



# TROOP 1729 and TROOP 729 Handbook

American Legion Post #22

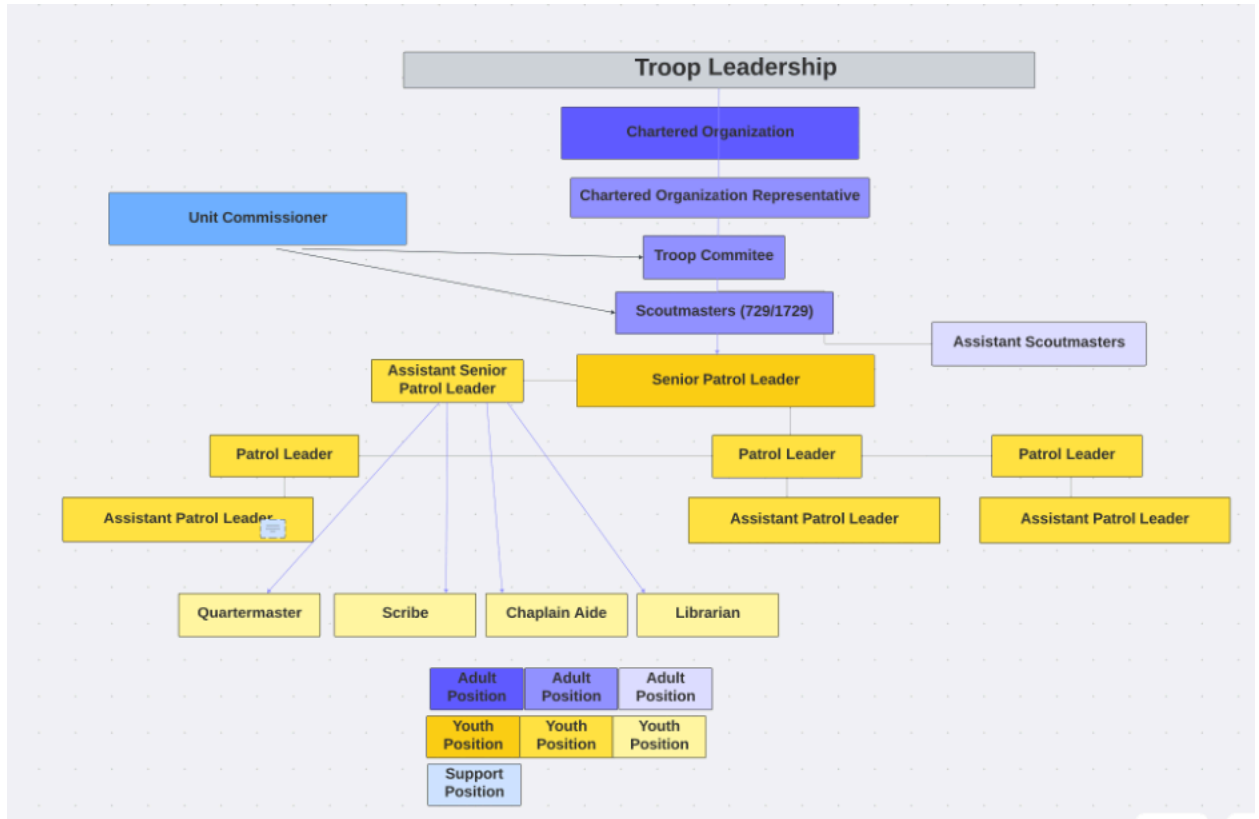
125 York Road, Towson Maryland 21204

| Revision | Date            | Comments   |
|----------|-----------------|--|
| 1.0      | 14 March 2024   | Initial publication of Handbook Document   |
| 1.01     | 12 May 2024     | Added adult camping requirements and notes on reimbursements to Adult Participation and Commitment |
| 1.02     | 16 August 2024  | Updated overnight adult camping requirements per national guidelines. Updated district fees.       |
| 1.03     | 16 August 2024  | Electronics policy update.   |
| 1.04     | 24 August 2024  | Added committee approved members and hardship notes.   |
| 1.05     | 05 January 2025 | Added 2nd class recommendation to leadership positions. Food standards added.                      |

