

WELCOME GUIDE FOR NEW SCOUTS

TROOP 895 | RICHARDSON, TX

Updated April 2014



Prepared. For Life.™

Welcome to BSA Troop 895

Updated April 2014

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| www.circle10.org/training | |
| www.trail.org | |
| Scout Rosters, Phone and E-mail Lists | distributed by e-mail |
| Adult Rosters, Phone and E-mail Lists | distributed by e-mail |

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Welcome to Troop 895.

Welcome to Boy Scouting and to Troop 895. We are glad to have you in our troop and look forward to great experiences in Scouting together. Troop 895 has a history of providing a balanced program, including personal development and leadership skills, while pursuing advancement and having fun.

Troop 895 has been chartered since 1970. The troop is located at Episcopal Church of the Epiphany of Richardson and we are thankful for the strong relationship we enjoy with our charter partner in the Scouting program.

The success of Troop 895 depends on four elements:

- > the Scouts
- > the Scout leadership
- > the trained registered adult (Scouter) leadership
- > the Scouts' parents

This guidebook will help explain the roles and responsibilities of each of the four elements. All four must work together for the troop to succeed.

We invite each parent to actively participate in the activities of Troop 895. Parents are encouraged to attend meetings and join us on campouts. In addition, parents will receive opportunities to identify special interests and talents. Our troop leaders continually need your help and welcome your support. During the year, if you have any suggestions on how the troop can function more effectively, please contact one of us.

We hope this guidebook helps address some of the questions you might have. If not, please contact one of the troop leaders and we'll do our best to provide the information you need.

Sincerely,

Dennis Macy
Scout Master

Fred Kersting
Troop Committee Chairman

Mission of the Boy Scouts of America

It is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America to serve others by helping to instill values in young people and in other ways prepare them to make ethical choices over their lifetimes in achieving their full potentials.

Aims of the Boy Scouts of America

The Boy Scout program works toward three aims.

The first is growth in moral strength and character.
We may define this as what a boy is himself,
his personal qualities, his values and his outlook.

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

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

The methods of the Boy Scout program are designed to accomplish these aims.

The Methods of Scouting

- > Ideals – Scout Oath, Law, Motto, and Slogan
- > Patrols – Teambuilding, Leadership Opportunities, Mutual Reliance
- > Outdoors – the best opportunity for learning
- > Advancement – the art of meeting a challenge
- > Personal Growth – Physical, Mental, and Spiritual
- > Adult Association – Limits, Mentors and Role Models
- > Leadership Development – Train Them and then Let Them Do It
- > The Uniform – Belonging

Becoming a Scout

A boy who meets the joining requirements of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) can join Troop 895 by completing the BSA Youth Application and the BSA Annual Health and Medical Record forms, signifying his interest to join our troop, and paying the Scout registration fee (\$96 per year).

A boy joining in the spring will be assigned to a “new Scout” patrol made up of six or more other Scouts who are “new” to Scouting. Each “new Scout” patrol is initially led by a more experienced Scout (Troop Guide). Each new Scout is assisted through the early ranks of Scouting under the guidance of a Troop Guide, the Scout leadership, the Trail to First Class Assistant Scout Masters, and the Trained Registered Adult Leadership.

A boy joining at other times of the year will be assigned to a patrol based on his age, Scout rank, and friendships. The Scouts will help with the training and orientation of new Scouts.

Each Scout is expected to cheerfully perform all duties assigned by his Patrol Leader or Troop Guide. Scouts are also expected to attend most meetings and campouts of Troop 895. In addition, monthly Patrol meetings (in addition to the troop meetings and under parental guidance) are strongly encouraged.

Scouts in Troop 895 assume much of the responsibility for running the troop. Patrol Leaders and the Senior Patrol Leader are elected periodically, so that each boy has an opportunity to experience a leadership position. Scouts serving in other positions of responsibility are appointed by the Senior Patrol Leader, with guidance from the Scout Master. By supporting these leaders, each Scout can learn the duties and responsibilities of each position and be better prepared when he assumes a leadership role.

The Boy Scout Handbook is a necessary guide for Scouts and parents.

Troop 895 Annual Dues

Troop 895 recharter with the BSA on February 28th of each year.

