

Resource Guide for Scouts and Parents



Scouts BSA Troop 614

Scotts Valley, California

Loma Prieta District

Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council

May 2023

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Welcome to Troop 614

Welcome to Scotts Valley Scouts BSA Troop 614. We can't wait to have our next adventure with you. Here is a link to the new scout and parent [welcome letter](#).

Structure of Troop 614

Troop 614 is composed of an all boys troop (Troop 614B) and an all girls troop (Troop 2614G). The separate troop structure is purely administrative in nature and we do most activities as one solid family troop.

Each troop is broken down into smaller patrol units (in groups of 4-8 scouts). Each patrol is all boys or all girls. Scouts camp with their patrols and appoint a leader for each patrol (a patrol leader). More details follow below.

Carrie Häber is the scoutmaster for Troop 2614G and Tim Johnson is the scoutmaster for Troop 614B. Both scoutmasters work together to help the scouts develop a truly unique and exciting scout-led adventure. Both Carrie and Tim have had many years of experience in scouting and leadership.

Adult Leaders

Committee Chair.....	Naiomi Dudek
Chartered Org Representative.....	Valerie Sims Johnson
Advancement Coordinator.....	Valerie Sims Johnson
Outdoor Activity Coordinator.....	Jieun Kim
Troop 614B Scoutmaster.....	Tim Johnson
Troop 614B Assistant Scoutmaster.....	Kim D'Ewart
Troop 2614G Scoutmaster.....	Carrie Häber
Troop 2614G Assistant Scoutmaster.....	Scott Caldwell
Troop 2614G Assistant Scoutmaster.....	Matthew Sims Johnson

Meet Our Scoutmasters

Carrie Häber

Carrie Häber has been involved in Troop 614 since February 2019, when the girls side of the troop was formed. Under the leadership of inaugural scoutmaster, Alan Randolph, Carrie was assistant scoutmaster for the troop. Since January 2022, Carrie has been scoutmaster of the girls.

Carrie was in Girl Scouts in the 1980s and has over 10 years of experience in Girl Scouts leadership as a GS troop leader and co-manager for the Coastal Redwoods service unit. Her daughter, Summer, is also in Girl Scouts in Troop 15504, and is an avid camper and loves the outdoors.

Outside of scouting, Carrie is an assistant dean in the Physical and Biological Sciences at UC Santa Cruz, is the president of her HOA, and creates the Loma Prieta District newsletter for our local unit of the BSA Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council (SVMBC). Carrie studied fine art photography and history in college and loves to learn about history, genealogy, and folklore. Carrie has Saami and Native American

heritage and having a deep connection to nature as a grounding force in her life from an early age helped shape her love of the great outdoors.

Tim Johnson

Tim Johnson became an adult leader in May of 2006 when the leader for his older son's den got transferred back to England and he took over as Den Leader. Since that time he has been den leader for his younger son, Cub Master of Pack 608 for three years, and an adult leader for Troop 614 since 2008. He has been Scoutmaster for the troop since 2017. Tim is also one of the co-founders of the girls troop. His younger son, Matthew, is the troop's latest Eagle Scout (2020). In addition he is a merit badge counselor for Citizen in the Community, in the Nation, in the World, and in Society, as well as for auto maintenance, home repair and woodworking.

He grew up in northern Minnesota where he developed a love of camping, canoeing, and the outdoors in general. One of his favorite experiences in Scouting was when he co-led the troop going to BSA's Northern Tier high adventure camp in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. Tim's view of the importance of Scouting can be summed up with a favorite phrase describing the role of Scoutmaster: "I turn boys and girls into young men and women of character who can lead."

By profession, Tim does product marketing in the software industry and holds an MBA from UC Irvine. He is also active in Kiwanis and does wood turning in his "spare" time.

The Purpose, Mission, Vision, Aims and Methods of Scouting

Purpose

The purpose of the Boy Scouts of America – now Scouts BSA—incorporated on February 8, 1910, and chartered by Congress in 1916—is to provide an educational program for boys and girls to build character, to train in the responsibilities of participating in citizenship, and to develop personal fitness.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Scouts BSA is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

Vision Statement

The Scouts BSA is the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training.

Scouting will continue to:

- Offer young people responsible fun and adventure;
- Instill in young people lifetime values and develop in them ethical character as expressed in the Scout Oath and Law;
- Train young people in citizenship, service, and leadership;
- Serve America's communities and families with its quality, values-based program.

Aims and Methods of the Scouting Program

The scouting program has three specific objectives, commonly referred to as the "Aims of Scouting." They are character development, citizenship training, and personal fitness.

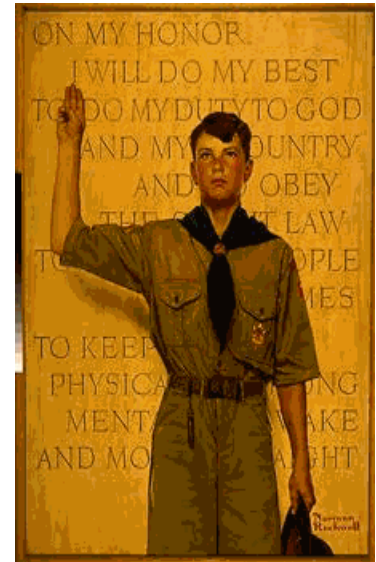
The methods by which the aims are achieved follow in random order to emphasize the equal importance of each:

Ideals

The ideals of Scouting are spelled out in the scout oath, scout law, scout motto, scout slogan, and the outdoor code (see Appendix D). A scout measures themselves against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and as the scout reaches for them, the scout has some control over what and who he or she becomes.

Patrols

The patrol method gives scouts an experience in team building, cooperation, collaboration, and participating citizenship. It places responsibility on young shoulders and teaches boys and girls how to accept it. The patrol method allows scouts to interact in small groups where members can easily relate to each other. These small groups determine troop activities through elected representatives called patrol leaders.



Outdoor Programs

Scouting is designed to take place outdoors. It is in the outdoor setting that scouts share responsibilities and learn to collaborate as a team. In the outdoors, the skills and activities practiced at troop meetings come alive with purpose. Being close to nature helps scouts gain an appreciation for the beauty of the world around us. The outdoors is the laboratory in which scouts learn ecology and practice conservation of nature's resources.

Advancement

Scouting provides a series of surmountable obstacles and steps in overcoming them through the advancement method. The scout plans their advancement and progresses at their own pace as he or she meets each challenge. The sScout is rewarded for each achievement, which helps the scout gain self-confidence. The steps in the advancement system help a sScout grow in self-reliance and in the ability to help others.

Seeing Adult Leadership in Action

Youth learn a great deal by watching how adults conduct themselves. Scout leaders can be positive role models for the members of the troop and allow scouts to witness facilitation of group activities and leadership skills to help them put these skills into practice. Scouts benefit from having skilled and responsive adult leaders who can help mentor and support them as they learn and grow. Reflecting back on experiences as young scouts, many former scouts find that dedicated adult leaders made a profound difference in their lives.

