

Boy Scout Troop # 174
American Legion Post 851
Dingmans Ferry, Pennsylvania

Jack DeGennaro, Scoutmaster

www.troop174.net

Larry Deignan, Committee Chairman

BOY SCOUT TROOP # 174 GUIDELINES AND POLICIES



WELCOME

The following is a description of our troop and our current statement of policies. Everything here holds for the current Scouting season. If you have any questions ever, please call me at 570-686-2253 or email at larry@speerrair.com; You can also find names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses for Adult Leaders, Patrol leaders, other Scouts, and the Troop Committee on the latest edition of the Troop Roster.

The Troop Roster is posted on the Troop web site, in a password-protected area. Upon joining our Troop, you will be issued a password for this area.

Larry Deignan

Committee Chairman, Troop 174

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HISTORY

This troop was first chartered by St. Vincent's Church, Dingmans Hills, Pa. in September 1979 as Troop 74. Then on March 1, 1985, Troop 74 was discontinued and became Troop 174 chartered by American Legion Post 851 of Dingmans Ferry, Pa. Troop 174 is part of Delaware River District of the Hudson Valley Council, BSA, Inc.

CHARTERED ORGANIZATION

A chartered organization is a local community group that has the best interest of youth in mind, and is willing to work with the Boy Scouts of America in providing a program to better youth. The chartered organization provides a place for the troop to meet, and makes sure that adults of the highest caliber are selected to head the program. A boy doesn't need to belong to a chartering organization in order to participate with the related Boy Scout program.

DISTRICT

A district is an organizational geographic unit of a council that usually comprises about 10-20 towns and approximately 50 scouting units (Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Explorers). A council is an incorporated body designed to support the local scouting units that are in its geographic area. Districts and councils employ both full time professional staff as well as numerous committees of volunteer scouting leaders. They offer training and program support to local scout leaders. Among the highlights sponsored by the council include seasonal council wide camporees, training courses for youth and adult leaders, monthly program meetings, and a long-term summer camping experience.

JOINING

Each scout must submit an official Boy Scout of America joining application in order to become a member of the troop. With this application there is also a registration fee that must be submitted with the application. The scoutmaster will inform you of the

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amount of the fee. The fee is pro-rated, depending on the re-charter data and the month the boy is joining.

Before you sign the Boy Scout application, you need to read and understand the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. By signing the application, you agree to live by these principles. You also commit to being an active and involved member of the troop.

IDEALS

In today's world, growing into adulthood means more than just growing up; it means learning to make decisions. Decisions about drugs, crime, gangs, peer pressure, and more. Scouting provides strong, values driven programs that strengthen character, develop good citizenship, and enhance both mental and physical fitness in youth; traits that prepare young people to make the best decisions for today and tomorrow. Unlike some sports, scouts doesn't require absolute commitment to the exclusion of all else. If a scout can attend only part of a meeting or a campout, he should feel free to do so. We will give each scout the opportunity to lead, to be responsible for and make decisions affecting him and others.

ADULT LEADERSHIP

The adults leading this troop are committed to a cause. Many have completed various levels of official BSA training. We, as adults, possess certain individual skills that are easily passed to another adult willing to learn. Experience is a great teacher and many of us have "been there before". We will strive to see that each scout acquires numerous years of experience rather than a year's experience numerous times. The troop is always looking for interested adults to participate in the management of the troop as a member of the committee. **Dads are encouraged to attend campouts with their sons. The leaders of this troop have a collective wealth of information and experiences and are more than willing to pass it along to the parents, as well as the scouts. There is always an adult patrol on campouts and we'll see that you survive the weekend. Come out and see what your son is doing. When a parent is involved, scouts are**

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more likely to stick with the program and usually advance more rapidly. It is recommended that before visiting any outdoor scouting function with the troop, you complete the Youth Protection Program. A BSA program designed to protection you and our scouting youth. A link is provided on the main page of of our web site. To set an example for scouts, the use of tobacco products by adults in the presence of scouts while on a campout is strongly discouraged. Alcohol is prohibited.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

A boy's scouting experience demands teamwork between a child and his parents/guardians. When your son joins boy scouting, you as his parents/guardians embark on this adventure with him.

Scouting teaches boys to be responsible for their actions, to work effectively with others, to be self-sufficient and knowledgeable, and to become good citizens of our state and country. As parents/guardians, the kind of support you give and the example you set is vital to the success of teaching Scouting's values to your son.

We rely on parents/guardians to encourage their son in his responsibility to be an active member of the troop. We ask that you also help your son in the advancement program of the Boy Scouts of America. While the responsibility of teaching scout skills to the boys and testing them on what they know is the responsibility of the troop leadership, parents/guardians can work with their son on his advancement, and help to inspire and motivate their son to do his best in all that he does.

