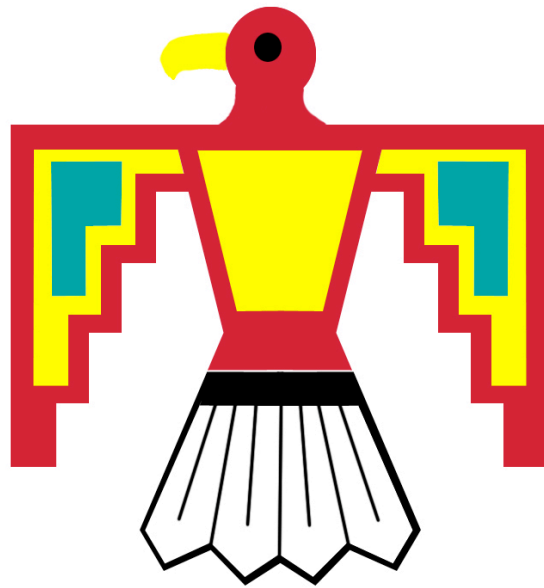


# Handbook For Parents



## Boy Scout Troop 228

Conestoga District - Greater Pittsburgh Council

Sponsored by Christ United Methodist Church  
Bethel Park, PA

Troop website: [www.scouttroops.org/pa/bsa/228](http://www.scouttroops.org/pa/bsa/228)

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction &amp; History</b>	<b>3</b>
Aims and Methods of Scouting	4
<b>Troop Structure</b>	<b>4</b>
• Troop Committee	4
• Line Leadership	5
• Youth Organization	5
<b>The Scouting Program</b>	<b>6</b>
• Troop Meetings	6
• Campouts and Events	7
• Clothing and Equipment	8
○ Uniform	8
○ Personal Equipment	9
○ Troop Equipment	10
• Attendance	11
• Advancement	11
• Finances	12
<b>General Information</b>	<b>14</b>
• Transportation	14
• Insurance	14
• Religious Services	14
• Emergency Communications	15
• Medical Care	15
• Food Allergies and Other Special Considerations	15
• Discipline Policy	16
• BSA Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Policy	16

**The Scout Oath:** *On my honor I will do my best To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; To help other people at all times; To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.*

**The Scout Law:** *A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.*

## Welcome to Troop 228!

We're glad you and your son have chosen to become part of a very active Boy Scout Troop with a long history. As a volunteer organization, the Troop depends on parents to help in a variety of ways, from serving as Committee members and Line Leaders to providing transportation to Troop events to baking cookies. As the saying goes, "Many hands make light work". We look forward to your input!

### History

Troop 228 was chartered on October 31, 1954, under the sponsorship of Christ United Methodist Church of Bethel Park. The Troop was originally comprised of 39 boys and 12 adults. The following men have dedicated their time and talents to the position of Scoutmaster over the years:

1954-1956: Elvin J Niel  
1956-1958: Charles T. Forst  
1958-1960: Wilfred K. McClain  
1960-1974: George "Big Mac" McIntyre  
1974-1989: Jack Patterson  
1989-1991: Bob Unitich  
1991-1993: David Barker  
1993-1994: Leonard Cooley  
1994-2004: David Barker  
2004-present: David Pokorski

To date, Troop 228 has served for over 50 years and has given our country the leadership capabilities of more than 150 Eagle Scouts and many other scouting participants. Over the years, the troop has achieved awards for adding new scouts, competing in district events, and camping activities, and advancing a high percentage of boys to the next rank each year.

## **Aims & Methods**

Troop 228 attempts to provide opportunities which boys can't find elsewhere - in their school, church, or community. Our meetings, campouts, and educational field trips hold to the **aims** that are rooted in the traditions set forth by Baden Powell, the founder of the worldwide Boy Scouting movement:

- ⇒ Character development
- ⇒ Citizenship training
- ⇒ Personal fitness

To accomplish these aims, the Boy Scouts of America have implemented the following **methods**:

- ⇒ The Ideals (The Scout Oath & Law)
- ⇒ Outdoor Activities
- ⇒ The Patrol Method
- ⇒ Personal Growth
- ⇒ Advancement
- ⇒ Leadership Development
- ⇒ Association with Adults
- ⇒ The Uniform

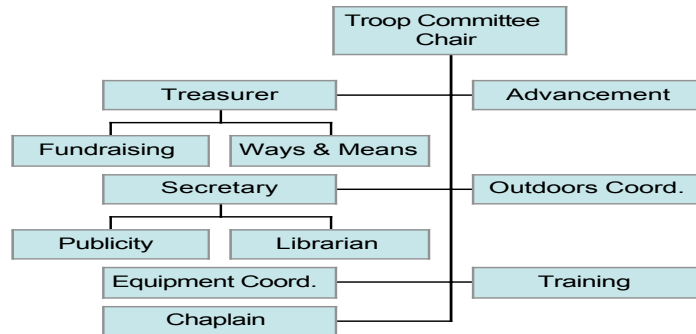
To ensure the success of our program, your boys need the backing of both the adult leaders and their parents.

