

BSA Troop 226 Membership Handbook

Scouting.....Building America's Future

BSA Troop 226
*St. Peter's Catholic Church
2061 Patton Chapel Road
Birmingham, Alabama 35216*

Updated July, 2015

Dear Scouts and Parents:

Welcome to BSA Troop 226. We're excited you have decided to join our Scouting family. We are sure you are going to find Scouting to be one of the most enjoyable experiences of your whole life. Plus, we are proud that you have chosen to pursue your scouting career with Troop 226.

To all Scouts, Scouting is a way of life. To most Scouts, Scouting is also their favorite sport. As a matter of fact, scouting is a whole string of sports: camping, backpacking, hiking, orienteering, swimming, canoeing, and many more. The leaders of Troop 226 have dedicated themselves to giving you the opportunity to enjoy these sports and to advance to the highest rank in Scouting...Eagle. We hope you will enjoy your years in Scouting. Your leaders will certainly enjoy guiding you through your future in Scouting.

To ensure that Scouts and their leaders can function effectively, parental participation and support is ***essential***. We realize that not all parents have the interest or inclination to become active Scout leaders. We will, however, be calling on all parents for support from time to time and we ask that you lend your willing hand when contacted.

This membership handbook is designed to help answer some of the questions regarding scouting and Troop 226. Upon registration, each Scout should have been obtained a Boy Scout Handbook. The handbook is basic to his experience in scouting, and like a constant companion it should almost become a part of the Scout. This handbook silently provides important information and offers sound advice. It also becomes one of the Scout's records of activities, leadership positions, rankings and troop information. Please work to assure that the handbook is not lost.

In addition, the boys and leaders of Troop 226 will be eager and willing to answer any question you or your Scout may have.

Again, welcome to the finest program for boys in the world...The Boy Scouts of America!

Paul B. Ford, III (Skip)
Scoutmaster

Peter Bosworth
Troop Committee Chairman

Steps for Joining Troop 226

1. Visit Troop 226 meetings at least three times
2. Return the following application forms and annual registration fee (Includes Boy's Life subscription)
 - Scout registration form
 - Registration fee of \$15.00 (Checks made payable to Troop 226)
 - Health History and Medical Exam (completed annually and/ or before a major outing)
 - Volunteer Leader form (if interested - obtain from Scoutmaster)
 - Merit Badge Counselor Information Form
1. Pass "Scout" requirements, as shown on page 4 of the Scout Handbook. This may be "passed off" by contacting any adult leader.

At the meeting following the passing of "Scout" requirements, you may be inducted into the Troop and formally inducted at the quarterly Court of Honor. It is requested that you not wear the uniform neckerchief until you are officially inducted into the Troop.

These steps may be done as quickly as you desire; however, you may not be inducted into the Troop until one week after passing off your "Scout" requirements.

General Troop Information

The following are items that constantly come up throughout the year. We have assembled them here to give you a general feeling of the troop committee's position on these topics. For further, more specific details, please contact the adult leaders and troop committee chairman

Meetings

Generally, the Troop meets every Tuesday from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM at St. Peter's Catholic Church. The Tuesday night after an outing is set aside for just the Patrol Leader Council meeting. A calendar will be provided periodically to verify the meeting dates.

Outings

It is our goal to provide at least one major outdoor experience per month for the Scouts of Troop 226. After all, the outdoors is "where its at" and we intend to be there as much as possible. We are not a fair weather troop. When we schedule an outing we do our utmost to follow through with it, regardless of the weather. Scouting is fun and safe even in the rain and snow, if you are properly prepared, and our leaders have Hazardous Weather training.

Preparation: The key to a successful outing is "Preparation." We must know who, what, where, when and how before we can carry out a successful trip. A major ingredient in this planning is knowing exactly how many scouts we will have. For this reason we have established the following rules:

Participation: Each scout must be at the scheduled meeting immediately prior to the outing to be eligible to attend. The only exception will be those who have personally contacted the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster and made specific arrangements to miss the meeting.

