

BOY SCOUT TROOP 577

LOS GATOS, CA



NEW SCOUT INFORMATION PACKET

New Scout Information Guide

Section 1. Troop Program

1.1 Introduction

This New Scout Information Guide is for Scouts and their parents. It explains the information for joining the Troop and forms to be completed, plus yearly dues. It will also discuss the Boy Scouts and about Boy Scout Troop 577 of Venture Christian Church, Los Gatos.

Boy Scout Troop 577 is a Christian Troop, and as a Christian Troop we offer a weekly Bible study through the book of Proverbs. We chose Proverbs because these verses are the foundation for wisdom and the development of a scout character. Additionally, our Troop is committed to service projects for Venture Christian Church, our sponsor. The Scouts are also encouraged to take part in our once a year faith Emblem program. This program is a 6 week course that sets a foundation for a scout to begin the maturing process from boy to young man which fulfills the Scout Law that a scout is reverent.

This is NOT the Scout Handbook, nearly an informational guide and upon joining Troop 577, your son will receive a binder with his Handbook and other important information.

A scout troop, with the high level of programs, outings, advancement, and service that Troop 577 provides, requires the support of many families and friends. No single person can do it all. It is an obligation of membership that each family in Troop 577 will support the activities of the Troop in some way during the school year. Please think about how you can best help. In return, we commit our efforts to continuing the positive methods, aims and traditions of Scouting for our sons.

1.1.1 Scouting Objectives

The major objectives of the scouting program are:

- Growth in moral strength and character
- Participation in citizenship
- Development of physical, mental and emotional fitness

All scouts are expected to live up to the ideals of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

1.1.2 Troop 577 Objectives

- Meet one night per week as a Troop when school is in session.
- Go camping every month (except December and July)
- Attend summer camp for one week each summer
- Have one patrol camping trip a year
- Always cook by patrol
- Be capable of camping in bad weather as well as good weather (we do not cancel outings because of bad weather)
- Have a special week long adventure trip every two years
- Do a service project for Venture Christian Church (Chartering organization) each year
- Learn new scouting skills (or improve skills) on each campout
- Have at least one bike, backpack and canoe/kayak outing each year
- Have all scouts make continual progress toward rank advancement and merit badge completion
- Earn the Quality Unit Award each year
- Have a large amount of fun and high adventure

1.1.3 Troop Leadership

Scoutmaster:

Geoff Phillips

Committee Chair:

Dennis Conte

Assistant Scoutmasters:

Rob Sanders

Leroy Hinkel

Afsi Gerami

Chuck Linsley

Committee:

Jennifer Sanders

Susan McArthur

Ron Barber

Patrol Leader:

Lucas S.

Assistant Patrol Leader:

Hugh P.

Scribe:

Liam R.

Chaplin's Aide:

Daniel L.

Quartermaster:

James M.

1.2 Troop Organization

Troop 577 is a BOY RUN TROOP! As such, the Senior Patrol Leader and his organization (Assistant Senior Patrol Leader and Patrol Leaders) run the Troop and direct the meetings and outings. The Scoutmaster's prime function is to act as the coach advising and assisting the boys in carrying out their program. As a result of this philosophy, meetings may not always be as smooth running as adult-led Troop meetings, but the training in self-discipline and leadership is well worth the price.

Not all boys will be great students, or exceptional athletes, but every boy participating in scouting will be a better person because of the experience. Scouting teaches young men a broad range of skills and values – from singular wilderness survival, to team membership responsibilities, and most challenging of all, group leadership.

1.2.1 Patrol Method

Every Boy Scout Troop is made up of patrols, grouping five to eight boys who work together as a team. Each patrol has a patrol leader and assistant. The Troop of patrols is lead by a Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) and one or more Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPL). Scouts are expected to be responsive to and respect directions given by the patrol leader, the assistant patrol leader, or the senior patrol leader. The Troop is comprised of patrols based on the experience level of the scouts. The Troop supports the three types of patrols:

New Scout patrols – This patrol is for 11-year-old boys who are just joining. The new scouts function together as a patrol during their first year in the Troop, working toward their goal of completing the requirements for the first class rank.

Regular patrols – These patrols are usually composed of Scouts who have completed the First Class requirements or who are at least in the seventh grade. They are groups of peers similar in age, achievement and interests.

