

Troop 5 Handbook



**Actively Serving Scouts
on the North Shore since
1922**

www.troop5.com

**Chartered by:
First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette
600 Ninth Street (9th & Greenleaf)
Wilmette, IL 60091**

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Introduction

Welcome to the Boy Scouts of America and Troop 5 in Wilmette, Illinois!

By becoming a parent of a Boy Scout, you are setting your son out on the grand adventure of Scouting. This is a tremendously important and rewarding endeavor that you will be able to share with him. The experiences and skills he learns in scouting will stay with him for the rest of his life. We are happy to have you with us!

The Boy Scouts of America celebrate their 100th Anniversary in 2010. Troop 5 has been in existence for 88 of those 100 years. We are proud of the accomplishments of our Scouts over this long history and look forward to the contributions they will continue to make in the future. .

Parents new to scouting have many questions: What's it all about? How can I be involved in my son's Troop? What are the costs involved?

We have prepared this Troop 5 Handbook to answer these questions.

The following pages describe how a Troop is organized and the advancement path each boy will follow. Reading this will help you understand how your boy can progress through the ranks with your assistance. It will also help you understand how you can contribute to the success of the Troop and what the various roles adult volunteers play in helping the Troop run smoothly. .

What Is Scouting All About?

The founder of Scouting said it best: Scouting is "fun with a purpose."

There are three aims that describe the purpose of Scouting:

- To build character
- To foster citizenship
- To develop fitness

These three aims are the bedrock of the American Scouting movement. Since its founding in 1910, the mission of the Boy Scouts of America has been to serve others by helping to instill values in young people, and in other ways to prepare them to make ethical choices over their lifetime in achieving their full potential.

The values we strive to instill are based on those found in the Boy Scout Law and Oath.

SCOUT LAW	SCOUT OATH
<p style="text-align: center;">A Scout is: Trustworthy Loyal Helpful Friendly Courteous Kind Obedient Cheerful Thrifty Brave Clean Reverent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">On my honor I will do my best To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; To help other people at all times; To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.</p>

Since 1910, these principles have been taught in an atmosphere of recreation and fun which allows young people to develop self confidence, leadership and moral character. The long list of famous scouts includes:

John F. Kennedy 34 th President of the United States	Boy Scout	Neil A. Armstrong, First person to set foot on the Moon	Eagle Scout
President Gerald Ford	Eagle Scout	Steven Spielberg	Eagle Scout
J. Willard Marriott, Jr. President of Marriott Corporation	Eagle Scout	William C. Devries, M.D. Transplanted first artificial heart	Eagle Scout
Sam M. Walton Chairman/CEO, Wal-Mart	Eagle Scout	Barber B. Conable, Jr. Former President, World Bank	Eagle Scout

The Boy Scouts of America is the largest youth oriented organization in the United States. More than **4 million boys** and leaders are currently registered in the Boy Scouts of America.

For those parents who have experienced Cub Scouts with their sons, there is a marked difference between Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts. Unlike Cub Scouting where the parents did most of the planning and executing of events, Boy Scouting is a youth-led organization. The boys learn how to organize and lead the Troop. After training, and with supervision from the adult leaders, the boys run the show.

Boy Scouting also provides for growth of moral strength and character, teaches citizenship, and enhances the development of physical, mental and emotional fitness. All this is done in the spirit of fun and adventure!

Please take a few minutes to read Chapter 1 of your son's Boy Scout Handbook. You will find the Boy Scout Handbook to be a ready reference for you and your son. Skills, advancement, and scouting basics are all covered in the chapters of the Boy Scout Handbook. Upon completion of the application paperwork, Troop 5 provides a copy of the Boy Scout Handbook to each new.

Organization

Troop 5 is a participating member of the Northeast Illinois Council (NEIC), Boy Scouts of America. As its name implies, the Northeast Illinois Council covers the northeast corner of the State of Illinois, basically from Evanston north to the Wisconsin border and from Lake Michigan west to McHenry County. Within that council, there are three Districts: North Star, Aptakisic and Potawatomi. Troop 5 is a member of the Potawatomi District. More information on the Council and the three Districts is available on the Council web site at www.neic.org.

