



# Troop 55

# Parent's Guidebook

*May 2022 Edition*

...It is said that the purpose of Boy Scouts is to help boys grow into men. That is true. But it is more than that. Almost all boys grow to be men. Scouting builds certain kinds of men. Men of honor. Men of courage. Men of loyalty. Men who are servants to others...

...For your journey will be summed up in those very few words that you have pledged so many times, and I charge you to pledge again. "On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God". These few words alone contain the essence of Scouting...

*From the Eagle Charge, Troop 55, 1990*

... and let your light so shine among men that they may see your good deeds and know your Father in Heaven...

*Jesus Christ, The Sermon on the Mount, Galilee, A.D. 30*

*from the Troop 55 Sunday Morning Church Service,  
February 23, 1992 on the trail  
at Big South Fork National Park*

## “Preparing Boys For The Future..... Building Men For The Kingdom”

( A Philosophy of Ministry )

Teaching leadership, responsibility, and morality are the core of our purpose in Troop 55. Our goal is to help lay the foundation of a young man’s heart and to pass on to him the essential knowledge and confidence of his God-given strength and abilities. We believe that it is crucial to give our scouts a place to receive instruction from Godly men on how they can fulfill God’s purpose in their lives. We believe that while biological maturity may happen naturally, emotional and spiritual maturity requires shepherding by prior generations. The men of Troop 55 seek to be those shepards.

Every boy longs to know the answer of the question of their very being: “Do I have what it takes, and am I powerful enough to impact my world?” Until a man knows deep in his soul that he truly is God’s man, he will be forever trying to prove that he is, while at the same time, shrink away from anything that might reveal that he is not.

Some ancient societies believed a boy becomes a man only through ritual, training, effort, testing, and the active mentorship of older men: a rite of passage from boyhood to manhood. In our culture today, where many fathers are absent, silent or passive, the Church needs to provide a place where, under the supervision of the Elders, boys are given an environment that nurtures them to develop leadership, personal responsibility, moral clarity and other aspects of maturity. We believe that boys need the active mentorship of men.

The mission of the men leading Troop 55 is to have an active influence in a boy’s life. Troop meetings and camping trips are led by boys, under the close supervision of our adult leaders. In this setting, opportunities present themselves for men and boys to spend intentional time together. The leadership of Troop 55 has a forty year tradition of men mentoring and teaching boys in our troop activities. We believe that it is the responsibility of our scouts’ fathers and other men in troop leadership to fulfill that mentoring role. The troop must not ignore youth who lack an engaged father in their lives and diligently make ourselves available to shepard these young men as well

We write this statement of ministry to the parents of the Troop to explain the philosophy behind how we do what we do with our young charges, the spiritual authority to which we submit and how it is in tune with the ministry of Christ Presbyterian Church.

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## **Introduction**

This 'Parent's Guide' handbook will assist new Scouts and their parents get off to a great start with Troop 55. This guide will help those with and without Scouting experience understand how we apply "The Boy Scout Way". Also included is some Scouting philosophy, Troop 55 history, and answers to many questions about Troop operations.

Parents and Scouts should read and discuss this together. Understanding the rules of the game will make each Scout's journey more meaningful and fun. Specific questions may be directed to any adult leader.

The Boy Scout Handbook is the Scout's most important reference. It has essential information boys need to travel the road of Scouting. Encourage your son to spend time with his Scout Handbook, especially during his first year. Thirty minutes per week will get him through it in less than a year. In addition to its necessity in advancement areas, it provides lots of good stuff he'll just plain enjoy. Parents should read it, too, for a real look inside the Boy Scout experience.

## **Our Mission - A Scout is Reverent**

The Mission of Christ Presbyterian Church is "to follow Christ in his mission of loving people, places, and things to life." Because God's Kingdom is much greater than a single church, we launched discipleship opportunities like Troop 55 to model "the flourishing of all people and not just our people; of all churches and not just our church." If you would like more information on our mission & vision or beliefs, please refer to [christpres.org](http://christpres.org) for additional information.

Christ Presbyterian Church sponsors Troop 55 as a ministry. In accordance with the twelfth point of the Scout Law, "A Scout is Reverent", we acknowledge the sovereignty of God and the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all areas of life. Therefore, as a vital part of all Scout activities, adult leaders commit to encouraging each boy in spiritual growth.

