

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Troop 266! We are very happy to have you and your son take part in the scouting experience. You have joined a troop with a long history, beginning in 1943. Our list of Eagle Scouts includes over 120 and is growing all the time. This Parent Guide is intended to help you learn how Boy Scouts of America (BSA), and in particular, Troop 266 operates. We know that this Guide will not answer all your questions, so feel free to ask any of the adult leaders. After you have read the Parent Guide, we ask that you use the information to help your new Scout be successful in his scouting experience.

## GOALS OF SCOUTING

The Boy Scout Program works toward three goals. One is growth in moral strength and character. We define this as what the boy is himself: his personal qualities, his values and his outlook.

The second goal is encouraging citizenship. The Scout learns of his obligation to other people, to the society in which he lives and to his government.

The third goal is development of physical, mental, and emotional fitness. Fitness includes the body (well tuned and healthy), the mind (able to think and solve problems), and the emotions (self-control, courage, respect for others and self-respect).

These goals are the foundation of scouting and are summarized in both the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. ***Boy Scouts is fun with a purpose!***

## TROOP SPONSOR

The Charter for Troop 266 is held by West University United Methodist Church at 3611 University Boulevard. Troop 266 is in the Golden Arrow District (GAD) of the Sam Houston Area Council (SHAC). The church provides meeting rooms and storage space for troop equipment. The Troop occasionally uses the church vans for transportation. Troop 266 funds its own activities, including all transportation. Church membership is not required to join the Troop.

## TROOP INTEREST

Troop 266 makes every attempt to be boy led. This concept provides a value which will follow the Scout throughout his life. The Troop does a variety of activities. The main one is camping which it does almost every month, leaving on a Friday afternoon and returning on Sunday afternoon. In addition, we attend Summer Camp in

July and Winter Camp between Christmas and New Year. There are also a number of opportunities for community service and advancement.

## SCOUT UNIFORM

Scouts must wear a uniform to all scouting activities. Flagrant disregard of this policy may result in a scout being asked to return home. Detailed information on the uniform is in the *Scout Handbook*. The *Scout Handbook* is provided by the Troop to each new scout, as well as the following uniform items denoted by a (\*):

### Formal “Class A” Requirements

Scout Shirt  
Scout shorts or pants  
Scout belt  
Scout socks  
\*Scouting neckerchief  
\*Neckerchief slide  
\*Red epaulets loops  
\*Quality Unit Patch  
Merit badge sash (for more formal activities)  
BSA cap is optional

### Informal “Class B” Requirements

Solid plain-colored or BSA T-shirt  
Scout shorts or pants  
Scout belt  
Scout socks

The following patches need to be sewn onto the new Scout’s shirt. The inside covers of the *Scout Handbook* and the Scout Shop can assist with placement of the patches:

Sam Houston Area Council Patch  
Numbers 266 for Troop  
Purple World Crest (same as in Cub Scouting)  
Patrol emblem  
Rank badge (New scouts wear no rank badge which, as earned, must be kept current)  
Arrow of Light, if earned in Cub Scouts  
Religious knots, if earned

All Scout needs can be purchased at the Scout Shop. In addition, the Troop maintains its own supply of used uniforms that are available during Troop meetings.

There are two convenient Scout Shops located at:

2225 North Loop West, Suite A  
Houston, TX 77008  
(713) 865-5190  
Mon.-Fri.: 9am - 6 PM  
Sat.: 10am - 5:00 PM

10435 Greenbough Dr., Suite #125  
Stafford, TX 77477-5034  
(281) 207-2340  
Mon.-Fri.: 10 AM - 6 PM  
Sat.: 10 AM - 3 PM

# TROOP ORGANIZATION

## Adult Leadership

- Scoutmaster: Coordinates the scout/troop activities and needs and reports to the troop committee.
- Troop Committee Chairman: Chairs monthly Troop Committee meetings, conducts Troop Courts of Honor, facilitates the running of the Troop.
- Troop Committee Members: Adults responsible for the Troop's welfare with positions such as Registration, Advancement, Recruitment, Treasurer etc.
- Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM): Adults that serve as Patrol Advisors.
- Charter Organization Representative: Acts as liaison between the church and the Troop. Meetings and functions are scheduled with the church through this person.
- Scouters: Any BSA registered adults.
- Trained Scouters: Registered adults who have completed the applicable BSA training sessions. Parents camping with the Troop are strongly encouraged to be trained.

