



Practical Guide for Scouts and

TROOP 285



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Introduction

Welcome to Troop 285. New Scouts and their parents should read this guide in its entirety to assure a smooth transition into the troop. In this guide you will find:

- Valuable information about the expectations of the Troop.
- Structure of the communications system and the flow of information.
- How your son will advance in his scouting journey.
- The many activities we undertake and a typical schedule of yearly activities.

Reading and understanding the contents in this guide will make the Scouting experience much more meaningful for your Scout and for your family.

The policies in this guide are directed towards the following:

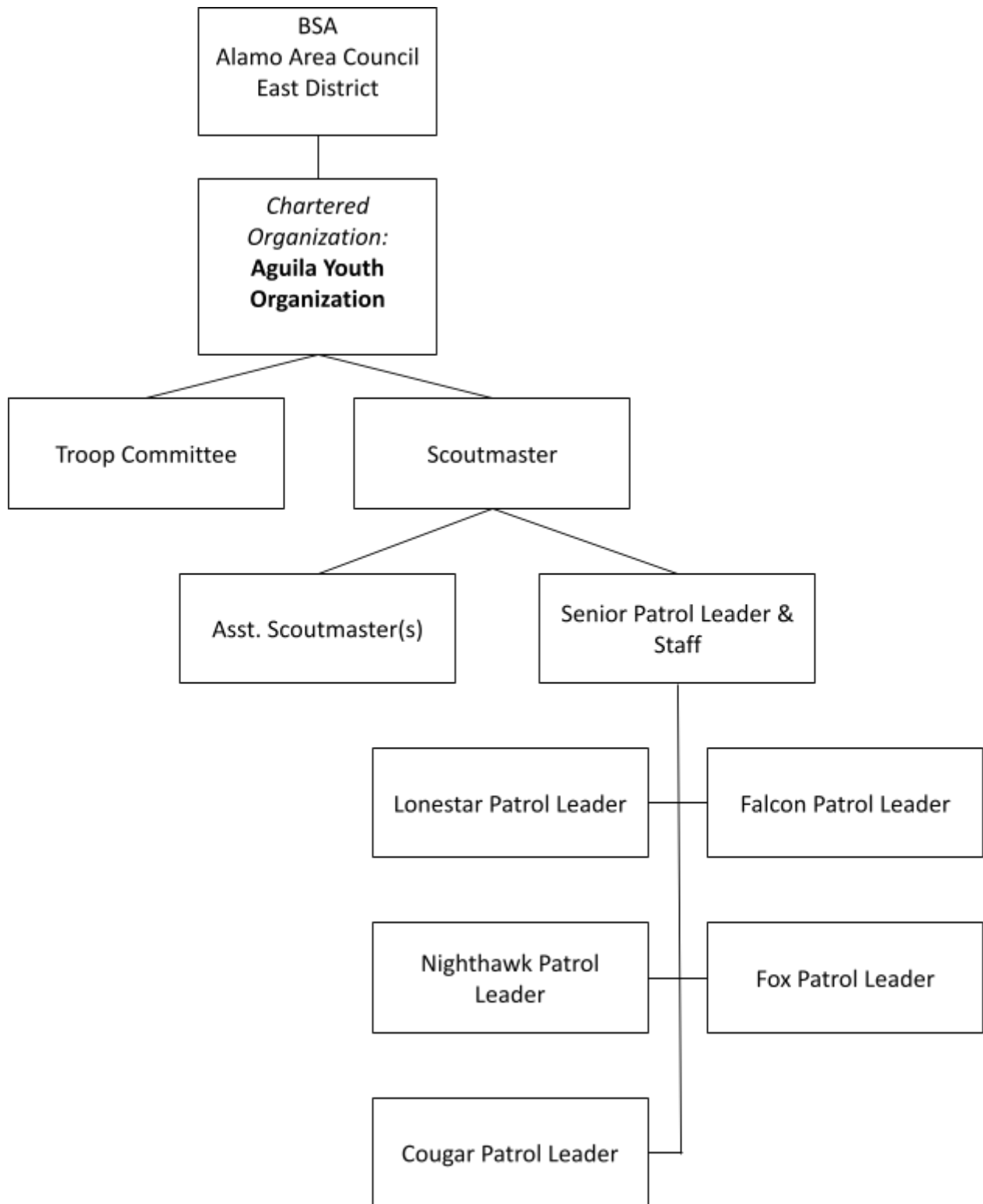
- Ensuring an organized program
- Helping the Scout to develop leadership skills.
- Helping each Scout to advance in rank.
- Developing Scout skills while having fun.
- Providing a basis for fair treatment of all involved.

There are four aims of the Scouting program:

1. Growth in moral strength and character.
2. Citizenship awareness and participation.
3. Development of physical, mental and emotional fitness.
4. Develop leadership skills.

These aims are met through the rank advancement process. Advancement helps the Scout to gain self-confidence. The values of the Boy Scout program are based on the foundations of the Boy Scout Oath, Law and Motto.

Troop Structure



The Troop organization is divided into five components. The cooperation and/or support of the membership of each component are important to the strength and vitality of the Troop.

