



WELCOME KIT

TROOP 410 - BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

TROOP 410  
CHARTERED BY

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

WE ARE PART OF THE SOUTH GA COUNCIL

**The Scout Oath**

On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country; obey the Scout Law; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.

**The Scout Law**

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent.

**The Scout Motto**

Be Prepared.

**The Scout Slogan**

Do A Good Turn Daily

## **Welcome!**

Welcome to Boy Scout Troop 410. Whether you are new, transferring from another Troop, or “seasoned” veterans, this packet is designed to help you get acquainted with our program and facilities. It also has something to say about a Scout's responsibilities and opportunities, and we hope it has the information you need to help your son get the most out of Scouting.

When a boy joins Scouting, his whole family joins in the experience. Scouting is a volunteer organization. Without volunteers to help challenge your sons, there would be no Troop 410. Parents and interested community members comprise the majority of the Troop's volunteers as Scoutmaster, Committee Members and Merit Badge Counselors.

Troop 410 needs your cooperation and volunteered time if it is to succeed. The Troop has some positions that may require a few hours of your time each week; there are also numerous, smaller “one-time” volunteer opportunities that could be shared among several families. Experience has taught us that the quality of the Troop and your son's experience in Scouting is directly related to the contributions of time and effort each scout's family makes. In addition, the scouts themselves generally like having their parents involved in their activities. A Boy Scout Troop is not an extension of the Scoutmaster—it is a part of your son's physical and character development.

Troop 410 is open to all boys regardless of economic or social status, race or religious belief. We take great pride in the diverse backgrounds of our Scouts. Unfortunately, however, no boy will be able to benefit from our program without his family's commitment to “help the Troop go.” Please let us know of your areas of interest. Many parents are surprised to find that helping their son in Scouting can be both rewarding and fun!

## **Goals**

Scouting is fundamentally a program for boys by boys. In Scouting we strive to enhance leadership development, self-confidence, character development and better citizenship through an organized program allowing boys to teach and organize themselves under adult supervision.

## **Joining the Troop**

For a boy to join Troop 410, his parents must complete an application. They must also fill out a Health and Medical Record, a Code of Conduct Acknowledgment, the Permission Slip/Waiver of Responsibility form. If a driving adult we need the automobile insurance, please assure us that you have and will maintain at least the minimum liability coverage required by the State of Georgia.

## **Meetings**

Troop 410 typically meets the first three Sunday Afternoons during the school year at First Christian Church, Valdosta. We do not meet over the summer as we attend Summer Camp and High Adventure Bases that are available. You should keep the Troop Calendar handy for changes or additions.

Meetings begin with an opening ceremony, which usually includes the Pledge of Allegiance and recitation of the Scout Oath and Scout Law. There may be some brief announcements. The opening at 4:00pm is followed by a program and, in most cases, games. The closing ceremony typically begins around 5:00 pm and this is when most important announcements are made. Parents are encouraged to come inside to hear these announcements and participate in closing.

Please be prompt in picking up your son. If you are late, two scoutmasters must wait with your son until you arrive. We never leave a boy alone at the church.

Since we believe in having a “boy led” troop, many of the programs and activities at Troop meetings are organized and run by the scouts. This is different from most other youth activities, where adults decide what to do and structure the way the youth do it. In Boy Scouting, the role of adult leaders is to promote the “process” of Scouting—to provide a safe and healthy environment, along with the necessary training and resources that the boys need. It can be a very messy business, sometimes painful to watch. Meetings where the boy leaders are in charge can be chaotic. And it can be tempting for adults to jump in and sort things out, because that is what adults do. But we have to remember what Scouting is about. Scouts learn by doing—even from disorganization and failure. We just have to remember that our business as adults is not the same as the business of the boys. It is up to them to get things done. It is up to us to make sure they have what they need, but (within the bounds of health and safety) not what they do with it.

