

2020



Troop 128 New Family Information

ALL THE THINGS YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT TROOP 128, BUT
WHERE SCARED TO ASK!
VERN GREEN, SCOUTMASTER

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Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in joining Troop 128. Troop 128 has a long history in Ventura California of producing quality young men. During our 65+ year history we have produced more than 140 Eagle Scouts. Many of our scouts have gone on to be business and community leaders as well as doctors and lawyers.

Troop 128 is chartered with Grace Lutheran Church in Ventura, California. We have our own scout house on the campus located at 6190 Telephone Road. While Troop 128 adheres to the Scout Law and promotes a Scout's Duty to God for all its members, not everyone is a member of Grace Lutheran Church, nor are we all of the Lutheran Faith. We welcome all denominations and religions into our troop.

What Are Some Things I Need To Know About Troop 128

Our charter organization is Grace Lutheran Church. The Church owns the troop and all of its assets. Our bank account is associated with Grace Lutheran Church and is audited yearly by the church. We abide by the rules set forth by Grace Lutheran Church, in turn, Grace Lutheran Church provides us a safe and secure meeting place and storage for our troop gear.

Additionally, Grace Lutheran Church agrees to use the Scouting program put forth by the National Boy Scouts of America. The program from the National BSA is flexible in many ways, but major departures from the BSA methods and policies are not permitted. As a parent, you should be aware of the following:

- Leadership is restricted to qualified adults who subscribe to the Scout Oath, Scout Law, and the Scout Outdoor Code.
- Citizenship activities are encouraged, but partisan political activities are prohibited.
- Marksmanship and elementary drill procedures for ceremonies are permitted and encouraged
- The Scouts BSA recognizes the importance of religious faith and duty; it leaves religious instruction to the member's religious leaders and family. Members who do not belong to a unit's religious charter organization are not required to participate in its religious activities. We do however perform service projects for our charter organization as a showing of thank you for their support.
- Two registered adult leaders or one registered adult leader and a parent of a participant, one of whom must be 21 years of age or older, are required on all trips and outings.
- All parents and friends of family members are required to take and maintain the Boy Scout Youth Protection Training. No exceptions.
- Corporal punishment and hazing are not permitted. Parents and unit leaders must work together to solve discipline problems.

- One-on-one activities between youth members and adults are not permitted; personal conferences must be conducted in plain view of others.
- If you suspect that anyone in the unit is a victim of child abuse, immediately report it.
- All scouting activities are open to parental visitation. There are no 'secret' organizations within Scouts BSA.
- While Scouts BSA now allows girls to join, according to the rules of the BSA, Troop 128 is not a co-ed unit. Co-ed Scouts BSA units are not permitted under BSA rules and guidelines.

What Are Troop 128's Core Objectives?

Troop 128's core objectives are to develop character, promote personal fitness, and teach good citizenship to our youth members. We believe strongly that every boy has an opportunity through the scouting program to learn important lessons that will help them to be strong citizens and team players and grow into well-rounded adults no matter what rank they achieve. Every boy is important to us and we realize that sometimes young men make mistakes. Scouting is a place where mistakes can be made in a safe environment so young men can learn.

What Does Boy Led Troop Mean?

Troop 128 is a boy led troop. This means that the boys in the unit are the ones responsible for planning out their activities, holding effective meetings, and making sure all the boys are aware of things happening in the troop.

It is good to note that our troop meetings will vary in their effectiveness and organizational structure. Since the boys lead the troop meetings and troop activities, it can be somewhat difficult to stand by and watch the disorganization that often takes place. It is important that we all understand that none of us started out making the best of choices and the wisest of decisions and only through learning, patience, and performing the task can we hone our skills, sharpen our minds, and grow stronger in these skills. Learning by doing is a fact of life and we encourage this with our boys who run the troop. Please be patient as we create the next leaders of our communities.

How Do I Join Troop 128?

If your youth decides he wants to join our Troop 128 family, BRAVO! Welcome to our family! Joining the troop is a simple matter of filling out a youth application for your son and paying the membership dues.

Youth Application



The standard BSA Youth Application can be filled out by obtaining the application from the Troop Scout House or the Council Scout House located at 509 East Daily Drive. This application needs to be filled out completely and turned into the Scoutmaster or Troop Committee Chair at Troop 128.

When and Where Does Troop 128 Meet?

Troop 128 meets at our Scout House located at 6190 Telephone Road in Ventura. Grace Lutheran Church has partnered with us and has provided the troop our very own Scout House. This Scout House is dedicated to Scouting activities.

Regular Troop Meetings

The troop meets each and every Thursday night at 7:00PM with the exception of holidays and in instances where the troop might be on an outing. There are times when the troop might meet at a location other than the Scout room, perhaps at the beach.

