



Quick Start/FAQ

For Parents:

Meetings/General Information:

- Does the troop have a new scout program?
 - Yes! Upon joining troop 2970, your scout will be placed in a new scout patrol, which has a senior scout from the troop assigned as the patrol leader. The new scout patrol is assisted by several Assistant Scout Masters within the troop, and our New Scout coordinator. The Patrol Leader and the assigned ASM's help the new scout patrol integrate into the troop and begin understanding how to advance through the scouting ranks.
- How long has BSA Troop 2970 been around?
 - BSA Troop 2970 was founded over 10 years ago.
- How can I find out what events and the dates that the Troop is planning?
 - Check the online Troop calendar or our App for the latest updates. We also communicate through email, from Patrols, Committee, and our Scoutmaster. Check your email frequently for emails from Troop leadership, and please make sure we have your current email addresses. We encourage Scouts to have a personal email account when parents feel they are ready for one.
- Should I call someone if my son can't be at a meeting? If so, whom?
 - There is no need to contact the troop leadership (Scoutmaster/Assistant Scout Masters) for a typical meeting night if your scout can't make it. Your scout should contact his Patrol Leader. And if you son is serving as a Patrol Leader, he should contact his Assistant Patrol Leader and the Senior Patrol Leader.
- Who do I contact with questions?
 - Scoutmaster: Mr. Shawn Carroll,
 - Committee Chair: Mr. Mark Jones
 - National Capital Area Council: 301-530-9360; www.ncacbsa.org
 - Scout Stores (Bethesda): 301-564-1091; (Springfield): 703-321-4836
- Can my son join scouts without being a Cub Scout?



- Yes! Even if your scout wasn't part of the BSA Cub Scouting program, they are eligible to join once they turn 11 years old. They can participate in BSA troops until they are 18 years old.
- How does advancement work in Boy Scouts?
 - Advancement is one of the methods that is used to deliver the aims and purposes of Scouting. All scouts are encouraged to advance, because it gives them recognition for accomplishment, teaches them useful skills, and gives them a benchmark by which to measure their progress. Unlike Cub Scouts, where all scouts advance in rank by age or grade, Boy Scout advancement is not tied to a specific timetable. There are scouts who advance to Eagle by the age of 14, and there have been some who reach age 18 without advancing higher than Tenderfoot.
 - A scout advances through the first few ranks (Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class) by mastering scout and life skills of increasing complexity. As the scout completes requirements, the scout will have the Scout Handbook signed the Scoutmaster or ASM (see a separate FAQ entry on this), complete his Scoutmaster Conference and Board of Review, and be recognized for his achievement. Scouts may work on all ranks through First Class simultaneously.
 - The next ranks, Star and Life, require completion of varying numbers of merit badges, including some that are required for the rank of Eagle, along with service hours and fulfilling a leadership role in the Troop.
 - The highest rank, Eagle, requires completion of 21 merit badges, of which 12 are required and the rest electives, development and execution of a service project involving supervision and leadership of others, and holding a position of leadership in the troop. The process is more complicated, and the rank is awarded by the national organization rather than the local council.
 - More information and links to videos for each rank can be found on the Advancements & Awards page on the BSA website.
- Who is your chartering organization?
 - Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church (OSWLC) has chosen Troop 2970 to be part of its youth ministry in Loudoun County and has agreed to be the charter Organization. In accordance with BSA policy, the Charter



Organization provides our meeting place, approves all adult leadership, assures that the Troop is maintaining its program consistent with church policy and missions, approves fund raising opportunities, assures the Troop and its members are registered annually, and has ultimate authority over the ownership of troop assets and equipment.

- Consistent with BSA Policy, youth and adult members of the troop are not required to belong to Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church.
- Troop 2970 acknowledges its obligation to Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church by actively participating in church cleanup and maintenance work days, service projects to maintain and improve church facilities, and by willingly complying with rules for use of church facilities.