The fee for Scouts is \$96 per year. (Prorated if you join after March 1st)

The fee for Adult Members is \$24 per year.

Troop 895 Scout and Scouter Uniform

The Scout Uniform is an important part of being a Boy Scout. The Uniform not only displays the Scout's patrol affiliation, advancement awards and leadership position, but also reflects the respect that the Scout has for Scouting.

All Scouts are expected to wear the Field Uniform at all Scout meetings, Scout Master Conferences, Boards of Review, Courts of Honor, Camporees, special activities, and when traveling to and from campouts.

The Field Uniform (once called Class A) for Troop 895 is a tan uniform Scout shirt (with epaulets), Scout pants (long or short) with Scout belt, and Scout socks. Uniform patches should be up to date and should include the following patches: Circle Ten Council, Troop 895, Patrol, current Rank, and Position of Responsibility (if applicable).

The Activity Uniform (once called Class B) for Troop 895 is a BSA t-shirt or plain t-shirt (not undershirt) with Scout pants (long or short).

If a hat is worn while the Scout is in his Field or Activity Uniform, it is to be a BSA hat of some type. Non-BSA hats are not appropriate for troop activities.

New Official Scout Equipment and Uniforms can be purchased at the following:
<http://www.circle10.org/scout-shops>

Circle Ten Council

8605 Harry Hines Blvd. Dallas, TX 75235
214-902-2001
M-F: 9 AM – 6 PM
Thursday: 9 AM – 8 PM
Saturday: 10 AM – 4 PM

Collin County Scout Shop

5600 US 75 (NE of Stacy & US 75) Fairview, TX 75069
214-495-0306
M-F: 9 AM – 6 PM
Thursday: 9 AM – 8 PM
Saturday: 10 AM – 4 PM

Nat'l Scouting Museum

1329 Walnut Hill Lane Irving, TX 75015
972-580-2484
Mon: 9 AM – 7 PM
T – Sat: 9 AM – 6 PM
Sun: 1 PM – 5 PM

Troop 895 maintains a uniform exchange intended to help share our resources and make sure every Scout has the means to look sharp in a complete BSA Uniform. The cost is \$5 for each piece of clothing taken. Donation or Trade of your out-grown uniform shirts and pants is appreciated.

Troop 895 Meetings & Communications

Each August, a calendar for the Scout year is developed by the Patrol Leaders Council, approved by the Troop Committee and distributed to the Troop. These dates are rarely changed, but up-to-date information and additional opportunities are communicated at Troop meetings and via e-mail.

Monday Night Meetings (Troop Meetings)

During the school year, Troop 895 holds regular Scout meetings each Monday night from 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM, at Episcopal Church of the Epiphany. The Troop calendar will note any exceptions to this routine. All Scouts are expected to attend these meetings each week. Scouters and non-Scouter parents are encouraged to attend these meetings. The Troop does not meet the Monday after a campout. This night is used by the Patrol Leader's Council for planning.

The program for each Scout meeting is planned by the Patrol Leader's Council (Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders, Patrol Leaders and Scout Master).

All Scouts who have not achieved the rank of First Class are considered on the Trail to First Class (TFC). All TFC Scouts are encouraged to bring their Boy Scout Handbooks and to work on their TFC requirements during the Scout meetings. Scouts teach other Scouts as part of learning. Older Scouts including Troop Guides, Patrol Leaders, Senior Patrol Leaders, and Assistant Sr. Patrol Leaders sign off on TFC requirements for Scouts. Most Scouts have time to practice the TFC skills during the meeting to learn and "sign-off" on the demonstrated TFC skills.

Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) Meetings

Each month the Patrol Leaders meet with the troop leadership to plan and discuss upcoming troop activities. These are the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) Meetings. All Patrol Leaders and troop leaders are expected to attend PLC meetings. If a Patrol Leader is unable to attend, he should arrange for a representative from his patrol to represent his patrol. The PLC meetings are normally scheduled for the Monday following a campout weekend.

Troop Committee Meetings

Each month, generally on the Tuesday before a campout, from 7:30 PM – 9:00 PM, the Troop Committee meets to plan and discuss upcoming activities and to take care of administrative tasks. Every parent is encouraged to become a Troop Committee member. All parents and Troop Committee members are encouraged to attend the Troop Committee meetings.

