



So, how does
Troop 57
Run, anyway?



First of all, Troop 57 is a boy run troop. You will find that most scout troops will make this claim. This is by design. The primary difference between the cub scouting program and the boy scouting program is this: the boys themselves plan and conduct their own activities both on a troop level and on a personal level. The adults in the troop function in advisory roles and help facilitate the plans the boys make. They also ensure that all of the activities are conducted within very strict safety guidelines as published in the BSA's "Guide to Safe Scouting" publication. With that in mind, here is how the troop is organized.

Within the troop there are several smaller groups called patrols. A patrol consists of 4 to 9 scouts who all work together. On camp outs each patrol cooks, eats, and camps together as a unit. Each patrol chooses a patrol leader who then represents his patrol at the monthly Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) meetings. It is the members of the Patrol Leaders Council who choose and plan all the activities for the entire troop.

Troop elections are held every six (6) months. The scouts elect from among themselves those who will serve in several key leadership positions.

Patrol Leader:

Each patrol elects one of its members to be Patrol Leader. The Patrol Leader then represents the wishes of his patrol at the monthly PLC meetings. He chooses a fellow patrol member to be his Assistant Patrol Leader to help him and to take over for him in the event he is unable to attend a PLC meeting. He also may choose a fellow patrol member to function as Patrol Quartermaster to be responsible for the patrol's equipment.

Senior Patrol Leader (SPL):

This scout is in charge of all of the PLC meetings and is also responsible to make sure that the operations of the entire troop run smoothly. He leads the weekly troop meetings and is also responsible for seeing that the troop activity plan is in place. He works with the scoutmaster to ensure that the resources the troop will need to carry out its plans will be available when needed. All of the other leadership positions in the troop report to the SPL.

Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL):

After elections, the new SPL chooses one or more assistants to help him in his responsibilities. On camp outs this leadership cadre of scouts is responsible for making sure that the rest of the troop is successful, especially the less experienced scouts. It is assumed that on camp outs that the SPL and his ASPL's will be spending most of their time assisting the rest of the troop and making sure that the planned activities occur and will not have time to also cook for themselves. For this reason the SPL and ASPL's are permitted to eat with the adults.

Quartermasters:

The scouts elected to this position are responsible for the troop's equipment. Prior to each camp out, the Quartermaster will work with each patrol to make sure that they have sufficient camping and cooking equipment and that it is all in good working order. During each camp out the Quartermaster oversees the loading of the troop trailer and makes sure that all of the necessary troop gear not in direct control of one of the patrols is in working order and is loaded on the trailer. They also record problems that are encountered with any equipment and report them to the adult advisor. After a camp out, they are responsible for making sure that all equipment has been properly cleaned and stored in the troop room.

Scribe:

The scout elected to this position keeps all the records during a troop activity. He collects the transportation fees from each scout and disburses them to the driving adults. He records activity attendance and reports it to the appropriate adult advisor. He also records the actions of the monthly PLC meetings.

Historian:

The scout elected to this position records the activities of the troop. He photographs troop camp outs and other outings. He also records information about the various campsites so that it can be used in the future.

Librarian:

The scout elected to be Librarian is responsible for keeping the various merit badge booklets organized and ready for use. He checks out materials to other members of the troop and ensures their return.

Bugler:

The scout elected Bugler is responsible for helping the troop get their day started on camp outs.

Troop Guide:

When there are patrols consisting solely of younger inexperienced scouts in the troop, the scoutmaster will appoint one or more Troop Guides to work with them. A Troop Guide is an experienced and capable scout who works very closely with the new patrol. He camps with them, cooks with them, and helps them learn to be self-sufficient. He functions in the role of patrol leader for the new patrol until one or more of its members gains enough experience to take over.

Instructor:

The scoutmaster also appoints scouts to function as Instructors. These scouts help teach specific scouting skills in the "Trail to First Class" program with the guidance of an assistant scoutmaster. They also assist others on camp outs and work closely with the various Troop Guides when needed.

Adults:

At the adult level is the troop committee. These adults are responsible for the financial needs of the troop and also set general policy regarding troop operation as it pertains to safety and harmony with the aims of scouting. The troop committee meets monthly and all parents are invited to attend.

Troop Committee Chairman:

The committee chairman who conducts the monthly meetings heads the troop committee. All other members of the committee report to the committee chairman. They are responsible for the selection of the scoutmaster and in securing the participation of other adults in various roles.

Advancement Chairman:

This adult maintains all of the advancement records for the troop and ensures that all rank advancement and merit badges earned by the scouts are properly reported to the council. They also organize and conduct boards of review for scouts seeking advancement to their next rank. The advancement chairman also organizes and leads the recognition of the various achievements of the scouts at Court of Honor ceremonies.

Treasurer:

The treasurer controls and accounts for all of the troops financial resources. They maintain records of the troop level funds and also the individual scouts accounts resulting from fund-raising activities, activity fees, and other sources.

Chartered Organization Representative:

This adult is the primary communication link between the troop and its chartering organization. They seek to ensure that the operation of the troop is consistent with the goals and values of the chartering organization to the benefit of both the troop and the organization.

