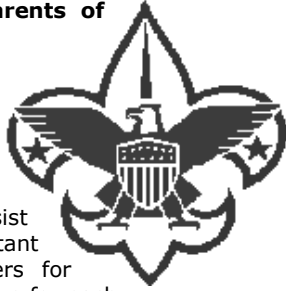


## Dear Webelos Leaders and Parents of Webelos:

This year your son will be making a decision that will have an impact on his Scouting career: the choice of which Boy Scout Troop he will join. We are providing this guide to help you assist your son as he makes this important decision. It includes brief answers for many of the questions you may have for each troop and suggests other questions you and your son might want to ask.

*Remember: The choice of a troop is a personal decision.*



### Troop 422 Contact Info:

Scoutmaster: Michael Sims (404)597 1338

### What should I ask when I visit?

During your visit, there are things to ask and observe. There is no "right" answer to these questions, but you want a troop where you and your son will feel comfortable. Don't be afraid to ask about our troop. We'll be happy to tell you about the strengths and weaknesses of our troop.

## Here are some questions that you might have when visiting Troop 422:

### How many registered Scouts are in the troop?

Our current troop size is about 17 registered boys.

*Quality Unit Award.* Our troop commits yearly to earn the "Quality Unit" award.

### How many registered Leaders?

We have about 15 registered adults and are always looking for more.

### What is the age range of the Scouts?

We have a good mix of ages in our troop 10-15 years old. We currently have 2 active patrols: The Flaming Arrows and the Wyverns. Patrols are encouraged to earn their Quality Patrol Award, yearly.

### Is the troop currently able to hold the interest of the older as well as younger Scouts? Do they offer (or plan to offer) any "High Adventure" Scouting?

We have a strong first year program led by our Asst Scout Master, an Eagle Scout, who works to help scouts reach First Class in their first year. We will have a sister High Adventure unit, Crew-422, which is for boys and girls, aged 14-21. The Crew will have several scouts who serve in both the troop and the crew.

Younger Scouts traditionally work on their Rank Requirements so they can advance through the Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class Ranks in their first year in Scouting. Much of their attention in meetings and on campouts is devoted to their basic Scout skills for these requirements. As the Scouts get into their teens, it is necessary to challenge them in order to hold their interest. Scouting has established "High Adventure" programs for Scouts who are 13 years of age or older. They may begin

high level canoeing, rock climbing, or sailing. Our troop has plans to travel to the Philmont Scout Ranch every other year for rugged mountain backpacking, attend Sea Base and the Northern Tier. We also send teams to the national or international Jamboree as they reach the appropriate age.

### Who are the Scout Leaders in the troop? Are the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, and Committee Chairman trained? What training have they attended and when?

The Troop Articles require that all adults are trained for his or her position. Your Scoutmaster and Committee Chair have completed all of their Wood Badge training – which is the most advanced training a Scout leader can achieve. Other leaders are registered to attend this course.

Trained leaders are a very important part of your consideration of a troop. A trained leader should know BSA policies on programs, safety, and youth protection. To be considered "Trained", Leaders must have taken training courses offered by the district and council. They may then wear a "Trained" patch on their sleeves. Most training courses (except Woodbadge) should be renewed every 2-5 years. High levels of training are desired.

Boy Scout Leader Training offered in our Council includes:

- *Fast Start* Basics of Boy Scout Program & Patrol Method
- *Youth Protection* (90 minutes video and discussion) (note: this training is available for all adults in the troop, and is now online and offered at Roundtable in 20-minute sessions.)
- *Scoutmaster Fundamentals/Adult Basic Leader Training* (one all day course + outdoor weekend course) [also called SALT and ITOLS]
- *Woodbadge* (Highest level of Scout Leader Training: one full week or two full three-day weekend campout/class sessions)
- *Committee Challenge training* – all committee members must be trained



### Is the troop "boy run"? What is their feeling about boy leadership?

In Boy Scouting, most troops aim to train their boys for leadership. Each troop has a Senior Patrol Leader, elected by all the boys in the troop, who with his Assistant Senior Patrol Leader takes the helm for leadership within the troop. The troop will also be organized into Patrols, units of 5 to 8 Scouts who function together, similar to a Cub den. They will have an elected Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader. In our troop, we try to allow the boys to lead, even if they fail, as this is the best way to learn how

### Do I need to join the troop my Webelos leader joins?

No, all members of a pack patrol need not join the same troop. Nor is there a "designated" troop that your boys must join. We recommend that all parents and scouts visit a minimum of 2 troops to understand the differences in the programs and what each troop has to offer. Our troop welcomes any new Scout that wishes to join our team.

