

# TROOP 297 PARENT HANDBOOK

## Troop Committee Policies and Procedures

Version 1.2 (May 21, 2010)

This handbook is intended for all parents in the troop. It is a compilation of policies and procedures that have either evolved over time or that have been decided upon by the troop's adult committee; as such it is a living document that will change as new policies and procedures are put into place or existing ones are changed by the committee. Please contact the committee chairman if you have any questions pertaining to this document, or if you know of an additional topic that you feel should be included in this document.

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### ACCOMMODATIONS

Reserve accommodations needed for an event as far in advance as possible, and obtain confirmation of the reservation in writing. Reserve forest preserves on January 2nd if possible, as spots for the coming year become available then and fill quickly. Take copies of the paperwork concerning the reservation with you to the event; give the originals to the treasurer.

### ADVANCEMENTS AND AWARDS

The advancement chair keeps track of the scout's advancements in rank and completed merit badges, purchases badges, patches, and pins at the scout shop and prepares them for

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presentation at the next court of honor, updates advancements and awards in TroopMaster, and provides scouts with an individual advancement report several times each year.

For rank advancements, the scout must show his scout book to the advancement chair for review; the advancement chair will then notify council, update TroopMaster, and give out the rank advancement patch. For merit badges, the scout must give the advancement chair his completed merit badge card in order to receive his badge at the next court of honor. If the advancement chair is not available at troop meetings, then the scout should email the advancement chair to find a suitable time to meet.

## **CAMPING AND CLIMBING EQUIPMENT**

The troop owns it's own camping and climbing equipment, which includes tents, dining shelters, patrol boxes, stoves, pots and pans, lanterns, axes and saws, climbing ropes and harnesses, and many other items needed when camping. The quartermaster inventories, stores, and maintains all of the troop equipment, and identifies the need for new equipment.

## **CANCELLATIONS**

A person who signs up for an event and then cancels will not be charged for the event if:

- the cancellation is due to medical reasons.
- someone else takes that person's spot.

Otherwise that person may be charged for costs already incurred, such as:

- event fees already paid to council or district.
- tickets to activities if the tickets were already bought and cannot be refunded.
- gas if that person was included when determining the gas fee.
- grub money if the grub masters have already bought the food.

Any situation not mentioned above will be handled on an individual basis.

If the cancellation is for medical reasons or if a replacement person cannot be found, and a council or district event fee was already paid, then the person that cancelled (or his parents, if the person cancelling is a scout) needs to submit a written request to council or district for a refund in the form of a check payable to "Troop 297". The council office (847-824-6880) will be able to tell you who is in charge of the event. The mailing address for council is Northwest Suburban Council, 600 Wheeling Road, Mount Prospect, IL 60056.

## **CHECK REQUESTS**

If you need to pay a deposit for an event, or pay a vendor for a product, fill out a Check Request Form (download from the troop's website) and submit it to the treasurer. Make sure you get a receipt after sending in the check, then give the original receipt to the treasurer so it

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can be attached to the Check Request Form. If you want to keep a copy of the receipt, make a copy before you give the original to the treasurer.

If you need to pay for accommodations or an activity at an event, but do not know the exact amount you will be charged, then the treasurer will give you a check with the amount left blank. **AS SOON AS YOU GET BACK FROM THE EVENT EMAIL THE TREASURER WITH THE AMOUNT OF THE CHECK.** This is very important as the check book cannot be balanced and the event cannot be closed until the treasurer knows the amount of the check.

**NOTE:** The bank requires that troop checks have two authorized signatures, so look over the check you receive from the treasurer to make sure it has two signatures.

## **CONSUMABLE FEES**

The consumable fee is a \$1 fee that is added onto the event fee whenever the troop will be cooking at an event using troop supplies. These supplies include propane, charcoal, Coleman (white) gas, lighter fluid, mantles, aluminum foil, cooking oil, dish soap, pot scrubbers, bleach, salt and pepper, garbage bags, paper towels, toilet paper, and firewood. The **EVENT FEE** worksheet in the **EVENT SPREADSHEET** automatically adds the consumable fee into the event fee if the troop will be cooking at the event.

## **CROSSOVERS**

The troop congratulates these Webelos scouts for earning their Arrow of Light award and choosing to continue their journey through scouting. At their Blue and Gold Dinner the troop gives these scouts the following gifts:

- Boy Scout handbook
- Boy Scout loops
- Boy Scout slide
- troop hat with the troop's custom star sewn on
- troop neckerchief (hand made!) with the troop's custom star sewn on

Boy Scouts is a step up from Cub Scouts – it offers boys new adventures and opportunities to explore the great outdoors. It makes sense, therefore, that a Boy Scout troop costs more to run than a Cub Scout pack. One of the ways the troop covers these costs is through the troop's registration fee. For crossovers the registration fee is due on or before the Blue and Gold Dinner. Crossover parents can choose to pay the registration fee in full when crossing over or use the troop's crossover payment plan to help ease their way into Boy Scouts. Under this plan half of the registration fee is due on or before the Blue and Gold Dinner, and the other half is due on or before June 1st. By this time the scout accounts will have been transferred from the pack to the troop, and the new scouts will have had an opportunity to participate in the troop's spring fundraiser and earn money for their scout accounts.

