

TROOP 631

NEW HORIZONS DISTRICT

St. Louis Area Council

Boy Scouts of America

Troop 631 is chartered by:

**St. Mark Presbyterian Church
601 E. Claymont Drive
Ballwin, MO 63011**

This handbook is for you and your family's use, **only**. Please take care of it.
It will be updated periodically.

Troop 631

Boy Scouts of America

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Note: This manual is issued to all new Scout families when a boy joins Troop 631. It is important for parents and Scouts to read and understand the material contained in this manual when issued. Updates will be provided from time to time and must be inserted as required.

INTRODUCTION TO NEW SCOUTS AND FAMILIES

Introduction

The Boy Scouts of America was incorporated on February 8, 1910 and chartered by the United States Congress in 1916 to provide an educational program for boys and young adults. The Boy Scouts of America was modeled after the Scouting movement founded by Robert S. Baden-Powell in 1908.

Boy Scouting works toward three aims. One is growth in *moral strength and character*. This is defined as what the boy is – his personal qualities, his values, and his outlook.

The second aim is *participating citizenship*. Used broadly, citizenship means the boy's relationship to others. He comes to learn of his obligation to other people, to the society he lives in, and to the government that presides over that society.

The third aim is the *development of physical, mental and emotional fitness*. Fitness includes the body (well-tuned and healthy), the mind (able to think and solve problems), and emotions (self-control, courage, and self-respect).

Troop 631 is dedicated to providing a program that supports these aims. The Troop is part of the New Horizons district of the Greater St. Louis Area Council, Boy Scouts of America. St. Mark Presbyterian Church, 601 East Claymont Drive, Ballwin, Missouri 63011 sponsors and charters the Troop. As the sponsor, the Church provides the necessary meeting facilities and ensures continuity of adult leadership. In return for sponsorship, the Troop must maintain behavior standards and program goals consistent with the wishes of St. Mark Presbyterian Church.

At times the Troop may impose requirements that exceed the basic standard set by the Boy Scouts of America. Such requirements are imposed only by a majority vote of the Troop Committee or at the direction of the chartered organization, and only in the best interests of the Scout and the scouting program.

Membership

Troop 631 is open to boys of all faiths, colors, creeds or nationalities without discrimination of any kind, and welcomes variety as a means of citizenship training. It is the policy of this Troop to encourage a boy to maintain an active interest in his religious preference.

The Troop normally accepts boys in the February/March timeframe for entry into the Troop at the Rank of "Scout". If crossing over from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts, it is requested that boys complete their Crossover Ceremony with their Pack prior to admittance into the Troop. This allows for an orderly integration of the new boy(s) into the Troop and insures that all of the new Scouts are on a level playing field.

The Troop may, from time to time, delay the admittance of new scouts or transfers due to temporary limitations of facilities, equipment or leadership. Under such circumstances, membership priority will be given to younger brothers of existing Troop 631 scouts, graduates of Cub Scout Pack 631 and neighborhood associates of current members, in that order. There are no boundaries to the term “neighborhood”, but parents of boys who live at a distance from the Church must accept responsibility for cheerfully (Scout Law) providing the necessary transportation to and from Scouting events and Patrol meetings.

Steps in Joining

For graduates of the Cub Scout Webelos Program: The New Scout will be presented a Troop neckerchief and slide upon payment of dues for Troop 631. The neckerchief provides a ceremonial transition into Boy Scout Troop 631. If transitioning from cub scouts to boy scouts, the scout will receive the neckerchief and slide at his crossover ceremony. However, membership into the troop is not confirmed until the boy has returned a completed membership application and participates in a Scout Investiture ceremony.

For other new boys: Having been a Webelos Scout is not necessary. New boys in this category will be expected to learn the requirements for the rank of Scout and pass them before the Scoutmaster prior to his Scout Investiture. This process usually takes three to four weeks.

The Scout Investiture Ceremony will take place after the Scout has officially joined the Troop, and normally at the Crossover Outing. At this time, one or both parents are expected to attend.

Transfers

Transfers will be accepted on the same basis as new Scouts and recognized in a simple neckerchief ceremony. It is particularly important that a transferring Scout obtain transfer papers or other documents from his old Troop, which will certify the record of advancement, merit badges, hikes, camping, etc., so that proper credit may be given (please see the section on Dues and Fees).

Transfers into or out of Troop 631 and other local troops, will only be approved after conference between Scoutmasters. Transfer is not considered a proper means of settling personal conflicts or program popularity between troops.

Uniforms for New Scouts

Usually a new Scout likes to have his uniform in time for his Scout Investiture. He may obtain his uniform at any time he has indicated that he definitely wants to become a Scout. If there is some doubt that he wishes to continue, he should not make the investment until the doubt is removed. The Troop 631 uniform is detailed later in this booklet.

Patrol Assignments

The Patrol is the basic and most important element of the Boy Scout program. The Scoutmaster and other adult leaders, with the best interest of the scout and troop in mind, make patrol assignments. The scouts within a patrol, with a minimum of adult supervision or interference, organize the Patrol. For the younger Scouts, it is an excellent training ground for adjusting to community living; and for the older Scouts, it provides training in real leadership responsibility. Scouts are assigned to a Patrol on the basis of existing friendship or neighborhood grouping when possible, but more frequently they are placed in a Patrol to balance that Patrol's strength.

Because the Patrol involves boy-to-boy relationships, there are likely to be occasional squabbles. If parents or boys feel there is a chronic problem developing within the Patrol, please report it in detail to the Scoutmaster rather than step into it yourself. Sometimes we are successful in having the patrol analyze itself and iron out its own problem.

Patrol meetings are critical elements in building a successful Boy Scout experience. There are many issues discussed in these meetings including planning for upcoming outings (duty rosters, menu planning, money collection, detailing activities, etc.), review of rank advancement requirements, and communication of other Troop/BSA requirements. This meeting requires active participation in order to improve Scout skills in leadership, group interaction and planning.

