

## Troop 17 Frequently Asked Questions from Visiting Webelos

Listed below are some of the questions that would not only apply to our Troop, but to any Troop you are visiting. When you visit other Troops, ask them these questions and compare their answers. While we would love for every Webelo in the area to join our Troop, our primary goal is to ensure that their Scouting experience meets their personality, their goals, and aligns with their family's values. If you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact our Scoutmaster in person or via email at [scoutmaster@troop17.net](mailto:scoutmaster@troop17.net). You can also visit our website at [www.troop17.net](http://www.troop17.net).

*How many Patrols is the Troop organized into, how are Scouts assigned to/between Patrols (do all new Scouts go into the same Patrol or are they spread among established Patrols), and how are leadership assignments made within the Troop/Patrol?* There are 4 patrols with a 5<sup>th</sup> patrol of "Staff". The staff patrol is the older Scouts that have already been Patrol Leaders and are the core leadership group for the Troop. New Scouts are distributed across the 4 patrols. The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), Assistant Senior Patrol Leader(s) (ASPL), and Scoutmaster determine the leadership of the Patrols and Troop.

*How big do you expect the Troop to be next year?* Currently 30 Scouts – We would anticipate that it will stay at that level or grow slightly.

*Is the operation of the Troop for meetings, camp-outs, etc., more at the Troop-level or the Patrol-level?* At meetings there is a mix of patrol activities and troop activities. During the campouts, patrols camp together and work as individual "units". They all come together for the main program activities.

*How often do you camp out and what would the distribution of your camp-outs be between heavy camping (vehicle supported), backpacking, and other (such as canoe or bicycle overnight trips)?* We camp monthly except August. August is our annual summer day trip to Burger's lake. In June, we attend a week long summer camp at Worth Ranch. In July, we have a high adventure camp (more on that below). We have a good mix of close and "far" camping. This year we took two different campouts into Oklahoma. We try to have those on a weekend where there isn't school on Monday so we can get back later on Sunday. The past few campouts were cycling at Mineral Wells, Backpacking in Oklahoma, Greenbar (leadership training) at Worth Ranch, Flour Wars at Worth Ranch, Rock Climbing at Sid, Canoeing in Oklahoma, Sailing at Wizard Wells, and Rocketry at Worth Ranch. We have a bus and equipment trailers and strongly believe that we should always minimize our impact by bringing as few vehicles with us as possible. The monthly campouts run Friday night to Sunday afternoon (normally 2p to 3p depending on the activity and location).

*What events do you regularly participate in on an annual or biannual basis (Score O? USS Lexington? Camporees/Webelorees)?* We'd love to say that we have regular attendance at Council and District events, but we really don't. We evaluate each event and how it fits into our traditional scouting program. We have attended Camporees, district events, and been to the USS

Lexington as part of our camping program in the past. We always want to ensure that the event or program meets our goals and traditional Scouting values.

*What special events (Philmont, Sea Base, Jamboree) do you anticipate doing in the next few years and how often do you undertake these type of events?* We have been lucky to have multiple treks to Philmont over the past few years (we generally attend Philmont every other year). In non-Philmont years, we take the troop on our own high adventure trips. In 2017, we took the Troop to Scotland for two weeks of backpacking and camping with Scouts from all over Europe. In 2016, we had two crews spend 12 days in the New Mexico back country at Philmont Scout Ranch. In 2015, we took 3 crews of 8 to the Boundary Waters on the Canadian border for two weeks of canoeing. In 2014, we camped in the national forest in Red River, New Mexico. We hiked/climbed Wheeler Peak, the highest point in New Mexico, during our 10 day stay there. In 2013, 2011, 2009 (and so on), we were in Philmont. In 2012 we toured South Texas and spent several days camping and hiking in Big Bend National Park. In 2010, we travelled to the International Scout Camp in Kandersteg, Switzerland (this is a year round international jamboree). In 2008, we went to Red River (we've been camping there for 20+ years). In other years, the troop has travelled to Colorado, Belize, the Northern Tier, and Sea Base.

*What near term / summer activities are planned that entry-level scouts might participate in?* Summer camp is in June. All scouts are encouraged to attend. Other monthly campouts are on the online calendar at [www.troop17.net/calendar](http://www.troop17.net/calendar) - these are open to all Scouts!

*What service projects is the Troop involved in?* In addition to individual Eagle Scout projects (10-15 per year), the troop is active with several groups including several elementary schools, and TCU. We actively work with the Worth Ranch Committee to work service projects at the camp.

*How often (and on what nights/at what times) does the Troop or Patrols meet?* The troop meets every Tuesday from 7:30 to 9pm at the Harry Male Scout Lodge (named after the first Scoutmaster).

