

Troop 56 Welcome Guide



Welcome to Troop 56! Scouting America is a scout-led program, which means that the troop's meetings, activities, and trips are planned and executed by its youth members. This is very different from Cub Scouts, where the adults planned and led the program. Adults supervise and provide guidance, but planning and execution of troop activities is left largely to the scouts themselves.

Current Troop Leadership (2026-2027 School Year)

Youth Leadership:

Senior Patrol Leader (SPL): Theodore Adamek
Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL): Henry Borgen

Adult Leadership:

Scoutmaster:	David Adamek	(617) 750-8228
Assistant Scoutmasters:	Mike Borgen	(617) 548-9380
	Scott Kaszuba	(978) 806-1967
Committee Chair	Jana Borgen	(617) 308-9149

Troop Structure

The troop is divided into 3-4 functional groups called patrols each spring. Patrols are made up of boys of all ages and experience levels. Each patrol is assigned a patrol leader, who in turn appoints an assistant patrol leader. A patrol works together in activities both at meetings and on trips. While camping, each patrol will plan and cook meals for themselves, clean, and complete other necessary duties to have a successful trip.

Each patrol is also responsible for planning 1-2 months' worth of troop program through the school year. This includes planning and executing weekly meetings as well as a camping trip during that month. Patrol leaders are in charge of this but the entire patrol may be called upon to assist.

Upon crossing over from Cub Scouts, new members will be loosely assigned to existing patrols but will also stick together for certain training activities.

The SPL is the leader of the troop and is elected by the troop annually. He oversees the Patrol Leadership Council (PLC) which is composed of the troop's youth leadership. The PLC meets monthly to plan all troop activities. The Scoutmaster and assistant Scoutmasters attend these meetings to help guide the PLC.

Parents who have questions should reach out to the Scoutmaster or one of the assistant Scoutmasters. Scouts should refer any questions to their patrol leader or SPL, though they can also go to an adult if needed.

Uniforms

There are two types of uniforms:

- (1) Class A (formal uniform)
- (2) Class B (informal T-shirt or sweatshirt)

Class A uniform:



The Class A uniform as defined by Troop 56 consists of an official khaki Scouting America shirt (pictured above) adorned with the appropriate insignia: our troop number (56), council patch, World Crest emblem, and green shoulder loops. The friendly employees at the local scout shop (located in Tower Office Park in Woburn behind Chick-fil-A or Scoutshop.org) can set you up with everything you need! The Class A shirt is required. **Other elements of the uniform, such as official Scouting America pants and caps, are optional. Please note, pajama pants, sweatpants, and**

basketball shorts are not appropriate bottoms for the Class A uniform. Olive drab cargo pants are recommended. The troop issues neckerchiefs to its members. Webelos who have a khaki uniform shirt can re-use that shirt.

New troop members should wear class A uniforms to all meetings until the rank of Scout is reached. At that point, class B can be worn to most meetings. Class A uniforms should be worn to the fourth meeting of each month, PLC meetings, and any other special event as determined by the SPL and/or Scoutmaster.

Class B Uniform:

Any Scouting America branded shirt is considered class B. The troop provides members who have reached Scout rank and have attended an overnight trip with Troop 56 with a Troop 56 class B shirt. These can be worn to troop meetings and trips except when class A is specifically called for. Additional Troop 56 t-shirts or sweatshirts may be purchased from the troop.

Scout Meetings

Regular troop meetings occur every Tuesday night 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM throughout the school year at Wilmington United Methodist Church (87 Church St) in the Fellowship Hall. When entering the back doors from the parking lot, turn left and proceed down the stairs to find the Fellowship Hall. Generally, if there is no school on a meeting day, there will be no meeting. Any updates regarding meetings will be sent out via e-mail to the e-mail addresses listed in Troop Kit (discussed below).

Scouts should bring their Scouts BSA Handbook to every meeting (and to any trips they go on).