Courts of Honor

Troop 895 Courts of Honor are held three times a year (in September, January and May) in lieu of a regular meeting on a Monday night in the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany.

The Courts of Honor are an opportunity for the Troop to look back (since the last Court of Honor) at the Troop campouts and special activities and to recognize group and individual participation and accomplishment. Slide shows and special presentations by the Troop Committee Chair, the Scout Master and special guests are common.

The Courts of Honor are held to recognize Scouts who have earned rank advancement, merit badges and other honors. As such, the Court of Honor means a great deal to the Scouts who are recognized for their achievements. Scouts are expected to wear their Field Uniforms and are encouraged to wear their merit badge sashes.

All Scouts and parents are encouraged to attend the Courts of Honor, whether or not your son is receiving an award.

Communications

Details of Troop 895 activities are communicated using announcements at Troop Meetings, monthly newsletters, notices posted on our troop website www.t895.org, and via e-mail notifications sent to the Troop 895 Family. When your family becomes a registered member of Troop 895, the registered adults, parents, guardians and Scouts will be given the opportunity to join our e-mail distribution list.

Campaing Procedures

Troop and Patrol Gear

Troop 895 maintains camping gear for use by each patrol and for sharing within the troop. Scouts and Scouters are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and condition of their gear. Damage or replacement needs should be reported to the Scouts serving as Quartermaster.

Troop Equipment

- > Trailer
- > Washtubs and Propane Heater for Dishwashing

Patrol Equipment

- > Tents
- > Dining Fly
- > Cooking Pots & Utensils
- > Propane Stove
- > Propane Lantern
- > Propane Tank
- > Water Jug
- > Table

Personal Gear – for Scouting Activities & Overnight Camping

Scout Outdoor Essentials

- Knife (blade must fold closed so it fits in palm of hand) [Totin Chit required]
- Personal First Aid Kit (for minor cuts & scratches)
- Extra Clothing – appropriate for the season
- Rain Gear
- Water Bottle (at least 750 ml, clear preferred)
- Flashlight (with spare batteries)
- Matches and Fire-starters [Fireman's Chit required]
- Sun Protection (BSA hat & sunscreen)
- Compass & Map of Camp (one map per patrol is acceptable)
- Notebook & Pencil
- Boy Scout Handbook

Overnight Camping Gear

- Pack or Duffel Bag (suitable to carry gear one mile)
- Sleeping Bag
- Sleeping Pad (optional, but recommended)
- Ground Cloth (used under Sleeping Bag or Tent)
- Tent (two Scouts may share one tent)
- Mess Kit (spoon, fork, knife, plate, bowl, cup) & dunking bag
- Body Soap, Washcloth and Towel
- Toothbrush, Toothpaste and Dental Floss
- Comb or Brush
- Deodorant

Personal Extras to Consider

- Watch
- Camera & Film
- Sunglasses
- Small Musical Instrument
- Swimsuit
- Gloves or Mittens
- Chair

Personal Things to Leave at Home

- Electronic Devices for Games or Entertainment
- Cell phones

Weekend Campouts

Campouts typically begin late afternoon/early evening on Fridays. Scouts with Friday evening conflicts are encouraged to join the campout on Saturday morning. Scouts with Sunday morning conflicts are encouraged to return home on Saturday evening. Most campouts return early afternoon on Sunday. Specific details are confirmed at the troop meeting prior to each campout. Email is used to communicate extensively.

Scouts and Scouters meet at the designated departure location (typically the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany south parking lot) at the specified time (typically at 6 PM). Equipment is loaded, troop assembly is called and drivers/passengers are matched for departure. We try to select most campsites to limit travel time to two hours. Scouts should bring a sack dinner or eat before assembling.

Patrols are expected to purchase and prepare the food for the remaining meals on the campout. (Even the Scouters have their own OGP Patrol.) Hot meals demonstrating a modicum of preparation skill are strongly encouraged. Each Scout is asked to take a turn in serving as patrol's "grubmaster". (Specific First Class rank requirements are associated with being grubmaster.) The grubmaster determines the number of Scouts committed to attending the campout, leads the patrol in planning a menu, prepares the food list, purchases the food, paper towels, aluminum foil and ice, packs the food for transport to the campsite and determines the cost per person. On the Monday before a campout (Money Monday), \$12 is collected from each Scout going to pay for the food for the weekend.