## Uniforms

The Boys Scouts of America is a uniformed organization. Wearing the Boy Scout uniform shows a sense of belonging and pride in the Scouting movement. All members of Troop 410 are required to wear the approved uniform and insignia to all troop meetings and scout related activities, unless otherwise permitted by the Troop Scoutmaster. **Scouts are expected to come dressed in the Official Boy Scout uniform: shirt, pants, and belt** (some newer versions of scout pants have a "built in" belt), **socks, and troop cap if hiking or outdoors**. All Cub Scout patches (except the Arrow of Light) should be removed. The boys are expected keep current on rank, patrol and quality unit patches. During the summer (Memorial Day to Labor Day) scouts may wear a "Class B" uniform--the troop tee shirt (or other Scout t-shirt such as a Scout Camp tee shirt) and any pants that are neat.

We realize that the cost of the official Boy Scout uniform is not insignificant. You may be worried that your son will outgrow his pants before they are worn out. On the other hand, the Boy Scouts is no different from any sports team in which your son may participate; like those teams, we expect our "players" to wear a full uniform when they are doing Scouting, and to wear it properly. If finances are an issue, please contact the Troop Scoutmaster or Troop Committee Chair.

The troop does have a supply of "experienced" uniforms which you may take. Contributions to our uniform supply are always welcome.

## What to Buy

The official uniform may be purchased at the Scout Shop by the mall. The troop will supply most of the patches required as part of the uniform. The troop will also provide each incoming scout with one troop tee shirt. Additional hats and tee shirts may be purchased for \$8.00 each.

Each scout must have his own Scout Handbook. It should be brought to all troop meetings, activities, and campouts. Many of our scouts write their names on the side of the book for easy identification (since at any given meeting, there may be 30 or 40 otherwise identical Handbooks, this is a good idea!). A protective cover (available from the Scout Shop) is recommended. The Boy Scout Requirements book and Field book may be of interest at a later time. Scouts may not carry pocketknives until they have earned their Tote 'n 'Chip card, so don't rush to buy a knife yet.

## Dues and Fees

Yearly dues of \$110 are collected in September (Dues are prorated for incoming scouts). Dues are used to cover the expense of registration and insurance required of each boy on an annual basis. It provides for an annual subscription to Boy's Life magazine and other Council fees. Dues also help defray the cost of awards and patches the boys earn during the year.

Campouts and other Troop activities generally entail a modest cost for participants. The usual cost for a weekend camping trip is \$15 to \$20. The Troop also holds one or two fundraisers (including the annual Popcorn Sale, the proceeds from which are shared with the Council, the Troop and the Scout) to help cover camping and equipment costs. Scouts will have the opportunity to earn money for their individual accounts (which can be applied to dues, summer camp, or uniform needs) during the scouting year.

Unless otherwise instructed, all monies paid to the Troop should be in the form of checks payable to Troop 410, which will serve as your record of payment.

## Advancement

Advancement by scouts through the ranks is strongly encouraged and necessary to help their development in scouting. The requirements for all of the ranks are found in the Scout Handbook. The first "rank" to be achieved is Scout. For a boy to earn this rank, a **parent must discuss the pamphlet** *"How to Protect Your Child from Drug Abuse and Child Abuse"* at the beginning of the handbook. Send in a note to the scoutmaster when you have done this. We try to have all boys ready for a Scoutmaster conference for the rank of Scout within a month of joining.

You can greatly assist your son by getting to know the requirements for the ranks. You may work on skills at home. Unlike cub scouts, **parents do not sign off** Boy Scout requirements. If you see an opportunity for your son to fulfill a requirement, point this out to him. For instance, encourage him to ask the Scoutmaster if he can help assist in preparing and cooking a meal (Tenderfoot

#3). While the leaders try to keep track of how each scout is progressing, the scout is ultimately responsible for his own advancement.

As soon as a boy joins the troop, he may begin to work on any requirements; he may even begin to work on merit badges, although we strongly recommend that the boys focus on rank advancement at first. When a scout learns a skill or fulfills a requirement, he can get that requirement "signed off." by a scoutmaster--or scouts who are two ranks higher than the sought after requirement (for example, a Star scout can sign off Tenderfoot and Second Class requirements). Boy Scouts of America does provide some alternative requirements for scouts with disabilities. Talk with the scoutmaster if this might affect your son.