Committee Meetings

The troop committee is made up of adults and is a cross between a board of directors and a parent support group. It sets troop policies and handles administrative functions, allowing the Scoutmaster and assistant Scoutmasters to focus on working directly with the scouts. The troop committee does not plan troop meetings or events. The committee is responsible for troop finances, property, and generally oversees the activities of the troop. Committee meetings occur once a month on a Monday evening 7:30-9 PM in Fellowship Hall at the Methodist Church. These dates will be listed on Troop Kit. All parents are welcome to join the committee.

Troop Kit and Scout Book

Both of these online tools are important to the scouting experience and keeping scouts on track.

troopkit.com

Troop Kit must be used to sign up for camping trips and other events/activities!!!

Troop kit is an online calendar and sign-up platform. Troop Kit is where information about upcoming events, meetings, campouts, fundraisers, and service activities can be found. When a child registers with the troop, that child's parent will be sent a login to access Troop Kit. If you do not receive login information, please contact our committee chair or Scoutmaster.

Scouts need to be signed up by a parent to attend campouts and other activities through Troop Kit. Please keep in mind that many of our trips require advance planning and purchase. There are deadlines in Troop Kit to sign up for each event. If the deadline is not met, you may not be able to attend the event.

Troop Kit also allows us to e-mail all or part of the troop. Please make sure the e-mail address attached to your Troop Kit account is the best one for contacting you.

Scoutbook.com

Scout Book is an online tool used to track a scout's progress on their journey to Eagle Scout. You will receive your scout's login when you sign up with the troop. Using Scout Book, scouts can track their rank advancement, reach out to merit badge counselors, and track merit badge progress. This is also where adult leadership will be able to see what your scout has completed.

Rank and Advancement:

Rank denotes how far along the trail to Eagle one has progressed. Although they are full members of the troop, Cub Scouts cross into the troop with no rank. Scout rank is the first rank to be earned. All new members are helped by the other troop members to reach this goal upon joining the troop. For all other ranks (Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle), scouts work on and complete requirements at their own paces.

To advance in rank, there are requirements for advancement which can be found in the back of the Scout Handbook and on Scoutbook.com. Scouts are required to master skills across a variety of topics to advance in rank. Some requirements for advancement can be accomplished during our regular meetings (knot tying, first aid, etc.), while some

are better suited to learning on campouts (cooking meals, knife and axe safety, etc.). Participating in troop leadership roles fulfills still more rank requirements.

After completing a rank requirement, the scout must meet with a scout holding the rank of First Class or above to verify that requirements have been met. If the ranking scout is satisfied, they will sign off the younger scout's advancement in their Scout Handbook.

For scouts who have not yet earned First Class, it is essential they bring their Scout Handbooks to meetings and ask for requirements to be signed off as they complete them! When all required skills have been signed off for a certain rank, the scout must ask for a Scoutmaster conference with the Scoutmaster or assistant Scoutmaster. Following the Scoutmaster conference, they will go through a board of review held by three committee members. Generally, both the Scoutmaster conference and Board of Review can be completed during one of the Tuesday meetings. **To participate in a Scoutmaster conference or board of review, the scout must wear their class A uniform.**

To advance beyond the rank of First Class, scouts must earn merit badges. Merit badges are subject based, and scouts can choose badges they would like to work on. Note that there are 14 specific badges that must be earned (in addition to other requirements) for a scout to earn the Eagle Scout rank, the highest in scouting.

Merit Badges

Any scout who would like to work on a merit badge must notify a Scoutmaster or assistant Scoutmaster of their intent. They must also find a registered merit badge counselor to work with on that badge. Only this merit badge counselor can sign off on completion of the badge's requirements.