In addition to these adult leadership positions, there are many volunteer positions needed to keep the Troop running.

## Boy Leadership

Remembering that the Troop is "boy run," leadership is at both the Troop and the Patrol level.

Boy Leadership at the *Troop* Level:

- Senior Patrol Leader (SPL): Works with the Scoutmaster to conduct troop meetings
- Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL): Helps the Senior Patrol Leader carry out troop activities
- Quartermaster (QM): Manages and maintains troop equipment
- Troop Guide (TG): Assists in guiding new patrols
- Historian: Collects and maintains continuing history of activities
- Scribe: Records minutes at Green Bar meetings and handles other secretarial duties for the Troop
- Chaplain Aid: Provides prayer at various Troop functions
- Librarian: Maintains Troop library mainly consisting of Merit Badge booklets
- Webmaster: Maintains Troop website ([www.troop266.com](http://www.troop266.com))
- Den Chief: Provides assistance to den leaders at the Cub Scout level

Boy Leadership at the *Patrol* Level:

A patrol is a group of 3-15 scouts led by a Patrol Leader, Assistant Patrol Leader, Quartermaster, and Scribe all elected by the patrol. New patrols are formed with the incoming Webelo scouts and any boys new to scouting. The Troop has many patrols. The use of patrols partitions the Troop into smaller, more personal and manageable parts. It further allows friends to camp and do activities together, as well as groups the boys according to age and rank. A boy usually remains in the same patrol throughout his scouting years.

The Patrol Leader is responsible for his patrol's attendance, compliance with uniform requirements, and duty roster. Patrols pick their own patrol name, emblem, yell, etc. In addition to the Troop meetings, a new patrol typically meets once a week on its own. These meetings help promote bonding and camaraderie among the new scouts. A new patrol is assigned a Troop Guide (an older scout) and at least one Assistant Scoutmaster to serve as patrol advisors.

**All elected Boy Leadership positions are for a term of six months (Oct-March and April-Sept) and may qualify for rank advancement requirements.**

## MEETINGS

Boy Scouts of America asks that troops be “boy run,” as much as possible. This gives the Scouts leadership experience and allows the boys to design many of their own programs and activities. Consequently, things aren't always as “smooth” running as they might be. Yes, the adults could do everything, but our Scouts would not have a chance to make those mistakes from which they all learn.

Regular Troop Meetings: Troop 266 meets *every* Tuesday, at 7:30 PM to approximately 9:00 PM at the church, upstairs in the gym (High Court) on the west end of the building complex. Rarely, but occasionally, the meeting is held in the Drummet Building by the rear parking lot. Please arrive a few minutes early so we can begin all meetings on time. Also, please arrive early for punctual pick up of scouts.

Scouts need to **always** bring their *Scout Handbook* and be fully dressed in “Class A” uniform (Scout pants, belt, socks, shirt, neckerchief and slide) at each meeting. The only exception to Class A dress is during the summer (from Memorial Day through Labor Day), when scouts may come to meetings in “Class B” uniforms. Class B uniform differs from Class A by allowing a Boy Scout T-shirt or a solid plain-colored T-shirt to be worn instead of the scout shirt and neckerchief/slide. Class A is required at all Courts of Honor and Boards of Review during the year.

We know meeting attendance is sometimes in conflict with sports or other commitments. We ask that your Scout attend at least 75% of the scout meetings and activities. If he is arriving directly from or going directly to a sports activity, sports

uniforms are acceptable. We would rather have scouts there for all or part of the meeting than taking time to go home and change.

Green Bar Meetings (Patrol Leaders Council): Once per month (usually the last Sunday of the month), we hold a boy-run meeting for all scout leaders and adult leaders of the Troop to plan upcoming events. Your scout will not need to attend until he has a leadership position. These meetings are informal and uniforms are not required.

Troop Committee Meetings: The first Wednesday of the month, the adult troop leaders and support, meet at 7:30 PM at the church. Led by the Troop Committee Chairman, these adults establish and approve the policies and procedures under which the Scoutmaster and other adult leaders operate and provide a framework for the management of troop fundraising, advancement, recognition and program development. Eagle scout project approvals are also given here. Parents are encouraged to attend these meetings and would find them very beneficial.

