



S C O U T S B S A

## Parent and Scout Guide

The mission of Scouts BSA is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

# Marsh Valley Troop 88

This publication provides parents and Scouts with an overview of how Marsh Valley Troop 88 is structured and run. It also provides information and resources to get each new Scout and Scouting family off to a well-informed start. **Welcome to Troop 88: Adventure This Way!**

Dear Parent: We invite you to stay current on Troop activities, be as actively involved as a Troop Volunteer as possible, and enthusiastically support your Scout in his Scouting Experience.

**About Us.** Marsh Valley Troop 88 is chartered to American Legion Post 88, Lava Hot Springs, Idaho, and located in the Tendoy Service area, headquartered out of the BSA Offices in Pocatello, ID. We are part of the Grand Teton Council, headquartered in Idaho Falls, ID.



### KEY TROOP CONTACTS

Scoutmaster: **Ryan Carter** • [ryan@solvhomedesigns.com](mailto:ryan@solvhomedesigns.com); 208-904-0427

Scoutmaster: **Bryan Beus** • [red2319@yahoo.com](mailto:red2319@yahoo.com); 208-681-3888

Chartered Organization Rep: **Mike Doyle** • [doylmich@isu.edu](mailto:doylmich@isu.edu); 208-317-8508

Troop Committee Chair: **Michael Waite** • [michael@bonefrog.com](mailto:michael@bonefrog.com); 208-776-5210

Troop Website: [troop88.mvscouts.org](http://troop88.mvscouts.org)

### RESOURCES

#### **Pocatello BSA Service Center and Scout Store**

2306 Pocatello Creek Rd., Pocatello, ID 83201 • 208-233-4600

#### **Grand Teton Council HQ, Service Center and National Scout Store**

3910 S Yellowstone Hwy., Idaho Falls, ID 83402 • 208-522-5155

Council Website: [tetonscouts.org](http://tetonscouts.org) • Council's National Scout Store: 208-403-0452

Uniforms, books and gear are available at the Pocatello Service Center and the Idaho Falls Council HQ, Service Center and National Scout Store. Scouting gear, uniforms and other materials can also be ordered online at [www.scoutshop.org](http://www.scoutshop.org)

### ONLINE RESOURCES

- Scouts BSA—[www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)
- Safety Information—[www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/](http://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/)
- Scouting Resources—[www.scouting.org/resources/](http://www.scouting.org/resources/)
- Health Forms (required for long-term camps)—[www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/ahmr/](http://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/ahmr/)
- Scout Shop—[www.scoutshop.org](http://www.scoutshop.org)
- Scoutbook—[www.scoutbook.com](http://www.scoutbook.com) (account registration necessary)
- Scouting App—search "Scouting BSA" on the Apple App Store and Google Play

## STAY IN THE LOOP

Marsh Valley Troop 88 uses **Scoutbook** and its related “Scouting” app to keep the leadership, volunteers, Scouts, and parents all looped in to Troop meetings, activities, and operations. Parents and Scouts can access the troop’s Scoutbook info via the “**Scouting**” app. The Scouting app is available in the Apple App Store or at Google Play (search “Scouting BSA”). Scouts and parents, using the Scouting app, can easily track advancement progress and activities, participate in communications between leaders, Scouts and parents, view the current calendar, and more. Please take a minute to download the app and stay informed and connected. Learn more about Scoutbook at [www.scoutbook.com](http://www.scoutbook.com).

The Troop 88 website—[troop88.mvscouting.org](http://troop88.mvscouting.org)—has an “announcements” box up top where we post the latest news and information on troop activities. Also an FAQ section, expanded gear tips, downloadable files, and online resource links.

## OVERVIEW

**Scouting vs. Cub Scouting.** Scouting differs from Cub Scouting in that Scouts run the Troop and plan the activities and outings under the experienced over-watch of the Scoutmasters. Scouts control their own destiny in terms of rank advancement and types of outings and activities the Troop engages in. Scouts lead. Scouts serve. Scouts participate in fundraising activities to offset out-of-pocket expenses for themselves and their families.

