



Troop 33

Takoma Park Presbyterian Church

310 Tulip Ave
Takoma Park, MD 20912
(301) 270-5550

troop33.takomaparkscouts.org



**BOY SCOUTS
OF AMERICA**

Information for Parents

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Welcome!

Troop 33 welcomes you as a new Scout family. Since the Boy Scouts is considerably different than the Cub Scouts, some valuable information is provided here to help you start this program. This guide provides some basic information about the Troop.

We have been chartered by the Takoma Park Presbyterian Church since 1920. We are part of the White Oak District of the National Capital Council.

Troop 33 Mission Statement

Troop 33 is a special place. The rules are ones we know well – the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. We create a safe haven at Troop 33, a place where everyone should feel physically and emotionally secure. We do this in several ways.

- We create an environment based on fun and learning.
- We seek the best from each member, and we do our best to help each person achieve it.
- We set the example for others and ourselves by always behaving as Scouts should.
- We live the Scout Oath and Law each moment of the day and to the best of our abilities.
- We refuse to tolerate any kind of inappropriate putdown, name calling, or physical aggression.
- We communicate our acceptance of each member and each other through expressions of concern and by showing our appreciation whenever possible.

Troop 33 is a boy-led troop. Empowering boys to be leaders is the core of Scouting. Scouts learn by doing, and one of our most important challenges is to train boy leaders by providing direction, coaching and support. The boys will make mistakes now and then and will rely upon the adult leaders to guide them. But only through real hands-on experience as leaders can boys learn to lead.

Joining

To join Troop 33, a boy must meet the Requirements of the Boy Scouts of America (see Appendix 1). You and your son must complete a Boy Scouts of America application. This application will be turned into the local council office.

A membership fee of \$65.00 for new scouts, or \$30.00 for Webelos crossing over or new scouts joining from March 1 through August 31, covers:

- the BSA registration and insurance
- *Troop 33 Neckerchief*
- *one Class "B" T-shirt*
- BSA Centennial Loops
- Official BSA Handbook

Your Scout can receive the Boys' Life Magazine for an optional additional \$12.

There are *no further fees for membership*. The Troop budget is structured to cover all annual registration with the local council for as long as your young man is in the Troop. Each family is expected to be current with their annual dues and participate with the fundraisers. (See Dues and Additional Fees).

Required Information

Parents must complete a Part A & B of the BSA medical form and a troop medical release before their son can participate in **ANY** outdoor activity with the Troop. The medical form provides leaders with critical information and permission to seek appropriate necessary medical treatment.¹

Any parent transporting a Scout other than their own son to any Scout activity must have adequate insurance coverage and seat belts for each passenger. The BSA requires information pertaining to each automobile and motor vehicle insurance coverage.

In order to minimize the collection of information required for each trip permit, we ask for each potential adult chaperone to give to the Troop vehicle/driver information to be kept on file.

More information on insurance requirements can be found in the Guide to Safe Scouting.²

¹ This form is available online at <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsorce/HealthandSafety/ahmr.aspx>

² <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsorce/HealthandSafety/GSS/gss11.aspx>

Weekly Meetings

Troop meetings are Thursday at 7:00 p.m. and end at 8:30 p.m. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m., so Scouts should arrive by 6:50 p.m. to assist with the set-up. Scouts arriving after 7:00 p.m. are considered 'late.'

- Troop meetings are held during inclement weather and will take place unless cancelled (Please refer to our Inclement Weather Policy).
- All Scouts should come to every meeting in uniform with their handbook, a pencil, and paper.
- Parents' Committee Meetings are held monthly.
- Troop Courts of Honor are held quarterly.

The Troop can only function when each Scout attends on a regular basis. The Troop records attendance and encourages Scouts to maintain an 85% attendance level throughout the year. Attendance is also a factor in determining eligibility for leadership posts. A Scout who will be absent from a meeting because of illness, school, family obligation or other conflicts should notify the scoutmaster and his patrol leader in advance to be excused. Absences for family obligations or school are considered 'excused' absences.

