



Welcome to Scouts BSA Troop 288!

Scouts BSA is a program for youth ages 11-17 that provides fun, adventure, learning, challenge, leadership, and responsibility to help them become the best version of themselves. Troop 288 prides itself on developing confident youth leaders who are enabled to bring their Scouting vision to life through the guidance of caring adult leadership.

American Legion Post 288 proudly charters our three units:

Boy Troop – for boys ages 11-17 (or age 10 AND has completed 5th Grade, or age 10 AND has earned Arrow of Light)

Girl Troop – for girls ages 11-17 (or age 10 AND has completed 5th Grade, or age 10 AND has earned Arrow of Light)

Venturing Crew – for boys and girls ages 14-21 years old (or age 13 and completed the 8th grade)

American Legion Post 288 is located at Verdugo Hills Memorial Hall, 4011 La Crescenta Ave., La Crescenta, CA 91214.

Meetings

Scouts BSA Boy Troop and Girl Troop meetings are every Tuesday at 6:50 p.m. at the Verdugo Hills Memorial Hall and during the summer we meet in the picnic area near the dog park in CV Park. We encourage everyone to arrive by 6:45 p.m. to help set up for the meetings. Parents are encouraged to attend the meetings, since important announcements regarding upcoming activities are made at the beginning of each meeting.

Venturing Crew meetings are on the 2nd and 4th Thursday @ 7:00 p.m. at the Verdugo Hills Memorial Hall. For more information, visit the Venturing Crew page on the troop website. Participation in Venturing Crew 288 is free for scouts 14 and older who are registered with Troop 288.

Digital Resources

Troop Website www.Troop288.org

The site is updated weekly and has our calendars, forms, and contact information for adult leaders. Check it often!

Shutterfly Photo Gallery's

Troop 288 maintains private archives of photos from troop activities. We encourage families to upload photos of troop activities into the folders for each activity; create a folder if you are the first person to upload for an activity. Our scouts have access to the photos to create slideshows and presentations.

Boy Troop: [VHCTroop288](https://vhctroop288.shutterfly.com) Request permission to the gallery at <https://vhctroop288.shutterfly.com>

Girl Troop: [VHCGirlTroop288](https://vhcgirltroop288.shutterfly.com) Request permission to the gallery at <https://vhcgirltroop288.shutterfly.com>

Social Media

Boy Troop

Facebook: [Troop 288](https://www.facebook.com/Troop288)

Girl Troop

Facebook: [BSA Girl Troop 288](https://www.facebook.com/BSAGirlTroop288)
Instagram: [bsa_girl_troop_288](https://www.instagram.com/bsa_girl_troop_288)
Twitter: [BSA Girl Troop 288](https://twitter.com/BSAGirlTroop288)
Pinterest: [@BSAGirlTroop288](https://www.pinterest.com/BSAGirlTroop288)

BAND

Troop 288 uses the BAND app to privately manage communications while ensuring safety and two-deep leadership. Scouts and parents should join and visit often to see announcements. To join our groups, follow the links:

Troop 288 - Boys: <https://band.us/band/79192628>

Troop 288 - Girls: <https://band.us/band/79167906>

Verdugo Hills Council

Our Troop is a member in the Tongva District of the Verdugo Hills Council, 1325 Grandview Avenue, Glendale, CA 91201 (818) 243-6282 <https://vhcbsa.org>

Council Mailing List - The Echo

Leaders, Scouts, and Parents can receive the most up to date information on events happening in Verdugo Hills Council. Please send a blank email to the following email address: **Boy_Scout_Leader+subscribe@vhcbsa.org** to subscribe.