- Boy Scouts of America
 - Northeast Illinois Council (NEIC)
 - Potawatomi District of the NEIC
 - Troop 5 Wilmette

The Troop's organization consists of a Chartering Organization, a Troop Committee, the Troop, and the Troop's Parents.

- Chartering Organization.....First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette (FPCW)
- Troop Committee.....Elected/Appointed Adult Committee Members
- Troop.....Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters
- Troop Parents.....YOU!

Chartering Organization (Sponsor)

Every Troop belongs to a Chartering Organization. The Chartering Organization for Troop 5 is the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette (FPCW). The Chartering Organization shares our objectives for the boys and seeks to insure that there is adequate trained leadership. A Chartering Organization Representative (COR) acts as a liaison between Troop 5 and First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette. While FPCW is our Chartering Organization, there is no requirement that troop members attend First Presbyterian or subscribe to any particular religious views.

Troop Committee

The Troop Committee functions as the administrative and support organization for the Troop. The Troop Committee takes care of the non-program issues, for example newsletters, Troop funds, fund raising activities, membership drives, advancement records, and procurement and maintenance of Troop equipment.

Troop Committee meetings are held on the **third Tuesday of each month** (other than July) at FPCW. All parents are welcome. The meetings are open and parents are encouraged to attend to learn about Troop 5, scouting in general and to help make the boys' experience in scouting a lifetime learning journey.

Troop

Boy Run. Troop 5 is a “boy led” troop. The Boy Scouts provides young men with real-life opportunities to learn leadership through participation and skill building. The Scout leadership of the Troop includes the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), who is elected by his fellow Scouts. The SPL chooses one or more Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPLs) to assist. There are other Scout leadership positions as well. Quartermaster, Scribe, Chaplain, More, More – these are all scouting Positions of Responsibility (POR) that are held by the boys.

Adult Leaders. While boy leaders run the Troop, the Scoutmaster (SM) and the Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM) help guide the boy leaders in planning and running Troop meetings and other activities. However, it is up to the Scouts to ultimately plan Troop activities and run Troop meetings. Parents are strongly encouraged to become Assistant Scout Masters (ASM) for Troop 5. The various skills and leadership styles of the adult leaders help the scouts recognize and learn different ways to achieve their goals for the Troop and in their personal lives.

Patrols and Patrol Leaders. Every activity that Troop 5 does is based on the “Patrol Method”. Each Patrol has five to ten boys. Scouts gather at the Troop meetings and work together in Patrols. At campouts, Scouts camp and cook their meals in Patrols. Each Patrol is led by a Scout who is elected Patrol Leader (PL) by the members of the Patrol. The Patrol Leader is aided by an Assistant Patrol Leader (APL) who is also elected by the Patrol members.

Troop 5 has three different types of patrols, based on a Scout's age:

Trailblazer Patrols: Trailblazer Patrols are formed with new Scouts in the spring of their 5th grade year. Trailblazer Patrols stay together through December of the boys' 6th grade year. These patrols are led by Troop Guides, who are older Scouts. Keeping the Trailblazers together allows these new scouts to learn as a group, assimilate into Troop 5 and have the support of other scouts at a similar age and skill level.

Experienced Scout Patrols: A Scout will move to an Experienced Scout Patrol in January of his 6th grade year. These patrols typically have a mix of boys in 6th through 8th grades (and 9th graders, in the fall).

High Adventure Patrols: In January of his 9th grade year, a Scout will move into a High Adventure Patrol called the Crew, which is composed of high school-aged Scouts. This patrol helps mentor the younger Scouts, setting an example for the younger Scouts to follow.

Troop Parents

The role of Troop 5 parents is to be supportive of the Troop's efforts and to provide the atmosphere Scouts need to learn and excel. Parents should:

- a. Actively follow their Scout's progress, offer encouragement and give a gentle push when needed.

