

TROOP 737
Family
HANDBOOK

Updated:
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This handbook is intended to introduce new families to the Troop and serve as a reference for the Scouts and their parents. Please address corrections and potential additions to the handbook to the Troop Committee.

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Your Troop

Members of the Clarksville (5th District) Volunteer Fire Department founded Boy Scout Troop 737 on April 14, 1959. Fritz Kulla was our first Scoutmaster. The Volunteer Fire Department is our chartered organization and provides us with equipment storage and rooms for Troop Committee and special meetings. The Volunteer Fire Department also sponsors Cub Scout Pack 737 and Venture Crew 737.



Boy Scouts is a program for middle- and high-school-aged boys (roughly ages 11 through 17) whose objectives are developing character, citizenship, and personal growth. Key components of the program are ideals, patrols, outdoor program, advancement, adult association, personal growth, leadership development, and the uniform.

Troop 737 is part of the National Pike District in the Baltimore Area Council. The Troop meets weekly on Thursdays, 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM, at Schooley Mill Park in the Multipurpose Building. The park is located on Hall Shop Road in Highland, Maryland.

Venture Crew 737

Venturing is a Scouting program for young men and women, ages 14 through 20. The Troop is partnered with Venture Crew 737.

How Boy Scouting Works

Troop Structure and Scout Leadership

Troop planning and leadership is the responsibility of the Scouts.

Patrols are the building blocks of a Boy Scout troop. Scouts are assigned to a patrol of 8-10 boys of similar age. Members of the patrol choose a Patrol Leader who leads the patrol. Patrol activities include planning menus for campouts, being responsible for the patrol's equipment, and working as a team on various scouting activities.

First-year Scouts are organized into patrols with an older Scout (position: Troop Guide) leadership and additional adult help (see "First Year Program," below).

Scout Leadership and the Patrol Leader's Council

Scouts also elect a Senior Patrol Leader. The Senior Patrol Leader and the Patrol Leaders form the Patrol Leaders' Council ("PLC"). The monthly PLC plans the Troop meetings and events, and arranges, and implements all troop activities. PLC patrol leaders' council is composed of the following members: Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leaders, Troop Guides.

Troop elections are held every six months. Holding elected or appointed office is requirement for advancement to the ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle. Scout (or "junior") leadership positions are described in an Appendix.

Annual Planning Conference

The troop activities are selected and assigned to the Troop Calendar at the annual Program Planning Conference, traditionally held in March. The troop's yearly plan is then submitted to the

Troop Committee for approval. The troop committee either approves the plan or makes alternative suggestions for the patrol leaders' council to consider.

New Scout Program

Our First Year Program places new Scouts in Patrols with their peers. An experienced Scout (a Troop Guide) leads this Patrol for the first six months. Their first camping experience focuses on developing outdoor skills. First-year Scouts participate in a special summer camp program that often allows them to complete the Tenderfoot rank requirements as well as earn merit badges (needed for advanced ranks). After summer camp, special activities allow the new Scouts to fulfill a number of additional outdoor rank requirements. In September, the new Scouts elect their patrol leader who continues to be advised by the Troop Guide.

Role of Adults

Adults advise and support the Scouts in two principal roles: the Scoutmaster and his Assistant Scoutmasters and the Troop Committee. Parents are strongly urged to assist in supporting the Troop.

The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters

The Scoutmaster is the adult leader, age 21 or older, appointed by the head of the chartered organization. He (or she) is responsible for the image and program of the troop. The Scoutmaster and his assistants work directly with the Scouts. The importance of the Scoutmaster's job is reflected in the fact that the quality of his guidance will affect every youth and adult involved in the troop.

The Scoutmaster, with the assistance of the troop committee, recruits Assistant Scoutmasters to help operate the troop. Each Assistant Scoutmaster is assigned specific program duties and reports to the Scoutmaster. They also provide the required two-deep leadership standards set by the Boy Scouts of America. An assistant Scoutmaster may be 18 years old, but at least one in each troop should be 21 or older, so he or she can serve in the Scoutmaster's absence.