Annual Troop 288 Recharter Fee: \$169

BSA National Fee	\$75
Verdugo Hills Council Fee	\$42
Verdugo Hills Council Insurance	\$12
Troop 288 Operations Fee *	\$40
Subtotal	\$169
If per-Scout Fundraising requirement was not met for current year, add:	\$25
If Family Volunteer Commitment requirement was not met for current year, add:	\$25
If Scouts' Life Magazine is desired, add:	\$15

* Our major operating costs are for awards, equipment maintenance and replacement, Courts of Honor, training, and registration fees for our active adult leaders.

Registration Fee is pro-rated for new scouts or those who join mid-year as follows:

Webelos Bridging to Troop 288: \$49

Includes Troop Neckerchief & Slide, and BSA Scout Handbook

New youth member not currently registered with Scouts BSA:

Includes: new BSA registration, one-time \$25 National fee, Troop Neckerchief & Slide, and BSA Scout Handbook

Jan – Mar: \$169 Apr – June: \$ 141 July-Sep: \$113 Oct – Dec: \$85

Scouts transferring from another troop (must be currently registered with Scouts BSA)

Includes: Troop Neckerchief & Slide

Jan – Mar: \$49 Apr – June: \$39 July-Sep: \$29 Oct – Dec: \$19

Optional Scouts' Life Magazine Subscription:

Jan – Mar: \$15 Apr – June: \$12 July - Sep: \$9 Oct – Dec: \$6

Troop Activities

We have an annual planning meeting where our youth leaders from the boy and girl troops plan activities for the coming year. They aim to have at least one day activity and one overnight trek per month on the initial calendar. Scoutmaster(s) and Assistant Scoutmasters add activities throughout the year, so check our calendar often for updates. Our calendars include boy troop only, girl troop only, boy & girl co-troop activities, and activities with our venturing crew.

Fees for Troop Activities

The annual registration fee does not cover the costs associated with troop activities. Participants of each activity pay to attend. The trek leaders will include the cost on the flyer / sign-up sheet when the activity is announced. Trek fees typically cover transportation, activities, campsite fees, meals, etc. Leaders submit a trek report after each activity that includes participation fees collected and trek expenses. If there is money left over, it is split evenly amongst the participants. A timely refund of that leftover money can be given before it becomes a non-refundable part of a scout's Scout Account and is subject to the rules thereof.

Annual Fundraising Commitment

The annual registration fee covers only part of the costs of operating our troops. We typically offer two fundraising opportunities per year.

Each scout is responsible to help fundraise \$25 per year, and this money is put into the Troop 288 General Operating Fund. After achieving the \$25 requirement, additional money raised is added to their "Scout Account" (see below). If a scout does not fundraise the \$25, the shortfall will be added to your recharter fees the following year. Scouts that join the troop after June 30th are exempt from the fundraising requirement for the year but are welcome to participate.

Scout Accounts

A scout account is a credit held by our treasurer in the name of an individual scout. Funds in scout accounts belong to Troop 288 since the funds were raised in the troop's name.

- The first \$25 raised in any calendar year by a scout through troop fundraising activities is credited to the troop general operating fund. Additional money raised remains the property of the troop but are credited to a scout account in recognition of the scout efforts in participating in the troop fundraisers.
- Funds may be credited to a scout account from other sources, like trek refunds, but still must be considered the property of the troop and as such must follow all rules of allowable purchases.
- A scout account balance may be used to pay for scouting activities whether sponsored by Troop 288 or by another scouting organization. Let your trek leader know when you sign up if you want to use your scout account funds to pay for the trek. These funds can also pay for annual rechartering, eagle scout service projects, and eagle scout COH. You will need to submit receipts when requesting reimbursements. These funds do carry over year to year and may only be used for the individual scout.
- These funds may not be used for parent activity fees, fundraising order obligations or fee requirements during recharter, or to purchase anything that will become personal property such as uniforms, camping equipment, etc.
- Funds may be transferred between scout accounts belonging to siblings upon request of a parent of the scouts.
- If a scout does not recharter with our troop for the next calendar year, the scout account balance will be credited to a sibling who does recharter with us or be forfeited to the troop general operating fund. A scout account balance may be reinstated if the scout does subsequently re-register with the troop within 12 months after forfeiture, with Troop 288 committee approval. With Committee approval, a scout's account balance may be paid out to a new troop (in case of moving, etc.).
- An Eagle Scout who has aged out will be able to use the balance of their scout account to pay for the costs of an Eagle Court of Honor for up to 1 year after they have aged out.