Scouts are required to show "scout spirit" for each rank advancement. The Scoutmaster may ask the scout how he has shown Scout Spirit, or to give examples of how he has demonstrated some of the points of the Scout Law in his own life.

When a scout has finished all but the last three requirements for a rank (scout spirit, Scoutmaster Conference, Board of Review), he should request a Scoutmaster Conference. At the Scoutmaster Conference, the Scoutmaster will ensure that all rank requirements have been completed and that the Scout has shown scout spirit. The Scoutmaster may also ask about the scout's experience with the troop and his advancement goals. The Scoutmaster conference may last from 15 to 45 minutes, depending on the rank.

A scout is required to be in full uniform for the Board of Review. He must be current on all dues and fees. He must also bring his Scout Handbook, with all requirements properly "signed off." At the Board of Review, the Committee reviews the Scout's progress and questions him about the rank and its requirements. They also assess the scout's attitude toward scouting and his plans for the future. A Board of Review may take from 20 to 60 minutes. A unanimous vote of the Board of Review is required for the Scout to be approved for rank advancement. If, during the conference, a question arises as to the whether all requirements for rank advancement have been satisfactorily completed, the Scout may be asked to return at a later time to complete the process.

Following the Scout's Board of Review, he will be presented with the badge for his new rank at the close of the troop meeting. The Scout's parents are especially encouraged to attend that portion of the meeting. Formal recognition of a scout's rank advancement takes place at a Court of Honor. This is a formal meeting, typically held two to four times per year. All parents, even those whose sons are not being recognized for rank advancement, are encouraged to attend. It's a great opportunity to support the scouts and to meet the leaders and other parents. Boys who are being recognized for their initial rank

advancement to "Scout" will receive a special ceremony called the Scout Investiture.

The scout should review the list of approved counselors for his merit badge and choose one. It is the responsibility of the scout to contact the merit badge counselor and discuss the process of earning the merit badge.

One way for parents to help the troop is to serve as a merit badge counselor. This requires the parent to register. Speak to a Scoutmaster about the procedure.

## **Outings**

There is an old Scout saying that: "outing" is  $\frac{3}{4}$  of "scouting." What we do on Sunday evenings and with advancement is geared toward learning skills that will be useful on outings. Campouts are the fun stuff of scouting that keep boys involved. It's also a way to determine if a scout really understands the skills he has been taught.

Each month from September to June, we try to schedule a weekend camping trip or a one day outing. In the summer we schedule a week of summer camp. Weekend camping trips are usually to a scout camp, a state park or a wooded area owned by someone connected with the troop. These are usually within an hour of Valdosta so that if a scout must leave early or come late he can still participate. The usual cost of a weekend trip is \$15 to \$20 to cover the costs of food, supplies, and equipment. Moms and dads are welcome to come along, and normally we do not ask parents to pay a fee for their participation. Trip fees should be paid in advance, by check.



A common question is, "What should my son bring?" Here's a list you should keep handy. **(If the list on the next page should be lost or stolen, a more complete list can be found on pages 292-295 of the Boy Scout Handbook.)**

Standard		Optional	<b><i>Don't bring</i></b>
Sleeping bag	Clothing for weather - layers are good	Compass	<i>Radio</i>
Pillow	Scout Handbook	Pocket knife - after being trained	<i>Electronic games</i>
Toothbrush	Pen and Paper		<i>Sheath knife</i>
Toothpaste	First Aid Kit		
Soap	Flashlight		
Towel			

Normally one of the scouts does the grocery shopping for his patrol or for the troop, and he will be reimbursed after presenting the treasurer or Scoutmaster with a receipt. The cost of food is covered by the trip fee. Snacks are always available. Scouts rarely go hungry on a campout. Please alert the Scoutmasters to any **food allergies or dietary needs** your son has; do not assume that we will remember what you told us when he joined Boy Scouts.