- b. Show support to both the individual Scout and the Troop by attending Troop Committee meetings, Courts of Honor and other scout family functions. In addition, if you have expertise that could benefit the Troop, volunteer to become a Merit Badge Counselor in that area or step up to take on a Parents' Committee Position such as Camping Chair, Equipment Chair, Treasurer, etc.
- c. Assist, as requested, in all Troop fund-raisers and other such activities. Such assistance lowers the cost of the program we offer to the Scouts and, therefore, lowers each family's cash outlay for their Scouts.
- d. Be aware of the Troop programs and annual calendar (see the Troop 5 web site at www.Troop5.com) and encourage your son to participate in as many Troop activities as possible.

Troop Schedule

Troop 5 meets every Monday during the school year (except during vacations and holidays) at the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette at 9th and Greenleaf in Wilmette. There are usually "gathering activities" from 7:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., focusing on a particular skill or event. The troop meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. and generally end at 8:45 p.m.

The third Monday of each month is "Patrol Night". Patrols meet separately at this time and choose their evening activity. They can meet at a scout's home, an activity location (bowling alley, art gallery) or at the FPCW (which is available with prior planning). This is an opportunity for the Patrol members to get to know each other informally, bond over common interests and have fun outside of the formal Troop meetings.

The Troop 5 calendar is continually updated and posted on the Troop web site (www.Troop5.com). It is in Excel format and can be downloaded and printed as needed at your convenience.

Communications

Troop 5 uses a number of communications technologies to keep both parents and scouts informed. Our web site (www.troop5.com) is the main repository for schedules, calendars, forms and information on the Troop and its activities. You will see numerous references to the web site throughout this document. We suggest you bookmark the site on your internet browser for easy reference and check the site regularly for new information.

We also use phone trees, text messaging and e-mail to communicate with members of the Troop. As safety in Scouting is key to Troop 5's functioning, we protect the electronic addresses of scouts in our communications and we never fully identify individual scouts in photographs or other information posted to the site. The site is the public face of Troop 5 and we carefully monitor it for proper uses and any unacceptable behavior is immediately addressed.

We encourage parents to discuss their concerns and limitations on using electronic communications media with our adult leaders. While technology is forever moving forward, we rely on the input from the parents to set our policies on how and when to

contact scouts in Troop 5. Our goal is to have a system that is user friendly, convenient and fast, while providing a safe communications environment for all Troop 5 members to use.

A list of other useful internet links that provide additional information on scouting is provided at the end of this Troop 5 Handbook.

Rank Advancement

Advancement to First Class – The Trailblazer Program

In the Boy Scouts, a Scout's advancement is his own responsibility. Troop 5 encourages, but does not require, each New Scout to set a personal goal of advancing to the rank of First Class Scout by the end of the summer after graduating 6th grade. Through the Trailblazer program, the Troop provides ample advancement opportunities to aid each Scout in meeting his personal goals. Troop Guides and ASMs are at every meeting and Troop 5 event to teach, review and sign off on any and all achievements toward a rank.

All new Scouts become part of Troop 5's Trailblazer Program. As Trailblazers, new Scouts form their own patrols separate from the older Scouts in the Troop. Under the leadership of other Scouts who act as Troop Guides, Trailblazer Patrols focus on developing Scouting skills and on rank advancement. Each Trailblazer serves as the Patrol Leader of his Patrol on a rotating basis to begin gaining valuable experience in the Scouting ways and learn basic leadership skills.

Trailblazers start by earning the rank of **Scout**. The requirements for this and all other ranks can be found in the current *Boy Scout Handbook*. Each Trailblazer must demonstrate the skills necessary to be awarded the rank of Scout to a Troop Guide, other designated Scouts, the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster. Unlike the Cub Scout program, in Boy Scouts, parents do not sign off on their son's achievements. The skill or achievement is demonstrated to a Troop Guide, ASM or the Scoutmaster who will then sign off in the Scout's *Boy Scout Handbook*. The *Handbook* stays with your son for his scouting career. It is the written (and signed off) record of the Scout's accomplishments over time. The *Handbook* is used for reviews and Scoutmaster Conferences before the awarding of a new rank.

Most new Scouts, especially those who have earned the Arrow of Light as a Webelos Cub Scout, can complete the requirements for the rank of Scout within the first few meetings. Troop Guides and ASMs work with the new Scouts to achieve the Scout rank in a timely fashion to give the boys a sense of accomplishment and achievement shortly after joining Troop 5.