Troop 56 maintains merit badge counselors for many of the badges, and the Scoutmaster will assist scouts in identifying counselors upon request. The Spirit of Adventure Council and other various entities also offer merit badge opportunities. Anyone is welcome to take advantage of these, but the troop will need appropriate records (a blue card or data input to Scout Book) to award the badge. Completion needs to be recorded by a registered merit badge counselor, so it is helpful to discuss any plans with the troop advancement coordinator or the Scoutmaster in advance to ensure the scout receives credit for their work.

How to Go Camping as part of Troop 56:

Troop 56 typically camps once a month from September through May. We usually skip a December trip due to the holidays. Location and activities for these trips vary widely. There is a cost associated with each trip. We do try to keep these costs low, though

some events can be costly depending on the activity. If cost is preventing your scout from participating in an event, please reach out to one of the adult leaders. We will do our best to find a way for everyone to be able to participate.

Departures for most campouts fall on Fridays. Scouts should eat prior to departure or bring a packed meal to eat on the way/upon arrival.

To attend a trip with the troop, the following must be completed:

1. Sign up for campout on Troop Kit
2. Pay for the trip by the payment due date listed in Troop Kit (payment varies based on activities and duration). Payment can be given to our treasurer (Mr. D) or committee chair (Mrs. Borgen). Make checks out to "Troop 56 BSA."
3. Bring a parent-signed permission slip, found on Scout Book.
4. Check scout's email for a packing list for each trip. Some trips require specific items besides the generic camping supply list below
5. All Medicines need to be in a clear zip-lock bag labeled with the scout's name and checked in with the committee chair or other designated adult at drop-off
6. Arrive at church parking lot at specified time to leave

Some gear is needed for these camping trips. While a packing list will be distributed for each trip, the following is necessary for all trips we take. If you have any questions on appropriate gear, please reach out to troop leadership.

Camping Supply list:

- Closed toe, waterproof hiking boots. **Sandals, Crocs, or other open-toed shoes are not appropriate for our trips!**
- Flashlight or head lamp
- Mess kit, including utensils and cups.
- Pack or duffel bag for carrying gear
- Reusable water bottle
- Day pack or other light backpack
- Sleeping pad
- Sleeping bag rated for the appropriate temperature. Please note, each bag has a temperature rating. **A bag will be comfortable only if its rating is 10 degrees BELOW the expected low temperature.** A 30-degree bag is good for most trips, though a 0-degree bag will be required for winter camping.

The troop provides tents for all youth. The troop also provides all meals (other than Friday night dinner) and cookware. The scouts will cook and clean for themselves in patrols. Adults usually cook separately.

For pick-up at the end of camping trips, monitor the troop's private Facebook page and/or your e-mail for an estimated time of arrival back at church. Sometimes our plans are affected by weather, traffic, or just how quickly the troop is moving in the morning so times can vary significantly. We'll do our best to keep you updated!

Adults that would like to attend camping trips need to become registered adult members of Scouting America. To do this, please reach out to the committee chair or Scoutmaster, who will let you know what is needed. Current membership requirements include Safeguarding Youth Training (SYT), a criminal background check (CORI form), and completion of registration forms to become an adult member of Scouting America. Note this takes at least two weeks and the process must be completed prior to attending any overnight trip. If you'd like to join us on a particular trip, please make sure to get this going early.

Fundraising

We hold a few fundraising activities throughout the year to help keep costs as low as possible for our families. The troop often subsidizes activities and trips to keep them affordable.

Every year we sell wreathes and Christmas trees. Scouts are asked to sell wreaths individually in the fall to both lower the cost of their own Summer Camp as well as support the troop. Information on wreath sales will be distributed in late September. All scouts are expected to participate in our annual Christmas tree sale, which runs for several weeks beginning after Thanksgiving. Scouts and parents are asked to staff multiple shifts at the Christmas tree stand. Sign up for specific shifts at the stand will occur via the Signup Genius website starting in October.

Finally, the troop runs concession booths at Wilmington's Fun on the Fourth every year. Scouts and parents are asked to cover multiple shifts at this event. Signup for specific shifts at the stand will occur on the Signup Genius website starting in May.

