

# Troop 69

## Guidebook

### Boy Scouts of America Troop 69, Crossroads of America Council, North Star District

**Chartered Organization:** Traders Point Christian Church.

One of the oldest Troops in Pike Township. Estimated ~ 50 years.

**Troop Motto:** Put the Outing in Scouting. The Troop generally has an overnight outing once a month

**Troop Website:** <http://www.tpcc-bsa-t69.org/>. The website does contain a calendar and links to Troop activities and documents, such as permission slips. This is a good resource to consult on a regular basis.

**Scoutmaster:** Mr. Rusty (John R.) Helms – (Eagle Scout, Order of the Arrow Vigil Honor, Firecrafter) Home phone: (317) 291-2711; Work phone: (317) 337-2980; Email: [Rusty@HelmsCPA.com](mailto:Rusty@HelmsCPA.com)

**Adult Leadership:** We have approximately a dozen adult volunteers in various roles such as Assistant Scoutmasters, Troop Committee members, or active parents assisting and mentoring the Scouts. Several of our Scouters are Eagle Scouts, and/or Order of the Arrow and Firecrafter members.

**Troop Committee Chairman:** Mr. Stanley Sorgen – Home phone: (317) 293-5697; Work phone: (317) 277-9135; email: [SORGEN\\_STANLEY\\_G\\_II@LILLY.COM](mailto:SORGEN_STANLEY_G_II@LILLY.COM).  
Committee Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month at TPCC.

**Troop Meetings: Every Monday night at TPCC from 7pm to 8:30pm, starting promptly at 7.**

Meetings are held year round, with a few exceptions for holidays and summer camp. Troop 69 meetings are “boy led”: the Senior Patrol Leader and his Assistants (all youth) run the meeting that has been planned by the Patrol Leaders Council (see Leadership). During weekly meetings, Scouts work on advancement and plan for upcoming events. To be considered an active Scout (required for advancement and to hold a leadership position), a boy must attend more than 50% of each month’s meetings and campouts, participate in the programming, and follow the Scout Oath and Law. If a Scout is unable to attend a weekly meeting and holds a leadership position, he should notify the Senior Patrol Leader prior to the meeting. If a Scout is unable to attend a weekly meeting but does not hold a position, he should contact his Patrol Leader to find out what was missed.

### **Organization:**

The Troop is divided into 4 to 5 patrols (or as many as necessary). New Scouts are generally placed in a new patrol and Troop Guides (older Scouts), are assigned to help mentor them through their first year where the emphasis is to have **FUN** while they advance.

## **Membership**

### **Registration:**

New Scouts receive the red “loops” from the Troop as they cross over from Webelos (replacing the blue loops) or register as a Scout for the first time. Scouts and parents should complete a Scout Registration Form with medical info and Troop Resource Survey Form as soon as they cross over to the Troop.

### **Dues:**

Dues are \$75 each year, due in January. These are not prorated for Webelos who cross over because they are provided with some additional supplies such as their Scout Handbook, Troop numerals, Staves, etc. These dues do not include the additional fees that are collected for weekend outings (usually ~\$20 to cover food and entrance fees).

The Troop is blessed with the gear necessary for our outdoor events, so new Scouts will not have to invest in a lot of additional camping gear. Because it takes a lot of time and money to keep the equipment in good shape, we ask the Scouts to participate in a couple of fundraisers. In the past our primary fundraiser has been the sale of Trails End Popcorn and Christmas wreaths, concurrently in the Fall. Half the money a Scout earns as profit goes to the Troop and half to the Scout for his Troop account, which can be used for summer camp and or other outing fees.

### **Uniform:**

Scouts crossing over from Webelos will experience some changes to the uniform. The front and back inside cover of the Scout Handbook has full details on the uniform. You are expected to wear the Class A Scout shirt to each meeting and outing, specifically during travel to and from the destination. For special events such as Color Guard duties, the Scout is expected to wear a complete Class A uniform, including pants, socks, and belt. Scouts are expected to keep their shirts tucked in at all times.

### **Handbooks:**

Every Scout needs to own a handbook and bring it to each meeting and outing. New Scouts will be provided a Handbook upon payment of the dues. Replacements can be purchased at the Scout office, 1900 North Meridian St. (925-1900) for about \$8. Although not required, the Boy Scout Merit Badge Requirements Book is useful. These can also be picked up at the Scout shop for under \$5.00.

### **Church:**

All Scouts are expected to abide by the rules of conduct and behavior appropriate as guests of Traders Point Christian Church. The Church provides the Troop meeting site and other support. It is important that all Scouts are respectful of the Church’s facilities.