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## Troop Organization



| Role               | Name           | Phone        | Email                    |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Committee Chair    | Jake Bucksbaum | 443-608-6471 | jake.bucksbaum@gmail.com |
| Scoutmaster – 1729 | James Pessagno | 410-409-8211 | T729sm@gmail.com         |
| Scoutmaster – 729  | James Pessagno | 410-409-8211 | T729sm@gmail.com         |
| Unit Commissioner  | Chuck Starkey  | 443-845-6912 | Charles.Starkey@bge.com  |

## Roles And Responsibilities

### Chartered Organization Representative

- Ensures continuity of the troop over time
- Mentors Troop Committee and Scoutmaster

## Troop Committee

- Annual Rechartering and Membership Registration
- Troop Finances and Fundraising
- Scout Rank Advancement review/approvals, to include Eagle project review/approvals
- Adult Volunteer Training: Annual Youth Protection Training, Scoutmaster Training, Committee Training
- Other Administrative Support: Medical Forms, Tour/Activity Plans, etc.
- Management of Assets and Equipment
- Interface to the charter organization and parents

## Scoutmasters (and Assistant Scoutmasters)

- Guides and facilitators
- Teach 'Scout skills' and merit badges
- Typically plan monthly outings

## Unit Commissioner

- Interface to the BSA District (Gunpowder Falls District) and Council (Baltimore Area Council)
- Manages multiple Cub Scout Packs and Boy Scout Troops

## Patrol Leaders Council (PLC)

- Youth-led leadership of the Troop
- Plans and runs weekly meetings
- Holds functional responsibilities - the Scouting program is youth-led, to give Scouts the freedom to succeed and make mistakes, learning from both experiences

## Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) Meets Monthly for Planning

1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month @7:30PM (typically a virtual meeting)

### Attendance:

- Scoutmaster
- Assistant Scoutmaster
- Senior Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader
- All individual Patrol Leaders and Assistant Patrol Leaders
- Key Scout Leadership: Scribe, Quartermaster, etc.
- All Scouts and leaders are welcome to attend

## Weekly Meetings

Every Thursday from 7pm to 8:30PM in the Blue Room (downstairs).

Follow the Baltimore County Public School schedule for winter and spring breaks.

Run by the Scouts.

Typical meeting includes:

- Scout Skills/Merit Badge teaching
- Planning and preparation for upcoming outings
- Game
- Leadership, Character and Skills Development

## Monthly Trips

Planned and scheduled in advance by the PLC with help from adult leadership. Posted on Scoutbook. There is a monthly trip from September through June. Summer camp is typically scheduled for July and the Troops break for August, returning when school restarts.

- Examples of past trips include: caving – Laurel Caverns (PA), biking – C&O Canal (MD), camping – Lum's Pond (DE), whitewater rafting (WV)
- Monthly trips are a cornerstone of the Scouting experience.
- Operated on a pay-as-you-participate basis. Scouts pay for each camping trip as they sign up. (Fee covers food and campsites and every effort is made to keep costs low.)
- Scouts cook in patrols, with adult supervision for proper sanitation during cooking and clean up. Adults who attend/volunteer during trips split the responsibility for their meals.
- Scouts share tents, not more than two-year age difference.
- Groups carpool from the American Legion for all trips. Scouts help with Troop gear heading into trip and upon return and take turns bringing gear and patrol boxes home to clean and organize.

