



Welcome to Troop 139

www.troop139.us

Summer 2010

Dear Scouts and Parents:

We are pleased to welcome you to Boy Scout Troop 139. We are an organization with 62 years of history in Davis. In 2010, we appear to be flourishing with a healthy complement of boys in all ranks.

Our troop conducts many activities throughout the year geared toward helping each Scout learn about the outdoors, teamwork and leadership while having lots of fun. The Boy Scout program is intended to involve both the Scout and his parents. Over 100 years of Scouting experience has made it clear that parental involvement leads to a successful Scout.

This handout will help you learn how our troop functions. If you need more information, adult leaders are always happy to answer questions.

Troop Organization

The basic Boy Scout unit is the troop. Each troop is composed of patrols usually consisting of 4-8 Scouts. Each new Scout is assigned to a patrol immediately after joining. For those of you who are familiar with Cub Scouts, the troop is the equivalent of the pack and the patrol is the equivalent of the den. However, the similarity ends there, because in Boy Scouts, the patrols and the troop are run by the Scouts, not by the adults. At least two adult leaders are always present at all Scout functions, but the idea is to let the Scouts learn leadership and teamwork by running the program themselves. Unless you are aware of this concept, you might think the typical troop meeting to be a bit chaotic. It is exciting to watch the development of the troop over the months and years as the boys take on the roles of planning, developing and then running their program. Of course, it takes a considerable amount of patience on the part of the adults.

The national office of the Boys Scouts of America is headquartered in Irving, Texas. The United States is divided into regions, sections, councils and districts. Troop 139 belongs to Yolo District in the Golden Empire Council. The council office is located in Sacramento on Commerce Circle. The district is assigned a paid professional adult Scouter that coordinates its efforts. Called the district executive, he or she can be reached at the council office in Sacramento. Our troop interacts with the district and council on a routine basis to keep them informed about our program and Scout advancement.

Troop Sponsor. Every troop has a sponsoring organization. Throughout its entire history, Troop 139 has been sponsored by the Davis Rotary Club. The sponsor is

ultimately responsible for ensuring that the troop has the necessary adult leadership and helps to provide a meeting place. In addition, St. Martin's Episcopal Church generously supports our troop by providing space for our weekly meetings.

Troop Meetings

Unless specifically changed, the troop meets every Tuesday at 7:30 PM. We currently meet at St. Martin's Episcopal Church on Hawthorn Lane in Davis. The meeting ends at approximately 8:45 PM. If you do not stay for the meeting, please pickup your son promptly so that two adults do not have to stay late waiting for parents.

On the 3rd Tuesday of the month, the troop activity is replaced by patrol meetings. Your patrol may be meeting at St. Martin's during this week or at someone's home. Be sure to have your Scout check with his patrol leader for specifics.

Once a month, typically the 2nd Tuesday of the month, the troop leaders conduct a patrol Leaders council (PLC). This meeting is run by the senior patrol leader under the auspices of the Scoutmaster to plan troop meetings and outings. The PLC meets prior to the troop meeting beginning at 6:45 PM. All Scouts in leadership positions should attend and participate.

Troop Leadership

Adult Roles

Adult Leaders. Several adults are registered leaders in our troop. The Scoutmaster and assistant Scoutmasters are adults who work directly with the Scouts at meetings and on outings. The Scoutmaster and assistant Scoutmasters are specifically charged with authority for overseeing that each Scout is given an opportunity to advance in his Scouting skills. Most of the assistant Scoutmasters serve in the capacity of patrol advisor. This gives each patrol one adult leader to oversee its operations. Please speak up if you want to be involved to the point of being a patrol advisor, an assistant Scoutmaster, or even the Scoutmaster. Nobody can serve in these positions forever and the troop is dependent on the steady addition of new leaders to keep its organization strong. It is a simple process to register as an adult leader although there is an annual fee (~\$10) which is normally paid for by the troop.

Troop Committee. Members of the troop committee also work with the boys. The troop committee is composed of adults and functions as the administrative part of the troop. It conducts business such as fundraising, maintaining advancement records, arranging outings and transportation, and purchasing equipment. It also conducts all boards of review for the Scouts. Most of the committee members are registered with the council. The head of the troop committee is the committee chair. Other committee members include the advancement chair, the secretary, and the treasurer. The troop committee also benefits from having at least one member-at-large. Meetings of the committee are held monthly. All parents are encouraged to attend these meetings because a lot of important information and decisions that directly affect the Scouts are

discussed. Scheduled committee meetings are listed on the troop calendar. You do not need to be a registered adult leader to attend a committee meeting.

