

# **BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA**

## **TROOP 102**



## **PARENT'S MANUAL**

Troop 102 Meets Thursday Evenings from 7:00PM to 8:30PM

First Congregational Church 3501 Forest Drive, Cheyenne, WY  
82001 Corner of Forest Drive and Pershing Blvd

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## WELCOME!

Hello and welcome to Boy Scout Troop 102. The leaders of the troop have prepared this handbook as a way of introducing you and your son to the adventures of Boy Scouting. We want you and your son to get the most out of your Scouting adventure.

Troop 102 is part of Longs Peak Council (Greeley, CO) which includes northeastern Colorado, southeastern Wyoming and the panhandle of Nebraska. The Cheyenne District includes Cheyenne and most of southeastern Wyoming.

Registration: It is important that each Scout fill out a Boy Scout application when he joins the troop. Until the application form is received along with his registration fee, your son is not officially a member of the troop and will not be able to participate in any troop functions without his parent or guardian present.

Troop registration fees are collected when the Scout joins the troop and every year thereafter in March. This fee registers your son as a Scout for one year with the Boy Scouts of America. This is known as "Rechartering". The recharter fee includes a registration fee for the year, a yearly subscription to Boy's Life magazine (one per family), insurance and troop dues. The dues help cover troop equipment costs. The current total cost is \$48 for the first boy in a family and \$36 for each additional boy.

Adult leaders are also required to be registered with Boy Scouts of America by completing a simple form. Adult leaders are screened by the Longs Peak Council with law enforcement agencies using the information provided on the application; this is to protect all the boys in the troop. The annual recharter fee for adults is \$15.

Calendar: A monthly calendar is handed out around the beginning of each month. It will list all of the troop activities for the new month and will also have a summary of planned activities for the year.

Meetings: Meetings are held every Thursday from 7:00PM to 8:30PM at the First Congregational Church, 3501 Forest Drive. Scouts are expected to wear their uniforms to troop meetings and to other troop activities. All of the troop's activities are discussed at the Thursday night meetings; your Scout should attend every week if possible, so that it becomes a habit. It is very important for boys to attend the meetings for two weeks prior to campouts. They must pay for campouts two meetings prior to the campout so that planning for food can be done.

Meetings start promptly at 7:00PM and end at 8:30PM. We ask that your Scout arrive on time and that you arrange to pick him up immediately after the meeting. Of course, all Scout meetings and activities are open to parents at any time, and we encourage you to stay on Thursday nights whenever you can. We emphasize that we are not a Thursday night babysitting service. Please do not leave other children at the troop meetings unless you plan to stay and control them. Meetings are for Scouts, parents

and adult leaders. We need input from parents, so please plan on stopping in. We ask all present to join us in the closing ceremony (about 8:20PM). This is when we remind everyone of upcoming events and present rank advancements.

We are very appreciative of the members of the First Congregational Church, its staff and pastor who help support our troop and provide us with meeting space in the church.

Organization of the Troop: Scouting is designed to build leadership, and emphasis is placed on having the Scouts be their own leaders. With a little guidance from the adults, the Scouts themselves are basically responsible for the operation of the troop.

Adults: The Scoutmaster is the troop adult leader; he/she also has several Assistant Scoutmasters who help lead the troop. The Troop Committee, made up of parents, serves to advise the Scoutmaster. All adult leaders serve with two purposes in mind: to fulfill the purposes and ideals of Scouting and to help Scouts achieve their goals.

Scouts: The troop is divided into smaller groups of six to eight boys called "patrols"; your Scout will be assigned to a patrol when he joins the troop. Each patrol has two leadership positions: Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader. They are responsible for coordinating the planning for the patrol and may need to call their patrol members occasionally to remind them of upcoming events. In addition, there are several troop leadership positions such as Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Scribe, Librarian, Quartermaster, etc. As your Scout progresses in Scouting, he will undoubtedly serve in several of these patrol and troop positions.

Discipline: We don't expect the Scouts to be angels, but we do expect their behavior to be within the bounds of safety and good judgment. Unruly Scouts take away from the other Scouts and this simply isn't fair to the troop. Our troop policy is that unruly Scouts will be warned three times during the year to correct a particular behavior. If warned a fourth time, his parents/guardians will be called to come pick him up for that evening. His parents must accompany him through the next meeting if the Scout has been asked to leave for disciplinary reasons.