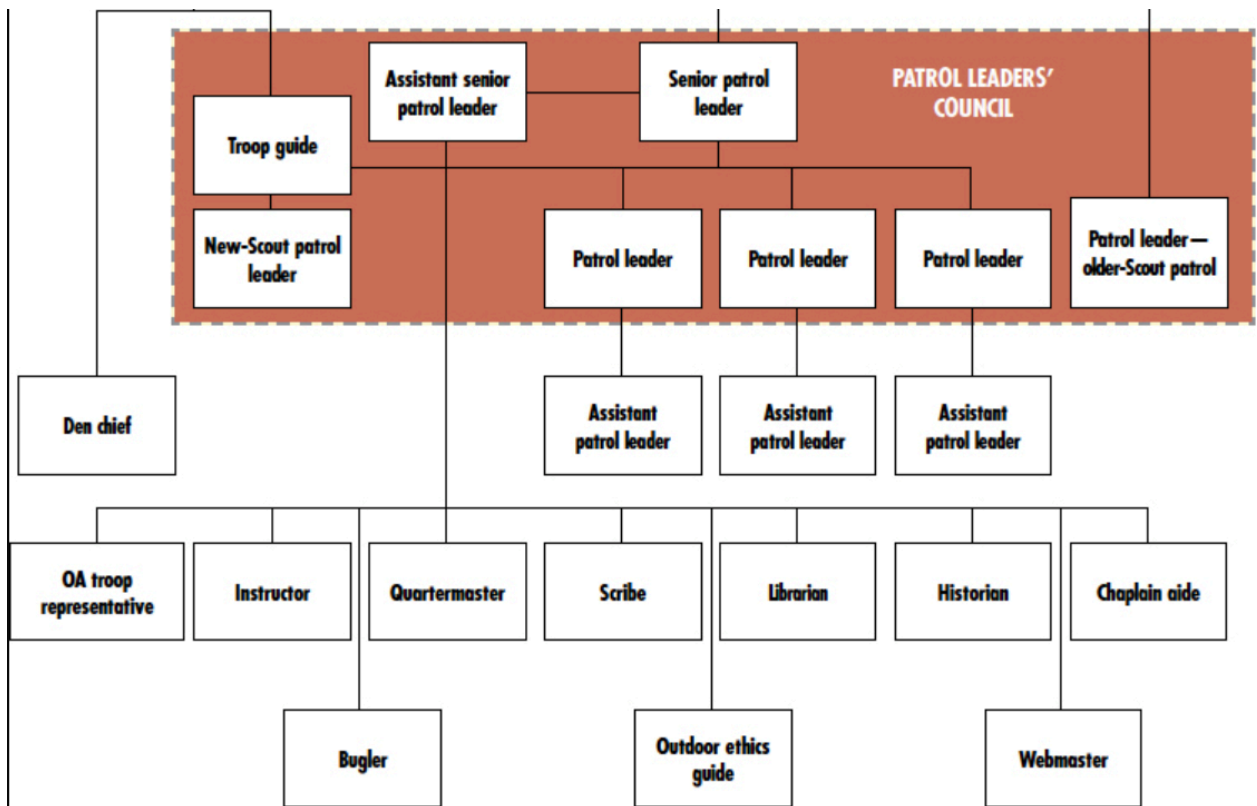
# Scout Ranks

- Scouts earn their way individually through ranks as they level up: Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle.
- Rank advancement is one beneficial aspect of Scouting and can be highly motivating for some, but it is not a requirement to participate. First Class rank is required to hold any position of responsibility in Troop leadership.
- Scouts typically advance one rank each school year, sometimes two. Earlier levels focus upon basic Scout skills and safety, while higher ranks emphasize service work and leadership roles and the completion of merit badges. Twenty-one total merit badges are required for the rank of Eagle (13 of these are mandated, the others can be chosen by the Scout.) Additionally, Eagle requires a significant service project.
- A Scout will complete the items required for each level and have their work signed off. Any Scout of First Class rank or higher may sign requirements.
- Rank work is individual to each Scout and therefore each Scout works independently through their requirements. Any Scout who attends most meetings and campouts, as well as Summer Camp, should have no difficulty in meeting rank requirements.
- Patrol Leaders should be checking their Scout's books every month.
- All ranks conclude with a Scoutmaster conference and many ranks also include a Board of Review, where the Scout will meet with adults from the Troop Committee to discuss their experience in Scouting.
- Ranks are officially earned upon the successful completion of the Board of Review and awarded at a Court of Honor.
- Court of Honor Awards ceremonies are held two times per year (Spring and Fall – typically mid to late November and May or early June). Parents/families are invited to all Courts of Honor and if their Scout is advancing ranks, they'll be asked to step forward during the ceremony.
- Scouts entering Life Rank are invited to attend a Life-to-Eagle training to learn more about the special process of earning Eagle Rank.