Assistant Scoutmaster Meetings: ASMs and the SPL meet once per month, usually the Monday after a campout, at 7:30 PM at the church. These meetings, chaired by the Scoutmaster, focus on activities and the scouts themselves. Again, parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

## TROOP DUES AND FEES

(In general, you'll find scout activities are a bargain!)

### Annual:

Yearly Boy Scouts of America registration (\$50) is due at the first of each year. It covers such items as district expenses, insurance and each Scout's subscription to *Boy's Life Magazine*.

Adult Scouters pay a yearly registration fee (\$20) which covers insurance and subscriptions to *Scouting Magazine* and the *Scouter* monthly council newspaper. Becoming a Scouter is the best way to keep informed on all aspects of scouting from camps to events and troop concerns. We strongly encourage all parents to register.

Troop 266 provides its own troop van transportation. A yearly transportation fee, that varies, covers the cost of gas and van rentals to all monthly campouts. The fee does not include Winter, Summer or High Adventure camp transportation.

### Monthly:

Patrol dues (\$2.00) are paid monthly or on an annual basis. Some monthly campouts require an "activities" fee. Most also require food costs.

Other:

Summer, Winter and High Adventure camps are billed separately for those planning to attend. The cost includes food, transportation and camp fees which will vary depending on the location.

Financial Support:

Financial support is available through Troop 266. Each year, we provide scholarships and loans to scouts who are in need of assistance for registration and transportation fees or to attend Summer, Winter or High Adventure camps. The scout is asked to replace the amount loaned over a period of time through his own work. Please contact the Scoutmaster or Troop Committee Chairman for additional information.

## RULES FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. A Scout lives by the Scout Oath, Law, Motto and Slogan at all times.
2. A Scout is expected to participate to the fullest extent possible in all troop activities.
  - A. Scouting is a year-round program that exposes the boy to an atmosphere of learning and growing by participation and service. Troop 266 expects support from the Scout's parents in helping the Scout meet these goals.
  - B. If a Scout cannot find time to give to the community or his troop by attending regularly, he will not be able to benefit from the camping experience. Poor attendance slows the Scout's advancement, leading to a loss of interest.
  - C. No one is discriminated against because of handicap, race or religion.
3. Profanity, bickering, physical abuse, name calling, unsafe actions, etc. have no place in Scouting and will not be tolerated by the Troop.
4. Troop equipment belongs to all the Scouts and as such, Scouts are responsible for the troop equipment. Material damages to equipment will be the responsibility of the Scout and his parents.
5. Dues and fees must be paid on time. Failure to do so will delay the Scout from participation in troop activities, camp outs, advancements, and Courts of Honor.

6. Scouts not dressed in appropriate required scout uniform (other than those with a sport obligation) may be asked to go home.
7. Parents and guardians **must be reachable** while their Scout is participating in troop activities in case of emergency or the need to return early from an activity.
8. Parents and guardians **must pick up the Scout at the rendezvous area at the appointed time after a scout activity**. Any alternate arrangements must be made in advance with the Scoutmaster or leaders in charge.
9. Troop equipment must **be cleaned and stored** before a Scout is dismissed from the troop activity.
10. Boys will follow the Scoutmaster's or Leader's instructions.
11. Boys will not participate in unsafe actions.
12. Boys will adhere to the buddy system of scouting.
13. Boys will not leave designated areas without the Scoutmaster's or ASM's permission:
  - He must tell the Scoutmaster or ASM of his whereabouts at all times.
  - He must not go to another area other than that requested or approved by the Scoutmaster.
  - He must not enter property marked "No Trespassing."
14. Boys will not explore physical hazards without the Scoutmaster's permission and supervision (i.e. lakes, creeks, cliffs, caves or underground areas, boats, abandoned structures).
15. Boys must not go near any type of vehicle, machinery or equipment without the permission of the Scoutmaster.
16. Boys will not damage *any* type of property: natural or man-made.
17. Non-scout related fundraising opportunities are prohibited on church property.

