

**BOY SCOUT TROOP 56**  
**Wilmington MA**

**Information for New Scouts & Parents**

This information handout provides some basic information that will be helpful to new scouts and their parents. It will not answer all of your questions, so please don't hesitate to ask your troop leadership:

New Scout Coord., Jay Sheehan	(781) 799-2059 (C)
Scoutmaster, Bill Klindt,	(603) 493-9629 (C)
Committee Chairman, Scott Briere,	(978) 430-4081 (C)

Troop website – <http://troop56.com>

**Some Differences Between Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts**

<b>Cub Scout/Webelos</b>	<b>Boy Scout</b>
Pack	Troop
Den	Patrols
Adult Leaders	Boys are Leaders, with Adult supervision
Many Handbooks	One Handbook
Blue Uniform Shirts	Tan Uniform Shirts
Pack Meeting	Court of Honor
Summers off	Summer Camp

**New Scouts**

The New Scout Coordinator and a Troop Guide want to make sure the transition from Webelos II to Boy Scouts is successful. The Troop Guide, an experienced scout or scouts, will help your scout through the transition. When a scout joins the troop, he must first earn the Scout rank. This is the first rank and is easily attained in the first few meetings. Beyond the rank of Scout, there's Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle.

**Meetings**

Normal meeting time is on Tuesday nights at 7:00 - 8:30pm at the Wilmington United Methodist Church at 87 Church Street, in Fellowship Hall.

If there is no school, then we don't have scouts. Troop meetings and outings are not held during the summer, other than summer camp, or special events or outings.

Scouts should ALWAYS bring their Boy Scout Handbook (with their name inside), a notebook, and pen to the meetings. All scouts are required to be in uniform at meetings, see the Uniforms section below.

## **Fees**

Dues are \$5.00 per month from September through June. This fee covers many of the troop expenses except the cost of outings. Failure to keep up-to-date on dues may prohibit participation in outing events.

Scouts are expected to earn his \$5.00 each month by doing chores around the house. Scouts need to take responsibility to earn the \$5.00 and remember to bring it to the meeting to pay their dues. Parents please do not write out a check for the year. The scouts are given a receipt for dues and should retain this. We do our best to double and triple check payments, but having the receipt will take care of any disputes.

The cost for outings is paid by those attending the outing, and is determined based on food, fuel, tolls and any additional fees. The troop covers the actual campsite costs for these trips. To cover the camping, and other troop expenses, the troop has fundraisers (wreaths, Christmas trees, and popcorn) throughout the year to help purchase new camping equipment, etc. As these efforts benefit all members participation is mandatory.

## **Uniforms**

A new scout should have a Class A uniform which consists of an official scout shirt and a bolo tie (optional). A short sleeve Class A works best as it can be worn over a long sleeve, solid color jersey in the winter. Upon achieving the rank of Tenderfoot, the scout is awarded a neckerchief. Official scout pants, shorts, and socks are not required. If they are crossing over from Webelos the beige shirt is a scout shirt.

Required insignia on the uniform is comprised of:

Council Patch (Spirit of Adventure Council)

Unit Number (56)

World Crest (International scouting emblem)

Green shoulder loops

Badge of Rank (Scout, Tenderfoot, ...), when he has received one

You should consult the Boy Scout Handbook for placement of the insignia. All of this may be purchased at the local Boy Scout Shop in Woburn.

Each scout should wear his Class A uniform to the third meeting of the month, and to all Courts of Honor. He may also wear it to other meetings and activities if he prefers.

The class B uniform is a black or gray T-shirt with the Troop logo and will be given to your son when he reaches the rank of Scout, but any scouting t-shirt, sweatshirt, or hoodie is acceptable as a class B. Scouts should wear a class B uniform during all other troop meetings, functions, and outings.

## **Advancement**

After reaching the rank of Scout, the scout will work on attaining new ranks, Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class. Although these ranks must be received in order, the requirements for ANY of the ranks can be worked on at any time (i.e. a scout working on Tenderfoot could also pass requirements for Second and/or First Class). As the scout works on the requirements for each rank, he should record them in his Boy Scout Handbook.

Once a scout has completed all of the requirements for a rank, three things need to be performed in the following order: Peer Review, a Scoutmaster Conference, and a Board of Review. The Peer Review is an opportunity for the scout to have one of his peers, a First Class Scout or above, review all of the requirements with the scout. Following the Peer Review, the scout should schedule a meeting with the Scoutmaster, the Scoutmaster Conference. Scheduled scoutmaster conferences are conducted between 6:30-7:00pm before a scout meeting. Following the scoutmaster conference, the scout should schedule a board of review. If you have any questions about scheduling a board of review, see Mr. Mainini, our Advancement Chair, or one of the adult leaders at a meeting. The scout must wear his Class A uniform to the scoutmaster conference and the board of review.

The troop encourages each scout to advance to the rank of First Class in their first year of scouting (i.e., by the end of 6th grade). This is an aggressive goal and requires a dedicated scout. To reach First Class, the scout must attend 10 troop outings, three of which must be overnight camping trips that involve sleeping outdoors. Each scout should keep their own advancement record by keeping their Boy Scout Handbook, signed merit badge blue cards, and rank cards received upon completion of a rank in a safe place. This may be needed as a backup to the troop records in case of any questions.