We also ask parents/guardians to help provide the necessary resources to be an active scout. Each scout should be encouraged to help in the purchase of his uniform, camping equipment, and fees for camping trips and dues, and parents/guardians should help him when possible. Parents/guardians should see that the boy has the opportunity and travel arrangements to attend meetings and outings. Removing a youth from scouting as a punishment only seeks to hinder the boy's progress: please do not use this as a form of discipline. The more support from home that a boy receives, the better his

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scouting experience will ultimately be. Think of your son's involvement in scouting as an extension and enrichment of his everyday education.

Parents/guardians should ask their scout about his scouting, and keep themselves informed about the troop's activities. While parents/guardians should be notified by the scout, through the website, and through communication by the troop leaders, each parent/guardian has the responsibility of keeping themselves informed about the troop program. Parents/guardians may elect to help the troop by registering with the Boy Scouts of America as a merit badge counselor, instructor, assistant scoutmaster, or member of the troop committee. Scouts need the guidance of involved parents/guardians, not only to learn the required skills for rank advancement, but also to learn real-life skills from positive adult role models.

At times, you may be asked to assist in transportation to/from an outing. Drivers are required to have at least state minimum liability coverage on their vehicle and a seat belt for each passenger, which will be used. Typically, drivers may be compensated for their assistance if we are planning a trip some distance away. The Troop Committee will make this consideration during trip planning.

UNIFORMS

The scout uniform is part of the thrill of scouting. It is a symbol of the ideals and outdoor activities of the scouting movement. The uniform helps the scout feel that he belongs, that he is truly a member of the patrol, and the troop and the Scouting's great world brotherhood, on the same level with all other scouts.

Our troop requires that the scout have the scout shirt, and the scout neckerchief. Scout hat is optional. The pants can be the scout pants or a good pair of blue jeans. The scoutmaster and /or his assistants can provide you with information on where to purchase the uniform.

The scout uniform **must be worn** at all troop activities, such as troop meetings, board of reviews, going to campouts, day trips, etc.

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MEETINGS

The troop meetings are held at the American Legion Building just off of Wilson Hill Road in Delaware Township. The troop meets every Friday night from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. The meetings start on the first Friday of the first full week of school in September and ends for the Summer on the last Friday in June. Courts of Honor are held twice a year. Please check the calendar of events for more info. Parents and family are strongly encouraged to attend these award presentation ceremonies. You will be called forward with your son when he receives his awards. Parents are also welcome to attend any meeting.

The troop meetings from time to time will need to be cancelled. The following are some examples:

1. If school is closed or let out early because of bad weather.
2. A phone call / email message from the Scoutmaster or Senior Patrol Leader stating that there is no meeting.

Note: If school is out, all day or a half a day, for reasons other than the weather, the troop meeting will still be held.

When dropping off your son at the meeting, please make sure that there are at least two troop leaders 18 years or older present. When picking your son up after the meeting, please be there by 9:00 PM.

DUES

Dues are collected the first or second week of every month starting in October and ending in June. The purpose of the dues is to offset the cost of the advancement badges, postage and program materials. Dues are \$5.00 a month, or \$50 for the Year.

FUND RAISERS

The troop from time to time will have the scouts participate in fundraisers. Each scout family is asked to try their best to make all fundraisers a success. The purpose of

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the fundraisers is to purchase troop equipment, to pay for all camping registration fees, and to help defray the cost of special trips.

You are asked to do your best to participate in our annual volunteer fundraiser at Pocono Raceway. One of our adults organizes a work party at both NASCAR events at Pocono Raceway in return for a donation from the track in proportion to the number of volunteer workers supplied. This year there are three, three day events available. We ask; you at least participate one day in each event. At present time, this is our only way of raising money for the troop. There is more information on our website under the header "Pocono Volunteer Program"

PATROL METHOD AND LEADERSHIP

Boys want companionship. They want to have fun with other boys. They want to feel that they "belong", and so they travel in-groups, they're own groups, under their own leadership.

This boy's group becomes the Scout Patrol, which is a small group of boys working together under the leadership of one of their own number. The patrol is the unit of Scouting, whether for work or for play, for duty or for discipline.

In the Scout Patrol you have democracy at work on a small scale. The boys choose the leader they want to follow. They plan their own activities and carry them out together. They learn Scoutcraft according to their individual abilities and desires.

In the good Patrol, group spirit-Patrol Spirit-is steadily at work producing a whole-hearted participation of all the members. The life in the Patrol creates in its Scouts a strong feeling of comradeship, of obedience to a common cause, and the willingness to help and share, so necessary in life.

The Patrol Leader encourages and assists his Scouts to train themselves in scoutcraft. Besides, he helps to plan and carry out the program of the Troop, which is simply a group of patrols-two, three, four or more-working, playing, hiking and camping together.