*What percentage of meetings and weekend trips are Scouts expected to attend?* We require 50% participation (for both meetings and camping) to continue advancing in the troop. We definitely understand that boys have other events in their lives. We want scouting to continue to be part of their lives also.

*What are the expectations with regards to uniforms at meetings and events?* Uniforms are one of the methods of Scouting and we strongly encourage boys to attend in their full Class "A" uniform at every meeting. We have a supply of gently used uniforms for anyone needing assistance in acquiring a uniform. Donations to our supply are also appreciated.

*What are the expectations/opportunities for parental involvement (fund raising, accompanying the troop on trips/camp outs, merit badge counseling or other volunteer opportunities)?* We probably have the best group of regular adult volunteers that we have seen working with a youth organization. We also have a great group that camps with the troop. The adults camp and act just like an additional patrol. The "Outstanding Father's" (OF) patrol has their own patrol leader that organizes the group for each campout. While we are on a campout, our primary function is to quietly supervise to ensure the security and safety of the boys. The SPL and staff continue to

lead the program and activities. The Scoutmaster regularly “tours” the camp with another adult to check on the boys and keep an open dialog with them.

Outside of camping weekends, we strongly believe in a close, personal Merit Badge advisor relationship. We feel that we can provide a rich, meaningful experience with a knowledgeable professional that has a deep understand of the topic. Merit badge colleges tend to “crank out” merit badges. We encourage parents to volunteer where they can.

We have several fundraisers throughout the year that can always use parental support. Our primary fundraiser is our concession stand at Amon Carter stadium for all TCU home football games and the Armed Forces Bowl. We have been working with TCU and the concessionaire for 5+ years and have a top selling stand in the stadium.

*What is your philosophy when it comes to Scouts making it to Eagle Scout?* We want every Scout to reach the rank of Eagle. One of the things that differentiate scout troops, however, is their approach to the rank of Eagle Scout. Eagle Scout is the highest rank that a scout can attain and we take it seriously. Some troops push their boys hard through advancement and they earn their Eagle rank at 14 and 15 years old. The thought is “get them through” before they get distracted by the “fumes” – perfume and gasoline (girls and cars).

Our philosophy is to maintain the boys through their older years so that when the fumes hit them, they still have the foundation of Scouting for them to fall back on when they are facing decisions and influences that potentially change the course of their lives. Keeping the boys engaged through age 16 and 17 helps them fully understand the skills and activities they are working through on their way to the rank of Eagle Scout. Having older boys still engaged in the troop also makes the troop a more mature group with deeper leadership experience. We firmly believe in a boy lead troop.

The Scoutmaster’s primary job and responsibility is to mentor and support the SPL. The SPL is responsible for designing and implementing the program for the troop. He has assistants and a staff that are there to support him. Adults in the Troop handle the basic administration tasks associated with the troop and the “back end” support. Without this depth of older scouts, we would not be able to put on our high adventure programs.

*When can we visit?* Visitors are always welcome at our meetings! While we meet every week, we may not always have a regular meeting activities scheduled. Please feel free to visit our website calendar at <http://www.troop17.net/calendar> prior to visiting. If you (or your son) are already a Scout, please come in your uniform too. We have additional information about the Troop for parents and will have the boys participate in the meeting with the Scouts.

*Where do you meet?* We meet at 2690 Sandage Avenue in Fort Worth at the Harry R. Male Scout Lodge on the grounds of St. Stephen Presbyterian church (our chartering organization). We are close to TCU and the Fort Worth Zoo at the intersection of Sandage Avenue and McPherson Avenue. Directions and a map are at <http://www.troop17.net/contact.html>.

*When can we join?* Boys must meet one of the following requirements to join Boy Scouts: 1) be 11 years old, or 2) be 10 years old and have completed the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, or 3) be 10 years old and have earned the Cub Scout Arrow of Light Award. Boys can participate in Boy Scouts until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Scouting's Venturing program is open to youth aged 14 to 20.

**Boys can join at any meeting.** We need a completed BSA Youth application completed (available at [http://www.troop17.net/forms/BSA\\_Youth\\_Application\\_28-406.pdf](http://www.troop17.net/forms/BSA_Youth_Application_28-406.pdf)) to register a new Scout. Adults can complete a BSA Adult application (available at [http://www.troop17.net/forms/BSA\\_Adult\\_Application\\_28-501F.pdf](http://www.troop17.net/forms/BSA_Adult_Application_28-501F.pdf)) and complete online Youth Protection Training before participating in Troop activities outside of our normal meetings.