The Scoutmaster maintains a list of Scouts and adults eligible to approve advancement.

Troop Committee

A committee of adults, age 21 or older, administers Troop 737. The Troop Committee has two functions. It acts as a board of directors, setting troop policy, and is the principal administrative body of the Troop approving membership and activities. The committee selects and supports the Scoutmaster and ensures sound scouting program following the guidelines of the Boy Scouts of America. All parents are welcome to attend meetings and offer input. The Troop committee meets at least once per month to review the past month's activities and ensure planning for upcoming activities. Minutes from these committee meetings are produced and distributed to all committee members.

Chartered Organization Representative

The chartered organization representative (COR) is a volunteer appointed by the executive officer of the Volunteer Fire Department. He oversees the operations of the Troop, approves the adult leadership, and represents the Troop on the District Committee and Council Committee.

Merit Badge Counselors

Merit badges are skills and achievement required for the higher ranks (Star, Life, and Eagle). Counselors are separately-registered adults, age 21 or older, and qualified to teach specific merit badges.

How You Can Help

All parents are strongly encouraged to take an active part in the troop, either in a formal capacity such as Assistant Scoutmaster or Committee Member, or as a helper in troop activities such as arranging events, serving as a driver, attending important functions such as Courts of Honor, camping with the Troop, and supporting your son in his Scouting career.

Troop Activities

The Troop offers a well-rounded program of camping and other events, advancement, and community service. Fund raising opportunities allow Scouts to earn money to pay for Scouting activities and equipment.

Meetings

Weekly Troop meetings are used to convey information, plan and preparing for outings and events, work on skills and advancement, and socialize. Some meetings are used for Courts of Honor (see below).

Inclement Weather Meeting Cancellation Policy

Troop Meetings are cancelled if schools are closed due to inclement weather, close early, or cancel evening activities. Meetings will be held if schools open late due to inclement weather. (Check <http://www.howard.k12.md.us/> or call 410-313-6600 for a recorded message.)

Camping and Other Events (Permission Slips)

The troop holds monthly camping (usually Friday evening through Sunday morning), periodic day trips and events, public service activities, and fund raisers. Each event will have an information sheet and permission slip detailing the location, dates and times, cost, and other information about the event. Parents must sign the permission slip, and this slip and payment returned due must by the specified date, in order for Scouts to participate in these events.

High Adventure

Local councils operate and maintain Scout camps. The National Council operates high-adventure areas at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, the Northern Tier National High Adventure Program in Minnesota and Canada, and the Florida National High Adventure Sea Base in the Florida Keys. About 70 councils also operate high-adventure programs.

The BSA conducts a national Scout jamboree every four years and participates in world Scout jamborees (also held at four-year intervals). Fort A. P. Hill, Virginia, is the permanent site of the National Scout Jamboree.

Scout Obligations

- Have and maintain a proper uniform; Wear the uniform at designated times which include troop meetings (except in summer) and courts of honor and travel to and from outings.

- Have and bring the Boy Scout Handbook to Troop meetings and outings.
- Use the Buddy system and conduct themselves in a safe and healthy manner.

Scout Advancement and Recognition

Advancement Basics

The Boy Scout advancement program provides a means to develop skills, gain confidence, and be recognized for his achievement. The advancement process is learning, being tested, being reviewed, and being recognized. A Scout may teach himself, or learn by working with or learning from others. The troop program provides opportunities to fulfill the advancement requirements.

The Troop Advancement Chairman, a member of the Troop Committee, oversees advancement records, provides advancement and other recognition (patches, badges, certificates), schedules Boards of Review, and oversees the advancement portion of Courts of Honor.

