



Troop 73 Appleton, WI

First English Lutheran Church

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Becoming a Virtual Troop

Transitioning From an In-Person Program Model to an Online Program Model to Comply With Mandated COVID-19 Pandemic Response Protocols



Troop 73 Engagement

- As mandated by National BSA and Bay Lakes Council, all in-person Scouting Activities are prohibited until further notice in order to support the national efforts to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus.
- While initial estimates were that this prohibition would only last 4-6 weeks, it appears now that we're unlikely to resume in-person meetings before Summer.
- As the Adult Leadership Committee it is our responsibility to design and execute a meaningful and value-added virtual engagement plan for the Troop.



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- As parents of the scouts, we should all be encouraging our sons to take advantage of the additional free time many of them now have as a result of most other extra-curricular activities being suspended.
- When your son says "I'm bored" and their homework is done, please encourage them to work on rank advancement or a merit badge;
- To the families of our older scouts in the troop who have been close to Eagling for a while, but sports, jobs, dating, etc. have been competing priorities...Your sons now have a unique opportunity to finish up their remaining requirements and paperwork without interfering with their social lives – PLEASE take advantage of this opportunity NOW so you're not trying to hammer through your remaining requirements once school, sports, dating, jobs, and the like resume their normal schedules.



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Troop Meetings

- We will continue to hold Troop meetings via Zoom or another online meeting vendor;
- Online Troop meetings will be different and strange, but with time and practice, they can become effective tools for ensuring the kids have the best possible scouting experience during these uncertain times;
- Proposed Agenda:
 - 6:15 start – Bugle “To the Colors” - POA, Scout Oath, Benediction, and Patrol Yells
 - 6:30 Announcements
 - 6:40 Patrol Time (*using online break-out rooms within the virtual meeting platform we're using*)
 - 6:50 Troop Time
 - 7:05 Scoutmaster Minute
 - 7:10 Closing – Scout Law, Outdoor Code, Bugle “Retreat”
 - 7:15 Dismiss Scouts to Rank Advancement Time.

Patrol Meetings



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- Regular Weekly Patrol Meetings will happen via “break-out rooms” within the online meeting platform we’re utilizing for the Weekly Troop Meeting (*Zoom*);
- This will give Patrol Leaders actual leadership opportunities as they will be expected to teach a Scout-Skill, plan a future event, facilitate an activity, or lead a conversation;
- Patrol Leaders will be required to submit their plans ahead of time to SPL for his review and approval;
- These are limited to 10 minutes on purpose:
 - A patrol may choose to virtually meet more often or for a longer periods of time than the ten minutes during the Troop Meeting, just as long as we maintain Two-Deep Leadership;
 - This is in fact encouraged! The Patrol Leaders who organize additional patrol activities via a virtual meeting will be recognized for their leadership!
 - This will require some minimal parental involvement by a parent of the Patrol Leader and at least one other scout’s parent...You don’t have to be on the conference per say, but you should be in the room.

Merit Badges

- Merit badges will be hosted by Merit Badge Counselors;
 - MB Counselors will work together to schedule them at different times throughout the week so the boys can choose to take and earn multiple merit badges during these weeks/months during which they have limited competing extra-curricular activities;
 - It is preferable that Merit Badge Counselors hold their virtual meetings outside of the 7:15-8:15 Sunday Evening window, so that the kids can use that time for Virtual Rank Advancement;
 - Merit Badge Counselors will communicate to participants which video conference platform they intend to host from;
 - You cannot be the MB Counselor if your kid(s) is(are) the only participant(s); however, you may if they are part of a larger group of scouts taking the MB.
 - Just as now, Scouts will be assigned reading and worksheet requirements to be completed prior to the next session;
 - Worksheets will still need to be completed, but should be submitted for the MB Counselor's review via email;
- Adults – Please review [this article](#) to see the list of 58 merit badges which are easier to complete virtually because they do not:
 - Include requirements to physically visit public places or companies;
 - Generally, their requirements can be completed indoors or in an average-sized yard.
- Please consider signing up to be a Merit Badge Counselor for one of the 58 listed in the article, it's easy and you will likely enjoy the experience:
 - Registered Adults interested in serving as MB Counselors – [Please click here!](#)
 - THANK YOU!!!



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Service Hours



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- Service Hours will be more challenging than normal with Social-Distancing or Shelter-In-Place orders in effect but not impossible;
- Some examples of Service a scout could perform without breaking the Social-Distancing or Shelter-In-Place orders are (*with parental permission*):
 - Contact a nursing home and volunteer to correspond with residents who are especially lonely due to the visitation bans in place;
 - Making fleece blankets for hospitals, animal shelters, etc.;
 - Volunteering on TeenCentral.com, an online help site for teens to counsel other teens in crisis;
 - Going with a parent to the FELC Downtown site for a few hours to perform some yard work/beautification (*NOT with a group!*).
- Some examples of conservation based service hours:
 - Helping to complete the ebird database for the National Audubon Society;
 - Environmental Protection Agency Volunteer Monitoring Program;
 - Build bird houses or Squirrel boxes for nesting habitat and donate to local nature preserves.
- Be creative, think outside of the box, but remember you are still required to obtain preapproval from Mr. Skrypczak.

Virtual Rank Advancement

- Suspending rank advancement would be tantamount to disbanding the troop;
- The Adult Leadership Committee will be sending out a separate communication detailing how Troop 73's Virtual Rank Advancement (VRA) is going to operate;
- Here is a high-level overview:
 - We'll build a weekly sign-up system wherein every available ASM signs up to host three to six fifteen minute VRA sessions throughout the week;
 - The ASMs will indicate their preferred video conferencing tool on their sign-up;
 - The Scouts will then sign-up to fill those slots by a specific deadline – With the expectation that they do not use more than two of any single ASM's sessions in a given week (*spread the load and help the boys build rapport with multiple ASMs*);
 - We'll send out the schedule so parents are aware of when their sons are meeting virtually for Scouts;
 - Boys 15 or younger will be required to have a parent in the room while video conferencing with an ASM;
 - Boys 16 or older are not required to have a parent present in the room, but their parents must be made aware that their son is video conferencing with a Registered Adult Leader of the Troop.



Scoutmaster Conferences and Boards of Review

- A Scout must still communicate their desire for a Scoutmaster Review and Board of Review to Mr. Shea in his capacity as the Troop's Advancement Coordinator;
- Mr. Shea will perform his due diligence and will let you know when you can contact Mr. Skrypczak
- We will perform those activities virtually as well;
- Parents will need to be present.



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Other Opportunities and Virtual Events



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- Virtual Camping (*more details to come from your PLC*)
- Virtual Day of Service
- Jamboree on the Internet
- Online STEM Events and Awards
- Hikes with a parent or sibling from the same household (*Not with other scouts!*)
- Online Scouting forums for scouts (*with parental permission*)
- Review the program guide for Bear Paw Scout Camp’s 2020 Summer Camp program offerings [here](#) so you’re ready to register as soon as you’re able. (*Once MB and Programing Registration opens, we’ll communicate that to you!*)
- In these times of uncertainty Please do your best to live the Scout Oath and Law!

Conclusion

- Positions of Responsibility will continue to be held to their expectations, but we'll be flexible considering the circumstances;
- As a unit, we can ensure our scouts can continue to be proud and active members of Troop 73!
- Please make sure your son has completed the most recent age/grade specific Cyber-Chip;
- Please take care of yourselves and each other;
- If you have questions or concerns with this plan, please contact Mr. Skrypczak directly.
- Thank you in advance for everyone working together to make this plan a reality!



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