## FORBIDDEN ARTICLES AND ACTIVITIES

The following is a list of prohibited items in any Scout activity:

- No electronics (radio, tape or CD players, DVDs, electronic games) unless specifically approved by the Scoutmaster
- Pocket knives with a blade in excess of 3-1/4" and a total closed length of 5".
- Sheath (fixed blade) knives
- Aerosol cans such as deodorant, insect repellent, etc.
- Matches, lighters or metal spark fire starters (except with permission of Adult Leader)
- Fireworks of any kind
- Liquid fuel candles
- Inflammable liquids, including lighter fluids
- Slingshots
- Water balloons or launchers
- Poisons of any sort
- Tobacco in any form
- Alcoholic beverages
- Any controlled substance or medication (other than those approved by the Health and Safety Officer)
- Firearms or ammunition unless as a part of a recognized merit badge activity that follows BSA regulation. A trained adult must be in control of the activity.

## DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Any Scout who behaves in a way that has the potential to cause harm to himself or others or which reflects negatively upon Troop 266 and the BSA will be disciplined.

If the infraction is relatively minor, e.g. a messy tent or failure to wash dishes when it's the Scout's turn, the idea will be for discipline to originate at the Scout level. The appropriate adult leaders will be kept informed. In these examples, it would be the adult Patrol Advisor. If there is a Troop Guide for the patrol, he will provide advice also. The troop Senior Patrol Leader may also be included in this process.

More serious infractions will be dealt with as appropriate. Examples of consequences can range from a discussion with an adult leader to extra duty to the extreme of expulsion from the troop, depending on the nature of the problem. Adult leaders also reserve the right to call the Scout's parents to come get him from the activity immediately, even if the campout is hundreds of miles from home; such a decision would not be made lightly.

Every effort will be made to make the consequences fit the offense, to cause the Scout not to repeat the offense and to send a message to the rest of the troop that such behavior, whatever it may be, will have consequences.

When necessary, patterns of unacceptable behavior will lead to a conference with the Scout and his parents. Continued instances of the behavior may lead to the Scout being asked to leave the Troop.

All adults involved believe that Scouting is a program that allows boys to make mistakes from which they learn important life lessons. No one expects perfection. Boys naturally make mistakes and scouting provides opportunities for Scouts to learn and mature.

## CAMPING OPPORTUNITIES

### **Monthly Campouts:**

A Troop's outdoor program is a main attraction for most boys. Troop 266 strives to provide a variety of outdoor camping experiences, approximately one per month, which are often coordinated with the advancement and merit badge programs. At campouts, every Scout learns to be responsible for himself, his own gear and the Troop's gear. Food is generally handled on a patrol basis.

### **Summer and Winter Camp:**

Troop 266 attends a one week camp in both the summer and the winter. Summer camp is usually in early July and Winter camp is between Christmas and the New Year. These are held at Boy Scout Camps in Texas and surrounding states. These camps provide great opportunities for scouts to advance, learn new skills, practice leadership, grow as Scouts and generally, have fun! Dates for camps are reserved well in advance. Mark your calendar early so that conflicts can be avoided. Scouts who attend summer and winter camps usually progress better than boys who do not and these camps provide all the fun and excitement that boys look for in their camping experiences.

### **High Adventure Camp:**

Troop 266 provides at least one High Adventure activity per year. These activities consist of challenges such as mountain backpacking, canoeing or sailing. Requirements for participation will vary depending on the activity, but participation is usually limited to: Scouts who are 14 years and older or have completed 8<sup>th</sup> grade and who have reached the rank of First Class; who show Scout Spirit; who, in the opinion of the Scoutmaster and the adult leader for the High Adventure, are physically capable of participating. The adult leader will set a training schedule for each activity. The Scout must participate in these special preparation assignments. If he does not meet the requirements, he cannot go on the trip. Money paid for the trip likely cannot be refunded since it is paid in advance to the High Adventure base or outfitter.

The phrase "show Scout Spirit" is to be interpreted as it is for advancement requirements: attendance at and participation in Troop meetings, campouts, and other activities to the best of ability of the Scout. The Scoutmaster has final say on whether this requirement has been met and a *Scoutmaster Conference* (see p. 14) on High Adventure participation will be required.

## CAMPING EQUIPMENT

Troop 266 maintains its own inventory of camping equipment which includes: tents, cooking utensils, coolers, dutch ovens, grills, camp stoves, water buckets, cordage, saws, axes, water cans, patrol boxes and dining flies.

This equipment is stored at the church for the exclusive use of the Troop and is used only for planned Troop activities. Single patrols, with prior permission and proper leadership, may check out and use this equipment and return it in the same condition. The use of personal equipment already provided by the Troop is strongly discouraged. All patrols need to learn the proper use, care and responsibility for Troop equipment.