Any Scout who violates the following rules must be picked up immediately by his parents/guardians:

- Fighting (A Scout is Friendly)
- Stealing (A Scout is Trustworthy)
- Disrespect to any Adult Leader (A Scout is Courteous)

Any use of alcohol, tobacco or any sort of drugs is strictly prohibited and will demand the immediate dismissal of the Scout from the troop.

If we are unable to contact you to pick up your Scout after one of these instances, he will be returned home by two adult leaders and then dropped from the troop.

*Parents*, if you yourself are a smoker, we ask that you not smoke at troop meetings, outings or activities. We lead by example.

All of these rules are meant to provide a safe and comfortable atmosphere for your Scout. The following rules have come about after many years of working with Boy Scouts. Please discuss them with your son.

Scouts must keep their hands to themselves. No pushing, hitting, tripping, wrestling, etc. Such contact often gets out of control and leads to fights.

Mock fighting is not allowed. It often leads to accidental physical contact and then to serious fighting.

Swinging of sticks is not allowed. Sticks belong on the ground. Swinging them quickly leads to accidents. "Sword Fighting" is not allowed.

Do not play with fire. Fires must remain inside fire rings. Do not poke fires. Once a stick is in a fire, do not pick it up. There is to be no horseplay around fires.

Do not throw any sticks, rocks, pinecones, snowballs or anything else. Catch with these items is not allowed.

Knives are a tool for Scouts. They are to be used properly and safely at all times by qualified Scouts. There is never any horseplay with knives.

Hazing of any kind is not allowed.

## ADULT LEADERS

Troop 102 has been successful for one reason: Adult leaders! The troop sincerely appreciates the time, effort and money that you contribute in support of the troop. In a troop this size, we are constantly facing difficult problems of logistics, budgets and transportation and can always use more adult leaders. Here's how you can help.

Assistant Scoutmasters – (male or female) Assist the Scoutmaster; help the boys run the meetings/activities; work on advancements and merit badges. It is our goal to have one Assistant Scoutmaster for every five boys in the troop. Turning away young boys who want to join the troop is self-defeating for the troop; we need to have enough Assistant Scoutmasters for a satisfactory adult/Scout ratio.

Troop Committee – Our Troop Committee meets once a month on the Thursday after the first Monday of the month at the First Congregational Church. Participants share information about upcoming events. This committee acts as a quality-control group for the troop and also steers the troop activities, determines equipment acquisitions, authorizes money making activities, etc. Positions include: Committee Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Advancement Chair, Equipment Coordinator, Outdoor/Activities Coordinator, Popcorn Colonel, as well as assistants. Every parent is invited to the Troop Committee meetings; we need your input and help.

Merit Badge Counselors – Help the boys earn merit badges. Look over the list of merit badges. If you note an area where you have a particular skill through your job or hobbies, you can become a merit badge counselor. This is a very rewarding part of Scouting. Don't be shy – talk to our Scoutmaster.

Drivers – We are always in need of drivers for campouts. Even if you can't spend the whole weekend with the Scouts, perhaps you could transport Scouts or equipment one way. All drivers must complete a Driver/Vehicle Information Sheet before transporting any Scouts besides their own.

Adult Chaperones – The Boy Scouts of America insists on an adult-to-Scout ratio of 1:10. BSA has a two-deep leadership policy that requires that two adult leaders must be with the boys at all times. For example:

- if we don't have enough adult volunteers to accompany the troop on a campout, the boys/troop do not go;
- if the troop is on a campout with three adults and ten Scouts and someone gets hurt or becomes ill and must come back to town with two adults, everyone must come home because there would only be one adult to stay with the rest of the boys and two adults are required.

The troop will help pay the expenses of adult leaders. Drivers on a campout do not pay for the cost of food. On long trips (e.g., summer camp) the cost of gas may be

reimbursed to drivers. The troop will generally cover  $\frac{1}{2}$  the training fees for adult leaders and  $\frac{1}{2}$  the cost of summer camp for leaders who participate.