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## **DEPOSITS**

If you have money to deposit into the troop's bank account, fill out a Deposit Form (download from the troop's website) and submit it to the treasurer. If you have tracked the money on a spreadsheet, then just fill in the spreadsheet totals on the Deposit Form and attach the spreadsheet to the Deposit Form. All checks must be made out to "Troop 297", with the specific event, fundraiser, etc. written in the memo area of the check.

If you are an event leader, meet with the treasurer after you've collected all of the event fees, but before the event, and email your event spreadsheet to the treasurer. If you have not collected all of the event fees before the event, give the treasurer whatever money you have, then give the treasurer the rest at the first troop meeting following the event. If you are organizing a fundraiser, meet with the treasurer after you've collected all of the money having to do with that fundraiser, and email your fundraiser spreadsheet to the treasurer.

The person handing over the money and the treasurer must count the money together as a safeguard for both parties. Only after they both agree on the amount should the money be handed over to the treasurer.

## **EAGLE PROJECTS**

An Eagle Project is a requirement for the rank of Eagle. The project must be something that would be helpful to a religious institution, school, or community. The scout must first find a project that interests him, research the benefits of the project, define its scope, and determine what materials are required and how many man hours it would take to finish it, then have the project approved by his Eagle advisor and the troop's adult committee. After picking a date for the project day, he must plan, organize, and fund (if necessary) the project. He must recruit volunteers to do the actual work by creating and passing out a flyer and talking about his project to scouts, family, and friends. On the day of the project the scout and his volunteers put his plan into action to complete the project; the scout is supposed to lead his volunteers and oversee the project, not do all of the work himself. After the project is over he must document the project using the official Eagle Project Workbook.

There is no official signup sheet for an Eagle Project. The scout will pass out his flyer, talk at troop meetings, and send out emails inviting everyone to help. Younger scouts may not know this older scout well, but the older scout was once a younger scout and spent many years in this troop advancing through the ranks, so support this scout in his efforts and be ready and willing to help on his project day.

## **EAGLE SCOUT COURT OF HONOR**

Not every Eagle Scout has an Eagle Scout Court of Honor, but for those who do it is a very poignant occasion, one that the scout will remember for the rest of his life. This special court of honor is meant to honor the Eagle Scout's accomplishments, but it can also inspire younger

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scouts to go the distance and give Life scouts the push they need to finish their trail to Eagle. All members of the troop should try and attend this court of honor, even those who don't know the Eagle Scout well, as a sign of respect for all the time, effort, and determination it took him to attain the rank of Eagle Scout.

Unlike a regular court of honor, which is put together by the troop, an Eagle Scout Court of Honor is hosted by the scout's parents. The parents send invitations to council and district executives, fellow Eagle Scouts and scouters, family, and friends. The venue is somewhere special to the scout, such as a church, school, banquet hall, or even outdoors. The ceremony is more formal, with a program, a color guard of the scout's choosing, speakers (which may include local dignitaries), an awards presentation, and a slide show. Refreshments, a buffet, or a sit down dinner follow the ceremony. Items from the scout's history in scouting are displayed, including his Eagle book and Letters of Commendation from dignitaries, such as current and past Presidents.

No matter the venue or style of the court of honor, it takes a lot of work on the part of the parents to pull it all together, and they would welcome any help you could give. There is an **EAGLE COURT OF HONOR CHECKLIST** that can be downloaded from the troop's website to keep track of all the tasks involved with the court of honor, plus there is a bin in the troop's storage locker with items that can be borrowed from past court of honors. To help with the cost, the troop reimburses the parents up to \$250 as long as their son was a "full" member of the troop on the day of his board of review. The parents need to fill out a Reimbursement Form (download from the troop's website), and submit that form along with a copy of the original receipts to the treasurer within a month after the court of honor, or by the end of the year, whichever comes first. Parents can also take money out of their son's scout account to reimburse themselves for additional expenses (see **REIMBURSEMENTS**).

## **END OF YEAR PICNIC**

The End of Year Picnic is a combined potluck picnic, court of honor, and campout. It is usually held sometime in August at the District 54 Nature Center. All scouts of Troop 297, past and present, along with Webelos from area packs are invited. The event is free to all who come, with all costs covered by the troop.