1.2.2 Youth Leadership

The youth leadership of the Troop is organized as the Patrol Leader Counsel. The PLC membership includes the SPL, ASPL, PL and Troop Guides. The Quartermasters may attend the PLC to report on equipment issues. The Troop Scribe also attends as a non-voting member to record minutes from the meetings. It is the PLC's job to plan and run the Troop program. Each patrol leader represents his patrol at the PLC and passes on the PLC decisions to his patrol.

1.2.3 Adult Leadership

Venture Christian Church sponsors Troop 577. The responsibility for Troop policies and organization lies with the Troop Committee. The Troop Committee meets monthly and is comprised of parents and friends of the Troop as well as the Chartered Unit Representative. The Scoutmaster reports to the Troop Committee. The Troop Committee welcomes suggestions and comments from the "Troop 577 family" at all times. While we work hard to make Troop 577 the best Troop possible, there is always more that can be done and ways to improve. All Scouting activities are open to parental visitation. We need, and expect, parental involvement and support as an ongoing benefit of membership in Troop 577.

1.3 Meetings

An annual plan (calendar) is developed prior to the start of our regular weekly meetings in the fall. The calendar, which is provided at the beginning of the year and is posted on our website (<http://www.vcc-troop577.com>), provides dates and locations of the year's activities. The Troop makes every effort possible to hold to the scheduled dates on the annual calendar. In the event that a change is required,

we will provide as much advance notice of the change as possible. Parents are encouraged to transfer these dates onto their family calendar and to plan their participation.

1.3.1 Troop meetings

Regular Troop meetings are held Monday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in room 213 room of Venture Christian Church. Meetings occur throughout the school year with the exception of holidays or school vacations (in other words, we will hold a meeting on any Monday that school is in session). This also means that the meeting is automatically cancelled if the school system (s) are due severe weather or acts of God(Earthquakes). Summer meetings are weekly unless

The Troop meetings are planned by the scout leadership and generally run by the Senior Patrol Leader. He may delegate duties to patrols for opening and closing ceremonies, skill contests, Troop wide fun games, and service duties (set-up and clean-up). Each patrol also meets briefly within the Troop meeting to schedule a patrol meeting date or plan for upcoming events.

Scouts are encouraged to complete advancement requirements at anytime during the Troop meeting. Any Scout wishing to complete a requirement should advise the Troop Guides, Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, Junior Assistant Scoutmaster for assistance.

1.3.2 Courts of Honor

These are normally scheduled 3 or 4 times a year, plus an annual Eagle Court when needed. All scouts advancing in rank and/or earning merit badges or other awards are recognized at the Courts of Honor. The Courts of Honor are held at our charter organization, Venture Christian Church. Any change to the meeting times or location will be announced.

1.3.6 Troop Committee Meetings

The Troop Committee supports the troop program as defined by the scouts and the Scoutmaster, advises the Scoutmaster on BSA policies, and supports the leaders in carrying out the program. Regular Troop Committee meetings are held monthly at a Venture Christian Church on 3rd Thursday of the month, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

While the philosophy is that the Troop is boy run, we cannot achieve that goal without strong parental support. The monthly Troop Committee meeting provides one of the best forums for parents to get involved. You do not need to hold one of the adult leadership positions to attend and contribute to this meeting. Please ask one of the adult leaders if you have questions or want to get involved.

1.4 Scout Uniform

Below is an outline of the uniforms worn by Troop 577. A neckerchief, this is worn as part of the Class A (Field) uniform for all official ceremonies. A generic troop neckerchief is worn until a scout reaches First Class, and at that time will receive the Logo'ed neckerchief that represents Troop 577. Once a Scout earns Eagle rank, they are presented with a special neckerchief representing this achievement. The neckerchief represents the pride of the troop and is designed by and voted on by the troop. When a new scout joins, either as a transfer from the Webelos, or straight into scouting, the neckerchief is provided by the troop.

"Class A" Shirt While either the long or short sleeve shirt is acceptable, most scouts use the short sleeve shirt, with Green shoulder loops. If a shirt is worn under the Class "A" shirt during winter months it is preferred that the color be a dark Green to be consistent with Boy Scout colors. (old colors were Red)

The Class A shirt is worn during Monday meetings, all official ceremonies, all Council events, parades, and at certain times during summer camp. The Class A shirt, loops, and other items worn on the shirt are fully explained in the Official Boy Scout Handbook, and can be purchased at the Scout Shop.