Volunteering

There are many volunteer opportunities available, some administrative and others more hands on. If you would like to be an Assistant Scoutmaster, a merit badge counselor, serve on the troop committee, or participate in any other capacity please talk to our Scoutmaster, Volunteer Chair, or Committee Chair. Don't be afraid to get out of your comfort zone, our experienced leaders will help guide you.

Family Volunteer Commitment

Scouting is a fun and rewarding adventure to enjoy with your child. Each family is responsible to support our program by volunteering a minimum of 10 adult volunteer hours for Troop 288 activities per year (Nov. 1 – Oct. 31). Hours are self-reported using the sign-up links on the volunteer hour page on the troop website. If a family does not volunteer and report at least 10 adult hours by October 31st, a \$25 fee will be added to your recharter fees for the following year. There will be no adjustments according to partial hours, so get out there and have fun supporting troop 288! Scout families that join our troop after June 30th are exempt from this commitment for the year but are welcome to participate. If you have questions about volunteering, please contact our Volunteer Chair.

Troop 288 pays for active adult registration fees as a way of saying "Thank You" for your help!

Youth Protection Training (YPT)

We encourage every adult to complete **Youth Protection Training** so that we are all aware of Scouting BSA safety guidelines and work together to keep everyone safe. It is required training for leaders and must be renewed every 2 years. One-on-one contact between adults and youth members is prohibited. Troop 288 requires that all adults attending treks, carpooling to activities, etc. complete this training. Additional information and the link to take this training can be found on the Troop website under the YPT page or go to <https://my.scouting.org/>

You will be asked to sign in or create an account. Follow the instructions on the site and after completion please send a copy of the certificate to our Training Chair, Terry Newgard at tmartinnewgard@gmail.com

Mandated Reporter Training / Live Scan Background Check

AB-506 was passed by the State of California requiring volunteers and staff of Youth Service Organizations to complete training in reporting child abuse and neglect and undergo Live Scan background checks. All Scouting volunteers who have direct contact with, or supervision of, children for more than 16 hours a month or 32 hours per year must complete a Live Scan background check (digital fingerprinting) and online mandated reporter training.

- **Mandated Reporter Training** is a 2-hour online course <https://mandatedreporterca.com/training/volunteers>. After completing the free course, please upload your completion certificate to <https://californiascouting.org/vhc/> and send a copy to our Training Chair, Terry Newgard at tmartinnewgard@gmail.com
- **Live Scan Background Check** – Our council has a unique ID number for Live Scans, you MUST bring their specific form and will find it on the YPT / AB-506 page on our troop website.

Two Deep Leadership

BSA Two Deep Leadership guidelines include safety precautions to protect youth, adults, and leaders. Two registered adult leaders 21 years of age or over are required at all Scouting activities, including meetings. There must be a registered female adult leader 21 years of age or over in every unit serving females. A registered female adult leader 21 years of age or over must be present for any activity involving female youth.

All adults accompanying a Scouting unit who are present at the activity for 72 total hours or more must be registered as leaders. The 72 hours need not be consecutive.

One-on-one contact between adult leaders and youth members is prohibited.

- In situations requiring a personal conference, the meeting is to be conducted with the knowledge and in view of other adults and/or youth.
- All Communications (phone calls, texting, emails, zoom chats, etc.) must include another registered leader or parent. Phone calls on speaker phone with a listening parent helps us follow these safety guidelines.
- Communication by way of social media (facebook, snapchat, etc.) must include another registered leader or parent.

