

Boy Scout Troop 283 Who We Are and What We Do

Troop 283 has been continuously chartered for over 95 years and is the oldest continuously chartered troop in Minnesota! We are in the Lake Minnetonka District of Northern Star Council. Wayzata Community Church is the chartering organization of the Troop and provides strong support with meeting rooms and troop storage space. While several of our Scouts attend WCC, we are extremely proud that many area churches and synagogues are represented in the Troop. You may request a copy of our latest roster for your use in case you might wish to call any Scouts or parents from the Troop as you make up your mind about which Troop you will join. In addition to the great diversity of religious backgrounds represented in the Troop, another strength we feel the Troop has is the number of schools represented in the Troop. We have boys from Wayzata Central Middle and Wayzata West Middle Schools. We have a number of older boys who attend Wayzata High School. In addition to those listed above, we also have boys from St. Bart's, Redeemer Lutheran, and Orono schools. Our members live as close as a few blocks from the Church or as far away as Maple Plain and Mound.

We have an active Troop calendar. We camp or conduct another similar activity twelve months of the year. We provide leadership training for all of our boys. Our adult leaders are trained as well. Our regular Troop meetings are held on Monday evenings from 7:00pm to 8:30pm. They are held three times a month in most months. In addition, we hold a Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) meeting once a month for the Troop's leaders to plan our activities. Our adult leaders and parents meet once a month where they have input into the program and how the Troop can best meet the needs of the Scouts.

At our Troop meetings, the boys will participate in a variety of activities. Meetings will be structured around advancement, merit badge work, skills training, leadership exercises, physical fitness, planning for campouts, care of camping equipment, etc. If we tried to make a complete list of all the things that go on at the Troop level, we would have a list too long for this letter. Suffice it to say that the purpose of the Troop meeting is to meet the needs and wants of the Scouts in the Troop

In addition to the Troop functions, each boy will participate in a smaller group, the Patrol. This group (similar in size to the Den) meets during part of most Troop meetings. In addition, some Patrols will meet at least once a month outside the regular Troop meeting. Much of the Patrol's time is spent in planning for the Troop campouts and outings since each Patrol is responsible for its own menu and cooking schedule at each campout. Patrols will also work on merit badges of interest to the members of the Patrol.

The monthly outing (usually a campout) is the highlight of each month's program. Much of the Troop's program is taken up in planning these outings so that they are fun, safe, and memorable. Whether it is a canoe trip on the Brule River in Wisconsin or a ski weekend in the Arrowhead region of the state, the boys plan the program since they will be the ones making the trips work. Adult attendance is critical at all campouts. Transportation for up to 40 boys and all their gear is no small feat. To facilitate this, we have an Outdoor Chairperson who works to nail down all the loose ends regarding permits, camping areas, etc. If we do not have enough adults, we do not camp. We camp in rain, sun, or snow.

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We have found that the most severe weather often produces the most memorable camping trips. As a result, proper clothing and equipment are necessary for each boy and leader attending. Before you run out and buy any new equipment, wait and see what is recommended. We find that most Scouts can make do with what they have with a few modifications. Part of the planning process each campout is providing an equipment list for the upcoming event.

A highlight each year is our week at Many Point Scout Camp near Itasca State Park. This week is an excellent opportunity for every Scout to work on his advancement and merit badges. Every Scout should plan on attending camp each summer. In addition to our Troop's visit to Many Point, there are also opportunities for additional visits on an individual basis for those who cannot attend with the Troop, or those who desire more opportunity for camping and/or advancement. These are called All Star camps.

As the Scouts get older, their needs change. To address these needs, we attempt to have a number of High Adventure activity each year. These activities are only open to boys who are First Class or higher, Scouts who are 13 years or older by the date of the event. In recent years, we have paddled the Boundary Waters, visited Yellowstone and the Tetons in Wyoming, hiked the mountains of New Mexico at the Philmont Scout Reservation, sailed down at Sea Base in the Florida Keys and sailed around the Apostle Islands. Those in attendance see each of these trips as a lifetime experience.