### **Communications:**

The responsibility for communicating Troop activities to parents is the individual Scout’s. However, to augment this communications and help with planning, the Troop maintains a website and an optional weekly email newsletter. In addition, the Troop roster will be updated and published annually, usually in April after all the new Scouts join the Troop.

## **Advancement**

The pace of rank advancement is determined by the individual Scout. The average Scout takes four years to advance to the rank of Eagle. Eagle rank can be accomplished within as little as two and a half years but must have been completed by the Scout's 18th birthday. The rank worn by a Scout does show other boys the progress he has made in Scouting. The ranks of Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class are designed to be completed at Scouting campouts, summer camp, Troop meetings and with the help of adults and other senior Scouts. It is the Troop's goal to advance Scouts to the rank of first class by their one year anniversary in Boy Scouts.

Overall, merit badges and ranks are more detailed and require more work than the ranks in Cub Scouts. Activities and campouts play a big part in advancement. It is very difficult for a boy to progress if he doesn't go on campouts, work on material outside of meetings, or help with service projects. There are 120+ merit badges available, of which twelve (12) are required and nine (9) are electives for the rank of Eagle, so there are plenty to choose from. Merit badge books may be borrowed from the Troop library (you must see the Troop Librarian), or are available for sale at the Scout office. The individual books give reference material and are more in depth than the Requirements Book.

In order to earn merit badges, a Scout must ask the Scoutmaster to sign the Application for Merit Badge "blue" card and seek out a merit badge counselor for assistance. Another Scout, parent, or friend may not sign off on the merit badge advancement without prior approval of the merit badge counselor or the advancement chair. Any adult may assist a Scout with working on a badge, but the completed work must be shown to the counselor. Completed rank and merit badge cards should be retained in plastic baseball card sleeves or sheets to be submitted along with the Scout's Eagle rank application. At the end of summer camp, each Scout will receive the blue or tan cards which list which requirements were finished for a particular badge and which ones still need to be completed. The Advancement Chairperson keeps an ongoing list of unfinished badges and sends out reminders prior to summer camp.

### **Signing off on Advancement:**

A Life or Eagle Scout in the Troop can sign off for the requirements for Tenderfoot. An Eagle Scout within the Troop can also sign off for Second Class requirements. Otherwise, sign offs must be made by one of the adult Scouters in the Troop.

During the advancement process, Scout leaders may ask questions about the various activities that have already been signed off. A Scout should seek out different leaders for sign off. Parents are encouraged to work with their Scout on advancement but they cannot sign off their own Scout for any requirement. It is the Scout's responsibility to tell a Scoutmaster when he needs to work on requirements. The Scout Handbook must be completed before a Scout may request a Board of Review. See a Scoutmaster or the Advancement Chairperson for questions about advancement.

### **Scoutmaster Conference:**

As a Scout finishes work on a rank, he has a conference with the Scoutmaster to discuss what he likes about Scouting, how things are going for him, and set goals for achieving future ranks. The Scout will then schedule a Board of Review, which may be the same night, or at the next Scout meeting.

### **Board of Review:**

A Board of Review is made up of two to three adult Scouters. They will ask Scouts about what they have learned etc. After successfully completing a Board of Review, the Scout will be recognized for the new rank and receive his badge at the close of the Scout meeting and receive the official card at a Court of Honor.

### **Court of Honor:**

A Court of Honor is where the Troop recognizes Scouts for their achievements, and new merit badges, cards, and special awards are given. A Court of Honor is held on a regular basis, usually three times a year. This is a

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meeting for the entire family and may involve the Troop organizing a pot luck dinner preceding the recognition ceremonies. One Court of Honor is usually held in the spring (~ April), one after summer camp (~ August), and one at the end of the year usually held in conjunction with our mid November Troop Thanksgiving dinner. For this event the Scout should be attired in complete Class A uniform along with merit badge sashes and staves. Separate Courts of Honor are conducted for those Scouts that achieve the rank of Eagle Scout..

**Leadership Positions:**

To hold an office in the Troop, a Scout generally has to be of First Class rank and be active, which means he attends more than 50% of the meetings and outings. Once a month the Patrol Leaders Council (the youth in leadership positions) meet to plan the Troop's program. These meetings are generally held at 6 pm, prior to the Troop meeting, the third Monday of each month .

