCristo range of the Rockies, Philmont has 215 square miles of wilderness that offers unforgettable 10-day backpacking adventures for older Scouts. Troop 654 typically sponsors a contingent every two years, and Troop 654 Scouts and adult leaders are encouraged to participate.

Sea Base:

Sailing, SCUBA diving, snorkeling and canoeing are the primary emphases of this program that includes facilities in both Florida and the Bahamas. Troop 654 typically sponsors a contingent every two years, and Scouts and adult leaders are encouraged to participate.

Northern Tier:

Since 1923, Scouts have been voyaging into the great north wilderness to seek adventure on the portage trail. These are the experiences that Scouts get in Canada and the north woods of the United States. Northern Tier High Adventure Program is the only outfitter in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and Canada charged by the Boy Scouts of America to deliver the Scouting program to Scouts and Leaders adventuring into North America's Canoe Country.

The Summit:

The Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve (SBR) located in Mount Hope, West Virginia and was the site of the 2013 National Jamboree. Scouts are afforded the chance to participate in activities including rock climbing, rappelling, mountain biking, geocaching, ATV riding, paddle boarding, and zip lining. 2014 will mark the first year 'The Summit' is an official 'High Adventure' venue. Troop 654 has not attended Summit yet and is researching experiences of other Troops before scheduling.

National Scout Jamboree:

The national Scout jamboree is a gathering, or jamboree, of thousands of members of the Boy Scouts of America, usually held every four years and organized by the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Referred to as "the Jamboree", Scouts from all over the nation and world have the opportunity to attend.

Order of the Arrow

Order of the Arrow is the national honor society for Boy Scouts. It recognizes outstanding Scouts who have met prescribed requirements and service. To be a candidate a Scout must:

- be at least First Class in rank;
- demonstrate Scout Spirit approved by the Scoutmaster prior to elections;
- participate regularly in Troop activities; and
- have at least 15 days and nights camping, including one long-term camp (six consecutive days) within a two-year period.

The boys elect Order of the Arrow members. This is one of the few organizations where non-members participate in selecting candidates. All Troop 654 youth members attending the Troop meeting in which elections are held are eligible to vote. Order of the Arrow members can be distinguished by the white sash with the red arrow that is worn at formal events.

Troop 654 Expected Conduct

Very simply stated, all boys always are expected to live and act by the values as established by the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

The Scoutmaster approves and advises the Patrol Leaders' Council in establishing Troop rules. The basic expectations below should not be considered an exclusive list. Troop leaders may generally act as needed to insure the safety and health of Troop members and keep the Troop in an environment free from harassment, profanity, and abuse towards youth and adult participants alike.

Troop Meeting Behavior

- wear the proper uniform to all meetings and activities
- be on time for all Troop activities
- no disruptive behavior
- no electronics (radios, cell phones, MP3 players, iPods, handheld video games, etc.) or homework
- troop and Church property must be respected
- live by the Scout Oath and Law
- remain with your Patrol during all activities (unless told otherwise)
- do not leave the Troop meeting room without permission

Troop Outing Behavior

- Do not play with fire. Fires are to be used only for heat, light, and cooking
- Only battery powered lights allowed in tents (no candles or gas lanterns)
- No fuel stored in the tents
- No food or eating in tents
- No rough horseplay
- No rock or projectile throwing
- No cutting of live trees, limbs, or vegetation
- No cruelty to animals
- No vulgar language
- Absolutely no fighting at all, ever
- No teasing, crude acts, pulling pranks, and similar acts of hazing
- Do not use, borrow, or otherwise disturb another person's property without permission
- Do not enter another person's tent without permission
- Do not take food from another Patrol without permission from the Patrol Leader
- Do not enter another Patrol or Troop campsite

Items Banned From Troop Activities

- Alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs (grounds for immediate dismissal from Troop)
- Fireworks or any other item that could potentially cause harm
- Firearms or bows and arrows, unless pre-approved by the Committee for purposes such as archery or rifle merit badge
- Squirt guns, super soakers, etc., unless an event is specifically designated and approved by Scoutmaster

- Inappropriate magazines or literature

Disciplinary Action

The Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster leading an activity has the authority to impart measured discipline to a Scout, including sending him home from an activity at the parents' expense. Other disciplinary measures are at the discretion of the Scoutmaster and Committee, to include suspension for a period of time; referring the Scout to a special Review Board (consisting of the Troop Committee Chair, Scoutmaster, and one or two other Troop Committee members); or dismissal from the Troop (after consulting with the Troop Committee Chair) for conduct inconsistent with Scouting ideals.

