

BOY SCOUT TROOP 721

Connecticut Yankee Council, B.S.A.

**Saint Mary Church
72 Gulf Street
Milford, CT 06460**



Information Handbook & Troop Guide
Version 1.2
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Dear Scouts and Parents,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your family to Troop 721 of Saint Mary School in Milford, CT. Many of you receiving this updated version (1.2) of our Troop handbook have been members of Troop 721 for some time now and we would like to thank you for your continuing involvement. For those of you just joining our Troop, we welcome you and look forward to seeing you for years to come.

At Troop 721 we feel that all Scouts and their families are members of a larger Scouting Family. This Scouting Family consists of all boys, their parents and leaders throughout the Scouting movement. Without the boys there would be no need for Scouting and without the parents there would be no Scouting Program.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with general information about our Troop. We hope this handbook will give you answers to common questions, give guidelines for what is expected from the boys, the Junior Leaders, Adult Leaders, and Parents. It is a guide as to how the Troop operates.

As stated in our previous versions of this handbook, please use this as a quick start to Scouting in Troop 721.

If at any time you have a question; please feel free to contact the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster(s) or any member of the Troop Committee.

Welcome to Troop 721, it's a pleasure to have you and your family as part of our Scouting family!

INTRODUCTION TO SAINT MARY TROOP 721

Boy Scout Troop 721 of Milford, Connecticut is chartered and sponsored by the Home School Association of Saint Mary School in Milford Connecticut. The Troop has been in existence for over twenty years. The Troop has a strong commitment to its Scouts and Leaders.

The purpose of Troop 721 is to advance the aims and methods of the Scouting program according to the Boy Scouts of America. Our main objective is to provide a solid program where the Scouts can learn, develop and have fun while achieving the "aims and methods of the Scouting Program. The only way such a program can achieve these objectives is through challenging the Scouts to be active participants in the program, and by following the guidelines of the Boy Scouts of America national policies.

In addition, this Troop places emphasis on several important goals, which include personal development, leadership, self-reliance and increased self-esteem.

One of the most important concepts to understand about Scouting is that it is a program designed to be run by SCOUTS. Activities that the Scouts do should be decided by the Patrol Leaders Council with the guidance of the Adult Leadership.

Our Troop holds weekly meetings every Wednesday evening from 7:00PM to 8:30PM in the School Gym or Library. The meetings are run from September 1st through June 30, with exceptions of major holidays, religious holidays or school closings due to inclement weather. Class A uniforms are required for all weekly meetings and special events from September 1st through June 30th. Class – B uniforms are allowed to be worn at events when so informed in advance.

The Troop runs an active schedule of outdoor events, which is one of the principle components of the Scouting program. Part of this outdoor program includes summer camp at Camp Sequassen in New Hartford, CT generally in July and weekend camping trips throughout the rest of the year.

OBJECTIVES AND AIMS OF TROOP 721

The objectives and aims of Troop 721 parallel the actual aims & methods of the Scouting Program set forth by the Boy Scouts of America. As with most organizations, the BSA has a purpose or mission statement that outlines who and what they are as an organization. The mission statement of the BSA is as follows:

“The Boy Scouts of America was incorporated to provide a program for the community organizations that offers effective character, citizenship and personal fitness training for youth. Specifically the BSA endeavors to develop American Citizens who are physically, mentally and emotionally fit; have high personal values based on religious concepts; have the desire and skills to help others; understand the principles of the American social, economic and governmental systems; are knowledgeable about and take pride in their American heritage and understand our nations role in the world; have a keen respect for the basic rights of all people; and are prepared to participate in and give leadership to the American Society.”

The aims of the Scouting Program are to build character, foster citizenship and develop fitness. These aims are achieved through a series of Scouting methods of ideals, patrol organization, outdoors, advancement, personal growth, adult example, leadership development and uniform. The ideals of Scouting are found in the Scout Oath, Law, Motto and Slogan. All Scouts are expected to live by these ideals. The Patrol Method develops leadership and teamwork abilities in a small group setting before it is applied on a larger Troop setting. The outdoors is the key setting where the aims and methods are achieved. Weekend camping establishes self-reliance as the Scouts learn to work, live and survive on their own as a team.

Advancement creates a challenge to all Scouts by providing them with a series of obstacles to overcome. Furthermore, it provides a rewarded sense of accomplishment for the Scouts hard work and determination. While advancement is encouraged and considered an important part of the program, it is not overemphasized! Scouting must be fun and every effort is made to make it so. Personal growth is developed as the Scouts provide service to their community, advance through the ranks at their own pace and develop a plan for the Scouting years. All of these activities provide an opportunity for the Scouts to grow as individuals and members of their community.

Adult association and guidance provides role models for the Scouts to observe and also a setting where adults and boys work together to achieve common goals and have fun while doing so. Leadership development is formed as the Scout matures and assumes a Junior Leader position. The development starts with patrol positions on a smaller level and fully develops as Scouts assume Troop Junior Leader positions that are essential to the operation of the entire Troop. The uniform gives Scouts identity, wear it proudly!

TROOP ORGANIZATION

The Adult organization of Troop 721 consists of two key segments. The first is the Troop Committee and the Second is the Scoutmaster and his Assistants. The Troop Committee consists of a Troop Committee Chairperson, Chartered Organization Representative, Secretary, Treasurer, Advancement Chairperson and various other adult committee members.

The Committee Chairperson oversees the entire Troop Committee and operation. The Chartered Organization Representative is responsible for working between the Troop and the Church/Home School Association. The Secretary is responsible for the minutes of every Committee meeting and any correspondence that need to be completed. The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing the financial situation of the Troop and for keeping the records and maintaining the Troop budget. The Advancement Chairperson is responsible for keeping track of all advancement records for all Scouts.