### What about the Arrow of Light Requirements?

The Webelos Arrow of Light requires your son to visit at least one Boy Scout Troop, attend an outdoor event with a troop, and complete an application to join. We recommend he visit several troops, so he can see how different troops do things. Every troop has its own traditions, activities, and level of adventure. You need to find one that is right for your son. If possible, you and your son should attend an overnight campout as a guest of Troop 422. Contact the troop(s) you are interested in to set up a visit and go with your son to help him assess the troop.

### How do I contact a troop?

The Etowah District has a list of troops in the District Yellow Pages. This resource lists the contact phone numbers, location, and meeting nights for all troops in our district, which includes Forsyth, Dawson, and Lumpkin.

*If you want to visit, us, please contact Michael Sims to make sure we'll be at the Scout Lodge and that the meeting is appropriate for Webelos.*

### What is your safety standards?

The Troop leadership requires that all Scouts view the Boy Scouts of America "Time to Tell" movie. Also, we follow the rules in BSA "Guide to Safe Scouting".

to succeed. Our Court of Honor ceremonies are even planned and led by the boys. Our troop philosophy is that "every boy has a clearly-defined position of responsibility." Our Scouts go through a troop Junior Leadership Training course after every election.

#### **"Let the Boys Lead."**

Our 1<sup>st</sup> Class Scouts or higher lead the New Scout patrols. When you join our troop, he will take your son through a 30-day Fast Start program to help him reach Scout and move forward quickly in advancement.

We believe strongly that unless you give the boys the opportunity to lead, you won't have those strong older boys leading your troop. As the older boys learn to lead, they'll become role models for the younger scouts who will take their place in the future.

#### **What is their activity program like?**

Our troop annual calendar is posted online. Our monthly activities are a mixture of backpacking, canoeing and rafting, rock-climbing, cycling, and camping at District or Council camporees. The Patrol Leader Council have a yearly planning session and the boys decide on the monthly trips and activities - with the approval of the troop adult leaders.

#### **What is a "typical" meeting like?**

As our meetings are "boy run" as much as possible, it may seem chaotic when you visit. The troop meeting is well coordinated but there are multiple activities taking place at the same time. We are working on engaging the older boys more so they always feel needed. Our troop goal is to have a strong program that helps boys reach Eagle by age 15 and then remain with the troop for at least another year to 'give back' to the troop.

#### **What are their uniform requirements?**

We require full "Class A" uniform for all meetings and for District or Council sponsored campouts. We travel in "Class A" and wear "Class B" for camping activities and service projects.

#### **Does the troop attend Summer Camp? What percentage of the troop attended last year? Where do they go? Do they always go to the same camp? How many Leaders attend camp with the Scouts? Are those Leaders trained?**

Our troop always attends Summer Camp and the Scouts decide on the camp they want to attend. We attended Camp Rainey Mountain, Camp Woodruff and this year we attended Camp Barnhardt. We typically alternate by attending a Council camp one-year and a non-Council camp the following year. That helps maintain the 'freshness' for our older Scouts.

#### **How do they utilize the Advancement & Merit Badge Program?**

We use the BSA Advancement and Merit Badge Program as the cornerstone of our program. Our campouts and meetings center on helping the boys advance. Some focus meetings on merit badge work. We can always use more parents to help us with teaching Merit Badges-*there are 121 of them!* While the younger scouts work toward First Class, the older scouts often attend Merit Badge University sessions.

#### **What can a parent expect in terms of fees?**

We have an initial start-up fee of \$25 and \$6.00 per month scout dues, which helps with troop operations, badges, patrol supplies and advancement. It does not include your son's uniform, or camping and monthly activity fees. See our Equipment Guide for info on our "Starter Kit."

#### **Observe how the boys interact.**

We hope that you'll feel welcome in our troop. Each scout is different and has different goals. We connect each Scout with an Adult Patrol Advisor who will be mentoring the Patrol Leader in your son's patrol.

#### **What can I do to help?**

Troops require lots of adult support. You are welcome to serve on our Troop Committee or as an Assistant Scoutmaster. We have several positions open now. Even though we are a large troop, we still need every parent's assistance in order for us to be a success. All of us are volunteers with jobs and families just like you. If each parent helps out just a little, that goes a long way to ensuring a successful program for all of the scouts.

Obviously, there are many other questions you may wish to ask of a troop relative to your son's interests or goals in Scouting. We hope this information gives you a starting point to help you assess the troops you visit. Good luck!

Modified for Troop 422

*Revised Thursday, August 21, 2008*



# **Webelos To Scout: The Transition From a Pack Patrol To a Troop Patrol**

**A Guide  
For  
Parents and Leaders**

**Etowah District  
NE Georgia Council BSA**

**Troop 422  
Dawsonville, Georgia**

<http://bsatrop422.com>