"Class B" Shirts The Troop has a Class B shirt may be requested for a specific event. These shirts are required, and are purchased directly from the Troop. The Senior Patrol Leader or the Scoutmaster will direct a specific shirt style for wear based on activity.

- **Class B T-Shirts.** The t-shirt comes with the Troop 577 insignia and Troop voted on graphics. This t-shirt is usually worn at summer camp, other camping trips or at other events and activities.
- **Pants/shorts** Troop 577 does not require official BSA pants/shorts for scouts through the First Class Rank, Scouts are required to have a full scout uniform, including green hiking-type shorts or long pants, to advance to Star and beyond. Scouts advancing to Eagle Scout will be required to have official BSA pants or shorts for their BOR and official ceremonies.
- **Hats** - Troop 577 has a baseball-style hat that is made for the Troop. All scouts should have and wear this hat during all Troop 577 activities where a hat is appropriate.
- **Footwear** - Sneakers are okay for regular meetings. Hiking boots are expected for all weekend campouts, Courts of Honor and any other event/activity where the Class A shirt is worn.

1.5 Finances and Fund Raising

1.5.1 Troop Fees

ONE TIME TROOP REGISTRATION FEE:

\$85.00 Payable when a new scout joins the troop. If a scout joins anytime after February, the amount will be Pro-rated.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE - The \$65.00 is used for:

- Boys Life subscription
- District registration
- Court of Honor advancement items (i.e. rank patches, merit badges) Misc. incidentals
- 20.00 Scout Account starting balance

1.5.2 Accumulating Fundraisers

The Troop requires funds to purchase equipment, pay for activities, and obtain items for advancement. The Troop raises funds through money-earning activities approved by the Troop Committee. All the money earned during a fund raising event will be credited to Individual Spending Accounts for each Scout or Leader that participates. If a parent participates in the fundraising effort, that parent's share may go to a personal account or be distributed to the Scout account. Adult leaders may also participate and build their own accounts. The funds in the individual accounts are for the use of Scouts and Adult Leaders to help defray the cost of summer camp fees and high adventure trips, as approved by the Scoutmaster. The account may also be used to pay for equipment purchases not otherwise bought by the Troop, such as backpacks and sleeping bags, as approved by the Scoutmaster. The Troop intends to continue to purchase basic equipment such as tents, stoves, and lanterns.

1.5.3 Scout Individual Spending Account

Each Scout has his own individual Scout Account. This account operates as the Scout's own "bank account" that will be credited through his fundraising efforts and can be used to pay for his Troop Support Fee, summer camp, and/or activity fees approved by the scoutmaster (generally any fee over and above the usual camping fee). Having an Individual Spending Account will instill a sense of responsibility in the scouts, and encourage participation in fund-raising activities. Through this account scouts can earn money to improve their scouting experience.

1.7 Advancement

Regular advancement is essential for the boys to grow and to maintain an interest in the program, and is one of the most important parts of Scouting. The extent to which a boy participates in the advancement program largely governs the benefit he gains from membership and the length of time he stays in Scouting. Advancement is one of the programs that help boys achieve the aims of scouting while learning skills, which will be beneficial throughout his life. It takes a unique combination of self-induced boy motivation, strong encouragement from parents, and a Troop and district support organization to make it happen. It is very important that goals for advancement are established for each boy by working with the SPL, ASPLs, PLs, and key adults.

Note to Parents: Parents are cautioned that advancement should not become the sole reason a parent keeps a Scout in Scouting. Parents should encourage their son to make advancement in scouting his own personal goal rather than his parent's goal. Scouts, not parents, should make the routine telephone calls to Troop leaders and Merit Badge Counselors concerning advancement, appointments and attendance. Part of the Scouting experience is for Scout to learn how to deal with adults.

1.7.1 Levels of Rank Advancement

Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class All three ranks can, and should, be worked on all at once, though each must be earned in sequence. The goal is for all new scouts to reach the rank of First Class by the end of their first year of scouting. The emphasis is on practical learning experience in five major categories –

- (1) Outdoors,
- (2) Physical Fitness,
- (3) Citizenship,
- (4) Personal Development,
- (5) Troop/Patrol Participation.