Personal Growth

As scouts plan their activities and progress toward their goals, they experience personal growth. The Good Turn concept is a major part of the personal growth method of scouting. Scouts grow as they participate in community service projects and do Good Turns for others. Probably no device is as successful in developing a basis for personal growth as the daily Good Turn.

Leadership Development

The Scouts BSA program encourages boys and girls to learn and practice leadership skills. Every scout has the opportunity to participate in both shared and independent leadership positions. Understanding the concepts of leadership helps a scout accept the leadership role of others and guides the scout towards the citizenship aim of scouting.

Uniform

The uniform makes the scout troop visible as a force for good and creates a positive youth image in the community. Scouting is an action program, and wearing the uniform is an action that shows each scout's commitment to the aims and purposes of scouting. The uniform gives the scout identity in a world brotherhood of youth who believe in the same ideals. The uniform is practical attire for scout activities and provides a way for scouts to wear the badges that show what they have accomplished.

Policies for Troop 614

Joining Requirements

Any boy or girl who has met the following requirements: age 10 1/2 years of age, completed 5th grade, or has earned the Arrow of Light but is younger than 18 years old, with parental consent may join Scouts BSA troops.

Parent Commitment

Troop 614 requires one (or more) parent/guardian to register as a troop committee member or serve as an adult volunteer in a variety of roles when your child joins the the troop. Here is a link to the [adult membership application](#). You will need to take the online Youth Protection Training using the link provided: <https://www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/>

Additionally, the State of California requires that all volunteers that work with youth submit to Live Scan Fingerprinting. This is good forever but must be done for each organization that you volunteer with. UPS can do this, but there are other places as well that may be less expensive.

Regular attendance is required at the parent/committee meetings and adult volunteers must also take mandatory youth protection training and complete the fingerprinting requirement.

Attendance

Regular attendance is an important part of the scouting program. Scouts must be considered active in the troop for the past three months to be eligible to attend campouts and outings.

To be considered active, a scout must attend 75% of all troop meetings, activities and service projects and must participate in at least one fundraising activity. Failure to do so may result in a scout being considered inactive. If a leave of absence is needed, please contact the SPL and Scoutmaster. Scouts

who regularly attend meetings and other activities will be considered for perfect attendance awards given at the Court of Honor ceremonies.

Patrols have a hard time functioning efficiently with sporadic and irregular attendance. Strong patrols are the secret to a successful scouting experience. Scouts should strive toward 100% attendance and work toward having the best patrol in the troop.

Uniform

All scouts are expected to have and correctly wear a complete uniform to all scouting events. It is expected that new scouts will have obtained a full uniform within the first three months of joining the troop. “Experienced” uniforms can sometimes be obtained through a uniform exchange within the troop or through the council. The troop committee chair or quartermaster supervises the supply of experienced uniforms and can help with reaching out to the council as well.

The full rules for the placement of patches can be found on the web at <https://www.scouting.org/resources/insignia-guide/>. The uniform inspection sheet can be used as a guideline for appropriate insignia and placement.

All formal events and most troop meetings require the formal Class A uniform. We also require Class A uniforms when traveling to and from events. Class B uniforms are for some outings that are more casual. All events that do not list Class B uniforms will require Class A uniforms.

Class A:

- Official Scouts BSA short or long-sleeved shirt with correct insignia and official pants, shorts, or skort.
- Official Scouts BSA socks if wearing shorts or a skort.
- Troop neckerchief and slide.
- Optional: official Scouts BSA bucket hat or baseball cap and belt.
- For formal events: red Rothco wool berets (girls only).
- Close-toed shoes or boots.
- Boys should tuck in shirts; girls may wear their shirt untucked if they have the shorter womens' style uniform shirts.
- Merit badge sashes can be worn for formal events.

Class B:

- Troop 614 t-shirt
- Official Scouts BSA pants, shorts, or skort or blue jeans or black leggings (girls only).

All adult leaders (scoutmaster, assistant scoutmaster, committee chair) are required to wear appropriate uniforms at any scouting function.

A well-prepared Scout should also have their Scout Handbook, a notebook, and pen or pencil at all functions. A scout should consider these items as part of the uniform.

Troop 614 Neckerchief Policy

All registered scouts can purchase a neckerchief unique to Troop 614 (green and tan). The neckerchief is to be worn to all troop meetings, campouts and events (unless specified otherwise) with the standard

scout uniform shirt and rolled under the collar, or worn over the collar. The neckerchief is folded into a triangle so that both green and tan sides are showing. Once rolled, the green side is worn on the right.

We may be designing a new neckerchief soon - more to come on that.

Discipline

The scouts run the scouting program. Adult leadership is present to counsel, guide, and provide new learning experiences for the scouts.

The Patrol Leader's Council (PLC) is responsible for troop program functions and disciplinary action. Physical hazing or initiation is not permitted.

If a scout refuses to follow the direction of the PLC at any time, the scoutmaster or assistant scoutmaster will counsel the scout to set expectations and discuss the issues at hand. If the scout does not comply, the PLC may request that the scout's parents attend meetings with the scout or pick the scout up from an event or activity. The PLC may decide on other corrective actions to be taken, under the guidance of the scoutmaster or assistant scoutmaster.

After three disruptive incidents, the senior patrol leader and scoutmaster should consult with the committee at large on further actions to be taken, ranging from probation, suspension, or dismissal from the troop.

The scouts parents will be informed promptly of any disciplinary action that comes as a result of a serious infraction (within 24 hours).

The scoutmasters and other adult leaders are responsible for taking immediate action in issues that infringe on health and safety of the scouts.

Fundraising and Dues

Fundraising events such as the evergreen sales, popcorn sales, summer camp cards, and Spaghetti dinner are held throughout the year and offset the total cost of scouting for the troop. We expect all scouts and parents to participate in at least one fundraising activity each year. For some fundraising activities like popcorn and camp card sales, a percentage of the net profits (30%) will go into scout accounts that must be used by the scout for scout-related expenses. The remainder of the net profits go into the troop general fund. For other fundraising activities, 100% goes into the troop general fund but help to offset the total cost of membership and dues for all scouts and adult volunteers in the troop. The troop treasurer tracks this money and parents and scouts can ask for a breakdown at any time. In order to use money in a scout account, parents must contact the troop treasurer to request this.

If a scout drops out of the troop, the funds in the scout account will transfer to the troop's general account.

The troop general account covers the cost of rechartering, insurance, camping gear, advancement awards, and community events. These expenses are reviewed and approved by the troop committee.

We collect membership fees and dues on an annual basis and the amount varies by the amount of fundraising we are able to do. Scouts and parents should contribute to the fundraising activities to help reduce the cost of scouting for the whole troop. Some successful troops are able to cover 100% of all

scouting-related costs through fundraising activities alone. Help us to keep the cost of membership low by actively participating.