Accommodations

- **Tenting** – BSA requires scouts to tent with other scouts of similar age range. Separate tenting arrangements must be provided for male and female adults as well as for male and female youth. Youth sharing tents must be no more than two years apart in age. In Scouts BSA, youth and adults must tent separately. Spouses may share tents.

Scouts BSA Uniform

Uniforms and insignia can be purchased at the Verdugo Hills Council Scout Shop, 1325 Grandview Avenue, Glendale, 91201. If you want to call ahead to check availability of what you need, call 818-243-6282. Uniforms and insignia are worn a certain way, consult the inside of your scout handbook or the staff at the scout shop for badge placement. Within a reasonable amount of time after joining the troop, Scouts are expected to have and wear the following:

Field Uniform (previously known as “Class A”):

Scouts are to wear to all troop meetings and other events as instructed.

- Tan Scout shirt with appropriate insignia and patches (Verdugo Hills Council shoulder patch, green shoulder loops, and patrol emblem (provided by the troop). Individual troop numbers 288 can be purchased at council OR you can buy our custom tan & green 288 patch from our troop for \$6.
- Troop 288 neckerchief & slide (provided by troop). Scouts can purchase or make their own slide if they prefer.
- Olive green scout pants or shorts (scout socks must be worn with scout shorts) and scout belt.
- Tennis shoes or hiking boots. Socks are required. No open-toed shoes.

Activity Uniform (previously known as “Class B”):

Scouts are to wear to summer meetings at the park, and other events as instructed.

- Troop 288 t-shirt (purchase from the troop), or any other scouting shirt.
- Olive green scout pants or shorts (scout socks must be worn with scout shorts) and scout belt.
- Tennis shoes or hiking boots. Socks are required. No open-toed shoes.

Troop 288 Outerwear:

We place an order of additional clothing items with our troop logo each year. We have a variety of sweatshirts, zip-up hoodies, hats, jackets, etc. Keep an eye out for the annual order! These additional outerwear items are optional, and we welcome scouts and parents to proudly represent our troop by wearing them.

Who's Who in Troop 288

Youth Senior Patrol Leader (SPL)

The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) is an elected position for a period of 6 months. The SPL selects, with the advice and counsel of the Scoutmaster, one or more Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPL), Troop Guides, Scribe, Historian, Librarian, Bugler, Chaplain Aide, and Quartermaster. Several positions have both age and rank requirements. Elections for Senior Patrol Leader are held in September and March of each year and all leadership positions change at this time.

Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPL)

Appointed by the SPL, these Scouts support the troop by running the different elements of the troop.

Patrol Leaders and Youth Patrols

In addition to the PLC, the troop is made up of several patrols. The Scouts in a patrol elect their Patrol Leader who in turn appoints the Assistant Patrol Leader and any additional roles needed. Patrols give bite-size leadership opportunities and allow solid friendships to form.

Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC)

A meeting led by the Senior Patrol Leader with the Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders, Patrol Leaders, and Troop Guides. The PLC is a meeting which plans the activities and runs the troop meetings. The Scribe is present to keep record.

Scoutmaster

The Scoutmaster is the adult responsible for overseeing and guiding the youth program and working directly with Scouts providing direction, coaching, and support. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters provide the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) with tools and skills so that they can run the troop. The importance of the Scoutmaster's job is reflected in the fact that the quality of their guidance will affect every youth and adult involved in the troop. The Scoutmaster can be male or female and must be at least 21 years old. The Scoutmaster is appointed by the head of the chartered organization.

Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM)

ASM's are the adult leaders that support the Scoutmaster and youth to deliver the scouting program. They provide support on treks, outings, activities, scout advancement, and general oversight during meetings. ASM's can be male or female and must be a minimum of 18 years old. They are appointed by the Scoutmaster and approved by the chartered organization.

