

## What's it all about?

"Scouting is Outing!" These are not just words. This is what Scouting is all about. Troop 695 holds a campout every month of the year except December. In addition, the Troop spends a week each summer at Many Point Scout Camp. As Scouts advance through the ranks and learn new skills, they will also be invited on one to two week Troop "High Adventure" trips. Upcoming trips are planned for the Boundary Waters, and Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

The Patrol Method ensures individual attention for each Scout. A Patrol is a group of 6 to 12 Scouts who work, play, and camp together. Each Patrol has two adult advisors who guide (but do not run) the Patrol and a Patrol Leader who is elected from within its own ranks.

Campouts, Troop Meetings, Activities, and Patrol Meetings are all geared towards helping each Scout develop to his full potential in the following areas:

- Learning to survive and be comfortable in the outdoors;
- Learning to live and work cooperatively in a group;
- Learning leadership skills;
- Learning the importance of service to others;
- Developing a personal moral code; and
- Exploring career opportunities and hobbies through merit badges.



## How Does a Scout Reach Eagle Rank?

The first badge a boy earns is the Boy Scout Badge. This badge signifies that the Scout has learned the Scout Promise, Scout Law, Scout Handshake, Scout Sign, Scout Motto, Scout Slogan, and Outdoor Code, and that he has met with the Scoutmaster. It is very basic, and Scouts should earn it immediately after joining the Troop.

The next three ranks are Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. Scouts must learn about knot tying, first aid, orienteering, fire building, camping, flag etiquette, etc. Along the way, each Scout meets regularly with the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters to ensure that he is progressing and that his Scouting experience is meeting his expectations. Scouts are encouraged to reach First Class rank about a year after joining Scouts.

The next two ranks are Star and Life. These ranks involve earning merit badges, participating in community service projects, and showing leadership within the Troop. Star and Life Scouts are the driving forces within the Troop.

The final rank is the Eagle Rank. In addition to earning merit badges and showing leadership, a Scout must develop, organize, raise funds for, and oversee a major community service project. Scouts who reach this rank are independent workers who set goals for themselves and reach those goals. They are an example to younger Scouts and use their leadership skills to help run the Troop. Eagle Scouts have learned the value of volunteering in their community and working for what they believe in. The Eagle Rank culminates in a special Court of Honor to recognize the young man's accomplishment.

The Eagle Rank is Scouting's highest rank, and is an honor that will be a highlight in any man's life.

## What do Scouts do?

Activities vary each year, but a typical calendar would include the following:

- March through May: emphasis is on teaching new Scouts camping, first aid, & orienteering skills.
- June through August: lots of time for long-term camps, sailing, & canoeing.
- September through November: rock climbing, hiking, shooting, and bicycling are wonderful fall activities.
- December through February: Scouts learn survival in our bitter winters, while having fun with snowshoeing and skiing. We use the first heavy snowfall to teach Scouts how to make quinzhee huts and other shelters. We also place an emphasis on earning merit badges in the winter months.

Scouts plan all of the Troop activities, meetings, and campouts to ensure that we schedule activities that they enjoy!

New Scout families receive a copy of The Boy Scout Handbook. This book explains the Boy Scout program very thoroughly ~ be sure to look through it with your son. You will also receive a copy of the Troop 695 Guidebook, which explains policies specific to Troop 695.

*There's so much that's new to us, how will we know*

Be sure to attend the Troop Parents' Meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. At this meeting, we will discuss upcoming events and answer any questions you may have. You will also receive the Troop's monthly newsletter, The Reconnaissance, at this meeting.

Last minute information, permission slips, scout account statements, etc. are placed in each Scout's file (the "ship"), which he should check at each Meeting. Also, ask questions of anyone in the Troop. If we don't know the answer, we'll find someone who does!

## How much will all of this cost?

Troop 695 believes that Scouts should pay their own way through the program. Of course, they will probably need a little help getting started! Here is an estimate of what a typical Scout will spend during the first year:

<b>Registration Fee:</b>	<b>\$50</b>
<b>Weekend campouts:</b>	<b>\$15 each</b>
<b>Many Point Scout Camp:</b>	<b>\$210</b>

New Scouts will also experience some one-time startup expenses. These vary greatly, but average costs would be:

<b>Uniform</b>	<b>\$55 - \$65</b>
<b>Backpack</b>	<b>\$75 - \$140</b>
<b>Sleeping Bag</b>	<b>\$60 - \$120</b>
<b>Other Equipment</b>	<b>\$30 - \$60</b>

The Troop sponsors various fundraising opportunities throughout the year. Scouts can work at the Flying Cloud "Snack Shack," the Staring Lake snack wagon, or the Christmas tree lot located at Pioneer Trail & Hwy 212. Scouts love working at these sites! In addition, they can sell wreaths and/or popcorn. These opportunities provide the Troop – and the Scout – with the revenue to offset the costs of Scouting activities and equipment. By participating in the Troop's fundraising events, Scouts can pay for their own Scouting experiences. Of course, scholarship funds are available to Scouts who need additional assistance.

## How Much of a Time Commitment is Scouting?

Scouts make a commitment to be "active in the Troop." Many boys are busy with sports, church activities, band, and so on, so we try to maintain a flexible attitude towards attendance. Of course, the more a Scout puts into the program, the more he will get out of it. That is why we encourage Scouts to attend as many activities as possible. When a Scout does need to miss a meeting, he must take responsibility for his absence by contacting his Patrol Leader.

## I'm ready to join! What do I do next?

For more information or to find out when the next Troop Meeting is, call or Email:

Joe Polta, Scoutmaster  
952-974-0264 (home)  
EMAIL: scoutmasterpolta@att.net

Burt Boudreaux, Assistant Scoutmaster  
952-906-9604 (home) 952-949-8105 (work)  
pboudreaux@mn.rr.com

Don Qually, Assistant Scoutmaster  
952-944-2679 (home) 612-839-4674 (work)  
EMAIL: qmcqually@worldnet.att.net

Kelly Schwab, Information Coordinator  
952-949-0705 (home)  
EMAIL: kschwab@mn.rr.com

When you make your final decision to join, you will be given an information packet containing:

- a registration form
- the Troop Guidebook
- the Troop Roster
- medical forms to be completed
- a request for information about you

## When & Where Does Troop 695 Meet?

Our Troop meetings are held three Tuesdays per month, from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm at Prairie Lutheran Church (11000 Blossom Road, near the intersection of Pioneer Trail and Bennett Place).

Scoutmasters are available to work with individual Scouts at campouts, from 8:00 pm to 8:30 pm on Troop Meeting nights, or anytime by special arrangement.

Scouts serving as Troop Leaders will also attend Patrol Leaders' Council Meetings one Tuesday evening per month.

Campouts and activities vary each month. For more specific dates and times, please see the Troop Calendar.

# Troop 695

Eden Prairie, Minnesota



**Scoutmaster Joe Polta**

**Tel. 952- 974- 0264**

*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.*

**www.troop695.org**