Patrol Leaders Counsel (PLC) Meeting

The first Thursday of every month at 6:00PM is our Patrol Leaders Counsel meeting (PLC). The term we typically use in the troop is "Green Bar or Planning Meeting". If the youth member has a position patch with a Green Bar on it, as in Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader, then they are expected to be at this meeting. Additionally, it is recommended other position members like Scribe and Webmaster also attend this meeting to ensure that information is sent out to those who need it.

The purpose of this meeting is to plan upcoming activities. This group typically works two months in advance so there is plenty of time to promote outings.

Timbersnakes (Leadership Training Roundtable)

The second Thursday of the month at 6:00PM is the Leadership Training Roundtable meeting, or better known as the "Timbersnakes". The Timbersnakes are a patrol that includes all boys that have a leadership position in the troop as well as the Scoutmasters.

In this meeting, we talk about the youth's troubles and challenges they are trying to overcome with their leadership positions. Scoutmasters provide assistance to the leader positions they mentor and encourage the youth to practice their leadership skills. After election times, we will perform Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops at this meeting as well.

Trail to First Class

Every fourth Thursday of the month at 6:00PM is our Trail to First Class meeting. All scouts that have not attained the rank of First Class should consider attending this meeting to work on the requirements needed for rank advancement. Scouts should come prepared, with their book in hand, and knowing what requirement they would like to work on, and if needed, equipped with items needed.

Troop Committee Meeting

The Troop Committee meets the first Thursday of every month at 7:00PM. The troop committee talks about upcoming events and program elements and discusses the general health and maintenance of the troop. The troop committee is made up of all the parents of the youth in the troop and select adults that have a vested interest in Troop 128.

How is the Troop Ran? Who Is In Charge?

There are three main parts to the organizational structure to every troop in Scouts BSA. Those parts are below:

Troop Committee

The Troop Committee is the troop's board of directors and supports the troop program. What does the troop committee do? I am glad you asked!

- Ensures that the quality of adult leadership is recruited and trained. In case the Scoutmaster is absent, a qualified assistant scoutmaster is assigned. If the scoutmaster is unable to serve, a replacement is recruited.
- Provides adequate meeting facilities
- Advises the Scoutmaster on policies pertaining to Boy Scouting and the chartered organization.
- Supports leaders in carrying out the program
- Obtains, maintains and properly cares for troop property.
- Ensures the troop has an outdoor program (minimum of 10 days and nights per year.)
- Serves on boards of review and Courts of Honor.
- Supports the Scoutmaster in working with individual boys and problems that may affect the overall troop program.
- Provides for the special needs and assistance some boys may require
- Helps with the Friends of Scouting campaign
- Assists the Scoutmaster with handling boy behavioral problems
- Helps to organize and manage fundraising opportunities

There are a number of positions within any Troop Committee and in Troop 128, all parents are encouraged to be involved in as many aspects of the Troop Committee as they can.

- Charter Organization Representative
- Troop Committee Chair
- Troop Secretary
- Treasurer
- Advancement Coordinator
- Chaplain
- Training Coordinator
- Equipment Coordinator

- New Member Coordinator
- Merit Badge Counselor Coordinator

Troop Adult Leadership



The troop adult leadership consists of the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters. Scouts BSA Troops are “youth run”, or sometimes referred to “boy led” so what exactly do these people do?

Boys need guidance. The Scoutmaster’s primary job is to train the youth leaders. This includes things like teaching them how to work with and motivate other youth and helping them to learn how to plan ahead.

A Scoutmaster is a mentor to the youth leaders. He presents them with ideas and information and provides support. One of the most difficult things a Scoutmaster has to do is allow the youth to lead, even when he can see failure looming on the horizon. A Scoutmaster might say things like “Have you considered...?” and “What do you think might happen if...?” but the youth don’t always take the hint. The rule of thumb we tend to go by is “If it’s not illegal, immoral, or dangerous, then let them

try it their way!” Failure is a good teacher and most youth will rebound from it with a positive attitude.

A Scoutmaster has Scoutmaster conferences with troop members. He shows an interest in them and talks to the boys about what is happening in their lives. He uses the Methods of Scouting to work towards achieving the Aims of Scouting for the youth. In Troop 128, Assistant Scoutmasters will often conduct Scoutmaster conferences with youth who are working towards their First Class Rank, after a youth achieves First Class, then the Scoutmaster will handle all conferences through the youth achieving Eagle and any Eagle Scout Palms.

The Scoutmaster works with the Troop Committee to make sure the youth have the resources they need for a strong youth program. A good working relationship with the committee is essential.