Skills are signed off by the Patrol Leader, Troop Guide, Instructor, Junior Assistant Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster or Scoutmaster. A Scoutmaster Conference and Board of Review made up of Troop Committee members (3) finalize the process.

1.7.2 Service Projects

Service projects serving for advancement shall be a service project not normally expected of a boy as part of his religious or school activities. The work may be done by the scout alone or with other scouts, his patrol or Troop. The Troop has a Service Project Coordinator who assists in providing opportunities for the boys to reach out into the community.

1.7.3 Merit Badges

Listings of merit badges that are available to be earned by scouts are included in the Boy Scout Handbook. Requirements for each merit badge can be found in a BSA Publication called "Merit Badge Requirements" or can be found on the troop website <http://www.vcc-troop577.com>. There are also individual booklets for each merit badge, which provide detailed information/

instruction on each requirement of the merit badge. Many of these publications are available online, and as boy advance or earn the merit badge, they are encouraged to place the publication in the Troop library for future scouts to borrow, or they can be purchased at the Scout Shop. Some of the merit badges are required to be earned by the scout in order to achieve the rank of Star, Life or Eagle. The Troop has access to many merit badge counselors to coach them of specific badge requirements. It is encouraged for the parents of our Scouts to become counselors so they may share their knowledge of a specific topic such as biology, electricity, etc..., This is often an easy way for parents to become involved with the Troop and any assistance in this regard is welcomed. Counselors can register with the Advancement Chairperson. The list of available counselors can be obtained from the Troop librarian or the Advancement Chairperson.

1.7.5 Attendance

In order to advance, regular attendance at Scout activities is expected, including Monday Troop meetings. In the event a scout is unable to attend, he is responsible for notifying his patrol leader in advance of his absence. Weekend outings are an important part of the scouting process and it is difficult, if not impossible, to meet the aims of the scouting program or to advance without attendance at these outings. More importantly, the outings are the main source of fun and skill development for scouting, including leadership. The Troop will publish a schedule of planned activities well in advance to assist families in their scheduling.

1.8 Required Activities

It is understood that there are many things that compete for a Scout's time. There will be times when these other things take precedent over a Scout activity. But there are certain activities during the year that Troop 577 believes are required for active members of this Troop. We expect all scouts to participate in the following, unless advance notification has been provided to the SPL or Scoutmaster (events and dates to be included in the annual calendar):

- Council campouts/activities when the Troop decides to participate, such as Scout-O-Rama, camporees, and Summer Camp
- Church service projects
- All Courts of Honor
- Fund raising, as defined in Section 1.5.

1.9 Conduct/Discipline

- Scouts should strive to uphold the principles in the Scout Oath and Scout Law at all times. It is realized that Scouting is a learning experience. Mistakes will be made and unacceptable behavior will occur from time to time. Scouts should, as much as possible, be given the opportunity to learn from their errors. Troop policy is not to insist on a rigid code of conduct, but to ensure a measure of orderliness and control that is necessary for: safety to Troop members and others; assuring Troop meeting goals are achieved; and creating a fun and learning experience for all participants. A few key points:
 - One-to-one activities between youth members and adults are not permitted; personal conferences must be conducted in plain view of others. This is based on the BSA Youth Protection Policy.
 - Scouts are expected to be respectful and responsive to directions given by patrol leaders, SPLs, the Scoutmaster, his Assistants or other Troop leaders.
 - Each scout will be courteous and respectful to other scouts, adult leaders and any guests at all times.
 - Cursing, bullying, name-calling or other forms of physical or verbal abuse will not be tolerated at any time and can be grounds for removal from the activity.

- Scouts should keep their hands and feet to themselves at all times.
- Fighting will not be allowed for any reason.
- No scout may leave a meeting or activity until dismissed by the Scoutmaster or designated adult leader.

