



# Session 514

## Webelos to Scouting Transition



Planning & Training Conference  
Chief Seattle Council  
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# Agenda

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1. Introductions
2. Differences between Cub Scouts and Troop Scouting
  - Scouts BSA is not Cub Scouts 2.0
3. Pointers for doing a Troop search
4. Things to look for in a Troop
  - Questions to ask, etc.
5. Bonus Slides (optional)
6. Q & A



# Introduction

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- Who I am...
  - Patrick McCann, Scoutmaster, T100 Ballard
  - ~1 year as SM, 5 years as Den Leader, Eagle Scout, Girl Scout Leader
- A Promise
  - Not here on a T100 recruiting call
- Material:
  - Full presentation will be available online.
  - Email me for questions, for link to this presentation, or if you'd like to have this discussion at your pack/den - [mccann101@gmail.com](mailto:mccann101@gmail.com)

# Differences: C.S. Badges vs Scouts BSA Ranks

## 1. Advancement

- CS Badges do not require the previous badge.
  - Example: Bear badge doesn't require Wolf
- In Troops, all scouts start at the first rank and work their way up.
  - Leadership skills: initiative, involvement and ownership.

## 2. Seven ranks in Scouts BSA:

- Two significant ranks: Eagle and First Class
- Achieving First Class (FC): Scout crosses into leadership
  - Single biggest milestone on way to Eagle
  - More responsibility, privilege, recognition
- First four ranks: Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, FC
  - Together they're called "Trail to First Class"
  - TTFC requirements are checklist of scout skills
    - Camping, first aid, citizenship, swimming, etc..
  - Rank requirements can be done in parallel
  - Can be done as fast as a Scout wants
- After First Class: Star, Life, Eagle
  - Leadership ranks
  - Require leadership and merit badges



# Differences: Dens vs. Patrols

## *A patrol is:*

- Scout led
- A self propelled group of Scouts
- Choose their own leaders
- Independent of adult control



**Robert Baden Powell:** “The object of the patrol method is not so much saving the Scoutmaster trouble as to give responsibility to the boy.”

# Differences: Dens vs. Patrols

	Den	Patrol
Size:	6-9 Scouts	6-9 Scouts
Leader:	Den Leader: Adult	Patrol Leader: Scout
Ranks:	Scouts are working on same badge	Scouts are different ranks
Ages:	All same grade	Can be all ages
Teaching:	Scouts learn from adults	Scouts learn from each other (EDGE method)
Names:	Similar names: Den 1, Den 2, etc.	Cool and crazy names: Falcons, Knights, Battle Turtles, etc..
Activities:	Do stuff that gets them to their badge	Scouts decide what to do

# Differences: Troops camp... a lot

- Most troops camp each month
  - Car camping, backpacking, canoe camping, etc.
  - Most will have an activity:
    - Biking, merit badges, camporee, cave hikes, etc.
- Camping teaches leadership skills:
  - Preparation, teamwork, problem solving, resiliency.
- Patrols operate independently on camp outs
  - Cook & eat together, tent together, & responsible for their own camping area (“leave no trace”)
  - Patrol leader is responsible for his patrol on a campout
  - Adults have a camp area away from the Scouts.
- Summer Camp is 1 week long
  - Scout can make significant progress on TTFC
  - Most scouts usually get multiple merit badges
- High Adventure: 13 y.o. & 1st class
  - 50 mile backpack, 60 mile canoeing, whitewater rafting, etc..



# Differences: Uniform

Merit badge sash: worn for special occasions

Merit badges: Silver trim means Eagle required MB. Green trim are non-Eagle.

Temporary patches: for things like summer camp. Hung from right pocket (over district patch)



Neckerchief: Often indicates troop

World Scouting patch: All Scouts around the world have this.