Scouting is not without rules. A copy of our Troop Conduct Policy is available on the web site. As can be seen, the rules are really only common courtesy. Only by evenhanded enforcement of the policy can each Scout find a safe haven where he can grow, learn, and mature in a positive environment. We look to each Scout and adult to enforce this policy.

We look forward toward meeting you. Should you have any questions about our Troop, the program, or how you can become involved please contact our Scoutmaster or Troop Committee Chair. Phone numbers for each are listed on the Web Site.

Are you confused by some of the terms the Troop has been using? It can be overwhelming to try to translate new terms - especially when you've just gotten the terms used in Cub Scouting straight! Below are some of the terms and their definitions as used by Troop 283.

Advancement - Boy Scouts differs from Cub Scouts in many ways. Perhaps the biggest is that the older boys are responsible for helping the younger boys advance in rank. Under adult supervision, the boys who have reached the rank of First Class or higher are utilized as teachers and coaches for the boys working on their Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class requirements. Advancement requirements, which are listed in the Boy Scout Handbook, are NOT signed off by parents of the Scout, as was done in Cub Scouts. Requirements are approved by either a First Class or higher Scout or by a registered adult leader.

Merit Badges - There are over 120 merit badges that a Scout can work on. Once a Scout has earned his First Class badge, advancement to Star, Life, and Eagle occurs after earning a minimum number of merit badges. Some merit badges are required for advancement and some are elective. Check the Boy Scout Handbook for the requirements. To receive a Merit Badge the Scout must first get permission from his Scoutmaster to work on the Badge. He will be given a

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blue Merit Badge Card. He must then contact a Merit Badge Counselor and arrange to earn the Badge with the Counselor. Only then can the Scout begin to work on the Merit Badge. The requirements for each Merit Badge are listed in the book published for the Badge by the Boy Scouts. These books are available at the Northern Star Council Office in Golden Valley for around \$5 each. Prior to purchasing a book the Scout should look in the Troop library to see if the Troop has one for loan. The Merit Badge Counselor will work with the Scout and will determine when the work is complete. Once again, the parents of the Scout do not sign off on a Merit Badge. After successfully completing work on the Merit Badge, the Scout is responsible for getting his signed Merit Badge Card turned into the Troop Advancement Chair. The Merit Badge will be given to the Scout at the next Court of Honor.

Merit Badge Counselor - This is an adult leader who has an interest in, knowledge of, and skill in a specific Merit Badge. The Counselor is the person who works with the Scout to complete the requirements of the Badge as they are written. The requirements are not to be changed in any fashion. That is not the option of the Counselor. Typically, a Scout's parent is not to be the Counselor for his/her son unless the Counselor is working on the Badge with a group of two or more Scouts working on the same Badge at the same time. Even then, it is preferred if the Scout secures another Counselor for any final testing.

Advancement Goal - The Troop has a goal of having every Scout earn his First Class rank within one year of joining the Troop.

Scoutmaster Conference - Prior to earning any badge of rank, the Scout must meet with the Scoutmaster. Performance will be reviewed and goals will be set.

Board of Review - Prior to earning any badge of rank, the Scout must first meet with a Board of Review. The board is comprised of several adult leaders from the troop. Their job is to verify that the Scout has completed all the requirements for the badge and approve the awarding of the badge. For the Eagle Scout Award, the Board of Review includes a member from the Council who leads the examination.

God and Country Awards - Each religious denomination has a recognition program. Contact Northern Star Council for your church's requirements.

Chartering Organization - Wayzata Community Church is the chartering organization for Troop 283. It is responsible for providing meeting space for the Troop and is also responsible for the actions of the adult leaders. The Church is not currently responsible for any financial support for the Troop.

High Adventure Trip - Each summer the Troop tries to provide a special camping experience for the older boys in the Troop. The trip is open only to boys who are First Class rank or higher and are 13 years or older. There are no exceptions to this policy. These trips have included trips to the Boundary Waters, Philmont Scout Reservation, and camping trips to various spots in the Rocky Mountains.