## **Getting Started**

We welcome boys interested in the Scouting Program. Boys generally participate from age 11 through their 18th birthday. To join the Boy Scouts, a boy must have completed the fifth grade, OR be 11 years old OR be 10 1/2, and have earned the Cub Scout Arrow of Light.

## **Registration**

All boys participating in Troop 55 activities must be registered with the Boy Scouts of America.

1. Our annual registration fee is \$80.00, due on the second Monday in January each year. This amount covers the BSA registration, the insurance fee and Troop fees for equipment and supplies.
2. Boys wishing to receive Scout Life magazine will need to pay the additional \$12.00 annual fee.

3. We prefer payments be made via PayPal or Venmo. If by check; make payable to: BSA - Troop 55

\*\*\* If a family needs assistance with the fees, they should contact the Scoutmaster. \*\*\*

## **Boy Scout Handbook**

A Scout needs an Official Boy Scout Handbook. In the front of the handbook is A Parent's Guide, which you and your son must read and discuss to meet the joining requirements. A new Scout may also purchase the Boy Scout Requirements book, which lists requirements for all merit badges. He will use his Handbook continuously throughout his Scouting career. His advancement will be recorded in his Handbook as he progresses. The Handbook and the Scout Requirements book can be purchased at the Jet Potter Scout Headquarters at 3414 Hillsboro Rd; Nashville TN or at [www.scoutshop.org](http://www.scoutshop.org).

## **Personal Health and Medical Record Form**

Parents or guardians must complete, sign and return Parts A&B of the BSA medical form. Additionally, if you have a specific medical or physical concern or caution regarding your son, please note on the back side of the medical release form and/or speak with an adult leader. The medical forms will be provided to you along with your application.

Before attending summer camp (Boxwell, Outpost Camp) or High Adventure trip, you must also complete Part C of the medical form. This requires a physical by a healthcare professional. This can be completed at your doctor's office or at a walk-in clinic.

These documents are only valid for 12 months and must be updated each year in order to participate in our activities.

## **Uniforms**

We require Class A uniforms complete and in correct fashion at the following times.

1. Weekly troop meetings
2. Scoutmaster Conferences and all Boards of Review
3. Courts of Honor
4. Special Scout functions as announced

Class A uniform consists of:

1. Khaki Scout Shirt with appropriate emblems and insignia
2. Troop 55 Neckerchief (provided by troop)
3. Troop 55 Hat (provided by troop)
4. Scout pants or shorts
5. Scout socks
6. Scout belt

Troop 55 considers Scouts a special organization. A properly prepared and worn uniform communicates allegiance and dedication to the ideals of Scouting -- duty to God, country, others and self. Parents, strongly urge your son to proudly wear his complete uniform.

During the summer months our Troop uses the 'Class B' uniform which consists of:

1. A BSA Themed T-shirt
2. Troop 55 Hat
3. Scout shorts
4. Scout socks
5. Scout belt

### ***Troop Neckerchief and Hat***

A Scout receives a special Troop 55 black neckerchief, Troop 55 Black T-shirt and Troop 55 ball cap when he joins the troop. With his First Class rank, he receives a new neckerchief with a distinctive and symbolic embroidered insignia. These should be cared for with great pride. Additional T-shirts may be purchased from the Troop.

### ***Uniform and Equipment Exchange***

We encourage Scouts to keep their Scout insignia and other memorabilia as these will be special throughout their lives. However, boys grow quickly, and Scout pants aren't all that sentimental, just expensive. We maintain an informal uniform exchange within the troop. We encourage parents to donate old uniforms and equipment as they are outgrown if there is not a sibling who can use them. Scouts and parents are encouraged to check what is currently available in the uniform/equipment exchange 'closet' (i.e. Rubbermaid tote) to see if there's an opportunity to reuse something rather than buy new.

## **Equipment**

In addition to uniform and handbook a Scout needs a modest amount of camping and accessory equipment: some form of raingear (poncho or rain jacket and pants), sleeping bag, pocket knife, and eating utensils. This will get him started and will be used throughout his Scouting career.

