



Redding, CT  
Troop Manual

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## LETTER FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Dear Parents of Boy Scout Troop 15:

We are pleased to have your son as a member of the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 15, and hope that both he and you will benefit from the association. Our goal is to help your son develop into a young man conforming to the Boy Scout ideals of physical strength, mental awareness and moral action.

The pre-teen and teenage years are an important time in your son's life. Critical, yet sometimes subtle, choices are made that can shape the rest of his life. Scouting is founded on the belief that, during this time, a boy should undergo the personal growth necessary to move from a state of almost complete dependence upon his family towards increasing self-reliance and independence. A primary vehicle for this change is presentation of opportunities to make responsible decisions under diverse circumstances, and to experience the consequences of his decisions. We feel privileged to play a part in helping influence some of these choices.

Here are a few of the ways you can use the Scouting program to help your son to develop and grow:

- At least one parent can join the Troop as an Assistant Scoutmaster, Committee Member, or on an event specific committee such as Fundraising or Summer Camp.
- Encourage your Scout to have perfect attendance at all Troop meetings and outings. Make it clear that he has made a commitment to his Troop and Patrol - they need him!
- Be interested in your son's Scouting activities and encourage his advancement.
- Check with Patrol Advisors or the Advancement Chair regularly. Praise your son on each achievement.
- As he matures, have him earn the money necessary for Troop outings.
- Encourage him to pay dues and patrol meal funds regularly as part of the learning of handling money and his responsibility to the Troop.
- Attend all Courts of Honor.
- Attend Troop Committee Meetings.
- Show your Scout, by your involvement, that the program is worthy of your time.

We wish your son every success in his Scouting career, and the sole purpose of the adult leadership of Troop 15 is to create and maintain an environment in which he can succeed.

Yours in Scouting,

Lori Walker  
sabereliseo@yahoo.com@yahoo.com  
Troop 15 Committee Chair

## **AIMS OF SCOUTING**

The Boy Scout program works toward three aims...

- The first is growth in moral strength and character. We define this as what the boy is himself: his personal qualities, his values, and his outlook.
- A second aim is participative citizenship. Used broadly, citizenship means the boy's relationship to others. He comes to learn of his obligations to other people, to the society in which he lives and to the government that presides over that society.
- The third aim of the Boy Scout program is development of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual fitness. Fitness includes the body (well-tuned and healthy), the mind (able to think clearly and solve problems), the emotions (courage, self-control and self-respect), and the spirit (relationship with a higher power).

## **METHODS**

### **Establish Clear Goals (Ideal)**

The ideals of Scouting are spelled out in the Scout Oath, Law, Motto, Slogan and the Outdoor Code. The Scout measures himself against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high and as he reaches for them he develops control over what he becomes.

### **Organize by Patrols**

The Patrol Method gives Scouts an experience in group living and participative citizenship. It places a certain amount of responsibility on young shoulders and teaches boys how to accept it. The Patrol Method allows Scouts to act in small groups where they can easily relate to one another. These small groups determine the Troop activities through their appointed representative.

### **Focus on the Outdoors**

The Boy Scout program is designed to take place outdoors. It is in the outdoors that Scouts share responsibilities and learn to live with each other. It is here that skills and activities practiced at Troop Meetings come alive with purpose. Being closer to nature helps Scouts gain appreciation for God's handiwork and mankind's place in it. It teaches them to be good stewards of their world. The outdoors is a laboratory for Scouts to learn ecology, practice conservation of nature's resources and develop self-sufficiency.

### **Create Opportunities for Success through Advancement**

Scouting provides a series of surmountable obstacles and the steps to overcome them throughout the advancement program. The Scout plans his advancement and progresses at his own pace as he overcomes each challenge. The Scout is rewarded for each achievement, which helps him gain self-respect and self-confidence. The steps in the advancement system (Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle) help a boy grow in self-reliance and the ability to help others.

## **Provide a Positive Role Model**

A boy learns from the example of his adult leaders. In his quest for personal growth, every boy needs contact with adults he can copy. The Scoutmaster and his assistants provide the positive role model espoused by the Boy Scout program.

## **Foster Personal Growth**

As Scouts plan their activities and make progress toward their goals, they experience personal growth. The Good Turn concept is a major part of the personal growth method of Scouting. Boys grow as they participate in community service projects and do Good Turns for others. There is probably no device so successful in developing a basis for personal growth as the daily Good Turn. The religious emblems program is also a large part of the personal growth method. Frequent personal conferences with his Scoutmaster and Patrol Advisor help each Scout to determine his growth toward Scouting's aim.

## **Encourage Leadership Development**

The Boy Scout program encourages the boys to learn and practice leadership skills. Every Scout has the opportunity to participate in both shared and total leadership situations. Understanding the concepts of leadership helps a boy accept the leadership role of others and guides him toward the citizenship aim of Scouting.

## **Emphasize the Practical and Symbolic Aspects of Wearing the Scout Uniform**

The uniform makes the Scout Troop visible as a force for good and creates a positive youth image in the community. The Boy Scout program is an action program, and wearing the Scout uniform is an action that shows each Scout's commitment to the aims and goals of Scouting. The uniform gives the Scout identity with a world brotherhood of youth that believe the same ideals. The uniform is also practical attire for Scout activities and provides a way for Scouts to wear the badges that show what they have accomplished.

## **Family Support**

A key element in maintaining and continually improving the quality of Troop 15 is by having active parental and family support. To be successful, scouting must be a *family activity*. We ask every parent to volunteer for at least one job supporting Troop 15 beyond merely getting your son to troop meetings and picking him up. BSA Troop 15 is not a child care service, but rather an organization that requires parents' and family's participation. Positive family support consists of the following:

- Make sure your son attends all troop activities and is ready for them, (and if unable to attend - ensuring he makes the proper notifications.)
- Encourage your son in his scout advancement.
- Take an active interest in his scouting activities.
- Attend parent meetings, courts of honor and other family activities.
- Join the Troop Committee. The committee is made up of parents and periodically to set Troop policy.
- Become a Merit Badge Counselor for the troop. You don't have to be an expert in the area. There are over 120 merit badges so there should be something you know about.