Outing Fees: At this meeting, the Scout will be given final arrangements for the outing. A roster will be made up and fees will be collected. To encourage responsibility and thrift, each boy will be assessed a fee for food. This is to be paid at the final troop meeting or immediately prior to the outing. Each patrol will appoint a representative to purchase food not to exceed \$5 per boy per day of camping (typically \$10). That Scout is to be responsible for collecting these funds from each Scout. Scoutmaster costs will be paid for by the Troop. Transportation costs will be reimbursed to the leaders attending the outing, using personal vehicles. In the event of the need for purchased transportation, a fee will be assessed to each Scout participating. Special outings or longer trips will be priced and assessed accordingly.

Leadership / Parents' Cooperation: Parent's total cooperation in this procedure will help insure that the Scouts have a well planned and successful outing. Parents are encouraged to attend an outing and provide leadership to the Troop for the specific activity. Parents and Troop leaders should seek the approval of the Troop Committee before plans begin for an outing not on the troop calendar.

Troop Leadership – Your Part

All adult leaders are registered and their fees are paid by the Troop. Act as a mentor to your scout and to the Troop. Encourage development of leadership skills, offer advice, ensure realistic planning and enforce guidelines. As an adult leader, you set the example.

- Wear a uniform on outings and when you have assignment at troop functions. Uniforms help everyone feel like a member of a team, and scouting is all about teamwork.
- Please don't engage in inappropriate behavior, or permit scouts to. Remember, they are teenagers and will test the limits of what you will allow.
- Share the load. Troop 226 will have 40 troop meetings, 10 challenging outings, 6 nights of summer camp and a 10-14 day high adventure trip. The time commitment needs to be shared by all the parents, everyone needs to pitch in, rather than rely on a few leaders.
- Note: Outings require at least 3 adults for transportation reasons, summer camp requires 2 to 3 adults, and high adventure requires 2 adults per crew.

Troop Committee

The Troop Committee is the troop's board of directors and supports the troop program. The Troop Committee does the following:

1. Ensures that quality adult leadership is recruited and trained. In case the Scoutmaster is absent, a qualified assistant Scoutmaster is assigned. If the Scoutmaster is unable to serve, a replacement is recruited.
2. Provides adequate meeting facilities.
3. Advises the Scoutmaster on policies relating to Boy Scouting and the chartered organization.
4. Supports leaders in carrying out the program.
5. Is responsible for finances, adequate funds, and disbursements in line with the approved budget plan.
6. Obtains, maintains, and properly cares for troop property.
7. Ensures the troop has an outdoor program (minimum 10 days and nights per year)
8. Serves on board of review and courts of honor.
9. Supports the Scoutmaster in working with individual boys and problems that may affect the overall troop program.
10. Provides for the special needs and assistance some boys may require.
11. Helps with the Friends of Scouting Campaign
12. Assists the Scoutmaster with handling boy behavioral problems.
13. The Troop Committee is made up of the following leadership positions:
 - Chairperson
 - Vice Chairman
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Chaplain
 - Advancement chairperson

Merit Badge Counselors

Merit Badge Counselors are a key component to the success of the scouts, and an integral part of the adult leadership functions of the troop. If you have a skill, expertise, or know someone who does, please fill out the [Merit Badge Counselor Information Form](#).

Finances

It is our sincere goal to keep the cost of Scouting as reasonable as possible and still provide a meaningful program. New Scouts are charged a flat fee when they join. This fee covers Scout registration, Boy's Life, Neckerchief, handbook and miscellaneous expenses. Registration fees are also required each year by returning Scouts.

Troop Finances: The majority of our troop's finances are covered by the annual ***Christmas Tree Sale***, held in Vestavia with all the other "Mountain Scout" troops of Birmingham. This event starts the Friday before Thanksgiving and continues till all trees are sold, or several days before Christmas. It provides us with the opportunity to get all our funds at one main event rather than assess the members or have many fund raising activities.

Occasionally we may participate in other activities that will generate funds. These are left to the discretion of the Troop Committee and according to need. We ask that each parent and Scout give your whole hearted support and encourage your scout to participate fully.