It is best not to buy the greatest pack on the market until the Scout is within six inches or so of his anticipated adult height. Most packs can be adjusted that much for height so that he could then acquire what would become a 'permanent' pack. Generally speaking, he won't be strong enough to carry a fully loaded 'permanent' pack till then anyway. Meanwhile, he can get by with a smaller general-purpose backpack. Some local outdoor equipment stores have reasonable rental programs for packs and sleeping bags. This gives you a good opportunity to try one out and see how you like it.

Specific questions regarding major equipment purchases may be directed to the adult staff.

You will find a checklist of the items Scouts need for various outdoor experiences in the Scout Handbook. A Scout should make notes after each campout on what he had that was useful, what he didn't have but needed and what he had but didn't use. You need less than you think. Backpacking needs are different from

fixed base camping needs. This knowledge will come with experience, which is a large part of what Scouting is all about.

Good hiking shoes/boots are easily the most important equipment as they are needed for every outdoor activity and it's really hard to have fun if your feet hurt!

### ***New Scout Equipment Checklist***

- **Official Boy Scout Handbook**
- **Scout Uniform (See above)**
- **Poncho or rain jacket & rain pant**
- **Hiking Boots**
- **Hiking Socks** - Wool blend and polypropylene
- **Sleeping Bag:** with stuff sack. A bag rated to +20F will work year-round.
- **Ground Pad:** for beneath the sleeping bag.
- **Tent:** Scouts provide their own shelter on our overnight trips. Scouts within two years of the same age can share tents.
- **Flashlight/Headlamp:** uses "AA" batteries (two flashlights are recommended for backup)
- **Pocket knife:** Folding multi-blade...(NO sheath or spring loaded knives)
- **Basic Cook Kit:** Includes a backpacking style camp stove, small pot, bowl, fork, etc.
- **Water Bottle:** A one liter Nalgene style bottle is what most scouts carry
- **Backpack:** a 40L pack, either external frame or internal frame will get you through your first year or more for under \$150. Check for a comfortable fit, especially the hip belt.

### ***Loaner Gear***

The troop maintains a collection of gear suitable for backpacking available for scouts to checkout. This gear is ideal for younger scouts that are growing rapidly as well as scouts that are building their kit. Scouts are welcome to check out items so they do not have to buy everything all at once. We have backpacks, tents, sleeping mats, and sleeping bags available.

## ***How the Troop Operates***

The patrol is the basic unit of the Boy Scouts. The ideal patrol has eight Scouts. Each patrol elects a patrol leader for a 6 to 12-month term. The Patrol Leader then appoints an assistant patrol leader. The patrol is responsible for its own troop equipment, its patrol flag, its campsite on campouts and cooking together.

The Troop then is made up of these patrols. The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), chosen by an election each year, leads the troop. Any Scout registered and active for the previous three months may vote for the Senior Patrol Leader of his choice. The SPL then appoints his own Assistant. Other leadership areas for the Troop include positions similar to the patrol positions plus Troop Guides, who are responsible for working with new Scouts.

The Patrol Leaders Council (PLC), comprised of the Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant SPL, Patrol Leaders, and all other boys holding troop leadership positions of responsibility actually runs the troop. This group meets with the Scoutmaster each August to plan the Troop activities for the coming year, and to set long



term troop goals. The PLC then meets again each month on the Monday night following a campout to plan the upcoming month's activities in detail. *Note: this means there is no Troop meeting that week. Boy leaders must attend these planning sessions to retain their positions.*

Anytime a Scout has a question he first directs it to his Patrol Leader. If the Patrol Leader cannot answer he may ask the Senior Patrol Leader. Only then should he ask an adult if his question remains unanswered. If you visit the troop very much you will certainly hear the Adult leader's standard answer to a Scout's question, "Have you asked your Patrol leader?" It's the Boy Scout Way.

### ***Communication.***

The troop primarily communicates via email. Be sure to provide a reliable email address to us and ensure that email messages are not directed to your spam folder.

### ***Troop meetings***

Regular Troop meetings begin promptly Monday evenings at 7:00 pm. and usually conclude at 8:45 p.m. Your Scout should arrive on time, in uniform, with his Boy Scout Handbook. Develop a 'Monday night' routine the Scout can count on for getting home work out of the way, having his uniform and book ready (this can be done on Sunday) and getting dinner in time to arrive promptly. Scouts should be picked up on time. We try not to run over and usually don't. Scouts should stay until the meeting concludes, as they will miss important information otherwise.

