



# **Hempstead Boy Scout Troop 108**

## **Handbook**

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## Welcome to Adventure!

WELCOME to the adventure of Scouting in Troop 108! This booklet will help you learn about Scouting, help you discover what makes Troop 108 special, and help you find answers or concerns. Our Scoutmaster, Raul Villarreal, will also be glad to answer any of your questions or concerns.

## How Your Son Benefits

Troop 108 is a very active troop. We try to provide a challenging and far-ranging program. Scouting is much more than just a wholesome and enjoyable activity. Active Scouts develop initiative, leadership, self-reliance, and self-confidence. Scouting helps boys become good citizens of strong character, who will be leaders, and achievers in the adult world.

## What Parents Need to Do

YOU are the single most important factor that will determine how successful you son will be in Scouting! *If you want your son to reap the benefits of Scouting offers, you need to join Scouting with your son, either as a uniformed leader, or as an active member of the troop committee.* Scouts whose parents are actively involved attend more meetings and advance in rank faster than Scouts with less involved parents.

Being an involved parent takes time and effort, but it's also rewarding and FUN! One of the reasons our troop is so successful is because of the dedication of so many of our parents. There is something to do that matches the talents of everyone, and your involvement is vital to your son as well as to our other Scouts. Active parents will receive priority when planning trips, outings or special events.

Current BSA policy requires all adults who have contact with the Scouts to register with BSA. The simplest way for us to meet this policy is register all parents.

## Summer Camp is Vital!

Be sure to put Summer Camp on your family calendar as soon as the date is published so your son won't miss out on the most important and exciting week of the year.

Boys who go to summer camp their first year stay in Scouting nearly three times longer than those who don't. Those who miss summer camp will have great difficulty catching up with the Scouts who went to camp, and more than half will drop out their first year.

Troop 108 has been to a great variety of summer camps, some in our own council and some out of council. We do this to give the boys a variety of experiences and to see different types of country.

# Troop 108 Goals

Scouting in Troop 108 means Adventure and Challenge for your son and for you. Scouting is a GAME with a PURPOSE: to develop future leaders of strong character, good citizenship, and personal fitness. Scouting's eight methods make it unique:

Scouting Ideals (Law, Promise, Motto, Slogan)

- \* Patrol System
- \* Advancement
- \* Adult Role Models
- \* Outdoor Program
- \* Leadership Development
  - \* Personal Growth
  - \* Scout Uniform

Scouts tent and eat with other Scouts in a patrol, led by an elected boy patrol leader. Adults tent and eat nearby in their own patrol. Boy leaders plan, execute, and evaluate the troop program, guided by our BSA-trained adult leaders.

## Sports and Scouting

We don't compete with sports, because our experience shows that the most successful Scouts are those with a variety of activities and interests. We want all of our Scouts to be active in church, music, sports, school and other activities. A Scout must maintain the Active Scout Standard as outlined in the Policies and Procedures to receive all benefits from the troop.

## Who Can Join?

Troop 108 welcomes any interested boy of Scout age (either 11 years old OR have completed the Fifth Grade OR have earned the Arrow of Light, whichever comes first). A boy does NOT have to graduate from Cub Scouts or Webelos to become a Boy Scout. Visit some other troops so you can be sure that Troop 108 is the best troop for you.

## Standards of Membership

We expect each of our Scouts to be active, to advance regularly, to wear full Scout uniform, to practice good manners and behavior, and to do his best to live the ideals of Scouting as expressed in the Scout Promise and Law. The troop may suspend Scouts for poor behavior. Scouts who attend fewer than half of the campouts pay higher fees, may be denied advancements, and may not be permitted to participate in certain special activities. The key to successful Scouting is the camping program, and only active Scouts can reap its full benefits. We expect our Scouts to attend overnight campouts year round, and to make every effort to attend our vital week at summer camp. We also expect parents to be actively involved

with their son in Scouting, since Scouts with involved parents reap the greatest benefits from Scouting.

## Troop 108 Uniform

Just as sports uniform identifies a boy with a team, the Scout uniform identifies a boy with the largest voluntary youth movement in the world. The Scout uniform tends to diminish the importance of a person's financial, social, and ethnic background, while clearly showing each individual's Scouting accomplishments.

Troop 108 requires all members to wear a full and correct uniform, Class A or Class B as determined by the Scoutmaster.