- Support fundraiser projects. This is how we earn money for troop equipment and the scouts can earn money for activities.
- Encourage sibling and extended family involvement - brothers/sisters, grandparents, aunts/uncles should all support scout participation and are invited to attend Courts of Honor or other Troop 15 events.

## **DUTIES OF TROOP ADULT LEADERS (SCOUTERS)**

Troop Leaders lead by helping each Scout help himself. They identify each Scout's characteristics and habits in order to understand him and help him feel they have his welfare at heart. They encourage each Scout in troop activities and lead through their own example - by living the Scout Oath and Law as expected of the Scouts.

### **Scoutmaster**

- Train and guide boy leaders to run their own Troop.
- Work with and through responsible adults to give Scouting to boys.
- Help boys to grow by encouraging them to learn for themselves.
- Guide boys in planning the Troop program.
- Become fully trained in the Boy Scout program.

### **Assistant Scoutmaster**

- Serve as leadership corp.
- Assist and stand-in for the Scoutmaster when needed.
- Lead specific aspects of the program, for instance organizing Summer Camp.
- Serve as a resource person for Patrol and leadership corps.
- Recruit others to assist.
- Support the Scoutmaster.
- Be fully trained in the Boy Scout program.

### **Troop Committee**

- Provide adequate meeting facilities.
- Advise the Scoutmaster on policies relating to the BSA Program and the Chartered Organization.
- Carry out the policies and regulations of the BSA.
- Encourage leaders in carrying out the BSA program.
- Be responsible for finances, adequate funds and disbursements.
- Obtain, maintain and care properly for Troop property.
- Provide adequate camping and outdoor programs (minimum 10 days and nights per year). And attend as many of those events as possible.
- See that adult leadership is assigned in case the Scoutmaster is absent or unable to serve.
- Operate the Troop in such a manner as to insure permanency.
- Conduct and serve on Boards of Review.

### **Duties of Troop Committee Members**

Each member of the Committee has specific responsibilities, thus dividing the whole job among the membership to carry out the pledge made at the time of the Application of



Charter. Committee members also support each other by helping complete others' "specific responsibilities" and assisting in accomplishing various troop-wide tasks. Examples of committee member positions include:

Committee Chair	Secretary	Treasurer
Advancement Coordinator	Fund Raising Coordinator	Quartermaster
Eagle Scout Coaches	Publicity Coordinator	Summer Camp Coordinator
Friends of Scouting Rep	Merit Badge Counselors	Members-At-Large

## TROOP MEETINGS

During the school year, troop meetings are Tuesday evenings from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. Locations for the meetings include RES (Redding Elementary School) cafeteria, West Redding Firehouse, or other locations as announced in weekly email blasts to the Troop. Attempts are made to hold meetings outdoors whenever possible. **The Scout shall wear his uniform each week and bring his handbook, a notebook and a pencil.** Should there be a time when the Scout must be unaccompanied, please return for pick up on time, as we cannot leave boys alone outside the school. If a scout is not able to attend a meeting, it is his obligation to contact his patrol leader and/or Scoutmaster to notify him he won't be able to attend. (As with any extracurricular commitment BSA membership should be shown the same level of respect and courtesy by notifying the group when you are unable to attend.)

## Patrol Groups

Troop 15 is divided into Patrol groups. The Patrol is the fundamental functioning group of Boy Scouts. Scout patrols plan their camp outs, plan hikes, plan other outdoor activities, and execute service projects. Patrols are encouraged to plan activities separate from the Troop, including camp outs, special trios, and service projects. To the greatest extent possible, patrols are kept together for camp outs and other activities. When necessary, patrols are reformed or combined for camp outs. Patrols elect their Patrol Leader and work to make their leadership tenure successful. It is important for all Scouts to be active members of their patrol for its members to receive the full benefit of the Scouting experience.

## Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC)

On one Tuesday evening per month the Patrol Leaders' Council meeting replaces the regularly scheduled Troop Meeting. The PLC is made up of the following scout leaders:

Senior Patrol Leader	Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders
Patrol Leaders	Senior Patrol Advisors
Troop Guide	Scribe (non-voting)

Other Scout leaders may occasionally be asked to attend at the discretion of the Senior Patrol Leader as non-voting members.



The PLC Meeting is attended by the Scoutmaster and one other invited adult leader plus, occasionally, other adult leaders at the invitation of the Scoutmaster.

## TROOP ACTIVITIES

### Summer Camp

Each year boys have the opportunity to attend Summer Camp. Dates and camps vary each year according to availability of leaders and the boys' interests. Compared to non-Scout camps, these camps are very inexpensive and are a highlight of the Scouting Program. Boys who attend Summer Camp generally remain in scouting longer and achieve higher rank than those who do not.

### Camporees

Camporees are Council- or District-wide events, lasting 3 days and 2 nights, where many area troops come together to camp, share ideas and compete with each other. Troop 15, or individual Patrols, may choose to attend Spring and Fall District Camporee. The location varies as does the theme, but always featured are Patrol competitions in scouting skills and spirit.

### Klondike Derby

The Klondike Derby is an annual District-wide winter camping event held at an area park or scout location. The event involves "dogsled" competitions where scouts pull their sled containing scout equipment and their gear along a trail to different "stations" hosting activities and tasks. Troop 15 scouts prepare our own patrol sleds each year for this fun and exhilarating winter event.

### Troop and Patrol Camping

Troop camps at least once each month. The more parents who are willing to participate in camping, the more options we can offer our Scouts.

Camp outs are usually from about 7:00 a.m. on Saturday through approximately noon on Sunday. Typically we meet in the RES parking lot before heading out. Parents and leaders provide transportation.

Each scout who attends a camp out is expected to attend the *entire* event and complete the tasks assigned by his patrol. While it is strongly discouraged for boys to make a late arrival or early departure - if a boy has a religious or other commitment that he must attend, he and his parent or guardian should discuss the requirement with the Scoutmaster BEFORE the camp out. Late arrivals and early departures (that have been discussed with, and approved by, the Scoutmaster) will be accommodated during a one hour time slot late Saturday afternoon. Scouts pre-approved to leave early will need to check-out with the Scoutmaster during this predetermined time slot. Scouts pre-approved to arrive late will need to check-in with the Scoutmaster during this predetermined time slot, and then stay for the duration of the camp out. The Scoutmaster will announce the one-hour "late arrival/early departure" time slot in advance of each camp out." Boys should never leave an event without prior notification and approval of the Scoutmaster.