## **Troop “Key Three”**

The Unit Key Three is a critical component to the success of the unit. The Troop Key 3 consists of:

- **Chartered Organization Representative (COR)** – This person appoints the unit committee chair and approves all adult leaders. They provide resources from the chartered organization.
- **Committee Chair** – The top volunteer in the unit is the Committee Chair. They are responsible for ensuring enough qualified adult volunteers are in place to provide the program. They lead the unit committee meetings.
- **Scoutmaster** – The Scoutmaster is the leader of Troop and is responsible for developing and delivering the “program.” He works closely with the Senior Patrol leader to ensure the youth leaders are well equipped and prepared.

The responsibilities of this group includes:

- Meets to discuss the unit, its challenges, coming events, and progress toward their action plan.
- Ensures that a monthly program and unit budget plan are in place and on track.
- Ensures a troop-wide communication system.
- Encourages training of all registered adults in the troop.

## **Adult leadership**

We are proud to have one of the best adult leadership teams in our Council, and we are always looking for fathers who can help us continue that tradition. We need a wide variety of people to be able to deliver the support necessary to make the program happen for the boys. Former Scouts are especially useful, but many of our best leaders started with no experience as a Boy Scout. In addition, we can say without equivocation that the Boy Scouts of America has the finest training and planning resources of any organization and are eager to share them.

These training aides and courses prepare you not only for service in Scouting but are equally applicable to anyone's personal and career life.

There are three possible levels of commitment:

1. Assistant Scoutmaster.
2. Troop Committee Member.
3. Resource Person (e.g. Merit Badge Counselor, Bus Driver).

**Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM)** have a high level of commitment coupled with high visibility. --they also have the most fun; those who take themselves or their jobs too seriously need not apply.-- They attend most Troop functions including meetings, camp-outs and other events. These men work closely with the boys and to a large degree area mirror the image the troop reflects. We strongly recommend they commit to the full training available, including Woodbadge, a 3 week-end long course in the Boy Scout Way and interpersonal skills development.

**Troop Committee Members (TCM's)** carry the next level of commitment. The TCM's are responsible to provide or arrange for support for the troop in the areas of Troop equipment, Camping, Leadership, Advancement, Safety, and Special Programs (such as the Annual Christmas Tree Sale fundraiser). The Troop Committee meets once a month.

**Resource Persons** are people who have some resource, skill, or ability they are willing to share with the Troop. This includes merit badge counselors, driving Scouts to and from events, special assistance on projects such as setting up for ceremonies, computer skills/resources, printing/copying/ mailing, telephoning, etc. They have the least week to week responsibility but are willing to jump in and do a job when called upon.

Naturally, if you have a particular expertise by vocation or avocation in some basic Scouting area such as astronomy, first aid, nature (plants and animals), map skills, outdoor cooking and such, we can use you either continuously or on a scheduled basis for program and instruction purposes.

There is a Troop Resource form at the end of this booklet. We would appreciate your completing it and turning it in. If you would, please indicate the level of commitment you think you would be interested in, with the understanding that it is not yet a commitment. Depending on your response, one of the current leaders will be in contact with you and discuss it in detail.

## **Camping**

Camping is the belt and suspenders of scouting. It is what holds it all together. We don't make camping the goal. We make it the means to the goal. We don't do it just to have fun, although we do have a lot of that! Rather, we make it a fun way of achieving the unique blend of self-sufficiency and interdependence Scouting teaches. It is The Boy Scout Way. And we love it.

We camp at least once per month during the school year, except December. We do Backpacking, Fixed Base Camping and Long-Term Camping (summer camp at Boxwell and Rock Island). Which is our favorite? All of them! We do each of them right and we have a blast. But just like the rest of Scouting, you gotta be there!

Most regular camping trips will depart from the Scout Barn and return to the Scout Barn. We typically will have use of one of the CPA buses for transportation (although we occasionally require adults to drive). Scouts aged 16 and over are allowed to drive themselves to the Scout Barn but are never allowed to drive themselves to a camping trip.

Trip leaders will communicate the plan for each trip to both scouts and parents. This will include the schedule, the food plan, what equipment you need to bring, as well as any costs. This plan will be communicated both in person in the meeting as well as by email.