Merit Badge Counselors. Merit badges are required for advancement in the senior Scout ranks (Star, Life, and Eagle). There are well over 100 different merit badges. Twelve merit badges are specifically required for the Eagle rank. Each merit badge deals with a specific subject requiring the Scout to demonstrate learned skills to a merit badge counselor. The counselor is an adult who is registered with the district and the council to teach a specific merit badge for which he or she has expertise, either because of professional training or learned from personal experience such as a hobby. Almost every adult can qualify to be a merit badge counselor for one or more merit badges. It is desirable to have multiple counselors for the same merit badge, especially for the required merit badges, since availability of a counselor will vary. It is very important that our troop maintains a good number of counselors that are available to assist our Scouts. If you register to be a counselor, you will be listed on the district list of counselors and, therefore, a Scout may call you from another troop for assistance. Of course, you are not obligated to respond to every request.

If you are interested in serving as a merit badge counselor, please request a counselor form from the advancement chair and select the merit badge(s) for which you are willing to be a counselor. Since all counselors are registered with the council, you will need to take Youth Protection Training (on-line) and complete an adult registration form. There is no fee for registering as a merit badge counselor.

Other Roles. Many adults are needed in order to make the troop successful. If being a leader or committee member is not possible for you, be aware that every parent should be involved somehow. If nothing else, offer to drive on an outing, participate in boards of review, or become a merit badge counselor. Every adult has different skills. Many adults shy away from becoming involved because they feel inexperienced and think that they do not have enough time or that their work or travel may not provide a consistent schedule to allow a commitment. Please rest assured that every adult feels the same way--including those already involved. Being part of the troop is essential for helping your son and does not require a lot of time, previous experience or a career change!

Youth Protection Training. This is the first mandatory course taken by all adult leaders and is required before you can register with the Boy Scouts of America as an adult leader. BSA developed Youth Protection training to help ensure that Scouting continues to be safe for all participants and to show Boy Scouts and their parents what they should do to prevent abuse. The training is available on the Web by registering¹ for an account at www.myscouting.org

¹ Registration is not required to take training. However, once you receive your BSA identification number and register your MyScouting account, any training taken online will be recorded and tracked.

Fast Start Training. This course is also taken by all adult leaders. *Fast Start Training* is a quick orientation to help you get ready for your first Boy Scout meeting. *Fast Start Training* is available online at www.myscouting.org

This is Scouting, Leader Specific Training for Scoutmasters and Asst. Scoutmasters and **Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills for Scoutmasters and Asst. Scoutmasters.** After completing *Youth Protection* training and *Fast Start* training, adult leaders holding the position of Scoutmaster or assistant Scoutmaster take *This is Scouting, Leader Specific*, and *Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills* training. *This is Scouting* is available online at www.myscouting.org

This is Scouting and Troop Committee Challenge. After completing *Youth Protection* and *Fast Start* training, members of the troop committee must take *This is Scouting* and *Troop Committee Challenge* training. Both are available online at www.myscouting.org

CPR Training. Adult leaders actively involved in outdoor program activities should be current in CPR. Troop 139 reimburses 100% of the course registration fee up to the amount charged by UCD Outdoor Adventures for Heartsaver AED CPR

Training is offered by every district in our council. Yolo District offers training in February and August. Other Golden Empire Council districts also offer training throughout the year. The Scoutmaster and assistant Scoutmaster program assumes that the adult has never been associated with Scouting and takes the adult through administrative and outdoor activities. By the end of the course you will have learned a lot and feel confident about what is going on in Scouting. It is well worth your time. See the committee chairman for more information.

Additional Adult Training. Wilderness First Aid training, programs offered by the Golden Empire Council High Adventure Team (Cold Weather Camping, Basic Backpacking Awareness, Paddle Sport Awareness and Climbing Awareness), and *Wood Badge* leadership training; enhance the quality of the troop's program by developing skilled and knowledgeable leaders. Adult leaders who have completed *Leader Specific Training* for Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters and *Outdoor Leader Skills* training are encouraged to take high adventure training and *Wood Badge*. Troop 139 subsidizes adult leader training by reimbursing 50% to 100% of the course registration fee for its active leadership. See the troop Web site for details.

Scout Roles

Boy Leaders. The troop is headed by the senior patrol leader (SPL). This is an elected position with elections being held generally every six months. The SPL will appoint one assistant senior patrol Leader. Likewise, each patrol will elect a patrol leader (generally every six months) and he will appoint an assistant patrol leader. There are numerous other positions within the troop such as troop guide, scribe, instructor, quartermaster, historian, librarian, chaplain's aide, etc. There are also positions within the patrol such as grubmaster, patrol quartermaster, patrol scribe, etc.

Additionally, Scouts can get leadership experience by serving as a den chief for a Cub Scout den. Every boy should have a specific duty to which he is elected or assigned on a rotating basis. Positions held at the troop level will count toward advancement by satisfying the requirement to serve in a position of leadership.