Monetary Commitments:

Dues:

Troop 2970 assesses annual dues for each member of the troop. This fee helps to offset the costs of rank awards, merit badges, troop equipment and supplies, insurance, leader training, and a subscription to Boy's Life magazine. Annual dues are payable upon joining troop 2970 and at the beginning of each year. Annual Dues for Troop 2970 are \$160 per year, broken out as follows: \$109 Troop Dues, \$33 BSA National Registration, \$12 for Boy's Life magazine, \$6 Insurance.

Arrow of light cub scouts which are transferring to our troop would only need to pay the troop dues, as they have already paid national and boys life.

Scout Accounts:

The Scout Account Program is designed to serve as a way for Scouts to earn money to help pay for their Scouting experiences. An individual account will be established for each Scout when they join. By participating in troop fundraisers, Scouts can earn enough money to offset the costs for campouts, dues and summer camp. The Scout Account funds cannot be used for other purposes and are deposited in the Troop's general fund once a Scout is no longer registered with Troop 2970



If you have a current balance with your cub scout pack, you can transfer that balance to the troop by having the Pack Treasurer issue a check to the troop, and delivering it to the troop treasurer.

You can add money to your scouts account either by mailing a check to the troop treasurer, made out to troop 2970 earmarked with your son's name, OR by paying it online through the website. The website allows payment via credit card or electronic check.

How can I help?:

- How can I help as a parent?
 - Parents can help in many ways. By volunteering to be Merit Badge Counselors, assist as drivers for monthly trips, joining the Troop Committee, assisting with fundraising, helping to organize Courts of Honor, Boards of Review, etc. By everyone volunteering a little, it makes it easier on everyone, and really benefits the Scouts.
 - We always have positions open for Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM) and Committee Members. There are several different committee positions, such as Equipment coordinator, Activities/Outings Coordinator, Training coordinator, Communications Coordinator, Membership Coordinator, Secretary, or Fundraising Coordinator (to name a few) that require volunteers from the parents. Most positions can have a "shadow" who can assist the primary contact and learn the job.
 - We also need parents to help with Boards of Review and Courts of Honor. All parents are welcome to register through our Troop with Boy Scouts of America; While all parents have a say in committee proceedings, only those registered as Committee Member or Committee Chair have a vote. Parents can also help by remembering that we are a "Boy Led Troop", and letting their son fulfill his requirements on his own is an important part of the growing experience.
- How much parental participation is required?
 - Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in some monthly activities, fundraisers, etc. It's the belief that if all parents share in the participation that it will make it easier for all and allow the scouts to enjoy their in the



scouts adventures. Parents are encouraged to attend various parents meetings throughout the year that provides information on Troop activities, guidelines, and allows the parents to ask questions

- What do you have to do to become an adult leader or Troop Committee member?
 - Ask about positions needed. Complete a BSA application. Complete YPT (Youth Protection Training). Complete and turn-in a BSA application and YPT certificate. Take additional required BSA training in a timely manner.

Advancement:

- Who keeps track of a scout's advancement?
 - He does! Although the Troop keeps advancement records once advancements are completed, a large part of the Scouting experience is for the boys to learn responsibility for their own advancement. The Scout Handbook should be taken on almost all Scouting events, and the Scout should be aware of what requirements are outstanding. Generally, nobody is going to tell him he needs requirement such-and-such until it is noticed that he's not been advancing for a long period of time.
- What can parents do to help with their son's advancement?
 - One of the biggest things you can do for your scout is to encourage them to keep working and to help them remember all our Troop activities on our calendar. Write important dates on your family's calendar. Keep track of advancement progress via the scout book. Remind your scout of items they still need to complete to earn the next rank. Encourage your scout to talk to the Patrol leader so they can review what needs to get done. You can also work with your scout on rank advancements, although you cannot sign them off. You certainly can, however, help prepare your scout to demonstrate what they have been working on and get those things signed off at a meeting by the appropriate person (usually, an ASM or the Scoutmaster).
- How can I find out what the current requirements are for a rank or merit badge?