## EQUIPMENT (The Basics)

Scout Handbook: Each Scout is required to purchase his own personal copy of the Boy Scout Handbook. These are available at officially licensed Boy Scout merchants (Loveland Scout Service Center at the Outlets). Your Scout's handbook will contain a record of his advancements. Each accomplishment is signed off in his book by a senior Scout or an adult. Each time your Scout advances in rank, the scoutmaster and the troop committee will review the signed book. Do not lose the book; it is an official record.

Handbooks must be brought to each meeting and every campout. Time is spent on advancement activities on these occasions and the book will be signed when a skill is learned and demonstrated. The book gets a lot of use during a boy's Scouting career. We highly recommend that you get a cover for the book. We also suggest that you purchase an Advancement Guide, which lists the requirements of all the merit badges.

Scout Uniform: When your son is officially admitted to the troop and earns the rank of Scout, he will be given his own Troop 102 yellow neckerchief to welcome him. Each Scout is required to purchase his own Boy Scout shirt (either long-sleeve or short); we recommend that you purchase a larger size so that your Scout has room to grow. For regular Scout meetings and activities, we ask that your son wear his Boy Scout shirt and Troop 102 neckerchief with nice jeans, sturdy trousers or BSA approved pants (no camouflage pants). Official BSA shorts or pants are required for Courts of Honors, Scoutmaster Conferences, Boards of Review and Summer Camp. When school is out over the summer, the Scoutmaster may authorize scouts the option to wear the Troop 102 T-shirt and the option to wear nice shorts. Once your Scout starts earning merit badges, he will need a sash (purchase one a bit larger in size). The remainder of the Scout uniform (shorts, socks, belt, hat, etc.) is optional.

Camping Gear: Troop 102 goes camping once a month, year round. As time goes on, your Scout will begin to know what he needs and wants for camping trips. Talk with the Scoutmaster or an experienced adult leader for advice on what type of camping gear to purchase. Your Scout will not need a lot of expensive stuff, but he will need to be prepared. Remember, birthdays and Christmas are great occasions to add to his equipment collection. Check the Boy Scout Handbook and our troop website for a list of suggested gear. To begin with, he will require:

- **Sleeping Bag** – good quality bag, preferable one which will carry him to 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below. A sleeping pad is important to have beneath the bag. Mummy-style bags will keep your son much warmer than the “square top” style.
- **Stocking Cap** – 50% or more of your body heat is lost through the top of your head. A stocking cap is a troop requirement for every campout, especially for sleeping.
- **Personal Items** – flashlight plus batteries, canteen/water bottle, toothbrush,

sunglasses, etc. Keep these in one bag.

- **Foul Weather Gear** – a must! Poncho, snow boots, heavy hat, gloves, etc. are needed on most campouts.

Check the recommended list on the next page. **Please put your name on all uniforms and equipment.** Much of your Scout's gear will look like that of other Scouts. Winter Camping Gear "And it is Always Winter"

Scout Handbook – a MUST	Scout shirt and troop neckerchief
Sleeping bag rated to 0 degrees; Extra blankets for lighter bags.	Heavy flannel or wool shirt
Sleeping Pad or Blanket	Suntan lotion (all year)
Sleeping bag liner	Lip balm/chap stick (all year)
Medication (give to adult leader with instructions on dosage)	Whistle
Rain coat and pants or poncho	Toilet paper, Kleenex, handkerchief
Winter coat and light jacket	Hooded sweatshirt or warm sweater
Snow boots and hiking boots	Gloves, minimum two pair
Towel, wash cloth, soap, tooth brush, etc.	Boot socks (wool) 3 pair
Sweat pants/shirt to sleep in	First Aid kit (made at home not bought)
Ski/Snow pants	Underclothing 1 pair/day
Knit cap	Cup for hot drinks, knife, fork, spoon; Plate/Frisbee
Wool pants are good	Compass
Jeans, loose is good	

Bag to pack your stuff in. We recommend waiting to get a backpack until your boy is older. If you do, get an adjustable backpack so that it can grow with your boy.

Day pack or large fanny pack.