While the Troop committee represents the behind scenes operation of the Troop, the Scoutmaster and his Assistants are responsible for overseeing and carrying out the operations of the Troop. According to the BSA, the Scoutmaster is responsible for training and guiding Scout Leaders to run their Troop, working with the Assistant Scoutmasters to bring the Scouting program to the boys, help the Scouts in planning the Troop Program, help the Troop Committee to recruit new Assistant Scoutmasters and to conduct Scoutmaster Conferences. The Scoutmaster has several Assistants to help him develop the Scouting Program. One key job of an Assistant Scoutmaster is that of monitoring the progress of new Scouts. The Assistants in the Troop also alternate responsibilities on the planning of trips, which encompasses primarily the reservations, transportation and food shopping for the adult leaders.

MEMBERSHIP OF TROOP 721

Membership in Troop 721 is open to "ALL" boys who have completed the fifth grade of school and are between the ages of 11 and 18 or to those boys who have successfully Completed the requirements and have been awarded the ARROW of LIGHT as a Webelos Scout. Membership in the Troop is open to all boys regardless of what school they attend.

Boys who have met the above requirements may attend Troop meetings, and participate in Troop functions and events ONLY if an application to join the Troop has been filled out and signed by their Parent or Guardian, and is on file with the Troop.

As soon as a Boy becomes a member of Troop 721, so do his Parents or Guardian. Personal involvement of a Scout's Parents in Troop activities and functions is expected. When a new Scout joins Troop 721 his parents or guardian should plan on attending his first meeting with him in order to be introduced to the Boys Patrol Leader and other Junior and Adult Leaders of the Unit.

A Scout must continue to be active in the Troop by attending Troop Meetings each week, Camping Trips and other Scout, Patrol and Troop functions. (See attendance and Advancement requirements)

SCOUT ORGANIZATION

The Troop is organized into a series of patrols consisting of five to eight boys. Each patrol elects a Patrol Leader as the head of the Patrol. The Patrol Leader is responsible for appointing an assistant Patrol Leader, Patrol Scribe and Patrol Quartermaster. Each Patrol represents a portion of the entire Troop. The Senior Patrol Leader and his assistants make up our "Green Bar Patrol".

Each October the Troop will conduct an election and elect a new Senior Patrol Leader and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader to lead the troop for the current year. The SPL is responsible for the overall success of the Troop! The ASPL is responsible to take over in the absence of the SPL.

The ASPL is responsible for the training of the Troop Staff. The Troop Staff consists of a Troop Guide, Troop Scribe, Quartermaster, Historian, Librarian and a Chaplains Aide. As with the Patrol Staff, the Troop Staff has their own position to help with the functioning and operation of the Troop. The following is a list of Troop Junior Leader Positions and brief job descriptions. If you're a Junior Leader, for a more detail description and updates see the "Troop 721 Junior Leadership Duties & Responsibility Handout:

- **Senior Patrol Leader:** Runs all Troop meetings, events, activities, and annual program planning conference and Patrol Leaders Council meetings. The SPL with the guidance and approval of the Scoutmaster appoints Troop Junior Leaders and assists in their training and assignment of duties.
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- **Assistant Senior Patrol Leader:** Helps the SPL run all Troop Activities. In the absence of the SPL, the assistant takes over. He helps to train and supervise the various positions listed above.
- **Troop Guide:** Trains, guides and monitors the progress of new Scouts through their first year of Scouting. He supervises and assists the new Patrol Leader(s) in making Patrol decisions and encourages new Scouts to earn First Class during their first year.
- **Patrol Leader:** Guides and represents the Patrol on the Patrol Leaders Council and on all Patrol activities. Can Appoint or elects an Assistant Patrol Leader and other Patrol positions. Knows the advancement needs and interests of all Scouts and works to satisfy those needs and interests.
- **Scribe:** Attends and keeps logs on the Patrol Leaders Council meetings, records attendance and advancement records and collects permission slips and money for troop activities.

- **Quartermaster:** Maintains records on Troop and Patrol Equipment. Oversees the maintenance of the Troop equipment and storage area. Issues all equipment needed for weekend outings.
- **Historian:** Gathers pictures and facts about past Troop activities and keeps them in a historical scrapbook. Maintains the Troops awards and ribbons.
- **Librarian:** Sets up and maintains the Troop Library. Oversees the process of loaning and retrieving any Troop literature and makes suggestions on materials to be purchased.
- **Chaplain Aide:** Plans and leads non-denominational services at all Troop Outings. Encourages all Scouts to take part in the religious emblems program. Assists the Scoutmaster and Cubmaster of Pack 721 with the annual Scout Sunday Service at Saint Mary Church.

The Patrol Leaders, with the Senior Patrol Leader as their head, form the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC). It is the council's job to plan and run the Troop Program, under the guidance of the Adult Leadership. Each Patrol Leader represents his Patrol on the Council and interprets to his patrol the plans and decisions the council makes.

The Patrol Leaders Council is in essence the operating board of the Troop. They are responsible to make decisions with regard to the overall program. The Troop Staff is responsible for carrying out the Troop Program. The PLC (Patrol Leaders Council)(Green Bar Patrol) meets monthly at the School.

At these meetings the PLC plans the monthly meetings and the activities for Scout weekends. Planning the upcoming meetings which entails coming up with a pre-opening activity, opening ceremony, skill session, game, patrol meeting topics, inter-patrol activity and a closing.

