

ORIENTATION INFORMATION TROOP 224

We wish to welcome both you and your son to Troop 224. This packet will provide you with some basic information about Scouting and Troop 224. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Scoutmaster or the Committee Chair, now or at any time in the future.

Troop 224 leaders:

Scoutmaster	Tarek Shraibati	(818) 879-0767
Committee Chair	Chris Laubach	(818) 880-6435

Goals of Scouting

Scouting is a game with a purpose. Every Scouting activity moves boys towards the three **basic aims of Scouting**:

- **Character development**
- **Citizenship Training**
- **Mental and physical fitness**

The Boy Scouts of America uses eight fundamental methods to meet boys' hope for fun and adventure, and to achieve Scouting's aims of encouraging character development, citizenship, and mental and physical fitness. A Scout troop functions best when all eight methods are employed. The **Methods of Scouting** are:

- **Ideals.** These are spelled out in the Scout Oath, Law, Motto and Slogan.
- **Patrol Method.** Within the troop this is the "Family Circle" that each Scout works within.
- **Outdoor program.** Most of the Scouting program is designed to take place outdoors.
- **Advancement.** This is a natural outcome of the other seven Scouting methods.
- **Adult Association.** Positive adult role models teach through their actions.
- **Personal growth.** Scouts grow in the positive environment provided by a troop.
- **Leadership development.** Leadership is a skill that is learned by doing.
- **The Uniform.** Gives boys a sense of belonging.

Boy Leadership

Scouting is a boy run organization! Older Scouts form the Troop Leaders Council. This is the group that works with the Scoutmaster to plan and carry out the troop program. Scouts should always look to their Patrol Leader or the Senior Patrol Leader for help before going to adults in matters concerning troop program activities. Patrol Leaders are expected to call Scouts before all activities. They coordinate the patrols actions on outings.

Troop Meetings:

The Troop meets on scheduled Monday nights at 7:00 P.M. at Webster Elementary school. See the yearly calendar for these dates. If you or your son should have any doubts as to the scheduled meeting, have him call his Patrol Leader.

Uniform:

The uniform which has been picked for our Troop consists of a short sleeve shirt, short pants, knee high socks, and web belt. A neckerchief will be provided by the Troop when your son reaches the first Scout rank. An example of the insignia for the shirt can be found in the Boy Scout Handbook. Dark shoes or boots should be worn with the uniform. Sandals are not be worn to meetings.

The troop provides a Troop Tee Shirt to each Scout. Tee Shirts are to be worn as an alternative to the Scout uniform on most outings.

Uniforms (or Tee Troop shirts) are to be worn to all troop meetings and outings unless otherwise stated. Tee shirts are provided by the troop for each scout.

Uniforms (and Scout Handbooks) may be bought at the following locations:

Scout Shop 16525 Sherman Way, Unit C8 Van Nuys (818) 781-1296
Westside Scout Store 10131 National Boulevard Suite A West Los Angeles (310) 839-9905
Ventura Council BSA509 E. Daily Dr. Camarillo (805)482-8938

Campouts:

During the regular school year, the Troop will go on at least one overnight outing each month. These outings appear on the calendar handed out at the beginning of each school year.

Transportation for these outings is provided by Parents. In order to assure that each Scout's Parents do their fair share in providing transportation and to insure that we do not place an unfair burden on a few Parents, it is necessary that each Scout's Parents provide transportation for at least *three trips per boy in the Troop*. Sign-ups for each trip will be taken on a first come first serve basis by the Transportation Chairman whose name appears on the Troop roster.

In addition to driving, we also expect fathers to spend the weekend with the Troop. If a Father does not have the equipment necessary for an overnight camping trip, the Troop can usually arrange to borrow it, provided we are given adequate notice. In the past, we have found that most fathers who go on our trips are pleasantly surprised by the experience.

Food is either bought by Patrol or the Troop for each outing. Each Scout is expected to pay for his share of the bill. Fathers who participate on campouts will have their food provided by the Dads Patrol and will reimburse the father buying the food. Any Scout who indicates he is going on a trip and then wishes to cancel, must call his Patrol Leader to notify him that he is not going. *If this is not done before food is bought, your son will still be expected to pay his share of the food bill even though he does not attend the outing.*

On certain trips, other costs may be incurred. Most of these costs will be paid by the Troop. However, in some special cases, each Scout who wishes to participate will be expected to pay. An example would be on trips where a long distance is driven; gas reimbursement for drivers is sometimes included as a trip cost.