Scout Accounts: Each Scout has an individual account, maintained by the Troop Treasurer. This account may be added to through a Scout's efforts at raising funds through a variety of means, but primarily through the annual Christmas Tree sale or other fund raisers or through deposits made by parents for various activities and major outings. A Scout's account is never to carry a negative balance. All agreed upon activities and outings participated in by the Scout will be covered by the account or assessed.

Honor Troop Status: It is the policy of Troop 226 at this time to subsidize all registration and Boy's Life for present members from troop funds at re-charter time. This is an easy way to handle the fees and helps qualify the troop for Honor Troop status each year.

Uniforms

The Scout uniform helps to achieve the objectives of Scouting. The uniform by itself cannot make a good Scout or a good Troop, but its use will improve both the Scout and the Troop. Each Scout should get a complete uniform as soon as possible after he has passed the Scout badge requirements and before he is formally inducted into the Troop. The Scout should wear it regularly and proudly because it is part of the thrill of being a Scout. It shows that you belong. You are a member of the largest youth movement the free world has ever seen.

The uniform can be purchased at the Scout Shop at the Greater Birmingham Boy Scout Council headquarters at Liberty Park. The proper uniform is outlined in the Scout Handbook.

The basic uniform for Troop 226 should be worn to all Scout meetings and consists of:

- Shirt: Khaki, short sleeve is the most popular in this region. Long sleeve is acceptable, however.
- Trousers or Shorts: Olive Drab. Again, shorts are very popular, but long trousers are generally needed in the winter months. Most boys have both.
- Socks: Olive Drab with red strip around the top are official and preferable. Dark green socks can be substituted in a pinch. White socks with a uniform are not acceptable.
- Neckerchief and Slide: Troop 226 has their own distinct neckerchief and for ceremonial occasions this should be worn. Other neckerchiefs of their choice can be worn for general use. The neckerchief is required for all scouts at all times the uniform is worn. Adult leaders are the only Scouters allowed to wear open collars.
- Hat: Any of the official Scout hats are acceptable. However, the new baseball type will probably be preferred by the boys.
- Epaulets: Red or Green for Scouting, to match the color of the numerals on the shirt.

In addition, there are activities within the Scouting functions that are not suitable for uniform wear, as in doing KP (kitchen patrol) or cleaning out a creek bed. For these occasions, we prefer that the Scouts wear their Class B Troop Tee Shirt, or a Scouting Tee shirt (may be purchased at the Scout Shop), or a shirt obtained on a troop outing related to Scouting. (Northern Tier, Philmont, Camp Winnataska, etc.)

Troop Equipment / Supplies

Scout equipment is always a costly challenge. In general, the major camping items are supplied by the Troop: i.e.: tents, dining flies, patrol kitchen gear, stoves, lanterns, axes, etc., and do not need to be purchased individually. Personal items are provided by each Scout. The enclosed list "A Checklist for Backpacking" is a good guide to follow. Before purchasing the more expensive items such as a pack, sleeping bag, etc. we would advise you to consult with Troop leadership.

Generally, the "Scout" equipment is good quality and can be relied upon to give good service. Please be advised that if you wish to deviate from Scout equipment, there is a great deal of "junk" on the market. Remember, good equipment should last for many, many years and will be less expensive in the long run.

New Scout supplies: Basically, start small and build your Scouting inventory as you grow in rank. The following items are needed early: Scout Handbook, Scout Uniform, Scout Fieldbook
The three major items are backpack, sleeping bag, and boots. Please consult the adult leadership.

Participation and Advancement Policy

The patrol method, troop program, and outing and high adventure preparation all work best when troop members are active and participate in all troop activities. One of the BSA requirements for rank advancement at every level is active participation. To help encourage participation and ensure the integrity of advancement and the troop program, the troop committee has adopted the following policy for participation:

Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class:

To be considered active and meet the requirement for these ranks a scout must attend 75% of the meetings and attend 2/3 of the outings in the previous three months or since passing off the last rank, whichever is less.

Star, Life, Eagle and Eagle Palms:

To be considered active and meet the requirements for these ranks a scout must attend 75% of meetings and attend 2/3 of outings in the previous six months.