Generally Patrol meetings are held during one of the regularly scheduled Troop meetings (see the section on Patrol Meetings in this booklet). If parents are kind enough to offer their home as a Patrol meeting place, they are entitled to full respect of their person and property and are asked to make this clear to the boys, reminding them that a Scout is courteous, kind, obedient and thrifty. Under no circumstances should a patrol meet without two adults present in the home (BSA policy).

Troop Leaders

One of the two key leadership positions within the Troop is that of Patrol Leader. Patrol Leaders are elected by a majority of all of the members of the Patrol who are present during the election. The ballot for Patrol Leader will consist of all boys within the Patrol who are eligible to serve. Eligibility requirements consist of having achieved the rank of First Class Scout and having attended NYLT (National Youth Leader Training). If a Scout is otherwise eligible, but has not attended NYLT, he may serve as Patrol Leader if he will be eligible to attend NYLT during his term of office and commits to do so. If no Scout within a Patrol is eligible to serve, or if, after a run-off election, no Scout receives a majority of the votes cast, an eligible Scout from another Patrol may be transferred to the patrol to serve as Patrol Leader.

The Patrol Leader's term of office will be for six outings, with Summer Camp counting as two. To successfully complete a term of office, the Patrol Leader must attend six outings, excluding Cabin Campout and the Presidents Day Outing. Excused absences will not count toward completing the term of office. If a Patrol Leader cannot complete

his term of office within 12 months of being elected, he must resign and a new Patrol Leader election will be held. Patrol Leader elections are held as soon as practical at the completion of a Patrol Leader's term of office.

Once elected, the Patrol Leader will choose an Assistant Patrol Leader to aid him in leading the Patrol. At the successful completion of a term as Patrol Leader, a Scout will serve the Troop as a Troop Guide, or other leadership position, and become a member of a leadership Patrol.

The other key leadership position within the Troop is that of Senior Patrol Leader. The Senior Patrol Leader is elected by the largest number of votes of all the members of the Troop who are present during the election. The ballot for Senior Patrol Leader will consist of all boys within the Troop who are eligible to serve and indicate in advance of the election a willingness to serve.

The eligibility requirements for Senior Patrol Leader consist of active participation in the Troop and Patrol activities during the year preceding the election (active participation is defined elsewhere as attending at least three-quarters of all Troop meetings and two-thirds of all Troop outings), achieving the rank of Life Scout, having completed NYLT, having successfully completed a term of office as Patrol Leader, and having attended three summer camps, at least one with Troop 631.

The Senior Patrol Leader is elected to serve a term of 12 months. If a Senior Patrol Leader cannot fulfill his duties, he may be asked to resign by the Patrol Leadership Counsel (PLC), but only with advance notice. Once elected, the Senior Patrol Leader may choose one or two Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders to aid him in leading the Troop.

Patrol Leaders of Leadership Patrols will be elected by a majority of all of the members of the Leadership Patrol who are present during the election. They will have the same responsibilities to their Leadership Patrol as other Patrol Leaders have to their Patrol.

Other leadership positions within the Troop will be filled by appointment by the Scoutmaster in consultation with the Senior Patrol Leader.

Conduct

A Scout is expected to conduct himself in a proper manner at all functions and at all times. Discipline, when necessary, follows the Scout chain of command: Patrol Leader, Senior Patrol Leader, and Scoutmaster. In general, discipline is handled at the Patrol level and has no impact on a Scout's status in the Troop. On those rare occasions when formal discipline is necessary, the following actions and their definitions are among the options available to the Scoutmaster and the Troop Committee:

Reprimand: The Scout will remain on the active rolls of the Troop. A letter will be placed in the care of the Troop Secretary to be destroyed after 12 months.

Probation: The Scout will remain on the active rolls of the Troop on the condition that a further violation of Troop rules within a period of no longer than 12 months will, at the discretion of the Scoutmaster, result in immediate suspension (which could lead to expulsion), with the Troop Committee action at the next committee meeting. Depending on circumstances, a parent of the Scout will be required to attend this meeting.

Suspension: The Scout will be placed on the inactive rolls of the Troop for a period of not more than 6 months as recommended by the Scoutmaster for approval by the Troop Committee at the next committee meeting. Depending on circumstances, a parent of the Scout will be required to attend this meeting. All time in Rank will be lost and must be made up before advancing to the next level.

Expulsion or Resignation: All relations between the Scout and the Troop will be severed, as recommended by the Scoutmaster for approval by the Troop Committee at the next committee meeting. Depending on circumstances, a parent of the Scout will be required to attend this meeting.

Adult Help

As most of you know, Scouting needs the total support of all parents. During the year, we will endeavor to spread the “opportunities” to help, so that no one is burdened to excess. If for some reason you feel you are not being given the opportunity to help, a few words to the Troop Committee Chair can get you more involved.

Parents are asked to officially join the Troop in order to gain insurance coverage and be able to provide transportation to and from outings.

Scout parents are strongly encouraged to become trained adult leaders to ensure that the Troop can provide the best possible training in the principles of Scouting for our boys. When accepting a Troop leadership position, attendance at a Wood Badge training program is also strongly recommended. Our ability to teach the boys is only as good as our training and experience.

In the Fall of each year, the Troop holds its Annual Parent Meeting with the Scouts and parents to plan for the coming year. It is strongly recommended that at least one parent from each family participates in the Parent Meeting. Parents not attending the Parent Meeting will be assigned duties to support Troop operations by the Troop Committee Chair.