While the Troop plans one campout per month, Patrol campouts are also encouraged as long as BSA guidelines are followed and appropriate adult leadership is available. All Patrol camp outs must have the prior approval of the Scoutmaster.

After a camp out, Scouts may need to take equipment home for additional cleaning, repairing and/or airing out. Equipment should then be returned to the Quartermaster by the next Troop Meeting in good, clean condition. Failure of a Patrol to adequately clean and care for Troop equipment is grounds for suspension of participating in camp outs.

### **Campout Patrol Meal Planning**

Each Troop 15 campout is planned ahead of time by the different boys who will attend. Patrols are responsible for deciding what they will eat, who will cook and who will buy the items necessary. These responsibilities are traditionally assumed by scouts who need to complete a (Tenderfoot, Second or First Class) “cooking,” “meal-planning” or “menu” requirement. While the meal items may be purchased by 1 or 2 scouts, the funding for the items is divided evenly among all boys in the patrol, who must reimburse the scout(s) who purchased the items before leaving for the campout.

### **Day Trips**

If a camp out has been canceled, **Plan B** will go into effect. Possible options are AT (Appalachian Trail) hikes, local museums, amusement parks, state parks, and historical areas of interest. The choice belongs to the Scouts as long as it is practical, affordable, and safe and provided we have enough adult coverage.

### **Spaghetti Dinner**

This is our only yearly Troop fund raiser, and is held each Spring at the West Redding Firehouse. The entire Troop helps with food preparation, serving, waiting, bussing tables and clean up. Scouts are required to sell tickets using the buddy system. This is a fun event for the whole family.

### **Service Projects**

Service projects include “*SHHhhh*” (Scatacook Helping the Homeless - food pantry program), roadside cleanup, Veteran’s and Memorial Day Remembrance, WRVFD Steak & Chicken Dinner, and the Redding Memorial Day Parade. The participation of all Scouts in these projects is expected and strongly advised. Boys may also assist older scouts completing the community Eagle Scout service project. All these projects reinforce one of the main goals of Scouting -- to foster strong participative citizenship.

What many boys’ approach with trepidation and reluctance, most often turns into an enjoyable, team building experience that they look back on with a real sense of pride and accomplishment.

Service projects must be pre-approved by the Scoutmaster to assure proper safety and adult supervision.

### **Buddy System**

Pairing two boys for Scout activities is called the “Buddy System.” All Troop and Patrol activities are structured this way for safety. At no time is a Scout allowed to “solo”, especially during outside activities. With an uneven number of boys, a three-person buddy group must

be used. Each Scout is responsible for keeping track of his Buddy at all times. He may not swap his Buddy without the knowledge and consent of his Patrol Leader.

Adult leaders are also required to comply with "Two-Deep Leadership" policy of BSA. A minimum of two adults, at least one of whom is a fully trained BSA Leader) is required for trips, outings, camps, hikes, meetings, etc. This policy protects leaders as well as the boys. Except for a parent and his or her son, Boy and Adult buddy combinations are not allowed. As part of BSA Youth Protection policy, one adult is never allowed to be alone with one Scout. This policy applies to all adults who attend campouts.

## **Youth Protection**

All adult scout leaders must be trained according to BSA requirements regarding youth protection. Parents of new scouts should review this section of the Boy Scout Handbook (*"How to Protect Your Children from Abuse"* pamphlet inside cover) to insure that they and their son understand appropriate and safe behavior by peers and adults. Any scout leader supervising a campout or other overnight event **MUST** be certified and "Trained" in a multi-day class which includes these policies.

## **Advancement (The Trail to Eagle Scout)**

Advancement from Scout to Eagle is an important part of the scouting experience and is completely explained in the Scout Handbook. Opportunities for completing advancement requirements will be provided to the scouts; it is the Scout's responsibility to take advantage of those opportunities. The troop has four basic rules about advancement.

1. A scout may be tested on rank requirements by his Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmaster, a troop committee member, his patrol leader, troop guides, or another junior leader, provided that the boy leader has already earned the rank the Scout is aiming for. The Scoutmaster maintains a list of those qualified to give tests and to pass candidates. A Scout merit badge counselor teaches and tests on the requirements for merit badges in various activities and subjects. Troop 15 strongly suggests that parents who are registered leaders and siblings who are also members of the troop not sign rank requirements or act as an "Eagle Required" merit badge counselor for their own family members. Troop members who sign off for a family member's rank requirements or merit badge requirements are asked to have these items also initialed by another adult troop leader.
2. Merit Badge Counselors must be registered with the Connecticut Yankee Council prior to any work being completed on the merit badge. The Advancement Chair reserves the right to disallow any advancement or merit badge signed-off by an unapproved individual. A list of approved Connecticut Yankee Council merit badge counselors is available from the Troop Advancement Chair.
3. Boys will be encouraged to advance but will not be pushed to advance. Troop leaders are responsible for providing advancement opportunities but are not responsible for ensuring a scout advances in rank. Scouts are reminded that being active in the troop is a BSA requirement for rank advancement.
4. Even though the Advancement Chair maintains records of each scout's advancement, it is each scout's responsibility to maintain written proof of his advancement. Scout Handbooks provide places to have requirements signed-off and the scout will be given a signed card for each merit badge or rank advancement.