- The current requirements are found on the National BSA Web Site. You can also use meritbadge.org, a resource which lists requirements for ranks and merit badges, and has Merit Badge worksheets available for download which make tracking progress on a badge much easier.
- Who can I talk with if I have any advancement-related questions?
 - You or your scout can always talk with the Scoutmaster or one of the Assistant Scoutmasters if you have a question about a requirement. You can also talk with the Advancement Chair if you have a question about whether an advancement has been recorded or any other advancement-related issue.

Medical Information:

- What medical forms are required?
 - To participate in troop outings, we require that BSA Health forms A and B be on file at all times. Form C is necessary on any even lasting over 72 hours. The same forms are used by both scouts and adults.
 - The form has three parts. Parts A and B are to be completed at least annually by participants in all Scouting events.
 - Part C is the physical exam that is required for participants in any event that exceeds 72 consecutive hours, for all high-adventure base participants, or when the nature of the activity is strenuous and demanding. Service projects or work weekends may fit this description. Part C is to be completed and signed by a certified and licensed health-care provider—physician (MD or DO), nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. It is important to note that the height/weight limits must be strictly adhered to when the event will take the unit more than 30 minutes away from an emergency vehicle-accessible roadway, or when the program requires it, such as backpacking trips, high-adventure activities, and conservation projects in remote areas.
 - Further information about the health forms can be found on the BSA website.

Other Topics:

- What is Youth Protection Training (YPT)? Do I need to take it?



- Youth Protection Training instructs adults in the steps BSA requires to keep our youth safe. It covers a variety of subjects including rules of contact, recognizing and preventing abuse, safe travel, camping, equipment, privacy, and many other subjects. You will learn the rules which all adults in the Scouting program are required to obey. All adult leaders who have contact with youth are required to take Youth Protection Training and remain current by retaking it every two years. This includes any adult who camps with the troop, drives Scouts to and from campouts or events, or works with Scouts in any capacity (including Merit Badge Counselors). Anyone can take Youth Protection Training - you do not have to be a registered leader. Begin your training by visiting the BSA Online Learning Center. Turn in your certificate of completion to the troop Committee.

For Scouts:

- What and when are Troop Meetings? Are there also Patrol Meetings?
 - Troop meetings are held from 7:30 to 9:30 PM each Thursday at:
 - Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church 43115 Waxpool Rd, Ashburn (Broadlands), VA 20148.
 - If there is inclement weather, meetings may be cancelled, and notice will be provided by the Scoutmaster or other Troop leadership.
- What happens during a normal weekly meeting?
 - In general, The PLC has organized several different activities each meeting night. We generally start with the flag presentation, reciting of the scout oath and law, and announcements. Program time is organized and run by the PLC, and then we close the meeting with additional announcements and the closing flag ceremony.
- How do I start working on rank advancement?
 - You can begin working on advancement immediately! Your scout book will be a key reference guide, as it lists the requirements for each rank. There are chapters in the book which discuss each topic in depth. When you feel that you are ready for a sign off, you should find an assistant scout master (ASM), or the Scout master (SM) and ask them to do a sign



off for you. Be prepared, if the requirement says you must demonstrate the activity, have everything you need to demonstrate it before you ask for the sign off!