For 2023, we did not charge troop dues (we had sufficient carryforward from fundraising activities and fewer expenses due to the pandemic) but parents and scouts were asked to cover the cost of BSA membership:

Here are the membership fees:

Scout membership - \$75

Scout Life magazine (if you want it) - \$15

Adult membership - \$45

All membership fees and dues can be paid by PayPal (send money to a friend) at scouts.bsa.troop.614@gmail.com (include info in the memo so we know what it is for) or by check made out to Scouts BSA Troop 614. Give the check to Naiomi Dudek or the scoutmaster. PayPal is preferred. We prorate dues but not membership fees charged by the Scouts BSA organization for scouts who join later in the year.

The ninth point of the Scout Law: A Scout is Thrifty

The Troop Committee recognizes that scouting can be expensive and a strain on a household budget. *No Scout should be prevented from participating for financial reasons.* Financial assistance is available for any scout who is unable to be fully involved in the troop due to financial constraints. Please contact either the committee chair or the scoutmaster if you need financial assistance. Scouts must also demonstrate appropriate scout spirit, have good attendance, participate in fundraising activities for the troop, and adhere to the Scout Oath and Law to receive financial assistance.

Transportation

Transportation to and from troop meetings is the responsibility of each parent. If parents are unable to pick up their scout, prior arrangements should be made with the leader in charge.

All parents must share in the responsibilities of transporting the scouts to campouts, summer camp, and other activities. Our activities coordinator will work with the committee / parents to ensure that we have adequate transportation and all parties are well-informed of the planned activities in advance. In turn, we ask that parents submit all permission slips and forms as soon as possible to give the activities coordinator time to fill out any additional paperwork that might be necessary.

All drivers are required to have a valid driver's license and must be over the age of 21. Drivers 18 years of age or older may drive vehicles that transport gear only (no scouts allowed). All scouts must have a properly functioning seatbelt and use it while being transported. All vehicles must have valid insurance (minimum 50K personal, 100K accident, 50K property).

For each outing, one person will be designated as the point person to have logistical information like directions, traffic/weather conditions, etc. When possible, all vehicles should travel together. Drivers should exchange cell phone information and maintain a list of the passengers that are assigned to them.

General Information

Joining Troop 614

A parent or guardian should accompany their child to a troop meeting when you decide to join Troop 614. One of the adult leaders will visit with you to explain Troop 614's program and procedures. The following documents are essential:

- Link to Scouts BSA youth application: [Girls Troop](#) and [Boys Troop](#)
- [Personal Health and Medical Record form](#)
- [Uniform Inspection sheet](#)
- [Adult application](#)
- [Access to Scoutbook with calendar and roster](#)

Before the next meeting, you should completed the youth and adult application, fill out the Personal Health and Medical Record forms for youth and adult, and pay the registration (membership) fee.

Please also provide email addresses for the parents and the scout to the scoutmaster, assistant scoutmaster, or troop committee chair. Email is one of the primary methods for communication to families. We understand and respect the need for privacy and take care to keep email addresses confidential.

Regular Troop Meetings

Troop meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month at St. Philip's Church from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We end all meetings promptly at 8:30 p.m. Green bar members (see PLC below) meet for 10-15 minutes after the meeting to wrap things up.

Troop meetings are held year-round except during summer camp and during the Christmas season. Please check the Troop 614 calendar in Scoutbook for the meeting schedule (periodically, we may cancel some meetings that fall on holidays).

Members of the Green Bar are scouts in the following leadership positions: senior patrol leaders, assistant senior patrol leaders, patrol leaders, assistant patrol leaders. Scouts in these positions are required to attend Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) meetings which are usually held on the third Wednesdays of the month from 7:00 to 8:30 pm over Zoom. These meetings are used for planning troop meetings, campouts, and other activities.

We understand that scouts will not be able to make every meeting and every campout but attendance is important. As the *BSA Scout Handbook* puts it, *"To gain full advantage of all that Scouting has to offer, you need to be present when things are happening. Take part in meetings, in planning activities, and in the fun of adventures. If you're there, you can do your part to make your patrol and troop a success."* All scouts are appreciated whenever they can attend any event.

Our troop has historically been a very active troop. The strength of the troop depends on the attendance of its members. The troop activities fall into three primary areas of activities: Troop Meetings, Troop Outings, and Troop Service Projects. Being active in this troop means being active in all three of these important areas. It is not sufficient to attend only meetings---scouts that do quickly lose interest in the troop and leave. They also miss the "outing" part of scouting. It is not sufficient to attend only the outings---the meetings are used to teach important skills and allow the older scouts to teach

and prepare the younger scouts for these activities. Likewise, the Troop Service Projects are where the second point of the Scout Oath, duty to others, is put into practice.

All ranks above Tenderfoot require the demonstration of Scout Spirit, of which an important part is participation with the Troop. The scout ranks of Star, Life and Eagle, as well as Eagle Palms, require an active participation level for rank advancement. Furthermore, the second point of the Scout Law says that a Scout is loyal, and the demonstration of loyalty to your Troop and patrol requires that the Scout participate in their activities. Scouts who involve themselves in other scout activities outside the troop, such as Order of the Arrow Outings, scout summer camp counselor, den chief activities, cub scout crossover ceremony participation or other scout related activities may count those non-troop activities towards their overall participation level, but they do not replace being active in the Troop.

Sometimes scouts have trouble making activities because of conflicts with school, sports, medical, or other reasons. We have had several scouts who have had to take a break from scouting because of these conflicts. If a scout needs to take a break from scouting, please notify the Scoutmaster of the situation.

Parent / Committee Meeting

The troop committee / parent group meets once a month on the fourth Wednesday of the month from 7:00 to 8:30 (same time and location as the regular troop meeting). All families are required to have at least one adult regularly attend these meetings.

In these meetings, we coordinate activities for the upcoming events on the calendar, give troop updates, and review the finances for the troop. It's a great way to connect with other parents and leaders from the troop and stay informed.

Charter Organization

Troop 614 is sponsored by St. Philip the Apostle Episcopal Church in Scotts Valley and is open to all eligible boys and girls regardless of race, religion, national origin, or where they attend school.

Information Distribution

The parent meeting is essential for sharing info, planning, and supporting our troop. The most current information, announcements, and schedules for Troop 614 can be found on our troop website: <https://www.bsatroop614.com> and on [Scoutbook](#).

Important announcements will be emailed to the families via Scoutbook and our Google Group.

Paying for Camping and other Activities

Many troop activities involve expenses for meals and sometimes registration or camping fees. The troop collects an activity fee from each participating scout and scouter (adult leader or volunteer) to cover the cost of the event and tries to keep it as reasonable as possible. In addition to the activity fee, each patrol establishes its own budget for food, and purchases its own food.

To pay for activity fees, send money via PayPal (preferred way to pay; use send money to a friend) to scouts.bsa.troop.614@gmail.com or pay by check to Scouts BSA Troop 614 and give the check to a

scoutmaster or to Jieun Kim or Naiomi Dudek. Clearly mark on the check or Paypal payment what/who the amount is for.