- Rank Advancement information can be found on Scoutbook online and in the paperback Scout book, which should be brought to all meetings and campouts.

## Scout Leadership Positions

- Scouts BSA defines the below scout leadership positions as applicable for a large troop as below. (Elections are held bi-annually, several weeks before the Fall and Spring Courts of Honor.)



- Positions are defined by Scouts BSA at the below link. Troop 729/1729 follow these role definitions as closely as possible  
<https://troopleader.scouting.org/troop-positions/>
- The positions listed below are required (critical to the Troop's success) and must be filled at each election. (Note: Scouts may hold more than one position.):
  - Senior Patrol Leader
  - Patrol Leaders
  - Assistant Patrol Leader
  - Quartermaster



- Scribe
- Den Chiefs: 319 (Legion/Hunt's Church), 1742 (Providence), 352 (SES), 439 (Rodgers Forge)
- Chaplain Aide

The committee recommends leadership positions to be filled by second class scouts or above; however, this can be overridden by the Scout Master at their discretion.

## Schedule And Time Commitment

| Who                                 | What                           | When  | Where                              | Requirements  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|
| All Scouts and Scoutmasters         | Troop Meetings                 | Weekly on Thursdays 7 – 8:30pm*                                 | American Legion                    | 50% attendance required                                       |
| Senior Patrol Leaders               | Troop Meetings                 | Weekly on Thursdays 7 – 8:30pm*                                 | American Legion                    | Attendance expected, communicate any absences prior to events |
| All Scouts and Scoutmasters         | Monthly Outings                | As announced, typically Friday at 6pm until Sunday at 12pm      | Typically within 1 to 2 hours away |   |
| All Scouts and Scoutmasters         | Summer Camp                    | Typically in July   | Typically 2 to 4 hours away        | Highly recommended for newer Scouts for rank advancement.     |
| Scouts with Active Leadership Roles | PLC Meeting – Monthly Planning | First Monday, at 7:30pm or before weekly meetings if in person. | Online or live                     | Attendance expected, communicate any absences prior to events |
| Troop Committee                     | Monthly Committee Meeting      | Second Monday at 7:30pm   | At a committee member's home, with |   |

|                                     |                             |  |                       |                         |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------|-------------------------|
|                                     |                             |  | option to join online |                         |
| Scouts with Active Leadership Roles | Troop meetings and campouts |  |                       | 75% attendance required |

## Equipment Requirements

### Uniform:

- Scout Store has everything. (Locations in Wyman Park, BWI, Westminster.)
- Troop may have hand-me-downs. Please check if that could be helpful.
- Also online: <https://www.scoutstuff.org>

### Dress Attire

- 'Class A' uniform at meetings and to/from camping trips and Courts of Honor. 'Class B' only as approved or announced. More specifically, a 'Class A' scout shirt is required to be worn at all Scout events from Labor Day to Memorial Day. 'Class A' is also required for all traveling. 'Class B' shirts may be worn to scout meetings outside of the timeframe above or when communicated as an exception. If compliance to these standards falls below 75%, it will be addressed by the Scoutmaster.

### Typical camping gear:

- Backpack, sleeping bag, mess kit, water bottle, first aid kit, flashlight, rain gear

### Provided by the Troop:

- Tents, cooking stoves and other supplies

## Troop Policies

## Troop Participation and Commitment

- Scouts are encouraged to attend weekly meetings and monthly outings. (See expectations outlined in Section 4.)
- Scouts may leave and come back into the troop without penalty (e.g. seasonal sports)

## Adult Participation and Commitment

- Volunteering is optional for parents, but the troop is always in need of volunteers. (See below for explanation of the troop's Parent Involvement Fee which is offset by meeting volunteer benchmarks.)
- All adult volunteers require 'Youth Protection Training' and must comply with BSA policies.
- All adults wanting to camp MUST be registered as a leader with the troop. The most cost efficient manner to be compliant for parents is to register as a Scout Reserve unit code 91. The troop will reimburse this fee for ALL parents.
- Parents seeking an advanced leadership role within the troop simply need to coordinate with the Scout Master or Committee members. They will be guided through the process. Parents will be reimbursed for registration and training fees with receipts. Receipts are to be emailed to the treasurer for reimbursement.