Scoutmaster:

The scoutmaster works closely with the Senior Patrol Leader and his assistants to carry out the plans made by the PLC. He attends PLC meetings and functions in a support and advisory role. He conducts "scoutmaster conferences" with individual scouts as part of their advancement plan. He helps acquire resources for troop meetings, troop activities, and outings. He monitors all troop operations to ensure safety. He also works closely with the troop committee to ensure that the troop has the equipment and financial resources it needs to operate. The scoutmaster's primary concerns are the well being of the scouts and providing the troop program as planned by the PLC.

Venture Crew Advisor:

Venturing is a relatively new program in scouting that is targeted for boys and girls who are 14 years old or have completed 8th grade. Our Venture Crew, Crew 57, is a separately chartered organization that is also a part of our overall scouting program. Venture Crew 57's program centers on high adventure outdoors activities. The Venture Crew Advisor helps these boys plan and accomplish their program.

Assistant Scoutmaster:

Other adults who work closely with the scouts and the scoutmaster in helping the troop carry out the various facets of its program are the assistant scoutmasters. Sometimes working behind the scenes, these adults provide vital support to the troop.

Troop Meetings:

Weekly troop meetings are every Tuesday night in the troop room located in the basement of the First United Methodist Church building, Avenue B & Glenbrook in Garland. Troop meetings start at 7:30 p.m. and end at 9:00 p.m. Special "Trail to First Class" sessions for new scouts are held every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. just prior to the regular troop meeting.

Camp Outs:

Troop 57 generally camps once a month, year round. Camp outs have traditionally been planned for the third (3rd) weekend of each month, but may vary from time to time as we attempt to accommodate other scheduled events. The best place to stay abreast of upcoming troop events is the troop web site at <http://www.troop57garland.org>

Once a camp out has been planned and a location selected, the patrols begin their preparation at the troop meeting prior to the camp out.

Meals:

Each patrol will select one of its members to function as "grub-master". The patrol then makes its menu plan for the weekend. Once the menu has been approved by the SPL, the patrol "grubmaster" collects money for food from each of the patrol members. The amount of money collected is at the discretion of each patrol, but is \$10.00 per person. The grub-master's responsibility then is to purchase the food and to bring it to the departure point for the camp out. Sometimes more than one scout will work together to accomplish this task for their patrol. During the camp out, the patrol members will share the cooking and kitchen-patrol jobs according to their own duty roster.

Transportation:

Unless other arrangements have been made, transportation to and from camp outs is provided by troop adults in private vehicles. The troop owns a covered trailer in which all of the troop gear is transported. Each is responsible for paying a transportation fee to the troop scribe who will distribute a portion of it to the adults who drive.

Camping:

Each patrol camps together as a unit. Local conditions permitting, patrol campfires are allowed provided that the patrol observes all of the fire safety rules. The troop provides tents, cooking equipment, lanterns, and other miscellaneous gear. Each patrol is responsible for taking care of this gear, keeping it clean, and reporting any problems to the troop Quartermaster. The cost of repairing and/or replacing Troop owned gear that is lost or damaged through obvious negligence or abuse is the responsibility of the patrol. Scouts are expected to provide their own personal gear, clothing, and sleeping gear.

Other fees:

Occasionally there will be other fees associated with a camp out. These might include registration fees for district events, tuition for summer camp, or usage fees for some camping locations. These fees will generally be expected from the scouts. Note that each scout has a personal account into which he can deposit funds either directly or through participation in the various troop fund raising events. All scouts have the option of paying any scouting related fees from the funds in their individual scout accounts.

Uniforms:

All members of Troop 57 are expected to wear the full field uniform. The uniform consists of a scout shirt with all insignia, scout belt, scout pants or scout shorts, scout socks, and scout neckerchief. When a new member of Troop 57 attends his first meeting in full field uniform, he will be presented with his own official Troop 57 neckerchief. Hats and caps are optional, but if worn any insignia must be scouting related. Full field uniform (including neckerchief) is required at the following events:

Troop meetings	Courts of Honor
Boards of review	Traveling to and from outings and camp outs
All flag ceremonies	Breakfast and Supper at Summer Camp
Any other time as deemed appropriate	

We also sell troop insignia t-shirts to be worn during some activities. This is our activity uniform.

The troop maintains a clothing rack of "experienced" uniform items in the troop room. Scouts are free to use items from this rack as needed. Any items outgrown or no longer needed are solicited for donation to the rack.

Fees:

Activity and registration fees are currently \$75.00 per year per scout and \$15 per year for registered adult leaders. Scouts who have money in their troop accounts from fund raising events or other activities may use that money for this purpose.

Medical Forms and Permission Slips:

To participate in Troop 57 outings and camp outs, a scout must have a currently valid medical form and an outing permission slip on file in the troop office. Blank forms are available on the troop web site on the useful "Resources" page at <http://www.troop57garland.org/info/index.asp>

Contact Information:

Troop Web Site: <http://www.troop57garland.org>
Troop Email List: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/troop57garland/>
(Sign up for this list on our page at <http://www.troop57garland.org>)

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