Troop Leadership

Troop 128 is a ‘boy lead’ troop. As a result, the youth are responsible for the weekly meetings. The youth have a number of leadership opportunities and leadership is a key component required for advancement for all youth in the higher ranks (Star, Life and Eagle Scout).

- Senior Patrol Leader
- Assistant Senior Patrol Leader
- Patrol Leader
- Assistant Patrol Leader
- Troop Guide
- Den Chief
- Scribe
- Quartermaster
- Webmaster
- Librarian
- Historian
- Order of the Arrow Representative
- Instructor
- Chaplain Aide
- Junior Assistant Scoutmaster
- Outdoor Ethics Guide



What does my son need for Scouts?

This is a common question we receive. When your son joins Troop 128, the Troop will give him a few things.

1. Neckerchief
2. Neckerchief Slide
3. Epaulettes
4. Patrol Patch
5. Troop Patch

You will need to provide your son with the following items:

1. Class A Uniform Shirt (with required patches)
2. Class A Uniform Pants
3. Scout Belt
4. Scout Socks
5. Class B Shirt – purchased through the troop
6. BSA Scout Handbook

Additionally, some paperwork will be needed once you join.

1. Activity Consent Form
2. Adult Youth Protection
3. Medical Forms

More about BSA Scout Uniforms

Uniforms are important to the Scouts BSA program as they are a universal symbol of scouting. The Official BSA Uniform is known for lasting through countless adventures and bringing Scouts together with a common thread.

What is a Class A Uniform?



The Class A uniform is the standard ‘dress’ uniform worn by all scouts. It consists of the tan shirt top, and green pants. Green shorts are also acceptable. Additionally, the boys will wear a neckerchief and a slide. The troop will provide each boy their first neckerchief and slide. These uniforms can be picked up at the Scout House in Camarillo, but you can also check our troop’s uniform bank for uniforms that your son may be able to wear.

The Class A uniform is worn to all meetings, travel to and from activities, and Courts of Honor except for the summer months between Memorial Day and Labor Day. During the summer months, we allow the boys to wear their class B uniforms to meetings, but any official Courts of Honor or other official scout activities may require the wearing of the Class A. The youth

leaders will announce when a Class A uniform is required during the summer months.

The BSA Scout Handbook has all the information you need about what makes up the Class A uniform, what patches need to be sewn on it, and how to properly wear it.

What is a Class B Uniform?

The troop has utility t-shirts for sale that count as a Class B uniform. Other acceptable Scout related shirts can be substituted for the official troop utility shirt in most situations, though there are times when the youth leaders insist that all boys wear the same shirt on an activity such as camporees and summer camps.

Typically, the youth can wear whatever pants/shorts they want with their class B uniform. We also encourage the youth to wear a class B utility T-shirt under their class A uniform shirt.

The troop sells their class B utility shirts for \$10.00.

Do You Require Wearing Uniforms When Travelling?

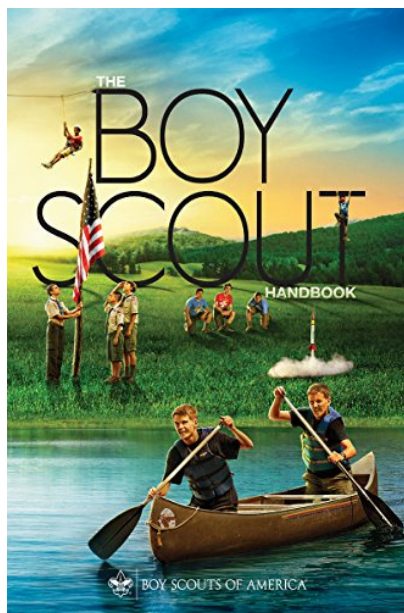
Yes, anytime we are traveling as a group to and from a campout, summer camp, or some other activity, we show Scout Spirit by wearing the Class A uniform. There is rarely an exception to this.

Are There Times When A Class A Uniform Should Not Be Worn?

There are times when Class A uniforms are not to be worn. Anytime the troop is engaged in a service project that may require the youth to get their uniforms dirty, they are encouraged to wear grubby clothing and not their class A uniform. Their class B is encouraged.

When the youth are out on Council sanctioned fundraising events like Camp Card Sales and Popcorn Sales, the boys are encouraged to wear their Class A Uniform. However, if the troop is performing a fundraising event not sanctioned by the council, Class A Uniforms are not to be worn and the Class B should be worn.

What is the Scout Handbook?



The Scout's Handbook is the book that has just about everything in it your son will need to be a Scout. Not only will it have the information needed, but it will also have checklists in the back that are used to help track the skills and requirements he will have to perform for each Scout Rank. This book is incredibly important for your son's scouting career. We encourage the boys to bring their books to every meeting, and they are taught to keep track of the book at all times.