Camel-back or water bottle of at least 1 Quart

## PERMISSION SLIPS and MEDICAL FORM

Permission Slip: Once a year (during recharter), each Scout will be provided with a parental permission slip. This gives your approval for your Scout to participate in troop activities. We must receive this permission slip when requested for your Scout to participate.

Medical Form: Your Scout will need a yearly physical for summer camp. This must be completed on the Boy Scouts of America medical form and then signed by a physician. The Scoutmaster will keep a copy of the completed medical form on record for future reference.

Medications: If your Scout is on any type of medication when he goes on a troop outing, the bottle needs to be labeled with his name and proper dosage instructions and then given to the Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster will dispense all medications.

Parents/guardians, please tell us on the permission slip if your Scout has particular allergies, if he is taking any type of medication, if he has a medical condition that we should know about, or if he shouldn't eat certain foods. Campouts are usually held in remote areas and medical help could be hours away. Forgotten medications, inhalers, etc. can be critical.

Remember that tent camping is physically taxing, especially in adverse weather. We ask that you use good common sense; if your Scout is ill, he should stay home and not participate in the outing.

## ACTIVITIES

Boy Scouts of America has several regular activities like summer camp, food drive and popcorn sales. In addition, our troop has several traditional special events which we regularly do, unless the Patrol Leader Council decides on something different. These are great outings, which the boys look forward to:

- January – Camp-in (usually at the church)
- February – Klondike Derby winter campout
- March –Campout
- April – Ft. Robinson Tree Planting Campout
- May – Spring Camporee
- June – Summer Camp or Campout
- July – Summer Camp or Campout
- August –Campout
- September – Wyoming Hunting and Fishing Expo or Canoe Derby
- October – Chimney Park Campout
- November – BDSR, Pole Mountain or Hynds Lodge Campout
- December – Family Christmas Tree Cut campout at Chimney Park

Service Projects: The troop participates in a number of service projects throughout the year, usually on weekends. These include helping at the Church's annual Fellowship Dinner the Sunday before Thanksgiving, cleaning the church grounds, picking up trash along the road at Clear Creek Park, helping with various Eagle Projects, city-wide Christmas tree pickup, etc. Star, Life and Eagle ranks each require the boys to organize a service project; these usually involve troop participation. The second Sunday of every February will be Scout Sunday at 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church (9 am service). Scouts and adults are usually needed for these projects.

## CAMPOUTS

The most exciting part of being a Scout is going on campouts. We go on a campout once a month, year round. The troop has camped at Ben Delatour Scout Ranch (BDSR) in Colorado, Camp Laramie Peak (CLP) Scout Ranch in Wyoming, Chimney Park Lodge in the Snowy Range, Pole Mountain area, Ft. Robinson in Nebraska, Canoe Derby, Spring Camporee and the Winter Klondike Derby. As you can imagine, it takes a great deal of planning to make a campout a reality.

Eligibility: For a Scout to be eligible for a campout he should attend the two Thursday night meetings prior to the campout. This allows us to prepare and plan for the event (food, transportation, leaders, etc.). Families are welcome to join the troop on campouts. Bring your own tent or camper. Participate in the planning. **Pets are not allowed on campouts.** Even the most docile dog has been known to get excited around a bunch of active young boys.

Equipment: Each patrol has its own cook box, which contains cooking gear, tools, etc. The Thursday night before the campout, all the equipment will be brought out of storage and organized for the trip. On the Thursday night after the campout, all the equipment taken home for cleaning will be returned to Troopstorage.

The troop purchases cook stoves, lanterns, tents and coolers. The troop wants to keep gear in good condition for a long time. After a campout, each Scout will be responsible for cleaning up a portion of the equipment used by his patrol. Pots, pans and cooking utensils are to be scrubbed in hot soapy water (soap is not used with Dutch ovens for which there are special cleaning requirements), rinsed and dried after each meal. Cook stoves should be cleaned to remove grease and spilled food. Tents are to be swept out and allowed to air dry (notify the Quartermaster of any needed repairs to the tents). Please note that your Scout is responsible for the article assigned to him for cleaning; if lost or damaged we will look to you for replacement. We are not sending items home for the parents to clean; your Scout used them, he should learn how to take care of them.