## **Troop Structure**

### **Adult Leadership - Troop Committee**

The Troop Committee is made up of registered volunteer leaders, most of whom currently have, or had at one time, sons active in the Troop. The Committee meets on the second Thursday of each month to provide overall direction of the Troop in meeting its objectives. While not directly involved in planning weekly meetings or monthly campouts, their primary function is to support the Scoutmaster and his assistants in delivering a quality troop program and handling troop administration.

The Committee structure consists of:



An adult from each family in the troop is needed to sign up for and participate in at least one activity each Scouting year. An ongoing list of Troop needs is available through the Committee Chair or the Scoutmaster. These activities may include acting as a uniformed Assistant Scoutmaster, helping with a fundraising event, instructing and counseling a merit badge or rank advancement, or assisting with an outing needed for rank advancement or a maintenance project.

### **Line Leaders - Scoutmaster & Assistant Scoutmasters**

The line leadership is directed by the Scoutmaster, who works with Assistant Scoutmasters to carry out a planned program of activities. The Scoutmaster and his Assistant Scoutmasters are referred to as the "Line" and are directly involved at all times with the scouts to provide supervision and support, encourage advancement, teach skills, and plan outings. Some Assistant Scoutmasters are assigned to work directly with patrols, while others look after the Troop equipment, develop specific programs or merit badge classes, and lead in special camping events.

### **Youth Organization**

The Troop is organized into patrols of 6 to 10 scouts each, most of whom are about the same age. Generally our scouts come from the Bethel Park and Upper St. Clair area, however we do attract members from other communities. Each patrol has a Patrol Leader (PL) who is elected by the members of the patrol and approved by adult leadership. The PL then chooses an Assistant Patrol Leader (APL) to work with him. In addition, an experienced Troop Guide is assigned to each patrol.

All patrols fall under direction of the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL). A young man is nominated each year by the adult leadership because of his demonstrated leadership abilities within the troop. A general election among all Scouts in the troop is held in May of each year to elect the SPL. The Scout elected then chooses his assistant(s). The new SPL will assume his duties upon returning from training and lead the Troop at Summer Camp.

Other troop youth leadership positions include Quartermaster (assists with the equipment), Troop Bugler, Scribe, Librarian, Historian, Chaplain's Aide and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. The Patrol Leaders, Assistant Patrol Leaders, and Troop Guides form a group called the Patrol Leaders' Council, which meets once a month. If you are the parent of a boy leader, one way to support your son is to remind him of his duties from time to time. This will keep him on track as he develops his leadership skills.

All new scouts are initially assigned to a New Scout Patrol with older scouts assigned as their PL and APL. The Troop leads new scouts through a program called "Trail to First Class" to provide a structure for them to advance to the rank of First Class in about 18 months.

Older Scouts also have the opportunity to plan high adventure activities for themselves that are not age appropriate for the younger Scouts.

## **THE SCOUTING PROGRAM**

Ideally, Troop 228 strives to be a boy-led organization. Boy leaders serving on the Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) work with adult leaders to plan and carry out activities of value and interest to the boys.

### **Troop Meeting**

The Troop meets at the Christ United Methodist Church every Tuesday night from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm, year round. Scouts who arrive early (around 7:00 pm) will find leaders and older Scouts available to help them with advancement. This is the best time to work on advancement, since there is not usually time allotted for this during the normal meeting.

**Troop meetings** consist of formal opening and closing ceremonies, announcements of coming events, special speakers or programs, patrol time, games, occasional advancement classes, event planning, and demonstrations. The closing is especially important, as this is the time when announcements are made and "Taps" is played by

our bugler. We stress this as a time for all present to listen to the announcements, refrain from talking, and show respect.

Electronic devices, unless approved as an essential part of the Troop meeting, should be left at home.