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The troop program is executed by the Senior Patrol Leader. He runs the Patrol Leaders Council which plans the weekly meetings and camping activities. He is like a General Manager of a corporation. This is the most important boy leadership position in scouting.

BEHAVIOR

Boys are expected to conduct themselves according to the scout laws and oath. Misbehavior during a meeting which requires that a scout be sent home means that the scout may forfeit his privilege to attend the next campout. Misbehavior on campouts may mean that you, as a parent, will be required to drive to camp to pick up your son. Each incident will be dealt with on an individual basis by the Troop Committee.

TROOP OUTINGS

The troop has an outdoor activity scheduled every month during the meeting year. A schedule of events is issued early in September with the committee's best estimate of when and where we will be. Any changes in the schedule are made know to the scouts in a timely manner. The Senior Patrol Leader will make calls. The troop also does a week long scout camp during the summer months. Our activities have included; camping, backpacking, caving, rappelling, canoeing, kayaking, pioneering and a variety of other interesting things. The troop prepares meals at the patrol level. Where possible, we cook over wood fires. Your son will see the need for and continually practice the outdoor skills that Boy Scouts stresses. The more he learns, the more enthused and confident he becomes. Most of our camping trips start on Friday night and end on Sunday afternoon. We leave from the American Legion parking lot and return to the American Legion parking lot. The parents/guardians are responsible for bringing the scouts to the parking lot and pick them up. Permission slips are posted for on our website two weeks before the campout and are due back the week before the trip. We attempt to run a zero based budget on the campout, charging each scout enough to pay for camping facilities, patches, food, and consumables. The admission fee charged is \$20. **The dead line for turning in their fee is the Friday before the trip. Payment for the campout is to be**

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made in cash. Money for food is disbursed on that Friday evening to the individual scouts who are buying for their respective patrols. Thus the need for cash.

Even if a scout can attend only a portion of the campout, the total fee is still due. With a budget it becomes more difficult for a scout to try to buy food when he has to also take into consideration who will be eating what meals. The scouts have one week in which to complete their shopping, and the Troop must arrange for transportation for all gear and scouts; again necessitating the timely return of permission slips and fees. Even if a scout has turned in a permission slip or verbally committed to go, fees must be paid by that Friday evening. Attempting to make calls to patrol leaders to buy extra food, getting payment to them, and the arranging for additional transportation are some of the complications that have arisen from trying to accommodate late commitments to attend. Permission slip information also needs to be completely filled out. **If you plan to be gone during a portion of the weekend your son is away, please note additional phone numbers where you or a close relative can be reached in case of an emergency.** The top portion of the permission slip should provide you with an emergency phone number where you can get in touch with your son. We try to stick closely to the return time that is listed on the permission slip. Scouts will have the opportunity to call as we near or arrive at the Legion. All kinds of complications arise when someone does not show to pick up their son. With no prior arrangements, just dropping your son at your house with no one home or having your son go to a driver's home brings up liability issues we'd rather not deal with. Please be timely in picking up your son. Make sure he has all his gear with him.

Equipment

The troop provides the necessary dining flies, tents, cooking utensils, pots, and stoves that a patrol needs to function. After a campout, we occasionally stay at the Legion to post prep our equipment to air out tents, a wet tent or tarp can mean the ruination of that gear from mildew. Scouts are expected to provide their own personal gear. As parents, we know these kids can rapidly grow out of boots and other equipment. You hate to spend large sums for gear that may be used for only a short time. Do consider though,

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that we camp year round. Please don't send your son on a campout without sufficient clothing to protect him from the elements. Typically, we will be outside all day, and sleeping on the ground in a tent. Cold and wet makes for a miserable time and can be one of the principle reasons why a scout doesn't like to camp. Look at the weather forecast. Too many times have we seen scouts who come to a campout where below freezing temperatures are expected, and they have neither gloves nor hat. Being wet is to be avoided at all costs. Make sure that your son has adequate rain gear and a dry change of clothes. A good sleeping bag is also important. A bag with a rating of zero degrees may still not be comfortable in the middle of winter. If you are considering purchasing new equipment for your son, consider asking any of the adults for assistance. We have some experience on what works best for your dollar. Also consider what you would feel like if you had to use the gear that you have provided your son. If your son is inadequately prepared for the elements, you may be called to pick him up at camp.

PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT

Leave home the radios and video games. With a group of 15-20 friends in the out-of doors, surely you can find something to do. Sheath knives are also prohibited. Pocketknives, bow saws, and axes are to be used only by scouts who have earned the "Totin' Chip" card, indicating that they have been properly trained in the use of these tools. An accident in the remote areas we sometimes camp can mean several hours and a long foot transport before proper medical attention can be received.