Drop off and Pickup: All trips depart from the First Congregational Church parking lot. Don't miss the boat; be on time. Scouts will bring equipment out and load the trailer. At that time we will give parents an estimated time of return. We return the boys to the Church, not to the individual homes. Please make arrangements to be on time both for drop off and for pickup. We will assume that each Scout has a ride home when we return unless you tell us otherwise. Any Scout not picked up will be returned to his home by two adults and he will not be allowed on the next trip unless a parent accompanies him. If for some reason the troop is delayed during an outing, you will be called regarding the new arrival time. Parents, if you will be out of town during an outing, please let the Scoutmaster know about an alternative contact.

**No cell phones are allowed on campouts. Please ensure your son leaves them at home. Battery operated video games and music players are allowed while driving to and from the scouting event providing that it is OK with the driver. These items must stay in the car.**

Camping Costs: Most Friday/Saturday/Sunday campouts cost \$15 per boy. Drivers and Junior Assistant Scoutmasters do not pay, but other family members pay \$10 each to cover food. For Camporees or when patches are purchased to commemorate the campout, costs will be higher.

Camp Cooking: For most campouts, each patrol is responsible for their own cooking and for purchasing their own food. The boys will work together to write their own menus covering all meals and have them approved by the Scoutmaster. Then one Scout (affectionately known as the Grubmaster) from the patrol will make the shopping list and his parents/guardian will take him to purchase the food. Grubmasters must limit the cost of food to a total of \$10 per individual eating with their patrol. Parents/Guardians can submit the receipt to the Troop Treasurer for reimbursement of up to \$10 per individual.

Adults and other family members generally eat together as the "Old Goats" Patrol. One adult will be responsible for the shopping list and purchase of food. On a few select campouts, the Old Goats Patrol will prepare all the meals for the entire troop.

It is important to pay for upcoming campouts at the Thursday meeting two weeks prior to the trip so that commitments are firm and the proper amount of food can be purchased.

We discourage boys from bringing additional food or snacks on campouts for two reasons: It takes up valuable space and it attracts animals.

The patrol will plan for enough food and drink for everyone for the entire trip. We will have plenty of excitement during camping trips; we do not want raccoons, skunks or bears providing more excitement. **Food is absolutely not allowed in tents.** Even the residual smell of food in a tent can attract animals on future campouts.

## SUMMER CAMP

Each summer the troop attends one of a variety of Boy Scout camps: Ben Delatour, near Red Feather Lakes in Colorado, Camp Laramie Peak near Wheatland and other camps in Wyoming, Colorado and South Dakota. Swimming, tenting, canoeing, hiking, wilderness survival, orienteering and many more exciting Scouting activities await your Scout at summer camp. This is a week-long Scouting adventure, and we feel that no Scout should miss summer camp.

Camp usually costs a little more than \$175 per Scout per week, but can be much less if the troop meets its Friends of Scouting (FOS) target. This fee includes insurance, three meals a day and lots of Scouting fun. The boys may bring a small amount of additional money if they wish to purchase items at the camp trading post. Normally, we begin preparation for summer camp in February/March when we must send in our troop's reservation and make a deposit to hold a spot. We encourage the boys to earn at least part of their summer camp fee through popcorn sales or other fund raisers.

Scouts will need their uniform (shirt and neckerchief) and their own camping equipment. The troop will bring tents and other troop gear that may be needed.

We usually design and order a troop tee shirt every summer – an additional expense.

**Please, no battery operated video games, radios, phones, etc. at summer camp.**

Older Scouts have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of High Adventure summer camp experiences.

Adults are needed to help at summer camp. The troop will help cover part of the cost for adult volunteers.

## FUNDRAISERS

As you might imagine, running a troop this size requires money. Annual troop dues and savings on campout costs cover most equipment replacement costs. Fundraisers are organized by the troop to raise money for the troop. Money raised specifically by your boy is put into the troop savings account under his name.