**Scoutmaster's Conferences** and **Boards of Review** are often held on Tuesday evenings as well. These may be held at a Tuesday meeting or at another time and location agreeable to the scout and Scoutmaster (*if a different time is chosen, the Scout must be accompanied by a parent*).

Formal **Court of Honor** award ceremonies are generally held three times per year, usually on Tuesday nights. All parents, family, and friends are invited to attend and participate in these ceremonies where the Scouts are awarded their new rank and/or merit badges. These are special times to recognize the Scouts' hard work and show our pride in them.

Become part of the program! We are always looking for interesting subjects and activities to present to the Troop. Parents with special skills or hobbies are encouraged to share them with our Scouts at regular Troop meetings. Varying programs are essential to retain the interest of Scouts through the year.

## **Campouts and Events**

The Troop provides at least one outdoor weekend experience each month except in July and December. In July the Troop attends a week long campout at Heritage Reservation, The Greater Pittsburgh Council's Scout Camp located south of Uniontown.

Most camping activities are built around special themes, which develop the skills needed to earn scout awards and merit badges. These include camping, cooking, hiking, orienteering (map and compass), survival (shelters using natural sources), pioneering (rope and log towers and bridges), first aid, and conservation projects. On occasion, special interest activities have included such things as rock climbing, caving, bicycling, and back-packing.

For many years, the Troop has had unlimited access to a small farm south of Washington, Pa, just off the Ruff Creek exit on Interstate 79. Through the courtesy of the late Dr. Patton and his family, we have erected a large cabin with a fireplace. Known to us as the "Thunderbird Proving Ground", we camp there at least

2-3 times per year. The patrols are able to set up tents in cleared areas around the cabin.

In the spring the Troop takes an extended three-day educational trip. Recent visits have been to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio; Gettysburg Battleground; Niagara Falls; Washington, D.C.; and Williamsburg, Virginia. The objective is to provide a unique learning experience, which brings the history and greatness of our country closer to each Scout. When the Conestoga District provides a special event, such as the Klondike Derby or other Camporee, we often participate if we are able to fit it into the Troop schedule.

Because most of our outdoor camping events are designed to develop Scouting skills and build boys' confidence in handling situations without the support of an urban environment, we maintain certain standards of conduct. Personal safety and awareness about possible hazards with knives, axes, fires, etc. is constantly stressed. Horseplay is not tolerated. The buddy system is used on hikes, swimming and other activities.

Unless specifically authorized by the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster in charge of the event, cell phones, radios, electronic games and music players, tape players, CD's, laptop computers, non-Scouting reading materials and similar items which distract from the outdoor experience are prohibited. All unauthorized items are subject to confiscation and will be returned to a parent at the next Troop meeting.

## **CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT**

### **Uniforms**

"The uniform is a symbol of the boy's commitment to Scouting - his acceptance of the BSA's ideals and willingness to live by them. The boy knows that when he is in that uniform he is expected to act in accordance to the values of the BSA and the values he has made an oath to live by. This purpose of uniforming is as much a part of the method as uniting him with his troop or patrol. Boy scouting is an action program, and wearing the uniform is an action that shows each Scout's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting." ~ [www.scoutmaster.org/uniforming.asp](http://www.scoutmaster.org/uniforming.asp)

Each Scout is required to have an official ("Class A") Scout Uniform consisting of:

- ⇒ Long Pants (tan/khaki/green)
- ⇒ Scout Shirt with insignia affixed
- ⇒ Scout Belt and Buckle
- ⇒ Neckerchief and Slide
- ⇒ Summer Shorts (tan/khaki/green)

Official uniforms may be purchased at the Scout Shop, Flag Plaza, Greater Pittsburgh Council Headquarters Pittsburgh, PA. It is located across from the Mellon Arena and is well stocked. Some sports stores also stock Scout items. Some used uniforms are available from Troop 228 at a reasonable price.

The Troop supplies special Thunderbird neckerchiefs and all insignia, decorations, and badges at no cost to the Scout. The Troop also requires a Troop hat and "class B" t-shirts at an additional cost to the scout.

Class A uniforms are worn to Troop meetings, Boards of Review, and Courts of Honor. They also need to be taken to Summer Camp and the Spring Educational Trip. Special announcements will be made if they are needed for other occasions.