After the campout, Scouts and the troop trailer will return to the church. Parents will be phoned to notify for pickup. Each Scout is expected to pick up all his equipment before leaving the church parking lot.

Winter Camp

The troop attends winter camp each year at Camp Cherokee. Each Scout is strongly encouraged to attend Winter Camp. We depart Richardson in the morning on December 27th and return in the early afternoon on December 31st. Scouts and Scouters prepare their meals together and eat together. Scouts work on merit badges and Trail to First Class activities.

Summer Camp

The troop attends summer camp each year in June or July. Each year, a different location is selected and scheduled. Each Scout is strongly encouraged to attend Summer Camp. This is an excellent camping experience and a great opportunity to work toward rank advancement and on merit badges not easily achieved at home. Swimming, Lifesaving, First Aid, Rowing, Canoeing, Basketry, Painting, Sculpture, Metalworking, Woodcarving and many others are much easier to accomplish at camp. Summer Camp starts on a Sunday and ends on Saturday. Friday night is "Family Night" and all parents and family members are encouraged to attend.

High Adventure

Every year, the troop attempts to participate in "High Adventure" camping experiences (i.e. a Philmont Trek, Northern Tier Canoeing, Sea Base scuba diving or sailing). High Adventure activities are designed for boys who are at least 14 years old on January 1st of that year. Each High Adventure trek is generally limited to eight Scouts and two trained registered adult leaders (Scouters). These activities require special health and safety qualifications, specialized training and preparations, depending on the type of trip and the travel arrangements required. These activities are usually scheduled for July or early August.

Scouting Advancement

Advancement is the recognition of a Scout mastering certain skills. The badges representing these skills reward the Scout's

Scouting Advancement

Advancement is the recognition of a Scout mastering certain skills. The badges representing these skills reward the Scout's efforts and provide visible evidence to the Scout and others of his achievements. Scouting provides many opportunities to set goals and develop skills ranging from Scoutcraft skills such as camping, first aid, hiking and canoeing to skills in communications, sports and sciences. Advancement sets a pattern of setting positive goals and reaching them through life. Advancement is one of the methods used to achieve the aims of Scouting. Advancement is a natural byproduct when a Scout's experience is acquainting him with the BSA ideals. It's easy to advance by following the four basic steps of Learning, Testing, Reviewing and Recognizing.

The requirements for the ranks of Scout through First Class prepare a Scout to take full advantage of all that Scouting has to offer. The ranks of Star, Life and Eagle require service to others, developing leadership skills, and completing merit badges.

Requirements for each rank are outlined in the Boy Scout Handbook. A Scout may work on advancement requirements with his parents or other family members, with other Scouts and with Scouters. This may be done on his own, in patrol or troop meetings, or during troop functions, such as campouts. As the Scout completes each rank advancement requirement, he will be tested and "signed off" in the back of his Boy Scout Handbook by a trained registered adult leader (Scouter) who is not his relative or guardian.

While the Scout advances through the first four ranks (Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class) he will learn many skills in the areas of camping, cooking, hiking, first aid, citizenship and conservation. Many of these Trail to First Class (TFC) skills are mastered on campouts and by patrol. TFC opportunities are included in every troop meeting and campout for Scouts to learn/practice the TFC skills. While working on TFC skills, a good "rule of thumb" is to try to complete one or two rank requirements at each troop meeting or campout. Some skills require the Scout to work on his own and then later demonstrate completion of the task to a leadership Scout for sign off (Patrol Leaders, Troop Guides, Senior Patrol Leader, or Assistant Senior Patrol Leader).

To complete each rank, a Scout must show Scout Spirit through attendance, appearance and attitude; master certain skills; have a personal growth conference with the Scout Master; and participate in a Board of Review when all of the other requirements have been completed.

The Boy Scout Handbook is the key training tool and primary record of each Scout's personal advancement. To take best advantage, Scouts should read their handbooks, practice what they can, and bring their handbooks to every troop meeting and campout.

Scout skills cannot be mastered by performing them just once. Scouts will have many opportunities to practice each skill, and will be thoroughly tested on each requirement before it is "signed off." In addition, Scouts should expect to practice each skill, even after it's been "signed off." As a Scout progresses, he will have opportunities to teach these skills to less experienced Scouts, which will further reinforce his knowledge and skill.