Achievement Knots: this is the religious emblem

Rank: This is Life rank

Arrow of Light



# Differences: Uniform

Green shoulder loops:  
Indicates Boy Scouts

Patrol Patch



Council patch: Yours  
will be Chief Seattle

Troop number

Leadership patch:  
this is SPL

# Differences: Parent Involvement

- Parents don't sign off rank requirements
  - Sign offs are by SM, ASM & older scouts, depending on troop rules.
  - Leadership: Builds confidence to speak to adults
- Parent guide and encourage their sons
  - But do not do the work for them
  - Scouts lead themselves
- Parental involvement is critical to the success of the troop
- Find a way to get involved:
  - A few ways that parent can be involved:
    - Signing up to be an ASM or on committee
    - Merit badge counselor
    - Fundraising
    - Going on campouts



# Differences: Leadership Organization

- Cub Scouts have two leadership organizations:
  - Committee: Chair, treasurer, secretary, etc.
  - Program: Cubmaster, Den Leaders
- Troops have three leadership organizations
  - Committee: Chair, treasurer, secretary, etc.
  - Program: Scoutmaster and all ASMs
    - Camp outs, oversee patrols, & sign off requirements
  - Youth Leadership: Typically higher rank scouts
    - Sr. Patrol Leader (SPL): leads the troop
      - Elected, reports to Scoutmaster
      - Leads weekly troop mtg & monthly PLC
    - Patrol leaders: lead the patrols
      - Reports to SPL
      - Leads on camp outs and weekly “patrol corners”
    - Other roles: Assistant SPL, Quartermaster, Chaplain’s Aide, Scribe, Librarian, Webmaster, Bugler, Den Chiefs, etc..



# Pointers for Visiting Scout Troops

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1. Visit 3-4 troops
  - Like shopping for a pair of jeans:
    - Try on a lot of them.
    - Choose the one that fits best
2. Spend at least 3 hours with your favorite troops
  - At least 2 troop meetings (~1.5 hours each)
  - Outings and campouts are better
3. As much as it can be, troop choice should be the Scout's decision
  - Leadership skills: Ownership, decision making
4. Parents should guide the Scout:
  - Interview after each troop visit
  - Take notes of each conversation
  - Compare and contrast based upon conversations and notes

# Choosing a Scout Troop: Some obvious things...

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There are a few obvious things to look for in a troop:

- Is it close to you?
- Does it fit your schedule?
- Does the Scout have friends that go there?
- How frequently does it meet?
  - Some meet once per week, others twice per month.



# Choosing a Scout Troop: Look for a “Right Sized” Troop

What size troop do you want?

- There is a wide range of troop sizes
  - As small as 8-10 Scouts
  - As large as 100 (or more)
  - Advantages to both
- Small Troops:
  - Advantages: Individual attention & scout won't get lost in the crowd
  - Disadvantage: Maybe not as many opportunities. (E.g. TTFC, Merit badges)
- Large Troops:
  - Advantages: Lots of opportunity (Merit badges, TTFC, etc.), Lots of variety, lots of friends
  - Disadvantages: Can be loud & chaotic, scouts can get lost in the crowd



# How to Choose a Scout Troop: Things to Look For

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- Are there plenty of adult leaders?
  - Even though a troop is Scout led, there should be plenty of adult leaders at troop meetings and outings
  - Are adult leaders paying attention to what the scouts are doing?
- Are the adult leaders enthusiastic, skilled and knowledgeable?
  - Do they seem to enjoy talking about Scouting?
  - Can they answer most or all of your questions?
  - Is the Scoutmaster available to talk and does he seem to enjoy his role?

# How to Choose a Scout Troop: Things to Look For

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- Is the troop Scout led?
  - Are older Scouts teaching younger Scouts?
  - Is the SPL leading the meeting or outing?
  - Do the Scouts seem to fix their own problems?
  - Are adults intervening a lot and doing things for the Scouts?
- Is there a good distribution of ages?
  - Due to attrition, there will usually be more younger Scouts than older Scouts in a troop
  - Are enough Scouts at each age level to provide leadership for the next 3-4 years?
  - Enough younger scouts (11-12) so the Scout won't feel like they are the only young Scout?