The ranks of **Tenderfoot Scout**, **Second Class Scout**, and **First Class Scout** require skills learned at campouts, hikes, and Troop meetings. As with all rank advancement, a Troop Guide, other designated Scouts, the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster must sign off on the requirements for these ranks.

A Scout may work on the requirements for all three ranks in any order, but must complete and will receive the ranks in order (*i.e.*, Tenderfoot before Second Class, Second Class before First Class).

Scoutmaster's Conference

The last two requirements for each rank advancement are: 1) participation in a Scoutmaster's Conference; and 2) a Board of Review. At the Scoutmaster's Conference, the Scout and the Scoutmaster review the requirements for that rank and any previous ranks. They talk about the Scout's involvement in the Troop and the extent to which the Scout exhibits "Scout Spirit". Scout Spirit means whether the Scout acts in accordance with the principles of the Scout Law and the Scout Oath (see Page 3). If the Scoutmaster feels confident that the Scout demonstrates the knowledge, skills and spirit required for the rank, he will initial and date the Scout's handbook. The Scout will then be ready to participate in the Board of Review.

Board of Review

At a Board of Review, the Scout must present himself in a neat, clean uniform with his *Boy Scout Handbook*. The three members of the Board (*i.e.* adults in the Troop who are *not* Scoutmasters or Assistant Scoutmasters) will ask him questions about Scouting, the Troop, any activities he has attended, and advancement requirements pertaining to the rank that he is completing. The Board will confer after meeting with the Scout and announce the results to the Scout and the Scoutmaster. Boards of Review are generally held monthly; the dates are announced in *Bugle Notes* (Troop 5's newsletter) and posted on the Troop calendar on the web site (www.Troop5.com).

Court Of Honor

Individual Scout achievements are recognized at a ceremony called a Court of Honor. At the Court of Honor, awards--including rank advancement, merit badges and special awards--are formally presented to the Scouts who have earned them. The Court of Honor (COH) is a very formal ceremony that celebrates the achievements of the Scouts. Each COH is planned to highlight those who have earned rank advancements, merit badges and other Scouting awards. All Troop 5 Scouts and their parents are urged to attend to help the Troop celebrate these important milestones in a Scout's career. Troop 5 holds its Court of Honor three times a year – in the Fall, Winter and Spring. The schedule is on the Troop calendar (www.Troop5.com) and announced at meetings preceding the COH.

Further Advancement

After achieving the rank of First Class Scout, Scouts are ready to move on to the ranks of **Star** Scout, **Life** Scout, and, ultimately, **Eagle** Scout. The requirements for these ranks are listed in the current *Boy Scout Handbook*. A more detailed packet is given to the Scout before he begins working on the Eagle requirements. Troop 5 maintains a *Life to Eagle* Committee to work with a Scout in his Eagle rank. The Eagle rank is a structured process involving the coordination of a number of internal and external sources of help and advice.

The *Life to Eagle* Committee works with the Scout to ensure that all phases of the process are completed in a timely and orderly fashion before he turns 18.

Merit Badges

Once a boy obtains the rank of Scout, he may begin working on merit badges. A list of all available merit badges is near the back of the *Boy Scout Handbook*. The Troop maintains a library of merit badge pamphlets that members of the Troop may borrow while working on a merit badge.

When a Scout decides to begin working on a particular merit badge, he must first discuss his choice with the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster. If the Scoutmaster approves of the choice, the Scout is given an Application for Merit Badge (Blue Card) and is instructed to contact a Merit Badge Counselor for that merit badge. All badges require that the Scout work with a Merit Badge Counselor who is registered with the Northeast Illinois Council. The Merit Badge Chair can provide the names of registered counselors for Troop 5 and NEIC. Please keep in mind that the records for all Eagle Scout candidates will be examined by the Council for compliance in earning their Merit Badges. Therefore, the Scout should make sure his counselors are registered with the Council.

After the Scout completes the requirements for a particular merit badge, the counselor will sign the blue merit badge record card. The Scout presents the completed card to the Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair. The Scout will receive his merit badge at the next Court of Honor. The Scout should keep all advancement cards as additional proof of completion.