For a scout working through rank advancements, it can be catastrophic if he loses this book. Losing the Scout Handbook can require that he rework the things that he has been working on for his next rank. The Scoutmasters of the troop really encourage the boys to keep track and care for this book.

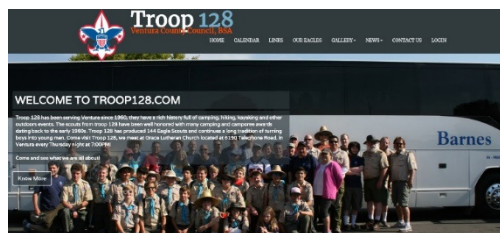
How will we stay informed in the Troop?

For the troop to run properly, communication is key. It is very important you and your youth both keep up to date with the latest happenings in the troop. We have a number of ways to keep you informed.

Meetings

At the end of each meeting around 8:25PM or so, the youth will announce what activities are happening over the next few weeks. This is a great time to stay up to date on the latest and greatest information and to get your questions answered about the various things the troop is doing.

Website



Our website located at <http://www.troop128.com> has all our upcoming events on our calendar along with any recent events and news related items. You can sign-up for our weekly newsletter through the website and you will get a weekly digest of any and all events coming up over the next couple of months.

Additionally, signing up for the weekly newsletter will also get you access to any messages that are sent out through the website to the troop. This

is a good way to stay up to date when the troop is out on activities and it is used for all information being sent out to the troop members.

Our website also has a login for both adults and youth. You will be able to see how your son is advancing, what documents we have and need, and how much money is in his scout bucks account. You can also upload and download pictures taken on our outings and you have access to a lot of additional information. Signing up for an account does not immediately grant you access to the login area, but once your account has been confirmed, then you will be good to go.

Email

As was mentioned above, most email communications need to be sent through the Troop 128 website. This way, we are making sure that all scouts and adults are getting the information they need. The email system in the website will also allow you to pinpoint your communications to just the adults, or perhaps to one particular patrol if you desire. Keep in mind though, any email that a scout receives is also received by the scout's parents and all the adult leaders in the troop. There are no secrets here and we strive to ensure that everyone gets access to the information they need.

Phone Calls

The Scoutmaster and youth leaders of the troop leans heavily on phone calls each week. These phone calls remind all the youth members of the troop from the top down what is happening for the week. It allows us to be prepared for those who might be absent. It also shows that we care about a scout's participation in the meetings.

Please make sure that your youth responds back to the youth leader that calls them with any information requested, even if you plan on not attending the meeting. This shows respect to those youth leaders who are working hard on behalf of your youth's scouting career. It is encouraged that all parents ask their youth if they have heard from their patrol leader each week, and if they have not, reach out to the patrol leader to get the latest and greatest information for the meeting.

What about additional paperwork?

There is some additional paperwork the troop will need to collect. Get used to this, because we will be asking for these things on a regular basis as most of them are required each year.

What are Activity Consent Forms?

Scout Activity Consent Forms are documents that adult leaders will carry on every campout the troop goes on. This form is essentially a release form that allows the adult leaders to make medical decisions in the case of an emergency. The form can be downloaded here:

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/19-673.pdf>

We also have these forms printed and available at the scout house. We typically only need these forms at the beginning of the year and we hold them throughout the year for all of our activities.

Other consent forms may also be needed. Any activity that includes shooting sports will require you to sign a consent form for that activity. If your son does not have that form, he will not be allowed to participate in shooting sports. Other activities like snow sports, jumping houses, climbing sports may require additional releases to be filled out before your youth can participate in any of those activities.

What Medical Forms are needed?

Scouts BSA has three medical forms that need to be filled out and kept on file each year. These forms again help the adults on an activity to make emergency medical decisions.

- **Medical Form Part A and B**

These forms are filled out by the parent and give the adult leaders the information they need to know about any medications, allergies or other information they need to know about your son. The adult leaders will work to make sure your son takes required medications when needed and we are attentive of allergy situations that might come up. These forms are needed for both the scout and any adults who want to go camping with the troop.

- **Medical Form Part C**

This form is required each and every year if your youth is to attend summer camp or other high adventure camp such as our Kayak Trip or Philmont Scout Ranch. Summer camps insist on this form and will not allow your son to attend unless the troop has this form on record. Any adults who plan to attend these activities will also need to turn in their Part C Medical Form.

Part A and B can be filled out and signed by the parent or guardian, Part C must be filled out and signed by a doctor.

What do we do if we have a complaint or a concern?