Class A Uniform:

- Official BSA shirt
- Official BSA trousers or shorts
- Official BSA belt with BSA buckle
- Official BSA socks
- Dk green BSA neckerchief or OA neckerchief (Special Occasions)
- Correct insignia sewn in correct places

The Scout Handbook has a full sized sewing template on the inside front and back covers. If you have any question please feel free to call.

Class B Uniform:

- Troop 108 monogrammed shirt (Tan, Grey, or Red) or Red OA shirt
- Official BSA trousers or shorts
- Official BSA belt with BSA buckle
- Official BSA socks

Scouts typically wear Class B to regular meetings and Class A to all formal activities, Board of Review, Court of Honors and any event where we will be in the public eye. The Scoutmaster will have which uniform is required on all activity information or check the web site.

## Permission Forms/Physicals

Your Scout will receive information for every activity with a permission slip, costs, uniform requirements and other important information. Please return these to the Scoutmaster no later than the date indicated (this is how Scouts sign up for outings). In addition the troop will maintain a current (updated annually) Class I Physical (with permission to treat). Class II physicals are required for any activity lasting more than 72 hours and must be updated every 3 years. Adults over 40 must have a Class III updated every year. Any activity deemed as high adventure requires a Class III physical.

## How Boy Scouting Differs from Cub Scouting

You may be surprised how different Boy Scouting is from Cub Scouting. But then, boys of Scout age are very different from boys Cub Scout age. Here are some key contrasts:

The Cub Scout program is family-centered. Adults plan all activities, and most activities lend themselves to full family participation.

*The Boy Scout program is boy-centered. Boys plan all activities (with adult guidance), and most activities do NOT lend themselves to family participation (because boys camp and function as patrol groups under their own elected boy leadership).*

Adults (usually the boy's parents) conduct all Cub Scout advancement. Cub Scout camping is extremely limited, even for Webelos.

*Adults other than a boy's parents conduct all Boy Scout Advancement. Camping is the very heart of the Boy Scout program.*

Because Boy Scout advancement is so different from Cub Scout and Webelos advancement, few Webelos Scouts are prepared for Scout advancement. Cub Scout advancement is done mostly with parents. Webelos advancement is done mostly in groups with the Webelos leaders. In either case, adults determine the timing and course of the boy's advancement with little input from the boy. On the other hand, a Boy Scout has almost total control over his own advancement, which he will do mostly on an individual basis with senior Scouts and with a number of different adults.

## How Scouts Advance

Boy Scout advancement is much more challenging and difficult than Cub Scout or Webelos advancement, and it requires much individual effort and initiative. It also emphasizes leadership and service as much as badges and skills. Achieving First Class (which should happen within a year) takes more effort than earning the Webelos Arrow of Light award. And becoming an Eagle Scout is a crowning achievement of youth earned by fewer than 3% of all Scouts.

Advancement requirements are listed in the Scout Handbook. To advance, a Scout must be active, must do his best to live by the Scout Law and Promise, practice leadership, give service to others, learn Scout skills (mostly in the outdoors), and earn merit badges (primarily from adult counselors other than his parents).

After completing all requirements for a rank, a Scout meets with the Scoutmaster for a "Scoutmaster Conference". Finally he attends a Board of Review with the troop committee.

What can you do to help your son take full advantage of the Boy Scout Advancement method? Make sure your son attends Summer Camp and campouts. Offer encouragement and support. Know what your son needs for his next rank. Be active in Scouting with him, and strongly encourage him to attend as many Scout activities as possible, because only active Scouts advance.

## Boy Leadership

In Cub Scouts and Webelos, adults provide all the planning and leadership. On the other hand, boys provide the planning and leadership (with adult guidance). This takes some getting used to, especially when we adults think we can run things more efficiently than the boys can. But remember, it takes practice to learn anything, including leadership. Your son will elect his patrol and troop officers,

and later, he will hold some officers himself (leadership is a requirement for advancement beyond First Class).

## Courts of Honor

A Court of Honor is a formal ceremony that recognizes each Scout's Leadership, advancement, and other significant accomplishments in front of his family.

Each Court of Honor will have some form of refreshments. The Court of Honor Coordinator will be in charge of assigning family duties.