Dues and Fundraising

Troop Dues

Troop 654 dues are paid once a year, in January through February (make checks payable to "Troop 654"). The annual dues for 2013 were \$100 per Scout. This fee includes Council fees, insurance, a yearly subscription to *Boys' Life* magazine, and Troop administrative funding for periodically replacing gear or maintenance on Troop equipment and facilities (storage shed, canoes and trailer, and gear trailer). Cub Scouts who transfer into Troop 654 from within the Council pay a \$1 fee to transfer their BSA membership, which is then valid until the Troop's next dues collection.

Fundraising

Scouts selling Scout popcorn and having fundraisers such as car washes can help support "fun" activities such as skiing and high-adventure outings. Each Scout may be asked to participate in fundraising activities, as necessary. Normally Troop 654 has one major fund raising activity per year which is the selling and distribution of Holiday Greens, which occurs between October and December each year. Scouts can earn credit toward their Troop dues, based on the number and value of items they sell.

"Friends of Scouting" (FOS) is perhaps the best-known Council level BSA fundraiser. FOS helps to pay for camps and District/Council support activities that directly benefit your son. Typically at the Spring Court of Honor, the Unit Commissioner gives a FOS presentation, explaining how much the Council pays for the Scouting program per boy. Parents are encouraged to "give back" to Scouting by writing a check to this worthy campaign.

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC): Parents or friends of the Troop and Scouting are encouraged to donate to the Scouting cause either directly via the NCAC web-site, the Friends of Scouting campaign, or through the United Way Combined Federal Campaign (Designate **CFC #58004 for Boy Scouts of America** or **CFC #48974 for NCAC**).

Annual Health and Medical Record (Valid for 12 calendar months)

Medical Information

The Boy Scouts of America recommends that all youth and adult members have annual medical evaluations by a certified and licensed health-care provider. In an effort to provide better care to those who may become ill or injured and to provide youth members and adult

leaders a better understanding of their own physical capabilities, the Boy Scouts of America has established minimum standards for providing medical information prior to participating in various activities. Those standards are offered below in one several section medical forms. Note that unit leaders must always protect the privacy of unit participants by protecting their medical information.

Parts A and B are to be completed annually **by all Troop members**. Both parts are required for all events that do not exceed 72 consecutive hours, where the level of activity is similar to that normally expended at home or at school, such as day camp, day hikes, swimming parties, or an overnight camp, and where medical care is readily available. Medical information required includes a current health history and list of medications. Part C also includes the parental informed consent and hold harmless/release agreement (with an area for notarization if required by your state) as well as a talent release statement. Adult unit leaders should review participants' health histories and become knowledgeable about the medical needs of the youth members in their unit. This form is to be filled out by participants and parents or guardians and kept on file for easy reference. Copies of these forms can be downloaded from the Troop website.

Part C is required with parts A and B for any event that exceeds 72 consecutive hours, or when the nature of the activity is strenuous and demanding, such as a high-adventure trek. Service projects or work weekends may also fit this description. It is to be completed and signed by a certified and licensed health-care provider—physician (MD or DO), nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant as appropriate for your state. The level of activity ranges from what is normally expended at home or at school to strenuous activity such as hiking and backpacking. Other examples include tour camping, jamborees, and Wood Badge training courses. It is important to note that the height/weight limits must be strictly adhered to if the event will take the unit beyond a radius wherein emergency evacuation is more than 30 minutes by ground transportation, such as backpacking trips, high-adventure activities, and conservation projects in remote areas. Additional sections may require to be filled out to meet requirements of specific High Adventure activities. In 2013 all health and physical forms were combined into one several page fillable form document. Parts **A, B, and C** are the "standard" for normal Troop activity including summer camp.