Fundraisers are done in three ways:

1. The troop organizes a fundraiser for all the boys who wish to participate. Most of the profit from annual popcorn sales or other similar sales that your Scout raises goes into his personal account (i.e. the profit margin on popcorn is normally 34% of sales, 25% goes to the Scouts account and the remaining 9% goes to the troop). A spreadsheet is maintained by the Troop Treasurer to identify exactly how much money your boy earns and how much he has in his account. This is his money as long as he is in Scouts. The only restriction is that he must spend it on Scouting related costs (campouts or summer camp fees, uniforms, training fees, any outdoor or camping gear). A boy's parents may draw from his account for adult Scouting related fees. The boy's account balance can be transferred to another troop if the boy moves, but reverts to the troop when the boy leaves Scouting.
2. The troop or patrol organizes a fundraiser for a particular event or activity such as an expensive high adventure summer camp (i.e. Philmont or backpacking in Alaska). This money is usually divided on a prorated basis based on the hours the Scout and his family put into the project. The money goes into a boy's special event account to be used specifically for that event. If the Scout drops the event, the family's out-of-pocket costs to that point will be reimbursed if possible (i.e. plane tickets, camp registration, etc.) or will be paid from the Scout's special event account up to the amount available in his account. The remainder of his special event account will be divided among the remaining boys participating in that event on a prorated basis.
3. The troop organizes a fundraiser for a specific need such as purchasing a new trailer. All profits from that fundraiser go into the troop account.

## SCOUT ADVANCEMENT

There are many definitions of advancement, but the Scouting definition might well be “the art of meeting the challenge”. That is exactly what the Boy Scout advancement program asks Scouts to do. It invites them to master a challenging series of skills, which builds confidence and prepares them to enjoy the outdoors and life in general.

Rank Advancement There are seven ranks a Scout can earn: Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and finally, Eagle. As a Scout masters the individual skills required to earn each rank, he qualifies for even more exciting activities to help earn the next rank. A Scout cannot master these skills without also learning something about living and working with others. Here's how he does it:

First the Scout learns. He learns Scouting skills by taking an active hands-on part in the troop and patrol meetings. Then, he is checked. When leaders see that he has mastered a given skill and has satisfied a given requirement, they tell him so and record his achievement in his Scout handbook.

Next the Scout is reviewed. He appears before a “Board of Review” composed of at least three adult troop leaders or committee members. A Scout should look his best for a Board of Review (hair combed, hands and face washed, a clean Scout uniform with troop neckerchief). Their purpose is not to retest him, but to make sure he has met all requirements, to speak with him about how he feels he's getting along in the troop, and to encourage him to keep advancing. He is given his new badge of rank immediately and again publicly at the next Troop Court of Honor.

Merit Badges There are more than 100 different merit badges a Scout can earn. Any Scout can earn any merit badge at any time up to his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. He does not need to have a particular rank to be eligible. We hope that you will purchase the Advancement Handbook, which lists all the requirements for all of the merit badges.

Some merit badges are required for the three highest ranks in Scouting, such as the three Citizenships, First Aid, Personal Management, Communications, etc. The rest are the choice of the Scout; there are many to choose from such as Computers, Music, Reading, Horsemanship, etc.

Your Scout needs to talk with his Scoutmaster about the merit badges that interest him. A Scout must get the Scoutmaster's approval before starting on a merit badge by getting the Scoutmaster signature on the merit badge card. Your Scout must then get in touch with an approved merit badge counselor so that he can work on the badge. See the Advancement Committee member for a current list of approved merit badge counselors. These counselors have a special knowledge in the merit badge subjects that they cover and are interested in helping the boys. Many of them have boys who are also Scouts.

The Scout is expected to meet the requirements exactly as they are stated in the merit badge book – no more and no less. He is expected to do exactly what is stated for the badge. If it says “show or demonstrate.”, that is what he must do; in that case, telling about it is not enough. If it says “make”, “list”, “collect”, or “identify”, that is what he must do. If he is given a choice of requirements, then he must choose.