## **EVENT FEES**

Events are designed to be self supporting through event fees, which cover accommodation fees, group activity fees, food costs, consumable fees, parking fees, and gas reimbursement for drivers. The event fee is calculated on a per person basis, and is due to the event leader before the event. The only exception to this rule is for simple day outings such as clay shooting – for these outings you can have people pay by cash at the outing.

The **EVENT FEE** worksheet in the **EVENT SPREADSHEET** calculates the event fee for you based on the data you input concerning the event. Using the **EVENT FEE** worksheet to

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calculate the event fee is easier than doing it by hand, and ensures that all costs are included and that it is done consistently from event to event.

## **EVENT LEADERS**

The troop is always in need of event leaders, and any adult in the troop can be an event leader. If you are an event leader, ask the treasurer for the current master EVENT SPREADSHEET; the spreadsheet is modified as time goes on and new situations arise from the different events, so always obtain the latest version from the treasurer. In this spreadsheet are different worksheets (tabs):

- **CHECK LIST:** This worksheet keeps track of the status of each of the tasks associated with the event. This is a great tool for new event leaders.
- **EVENT FEE:** This worksheet automatically calculates the event fee based on the data you enter, and automatically modifies the SIGNUP worksheet for your event.
- **SIGNUP:** This worksheet keeps track of who has signed up for the event and their method of payment.
- **GRUB MONEY:** This worksheet calculates the amount of money (and denominations) needed based on the number of people coming to the event and the cost per person for each meal.
- **GRUB MASTER:** This worksheet is a printable Grub Master Form. This form is used by the event leader and the grub master to record the distribution of grub money, then later to reconcile the grocery receipts and any leftover money.
- **DRIVER LIST:** This worksheet keeps track of who is driving to the event and who is riding with each driver. It's optional, there in case you need it.
- **NOTES:** This worksheet is a handy place to store notes about the event, which would be a big help for the next person who leads this event.

If you have any problems with the spreadsheet or with the event, ask the treasurer for help.

Once the event is over, the event leader should sum up the event at the next committee meeting: did the scouts like it, should the troop do it again and how often, were there any problems, and could anything be done differently next time to make it better.

## **EXCESS FUNDS**

There are three types of excess funds:

- **GENERAL FUND:** If the income for the year exceeds the expenses for the year, then the excess funds will be rolled over into the next calendar year.
- **NAPOWAN:** Napowan is included in the general fund budget because its ending balance varies widely from year to year, depending on the number of adults and scouts who go, the cost of the pizza dinner, and the cost of gas. If the ending balance is greater than \$100, then the excess funds will be refunded to the scouts who attended the event by crediting their scout accounts.

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- **EVENTS:** Events are not included in the troop's budget because they should end up with a zero balance. At the end of the calendar year, any excess funds (minus the consumable fees) from the year's events will be rolled over into the general fund for the next calendar year.

## **FUNDRAISERS**

Fundraisers are used to help cover troop expenses and to help scouts earn money for their scout accounts. The troop does not do buy-out fundraisers, and 100% of the proceeds from scout account fundraisers go to the scouts. Our troop's fundraisers are:

- **GENERAL FUND** fundraisers are usually single events, with the profits going into the troop's general fund to help with troop expenses. Profits from these fundraisers are either in the form of a check (i.e. restaurant days, food cleanup) or on a cost-per-person basis (i.e. car washes, dinners). General fund fundraisers are used primarily to cover the cost of troop storage.
- The **FLOWER** fundraiser in the spring and the **WREATH** fundraiser in the fall are scout account fundraisers. The scouts takes orders for products from relatives, friends, and neighbors, then later deliver those products and collect payment. The scouts earn a percentage of the retail price on every product they sell, with all of the profits from the fundraiser credited to the appropriate scout accounts.
- The **POPCORN** fundraiser in the fall is the same as the other scout account fundraisers, with an additional twist. With advance approval, the scouts can also sell popcorn at site sales in front of neighboring businesses. The scouts that participate at site sales earn a percentage of the profit from the popcorn they sell, plus a percentage of any donations. All of the profits from this fundraiser are credited to the appropriate scout accounts.

Scout uniforms can only be worn when selling for council sponsored fundraisers. Troop wear should be worn when selling for all other fundraisers.

The Unit Money-Earning Application (download from council's web site) must be filled out for all fundraisers that are not sponsored by council; currently only the popcorn fundraiser is sponsored by council. This application needs to be signed by the charter rep, then submitted to council at least two weeks before the fundraiser. Council will sign it and sent it back; the fundraiser coordinator should keep a copy and give the original to the treasurer.

To track orders and payments for scout account fundraisers, the fundraiser coordinator should use the flower, popcorn, or wreath spreadsheets available from the treasurer. These spreadsheets are tailored specifically for these fundraisers.

**NOTE:** General fund fundraisers in which the troop purchases and pays for product upfront should be avoided. This type of fundraiser is inherently risky because if the product doesn't sell, you may not be able to return it and get your money back.