Section 2. Camping Program

The Troop typically schedules ten weekend overnight outings during the year (except December), and in addition, schedules a one-week summer session at a scout camp. During a program year, September through August, a Scout who attends every outing or expedition with the Troop will have spent approximately 25 nights camping. Our outings fall into several classifications. There are campouts where the main theme is to work on advancement – particularly for the ranks leading up to First Class. Then there are activity or event type \ outings that tend to repeat themselves each year such as bicycle trips, river or lake canoe trips, snowmobiling, and ski trips. Other outings include Santa Clara Council Camporees, weekend hiking and backpacking trips, Hornet Aircraft Carrier Museum, climbing Half Dome, and more. Additional venture activities will be scheduled for the older scouts in the Troop who have obtained First Class. Any individual patrol can and is encouraged to schedule camping activities.

2.1 Permission Slips

The Troop is required by BSA policy to have Permission Slips for each activity held outside of our regular weekly meeting location. The Permission Slips are specific to the event, and will be attached to a general information page for parents. These will be available on Troop 577's web site prior to each activity. The permission slip must be signed by the parent and returned two weeks prior to each activity, or your son will be unable to participate. It is important that the Permission Slips and required payments be received by the stated due date. This allows the Troop to obtain necessary supplies and campsites, and make other financial arrangements. Changes to scout attendance after the due date can put a financial burden on the Troop that it isn't prepared for. For this reason the due date for Permission Slips will be enforced. **Fees provided at the time of the Permission Slip are, unfortunately, non-refundable.**

2.2 Medical Forms

BSA policy also requires a current medical form be available for each scout and adult. Part of the form requires a physician's signature and is valid for one-year. Personal medical history records on file with the Troop need to be complete and up-to-date. Should any change occur in a Scout's medical condition, please contact the Scoutmaster to make arrangements for the updating of this very important document. For summer camp, a Class III Medical Form is required. For short-term camping, Medical form Class I & II for adults and scouts are required. These forms can be found on Troop 577's website.

2.3 Parental Involvement and Siblings in Campouts

Outings cannot happen without good parental participation. There is no better opportunity to spend quality time with your son than on scout outings. If you are interested in attending one of the campouts or other activities, please see the Scoutmaster. Troop 577 will designate one or two specific outings as a 'family outing' each year. Siblings are welcomed to accompany any parent participating in these designated campouts. The well-being and discipline for the siblings will be the responsibility of the parent for the duration of the outing. Because some of our activities are heavily dependent on parents (such as high adventure outings), they may require adults to be dedicated to transportation planning, food, equipment, permits, money, Scout training, route mapping, shopping, communications, budgeting, etc.

During extensive trips of this nature that require major adult effort, we allow siblings on the trips – so your volunteer effort to help make the trip happen can benefit other family members, as well as your Scout son. Scouts may undertake more vigorous adventure while other family members may be day hiking and sightseeing. Siblings are not usually allowed at Council- sponsored events, unless specifically invited by Council.

Except for the designated 'family outings', guests can only be invited to Troop 577 events and campouts with the Scoutmaster's prior approval.

2.6 Equipment

Equipment for hiking and camping is classified into two major categories: Patrol/Troop equipment and Personal gear.

2.6.1 Patrol/Troop Equipment

The Troop provides equipment necessary to take the Patrols on overnight hiking and camping experiences, including:

- Tents/Tarps
- Patrol Box with Cooking gear (stoves, griddle, pots), utensils, wash basins
- Water jugs
- Propane Lanterns

This equipment is issued to the patrols at the beginning of the year. It is the Patrol's collective responsibility to retain and clean the gear, keep it in good condition, and to bring it back for the following campout. If the gear is not properly cleaned on a camping trip, scouts from the patrol are assigned to take home some portion of the patrol equipment after the camping trip for cleaning. It is the Scout's responsibility to bring the equipment to the next troop meeting, or to make arrangements to get the equipment to another patrol member if that Scout is not attending. (All gear is be placed back in storage after each trip) For the tents, and all related accessories (poles, rain fly, stakes, ground tarp), following the campout, assigned scouts should ensure their tent is immediately dried, swept out and properly stored so it is ready for the following trip. The Troop will keep the lanterns, propane tanks and hookups between campouts and assign these out each camping trip.