We typically meet at the church early Friday evening for a weekend campout. Please make sure you son has dinner before bringing him to the church. It takes a while to load equipment and drive to our destination. Our standard policy is to return the scouts to their homes Sunday morning around 11:00 AM. Since cleanup at the campsite is often difficult, each scout will most likely be given something to take home and clean. If he is not sure how to do it, he should ask. Items should be returned to the troop as soon as possible, preferably within a week.

Boy Scout policy prohibits adults from sharing tents with scouts. It is Troop 410's policy that not even parents share tents with their sons. We are very careful to observe the BSA policy that no leader is ever alone with one scout.

After the outing, the scout should record the nature of the outing and the date in his Scout Handbook on page 446 for reference.

## Clean Up

As we break camp, scouts are usually assigned something to take home and clean. Since we try to teach skills and responsibility in scouting, we suggest that the scouts take responsibility for this chore. Of course, scouts sometimes need help or encouragement from parents. These items should be cleaned and returned by the second scout meeting after the event. Please check them in with the troop quartermaster.

**Tents:** The tents should be set up to air out and dry. Remove any debris from inside the tent. There should be six tent pegs that go in the small bag. There are three poles with shock cords that should be put in their own bag. Finally gently stuff (do not fold) the tent fly and tent into the bag. Report any missing or extra pieces to the troop quartermaster.

**Ground cloth:** Remove any mud or dirt; hose it off if necessary. Dry it, and fold it twice in each direction. Report tears to the quartermaster.

**Pots and pans** (cook kits): The aluminum pots and pans have seen heavy use. Burned on food is common and may require a Brillo and elbow grease. The test for whether it is clean enough is to ask the chief cook in your household if she/he would use it in that condition.

**Iron Dutch ovens:** Cast iron requires special care for cleanup. Let it soak as long as necessary and then use water – **no soap** – to clean the inside. (New cast iron cookware must be seasoned with oils to create a non-stick surface. Soap and scouring pads can undo the benefits of years of seasoning.)

**Utensils** (chef kits): Each chef kits contains a ladle, spatula, slotted spoon, turning fork, slicing knife, paring knife, can/bottle opener, and vegetable peeler. Wash and dry these thoroughly before returning them to the cloth organizer. Report any missing items to the troop quartermaster.

## **Summer Camp**

The first question that must be addressed is often asked by new scout parents, “Is my son old enough to spend a week at camp?” The answer is, “Yes!” This summer camp experience is designed for new and young scouts. We usually ask that scouts spend a weekend camping with the troop before going. This gives the scout a chance to try out his equipment and skills; and it gives the leaders a chance to get to know the scout.

At summer camp, the boys sleep in large tents, two to a tent. Adults usually have a tent to themselves. We eat in a dining hall, and food is prepared for us. Scouts take turns helping with table setup and cleanup. There is an excellent morning program for first year scouts. It focuses on the requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class. In addition, at least 15 to 20 merit badges are offered, which can be worked on in the morning or afternoon as time permits. Besides advancement, there is time for swimming, boating, hiking, and just hanging out.

## **Get Involved**

Troop 410 offers an excellent opportunity for boys to mature into young men, but we do need help. There are many ways you can help. Make sure your son comes to meetings in full uniform and attends outings. Encourage your son to advance. Help with transportation for outings, and get to see where he's spending time. Stay for an outing. Join the troop committee, and help plan events or help with boards of review. Once a year jobs are the popcorn sale, the family dinner, Scouting for Food, a fund raiser, and the family camping trip. Share your interests or hobbies at a Monday meeting or as a merit badge counselor. Be an Assistant Scoutmaster. When lots of parents get involved, it lightens the load. One outstanding aspect of the Boy Scouts of America is the opportunity for leadership training for scouts and adults. There will always be someone to help you with the responsibilities you accept. Talk with one of the leaders, and we'll get you started on your own scouting adventure.