TROOP OPERATIONS

Troop Committee

The Troop Committee is the Troop's Board of Directors. The Troop Committee supports the Troop program. This includes:

- Ensures that quality adult leadership is recruited and trained. In case the Scoutmaster is absent, a qualified assistant Scoutmaster is assigned. If the Scoutmaster is unable to serve, a replacement is recruited.
- Provides adequate meeting facilities.
- Advises the Scoutmaster on policies relating to Boy Scouting and the chartered organization (St. Mark Presbyterian Church).
- Supports 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.
- Ensures the troop has an outdoor program (minimum 10 days and nights per year).
- Serves on Boards of Review and 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.
- Assists the Scoutmaster with handling boy behavioral problems.

The Troop Committee includes the Committee Chair, the Scoutmaster, the Advancement Chair, the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Program Chair, the Outdoor Chair, and the Quartermaster, as well as any additional officers or sub-committee Chairs as are required to provide the Scouting program. Also, all parents of Troop 631 Scouts are considered members of the Troop Committee and are invited to attend all Troop Committee meetings.

Chartered Organization Representative (COR)

The COR is the interface between the Troop, its chartering organization and The Greater St. Louis Area Council (GSLAC). The COR also insures that the Chartering Organization and GSLAC's standards are maintained within the scouting program.

Troop Committee Chair

The Troop Committee Chair is responsible for organizing the Troop Committee to see that all operations are delegated, staffed, coordinated and successfully completed. The Committee Chair maintains a close working relationship with the Chartered Organization and the Scoutmaster.

The Committee Chair is also responsible for addressing any adult issues that arise throughout the normal operation of the Troop.

Scoutmaster

The Scoutmaster is the adult leader responsible for the image and program of the Troop. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters work directly with the Scouts in bringing the Scouting program to the boys. They are role models and guides in achieving the aims of Scouting.

The Scoutmaster is also responsible for addressing any scout issues that arise throughout the normal operation and activities of the Troop.

Troop Committee Meeting

Meetings of the Troop Committee are held on the second Monday of each month at St. Mark Church as 7:00 PM (no meeting in July). Please check the current Troop Calendar for exact meeting times and dates. Special Troop Committee meetings may be called if circumstances require immediate actions. All Scout parents are considered members of the Troop Committee and are invited and encouraged to attend Troop Committee meetings. Any Scout parent who is present at a committee meeting is eligible to vote on any “Troop” related item being considered by the committee during that meeting.

Courts of Honor

For the presentation of awards and the recognition of advancements, Courts of Honor are held four times per year, generally at St. Mark Church. Please make sure you review the current Troop Calendar for the exact dates.

There are two separate types of courts: One for the presentation of the Eagle Scout Rank, when required, and one for presentation of the Scout through Life rank advancement badges, merit badges, Troop leadership badges and other awards. Normally, the Eagle Award ceremony immediately follows the regular Court of Honor. Because the achievement of the Eagle Scout Rank is a very significant accomplishment in a boy’s life and deserves special recognition, Troop 631 keeps it as a separate ceremony and requests all parents and Scouts to honor the recipient by attending.

All parents and all Scouts are expected to attend these Courts. Scouts who do not attend may have advancement delayed, unless prior absence approval is obtained from the Scoutmaster.

Attendance

All Scouts are required and encouraged to support their Troop and Patrol through active participation in Troop and Patrol activities (a Scout is Loyal). Scouts are expected to attend at least three-quarters of all Troop meetings and two-thirds of all Troop outings. The Advancement Chair or the appropriate Patrol Scribe will take attendance at all outings and meetings. The Advancement Chair keeps attendance records. Scouts are expected to meet these standards for advancement.

Dues and Fees

Troop dues and late fees are set and billed each year in January. They are due by a date specified during the month of January. Scouts and Adults whose dues are not received by the specified date will be charged a late fee. If dues are not paid prior to the Troop Recharter being submitted, the Troop will not be able to re-register the Scout or Adult. In such cases, the Greater St. Louis Area Council will discontinue insurance coverage for the Scout, and the Scout will not be allowed to participate in any Troop events or activities. If the Scout or Adult wishes to continue with the Troop after the Rechartering process, they may do so by re-submitting new registration paperwork.

The dues year runs from February through January. A subscription to “*Boy’s Life*” is optional and is available through the Troop at a reduced rate at registration time. This subscription fee is additional to the regular yearly dues. It is expected that the dues will cover all, or substantially all, Troop operating expenses including registration; but they are not intended to cover any outing expenses. If your son receives an allowance, we would suggest that you work out a budget system with him (a Scout is thrifty) so that dues are paid on time.

Note: Dues may be increase as a result of non-participation in a mandatory fund raising effort (see Fundraising for additional details).

In some cases older scouts (generally 16 years of age or older) may wish to continue their enrollment in the Troop and the Boy Scouts of American, but are unable to participate actively in Troop events. In such cases where the Scout has completed all requirements for the rank of Eagle, with the exception of the Eagle Project, they can continue with the Troop as a Limited Scout (with the Scoutmaster’s approval) by paying a reduced annual dues (set by the Membership Committee).

In addition to Troop dues, it is our policy that each Scout must pay all fees for an outing in advance of the outing in order to participate. Cancellations will not incur a refund once the food or camping fees have been spent.

Eagle Courts of Honor are special celebrations in Troop 631 and incur additional expense. In order to defray a portion of the additional expense, there is a \$100 fee charged for each Eagle Scout who receives a Court of Honor from the Troop. In cases where two Scouts from the same family are receiving an Eagle Court of Honor on the same day, a single payment of \$100 is all that is required.

Scouts are expected to turn in equipment assigned to them to the Troop Quartermaster during the Equipment Turn-in meeting immediately following each outing. Scouts and parents who cannot return the equipment on time are urged to make alternate arrangements to turn in the equipment. Any Scout who does not return equipment on time and properly cared for (clean, dry, etc.) will be assessed a \$5.00 fine for each week that the equipment is outstanding, or assessed the cost of a replacement. These fees can be deducted from the Scout’s Scout Bucks Fund.