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## **GAS REIMBURSEMENT**

If the trailer is being taken to an event, then the trailer driver is ALWAYS reimbursed for gas. The driver is reimbursed based on gas receipts, plus an additional 10 cents per mile to cover the extra wear and tear on the vehicle caused by pulling such a heavy load.

Whether the car drivers will be reimbursed for gas depends on how far away an event is from the troop's meeting place. As a rule of thumb: Car drivers are reimbursed for trips over 100 miles round trip. Since this is an important consideration for some drivers, the event flyer should expressly state whether car drivers will be reimbursed for gas.

If the trailer is going on an event, or if the car drivers are going to be reimbursed for gas, then the estimated cost of the gas needs to be included in the event fee. Everyone attending the event should be charged the gas fee, even the drivers. The EVENT FEE worksheet in the EVENT SPREADSHEET calculates the gas fee for you.

When being reimbursed for gas, drivers need to fill up right before the start of the trip and again as soon as they get back. All receipts need to be kept, even if paying by cash. Drivers then need to turn in a Reimbursement Form, along with their receipts, to the event leader within 10 days (or two troop meetings) after the event. Once all of the gas reimbursements have been turned in, the event leader will give the forms and receipts to the treasurer, who will then distribute checks and/or credit scout accounts.

If a driver loses the gas receipts, and cannot find the gas charges on the credit card statement, then:

- trailer driver: will be reimbursed based on 10 mpg.
- car driver: will be reimbursed based on the average of all the other car driver reimbursements.

The reimbursement will be credited to the appropriate scout account.

## **GENERAL FUND BUDGET**

The troop uses the calendar year – January to December – as its fiscal year. At the beginning of each new fiscal year the treasurer will create a tentative budget based on the previous year's actual costs. After the committee has reviewed the new budget, the treasurer will make any suggested changes and bring it before the committee for approval. Any changes to the budget during the year must be approved by the committee. Reimbursement from the general fund for expenses that have not been included in the budget must be in the form of an email request to the committee chairman, who has the authority to grant reimbursements up to \$100. The budget report, along with other financial reports, are available at monthly committee meetings.

## **GRUB MONEY**

The grub money is included in the event fee, making it easier to collect the grub money and

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ensuring that the grub masters, who buy the food for the outing, will have the money in hand when they go shopping. About a week before the event the event leader uses the GRUB MONEY worksheet in the EVENT SPREADSHEET to calculate the amount of cash (and denominations) needed for all the grub masters (there is usually one scout per patrol). This calculation is based on the number of people attending the event, the number of meals that will be prepared, and the cost per person per meal, using the troop's standard fee for each type of meal: breakfast, lunch, dinner, or snack (aka cracker barrel). The event leader should plan on getting more cash than is needed in case additional people signup at the last minute.

Either the event leader or the treasurer will use a troop check made out to "cash" to get the money from the bank (don't wait until the last minute to notify the treasurer!). At the next troop meeting the event leader will distribute the cash to each of the grub masters in an envelope that can be sealed. The event leader and the grub master need to count out the money together so both parties agree on the amount of money the grub master is being given, and fill out a Grub Master Form (one per grub master). Once the event is over, each grub master must turn in his receipts and any leftover cash to the event leader with 10 days (or two troop meetings) after the event. The event leader then reconciles the money with the grub master using the original Grub Master Form. If a grub master has spent more than he was given, then he will be reimbursed by crediting his scout account. Once all of the grub money has been reconciled, then the event leader will give the Grub Master Forms, receipts, and any leftover cash to the treasurer, who will redeposit the money into the bank.

If the adults will be eating meals as their own patrol, as opposed to eating meals with the scouts, then an adult needs to volunteer to organize their meals. This person will be considered a grub master and will follow the same procedures as the scout grub masters, with any reimbursements credited to the son's scout account.

## **MEDICAL RECORDS**

The troop's health and safety chair keeps medical records on file for each scout and adult in the troop, and supplies copies of the medical records to the event leader for each person attending an event. The BSA Annual Health and Medical Record can be downloaded from the council's website. It has three parts:

- A. Filled out by parents or guardians, and includes general and insurance information, medical history, and medications.
- B. Must be completed and signed by a certified and licensed health-care provider after a physical examination.
- C. Filled out by parents or guardians, and includes the parental informed consent and hold harmless/release agreement and the talent release form.

The troop requires that all members who participate in events and activities complete all three parts on an annual basis.

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## NAPOWAN (SUMMER CAMP)

The troop's annual week-long summer camp is held at Camp Napowan in Wild Rose, Wisconsin. The Northwest Suburban Council owns and operates Napowan. The troop usually goes the third week in July, although there are contingent weeks if a scout cannot go with the troop.