Youth Leadership

Patrol Method

Troop leadership is divided into two distinct segments: Scouts and adults. Troop 33 employs the patrol leadership method. Most leadership functions are delegated to the Scouts themselves. The Troop is made up of smaller segments called *patrols*, which are the basic functioning unit of the troop. Each patrol has a leader and an assistant who are responsible for its overall function. All patrols are encouraged to earn the National Honor Patrol Award.³

Overseeing the patrols is the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL). The SPL, the individual patrol leaders, and the other Troop officers make up the Patrol Leaders Council (PLC). Troop 33 has two Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPLs), one to work with Patrol Leaders, and one to work with the other troop officers. The PLC plans and organizes the Troop's activities and functions. The PLC is also responsible for helping to conduct Courts of Honor. Elections are held in June and December.

The primary difference between Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts is that the boys, and not the adults, are expected to be their own leaders. This leadership method has proven to be very effective in developing young boys into strong leaders. Sometimes it may appear chaotic, but the method does work and has proven to provide the most benefit to

³ http://www.scouting.org/scoutsourc/Awards_Central/NationalHonorPatrol.aspx

the Scouts themselves. The Scouts are always encouraged to work through their chain of command.

The troop abides by the “Guide to Safe Scouting” and the “Sweet 16 of Scout Safety.”⁴ While events are boy led, adult leaders do supervise all events and intercede to ensure safety.

Youth leaders are expected to be at all Troop functions. If they fail in their duties the Troop will counsel them in how to fulfill their duties. The Troop's leadership guide is available for download on the Troop's website.

Learning to be boy-led does not mean that youth scout leaders have veto power over adults in troop operation. Consistent with this, the Scoutmaster is in charge of the program operation of the troop. The boys should understand that they have only as much authority as allowed by the adults, especially the Scoutmaster and other fully trained troop leaders.

Uniform Policy

We STRONGLY encourage scouts to wear the official dress uniform to every meeting, especially if you are participating in a Scoutmaster Conference, Board of Review or if you are a Troop Leader (SPL, ASPL, and preferably PL).

The official dress uniform is to be worn when traveling to and from any scouting related activity. Occasionally, we allow Class B for some trips - but scouts will be told of this ahead of time. It is also to be worn at EVERY ceremonial function, for example, Courts of Honor.

It is also to be worn when attending an event as a representative of Troop 33 and/or BSA - for example, the Wreath Laying Ceremony. Please note: The official dress uniform is commonly referred to as the '*Class A*' uniform and the activity uniform as '*Class B*' even though these are not correct BSA terms.

For more on the BSA Standards and for photos of the patch placement, see the BSA Uniform Inspection Sheet.⁵

The official dress uniform consists of:

- BSA Shirt (long or short sleeve) with proper insignia
 - The Council Shoulder Patch and Troop Number, OR the combined Troop 33 Patch
 - A US Flag on the right shoulder
 - Centennial epaulets

⁴ Please see “Qualified Supervision” in the Sweet 16 of Scouting Safety at <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsourc/HealthandSafety/GSS/gss08.aspx#a> for more detailed information.

⁵ <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34283.pdf>

- A rank patch on the left pocket
- BSA Pants (long, short or convertible) - in emergency MAY substitute pants of a dark green color (olive)
- BSA or suitable belt
- BSA socks - in emergency MAY substitute socks of a dark green color, with shorts and dark socks with the long pants
- Brown or Black shoes or boots, NOT tennis shoes or Keens, or similar
- Neckerchief WITH slide, sometimes we must all be alike (Horseshoe, for example), otherwise, somewhat optional
- Head gear is optional, unless the Troop votes to wear hats

As appropriate, the shirt may also have:

- A [patrol patch](#) on the right sleeve under the flag
- A [journey to excellence](#) patch earned in Troop 33, on the right sleeve, under the patrol patch
- The [badge of office](#) on the left sleeve, under the Troop number
- A [Trained patch](#), if earned, on the left sleeve, under the badge of office
- An [Arrow of Light](#), below the left pocket and centered
- A [religious emblem knot](#) above the left pocket (centered)
- An [Interpreter Strip](#), if earned, above the BOY SCOUTS of AMERICA, above the right pocket
- An [Order of the Arrow lodge patch](#) on the right pocket flap (if the Scout is a member and is current with their dues)
- One Temporary, Boy Scout related patch may be on the right pocket (i.e. Camp Horseshoe patch; a Totin' Chip patch)

If you have a particular situation that makes obtaining a full Class A uniform a difficulty, PLEASE contact the scoutmaster about this, rather than have your Scout be out of uniform. The troop maintains a uniform exchange with numerous high-quality uniform parts available to you quickly and affordably.

Class B shirts

The Troop has a number of Class B shirts for sale.

Finances

The annual membership fee is \$52.00 for returning scouts. This provides registration and insurance.

A Scout is Thrifty – personal responsibility is a core Scouting value. Parents should review the following guidance taken from the BSA document, *Who Pays for Scouting?*⁶:

⁶ <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/02-506.pdf>

Youth Members

Assisted by their parents or guardians, boys in Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Varsity Scouting, and young men and women in Venturing pay their share from personal savings and participation in money-earning projects. Scouts buy their own uniforms, handbooks, and personal equipment and pay their own camp fees.

Units

Weekly or monthly dues and funds from approved money-earning projects meet expenses for supplies and activities in the Cub Scout pack, Boy Scout troop, Varsity Scout team, and Venturing crew. These monies help pay for camping equipment, registration fees, Boys' Life magazine, uniform insignia, special activities, and program materials.

Dues

The dues are \$1.00 per week from September 1 until August 31. There are two payment options. Dues can be collected weekly at the Troop meetings by the patrol leaders. The Troop Scribe is responsible for the collection of all dues from the patrols. The Troop Scribe gives the dues collected to the Troop Treasurer for the Troop. There is also the option of paying for the entire year on September 1. Dues cover the following:

- Craft supplies and materials
- Refreshments at quarterly Court of Honor
- Development of Troop Reference Library
- Re-registration and Boys' Life for the following year
- Awards

Dues are paid by cash or check (make checks payable to Troop 33).

The Troop encourages families to expect their sons to work for their activities through Scoutscapes or to pay from their allowance to help them learn financial responsibility. Scoutscapes is a troop run program where scouts work in the neighborhood to earn money for the BSA related expenses.

Additional Fees

Throughout the course of the Scouting year, additional fees are required (to be paid by Scouts). These are primarily for the various outings and activities that occur during the year. Campouts are typically \$30.00 per Scout, which covers camp fees, meals and travel.

The Troop holds fundraisers each year to defray the cost of its operations; usually one in the Spring and one in the Fall. Every family is expected to participate. Each fundraiser offers the Scouts the opportunity to earn funds for their outings and

registration. The Troop also supports the local council by participating with the annual Friends of Scouting campaign.

Financial Assistance is available. Please contact the Scoutmaster or the Committee Chair for more information.

Troop Camping and Outings

An active camping program is a key element to Troop 33's outdoor program. We are lucky to have an abundance of campgrounds in this area available for our use, including our own Camp Schmitt. The Troop camps throughout the year in all types of weather conditions except severe electrical storms. The Troop typically schedules one activity each month, and eight weekend campouts in a year. Weekend campouts usually start on Friday evenings (5:30 PM) and end on Sunday mornings. The Troop returns to the church typically around 3:00 P.M. Sundays. We return to the church to store our gear.

Unless otherwise stated, if the Troop has a Friday evening departure, Scouts are expected to provide their own sack-dinner.

Each outing will have a designated Tour Leader in charge of coordinating the logistics of the trip. Each outing will have a designated patrol in charge of helping to program the theme of the outing or the campout.