**Troop Meetings.** The Troop meets weekly on Thursday nights from **5:00 to 6:30 pm** at the **McCammom City Offices** (The Old Train Depot) at **802 Front St., McCammon, Idaho**. Meetings start promptly; please arrive on time.

Some Troop meetings may be held in other locations as necessary. Notice will be provided by text and/or email. Parents are welcome to attend and assist with meeting and participate in other Scouting activities.

Cancellations of meetings or activities due to inclement weather are rare, but should they occur, Scouts and Parents will be notified by text or email. If in doubt, Scouts should contact their patrol leader to verify.

**Troop Dues.** In addition to the Scouts BSA registration fee, each Scout is required to pay Troop “dues” that are used to fund troop activities and operations, and to purchase awards. Troop dues are \$10 per month (\$120 per year), beginning each January 1, and should be paid annually. Dues can be paid with a credit or debit card via the PAY DUES button on the troop’s website ([troop88.mvscouts.org](http://troop88.mvscouts.org)). If needed, monthly payment of troop dues can be arranged. Contact the Troop Committee Chair. **Scouts who join the Troop during the year pay a pro-rated fee.**

**Refunds.** If a Scout drops out or quits actively participating in the Troop, dues are not refunded. If a Scout moves out of the Marsh Valley area and/or chooses to join a different Troop, the Troop will refund the remaining Troop dues monies to the Scout via a check, drawn on the Troop’s bank account, and mailed to the Scout’s new address within 30 days of registration with a new troop. The Scout must provide Troop 88 with the name and location of the new Troop to trigger the refund.

**Note:** Scouts who move into a new Council area can request their Scouts BSA registration be transferred to the new council prior to joining a new Troop. It is the Scout’s responsibility to provide Troop 88 with the new Council and Troop information. Marsh Valley Troop 88 will then refund the remaining Troop dues monies to the Scout via a check, mailed to the Scout’s new address within 30 days of registration with a new troop.

### Typical Expected Expenses<sup>1</sup>

- Annual BSA registration fee (\$66)
- Council Activity Insurance (\$10)
- New Scout fee (\$25); paid once, when scout joins the troop; not required with subsequent annual BSA registrations.
- Annual Troop 88 Dues (\$120)
- Class A Scouts BSA uniform shirt (\$30+), Merit Badge sash (\$11).
- Scouts BSA handbook (\$18 coil bound, 14th Edition).

#### Provided by the Troop:

- Troop 88 Neckerchief.
- Troop 88 activity teeshirt.
- Rank, patrol, merit badges, special event, council shoulder strip, and troop number patches.

## Optional Expenses

- Scouts BSA uniform pants (\$35+) and/or shorts (\$20+)
- BSA belt (\$13)
- Scouts BSA uniform hat (\$18).
- Additional troop activity teeshirt(s) (\$8)
- Boy's Life Magazine (\$24/10 issues). A subscription to *Boy's Life* can be a fun and powerful resource to fuel a boy's Scouting experience. The *Boy's Life* website ([boyslife.org](http://boyslife.org)) is a great resource as well.
- Camping Gear<sup>4</sup>

## Occasional Expenses (paid by Scout or Parent).

- Event fees to attend Merit Badge Pow Wows, Camporees, Jamborees, Summer Camps and other event-level activities.
- Troop Adventure fees (weekend campouts, sites-of-interest visits, learning workshop supplies).
- Lunches on day-long outings.
- Spending money and incidentals at Scout Camp and other day+ events.
- Lost patches, troop activity teeshirts, or neckerchiefs are to be replaced at the expense of the Scout

**Fundraising.** The Troop participates each year in the Council-wide popcorn fundraising activity held in September/October. We also develop specific troop-centric fundraisers as necessary to fund special outings or purchase Troop equipment. Scouts are expected to participate in the fundraising activities. A portion commensurate with the Scout's participation level will be deposited in an individual "Scout Account" for use in paying for Scout-related activities and equipment. The balance of money is used for Troop equipment and operating expenses.

## UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

Each Scout needs an official Scouting USA Class A Uniform Shirt. A Scout belt is strongly encouraged. A neckerchief will be presented by the troop. Official pants are not required. If a Scout wants to wear shorts with the uniform shirt, the shorts must be the official Scouts BSA item. Athletic wear is not to be worn. Class A uniform shirt or Troop 88 activity shirt is to be worn at troop meetings, outings, and service projects. Scouts will be informed when a particular activity requires the class A uniform shirt is to be worn.

Each Scout will also need a **Scouts BSA handbook** (14th edition).

**Insignia.** The correct placement of patches, pins and other uniform insignia is found in the Scouts BSA handbook. Troop numbers, council shoulder patch, and the patrol patch will be issued by the Troop. The Troop also issues all activity/event participation, award, rank advancement patches, and merit badges to the Scouts.

A **merit badge sash** may be worn with the Official Uniform Class A shirt at any time to display merit badges earned. The sash is typically worn at special events, such as a Court of Honor. Order of the Arrow sashes follow the same guidelines.

Scouts will be issued a **Troop 88 activity teeshirt**, which may be worn at troop meetings, troop outings, and troop service projects. Additional shirts may be purchased from the Troop.

**Uniform Bank.** We are actively collecting pre-worn uniform shirts and other uniform pieces, as well as previously-owned outdoor gear for use by any Scout. Please see the Scoutmaster if interested.

**Boots.** A Scout only goes as far as his feet will take him. Please provide your Scout with a quality pair of outdoor boots<sup>2</sup> that will protect and keep feet dry, brace ankles, and support arches.

## RANK ADVANCEMENT

Scouts advance at their own pace—and participation at all meetings, outings, and summer camps is the key to steady advancement. Scout ranks must be earned in order, beginning with the rank of Scout. (See requirements<sup>5</sup> published in this guide or online at [scouting.org](http://scouting.org)).

Parents or Scouts can mark advancement requirements as "completed" via the Scoutbook app, but the "sign off" and subsequent official recognition of a requirement comes ONLY from the Scoutmaster (or Scoutmaster-designated specialist)

after the Scout is tested on that requirement. Once a Scout feels they understand and/or have completed an advancement requirement, it is the RESPONSIBILITY of the SCOUT to ask the Scoutmaster to "sign them off" on that requirement. The Scoutmaster will then update that requirement for the Scout in the Scoutbook app. Scoutbook then transfers the update to the BSA National database.

It is strongly encouraged that advancement requirements and rank advancements are also tracked and signed off in the Scout's own copy of the handbook.

Rank advancements and other awards are awarded and presented as soon as possible after being earned, typically at the next Troop meeting.

The ranks of Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class Scout focus on building a foundation of basic skills. Star, Life, and Eagle ranks are designed to broaden a Scout's horizons via merit badges, service to others, and leadership positions.

The final rank of Eagle has special requirements that must be done in the proper sequence. The Scout should work closely with the Scoutmaster when planning the final tasks for the Eagle rank.

## M E R I T B A D G E S

Merit badges are earned by working through Scouts BSA registered merit badge counselors. ONLY these registered merit badge counselors (who are registered to teach specific merit badges) may "sign off" on completed merit badge requirements. Merit Badge requirements and completions are tracked in the Troop's Scoutbook account, but we also use the blue card<sup>4</sup> process as a backup paper trail to ensure a Scout gets credit for every met requirement and earned badge.

The requirements for all the Scouts BSA merit badges can be found online. Printed merit badge pamphlets are also available. It is the Scout's responsibility to find and contact the merit badge counselor for the badge they want to earn. The Troop can provide a list of current registered merit badge counselors.

To **begin a merit badge**, the Scout should:

- 1) check to see if the merit badge has a prerequisite. For example, a Scout must first earn the First Aid merit badge before earning the Emergency Preparedness merit badge.
- 2) read the merit-badge-specific pamphlet. Seriously. There's all kinds of good stuff in the MB pamphlets. At the very least, read the requirements. A list of all the MB requirements is available on the troop Scoutbook site.
- 3) obtain a BLUE CARD<sup>3</sup> with the MB Counselor's name and contact information from a Scoutmaster; contact counselor.
- 4) meet (take a buddy) with the MB Counselor PRIOR to beginning work on the badge requirements.

