

Troop 291 Quick Reference Guide



WHO WE ARE - *More info available on the Web site*

Mission Statement

Boy Scout Troop 291 prepares boys to become ethical young men by teaching and applying the Boy Scout Oath: "A scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent."

We exist to serve boys by instilling values, preparing them to make ethical choices over their lifetime and enabling them to achieve their full potential. Scouting is a game with a purpose. The goal is to have fun while learning new skills. We accomplish this by working toward three aims - Participating Citizenship; Moral Strength and Character; and Development of Physical, Mental and Emotional Fitness.

Background

- Troop 291 was founded in November 1965 by our chartered organization, First United Methodist Church Plano. We are the oldest continuously registered troop under the original charter in Plano.
- We have had 123 Eagle Scouts to date.
- We are boy led. This means that boys make decisions together, help each other, teach each other, and take initiative. It **does not** mean lack of adult supervision.
- We welcome incoming parents to become assistant scoutmasters and/or active committee members making the behind-the-scenes decisions needed to keep the troop running smoothly.

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STAY INFORMED - *Always check the Web site; if it is not there we need to get it there*

Organization

- Chartered Organization – First United Methodist Church Plano - <http://www.firstmethodistplano.org>
- District – Northern Lights – <http://www.northlightsbsa.orgxq>
- Council – Circle 10 – <http://www.circle10.org>
- Boy Scouts of America National – <http://www.scouting.org>

Communication

- Web site – <http://www.troop291plano.org>
- Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Troop291Plano>
- Twitter – <https://twitter.com/Troop291Plano>
- Email List – Send request to webmaster@troop291plano.org to get added
- Registration for upcoming events is done on the Web site (or sometimes via a Facebook invite)
- Calendar of events is available on the Web site (email instructions for subscribing also on Web site)
- Various forms and files are available on the Web site

KNOW YOUR LEADERS

- Scoutmaster (SM) – Daniel Mitchell – scoutmaster@troop291plano.org
- Committee Chair (CC) – Guy Saenger – committee.chair@troop291plano.org
- Advancement Chair – Sharon Henson - advancement@troop291plano.org
- Merit Badge Chair - Trey Barlow – merit@troop291plano.org
- Treasurer - Jan Taylor – treasurer@troop291plano.org
- Quartermaster – Harry Donaghy – quartermaster@troop291plano.org
- Multiple Assistant Scoutmasters (ASMs)
- Multiple Committee Members (CMs)
- All registered leaders are required to have online Youth Protection Training (YPT) and Face-to-Face YPT in order to attend camps over 3 days in length.
- Assistant Scoutmaster (1 day classroom) and IOLS (Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills – 2 days camping) training is required by all adult leaders participating in campouts.

STAY ON SCHEDULE - *Always check the Web site calendar; it is kept current*

Meetings

- We meet on Monday evenings (unless school holiday or otherwise noted) at 7:00pm at FUMC.
- ASM meetings (7:30pm during normal meeting) are usually on the Monday after a campout.
- Committee meetings (7:30pm during normal meeting) are usually held on the 1st Monday of the month.
- PLC (Youth Leaders) meetings (6:30pm prior to the normal meeting) are usually on the Monday after a campout.

General

- Courts of Honor occur in September, December, and May.
- Re-charter takes place in December; annual dues are paid; medical forms are due.
- Campouts are usually every month except December from August through May.
- We leave for campouts on Friday evening at 6:30p from First United Methodist Church.
- We arrive back from campouts on Sunday around 12:30p at First United Methodist Church.
- Annual planning meeting over the summer for the upcoming scouting year.
- Scouting year mimics the school year except for a few summer activities.
- Elections for youth leadership occur in December and May.

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THE FINANCIAL SIDE

Fees

- \$90 annual troop dues (includes \$24 re-charter fee to BSA).
- Incoming dues are pro-rated to \$67 (\$90 - \$24 re-charter by pack + \$1 transfer).
- Re-charter fees are covered by the troop for all adult leaders (unless also chartered elsewhere).
- Training for adult leaders is usually covered by troop with prior arrangements.
- Typical campouts are no additional fees.
- Special campouts such as canoeing, rock climbing, caving, etc. may have an additional admission fee.
- Optional fees
 - Boy's Life Magazine annual subscription (12 issues) additional \$12
 - Summer Camp – typically \$500 to \$600 (includes camp, meals, transportation, etc.)
 - High Adventure Camp – typically \$1000+ (includes camp, meals, transportation, etc.)
- Lots of fundraising opportunities for scouts to earn monies to cover any scout-related fees.
- Rank advancement patches are covered by Circle 10.
- Merit badge patches are covered by the troop.