Unfortunately, in today's world, Scouting is not without cost. And yet, we do not want to bar any boy from Scouting because of his inability to afford it. If you fall under these circumstances, or would like to recommend a boy for membership who does, please contact the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair and confidential efforts will be made to arrange a sponsor. It is expected however, that Scouts taking advantage of a sponsorship will fully participate in Troop fund raising activities in order to fund their future troop activities.

In cases where a Scout family relocates outside the Troop 631 area, the family may apply for a refund of dues. Refunds may be made only with the Troop Committee approval.

Fundraising

To help hold down dues, it is necessary to conduct at least one fundraising project each year. These funds are used to supply the Troop with Equipment such as tents, etc., and to help offset operating expenses. Special fundraisers may be used to pay for outings that incur more than the normal travel/lodging expense.

Since 1967, Troop 631 has held a Spaghetti Supper in March of each year. This event has been well received, and it is our intent to continue this annual event. All Scouts and parents are expected to do some portion of the work during the Spaghetti Supper. At a minimum, one shift per scout registered with the troop.

Each family is asked to assist in the sale of Spaghetti Supper placement ads. Lack of participation in this fundraising effort, by a scout's parent/guardian, will affect an increase in the scout's dues equal to the required amount of the ad sales.

Troop Paid Expenses

The troop will reimburse the cost of Adult Leader Training and most other adult training courses with prior approval. Also, it is the troops policy that the Scout Master is not charged a fee for any of the outings or Summer Camp, exclusive of meals.

Scout Bucks

During fundraising activities, Scouts are rewarded for their participation with Scout Bucks. Through Scout Bucks, Scouts can earn a share of the profits resulting from a fundraising activity. The share rate will vary with the fundraiser.

Scout Bucks are kept in an individually itemized account and are paid to the Scout as reimbursement for Scouting related equipment or supplies purchased or dues and fees paid by the Scout.

It is expected that any Scout that is receiving support from the Troop, readily participate in all fund raising activities in order to earn Scout Bucks. Those Scout Bucks are then available, and should be used, to fund his scouting activities before additional financial support is provided.

Transportation to Activities

Each scout is responsible for arranging his own transportation to and from an outing or activity. The Patrol Leader should also confirm that all members of his patrol have made such arrangements. The Outdoor Activity Coordinator will provide the scouts with a list of drivers to help facilitate making these arrangements. Please note that Scouting is a family affair and parental support in providing transportation is greatly appreciated.

Adults that will be driving scouts to/from outing need to be registered with the troop in order to guarantee proper insurance coverage.

TROOP MEETINGS AND REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Troop Meetings

Troop meetings are normally held Thursday evenings during the school year from 7:00 PM until 8:30 PM at St. Mark Church. All Scouts should attend in full uniform. **Consult the current Troop Calendar for exact dates.** Troop 631 is an **ALL WEATHER Troop** and **does not follow school district cancellations** due to weather. The Patrol Leaders will notify the Scouts if a meeting or outing is cancelled due to weather.

Patrol Meetings

Patrol meetings are scheduled for the second Thursday before an outing at St. Mark Church from 7:00 PM until 7:45 PM. Following the Patrol meeting, there will be a Troop activity and announcements. The meeting will end at about 8:30 PM. **Consult the current Troop Calendar for exact dates.** Full uniform is required for these meetings.

The Patrol Leader or Assistant Patrol Leader may schedule additional Patrol meetings. The schedule and location for these meetings are developed by each patrol to attain maximum attendance. Please note that BSA policy requires two adults to be present anytime two or more Scouts are present. Uniform requirements are at the discretion of the leader scheduling the meeting.

Patrol Leader Council

Patrol Leader Councils are held at campouts and at regular Thursday night Troop meetings at 6:45 PM. Full uniform **is** required for these meetings.

The Senior Patrol Leader, the Patrol Leaders, the Troop Scribe, and a representative from the outdoor activity committee, are expected to attend. The Executive Leaders are invited to participate but not mandated.

Equipment Turn-in

All equipment that is assigned to a Scout for use on an outing must be turned in to the Troop Quartermaster on the Thursday night immediately following the outing. The Quartermaster will be available from 7:00 PM until 8:30 PM. **Consult the current Troop Calendar for exact dates.** Full uniform **is** required for Equipment Turn-In. Equipment is furnished free of charge. Loss, damage or mistreatment of equipment may result in fines equal to the cost of replacement or repair. There is a fine for late turn-in (see Dues and Fees for details).

Advancement Board of Review

The Advancement Committee meets at the same time and on the same dates as Equipment Turn-in. Each Scout who is ready for advancement and has completed his Scoutmaster Conference should make an appointment with the **Advancement Committee Chair**. See the Troop Roster for the current **Advancement Committee Chair**. Full uniform (with neckerchief) and the Scout Handbook are required.

Annual Parent Meeting

The Troop holds a Parent Meeting during a Troop meeting each Fall. **It is mandatory for at least one parent from each family to participate in this planning session.** The meeting will be held with the Troop Committee Chair and the Scoutmaster. The patrol method, advancement, the Troop Calendar and Troop operations will be discussed. There will be ample time for questions. Please contact the Committee Chair if you cannot attend.

Annual Planning Meeting

The Planning Meeting is held in July or August of each year at St. Mark Church. This meeting is used to receive feedback from the Senior Patrol Leader and the Patrol Leaders and to plan the activities for the coming year. Please remember that our Troop program will only be as good and effective as its parental participation.

Campouts and Official Outings

Consult the current Troop Calendar for exact dates. There is typically one outing per month throughout the school year and a one-week Summer Camp during the summer school break.