Troop 288 Committee

Our Troop Committee functions as administration and support for the Boy Troop and Girl Troop. They take care of the non-program issues surrounding the troop. For example: accounting, fundraising activities, membership, recruitment, advancement records, and procurement and maintenance of troop equipment.

Troop 288 has a Committee Chair who is the administrative head for both the Boy Troop and Girl Troop units. The Committee Chair is voted in by the Troop Committee and approved by the Chartered Organization. The Committee Chair asks parents to fill the other committee positions: Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Chair, Board of Review Coordinator, Equipment Chair, Advancement Chair, Webmaster, Chaplain, and Chartered Organization Representative Liaison. Other leadership positions will be announced and filled as needed and may include Fundraising Chair, Training Chair, Volunteer Chair, etc. Adults may only hold one position on the committee. The committee may replace any of its members, at any time, as it may determine to be in the best interest of the organization.

The committee meets monthly and interested parents may attend these meetings. Please notify the Committee Chair if you have a specific topic to discuss. Only committee members have voting privileges. There may be circumstances where the Committee Chair calls for a closed meeting for voting members only.

Scouting Program and Delivery

The Troop 288 Program

Troop 288 supports a Boy Troop and Girl Troop each providing their own SPL, youth leadership structure, and dedicated Scoutmaster to support leadership skills in the best possible manner for each unit. It is the expectation that both PLC's

will meet to discuss their meetings, outings, and annual calendar. Collaboration occasionally exists between the Troops in the delivery of their programs and is the responsibility of the Scouts to determine what their collaborative efforts will be. Please note, not all meeting programs and outings are joint ventures to allow the youth ownership of their respective leadership program.

The Aims of Scouting

- Character Development
- Citizenship Training
- Physical and Mental Fitness
- Leadership Development

These are the foundations of the scouting program and represent the long-term outcomes we want for every Scout. It is the mission of Scouts BSA to serve others by helping to instill values in young people, and in other ways to prepare them to make ethical choices over their lifetime while achieving their full potential. The values we strive to instill are based on those found in the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

Scout Oath

On my honor, I will do my best, To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; To help other people at all times; To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

Scout Law

A Scout is Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.

Advancement

Advancement is part of the scouting program, but it's not the reason why youth are Scouts. Our goal is not to produce Eagle Scouts, but rather to develop our young people into tomorrow's responsible citizens. Each Scout must "own their own advancement," or it will not be meaningful. Parent encouragement is welcome and needed, but ultimately it will be up to the scout to decide on what their advancement pace will be.

There are four steps of advancement:

- The Scout Learns.
- The Scout is Tested.
- The Scout is Reviewed.
- The Scout is Recognized.

Trail to First Class

Scouts are encouraged to work with youth leadership to get signed off on ranks. This enables the First Class Scouts and above to learn how to instruct, gain leadership experience, and learn to work together using the patrol method, and gives younger scouts examples of leadership while building their confidence. Adult leaders will also work with Scouts on their requirements.

Scouts will be learning basic scouting skills that will enable them to camp, hike, swim, cook, tie knots, administer first aid, and perform other tasks in the outdoors. With these first steps the scout begins to build themselves physically, mentally, and morally. They will start to follow the Scout Oath and Scout Law and the three points of the scout emblem fleur-de-lis: duty to God and country, duty to other people, and duty to yourself. When the First Class rank is earned, a scout has learned all the basic camping and outdoors skills of a scout. First Class Scouts can fend for themselves in the wild, lead others on a hike or campout, set up a camp site, plan and properly prepare meals, and provide first aid for most situations that may be encountered. A First Class Scout is prepared.

Merit Badges

The goal of the merit badge program is to expand a scout's interests, and there are more than 135 merit badges to choose from. Merit badges may be offered at troop meetings, or patrols may choose to work on a merit badge together. Many merit badges can be earned at summer camp and with other scouting organizations. Scouts may also choose to complete merit badges on their own.