For weekend outings, we try to stay relatively close to home to ease logistical problems associated with traveling a long distance with 25 or 30 boys. Parents of new Scouts should refer to *The Boy Scout Handbook* for a listing of personal gear and clothing required for each Scout. Scouts are required to have their own sleeping bag and a durable bag or pack to transport their belongings.

Once again, thrift shops and garage sales are good sources for used camping equipment. If you're going to purchase a tent for your Scout, it's recommended that you don't go overboard. A small, inexpensive dome tent is sufficient for short-term camping. The tent should be easy to set up by one or two Scouts in dwindling light. Canvas tents should generally be avoided simply because they require more dedicated effort to maintain.

Scouts are encouraged to begin the process of travel planning well in advance. The planning process itself is a learning experience and integral part of the Scout program. Youth-led planning will take more time than if adults do all the trip planning. To ensure that any travel we do with scouts infuses the Boy Scout Leadership Experience at every opportunity, we limit our role to facilitating the boys' brainstorming and planning - but never doing the work for them. We allow the scouts to lead, learn collaboratively, and learn by doing (and by making mistakes). All the while, however, provide ideas and insight, ask tough questions when we have to, and support all their decisions with enthusiasm and encouragement!

Prohibited Items

A number of items are prohibited at Troop activities. The following items will be confiscated and returned to the parent of the Scout:

- Alcohol
- Cash in excess of \$20.00 (unless otherwise specified)
- Drugs (unless prescription, under control of Adult Scouter)
- Electronic games
- Firearms, BB-guns, CO₂ pistols, etc.
- Fireworks
- Sterno
- Offensive or pornographic materials
- Pets
- Sheath knives or personal axes
- Other items deemed to be distracting to a meeting, campout or other Troop event will be confiscated.

Knives are not allowed at meetings unless the Scout holds a Totin' Chip card.

Adult Leadership

The Troop encourages each family to have one parent or guardian registered as an adult volunteer either as an Assistant Scoutmaster or Committee Member. Registration with the BSA offers access to the BSA resources, and coverage by the liability insurance.

Troop Leaders

Troop 33 selects adult leaders (Scouters) based on commitment, ability, and adherence to Scout principles. All direct contact leaders⁷ (including drivers) must take the online Youth Protection Training. Troop 33 follows the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#). The Troop maintains a corps of Assistant Scoutmasters to assist the Scoutmaster. Among these leaders are the Patrol Advisors. All adult leaders should expect to assist the scoutmaster in providing a safe, fun experience for the Scouts. Leaders are:

Troop Committee

The troop is “owned” by a chartered organization. The Takoma Park Presbyterian Church holds the troop charter and has been a stalwart champion of local scouting through since 1920. The troop committee is the troop’s “board of directors.” The troop

⁷ Per BSA guidelines, direct-contact leaders are anyone who comes into direct contact with youth members, and includes assistants to the top leaders and all den leaders.

committee is responsible for conducting the business of the troop, setting policy, and supporting the Scoutmaster and Scouts with the outdoor program and other planned activities. The troop committee welcomes the involvement of all parents, caregivers, and legal guardians. The troop committee meets monthly and on an ad hoc basis as specific needs arise.

It is the policy of the troop that each troop parent is an ad hoc member of the troop committee. We encourage an adult from each family to register with the BSA, but do not consider the failure to do so a disqualification from service. All parents or volunteers who are registered with the Boy Scouts of America are official members of the troop committee. At the request of any registered member of the troop committee, a quorum of thirty percent (30%) of the families involved in the troop is required for formal votes and to conduct official business. Families is defined as those having scouts in the troop and those leaders without sons in the troop but who are registered as leaders.

For the success of the troop it is strongly encouraged that parents:

- Volunteer for two of the largest fundraisers (pancake supper/mulch delivery)
- Volunteer for at least two service projects (church work day and bazaar)
- Volunteer for two other activities

Advancement and Training

Advancement

The Troop follows the 2015 BSA Guide to Advancement⁸

BSA Mission Statement

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

The Aims of Scouting

Every Scouting activity moves boys toward three basic aims: character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness.

