

Dear Parents,



Welcome to Troop 127! We hope that you will find the answers to some of your questions in this letter and that you will decide to help us continue to make this one of the best Troops in the Longhorn Council.

The following topics are addressed in this letter:

- *Troop History*
- *Meetings and Programs*
- *Leadership*
- *Membership*
- *Finances and Fundraising*
- *Uniform and Scout Handbook*
- *Troop Equipment*
- *Personal Camping Gear*
- *Campouts*
- *Medical Forms*
- *Court of Honor*
- *Advancement*
- *Troop Rules*

Troop History

BSA Troop 127 was chartered on January 1, 1998 by St. Joseph Catholic Community in Arlington, Texas. Born of a desire of five experienced Scouts to be a part of Scouting at it's finest, Troop 127 was established with aspirations to take the program to a higher level of excellence. Thus, they felt it appropriate that the phoenix, itself a paragon of excellence, represent the troop and that its slogan should be a moderate reminder of this yearning. Hence, Troop 127 is "Rising Above!" in all that it does. The ideals set forth in 1998 remain the core of our program today.

Stressing fun, honor, character, commitment and uncompromising respect for others, the troop program includes a strong advancement program, quality youth leadership, challenging outdoor experiences, and utilization of the patrol method to build future leaders.

Meetings and Programs

Troop meetings are held every Monday night year-round from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at St. Joseph Catholic Community Church. At least one campout or troop activity is scheduled for each month with destinations and times based on availability and the scheduling of other scouting events.

The program for the Troop is planned by the Patrol Leaders Council (the boy leaders in the Troop) and the Troop adult leaders (the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters). The program includes activities during Troop meetings, camping trips, and outings. At the age of eleven or twelve, boys need to be exposed to many things, and we feel that the Scouting program offers the best and broadest range of experience and training that is available in our area. Please check the Troop 127 calendar at www.jeditexan.com/troop127 for the dates and times of all meetings and activities. Your ideas for the program are always welcome.

Leadership

The Troop Committee is composed of a chairman and as many interested parents or other adults as wish to participate. The Committee is responsible for providing general supervision and support of the Troop, and meets at the Church on the first Monday of each month. We encourage ALL Parents to register with the Troop and participate as an adult leader. You will soon find yourself caught up in the excitement that can only come from Scouting!

Membership

Your son has joined our Troop by filling out a Boy Scout Application form and paying the National Registration Fees outlined on the application. If you and your son transferred to the Troop from a Cub Scout Pack or other Troop, we ask that you each pay the \$1.00 transfer fee.

As a member of our Troop, your son should complete all additional paperwork required by Boy Scouts of America. Specifically, the BSA Annual Health and Medical Form must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian before your son can participate in any Troop outing or campout.

Members of our Troop are also responsible for quarterly dues in August, November, February, and May.

Finances and Fundraising

The cost of the Scouting program is the responsibility of the Scout and his parents. Each year the cost of Scouting will be approximately \$400 to participate in Summer Camp, Camporees, merit badges, camping trips and other Troop 127 special activities. While we encourage Scouts to attend all activities, each is independent and participation is typically optional.

Initial costs to join the Troop are as follows:

- Troop Dues \$15.00 per quarter due in August, November, February, and May.
- National Dues \$15.00 per year due December 1 (pro-rated if the Scout joins during the year).
- Boy's Life (Scouting magazine) \$ 12.00 per year due December 1
- Uniform and Scout Handbook (see *Uniform and Scout Handbook* below)

Troop activities typically have participation costs to cover Troop expenses associated with admission, transportation, food, etc. These fees vary by event and are outlined on the Activity Permission Form. Most campouts have an activity fee of approximately \$20. This amount may vary depending on the campout location and weekend activity.

It is the goal of Troop 127 to raise funds through annual fundraisers to offset costs of maintaining the Troop's camping equipment and gear. By actively participating in the Troop fundraisers, we are able to defray some or all of these costs enabling the Troop to maintain low quarterly dues. We will periodically undertake additional fundraising initiatives directed toward specific troop goals such as new equipment, summer camp travel fees, etc.

Uniform and Scout Handbook

Your son will need a Boy Scout Handbook and a complete Field uniform to get started in Scouting. The following items can be purchased for about \$45.00 at the [Longhorn Council Scout Shop in Arlington](#) ([click on link for address](#))

- Boy Scout Handbook
- Scout Field Uniform Shirt (short sleeve)
- Longhorn Council Patch
- World Crest Emblem
- Patrol Emblem (Troop will provide)
- Green Shoulder Loops*

- Troop 127 numbers*
- Cover for Handbook (optional, but highly recommended)
- Convertible Scout pants (optional, but highly recommended)
- Scout Socks (optional)
- Scout Web Belt & Buckle (optional)

* Item may have been provided by the Troop at a Webelos Cross-over ceremony

If you enjoy internet shopping, you can "pre-shop" and/or obtain these items online at www.scoutstuff.org. You can also print out a list to take with you to one of the Scout Shops. http://www.scoutstuff.org/BSASupply/images/pdfs/Boy_Scout_Checklist.pdf

In addition to the items from the Scout Shop, you will also need an official T127 Activity Shirt. The Troop also offers a hooded sweatshirt and Troop baseball cap and a commemorative Troop neckerchief as optional uniform pieces.

The proper placement of badges and insignia is shown in the Boy Scout Handbook or can be downloaded from the internet at <http://www.scoutstuff.org/BSASupply/forms.aspx>. We recommend that the patches be sewn onto the uniform (rather than using Badge Magic, a sticky backing that can be used in lieu of sewing. Badge Magic tends to "run" and turn black as the uniform ages.) Most dry cleaners will sew patches on Scout uniforms for around \$2 per patch. Be sure to pin the patches to the uniform to ensure they are sewn in the correct place.