Camping trips are generally closed to extended family members unless they are officially designated as 'family trips. BSA requires all adults spending the night be registered. See notes above.

## Expectations

- Troops 729/1729 define an "active member of the Troop" as a Scout who attends 50% or more of meetings and campouts.
- Troops 729/1729 with Scout leadership positions as defined below are required to meet the minimum expectations of those positions and attend 75% or more of meetings and campouts to fulfill their leadership requirements. Excused absences must be cleared by Scout Master or ASM prior to Patrol Meeting.

- Troops 729/1729 are expected to be in attendance at PLC meetings if elected for a leadership role. Excused absences must be cleared by Scout Master or ASM prior to Patrol Meeting.
- Troops 729/1729 Senior Patrol Leaders are expected to communicate any absence with the Scoutmaster and other patrol members prior to all events. It is expected that they attend as much as possible.
- Appropriate behavior is required at all meetings and outings. Being kind, courteous and respectful ect... as dictated by the scout oath and law will be monitored by all Adults and senior leaders. In instances where Scout Spirit is impacted a scout may be asked to demonstrate/correct compliance with the Scout Oath and Scout Law prescribed by the rank advancement requirements (which could delay rank advancement) as directed/determined by the Scoutmaster.

## Items Forbidden from Troop Activities

- Switchblades and sheath knives
- Fireworks, including sparklers
- Alcoholic beverages or drugs
- Cigarettes or vapes
- BB/Airsoft guns

## Electronics Policy

- If a Scout has an electronic device (smart phone, air pods, headphones, iPad, etc.) at a meeting, outing or campout, it is expected that the device remains stored away, so as not to detract from the Scouting experience. Phones are sometimes useful tools for Scout-related business. However, we want to maintain the spirit of Scouting which is based on outdoor experiences and camaraderie, not technology. At all outings, electronics should not be used/out at all unless requested to and approved by the Scoutmaster and/or Assistant Scoutmaster. Scouts may travel with a device if it is provided to the Scoutmaster or Assist Scoutmaster once they arrive at the destination. If a device is seen or heard at an event the Scoutmasters or Assistant Scoutmasters will hold the device for the duration of the event. Parents can request Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters hold devices ahead of time to be available for the scouts in

Emergencies. Held devices will be stored in a secure central location. If you choose to bring your device, the troop is not financially liable for it when collected. Every attempt will be made to keep it secured.

## Buddy System

- Scouts must travel with a buddy at all times, including meetings, events, campouts and summer camp. This includes all activities such as trips to the bathroom, open swim, visiting the trading post at camp, etc.
- Scouts must always tell someone where they are going. They must choose a youth leader (Senior Patrol, Leader, Patrol Leader or any more experienced Scout) and tell them where they are going, what they will be doing and which buddy they are taking.

## Safety Drills or Alarms

- If a drill or alarm sounds, Scouts must stop what they are doing, grab their buddy and report to the nearest youth leader, camp counselor or adult volunteer. If applicable, they must share their first and last name and Troop information with that leader. If no leader is present and a Scout hears the weather siren, they must seek cover in the closest building and report to any leader they find there.

## See Something, Say Something

- If a Scout sees or hears anything suspicious, they should report their concerns to a Scoutmaster or adult volunteer.
- Scouts in Troops 729/1729 commit themselves to following the Scout Oath and Law: being obedient by listening and following directions, being cheerful by working as a respectful member of the team, being brave by being willing to try new experiences, new food and new challenges. A Scout's behavior may be corrected or redirected at any time by the troop's youth leaders, one of the Scoutmasters or an adult volunteer. Any Scouts who fail to follow the Code of Conduct, causing a situation that's unsafe for themselves or others will be asked to leave the program immediately, and their parents or guardian will be responsible for transporting them home. Additionally, non-compliance with these

standards may also result in the delay of rank advancement, at the discretion of the Scoutmaster in accordance with rank requirements.