- 1. The Sponsoring Organization:** Our Troop Charter is held by the Aguila Youth Organization. We meet in the William McCalister Scout Lodge, located on the Coker Methodist Church
- 2. The Troop Committee:** This committee is composed of adults from the sponsoring unit, the community, and the parents who are interested in the Scouting program. The committee chairman will recruit adults to fill committee positions, conduct a monthly meeting and provide other support required by the Scoutmaster. The Troop Committee usually meets at 7:00 pm on the Monday after the monthly camping weekend.
- 3. The Troop Leaders:** The adult leadership consists of the Scoutmaster, his Assistant Scoutmasters, Patrol Dads, Merit Badge Counselors and other members of the Troop Committee that take an active part in the weekly Troop meetings and other activities of the Troop.
- 4. The Parents:** The parents are a vital part of the organization needed to support the Troop and the individual needs of each Scout. All parents of Scouts are invited and encouraged to join the Troop Committee and to take part in Troop activities. Your enthusiasm and interest will impact and enrich your son's Scouting experience.
- 5. The Scouts:** Troop 285 is a boy-led troop, where a scout is elected as a Senior Patrol Leader (SPL). The SPL and his staff conduct weekly meetings and troop activities. All Scouts are divided into patrols to encourage camaraderie, positive competition, and a greater leadership ratio to help guide scouts in rank advancements.

Troop History

Influencing three generations of Scouts, Troop 285 has excelled for over six decades at the art of creating lasting Scouting memories. Troop 285 has changed outwardly to meet the challenging demands of each generation, but has remained rock-solid in adherence to the tenets of the basic Scouting Program. It is flexible with the times but is "executed with dedication, vision and bodacious enthusiasm...still following the inherent basic guidelines as prescribed in the Boy Scout Handbook", says Bill McCalister, the Scoutmaster since 1977.

Troop 285 was born in 1954, the same year the United States Air Force Academy was created, RCA introduced the first color television, "Sports Illustrated" began publication, M&M candies introduced their M&M's with peanuts. The troop has evolved from a few boys meeting in the dairy barn of Vivian Jones near the corner of Bitters Road and Jones-Maltsberger to an average of 45 scouts and 35 adults conducting troop meetings and related scout activities in the renowned McCalister Scout Lodge on the campus of the troop sponsor, Coker United Methodist Church.

The troop maintains high standards for advancement. Many merit badges are taught in- house by professionals in the particular fields and without compromise on standards.

Learning and practicing leadership skills are vital to the Scouts. Scouts must apply for leadership positions with a written application and are mentored and evaluated on their performance over a six-month term.

After graduation from college, the memories center on friendships, mentors, and knowing how to persevere in life. All of this is made possible by leadership with vision and role models with strong moral convictions generously given to the Scouts.

The Adult Leaders in our Troop know and are committed to these values and principles as a moral compass to teach and prepare our maturing Scouts on their way to becoming responsible leaders in our society. We all are in this journey together.

Outdoor basics continue to be emphasized through camping and Scout skill activities. They served as a hands-on laboratory to develop leadership and general knowledge of survival skills. We have camping and backpacking opportunities

around the state, nationally and internationally. The Troop 285 program is committed to High Adventure activities and our scout lodge is a photo diary documenting all the adventures the scouts have enjoyed.

The Troop has celebrated the Courts of Honor for over 235 Eagle Scouts

General Expectations

Scoutmaster

Set the example: Come to as many activities as possible in your proper uniform. Behaving properly; showing respect to others and by being organized; and thoughtful of the Troop.

Be prepared: Plan ahead. Follow the necessary steps to get ready. Evaluate the desirable outcomes and keep in mind that plans change and we have to learn how to adapt.

Take your role seriously: Be proud of what you do, and seek to make your contributions to the Troop more relevant by assuming responsibilities. In short words: Grow and learn by doing. Don't just show up; participate.

To participate: Participation is half of what is needed to be successful in life.

The Scoutmaster's vision is very simple. He teaches them, demonstrates them, and leads by example.

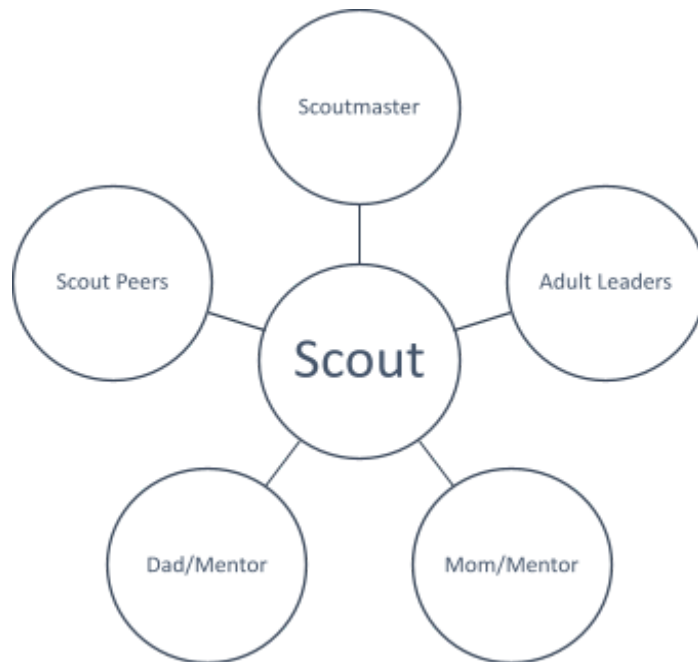
Troop Policies & Rules

These rules are considered necessary to ensure proper operation of the Troop.

- All Scouts are expected to obey the Scout Law, Oath, Motto and Slogan.
- Proper uniforms are to be worn at all official Scout functions. The required uniform is set by the Scoutmaster, but generally is as follows:
 - August – May: Class A uniform – official BSA shirt, trousers or shorts, neckerchief, slide, belt and buckle, brown shoes or hiking boots.
 - When shorts are worn, BSA socks are required.
 - June-August: Class B – a Troop 285 t-shirt with BSA shorts, socks, and belt and buckle.
- Each Scout will conduct himself properly at all times. Repeated issues of conduct will be conferred to the parent and may require suspension from the Troop or camp.