Costs of summer camp and high adventure trips are the responsibility of the scout and parent (although these costs may be offset by money available in individual scout accounts from popcorn or camp card sales as previously mentioned). Scouts are expected to earn and save for their scouting expenses and not simply ask their parents to pay for it.

Reimbursements for expenses

Sometimes, parents are asked to purchase things on behalf of the troop and then get reimbursed for the expense. These expenses must be preapproved by the committee chair and two other members of the committee. To request reimbursement for expenses related to troop events, please fill out the Google Form and upload any receipts (you can scan them or take a photo of them and upload to the Google Form). Once you have submitted the form, please email Naiomi Dudek (graduatedandgone@hotmail.com), the unit treasurer, to let her know that you have uploaded the reimbursement request.

The Google Form can be found here on the Troop website in the password-protected area:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe9GqQE3ZCNDOSvkrTK5vmn_-K1FTESD_3ipD8tsUoQ-RzAEw/viewform

Once Naiomi has the majority of all the reimbursement requests for an event, she will process them and issue checks or payment by PayPal or Venmo if there are funds available. Please try to submit these as soon as possible. If you need help, Carrie Häber (collectingbutterflies@gmail.com) can upload receipts and submit the form on your behalf.

Books and Other Materials

The first book that you will want to obtain is the current edition of the *BSA Scout Handbook*. It contains most of the information you will need to advance in rank along with important information about how a Scout troop functions, and what you will need to be prepared to go camping and hiking. *Put your name prominently on and in your Handbook when you first obtain it.* Besides it being your guide, it is also a permanent record of your progress and as such, you do not want to lose or misplace it.

Bring your *Handbook* with you to every troop meeting and on every campout. Start reading your *Handbook* right away. You should become familiar with its contents and you should stay aware of what you need to do next to advance in rank. The handbook can be purchased at the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council Scout Shop in San Jose. The Scout Shop also has canvas covers for the handbook, which help protect it.

From time to time you will also need to purchase merit badge pamphlets. Each of the 100 plus merit badges has its own pamphlet that contains not only the requirements for the badge, but also much of the information you will need to complete the requirements. Our troop has a merit badge library and some digital resources as well. Make sure to ask the troop librarian before you purchase one.

Medical Forms

Everyone who goes camping with Troop 614 must have a Personal Health and Medical Record on file so that proper treatment can be made in the case of accident or injury. **You must have a medical form on file in advance, so plan ahead. There are three classes of medical records – read carefully to determine what is required in your situation:**

Part A and Part B are printed on the same form (Form 680-001). Part A/B is valid for any event that *does not exceed 72 consecutive hours* where the level of activity is similar to that normally expended at home or at school, and where medical care is readily available. Examples: day camp, day hike, swimming party, or a weekend camp. The Part B form is a Personal Health and Medical History. *A parent or guardian must update this section annually.* The Part A section covers the bottom front and top half of the back of Form 680-001.

Part C is needed for any event that *exceeds 72 consecutive hours*, where the level of activity is similar to that normally expended at home or at school, and where medical care is readily available. The Part C form is designed primarily for summer camp but could be used for any Part C activity. Part C is a *medical evaluation and requires a physical examination within the past 12 months and a doctor's signature.*

This form must be updated annually for all individuals planning to participate in high adventure trips or take Wood Badge training, regardless of age.

What this means is: When initially joining Scouts BSA, the scout needs a physical examination to participate in most camping activities or to go to summer camp. You need to fill in the personal medical history section on the Part A/B Medical Form and take it with you to the doctor for completion and signature. It needs to be updated yearly by the parent, but a physical examination by a medical professional is only required every 3 years. *However, all Scouts and adults* participating in high adventure activities, Jamborees, NOACs, etc., and adults over 40, must have a physical examination by a medical professional, evidenced on a signed Part C Medical Form, within the preceding 12 months.

Copies may also be obtained from <http://www.scouting.org/forms/>. *Completed forms should be turned in to the activities coordinator.* Please keep several photocopies for yourself, as you may need to provide them for different events.

Outings

"Outing" is a major part of Scouting. Camping, hiking, canoeing, and all kinds of outdoor activities are an important means for achieving the three aims of Scouting. Outdoor activities are the central part of the fun of Scouting and are a major source of advancement opportunities. Troop 614 schedules some sort of outing every month of the year. We have fun outdoors regardless of what the weather conditions may be. We certainly learn more and gain greater confidence when we are camping during "adverse" weather.

Scouts will advance faster, become more proficient in Scout skills, and enjoy Scouting more if they participate regularly in troop outings. A preliminary schedule of activities is published in the troop's calendar in Scoutbook. Adjustments may be made to some of the details, locations, and dates as the year progresses.

Note that if a Scout signs up for an outing and pays a deposit, that deposit is usually NOT refundable if they do not attend. Fees are calculated on a shared basis and dropping out or being a 'no-show' does not relieve the Scout of responsibility for their commitment.

Scouts are expected to travel to and from outings in your full activity uniform and to remain in uniform whenever we are in public. The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) will inform the Scouts when there is an exception to this guideline.

Many of the troop's outings are in a wilderness setting. To preserve the wilderness experience and for safety, do not bring extra food or electronic devices such as games and cell phones, etc., on outings. If the Scout has their Cyberchip, they may use the device inside of vehicles while traveling to/from campouts but are not to be used during campouts.

Troop 614's policy encourages scouts to camp without parent supervision. We do, however, always welcome adult guests. If you attend as an adult volunteer, please allow your scout to function independently while you observe. When your Scout is on an outing, they are part of a patrol and should follow the troop youth leadership hierarchy (Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leader, etc.). If they have an issue and come to you for assistance, please ask them to take it to their patrol leader first. Doing so encourages them to learn leadership skills and to be independent. You'll get the amazing satisfaction of watching your Scout grow into the next generation of confident leaders.

Troop 614 Camping Policies

Camping Program

Overnight camping is a requirement for rank advancement. The camping program for Troop 614 is planned by the Troop and our annual planning meeting, at which time the themes and major activities are chosen for the new year.

Camping Permission

Troop 614 does not ask for separate permission slips for each campout or activity. The parent or guardian signature on the application form is taken as granting permission for all campouts and activities. If parents have a concern regarding a specific event, they are welcome to bring those concerns to either the Scoutmaster or the Troop Committee.

Patrol Gear

Patrol boxes and tents are currently managed by the Quartermaster. No Troop-owned gear is to go home with the Scouts. All cookware and utensils are to be cleaned on the campout to the satisfaction of the Troop Quartermaster.

Camping Drop-off / Pickup

Scouts should be at the designated meeting place on time. If the Troop is ready to leave and no prior arrangement has been made with the Scoutmaster to allow for a Scout to arrive late, the Troop will leave without them.

Scouts may not leave in the middle of any campout or event without the Scoutmaster's approval. This approval should be obtained prior to the campout. Scouts must also have prior permission from the

Scoutmaster to meet the Troop midway through an event if that is desired, so that appropriate arrangements by the Troop can be made.