It is the Scout's responsibility to pick a merit badge subject and ask for approval from the Scoutmaster. Once approved, the Scout will receive their signed, blue merit badge card ("blue card") and the name and contact information of a merit badge counselor. The Scout will then reach out to the counselor to begin working on the badge.

Another person must be with the Scout at each meeting with the merit badge counselor. This person can be a parent,

legal guardian, or another registered adult with the troop. Once the counselor has indicated completion on the blue card, the Scout presents the blue card to the Scoutmaster for a final signature. One signed, the blue card must be placed in either the “ammo box” inside the troop bin or given to the Advancement Chair by the Scout. The Scout will receive their merit badge at the next COH.

Rank Advancements and Board of Review Process

The requirements for Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks may be worked on simultaneously; however, these ranks must be earned in sequence. These requirements can be signed off by your Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM), Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), Troop Guides, and Instructors. NOTE: Parents are not authorized to sign off on their scouts' requirements like they did in Cub Scouts.

Rank	Requirements can be signed off by:			Can earn requirements simultaneously with other ranks	Scoutmaster Conference with:	
	Senior Patrol Leader/Instructor /Troop Guide	ASM	Scoutmaster		ASM designated by your Scoutmaster	Scoutmaster
Scout	X	X	X	X		X
Tenderfoot	X	X	X	X	X	X
2nd Class	X	X	X	X	X	X
1st Class	X	X	X	X	X	X
Star		X	X			X
Life		X	X			X
Eagle		X	X			X

Scout Rank -

Review the requirements - you will need to read, learn, and perform these requirements and receive sign offs for each.

- ☐ After completing all the requirements, ask your Scoutmaster for a Scoutmaster conference.
- ☐ After the Scoutmaster conference, the Scoutmaster will award you with your Scouts BSA Scout Rank Emblem.

Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class Ranks -

- ☐ After completing all the requirements and receiving sign offs for each, ask your Scoutmaster for a Scoutmaster conference. The Scoutmaster may designate an Assistant Scoutmaster for you to meet with for the conference. You must wear your full Field Uniform (previously known as “Class A”).
- ☐ **AFTER** your Scoutmaster conference is completed for a rank, you will set up a Board of Review (BOR) for that rank.

Star and Life Ranks -

- ☐ After completing all the requirements and receiving sign offs for each, ask your Scoutmaster for a Scoutmaster conference. You must wear your full Field Uniform.
- ☐ **AFTER** your Scoutmaster conference is completed for a rank, you will set up a Board of Review (BOR) for that rank.

How to Set Up a Board of Review (BOR)

AFTER the Scoutmaster conference is completed, the scout (NOT a parent) must CALL the Board of Review Coordinator to schedule a BOR appointment. The deadline is 8:00 p.m. on the Sunday before the next regularly scheduled BOR date. Call Mrs. Bruck at 818-723-4892. When you call, BE PREPARED: clearly say your first and last name, and you are calling to request a BOR for the rank of __?__. If you get a voicemail, leave a detailed message. If you do not get a return call within 24 hours, call again, and send an email to annabruck1@gmail.com

Be Prepared for your Board of Review

- Wear your full Field Uniform with Merit Badge Sash and / or Order of Arrow Sash (if applicable)
 - Scout shirt, be sure you have all your correct badges sewn on
 - Neckerchief with any slide
 - Scout pants or scout shorts (scout socks must be worn with shorts) and scout belt
- Bring your BSA Scout Handbook
- Study the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Outdoor Code, Scout Motto, and Scout Slogan
- Reflect on your scouting experiences, and come prepared to share them with us

- Bring your Scout binder (3-ring binder with earned awards). If you don't have one, start one!

The purpose of the BOR is to ensure that the requirements have been met for advancement as well as to discuss the Scout's experiences in the troop, the strengths, and weaknesses of the troop program, and to encourage the Scout to keep working towards advancement. After a rank advancement has been approved at a BOR, the rank has been earned, and the BSA Rank Emblem will be awarded at the next Court of Honor.