- Participation in all events is highly encouraged. Rank advancement and other awards are earned at a self-paced rate. Parents/Mentors who are involved in scouting activities will help guide their son to be an enthusiastic and engaged scout. Keeping them on the advancement track. Attendance and participation by scouts and parents support scout spirit.
- Dads/Troop Committee Members:
 - Uniforms: Dads should be in uniforms with their scouts. You don't have to be an Assistant Scoutmaster to wear the uniform. Help check your son's uniform before leaving the house to ensure you are both wearing it correctly.
 - Patrol Advisor: Dads are also the Patrol Advisors when their son is the Patrol Leader. This is a responsibility to help your son become a good leader. Guide the scout. Take this position seriously. If there a scout that doesn't have dad in the troop, another dad in that patrol needs to step up and mentor and guide the Patrol Leader.

Scouting is a Partnership



Each partnership is important to the Scout's success and the quality of their Scouting experience. A parent/mentor can best contribute by becoming an active member of the adult leadership of the troop. As you become engaged with the troop and understand the scouting program and expectations, you can incorporate them in the daily routine of your home so that scouting is not an activity, but rather a lifestyle. Moms play a critical role in helping their son meet each target along the Scouting Trail in Troop 285.

The official troop policy is that campouts are a father/son experience for the importance of mentorship and male bonding. Summer and spring break activities offer opportunities to the entire family. Some ways parents can support the troop are:

- Secretary for Committee Meetings
- Merit badge counselor
- Ticket coordinator for Fiesta Parades
- Registration coordinator
- Special events planning/coordinating
- Be a mentor and guide for scouts and families while your son serves in a leadership roles.
- Historical Committee
- Training Coordinator

- Social Media Coordinator

Most importantly: Scouts who participate and stay focused are more likely to achieve the status of Eagle Scout. Naturally, with school and other distractions, they can falter on their path to Eagle.

Please volunteer in a role where you feel comfortable or create a new one!
Suggestions are always welcome.

How Patrols Work

The patrol method allows Scouts to interact in a small group outside the larger troop context, working together as a team and sharing the responsibility of making their patrol a success. A patrol takes pride in its identity, and the members strive to make their patrol the best it can be.

Troop 285 has the following patrols:

- **New-Scout patrols** are for 11-year-old Scouts who have recently joined the troop and are together for the first year in the troop.
 - **Lone Star Patrol:** For scouts who have just crossed over and are working on their Scout, Tenderfoot, and sometimes Second Class ranks.
- **"Regular" patrols** are made up of Scouts who have completed their Second Class rank requirements. They have been around Scouting long enough to be comfortable with the patrol and troop operation and are well-versed in camping, cooking, and Scouting's other basic skills.
- **Staff Patrol** consists of all boy leaders in the troop and is led by the Senior Patrol Leader. This includes all Patrol Leaders, Assistant Patrol Leaders, Den Chief, Quartermaster, Chaplain Aide, Order of the Arrow (OA) Representative, and Junior Assistant Scoutmaster.

Patrol Leaders

- Patrol terms are 6 months each.
- Terms renew in April and October.
 - April Changeover Goals:
 - Patrol Leader helps scouts advance
 - Conduct multiple meeting training sessions to get their scouts ready for Bear Creek Campout in September. Bear Creek Challenge is a big campout where Patrols compete against each other in Scout Skills activities.
 - October Changeover Goals:
 - Patrol Leader helps scouts advance
 - Conduct multiple training sessions to get their patrol ready for Pike Davis Campout in January. Pike Davis is a big campout where

Patrols compete against each other, and other troops in backpacking and orienteering challenges.

- Patrol Events: Each patrol should be holding patrol events outside of the Troop events. These include:
 - Family Potluck for families to get to know each other.
 - Hikes
 - Patrol only campout
 - Cooking events
 - Service Projects to include helping Eagle Scout Projects

Success

Success is determined by Communication, Coordination, Planning, and Participation:

- The Patrol Leader is responsible for their patrol. If they are absent, they need to communicate with the Assistant Patrol Leader to take their place at that event.
- At campouts, patrols need to work together and stay together.
- Patrol corners at meetings are training and advancement to include information on backpacking, how to use a compass, and other scout skills.
- Your scout needs **you** to get to the meetings. If you are not participating, your scout will not be able to participate.

Uniform

The Scouting program in America has always included uniforms for its members and volunteers to identify members and show they are part of the Boy Scouts of America. Scouts and leaders should wear their uniforms to all patrol meetings, troop meetings, and scout outings.

The tan and green Boy Scout uniform is a well-known symbol of American scouting. All scouts in the program wear the same uniform with the major differences being the badges each scout has earned and the troop specific neckerchief.

The official dress uniform is commonly referred to as the 'Class A' uniform but, officially known as the "Field Uniform". Most scout troops also have an "activity uniform", referred to as 'Class B' which is often a t-shirt customized just for the troop. Activity uniforms are worn for work projects, sporting activities, and other events in which the dress uniform might get damaged.