## Medical Forms

- All Scouts need completed BSA Medical Forms annually.
- Parts A and B must be completed for all Scouts and adults who attend any outings, camping or day trips (Part C not required)
- Part C (doctor-completed) will be required along with Parts A and B if you camp more than 72 hours (summer camp, high adventure)

## Youth Protection Training (YPT)

- Youth Protection Training (YPT) is required for all registered adults participating in events or trips.
- YPT will be validated by the Committee prior to all events/trips.
- Will need to be renewed every 12 to 24 months depending on the adult's role within the troop.
- YPT is available at <http://my.scouting.org/>

## Fundraising

Current fundraisers include:

- Ravens games (Fall and Winter): Scouts and their family members or friends volunteer to arrive early at designated games and hand out programs or giveaways. Volunteers are often given complimentary tickets when their shifts end after the first quarter (but are allowed to remain in the stadium for the duration of the game regardless). The Ravens franchise donates generously to the troop for this work.
- Mulch Sale (March or April): Scouts and families solicit orders of bagged mulch from a designated area in Towson and on delivery day, volunteers move one to two semi-truckloads of mulch into smaller U-Haul trucks and deliver.

# Fees

## Bridging Webelos

- \$25 scarf deposit is required for all troops. \$25 prorated troop fee.
- \$25 prorated troop fee will be utilized to offset the costs of patches, scoutbooks and troop numbers.
- Total cost expected by first troop outing in order to participate: \$50

## Annual rates

### BSA Council/National Membership Renewal Fees

- Starting January of 2025 National Dues have increased to \$85 per scout and Gunpowder falls district will institute a \$75 fee per scout for a total of \$160 per scout.
- Membership/expiration dates coincide with dates of enrollment.
- The troop has elected for families to pay this fee directly to district/national.
- This can be done 90 days prior to your scouts renewal date on [my.scouting.org](http://my.scouting.org). You will be emailed by ScoutsBSA when you are eligible to renew.
- Steps to make your National Payment are posted on [troopawesome.com](http://troopawesome.com) under resources.
- Financial Assistance Information will also be maintained in the resources tab on [troopawesome.com](http://troopawesome.com)

### Troops 729/1729 Membership Fees

- \$50 per SCOUT (to cover programming, in small part)
- \$120 per FAMILY (a 'Family Involvement Fee' that is refundable if certain criteria are met)\*
- Summary: \$170 fee annually, plus \$50 per additional Scout (\$120 of that amount is reimbursable – see below)
- Scout and Family fees will be collected annually in September – at the start of the 'Scouting year' that runs from late August to through summer camp.

\*At the end of summer camp each year, families whose adult relatives have meaningfully volunteered will be reimbursed the \$120 Family Involvement Fee.

Meaningful volunteering Must Include:

-Working one or more shifts or positions for the Annual Mulch Sale (If your family is unavailable on the date of the mulch sale, there are volunteer jobs leading up to the sale involving organizing equipment, routes and sales.)

And Two Or More Of The Following:

- Working one or more shifts at the Ravens games to fundraise for the troop.
- Attending a camping weekend as a leader/volunteer.
- Planning and organizing a camping weekend.
- Organizing medical forms for summer camp.
- Attending summer camp as a leader.
- Serving as a merit badge counselor for one or more merit badges (especially for Eagle-required badges – you don't have to be an expert in the area.)

Or Holding One Of The Following Roles:

- Holding a position on the Troop Committee. Positions include:
  - Chartered Organization Representative
  - Committee Chair
  - Treasurer
  - Scoutmaster/Assistant Scoutmasters
  - Advancement Chair
  - Advancement Coordinator
  - Troop Equipment Coordinator
  - Training Coordinator/YPT Champion
  - Summer Camp Coordinator
  - Membership Coordinator/Rechartering
  - Fundraising Chair
  - Hospitality/Court of Honor Coordinator.