All fees for Napowan are paid to the troop's summer camp coordinator, who then pays any money owed to council. The fees for Napowan include:

- **COUNCIL CAMP FEE:** Council has three deadlines for its scout camp fee, with the fee getting progressively higher for each deadline: the Early Bird Discount is due by early March, the Regular Camp Fee is due by early April, and the Last Minute Fee is due before the start of camp.
- **TROOP CAMP FEE:** The scout troop camp fee is due by early May. It covers pizza night, gas reimbursement for the trailer and car drivers, and half of the cost of the council adult camp fees. Adults do not pay the same troop camp fee that the scouts pay, but do pay for half of the cost of the council adult camp fees.
- **MERIT BADGE FEE:** Merit badge fees are due several weeks before camp. Some merit badges require a fee that needs to be paid beforehand and some do not.
- **WEDNESDAY OUTING:** On Wednesday of camp week the third year Napowan scouts go on a special outing which the scouts and adults pay for separately.

To help offset some of the cost of summer camp, scouts in grades 5-7 have the opportunity to earn money for Napowan by applying for a Schaumburg Township Elementary School Foundation Memorial Scholarship Grant (due mid March) or a Schaumburg Township Council of PTA's Summer Scholarship (due mid April). Each scholarship application can be downloaded from the sponsoring organization's website. If a scout is awarded scholarship money, then the money is usually sent directly to council with a notification letter sent to the parents. **LET THE TREASURER KNOW AS SOON AS YOU ARE AWARDED SCHOLARSHIP MONEY.** After the scout attends Napowan, the money will be deducted from the troop's final Napowan payment and the treasurer will transfer the money from the troop's general fund to the scout's scout account. This means that the scout must pay for Napowan in full before he goes, because he will not receive the scholarship money until after he comes back. If the scout doesn't go to Napowan, then the money must be returned to the sponsoring organization.

To track signups and payments, the summer camp coordinator should use the Napowan spreadsheet available from the treasurer. This spreadsheet is tailored specifically for Napowan.

## PERMISSION SLIPS

The troop's permission slip acts as a parental consent form, "Hold Harmless" waiver, and basic medical directive. Each adult attending an event must fill out and sign a permission slip. Each scout attending an event must have their parent/guardian fill out and sign a permission slip for

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them, then the scout must sign the permission slip. The event leader must have all of the permission slips before the event. It's easiest if the permission slips are filled out when signing up for an event.

The event leader can download the troop's standard permission slip from the troop's website. After tailoring it for the event, the event leader should email the permission slip to the webmaster for posting on the troop's website, email it via the troop's Yahoo group, and have copies available at troop meetings.

## **PROMOTING EVENTS**

The best way to promote an event is to pass out a flyer with all of the pertinent information, including the event fee and the deadline for payment. An "Event Flyer" template can be downloaded from the troop's website to help with creating the flyer. The event leader should email the flyer to the webmaster for posting on the troop's website, email it via the troop's Yahoo group, and have copies available at troop meetings. The event leader should also make announcements and reminders about the event during circle up time at troop meetings, then email any last minute changes or reminders.

## **QUICKEN (TROOP FINANCE SOFTWARE)**

The troop uses Quicken Deluxe software to keep track of its financial transactions: deposits and check transactions, scout account transactions, and unit account transactions. Each transaction entered into Quicken is assigned to a category (such as an event, fundraiser, or type of expense) and reports can be generated to track all the transactions that have been entered against a category.

The troop looked into using TroopLedger, which is made by the same company that makes TroopMaster; however TroopLedger is not able to import Quicken data so all of the troop's historical information would be lost. Therefore the decision was made to stick with Quicken.

## **REFUNDS**

The treasurer posts all refunds from an event to scout accounts unless directed otherwise (email the treasurer if you prefer a check). If an event ends up with an overage (positive balance), then refunds may be given if the overage is due to:

- **GAS:** If the gas fee overage is greater than \$100, then the entire overage (as long as the event does not go negative) will be refunded to all of the people who attended the event, including those who cancelled but were still charged the gas fee.
- **ACTIVITY FEES:** If an activity is cancelled due to the weather or other unforeseen events, then the activity fee will be refunded to all of the people who paid that fee, including those who cancelled but were still charged the activity fee.

Any other situations will be handled on an individual basis by the committee.

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## **REGISTRATION**

The troop's annual registration process registers scouts and adults with the Northwest Suburban Council and with Troop 297. The registration year runs from March 1 through February 28 or 29. In early January the committee chairman will give each member of the troop a registration form which needs to be filled out and returned along with a registration fee before the end of January. The registration fee includes a troop fee, council's annual dues, and a Boys Life subscription (one per family). The troop fee is used to offset troop expenses, such as the troop's annual recharter with the Boy Scouts of America, advancements and awards, camping equipment and supplies, trailer upkeep, training fees, troop service project, troop storage, and year end picnic/campout. The troop fee is not used for any personal items.