# Choosing a Scout Troop: How to Ask Questions



## How to ask questions:

- Ask during a troop meeting or outing
  - Outings are generally better since they are less hectic
- Parents/guardians should ask the questions
  - While the Scout is involved in the meeting or outing
- Bring a list of questions you want to ask
  - Maybe a pencil to jot down things you want to remember
- Look for an experienced, enthusiastic leader to answer your questions
  - Look for someone who's been directly working with the Scouts for a year or more
    - They'll know the most about camp outs, ranks, boy-led, etc.
    - This will probably be an ASM
- Talk with the Scoutmaster if you can!

# How to Choose a Scout Troop: Questions to Ask

- What the troop does for Trail to First Class (TTFC)
  - Do they have planned activities and structure to guide a new Scout on TTFC?
  - More planning and structure makes it easier for Scouts to reach 1st Class
- How do they organize their patrols?
  - Same age patrols:
    - Advantages: Scouts have more in common & easier to become good friends
  - Mixed age patrols
    - Advantages: younger scouts learn from older scouts & patrols are approximately equal
  - Hybrid
    - e.g. First year patrol, followed by mixed age patrols



# How to Choose a Scout Troop: Questions to Ask



- Ask how often they camp.
  - Most troops camp about once per month
- Ask what “Scout-led” means in their troop.
- All troops do “Scout-led” slightly differently.
- Ask what the challenges of a troop are.
  - All troops have challenges...
    - Involved adult leaders should be aware of what the challenges are.
- Ask what the strengths of the troop are.
  - All troops have strengths
    - Involved adult leaders should be eager to brag about the strengths of the troop

# How to Choose a Scout Troop: Questions to Ask

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- Ask what they do for fundraising
  - Do they have one big fund raiser or lots of smaller fund raisers
  - Do they do Christmas Tree Recycling?
- Ask what the troop pays for
  - Badges? Dues? Etc....
  - How much do camp outs cost?
  - Strong fundraising makes Scouting more affordable for families
- Ask what the troop does for High Adventure
  - Again, High Adventure is for Scouts that are 1st Class (or higher) and 13 (or older)
  - What have they done recently and what are they planning?
  - Do they do at least one HA trip per year?



# How to Choose a Scout Troop: Questions to Ask

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## Troop Involvement with the rest of the Scouting World:



- Ask if they are involved with Order of the Arrow
  - Honor society for Scouts
- Ask if they are involved with NYLT (National Youth Leadership Training)
  - Leadership training for older Scouts
- Ask if they are involved with Round Table
  - Monthly district information session for adult leaders
- Ask if they are involved with Wood Badge
  - Leadership training for adult leaders

# ***Bonus Slide: Bad Assumptions***

Questions & assumptions that are not that helpful:

- **Bad Assumption: Small troops are unhealthy troops**
  - Some troops are small by choice
  - Small troops have several real advantages
- **Bad Assumption: Few Eagle scouts means an unhealthy troop.**
  - Low numbers of Eagle Scouts can be because of low recruitment numbers 4-5 years ago.
- **Bad Assumption: Fund raising and service projects are not good times to visit with troops.**
  - Fund raising and service projects can be fun team building activities and a great time to visit



# Bonus Slide: What to buy for Boy Scouts

- **Priority 1:** (First week)
  - Dues, Book
  - Uniform:
    - Class A shirt, pants, socks, belt, loops, woggle
    - Patches: troop, district, patrol, World Scouting
    - Optional: Sash, AoL patch, hat, class B.
    - Troops commonly supply a neckerchief.
- **Priority 2:** (Before first camping trip)
  - Mess kit: Keep it simple. It will get lost.
  - Sleeping bag:
    - Warm enough for 30F nights
    - Should pack small & light.
- **Priority 3:** (first 1-4 months)
  - Backpack: Youth size, well built, easily expandable for growth. (Ask if packs are supplied by the troop)
  - Boots: tough, waterproof.
- **Priority 4:** (after first year)
  - Tent: Troops commonly supply tents