There are many leadership positions available for boys throughout the Scouting years. The ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle have requirements of a specific number of months in a leadership position. Each Patrol has a Patrol Leader elected by the Scouts in that Patrol. The Senior Patrol Leader is elected by all the Scouts in the Troop, and is responsible for the Patrol Leaders and planning meetings. Other positions of responsibility include Troop Guide, Scribe, Librarian, Chaplain Aide, Historian, etc. Elections are usually held twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall.

## **Program**

### **Outings:**

Each month the troop will have an outdoor event. During the winter months these activities may be cave trips or cabin campouts but some of the “most fun” campouts have been tenting in the snow. (Scouts will receive a full orientation on cold weather camping prior to the trip.) Attendance at outings is necessary for rank advancement, as some requirements, such as purchasing a patrol’s food and making the meals, can only be completed at camp. Scout should plan to attend the full camping event as leaving early or coming late will cause them to miss out on a significant part of the program and creates extra work for the remaining boys and adults to do. Each year we revisit some favorite trips as well as seek out new adventures. Parents are always welcome; we encourage them to come on at least one trip each year.

Typically, there is a fee for outings to cover food and possibly campsite or camporee fees. Most outing fees will run between \$20 and \$25 for the entire weekend. On Sunday returns from a weekend outing the Troop does not prepare lunch, but stops at a fast food restaurant. This meal is not included in the outing fee, so the Scout will need pocket money. (This is also a good experience for them.)

Every Scout who attends a Scouting event (except for regular meetings) needs to have a permission slip completed by his parent or guardian in order to participate. These slips will be distributed at the meeting and on our website a couple of weeks before the event. The form and associated fees, as applicable, should be turned in at the meeting prior to the event, unless some other due date has been specified.

Most outings will depart from the TPCC garage as this is where the Troop trailer is stored. For most weekend outings the Troop will ask Scouts to be at muster location by 5:30pm with departure at 6:00pm sharp. The Troop usually aims to return from weekend camping trips on Sunday by 1pm at TPCC garage. Please note this is a rule of thumb and subject to change for each event. Departure timing and details will be announced at least at the meeting prior to the event if not before.

### **Summer Camp:**

Each year the Troop spends a week at summer camp during July, usually at Ransburg Scout Reservation on Lake Monroe south of Bloomington. Merit badges and rank advancement can be worked on at this camp along with Firecrafter ranks. A month or two before camp, each Scout will register for the merit badge classes. First year Scouts will focus more on rank advancement than merit badges. Many merit badges cannot be completed at camp, but in some cases the missing requirements can be done before camp. Some merit badges are best done at summer camp because of the resources available such as Shotgun Shooting, Swimming, Environmental Science, Archery, Rifle Shooting, etc. The Scoutmaster and other Scouters are at camp and are usually available to work with Scouts on advancements. Scouts and their parents must attend a special summer camp meeting that will be held prior to summer camp. Frequently, the Troop will take their swimming assessment prior to camp, usually in May.

The registration form for camp lists items to be packed. There should be at least 7 days of clean clothes, a Class A uniform (which is required for dinner), tennis shoes, and hiking boots. Label all clothes and equipment - in camp all underwear looks the same! (see also Equipment.)

Camp fees will be announced in advance of registration time. In addition to fees charged by the Council, the Troop usually issues the Scouts a Troop T-shirt and/or cap that adds approximately \$10 to the cost, and there will be a charge for dinner on Cook’s Night Out. To minimize financial losses during summer camp, an adult “banker” will hold the Scouts’ money in trust and allow them to withdraw it as needed for snacks, souvenirs, and kits.

Scouts must complete and submit a Class 2 medical form to participate at camp. This requires Scouts to have a physical exam at least every 3 years. Adults who attend camp as volunteer leaders must also have a Class 2

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medical form on file. In addition, adults over the age of 40 must submit a Class 3 form, which requires annual physical exam.

**Service Projects:**

The Troop participates in many service projects throughout the year, including Scouting for Food held in March, Environmental Good Turn Day held in September, and service projects for TPCC. In addition each of our Scouts who are working toward Eagle rank will ask the Troop to participate in his service project. This is an important part of Scouting. Rank advancement for a Scout is dependent upon fulfillment of service requirements.

## **Equipment**

The Troop owns a substantial amount of camping equipment that is stored in our Troop trailer. Tents, dining flies, cooking stoves, cooking equipment, lanterns etc. are all owned by the Troop so a Scout need only concern himself with personal gear. The Troop is divided into Patrols and provides each Patrol with a Patrol box, which contains all the cooking equipment needed for the Patrol. Patrols need to plan and purchase their own food prior to every outing and will prepare it for themselves at each outing. New Scouts will be taught about meal preparation, cooking and clean up beginning with their first outing. All Scouts are responsible for the proper care and handling of Troop equipment.