TROOP COMMITTEE

The troop committee has two key jobs - To select the best possible man as Scoutmaster and - To help him provide a sound Scout program to the troop.

Troop committee work is both interesting and challenging. You make a significant contribution in helping boys grow up. The ideals of the Scout Oath and Law, together with the skills and methods he learns as a Scout, helps him meet tomorrow's

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challenges and today's. In helping boys grow into useful citizens, you perform a very valuable service to the community.

The troop committee is made up of a minimum of three adults who want to provide Scouting for the community's youth. Members of the committee could be parents/guardians of Scouts members of the chartered organization or persons interested in youth. They need to be willing to devote the time and effort necessary to their work as troop committee members.

The functions of the committee are: supporting the Scoutmaster with whatever assistance he needs for the troop program and administration. The committee aids the Scoutmaster in areas related to programming. They are "Program Planning, and Support", "Outdoor Program Support", and "Advancement". The committee is responsible for the operation of the troop so it will be a continuing organization. Committee members have a duty to make sure that meetings are held and that the Scout program is offered. To do this, the committee is responsible for the following functions. The committee is responsible for leadership, finance, records, equipment, facilities, and membership. In very broad terms, these are the functions of the troop committee. These responsibilities are broken down into more specific duties. These are then assigned to the individual members of the committee.

If you or anyone you know is interested in becoming a troop committee member, you can contact the Committee Chairman so the proper paper work can be started.

ADVANCEMENT (PROGRESS AWARDS AND MERIT BADGES)

Scout advancement provides a progressive series of requirements in various skills, sets standards for meeting them, and offers awards to the Scouts who master them, in the form of special badges.

Scout advancement has introduced a new principle education. In most educational systems, boys are taught in classes, doing specified work in a specified time. In such classes the brighter boys are held back by those less bright, and the slower are

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forced ahead faster than they can grasp the subject. In Scouting advancement each boy proceeds at his own speed. His rate of advancement depends upon his own ability and interest.

Boy Scouts is structured as a youth organized program. Older scouts teaching younger scouts. Teaching methods are structured in accordance with the Scout Handbook, as it is assumed that that may be the only resource available to the scout for future reference and review. That doesn't mean that there is only one way to do things; alternate methods or techniques are used to clarify and simplify, where appropriate. The program allows for a scout to advance to the rank of First Class during his first year in scouting. The scouts can and are encouraged to complete requirements for more than one rank at any given time. Boys are more responsible for their advancement than they were as Cubs. Their first line of communication and advancement should come through their patrol leader and other youth leaders. Adult members can sign off on requirements, but we usually defer to the patrol leader or his assistant, if possible. After the completion of each rank, the scout has a conference with the scoutmaster. He is also quizzed by other adult members in a Board of Review to determine his skill level, areas of strength and those for improvement. Merit badges, which are required for the rank of Star and above, are earned on a more individual level. A scout must make contact with an adult who is qualified in that area of expertise and is registered with the Boy Scouts of America. Two deep leadership is required in scouting. **For his protection and the protection of the leaders involved, scouts should never be present with adults in a one-on-one situation.** Earn your merit badge with a friend or have a parent with you when you interview with a counselor. Scout summer camp is a great way to earn rank and merit badges. The program is designed for scouts ranging in age from 11 to 18 years. It is to be expected that some merit badges will be too difficult for a youth of 11. We will monitor the choices of your son at summer camp to see that he doesn't try to do too much, receiving partials and completing nothing.

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Enjoyment

Each scout will be required to *tow the line* so to speak. On camp-outs each scout will have an assignment posted on the duty roster. Assignment examples; water run, cooking, dishes, tents/equipment set-up or breakdown. The duty roster is normally completed by the Senior Patrol Leader, or acting SPL, (an older, experienced scout). Not all of these assignments may be desirable, this it is taken into consideration and all scouts will share and/or rotate all of the assignments over the course of the trip. No one scout will do all of the undesirable assignments, Our main goal is to assure your scout will enjoy himself, and in doing so, he will be back for the next one. The end result will be an experience that will last for a lifetime!

WHY JOIN SCOUTING?

ADVENTURE! That's what Scouting is. You are standing at the doorway to the most exciting adventures you can imagine. Step into the world of Scouting, and you'll find yourself hiking along mountain trails, canoeing across lakes, and camping under the open sky. Smell fresh rain in the woods and fill your mouth with the taste of wild strawberries. Cook your meals over a camping stove. Travel the backcountry without leaving a trace, and live with only what you can carry on your back. Sound inviting? As a Scout, you can do all this and more.

Closing

This pamphlet, although long, is not all inclusive, it should give you a good idea about the scouting program and Boy Scout Troop 174. If you have any questions about anything in the pamphlet or anything else about the Scouting program, you can call me at any time.

Yours in Scouting,
Larry Deignan