Risk Factors

Based on the vast experience of the medical community, the BSA has identified that the following risk factors may define your participation in various outdoor adventures. For more information on medical risk factors, visit Scouting Safely on www.scouting.org.

- Excessive body weight
- Heart disease
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Diabetes
- Seizures
- Lack of appropriate immunizations
- Asthma
- Sleep disorders
- Allergies/anaphylaxis

- Muscular/skeletal injuries
- Psychiatric/psychological and emotional difficulties

Prescriptions

The taking of prescription medication is the responsibility of the individual taking the medication and/or that individual's parent or guardian. A leader, after obtaining all the necessary information, can agree to accept the responsibility of making sure a youth takes the necessary medication at the appropriate time, but BSA does not mandate or necessarily encourage the leader to do so. Also, if state laws are more limiting, they must be followed. For frequently asked questions about this Annual Health and Medical Record, see Scouting Safely online at <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety.aspx>. Information about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) may be found at <http://www.hipaa.org>.

The Annual Health and Medical Record, which took effect in January 2013, identifies that due to health and safety concerns, participation in high-adventure activities (where health care is 30 minutes or more away) will be restricted to those who fall within BSA's standardized height/weight ratios. Scouts and adults deemed too overweight will not be permitted to attend Philmont Scout Ranch, Florida Sea Base, or Northern Tier High Adventure Base.

The Troop's Summer Camp Coordinator and those adults planning the particular High Adventure Trip will provide the best form for individual situations, and answer questions.

Special Needs

Parents are strongly encouraged to inform the Scoutmaster of any unique concerns (Medical, dietary, social, financial) they have about their Scout. This information will be shared only with those that have a strict need-to-know (Scoutmaster-in-charge, Committee Chair, etc.) as deemed by the Scoutmaster and in-order-to ensure a successful scouting experience. If deemed necessary, at least one parent (or adult guardian) will be required to attend every outing with their son. This policy is not to discriminate but to ensure a positive Scouting experience for all. Troop 654 Committee retains the authority to deny, or discontinue, membership to anyone considered disruptive to the Troop and, if deemed necessary, may control the overall size of the Troop by limiting new membership.

Guide Approval Process

The initial issuance of this guide will take place after a timed review by Committee members. Future revisions of this guide are to be reviewed by the Troop Committee and voted for adoption. Additionally, this guide must be aligned with BSA guidance and policies. Approval requires a simple majority of the votes cast. The members of the Troop Committee are listed in the Troop Directory published annually.

Amendments and modifications to future versions of this guide will be submitted to the committee by the Committee Chair for review and discussion. The committee will then set the date for a subsequent meeting for the vote to take place.

Appendices

Appendix A:	Advancement
Appendix B:	Merit Badges
Appendix C:	Adult Leadership
Appendix D:	Troop Committee

Appendix A – Advancement

Note: *The BSA Guide to Advancement is the foundational document for all advancement activities in Scouting. All Troop advancement procedures below are based on and must be consistent with the BSA guide.*

Troop 654 Board of Review

Guidelines for Scouts

TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR A BOARD OF REVIEW, A SCOUT MUST:

- Complete all requirements for his new rank as described in Rank Requirements pages at the back of the Scout handbook.
 - This includes turning-in all completed merit badge blue cards to the Troop's Advancement Coordinator.
- Successfully complete a Scoutmaster Conference and be recommended for advancement by the Scoutmaster.
- Request to be scheduled for a board by the BoR Coordinator (who works in tandem with the Advancement Coordinator).