"The Patrol Method" fosters five important points among the members of the Patrols. First, they promote friendship by grouping Scouts together. Second, the small sizes allow each Scout to get involved because he is needed in order for the Patrol to function effectively. Third, the Patrol Method develops responsibility as each member of the Patrol takes on a leadership position within the Patrol. Fourth, the Patrol Method introduces a democratic process to decision making. And fifth, the Patrol Method works because it has proved over time its effectiveness in the Scouting program.

ADULT LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

Troop 721 is fortunate to have a group of trained and dedicated adult leaders who promote the Scouting Program to all members of the Troop. As Adult leaders we are primarily responsible for achieving two major goals:

Training and guidance of the Scouts consistent with the Aims and Objectives of the Boy Scouts of America; and providing a safe and enjoyable outdoor program to all Scouts.

By assuming these two key responsibilities, we provide the Scouts with the tools to actually deliver the Scouting program to themselves and to their fellow Scouts.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

As we work on providing the best possible Scouting Program for your son, there is a lot of hard work and time that goes into planning such a program. In order to do this, we request that parents accept certain responsibilities. While we do not mandate parental involvement, as some Troops require, we strongly encourage it. The first responsibility of all parents is to take an active interest in your son's activities and progress in the Scouting Program. Encourage him, praise him and support him. We expect all parents to be in attendance at all Courts of Honor and special functions.

The Court of Honor is a very special important moment in your son's Scouting career as he is rewarded and recognized for his hard work and determination. Also important information about Troop activities is relayed at these ceremonies. All Parents of all Scouts should attend these ceremonies even if their own Scout is not receiving an award that evening. It shows the full Parental/Adult Support of our Troop family that we share between us all.

We also ask that all parents make every effort to attend any and all Parent-Meetings that we schedule during the year. These are meetings that we ask **JUST THE PARENTS** attend--- NOT the Scouts. These will only be held a couple of times a year. Please make the effort to attend.

Secondly, we ask that all parents participate in all troop fund-raisers. These fundraisers are what enable the troop to function and to purchase new equipment and supplies through the year. They also help your Scout toward his Summer Camping program. (As of September 1, 1998, 50% of all "profit" raised by the Scout during our Fall Popcorn Sale will be applied toward his Summer Camp Program). Without fundraisers, we will not be able to provide the future programs that we have in mind for the next couple of years. See our "Finances of the Troop" section for more on fundraising information.

Third is meeting deadlines and scheduled times for events and functions. When we set a deadline on permission slips, money or any other item it is for the purpose of planning logistics of trips or activities. Please do your best to meet these deadlines.

If a financial reason arises, please see the Scoutmaster and we will be happy to work something out privately within the Troop. Under no circumstances should a family be priced out of Scouting.

Fourth, help to provide transportation to and from camping trips and events. Remember normally on in state trips, adult leaders DO NOT get reimbursed for gas, mileage or wear and tear on their vehicles therefore it becomes everyone's responsibility to do their share to help transport Scouts and equipment to and from events. PLEASE DO YOUR PART!

And finally, we ask for is your support for your son as he advances in Scouting. Your support is extremely important! Let him know that your interest and support of his involvement in Scouting, is important to you.

We encourage and ask that all parents do get involved. You can serve on our Troop Committee or attend camping trips with us. If you have a special trade, education or skill, you can become one of our Troop Merit Badge Counselors. Volunteer to organize and run a troop fundraiser or other event. There are many other ways of helping us and your Scout.

REGISTRATION & DUES

A boy can enter the Scouting Program at anytime during the year. He does not have to wait until any special time providing he fulfils the requirements outlined earlier.

The Scouting year begins with the new school year in September. Renewal of all Scout registrations will take place at that time. Scouts are expected to bring with them their renewal fees at the first Round up meeting of the new year. All Scouts will be informed of that date at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. They will also be informed of the Current registration fees for the upcoming year, as well as what the current year "Buy-Out Plan Fee" will be for not taking part in the primary fundraisers of the unit.

Any Scout who transfers into Troop 721 from another troop, after the new year has already started shall be responsible to pay the difference between the Council fees and the regular Troop Renewal fees, based on the time of year the Scout enters the Troop.

In addition to regular renewal/roundup fees, Scouts will be expected to pay weekly Patrol dues at each Troop meeting. These fees will be used to help their Patrol maintain its Patrol Box and equipment. The Troop Scribe shall be responsible to collect and record all such dues and turn them into the Scoutmaster each week.

TROOP RULES, POLICES & PROPER SCOUT BEHAVIOR

While we don't anticipate problems with inappropriate behavior, it is necessary to have a discipline policy and more importantly, inform the Scouts and their parents about such a policy.

Behavior problems will not be tolerated. All boys must work together with respect for each other and fellow Scouts from other troops. However, if a problem should occur it is first to be dealt with by the Patrol Leader. In the event the Patrol Leader is having a problem with a Patrol member and it cannot be resolved, he should report it to the Senior Patrol Leader. If a behavior problem becomes uncontrollable or risks the safety of the Scout or others, the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster will step in to determine the appropriate discipline in conjunction with the SPL.

- **RULES OF CONDUCT:** All Scouts are expected to live by the Scout Oath and Law. These ideals should dictate all Scouts behavior. Any behavior that goes against the Scout Oath & Law, that disgraces the Scout, his parents, the adult leaders and the Troop shall be handled as follows:

While attending any Troop Meeting, Event, Function or Camping Trip, all Scouts are expected to act in a manner becoming Scouts, in accordance with the Scout Oath, Law and Promise.