Court of Honor (COH)

Troop 288 conducts Court of Honors once per quarter to recognize Scouts for their achievements. We recognize scout elections, awards, and advancements since the last COH. It is the responsibility of the Patrol Leaders' Council, in conjunction with the Advancement Chair, to plan and conduct the ceremony. Scouts and their families are strongly encouraged to attend every COH, whether they are being awarded or not, to show support to their fellow Scouts.

Trail to Eagle Scout

After achieving First Class, the next ranks the scout earns are Star and Life. Here, Scouts will become the core of the troop leadership, performing service projects, earning additional merit badges, and demonstrating leadership. They will take the skills that they have learned and find new ways to guide the troop to success. The original principles of the Scout Oath and Scout Law now have a greater meaning to the Scout. The final steps towards Eagle Scout are filled with impactful leadership experiences. Eagle Scout is the most significant honor a Scout can earn in the Scouts BSA program. Eagle Scouts are valued in our society because they embody the core messaging of the Scout Oath and Scout Law. They show character, ability, perseverance, and leadership. This award will offer a Scout opportunity in education, professional employment, and personal growth that is unrivaled.

Helping Your Scout

Parents ask how they can help their Scout during their time in the troop. Be there to celebrate your Scouts' successes. Be willing to volunteer when help is needed. Be supportive of your Scouts' choices and allow them to make mistakes. It is your job as a parent to remind your Scout that this is their program and advancement. They may not progress as quickly as you would like them to but remember that this is the formation of life-long character skills. It takes time and grit to build a solid foundation. Just by reading this, you are already helping support your Scout!

Success is achieved when we accomplish the aims of scouting: character development, citizenship, training, leadership, and mental and physical fitness. We know we are on the right track when we see youth accepting responsibility, demonstrating self-reliance, and caring for themselves and others; when they learn to weave the scouting ideals into their lives; and when we can see they will be positive contributors to society.

Important Differences from Cub Scouting

- **Scouts BSA is Scout-led**, rather than parent-led, and as such may not be as efficient as if everything were run by an adult. This is by design, so that youth may learn from their mistakes and experiences. Ranks are achieved at Scout's own pace and level of effort. Ranks have no correlation to age, although some do take a minimum amount of time. The only deadline, however, is that any award or rank must be earned before a Scout turns 18 years old.
- **Parents cannot sign off** on their Scout's progress. It must be a registered adult or appropriate youth leader.
- **Treks are usually restricted** to registered scouts and adult leaders. There are occasional exceptions, but most are not "family" treks as in Cub Scouting where the whole family can participate. This is to make more room for Scouts, as well as to develop independence, confidence, and team building.
- **Scouts are required to tent** with other scouts of similar age range (no more than 2 years' difference). **Siblings and** parents cannot tent with Scouts, even their own.
- **Car Camping** – When we make campsite reservations for our car camping treks, the campsite occupancy dictates how many scouts and adult leaders can attend. Unlike Cub Scouting, a troop car camp does not mean that parents or siblings are invited. Reservations are usually made far in advance, so if you see a trek that interests you, please communicate with the trek leader. Please be aware that there are many factors that will affect how a trek leader responds.
 - Some treks are limited due to the number of campsites reserved, which affects tent and/or parking spaces. Some campgrounds also restrict the total number of cars. *Current COVID restrictions exacerbate this.*
 - Some treks may welcome several adults because of our need for drivers and help with activities / supervision.
 - Some treks welcome families to join if they want to reserve their own family campsite for the non-scout participants, in that case sharing a campsite with another family might be an option. Reservations must be made on one's own and should be approved by Trek Leaders in advance. **Registered scouts must sleep on the troop campsite, they are not allowed to sleep on a family campsite.**

Please note that parental involvement is still critical to the success of the Scouts BSA program. There are some tasks that youth cannot do to make the program work, and that's where our families and volunteers come in!