No Scout may leave until the Scout has permission from their Patrol Leader. Patrols may not begin to leave until the Patrol Leader has obtained permission from the Senior Patrol Leader. If a Scout needs to leave early, he must have the Scoutmaster's permission. If allowed, it may be with the provision that extra duties will be taken on by the Scout during the campout to make up for being unable to help unload / cleanup upon return. Since a scout is helpful, these duties should be taken and performed cheerfully.

Adult Leadership Requirements

From the *Guide to Safe Scouting*: Two registered adults¹, or one adult and a parent of a participating Scout, one of whom must be at least 21 years of age or older, are required for all trips or outings. There are only a few instances, such as patrol activities, when no adult leadership is required. Coed activities require male and female adult leaders, both of whom must be 21 years of age or older.

No fewer than four individuals (always with the minimum of two adults) are to go on any backcountry expedition or campout.

Troop 614's policy is to have at least one registered adult present for each 10 Scouts involved in an activity. At least two adults, at least one of whom is a registered Scouter, should be present with each "group" of Scouts during an event in which "groups" break up into different areas that are physically separated.

Registered parents, guardians and other interested adults who have taken Youth Protection Training and are fingerprinted may camp with the Troop with prior permission from the Scoutmaster. Only those adults who are registered Scouters and have successfully completed BSA training in the prescribed sequence up to and including the BSA course "Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills" may camp with the Troop on a regular basis. Adults camping with the Troop will camp as an adult patrol and will not tent with the Scouts. The adults are also expected to set a good example and will abide by the same camping rules as the Scouts. They may not use unusual equipment not available to the Scouts, such as pop-up campers, heaters, or sleep in their cars, except in emergencies. Parents should let their scout carry out their scouting responsibilities on their own and should not perform the scout's tasks for them and should discourage the scouts from hanging around their parents or other adults when the scout should be with their patrols.

Smoking and Alcohol Policy

Scouts BSA policy is to always discourage the use of drugs, including alcohol and tobacco. Thus, Troop 614 requires that no adult smoke in the obvious presence of the Scouts. No alcoholic beverages are allowed on any Scout trip, campout or activity.

Transportation

¹ A registered adult is one who has turned in an adult volunteer application form with the applicable annual fee for registration with Troop 614, SVMBC and has completed online Youth Protection Training.

From the Guide to Safe Scouting: If you cannot provide two adults for each vehicle, the minimum required is one adult and two or more youth members - never one on one.

Seat belts are required for all occupants. The beds of trucks or trailers must never be used for carrying passengers. Drivers are requested to bring a mobile phone if they have one, and to share their phone numbers with the other drivers for directions and the parents of scouts on the outing in case of emergency. In accordance with BSA policy, drivers should NOT travel caravan-style in close proximity to each other. However, drivers often agree to meet at predetermined stops along the way for meals or to re-group. Trips of greater than 300 miles each way require two drivers (one 'relief-driver') in each vehicle.

Tenting arrangements

From the Guide to Safe Scouting: Male and female leaders require separate sleeping facilities. Married couples may share the same quarters if appropriate facilities are available. Male and female youth participants will not share the same sleeping facility. When staying in tents, no youth will stay in the tent of an adult other than his or her parent or guardian.

We recommend that all scouts tent alone but, with parental permission we allow 2-3 scouts to share a tent. The troop owns several tents that can be loaned out for trips but it is suggested to provide your own. Appropriate hammocks with a rain fly are acceptable under certain conditions but must be requested prior to the campout.

Health and Medical Issues

There are three primary issues with respect to health, developmental, and medical issues at a scouting activity:

1. Informing the Scouting Adult Leadership of health problems that have an impact on a Scout's participation.
2. Medication that must be taken by Scouts during campouts or events.
3. Special situations, such as diet or limitations of activity, which must be planned for in advance.

For each activity or campout, an adult (age 21 or higher) will be assigned the duty of Medic. This person has the following responsibilities:

1. To ensure that proper medical forms are in hand.
2. To collect medications and their instructions for their use from the parents of any Scout who requires medication during the activity and requests that an adult administers the medication to ensure that it is taken (as stated above, taking prescription medications is the responsibility of the individual and/or that individual's parent or guardian.) *To ensure that medicines are properly administered, the Troop requests that any parent requesting asking for adult assistance with their child's medication provide the necessary medication in a zip-lock bag(s) with the scout's name clearly marked in large letters, and containing clearly written or typed instructions for dosage, timing and other necessary instructions for each medication, along with written & signed authorization for administration by an adult leader. Written authorization is required for non-prescription medication. Prescription medications must be in their original packaging or containers.*
3. To ensure that an appropriate Troop First Aid kit is in hand.
4. To maintain a First Aid log to record any accidents that require treatment during the activity.

5. To receive from parent's information as to any special situations that require special treatment.
6. To have in hand a plan for emergency care for a critical injury or illness. This should include the name and location of the nearest medical facility to the site of the activity and may require additional consideration where aquatic, high adventure, or backcountry events are involved.

If a Scout is not healthy enough to participate fully in an activity, the Troop policy is that the Scout should remain at home to get well. Scouts with contagious diseases should not participate in Troop activities until a physician's note has been obtained indicating that the Scout poses no threat to other Scouts or Scouters.

See also the section of this guide entitled "Medical Forms" on page for the medical forms and physical examination requirements for participating in scouting activities.

Webelos Scouts Camping with the Troop

From the Guide to Safe Scouting: A Webelos Scout may participate in overnight den camping when supervised by his mother or father. If a parent cannot attend, arrangements must be made by the family for another youth's parent (but not the Webelos leader) or another adult relative or friend to be a substitute at the campout.

Troop policy is that second-year Webelos Scouts may camp with the Troop as part of their Den, both to complete the requirement for the Arrow of Light and to learn about the Troop as they anticipate moving up to Scouts. When they camp with the Troop, their Den is expected to have a minimum of two deep adult leadership, with the understanding that youth who do not have a parent along must have written permission from a parent indicating that another adult will serve as the parental substitute. The Den Leader, Troop Scoutmaster, and ASMs serving in a Troop function may not be used as a substitute.

Personal Equipment Guidelines

Proper equipment and clothing are essential for safe and enjoyable outdoor activities. Some equipment is owned and maintained by the troop, including equipment that must be shared such as cooking equipment. Troop equipment is assigned to individual patrols. The patrols are responsible for the care of the equipment and bringing the appropriate equipment for each outing. The patrols work with the troop quartermaster when troop equipment needs servicing or replacing.

Each individual Scout is expected to provide their own personal equipment and clothing. A list of suggested equipment and clothing is found in your *Scouts BSA Handbook*.

Many items are available over the internet at less cost than you can find at local outfitters, at websites such www.rei.com, and/or www.backcountry.com However, some items need to be properly fitted, notably backpacks and hiking boots. For such items, local outfitters with trained staff are worth the possible extra costs for their knowledgeable advice and their fitting skills. We recommend Downworks in Santa Cruz for all back-packing supplies and REI for a wide selection of quality boots.