Troop 721 has instituted a method to deal with Scouts who continue to use Improper / Foul Language, talk back to leaders or adults or who constantly misbehave or bring discredit to the Troop. It consists of the following steps;

As stated above the Patrol Leader shall attempt to resolve the problem within his patrol. If he cannot then the SPL will step in and take charge to resolve the problem and see that the proper action or discipline is taken.

Such action may include a "Time-out Area", suspension of the Troop Activity, etc.

If the Scout continues to act in an inappropriate way, continues to use improper language or has any major behavior problems, the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster shall step in and the following actions may occur: 1) Parental notification and immediate discharge from the meeting, activity or camping trip. 2) No participation in Troop meetings or outings for a given time. 3) Withholding of rank advancement because a Scouts inappropriate behavior or language does not demonstrate the last requirement of living by the Scout Oath and Law.

If the Scout continues to act in an inappropriate manner, the Scoutmaster, Troop Committee Chairperson and the Senior Patrol Leader may opt to suspend the Scout from multiple activities. The Scoutmaster will immediately notify the parents in this situation. Generally, this procedure will be the first step in removal from the Troop.

This policy is meant to apply to all activities of this Troop. It applies to all Scouts, Junior Leaders and Adults. We hope that we will never have to use such discipline actions, however, it is important for all Scouts and Parents to know what course of action will be taken if necessary.

* **ADVANCEMENT:** Advancement is an important part of every boy's Scouting career. The Troop has adopted an advancement policy that will insure that all Scouts are knowledgeable in the requirements needed for advancement. The policy consists of skill instruction, demonstration, practice and testing. All skills that are taught to Scouts should be practiced immediately by those Scouts; however, requirements are not to be signed off immediately. At least one day must elapse between when a Scout is taught a skill and when they are tested and signed off for knowledge of that skill.

In Troop 721, the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, Committee Chairperson, Trained Adult Committee Members, Senior Patrol Leader, ASPL, Instructor and Troop Guides shall have the authority to sign off a Scouts book on rank requirements. Other adult leaders from our unit or Registered BSA adult leaders from other units may also sign off requirements if said leaders have been teaching a skill for that advancement. Unlike the Cub Scouting Program, parents are NOT permitted to sign off on advancement in their son's Scouts Handbook.

If any questions arise regarding certain requirements, an adult should be seen before the requirement is signed off. The purpose of advancement is knowledge and the ability to retain that knowledge.

Signing off requirements that are not completed or without sufficient evidence that the knowledge has been retained only cheats the Scout who is trying to learn the skill. It may also cheat the Scouts Patrol at a Camporee or competition event when the Scout tries to compete with his patrol and falls short!

In order to remain active a Scout is expected to earn a minimum of one rank during each twelve (12) month period beginning from his date of joining the Troop until he reaches First Class. After First Class, a Scout is expected to earn a minimum of two (2) Merit Badges in each twelve-month period in order to remain active. It is the responsibility of the Parents to keep informed on their son's advancement progress. The Scoutmaster maintains a current list of Merit Badge Counselors registered with the Troop and Council.

The advancement program requires a Scout to earn a total of twenty-one merit badges in varying fields to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout. Of the twenty-one (21) badges, twelve (12) are required. The remaining nine may be chosen by the Scout based on his hobbies or other interests. If a Scout wants to work on a given Merit Badge he must first speak to the Scoutmaster and obtain the required Merit Badge Blue Card from him. The card is to be presented to the Merit Badge Counselor and will be returned to the Scout upon successful completion of the Badge. It is the Scout's responsibility to return the signed card back to the Scoutmaster in order for him to arrange for the awarding of the badge. The Scoutmaster decides who the assigned Merit Badge Counselor shall be.

In accordance to B.S.A. policy, Scouts should attend all Merit Badge Sessions with a buddy. Scouts, NOT THEIR PARENTS, must be the one to contact the Merit Badge Counselor to arrange for an appointment. Parents in the Troop are encouraged to work with Scouts in the Troop as Merit Badge Counselors.

- **ATTENDANCE:** Once a Scout is registered and assigned to a Patrol, he is expected to attend a majority of the Troop activities. If a Scout is going to be absent from a Troop Activity, it is his responsibility to notify his Patrol Leader in advance. A Scout missing three (3) consecutive scheduled Troop Meetings without notifying his Patrol Leader, the Senior Patrol Leader, and the Scoutmaster in advance, will be considered INACTIVE until readmitted by the Scoutmaster. Because we are a camping troop and younger Scouts learn from their Senior examples, Scouts must attend at least three (3) campouts per year or two (2) campouts plus Summer camp in order to remain active.

Generally, Troop Meetings end at 8:30PM. Parents should pick their Scouts up at that time. Please make every effort to be on time when picking up your Scout.

- **TRAVEL POLICY:** When traveling to and from campsites, all Scouts must wear seat belts at all times. Not only is it good sense, it is the law! All vehicles are always to be left cleaner than you found it. Any disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. If any Scout behaves in such a way that is disruptive to the driver, his parents will be contacted when we arrive at the campsite. He will not be allowed to stay.
- **UNIFORMS:** Troop 721 is an uniformed troop. The Scout uniform represents an important part of who we are and should be worn with PRIDE by all Scouts and Adult Leaders at all Scouting functions. Any Scout that cannot afford a uniform should have his parents see the Scoutmaster. Any Scout who outgrows their uniform and wishes to donate it to the Troop can do so. It may help out another scout. Full Class-A Uniforms are required for all Court of Honors and Functions as so ordered by the Scoutmaster. Class A uniforms shall be worn to all Troop meetings and events from September 1st through June 30th unless otherwise directed.