Scout Accounts

- Individual account assigned for each scout.
- Monies that scouts earn from fundraising get put into scout accounts.
- Used to pay any scouting-related fees (re-charter, summer camp, special camping, etc.)
- Balances uploaded to web site quarterly.

Fundraising

- Typically, profit is split evenly between the troop and the scout based on individual effort.
- Each scout must fundraise at least \$100 per year for the troop portion (check donation is accepted).
- Popcorn (Sep – Nov) – splits evenly between troop and scout.
- Balloon Festival Parking (Sep) – splits evenly between troop and scout.
- Rotary Flag Program (6 holidays per year) – splits evenly between troop and scout.
- Camp Cards (Feb – Apr) – 100% proceeds benefit the scout.
- Friends of Scouting (FOS) (Feb) - fundraising event that benefits the council.

Reimbursement

- Food reimbursement allowance of \$10 per scout for grubmaster (see CAMPOUTS).
- Gas reimbursement for drivers for trips over 150 miles each way.
- Gas reimbursement for driver pulling trailer (no minimum miles).
- Supplies, etc. purchased with prior authorization from committee.
- Reimbursement can be made via check or by deposit into scout account.

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SOME TROOP BASICS

Patrols

- Scouts are divided by age/grade into patrols.
- Troop currently has 6 patrols with an average size of 8 scouts in each patrol.
- Each patrol has a Patrol leader (PL) & Assistant Patrol Leader (APL) elected by the other boys in the patrol.
- Each patrol is provided equipment (tents, kitchen kit, cooler, stove, etc.) they must care for and clean.
- A new patrol must determine a patrol name, creates a patrol flag, and pick a patrol patch.
- New patrols have a Troop Guide that helps counsel them through the first year as a Boy Scout. Often this is the same scout that served as their Webelos Den Chief.

Uniform

- Class A – required for travel, ceremonies, Scoutmaster Conferences (SMCs), Committee Boards of Review (BORs), flag presentation, parades, scout fundraising, or service projects representing scouting
 - Tan scout shirt w/ epilates
 - Neckerchief w/ slide (not required for meetings, travel)
 - Jeans or tan/green pants or shorts w/ belt (no gym shorts)
- Class B – for campouts, informal service projects, or as indicated
 - Scout t-shirt
 - Jeans or tan/green pants or shorts w/ belt (no gym shorts)

Meetings & Activities

- General flow of meeting is opening flags, announcements, patrol breakout, activity, circle-up, closing.
- Scouts are encouraged to meet with adult leaders and older scouts at meetings to:
 - Sign up for merit badges
 - Request merit badge offerings
 - Check on merit badge requirements needed for completion
 - Sign up for upcoming events
 - Turn in monies for fundraising, fees, etc.
 - Sign up for Scoutmaster Conferences (SMC)
 - Schedule a Committee Board of Review (BOR)
 - Get older scouts to sign off on rank requirements, campouts, and service hours.
 - Sign up for training opportunities.

Re-Charter

- Used to re-register scouts and leaders in the scouting program each year.
- Happens in December
- Scout must show up in person and in full Class A uniform.
- Annual dues must be paid.
- Annual medical forms (including physical part C) must be turned in.

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ADVANCEMENT, MERIT BADGES, COURTS OF HONOR

Advancement / Ranks

- Ranks – Scout, Tenderfoot, 2nd Class, 1st Class, Star, Life, Eagle.
- Scoutmaster Conference (SMC) is required for each rank and available by appointment (online).
- Committee Board of Review (BOR) is required for each rank and available by appointment (online).
- Scout Handbook
 - Each scout is required to have a Boy Scout Handbook.
 - Each rank has a list of requirements identified in the handbook.
 - Scouts should record campouts, service hours, and training in their handbook (back of book)
 - It is the scout's responsibility to get older scouts to sign books for rank requirements, campouts, and service hours. Adult leaders (unless specifically stated) do not sign books (especially dads).
 - Signers expect the scout to be able to demonstrate knowledge of the requirement.
 - Book is required on campouts for scouts below 1st class rank.
- First Year Scouts
 - New scouts are urged to attend summer camp so that they can earn rank and some key important merit badges (Swimming, First Aid).
 - New scouts typically earn the rank of Scout on their first campout (usually the Family Campout).
 - New scouts typically earn their Totin Chip (allows them to carry a pocket knife and use a saw or axe responsibly) on their first campout.
 - New scouts typically earn their Fireman Chit (allows them to build a fire responsibly and know how to extinguish it properly) on their first campout.
 - New scouts do not typically work on merit badges until their first summer camp so that they can focus on rank requirements. Exceptions include merit badges earned from specific camping activities such as Canoeing, Astronomy, Aviation, etc.
 - New scouts are urged to earn Tenderfoot by their first summer camp. This is only possible by coming on campouts, not just coming to meetings.
- We use Troopmaster software for management and synchronize to the BSA national database.
- Individual Progress Reports are available as requested or quarterly for all scouts.