AT HIS BOARD OF REVIEW, A SCOUT MUST:

- Be on time
- Bring his Boy Scout handbook
- Be in his Field / Class "A" Boy Scout uniform
- Be Prepared to:
 - Answer questions about the requirements for his new rank and all previous ranks he had held (for example, a Scout seeking to advance to First Class may be asked about Tenderfoot and First Class requirements.)
 - Answer questions about the requirements for the merit badges he has earned
 - Discuss skills appropriate with his Scout rank (such as knot tying, lashings, and first aid)
 - Answer questions on how he has endeavored to live by the Scout Oath and Scout law in his daily life
 - Discuss Scouting in general and his future plans for Scouting

SCOUTS WHO DO NOT MEET THESE REQUIREMENTS EITHER WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO SIT FOR A BOARD OF REVIEW OR WILL NOT BE APPROVED BY THE BOARD.

Guidelines for Adults serving on a Board of Review

Purpose

The members of a BoR should have the following objectives in mind:

- To see how good an experience the Scout is having in the unit
- To encourage the Scout to progress further

Additionally, the BoR provides "quality control" on advancement within the unit, it provides an opportunity for the Scout to develop and practice those skills needed in an interview situation, and it is an opportunity for the Scout to review his accomplishments.

The board is NOT a retest; the Scout has already been tested on the skills and activities required for the rank. However, the chairman of the board should ensure that all the requirements have been "signed off" in the Scout's handbook. Additionally, the chairman should ensure that leadership and merit badge records are consistent with the requirements for the rank.

The BoR is an opportunity to review of the Scout's attitudes, accomplishments acceptance of Scouting's ideals, and the Troop's program itself.

Composition of a Board of Review

For all ranks (except Eagle) and Eagle palms, the BoR consists of three to six members of the Troop Committee and or interested Scout parents. The Troop Board of Review Coordinator assigns the chairperson of the BoR. Relatives or guardians may not serve as members of a Scout's BoR. Unit leaders (Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, etc.) should not participate in a BoR.

Mechanics of a Board of Review

- The Scout should be in the Field / 'Class A' uniform to include
- The board members are invited to ask questions of the Scout. The questions should be open-ended, offering an opportunity for the Scout to speak about his opinions, experiences, activities, and accomplishments. Avoid questions which only require a simple one or two word answer. If an answer is too brief, follow up with a, "Why?" or, "How can that be done?" to have the Scout expand his answer. The questions need not be restricted to scouting topics; questions regarding home, church, school, work, athletics, etc. are all appropriate. The Chairperson should be made aware of any "out-of-bounds" areas; these should be communicated to the board before the board (e.g., if a Scout is experiencing family difficulties due to a divorce, it may be prudent to avoid family issues.)

The time for a board should be from 15 to 25 minutes, with the shorter time for the lower ranks. When all members have had an opportunity to ask their questions, the Scout might be excused from the room. The board members then consider whether the Scout is ready for the next rank; the board's decision should be unanimous. Once the decision is made, the Scout is invited back into the room, and the Chairperson informs the Scout of the board's decision. If the Scout is approved for the next rank, there are general congratulations and handshakes all around, and the Scout is encouraged to continue

advancing. If there are issues which prevent the Scout from advancing to the next rank, the board must detail the precise nature of the deficiencies. The Scout must be told specifically what must be done in order to be successful at the next BoR. Typically; an agreement is reached as to when the Scout may return for his subsequent board. The Chairperson must send a written follow up, to both the Scout and the Scoutmaster, regarding the deficiencies and the course of action needed to correct them.

Greater detail on this subject may be found at this link:

<http://clipart.usscouts.org/ScoutDoc/Advance/>

Appendix B – Merit Badges

Procedures for Merit Badge Paperwork

To start a Merit Badge

1. Read the requirements for the Merit Badge from the workbook or online (http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Merit_Badge_Worksheets).
2. Contact a council registered Merit Badge Councilor.
3. While a boy may begin working on a merit badge at any time, the Scout must eventually take the initiative to request and obtain a merit badge “Blue Card” from the Scoutmaster. (note: it is the counselor’s decision whether to accept work or activities completed prior to the issuing of the signed blue card. Common sense should prevail, however.)
4. Maintain contact with the councilor throughout the entire effort to earn the badge.