Finances

Each Scout family has an “account” set up with the troop, managed by the troop treasurer. Records are kept of charges to your account (generally dues and outings) and credits made (checks submitted). Statements are provided to every family monthly via email. It is preferable that families keep close track of their account status, as the troop does not have the financial base to support large debts.

Fees. The fee for a new Scout is \$25.00, payable whenever you start. Dues are collected annually, usually in November (\$25 per Scout). Dues/fees are used for registering your son in Scouting and include a subscription to *Boy's Life*, an excellent monthly Scouting magazine. Dues also cover other expenses such as advancement patches and badges. The dues for adults cover registration fees and are currently paid by the troop. Be mindful that you only need to pay fees for one Scout unit. Adults who are registered in both a pack and a troop for example only pay one fee even though they are dual registered.

All payments should be given to the troop treasurer. Checks should be made payable to Troop 139.

Other Charges. There are usually charges for attending outings. These charges cover entrance fees, parking fees, and food. Typically, each patrol is responsible for purchasing its own food for outings. The troop reimburses the food purchaser for the actual cost of the food purchased or at a flat rate (whichever is less). Using the flat rate, each patrol member is then billed by the troop. The food reimbursement policy is posted on the troop's Web site.

The troop attends at least one week-long Boy Scout camp and a second Boy Scout camp or high adventure activity every summer. This is an important opportunity for each Scout to earn merit badges and to work on advancement. Camps have special programs to help new Scouts learn Scouting skills and to complete advancement requirements. The camps also have a wide variety of merit badge courses available. Costs vary according to which camp is selected but the average cost is ~\$300 per Scout. This will include meals but there may be additional charges for supplies related to certain merit badges. A deposit for each Scout is collected in March with full payment due in advance of attending--usually collected by May 31st. New Scouts are strongly encouraged to attend summer camp at their first opportunity.

Friends of Scouting. The national, council, and district offices solicit donations from parents of Scouts once each year. This is through an official program called Friends of Scouting (FOS). These funds help maintain Boy Scout camps, council offices, and pay for liability insurance, etc. Donations are strictly voluntary. A representative from FOS

usually gives a short presentation about the program to parents during a Scout meeting in February or March.

Financial Assistance. The troop tries very hard to keep expenses to a minimum and still provide a quality program for the Scouts. From time to time the troop has been able to assist some families who have had trouble with expenses for uniforms and outings. If you find your participation is being compromised because of expenses, please contact either the committee chair or the treasurer, in confidence, to see what kind of help is available.

Fundraising. Our troop supports itself on the fees we charge with heavy reliance on funds generated by participating in the annual Davis Boy Scout Christmas tree sale. This fundraiser starts just after Thanksgiving and continues until all the trees are sold-- usually just before Christmas. Other minor fundraisers have included aluminum can drives and trash detail for the AYSO World Cup Soccer tournament. We are open to any fundraising event that a parent is willing to lead.

E-Scrip. Our troop is also enrolled in the E-scrip program. If you elect to sign up for this program, money you spend at sponsoring stores (Safeway is the biggest contributor) will earn a percentage that is donated directly to our troop. You can assign your contributions to go to our troop and/or to other groups. You may sign up for the e-script program at www.escrip.com

Uniforms

The national policy of the Boy Scout of America is that each Scout wears a uniform. Some troops elect not to require Scouts to wear Scout trousers or shorts. We do not require them but highly encourage Scouts to have Scout pants. The official Scout shirt is an absolute requirement and should be worn with the troop neckerchief (forest green with red embroidery trim). The uniform should be worn to each troop meeting. It should be worn on each outing unless specifically instructed not to do so by the Scoutmaster. Uniforms may be purchased from the River City Scout Shop located at 251 Commerce Circle, Sacramento, (916) 649-1800. The uniform is a highly visible symbol of Scouting and it is important that the uniform be complete and that the Scout wears it correctly and proudly. Scout pants are worn with Scout belt and Scout socks. If a cap is worn, it should be a Scout cap.

Each new Scout is provided with a troop neckerchief, troop numerals, green shoulder loops, troop hat and a copy of the *Boy Scout Handbook*. The Scout should purchase the following items: neckerchief slide (or make one of your own), Scout shirt (long or short sleeved) with council patch and international brotherhood patch, Scout web belt and buckle, Scout pants and Scout socks. The troop number patch is provided by the troop. The Scout can wear any kind of shoes with the uniform. Activity tee shirts can be purchased at cost.

Equipment

Each Scout is expected to provide his own personal gear for outings. This includes the following: backpack with internal or external frame, sleeping bag (suitable for 4-season camping), ground pad, personal first aid kit, eating utensils, poncho, hiking boots, suitable clothing for the weather and season. For cold weather camping, each Scout must have appropriate gear in order to attend. A checklist of cold weather clothing is available to Scouts and parents and should be reviewed before purchasing or borrowing equipment. See the Scoutmaster for suggestions about equipment and clothing selection and about where to purchase these items.