**LABEL  
EVERYTHING!!!**



# Bonus Slide: Merit Badges

- ~130 Merit Badges: total changes every year
  - Displayed on sash
- Eagle Required (ER) vs. Non Eagle Required (NER)
  - ER are generally harder
    - e.g. Personal Management, Cooking, Env Science, Citizenship in the World/Nation/Community, Swimming, Camping.
  - NER are generally more fun
    - e.g. Rifle Shooting, Geocaching, Animation, Kayaking, Fishing, Snow Sports, Dentistry, Welding.
- MBs are required for higher ranks
  - e.g. Eagle requirements: 13 ER MBs, 8 NER MBs
- Blue Cards
  - 3"x6" card used to as sign off record for MB
  - Signed by SM and MB Counselor
- Visual: Silver trim for ER MB
  - Gold trim for NER MB



Information for Applicant	Approved By	Date of Approval	Signature

**Information for Applicant**

- A merit badge application can be approved only by a registered merit badge counselor.
- You must have a health and safety card on file with the merit badge counselor.
- Sign on your approved application to your unit leader. You will be awarded the merit badge emblem and certificate at a suitable occasion.

**Information for Counselor**

- Merit badge applications must be signed in advance by the applicant's unit leader.
- The Scout must have his/her Scout Safety Card in attendance at all instructional events.
- You may not change any requirement, but you may check your knowledge or experience that all areas for counseling, instruction and testing.

204126A  
30170-34126

**APPLICATION FOR MERIT BADGE**  
Name: JOHN DOE  
Address: 123 CHERRY STREET  
City: HAMPTON, VA 23666  
It is requested:  Day Board  Week Board  Weekend  
of TROOP no. 999  
Name: HERITAGE  
Council: COLONIAL VIRGINIA  
and is qualified to begin working for merit badge credit on the honor roll.  
1/1/98  
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA  
34126  
2001 Via Valley of Atlanta



# ***Bonus Slide: Scouts BSA Terms (page 1)***

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**“Ask your SPL”**: An ASM’s answer when a Scout asks a question that the Scouts should figure out on their own.

**ASM**: Assistant Scoutmaster- Adult leader that works directly with Scouts. Attends troop meetings & camp outs, signs off requirements and oversees patrols. **Board of Review**: Meeting between a Scout and 3-6 committee members. This is the last requirement for a rank.

**Court of Honor**: Awards ceremony. Commonly used to present merit badges, etc..

**Eagle Palms**: Awards beyond Eagle badge for extra merit badges and time in Scouts. Bronze → Gold → Silver

## ***Bonus Slide: Scouts BSA Terms (page 2)***

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**EDGE Method:** Explain, Demonstrate, Guide, Enable. Four step method of Scouts teaching Scouts.

**PL:** Patrol leader: Elected scout that runs a patrol. 6 month term.

**PLC:** Patrol Leader's Council- monthly meeting of SPL, Patrol leaders and other youth leaders. Used to plan upcoming events and talk about issues in the troop.

**SPL:** Sr. Patrol Leader: Elected Scout that runs the troop.

**Scoutmaster conference:** 1-1 meeting between SM and Scout. This is the next to the last requirement for a rank. (BoR is last)

**TTFC:** Trail to 1st class- All requirements for ranks from Scout to 1st class.

# Bonus Slide: Additional Scouting Opportunities

- Venturing (Crews)
  - High Adventure
    - White water rafting, shooting, rock climbing, etc.
  - Co-ed, ages 14-21
  - Counts toward troop rank advancement
  - Find one: Beascout.org.
- Sea Scouts (Ships)
  - Maritime scouting
  - Co-ed, ages 14-20
  - Counts toward troop rank advancement
  - Find one: beascout.org