At the Pathfinder Recharter Clinic, which is usually held the last Saturday in January, the committee chairman and the treasurer will go over the troop's roster with a council representative, then pay the council registrar any money owed council: scout and adult dues, Boys Life subscription fees, and the troop's yearly recharter fee. In early April council will send the scoutmaster a BSA Certificate of Recharter for the troop, a current roster for the troop, and a registration card for each registered member of the troop.

A scout who joins the troop after the registration year has begun will pay a prorated registration fee based on the number of months left in the registration year, and will be given the troop's hat and neckerchief as a welcome gift. A scout who will be aging out during the registration year will pay a prorated troop fee based on the date of his 18th birthday (council does not prorate annual dues for scouts who will be aging out).

Since the troop would like every scout to be able to stay in scouting, families that are dealing with financial hardship should speak with the committee chairman about making special arrangements for the payment of the registration fee.

To track registration choices and payments, the committee chairman should use the registration spreadsheet available from the treasurer. This spreadsheet is tailored specifically for registration.

## **REIMBURSEMENTS**

To be reimbursed for expenses, fill out a Reimbursement Form (download from the troop's website), mark whether you want a check or a credit to your son's scout account, and attach your original receipts and any other documentation to the form. If you want to keep a copy of the receipt or documentation, make a copy before you give the originals to the treasurer.

Submit reimbursements having to do with an event, including gas reimbursements, to the event leader within 10 days (or two troop meetings) after the event. Submit all other reimbursements

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directly to the treasurer before the next committee meeting if possible so they can be reflected in the treasurer's monthly reports.

Always keep your receipts – if you are not given a receipt, ask for one. You should have a receipt for every expense you incur during an event, including gas fill ups, and for every purchase you make for the troop. If you lose your receipts, check your credit card statement or ask for a duplicate receipt. If this doesn't work out, then the reimbursement will require the approval of the committee chairman and the treasurer.

## **SCOUT ACCOUNTS**

Scout Accounts are bookkeeping accounts, not separate bank accounts. Through scout account fundraisers, such as popcorn, scouts have the opportunity to earn money for their scout accounts. Scouts can use this money to pay for basically anything scout related: registration, events, summer camp, camping equipment (tents, backpacks, sleeping bags, etc.), clothing (hiking boots, long underwear, etc.), merit badge books, and scout store purchases. It's a way for scouts to learn self-reliance and to pay their own way.

In reality, however, the scout accounts are also a convenient way to handle the payment of fees, reimbursements, and refunds. Money is added to scout accounts automatically by the treasurer after scout account fundraisers, and when refunding event costs and reimbursing without receipts (plus a few other situations that are mentioned throughout this document). Money can also be added to scout accounts, upon parental request, when reimbursing for troop related costs (ex. reserving an event accommodation). Money is taken out of scout accounts, upon parental request, for the payment of adult and/or scout fees (registration, event, summer camp) and for reimbursements in the form of a check for scout related purchases or training courses. Money can also be transferred, upon parental request, to and from other scout accounts.

Parents and scouts can find out the balance of their scout accounts by emailing the treasurer. The treasurer can also email back a transaction report, if requested. In addition, adults who are collecting money for fees have a listing of the scout account balances in order to verify whether there is enough money in the accounts to pay for the fees. Scout account balances should never go below zero.

If a scout will be aging out soon, and he has money left in his scout account, then the treasurer will contact that scout prior to his 18th birthday to find out what he would like to do with the remaining money in his scout account:

- Use the money in the account to buy scout related items. The scout must submit a Reimbursement Form and his receipts to the treasurer before his 18th birthday. He will be reimbursed for the amount of his purchases, or for the remaining amount in his scout account, whichever is greater.
- Transfer the money to a sibling's scout account. If the scout has a sibling in the troop, then this is the default option.

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- Transfer the money to the Scout Assistance Fund. If the scout does not have a sibling in the troop, then this is the default option.
- Transfer the money to the general fund.
- Transfer the money to another scout account.

Scouts who are dropping out of scouting have these same options. Scouts who are transferring to another troop or crew have these same options, or their parents can submit a Check Request (download from the troop's website) to the treasurer requesting a check for the balance of the scout account made out to the new troop or crew (not to the parents or scouts).

## **SCOUT ASSISTANCE FUND**

When a scout ages out of scouting, the scout or his parents can choose to donate the money in his scout account to the Scout Assistance Fund. The purpose of this fund is to help families that otherwise couldn't afford scouting. If a family finds itself in a hardship situation, then the parents can request financial assistance from the committee chairman. If the chairman grants the request, then the chairman will direct the treasurer via email to transfer a specific amount from the Scout Assistance Fund to the scout's scout account. The transfer will remain a confidential matter between the parents, the committee chairman, and the treasurer. Only the committee chairman and the treasurer have the authority to view the Scout Assistance Fund transaction report.