Class A Uniforms shall consist of a scout shirt with the proper insignia sewn in its proper place, scout uniform pants, scout belt, scout hat, scout socks, troop neckerchief, hiking boots or dress shoes and your Scout Handbook with a pad & pen. **No unauthorized hats or earrings are to be worn with the BSA Uniform.**

Class B uniforms shall consist of the Troop approved Class B Red Shirt or other BSA shirt, Scout shorts, scout belt, sneakers (Unless not allowed for function) and your Scout Handbook with a Pad & Pen.

Uniform inspections will be conducted twice a year and the Scout is expected to be in full CLASS A UNIFORM no exceptions!

- **EQUIPMENT & TROOP /PATROL GEAR:** Troop 721 owns a substantial amount of Troop and Patrol Gear and equipment and continues to obtain additional equipment on an as needed basis. As a result we have a very strict policy regarding all troop property. Any equipment issued to a Patrol in its Patrol Box, is the responsibility of that Patrol. Any equipment loss or damaged (do to misuse or abuse) at a Patrol function becomes the responsibility of the entire Patrol to replace. If equipment is damaged through no fault of any Patrol Member, the Troop will replace the equipment. However if any equipment is damaged through fooling around or direct abuse, it becomes the Patrols responsibility to replace it. Parents will be notified. Periodically, Patrol members will take equipment home after weekend outings in order to better clean and maintain the equipment. All equipment taken home **MUST BE RETURNED AT THE NEXT TROOP MEETING----**NO EXCEPTIONS! If the equipment is not returned by the following meeting a fine will be placed on that Patrol. Please understand that the reason we are so strict about the equipment is that often it goes home with a Scout and doesn't return for months later. Also, no equipment is to be left at the school other than at a troop meeting.
- **CAMPING RULES:** Camping is an important part of the Scouting Program. In order for a Scout to advance, he must camp with the Troop and his Patrol. When Camping, the Scout is expected to camp, live, eat and sleep with his Patrol. The Patrol is expected to act and function as a Team and there is no better way than to do so, than to be an actual part of that team. Therefore, unless on a special event trip, each Scout will live and work with his "Team". Troop 721 as stated above conducts a year round camping program.

Final preparations for all campouts (except Summer Camp) begin "TWO" weeks prior to the date of the event. At this time all "PERMISSION SLIPS & FEES" are due! As of September 1st, 1998 if permission slips and fees are not turned in to the Scoutmaster at this two week prior period, you WILL NOT be allowed to attend the Camping Trip or event.

Also at this two-week prior period, ALL PATROL menus, shopping lists and duty rosters need to be presented to the Scoutmaster for his final approval. Once the Patrol Menu and shopping list are approved, the Patrol has permission to complete its shopping. Most Patrols wait until the Wednesday or Thursday before the Camping weekend to complete their shopping. This allows for any last minute (approved) changes. At present the fees for regular weekend camping trips will be \$ 20.00 per Scout. Out of this the Patrol has \$ 13.00 per Scout allowance for food and supplies that it needs for the trip. If the Patrol decides to purchase additional food items or special treats, then it is understood that that Patrol will be responsible to pay the difference between the \$ 13.00 per Scout allowance and what they actually spent. If a Scout has a problem and finds he cannot attend a Camping Trip after he has already signed up and paid his fees, he must notify the SPL and his Patrol Leader at once. Every effort will be made to refund the fees, unless expenses have occurred. However, after the food has been purchased, no refund will be made. In the event that a financial hardship should exist and the family is unable to afford the Camping Trip, see the Scoutmaster, arrangements will be made.

All money spent on shopping will be reimbursed by the Scoutmaster (up to the allowance) providing a receipt is turned in at the Troop meeting. If in the event that a parent needs to have the funds prior to turning the receipts in, he or she should see the Scoutmaster to make other arrangements.

Special camping trips, Camporees or other activities may require additional fee's based on that activity.

All Patrols are expected to maintain their own Patrol Box, which includes Patrol Cooking gear and supplies. Each Patrol should be maintaining a supply of regular staple items such as dish soap, brillo pads, garbage bags, paper towels, toilet paper, spices and misc. items. These items should not be shared between Patrols as they are purchased out of the Scouts allowances for that Patrol.

During the Troop meeting just prior to the Camping Trip, the PATROL Quartermaster should see the TROOP Quartermaster and sign out whatever Troop gear the Patrol will be needing for that trip (i.e.- tents, tarps, Stoves etc.). Remember troop gear must be returned as stated above in the handbook polices.

On regular weekend camping trips, all Scouts who register to attend a weekend camping trip are expected to arrive on Friday evening at the stated time to be in camp. It is unfair to other members of the Scout's Patrol and Troop for Scouts to arrive late or on Saturday morning. Most of the site work in setting up the campsite must be done on Friday evening and everyone's help is needed. Therefore, unless a special reason comes up, which should be cleared with the Scoutmaster prior to Friday evening, EVERYONE is expected to be in Camp at the scheduled time.

Scouts are expected to either eat prior to arriving at camp Friday evening or bring with them a "Bag Dinner & Drink", unless otherwise informed.

Upon arrival at the Campsite, the Senior Patrol Leader and the Scoutmaster shall check in and make sure everything is set. Troop and Patrol Gear will be moved into the site prior to personal gear. Patrol Leaders will then secure a Patrol Site (Have Scouts who are working on Second Class assist Patrol Leaders in Picking site) and have the Patrol begin site setup. As Patrol areas are completed all Scouts will assist the Junior Leaders in setting up the Troop equipment. In the event of foul weather, the Troop Canopy (dining fly) should be set up at once in order to shelter all other equipment and gear from becoming wet. Patrol Duty Rosters shall be posted and all Scouts are expected to carry out their respective assignments.