### **Personal Equipment**

- ⇒ Scout Handbook
- ⇒ First Aid kit (as described in the Scout Handbook)
- ⇒ Backpack or Duffel Bag
- ⇒ Ground Cloth
- ⇒ Sleeping bag(s) - *Scouts must be prepared for both very cold and warm weather*
- ⇒ Flashlight
- ⇒ Compass
- ⇒ Pocket Knife with blades smaller than the Scout's hand (requires Tote-N-Chip)
- ⇒ Poncho / Raincoat
- ⇒ Canteen/water bottle
- ⇒ Personal Grooming items

Other items such as jeans, heavy socks, gloves, knit hats, coats, boots, thermal underwear, sweatshirts or flannel shirts, and swimming shorts, are needed depending upon weather and type of event. Camping gear and other useful items may be purchased at local discount stores. Substantial waterproof hiking shoes are required for all camping or hiking events.

Sheath knives and hand axes are **NOT** needed and are **NOT PERMITTED** at our hikes and campouts. The Troop provides axes and saws for use under controlled supervised conditions.

## **Troop Equipment**

Our Troop maintains an inventory of several thousand dollars worth of equipment, sufficient to sustain us in the field for several days. The equipment is in a locked storage area adjacent to the Troop meeting room. Scouts may be requested to take troop tents home for drying, pots and coolers home for cleaning after the camp out. We expect them to be returned **properly cleaned** at the next Troop meeting. Included in our inventory are:

- ⇒ 12 2-man tents with floors
- ⇒ 4 dining flies
- ⇒ miscellaneous rigging equipment
- ⇒ water containers
- ⇒ mess gear
- ⇒ cleaning equipment
- ⇒ several propane lanterns
- ⇒ several propane stoves
- ⇒ hand tools
- ⇒ brooms
- ⇒ axes
- ⇒ saws
- ⇒ large first aid supply box
- ⇒ various storage boxes for gear and supplies -flags
- ⇒ banners
- ⇒ bulletin board
- ⇒ ceremonial gear
- ⇒ various pieces of cooking gear assigned to patrols
- ⇒ merit badge book inventory

Scouts who purchase merit badge books are encouraged to donate them to the Troop Library when their family is finished with them.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Being a Boy Scout requires dedication and effort. We hope that your son will want to come to Boy Scouts because he has fun. There will be conflicts with school, church, other activities and times of illness, but we would like our scouts to aim for 75% attendance at meetings and 75% attendance at campouts. When a boy's attendance falls below that level, he has a harder time advancing. Active participation in Troop activities is an essential part of the program, and no Scout can advance to Eagle without it. Scouts should make every effort to be on time for meetings and events when possible. Latecomers can affect the entire group.

Scouts who have overlapping school, church, or community events where attendance is required, such as sports practice, will be counted for attendance as long as they get to any part of the meeting with or without their uniform. Likewise, boys who arrive late at a campout or who have to leave early will be given credit for attendance as long as they stay one night and check in with the Troop Scribe.

As proper uniforming is one of the methods utilized by BSA, scouts who attend 75% of meetings *in uniform* (shirt with all insignia affixed, neckerchief, slide, hat, honor necklace, green/tan pants) will be recognized with a special bead for their honor necklace. Uniform inspections are held periodically.

## **ADVANCEMENT**

Each scout must purchase his own Scout Handbook (a cover is highly recommended, as the books tend to come apart after being used for a few years). For Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class, various requirements must be completed and may be worked on simultaneously, though the ranks must be earned in order. Assistant Scoutmasters regularly review each scout's progress, set goals, and sign off skills as they are demonstrated and achieved. Advancements are officially recorded for the scout when reported to the Troop Committee Advancement Chair. The Scoutmaster signs off on Scout spirit and leadership positions for Star and Life.

The Boy Scouts of America is well known for its motto: "Do a Good Turn Daily", and rank advancement beyond First Class requires certain service time. The Scoutmaster must approve service time in advance if the scout is planning to use the hours for advancement purposes. Service time includes working on a fellow scout's Eagle project, Penn DOT and community clean-ups, the annual food drive, and many other church or community services as approved.

Because we are an active outdoor Troop, we encourage Scouts to earn the cooking, hiking, and camping merit badges. All of these can easily be earned by participating in the Troop's outdoor schedule.

The ***Scoutmaster's Conference*** is a time for individual scouts to discuss their progress in a particular rank or for other reasons as the need arises. These may be held at a Tuesday meeting or at another mutually agreeable time and location. After all other rank requirements have been signed off, the scout must request a conference with the Scoutmaster. Scouts working on ranks of Tenderfoot and Second Class may alternately meet with an Assistant Scoutmaster.