Troop meetings for the weeks immediately prior to a campout focus on the skills and preparations required for the next campout, whether a backpacker, fixed base campout or a District or Council Camporee. Naturally, to Be Prepared, you gotta be there!

## **Cooking**

Patrol members cook together except on some backpacking trips where rugged individualism kicks in. The boys plan their own menus, do their own shopping and split the cost. Patrol Leaders assign menu planning, shopping and cooking depending on which patrol members need that for advancement.

Cooking is an important part of the Scouting experience. During a four-year Scouting experience, an active Scout will participate in planning, preparing, cooking and cleaning up over 150 meals. The first 50 are the toughest!

## **Leadership Instruction and Summer Camps**

As previously indicated, one of Scouting's great strengths is time tested training, and it starts with the boys. Our approach is to build leadership and practical skills through a year long program. Boys learn to work together through increasingly difficult activities and camping trips.

If weekend camping is the training ground, then our Outpost Camp (Rock Island and Old Kia Kima) in June is the proving ground. We have observed that during the Scout year, many boys can 'fake it' for a weekend camping trip. They can get along with anybody for a day and a half or even two nights and usually no one

will starve to death between a Friday departure and a Sunday return. But at Outpost Camp they cannot fake it. Here, dull skills get sharpened, the rough personality edges get sanded off and a lot of growing is done. Additionally, this is where the patrol method really shines through and our boy leaders develop leadership capabilities in significant ways. In many ways, Outpost Camp is the heart of our Troop and is our flagship event.

Summer camp at Boxwell Reservation near Gallatin is the Middle Tennessee Council's cornerstone for rank and merit badge advancement. Located on the shores of Old Hickory Lake, Boxwell provides a unique Boy Scout camping experience. A Scout could almost pass off all his merit badge requirements for Eagle with four years of Boxwell Summer Camp.

Boxwell is especially strong on rank advancement - Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class. After that, Scouts should take advantage of the excellent waterfront training it offers. Swimming, lifesaving, rowing, canoeing, sailing, water skiing and motor boating are all done well at Boxwell. Also, Scouts should get their Mile Swim and BSA Lifeguard at Boxwell. With a staff of over 60 seasoned Boy Scouts and young adult Scouters, Boxwell is a camp no Troop 55 Scout should miss!

## **Knives**

Part of the advancement requirements includes instructions on safe knife handling. This is an area that receives constant vigilance from the adult and older scout leadership.

A small well-sharpened pocket knife is sufficient for all needs during the first six months to a year. During that time the Scout will be able to learn proper knife care and handling and observe the norm for his peers in the troop.

Adult leaders and leader scouts are authorized to confiscate any inappropriate or unsafe knife, or any knife being used in an unsafe manner, at any time with no questions asked. Such knives will be returned over to the adult leader in charge who will handle the situation. This is not something Troop 55 has had serious problems with, nor do we intend to.

## **Parents: Why Are We Doing This?**

Boys join Scouts to have fun. But we want to accomplish a lot more than helping boys have fun! Scouting has three fundamental aims, three long term outcomes we want to see:

1. To build character.
2. To foster citizenship.
3. To Develop Fitness

**Character** is morals, ethics, honesty, courage, integrity, self-reliance, self-discipline, self-confidence, and self respect.

**Citizenship** is the quality of a person's response to membership in a community. Knowing and carrying out the duties, obligations, privileges, and functions of a citizen.

**Fitness** is physical, mental, emotional, and moral. Physical fitness is health, good habits, eating right and exercise. Mental fitness is staying alert, thinking ahead, asking questions and making decisions. Emotional fitness is coping with difficult situations, dealing with frustration or anger, and handling problems. Moral fitness is courage, doing what is right even when it's not easy.

Scouting uses eight methods to achieve its aims:

1. **Ideals.** The Scout Oath. The Scout Law. The Scout Motto. The Scout Slogan.
2. **Patrols.** Every boy is a member of a group of six to eight boys that work together as a team.
3. **Outdoors.** This is where the fun is, and many of the challenges.
4. **Advancement.** Learning. Demonstrating. Being recognized. Teaching.
5. **Personal growth.** As one Scout grows, he helps cause others to grow.
6. **Adult association.** Role models. Involved, caring people.
7. **Leadership development.** Responsibility to others, for others.
8. **The uniform.** Accountability. Identification with the group.