The Scout must complete the merit badge requirements as written and directed by the MB Counselor. Some requirements have "or" options; a particular MB Counselor may direct a specific "or" requirement to be completed.

Some merit badge requirements may be worked on at a troop or patrol level, but rarely can (or should) a MB be completed in a group setting. It is a key part of the learning and growth process that Scouts meet and engage with these subject specialists on an individual basis and devote time to completing the requirements outside of troop meetings and outings.

Attending summer camp provides a great opportunity to earn several merit badges over the course of the week-long camp. Periodically, Merit Badge Pow Wows (workshops) are offered by the Council and provide opportunity to earn or partially earn merit badges in a single day.

## T H E C O U R T O F H O N O R

The Troop 88 Court of Honor event provides an opportunity to publicly recognize and celebrate each Scout's efforts to earn awards and advance in rank. They are typically held quarterly. A special Eagle Court of Honor may be held anytime. Scouts and their families may invite anyone they wish.

A Troop 88 Court of Honor typically includes a **potluck supper/mixer** immediately following the Court of Honor meeting. Please bring enough food for your family and to share with others. Table service and beverages provided by the Troop. Please plan to join us!

## C A M P O U T S   A N D   O T H E R   O U T I N G S

Campouts and other outings are usually scheduled monthly, and begin by assembling in the parking lot of the Old Train Depot in McCammon, (where Troop meetings are held) before departure. Assembly and departure times will be posted on the Troop's website.

Troop outings are for Scouts, but Scouts may bring a non-registered age-eligible friend in a "recruitment" capacity with the permission of the Scoutmaster.

Camping nights (required for advancement) are tracked by the Troop Scribe and recorded on the Troop's Scoutbook site. Service hours are also recorded and tracked in Scoutbook.

### CAMPING EQUIPMENT

Each Scout will need to have some **core camping gear**<sup>4</sup>:

- a sleeping bag appropriate for the forecasted temperatures.
- a mess kit and eating utensils.
- a backpack.
- appropriate clothing and footwear for the expected weather. For cold camping, dress in layers and bring a stocking cap.
- rain gear. Always.
- personal effects such as toiletries and grooming items (smellies) sealed in a heavy duty zip-lock bag.
- DO NOT BRING electronic devices (cell phones, digital music players, radios, DVD players, etc.). If brought, these items will be confiscated. Leaders will have cell phones if parental contact is necessary.

## Welcome to Marsh Valley Troop 88: Adventure This Way!

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<sup>1</sup> **UNIFORM and GEAR COSTS.** One of the long-practiced methods for outfitting a boy for his scouting years is to leverage the yearly gifting cycles—Christmas and birthdays and other such occasions. Grandparents and extended family also love to get involved. Serviceable gear can also be found in the used-stuff channels: Deseret Industries, Goodwill, Ebay and similar. Scout uniforms too.

<sup>2</sup> **BOOTS.** Fit, protection, ankle support: those are the key features of a functional boot for Scouting adventures. A Scout's feet are always growing, so most of the better entry-level boots made from fabric and leather and other materials will typically do the job. The FIT of the boot needs to include the thick socks (or sock combo of wicking liner sock and outer wool sock) that should be worn with the boots. Wearing the socks that will be used with the boot, the heel should be snug with enough wiggle room for the toes up front. A good lugged sole provides traction and protection, and a high-sided boot provides support for ankles. A silicone waterproofing spray like CampDry, applied per directions, will provide a measure of water resistance for snow and muddy trails. Finally, and very important, the boots need to be broken in to the boy's feet BEFORE hard hiking use. New boots bought just before a long hike is a recipe for blisters and a miserable boy.

<sup>3</sup> **The BLUE CARD.** Advancement and merit badges earned are tracked via Scoutbook, but it is ALWAYS a good idea to have a paper record of what was earned when—hence the use of the blue merit badge card. One section of the 3-part card is the "applicant's record" and is given to the Scout upon successful completion of the MB requirements. Find a safe place to keep these 2.5 x 3.75-inch cards—a recipe box, a plastic sleeve meant for trading cards, a ziploc sandwich bag—the point is to keep them together, in one place.