The Scoutmaster designates those qualified to give tests and pass candidates on skills and accomplishments required for ranks of Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. Requirements for these ranks are found in the *Boy Scout Handbook* and completion of requirements is indicated by a signature in the *Handbook*. Bringing the Handbook to Troop meetings and outings is a Scout responsibility.

Skills requirements for the higher ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle are fulfilled by working with Council-approved adult Merit Badge Counselors who are designated to approve certain merit badges. A complete listing of merit requirements is found in the current *Boy Scout Requirements* book. These ranks also have leadership (Troop office) requirements that are approved by the Scoutmaster.

Second Class, Star, Life, and Eagle ranks have service project requirements. Except for the Eagle rank, these requirements are fulfilled by taking part in Troop service projects, Eagle Scout projects, or other service approved by the Scoutmaster in advance.

Scoutmaster Conference and Board of Review

After completing the requirements for a rank, the Scout meets with the Scoutmaster (or an Assistant Scoutmaster) for a one-on-one conference assessing the Scout's readiness to advance in rank, including "Scout Spirit" and fulfillment of leadership requirements. The conference is followed by a Board of Review conducted by members of the Troop Committee. **By Troop policy, Scouts must contact the Scoutmaster to schedule Scoutmaster Conferences. After completing the Scoutmaster Conference, Scouts must then contact the Troop Advancement Chairman to schedule a Boards of Review.** The Board of Review assesses the Scout's experiences and help the Scout set goals.

Courts of Honor

Scouts received ranks and merit badges at the Troop meetings immediately following their completion ("instant recognition"). Formal recognition of rank advancement, merit badges, and other accomplishments are made at quarterly Courts of Honor. Parents are strongly urged to attend, even if their son is not being recognized. Refreshments are served.

The September Court of Honor is usually a family picnic.

Eagle Courts of Honor are held to recognize and install new Eagle Scouts. The scheduling and content of these Courts of Honor are determined by the family.

Eagle Rank and Eagle Advisor

Owing to the more complex nature of the Eagle rank and its special requirements, the Troop has an Eagle Advisor who guides Life Scouts through the process. The Eagle advisor supplements the advancement process for the Eagle rank, including serving as liaison between the Troop and the District.

Merit Badge Counselors

Merit badge counselors are separately-registered adults qualified to teach and test Scouts on requirements for specific merit badges. New merit badge counselors must complete a Boy Scouts of America Adult Application (even if already registered) and a separate merit badge counselor application. Current counselors wishing to add to their list merit badges that they counsel need only file a merit badge counselor application. Both adult and merit badge counselor application must be approved by the Troop and the District before merit badges can proceed. Counselors can register to work only with Scouts from the Troop or with any Scouts in the District.

A Troop “Merit Badge Dean” registers adults to be merit badge counselors. A list of Troop merit badge counselors and the merit badges they counsel are listed in the “member-only” portion of the Troop Web site.

Troop policy prohibits parents, relatives, or guardians from counseling Eagle-required merit badges with a Scout. They may counselor non-Eagle required merit badges with their son, relative, or ward concurrently with at least one other Scout.

Order of the Arrow

The Order of the Arrow is intended to recognize those Scouts who best exemplify the Scout virtues of cheerful service, camping and Scout leadership. Scouts, who meet the eligible requirements and approved by the Scoutmaster, are annually elected to the Order by their fellow troop members. To be eligible for membership, a Scout must hold First Class rank and have 15 days and nights of camping during the two years before his election. The 15 days and nights must include one, but no more than one, long-term camp consisting of six consecutive days and five nights of resident camping, and the balance must be overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps. More information on the Order of the Arrow can be found at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/misc/>.



Other Scout Recognition

Scouts may earn a variety of other recognitions, including the Den Chief Service, 50-Miler, Mile Swim, Snorkeling, Scuba, Kayaking, Leave No Trace, and World Conservation awards. Requirements for these recognitions, except the religious emblems, are found in the current *Boy Scout Requirements* book. The book includes contact information for the religious emblems (which are awarded by the religious institution).