There is no need to buy everything at once – one can start with the critical items at first, and then put additional items on birthday and Christmas lists, and be well equipped over time. Popular myth holds that better quality gear costs a fortune. Quality brand-name gear can be found locally or over the internet at very reasonable prices if you are willing to be patient and sometimes shop out-of-season,

i.e., buy winter gear in spring and summer gear in the fall. The markups are relatively high, so when items go on sale, the discounts can be relatively high also.

A final note: a Scout often must carry everything on their back, sometimes for a distance, so pay attention to what things weigh. Generally speaking, assuming equal quality, the lighter equipment costs a little more, but your Scout will thank you for it.

Troop 614 generally recommends that a Scout's first **backpack** be an external frame (pictured) or internal frame that is adjustable to accommodate the growth in the early years. Internal frame packs are sometimes more comfortable, and may put the weight closer to the body, which is advantageous. Many manufacturers offer adjustable "youth" models. Do not buy a large backpack to "grow into". An ill-fitting backpack can cause a lot of discomfort and result in a miserable hiking experience. When trying on packs, make sure they are loaded with plenty of weight for a more realistic experience.



Sleeping system In California, a 3-season, synthetic-insulated mummy bag rated at 20 to 30 degrees is the most versatile bag to own. Down bags are quite warm but are not a good choice for youth, as they do not retain heat if they get wet. A fleece sleeping bag liner can also be used as a supplement for very cold weather and is nice to have for a lightweight sleeping bag by itself in the summer, as the fleece liner is adequate when the lowest temperature won't go below 50°F. A wool beanie hat may also be needed for very cold weather as most body heat is lost through the head. Get a stuff sack when purchasing the bag or use a trash can liner in the interim. A compression sack is nice to have but not required.



A ground pad is an important part of a sleeping system. The pad is important for more than just comfort. The pad provides vital insulation between your body and the ground. A half-inch thick closed cell foam pad such as the Z-Rest is the least expensive (around \$20), lightest (about one pound), and most durable choice. Self-inflating insulating foam sleeping pads such as the Thermarest brand are more comfortable, a little heavier (around 3

Rain Gear: Staying dry is critical to staying warm.

Raingear is an absolute necessity for camping and can serve double duty as an outer windproof layer. High-tech rain suits are available from many sources, and work very well, but are not a necessity. A Scout does not have to have an expensive rain suit and is likely to grow out of it. A durable poncho can be adequate and is much cheaper. Avoid buying the cheap plastic ponchos that are like garbage can liners because they will not last even a single campout. Rain gear should be taken on **all** campouts, as it often rains when we camp!



Foot Gear: Most children wear athletic shoes everywhere: school, church, and during play. In good weather you may get by wearing them on a campout. However, a waterproof hiking boot will stand up better to the rain, mud, and other conditions encountered on a campout and will protect your feet better

than an ordinary athletic shoe. Under some weather conditions, an ordinary athletic shoe may be a serious health risk. Comfort is critical when hiking, so make sure they fit properly. Trying them on with thick socks is recommended.

Don't compromise the comfort and health of your feet by wearing cotton socks. Use synthetic liners under a medium-weight synthetic/wool sock whenever you are hiking or wearing boots. Synthetic blends that combine the best of polyester and wool into a single sock and other similar blends are a more expensive alternative, but they do a better job of keeping feet warm and comfortable under cold and wet conditions than pure wool socks. These synthetic blends are available over the internet or at most local outdoors stores. BSA now offers Class-A socks in a synthetic blend (made by Thorlo) that are excellent year-round socks, and they also comply with BSA uniform requirements.

Knives: Since inception, teaching Scouts how to use, handle, and store legally owned knives with the highest concern for safety and responsibility has been an integral part of Scouting. A sharp pocket knife with a can opener on it is an invaluable backcountry tool. After earning the **Totin' Chip**, a Scout is encouraged to keep one with them on all outings, and to keep it clean and sharp. Youth members are not allowed to carry sheath knives, which are heavy, awkward to carry, and unnecessary for most camp chores.

Advancement

Advancement is an important part of Scouting as a measure of the Scout's growth and progress. Each Scout keeps their own personal advancement record in their *Scout Handbook*, and should also record your service hours, campouts, troop activities, and leadership positions in their *Handbook and online on Scoutbook*. The troop also keeps advancement records on each Scout. Your *Scout Handbook* identifies and explains all rank advancement requirements, so read it carefully. Information on merit badge requirements is found in the appropriate merit badge pamphlets, most of which are available in the troop library. See also the following section of this guidebook on merit badges.

When crossing over to Scouts from Cub Scouts, most scouts observe a significant difference in the standards for rank advancement. In Cub Scouts the standard was to "Do Your Best". Scouts are expected to complete the stated requirements exactly as written and satisfy the standards of each rank and merit badge. Sometimes you may find that you must work hard and grow beyond your current capabilities to obtain your goals.

Scouts should work on advancement with their parents, fellow Scouts, Scout leaders, and merit badge counselors. They should work on advancement on their own, in patrol meetings, during Troop meetings, and during other Troop functions such as campouts. Scout skills cannot be mastered by performing them just once. These skills should be practiced repeatedly, even after a skill has been "signed-off".

After you master a skill on your own or with your parents or in school, you must ask the appropriate Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmaster, or merit badge counselor to sign them off. Additionally, certain scouts who have achieved Star rank or higher have been approved to sign off rank advancements for scouts who are working on ranks below First Class.

From entering the Troop until earning their First Class, the Scout will be learning basic Scouting skills that will enable them to camp, hike, swim, cook, tie knots, administer first aid, and to work as a

member of a team. Through First Class, the Scout begins to build themselves physically, mentally, and morally and to live with the Scout Oath and Law. The rank of First Class shows that the Scout has mastered the fundamentals of Scouting and can begin to start leading others, refining basic scout skills, and learning more advanced skills. Parents should realize that this is a goal, not a requirement. Scouting has much to offer besides earning rank. Some Scouts take longer to earn First Class than others and they are still benefiting from the program. Scout leaders understand this and will work with each scout accordingly.

From the achievement of First Class through Eagle, the Scout will be demonstrating leadership, performing service projects, earning merit badges, and using the skills learned achieving the rank of First Class. The next ranks are Star and Life. These ranks are harder to obtain but are more interesting for the older Scouts. Upon completion of all the requirements for Star and Life, the Scout will be eligible to work for Eagle. The final steps towards Eagle are filled with leadership experiences.

Becoming an Eagle Scout carries special significance, not only in Scouting, but also in higher education, business, and community service. The award is a performance-based achievement whose standards have been well maintained over the years. Only about 4% of all Scouts who join complete the journey to Eagle.