Possession of a patch is not considered proof. Eagle rank will not be granted without documented proof that all requirements have been completed

## Earning a Merit Badge

Listed below are the steps to follow to earn a merit badge

1. After looking over the list of merit badges and finding one that interests you, obtain a blue merit badge card from the Merit Badge Coordinator, Advancement Chair, or Scoutmaster. Fill in your name, address, and the name of the badge. Ask the Scoutmaster or Merit Badge Coordinator to sign the card before you begin working. These leaders can give you the names of registered merit badge counselors with whom you can work.
2. Contact the merit badge counselor and tell him/her that you want to earn the merit badge. The counselor may want to set up an appointment to explain what he/she expects and to help you get started. **Note:** *Under BSA Two Deep Leadership rules, you must have another person with you at each meeting with the merit badge counselor. Boys should never be alone with an adult.*
3. Read the merit badge pamphlet on the subject. When you know what is expected, start working on the requirements. You can ask your counselor to help you learn things you need to know or do.
4. When you are ready, call the counselor and make an appointment to review your work. When you go, take along the things you have made to meet the requirements. If they are too big to move, take pictures or a note from an adult who can tell what you have done. The counselor will ask you to show and discuss each requirement to make sure you have done everything required. Once the counselor is satisfied that you have completed the requirements, he/she will sign your blue card and keep the counselor's portion of the card. Be sure to hang on tight to this card: if you lose it, you may have to start the badge over unless the counselor is willing and able to vouch for what you already completed.
5. Take the card back to the Scoutmaster, or designated Assistant Scoutmaster, and have him sign it. Give the "Applicant's Record" and the "Troop Record" sections to the Advancement Chair. You will receive your merit badge at the next Court of Honor along with the "Applicant's Record" portion of the blue card."

**Note regarding merit badge requirements:** You are expected to meet the requirements as they are stated - no more and no less. You are expected to do exactly what is stated in the requirements. If it says "show and demonstrate," that is what you must do. Just telling about it isn't enough. The same thing holds true for such words as "make", "list," "in the field," "collect," "identify," and "label."

## Who can sign on rank requirements?

Rank Advancement can be signed off by the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters. Tenderfoot, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> class rank advancement requirements can be signed off by Junior Assistant Scoutmasters.

## **Rank Advancement Procedure**

The procedure for rank advancement will be used for all rank advancements except Eagle, which is governed by the procedures outlined by our District, Council, and the Boy Scouts of America.

Each Scout is responsible for completing all of the requirements for his rank as noted in the *Boy Scout Handbook*. When a requirement is completed, the Scout should ask the leader in charge of the activity to sign and date his book immediately.

Once all of the requirements for a rank are signed off, the Scout will take his book to his Patrol Advisor or a Senior Patrol Leader who will verify that all requirements are completed. If the Patrol Advisor or Senior Patrol Leader feels the Scout is prepared, he will instruct the Scout to request a conference with the Scoutmaster.

The Scoutmaster Conference will usually take place at a troop meeting, patrol meeting, weekend camp-out, or camp. For this conference, the Scout must bring his handbook and be in his Class A uniform. The Scoutmaster will ask questions related to the requirements of the rank to which the Scout wishes to advance and his development as a scout. Each Scout should study and review the material before this conference. If the Scoutmaster is unavailable or has many conferences, designated Assistant Scoutmasters may conduct the Scoutmaster Conference for all ranks except Star, Life, and Eagle. If the Scoutmaster feels the Scout has accomplished the skills for rank advancement, he will sign the appropriate page in the Scout's handbook.

Once the Scoutmaster signs the Scout's handbook, the Scout will then ask the Advancement Chair to schedule a Board of Review. The Advancement Chair will check the Scout's advancement history in the Troop's records to verify that all required merit badges for each rank have been earned. The Scout will then be notified of the date for his Board of Review, or if he has requirements to complete before a Board of Review is convened. For a Board of Review, the Scout must bring his handbook and must be in full Class A uniform. This review will not retest the Scout. The purpose is to evaluate the Scout's experiences, to find out how our troop is doing from the Scout's perspective, help the Scout to realize his accomplishments, and encourage him to continue to advance in rank. Upon confirmation of advancement, each member of the Board of Review will sign the Scout's handbook and a Board of Review form.

The Board of Review forms will be returned to the Advancement Chair to be entered into the Troop's records and recorded at the Scout Council Office. The Scout will receive his advancement badge at the next Court of Honor.

## **Scoutmaster's Conferences**

This is a one-on-one meeting with the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster. The purpose of the Scoutmaster's Conference is to provide the Scout with the opportunity to demonstrate his knowledge of the skills required for rank advancement. The conference must be requested by the Scout, but will be held at the convenience of the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster. Scouts are expected to appear in full dress uniform for the Scoutmaster Conference.

## **Board of Review**

Scouts are expected to appear in full dress uniform for the Board of Review.

The Board of Review interview is conducted by three adults of the Troop Committee after the Scout has successfully completed the Scoutmaster's Conference. The Scoutmaster will not sit on the Board of Review.

The questions are intended to be more general in nature, regarding the Scout's individual experiences and suggestions regarding the Troop. As a rule, Boards of Review for higher rank advancements take slightly longer, as it is expected that the Scout is more capable of expressing his views.

The Scout is notified within minutes of the completion of his Board of Review as to whether he has successfully earned his rank.

### **Court of Honor**

A Court of Honor is a special meeting of troop members, family and friends. The meeting is held to publicly recognize those scouts that have earned rank advancement, merit badges or other accomplishments. Troop 15 traditionally conducts 3 Courts of Honor per year (Fall, Winter and Spring) and each is held at our Charter Organization site - the West Redding Firehouse.

The whole family is encouraged to attend, even if a scout has not earned any special recognition, because the meetings are also used to discuss the troop's accomplishments and future activities. Scouts who may not have achieved a rank advancement or earned a merit badge are expected to attend each Court of Honor to support fellow scouts.

### **RECOMMENDED PERSONAL EQUIPMENT**

Please talk to the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters or an experienced camper before purchasing equipment. There is a wealth of experience available to help you assemble the best equipment at a reasonable price. This is especially important when purchasing key equipment like sleeping bags, sleeping pads, tents, and backpacks.

Required for *all* meetings:

- Class A Uniform (see list below)
- Boy Scout Handbook
- Notebook and pen/pencil

### **Required for Camping & Outdoors Activities**

The following is a list of equipment that will be needed at various times during the year. Not all of this equipment will be necessary on each campout or activity; your son should consult with his patrol leader to understand what is required for a specific event.

- Backpack
- Sleeping bag appropriate for the time of year
- Lightweight hiking boots
- Lightweight rain poncho
- Flashlight with extra batteries (the smaller and lighter the better - a headlamp allows free use of both hands)
- Compass
- Pocketknife - (lock blade, 3 1/2" blade maximum) for scouts with their Totin' Chip
- Insect repellent (non-aerosol)
- Water bottle or canteen



- Personal first-aid kit (assembled as a Patrol project/Second Class requirement)
- Personal mess kit, eating utensils
- Day pack or fanny pack for hikes and activities
- Fire-making kit (matches, fire-starters, etc) for Scouts who have their Firem'n's Chit.