Communications

Troop Web Site

The Troop Web Site is a good resource for pictures, calendar updates, rosters and other information. The National Pike District (Howard County), the Baltimore Area Council, and the National Council also maintain web sites with important and useful information.

Scouting Organization	Web Site
Troop 737	http://www.Troop737.org/
National Pike District	http://www.nationalpike.org/
Baltimore Area Council	http://www.baltimorebsa.org/
National Council	http://www.scouting.org/

E-mail Notifications

Schedule changes, trip information, and the weekly schedule are sent by e-mail to all families who provide an e-mail address.

Troop Scoop

The Troop Scoop is the Troop's newsletter.

Uniform and Equipment

The Uniform (uniform exchange)

Each Scout is expected to have a complete uniform. To help contain cost, the Troop has a uniform exchange.

The Troop provides basic uniform insignia, ranks and merit badges, patrol patches, and insignia of office

Troop Equipment

The Troop provides group equipment, including tents, patrol ('chuck') boxes with cooking equipment (pots, pans, utensils), propane stove, and propane lanterns, tarp, woods tools (axes, saws, sharpening equipment), and rope. Food for camping is purchased by Patrols from the fee charged for that outing. Scouts may be asked to bring money to purchase meals en route.

Personal Equipment (minimum necessities)

Scouts provide their personal equipment, including clothing, sleeping bag, small flashlight, toiletries, rain gear, and personal eating equipment ("mess kit"). The Scout provides his Scout Handbook.

Community Service

The Boy Scout motto, "Do a good turn daily," demonstrates Scouting's commitment to service to family and community. In order to give its Scouts ample opportunity to serve their community, Troop 737 participates in several community service activities throughout the year. As community service is a requirement for advancement, the number of service hours performed by each scout is recorded by the advancement coordinator. Family members are encouraged to join their Scouts in all Troop sponsored community service events.

Adopt-a-Park

Troop 737 participates in Howard County's facility adoption program to maintain and improve Schooley Mill Park. The Troop assists the Howard County Recreation and Parks Department by maintaining the miles of trails within the park, general housekeeping, and supporting conservation projects. Our association with the county also provides opportunities for Eagle candidates to undertake projects to improve park grounds.

Adopt-A-Park activities are scheduled quarterly on Saturday mornings. Scouts are required to participate in at least two of the four Adopt-a-Park events each year.

Scouting for Food

Each year in the spring, the Troop participates in the National Boy Scouts of America Scouting for Food "Good Turn" service project along with other Scouting units in the region. This two-weekend project starts with grocery bags being distributed to an area of the county as defined by the district. The following weekend the same area is scouted to pick up bags in front of households that choose to donate non-perishable foodstuffs to area food banks. The Troop routinely collects hundreds of pounds of food items with some years the total reaching more than 1000 lbs.

We Remember

On the Friday evening prior to Memorial Day, the Troop, along with other area scouts, places flags on the graves of veterans at the National Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Baltimore. The placing of several tens of thousands of flags by the Scouts and their families and attending the following ceremony at the cemetery is a popular and moving event.

Holiday Caroling

During the December Holiday season, the Troop "carols" at an area retirement community to spread the joy of the season to those who otherwise homebound by age or disability.

National Family Volunteer Day

Every November, the Troop participates in Howard County Recreation and Parks organized community service events in recognition of National Family Volunteer

Volunteer Fire Department Breakfasts

Several Scouts assist our sponsor, the Fifth District Volunteer Fire Department, at monthly fund-raising breakfasts in the VFD ballroom.

Finance

The Troop Treasurer, a Committee Member, collects fees for registration and events, money earned by fund raisers and other income. The treasurer maintains a bank account, issues payments for Troop activities, advancement and other awards, and Scouting fees.