Patrols are to wash all equipment after use during the campouts, with hot water and soap if conditions permit, or other appropriate means, in order to reuse the equipment later in the weekend. A thorough cleaning, including the stove, griddles, utensils, pots, etc will need to be performed at the end of the camping trip or at the church prior to the next campout. The Troop also provides such expendables as: sponges, dish soap, paper towels, trash bags, and foil. The costs for these items are included in each activity fee. This is done to ensure each patrol is properly equipped on every outing. If any patrol items are out, lost or broken, please advise the patrol or Troop Quartermaster. The Troop also has other equipment that can be requested and brought on a trip, depending on the activity. These include canopies, large first aid kit (brought to all Troop 577 activities), tables, Dutch ovens, camp saw, hatchet, etc. These should be identified during your patrol planning and requested of the Troop Quartermaster or other leader.

The troop assigned patrol gear and any troop gear requested by a patrol is expected back in working condition. If any repairs or replacement is required due to obvious and willful negligence by any patrol member, that patrol will share the expense of that repair, unless otherwise advised by the Patrol Leader. For this reason, it is important that patrols only check

out and use their patrol assigned gear. A Scout that uses gear that is not theirs, without permission, is not living up to the Scout Law principles of TRUSTWORTHY and COURTEOUS.

2.6.2 Personal Gear

The principles for what clothing and equipment are needed by scouts on an outing are relatively few, but are extremely important and they must be followed:

- Always have the essentials
- Use the layering system for clothing
- Use good, well-fitted boots
- PACK LIGHT, PACK LIGHT, PACK LIGHT

Good equipment that is not totally dependent on size is generally worth paying a little more for because of the many years of service. With these principles in mind, the following represents the collective wisdom of the Troop and reflects training sessions received by the Troop leaders. All personal gear should be labeled with the Scout's name and "T577". The rest of this section provides lists of essential and optional personal gear.

2.6.3 Food

A normal weekend campout consists of the following meals: Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner, and Sunday breakfast (and sometimes lunch). All scouts **MUST** eat dinner on their own before meeting the Troop for Friday departures. Meals are not prepared on Friday nights. Food is usually purchased by patrol and each patrol is responsible for funding it, usually by reimbursing the shopper. The menu is determined by the patrol, with approval by the SPL and an adult leader. We ask the boys, and not the parent, to shop for the food they need. However, the parent should feel free to provide advice on serving sizes and selecting items that would hold up better on a camping trip (rolls for sandwiches instead of a loaf of white bread, for example).

As the experience of planning and preparing meals is a very important aspect of Troop camping weekends, we encourage the patrols to not include 'instant or box' meals on their menus (such as hamburger helper, canned food, etc.). Most members of Troop 577 may or may not eat salads. However they will eat raw vegetables, such as carrots, celery, etc. Fruit is also usually well received. Unless designated as an individual cooking trip (where each scout will carry and cook their own food), most camping trips will follow the patrol method for food preparation. All food should be packed into coolers, if appropriate for the specific camping trip. Items requiring refrigeration should be packed into coolers and iced down prior to meeting the Troop. The Troop currently provides one cooler per Patrol. If another cooler or plastic tub is needed for dry food and the patrol does not have access to a family-owned cooler for the weekend, the Patrol Leader should contact the Scoutmaster at least 3 days prior to the campout so arrangements can be made to borrow one. Do not bring dry items in paper or plastic bags or boxes – they don't do well in the rain.

Section 3. Letter from the Committee Chair

The level of adult participation and interaction with the Scouts aids the success of Troop 577, and any troop for that matter. No matter how strong the Scout leadership is in the troop, the program will ultimately fail without the proper balance of adult participation with the Scouts planning and actions. We need an active adult troop in addition to our active Scout troop. The infrastructure is in place, now we need the continued support of all adult leaders to make the troop successful. Think about a troop with 70 Scouts without enough adult support. Campouts could be curtailed, outside activities reduced or even eliminated and major issues in rank advancement and earning merit badges could occur.

So, how does this affect you, the parents of our new scouts? Your son will get as much out of scouting as you help him put into it. Part of that help is you as an active adult volunteer. But remember what you put in, your son, and other sons, will get out. Think about this unique opportunity that is available to you. Firsthand, you can watch your son grow and develop. And you can help in his development and the development of other scouts. You can work one on one or one on a patrol as an Assistant Scoutmaster in that development.

"But, I don't have the time" is something heard a lot. Well, the challenge back to you is "How can you not have the time for your son?" You can be a merit badge counselor, a committee member or even helping out current committee members. You can help in meetings helping the Scouts, assisting in discipline, assist in their patrol activities. There are as many ways to help as there are activities.