When you complete a Merit Badge

1. Your Merit Badge counselor will complete the requirements section of the blue card, sign it. (note: there are two places where the counselor’s signature is required). He or she should then take the counselor’s portion of the card
2. Take the remaining 2 sections of the blue card to the Scoutmaster for Scoutmaster’s signature.
3. Turn both portions of the Blue Card to the Advancement Coordinator.

Presentation of Awards

Typically, a Scout will receive the Merit Badge and the Scout’s copy of the Merit Badge Blue Card at the next scheduled Court of Honor. Merit badges earned at summer camp are normally presented at the Fall Court of Honor.

Partially completed Merit Badges

Every year, several Scouts come home from summer camp(s) with partially completed Merit Badges. The Scout is responsible for retaining and acting to complete the merit badges represented by these Blue Cards. If beginning with a new Merit Badge Counselor, the Scout will need to initiate activity for a new Blue Card, and may need the partial cards to show/demonstrate what he has already accomplished.

Note: It is strongly suggested that each Scout designate a place to maintain his (completed and partially completed) Blue cards. The completed Blue Cards will eventually need to be submitted along with a detailed package in the event the Scout elects to pursue the rank of Eagle Scout.

Appendix C - Adult Leadership

The Scoutmaster

The Scoutmaster is the adult leader responsible for working directly with the Scouts to help them create the program for the Troop. The Scoutmaster trains boy leaders to run the Troop by providing direction, coaching and support. The importance of the Scoutmaster's job is reflected in the fact that the quality of his guidance will affect every youth and adult involved in the Troop. An effective Scoutmaster exhibits the best traits of Scouting, setting the example for all. The scope and details of the Scoutmaster's duties are described in detail in *The Scoutmaster's Handbook*.

The Scoutmaster may be male or female, but must be at least 21 years old. The Scoutmaster is appointed by the Head of the Chartering Organization.

The Scoutmaster's duties include but are not limited to:

General

- Train and guide boy leaders
- Work with other responsible adults to bring Scouting to boys
- Use the methods of Scouting to achieve the aims of Scouting
- Ensure a safe environment for scouting

Meetings

- Meet regularly with the patrol leaders' council for training and coordination in planning Troop activities
- Attend all Troop meetings or, when necessary, arrange for a qualified adult substitute
- Attend Troop Committee meetings
- Conduct periodic parents' sessions to share the program and encourage parent participation and cooperation
- Attend (or have a representative attend) monthly district Roundtables when possible

Guidance

- Conduct or arrange Scoutmaster conferences for all rank advancements
- Provide a systematic recruiting plan for new members and see that they are promptly registered
- Delegate responsibility to other adults and groups (assistants, Troop Committee) so that they have a part in Troop operations
- Supervise Troop elections for the Order of the Arrow

Activities

- Make it possible for each Scout to experience at least ten days and nights of camping each year
- Participate in council and district events as deemed appropriate.
- Build a strong program by using proven methods presented in Scouting literature
- Conduct all activities under qualified leadership, safe conditions, and the policies of the chartered organization and the Boy Scouts of America

Assistant Scoutmasters:

To fulfill his obligation to the Troop, the Scoutmaster, with the assistance of the Troop Committee, recruits Assistant Scoutmasters to help operate the Troop. Each Assistant Scoutmaster is assigned specific program duties and reports to the Scoutmaster. They also provide the required two-deep leadership standards set by the Boy Scouts of America (there must be at least two adults present at any Boy Scout activity). An Assistant Scoutmaster must be at least 18 years old, and at least one in each Troop should be 21 or older so he or she can serve in the Scoutmaster's absence.

Possible roles for Assistant Scoutmasters include working with new Scouts, the boy leaders (e.g., Quartermaster), Scout skills, Trip Advisor/Mentor, Eagle Advisor, etc. The Troop would like to recruit as many Assistant Scoutmasters as possible.

Youth Protection Training requirements must be met prior to any adult joining and participating in outdoor events.

Appendix D - Troop Committee

The Troop Committee

The Troop Committee is the Troop's Board of Directors and supports the Troop program. The Committee works on behalf of the Charter Organization and operates within the policies set out by that organization and the Boy Scouts of America. The Committee's primary responsibility is to support the Scoutmaster in delivering a quality Troop program.