Board of Review

A **Board of Review** is a requirement for each rank advancement. The Board consists of three to six registered members of the Troop Committee, but may not include assistant Scoutmasters, the Scoutmaster, or the scout's own parents. The scout needs to bring their *Scout Handbook* and be in full uniform to appear before a Board of Review. At the beginning of the review, the leader of the Board will bring the scout into the room and make introductions. The scout may be asked to stand before the Board and recite either the Scout Oath or Scout Law or other items that all Scouts are expected to know. Your uniform may be inspected for completeness and appropriate placement of patches. After this introduction you will be invited to be seated. Scouts will be encouraged to give constructive feedback to the Troop Committee on activities, improvement opportunities, and the Scouting experience in Troop 614. At the end of the review, the Scout will be asked to leave the room while the board confers. The board will then call the Scout back into the room to inform them either that they qualify for the next rank or what additional actions they must take to qualify. Scouts must truly earn their rank before it is awarded.

Following a successful Board of Review, the applicable new rank badges are awarded to the Scouts at the next possible troop meeting. Formal recognition of advancements and merit badges are made in front of family and friends during a ceremony at a **Court of Honor**.

Merit Badges

The Scouts BSA merit badge program is an excellent way for Scouts to learn important Scout skills in more depth and to explore many different careers and hobbies. It's not uncommon for a Scout to select a career or lifelong hobby from his experience with the merit badge program. The program also gives the Scout the opportunity to learn an important life skill: to make an appointment to work with someone they do not know.

Scouts may work on merit badges at any time, but they must have the merit badge blue card approved and signed by the Scoutmaster before working with a counselor. Merit badges are not required to advance through the ranks of Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. Therefore, until a Scout has

completed First Class, their time is better spent focusing on the requirements of the first three ranks rather than earning lots of merit badges. A certain number of merit badges must be earned for the ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle. A portion of those merit badges must come from the list of "required" merit badges. Required merit badges have a silver border and the others have a green border. Some merit badges may not be a good fit for very young scouts and should be deferred until the scout is older and better suited to meet the requirements, such as Personal Management.

Many merit badges can be earned at summer camp. In the spring, all of the Scouts going to summer camp will consult with the Scoutmaster and select which merit badges they wish to work on during camp. First-year Scouts should select no more than two or three merit badges. There will be a list of prerequisites for each merit badge. It is the Scout's responsibility to obtain the merit badge pamphlet, **read it**, and to complete the prerequisites prior to camp.

Additional information on merit badges and the current requirements for all merit badges can be found on the web at <http://usscouts.org/meritbadges.asp>

Summer Camp

Summer camp is the highlight of the year for most Scouts. Every Scout should plan on attending summer camp. Being away from home, managing their daily schedules, and being immersed in scouting for a week is an outstanding educational, healthy, and fun experience for the scouts that cannot be fully explained in words.

Troop 614 usually goes to a different summer camp each summer. Details of which camps have been selected by the youth and the week that the troop plans to attend are published in Scoutbook. Additional information, including handouts, will be provided in advance at troop meetings, that cover activities and merit badge opportunities, costs & timing of payments, what to bring, travel arrangements, emergency contacts, etc. Most scout camps have very informative websites, which usually can be found by performing a search on the internet. Frequently, the best section of their websites to find out details will be in the section for adult leaders, so reviewing those sections is encouraged for everyone.

Community Service

Boy Scout Slogan: Do A Good Turn Daily

The Scout Oath includes the phrase: . . . To help other people at all times; . . .

Every Scout is expected to perform acts of charity and kindness and to develop a lifelong habit of community service and helpfulness towards his neighbor. Many Scouting awards and most of the ranks in Scouts have a requirement to perform a certain number of service hours. These service hours may be earned by giving your time to our charter organization, your community, or for a neighbor. For the purpose of rank advancement, Scouts may count service hours performed to meet other community service requirements from their school and church. Note that the requirement states that service activities must be approved, so be sure to check with the Scoutmaster prior to starting your service to ensure that your activity will qualify.

Scouts should seek out opportunities for performing community service and they should participate in the community service projects that are scheduled by the troop.

Troop Organization & Leadership

Scouts is a unique organization in that the Scouts are responsible for planning and running most of the activities. The adult volunteers are there to provide advice, leadership training, and administrative support. When a Scout has a question or concern about the troop, he should first go to the junior leadership rather than to the adult volunteers.

Patrols

As a member of Troop 614 you will be a member of a **patrol**. Within each patrol, the Scouts elect a **Patrol Leader** who then appoints the other positions within the patrol. Patrols tent, cook, clean up, and perform other activities as a unit, and learn to work as a team.

Senior Patrol Leader and other Troop Leadership Positions

The person in charge of the troop is the **Senior Patrol Leader** or **SPL**. He is elected to this office by all of the Scouts in the troop during a secret ballot. After consulting with the Scoutmaster, the Senior Patrol Leader appoints an Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL), and other troop leadership positions including Quartermaster, Scribe, Troop Historian, Librarian, Chaplain Aide, Bugler, Troop Guide(s). A Scout must be active in the Troop, be at least First Class in rank, and have been active in Scouting for at least 12 months in order to be nominated for Senior Patrol Leader.

Patrol Leaders' Council

All of the Patrol Leaders, along with the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader and the Troop Guides, make up the governing body of the troop called the **Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC)**, which is headed by the Senior Patrol Leader. The PLC conducts a troop program planning conference in June to plan and schedule the troop activities for the coming year. Patrol Leaders' Council meetings are usually held on the 3rd Wednesday each month from 7:00 to 8:30 PM via Zoom.

Adult Volunteers

Scouting would not exist without adult volunteers. Adult volunteers can fill one or more of several roles. They may serve as a uniformed leader who works with the Scouts on a regular basis during weekly meetings and monthly outings, they may provide support for the troop through the troop committee, and/or they can help by being a merit badge counselor.

The adults who work directly with the Scouts are the Scoutmaster and the Assistant Scoutmasters. One of the most important jobs of the Scoutmaster corps is to train and guide the junior leaders in running THEIR troop. The scoutmasters should not run the troop, as this would deny the scouts opportunities to learn leadership, planning and organization skills. As scouts assume the various leadership positions within Troop 614, they can expect both formal leadership training and informal coaching from their Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmasters, the troop committee, and fellow junior leaders.

The troop committee performs three main functions: They serve as a board of directors that provides direction and guidance and establishes policies. They provide much financial, administrative and logistical support that makes the program planned by the Patrol Leaders' Council a reality and support advancement and other aspects of the scouting program. They also conduct the Boards of Review, an essential element of the Advancement process as covered in the Advancement section of this guide and in the *Scout Handbook*.

It Takes a Village! Since scouting could not exist without adult volunteers, we **strongly encourage all parents** to contribute their time and expertise to the troop. We need your help and expertise to help the scouts succeed. Consider driving on a trip, attending a camp out or day trip as an adult volunteer, serve on the committee or train and volunteer by stepping into an adult leadership role.