Boy Scout Handbook. Each new Scout needs the official *Boy Scout Handbook*. This is provided to you when you join and is included in your initial fees.

Advancement

During the course of learning Scouting skills, the Scout has the opportunity for showing achievement through earning various ranks. Each rank requires a Scoutmaster conference following the completion of all the requirements for that rank. Except for the Scout rank, each rank also requires a board of review before the rank is officially completed. During the Scoutmaster conference, the Scout meets with the Scoutmaster to review the requirements that have been completed for that rank and also to discuss the next rank's requirements. Once the Scoutmaster is satisfied, he will sign the Scout's handbook and recommend the boy for a board of review. The board of review is conducted by a panel of at least three committee members who meet with the Scout in a closed session. The board does not test the Scout over requirements for that rank since the Scoutmaster will have already done that. They discuss with the Scout his goals for Scouting and help determine how the program is working for the Scout. We try to conduct boards of review once a month, typically during the evening on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Scout. When a new boy joins the troop, he must first learn the basic Scouting principles and satisfy the Scoutmaster that he has learned these. Once this has been done, the Scoutmaster will sign the boy's handbook in the requirement section for the rank of Scout. Then, the boy may be called Scout and wear the Scout rank badge on his shirt. Cub Scouts completing their Arrow of Light have learned these requirements already. Nevertheless they still need to have their Scoutmaster conference before being awarded their Scout badge.

Totin'Chip and Firemanship Chit. As soon as possible, the new Scout should learn the safety rules for handling a knife, ax, saw (including sharpening) and fire. Once the Scout has demonstrated that he knows how to handle these tools safely, he will be issued cards showing his successful completion of this training. The Scout must have these cards with him whenever using a knife, ax, or saw, or when using fire. Unsafe practices will result in the Scout having to turn in his card and undergo additional training. Once earned, however, a Scout is allowed to carry a pocketknife. Sheath knives are not allowed. Matches are allowed but lighters are not permitted.

Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. The Scout can work on all three of these ranks at the same time. However, he must finish all the requirements, including the Scoutmaster conference and the board of review for Tenderfoot first, then Second Class, and finally First Class in that order. No merit badges are required for these ranks. Nevertheless, the Scout is eligible to work on merit badges if he so chooses. Reviewing the requirements for these ranks reveals that the major emphasis is the development of Scouting skills (first aid, knots, cooking, and camping) with increasing expertise in these skills as the Scout progresses through the three ranks. A reasonable goal is for a Scout to progress to First Class approximately 12-18 months after joining.

Star, Life, and Eagle. These ranks require various merit badges and service projects to earn. They also require increasing amounts of leadership experience. It is expected that these ranks will be achieved 2-4 years after earning First Class. It is only the dedicated serious Scout who makes it all the way to the rank of Eagle.

Sources of Troop Information

It is difficult task to keep all the families in a troop informed. It is up to each Scout to make sure that he makes use of the following to keep current on what is happening:

Meetings:

Announcements about upcoming events, including outings, fees, dates, times, etc. are made every Tuesday, during the troop meeting, by the senior patrol leader and/or the Scoutmaster. If a Scout misses a meeting, he should contact his patrol leader for information. If he is the patrol leader, he should have notified his assistant patrol leader to handle his position and get needed information back to him.

Troop Calendar

The troop calendar lists dates for troop meetings and outings. These dates are for planning purposes. They may change from time to time due to weather and other constraints. Updates will be announced at meetings and via email.

Email

The troop relies on email to communicate detailed information in a timely manner. If you have email and are not on the distribution list, please contact the committee chairman or Scoutmaster. If you do not use email, please discuss with the Scoutmaster the best way to get information to you and your family.

Traditional Troop Activities

The program could certainly change at any time. However, the following is a list of activities that our troop has not missed in several years:

January – Yolo District Klondike Derby.

Snow camping with Scouting competitions

March – Scouting for Food

March/April – Yolo District Camporee

Spring event with Scouting competitions

July/August – Council Summer Camp

We typically attend one Golden Empire Council summer camp, e.g. Camp Winton on Lower Bear River Reservoir and one additional Boy Scout summer camp or high adventure activity

October – Scout-O

Scout Orienteering competition

December – Christmas tree sales

This is our primary fund-raising event and the money earned here typically funds us well each year. Successful participation means help from every family in the troop.

In addition to these traditional activities, we generally have one outing per month and offer a variety of merit badge opportunities throughout the year.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated, interested, and involved group of parents with our current Scouts. Parental involvement leads to success in Scouting.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Scoutmaster or committee chair.