Merit Badges

- A lot of merit badges are geared towards older or more mature scouts.
- The troop has a list of the registered merit badge counselors in the Troop library.
- The troop has a merit badge waiting list at each meeting. This allows for the troop to have an idea of who is interested in what and helps the troop organize a class or event for offering that merit badge.
- If a scout is interested in a merit badge that is not currently being offered, the scout should sign up on the merit badge waiting list or talk to the Scoutmaster or appropriate merit badge counselor.
- If a scout hears about a merit badge class they are interested in from a neighboring troop or a BSA merit badge college event, the scout is able to sign up for that event after getting permission from the Merit Badge Chair, Advancement Chair, or Scoutmaster.
- The full merit badge process is documented on the Web site.

Courts of Honor (COH)

- Public ceremony to present Merit Badges and Ranks earned by the scouts.
- Take place in September & December in the church gathering area.
- May COH is typically at a local park and includes a cookout and games.
- Full Class A uniform required at each COH.
- Each family brings dessert for reception.

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CAMPING, MEDICAL FORMS, & MEDICINES

General Campouts

- The purpose of campouts is to allow scouts to learn and practice outdoor skills and build camaraderie.
- Themes - Astronomy, Rockets, Canoeing, Rock Climbing, Caving, Shooting Sports, Family, Water Sports.
- Camporee is a council camping event that gathers troops from the council for competition and awards.
- Assistant Scoutmaster and IOLS (Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills) training is required by adult leaders participating in campouts.
- Departure / Return
 - When parents drop off scouts for a campout, they are required to sign a permission slip and turn in any medications or special instructions to a trained adult leader.
 - Typical departure is Friday evening at 6:30p from First United Methodist Church.
 - Typical return is Sunday afternoon at 12:30p at First United Methodist Church.
 - Parents should check email for possible variations in arrival time. Scouts will call parents if arrival time is different than expected.
- Grubmaster
 - Each patrol elects a scout to purchase food for the patrol meals (Saturday breakfast, lunch, and dinner and Sunday breakfast) for the campout. Allowance of \$10 per boy.
 - Patrol determines headcount, menu, and chooses grubmaster at the meeting on the Monday before the campout. Grubmaster takes a patrol cooler home from meeting.
 - Grubmaster purchases food, stocks cooler, and brings food to campout departure.
 - Grubmaster must take cooler home from campout, clean it, and returned at the next meeting.
- Electronics
 - Scouts are allowed to bring electronics/phones for use only during travel but must leave them in the vehicle while camping.
- Tents
 - Scouts use troop tents until 1st class rank. Once 1st class, scout has earned the ability to bring their own (3-man or smaller) personal tent.
 - Scouts sleep 2 or less to a tent.
 - Camporee requires all boys to use troop tents regardless of rank.
 - Tents are assigned by the quartermasters to scouts for cleaning & drying after campouts.
 - Tents should be taken care of in a timely manner so that they do not mildew, get stinky, etc.
 - Tents should be returned at the next meeting to the quartermasters.
- CANNOT BRING:
 - Electronics (except for use during travel)
 - Sheath knives (folding knives in leather cases are okay) or any type of firearm
 - Drugs or medications (except inhalers as appropriate); pain medicines such as Tylenol & Advil are available in our first aid kits.
 - Anything deemed inappropriate for a scouting or youth environment.

Medical / Medicine

- Annual medical forms are required by all scouts and leaders in the troop. Forms are available on the Web site.
- Medical forms are required to be turned in at re-charter and must be on file on all camping events.
- Scoutmaster or other designated adult leader dispenses medicines on campouts. Medicines must be sent with specific instructions.
- Summer camp may have the central medical facility distribute medicines.
- Inhalers are permitted to be kept by the boys if the parent is comfortable with the scout's knowledge of the use.
- First aid kits are in the trailer; Scout quartermaster or any adult is able to help out with first aid.

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Summer Camp

- Summer camp is an excellent place to earn rank and merit badges as well as build friendships.
- First year scouts are urged to attend and typically take a rank advancement program, the Swimming and First Aid merit badges, and an additional one or two merit badges of their choosing.
- Typical cost is \$500-\$600 for out-of-state/far camps. \$350-\$400 for in-state/near camps.
- BSA regulation requires that scouts not travel more than 10 hours per day.
- Troop stays at a church (usually with a gym) on the way to and back from out-of-state camps.
- Scouts get \$5 each day of spending money while at summer camp.