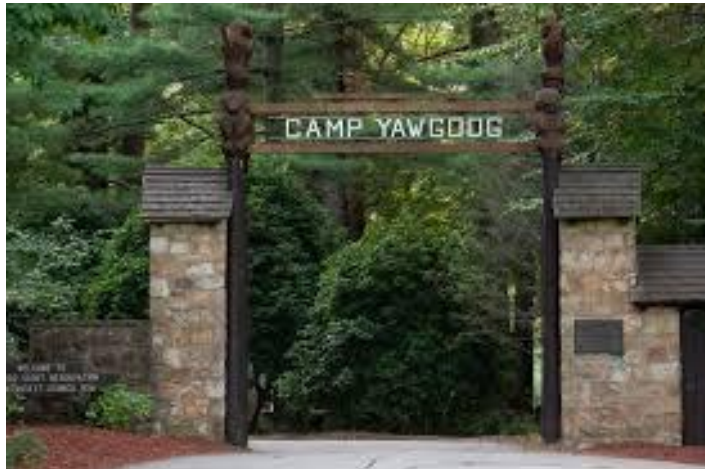
These fundraisers have been very successful at defraying the cost of Troop 56's many activities. They bring in significant funds every year. Your support is crucial to their continued success.

Please note, additional fundraising may occur if the troop plans major trips (i.e. high adventure trips). Also, troop members pursuing Eagle Scout projects may embark on fundraising efforts to support their efforts. Your support is always appreciated!

Dues

Troop 56 does not charge dues. To register with Scouting America, annual dues need to be paid during online registration. This is a recent change and additional information will be provided to families to aid in completing this registration. Current fees are approximately \$140/ year.

Summer Camp



The troop attends a week-long summer camp at Camp Yawgoog in RI every July. Specific information on summer camp is distributed each spring, and covers packing lists, transportation, and activities. In addition to normal camping gear, a large tote/footlocker and bug net will be needed.

While a week away from home can be scary for some of our younger scouts, almost everyone that has joined us for summer camp has enjoyed the experience and returns year after year. If you have specific worries or concerns related to summer camp, please reach out to the Scoutmaster or an assistant Scoutmaster.

To defray the cost, a portion of an individual's wreath sales can be applied toward summer camp fees. The more wreaths they sell in the fall, the cheaper camp is for each scout.

You can also find information about Camp Yawgoog at yawgoog.org.

Cell Phone Policy

After much debate over the years, Troop 56 maintains a policy of not allowing cell phones while on camping trips, during meetings, or at summer camp. This policy has been agreed to both by the PLC (the boys themselves) and the troop committee. For trips that involve a drive of two hours or more, cell phones are allowed in cars but must be surrendered to an adult leader upon arrival for the duration of the trip. Scouts will be allowed to use their phones or an adult leader's phone to call home any time they request to do so. This policy extends to gaming devices or any other electronic communication device. This policy may be modified for specific trips. Any trip specific modifications will be communicated to the troop in advance.

Community Service

Community service is a large part of Scouting, and the troop often participates in activities to benefit our community.

Once per month throughout the school year, the troop serves dinner at St. Paul's soup kitchen in Lowell. Some members of the troop prepare dinner in advance (shepherd's pie and cupcakes), while others travel to St. Paul's to serve. Further details will be provided, but all scouts are asked to participate in this activity in some way. This is an extremely rewarding experience that helps many people in need.

Every Veterans Day the troop completes a "rake-out" to help veterans who live in Wilmington. Scouts and adults clean out the yards of veterans across town as well as participate in the town's Veterans Day Ceremony.

Other community service opportunities often come up throughout the year. Some may be tied to Eagle projects (a project needed to earn the Eagle rank). All community service activities completed in scouting can also satisfy school community service requirements. Scouts should talk to an adult leader if they need community service hours approved for school.