Another common comment is "I don't know what to do." Well, the simple answer to that is to ask questions, or develop it yourself. You do not have to have been a former leader or a former scout. Many of our current scout leaders started when their sons joined Scouts.

There is no rule or obligation that once you become an adult leader, that you have to go to everything and be everywhere. That is not realistic. Just like the Scouts, you must make choices. Sometimes you will have time and sometimes you will not. The obligation is to do what you can, help when you can and you will really make the difference in a Scout's life—maybe even your own son.

Your involvement does count.

Yours in Scouting,
Dennis Conte
Troop 577 Committee Chair

Section 4. Troop Position Descriptions

4.1 Youth Leadership

All youth leaders are expected to:

- Set a good example
- Wear the uniform correctly
- Live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law
- Attend all Troop functions
- Earn Advancement
- Complete Troop 577'a Junior Leader Training Program

Junior Assistant Scoutmaster

(JASM) A Scout at least 16 years of age who has shown outstanding leadership skills may be appointed by the Scoutmaster, to serve as a Junior Assistant Scoutmaster.

Senior Patrol Leader (SPL)

The junior leader with the most responsibility in a troop is the Senior Patrol Leader. All members of the Troop elect him. The senior patrol leader is elected at six month intervals and can be re-elected. During a Scout's tenure as a senior patrol leader, he is not a member of a patrol.

Assistant Senior Patrol

Leader (ASPL) With the approval of the Scoutmaster, the ASPL is appointed by the SPL, serves as his assistant, and takes his place when the SPL is absent.

OA Troop Representative

The Order of the Arrow Troop Representative serves as a communication link between the Troop and the local Order of the Arrow lodge or chapter. By enhancing the image of the Order as a service arm to the Troop, he promotes the OA in the Troop while encouraging year-round and resident camping in the Troop and participation of older Scouts in high adventure programs.

Troop Historian

The Historian collects and preserves Troop photographs, news stories, trophies, flags, scrapbooks, awards and other memorabilia. He might also collect and organize information about former Scouts and leaders and make materials available for Scouting activities, media contacts and Troop projects.

Troop Scribe

The Scribe is the Troop's secretary. He attends meetings of the PLC and keeps a log of their discussions, but not as a voting member. During Troop meetings he records attendance and may maintain Troop advancement records. He may be assigned to a member of the Troop Committee to help him with his work.

Librarian

The Librarian oversees the care and use of Troop books, pamphlets, magazines, audiovisuals, and merit badge counselor lists. He checks out these materials to Scouts and leaders and maintains records to ensure that everything is returned.

Instructor

Each Instructor is an older Troop member proficient in a Scouting skill and in the ability to teach that skill to others. First aid, camping, and backpacking – the subjects can encompass any of the areas that the Scouts will want to master, especially those required for outdoor activities and rank advancement. A Troop may have more than one instructor.

Chaplain Aide

The Chaplain Aide assists the Troop chaplain (usually an adult from the Troop Committee or the Chartered Organization) in religious services for the Troop. He sees that religious holidays are considered during program planning and promotes the religious emblems program.

Den Chief

A Den Chief works with a den of Cub Scouts and with their adult den leader. He assists with den meetings, encourages Cub Scout advancement, and serves as a role model for younger boys. Serving as a Den Chief can be a great first leadership experience for a scout.

Patrol Leader (PL)

The members of each patrol elect one Patrol Leader. He takes responsibility for the patrol's activities and represents the patrol as a member of the PLC. Each patrol leader appoints an assistant patrol leader to assist them.

Assistant Patrol Leader

(APL) The Assistant Patrol Leader steps in to serve whenever the Patrol Leader must be absent. He may carry out special assignments given him by the SPL – working with patrol members on advancement for example.

4.2 Adult Leadership

The following are descriptions of the adult leadership positions within the Troop. Additional details and a full position description are available by request. Most position responsibilities can be delegated to additional helpers as feasible.

Committee Chairperson

Organize the Troop Committee to see that all functions are delegated, coordinated, and completed. Preside at regular monthly Troop Committee meetings and work closely with Committee members, Scoutmaster, and Troop Leadership in executing program. Perform the annual re-charter of the Troop.

Recording Secretary

Keep minutes of meetings and send out committee meeting notices.