See BSAUniforms.org for details or this PDF File

Field Duty Uniform (Commonly known as Class A):

- Official short sleeve shirt
- Green Shoulder Loops
- Troop 285 Numerals
- World Crest
- Patrol Patch
- Official scout pants or shorts (optional)
- Official BSA tweed belt
- Brown shoes or hiking boots
- Official BSA /troop 285 cap (optional)
- Troop 285 neckerchief and slide
- Boy Scout Handbook
- Merit Badge Sash: Only worn for Boards of Review and Courts of Honor



Class B: An alternate uniform (Class B) with the Troop T-shirt is allowed for certain functions in the summer. The Scoutmaster will designate the appropriate uniform by event.

Always Wear a Complete Uniform

The Uniform is an important part of delivering the complete Scouting experience to your scout.

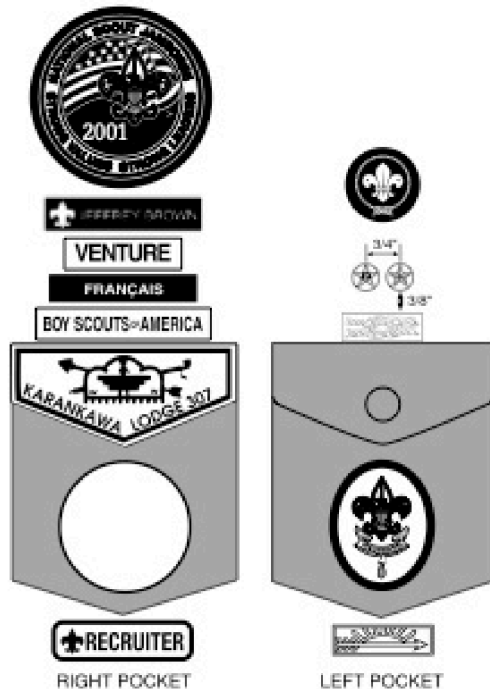
Wearing uniforms has been a method of the Scouting movement from the beginning. Decades of experience show uniforms have many benefits, including these:

- **Equality** – The uniform represents a democratic ideal of equality. Scouts from various cultures and different economic levels wear the same uniform and cooperate as equals.
- **Identification** – the uniform identifies a scout as a member of the Boy Scouts. Badges on the uniform tell other members that he belongs to their Patrol, Troop, and council. The uniform itself identifies a good citizen to the entire community.
- **Achievement** – The uniform displays badges and other awards so the accomplishments of each Scout can be immediately recognized.
- **Commitment** – Wearing a uniform is a constant reminder to each Scout of their commitment to the ideals and purposes of Scouting: duty to God, loyalty to country, and helpfulness to others.

For these reasons, all parents and Leaders should emphasize to their Scouts the importance of wearing the correct uniform at all occasions. Use the following websites or go to the Musselman Scout Shop.

<https://www.scoutshop.org/uniforms-and-apparel>

https://www.scoutshop.org/uniform_builder



Merit Badge Sash: If worn, merit badges are attached to front (and back, if needed) of sash. Venture/Varsity letter is attached at bottom front corner. Temporary insignia may be worn on back.

Shoulder Epaulets: Red shoulder loops identify Boy Scouting (all members of a troop). Blaze (orange) loops identify Varsity Scouting.

Right Sleeve: U. S. flag. Only the most recently earned Quality Unit Award may be worn below patrol emblem or below National Honor Patrol star. Musician badge, if in band or drum corps, is worn 1/2 inch below patrol emblem. Up to six merit badges may be worn on the long-sleeve shirt in two columns of three starting 3 inches above the bottom edge of the cuff.

Left Sleeve: Council patches, unit numeral, and badge of office are worn as shown snug up, and touching each other. Badge of office is centered below and touches unit numeral. The veteran unit bar (25, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, or 80 years) is positioned above and touching troop numeral and in turn touching council patch. Den chief cord is worn over the left shoulder and under epaulet.

Right Pocket: Jamboree insignia (only one) worn above BSA or interpreter strip. Order of the Arrow lodge insignia worn on pocket flap. Temporary insignia worn centered on the pocket. Flap buttoned. The Varsity or Venture strip is worn above the BSA strip or above the interpreter strip. Nameplate, if worn, is centered above the BSA strip, interpreter strip, and Venture or Varsity strip.

Left Pocket: Service stars above the pocket. If a medal or embroidered knot for youth members is worn, service stars are raised. Embroidered square knots are worn centered above the pocket in rows of three. Not more than five medals may be worn, pinned centered immediately above the pocket (extending over knots if both are worn). The wearing sequence for knots or medals is at the wearer's discretion and lead color is to the wearer's right. Badges of rank are worn centered on the pocket above the Arrow of Light Award. Flap buttoned. The World Crest is worn centered horizontally over the left pocket and vertically between the left shoulder seam and the top of the pocket.

Communications in the Troop

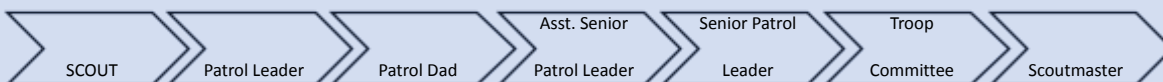
RSVP YES or NO!