## **Merit Badges and Blue Cards**

Work on a merit badge begins with the scout finding a merit badge counselor for a given merit badge, then requesting a blue card from his scoutmaster. The scoutmaster gives the scout a blue card for recording progress on the badge. When all the requirements for the merit badge have been completed, the scout will return the blue card signed by his counselor to the Advancement Coordinator (Mr. Mainini).

The troop will work on some merit badges as a troop and others on an optional basis during advancement sessions at troop meetings. However, it is expected that each Scout will work independently of the troop on MOST of the merit badges. One excellent opportunity to work on merit badges, as well partake in an overnight camp outing, is summer camp.

## **Summer Camp**

The troop spends a week together at the Wah-Tut-Ca Scout Reservation located in Northwood, NH which is east of Concord NH, sometime in July. It's a great

opportunity for rank advancement and to pick up a few merit badges. The kids have a great time, and so do the adults!

### Outings

The troop goes on about one outing per month during the school year. Few scouts can attend all the outings, but we recommend that a scout attempt to attend as many as possible. Scouts have lots of fun and learn about outdoor skills.

### Camping Gear

The troop does a lot of camping and other outdoor activities so there is some essential equipment that each scout needs such a daypack, sleeping pad, and sleeping bag. A good start on a list of basic outdoor equipment needed is:

1. Good pair of **hiking shoes or boots** and several pairs of socks. Be sure to “break boots in” before your first hike!
2. **Water bottle** (1 quart minimum). Nalgene bottles work great.
3. **Mess kit and “silverware”** (stainless or plastic preferred). Think about labeling it so you can distinguish it from others that may look the same.
4. **Sleeping bag** (rated 25 degrees F) and a **closed cell pad**. A 0 degree rated bag is required for winter camping.
5. **Flashlight** (small) Headlamps are very handy. Bring extra batteries!
6. **Rain suit or poncho** A low cost “emergency” style poncho is light and small but very useful.
7. **Toilet Kit** You can make this kit yourself using the lists in your Boy Scout Handbook.
8. **First Aid Kit** (personal) You can also make this kit yourself using the lists in your Boy Scout Handbook.
9. **Compass** You will be doing lots of map reading so get a compass that lies flat with clear see thru scales.
10. **Pocketknife** (after Totin' Chit is earned), Folding type only (no fixed blades), 3” maximum blade length, lock blade preferred.
11. **Waterproof matches** (after Fireman Chit is earned) “Strike anywhere” matches in a waterproof holder are also OK.
12. **Daypack** A good daypack should be brought on all campouts, and it should be big enough to hold most of the items above (less sleeping bag and pad!).

Gear should be appropriate for backpacking (i.e. lightweight). You may want to consider more than one sleeping bag, the first being at least rated to 0 degrees for the camping in the late fall/winter/early spring and the other rated to at a higher temperature for the summer/early fall. Stores like REI, EMS, Dick’s Sporting Goods, Bass Pro, or LL Bean can give good advice on gear. Older scouts and adult leaders could also answer questions regarding the type or style of the above equipment.

## **Scout Leadership**

One of the principle goals of Boy Scouting is providing an opportunity for scouts to attain leadership skills. The troop is always working towards the goal of having the troop run by the scouts. The planning of troop activities is the function of the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) and the Scoutmaster.

If a new scout has a question, he should first ask the Troop Guide or the scout's Patrol leader, then the Senior Patrol Leader, and lastly the Scoutmaster. If a situation arises where you feel the issue is not appropriate to discuss with the youth leaders, please don't hesitate to contact the Scoutmaster directly. We ask that all parents work with us to encourage the scouts to be leaders.

### ***Troop Positions assumed by Scouts***

Senior Patrol Leader (SPL)

Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL)

Troop Guide

Troop Scribe (collects dues, send out info shared at meetings)

Troop Chaplain Aide

Troop Historian

Quartermaster (dispenses camping equipment like tents)

Patrol Leader

Assistant Patrol Leader

### ***Troop Positions assumed by Adults***

Scoutmaster

Assistant Scoutmaster

Troop Committee

Merit Badge Counselors

## **Troop Committee**

The Troop Committee is made up of adult leaders and parents. It handles finances, provides adult support for planning of troop activities, training, outdoor programs of the troop, recruiting adult leaders and volunteers, and performs boards of review for rank advancement. Committee meetings fall on the second Monday of each month at 7:30pm at the Wilmington United Methodist Church.

## **Parent Involvement**

The involvement of parents is vitally important to the troop. We need your involvement in supporting your scout, supporting his rank advancement, supporting his attendance to the troop meetings, and supporting his participation in the troop activities. Parent volunteers are needed as Assistant Scoutmasters, Troop Committee Members, Merit Badge counselors, to attend outings, etc. Any and all help you can offer will be greatly appreciated.

### **Troop Communication**

The troop uses the website Troopkit.com to schedule meeting, and events; handle sign-ups for the same; and as an easy way to communicate with the troop as a whole, on down to individual scouts or leaders. You should already have received login instructions for you and your scout. There is an online User's Manual, available through the Help menu.

Scoutbook (<https://www.scoutbook.com>) is another tool that the troop is starting to look into. This is a free tool to track and assist your scout with advancement. This was purchased by BSA and our Council is providing it to all troops for free. More information will be provided as it becomes available.