The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster(s) are not members of the Troop Committee and have no vote. However, mutual cooperation between the two groups of leaders is essential for the smooth and successful operation of the Troop.

Every member of the Committee should have a working assignment, in order to ensure the smoother operation of the Troop and an equitable distribution of the workload.

The Committee's responsibilities include:

- Ensures that quality adult leadership is recruited and trained
- Provides adequate meeting facilities
- Advises the Scoutmaster on policies relating to Boy Scouting and the Chartered Organization
- Supports adult leaders in carrying out the program
- Is responsible for finances, adequate funds, and disbursements in line with the approved budget plan
- Obtains and oversees the maintenance and care of Troop property
- Ensures the Troop has an outdoor program (minimum 10 days and nights per year)
- Serves on Boards of Review and assists with Courts of Honor
- Supports the Scoutmaster in working with individual boys and problems that may affect the overall Troop program
- Provides for the special needs and assistance some boys may require
- Helps with the Friends of Scouting campaign

The committee must consist of at least three adults aged 21 or older. There is no maximum. Five core positions are essential for quality Troop operation: Chair; Secretary; Treasurer (Finance/Records); Outdoor Activities Coordinator; and Advancement Coordinator. When there are more Committee members than positions, members should be assigned to assist in one of the areas. Descriptions of each position's responsibilities are given below, in addition to other positions that are available to be filled. Specific responsibilities, such as Transportation Coordinator, or High Adventure Coordinator, can be broken out into separate positions when warranted.

There is training for the Committee in the form of the Troop Committee Challenge, a three-hour BSA training session. Ideally, the training should be conducted every other year, or whenever there is turnover in the core positions of the Committee.

The positions are as follows:

Chair

- Organizes the Committee to see that all functions are delegated, coordinated and completed
- Maintains a close relationship with the Chartered Organization Representative and the Scoutmaster
- Interprets BSA national and local policies for the Troop
- Prepares the Troop Committee meeting agendas
- Calls, presides over, and promotes attendance at monthly Troop Committee meetings and any special meetings that may be called
- Ensures Troop representation at monthly Roundtables
- Secures top-notch, trained adult leadership for camp leadership
- Arranges for charter review and re-charters annually
- Plans the charter presentation
- Is appointed by the Chartered Organization Representative

Secretary

- Keeps minutes and sends out Committee meeting notices
- Handles any required publicity
- Prepares a family newsletter of Troop events and activities
- Conducts the Troop resource survey
- Plans for family night programs and family activities
- Reports the minutes of the previous meeting

Treasurer (Finance/Records)

- Handles all Troop funds; pays bills on recommendation of the Scoutmaster and authorization of the Troop Committee
- Maintains Troop checking account
- Keeps adequate financial records
- Collects outdoor program fees and coordinates reimbursement for expenditures related to same
- Supervises money-earning projects, including obtaining proper authorizations
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- Prepares an annual Troop budget or framework as directed by the Committee Chair
- Leads the Friends of Scouting campaign
- Reports to the Troop Committee at each meeting

Advancement Coordinator

- Encourages Scouts to advance in rank
- Works with the Troop Scribe to maintain all Scout advancement records
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- Makes a prompt report on the correct form to the council service center when a Troop board of review is held. Secures badges and certificates
- Works with the Troop librarian to build and maintain a Troop library of Merit Badge pamphlets and other advancement literature, as well as general Scouting, leadership, and outdoor Scouting lore knowledge

- Supports coordination of periodic Courts of Honor working with the appointed Master of Ceremonies and designated Boy Scout leaders
- Reports to the Troop Committee at each meeting

Event/ Activities Coordinator

- Works with the Scoutmaster and PLC from the approved Troop Calendar to schedule activities
- Researches and makes initial deposits for activities and camping – reimbursed by the Treasurer
- Transitions the information and reservation activity to the appointed youth Trip Leader and Adult planner (normally an Assistant Scout Master) when identified by the Scout Master

Health and Physical Forms Coordinator

- Annually collects updated Health and Physical Forms parts **A**, **B**, and before Summer Camp part **C**.
- Creates a Binder and provides the collected and bound forms to the Adult Leader appointed for each activity.
- Ensures parents retain the originals and provide copies to prepare a separate binder of **A**, **B**, and **C** forms for Summer Camp (Camp Rodney) for turn-in at check in
9coordinates this with the Camp Rodney Coordinator.

