



Boy Scouts of America Troop 518 **Sponsored by Nativity BVM Church, Tunkhannock, PA**

Troop Guidelines/By-Laws

Parent Handbook

Approved June 2010

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1. Sponsor/Chartering Organization

Boy Scout Troop 518 is sponsored by Nativity BVM Church, Tunkhannock PA which owns the Troop Charter. A Scout does not have to be a member of this church to be a member of the Troop. The Troop will operate in accordance with the policies of the Boy Scouts of America and our Chartering Organization. Troop 518 is a member of the Iron Horse District of the Northeast PA Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

2. Purpose of the Troop

It is the purpose of Boy Scout Troop 518 to provide for boys an effective program designed to build desirable qualities of character, to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to develop in them, personal fitness, thus to help in the development of American Citizens who:

- Are physically, mentally and emotionally fit.
- Have a high degree of self-reliance as evidenced by such qualities as initiative, courage, and resourcefulness.
- Have personal and stable values firmly based on religious concepts.
- Have the desire to help others.
- Understand the principles of American social, economic, and governmental systems.
- Are knowledgeable about, take pride in their American heritage, and understand America's role in the world.
- Have keen respect for the basic rights of all people.
- Are prepared to fulfill the varied responsibilities of participating in and giving leadership to American society and in the forums of the world.

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

Scout Law: A Scout is; Trustworthy - Loyal - Helpful - Friendly - Courteous - Kind - Obedient - Cheerful - Thrifty - Brave - Clean - Reverent

3. Membership/Registration - Boys

To join and maintain membership in Troop 518 a boy must meet the Boy Scouts of America Boy Scout eligibility requirements which are defined as: Completed the 5th grade or is 11 years old or has earned the Arrow of Light, but is under 18 years old. Prior to a boy joining the Troop he shall have attended at least one Troop meeting. New Scouts must fill out a youth application and pay for their first year district registration. The annual fees are reduced for partial first year registration if a Scout joins the Troop in mid-term. If the Scout is already registered, as with incoming Webelos, a transfer fee of \$1 will be charged and a new registration form shall be completed. Dues for the Scouting year are payable to the Troop Treasurer in September. If a Scout has not paid his dues by the date indicated, the Troop Treasurer is authorized to redirect the amount of dues from an individual's Scout camping account to the general fund if dues are not paid. A Scout who has not paid his dues may be ineligible for advancement or participation in outings until the dues are paid, at the discretion of the Scoutmaster. If dues have not been paid by the end of October, and the boy is inactive in the Troop, upon a vote by the Troop Committee, the Scout can or will have lost his membership in Troop 518 and will forfeit all funds in all of his accounts to the Troop's General Fund. In the case of insufficient funds, his membership will be suspended until dues are fully paid. We allow for flexibility in participation, but we do need support from every family to maintain our extensive camping and activities programs in a manner that is fair to our Scoutmasters and other Troop families.

4. Scout Participation, Responsibilities and Meetings

Troop Meetings are held on Monday evenings from September through June except on holiday Mondays. Meetings will be held promptly at 7:00-8:30p.m., at Nativity BVM Catholic Church in Father Nallin Hall. The church is located at 90 East Tioga Street, Tunkhannock PA. The Troop will not conduct meetings on those days when there is no school, and meetings will be canceled on days when school closes early due to emergency or inclement weather. Our Troop operational year is from September 1 through August 31. Scouts plan Troop activities that include camp-outs, programs, fundraisers and other special activities. The following list represents the minimum participation necessary in order to be considered an active Scout:

- Attend over 50% of the Troop meetings.
- Exhibit appropriate respect for Scout Leaders and fellow Scouts at all times.
- Use best efforts to attend the Courts of Honor, which are held three times a year.

- Keep registration fees current.
- There will be NO hazing or initiation at any Troop 518 functions.
- Scouts are expected to be in full 'Class A' Scout uniform unless otherwise directed.
 - The Boy Scout Handbook published by The Boy Scouts of America will be used to guide Troop activities. Each Scout should have a copy and should bring it to each meeting.
 - Acceptable behavior is required at all meetings and during all Troop activities.
 - Parents are welcome to attend all meetings and offer any skills or talents that they may wish to share with the Troop.
 - Parents are requested not to forbid a Scout to attend a meeting as a disciplinary action.

Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) meetings are held every two weeks in Fr. Nallin Hall. These meetings are with the Boy Scout Patrol Leaders to plan the details of the Troop's activities. Special monthly events or activities such as hikes and campouts are scheduled for each month. These activities are suggested, voted on and planned out by the PLC. The Troop will be limited to as many patrols as the Scoutmaster feels the Scout Leaders can reasonably provide with good programming.

5. Membership/Registration - Adults

In order to safeguard the youth in our care, the Boy Scouts of America requires that every applicant for Registration as a BSA employee or volunteer be submitted for a criminal background check (CBC). To ensure compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act, The Northeast Pennsylvania Council must receive an Adult Leader Application and a Criminal Background Check Disclosure/Authorization Form for all new adult applicants. No registrant can be submitted for a criminal background check without a signed disclosure/authorization form on file in the local Council office.

In addition, The Diocese of Scranton under which Nativity BVM Church is a member also has requirements for all adults who work with our youth. The Diocese of Scranton Code of Pastoral Conduct Rules and Guidelines Form must be signed, and adults must complete Virtus Training offered by the Diocese. Such training is periodically offered through Nativity BVM Church.

Adult registration is required for specific leadership positions such as Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster and Troop Committee Members. If an adult desires a Boy's Life subscription, the additional cost must be added to the dues. An adult who is transferring their registration from another Troop during the

Scout year is charged a transfer fee of \$1. Adults changing leadership positions are required to submit a new registration form identifying their new position. The registration fee is waived if the change takes place during the current Scout year and dues are up to date.

6. Re-chartering

Troop re-chartering (registration) begins each November and is the responsibility of the Committee Chair. An optional Boy's Life Magazine subscription is available which runs from March until February and is an additional cost added to the total dues for those boys who desire a subscription. Scout registration fees, Troop dues and insurance are currently set at \$ _____ for a Scout with a Boy's Life Subscription, \$ _____ for a Scout without Boy's Life and \$ _____ for adult leadership and committee members. The registration and dues are reviewed annually during the August Committee Meeting and adjusted accordingly for the following year. Registrations and dues are due by the last Monday in September each year. Scout dues cover the Scout's registration and insurance with council and a small amount to offset the costs of awards within the Troop. Adult dues cover registration and insurance with the council.

7. Scout Accounts

A Scout Account for each individual family in which monies earned by the Scout during designated Scout fundraisers is maintained for use by the Scout for any Troop related function or purchase of any Scout related items. The Troop Treasurer will maintain the accounts. Reports will be submitted by the Troop Treasurer along with the monthly Treasurer's Report at each committee meeting. The coordinator of any fundraiser is responsible for submitting amounts to be credited to a Scout's account to the Treasurer. Parents may make payments to the account anytime during the year to be used for summer camp as well as towards other Scout related activities. Parents should verify their son's account within a timely manner after the Treasurer sends out yearly account statements. If a Scout leaves the Troop, his funds will be contributed to the general fund in good will for the benefits that he derived from participation in past Troop activities. Under no circumstance will funds be paid out to a Scout who leaves the Troop, unless they intend to transfer and register with another Scout Troop of their choosing.

8. Scout Uniforms

- All Scouts are required to wear the official 'Class A' uniform at all Troop meetings and activities. The Scoutmaster may designate the wearing of other clothes for Troop activities when it is deemed to be appropriate.
- The 'Class A' uniform consists of the Scout shirt, Scout trousers or shorts, Troop neckerchief and slide, Scout belt and buckle and Scout socks or knee socks.
- The shirt shall have badges sewn in the proper placement.
- The 'Class A' uniform shall be worn for all advancement conferences, Boards of Review, and Courts of Honor.
- The 'Class B' uniform consists of a BSA related t-shirt.
- Scouts should be prepared to stand a uniform inspection at any Troop meeting or activity without receiving prior notice.
- Troop 518 believes in wearing the Boy Scout uniform. It gives each Boy Scout the sense of belonging. It also gives each Boy Scout a place to proudly display his achievements, advancement and places he has been.