### **Day Packs:**

The boys are asked to have a day pack with them **at all meetings and outings**. The contents should include the following:

Scout handbook	Pen or pencil with paper	Insect Repellant & Sunscreen (non-aerosol)
Small Flashlight	Personal First Aid kit	Scout Knife (w/ Totin' Chip)*
Water bottle	Underwear & Socks (1 pair)	Matches (w/ Firem'n Chit)*
Rain poncho or jacket	Compass	Other items as needed/desired
Work gloves	Rope (15' to 20')	

### **\* Totin' Chip and Firem'n Chit:**

Before a Scout is allowed to carry pocket knife (all scout knives must be the safety retractable pocket type) or matches they must go through Totin' Chip and Firem'n Chit training. This usually occurs at the first outdoor outing a new Scout attends. If a Scout displays problems with complying the requirements of this training, they will not be allowed to use a pocket knife or other woods tools or matches until they successfully complete the training again.

### **Camping supplies and equipment (in addition to Day Pack contents):**

The following is a list of the basic supplies needed for camping:

- Rain pants or poncho
- Heavy absorbent socks
- Ankle high hiking boots
- Mess kit (plate and cup), combination knife, fork, and spoon
- Clothes appropriate for the weather
- Blanket
- Small roll of toilet paper
- Foam pad or camping cot
- Sleeping bag that is rated down to 20 degrees
- Pack (internal or external frame)

Since you are at one campsite for a week during the summer, it is nice to have a campstool or chair for sitting around the campfire. Take time to label everything with initials in a permanent marker.

What is not in the Scout Handbook is how to pack the pack. Use the outside pockets for items you may want to get easily such as for trail mix or rain gear. When using an internal frame pack, the sleeping bag goes on the inside at the bottom. With an external frame pack the sleeping bag goes on the bottom but on the outside. It really is a matter of trial and error with packing. Also useful are clips and small bungee cords that can attach various items such as water bottles, hiking shoes that are muddy, etc. Wrap each day's clothing in a Ziploc plastic bag to minimize dampness and for convenience.

### **Medications:**

Medicines should be provided to Adult leaders at outing check in. The medication should be in a Ziploc bag labeled with the Scout's name. Please list instructions inside the bag.

## **Other Opportunities**

### **High Adventure:**

Scouts can attend Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico and other high adventure camps such as Boundary Waters in Minnesota or Sea Base in Florida. The National Jamboree is held every four years at Fort AP Hill, Virginia, which is near Washington, D.C. The World Jamboree is also held every four years, alternating. Many of the experiences at this level have age or rank requirements for attendance.

### **Camp ranks and Firecrafter:**

Many Councils develop ranks that a Scout attains only while at summer camp. Chief Scout Francis Belzer, of the Central Indiana Council, was in charge of one of the first Boy Scout summer camps in the United States. He wanted to find a new way to enrich the Scouting program so in 1919 he developed the first year rank of Camper and the second year rank of Woodsman. Then he developed the third rank which is more challenging - Firecrafter. These camp ranks have different criteria but all embrace the requirement of high standards of personal attitude and role modeling, and showing respect for fellow campers and the environment.

Firecrafter is a rigorous rank of which some criteria are: building a fire by friction of natural materials, which must burn 15 minutes; swimming; identification of animals, trees, and plants; planning and conducting a campfire program; and completing the Unknown Test at the Firecrafter Ritual. Many Troops at summer camp are invited to attend each individual Scout's Firecrafter program.

### **Order of the Arrow (OA):**

This is an honor society for Scouting - *"the brotherhood of cheerful service"*. Order of the Arrow recognizes Scout campers, boy and adult, who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives. It exists to develop and maintain camping traditions and spirit; promote Scout camping and summer camp as part of a unit's program; and to crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life of purposeful leadership in cheerful service to others. Qualified boys can be nominated into the Order of the Arrow by every Scout troop, Varsity team or Venture crew. Unit elections are held once a year in early spring. Only youths may vote. To qualify for election, a boy must be a registered youth member of the BSA, holding the rank of First Class or higher; and, since becoming a member of a troop, team or crew, have experienced 15 days and nights of camping, including 6 consecutive days and nights, under the auspices of the BSA within two years prior to election. Boys who are elected will be notified in a "call out" ceremony and then invited to participate in a weekend Ordeal. There they complete their membership ties through service to the camp.