Youth Protection

The Boy Scouts of America has adopted a number of policies aimed at eliminating opportunities for any type of abuse within the Scouting program. These policies focus on leadership selection, training and on placing barriers to abuse within the program. Troop 5's Youth Protection program includes the following:

- Troop 5 follows the BSA youth protection policies. These policies are outlined at the following website:
www.usscouts.org/safety/yp_guidelines.pdf
- Scouts are shown the BSA film, "A Time to Tell," which is an age-appropriate video about identifying and preventing sexual abuse.
- While adult leaders and volunteers are required to participate in BSA Youth Protection training, parents are also encouraged to attend this training.
- One of the first activities a parent must perform with his son is to go over the Youth Protection pamphlet in the front of his *Boy Scout Handbook*.

Record Keeping

All requirements for rank advancement are tracked using each Scout's *Boy Scout Handbook*. Each Scout also receives a three-ring binder where he is expected to record his camping, service and merit badge activities. Information is also maintained by an adult volunteer using a database program called "Troopmaster".

The Scout should bring his *Boy Scout Handbook* to all meetings and activities so that requirements can be initialed and dated as he completes them ("Be Prepared"). Troop 5 also encourages each Scout to carry a pen and small notebook or memo pad in his uniform shirt pocket in order to take notes.

Uniforms

The Boy Scout uniform makes Troop 5 visible as a group and demonstrates the Troop's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting. Troop 5 requires that each Scout wear an appropriate Boy Scout uniform to all Troop-sponsored activities. Presently, the complete dress uniform (Class A Uniform) is required for all Troop meetings (although this rule could be modified in the future, at the discretion of the boy leaders). With the approval of the Senior Patrol Leader, Scouts may wear a field uniform (Class B Uniform) to patrol meetings which are not part of regular Troop meetings, during campouts and at other times when the dress uniform is not appropriate.

The Class A dress uniform consists of the Boy Scout khaki shirt (either long or short sleeves) with proper patches, green Boy Scout shorts or pants, a belt, and Scout socks (worn with shorts). After earning the rank of Scout, each new Scout will be given a Troop 5 neckerchief which should be worn with the dress uniform at all times. The *Boy Scout Handbook* and the Troop 5 web site (www.Troop5.com) contain information about the uniform and placement of patches and insignia.

The Class B field uniform consists of the Troop 5 t-shirt or another Scout-related shirt, sweat shirt or sweater with jeans or shorts.

Uniforms and other Scouting items can be purchased at the Northeast Illinois Council store located just off Route 41 at 2745 Skokie Valley Rd, Highland Park (847-433-1813), or through the BSA catalog. The Troop also maintains an inventory of Scout uniforms (Uniform Exchange) which Scouts have outgrown.

Camping Activities

Camping

Troop 5 has an active outdoor program and goes camping nearly every month. Weather conditions are variable and all Scouts must be adequately prepared for each campout. Each Scout must provide his own clothing which is appropriate to the season and weather, a sleeping bag, a mess kit with eating utensils, and a

duffel bag or backpack. A list of appropriate camping equipment is found in the current *Boy Scout Handbook*.

Each Patrol uses troop-owned tents, stoves, cooking pots, lanterns and other common camping equipment. With the proper equipment, all Scouts will be dry and warm regardless of the weather.

Before a Scout may camp with the Troop, parents must complete a liability waiver and submit insurance information to the Troop's Camping Chair.

Summer Camp

Troop 5 attends two weeks of summer camp at the end of July/beginning of August at Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan near Antigo, Wisconsin. Troop 5 attends Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan for two consecutive weeks – although Scouts may choose to stay only one week. Camp activities include crafts, swimming, rank advancement, merit badges, and boating.

Older Scouts can participate in “high adventure” activities like backpacking in the New Mexico, scuba diving in the Florida Keys, kayaking in the Apostle Islands (Wisconsin), or canoeing through the Flambeau Flowage (Wisconsin).

Completed BSA Medical Forms are required for Summer Camp. Blank forms are available for downloading on the Troop 5 web site (www.troop5.com) or from the Troop's Camping Chair. It is advisable to complete the medical forms early so that any questions can be addressed in a timely fashion.