After the Scoutmaster's Conference is completed, the scout must schedule a ***Board of Review***. Normally on a Tuesday evening, the Board of Review is not a time to retest the Scout; rather, it is a time to check the scout's book to ensure all requirements have been met, discuss how things are going, and advise the scout in setting some goals for his future advancement and leadership development. Upon satisfactory completion, the Board will fill out and sign the Advancement Record and turn it in immediately to the Troop Committee Advancement Chair.

Scouts who have earned the Life rank need to complete an "Eagle Workbook" and have their Eagle project approved by the District Advancement Chairperson. Scouts advancing to Eagle Scout must also pass a ***District Board of Review*** composed of Adult Leaders from other Troops in the Conestoga District. Final approval for Eagle Scout involves certification from Scout National Headquarters in Irving, Texas.

## **FINANCE**

### ***"A Scout is Thrifty"***

**Definition: a Boy Scout pays his own way.**

To enable the boys of Troop 228 to pay their own way, the troop offers several fund raising activities for them to earn money. Each Scout has a Safe Keeping Fund (SKF)- the Troop Treasurer maintains an account for each boy, in which money from fundraisers, as well as deposits from parents, is kept for use at a later date. When it comes time for a weekend campout, Summer Camp, other event or expense, the appropriate amount is deducted from the Scout's SKF. Parents can check in with the Treasurer at any time for the balance on their son's account.

How much money does it take to fully participate in all the troops activities? The following is a breakdown of the approximate yearly costs of participation:

CAMPING & DUES	COST	POPCORN SALES NEEDED
Annual Dues	\$50.00	\$129.00
Summer Camp	\$200.00	\$488.00
Spring Ed. Trip	\$65.00	\$167.00
Monthly Camp/Food	\$96.00	\$246.00
High Adventure	\$35.00	\$90.00
Total	\$446.00	\$1120.00

In September the Troop sells Trails-End popcorn as part of the council-wide fundraiser. From the scout's individual sales, 39% goes into his safekeeping fund. To raise \$436.00 he needs to sell \$1,120.00 worth of popcorn, or approximately 92 units of popcorn.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES & UNIFORMS	COST	POPCORN SALES NEEDED
Class "B" shirt	\$10.00	\$26.00
Swimming MB	\$12.00	\$31.00
MB University	\$5.00	\$13.00
Total	\$27.00	\$70.00

As they mature and advance in the program, scouts may want to try more and different high adventures such as Twin Echo Merit Badge Camps, canoeing or backpacking in northern Pennsylvania, New York and Canada, the National or International Jamborees, Sea Base or Philmont. These expeditions cost between \$200 and \$1200 for a weeklong adventure. If they sell a little extra popcorn each year they can include these types of camping trips in their Scouting adventure.

As the need arises, the Troop will also be holding additional fund raising events such as a candy sale and car washes.

We intend that the Troop be self-sustaining. The Troop maintains sufficient resources to offset repairs to equipment and minor purchases of new equipment, to provide insurance coverage for the Troop, and to meet unusual emergency conditions not budgeted for the current year. Special fund raising activities may be necessary to meet other major Troop expenditures in the future.

Troop Leaders do not receive any pay for their services. On long trips, like the Spring Trip, the cost of gas is included in the trip cost and drivers are reimbursed. The driver of the vehicle used to pull the Troop trailer will be reimbursed for gas used on all campouts. When agreed to by the Scoutmaster or a member of the Troop Committee, appropriate mileage donations will be applied.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Transportation**

For most campouts, adult leaders work with patrols to organize their transportation. Adult Leaders will assist with the planning and usually have a few spaces available in their cars, but it is NOT the purpose of the Adult Leaders to provide transportation. Parents must assist regularly to ensure adequate travel arrangements. It is important that Scouts are dropped off on time at the church and picked up at the Olive Garden parking lot. We will call if we are running late.

Safety is of great concern. We will not overload vehicles or exceed normal traffic flow. To the extent possible, routes will be pre-planned and all drivers will be given route maps. Scouts under the age of 21 will not be permitted to drive under any circumstances.

### **Insurance**

The Troop maintains an accident insurance policy, which covers all registered Scouts and Adult Leaders while participating in Troop activities. It is a standard group policy endorsed by the Boy Scouts of America and underwritten by ACE American Insurance Company.