It is up to each Scout to take advantage of the TFC advancement opportunities available to him, and to take the initiative to ask a trained registered adult leader (Scouter) to test him when he is ready. Each Scout is responsible for keeping his own personal advancement record in his Boy Scout Handbook. He should also record his service hours, campouts, troop activities and leadership positions in his Boy Scout Handbook.

A Scout must earn the ranks in order, but he may complete any requirements for Tenderfoot through First Class at any time. (A Scout may complete the First Class requirements for cooking before completing the Tenderfoot rank.) With the approval of the Scout Master, a Scout may work on merit badges before completing the Tenderfoot rank.

Scouting Advancement (continued)

A Scout does not have to wait until he has completed the requirements for a rank advancement in order to ask for a Scout Master Conference. He may talk with the Scout Master at any time that is convenient to discuss his activity in the troop and his understanding and practice of the ideals of Scouting. However, for a Scout Master Conference to count toward rank advancement, it must take place after all other requirements are complete and before the Board of Review.

After his Scout Master Conference, a Scout can arrange for his Board of Review with the assistance of the Advancement Chairman (if at a troop meeting) or the Scout Master (if on a campout). Boards of Review for all ranks except Eagle are composed of at least three Troop Committee Members. Eagle Scout Boards of Review are arranged through the District Advancement Committee. The Board of Review may not include the Scout Master, Assistant Scout Masters or the Scout's family members.

A Scout must present his Boy Scout Handbook to the Board of Review and must be dressed in his complete Field Uniform. At the beginning of the review, the chairperson of the board will introduce him to the board and invite him to be seated. During the review, the board will discuss his development along the trail to Eagle, ask him questions about skills that were required for the rank, and evaluate him in terms of troop activities and readiness for the next rank. The Board of Review is not a retest of skills that have been "signed off", but a boy may be asked to recite the Scout Oath, Law, Motto, and Slogan. It is also a time for the Scout to ask any questions he might have and to give feedback to the troop committee about activities and his Scouting experience in the troop and in his patrol. At the end of the review, the Scout will be asked to leave the room while the board discusses his qualifications. The board will then call him back into the room and inform him either that he has been approved for the next rank or what additional actions he must take to qualify.

After passing the Board of Review, a Scout must notify the Advancement Chairman. The Scout will be awarded his rank advancement patch at the next troop assembly. His Field Uniform should reflect his new rank as soon as possible. This allows others to celebrate his advancement and encourages other Scouts to pursue similar advancement. Formal recognition of Scout advancements is at the next Court of Honor. Merit Badges, Merit Badge Cards and Advancement Certification Cards are presented to the Scouts at the Courts of Honor.

After reaching the rank of Life Scout, a Scout meets with one of the adult leaders in the troop. He will receive the Life to Eagle packet and discuss ideas and suggestions for his Eagle Service Project. The project must conform to special guidelines that have been outlined by the Boy Scouts of America. The Scout Master, Troop Advancement Chairman, a representative of the District Advancement Committee, and the benefiting organization must approve the Eagle Service project before the Scout begins carrying it out.

Merit Badges

Earning merit badges allows a Scout to explore many fields, helps him round out his skills, and introduces him to subjects that will perhaps become lifelong interests or a rewarding career.

There are more than 120 merit badges from which to choose. A Scout may earn any merit badge at any time, with the Scout Master or Advancement Chairman's approval. A Scout shouldn't wait for someone to tell him when and which merit badge to work on. He doesn't need to reach a certain rank to work on Eagle required merit badges. (Many first year Scouts complete the Swimming Merit Badge at their first summer camps.) However, a Scout should concentrate on achieving the rank of First Class before devoting too much time working on merit badges.

A Scout should not overwhelm himself by working on too many merit badges at one time. We recommend that each Scout actively work on no more than two at one time until he reaches the rank of First Class, and no more than five at one time (2 of which can be Eagle Required) thereafter.

Scouts may find information about merit badge requirements in the appropriate merit badge pamphlets and online at <http://usscouts.org/meritbadges.asp>. Troop 895 maintains a library of merit badge pamphlets, available at troop meetings to be checked out. Merit badge pamphlets may be purchased at the Scout stores identified on page 6. When a Scout is finished using pamphlets that he owns, we encourage him to donate them to the Troop 895 library.