Merit Badge Counselor Coordinator

- Identify and guide parents through the process of becoming Merit Badge Counselors.
- Work with Membership Coordinator and Committee Chair to get parents registered.
- Maintain and access the latest version of the District Merit Badge Counselor List.
- Work with the appropriate District representatives to keep an updated list and to facilitate annual Merit Badge Jamboree planning.
- Coordinate Scout Input for the annual District Merit Badge Jamboree and promote same.

Life to Eagle Coordinator/Mentor

- Sometimes termed the Eagle Project Coach, guides the Scout through the process of planning his Eagle Project, and gaining approval from the Scoutmaster, Committee Chair, and the District Representative.
- Once project complete, and all other requirements complete, guides Eagle Candidate through the administrative process, final requirements completion, and filling in the Eagle Scout Application form utilizing current National, Council, and District Guidance, before the Scout Master Conference is held for the Eagle Scout Rank.

Troop Adult Webmaster

- Works with and supervises the Boy Scout Troop webmaster in updating and maintaining the Troop Website.
- May interface with Troop Historian to publish or display media associated with Troop activities.
- May take corrective action to suspend or shut down the website at the direction of the Scout Master or Troop Committee Chair.

Holiday Greens Sales Coordinator

- Generally coordinates the activity leading into and associated with the Troop's single major fund raiser in the year.
- Produces sales and ordering material for the Scouts to utilize in Greens Sales.
- Arranges for distribution and mailing of Greens and coordinating orders.
- Works with the Treasurer to ensure Scouts receive appropriate credit for their Greens Sales.
- Requests opportunity from St. Luke's to set up a table for a couple of weekends to allow scouts to sell Holiday Greens to Church members.
- Works with the Treasurer to pay all bills associated with Greens Sales.

High Adventure Coordinator

- Usually an Assistant Scout Master or experienced Scouting Parent.
- Handles all preliminary lottery entry, reservations, transportation, lodging and additional arrangements to effect an Annual High Adventure Trip.
- Works closely with the Scout Master and other Adult leaders who will go on the Trip.
- Researches and advises on any required adult training requirements (such as Wilderness First Aid) coordinating with the Adult Training Coordinator.
- Determines amounts, and collects all fees and payments, keeping record of same before turning over to the Treasurer for deposit.
- Works with the Treasurer to pay all bills associated with the trip.

Camp Rodney Coordinator

- Usually an Assistant Scout Master or experienced Scouting Parent.
- Follows the Camp Rodney leadership guide and is familiar with all instructions pertaining to Camp Rodney and participation in the program.
- Tracks the current reservation ensuring all payments and fees are collected in a timely manner.
- Works with the Treasurer to ensure all payments are made on time- usually makes payments with personal credit card and then seeks reimbursement from Treasurer.
- Distributes timely information and takes input from Scouts on their desired Merit Badge Selections, registers their requirements and registers New Scouts for the Brownsea Program.
- Works with the Scout Master to ensure all required pre-requisites for merit badges, if accomplished by the Scouts attending, are documented and prepared for turn in on the first day of camp
- Conducts advance order of Camp T-Shirts.
- Coordinates transportation and equipment requirements with the assistance of other participating Scouting Parents.
- Works with the Health and Physical Forms Coordinator to ensure all appropriate records copies for Scouts and Adults are available for turn in at check in.
- Prepares the Thursday night pizza order and ensures reservations are made for the following year.