Your Scout must get in touch with the counselor and tell him/her that he wants to earn the badge. The counselor may want to get together with your son so that he can explain the requirements. If so, your Scout must have another Scout or another adult accompany him to each meeting with the counselor, as this is a youth protection requirement. Then the Scout can start to learn and do the things required. As the Scout completes the requirements, the merit badge counselor will date and sign the merit badge card. The counselor will sign the back of card when he/she is satisfied that your Scout has met all of the requirements. **Your Scout must give the signed merit badge card to the Scoutmaster so that the information can be recorded in the troop, council and national Boy Scout records.**

The merit badge itself will be given to the Scout at the next troop Court of Honor. It will be stapled to a small card. The badge can be sewn onto a merit badge sash. **Be sure to keep the card as your record of the name of the merit badge and the date that it was earned as it will be needed when he applies for the rank of Eagle Scout.**

At times patrols or groups of boys in the troop will decide to work on a particular merit badge together. They can do this together at troop meeting or at other times. However, each boy must meet each of the requirements on his own.

Merit Badge University – Every winter the Cheyenne District hosts a Merit Badge University. It is usually held on two Saturday mornings separated by a couple of weeks. Boys can earn up to three of the offered badges during that time. It is a good opportunity to concentrate on earning merit badges.

Troop Court of Honor The Troop Court of Honor will publicly recognize all the achievements of all of the Scouts since the last Court of Honor. We hold these three times a year. It is a family affair, with family and friends invited. The Court of Honor is hosted by the Scouts themselves and is usually done on a regular meeting, Thursday night. We usually have snacks or a potluck at these affairs. We expect all Scouts to wear their uniforms, including their merit badge sash, and to look their best on these occasions.

When a Scout earns a new rank, he will present his mother with a mother's pin (provided by the troop) at the Court of Honor.

The Eagle Scout Court of Honor is held separately to specially recognize a Scout who has achieved Scouting's highest award, the rank of Eagle Scout. Only about 2% of all Boy Scouts earn this rank. Our troop has an excellent record in this regard. The Scout and his parents plan this ceremony.

## **VENTURE CREW**

The Congregational Church also sponsors Venture Crew 102, which cooperates closely with Troop 102 on some joint activities, and some older scouts are leaders in both units. The Venture Scouting program is a co-ed program that is based on a series of more challenging activities that lead up to an "ultimate Scouting experience (for example, the more advanced aspects of backpacking, hiking, caving, rock climbing, winter camping, cycling, etc.)

Venture Scouts must be at least 14 years old and graduated from 8<sup>th</sup> grade or 15 but not yet 21. Boys can be co-members of the Venture Crew and the Troop until they are 18 years old.

## A WORD TO PARENTS

We need all parents involved with the troop. If your Scout has gone through Cub Scouts, then you are familiar with Scouting in general. **Boy Scouting is different in that now the emphasis is on the boy taking the initiative, the boy showing responsibility, the boy working independently of his parents/guardians.** You cannot do the work for him, but you can help him do it for himself. Scouting helps a boy during these critical years of maturing to learn responsibility. Here is how you can help:

- First and foremost, moms, dads and other guardians are all encouraged to participate in all troop activities (all campouts, outings, training and adventures)
- Encourage your Scout to keep himself organized. Make sure his records are up to date, ask about his rank advancements and merit badge needs. A three-ringed notebook is a good way to keep calendars, troop and patrol rosters, merit badge counselor lists, etc.
- We keep troop records on the advancement chair's home computer, but it is up to the Scout to have proof of his rank, merit badges, awards, troop positions, etc., in his Scout Handbook. He will be asked to present his handbook for every Board of Review; this is especially important when he goes before the Eagle Board of Review. The records in his handbook are his documentation of his Scouting history. His Scout handbook will be used for 7 to 8 years and it needs to be kept in good condition. A book cover helps. Scouts can also earn service pins for each year they are in Boy Scouting. This pin is worn on the uniform.
- Have lots of laundry soap ready for your Scout to use when he gets home from a campout.
- Do you have a skill that relates to a merit badge? Sign up as a merit badge counselor. Come help our Scouts learn more about your skills, work or hobbies.
- Check the inside of the Boy Scout Handbook for the placement of patches to be sewn on his shirt. Better yet, teach him how to sew on his own merit badges on his sash, which is flat and good for beginning sewers.

## **CLOSING**

All of us in Troop 102 look forward to working with you and your son. We will be most successful with your participation in and support for the troop. Whenever you have questions, comments or concerns, feel free to talk to the Scoutmaster, Troop Committee members or any of the adult leaders.

Welcome Aboard!!