Boys do need some personal equipment that is listed in the *Boy Scout Handbook* and also on our website. Most of these things are available in the home. Items can be purchased at Academy, Oshman's, REI, Target and Wal-Mart. Please note that when buying equipment, inferior brands can often be no bargain. Quality merchandise will go a long way in the boy's scouting adventures. *The Troop especially recommends quality waterproof hiking boots!*

## GENERAL CAMPING POLICIES

### **Monthly Campout Procedures:**

All scouts must have a notarized "Consent to Treat" form on file with the Troop's Health and Safety Officer before participating in any campouts (see Troop Medical Policies below).

A permission slip is available during the weekly Troop meetings at least two weeks in advance of the trip. Each Scout is responsible for getting it signed and returned to the adult leader in charge of the campout, as noted on the slip. Parents keep the top half of the form that contains the information specific to the date, time, location, money and equipment requirements. The permission slip will have a date due deadline, usually being the Troop Meeting on the Tuesday evening one week prior to the planned campout. After that date, boys may camp on a space available basis.

Money for the purchase of patrol food (usually \$10.00 **cash**/scout) should be turned in to the Patrol Leader **prior** to the Tuesday meeting before the campout. The patrol will purchase and pack its own food according to a menu they prepare.

If a boy decides to attend a campout at the last moment, he must:

1. Secure permission from the leader in charge of the campout
2. Call his patrol leader ASAP to determine if food has already been purchased
3. Deliver the food money (cash) to the patrol members purchasing food
4. Call the leader in charge to determine if transportation space is available and to verify the availability of the Scout's medical form
5. Bring the signed permission slip to the home of the leader in charge or to the church parking lot on the evening of departure

If a boy signed up for a campout and he *cannot* attend, he must:

1. Notify the patrol leader. If the food has **not** been purchased, he can get a refund of his food money. If the food has been purchased, the money will not be returned.
2. Notify the leader in charge, especially if the parent has indicated that he/she will be driving.

*All Scouts and Adult Leaders must be in complete Class A uniform while traveling to and from a campout. All Scouts **must have eaten dinner before** camping departure time.*

### **Troop Medical Policies:**

It is required that all members of Troop 266 must have annual medical evaluations by a physician. In an effort to provide better care to those who may become ill or injured, and to provide youth members and adult leaders a better understanding of their own physical capabilities, the Boy Scouts of America has established minimum standards in providing medical information prior to participating in various activities. The Troop Committee has established the Class 3 BSA Medical Form and a Troop 266 notarized Consent to Treat Form as the minimum medical information for all Scouts in the Troop. Adult leaders are also required to have a Class 3 and notarized Consent to Treat form on file. The Troop carries these forms for all participants to every campout.

The Sam Houston Area Council has directed that each BSA unit have a designated Unit Health and Safety Chairman who will maintain the medical forms and advise the Troop Committee in the areas of health and unit safety. Questions regarding forms and exams can be directed to that person. More medical information and copies of these forms can be found in the Appendix to this brochure.

Prescription drugs must be entrusted to the designated adult leader for the duration of any scout activity/campout when a parent will not be present. Prescription drugs must be submitted in their original containers with prescription number, doctor's name, dosage and instructions. Over-the-counter drugs must be submitted in their original containers with the Scout's name printed on the label.

### **Parent Camping and Transportation:**

Troop 266 provides its own camping transportation using either rented or church vans. Parents attending a campout may take their own personal cars. Sometimes, drivers of personal vehicles may be needed to drive scouts if the vans are too full. Otherwise, the Troop requires that all boys do travel together on the Troop vans.

If a parent would like to camp with the Scouts and/or provide transportation for the Troop, please be sure to turn in the bottom of the permission slip and indicate your intention to provide transportation. Adults attending the campout will be part of the Leadership or “Crab” patrol. Food usually costs \$10.00 and should be paid to the Assistant Scoutmaster or leader in charge planning that function. A notarized Consent to Treat form must be on file. Adults provide their own personal camping equipment, including their tent.