While we attempt to follow the Golden Rule, we are working with boys here and sometimes poor decisions are made. The best thing to do if you have a concern is to bring it to the attention of one of the Assistant Scoutmasters. Please feel free to come and talk to any of the Assistant Scoutmasters with any concern you have, if you feel you did not get appropriate attention to the problem, then informing the Scoutmaster or the Committee Chair would be the next appropriate action.

What does all of this cost?

What are the membership fees?

The troop collects membership fees on behalf of the National BSA and the Ventura County Council. The membership fees go to administrative costs and insurance costs.

Membership fees as set by the National Scouts BSA Council and Ventura County Council BSA are currently \$72.00 for youth members. The troop does not see any of this money as it goes directly to the National BSA and to our local council to offset insurance costs.

Does the Troop charge dues for the year?

Yes, the troop collects a yearly due from all youth members. This modest fee helps offset the cost of patches the youth attain throughout the year. As boys earn Merit Badges, Rank Advancement, and Troop Leadership positions, the troop pays for those patches and present them to the boys, these dues help offset some of that cost.

The troop's yearly dues are \$28.00 for youth members.

All these fees are prorated through the year depending on when the boy joins the troop. A table of the prorated amounts are shown below:

| Scouts Registration 2020 | National BSA Dues | Troop Dues | Total Registration Cost |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| January | \$72 | \$28 | \$100 |
| February | \$66 | \$28 | \$94 |
| March | \$60 | \$28 | \$88 |
| April | \$54 | \$21 | \$75 |
| May | \$48 | \$21 | \$69 |
| June | \$42 | \$21 | \$63 |
| July | \$36 | \$14 | \$50 |
| August | \$30 | \$14 | \$44 |
| September | \$24 | \$14 | \$38 |
| October | \$18 | \$7 | \$25 |
| November | \$12 | \$7 | \$19 |
| December | \$6 | \$7 | \$13 |

What does it cost to go on outings?

Every outing we go on as a troop has a cost associated with it. The adult leaders in the troop work hard to keep that cost down, here are some examples of typical costs for an outing.

Camping Fees

Usually when we go camping, we are camping in locations that charge us to camp there. We will typically take all of those camping fees for the entire troop and divide them out where each person pays an equal share.

Automobile Fuel

A scout is Thrifty, as a result we try and take as few vehicles on camp outs as we possibly can. When we ask people to drive, we usually consider two main points.

1. Hauling Equipment
2. Hauling People

We always have gear that needs to be hauled. This may require rental of a trailer, and almost always requires one of the drivers have a truck to carry gear. We always have to consider that because few vehicles can carry scouts and all the gear we take on a campout.

We typically are looking for vehicles that can carry lots of bodies. SUVs and vans are the first things we will try to get to go on a campout and we typically ask owners of those types of vehicles to drive first.

When we have enough “seat belts” to carry all the attendees and gear, we collect enough money for all those vehicles to have their fuel paid, along with a little extra to account for wear and tear.

Each vehicle gets the same amount and all youth and adults share in that cost. It does not matter if one vehicle carries 9 people and another only carries 4, both drivers get the same amount of money if they are asked to drive.

We understand there are adults that want to drive on their own, but since so many of our camps have limited parking, and we are trying to teach the boys the concept of being thrifty, we strongly discourage additional vehicles going.

Additionally, we have to consider logistics, we need to make sure we have enough seats on hand to evacuate everyone we have at camp. So, we discourage adults dropping their youth off and picking them at the end of the campout. We always try to have enough seats to carry everyone if we have to evacuate out of an area, even if you plan to come up late or leave early.

Food Costs

Sometimes when traveling we will say to show up at an outing “having had”. The boys know this to mean “having had breakfast, or some other meal” and that means we will not be stopping for a meal before we get to camp.

Other times, we will plan to have a meal on the drive to and from camp. Youth are expected to carry some pocket money for those trips. We usually announce when we are planning to make such stops and where we plan to make them so proper amounts of money are provided for.

Food during the campout

We encourage the boys to cook good, tasty, and nutritious meals on camp outs. Each patrol is expected to cook their own meals and eat as a patrol. They will plan their meals before they go and we have found that it is best for one boy to buy the food for the trip. We typically give them a budget to work from that each boy is expected to pay. If the patrol goes over that budget, then they will need to collect up the difference from each boy.

General Fees levied against the troop

Sometimes we are charged extra parking fees, boat launch fees, or some other type of cost. We usually try and always have those fees added into the per person cost for an outing when they come up.

Summer Camp Fees

Summer camp is one of the big expenses for the year. The cost of sending a youth to summer camp varies greatly on the camp the boys elect to attend. Camps like Emerald Bay can be upwards of \$700 to attend, while Camp Three Falls may cost \$405 or more to attend.