Steps to earning a Merit Badge:

1. Get a blue merit badge card from the Advancement Chair or Scout Master. He/She will fill in the name of the merit badge and the name & contact information of a qualified counselor.
2. Fill in your name and address. Keep the blue card in a safe place.
3. Contact the counselor and set up an appointment. The meeting place can be any place that is suitable to both of you. Along with a buddy (another Scout, family member or friend) meet with the counselor. The counselor will explain the requirements and help get started. The Scout should always bring his blue merit badge card and merit badge pamphlet to each meeting with the counselor.
4. Work on the badge requirements until you complete them, meeting with the counselor (with a buddy) whenever necessary. You must complete the stated requirements and satisfy the standards for each merit badge. The Scout keeps the blue merit badge card until all merit badge requirements are complete. If the Scout loses the card, he will have to start the badge over unless the counselor is willing and able to vouch for what has been completed. If you change counselors for any reason, it is up to the discretion of the new counselor to accept or not accept the work done with the previous counselor.
5. After the merit badge is completed and the counselor signs the merit badge card, he/she will keep the Counselor's Section and return the rest of the card to the Scout. The Scout completes the process by returning the card to the Advancement Chair, who will keep the Troop's Section and return the Scout's Section to the Scout.
6. The merit badge and certification card are presented to the Scout at the next Court of Honor.

Positions of Responsibility

One of the rank requirements for Star, Life and Eagle is that the Scout serves actively in a position of responsibility (POR) within the troop. For Star, the position must be held for 4 months once he has attained the First Class rank. For Life, the position must be held for 6 months once he has attained the Star rank. For Eagle, the position must be held for 6 months once he has attained the Life rank. In Troop 895, all positions of responsibility are held as twelve month assignments.

Within Troop 895, each POR has the Scout Master (SM) or a designated Assistant Scout Master (ASM) as a mentor. Only the SM or designated ASM is allowed to “sign off” the “serving actively in a position of responsibility” requirements for Star, Life and Eagle.

Being a good leader is a skill that can be learned only by doing it. A Scout is recognized for his experience and knowledge by being offered a POR within the troop. However, just wearing the patch or being asked to serve does not constitute “serving actively”. The definition of “serving actively” varies from position to position and should be discussed with the SM or ASM mentor before a Scout accepts a POR. It is at the discretion of the SM or ASM to “sign off” the “serving actively in a POR” requirements for Star, Life and Eagle. The “sign off” may occur during or immediately following the term of the POR. As with all advancement requirements, obtaining the “sign off” is the Scout’s responsibility.

Troop 895 Position of Responsibilities

1. Senior Patrol Leader
2. Assistant Senior Patrol Leader – Outdoors
3. Quartermaster
4. Chaplain Aide
5. Assistant Senior Patrol Leader – Instructors
6. Instructor
7. Order of the Arrow troop representative
8. Assistant Senior Patrol Leader – New Scouts
9. Troop Guide
10. Den Chief
11. Scribe
12. Historian
13. Patrol Leader

Record Keeping

A Scout’s advancement records are kept in three places – the Council office, the troop’s Troop Master computer program and the individual Scout’s BSA Handbook.

A Scout will receive three kinds of documents that he needs to keep in a safe place until he turns 18 (at which time the Scouting rank advancement program for him concludes)!

These documents are:

- > His Scout Handbook (with requirements signed off),
- > His portion of completed blue merit badge cards, and
- > His certification cards for rank advancements and merit badges completed.

Make sure each of these are signed or initialed by the appropriate Scout leader. (All of the cards are the same size and can be safely kept in plastic protector pages designed for sports cards.) It is very important that each Scout keeps these documents in a safe place and does not lose them!!! If it should happen that there is a discrepancy or missing records, the Scout’s personal records are his most important ally in proving what he completed and when.

Advancement Summary

Advancement in Scouting provides an opportunity for the Scout to set goals, to learn skills and to accomplish significant tasks. A Scout should own his advancement and its speed. Some Scouts will progress faster than others. It is not a race or competition. The rate of advancement depends on the Scout's interest, effort and ability. When a Scout owns his advancement he feels a sense of accomplishment and self-satisfaction when he receives public recognition of his rank advancement. Scouting should be a challenging, learning, and growing experience. It should also be fun!