- To every event
- Troop cost is based on headcount
- It's the proper thing to do

How to find out what's happening:

- **Troop Leadership Committee (TLC) Meetings:** These are open meetings held once a month on the Monday evening (7:00 pm) following a campout.
- **Troop Emails:** You will receive emails regarding meetings, activities and campouts from Troop 285 or Scoutbook.
- **Patrol Communication:** Each patrol leader will use the best method for his patrol. This may be an app, text, email or Scoutbook patrol forum. Overall, Patrols need to communicate within their patrol. Patrol Leaders need to communicate updates to the Senior Patrol Leader. The Senior Patrol Leader needs to communicate to ALL patrol leaders and adult leadership.
- **Parent Communication:** Parents need to communicate with their scouts and each other. Parents need to read communication from the troop and ask questions. Model good communication for your scout.
- **Troop Facebook Page:** Facebook.com/Boy-Scout-Troop-285-San-Antonio
- **Troop website:** www.Troop 285.org ○ Calendar ○ Forms ○ Advancement ○ Maps/Directions
- **Scout Lodge Bulletin Board:** You find signup sheets for merit badges, camps and Board of Reviews. It is located in the back of the Scout Lodge, right side.
- **Scoutbook** is an advancement tracking tool that also has messaging and calendar features.

Other members of the Troop – When a scout has a question, he should always start by asking the **Patrol Leader**. The chain of command for communication and scout support is as follows:



It takes time for the scouts to gain confidence in developing the skills of asking and getting information. Please help them to reach that goal. We want them to be able to advocate for themselves.



SCOUTBOOK

Scoutbook Basics:

After registering with the Troop, you will receive an email from Scoutbook.

Important Steps to Get Started:

1. Click on the link provided in the email and set up a username/password.
2. Click on “My Account” and then “Edit Profile.”
3. Ensure that all of your contact information is correct. Save.
4. Add a cell phone number if not already there, and click on “Verify.” Follow the steps. Save.
5. Click on your scout’s name, then “Edit Profile” and ensure that all contact info/school and grade info are correct. Save.
6. Upload picture
7. On the same page (Scouts Name, Edit Profile), at the bottom, click on the link that says, “Invite Scout to Connect.” Enter the scout’s email and save.
 - This allows the scout to have access to track their own advancement.

Parents and Scouts have access to:

- Edit their own profiles
- View scout’s advancement, awards, etc. (in progress and completed)
- Mark items as “completed” on a certain date and post any notes about the item.
- Invite Merit Badge Counselors to connect to the scout for approval of merit badges
- Send messages to others through Scoutbook
- RSVP to events

Places to click and look around:

- My Dashboard – Unit, Scout, My Account

- My Account – Edit Profile, Adult Leadership positions, training, etc.
- Scout's Advancement - Ranks and Merit Badges
- Scout's Awards – All other awards (ex: Totin' Chip, Cyber Chip, Religious Emblems, etc.)
- If you have questions, email Risa Alonso at risa.alonso@gmail.com

These communication systems are used with the best intentions to be effective and successful. All suggestions for improved communication are welcome.

IF YOU DON'T KNOW, ASK!

REMEMBER, WE ARE ALL VOLUNTEERS!

Activities

This is a list of the Troop's standard activities. Each activity provides us with an opportunity to tell the community about Troop 285. Always wear Class A or Class B as dictated by the event.

- **Troop meetings:** Most Mondays. Starts promptly at 7:00 pm. Scouts do presentations on topics of interest in coordination with the Senior Patrol Leader; scout skills activities; logistics of future campouts or activities. Scouts can help put out and clean up chairs. Class A Uniform.
- **Troop Leadership Committee (TLC):** One Monday a month, usually after a campout. Led by the Troop Committee Chairperson, covering past, present and future events. All parents are welcome. Senior Scout Staff meet on these nights but no regular Scout meeting is held. Class B Uniform. Court of Honor – Ranks, merit badges and other honors are awarded to scouts. Held every August, February and May.
- **Service Projects:** There are two that are done on a regular basis at the Guadalupe River State Park, one in the Spring and the other in the Fall. There are other opportunities that come along during the year, as needs arise.
- **Change of Leadership:** Happens twice a year in April and October. Scouts apply for leadership positions and go through an election and selection process.
- **Fundraising Activities:** The troop provides opportunities for scouts to raise funds that go directly to their personal scout account for summer camps and trips.

There are 4 main opportunities:

- **Fertilizer Sales:** Organic Fertilizer that can be delivered in bags or spread by the scout for an additional fee (March).
- **CokerFest:** An arts and crafts festival held by Coker Church. Our troop has traditionally packed and served lunches for a fee (Nov).
- **Alamo Bowl:** Our troop sells programs at the Alamo Bowl (Dec).

- **Coffee Fundraiser:** Beans roasted by an Eagle Scout in Buena Vista, CO.
- **Troop Fundraiser:** Our troop hosts a section of the day and night Fiesta parades. Our scouts are responsible for setting up and taking down the chairs in our area (April).
- **Eagle Rank Projects:** 3-7 Eagle Scout Service Projects are performed throughout the year with scouts volunteering to help out the Eagle candidate by supplying service hours for each one.
- **Campouts:** Several 2 -day weekend campouts are scheduled during the academic year. During the summer we have campouts and High Adventure activities that can last from one week to two weeks.
- **Blood Drives:** We host blood drives for the Blood & Tissue Center as a service to the community. Usually done either once or twice per year at the Scout Lodge.