Summer High Adventure

- Alternate destination each summer based on level of participation and interest.
- Scouts must be 14 years of age or older.
- Philmont (New Mexico) – Hiking
- Sea Base (Florida) – Boating, Deep Sea Fishing, Scuba
- Northern Tier (Minnesota) – Canoeing
- Summit (West Virginia) – Climbing, Zip-Lining, Biking, Skating, Shooting

Camping Supplies

- We require that all scouts have a refillable water bottle on all campouts.
- We require that all scouts have a mess kit on all campouts.
- We recommend a good sleeping bag. Many of our campouts are cold weather, so investing in a good sleeping bag (like a 0 or 10-degree bag or at least an extra liner for a warmer bag) is advised.
- Boys should always be prepared with bug spray and sun screen.
- A general list of camping supplies is available on the web site.

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SCOUT LEADERSHIP & TRAINING

General Leadership Information

- All positions require 1st class rank or above except individual patrol leaders
- The Patrol Leader Council (PLC) consists of all scout leadership positions
- PLC meetings are usually on the Monday after a campout at 6:30pm (prior to the normal Troop meeting)
- Elections for leadership are held in December and May
- All leadership must attend a day of training after elected to familiarize the scout with their responsibilities
- Senior Patrol Leader is required to be Oak Leaf Trained
- A scout can only hold one leadership position during the elected term. If a scout is elected to more than one position, they will have the opportunity to pick which role they want. Runner-ups for the positions not chosen will assume the leadership role.

Leadership Positions

- Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) – spl@troop291plano.org
 - Oversees scouts, reports to Scoutmaster, Over 14, At least 1st Class, Oak Leaf Trained
- Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL) – aspl@troop291plano.org
 - Assists and reports to SPL, fills in for SPL when not present
- Each patrol has a Patrol Leaders (PL) and an Assistant Patrol Leader (APL)
 - Oversees scouts in the individual patrol, reports to SPL and ASPL
- Jr. Webmaster – updates our Web site and Facebook page
- Historian – organizes our history board, records our legacy
- Chaplain Aide – all things worship / prayer related
- Quartermasters – organizes the trailer and manages equipment
- Librarian – organizes the merit badge books that scouts can check out
- Troop Guides – older scouts that mentor first year scouts
- Scribe – records notes from leadership meetings
- Den Chiefs - scouts that assist with Cub Scout Pack Webelos patrols
- OA Representative – liaison for the troop to Order of the Arrow

Youth Training Opportunities

- Ongoing during all scouting activities
- Formal available - National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT)
- Staffing summer camps and high adventure camps
- Order of the Arrow (OA)

SERVICE

- The purpose of service projects is to provide continual leadership training to the boys while providing interaction and ongoing service to the community. It is our means of “giving back”.
- Some of the projects we do include:
 - Scouting for Food (Feb)
 - Plano creek cleanup (multiple)
 - Susan G. Komen Race (Jun)
 - Annual FUMC service project
 - Order of the Arrow (OA) ordeal
 - Summer Camp project
 - Toys for Tots, Plano Santas (December)
 - Plano Parades (July, December)
 - Various Eagle projects

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RECRUITING

- Webelos Woods (Sep) – an opportunity for Cub Scouts to meet/camp with Boy Scout troops
- Meet the Troop (Sep) – an opportunity for Cub Scouts to meet many Boy Scout troops in a single location
- School Night for Scouting assistance (Sep)
- Den Chiefs – Boy Scouts preparing Webelos Cub Scouts for crossover
- Various year-round events for Webelos recruits

CROSSOVER

- Troop provides leaders and scouts to attend and help Cub Scouts at crossover ceremonies.
- Troop provides the following to the incoming scout at the crossover: epilates, troop number patches, year patch, Boy Scout handbook, neckerchief, and slide.
- Parents are responsible for purchasing the following: Boy Scout Class A shirt, council patch, any other uniform items such as socks, belt, pants, shorts, etc.
- Incoming patrol of new boys is assigned a Troop Guide to help guide them through the first year.
- Once the incoming patrol chooses the name of their patrol & patch, the troop will provide patrol patches.
- Incoming scouts and adult leaders will be provided with a class B t-shirt, a baseball hat, and an optional beanie.
- A mandatory parent meeting is usually held right after crossovers during the normal troop meeting time to familiarize parents with this guide and handle checklist items below.

INCOMING CHECKLIST

- Fill out application for scout (choose TRANSFER).
- Fill out contact information sheet.
- Pay \$67 dues (check payable to Troop 291).
- If adult leader, fill out adult leader application and sign background check page.
- If want to be merit badge counselor, fill out MBC application.
- If registering as an adult leader of any kind, provide proof of Youth Protection Training.
- Sign up for the email list.
- Sign up for Facebook access (if desired).
- Sign up for Twitter access (if desired).
- Subscribe to Google calendar (if desired).
- Familiarize yourself with the Troop Web Site.
- Indicate scout shirt size.
- Indicate adult leader shirt size (if applicable).