On Sunday morning, all personal gear with the exception of eating utensils shall be packed up before the Patrol eats breakfast. Tents should be aired out, cleaned and dried before being packed away. All tents must be inspected by the SPL or Troop Quartermaster prior to be dropped and packed. All Patrol and Troop gear should be packed properly in vehicles. Remember each Patrol is responsible for the safe and un-damaged return of patrol & troop equipment to the School.

NO GEAR SHALL BE returned to the storeroom without the TROOP QUARTERMASTER signing it back in. Neither the Troop nor the Troop Quartermaster shall be responsible for any gear that is left in/by the equipment room when it has not been signed back in by the Troop Quartermaster or Adult Scout Leader.

Also, on Sunday Morning, **NO ONE** shall be dismissed from the campsite prior to having the entire site broken down with all troop and patrol gear loaded into vehicles. We shall have a formal Flag Lowering and closing ceremony just prior to dismissal. Parents should be aware of this policy, as it becomes unfair for Scouts to leave just because mom or dad shows up early. When the Scout leaves, he leaves behind another hour's work for everyone else to do. Remember you are all part of a team that EVERY member of that team depends on!

Below is a list of general Camping Practices and Rules that all Scouts are required to follow:

Patrol Duty Rosters shall be posted and ALL Scouts are expected to carry out their respective assignments. If two Scouts are assigned to cook a meal, then those Scouts should be the only ones in the "kitchen" area not everyone else. IF two scouts are assigned to get the wood for that meal fire, then they should do as instructed.

NO ONE IS ALLOWED OUT of a cabin or tent area without boots on. There will be no open toe shoes or walking in socks or bare feet at anytime. Sneakers are only allowed during dry summer periods. All hiking and WINTER CAMPING REQUIRES HIKING BOOTS ONLY!

The SPL and Adult Leaders must know where every Scout is at ALL TIMES! No one is to leave the Cabin or Campsite area without informing an Adult and the SPL of where they are going and asking permission first.

When leaving the Campsite for any reason, we require the use of the "Buddy System" at all times! Failure to abide by this rule could require you being sent home early!

The SPL will make out Site Duty Rosters, EVERY SCOUT will appear on the duty roster except the SPL. If you are on the duty roster, you are expected to perform as detailed.

During spring, summer and early fall, NO FIRES ARE ALLOWED IN THE SITE during daytime hours except for meal cooking or special presentations. All Scouts need to ask permission prior to starting of any fires!

Respect the rules of the Camps that we stay at.

Remember, there will be NO RUNNING in any Camp, DO NOT CUT THROUGH any campsite or program area, and DO NOT LITER! FOLLOW THE OUTDOOR CODE TO THE LETTER!

NO RADIOS, WALKMANS, CD-PLAYERS, ELECTRONIC ITEMS INCLUDING PETS, GAMES or any OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES SHALL BE ALLOWED IN ANY CAMP! THIS IS A B.S.A. POLICY!

THERE WILL BE NO Tobacco, alcohol, fireworks, lighters of any kind, aerosol cans of any kind, drugs, or pornographic books.

There will be no drugs or medications allowed to be held by the Scout. If a Scout is to take medication, it must be given to the Scoutmaster (Or in Summer Camp to the Health Officer) with written instructions for its use. (Exception: Inhalers or Epi-Pens. Scout may maintain these items on his person, providing the Scoutmaster is aware of them and is given instructions on use of same for the Scout.

TROOP AND PATROL HIKES

Troop Day Hike's will be announced at least two weeks in advance. Scouts will provide their own sack lunches unless otherwise informed. Patrols are responsible for providing their own transportation to and from the hike location. Day hikes **MUST** have the permission of the SPL and the Scoutmaster and all hikes must have a minimum of two (2) adults present with the Patrol during the course of the hike. If a Patrol wishes to setup a hike, a request must be submitted to the Scoutmaster at least two weeks prior to the hike. The Patrol must submit complete plans for the hike including transportation and adult participation with two deep leadership. All hikes, Troop or Patrol require completed permission slips from each Scouts parent, even if the parent is planning on attending the Hike.

TROOP COMMUNICATIONS

WEEKLY INFORMATION:

All Scouts are expected to report to weekly troop meetings in full Class-A Uniforms and to have with them their Scout Handbook and A PAD & PEN. It is their responsibility to write down weekly information that is given out and to report this information to their parents when it relates to them. We do not send out weekly newsletters or notices to parents with regard to regular weekly items or camping trips.

For all general Intra-Troop Communications, the Senior Patrol Leader shall be notified by the Scoutmaster that an announcement needs to be told/given to all Scouts. The Senior Patrol Leader then in turn calls his assistants and all Patrol Leaders. The Patrol Leader is responsible to call every Scout in his Patrol and report whatever the message is and when required then return a call to the SPL to report the results.

NEWSLETTERS & PARENT LETTERS:

Once in a while it may become necessary for a direct letter to be mailed out to the parents or for a letter to be sent out through the school mail (SMS Students only-other Scouts who do not attend SMS will get a letter through other means). This letter may just be a reminder or some announcement of special interest, which we feel requires additional notification. It does not mean that you will get a letter for every event or function. The Troop also uses "E-mail" for many announcements. If you have an email address, please file it with the Scoutmaster (Both Adults and Scouts)

As Scouts, we feel that they should be responsible enough to bring home the information on their own. If, as a parent you do not seem to be getting the information about events, question your Scout.

HOURS OF TELEPHONE USE BY SCOUTS:

It has been requested by the Troop Committee that Scouts refrain from making calling to other Scouts past 9:00PM on weeknights and no earlier than 9:00 AM on weekends.