Communications Secretary

Organize and publish a periodic activity listing to inform scouts and their parents of upcoming events.

Treasurer

Collect and disperse Troop funds. Maintained reconciled bank accounts. Keep records to conform to Scout Council requirements. Work with the Troop Committee and Scoutmaster in budgeting and fundraising. Report to the Troop Committee at each meeting.

Scoutmaster (SM)

The Executive Officer of the Troop – guide the Troop programs by providing training and direction to boy leaders. Implement Troop Committee recommendations. Implement program to use Scouting methods to achieve Scouting Aims.

Assistant Scoutmaster (ASM)

Assist Scoutmasters are assigned specific duties by the SM to support the Troop. These duties, as delegated, are the same as the SM.

Outdoor Activities Coordinator

Help in securing permission to use camping sites. Serves as transportation coordinator. Secure tour permits for all Troop activities.

Advancement Chair

Coordinate with other parents as necessary to develop an overall program to stimulate and assure adequate Scout advancement within the Troop.

Scholarship/Fund Raising Coordinator

Responsible to identify, develop and supervise fund raising opportunities and to present such opportunities to the Troop Committee.

Merit Badge Counselors

Besides the District-assigned Merit Badge Counselors, the Troop maintains its own counselors capable of signing off a number of badges. These are volunteers with a particular skill or expertise applying to the merit badges.

Equipment Coordinator

Works with Troop Committee, Scoutmaster and Troop Quartermaster to maintain an up-to-date inventory of all Troop equipment. Arrange for allocation of equipment to Troop patrols. Recommend replacement and/or new equipment acquisition. Purchase equipment through coordination with the Committee and Treasurer.

Training Coordinator

Ensure Troop leaders and committee members have opportunities for training. Maintain an inventory of up-to-date training materials, videotapes, and other training resources. Work with the District training team to schedule/advertise Fast Start training for all new leaders.

Service Coordinator

Organize and provide service project opportunities for the scouts.

Fundraising Coordinator

Helps to organize troop fundraising activities. Ensures proper fundraising request forms are submitted to council. Reports status to the committee. A coordinator may handle all fundraising or be assigned to one activity. Popcorn Fundraising Coordinator A

fundraising coordinator specifically designated to organize the annual popcorn sale. This includes tracking popcorn distribution to the scouts, collecting sales money and returned popcorn at the end of the sale, organization sales booths.

Section 4. Bridge to Faith

4.1 A Christian Based Troop

Troop 577 - A Bridge to Faith

The Boy Scouts of America have always been committed to the moral, ethical, and spiritual development of our youth. Scouting is not a religion, but duty to God is a basic tenet of the Scout Oath and Law.

Scouting does not seek to impose its beliefs upon others that do not share them. Virtually every religion is represented in Scouting, and the BSA does not define or interpret God. That is the role of the Scout's family and religious leaders or advisors.

All Scouts are reverent by being faithful in their duty to God. Troop 577 has made the commitment in this obligation of duty by offering the following religious growth activities.

1. **Weekly Bible Versus.** Each week the Troop Chaplain reviews the Bible versus assigned to that week, and the Troop studies the Book of Proverbs as it is an excellent for teaching and developing character in the scouts. It also reveals important wisdom as they learn to make decisions. Each Scout that can recite the Bible Versus will earn a dollar toward their scout accounts.
2. **Worship Services.** At each of our campouts a 15-20 minute worship service on Sunday is led by the Chaplain Aides. This service is non-denominational, filled with prayers, hymns, and scripture readings, and is a glorious way to end each fun filled campout. This service is called the "Scouters Own" Service.
3. **Religious Growth Program.** Any Scout can earn their religious emblem (a really cool medal) by fulfilling certain requirements based on the Scout's religious affiliation. EVERY SCOUT SHOULD BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO EARN THE RELIGIOUS EMBLEM OF HIS FAITH.
4. **Chaplain Aide Position.** Any Scout wishing to hold the position of Chaplain Aide may do so by contacting the Troop Chaplain or the Scoutmaster. The role of the Chaplain Aide is to assist in the worship services, and under the direction of the Troop Chaplain, provide input on the content of each worship service.

Scouting serves as a bridge for our sons entering manhood, but also serves as a bridge for discovering and/or growing in their Faith.