Chaplain:

- Provides a spiritual tone for Troop meetings and activities
- Gives guidance to the chaplain aide
- Promotes regular participation of each member in the activities of the religious organization of his choice
- Visits homes of Scouts in time of sickness or need
- Gives spiritual counseling service when needed or requested
- Encourages Boy Scouts to earn their appropriate religious emblems
- Reports to the Troop Committee at each meeting

Adult Training Coordinator

- Ensures adult Troop leaders and Committee members have opportunities for training
- Maintains an inventory of up-to-date training materials, videotapes, and other training resources
- Works with the district training team in scheduling training for all new leaders
- Is responsible for BSA Youth Protection training within the Troop
- Reports to the Troop Committee at each meeting
- Assists in orientation of new parents
- Is watchful that the Troop strives to ensure BSA safety requirements

Adult Troop Quartermaster

- Helps the Troop procure Troop equipment, such as stoves for camping
- Works with the Boy Scout Troop quartermaster on inventory, storing, and maintaining Troop equipment
- Makes periodic checks on all Troop camping gear, trains Patrols in the safe use of all Troop equipment
- Reports to the Troop Committee at each meeting

Membership Coordinator

- Develops a plan for year-round membership flow into the Troop
- Works closely with the Cubmasters and Webelos den leaders of neighboring Cub Scout packs to provide a smooth transition from pack to Troop. Assists in developing and recruiting den chiefs, and assists in the crossover ceremony from Webelos Scouts to Boy Scouts
- Plans and coordinates a Troop open house to invite non-Scouts into the Troop
- Encourages Scouts to invite their friends to join the Troop
- Keeps track of Scouts who drop out of the Troop, and develops a plan to encourage them to rejoin

Terms

As with all jobs in Scouting, Troop Committee members serve for a year at a time. At charter renewal time, a manpower inventory will be conducted to identify leadership needs. The Troop Committee chair will act to fill each Committee position.

Meetings

The Committee meeting should be attended by all Committee members and the Scoutmaster.

Occasionally, the Committee may wish to invite guests such as the Chartered Organization Representative or Unit Commissioner.

A typical agenda for a Committee meeting would be:

- Call the meeting to order – **Chair**
- Welcoming remarks, introductions of any new members – **Chair**
- Approval of the previous meeting's minutes – **Secretary**
- Reports:
 - **Scoutmaster** (Troop progress, actions of patrol leaders' council, disciplinary problems, attendance, monthly outing plans, other Troop needs)
 - **Secretary** (newsletter, additional resource surveys)
 - **Treasurer** (current financial standing, money-earning projects, Friends of Scouting)
 - **Advancement Coordinator** (Troop advancement progress, boards of review, courts of honor)
 - **Training Coordinator** (new training materials, youth leader and adult volunteer opportunities for training)
 - **Equipment Coordinator** (status of new and existing Troop equipment and of Troop needs, new procedures for safe use and storage of equipment)
 - **Membership Coordinator** (update status of Webelos crossover ceremonies, Troop open houses, and boy-to-boy recruiting)
- Old business (reports on task assignments from previous meeting)
- New business (assign tasks as issues are discussed)
- Announcements (including date of next month's Troop Committee meeting)
- Adjournment

If all are prepared, meetings should not last longer than 1 hour.

Recruiting Leadership

The single most important responsibility of the Committee is to recruit adult leaders and volunteers. The two most important positions, the Committee Chair and the Scoutmaster should be coordinated with the Chartered Organization Representative, as the representative needs to gain the Chartered Organization's approval for individuals nominated to these positions. Potential leaders can be identified through the Troop Resource Survey (conducted by the Secretary), or through conversations with parents.

While all Committee members should be involved at some point, regarding the process of selecting new Committee members, it may be helpful to create a nominating subcommittee to evaluate the status of Troop Committee leadership and staffing. The nominating Committee then will take the lead in identifying and recruiting adult volunteers to fill gaps and improve performance, and, if recommending a new Committee Chair and/or Scoutmaster, confer with the Charter Organization Representative on proposed candidates for those positions. Upon

approval of the Charter Organization Representative (as necessary), the subcommittee should present a full slate of candidates to the Committee for election.