PROGRAM LEVELS & OPPORTUNITIES

INCOMING WEBELOS:

Webelos Scout dens who are in fifth grade and working on fulfilling their requirements for their Webelos Badge and Arrow of Light are encouraged to attend two or three Troop meetings. They must have a parent present with them, attend in full Class-A uniform and be sure to inform the Scoutmaster at least two weeks in advance if possible.

Webelos II Dens who wish to attend a weekend Camping Trip with Troop 721 must make special arrangements with the Scoutmaster at least two months in advance. They must camp as a Webelos Den and have a ONE to ONE Scout/Parent ratio present. In accordance to B.S.A. requirements, Webelos Scouts may not camp in tents or open shelters between November 1st and April 1st.

If a Webelos Den has made arrangements to camp with the Troop, all members of that den and a parent for each Webelos Scout must attend the troop meeting two weeks prior to the camping trip for information and to turn in permission slips and fees. They must provide their own drivers and assist in transporting Troop/Patrol Gear. If they have a Den Chief assigned to their den, he will assist them throughout the camping trip. The Webelos Den will act as a Patrol with the Den Chief acting as a Patrol Guide. (A Den chief will be assigned to them if they do not have a regular one for this event)

GRADULATION OF WEBELOS SCOUTS:

Webelos II Scouts upon their graduation from their Packs will be assigned to a patrol of the Troop upon submitting a completed Boy Scout Application to the Scoutmaster along with any fees that are due upon registering. The new Scout and his parent(s) will be introduced to his Patrol Leader and all members of his new Patrol. The Patrol Leader shall make the scout feel at home and help and guide him as he begins this new Scout Trail!

TROOP STAFF PATROL- Green Bar Patrol:

Troop 721 has a Troop Staff Patrol made up of older scouts and Troop Officers. Special campouts and additional events will be planned with these Scouts who have satisfactorily exercised positions of Leadership in the Troop. This includes the Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Troop Guides, Patrol Leaders, Assistant Patrol Leaders, Den Chiefs and Troop Officers. In order to attend special activities, the Scout must have attended at least 50% of the Campouts and 75% of Troop meetings since the beginning of the Scout Year in order to attend the special event.

SCOUTMASTER'S CONFERENCE:

A Scoutmasters Conference is required of all Scouts for rank advancement. A Scout who needs a Scoutmaster's Conference must request one at least two weeks in advance of a Board of Review. As with a Board of Review, the Scout should present himself in full uniform with his handbook.

BOARD OF REVIEW:

At the start of each Scout year, Troop 721 will set up a schedule of Four (4) dates for General Board of Reviews. The dates may have to vary depending on actual School use programming. Additional Board of reviews may be conducted on a needed base if approved by the Committee Chairman on an on-going basis.

Requests for Star and Life Board of reviews must be made by the Scout at least two weeks prior to the requested or needed date.

The Scout must present himself in full uniform with his handbook with him before the review board. Eagle Board of Reviews are scheduled by the District Eagle Board, not by the Troop Committee.

COURT OF HONOR:

Troop 721 shall conduct four (4) "COURT OF HONORS" during the regular scouting year. These dates shall be announced at the start of the New Year, and they can vary depending on actual School use programming. These are important events that the entire family is invited to and expected to attend. Not only does a Scout get full recognition of his completed work, the events are planned as a social event for the entire family. Each Scout family will be asked to help provide the refreshments for the event.

Special "Eagle Court of Honors" are scheduled as needed during the year and will be announced when the Scout has completed his "Eagle Board of Review". Eagle Court of Honors ceremonies are planned by the Scoutmaster. The Scouts family shall be responsible to plan any reception they wish following the actual ceremony.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT FOR THE SCOUT

Scouts are responsible for their own personal equipment. In order to help those who are just purchasing equipment, the Troop has some recommendations on specific equipment. While we do not recommend going out and purchasing all of the equipment at one time, the list is intended to provide parents with specific types of equipment that we have found to be more usable or appropriate for camping trips. Keep these in mind for birthdays and holiday gifts.

All Scouts are strongly encouraged to have a junior size **external frame backpack**. Most camping done by the Troop will use backpacks. Backpacks can range in price from \$ 75.00 - \$ 125.00 for junior packs, but offer a great way to consolidate and store all personal gear.

Sleeping Bags are mandatory for all camping trips. Sleeping bags are rated for warmth by the manufacturers. The Troop recommends a **three-season bag** usable to 15-degree weather. Sleeping bags can get a little expensive. The warmer the rating of the bag, the more expensive. Most good bags run in the range of \$ 95.00 to \$ 350.00. (You will never need a Sleeping bag that costs \$ 350.00, we can assure you of that!) If you have an adequate sleeping bag currently, do not purchase a new one; consider purchasing a better quality bag at a later date if your son really enjoys camping.

Foam Sleeping Pads are extremely important for a good night's sleep. Closed cell pads are inexpensive and more than adequate. The 48 inch pads cost around \$ 18.00 or so.

Hiking Boots are a must on all Scouting activities. Again, inexpensive hiking boots are more than sufficient for the average growing Scout. As your son stops growing, you may wish to purchase better quality, more expensive boots. Waterproof boots are **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!**

Weather Gear/Rain Gear is a must on all camping trips. One thing that we have all learned is the \$.99 rain ponchos are worth exactly what you pay for them. Consider purchasing a Backpacking Poncho. They cost approximately \$ 25.00 to \$ 30.00, but will last for years to come.