### **Troop Driving Policy:**

1. When driving scouts to and from troop activities, two adults will be assigned to each van at all times.
2. All drivers must have a valid driver’s license and be at least 21 years of age.
3. All drivers must carry adequate liability insurance as recommended by BSA policy:

Each person:	\$50,000
Each accident:	\$100,000
Property Damage:	\$50,000
4. All drivers and passengers must wear seat belts.
5. When traveling, drivers should attempt to travel together and should establish rendezvous points along the way.
6. When traveling, arms , heads, and other objects must be kept within the vehicle. No unruly behavior will be tolerated. Drivers have the responsibility to discipline any Scout who exhibits behavior that may be distracting.
7. Drivers must obey all speed limits and other traffic regulations.
8. Licensed drivers who are not yet 21 years of age may drive only themselves and immediate family members to and from the weekly Troop meeting. They may not carry other Scouts in their vehicles.

### **Troop Insurance:**

Troop 266 maintains an insurance policy through the Boy Scouts of America. It is in force only at official Boy Scout sanctioned activities. This insurance will not and is not meant to take the place of personal insurance.

## **SCOUT ADVANCEMENT AND RECOGNITION**

Every Boy Scout activity strives toward the three main goals of scouting: building character, fostering citizenship and developing mental, moral and physical fitness (not to mention, having fun!). Scout advancement is based on learning and demonstrating a series of skills, participating in the Troop, working on service projects, demonstrating Scout Spirit, earning merit badges, and providing leadership.

### ***Scout Ranks:***

Scout ranks are as follows: Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle. Each of these is described in more detail in the *Scout Handbook*.

Rank advancement is only earned after a skill is learned and demonstrated to an adult Scout Leader who will then initial and date the Scout's *Scout Handbook*. It is the Scout's responsibility to get his advancement recorded in his *Handbook*. Unless the parent is an ASM, parents may not sign off their own Scout's advancement.

Some rank requirements (up through First Class rank) can be worked on at any time whether the scout has achieved that particular rank or not.

### ***Scoutmaster Conference:***

Upon completion of all the requirements for a rank **and** sign-off in the *Scout Handbook*, a Scout needs to request a Scoutmaster Conference with the Scoutmaster. At that time the Scout is responsible for showing the Scoutmaster that he has proficiency in all requirements for the current and previous rank. The leader will not pass the Scout until proficiency is shown. The Scout should **Be Prepared** and wear his **Full Uniform** and bring his *Scout Handbook*.

### ***Board of Review:***

After completing the Scoutmaster Conference, the Scout must advise the Advancement Chairman that he is ready for a Board of Review. The Board is comprised of members of the Troop Committee and parent volunteers. The Board of Review meets once per month. The Scout must present himself at the scheduled time in **Class A uniform (year-round) with his Scout Handbook**. During the Board of Review, questions are asked to determine the quality of the Scout's experience. Other questions pertaining to "Scout Spirit," leadership abilities, service work or other aspects of scouting

are to be expected. The Scout will not be re-tested on rank qualifications, but he will be asked questions to verify that the requirements were actualized. The Board of Review is also an opportunity for the adults to determine how the Scout is progressing and how he feels about his Scouting experience thus far. Parents may not sit on a Board of Review for their own son.

### ***Troop Court of Honor:***

Three times per year, each Scout's advancement is recognized at a formal Troop Court of Honor. Here, he receives his rank badges, parent's pin, signed card of Rank Advancement (save these!) and any earned merit badges. The Troop and families and friends are in attendance. Scouts must be in Class A uniform. The Court of Honor takes place during the regular meeting time but in the church sanctuary. Patrols provide refreshments which are served following the ceremony.

### ***Eagle Board of Review:***

An Eagle Board of Review requires special considerations. The Scout should speak with the Scoutmaster and the Advancement Chairman so that the appropriate members of the Board can be selected and notified and to assure that all Eagle requirements have been met. A supplemental Eagle Scout Handbook has been prepared by the Troop and will be given to the Scout when he is ready to plan his Eagle project.

### ***Eagle Court of Honor:***

When a Scout achieves the Eagle rank, a special ceremony is held just for him. It is held by invitation and focuses on his advancements, achievements, character, and years in scouting. It is also his opportunity to thank those who have helped him achieve his goals. This event is organized by the Eagle's family and the Troop will provide any requested assistance. The Troop has prepared a Court of Honor Guidebook to help the Eagle to organize his ceremony. This event is the Eagle's responsibility.