9. Permission Slips

The standard Troop 518 sign-up sheets will be used for all campouts and other activities as required by the Scoutmaster. This permission will include all activities and means of transportation. In most instances, parents must indicate their approval of their son's participation in a Troop activity by signing the sign-up sheet for their son to be eligible to participate. A parent's signature will serve as permission.

10. Parent Participation

Parents of Scouts accepted into membership in Troop 518 will be expected to offer their time and/or services in any variety of helping roles that may be needed and from time to time as requested by the Troop Committee. Each parent is strongly encouraged to participate in Troop activities and (optionally) become a registered adult leader. Parents of Scouts are also encouraged to serve on the Troop Committee and attend monthly committee meetings.

- A fair and equitable share of assistance is expected from each parent/guardian. On a rotating basis, parents will be required to furnish transportation to and from campouts and Troop activities. To be a driver on outings you must have a valid driver's license and insurance on your vehicle. The automobile

must be in good operating condition. The Outdoor/Activities Coordinator can assist you in completing the required paperwork.

- Parents are expected to attend Courts of Honor.

11. Advancement

Advancement shall be encouraged for all Scouts. Many of the skills needed for advancement will be taught during regular meetings while others will be taught on outings such as camping trips, hikes, etc. Some of the requirements for advancement must be learned at home with parental involvement, if necessary. All Scouts will be encouraged to seek help of an adult including but not limited to, the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, Committee Members, and parents for help in advancement and for procuring Counselors for Merit Badges. Each Scout shall be allowed to advance at his own rate with appropriate encouragement to become an Eagle Scout prior to his 18th birthday, according to BSA guidelines. No rank in Boy Scouts can be skipped, overlooked or ignored; regardless of what age the boy joins scouting.

All signatures on the Merit Badge blue cards shall be original. No stamp can be used. The only time a stamp can be used for a signature is for summer camp because of the high number of blue cards that need to be signed. Each boy should fill out his card prior to receiving the Unit signature since the signature gives permission for the Scout to work on the merit badge.

12. Board of Review

Board of Review shall be held as often as necessary for advancement of the Scouts. A Board of Review shall consist of at least three (3) Committee Members for the ranks. All Committee Members serving on a Board of Review shall complete a Board of Review training module published by Council and all Boards of Review shall be administered in a classroom setting.

13. Court of Honor

Courts of Honor will be held at least three times a year, September, January, and June with additional Courts being held as necessary. The Advancement Coordinator shall be responsible for coordinating the awards portion of the ceremony by procuring and organizing the awards needed from the Council store. The Scoutmaster shall be responsible for the program and the distribution of awards.

14. Emergency Medical Release and Health

All Scouts and adult leaders participating in Scouting events are required to have an up-to-date Health Form (less than one year old) on file with the troop. In case of medical emergency the parents/guardians will be notified immediately.

15. Troop Committee

- The Troop Committee's primary responsibilities are supporting the Scoutmaster in delivering a quality Troop program, and handling Troop administration. The TROOP COMMITTEE GUIDEBOOK For Successful Troop Operation shall be the guideline for the operation of the Troop Committee. All Committee Members will receive a guidebook and Troop Committee binder. Committee Members will pass the binder to the next person when a Committee Member's tenure is over.
- The Committee shall establish Troop policies, but it shall refrain, unless events or situations dictate, from becoming involved in the day to day operations of the Troop.
- A Committee Member shall be in good standing unless he/she misses four consecutive meetings without prior notice to the Committee Chair. The member shall not have voting rights and shall attend two consecutive meetings to regain as of the second of those meetings. The Committee Chair shall notify a member when he/she risks falling out of good standing. Any Committee Member who misses a total of six Committee meetings in an operational year (except for good cause - e.g. illness) shall be asked to leave the Committee.
- The Committee shall meet the first Monday of the month at Fr. Nallin Hall classroom at 6pm. Every effort will be made to limit the duration of the meeting to no more than ninety minutes.
- Meetings shall be conducted under the generally accepted Roberts Rules of Order.
- Troop policies shall be adopted by motion of a member of the Committee, appropriately seconded and voted upon. Policies adopted by the Committee shall become effective immediately.
- The Troop, with the assistance of the Treasurer, shall prepare, yearly, a budget proposal for the coming operational year to be distributed to Committee Members by the October meeting. No action shall be taken on the budget until the November meeting to provide proper time for

dissemination and discussion. If the budget is not approved by January 1, the Troop shall have no authority to spend or obligate any monies until a budget is passed. The budget may contain deficit spending; however, such deficit shall not exceed 75 percent of the troop's cash and cash equivalents projected as of Dec. 31, unless such amounts are less than \$500. The vote to approve a budget shall be by majority of Committee Members in good standing who are present.