Advancement in Scouting also provides an opportunity for parents and other interested adults to share their knowledge and experiences with Scouts by being merit badge counselors and by participating in campouts. The importance of adult involvement in this part of Scouting cannot be overstated. Please consider offering to support Troop 895 as a Merit Badge Counselor. Also, consider camping with Troop 895 to gain perspective on how the Troop 895 advancement program operates.

Parents' Responsibilities (How You Can Help)

You do not need to be a BSA registered adult member to support the troop's program.

The activities of Troop 895 depend upon the support of parents. Without adults, Scouts can't go camping. Without funds, troop equipment (such as propane and cooking equipment) can't be purchased and maintained. Without fund-raising, there are no funds. Troop 895 needs your contribution of time and appreciates any amount that a parent is able to give. Each family is expected to provide transportation to and from a campout at least once each year.

Camping

Parents are needed and welcome to participate in the camping activities of Troop 895. Parents wishing to camp with the troop must complete a BSA Annual Health and Medical Record Form (available online through www.circle10.org) and must complete the Youth Protection Training course (available online through www.circle10.org). Parents "camp" with the troop's Old Geezer Patrol (OGP). The OGP sleeps as a patrol, within sight of, but not with the Scout patrols. The OGP plans, purchases and prepares its own menu, usually "gourmet" camp fare. The meal costs (Breakfast Saturday – Breakfast Sunday) are usually \$12 per person. Those who have camped with the OGP know that the coffeepot is always on, that the conversations are interesting, and that the weekend is very relaxing (bring a camping chair). Additionally, you get to spend quality time with your son's troop in the out-of-doors.

Of course, you don't have to like camping to help. If your idea of "roughing it" is Holiday Inn, there still many other ways you can contribute to the Troop by becoming a Merit Badge Counselor or Troop Committee Member.

Merit Badge Counselors

Troop 895 has a continuing need for merit badge counselors. There are over 120 merit badges ranging from "Archery" to "Woodworking". All of the merit badge requirements are available online through www.usScouts.org. Your education, work history, hobbies, and life experiences probably qualify you to become a merit badge counselor. Please take a moment to review the list of merit badges in your son's Scout Handbook and discuss your interest with the Advancement Chairman at the next Troop Meeting. The merit badge handbooks are available in our troop library (during the Troop Meetings) and have all of the information you will need. Your vocation or avocation may become a valued resource to our Scouts.

Troop Committee Member

All parents are encouraged to join the Troop Committee. This is an excellent way to meet the adults who work with your son and to stay informed about happenings in Troop 895. To become a registered adult member of Troop 895, complete the BSA Adult Application form, complete the Youth Protection Training course (available online through www.circle10.org) and pay the annual dues.

Becoming a trained registered adult leader (Scouter) is encouraged.

Additional online classes are available through <http://www.circle10.org/training>.

Sign up for North Trail District adult leader training at www.ntrail.org for:

Boy Scout Troop Committee Training -- Specific training for adults serving on troop committees. This session focuses on planning, finances, record keeping, selecting leaders, the importance of training, insuring that activities are done safely and implementation of policy. These are interactive sessions with opportunities for questions and discussion.

Boy Scout Leader Specific Training -- More extensive training for adult leaders who work directly with boys. Every aspect of unit operation is covered in detail. This is a great course for interested parents who think they might like to be leaders, but are not sure what is involved. Outdoor Leader Skills follows this course and participants are strongly encouraged to include this as part of their training.

Boy Scout Outdoor Leader Training

Weekend camping activity designed to demonstrate by “doing” how a troop functions. Participants will be assigned to patrols, elect patrol leaders, plan and execute a campout. Any adult leader who expects to go on camping activities with their units should consider this excellent course.

Beyond the Troop Committee, there are other opportunities.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- > Help with the Popcorn Sales fund raising drive (September – November)
- > Help collect and maintain Medical records (before each campout)
- > Help with campout registrations (at the Troop Meetings)
- > Help champion a community service project
- > Help maintain Troop Equipment
- > Help with the Flag Program (selling or placing/retrieving)
- > You may have an even better idea!