Costs and Fees

Registration and Dues

Each year, the Troop renews its charter from the Boy Scouts of America and reregisters all adults and Scouts. At this time the Troop collects a national registration and insurance fee (\$10.80) from all adults and Scouts, a *Boy's Life* subscription (\$12.00) from each household with a Scout,

and troop dues. Troop dues are \$50 with a reduced amount for families with multiple Scouts (\$40 for the second Scout, \$35 for third or more Scouts).

For new members, registration fees and dues are prorated from the beginning of the year. Scouts transferring from other units pay a \$1 transfer fee.

Camping and Events Fees

Camping, summer camp, and other events have additional fees. These fees range from approximately \$12 for a weekend campout (primarily for food) to approximately \$200 for ski weekends and week-long summer camp. High adventure activities typically cost \$1000 or more (primarily for travel). Cost of each event is included in the information sheet and permission slip

Scout Accounts

Scouts have the opportunity to earn money for their own use as part of certain scout fundraising activities. Scouts can use this money to pay for Scout trips or to purchase equipment or clothing needed for Scouting. Money refunded (e.g., because of trip cancellation or overpayment) is deposited in the Scout's account. Money can also be deposited in the Scout accounts "up front" so that parents do not need to write a check for each trip. The treasurer maintains a list showing the current balance in the accounts. Upon leaving the troop, any unused funds revert to the troop.

Fundraisers

The Troop conducts several fundraisers during the year. Troop fundraisers include the Howard County Fairground Cleanup, the Council Popcorn sales, and the Giant Gift Card sales. Scouts earn a percentage of the total raised based on participation. Money earned by Scouts is deposited in individual Scout accounts.

Friends of Scouting

Troop 737 is part of the Baltimore Area Council with over 47,000 Scouts. The Family Friends of Scouting fundraiser provides financial support to our District and Council. Our annual dues stay within the Troop and are used for advancement and recognition, supplies, and general Troop needs.

The Troop does not sponsor any other fundraiser that provides financial support the District and Council, yet we benefit greatly from these organizations. The donations we receive go to developing new Scouting programs, training our Scouts and adult volunteers, and maintaining the three camps at Broad Creek. Friends of Scouting funds are also used to underwrite Scouting programs in poor areas where the ideals of Scouting are needed.

The Baltimore Area Council's cost to support one Scout in 2006 is \$125 per year. Volunteers and family support make scouting happen. Without your time, dedication and talents we could not fulfill our mission.

Training

BSA training is primarily focused on providing quality leadership to the organization. It is available for both scouts and adults. The Troop training coordinate, a member of the committee, ensures that all leaders meet not only the minimum training requirements of the BSA but take advantage of all training opportunities that improve their skills and benefit the troop. Some of the training opportunities for scouts and adults follow.

Scout Training

Troop Junior Leader Training

The Scoutmaster is responsible for basic Scout training. The Troop conducts a one-day training session for new-elected leaders after spring and fall elections. There is no cost.

District Junior Leader Training

Twice a year, the National Pike District sponsors a training campout weekend at a local facility. The session is designed to prepare scouts for assuming leadership roles within their troop. Costs are minimal (\$25-30) and include food and camping fees.

Advanced Junior Leader Training

Council “Green Blaze” Junior Leader Training is a week-long course held in August at Broad Creek Scout Reservation. It focuses on leadership at the Troop level (primarily the Senior Patrol Leader). The National Junior Leader Training Conference is a week-long training session held in several sessions during the summer at Philmont Scout Ranch and develops Scout trainers to conduct Junior Leader training at the district and council levels.

Life-to-Eagle Seminar (for Life Scouts)

The National Pike District conducts Life-to-Eagle Seminars twice a year at Roundtable (usually October and April). Life Scouts and their parents are invited to participate in a program designed to explain the process of obtaining the Eagle rank, including the requirements for the Eagle Project, paperwork, and documentation. The session is held at the District Roundtable and lasts 1½ hours and is free of charge.