Court of Honor - This is a ceremony planned by the Troop and organized by one or more Scouts. The ceremony takes place three - four times a year. Reports of Troop activities are presented at the ceremony and awards of Merit and Rank Badges and are accomplished. The EAGLE

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SCOUT Court of Honor differs in that the family of the boy receiving the award plans it. Only Eagle Scout Awards are made at such a ceremony.

Many Point Scout Camp -This is the large Scout Camp owned and operated by Northern Star Council in northern Minnesota. The camp is located near Itasca State Park. Troop 283 attends Many Point every summer. All Scouts are strongly urged to attend Many Point with the Troop. Some of our Scouts go on to act as counselors at Many Point as they get older.

National Boy Scout Jamboree - This is a quadrennial event organized by the National Boy Scout Office. Tens of thousands of Scouts and adult leaders attend the event from all over the world. Troop 283 strives to have one or more Scouts attend each Jamboree. To attend, a Scout must be First Class or higher and 13 years or older.

Parent's Meeting - This is the Troop's monthly meeting for all parents in the Troop. It is here that policies are discussed, details of upcoming events are planned, and plans for future events are begun. Each family should have a representative at the meetings.

Patrols - These are small (6 to 9 Scouts) groups that are formed that are the building block for the Troop. Patrols typically have boys who are close in age and rank and serve as the support group for individual Scouts. The Patrol is to meet at least once a month outside the regular Troop meetings. Each Patrol elects its own Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader. Both positions are held for a period of six months. The Patrol will function as a unit at all camp events providing their own food, menu, and work assignments. More information on the Patrol is found in the Boy Scout Handbook.

Assistant Scoutmasters – An Assistant Scoutmaster will be assigned to help overseeing actions of the Patrol. Additional responsibilities are assigned to them as required by the Scoutmaster or Committee Chair. The Assistant Scoutmaster should be present at Patrol Meetings and should be active on the campouts as well. Remember there should always be two deep leadership at scouting activities. The patrol is to be Scout run but adult counseled.

Roundtable - This is a monthly meeting conducted by the District on the first Thursday of every month at 7:00pm at locations in the area. They are listed in the District web site. It is here that District events are planned, training occurs, and useful ideas and information is shared. All leaders should make it a point to regularly attend the Roundtable.

Service Projects - Each Badge of Rank carries with it a requirement that a certain number of service hours are worked. These hours must be on projects approved by the Scoutmaster prior to the event. Approval is typically given for service given to a Scout's church, work done at a Wayzata Community Church work day, time volunteered to the Blood Bank, raking leaves for a Rake-a-thon, etc. Troop Service Projects like Sharing and Caring Hands, the Pancake Breakfast, Wreath Sales, etc. do not count toward the requirement.

Friends of Scouting - This is the annual fund drive conducted by Northern Star Council to provide funding for the Boy Scouts not provided by dues or fees. Each Scout receives the benefit of approximately \$50 per year that is not covered by fees, dues, or United Way funding. Our Troop has a goal of raising an amount greater than the benefits received each year. The drive is held at the February Court of Honor each year.

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Patrol Leader's Conference (PLC) - Each month the Patrol Leaders, Senior Patrol Leader and other Scout leaders meet to plan the month's activities.

Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) - This is the highest elected post in the Troop. This is the Scout chosen by the other boys to serve as their leader for the year.

Wreath Sale - Each year the Troop sells holiday wreaths in October for delivery around Thanksgiving. While a big money maker for the Troop, a portion of each sale is set aside for the Scout doing the selling. The Scout can use the money to defray a camping fee or purchase camping equipment.

Popcorn Sale - Each year the Northern Star Council conducts a sale of popcorn products. All money earned by the Troop in this sale is deposited in the selling Scout's camping account.

If there are any further question of the Troop or our activities, please do not hesitate to contact the Scoutmaster and he will be glad to provide an answer. We hope to have the opportunity to serve with you and your son within Troop 283

Scoutmaster
Troop 283