If you lack the funds to purchase a complete uniform, the Troop may have some "experienced" uniforms available for your Scout.

Uniform

Scouts in our Troop proudly wear their tan Field uniform at every regular Troop meeting, Troop Court of Honor, flag ceremonies, and when traveling with the Troop. The Merit Badge Sash and the optional Troop neckerchief are treated with honor and are reserved for special events such as a Board of Review or Court of Honor. Our Troop does not require Scout pants, shorts, or hats. If a hat is worn, it must be Scout related and it should not be worn inside the church where we meet. Open toe shoes are never a part of the Scout uniform and must not be worn to meetings or at Troop activities.

The Activity uniform (formerly called Class B uniform) is the official Troop T-shirt. Activity uniforms are worn on Saturdays during campouts, at Patrol Leaders Council meetings and other designated Troop activities.

Troop Equipment

The Troop supplies tents, cooking gear and utensils, tables, propane lanterns, and propane stoves for each patrol in the Troop. This equipment is purchased with money from dues and with funds earned by the Scouts and/or the parents during approved fundraising projects. Camping trips will be paid for by the Scout and will include food, transportation, and admission costs.

Personal Camping Gear – see attachment

Campouts

Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend Troop activities; however, unlike during Cub Scouts, parents are not required to attend Boy Scout campouts. We recommend all adults register with the

Troop as only registered adult leaders and Scouts are covered by BSA insurance. We strongly believe in keeping our parents active in the Troop and we value parental support in all Troop activities. Moreover, studies have shown that parents who remain active in Troop activities significantly increase the likelihood that their son's will earn their Eagle rank.

Periodically the Patrol Leader's Council will designate an activity as a family campout. Please keep in mind that our activities are geared toward youth who are old enough to participate in the Cub Scout and Girl Scout programs.

Medical Forms

The Annual Health and Medical Form must be updated each year and be signed by the Scout's parent. The form is available at <http://www.scouting.org/forms.aspx>.

Court of Honor Awards Ceremony

The Troop strives to hold a Court of Honor each quarter to present the awards earned by the Scouts. Families are asked to attend and join in the presentations of awards to their sons. Full uniform, including the custom embroidered Troop neckerchief and the merit badge sash are worn at all Court of Honor events.

Advancement

The Boy Scout program, different from Cub Scouts and Webelos, is designed to give each boy a chance to stand on his own two feet. An Assistant Scoutmaster is assigned to each Patrol to help them learn Scout skills and advance in rank. The Assistant Scoutmasters are sometimes assisted by Troop Guides, Junior Assistant Scoutmasters, and Instructors who are boy leaders in the Troop. Boys are allowed to progress at their own pace. After they earn the Scout rank, they can work on Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class requirements simultaneously.

If they are actively involved, and regularly attend the Troop meetings and campouts, they should easily make First Class within 12 months. Our goal is for the boys to have fun-while learning useful, lifelong skills.

Merit Badges can also be earned along the way. They are required for the advanced ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle. This program gives parents a chance to lend their expertise on a variety of subjects by volunteering to teach a Merit Badge course. Many merit badges can be completed in four weeks.

Troop Rules

See the Troop 127 Rules and Procedures at <http://www.jeditexan.com/troop127/> for specific requirements. However, a few are important enough to be mentioned below:

1. On any Scout function, no tobacco products, alcohol, or controlled substances will be allowed.
2. Medication (including over the counter medication such as Tylenol, Advil, cough syrup, asthma inhalers, and prescriptions) should be turned over to an adult leader in charge prior to departing.
3. On any Scout function, Scouts must remain in the area designated by adult leaders. Scouts must use the buddy system and obtain permission from an adult leader prior to going on a hike or leaving the area.
4. Hazing (initiation) and/or harassment is not allowed and will not be tolerated at any time in Scouting.

5. Scouts are responsible for their portion of the food purchased once a commitment is made to attend a camping trip. These costs must be reimbursed to the Scout making the food purchases unless the grubmaster and Scoutmaster have been notified prior to the food purchase.
6. Fighting, physical or verbal abuse or the use of profane language will not be tolerated.
7. Camping is an outdoor experience. Personal items such as electronic games, MP3 players, etc., are not appropriate on weekend campouts or Troop outings. Any such devices that are seen on Troop outings will be turned in to the Scoutmaster and or Assistant Scoutmaster and returned to the Scout at the end of the Troop outing. (Please note that these items may be permitted while traveling to/from long term campouts. These devices must remain in the vehicle during the campout.)
8. Scouts are expected at all times to show respect for adult leaders, their fellow scouts, the scout program and the outdoors.
9. Scouts are expected to demonstrate "Scout Spirit". Scout spirit is a requirement for all rank advancements. Scout spirit includes such common courtesies as respect and cooperation.

At times Scouts like to test the validity of Troop rules. I can personally assure you that a violation of these rules or those outlined in Troop 127 Rules and Procedures may result in the Scout being sent home at his expense. In addition, the Scout and/or his parents may be asked to appear before the Patrol Leaders Council or Troop Committee to discuss serious rules violations.

I am looking forward to working with each of you to make Scouting a memorable and worthwhile experience for all of our boys. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Yours in Scouting,

Tali Ploetz

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Other Important Information

Troop Website: www.jeditexan.com/troop127

Council Website: www.longhorncouncil.org

District Website: www.tejasdistrict.org

Scout Gear: www.scoutstuff.org