High Adventure Trips

High Adventure activities are those outings to remote Scout properties and vary from year to year. In particular, the trips most often planned and rotated every three years, by Troop 631, are to the following locations:

- Northern Tier, Canadian Boundary Waters Canoeing
- Sea-Base, Florida Keys Deep Sea Diving and Sailing
- Philmont Scout Ranch, Backpacking in the Pecos Wilderness of New Mexico

Other locations are also available and may be planned in the future.

Sign-up for these trips is on a first-come, first-serve basis, as space is typically limited. However, priority will be given in the following order; Scouts, Troop Leaders, Troop Committee Members, other family members (that meet the requirements), Scouts from other Troops, adults from other Troops ... with the understanding that a certain minimum number of adults are typically required. It should be noted that all BSA High Adventure Camps are for the benefit of Scouts and should not be viewed as family vacations. However, if when we get closer to the camp's date and have open slots, we will consider additional / extended family members.

To reserve a slot requires payment of a deposit, which may or may not be refundable, and timely on-going payments, as required. The cost of these trips currently run from \$800 to \$1200 ('2009') and can be partially, or fully, funded through fundraisers run by the Troop.

CAMPING GUIDELINES AND RULES

Greater St. Louis Area Council and Troop 631 Camping Regulations

Those persons using camping facilities can help to preserve the properties and Scouting's favorable image by observing the points listed. Violations of any of the first four regulations will be cause for removal from camp.

- **Lanterns** – No open flame lanterns or candles are permitted in or near the tents.
- **Pressurized lanterns, stoves, etc.** – These may be used only by trained persons (Scouts or adults) and only with the permission of the Scoutmaster.
- **Fireworks and firearms** – These are absolutely prohibited on all Council properties and on all Troop 631 outings.
- **Alcohol, drugs and tobacco** – Alcoholic beverages, non-medically prescribed drugs and tobacco are prohibited on Council properties and on Troop 631 outings. Adult leaders should support the attitude that young adults are better off without these substances.

The Boy Scouts of America prohibits the use of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances at encampments or activities on property owned and/or operated by the Boy Scouts of America, or any activity involving participation of youth members. Further, the use of tobacco products is not allowed at any BSA activity involving youth participants.

- **Fires** – Build fires only in a cleared area and put out all fires with water. Do not dig holes for fires. If rocks are used to build a fireplace they must be returned to the edge of the camping area. The Patrol Leader or designated replacement must be present at all times when a campfire is burning.
- **Wood** – Use only dead wood or charcoal for fires. Do not cut down any trees.
- **Garbage, tin cans and trash** - Put everything in the containers provided at each campsite and cabin – or bring it home. Do NOT bury any refuse.
- **Tent ditching** – “Proper pitching avoids ditching.” No ditches are to be dug.
- **Use of Water** – Water spigots are for the purpose of drinking and filling water containers only.

In addition to the above regulations, Troop 631 has the following policies:

- **These items are not allowed in camp and will be confiscated:** Fireworks, Duraflame logs, quick-light charcoal, charcoal lighter fluid, knives with blades longer than 3”, switch blade knives, sheath knives, guns, bikes, personal tents, personal water floats, cell phones (for Scouts), and laser pens.

All electronic devices (boom boxes, video games, TVs, iPods, etc.) are prohibited. Any devices found to be in violation of this policy will be confiscated for the duration of the outing. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the Scoutmaster and Troop Committee, and must be pre-approved..

- **Prescription medicine** – Insuring that the Troop is properly aware of what and when medicines are to be taken, is the responsibility of the Scout's parent/guardian. A designated adult leader, after obtaining the necessary information, will agree to accept the responsibility of making sure the Scout takes the necessary medication at the appropriate time. All medicines should be in their original containers and will be kept and dispensed by the designated adult.

The Greater St. Louis Area Council requires a record of all medications dispensed in camp. In order to facilitate this, the troop has a form that must be completed by the parent/guardian of the scout receiving the medication.

- **Scouts of driving age** – Per Troop 631's Chartered Organization, no scouts are allowed to drive to/from any troop outing.

Summer Camp Guidelines

Because of the distance to the Summer Camp location and the duration of the camp, there are requirements beyond that of a normal Troop outing.

- **Health history and medical evaluations** are required for Summer Camp. No one will be allowed to go to camp unless their medical forms are current and on file. Please be sure that all health forms required by the Greater St. Louis Area Council are turned in to the Troop's Summer Camp Coordinator before camp starts.

The Personal Health and Medical Record form is good for three years (for scouts and adults under 40 years of age). Adults over 40 will need a form completed annually. All forms must be turned in to the Troop's Summer Camp Coordinator before camp starts.

These forms will be available at Troop meetings along with a list of Scouts who still have a valid form on file. These forms must be completed by your doctor.

- **Transportation** to and from Summer Camp is each Scout's responsibility (unless otherwise specified). When camping at a St. Louis Area Council property, plan to arrive on Sunday between 1:00 PM and 2:00 P.M. Sunday lunch is the responsibility of each Scout/family prior to arriving in camp. Summer Camp dates and campsites are determined by a lottery held in the fall/winter of each year, and will be announced as soon as they are available. Details on camp location and emergency phone numbers will be included with camp details. If an emergency occurs the camp staff will ensure that a message gets to the Troop as quickly as possible and the adult leaders will take appropriate action upon receipt.

The Troop 631 Advance Party will consist of some adult leaders, the Scoutmaster, the Senior Patrol Leader, and a select group appointed by the Scoutmaster. The Advance Party must be at camp early on Sunday morning to assist with general camp set-up tasks.

- **Parents** should visit only during designated visiting hours unless you have volunteered to remain overnight as an adult leader. Please make prior arrangements with the Summer Camp Coordinator if you are volunteering to help and remaining in camp overnight. Designated visiting hours are Thursday from 5:30 P.M. until the conclusion of the Order of the Arrow ceremony (usually around 9:30 P.M.). Visitors should not plan on returning to the campsite after the O. A. ceremony.