It is especially important for boys in leadership positions to be active in order to fulfill the responsibilities of office. Scouts will be subject to removal from office if they fail to meet participation requirements. The Troop Committee also stresses that while attending meetings; boys should participate with their proper patrol in ALL activities and should not gather in the parking lot or equipment area while troop or patrol activities are going on. Younger scouts need the example, experience and expertise of the older Scouts.

Merit Badge Submission Guidelines

1. Application for Merit Badges must be turned in on the
2. 1st meeting of every month.
3. Application for Merit Badges (*Blue Cards*) must be filled out completely; signed by the Merit Badge Counselor and Scout Master; then turned into the Troop Advancement Chairman.
4. Merit Badges will be awarded at the next Court of Honor.
5. Merit Badge Counselors must be approved by the Scout Master, and Troop Committee.
6. Eagle Required Merit Badges must be approved by the BSA Council

Scoutmaster's Conference Guidelines

1. Request for Scoutmaster's Conference should be done at least one week in advance.
2. Scout should have all requirements for the rank completed and signed off in their personal Scout Handbook.
3. All rank requirements must be completed. Required Merit Badges must be completed and submitted to Advancement Chairperson prior to Scoutmaster's Conference.

No Scoutmaster conferences will be granted less than two before a Courts of Honor

Board of Review Request Guidelines

1. The Scout must request a Board of Review from the Troop Advancement Chairperson at least two weeks in advance.
2. Scoutmaster's Conferences must be completed prior to the board of Review and Scouts should have all requirements for the rank completed and signed off in personal Scout Handbook
3. All required Merit Badges must be completed and submitted to Advancement Chairman prior to Scoutmaster's Conference.
4. Boards of Review will be held upon request and availability of 3 adult leaders.
5. All Board of Review Scout candidates must present themselves in Class A Uniform and have Scout Handbook for the Board of Review.

Courts of Honor

This is a required, quarterly activity. The purpose of the Court of Honor is to recognize the accomplishments of the Scouts, including merit badge achievements, moving up in rank, and special honors and awards. Parents and siblings are encouraged to attend. Refreshments and snacks are provided by Troop members. Class A Uniforms are required.

Each Court of Honor is hosted by a Scout as part of their rank requirements. This Scout is responsible for the program agenda, assignment of speakers on Troop outings, assigning refreshments and supplies to the various patrols and acquiring a listing of the advancements and merit badges completed.

The Court of Honor is usually held at St.Peter's Holy Family Room, but may, on occasion, be held at another suitable location.

Troop 226 Eagle Courts of Honor are also considered a ***required*** activity for troop members.

Membership in Good Standing / Discipline

The Troop Leadership Council, (Scouts leaders) with approval of the Troop Committee, has established the following criteria for maintaining membership in good standing for Troop 226:

- Scouts must be on time for meetings and other troop activities. Meetings start at 7:00 PM. Patrol meetings are as scheduled in advance by each patrol.
- Scouts must wear “Class A” uniform (outlined in Handbook) to all meetings unless advised to the contrary in advance. This includes neckerchief.
- Scouts may miss only one meeting per month unexcused. Scouts must advise either the Senior Patrol Leader or the Scoutmaster in advance that you will not be at the meeting.
- A Scout’s behavior should reflect the Scout Law.
- Each Scout has responsibilities within his patrol. This could be patrol scribe – collects dues, keeps attendance, collects food money. Grubmaster – plans menus, purchases food for outings. Quartermaster – responsible for patrol gear, checking out troop gear on outings.
- Each Scout will learn leadership skills by serving as a leader. The role of the patrol leader is most important to the patrol. The patrol leader assigns tasks and organizes the outings with the other patrol leaders.

In addition, it is hoped that major discipline will not be necessary, but if it does become a problem, the following will be in effect:

- **First offense:** adult leaders will discuss behavior with scout and scout’s parents.
- **Second offense:** will result in the Scoutmaster informing the Scout and his parents that until the Scout is able to conduct himself as a Scout, he may be put on restriction from the next outing.
- **Third offense:** the Scoutmaster will call the parents and have them pick the Scout up immediately from the meeting or activity. The Troop Committee and parents will mutually decide what further action should be taken. This may involve dismissal from the troop.