Typically summer camp payments can start to be collected as early as January, so it becomes important for all the youth to make decisions early on if they are planning to attend summer camp.

A Final Word on Camping Fees

It is very important that the boys decide, sign-up, and commit to a campout as early as possible. This gives us plenty of time to make sure we have plenty of drivers and that we have time to collect money for travel and food costs. However, we do know that things happen at the last minute and changes need to be made.

Signing up to go on a campout and then backing out at the last minute puts other participants in a bind with having to spend money for food, or having to come up with more money to cover the costs associated with camping and travel. Additionally, this does not help teach responsibility or accountability to the boys. For this reason, camping fees collected prior to a campout may not always be available to be returned.

What is this 'Eagle Scout' thing I keep hearing about?



Eagle Scout is the highest rank a youth can earn in Scouts BSA. It is the culmination of a lot of hard work on learning scout and life skills, earning merit badges that teach them about different types of careers available to them, how to be a good citizen, and learning and conducting leadership.

Less than 6% of all youth that join scouting will earn the rank of Eagle Scout. Achieving the rank of Eagle Scout looks extremely good on college admissions and work resumes as it shows that this youth can set goals and achieve those goals - things that potential employers are looking for when entering the job market.

To attain Eagle Scout, your son will have to do a number of things, all of them are shown in the Scout Handbook. Those tasks he needs to perform however, are addressed through Rank Advancement.

Rank Advancement

Rank Advancement is one of the means of scouting. A boy learns skills, earns merit badges and performs other activities to gain rank. A boy will move through 7 ranks:

1. Scout
2. Tenderfoot
3. Second Class
4. First Class
5. Star
6. Life
7. Eagle

Each rank has different requirements the youth must perform to achieve that rank.



Scout Through First Class

At this period in your scout's career he is going to be learning the scout skills he will use throughout his time with scouts. He will learn to tie knots, cook food, clean up after himself. He will learn to swim, paddle a boat, and perform first aid. He will learn what it means to have Scout Spirit, he will be able to identify his duty to God, country, other people, and himself.

All the requirements from Scout to First Class can be worked on at the same time. Your son does not need to finish his Scout Rank requirements before he can work on Tenderfoot for instance. Some of the best places for your son to learn these skills is out camping with the troop, so we really encourage youth in this age range to get out and go camping with the troop as often as they can.

In Troop 128 we want to see every boy make First Class within the first year. As such, we tend to discourage scouts in these ranks from working on too many merit badges, especially at summer camp. Summer Camp has programs where the boys can learn scout skills that are much harder to learn at the troop level.

Star through Eagle Ranks

At these levels of rank, the attention shifts from Scout Skills, to leadership and citizenship skills. The focus becomes more on earning merit badges. Every boy in these ranks have requirements to hold a leadership position within the troop. Each boy is required to spend a certain amount of hours in service projects to others, and ultimately, each boy will be required to perform their own Eagle Project to earn the rank of Eagle Scout.

My son wants to work on a Merit Badge, what do I have to do?

In this strictest sense of the word, if your son wants to earn a Merit Badge, you as the parent need not do anything.



Having said that, there is one thing you might want to consider doing unless your son can pay his own way, and that is to buy the merit badge book he wants to work on. Our troop has many merit badge books in our library that can be checked out, if needed. Every merit badge that is available to earn has a book that goes along with it which will give the boy most, if not all, the information he needs to complete the merit badge. Some merit badges will have skill checks that he will need to perform in front of a merit badge counselor, but more on that in a bit.

Youth who want to work on a Merit Badge need to just pick the subject they want to work on. They can start working on the merit badge whenever they want, but there are a few things that must happen as early as possible.

1. **Speak to the Scoutmaster**
While the boys can start working on requirements any time they wish, they need to come to the Scoutmaster, or an Assistant Scoutmaster if the Scoutmaster is unavailable, and the two of them will consult on an appropriate Merit Badge Counselor. During this conversation, the boy will be asked to fill out a "blue card". The blue card is his record for working on the merit badge and recording its completion. These are important!
2. **Understand the Buddy System**
During the conversation above, the Scoutmaster will remind the youth that they must have a buddy with them (Parent) when they meet the counselor, no one on one contact is allowed between youth and scouts.
3. **Contact the Merit Badge Counselor**
The YOUTH (not mom, dad, grandma, or grandpa) is to contact the merit badge counselor. The whole Merit Badge program is meant to get youth used to speaking with adults and working with subject matter experts to prepare them for life. Very few, if any merit badge counselors will speak directly with anyone other than the scout on matters of scheduling and working on the merit badge, do not be surprised if a merit badge counselor asks to speak to your son and not to you.
4. **Show His Work and Skills**
The boy will need to work with the merit badge counselor on the requirements. Counselors cannot ask the boys to do anything more than what the requirements require, nor can they accept anything less. There are a few areas where "scout spirit" may come in to play. If you read a requirement and try to determine if the requirement is met and you start your argument with the words: "Technically it says..." then guidance would dictate a re-reading of the document with a mind towards the spirit of the requirement and scout spirit of "Doing your best!"
5. **Turn in the completed "Blue Card" when completed.**
Once the merit badge is completed, the Merit Badge Counselor will sign the Blue Card. The counselor will take part of the blue card and return the rest to the boy. The scout then returns to the Scoutmaster who will consult with the youth and ultimately sign approval on the finishing of the merit badge. At which point the blue card gets