Each summer, the Troop provides a long-term (one week) summer camping trip. Costs for this trip are to be paid by each participant. (Camperships for Summer Camp are available through our Council for families with financial need. Please contact the Scoutmaster for more information. All inquiries are confidential).

Questions concerning outings can usually be answered by your son. If your son does not know the answer, we urge you to have *him* call his Patrol Leader. If the Patrol Leader does not have the answer, he will get it. We encourage this method of answering questions because it teaches good communication skills and enforces the chain of responsibilities in the Troop.

Our Troop provides the following items when you or your son go on an outing:

Tent	Group Cook Kit	Maps (as needed)
Stove	Group Utensil Kit	Group First Aid
Equipment Repair Kit	Kitchen Cleanup Materials	

Each Scout furnishes his own personal equipment. A list of the equipment he will need will be provided at Troop meetings. Please do not go to the expense of buying any personal equipment when your son joins the Troop until we have explained what is needed. This will save the aggravation of possibly buying either unneeded or improper equipment. We have several knowledgeable people in the Troop when it comes to the subject of equipment. Please have your son find out who they are if you should have any questions.

Scouts with special needs

Our number one priority at every Troop function is the safety of every Scout. In order to assure that your son is safe at troop meetings and on outings it is imperative that the Scoutmaster is aware of any special needs that your son may have. This includes developmental and medical issues. If the adult leadership is aware of these needs before a situation arises then we can deal with it more effectively.

If your son has any special needs you must be sure that the Scoutmaster is aware of the situation before you drop him off at a meeting or before we leave on trip. Finding out that we have a problem when we are miles from help could lead to complications that a little preplanning would avoid.

Special needs includes but is not limited to:

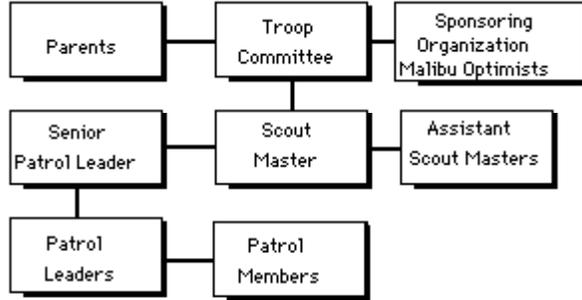
- Learning disabilities
- Medication needs. The Scoutmaster needs to be told what is being taken, what condition requires the medication and the dosing details.
- Not feeling well, (sore throat, upset stomach, colds etc...).
- Minor injury, (blisters, sprains, pulled muscles, broken toes, etc...)
- Allergies (hay fever, bee stings, foods, etc...)
- Current home or school related problems (these will be kept confidential)
- Chronic medical conditions.

In the event that a Scout is taking a prescription medication, that Scout's parent(s) will be asked to fill out a troop form that lists the drug name(s), dosing instructions and other medical information that would be useful in the event of an emergency.

Troop Organization:

To inform you of our Troop's "Chain of Command", a schematic diagram of our Troop's organization appears below. This, of course is only the model that we strive for. Your help in attaining a better Troop is always welcome.

TROOP 224 ORGANIZATION



As parents, you are encouraged to participate in our Troop. You are welcome to serve in any one of our positions for adults. These include Committee Members, Assistant Scoutmasters, and Scoutmaster.

The Troop Committee serves two functions in our Troop: one is administration, and the other is support.

The administration includes the following:

1. Keeping financial records.
2. Acquiring and maintaining Troop equipment.
3. Keeping advancement records.

The support includes these functions:

1. Providing needed advancement materials including counselors and Courts of Honor.
2. Providing transportation for outings.
3. Providing any other support needed in the Troop.

In our Troop, all of these functions are handled by the Troop Committee. The Committee consists of Parents and others interested in Scouting. The more people we have doing these jobs, the better our Troop runs, so please offer your help to the Committee Chairman.

Advancement:

Advancement is not a goal of Scouting, it is one of the eight methods of Scouting. Parents should realize that each Scout is expected to "Do his Best". This means that different boys will advance at different rates. Advancement is never to be considered a race.

Every boy who joins Scouts aspires to attain the rank of "Eagle" some day. Few do it alone. They will need Troop and Parental support. Your boy will immediately begin to work on Scout skills. Merit Badges will be worked on later for Star, Life and Eagle ranks.