### **Equipment Organization and Packing**

In past years, Scouts have shown up for weekend camping with their gear packed in everything from trunks, garbage bags, pillow cases, and sometimes not packed at all. Managing equipment for dozens of boys when packed so haphazardly is very difficult and too often ends in misplaced or lost personal equipment. The troop strongly encourages all scouts to obtain a hiking backpack sufficiently large to contain the typical equipment needed for weekend camping. A good rule of thumb is that if your gear won't fit in or attached to a standard hiking backpack, then you are probably bringing too much stuff. Speak to a leader or senior scout for tips on appropriate gear including a good quality backpack.

### **Cold Weather Equipment**

Note that cold weather camping requires a careful review of clothing and equipment to insure a safe and enjoyable event. Each Troop 15 scout and his parents should review and prepare a personal list of cold weather gear and items needed to be packed for each campout event held between October - April. Troop leaders will review cold weather camping at the beginning of the year and remind boys to pack appropriately before participating in the event. There is also guidance for cold weather camping on the Troop website.

### **Troop Equipment**

Troop equipment is stored in our trailer. This includes propane, stoves, lanterns, patrol boxes containing cooking gear, and other equipment necessary for campouts. Each Patrol has a separate Patrol Box with all necessary equipment for cooking and clean-up.

## **UNIFORM INFORMATION**

Scouting is a uniformed organization. The scout uniform signifies association with other scouts and pride and spirit in scouting. It has been a tradition and critically important part of the program for over 100 years.

### **The Class 'A' Uniform**

The Class 'A' Uniform is worn to all Troop Meetings, District and BSA events, or Training, unless otherwise directed by the Scoutmaster. It consists of:

- Official Boy Scout tan shirt (w/ appropriate emblems & patches)
- Green Shoulder Epaulets
- Official Boy Scout Shorts or Official Boy Scout Long Pants, or any solid colored olive green shorts with belt loops, or any solid colored olive green pants with belt loops.
- Official Boy Scout belt
- Troop 15 neckerchief with slide
- Scout Socks, or similar dark colored socks (i.e. no white athletic socks)



Note that the Scout Uniform has been updated over the last couple of years. The older model shirts and patches (red Epaulets) are still considered official uniforms and need not be replaced.

A few suggestions on scout uniform purchases based on experience:

1. Short sleeve shirts work best for year-round use. The long sleeve shirts are too hot during summer and don't provide significant warmth in winter; scouts can always wear a long sleeved shirt neutral color under or fleece sweater over their shirt sleeve shirts in winter.
2. Buy the shirts a size too big and let the boys grow into them.
3. The troop often has a supply of lightly used uniforms, check with the Scoutmaster before buying new.
4. When washing zip-off pants, be sure to wash the uppers and lowers together even if the boy only wore the pants as shorts. Not washing all parts together will result in slightly faded uppers that don't match the bottoms.

## **SUGGESTED SUPPLIERS AND SOURCES**

### **BSA Uniforms and Scouting Items**

BSA CT Yankee Council Store  
203-876-6880  
Connecticut Yankee Council  
60 Wellington Road  
Milford, CT 06460  
Boy Scouts of America Scout Shop On-Line  
<http://www.scoutstuff.org>

Rankin Sporting Goods  
37 Newtown Road, Danbury, CT06810  
800 -878-7602  
<http://www.rankinsports.com>

### **Outdoor Apparel and Camping Gear**

L.L. Bean  
800-221-4221  
<http://www.llbean.com>

Campmor  
800-236-7667  
<http://www.campmor.com>

REI  
800-426-4840  
<http://www.rei.com>

Cabela's (Near Hartford)

800-237-4444  
<http://www.cabelas.com>

Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS) Danbury Mall  
888-463-6367  
<http://www.emsonline.com>

Sports Authority (in Norwalk, CT)  
(203) 838-2583  
<http://www.sportsauthority.com>

Dicks Sporting Goods (Danbury Mall)  
1-877-846-9997  
<http://www.dickssportinggoods.com>

## **FINANCIAL POLICY**

### **Dues**

Dues of \$25.00 per year are assessed each September from all Troop 15 scouts to be used for troop expenses. There is no additional fee for multiple scouts in the same household. Dues need to be current for the Scout to participate in Troop activities such as camping and advancement (i.e., Court of Honor). Older boys who are transfers from other Troops or communities must all pay dues.

It is the policy of Troop 15 that no boy should be denied entry to the troop because of financial hardship. If a boy wants to join Redding, CT BSA Troop 15 and they have a financial hardship or impediment to their joining or maintaining membership in the Troop, they should contact the Troop 15 Committee Chair to discuss the Troop supporting their membership. This inquiry will be kept strictly confidential between the parent(s)/guardian and the Troop Committee Chair and Treasurer.

### **Campout and Event Costs**

At monthly campouts and other Scout events during the year, boys will need to contribute their share of meal costs for their patrol. The cost for a typical weekend campout is about \$10 and is paid to the patrol member that buys the supplies. Boys should bring this patrol fee to the Tuesday meeting before the weekend campout *before* the supplies are bought.

## **SCOUT REGISTRATION AND RECORDS**

### **Scoutbook**

Scoutbook is a web site used by Troop 15 to record the advancement records of scouts. Parents and scouts have limited, but important, access to Scoutbook in which they can change contact information (new email address, phone numbers, etc.) and confirm the scout's advancement records. Login credentials for scouts and parents are provided by the Advancement Chair who administers Scoutbook. Parents are encouraged to use

Adult Leaders have access to Scoutbook for recording rank advancement sign offs. Scoutbook is available through a web interface on a smart phone so leaders can record

signoffs in real time. Certain Adult Leaders have email privileges through Scoutbook whereby they can email individuals or the entire troop. Leaders are reminded to use this privilege judiciously and strictly for Troop 15 purposes.