All of these methods fit into boys having fun, and also can be used to achieve the three aims. Yes, it's a proven program!

## **Youth Protection**

Troop 55 diligently follows the Youth Protection protocols as established by the National Scout Office. Our adult leaders remain focused on ensuring that we provide a safe and effective program for all our scouts. Some of the key principles of this policy include:

- We insist on two deep leadership **at all times**. Scouts are never alone with an adult leader. This policy extends to phone, email, text communications. Other adults or parents **must** be copied on all electronic communication.
- All adult leaders are required to attend Youth Protection Training every two years to reinforce the best practices for running a safe program.
- Scouts are only allowed to share a tent with other youth that are within two years of their age.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Note that this policy extends to a boy's father. The BSA does not allow fathers and sons to tent together. The program is designed to allow boys to experience activities on their own and with their peers. Tenting with dads hinders this part of the program.

## **Parents: Important Ways You Can Help Your Son In Scouting**

Parent support is important in Scouting. There are several important ways a parent can help their Scout succeed:

**1. SUPPORT HIS COMMITMENT.** Help your son realize the commitment he is making when he joins the Scouts, and help him live up to it. He needs to attend the meetings on Monday nights, the Patrol Leaders Council when required, the campouts as scheduled, the service projects as called. He needs to take personal responsibility for his behavior, attitude and participation in activities such as advancement. He needs to attend whether or not he likes what is on the menu at any particular time. Imagine a sports team that didn't have at least this much commitment from its members!

Your son can't benefit from the program if he is not there. And since the program is designed around patrols of six or eight boys, his absence hurts the other boys in his patrol. Everyone has conflicting priorities from time to time. Help your son keep his commitment to Scouts in perspective when these decisions have to be made.

**2. SUPPORT HIM IN HIS ROLE AS A LEADER.** If your son is a Patrol Leader, his attendance at the meetings, and his diligence in his duties as a Patrol Leader are critical to the success of his patrol and the whole troop. We can't function without him!

This is so important that if your son is elected Patrol Leader or Assistant Patrol Leader, and you see that other commitments will prevent him from fulfilling these responsibilities, please contact the Scoutmaster so arrangements can be made to elect someone else in that Patrol.

Patrol Leader is actually the second highest leadership position a Scout can attain, and the program is essentially designed around that position. We are increasing our diligence in training and guiding our Patrol Leaders in their duties and opportunities. We expect a lot from them, but the Patrol Leader role provides a boy with a unique learning and development experience that he will benefit from for the rest of his life.

**3. SUPPORT HIS ADVANCEMENT.** Your son's advancement is his responsibility. We will see that properly trained boys and adults are available to answer his questions and to test him on each requirement when he is ready. He should achieve First Class rank in the first 12 to 18 months, and another rank each 9 to 12 months after that. Planning is new to boys of Scouting age, so help him plan when he will accomplish each requirement and stick to that plan. Don't do his work for him, of course, but help keep him on track. Help him see how his decisions about how he spends his time affect his plan.

**4. SUPPORT THE UNIFORM.** The uniform is one of the key components of the Boy Scout program. Keeping a uniform ready to wear is new to most boys of Scouting age. Help your son keep track of when he's going to need his uniform next and what he needs to do to have it ready. This is one of the ways Scouting teaches a boy to live the motto "Be Prepared."

**5. SUPPORT HIS PUNCTUALITY.** He's going to need your help to get to the meeting at 7:00 pm Monday nights, and to any other Scout meeting of which he needs to be a part.

You know how hard it is to get one boy delivered to a certain place at a certain time, so we appreciate your understanding as we try to have 20 or 30 boys ready to be picked up at a certain time after a meeting or especially a campout! We try to finish the Monday meetings no later than 8:45 pm, but it varies plus or minus 15 minutes. We always publish our expected pickup time for campouts, but the nature of overnight trips makes this unpredictable. Once we leave the site, Trip leaders will provide an updated pickup time via email.

**6. SUPPORT THEIR COOKING SKILL DEVELOPMENT.** Encourage your son to cook at home - on the stove, on the gas grill and over charcoal. We actually do "show 'em how to cook" some, but it just makes sense that if a Scout can't scramble an egg or make a biscuit at home with a modern stove under ideal conditions, then it will be somewhat more difficult to do it 20 miles from a road in the rain on the ground with wet wood.