- Who signs off on my advancements?
 - In general, when a Scout learns and masters the task in a requirement, he demonstrates it for the Scoutmaster or ASM, who will initial and date his Boy Scout Handbook on the page (in the back) for that requirement.
- How does the troop decide where to go on camping trips, and how does the troop decide on the subjects for the weekly meetings?
 - The Scouts through the Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) plan the program of trips and meetings.
- What is the PLC?
 - The PLC (Patrol Leaders' Council) consists of the Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leaders, Assistant Patrol Leaders, Troop Guides, and SPL-designated troop positions.
- Where do I get a uniform and a scout book?
 - All of your initial scouting equipment, including a Class A uniform, and a scout book, can be found at a local scout store. Near us, There is a small store in Leesburg that carries uniforms, and the Scout shop in Bethesda, MD will have anything you need to get started.
- Who keeps track of the activities that I've attended?
 - You do! In your scout book there are logs intended for you to track camping nights, service hours, rank advancement, etc. While the troop does track advancements when they are completed, it's primarily your responsibility to track progress towards ranks and merit badges.
- When should I wear my uniform? Should I wear the full (Class A) uniform or the T-shirt (Class B) uniform?
 - Troop 2970 recognizes two kinds of uniform: Class A and Class B.
 - The Class A consists of the official Boy Scout uniform shirt, olive green pants or shorts, belt, socks, and Troop hat (hats are not worn indoors at certain times), Troop neckerchief and slide, and appropriate footwear (leather or canvas shoes, neat and clean, or hiking shoes or boots). The Class B T-shirt is worn under the Class A shirt. The Class A Uniform is customarily worn:



- While traveling to and from campouts, and for dinner and chapel while at the campout
- All regular Troop meetings, unless activities during the meeting require other clothing.
- When participating in a public event such as flag ceremony or parade.
- When sitting for a Scoutmaster Conference or Board of Review
- At formal events such as a Court of Honor, the Merit Badge Sash may be worn over the right shoulder. If a scout is a member of the Order of the Arrow, the OA sash may be worn instead of the Merit Badge Sash. Both sashes may not be worn at the same time, nor may the Merit Badge Sash be worn draped from the waist or belt.
- The Insignia Guide contains information on how to wear the uniform correctly and where all insignia should be placed.
 - The Class B Uniform substitutes the troop T-shirt for the official BSA scout shirt. Khaki or green pants or shorts are still part of the Class B, and footwear appropriate for the activity. Occasionally, scouts may be asked to wear other clothing instead official Class A or B uniforms, activity dependent.
- What is the youth leadership structure of the troop and where do I fit in?
 - Unlike Cub Scouts, which is run by the adults, Boy Scouts is a boy-led organization. The troop consists of several smaller groups called Patrols. These may seem to be similar to dens in Cub Scouts, but with one important distinction: Boys in a patrol elect their own leader from among themselves. The Patrol Leader's job is to help the boys in the patrol succeed by helping them advance, defining and supporting their roles in the patrol, and to represent the patrol on the Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC). The Patrol Leader appoints an Assistant Patrol Leader and designates other members to ongoing or per-event functions, such as a patrol quartermaster The Patrol Leader also assigns duties for each member at campouts such as cooking and cleaning. Patrol Leaders are elected by patrol members at twice-yearly troop elections.



- The top youth leader of a troop is called the Senior Patrol Leader. The SPL is elected by all the boys in the troop at the twice-yearly troop elections. His job is to chair the PLC, appoint Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders and other troop officers not appointed by the Scoutmaster, and to support the Patrol Leaders in their duties. He also chairs the annual troop program planning conference and conducts Troop Leadership Training with the support and participation of the Scoutmaster.
- Other troop officers include the Scribe, who records the happenings of the PLC and at troop meetings, and takes attendance; the Librarian, who maintains the troop's library of handbooks and merit badge pamphlets; the Chaplain Aide, who plans and conducts religious services at campouts; Historian, who keeps a written and photo record of troop activities; the Quartermaster, who helps keep track of the troop's equipment; Webmaster, who helps maintain the Troop website; Troop Guides, who help new-scout patrols get settled in the troop and with their advancement; Instructors, who teach Scout skills; and Den Chiefs, who assist Cub Scout den leaders.
- Every scout in the troop (except for the SPL, ASPLs and Troop Guides) is a member of a patrol. Patrol members can choose their patrol name, have a patrol flag and cheer, and camp as a patrol on troop campouts. As a new scout, your patrol leader and members of your patrol will do everything they can to make you feel at home in the troop and help you learn what you need to know to succeed.
- What do you do on campouts?
 - Each campout has a primary activity associated with the outing, but we also focus on working on requirements. Most important of all, the Scouts decide on these activities by working together and voting to determine what they want to do as a group each year!