-If interested, ask the Committee Chair on how to volunteer.



## Food Reimbursements

The pre-approved reimbursements for meal planning are detailed per day for campouts are below.

- \$4.00 Saturday breakfast
- \$5.00 Saturday lunch
- \$7.00 Saturday dinner
- \$4.00 Sunday breakfast

Total \$20 per scout per weekend.

## Scholarships and Hardship Requests

Costs should never prevent participation in Scouting, so if fees are an issue, please contact our Treasurer ([treasurer@troopawesome.com](mailto:treasurer@troopawesome.com)) and they can talk through options, including a payment plan. This is confidential and will not be discussed with anyone in the troop other than the Treasurer and the family. Treasurer reviews each request on a case by case basis. Treasurer can approve requests for hardship directly. Challenges to this decision can go to the committee chair. Treasurer will report the amount of hardship requests to the committee without names.

## Troop Communications And Additional Resources

### Scoutbook

<http://www.scoutbook.com>

Log-In/Password required (Contact [committee@troopsawesome.com](mailto:committee@troopsawesome.com) for assistance with access)

Includes event calendar (with online RSVPs), email communication tool, contact information, rank and awards tracking

- At least one parent/guardian of each Scout should be registered in Scoutbook and accessing their account regularly. Highly recommended for all scouts that are Second Class or above.
- It's critical that scouts and parents RSVP YES OR NO to events in Scoutbook. RSVP's should be done 30 days ahead for each event whenever possible. If a Scout has RSVP'd yes but does not attend an outing after either food or tickets are purchased, the Scout will be responsible for the fees

associated with that outing. Specific RSVP deadlines may be established by event; in those cases, a Scout will not be able to attend if deadlines are not met.

## My Scouting

<http://myscouting.org>

Log-In/Password required (You can register yourself.)

Youth Protection Training

## BSA

<http://www.scouting.org>

General Information

## MeritBadge.Org

[http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Main_Page)

Merit Badge Information and Workbooks

## TroopAwesome Website

[www.troopawesome.com](http://www.troopawesome.com)

For the latest troop information including this handbook.

## Getting Started

New Scouts should meet with their Scoutmaster at a meeting or event to talk through rank requirements and make a plan to reach their first rank (Scout).

Prior to starting a merit badge, the Scout must ask the Scoutmaster for permission to start the merit badge and the Scoutmaster will assign a merit badge counselor.

Scouts should also 'start a blue card' (old, pre-internet terminology for opening a merit badge with a Merit Badge Counselor) for the Camping Merit badge. This merit badge requires 20 nights of camping, but the merit badge must be opened before the camping nights count toward the tally.

Scouts should also talk with the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster or Advancement Coordinator about Eagle rank merit badges that might require activities that Scouts are doing in their daily lives (ie – a visit to an ethnic festival counts toward a requirement in the Citizenship in the World merit badge, but unless the merit badge is opened, such a visit would not be counted toward completion.)

Other Eagle rank merit badges like Personal Management and Personal Fitness require tracking over extended time periods.

## 729/1729 Elected Committee - 2024 - 2025

Committee Chair: Jake Bucksbaum

Email: [committee@troopsawesome.com](mailto:committee@troopsawesome.com)

Chartered Organization Representative: Stuart Blair

Treasurer: Eric McCray

Email: [treasurer@troopawesome.com](mailto:treasurer@troopawesome.com)

Scoutmaster: James Pessagno / Phil Baker

Assistant Scoutmasters: Ann Kerg-Bucksbaum, Julie Kitt, Chad Koehler, Dave Silver

Advancement Chair: Chuck Starkey

Advancement Coordinator:

Troop Equipment Coordinator:

Training Coordinator/YPT Champion:

Summer Camp Coordinator: David Capen

Membership Coordinator/Rechartering:

Fundraising Chair:

Hospitality/Court of Honor Coordinator: Allyson Hocker