Advancement is one of the eight methods used by Scout leaders to help boys fulfill the aims of the BSA.⁹

Policy on Unauthorized Changes to Advancement Program

No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to, or subtract from, advancement requirements. There are limited exceptions relating only to youth members with special needs.

⁸ <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/GuideToAdvancement.aspx>

⁹ <http://www.nesa.org/methods.html>

Training

Each year the troop holds an Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops (ILST) course for the members of the troop to learn leadership skills.¹⁰ We also encourage scouts to be Den Chiefs and attend Den Chief Training. In addition, we sponsor scouts to attend the National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) course hosted by NCAC, locally known as Impeesa.

The troop has implemented the “Target First Class” program to help its new scouts learn all the basic scout skills.¹¹

Whenever possible we encourage volunteers to get Adult Leader Training in their first year as a registered volunteer. Every boy deserves a trained leader.

Code of Conduct

All members of Troop 33 (youth and adults) are to represent the Boy Scouts of America based on character, camping skills, physical and personal fitness, and leadership qualities. Therefore, all members, including parents/guardians, are asked to read our Statement of Understanding and Code of Conduct as a condition of participation.

Please see SOP Appendix 4.

Inclement Weather Policy

Troop 33 follows the Guide to Safe Scouting¹² and the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) closure policy during inclement weather. MCPS status is reported on TV and radio stations, as well as the MCPS home page (<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/emergency>).

- If MCPS is closed all day for inclement weather, all Troop and/or patrol activities are cancelled.
- If MCPS cancels all afternoon and/or evening programs, all Troop and/or patrol activities are cancelled.

Scouts, scouters, and parents who can make it safely are encouraged to respond if TPPC asks for Troop assistance in clearing snow and/or ice from sidewalks and walkways.

For Patrol weekend activities/outings, the Patrol Advisor in charge of the activity/outing (in consultation with the Troop Leadership) is responsible for deciding whether or not to cancel the activities based on the safety of the scouts.

¹⁰ <http://www.scouting.org/Training/Youth.aspx>

¹¹ <http://www.boyscoutstrail.com/boy-scouts/1st-scout-schedule.asp>

¹² <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx>

For Troop weekend activities/outings, the Scoutmaster, in consultation with the other Troop leaders, is responsible for deciding whether or not to cancel the activities based on the safety of the scouts.

This Troop information was updated by the parent committee on September 18, 2019.

Scoutmaster

Committee Chair

Our thanks to Troop 625 for providing us with a template for this document.

http://webspaces.webring.com/people/gu/um_12747/new-par.html

Appendix 1

Joining the Boy Scouts and Troop 33

In order to become a Boy Scout, you must:

JOINING THE BOY SCOUTS

- Be a boy who has completed the fifth grade, or who has earned the Arrow of Light Award, or be 11 years of age, but not yet 18.
- Submit a completed Boy Scout Application and health history signed by your parent or guardian.
- With your parent or guardian complete the exercises in the pamphlet *How to protect your Children from Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide*

***You did all of these Things?
Welcome!! You are a Scout!***

Boy Scout Oath or Promise

On my honor, I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake and morally straight.

Boy Scout Law

A Scout is:

Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly,
Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful,
Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.

Boy Scout Motto

Be Prepared!

Boy Scout Slogan

Do a Good Turn Daily!

The Outdoor Code

As an American, I will do my best to -
Be clean in my outdoor manners
Be careful with fire
Be considerate in the outdoors, and
Be conservation minded.

