

## **Welcome to Oswego Boy Scout Troop 31**

Whether your son is new to Scouting, is transferring to our Troop, or is crossing over from Cub Scouts, we're glad you've chosen our Troop.

Troop 31 is over 90 years old and has a long successful history. We have many active Scouts of all ages, ranks, and abilities in our Troop, led by adults who enjoy participating in Scouts as well. If Scouting is something you as an adult would enjoy getting into, please let us know and we'll have you complete an adult registration. All of the Troop's adult leaders are volunteers and do their very best to teach your son life skills that he will take with him, to instill confidence in him, and to prepare him to be a better citizen.

If your son is crossing over from another Troop or Pack, there is no fee, so long as he was chartered with that unit. Troop 31 annual dues are \$48/year or \$4/month depending upon the month the Scout is joining. In addition, Scouts will need a Troop 31 neckerchief (provided free to charge to new Scouts crossing over or \$5) and a Boy Scout handbook. Your son should have at least one Class-A Boy Scout shirt with proper insignia/patches. Patches should be sewn on if they are permanent, and tacked on for those patches that change periodically. Proper attire (Class-A shirt, belt, neckerchief/slide) is to be worn to meetings during the school year. During the summer Scouts can wear a Class-B Troop 31 t-shirt that can be purchased from the Troop. These t-shirts are handy for summer camp as well.

Adults are more than welcome to join as well as their Scout. Adult fees are \$48/year as well or \$4/month, again depending upon when you join. If you're transferring from another Troop or Pack, there is no fee so long as you were chartered with that unit for the year.

Our Troop is sponsored by the Oswego Presbyterian Church on Route 25 in Oswego and meets on Monday evenings from 7pm – 8:30pm. Please be punctual when dropping off or picking up your son because we try to start and end each meeting promptly. Troop 31 is a boy-led Troop, so our Scouts take an active role in leading the meetings. It may seem hectic and helter-skelter, but the boys are learning responsibility as they go. Adults take an active role to serve as advisors, mentors and leaders as necessary. The Troop meets almost year-round except on those Mondays when there is no school, unless noted. Scouts are encouraged to attend summer camp, which usually takes place in late June/early July. The Troop usually meets every other Monday after summer camp through Labor Day.

An active Scout will earn merit badges and rank advancements as he progresses through the Troop. If he attends summer camp, he has the potential to earn 3-6 merit badges on average, including many that are water related (swimming, small boat sailing, canoeing, etc.). The Troop holds a Court of Awards about twice a year where parents and friends are invited to watch as Scouts receive their advancements. An Eagle Court of Honor is held for those Scouts who attain Eagle rank, the highest honor a Scout can achieve, and all Scouts are requested to be in attendance if possible. Younger Scouts will see what they have the potential to attain.

Troop 31 holds Troop and Scout fundraisers during the year. The Troop fundraiser is held during Oswego's PrairieFest, over Father's Day weekend, selling hotdogs, chips, water and pop. We raise money for Troop supplies and to cover costs not covered by dues. We rely on Scouts and their parents to volunteer a few hours this weekend and we ask for a donation of two cases

(48 cans/bottles) of name brand pop or water per Scout. This is an enjoyable event with everyone working together, having fun along the way and learning new skills as Scouts deal with their peers, the public, food and money. The more volunteers we have, the easier it is for all involved since this is a very time-consuming, but important, event for the Troop. Scouts can earn money for their Scout Account by participating in the BSA popcorn sale held in the fall, earning about \$0.30 for every dollar they sell of popcorn product. In addition, the Troop holds a Spaghetti supper, in the spring, and Scouts that sell tickets earn all profits from those sales. Scout Accounts can be used to pay for monthly camping fees, summer camp fees, to purchase needed camping supplies or for other approved Troop expenses including yearly re-charter fees.

Our Troop usually participates in a monthly campout. Food fees are typically \$10-\$15 per campout and other actual costs may be included as well. Permission slips and information are handed out as soon as available and are to be returned promptly with payment so menus can be planned. Once a Scout has committed to going and food has been purchased, refunds are not available if he cannot participate. Drivers are always needed for these events, so volunteer to drive or come along if it is a Troop campout and you have taken the online Youth Protection Training. Our Troop has a "No Tolerance" for misbehavior and if your son has to be disciplined, you will be asked to come pick him up immediately, so please explain to him that he should use best behavior when camping. Everyone should have a good time while camping and learn many useful skills that they will take with them for life. The Troop usually leaves for campouts on Friday evening at 5:30pm from Oswego Presbyterian Church and returns Sunday around 11am to the Senior Center/YMCA on Franklin Street. If for any reason they would be late returning, cell phones are available for them to contact you. Scouts are not allowed to bring any electronics, including cell phones, with them on campouts – except for the Electronics campout usually held in March.

An annual BSA medical form must be completed by a parent/guardian. If your son attends summer camp, the medical portion of the form must also be completed by a licensed health-care practitioner. This information will be kept confidential, but is necessary so if care needs to be given to a Scout, pertinent information is available as to allergies or medicines. If your child is on medicine, please let the adult leaders know so that they can monitor the administration of it while on campouts. Enclosed is a copy of the annual form for your completion.

Enclosed you will also find a Code of Conduct. This is to be read by all Scouts and parents. It explains the conduct that is expected of each Scout and that they will live by the Scout Oath, Law, Motto and Slogan.

Our Troop also has a website, noted below, that has some great information on it including a Troop handbook. We also have a Face Book page and you can request to be a member.

We hope you and your son enjoy being part of Troop 31. Do not hesitate to ask questions should you have any. We look forward to getting to know your son and teaching him new skills.

George Webber

Scoutmaster

708-373-4878

[scoutmaster@oswegotroop31.org](mailto:scoutmaster@oswegotroop31.org)

Troop Website: [www.oswegotroop31.org](http://www.oswegotroop31.org)