Pocketknives are used by all Scouts after they have earned their Totin' Chip card, which shows they have been trained in the use of knives and other ax yard equipment. Do not spend \$ 65.00 on a Swiss Army knife that has everything but the kitchen blender in it. It will only get lost and he won't use most of what the knife has. Most Scouting pocketknives run under \$25.00 and are more than adequate for your sons use. Lock-back Knives are not approved for Scout use in Troop 721.

Flashlights should be carried by all Scouts. The best buy on flashlights are the mini-maglites that come with a carrying holster. They cost around \$ 14.00 at Home Depot, are lightweight and give off a lot of light. There is no need for a big 6 Cell, 4foot flashlight on camping trips.

Compasses are an important Scout Tool and should be carried on all camping trips. As with pocketknives, there is no need for elaborate compasses. Silva makes an excellent compass for around \$ 20.00 or so.

Water Bottles or Canteens are necessary on all backpacking trips, hikes and camping trips. The Troop recommends that each Scout have two one- (1) quart water bottles. Please do not buy any water bottles that are odd shaped or have straps. The Straps become a safety hazard. Plastic is preferred over metal. Only water should be put into these. They are not for soda, juice or powered drink mixes.

A Scout is clean. All Scouts should have a small toiletry kit containing travel sized toothpaste, deodorant, soap, toothbrush, wash cloth and towel. All toiletries can be kept in a small zip locked bag. All Scouts are expected to wash up in the evenings and mornings and at meals. Cooks must wash before handling any food.

Every Scout should carry a small first aid kit with them. Again use a zip lock bag or old Band-Aid container for storing supplies including rubber gloves. Pages 289-290 in the Scout Handbook suggest items that should be placed in the First Aid kit.

All Scouts should have a standard Mess Kit consisting of a cup, plate and eating utensils. It is recommended that the Scout have an Insulated Large Mug like a Dunkin Donuts Coffee Cup. This is a very useful item that can be used year round. It's perfect for soup, oatmeal or hot liquids. As for the mess kit, if you are buying a new one, look for the Stainless Steel set. It will cost around five dollars more than the small aluminum one but will be more useful.

The above items represent suggested equipment for camping trips. While every Scout should eventually have the suggested equipment, please do not go out and purchase all the equipment at one time. Ask around, you will be surprised at how many people might have some of the equipment you could borrow.

Consider the quality of the equipment you are purchasing. The better quality items will last a lifetime and are a good investment if your son enjoys camping and the outdoors. Many adult leaders have items which were purchased 20-30 years ago and are as functional today as when first used.

The following list is a personal equipment checklist of all items that should be brought on a camping trip. In addition, the Scout Handbook also has clothing and equipment check list that should be reviewed for all camping trips.

- Backpack
- Sleeping Bag
- Foam Sleeping Pad
- Scout Handbook with pad & pen
- Scout Outdoor Essentials:
 - Pocket knife
 - First Aid Kit
 - Change of clothes
 - Rain Gear
 - Water Bottle
 - Flashlight with extra batteries & bulbs
 - Trail Food
 - Matches and Fire Starters
 - Sun & Lip Protection
 - Compass

- Warm –Weather Clothing:

- Short –sleeve shirts
- T-shirts
- Hiking Boots
- Long Pants
- Sweater or warm jacket
- Cap or Hat
- Bandanas

- * Cold Weather Clothing:

- Long Sleeve Shirts
- Wool Shirt / Pants / Sweater / Cap / Socks
- Long Pants
- Polypropylene long underwear
- Insulated Coat, Gloves & Hat
- Insulated boots
- Mess Kit
- Toiletry kit
- Extras: Watch, Camera, Insect Repellent, Mosquito Netting, Sunglasses, Swimsuit

Remember these are only recommended items. Actual equipment list can vary depending on exactly what type of season and camping trip is planned. We will inform the Scout of any special equipment over and above listed items above.

Prior to any winter camping trips we will review and demonstrate the proper equipment required for the weather.

FINANCES OF THE TROOP

Troop 721 is a completely self-sufficient troop that supports itself through fundraisers. The Troop receives NO outside support from any source except from its own fundraisers. **The Home School Association does not provide any funding, as per B.S.A. policy.**

Therefore it is so important that every Scout and parent does their best to help support all fund raising events that are done during the year.

These events are held in order for the unit to be able to conduct the troop's overall program and to purchase awards, advancements and equipment needed to operate the unit.

We ask that if you are called to help out at a fundraising event that you make every effort to assist in anyway you can. If you would like to run a fund-raiser for the troop, please see the Scoutmaster and he'll help you get started.

The Troop is looking into some long range planning of some special trips in the future, which will require specific fundraising activities to subsidize these events. Please help when called!

IMPORTANT: Policy of Troop 721

As stated, Scouts and families are expected to take part in the Troops fundraising activities. Some of the fundraising activities can earn the Scout what are called "*Scout Points*" which are based on a percentage of the over all profit earned on these fundraisers.

The "*Scout Points*" can be accumulated to a maximum set by the unit committee, and keep in what is called a "*Scout Point Account*". (Paper ledger account) These "*Scout Points*" can be used toward any "Scouting Related Program Activity" that the Troop takes part in or authorizes, that the Scout chooses to take part in, **while a member of Troop 721**. These "*Scout Points*" cannot be used for yearly registration fees or for purchases of personal equipment for the Scouts use.

If at any time the Scout decides to leave the membership of Troop 721 for any reason, the balance of any "*Scout Points*" shall remain with the Troop and are not transferable, refundable, or moved to other units or organizations.

In accordance to Connecticut State Statue, fundraising raised in the name of a Scouting Unit stays with that Scouting unit.

Scouts that have "*Scout Points*" in their respective *Scout point accounts* are required to use these points first when registering for any program activities, before actual payments are to be applied to these requested activities.