Appendix 2

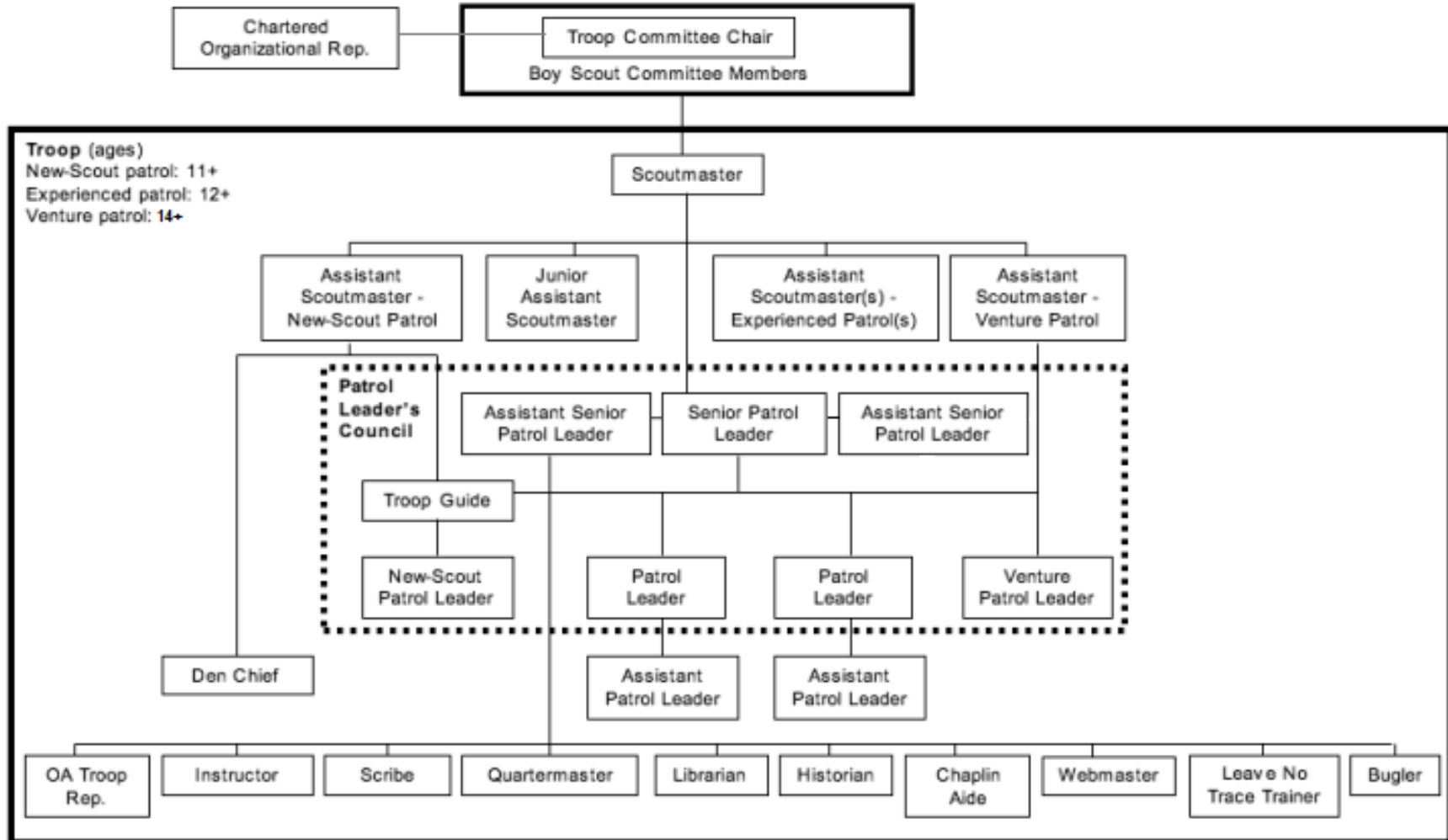
Prices for Gear and Other Stuff

What you can expect to spend:

Optional

Appendix 3

Troop organizational chart



Thanks to: http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Troop_organizational_chart

New Scout Slip

To: Troop 33

We have reviewed Troop 33's New Scout Pamphlet. We agree to follow the Troop guidelines.

Additionally, we have reviewed the Youth Protection pamphlet from the Boy Scout Handbook.

Sincerely,

Scout

Date

Parent

Date