<sup>4</sup> The BSA sells a collection of "official" **CAMPING GEAR**, but any brand of quality gear will do the job if you keep the following key points in mind. (TIP: The *Boy's Life* magazine website (boyslife.org) offers great advice and articles on gear selection.)

• The SLEEPING BAG should be the lightweight "stuffable" backpacking type, not the cotton-shell, roll-up car-camping type. When possible, get one with a temperature rating of at least zero degrees. A sleeping bag PAD is also needed to provide a little cushion and to serve as a insulative barrier between the sleeper and the cold ground. An inexpensive closed-cell foam backpacking pad does the job, while the more expensive self-inflating style pads provide a sweet combination of open-cell foam insulation and air cushioning. For cold-weather camping, stacking a closed-cell pad under the self-inflating pad is a winning combination.

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• The BACKPACK can be internal or external frame-type. The external frame packs are getting harder to find, but tend to be more affordable to buy new. A hand-me-down or used backpack pack is just fine—the most important criteria being this: does it have (or can it be fitted with) a wide, padded hip-belt? The hip belt allows the weight of the pack to be carried on the hips, not hanging from the shoulders. Many of the bargain-basement external-framed packs of yesteryear had only a narrow nylon belt pinned to the frame, and that's not good enough.

• The Scout's MESS KIT need only to consist of personal eating items, as cooking will be done at the patrol level using troop gear. The kit can be as simple as a durable cup, a sided plate/bowl combo, and a single "spork" utensil. A mesh bag to store the kit is a plus.

• See the Troop's WEBSITE ([troop88.mvscouts.org](http://troop88.mvscouts.org)) for more camping gear tips.

**5 SCOUT RANK REQUIREMENTS.** The "Scout Rank" requirements are entry level—the first skills a new Scout will need to learn and demonstrate. We include them here so the Scout can begin on them immediately, as the process of gearing up, including acquiring a Scouting BSA handbook, can take a few days or weeks.

NOTES: 1) All requirements for the Scout rank must be completed as a member of a troop or as a Lone Scout. If you have already completed these requirements as part of the Webelos Scouting Adventure, simply demonstrate your knowledge or skills to your Scoutmaster or other designated leader after joining the troop. 2) The requirements for Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks may be worked on simultaneously; however, these ranks must be earned in sequence.

### SCOUT Rank Requirements

**1a.** Repeat from memory the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout motto, and Scout slogan. In your own words, explain their meaning.

**1b.** Explain what Scout spirit is. Describe some ways you have shown Scout spirit by practicing the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout motto, and Scout slogan.

**1c.** Demonstrate the Scout sign, salute, and handshake. Explain when they should be used.

**1d.** Describe the First Class Scout badge and tell what each part stands for. Explain the significance of the First Class Scout badge.

**1e.** Repeat from memory the Outdoor Code. In your own words, explain what the Outdoor Code means to you.

**1f.** Repeat from memory the Pledge of Allegiance. In your own words, explain its meaning.

**2.** After attending at least one Scout troop meeting, do the following:

**2a.** Describe how the Scouts in the troop provide its leadership.

**2b.** Describe the four steps of Scout advancement.

**2c.** Describe what the Scouts BSA ranks are and how they are earned.

**2d.** Describe what merit badges are and how they are earned.

**3a.** Explain the patrol method. Describe the types of patrols that are used in your troop.

**3b.** Become familiar with your patrol name, emblem, flag, and yell. Explain how these items create patrol spirit.

**4a.** Show how to tie a square knot, two half-hitches, and a taut-line hitch. Explain how each knot is used.

**4b.** Show the proper care of a rope by learning how to whip and fuse the ends of different kinds of rope.

**5.** Tell what you need to know about pocketknife safety.

**6.** With your parent or guardian, complete the exercises in the pamphlet *How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide* and earn the Cyber Chip Award for your grade.

**7.** Since joining the troop and while working on the Scout rank, participate in a Scoutmaster conference.