Campouts



GENERAL CALENDAR ACADEMIC YEAR

- **September:** Bear Creek Challenge; Bear Creek Scout Reservation, Hunt Texas ○ Scout skills and teamwork competitions
- **October:** Guadalupe River State Park, Spring Branch, Texas ○ Service Project
- **November:** Campout Adventure ○ Exploring different parks around Texas.
- **January:** Pike Davis Ranch, Marble Falls, Texas ○ Backpacking camp with scout skills competitions to include 5 mile backpacking, orienteering, and flag retirement ceremony
- **February:** Campout at select sites around San Antonio such as Colorado Bend State Park, Bend, Texas or Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, Fredericksburg, Texas ○ Caving and other adventure opportunities
- **March:** Spring Break Big Bend Adventure ○ Intro to Troop 285 High Adventure ○ Historical/geological education
- **April:** Guadalupe River State Park, Spring Branch, Texas
- **May:** Richard Newberry Triathlon; Camp Fawcett, Barksdale, Texas ○ Scouts try for their personal best in cycling, swimming and running

SUMMER

Most of these camps are coordinated by BSA, occasionally others are adventures completely planned by members of the Troop

- Lost Pines Scout Reservation, Bastrop, Texas ○ For first year scouts
- Camp Wehinahpay, New Mexico
- Camp Peaceful Valley, Ebert, Colorado ○ Earn Merit badges

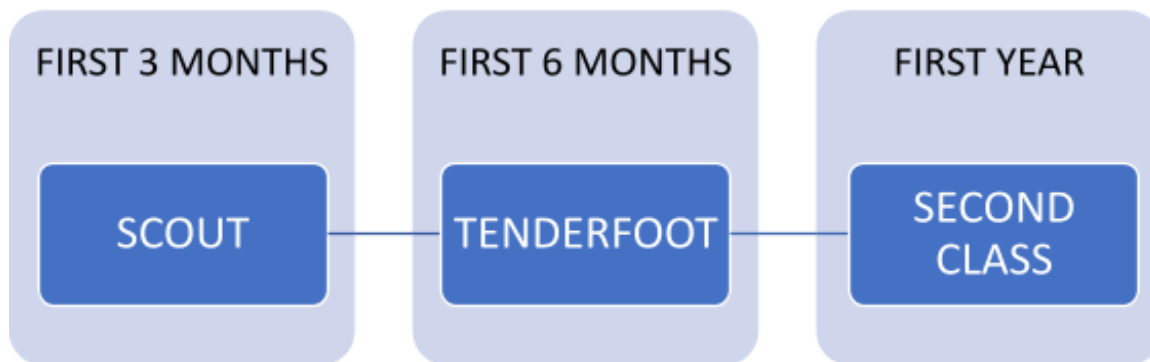
- High adventure
- Florida National High Adventure Sea Base, Islamorada, Florida
- Philmont Scout Ranch, Cimarron, New Mexico
- Northern Tier National High Adventure Program, Ely, Minnesota
- Wind River Range, Wyoming – Outstanding opportunity to hike this mountain range along the Rocky Mountains
- Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex, Montana – Located in the northern Rocky Mountains along the Continental divide
- Bissett
- International Excursions ○ Past travels have included:
 - Galapagos Islands, Ecuador
 - Switzerland
 - Canada
- Scouts who are patrol Leaders can now attend NYLT (National Youth Leadership Training). Troop 285 prefers the Capital Area Council Training.
- Scouts who are 14 and older, hold a leadership position and have completed NYLT are eligible to attend NAYLE (National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience). Troop 285 prefers the Philmont Ranch.

HIGH ADVENTURE CAMPS ARE FOR SCOUTS 14 YEARS AND OLDER.

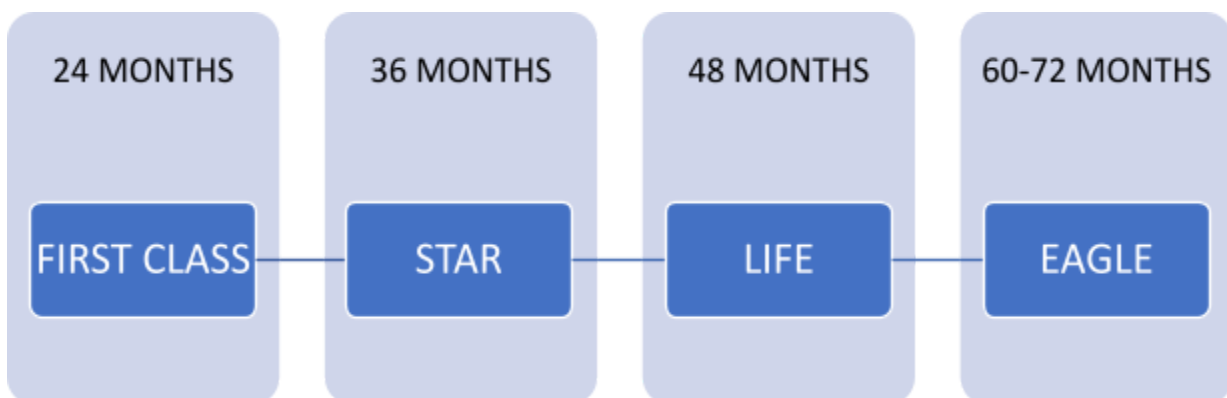
Advancement

Advancement through the ranks of Scouting is taken very seriously by our Troop Leaders. Troop 285 prides itself in knowing that scouts have truly earned their Ranks and Merit Badges. A scout's advancement shows their commitment to the Scouting program and to the spirit of Scouting. Using the Scout Handbook and being actively involved is the key to advancement.

In Scouting, we have 7 ranks. Your scout's advancement is assessed through a Scoutmaster Conference and a Board of Review for each rank.



Leadership roles are available for scouts who are First Class and above:



The Troop 285 suggested schedule allows a scout to mature and learn the long-lasting lessons and skills that Scouting has to offer. We want our sons to be responsible, successful, confident young men.

We also need to make sure and help scouts that are not advancing.