Parents who come to the Thursday ceremony should bring lawn chairs, flashlight, insect repellent and an assigned food dish or dessert. Scouts are required to eat with their patrols that evening. If you bring something for your son (cookies, etc.), please bring enough for the entire Patrol (usually 8 to 10 Scouts). No pets are allowed in camp.

- **Scouts should bring money** for the camp Trading Post. Such things as neckerchiefs, neckerchief slides, souvenirs, soda, candy, T-shirts, etc. are available for purchase. \$20.00 to \$25.00 should suffice.
- **Scouts should study and complete all prerequisites** for all Merit Badges that they will take at Summer Camp. This will better prepare them for Camp and help maximize their learning. Merit Badge schedules and prerequisites will be available in May and Scouts can sign up for the badges they want at that time. Materials and books can be purchased in advance at the Scout Shop. Scouts who are interested in doing the one-mile swim will have the opportunity to do so at Camp, after meeting the eligibility criteria.
- **Equipment** is listed elsewhere in this manual. Be sure to include the full Scout Uniform (Scouts must be in full for all ceremonies), a mess kit including cup/fork/spoon/knife, Scout Handbook, poncho, canteen, toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, comb and shampoo), sleeping bag, sunscreen, insect repellent, flashlight with extra batteries, bathing suit, hat, towel(s), pen or pencil, paper, 2 pair of boots or sneakers (no sandals or flip-flops) and a personal first aid kit. Also make sure the Scout has the Merit Badge books he will need during Summer Camp.
- **Optional items** include a camera and film, reading material, sewing kit, fishing gear, compass, clothesline, clock, watch and lawn chair.
- **These items are not allowed in camp and will be confiscated:** Fireworks, Duraflame logs, quick-light charcoal, charcoal lighter fluid, knives with blades longer than 3", switch blade knives, sheath knives, guns, bikes, personal tents, personal water floats, cell phones (for Scouts), and laser pens.

Scouts are prohibited from using pressurized fuel devices while at Summer Camp.

All electronic devices (boom boxes, video games, TVs, iPods, etc.) are prohibited. Any devices found to be in violation of this policy will be confiscated for the duration of the outing. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the Scoutmaster and Troop Committee, and must be pre-approved.

- **Prescription medicine** – Insuring that the Troop is properly aware of what and when medicines are to be taken, is the responsibility of the Scout's parent/guardian. A designated adult leader, after obtaining the necessary information, will agree to accept the responsibility of making sure the Scout takes the necessary medication at the appropriate time. All medicines should be in their original containers and will be kept and dispensed by the designated adult.

The Greater St. Louis Area Council requires a record of all medications dispensed in camp. In order to facilitate this, the troop has a form that must be completed by the parent/guardian of the scout receiving the medication.

- **All Scouts should remain in camp** all week. Personal telephone calls to home are not allowed unless approved by the Scoutmaster.
- **Scouts of driving age** – Per Troop 631's Chartered Organization, no scouts are allowed to drive to/from any troop outing.

UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT

Official Boy Scout Handbook

The Boy Scout Handbook, which should be the Scout's first purchase, lists the equipment he will eventually want to have in order of importance. This is a great source of gift ideas for birthdays, etc.

Uniform

The Troop 631 uniform consists of long or short olive green Scout Pants, Scout khaki shirt, Scout socks, Scout web belt with brass buckle, and neckerchief with slide. Note: This is referred to as the **Class A uniform**.

IT IS EXPECTED that a Scout will wear the Scout uniform to all Troop meetings, Patrol meetings and Patrol Leader Councils unless otherwise instructed. IT IS MANDATORY to appear in full uniform, including neckerchief, at the Scoutmaster Conference and Board of Review for rank advancement, at Troop Committee presentations, at Boards for the Eagle Scout rank, and at all Courts of Honor.

For campouts and expeditions, Scouts are required to go and return in **Class B uniform** but will probably want to change into jeans or play clothes during the outing. Troop 631 does not require the Scout hat for any function; however, **only a Scout hat** may be worn with a Class A uniform.

While we recognize that parents would like their Scout's uniform to look fresh all the time, the uniform is fairly rugged and will probably outlast most play clothes. The uniform is appropriate attire for many occasions, and the Troop would rather have the uniform worn out than outgrown.

For Summer Camp and High Adventures Camps, the Troop provides a T-shirt that can be worn with Scout shorts, web belt and socks. This is referred to as the **Class B uniform**. The Class B uniform can be worn at the discretion of the Senior Patrol Leader, Scoutmaster or High Adventure Leader.

Uniform items other than Class A must be official BSA issue (e.g., NYLT neckerchief or Sea Base belt) or approved by the Scoutmaster.

“Class A” Uniform List

Note: All items are available at the Greater St. Louis Area Council Scout Shops located at 4568 West Pine and at 11481 Page Avenue.

Official Troop 631 Uniform

Scout Trousers
Short Sleeved Scout Shirt (khaki)
Scout Shorts

Scout Socks
Web Belt and Brass Buckle
Neckerchief *(1)
Neckerchief Slide – BSA metal*(2)
Greater St. Louis Area Council Patch *(3)
Troop Numerals “631”
Patrol Medallion (provided by troop)
World Crest
New Horizons Patch

Plan to spend approximately \$120 on a complete Scout uniform.

*Notes:

1. Awarded to new Scouts by the Troop at Investiture.
2. Neckerchief slides can be made out of almost anything. They are also awarded at certain events. If Dad was a Scout and has a neckerchief slide he wants his son to use, GREAT! But each Scout must have a neckerchief slide.
3. The patch and numbers from the 631 Cub Scout shirt can be used.

Please consult the current BSA catalog or contact the Scout Shop for information on Scout items and prices.