## **SERVICE HOURS**

To obtain the rank of Second Class, Star, and Life, a scout must work a certain number of service hours. Service projects that count towards rank advancement are ones that benefit the community, the charter organization, or an organization other than Boy Scouts (with the exception of Eagle Scout Service Projects, which do count). For example, when our troop cleans up tables at the Hoffman Estates 4<sup>th</sup> of July Festival, we are helping the Village of Hoffman Estates, but since we are getting paid to do it the project does not count towards rank advancement service hours.

## **SIGNUP SHEETS**

Each event should have a signup sheet or an attendance sheet so that the event leader can keep track of who is going on the event and how each person has paid. The only reason to use an attendance sheet is for a simple day outing or service project; otherwise the event leader should use the troop's EVENT SPREADSHEET available from the treasurer. After filling out the EVENT FEE worksheet, the SIGNUP worksheet will be created for you. If you have any problems with the spreadsheet, ask the treasurer for help.

The signup sheet, along with the event flyer and permission slip, should be available at troop meetings. The event leader is responsible for collecting all of the event fees before the event. Payments can be made by cash, check, or deductions from scout accounts. The event leader

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will have a listing of the scout account balances in order to verify whether there is enough money in the accounts to cover the event fees. When multiple event signups are going on at the same time, each event leader is responsible for updating the SCOUT ACCOUNT BALANCES spreadsheet each week with any scout account payments for their event, and then emailing the spreadsheet to the treasurer. The treasurer will combine the events onto one spreadsheet and email it back to all of the event leaders.

Once the signup sheet is final, the event leader should email the EVENT SPREADSHEET to the treasurer. The signup sheet is an integral part of the event paperwork and is used to balance the money, deduct fees from scout accounts, and update TroopMaster. If the treasurer does not receive a signup sheet or an attendance sheet, then TroopMaster cannot be updated and the scouts will not receive credit for that event.

## **TOUR PERMIT**

Tour Permits are required for activities that take place more than 20 miles from a unit's normal meeting location OR include an overnight camping trip (except for council sponsored events). BSA insurance coverage only applies to official scouting activities – an approved tour permit registers that activity as an official scouting activity. Tour permits also reinforce two-deep leadership, transportation, aquatic activity, and climbing requirements, and can be used to help locate the troop in the event of an emergency.

The tour permit states that “BSA policy requires at least two adult leaders on all camping trips and tours. The adult leader in charge of this group must be at least 21 years old. All registered adults participating in any nationally conducted event or activity must have completed BSA Youth Protection Training. At least one registered adult who has completed BSA Youth Protection Training must be present at all other events and activities that require a tour permit.”

For trips of less than 500 miles one way, or for trips to a council-owned camp, the event coordinator will submit a Local Tour Permit to council at least two weeks before the event. For trips more than 500 miles one way, the event coordinator will submit a National Tour Permit to council at least four weeks before the event. Council will sign the permit and send it back to the event coordinator, who will give it to the event leader. The approved tour permit must be present at the event at all times.

You can review the council's Local Tour Permit on the council's website. The event coordinator needs specific information from the event leader in order to fill out the permit: date and location of the event, number of youth and adults attending, driver information, event leader and assistant event leader, names of adults with specific training (depending on the event). Check out “Tour Permit FAQ” on the council's website for more information.

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## **TRAILER**

The troop owns the most spectacular Boy Scout trailer anywhere. In July 2007 the scouts painted the trailer from designs created by Mike Saubert, the scoutmaster at that time.

When not at a troop event, the trailer is parked in the Hoffman Estates Police Station's parking lot. The trailer is hauled to most events where there will be tent camping, and it holds tents, patrol boxes, the troop's first aid kit, and other camping equipment. The quartermaster and scoutmaster have keys to the trailer; if you need to put something in or take something out of the trailer, then contact one of them. The quartermaster makes sure the trailer receives any necessary upkeep, and the treasurer handles the annual license plate renewal fee. Whether or not the troop needs trailer insurance has been an ongoing discussion for some time.

## **TRAINING**

More and more courses are available at the BSA online learning center ([olc.scouting.org](http://olc.scouting.org)), including:

- YOUTH PROTECTION TRAINING (YPT) ensures that the boys involved in scouting are kept safe and is required for all registered adults; however, we encourage all the parents in the troop, plus the older scouts, to take it. This course takes very little time to complete. It must be retaken every two years.
- HAZARDOUS WEATHER should be taken by all adults who go on events and is required for event leaders.
- SAFE SWIM DEFENSE, SAFETY AFLOAT, CLIMB ON SAFELY, and TREK SAFELY should be taken by all adults who go on events, especially event leaders.
- FAST START, THIS IS SCOUTING (formerly New Leader Essentials), and TROOP COMMITTEE CHALLENGE should be taken by all registered adults.