## **BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Boys who join Boy Scouts of America are encouraged to mature to become young men who demonstrate leadership and positive behavior according to the Scout Oath and Law at all times. Inherent in developing leadership skills is the ability to evaluate and measure appropriate disciplinary consequences for inappropriate behavior. Whenever possible Troop 15 adult leaders will include senior scouts in examining the inappropriate action taken by fellow scouts and jointly with adult leaders, administer the necessary discipline to correct such behavior.

However due to the potential liability of the Troop members, adult Troop leaders or members of the Troop Committee resulting from an injury to a Scout, or property damage done by a Scout when at a Troop sponsored activity or campout, the Troop Committee has adopted the following "Discipline Policy."

Any Scout who knowingly or intentionally participates in an activity that has the potential to cause harm to himself or other Troop members, or behaves in such a manner that reflects negatively upon Troop 15 or the Boy Scouts of America, or intentionally participates in any activity that may cause damage to public or private property, will be disciplined. This includes *all* BSA scout activities and events whether or not they are specific to Troop 15. Behavior which is cause for disciplinary action as outlined in the Discipline Policy Procedures includes, but is not, limited to the following examples:

1. Failure to follow the Scoutmaster's or an adult leader's direction.
2. Unsafe actions, as determined by the Scoutmaster , adult Leader or Senior Patrol Leader
3. Physical or verbal hazing or harassment of another person.
4. Leaving designated areas without the Scoutmaster's permission:
  - a. Not telling the Scoutmaster of their whereabouts at all times.
  - b. Going to an area other than that requested.
  - c. Entering property marked "NO TRESPASSING."
5. Exploring physical hazards without Scoutmaster's permission and supervision (i.e., lakes, creeks, cliffs, caves or underground areas, boats, abandoned structures, etc.)
6. Going near any type of vehicle, machinery, or equipment without the permission of the Scoutmaster.
7. Any type of property damage to nature or man-made areas.
8. Excessively rowdy, unruly, loud, disrespectful, and disobedient or disruptive behavior.
9. Excessive and/or repeated use of cursing or foul language.
10. Smoking or the use of any tobacco products.
11. Illegal use of any controlled substance, drug or alcohol.
12. Possession of any type of weapon or threatening use of any approved tool or instrument to harm someone.

13. Exhibiting a pattern of poor attitude or disruptive behavior that is affecting the normal activities of the Troop.
14. Failure of a senior scout (rank Star and above) to report violations of the above policies to a responsible adult.
15. Possession or use of any restricted or regulated items as listed in the Restricted and Regulated Items section of this Manual.

### **Discipline Procedure**

In the event an adult Scout leader needs to discipline a Scout, the leader will give the Scout two separate warnings and explain exactly what conduct must be corrected by the Scout. Included in the “warning” procedure will be advisement of a senior scout leader that a warning has been given. If during this same Troop activity a third warning is required, the adult leader in charge will discuss the infraction with the Scout at the time of the violation, reminding him of the Behavior and Discipline Policy and Procedure.

And upon the occurrence of a third *warning* the following Disciplinary steps must be taken and will be documented as the “First Offense” in the written behavioral record of the Scout. **However this does NOT preclude behavior or action taken by a scout whereby his action has created such a liability or safety hazard for other Troop members or adults that it is so egregious and severe to warrant bypassing the warning and disciplinary procedures and requiring immediate expulsion from the Troop (see *Third Offense*).**

**First, Second and Third Offenses outlined below must be documented on the Troop 15 Discipline Procedure form.** The trained adult in charge, the Senior Patrol Leader and any witnesses must describe the infraction, sign and date the form. These forms will retained in a file by the Troop Scoutmaster and/or Committee Chair so any past behavioral discipline can be verified.

On the **First Offense** the following steps will be taken:

1. The Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster or trained Leader in charge will meet with the scout and the parent(s) or guardian(s) to discuss the discipline problems with them and inform them that this behavior will not be tolerated.
2. The parent(s) or guardian(s) will then be required to attend the next Scout activity with their Scout, in order for the Scout to participate.
3. The Troop Committee Chair and Patrol Advisor must be notified in writing by the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster or trained Leader in charge, and given all the details.

At the Scoutmaster’s discretion, any scout receiving discipline under a “first offense” may be given a probationary period, ranging in length from three months to one year, depending upon the severity of the offense.

If the Scout has no further incidents during the probationary period, the first offense will be removed from his record. The purpose of the probationary period is to give the Scout a goal and to insure that he is not penalized his entire Scouting career for one mistake. It is hoped that this will provide the Scout with a sense of achievement and further his interest in Scouting.

In the event that another incident occurs during the probationary period, it will be treated as a second offense and no consideration for probation will be allowed.

On the **Second Offense** the following steps will be taken:

1. The Troop Committee Chair must be notified by the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, or Leader in charge and given all details of the offense.
2. The Troop Committee Chair will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the involved Scout.
3. The parent(s) or guardian(s) and the Scout or prospective member must appear before the Troop committee to discuss the problem.

On the second offense or in the case of possible endangerment of the Scout or others, a Special Board of Review may be called at the discretion of the Troop Committee, Scoutmaster and/or Assistant Scoutmasters.

NOTE while this Disciplinary Procedure provides for a 3-step process, the Troop Committee upon request of the Scoutmaster and/or Assistant Scoutmaster(s) may decide at any time, that in the best interests of Troop 15, a Scout be informed that he will have to find another troop to continue his participation in the Boy Scouts of America program.

On the **Third Offense** notification follows the same pattern as above. The parent(s) or guardian(s) will be requested to remove the Scout from Troop 15.

Each Scout and his parent(s) or guardian(s) will be required to sign the form in the back of this Manual acknowledging their understanding of the Troop Behavior and Discipline Policy and agreeing to abide by this safety measure designed to insure the safety and welfare of all members of Troop 15.