Scout skills are learned within the Patrol, with the Patrol Leader responsible for the Scouts progress. Merit Badges are coordinated with a Merit Badge Counselor after receiving the Scoutmaster's approval to work on the badge. The troop also runs merit badge classes. As your son learns Scout skills and earns Merit Badges and participates in troop activities he will qualify for rank advancement. As a rule of thumb, you can expect him to progress as shown below *if he is active in all activities*:

Tenderfoot.....within 3 months
 2nd Class.....6 months
 1st Class.....1 year
 Star.....1 1/2 years
 Life.....2 years

Eagle.....3 years

Cost:*

Annual Dues (Includes Boy's Life subscription).....\$150.00

Uniform (with merit sash and Scout Handbook).....\$75.00

Camping gear varies

Summer Camp varies

*financial assistance is available, if needed. Contact your Scoutmaster.

Scout Participation:

Scouts must attend two thirds of all meetings and outings in order to be considered active members of the troop. Boy leaders in the troop must attend 80% of all meetings and outings to hold leadership positions in the troop. Unlike other troops we do not ask inactive boys to leave our troop, however advancement requirements cannot be met unless a Scout is an active member of the troop.

Parent Participation:

Troop 224 is a troop wherein Parents provide the entire adult leadership behind the Scout leaders. We have a number of volunteer parent Assistant Scoutmasters and an active Troop Committee of Parents. Parents are expected to participate as active Committee Members and to provide transportation for at least three campouts a year per boy in the Troop. We don't expect you to be an Assistant Scoutmaster to lead the Scouts, nor to teach skills, but welcome your help if you have the inclination: we would like you to camp with us at least three times a year. The Troop provides group mess gear and tents. We hope that your sons will be better people for their involvement with Scouting in general and Troop 224 in particular.

To maintain the "open enrollment" policy of Troop 224, it is essential that Parents do their part in development of the Troop Leaders by maintaining an active interest in what their sons (and others) are doing or planning to do. It is absolutely necessary that parents assist their Scouts in regular attendance at meeting and outings, and for Parents to carry out their Committee assignments in a positive, cooperative, and timely manner.

We are all busy-boys and Parents! There are many boys who would like to join a Troop. **There is no room in Troop 224 for boys who do not maintain continuous active participation or for boys whose parents do not carry their share of the load** to make it a successful, challenging, and satisfactory experience for the Scouts without placing undue burdens on a few Parents and Scouts.

RULES FOR PARENTS GOING ON SCOUT TRIPS

In order maintain a safe environment for all Scouts and to qualify for coverage by our BSA Liability Insurance policy, it is important that the following rules be followed by all parents going on Scout trips. This is intended only as a helpful guide; more detailed rules are provided in the BSA literature (e.g., Guide to Safe Scouting, WLACC camping policies) - Most, but no all, of the rules are common sense.

Please keep in mind that the most powerful tool that we, as parents, have in teaching our children right from wrong is the example we set. Boys who see unchallenged inappropriate behavior on the part of parents are being told that it is an acceptable behavior.

1. There is to be absolutely no consumption of alcoholic beverages at any time while a parent is associated with a Scout trip.
2. Posted speed limits are to be strictly obeyed.
3. Parents must follow the program established by the Scout Master and the trip leaders. They should not to

leave the group but if they must, it is important that they tell the trip leaders where they are going and when they will return - The trip leaders shouldn't be spending their time dealing with other parents.

4. All parents and boys will travel as a group and stay together, both when leaving for a trip and when returning.
5. All parents that participate in a trip are responsible for the safety of all of the boys. Any activity that is observed to be unsafe should be immediately recognized by the observing parent and the associated boy(s) should be instructed in the correct methods.
6. Two-deep leadership must be in place at all times. This means that at least two registered, trained, adults must be present on a trip, and with the group, at all times.
7. It is required that at least four individuals, including at least two adults, go on any campout or expeditions. If an accident occurs, one person must stay with the injured, and two should go for help.
8. When staying in tents, no Scout will stay in the tent of an adult other than his parent or guardian.
9. In general, an adult should never be alone with a Scout unless the adult is his parent or guardian.
10. Smoking is not permitted around the boys. Parents who need to smoke should find a location away from the troop to do so.