The troop will reimburse registered adults for the following classroom-led courses:

- TROOP COMMITTEE SPECIFICS is required for committee members. It is also available online but the classroom-led one is much more thorough.
- SCOUTMASTER SPECIFICS is required for scoutmasters and assistant scoutmasters.
- INTRODUCTION TO OUTDOOR LEADER SKILLS (IOLS) provides leaders with the basic skills needed for the success of their outings. This course is normally a day and a half long and conducted at a local scout camp on a weekend.

## **TRANSPORTATION TO EVENTS**

Once an event leader has determined which adults will be driving to an event and how many passengers each car can take, then the other adults and scouts going on the event are assigned to one of these cars. Each driver will have a packet consisting of directions, permission slips, and medical records. Both scouts and adults should wear their scout shirts while going to and from an event.

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## **TROOP STORAGE**

The troop's gear is kept in a locker at a storage facility. The quartermaster and the scoutmaster have access to this facility; if you need to put something in or take something out of the locker, then contact one of them. The troop is billed for the locker on a monthly basis, however if there is enough money in the general fund at the start of the calendar year, then the treasurer will pay for the entire year at one time for convenience sake, to freeze the rental rate for the year, and to avoid any possible late payment fees.

## **TROOP WEAR**

Every couple of years the troop purchases t-shirts and sweatshirts that are then offered for sale to scouts and adults. The troop also makes its own hats and neckerchiefs, which are given as gifts to crossovers and boys new to the troop. If a hat or neckerchief is lost, replacement ones can be purchased for \$6 each.

## **TROOPMASTER**

TroopMaster is a scout unit management software system that was developed by a family of scouters. It keeps track of data on adults and scouts, events and activities, advancements, merit badges, training, leadership, service projects, Order of the Arrow eligibility, and much more. There are many different reports that can be produced, plus you can create custom reports by selecting which data you want to see.

TroopMaster can be run on multiple computers, with either read-only or update access granted to each application. The scoutmaster, committee chair, and webmaster have read-only access. The following adults are the only ones who are granted update access:

- **DATABASE ADMINISTER:** Renews the troop's license for TroopMaster each year, installs upgrades, maintains a list of the troop's merit badge counselors, and enters information from applications such as scout and adult personal data, election results, patrol assignments, Order of the Arrow data, annual school grade promotions, and adult position changes.
- **TREASURER:** Enters data on events and activities from the event signup sheets or from information supplied via email (ex. participation at non-troop events).
- **ADVANCEMENT CHAIR:** Enters scout advancement and merit badge data after reviewing the scout's handbook or receiving the completed merit badge card.
- **TRAINING COORDINATOR:** Enters courses that have been taken by scouts and adults after receiving a copy of the training certificate.
- **TOUR PERMIT COORDINATOR:** Accesses driver information when filling out tour permits.

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## UNIT ACCOUNT

The troop has a unit account at council. The unit account is similar to a bank debit account. Money in this account can be used to pay for advancements and awards at the scout shop, registration or transfer fees (except for registrations paid by check at the yearly Recharter Clinic), council or district training course fees, and event fees for council sponsored events. Only authorized troop members can deduct money from the unit account.

The treasurer keeps track of the balance of the account, then writes a check to NWSC for deposit into the account when the balance is low. When making purchases at the scout shop, the advancement chair should ask for a duplicate receipt, then give that receipt to the treasurer at the next troop meeting. Approved applications and receipts from council that are picked up at Roundtable meetings should be given to the treasurer at the next troop meeting.

## WEBELOS SCOUTS

Webelos scouts can learn a lot about our troop by browsing our website, plus Webelos are welcome to visit any of our troop meetings. The troop also invites Webelos on certain events held throughout the year, such as the End of Year Picnic. Visiting scouts are given one of the troop's carabineers as a gift and the troop's brochure so they can learn more about the troop.

Before posting a new version, update the index (table of contents) by positioning the cursor at the start of the index and pressing PF9.

- Version 1.1**     **1/14/10 committee meeting:** added EXCESS FUNDS section  
**1/14/10 committee meeting:** updated GAS REIMBURSEMENT by  
(1) adding stipend for trailer driver of 10 cents per mile  
(2) changing part about reimbursement without receipts - reimbursement for trailer driver now based on 10 mpg, reimbursement for car drivers now based on average of all the other car driver reimbursements; both credited to scout accounts
- Version 1.2**     **1/14/10 committee meeting:** updated REFUNDS by adding part about gas fee overages  
**3/11/10 committee meeting:** updated CONSUMABLE FEES with a more complete definition of troop supplies  
**4/8/10 committee meeting:** added SERVICE HOURS section  
**5/13/10 committee meeting:** updated GAS REIMBURSEMENT by changing reimbursement for car drivers to events 50 or more miles away (used to be 100 miles)