

# Nah, we're not sadists. You can get involved with your son's Scout troop with minimal pain.

By Ross Statham, Scoutmaster

For almost 100 years, Scoutmasters and their assistants have guided young men through their teenage years. These adult leaders have been, and remain to this day, ordinary Dads of Scouts. Working stiffs like you and I with jobs, families and other responsibilities. We "Scouters" (as we call ourselves) have one thing in common: a desire to see boys grow up into young men of good character and sound citizenship. We want them to have values other than what they see on television. For that, we gladly give up a little of our time and money, put on a Scout uniform and learn a few new skills. We hope you feel the same.

**Amateurs wanted.** Since 1910, the Boy Scouts of America have followed the teachings of General Sir Robert Baden-Powell (the founder of Scouting), a retired British war hero with a love of the outdoors who understood that every boy craves adventure, challenge, recognition and most of all, fun.

The Scouting program has been updated over the years, but never improved. The Scoutmaster's Handbook explains it all very well, in a manner that's easy to understand, follow and apply to the troop. It's remarkably easy to have a successful troop by following instructions.

**Why do you want me to buy a uniform?** Our boys need to learn the hows and whys of being a part of a larger team. Uniforms build teams, and your wearing a complete uniform will make a difference.

When I worked at camp staff many years ago I noticed that troops with properly uniformed adults always had properly uniformed Scouts. These troops had a higher percentage of their boys advance to Eagle, had more experienced boys in positions of troop leadership.

Your uniform and your mileage to Scout functions are fully tax deductible. Check your local Scout Shop.

**Merit Badges** are an integral part of upper rank advancement. Please let us know about your special work or hobby skills!

**How will I ever learn this?** Same way we all did. It's no big deal. Buy yourself a *Scoutmaster's Handbook*. It's not just for Scoutmasters; it's for all of us. It does a great job of explaining most of the hows and whys of what we do. It's written for people that are new to Scouting and who want a quick and easy way to learn what it's all about.

Buy a *Scout Handbook* while you're at it and keep it handy as a reference guide. It will help you just as much as it was designed to help boys to advance in rank.

Ask for training. Every new Adult Leader should go through Scout training at a troop level, so ask to be trained. Chances are that others need the training, too, and it's a good opportunity for you and the other adult leaders to exchange ideas and find out what Scouting expects of you. And of course, ask questions!

**Parents/Adults Meetings.** We have a Troop Committee /Parent's meeting each month, planned by the Troop Committee Chairman. This is your forum for introducing new ideas and programs into the Troop. We also occasionally meet right before big events like Summer Camp. Welcome aboard!

**Don't sweat it.** Relax and have fun. You're among friends, and there's no way that we can all be "experts" at all of this! Feel free to call the Scoutmaster, Committee Chairman or Charter Rep at home with any questions, or email them anytime.