

Troop 38 – New Scout/Parent Guide

Dear Parents,

We're pleased that you and your son chose to join our troop. We'll do our best to make you feel welcome and ease the transition from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts. I encourage you to get involved when you can. I put this guide together to give you, the parent, enough information to help you and your son navigate the first couple months of Scouting. Your son should be getting all of the information that he needs to prepare for the meetings and camping during our troop meetings. It's our goal to have your son learn to be responsible for himself and eventually for other Scouts. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to myself or any of the other adult leaders in the troop.

Ed Bruce
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Joining Requirements

We need to get the following paperwork out of the way as soon as possible:

- Boy Scout Transfer Application
- Permission Slip
- Contact Information Slip
- BSA Health Form (Parts A & B before the next camping trip, part C before summer camp)
- Review "A Parent's Guide" with your son. This is inside the front of the Boy Scout Handbook that your son received at the Blue & Gold Banquet.

You should have received a Boy Scout Handbook and a Troop 38 Neckerchief as part of your crossover ceremony. We'll also provide you with 2 Troop 38 t-shirts during one of the first meetings.

Troop Meetings

Meetings are every Tuesday night from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM in the cafeteria of the North Falmouth Elementary School. If school is not in session (or is cancelled due to weather) then we do not meet. Since we meet in a school there are quite a few rules that we must following that will be discussed with the new Scouts during their first meeting. Our Boy Scout Troop is boy-led. Many of us have adult expectations as to how we would like to see a Troop meeting run. Since the boys are in charge, the meetings may be chaotic and disorganized. It may appear that they're not doing or learning anything. Sometimes this is true, but they're learning more than we think. The boys are responsible for planning for camping trips and teaching/learning Scout skills. There's also time at the end of the meeting for a game. We don't want Boy Scouts to be a repeat of school. If we made it that way, many boys would stop attending meetings. Scouting should not be presented in a classroom environment but experienced in the outdoors. The magic of Scouting happens mostly during our camping trips.

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Patrols

We use the Patrol Method in Troop 38. Each Scout belongs to a patrol. There are usually 6-12 Scouts in a patrol. Scouts are assigned to patrols by the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) after consulting with the Scout. I've advised the SPL to keep friends together and brothers apart. Each patrol has a Patrol Leader (PL) that is responsible for his patrol and the PLs are overseen by the SPL. If a Scout has a question about anything you should encourage them to ask their PL or the SPL before asking the Scoutmasters. The Patrol leader is responsible for making sure your Scout has the information and skills to go camping. If your Scout has a question, he should be directed to his Patrol Leader. If you have a question, feel free to contact me or talk to one of the other adults.

Camping and other events

We camp every month from September through June. For one or two of our winter trips we stay in a cabin, but most of our camping is done in tents or lean-tos. Our current schedule is posted on www.troop38.info. The troop normally pays any campsite or cabin fees through our fundraising. Food money (\$10-\$15 cash) is collected by the Patrol Leaders from each scout the Tuesday before the camping trip (the Scouts plan their own menu and do their own shopping). If we're participating in other activities during the trip like skiing, rock climbing or camporees, those expenses are usually paid by check to "Troop 38" or from the Individual Scout Account. I send out regular email updates with more information about upcoming events. You can also visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/troop38.

Parents and camping

Our program is designed to make your son responsible enough to take care of himself and learn to be independent. Think of Scouting as a game with a purpose. If your son is playing a sport, you're not permitted to play the game with him or coach him (unless you're the coach). In Scouting we don't share tents with our sons or pack their gear for them (it's ok to help). Their Patrol Leader or another older Scout will work with them and provide coaching and assistance. The adult leaders will step in when necessary to provide advice to the youth leaders and to make sure everyone is following the rules and staying safe. That being said, you're welcome to come camping with me and my Assistant Scoutmasters. We know that it can be difficult for you to let your son go off camping with strangers and that you may want to check out what we do on a camping trip. We'll provide some guidelines that must be followed during our camping trip and spend time with you during the trip to talk about the program. You will need your own tent and personal gear. We can include you in the adult meal planning. Please let us know if you're interested in camping with us. We're always looking for new Assistant Scoutmasters and Committee Members. Let me know if you can help.

Camping gear

Please see the personal camping gear list and buying guide. You do not need to rush out and purchase everything on the list. If you don't have something that's needed for a camping trip, many of us have items that you could borrow. If you have any questions about gear, please ask.

Uniforms

If you still have the blue Cub Scout uniform, it's time to switch to the tan Boy Scout uniform. You will also need green shoulder loops, a neckerchief slide, the numbers 3 and 8 and scout pants

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or shorts. This is officially called the “field uniform” but is usually referred to as the “Class A” uniform. We wear our Class A uniform to the first meeting of the month, Court of Honors, most community service projects, parades, public events and when traveling on public transportation. Our “activity uniforms” are normally referred to as a “Class B” uniform. This is the troop t-shirt and Scout pants. These are worn on the rest of the month and camping trips and other activities.

Courts of Honor

Scouts are recognized for their achievements at a Court of Honor. These are normally held the 2nd Tuesdays of October and February during our normal meeting times. These are usually held at the North Falmouth Congregational Church. We also have a Court of Honor and Spring Picnic on a Tuesday night in June at an outdoors location like Goodwill Park. Parents and family members are encouraged to attend these events.

Fundraising

The troop raises money in the fall by selling popcorn, in the spring by holding a car wash and in the summer by helping with the Falmouth Road Race. There are also fundraising opportunities by serving dinner at the Marine Lodge or helping at the Falmouth Sprint Triathlon. A portion of the funds raised will be allocated to Individual Scout Accounts (ISA).

Summer Camp

Scouts are strongly encouraged to attend summer camp with the troop. We spend a week at Camp Yawgoog in Rockville, RI. The Scoutmasters and other adults are present for the entire week. A deposit of \$25 is due in mid-April. We'll do everything you can to help you prepare your son for his first week away at summer camp.

Adult Leadership

The adult leaders of Troop 38 are committed to providing the best possible scouting experience for your son. The realization of this goal depends upon the help of every parent. At the unit level all leaders are volunteers. **We** run our troop. **We** are Scouting. Your help is needed for transportation, two-deep leadership, fundraising, merit badges and other tasks to support the troop. The more that each parent does, the less that a single person is asked to do. If you're interested in directly supporting the Scouts as an Assistant Scoutmaster, we normally ask you to camp with us a couple times before we appoint you to the Assistant Scoutmaster position. This will give you the opportunity to learn about the program before you make a commitment. You may also be interested in helping out on our Troop Committee which supports our Scouting program. Training is required for every adult leadership position.