## How to Communicate with the Troop

- Telephone – If your son misses a meeting he should call his patrol leader to see if there has been additions or changes in the schedule
- Website – information is posted on a regular basis

## Annual Expenses

Troop 108 provides a quality year round program. Some expenses you will be expected to pay (less any fundraiser credits):

- Uniform (Not annual but as needed)
- Summer Camp
- Summer Camp Transportation
- Campout Food (Approximately \$2.50 per meal)
- Annual BSA Registration fee
- Possible Registration Fees for Camporee, Canoeoree, etc.

## Driving Safety Policies

Our Scouts are transported by volunteer drivers like you. We ask our parents and other drivers to review these commitments and BSA policies once each year.

As a volunteer driver, I agree to do my best to abide by the following policies whenever I provide transportation for Troop 108:

I will carry no more passengers than my vehicle's proper capacity.

I will never carry passengers in the back of a truck, in a camper unit shell, or in a pickup bed (covered or uncovered)

Before placing my vehicle in motion, I will make sure that each passenger is wearing a seat belt. I will stress to my passengers in the importance of wearing a seat belt at all times. (Seat belts are proven lifesavers, especially in front seat occupants)

I will maintain liability insurance coverage on my vehicle at least equal to Texas state minimum.

I will not attempt to travel in a convoy with other vehicles. (It is dangerous to follow and keep up with other cars because normal driving should have your full

attention. It is safer to follow a planned route on your own to a pre-arranged rendezvous point.)

I will not consume alcoholic beverages while on a Scout activity nor within a reasonable time before driving.

I will return my Scout passengers to their parent(s) or another person approved by the Scout's parent(s). Upon returning from a Scout trip, I will take my passengers directly home or wait at the church until they are picked up.

All drivers must be registered with Troop 108. If I am unable to drive as planned for an outing, I will either call the transportation coordinator or arrange for a substitute driver from among the registered parents and leaders of Troop 108.

Scouts under the age of 18 are not allowed to drive on any activity. This does not include driving to meetings, which the troop cannot supervise and for which neither the troop nor the BSA can assume any responsibility. The troop recommends to parents that minors not be allowed to drive to meetings without a parent in the car.

## Emergency Procedures

No matter how carefully we plan, there will be times that things go wrong. When they do, here's what the troop's volunteer leaders and parents should do.

### What the Troop Leaders Do

We make every effort to ensure that our volunteer adult leaders have taken Scout Leader Basic Training, acquire good camping experience and knowledge, and have good leadership and crisis judgment. And we follow standard practices recommended by the Boy Scouts of America and by emergency service agencies for situations in bad weather, lost, injury, illness, delays, etc. We expect parents to have faith in the experience and good judgment of the Scoutmaster and other volunteer leaders.

The leader in charge will notify parents as soon as practical if the group is delayed or if a boy is ill or injured. When a problem occurs that prevents the group from proceeding safely or returning on time, the group will remain in a safe location either to wait until it is safe to travel or to wait for help to come. The leader will send someone out for help ahead of the group only when immediate assistance is essential. The leader will never send someone out ahead of the group solely to reassure worried parents (because of the danger of splitting the group's resources and the risk the people sent ahead may get lost or injured).

Estimated return times are ALWAYS approximate, because of unpredictable nature weather, terrain, travel time, etc. Figure that we are on time if we are within two hours of the planned return time. If we are going to be much more than two hours late, the leader will try if possible to notify parents, using our emergency contact person.

### What Parents Should Do

When a problem occurs (or if you are worried or just have a question), FIRST breathe slowly and deeply for a few minutes and review carefully and logically what



you think is happening. THEN call the emergency contact listed on the activity information.

It is the responsibility of the emergency contact to determine what actions should be taken.

## Checklist for a “Typical” Weekend Campout

Use common sense along with this list; be prepared for all types of weather changes. Always bring one complete change of EVERYTHING, and several pairs of socks. Then add gear for rain, temperature change, sleeping and eating. You DON’T need expensive equipment.

NOTE – Troop 108 does not allow candles, butane lighters, non-folding knives, radios/walkmans or computer games on campouts.

- Pack & frame OR duffel bag
- 4 pair socks
- hiking boots
- t-shirts
- 2 underpants
- 2 pairs shorts/pants
- hat with sun visor
- rain jacket OR poncho
- sleeping bag
- sleeping pad and/or cot
- flashlight
- sunscreen
- toilet paper
- soap/comb/toothbrush/toothpaste/towel/hand towel
- water bottle
- cup/plate/bowl
- spoon/fork/knife