Adult Training

Roundtables

Every month the District holds a Boy Scout Roundtable on the second Monday, 7:30 pm, at Columbia Academy. It is supplemental training dedicated to providing leaders and interested adults updated information on District events, recognizing troops and individuals for special accomplishments, and training. All are welcome to attend. No charge.

Fast Start Orientation

There are on-line and video versions of the Fast Start course. Both provide a simple overview of the purpose of scouting and cover some of the basics. Anyone not familiar with the BSA will find this the best place to start. There is no charge and the troop has a tape available for loan.

Wagon Wheel

Twice a year, in spring and fall, the District conducts the four Boy Scout adult basic training courses in a single unit. These courses are: New Leader Essentials, Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Training, Troop Committee Training, and Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills. These courses are conducted in two Friday night sessions, a Saturday session, and a 2-night camping weekend. The Wagon Wheel course trains the leaders in BSA basics (organization, standards, purpose, etc.), outdoor skills, and leadership positions in the troop and district. The course is highly recommended for new leaders and is a great deal of fun. The session costs approximately \$30 plus additional cost for camp meals.

Wood Badge

Wood Badge is advanced training reserved for adult leaders who want to more fully commit themselves to Scouting's ideals. It has a strong emphasis on leadership. The course consists of a practical phase conducted over two 3-day weekends and a self-directed application phase to be completed within two years. Completion is recognized with a special "woggle," neckerchief, and "beads."

Youth Protection Training

This is one of the most important requirements we have. All adult leaders (and scouts over the age of ??) must have this training before they are allowed to participate as leaders in any activity. The training instructs leaders on their responsibilities with regard to ensuring that scouts are protected from abuse. It is a good course for all adults (leaders or not) to participate in. The first delivery of the training must be with a live instructor. The two hour session has been offered at least twice a year in the past at a local school on a weekend. There is no cost. Subsequent renewals (every 3 years) can be done through an on-line course using your BSA registration number.

Life-to-Eagle Seminar (for Adults)

Once a year (usually in November), the National Pike District Roundtable has a Life-to-Eagle seminar designed to the process of earning the Eagle rank to adults serving as advisors to Life Scouts. Administrative and other requirements are addressed. The session lasts approximately 1½ hours and is free of charge.

APPENDICIES

The following information will be provided separately:

- A. Calendar
- B. Scout Roster
- C. Adult Rosters
- D. Junior Leader Positions
- E. Troop Merit Badge Counselors

D. Junior Leader Positions

Service in positions marked with an asterisk (*) qualify for fulfilling the leadership requirement to serve in a position of responsibility required for Star, Life, and Eagle ranks. The Scoutmaster determines whether a Scout has satisfactorily fulfilled his term of office.

***Senior Patrol Leader** is the top junior leader in the troop. He leads the patrol leaders' council and, in consultation with the Scoutmaster, appoints other junior leaders and assigns specific responsibilities as needed.

***Assistant Senior Patrol Leader** fills in for senior patrol leader in his absence. He is also responsible for training and giving direction to the quartermaster, scribe, troop historian, librarian, and instructors.

***Patrol Leader** gives leadership to members of his patrol and represents them on the patrol leaders' council.

Assistant Patrol Leader fills in for the patrol leader in his absence.

***Troop Guide** advisor and guide to the new Scout patrol.

***Scribe** the troop secretary

***Troop Historian** collects and maintains troop memorabilia and information on former troop members.

***Librarian** keeps troop books, pamphlets, magazines, audiovisuals, and merit badge counselor list available for use by troop members.

***Quartermaster** responsible for troop supplies and equipment.

***Bugler**

***Chaplain Aide** assists in troop religious services and promotes religious emblems program.

***Order of the Arrow Troop Representative** is liaison between the Troop and the Order of the Arrow Chapter

***Instructor** teaches one or more advancement skills to troop members.

***Den Chief** works with a Cub Scout den as a guide.

***Junior Assistant Scoutmaster** a Scout 16 or older, appointed by the Scoutmaster, who supervises and supports other boy leaders, under adult supervision.