### ***Order of the Arrow:***

The Order of the Arrow (OA) is a Boy Scout Program that seeks to recognize those campers (Scouts and Scouters) who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives and by such recognition cause other campers to conduct themselves in such a manner as to warrant recognition. The OA's purpose is to develop and maintain camping traditions and spirit, to promote Scout camping, both year-round as part of the Troop program and also in the council's summer camps, and to crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others.

Selection to the Order of the Arrow is made by the members of the Troop. Each spring, a limited number of Scouts (must be First Class rank) will be eligible for induction. The Scouts elect the fellow Scouts they believe best represent the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives.

## MERIT BADGES

Merit badges can be earned anytime. Although merit badges are required for the Star rank, Scouts do not need to wait until completing First Class to earn merit badges. The Troop provides merit badge opportunities through its monthly campout programs. In addition, encourage your Scout to go to Summer and Winter Camps, as well as Merit Badge Fairs. These are ideal opportunities to earn many exciting merit badges. In a single week at these camps, Scouts can earn up to five merit badges (21 are required for Eagle).

The following is the procedure for Scouts wishing to earn merit badges on their own (other than at camps):

1. Pick a badge of interest.
2. Ask the Advancement Chairman for a merit badge card, fill it out and have it signed by the Scoutmaster.
3. Read the particular Merit Badge Book (available through the Troop library or Scout Shop).
4. Ask the Advancement Chairman or Scoutmaster for the name of a qualified merit badge counselor.
5. Contact the counselor and ask if he/she is willing to help. Make an appointment before fulfilling any of the merit badge requirements. Counselors may be associated with Troop 266 or other troops. BSA has a rule called "Two Deep" leadership. This means that the counselor cannot meet alone with the boy. Another adult needs to accompany him in visiting the counselor.
6. As each badge requirement is met, the Scout should have the counselor sign and date the appropriate place on the card.
7. When all requirements are met, the completed card has to be returned to the Advancement Chairman. He will receive his badge at the next Court of Honor.

**Merit Badge Cards and Cards of Rank Advancement (all received at the Court of Honor) must be saved. They are the proof of Scout awards in the event the award itself is lost. *Do not lose them!***

## ADULT LEADER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Every boy deserves a trained leader. BSA offers a wide range of training for leaders at all levels. Adult leader training provides the specialized knowledge a new leader needs to assume a leadership role. Courses are offered on weekends and evenings. Schedules can be found in *The Scouter* or by calling the Boy Scout office. The following courses are designed for a specific leader position, and, if your scouting position changes, you should take the next appropriate course. These courses are as follows:

New Leader Essentials: This initial session is for all new leaders and is approximately 1.5 hours in length. After this orientation course, participants go on to training specific to the leader's new scouting position.

YPT or Youth Protection Training: This training is an important component of the Boy Scouts of America's strategy to protect its members from child abuse. On-line training available.

Scoutmaster Specific: For scoutmasters, assistant scoutmasters and others interested. Training time is in three sessions of approximately 2.5 hours each.

Troop Committee Specific: For committee chairs and members and parents. Training time is in a single session of approximately 3 hours.

Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills: Outdoor skills are critical to the success for the Scouting program and this course provides leaders with the basic outdoor skills needed to start a program right. The skills taught are based on those found in *The Boy Scout Handbook*. The course has an initial orientation session which is held in Houston and then a weekend campout held a week or two later at a location approximately one hour northwest of Houston.

Roundtable Meetings: Meet with leaders of other troops at the Golden Arrow District Roundtable which is held on the first Thursday of most months.

University of Scouting: A major one-day training fair held for Boy Scout and Venturing leaders from all over the Sam Houston Area Council. University of Scouting is usually held in early February.

Advanced Training: Consider taking the Wood Badge course and other training courses all described on the Golden Arrow District website ([www.goldenarrow.org](http://www.goldenarrow.org)).

## CLOSING

We hope we have answered some of your questions about Troop 266 and BSA. Always feel free to ask any questions you may have. Remember that our website ([www.troop266.com](http://www.troop266.com)) is a helpful tool also. Like so many volunteer organizations, we need and welcome parent involvement and support. That's also the best way to stay informed! Boy Scouting is fun not only for the scouts, but for the parents as well! Besides leadership positions, there are many support volunteer positions that help the Troop run smoothly. We look forward to working with you for the benefit of your new Scout. Welcome again to Troop 266!

(Information contained in this brochure may be subject to change and is meant to provide a general overview of the troop.)