Footwear

Tennis shoes (or other non-floor marking soled shoes) **MUST** be worn to Scout meetings. They may also be worn around camp at Summer Camp and on warm weather campouts. Tennis shoes are discouraged for hiking because they contribute to blisters.

Each Scout should have a sturdy pair of shoes suitable for rough use, walking and hiking. They should be bought large enough to wear a heavy wool sock over a lighter cotton sock. The two socks help cushion the foot and reduce blistering. Shoes can be waterproofed with many commercial waterproofing agents, or just plain petroleum jelly will do a good job. Lightweight rubber “tote” type boots can work for additional waterproofing and warmth in winter.

Heavy all-wool or partial wool socks are best for hiking, because they not only cushion the foot, but tend to keep moisture away from the foot as well. Also, they will still keep the foot warm in winter, even when wet. Thermal socks are also good for winter wear.

Coat/Jacket/Poncho

In the summer, a lightweight jacket or sweatshirt is desirable for hikes and campouts. With a hood is even better. In colder weather, they may be used in combination with a hooded thermal sweatshirt to control body temperature.

A lightweight thermal sweatshirt with a zipper front is good for both summer and winter outings. In warm months, you can never tell when a cold snap may set in; and you can put a nylon jacket under or over the sweatshirt for even more warmth. In the winter

months, the thermal sweatshirt is good for lighter wear while working and for extra warmth when worn with a heavier coat.

In colder weather, a hooded survival parka with suitable insulation or hooded down or Dacron Fiberfill II jacket is desirable. The parka should come down below the waist. Fiberfill is cheaper than down and will keep you warm even when wet. Down is warmer for the same weight, but is more expensive and will not keep you warm when wet.

A poncho is highly recommended for rainy days. It can serve as a raincoat, be used to build a shelter, or work as a ground cloth. A Boy Scout, commercial or Army surplus poncho is acceptable.

Underwear

Thermal long underwear tops and bottoms are recommended for cold weather hikes and campouts. Two pair are desirable, with the second pair serving as pajamas.

Cap

A wool stocking cap that can be pulled down over the ears is desirable for all cold weather outings, even if the coat has a hood. A hood is cumbersome if it is not too cold. If it is very cold, the stocking cap and the hood together are even warmer. The cap can also be worn to bed.

Gloves

A pair of cotton or leather work gloves are desirable for all hikes and campouts. In very cold weather, an additional pair of cold weather gloves is desirable.

Sleeping Bag and Pad

Sleeping bags are made in a wide variety of materials to satisfy a range of conditions including weather, packing weight, price, etc. Here are some things to look for: a full zipper, a bat in the lining that insulates the zipper, quilting to prevent the insulation from bunching or sagging, and preferably a waterproof bottom. Qualofil and Hollowfill II are the best values in synthetic insulation and dry quickly. Down is more expensive and if it gets wet, is hard to dry. At least a 15 – 20 degree bag is recommended, and should be lightweight.

Your Scout may want to have a “closed cell” backpacker’s pad to put under his sleeping bag. The pad is made out of heavy, rubber-like foam about 3/8” thick, 3’ wide and 4’ long. It can be rolled up into a small roll and takes up very little space when attached to a backpack. It takes the lumps out of the ground and makes very good **insulation** between the Scout and the ground. It is more comfortable, warmer and less nuisance than a regular air mattress. A self-inflating pad is a more expensive alternative. The troop does have some pads that can be borrowed on a first come, first serve basis.

Other Equipment

The Scout must have the following equipment for most outings:

1. Knife, fork and spoon set
2. 1.5 or 2 quart canteen/water bottle
3. Personal mess kit
4. Drinking cup
5. Compass
6. Flashlight
7. Personal grooming kit including comb, soap dish and soap, washcloth, towel, toothbrush and toothpaste, deodorant, and mirror.

Equipment Bag

Nylon duffel bags approximately 13" X 20" X 29" with a zipper and wrap-around handle are nice for storing gear on longer campouts like Summer Camp. Inexpensive ones of all sizes can be obtained at most discount stores. A backpack serves as well. The troop does have some backpacks that can be borrowed on a first come, first serve basis.

Knives

Every Scout loves the idea of carrying a knife. Although the Scout catalog carries sheath knives, **the St. Louis Area Council and Troop 631 prohibit the carrying of sheath knives at any Scout event.** Your Scout should have a regular folding Scout pocketknife or equivalent. This knife may only be used or carried at Troop 631 events after the Scout has successfully earned his Tote 'N Chip card and while the Scout is carrying the Tote 'N Chip card.

Identification and Markings

Please make sure **all** of your Scout's equipment and clothing is clearly marked with his name.

Disallowed Items

Aerosol cans, laser pens, boom box, iPods, cell phones, video games or other electronic devices, are NOT Scout equipment and are not permitted at any Troop function. These items will be confiscated by the Scoutmaster.

Troop Furnished Equipment and Supplies

The following items are furnished to the Patrols for use on outings:

1. Patrol Box including all cooking equipment
2. Camp cooking grill
3. Two wash buckets
4. Jerry jug
5. Fire buckets
6. Localizers and chimneys
7. Kindling
8. Tent
9. Ground cloths

- 10. Dutch ovens
- 11. Trash bags

Patrol Furnished Equipment and Supplies

The following items are furnished by the Patrols for use on outings:

- 1. Food and drinks
- 2. Cooking supplies – oil, salt, spices and seasonings
- 3. Food coolers
- 4. Patrol flag

Troop 631 Outing Equipment Checklist

As outings vary greatly, you will receive a list of required equipment for most outings:

- ___ Boy Scout Handbook
- ___ Hiking shoes and a second pair of shoes
- ___ 2 pair heavy wool or equivalent socks
- ___ 2 pair of lightweight socks
- ___ 2 pair long pants (Scout Pants count as 1 pair)
- ___ 1 long sleeved shirt
- ___ 2 T-shirts
- ___ 2 pair underpants
- ___ 2 handkerchiefs
- ___ Small towel
- ___ Grooming Kit or equivalent
- ___ Knife, Fork and Spoon Kit
- ___ Personal Mess Kit
- ___ Flashlight
- ___ Rain poncho
- ___ Sleeping bag
- ___ Backpacker's foam pad
- ___ Folding pocket knife
- ___ 1.5 or 2 qt. canteen
- ___ Pocket or small first aid kit
- ___ Compass
- ___ Pen or pencil and small (3"X5") notebook
- ___ Sleepwear
- ___ Boy Scout Yucca Ranger Pack or equivalent, or equipment bag

Optional Equipment (depending on weather and time of year):

- ___ Camp Chair
- ___ Rubber boots
- ___ Thermal hooded sweatshirt with pockets and zipper front
- ___ Hooded Survivor Parka or equivalent
- ___ Stocking cap
- ___ Work gloves and/or mittens
- ___ 2 pair of 2-piece long thermal underwear or equivalent

ADVANCEMENT

Scout Handbook

See the Scout Handbook for specific requirements for each rank advancement. Each advancement will require the completion of certain tasks and/or activities. These might include merit badges, acquiring certain skill sets, participation in activities, service to the community, participation in a leadership role, and the passage of a certain period of time.

Service Hours

Service hours for rank advancement are intended to be for services performed for the community. Eagle projects, as well as activities and events such as Vacation Bible School, etc., are acceptable. Hours worked for the Troop or Scouting in general are not necessarily service hours. Service hours worked outside Troop 631 require advance approval from the Scoutmaster. If you have any questions concerning service hours, please contact the Scoutmaster. Service hours should be reported to the Advancement Chair.

Time in Rank for Advancement

Time in rank is measured from the date of the Board of Review for the previous rank.

Participation Requirements

Active participation is required for all rank advancements. Active participation is defined as attending 2/3 of the outings and 3/4 of the meetings, unless absence is excused in advance by the Scoutmaster.

Leadership Requirements

For those ranks that require leadership service, Troop 631 recognizes all leadership positions identified in the Boy Scout Handbook.

Patrol Leaders are elected by the Scouts in their Patrol. To be elected Patrol Leader, a candidate must have completed the National Youth Leader Training Camp (NYLT) or agree to attend NYLT as soon as possible in their term as Patrol Leader.

MERIT BADGES

General Information

Troop 631 provides many group and individual opportunities for Scouts to earn Merit Badges (Cabin Campout, Outings, Summer Camp). In addition, Scouts are **encouraged** to seek Merit Badge counselors outside of the Troop. The Troop does ask parents not to sign off on their child's Merit Badge cards unless their child is a member of a group they are counseling.

As required by BSA and District policy, all Scouts must initiate personal contact with both the Scoutmaster (to obtain a Merit Badge card) and the Merit Badge Counselor (to arrange for counseling). This communication is essential in helping Scouts learn to effectively communicate with adults.

Scouts often earn Merit Badges at Summer Camp. All Summer Camp Merit Badges must be completed within one calendar year of the date noted on the Merit Badge card. There is a make-up date at the end of the summer when incomplete Merit Badges can be completed. Also, Merit Badges can be completed with any registered and approved counselor.

Troop 631 Counselors

All Merit Badge Counselors are approved and registered by the Greater St. Louis Area Council. Only currently registered and approved counselors can sign off on Merit Badge cards. The Council provides guidelines for Merit Badge counseling and Merit Badge Counselors are expected to follow those guidelines.

Merit Badge Worksheets, listing all of the requirements for each badge, can be found here: <http://www.usscouts.org/mb/worksheets/list.asp> or http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php?title=Merit_Badge_Worksheets

A list of all St. Louis area Merit Badge Counselors can be found here: <http://www.stlbsa.org/Advancement/Merit+Badge+Counselors+Directory/>

See Appendix for a list of Troop 631 Merit Badge Counselors. Note the revision date for the most current version. This list will change yearly.

EAGLE REQUIREMENTS

Merit Badges Required for Eagle Rank

For the rank of Eagle Scout, 12 of the following 15 merit badges must be earned. A Scout may choose any combination of these merit badges to fulfill requirement number 3 for Star and Life Scout. (He must have a total of 4 of these badges for Star and 7 of these badges for Life).

1. [First Aid](#)
2. [Citizenship in the Community](#)
3. [Citizenship in the Nation](#)
4. [Citizenship in the World](#)
5. [Communications](#)
6. [Personal Fitness](#)
7. [Emergency Preparedness](#) or [Lifesaving](#)
8. [Environmental Science](#)
9. [Personal Management](#)
10. [Swimming](#) or [Hiking](#) or [Cycling](#)
11. [Camping](#), and
12. [Family Life](#)*

Eagle Checklist

Scoutmaster Fleming, as a Woodbadge project, has created a Path to Eagle document that is included with this handbook and serves as a step-by-step guide to earning the rank of Eagle.

Also, the New Horizons District holds a Life to Eagle Workshop every six months. This outlines, in detail, the steps that a Life Scout must take to reach the rank of Eagle and the expectations of the Review Boards. Adults are also encouraged to attend this workshop to learn how best to encourage and motivate Scouts.

APPENDIX

Troop Calendar

Troop Org Chart

Patrol Org Chart

Troop Roster

Merit Badge Counselors

Path to Eagle

Updates:

8/13/08 – typo fix under High Adventure section

10/1/08 – add priority stance for High Adventure

1/12/09 – add mandatory fundraising requirements

2/25/09 – updated Dues and Fees, registration and older scout allowance

3/9/09 – reimbursement of adult training require prior approval