



September 4, 2012

Dear Parents and Families,

On behalf of all the Adult Leaders, and the new Scout Leadership Team led by SPL Ulisses Ramirez, I would like to welcome you and your sons back for another exciting 2012 - 2013 scouting year. We have many exciting and challenging activities planned for troop meetings and outdoor events – some old favorites and some new adventures as well.

This past year was filled with many outdoor adventures, including camping, backpacking, the backwoods pig roast, winter snow camping (below zero), snow sport adventures, motor boating, canoeing, and hiking on various trails – even in the white mountains. The troop closed out the year with a great summer camp week at Camp Resolute and a successful High Adventure Trip to Camp Tahosa in Ward, Colorado where several scouts and adult leaders completed a 50 mile backpacking trek.

Over the past year there were many awards, merit badges, and badges of rank earned by the scouts. We are also very proud of our new Eagle Scouts from this past season; Matt Bedard and Dan Avery.

Our scouts participated in and completed many individual and group service projects, including Scouting for Food, a cleanup of the St. Mary's cemetery, providing holiday decorations at Draper Park, and work on several Troop 4 Eagle Scout projects.

The troop website continues to serve as an excellent resource for current information on activities and calendar dates/times. Be sure to check out the website on a regular basis at [www.troop4milford.org](http://www.troop4milford.org)

The Venture scouts will continue to have a "Venture Corner" in each of the troop newsletters with information especially for them. Mark Hobart and other adult leaders will continue advising our expanded cadre of Venture (high school age) scouts this year. We will continue to bring in guest speakers to talk to the Ventures on a variety of careers and occupations, and plan to schedule some venture-only trips to challenge these older scouts.

Troop meeting activities will include old favorite activities including: cooking, scoutcraft, pioneering, engineering, advancement, demonstrations, and merit badge classes. The Patrol Leader's Council will also schedule new activities to freshen up the program. The troop meetings will continue to be held 7:00 – 8:30 PM on Thursday nights at St. Mary's parish center.

In addition to our regular assortment of monthly outdoor activities, the Troop will soon begin planning for Camp Resolute for the summer of 2013. It is a great way to spend a summer week, make new friends, complete several merit badges and have a lot of outdoor fun. More information will be announced on this trip later this fall.

The Venture Scout organizational meeting will be held **Thursday, September 20 from 7:00 – 8:30PM**. This meeting applies to High School age scouts. **The first meeting for ALL OTHER SCOUTS will be Thursday, September 27. This will be our planning meeting for the year, for election of Patrol Leaders and Assistant Patrol Leaders, and the announcement of other leadership posts assigned by the SPL.** Venture scouts will come to the meeting as well.

**Dues for the Year:**

The troop is collecting both the BSA re-charter fee and annual troop dues in one combined payment. The troop 4 committee is meeting later this week to finalize on the final amount. More information will be distributed in the upcoming Troop 4 newsletter.

**Reminders for the Troop Meetings:**

- We realize it's hard sometimes to make the 7:00 PM meeting start time. Coming late from another activity or school work/job is fine, but when scouts arrive they should come into the meeting room (no detours to the corner convenience store). We will be starting the meetings at 7:00 PM.
- Once at the troop meeting, scouts must stay on the parish center grounds until the meeting is over
- Uniforms must be worn to all the troop meetings. If coming from another event, change into your uniform at the parish center.
- Return of troop camping equipment: Most troop equipment will be cleaned and put away after a trip. If your son takes home equipment from a trip to clean – probably a tent, please clean it and get it back within 2 weeks of the event. Tents can be dried out in a garage or cellar (inside out is best) – they don't need to be aired out in the open. ***If you currently have any troop equipment, please return it by the September 27<sup>th</sup> troop meeting.***

**Medical Form to Fill Out:**

The annual medical form is provided as the final pages of this memo. The troop asks for this information annually, even if you have recently provided a form for Camp Resolute. Access is limited to only a few adult leaders. The information is then kept by the adult leaders in charge at all meetings and activities. We need the updated information on hand in case of medical emergencies and to be aware of any health restrictions for activities. Please complete the medical forms and bring it to one of the first two troop meetings. Note that the annual medical forms are different than last year. Two pages of the new standard BSA form are now required to remain on troop file each year; Part A and Part C. The version on the troop website allows you to enter data electronically, if desired. Note that a doctor's signature is **NOT** required for this submittal.

**Advancement and Badge Work:**

Troop 4 has a long tradition of many scouts earning many awards and badges. The upcoming year will be another year of great accomplishments. Over the past couple years; we've noticed that scouts would benefit from better organization of their merit badge blue cards, worksheets, and related materials. Mrs. Amy Croteau has once again volunteered to work with scouts to help them develop a system to organize all their important merit badge paperwork into a handy binder. Scouts that keep this paperwork organized tend to be more productive on their badge work, and as a result, have advanced more quickly. Mrs. Croteau will conduct the session early this fall.

The troop will continue to help scouts working on Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class badges of rank at troop meetings and troop events. These scouts, as well as the other scouts in the troop, will also have the opportunity to work on merit badges in Communications, Personal Fitness, Citizenship, Camping, Environmental Science, First Aid and other badges soon to be determined.

This year, Life Scouts preparing for an Eagle Service Project will be assigned an adult advisor from the troop leadership. Advisors will be available for questions and guidance as you work on your project. Life Scouts will meet to discuss their Eagle advancement plans and/or project status as part of the Sept 20<sup>th</sup> venture planning meeting.

Scouts working on Star, Life and Eagle ranks will also have opportunities to complete their scout spirit, participation and leadership requirements at troop meetings and activities this year.

Adequate participation is necessary for scouts working on Star, Life, and Eagle ranks in order to demonstrate and meet the scout spirit, active participation, and leadership requirements for advancement. ***While it is up to the Scoutmaster to determine if the scout meets the requirements, the Troop Committee has established these minimum participation requirements (and there may be more on an individual basis):***

- Scouts must attend and be an active participant in at least half the troop meetings in the scout year.
- Scouts must attend and be an active participant in at least 4 outdoor troop activities (e.g., camping, hiking) in the scout year.
- Scouts must attend at least 1 troop service activity in the scout year (e.g., cemetery clean-up, scouting for food, Christmas tree pickup, etc).
- To demonstrate leadership among his peers in the Troop, a minimum of 25% of the total number of Eagle Scout Service project volunteer hours (not the project leader's hours) should be from Troop 4 Scouts, with a stretch goal of at least 50%.
- Scouts must demonstrate scout spirit during troop meetings and outdoor activities and obey the scout law. Violations of the scout law will delay advancement. Serious or repeated violations will be reviewed by the Scoutmaster and Committee to determine further action.
- In order to complete leadership requirements, scouts may need to attend more than the number of activities listed above, and may have to work independently to complete some requirements.
- Scouts wishing to advance more than 1 rank in a year would be expected to meet the meeting requirements and the appropriate ratio of outdoor activities for each period (e.g., 2 outdoor activities for half a year).

**Troop Family Newsletter:**

The first Troop Family newsletter will be out shortly with lots more information. You will receive newsletter updates about once per month. Please read them carefully, and pay special note to deadlines, especially those related to camping trips. All newsletters and related information is also routinely posted on our website.

Please call or email if you have any questions.

On behalf of all the Adult Leaders, I'd like to welcome you to this new season. We also would like to extend a sincere thank you for all of the help from families and friends over the past year.

We're looking forward to an exciting new season!

Very truly yours,

Troop 4 Milford  
Ronald (Ron) Gorham  
Scoutmaster

Enclosure – medical form