### **Religious Services**

A Scout is reverent toward God - he lives his life according to the ideals of his beliefs. He is faithful in his religious duties and respects the beliefs of others. BSA maintains that no member can grow into a good citizen without being "Reverent" and recognizing a "Duty to God". The Troop Chaplain & Chaplain's Aide provide a spiritual atmosphere for Scouts to live by the Scout Oath & Law as well as providing the opportunity and encouraging the Scout to earn their specific religious emblem for their faith. Any religious services and times of reverence held during troop meetings or outings will be of an interfaith nature.

## **Emergency Communications**

Many of our campouts lead us to primitive areas beyond the reach of regular telephones. We will always have several leaders with cell phones to handle any problems that arise. Instructions detailing equipment needs, times, dates, and other information about emergencies are given to each Scout prior to a campout. At least two (2) leaders' cell phone numbers will be provided on each campout permission slip, for emergency contact only.

## **Medical Care**

Scout leaders trained in basic first aid will always be on a campout to tend to minor cuts, scrapes, and bruises. For any other injuries or illnesses we will contact the person's family and will transport the injured person to the nearest medical facility. If within a reasonable distance and medical condition warrants it, arrangements will be made to get that person home.

Any Scout who has special medical problems or medicines to be administered should be cleared with the Adult Leaders before any trip. Parents should take the initiative to ensure leaders fully understand the medical conditions and get the medications to the assigned leader for that outing. Scouts attending Summer Camp require a Class 2 physical exam (good for 3 years). Leaders over 40 require a Class 3 physical exam (good for 1 year). Additionally, a "**Health Record and Consent to Treat**" form is required for all scouts and adults who participate in Troop outings.

## **Food Allergies and other Special Considerations**

The leaders of Troop 228 are sensitive to the fact that sometimes a Scout will have special physical, learning/behavioral, or dietary needs. We work with all kinds of boys across the spectrum. With a parent's help, we are more than willing to make every accommodation possible to ensure your son's successful experience. We depend on open lines of communication that keep us informed of your son's unique situation. If he has food allergies or sensitivities, we ask that parents provide the Scout's food, clearly labeled, for all occasions where meals or snacks will be eaten - or parents may choose to work with their son's patrol to make food arrangements. Ultimately, it is the parent's responsibility to make sure your son has any special needs addressed while he is attending Boy Scout meetings, events, and campouts. Parents should direct questions or concerns about special dietary needs to the Committee Chair or Outdoor Activities Chair. Information pertaining to your son's physical, learning, behavioral or other needs should be directed to the Assistant Scoutmaster handling special needs.

## **Discipline Policy**

The goal of the Committee, Scoutmaster and Adult leaders is to have a safe, fun Troop program for your son and all of the boys in the Troop. Troop 228's Discipline Policy attempts to provide a standard of expected behavior, along with clear, consistent consequences for unacceptable behavior.

Simply put, scouts are expected to live by the **Scout Oath**, and the twelve points of the **Scout Law**.

Scouts who follow the Oath and Law have a right to expect the Troop to discipline scouts who disrupt Troop activities or threaten the safety or well being of other troop members. If any Scout *does not* abide by the Scout Oath and Law, he needs to know what the consequences will be.

The first line of discipline should be the boy leadership. If a behavior problem arises and can't be solved by the boy leaders, the Scoutmaster (and/or Leader in charge) will step in and speak privately with the scout. Situations that are unsafe or where someone is behaving in a "un-Scout like" way (such as lying, fighting, hazing, using foul language, or failing to follow directions) will not be tolerated.

If a Scout is unwilling to abide by the **Scout Oath** and **Scout Law** or the requirements of the adult leaders in charge, the Scoutmaster or Leader in charge may require a parent to come and pick up the Scout, whether the situation occurs at a Troop meeting or during an outing. If any behavior problems persist, the Scoutmaster, in consultation with the Troop Committee, may suspend the scout from the Troop for a specified period of time. Every Scout needs to show his commitment to the ideals of scouting in order to remain an active member of Troop 228.

*BSA's Youth Member Behavior Guidelines state: "All members of the Boy Scouts of America are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in the Scout Oath and Law. Physical violence, hazing, bullying, theft, verbal insults, and drugs and alcohol have no place in the Scouting program and may result in the revocation of a Scout's membership in the unit."*

### **BSA Policy on Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Use and Abuse**

*"The Boy Scouts of America prohibits the use of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances at encampments or activities on property owned and/or operated by the Boy Scouts of America, or at any activity involving participation of youth members."*