We can help them with the wet wood part. They can help themselves a lot by practicing at home. It's also a good idea to let the dishwasher be broken every now and then and make sure they know how to get burnt food out of an iron skillet. We eat well on the trail and so will your boy. He will have a lot more fun if he approaches it with the confidence a little 'home cooking' will give him.

## *Scouting History*

Scouting began in the mind of its British founder, Lord Robert Baden-Powell, who took a group of boys to the first Boy Scout Camp on Brownsea Island off the English coast in 1907. After that camp, Lord Baden-Powell (formerly General Baden-Powell, HMS) wrote a handbook for boys and an instruction booklet for adult leaders. The handbook, called *Scouting for Boys*, was published in five parts early in 1908, and later that year in book form.

Scouting emigrated to the United States when a Chicago publisher, William D. Boyce, while lost in the notorious London fog, encountered one of Baden-Powell's Scouts, who guided Mr. Boyce to his destination. When Boyce offered to tip the boy, the Scout declined, explaining that the service had been his duty as a "Good Turn". Since he was one of Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts, he could not be compensated for an act of service. Impressed, Mr. Boyce asked the Scout to wait while he completed his appointment and then had him lead them to Baden-Powell's office where he might inquire about this unusual organization that developed such commendable characteristics in young boys.

When Boyce sailed for home, he had a steamer trunk full of Scouting literature, insignia and uniforms and a head full of visions and dreams for the boys of America. As a result of this chance encounter with this English boy, now known only as the Unknown Scout, Boyce and other men founded the Boy Scouts of America with a charter from the United States Congress on February 8; 1910.

Middle Tennessee Scouting got its start in the early 20's when the Nashville Council, now known as the Middle Tennessee Council was granted its charter and appointed its first Scout Executive, W. J. Anderson. The Council established Districts in the 1940's, including our West District, named for James E. West, the first Chief Scout Executive of Boy Scouts of America. The Middle Tennessee Council has a rich and

inspiring history which you can read about in detail in a book called "Boys Will Be Men". While now out of print, copies of this book may still be found.

## **Troop 55 History**

Troop 55 started in 1983 with ten boys, five who became Eagle Scouts, under the leadership of Jerry Martin as Scoutmaster. It is an ongoing ministry of its sponsoring institution, Christ Presbyterian Church. Over the years, Troop 55 has maintained the reputation of being one of the top 10 Troops in the Middle Tennessee Council, which just so happens to be one of the top 10 councils in the United States. While our troop ranks did swell to over 90 registered Scouts at one time, we've found that our ideal size is between 40 and 50 Scouts and we try to maintain that size. Also, we pride ourselves in being a "Boy Led Troop" who faithfully practice Lord Baden-Powell's Patrol Method of running the troop.

The normal tenure of a boy in Troop 55 is four to five years, while many stay active until they turn eighteen and graduate from high school. If a boy completes five years with Troop 55, he can participate in twenty fixed base camping experiences, including ten long term summer camps, over twenty-five backing trips and two High Adventure trips. He will log over 200 miles of hiking, have rappelling adventures, spelunking trips, and both river and lake canoe trips. During that time he will accumulate over 100 nights of camping and will cook more than 150 meals over fires and camp stoves and will become quite proficient in Dutch Oven cooking. Did I forget to mention fire building, shooting shotguns, rifles, bow & arrows and throwing tomahawks? Are we having fun yet?

While all fathers are expected to be active members of the Troop Committee, 12-15 men provide the core of Troop 55 leadership. Several of these men have been involved with Troop 55 for over twenty-five years and many are Eagle Scouts themselves. Also, Troop 55 has one of the highest ratios of Wood Badge trained leaders in the Council. Wood Badge is said to be the PhD of Scouting and many of Troop 55's leaders have served on Wood Badge Staff. While we feel that all of the adult training offered by the Middle Tennessee Council is worth the effort, we strongly encourage our adult leaders to take advantage of the Wood Badge experience.

In 2022, Troop 55 inducted Bart Lowe as its 12th Scoutmaster to direct the Ministry of the Troop. In attendance at the ceremony were many former Scoutmasters who laid hands on him and prayed for him and his effective leadership of the Troop and to support him as he pledged to serve faithfully in this important leadership role of the Troop.