turned into the Troop Advancement Chair to ensure that the merit badge is bought and given out at the next Court of Honor.

What is a “blue card”?

A blue card is the Merit Badge record sheet a scout uses when working on a merit badge. It helps the scout and the merit badge counselor to keep track of the boys’ work towards earning the merit badge. Once earned, these cards kept as records to show the date the boy earned the merit badge. They can become important if there are any errors in recording what was earned and when.

It is advised each boy get a three ring notebook with page protectors to keep things like Rank Advancements, Merit Badge Blue Cards and other scout information, these records can become extremely important when it comes time to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout if there are record keeping errors. This also serves as a great history of your scouts career.

What kinds of things does the Troop do throughout the year?

Troop 128 has several campouts and outings we do regularly, here are some of those:

Car Camping

We do some car camping throughout the year. We encourage families to go along on these campouts. They can be anything from going to Death Valley, to float trips down the Owens River, to just going to Camp Three Falls for the weekend. Car camping allows us to bring more comforts from home and to have guests come with us without too much trouble.

Backpacking Trips

Throughout the year, the troop tries to do as many backpacking trips as we can. Backpacking and hiking are requirements for new boys in the unit, so we try and give as many opportunities as we can for them to get out on the trails. Not all backpacking trips are appropriate for all scouts, there may be times when we suggest younger scouts not go on a particular backpacking trip.

Kayak Trip



Every other year (even years), Troop 128 builds our folding kayaks and we do a float trip down the Colorado River. Boys build their own kayak and the trip takes 3 days to travel over 50 miles. This trip is almost always scheduled for the first weekend after school lets out for the summer. This usually coincides with Father’s Day weekend.

The kayak trip is considered a ‘high adventure’ trip and as such we limit participation to scouts who have been in the troop for at least 1 year. First year scouts are only allowed to go on the trip if they go

in a tandem kayak with an adult. We have found that younger scouts lack the discipline and physical ability the trip requires.

Camporee

Every year the District puts on a Camporee. Camporee is a chance for the troop to participate in events and competitions that put their patrol skills to the test against other troops in the district. Our troop always participates in Camporee and usually commits to hosting one or two events as well. We also get involved with the cleanup of the Camporee site and we help set up for Camporee each year.

Hosting an event at camporee requires adult leaders to be willing to put together the event and then to score the event for all the units attending camporee. This is a great event to get involved with in order to get to know others around the district.



Winter Camp

We typically look for a chance to go camping in some location where temperatures are below freezing and snow may occur. This is a great campout for everyone in the troop, and we spend time with all new scouts to help them make sure they are as comfortable as possible in adverse weather conditions.

Summer Camp

Troop 128 attends summer camp every year. Summer camp is a weeklong camp that is put on by the BSA councils. The troop's youth decide which summer camp they want to attend at our yearly planning meeting typically held in August.

Wilderness Survival

Each year in the fall or early spring, the troop likes to go out and "rough it". We plan to go camp at an unimproved campground, or we go out on a hike. We do not take tents on this hike; the boys are expected to build their own shelter. We pack lightly on food as well, and we try to either carry all the water we need, or plan to go someplace where water is available. Again, the idea is to teach the boys how to survive in the wilderness with the least amount of gear as possible.

Chief Peak Hike

Each year we try and do a night hike up to the top of Nordhoff Ridge in Ojai. We sleep under the stars at the top of the hill and then in the morning continue to the top of Chief Peak. Once there, the participants get their picture taken at the survey marker. Once we return, the boys will be able to buy a replica pin of the survey marker they can wear on their uniform.



We
up
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Service Projects

Throughout the year Troop 128 is called upon for various service projects. These service projects also work for service hours which many of our middle and high schools in the city require of the youth. We encourage the boys to take part in as many of these service projects as possible.