Other Scouting Activities

Order of the Arrow:



The Order of the Arrow is a national brotherhood of Scout campers. The honor of becoming a member of the Order of the Arrow is one that scouts cannot set out to earn on their own. The members of the troop bestow this honor on you when you have proven yourself worthy of receiving it through active participation in troop activities. To be eligible for election into the Order of the Arrow, you must be an outstanding and unselfish camper, be at least First Class in rank, and have 15 days and nights of camping within the past two years including one week at summer camp. Elections for membership in the Order of the Arrow are held annually in the first quarter of the year.

Youth Leadership Training Conference (YLTC):

This is a weeklong junior leadership training course conducted by the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council. A Scout must be 13-years old and at least First Class in rank to attend. The course teaches advanced leadership skills and has a heavy emphasis on outdoors skills and the patrol method. Any Scout considering being a Senior Patrol Leader or Assistant Senior Patrol leader is expected to attend Council Youth Leadership Training. Anyone interested should inform the Scoutmaster.

Behavior, Conduct, Troop Rules

All members of Troop 614, both youth and adults, are expected to live their daily lives in accordance with the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. The Oath and Law embody the expectations of everyone's behavior and conduct.

When a Scout misbehaves, the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster in the absence of the Scoutmaster, will evaluate the situation, consider the circumstances, and then use his or her best judgment to make a decision that is fair and just. Youth leaders in the troop may act to put a stop to inappropriate or unsafe behavior, but they cannot administer discipline. Disciplinary actions and responses to misbehavior must never involve corporal punishment, denial of food, or belittling of a Scout. Multiple scouts will not be disciplined for the actions of one or more scouts, if they themselves aren't guilty of negative behavior that may warrant discipline.

Scouts who misbehave will be appropriately counseled in a scoutmaster conference by the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster in the absence of the Scoutmaster. Serious misconduct or multiple infractions may result in a period of troop suspension, as determined by the Scoutmaster and in consultation with the Committee Chair. Very serious misconduct may result in troop expulsion, in consultation between the Scoutmaster, Committee Chair, and Chartered Organization Representative.

One of the aims of the Scouts BSA is to help young men and women develop strong moral character. Being a good parent, a good spouse, and an effective leader requires critical thinking and the ability to make sound judgments and ethical decisions. In an effort to serve as effective role models, the adults in Troop 614 will try to exercise these characteristics and not hide behind a long list of inflexible rules. Comprehensive by-laws, codes of conduct, and behavior consequence plans tend to preclude the application of common sense, fairness, and justice.

Religious Instruction

Troop 614 policy on religious instruction is consistent with BSA guidelines in that we do not endorse nor promote any one faith over another, and we are respectful of other faiths and to those who practice them. Although we regularly conduct a religious observance during campouts on Sunday morning, these are interfaith-based, without preference to any specific set of religious beliefs. BSA policy believes that specific religious instruction belongs in the family.

Hazing and Initiations

All Scouts, Scouters, and parents should know that hazing is forbidden by the Scouts BSA and will not be tolerated in Troop 614.

The BSA policy on hazing can be found in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, Chapter I - Youth Protection and Child Abuse:

All members of the BSA Scouts of America are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in the Scout Oath and Law. Physical violence, hazing, bullying, theft, verbal insults, and drugs and alcohol have no place in the Scouting program and may result in the revocation of a Scout's membership in the unit.

Appendix A: Merit Badge Process for Troop 614

Merit Badges are an important part of Scouting. Many teach skills that can be valuable years into the future, such as Lifesaving and Personal Management. Even the optional ones are important, as many former Scouts attribute their interest in their current career or their hobbies to an introduction to a subject by a dedicated Merit Badge Counselor. This appendix describes some of the details of how a Scout goes about earning a Merit Badge.

There are generally two forums in which Merit Badges may be mentored by a local counselor associated with the Troop or District or at Summer Camp. There are some minor differences, mostly because some camps don't have the same "paper trail", but the process should go as follows:

Step 1: The Scout decides on a badge they would like to work on and talks to the scoutmaster about it.

Step 2: The Scoutmaster decides if this is an appropriate badge for the scout, finds out who the appropriate Counselor is, and makes sure the Scout knows that he or she must have at least one more Scout sign up with them so that the Scout and Counselor are never working one-on-one, alone. In some rare cases, a sibling or friend might substitute for another Scout in the meeting with a counselor. (Note: Troop 614's policy is that if the Scout's parent is the appropriate Counselor, we REQUIRE that at least one other Scout be involved, so that the badge is taught as a class and we avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.)

Step 3: The Scout fills out a "blue card" and gets it signed by the Scoutmaster. This card is the Scout's permission slip to begin to work and no Counselor should begin to help a Scout with a badge until he or she is presented with a blue card signed by the Scoutmaster. The reason for this is that some badges require other badges as a prerequisite (Swimming must be earned before starting Lifesaving, for example), some Scouts try to sign up for too many badges at once, and other badges are most appropriate for older Scouts (Personal Management and Family Life, for example, for when the Scout is more likely to have an income and is better able to appreciate the topics addressed). The Scoutmaster makes a note in a Troop Merit Badge Notebook that the Scout has started a badge. This helps the Scoutmaster know whether a Scout has, for example, begun 6 badges in the last year, all of which are still "in progress", or whether the Scout needs a particular badge to get to that next rank. The Scoutmaster can then counsel the Scout as necessary to help them be efficient and stay on track.

Step 4: The Scouts take their signed blue cards and give them to the Counselor, who holds on to them and fills them out as the Scouts complete their requirements. We recommend that the Scout purchase the latest edition of the appropriate merit badge pamphlet and use this not only as a guide, but also as a way of keeping track of which requirements he or she has finished and which he or she has left to do (requirements are also available on-line at <http://www.meritbadge.com/>). The Scout should be keeping track of what they have done, but if a Scout has any questions, they should approach the Counselor to verify his achievements.

Step 5: When the badge is complete, the Counselor signs the card, and tears off his/her third of the card to keep as a record. The Counselor then turns in the other two thirds to the Scoutmaster, who signs the card and gives one third to the Scout and keeps the last third to use to write the information on a Troop

Advancement Report. This final portion of the blue card goes into a file in the Scoutmaster's office, and the Scoutmaster also makes a note in a Troop Merit Badge notebook that the badge is complete.

Step 6: The Troop Advancement Chairperson takes the report to the Council office, gets the badge, fills out the accompanying recognition card, and returns the badge and card to the Scoutmaster while giving a copy of the Advancement Report to the Troop Advancement Chair.

Step 7: The Scout is presented the badge at the next opportunity, usually a Troop meeting, while the card is saved to be given at the next Court of Honor to recognize the Scout's achievement.

Remember that this is **her or his** badge to earn; while it is fine for you to help them pick fun merit badges, identify resources, and make it to meetings, it is their job to do their own research, keep track of activities, do exercises and write reports. If they struggle with these, encourage them as best you can and by all means let us know so we can encourage them, too. But the work remains the Scout's responsibility. This way, they learn to take initiative to complete a project, and will feel that **they** have really accomplished something when receiving that badge. And it's this ability to take a project to completion that will put them ahead on the "Trail to Eagle."