Earning Ranks Procedure

The following steps must be done in this order. The process and request forms are here: <https://troop285.org/advancement-2/> All other referenced material can be found here: <https://troop285.org/forms/>

1. Sign-off of Rank Requirements

Participate and accomplish all the requirements for the rank from the Scout Handbook and have them signed off by a Troop leader. Show an older scout that you know or have achieved the rank requirement while a troop leadership dad witnesses it and then signs it off.

2. Scoutmaster Conference

When a Scout has completed all requirements for a given rank and they've been signed off, the scout is ready for his Scoutmaster Conference. The Scoutmaster Conference form, located on the troop website, must be filled out by the scout and emailed with a request to schedule a meeting with the Scoutmaster. Class B Uniform is acceptable for this conference.

Purpose of the Scoutmaster Conference:

- To review the Scout's advancement record and make sure that the dates of advancement and sign-offs in his Scout Handbook and progress records are the same.
- To encourage the Scout to continue his advancement toward Eagle.
- To review skills with the Scout.
- To assist the Scout with his preparation for the Board of Review by providing pointers on what to expect.
- Scoutmaster Conference time estimates: ○ Scout Rank – About 1 hour ○ Tenderfoot – About 90 minutes ○ Second & First Class – About 1 hour
- To discuss any problems the Scout is having in the program and to assure that the program is meeting the needs of the scout.

3. Boards of Review

The Board of Review is a time to determine the Scout's attitudes, accomplishments and acceptance of the scouting ideals.

- Sign up for your board on the sheet on the bulletin board located in the back of the Scout lodge.
- Print out the correct Board of Review form and all other required forms pertaining to the rank you are seeking and fill in your information.
- Bring your fully signed off Scout Handbook along with all required items stated on your rank form.
- Be ready to be tested by the older advancement boys (Star rank or higher) and selected adults.
- Full class-A Scout uniform, including shirt, pants, belt, merit badge sash, neckerchief, slide, Scout socks and dark shoes—no tennis shoes or sandals are permitted.
- It is not a failure to have to go the the Board of Review more than once. It is a learning and growing experience that prepares the scout for life.

Preparation:

The Board of Review is not a training session – it is a time to show that you have already mastered the required material. Here's how you do it:

1. The Scout Handbook is your reference guide. Your Patrol Leader is your mentor. Your Patrol Leader will introduce you to the skills and activities for your rank. Use your Scout Handbook as your study guide – read, highlight, and underline pertinent information. Practice skills and knowledge with your parents and patrol. The more you practice, the better prepared you will be. If you have any questions or need to demonstrate a skill demonstrated, be sure to ask your patrol leader.
2. When you think you know it, explain what you have learned to your parents.
3. Once you understand and can demonstrate/explain our requirement, present to a staff level scout in front of any adult leader to sign off on your requirements. When you meet with the adult leader, have your book open to the proper page for them to sign and know which pages cover the material. You also need to have a pen in hand – give that to the leader when you hand them the book. Don't expect others to be

prepared for you. That is what it means to “Be Prepared” as it relates to advancement. It also means that you will probably advance much more rapidly while at the same time you develop great life skills.

4. **Court of Honor** – The Court of Honor ceremony is held three times per year: February, May and August. Recognition of rank advancement, merit badges and other recognition awards are presented during this ceremony. Scouts and parents are highly encouraged to attend all Courts of Honor to receive their recognition and show support for all Scouts within the Troop.
 - Attendance is important for multiple reasons:
 - Support fellow scouts, even if not receiving any awards or ranks
 - The Eagle speeches are mostly targeting the young scouts - the importance of involvement, staying focused, and motivating and encouraging them to do high adventure and experience great things.

Troop 285 uses **Scoutbook.com** to track the advancement in Scouting. Parents and eventually, the scout, are responsible for entering their information.

ALL SUPPORTING FORMS CAN BE FOUND HERE: <https://troop285.org/forms/>

THE PROCESS AND REQUEST FORMS ARE HERE:

<https://troop285.org/advancement-2/>

Merit Badges

Merit Badges allow scouts to examine specific subjects thoroughly; possibly resulting in a future career field. Merit Badges are required on your journey to becoming an Eagle Scout and are earned via Merit Badge Counselors who are experts in the field. These badges can be earned at summer camps, troop meetings, Alamo Area Council's Merit Badge University events or with specially coordinated additional meetings. We recognize Scouts who apply themselves and earn at least 50 merit badges with the "Big Fifty Award".

Over 130 Merit Badges are offered by BSA. A recommended path to earn certain Merit Badges in Troop 285 is:

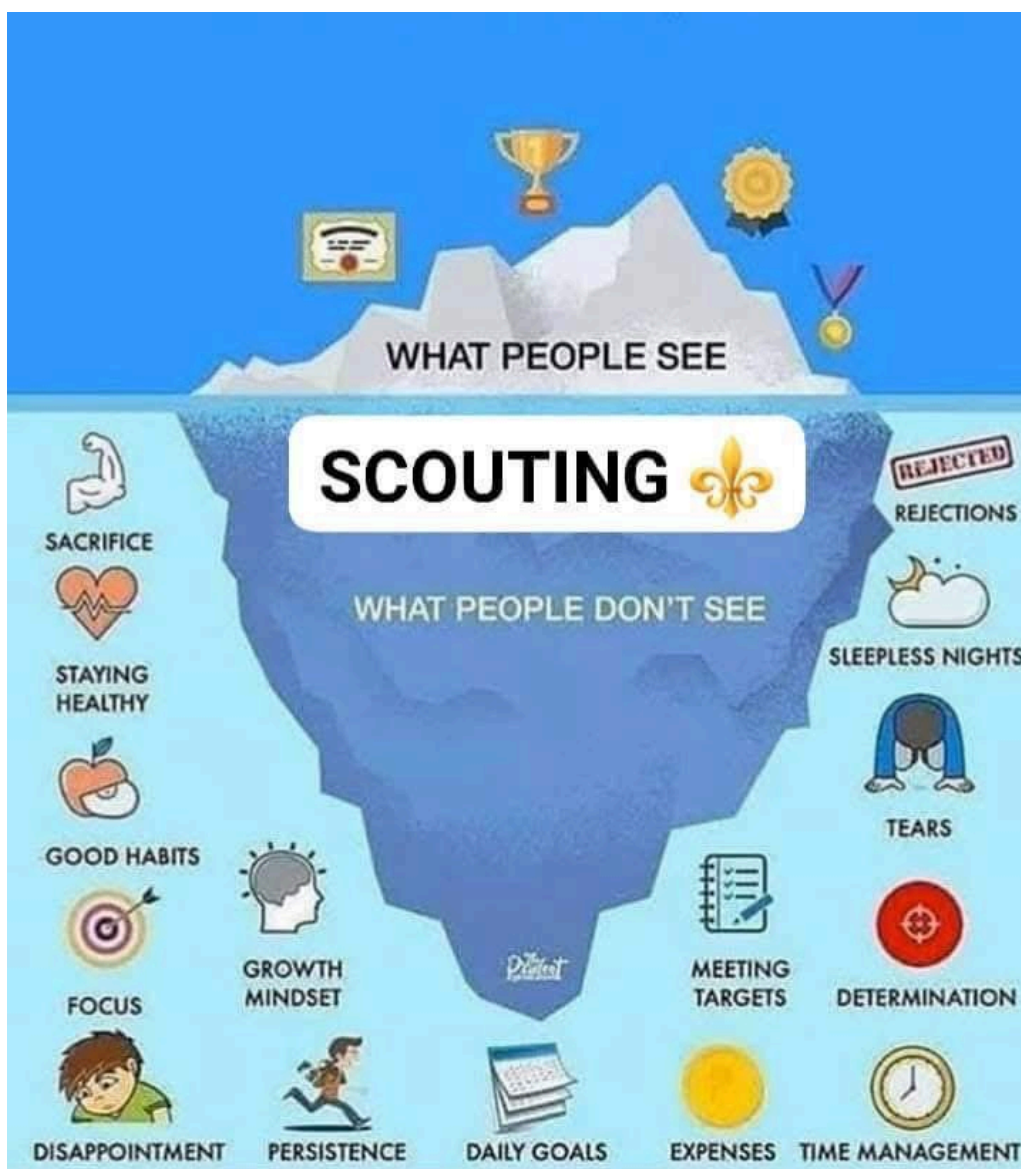
- **Scout's first year** Merit Badges provide a foundation for participation in other activities and should include the following:
 - Swimming
 - Personal Fitness, ○ Family Life ○ First Aid
- **Scout's second year** Merit Badges should include the following:
 - Citizenship in the Community ○ Pioneering ○ Cooking
 - Environmental Science ○ Life Saving
- **Scout's third year** Merit Badges should include the following:
 - Citizenship in the Nation
 - Camping ○ Hiking ○ Cycling

A GREAT REFERENCE FOR MERIT BADGE WORKSHEETS AND OVERALL SCOUT ADVANCEMENT IS

[HTTP://USSCOOTS.ORG/MB/WORKSHEETS/LIST.ASP](http://USSCOOTS.ORG/MB/WORKSHEETS/LIST.ASP)

Important Notes:

- ***=Eagle Required** : Troop 285 does require that most Eagle-required Merit Badges to be taught and earned only within the Troop. These Merit Badges are foundational and emphasize life skills which are taught by experts in their fields. If these Merit Badges should be earned other than within Troop 285, the scout may be required to retake some of the requirements.
- Backpacking, Reading, Sustainability, and Scholarship are mandatory in Troop 285



Appendix 1: Contacts, Roster and Information Key Leadership and Staff:

Role	Name	Phone	Email
Scoutmaster	Chris Alonso	210-744-3211	christophergalonso@gmail
Troop Advisor	Bill McCalister (Mr. Mac)	210-471-8244	bmccalister@livejoubert.com
Assistant Scoutmasters			
	Andre Cap	210-410-6882	andrewpcap@gmail.com
	Alan Gustin	210-259-9772	alan@gustin.org
	Bo Jackson	210-389-8888	gayebo2003@yahoo.com
	Dave Kibler	210-414-1765	djkib@gvtc.com
	Ted Lee	210-557-9500	tedlee@gunn-lee.com
	Jim Lynch	210-887-6066	texaslynches@sbcglobal.net
	Tim McBrayer	210-542-5398	tim@tmcbrayer.com
Key Staff:			
Committee Chair	Philip Devlin	210-850-8494	usdevlins@icloud.com
Treasurer	Brad Collie		
Medical			
Support Staff:			
Quartermaster	Gary Morgan	443) 535-1127	gpurdue3@gmail.com
Registration	Roel Almendarez	210-379-3807	roel.almendarez@gmail.com
Scoutbook	Risa Alonso	210-264-2914	risaalonso@gmail.com
Fiesta Ticket Sales	John Paradez	210-748-1353	jeparedes@yahoo.com
Fertilizer Sales	Stephen Faulstich	210-438-7658	safiji1848@icloud.com
Coffee Sales	Nancy Narayan	210- 326-7589	happywahine@hotmail.com