Cost

Fees

The annual membership fee for Troop 5 is **\$80**. The fee for new Scouts who join mid-year is **\$40**. These fees cover each Scout's participation in all Troop activities, except the food for campouts. Occasionally, Troop or Patrol activities require additional charges. These fees may change over time. The Troop Committee continually reviews alternative funding programs so that the cost of scouting is kept within reach of all who want to participate.

The annual fee also includes a subscription to *Boys Life* magazine, the Troop 5 newsletter known as *Bugle Notes*, and all patches and badges awarded to the Scouts. Financial assistance, considered on a case-by-case basis, is available from the Troop. Please contact the Troop Treasurer for further information.

Fundraising

In order to adequately finance the Troop's activities, Troop 5 sponsors a Pancake Breakfast each fall. This is our only Troop-wide fundraising activity and all Scouts and parents are expected to participate. Scouts have an individual ticket sales goal and parents volunteer in a number of important positions to make the annual Pancake Breakfast a success.

How Can You Get Involved?

Parent Volunteers

While the Troop program is run by the Scouts, it takes plenty of adult support to keep the Troop running. Troop 5 welcomes adults who want to participate as Assistant Scoutmasters, Committee Members, Merit Badge Counselors, drivers, phone callers and various other positions. There is a direct correlation between parental/family involvement and Scout success: The more you are involved, the more likely it will be that your son will be successful.

The Troop needs your support. What can you do to help?

- ***Committee Meeting Requirement***

Each parent who is not an Assistant Scoutmaster or member of the Committee will be asked to participate in a Committee Meeting by acting as a meeting secretary once per year.

- ***Merit Badge Counselors***

Merit Badge Counselors are adults who work with Scouts to teach them skills and help them obtain knowledge in a specific area. Merit Badge Counselors must participate in Merit Badge Counselor Training and be registered with the Northeast Illinois Council. Merit Badge Counselors come from all walks of life. Career responsibilities, hobbies, and areas of interest – all are the basics that make a good Merit Badge Counselor. Counselors can work across multiple Merit Badges that they qualify for and they can work with other Troops within the Northeast Illinois Council if they so desire. The skills that a boy acquires while working on a Merit Badge can lead to life choices or simply expand his universe of interesting things accomplished. As a Merit Badge Counselor you can provide a learning experience that stays with a boy for a lifetime.

Conclusion

This Troop 5 Handbook contains the key information on Troop 5 and how it operates. There is much more information for you and your son in the Boy Scout Handbook that was given to him when he joined Troop 5. Taken together, and with the information on the Troop 5 web site (www.troop5.com), you have access to the information you need to guide you as your son progresses through the scouting program. The Scoutmaster (SM) and Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM) are always available to answer any questions you may have or to discuss any concerns. Of course, ideas and suggestions are always welcome at Troop 5, as are your time and talents as a volunteer or as an ASM or Committee Member.

Useful Internet Links

Northeast Illinois Council (NEIC) (www.neic.org)

This is the site for the NEIC which Troop 5 belongs to. It is a great location to find information about the Council and its events in the area, as well as detailed information on summer camps. It also contains many more links to scouting related activities and sites.

Boy Scouts of America (BSA) (www.scouting.org)

This is the main site for scouting in the US. It has complete information on the scouting program, links to events and programs on a national basis and much, much more.

Boy's Life Magazine (www.boyslife.org)

This is the official site for the *Boy's Life* publication of scouting. Each scout in Troop 5 received a subscription to *Boy's Life* as part of his membership in Troop 5. This site has back issues, additional information on stories in *Boy's Life* and photo and video clips of scouting activities that have been written up in *Boy's Life*.

Animated Knots (www.animatedknots.com)

A very helpful site that shows, via animation, how to tie the various knots that scouts learn as they advance in scouting. A good companion to the illustration in the *Boy Scout Handbook*. Click on the Scouting icon to go directly to the knots of interest to Troop 5 scouts. Has lots of other knots there, as well. Even shows you how to tie a necktie or your shoe laces.

Merit Badge Information (www.meritbadge.org)

A helpful site that provides information on merit badges and advancement for all levels of scouting. Worksheets and other tools are available on this site to help you achieve your goals.