Disciplinary actions taken in accordance with this policy will be recorded as indicated. Every effort should be taken to maintain the confidentiality of the persons involved. The aim of this policy, when invoked is to reach out to the Scout and provide him with guidance on how he can improve and become a better Scout. Extra attention will be accorded these Scouts to insure they are given every chance to succeed and prove themselves. At this point in time, Scouting is the best thing for these Scouts and the Troop leadership will do everything possible to maintain their interest in Scouting

### **Proactive Policies on Discipline at Summer Camps and Non-Troop 15 Sponsored Events**

1. The Boy Scouts of America has a zero tolerance policy on bullying. Troop 15 will not tolerate bullying of any kind.
2. Any disciplinary infraction that is deemed bullying, harassment, or intimidation at the sole discretion of the Scoutmaster or other Scouter in charge at the event will be deemed a Second Offence under the Discipline Procedure, below.
3. Part of leadership is the care and nurturing of those under your charge. Scouts of higher ranks and leadership positions have a responsibility to look out for the well-being of younger scouts by reporting violations of bullying and harassment policies to responsible adults. While it is not the role or responsibility of older scouts to physically intervene in these situations, they do have a responsibility to report them immediately to a uniformed adult leader.
4. The Troop leadership will proactively discuss its zero tolerance bullying policy with all participating scouts at selected times during the scout year so that all boys know and are reminded of their responsibilities and options for reporting infractions.

5. Parents should proactively discuss the potential for bullying, harassment, or intimidation, and instruct them to immediately report any such actions to a responsible adult.

### **Trouble Outside of Scouting**

While the troop leadership has primary responsibility for maintaining discipline and safety during Scout sponsored events, there are situations that occur outside of scouting that directly affect safety, discipline, and morale inside the troop. As such, the Troop leadership reserves the right to limit or deny participation in Troop activities to any scouts that is found to be engaged in serious illegal activities or other activities that call into question safety or discipline inside the troop. Examples of such activities include:

- Illegal acts such as drug possession, drunk driving, violence, contributing to the delinquency of a minor
- Serious infractions of school discipline policy such as drug possession, violence, weapons possession

### **MEDICATION POLICY**

The Boy Scouts of America recognizes that many Scouts and adult leaders occasionally, or even routinely, are required to take some form of prescription medication to alleviate the symptoms of any number of legitimate acute or chronic conditions. The possession and use of legally prescribed medications is acceptable within the guidelines of this policy. However it is the responsibility of the parent(s) or guardian of each scout required to take any prescribed medication to:

- Notify the Scoutmaster that their son is required to take medication.
- Provide adult BSA leaders with written notice, signed by a parent or guardian, for any medication (prescription or otherwise).
- Maintain and administer any prescription medication to their son when he is attending a Troop camp out or other Scout activity. (If the scout is attending Boy Scout summer camp it is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian to complete, sign and submit the required documentation so that the camp medical staff may administer the medication(s).)

All medications must be carried in the original container. In the case of prescription medication, a legible label showing the name of the medication, the prescribing physician and prescription number must be affixed to the container.

Upon receipt of written authorization and instruction, adult BSA leaders *may* agree to assist the Scout in remembering to take the authorized medication at the proper time(s), but will not accept any responsibility for insuring that he does so.

### **POLICY REGARDING CAMP FIRES**

Campfires are an integral part of the Boy Scouts program, so much so that an entire chapter of the Boy Scout Manual is devoted to the subject, but fire safety is one area which cannot be taken for granted. Troop 15's camp fire safety and training will be centered on BSA's "Firem'n's Chit" training and certification.

Scouts who have been trained will receive a personalized “Fireman’s Chit” that provides a list of fire safety instructions, and indicates that the scout understands his responsibility and privilege of being permitted to start camp fires and carry fire-starting equipment like matches, fire starters, and lighters.

A senior scout (Star rank and above) will always supervise and instruct younger scouts in proper and safe use of matches and fire-starting equipment. Scouts will use the buddy system when preparing and starting a fire for any purpose.

Any scout who improperly uses matches or any incendiary device will immediately have his Fireman’s Chit revoked and will be prohibited from campfire starting and oversight during any Troop activity until he re-earns his Fireman’s Chit.

Any scout who uses any incendiary device or fuel will immediately have his Fireman’s Chit revoked and will be subject to the Disciplinary Policy, and based on the Scoutmaster’s and/or the Troop Committee’s decision may face expulsion from the Troop.

Fireman’s Chit training guidelines are included in the Scout’s Boy Scout Handbook.

## **POLICY REGARDING KNIVES OR BLADED DEVICES**

Using a knife or other bladed equipment is also an integral part of the Scouting program. Troop 15’s bladed device policy will be centered on BSA’s “Totin’ Chip” training. Each scout in Troop 15 that uses a knife or bladed equipment must be trained in proper and safe use as well as care of the equipment. Scouts will only be permitted to carry knives if they have earned their Totin’ Chip and only knives that conform to the size and configuration stipulated by BSA and local regulations, (see “*RECOMMENDED PERSONAL EQUIPMENT: Required for Outdoor/ Camping Activities,*” p. 13.)

Scouts must also have earned their “totin’ chip” and understand the consequences for inappropriate use of the equipment. This includes, but is not limited to, confiscation of the knife or other bladed device if the Scoutmaster or adult leader believes that the scout is using the item unsafely or that it doesn’t conform to appropriate BSA standards. Use of a knife or other bladed cutting equipment in a dangerous and improper manner to the scout or other scouts or adults will result in immediate disciplinary action. The scout will be subject to the Disciplinary Policy and based on the Scoutmaster’s and/or the Troop Committee’s decision may face expulsion from the Troop.

Scouts are encouraged to present their knives to the Scoutmaster for approval.

Sheathed knives are strictly regulated but permissible, at the Scoutmaster’s discretion, to Life and Eagle Scouts once presented to the Scoutmaster for approval. Sheaths must be of high-quality and in proper working order. All rules of the Totin’ Chip apply to sheathed knives.

Totin’ Chip training guidelines are included in the Scout’s Boy Scout Handbook.