- Committee Members should, within six months of joining the Committee, obtain the required Troop Committee Challenge Training and Virtus Training.

Virtus Training is required by the Diocese of Scranton and is often offered at Nativity BVM. We strongly encourage Committee Members to take Board of Review Training and Scoutmaster Fundamentals.

Quorum and Voting Rights

A majority of the then sitting members of the Troop Committee in good standing present at Committee meetings and other weekly Troop meetings will be deemed to constitute a quorum for the purposes of conducting Troop 518 business. In order to conduct any Troop business requires a vote, a quorum must exist, in person, at the time and place of the requested vote.

Voting rights may be exercised only in person: no proxies will be allowed.

The Scoutmaster will not have the right to vote on Committee business (except as noted below), but will be afforded the opportunity to enter into and actively participate in any discussion prior to a vote.

All matters presented for a final vote by the Committee must be approved by a majority of those present (assuming a quorum is present).

Expedited Approval / Vote

When, in the opinion of both the Troop Committee Chair and the Scoutmaster, Committee approval of an issue is required on an expedited basis, prior to the next scheduled Committee meeting, the Committee Chair shall be authorized to contact and poll the members of the Troop Committee, in person, by telephone or electronic mail, regarding the issue. Approval of the issue will be deemed acceptable to the Troop Committee at large in the event that a majority of the Troop Committee responds favorably to the Committee Chair's poll, assuring a quorum of Committee Members have been polled.

In any such instance where an expedited approval or vote has been conducted, the Committee Chair will document the instance and provide the secretary with a complete disclosure of the issue and the results of any vote for inclusion in the minutes of the next scheduled Troop Committee Meeting.

16. Funding Troop Activities

The Troop receives money from various fundraisers and Scout dues to provide for the general operating expenses of the Troop. These include; merit badges and other recognition items, camping fees, camping equipment, processing for records of activities, insurance and licensing for the trailer, licensing for Web Master and postage. The Troop will purchase food for special events and off set the cost of some Troop activities and trips. The Troop does not receive any direct funding from our local BSA Council. Funding is needed. Fundraising activities are planned by the Troop Committee. All Scouts are expected to actively participate in fund raising activities.

17. Code of Conduct

All Scouts and adults shall exhibit behavior appropriate to the spirit and letter of the Scout Oath, Law and Motto. Each Scout is expected at all times to be respectful and courteous to the adult leadership, fellow Scouts and members of the public. They should be mindful of their surroundings and respect the property of others. Boys that fail to act as good Scouts during any Troop activity will be counseled by the Scoutmaster and may be asked to leave the activity. In extreme circumstances, a parent or guardian may be called to retrieve their son from a Scout activity.

18. Troop Website

Troop 518's official website is <http://www.bsa518pa.org>. It is maintained by our present webmaster who donates the cost of maintaining the website. In the event the webmaster resigns the Troop shall continue to support the website.

19. Troop Equipment/Trailer

Troop equipment is for use on Troop outings and campouts. All equipment is stored in the Troop Trailer which is located at the Quartermasters home or an Assistant Scoutmasters home. Our Troop Trailer was purchased in 2009 with funds donated from the late Roy Piper. Equipment Chairperson from the Troop Committee and the Quartermaster will have the keys. Arrangements shall be made with these individuals for the trailer and/or equipment. Scouts will clean out the trailer after every usage. Once a year inventory will be updated and the trailer will be 'spring' cleaned.

20. Discipline

Scout inactivity or inappropriate conduct of Scouts will be handled by the Senior Patrol Leaders and reviewed by the Scoutmaster and the Committee, whose action is final.