Eagle Service Projects

Many times, throughout the year our boys who are working to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout will have Eagle Service Projects. The boys working on Eagle Rank are expected to lead these projects and have adults and youth working the project with them. We encourage the boys in the troop to participate in as many of the Eagle Service projects as they can, as they will one day need the troops help on their own Eagle Project. These projects can also be credited for the school service requirements.

Leadership Planning Meeting

Each year in August the current leadership heads out on their yearly planning session. In the weeks leading up to this event, the patrol leaders start talking to their patrols and getting information about the kinds of events the youth would like to do.

These leaders then go on the leadership planning meeting and they decide all the year's activities. They put those activities on the calendar, and they try and come up with a rough estimate in cost. The plan is then shared at our fall Court of Honor and boys can work out exactly how they plan to pay for all the activities throughout the year.

Courts of Honor

Troop 128 holds three Courts of Honor throughout the year. A Court of Honor is the troop's time to recognize the awards, ranks and merit badges earned since the last Court of Honor.

- Spring Court of Honor

This Court of Honor is typically held in May. We try and have updates on our upcoming summer activities in addition to recognizing any awards since the last winter Court of Honor.

- Fall Court of Honor

Our Fall Court of Honor is where we present the plan for the next program year in addition to recognizing accomplishments.

- Winter Court Of Honor

Our Winter Court of Honor is set aside for a time of fellowship and thanksgiving for our scouting family. We will typically have a potluck dinner at this Court of Honor. Additionally, we usually set aside this night for an all-night game night. The boys can bring their favorite family friendly video games, board games and tabletop games and we all play through the night!

So, as a parent, what do I have to do?

We are SO glad you asked!

A lot of parents when they first come in the troop ask what they must do. Many who come in from Cub Scouts are used to being heavily involved in the day to day workings and meetings of the pack. Most have a little culture shock moving to scouts when they learn they really do not have to do anything.

Having said that, we really do need your help in any number of areas!

What is this 'Youth Protection Training'?

All parents who intend to come to meetings, even if only to drop off and pick up youth, MUST have completed "Youth Protection Training". Youth Protection Training is an online course that can be taken at <https://my.scouting.org> it takes a few hours to complete and is valid for two years. You can sign up online, take the course and bring a printed certificate with you to turn into the Scoutmaster, Committee Chair, or Training Chair.

There are simply no exceptions here and we will be asking everyone to complete this.

What other types of training are needed?

Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM) have far more training that needs to be taken. If you have aspirations to join the team as an ASM, then you should take and/or attend these trainings as soon as you can.

Scoutmaster and ASM Specific Training

This training is available online and occasionally the District will put this on in a classroom setting. It takes about 4 to 6 hours to complete.

Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills

This training is a required training for Scoutmasters and ASMs and it requires that you spend an overnight with the course instructors working on outdoor skills. This course is only put on by council and district volunteers and is offered around four times per year. It can also be taken at some summer camps as well.

Other online courses

There is a myriad of other online courses that adults should take, even if you are not going to be scoutmaster or ASM including Swim Safety, Boating Safety, Bad Weather, Wilderness First Aid, and others. Take any and all of those classes as you feel you need.

Do I have to be registered with the troop in some capacity?

The answer to this question is LIKELY. The BSA requires any adult who has more than 72 cumulative hours in direct contact with the youth to be registered. This means you will have to fill out an adult application, pay yearly membership fees, and undergo a background check.

Let's look at this a little deeper. If you come to every meeting for one year, and each meeting is 1.5 hours long, then you will have had 75 hours cumulative time throughout the entire year and would have to be registered. Add in a couple of camping trips, summer camp, winter camp, or the kayak trip and you have exceeded the 72 hours and you need to be registered with the troop. Most adults are registered as members of the parent committee.

Are there membership fees for adults?

Yes, adult membership fees are only \$48 per year, and all that money goes to the National BSA and to the Ventura County Council to offset insurance costs. The fees are prorated on the following table:

| Adults Registration 2020 | National BSA Dues |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| January | \$48 |
| February | \$44 |
| March | \$40 |
| April | \$36 |
| May | \$32 |
| June | \$28 |
| July | \$24 |
| August | \$20 |
| September | \$16 |
| October | \$12 |
| November | \$8 |
| December | \$4 |

Other than registration and background check, what other paperwork is needed for adults?

Beyond registration, adults may be required to submit the same paperwork as the scouts do. Medical forms A, B and C will be required for some events. Troop lead adults may come to you for these forms as needed throughout the year.

In Closing

Thank you for your interest and/or joining Troop 128. We are indeed happy to have you and we are looking forward to getting to know every one of you over the next few years. We hope to have loads of fun with you and your son in the troop and we hope that you will find a family here among us!