### **!!! IMPORTANT !!!**

***Regardless of BSA Policies, Redding School policy and Connecticut State law governs our use of school and public facilities. At no time is knife or other potential weapon to be brought inside a school or other public building. Other locations that we visit may have similar restrictions which the Troop strives to obey under all circumstances.***



## POLICY REGARDING ELECTRONICS

Modern electronics provide exciting opportunities to enhance the Scouting experience. However, this technology also involves great risk to enjoying physical and outdoor activities and, in the extreme, exposure to threats of child safety and cyber-bullying. In an effort to address the wide-ranging issue more holistically, Troop 15 has developed a training program, resulting in a scout earning the “Silicon Chip,” similar to BSA’s Totin’ Chip and Firem’n’s Chit, that addresses the use of electronics. Given the wide and ever-changing range of functions of electronic devices, such as the iPhone, our training program focuses on the use of the device more than its simple possession. However, the possession of these devices is considered complementary, not fundamental, to scouting. Therefore, persistent or extreme violation of the Silicon Chip training may result in a scout losing permission to possess or use electronics altogether.

Scouts who have been trained will receive a personalized “Silicon Chip” that provides a list of electronic device instructions, and indicates that the scout understands his responsibility and privilege of being permitted to use and possess approved electronics.

Any scout who improperly uses or possesses electronic devices may immediately have his Silicon Chip revoked and will be prohibited from using any electronics during any Troop activity until he re-earns his Silicon Chip. Extreme misuse of electronics for unsafe or cyber-bullying will be subject to the Disciplinary Policy and, based on the Scoutmaster’s and/or the Troop Committee’s decision, may face expulsion from the Troop.

Silicon Chip training guidelines are available from the Scoutmaster and will be posted on the Troop’s web site.

Sample uses of electronic devices that are encouraged include:

- GPS and electronic compasses.
- Walkie-talkies between members of our troop - subject to all other discipline guidelines of the trip regarding privacy, cyber-bullying, etc.
- Night vision goggles - subject to all other discipline guidelines of the trip regarding privacy, cyber-bullying, etc.
- Cameras - subject to all other discipline guidelines of the trip regarding privacy, cyber-bullying, etc.
- Use of cell phones in an emergency to address safety concerns such as injuries, 911 calls, or lost scouts.

Sample uses of electronic devices that are restricted include:

- “Couch potato” uses such as video games. Devices, such as Nintendo DS, that are primarily gaming consoles, are strictly prohibited.
- Any electronic communication (whether audio, text, pictures of video) between any scout and anyone other than the scout and that scout’s parents.
- Any “diversionary” use of electronics to browse the web or other waste of time when the scout should be enjoying the outdoors or other activities planned by the Troop.

While parents often encourage, and even require, their scouts to carry cell phones for safety reasons, we expect parental support in enforcing both the rules and intent of the Silicon Chip program.

Troop 15 hopes our Silicon Chip program becomes the basis of a BSA-wide program.

## **OTHER RESTRICTED AND REGULATED ITEMS**

Besides rules inherent in the Totin' Chip, Firem'n's Chit, and Silicon Chip programs, there are other items and activities that Troop 15 explicitly restricts. Scouts possessing or using these items will be in violation of the discipline policy.

- Water Guns and water balloons.
- Sling-shots and other high-velocity projectile devices.
- Any device meant to be hurled at another scout or animal.
- Any weapon, firearm or ammunition.
- Fireworks or explosives, including otherwise allowable items used as fireworks or explosives.
- Knives with cutting edges longer than 3.5 inches, machetes or similar tools.
- Fire accelerant such as gasoline, lighter fluid, cooking oils, torch fuel, or kerosene.

Note: some Scouting activities allow for some of these items under strict adult supervision. When that is true, THE ITEMS WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE TROOP. Scouts should never bring them.

## **E-MAIL POLICY**

Electronic mail is a very effective way to communicate the news and events of the Troop. Unfortunately, the very ease of use which makes e-mail so effective also makes it prone to inadvertent misuse by well-intentioned or aggrieved Scouters within the troop and, more ominously, malicious abuse by parties outside of Troop 15. Scouts and parents should keep in mind that whatever is written will be read by everyone and words should be chosen carefully. Also refrain from personal or private issues on email.

Accordingly, in an attempt to insure the privacy of Troop 15 Scouts and families, the following policies concerning the use of electronic mail for the conduct of Troop 15 business should be adhered to.

The ability to send simultaneous e-mail to the entire Troop 15 mail list directly from the Troop 15 website will be restricted to a small group of individuals approved by the Scoutmaster and Committee Chair

Scouters wishing to communicate to Troop 15 at large should provide the relevant information to the Scoutmaster. If the information is deemed appropriate for dissemination to all members of the Troop, a separate e-mail will be composed by the Scoutmaster. The Troop 15 email distribution list will only be used to convey Troop 15 information and will not be used for any other group or organization.

Individual Scouts and Scouters are free to compile their own individual mail lists containing the e-mail address of other Troop 15 Scouts or Scouters, but are strongly cautioned to insure that potential recipients have given their permission to be included.

No Scout, Scouter, or parent, other than the Scoutmaster, will use or share any email list of Troop 15 Scouts, Scouters, or parents for any purpose that is not directly related to Troop 15 or Boy Scouting. The Scoutmaster shall not use or share any email list of Troop 15 Scouts,

Scouters, or parents for any purpose that is not reasonably related, directly or indirectly, to Troop 15 or Boy Scouting.

When sending e-mail to any address posted on the Troop 15 website, the sender is cautioned to remember that many of the adult recipients receive this e-mail on their home computers, and as such, it is possible that individual Scouts might have access to read whatever is written. Topics or issues of a sensitive nature should not be openly discussed or posted in an electronic mail format.

## **LIABILITY RELEASE FORM AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POLICY MANUAL**

Parents of Troop 15 scouts must sign two forms annually acknowledging a limitation of liability and acknowledgement of Troop 15 policies as outlined in this manual. These forms are distributed to all scouts at the beginning of the school year and to new scouts who bridge in to the troop in February/March.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE TROOP 15 SCOUT MANUAL**

Scout's Acknowledgment:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print Scout's name),  
acknowledge having received and read the Troop 15 Scout Manual. I understand and agree to  
the policies and procedures as printed in the *Troop 15 Boy Scout Manual*.

(Signed by Scout) \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Guardian's Acknowledgment:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print parent-s or guardian's  
name-s), acknowledge having received and read the Troop 15 Scout Manual. I understand and  
agree to the policies and procedures as printed in the Troop 15 Scout Manual.

(Signed by parent-s or guardian-s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please sign and return as soon as possible to participate in Troop 15 activities.)

Troop 15 Scout Manual