Record-Keeping

There are three kinds of records that a Scout will need to keep in a safe place.

- The BSA Scout Handbook – with requirements signed off
- The Scout's portion of completed and partial merit badge cards and wallet-sized merit badge certificate cards
- The wallet-sized certificate cards for rank advancement

Make sure all the cards are signed by the appropriate scout leader. These can be kept in plastic page protectors designed for baseball or collectable cards. If there is a discrepancy or missing record, these personal records are the most important ally in proving what a Scout completed and when. These documents will be extremely helpful when preparing Eagle Scout applications and are required for Eagle Scout BOR. These records form the basis of the Scout's Eagle Binder. This could be a 1.5" binder and it will include all of the above records and any additional highlights from their scouting journey. Scouts will learn more about this during the relevant Scoutmaster conferences. Also, we recommend taking photos periodically of the handbook signature pages as a back-up.

Scoutbook – www.scoutbook.com

Our troop utilizes Scoutbook to keep a digital record of advancement and major milestones. Scoutbook uses the same user ID and password as the BSA's My.Scouting website (<https://my.scouting.org>). Scouts, leaders, and parents will have their own accounts. Parent accounts will be linked to their child's scout account. You can create your My.Scouting account via <https://my.scouting.org/create-account>. While you can create your My.Scouting account yourself, you will eventually need to link it to your BSA ID number. This can be provided by troop leaders after your registration paperwork has been fully processed. The BSA has IDs for all scouts and for all registered adults.

Eagle Scout Recognition & Gifts

Our troop gives some special gifts to our Scouts when they achieve Eagle Scout, if the Scout wants to receive them. These gifts are usually presented at the Eagle Scout Court of Honor.

- Eagle Scout Neckerchief & Slide
- Eagle Award Kit (Eagle Badge, Eagle Award, Mentor Oval Pin, Mothers Pin, Fathers Pin). Scouts will give the mentor pin to someone to thank him/her for supporting your scouting journey. Additional mentor pins can be purchased from the council store if a Scout wants to hand out more than one.

Our Chartered Organization, American Legion Post 288, gives an Eagle Scout Certificate as well. A thank you card to our Chartered Organization is a way that an Eagle Scout can show appreciation. Send to: American Legion Post 288, P.O. Box 223, Montrose, CA 91021

If a Scout decides not to have an Eagle COH, these gifts can still be received if desired. We ask each family to notify our Scoutmaster whether the gifts are wanted, and your thoughts about having an Eagle Court of Honor or not. A great time to start this conversation is immediately after the Eagle Scout Board of Review.

Eagle Court of Honor

Individual Scouts can host their own Eagle Court of Honor or join other Scouts and have a combined celebration. The troop will reimburse Eagle Court of Honor expenses (after the fact) up to \$75 per Eagle Scout for food, decorations, and facility expenses only. Gifts such as additional mentor pins or Eagle memorabilia will not be reimbursed. Allowable Eagle Court of Honor expenses more than the \$75 per Eagle Scout allocation may be reimbursed from scout account funds, up to the balance remaining in the scout account, if the scout or parent chooses to do so. In all cases, original receipts for allowable expenses must be presented to the Treasurer for reimbursement. The Treasurer will first pay out the \$75 allowance, and then pay out of scout accounts as directed by each scout or parent. In the case of pooled expenses for multiple eagle scouts, the parents organizing the Court of Honor will need to direct the treasurer as to how to issue the reimbursements (and settle among themselves as they see fit).

And finally...

You and your Scout are joining a great organization that offers so much more than enjoying the outdoors. It will be the formation of lifelong friendships, academic development, and the making of cherished memories as Scouts find their way along the Trail to Eagle. Watching your Scout build character and grow as a person are just some of the many gifts this troop has to offer. More than anything else, Troop 288 is here for your scout to have FUN. We are so glad you have joined us!