



TROOP 9

Ridgecrest Baptist Church

Welcome to Scouting

Dear New Scout Parent(s),

First, let me begin by welcoming you to the World of Boy Scouting and Troop 9 at Ridgecrest Baptist Church in Madison, MS. The adventure on which you and your son are about to experience will be both fun and fulfilling.

Our troop is sponsored by Ridgecrest Baptist Church and is a chartered organization of the Boy Scouts of America. A Troop Committee, consisting of adults from the church and surrounding community manages our Troop.

The Boys run our troop. In most cases the boys plan all activities including meeting and campouts.

Now that your son is a member of Troop 9, what next?

1. Troop Meetings

Our troop meetings are held on Monday evenings from 6:30 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. from August to May at Ridgecrest Baptist Church in the Activities Center located in the GYM in Madison, MS. Please be prompt!

2. Scouting Fees & Expenses

Registration fees are @\$60 per year and are prorated based upon our September Re-charter date. This fee covers advancement & merit badge cost, Boys Life magazine, Troop insurance and other miscellaneous costs. If Scouts are transferring from another troop or bridging from Cub Scouts, the joining fee is \$1.00 + a prorated amount of our annual fee. Other fees may be required for Troop activities. We will send out notices about dues in the August timeframe. If any financial hardships exist, please contact either the Troop Committee Chairperson or Scoutmaster.

During the year we normally have two fund raising events. We sell Boy Scout Popcorn and also Christmas Greenery. We use the profits from these events to assist in summer camp fees and also to fund troop activities such as camporees and other troop outings. We **STRONGLY** encourage your active participation in these efforts because the more monies we raise, the more we can do to lower your cost to participate.

3. Patrol Assignment

Your son will be assigned to a patrol. The patrol functions as a single group at all troop activities. Each patrol has a patrol leader and an assistant patrol leader which are elected by the patrol members. In the event your son has any questions he should contact his Patrol Leader. (If you, as a parent, have any questions please feel free to give any of the adults in our troop a call.)

4. Troop Activities

In the fall timeframe, we distribute our troop calendar for the year with tentative dates and activities. As a troop we try to camp or have a troop activity on a monthly basis.

5. Troop Campouts

Information will be distributed on Monday nights prior to our scheduled campouts. This information will include the time we will leave, where we will be going, cost, and the time we will return plus other information regarding the campout. Parents are always invited to participate in any and all events. On Campouts, the adults cook as a separate group unless you choose to eat with your sons' patrol.

On troop campouts each PATROL is responsible for buying food and preparing their own meals unless specified otherwise. No stoves or lanterns may be fueled or lighted by a Scout. This must be done under direct adult supervision or by an adult participant. **NO BUTANE LIGHTERS OR LIQUID FUELS ARE ALLOWED.** Matches work best. Our troop has limited equipment. We have water jugs, lanterns and a few Dutch ovens available for each patrol. Each scout is responsible for having their own tent or sharing a tent with other scouts. They should talk to their patrol leader before each campout to make sure the patrol has cooking materials and food.

It is each Scout's responsibility to contact his patrol leader prior to the campout to let them know if they and/or their parent will be attending. **THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT.** This will allow us to arrange transportation. Adequate adult supervision will be present at each troop activity. We use the two deep adult leadership method at all times. Normally we will have 3-4 adults at each event.

6. Scout Handbook and Uniform

The first item you should get is the Boy Scout Handbook. This will answer many questions about what to bring on campouts and other scouting questions that may arise.

The Scout Uniform consists of:

- Boy Scout shirt with a Troop 9 number

- Boy Scout shorts and or long pants

- Boy Scout socks

- Boy Scout belt

- Boy Scout hats are not required as most boys have their own they chose to wear.

Inappropriate hats are not allowed.

Scout uniforms are required to be worn when traveling to and from all troop outings. Exceptions will be made for new Scouts on their first trip. These items may be purchased at the Scout Shop on Riverside Drive.

7. Rank advancement and merit badges

Information on advancement and merit badges can be found in the Boy Scout handbook. You may work with your son on rank advancement. Make sure he does the work and not you. Troop Adults and Scouts in Leadership roles may sign off rank advancement items with some exceptions. After the completion of rank advancement requirements scouts will go before a board of review, which consists of several adults in our troop. **Any request to work on merit badges must be approved by the Scoutmaster or authorized adult within the troop prior to beginning the merit badge.**

8. Medical Information

Please ensure that the medical information form provided at the time you join is current, accurate and complete. This form allows us to obtain emergency treatment if we cannot contact the parent(s). If any medical conditions change please let us know.

We will be glad to administer medication as required but, we must know about it first. On campouts please give any prescription medicines, along with instructions in a plastic bag, to the Scoutmaster. In the event of accidents during campouts etc, and professional medical attention is required, we will attempt to contact the parents of the youth and gain permission to get medical treatment. If we cannot contact you, we will transport, or arrange for transportation at your expense, to the nearest medical facility and get treatment without delay as the judgment of medical personnel dictates. Our troop carries limited supplemental insurance beyond your family insurance.

9. Summer Camp

Each year our troop attends one week of summer camp. Physical examinations are required for Summer Camp. Information regarding Summer Camp will be distributed in the Jan/Feb timeframes.

10. Discipline

While every effort is made to ensure that each Scout lives up to the Scout Oath and Law, we recognize that boys will be boys. However, if the need warrants we will contact you by telephone and discuss situations as they may arise.

11. How Can Parents Help the Troop?

The role of parents in Boy Scouting is very important and critical to the success of your son. Although the program is boy-run, we still welcome and need adult participation in order to handle the many various tasks that boys can't do and that make an excellent scouting program. Here is how you can help with varying levels of time commitment:

- **Encourage your son to fully participate**, to go to meetings, campouts, summer camp, and other outings. These are the places where the boys learn the skills. A boy can't advance unless he participates. Encourage him to show initiative to learn and get his skills "signed-off".

- **Help us with transportation**. On occasion, we need parents to help drive the boys to outings.

- **Help us by going on the outings with us**. As you can imagine, Boy Scout camping is not the same as family recreational camping, but helping hands are often needed to run activities.

- **Help us with our fundraisers**. Summer camp can be very expensive and we want to defray all or part of the costs so that anyone who wants to go to camp may go.

- **Serve on a Board of Review**. In the weeks before a Court of Honor, we need a small committee of parents to meet individually with boys to certify their advancement. This is a formal opportunity for the boy to voice his goals and reflect on his scouting experience.

- **Become a Merit Badge counselor**. If you have a special skill or hobby and feel qualified to help teach small groups of boys about that skill, you may sign up with the to teach and grant some merit badges to our boys.

- **Be a committee member** and take on some of the work of the troop.

Again, welcome to Troop 9 and the Boy Scouts of America. We hope that your scouting experience will be enjoyable.

Please call BOB CLAY, Troop Committee Chairman, at 601-856-9098 or JOHN SPEED, Scoutmaster, at 601-892-6076 if you have any questions.