

Hello from Troop 197

Here are some helpful hints for WEBELOS getting ready to join Boy Scouts!

As you're starting or finishing your second year of WEBELOS, we thought we would share with you some hints and suggestions, so you're not going crazy this year.

WEBELOS is a transition from the adult led Cub Scout program into the world of Boy Scouts, which are more boy led and adult guided. WEBELOS activity badges are meant to start helping the boys learn valuable life skills and to gain exposure to adults and their hobbies and careers. AND our job is to make it fun and interesting for them! (Not an easy task sometimes). AND to help them gain independence.

Here are our thoughts -- having been a WEBELOS Den Leader for 2 years, The Barfield Day Camp Director for 3 years and my chats with our Troop Scouts and Leaders whom have many of the same experiences that we and our sons had, having helped many dens crossover and now -- being in Boy Scouts and seeing things we coulda, woulda, shoulda.... with our dens and our own scouts.

I HIGHLY encourage you to take advantage of the District WEBELOS Activity Days, Council Day Camps, and Resident Camps being offered this summer. Visit www.mtcbsa.org and www.totscouting.org for more information. Going as a group is a blast for the kids -- they will have a healthy mix of classroom and outdoor education, mixed in with fun and games. They LOVE the counselors who play along with them and also act as their guides. My son still remembers the names of most of his camp counselors... This WEBELOS Day is an easy day for parents -- drive to camp, enjoy a little free time with your son, eat lunch with him, and drive him home. I would also offer our **Troop Open House**, held annually the first weekend in February at Fellowship United Methodist Church, 2511 Highway 99 South in Murfreesboro. It starts at 7:00 PM and will be about 1.5 hours of games and scouting as well as an information briefing for parents.

These camps also assist you in completing some of the more challenging badges. If necessary - repeat something -- it never hurts to hear it twice!

I especially recommend signing up for:

SHOWMAN

AQUANAUT

NATURALIST

SCIENTIST or ENGINEER

READYMAN

I suggest you stick together with your den, or at least a buddy.

The challenges of the WEBELOS II's year that you will face --

A bit of boredom from the boys --- which means -- they need to go on outings, explore the world and learn from other adults (and Boy Scouts.) NOT JUST THEIR LEADER. If you see some requirements that you're comfortable teaching or know someone who can help out -- please step up and help out. Call the troop if you need help. Call or email us through our website at www.bsatroop197.com !!!!!

Visiting Boy Scout Troops: START NOW!

We think that you should visit 2-3 troops to get an idea of various troop operations and personalities. You need to do this EVEN IF your son has already chosen a troop.

Unfortunately, many of the troops do not start their invitations until the fall -- November through January, a busy time of year. If you would like contact information now, please contact me. Spend as much time with the troop as you can. This will make the transition into Boy Scouts easier -- if they already know some of the guys. Remember - every troop is different. We have had scouts transfer into our troop. We have had scouts transfer out of troop. It happens. The boys need to find a troop that feels right to them. (You are also an important part of that decision. So YOU should visit too. You need to feel comfortable with the adults who will take your son camping one weekend a month and to a week-long camp. You will need to feel comfortable with the adults who are mentoring your sons from childhood to adolescence to manhood. --Yes they will be 18 when they leave the troop!)

Camping as a WEBELOS DEN: For the Arrow of Light, there are 2 times that they must camp as a den. Once for the AOL and once for the Outdoorsman Badge. Camping at a Webelos Experience counts, camping at Family Camp counts. As a den, you may wish to camp again. Invite the WEBELOS I's to go with your den! Help them out, too!

Our Troop Campouts: We generally camp the second weekend of each month. We have many activities planned. You can visit our website at www.bsatroop197.com for more specifics. Coordination should be made 2 weeks in advance if your WEBELOS are going to eat with our Patrols. If you bring your own food, 1 week is sufficient.

ACHIEVING the ARROW of LIGHT: Review the requirements NOW so you don't have any surprises. The Arrows that we gave at the end of the year have thread wrapped on them to represent each achievement they have earned -- Tiger, Wolf, Bear, WEBELOS -- arrow points, religious emblems, WEBELOS badges. Start getting that list together.

Parents, if you choose, you can make the Arrow of Light plaques for your scouts. I suggest you decide this at a WEBELOS parent meeting of some kind. Fees for supplies run from \$20-\$30 depending on what you use/decide, etc. Visit <http://www.arrow-of-light-awards.com/arrow.pdf> for some good information on the awards.

Our den had a last den meeting that was pizza and games... something silly and fun!

This will be a busy year for you -- but it is worth it! Completing with an Arrow of Light is an honor! They will be able to wear that recognition on their adult uniform when they are leaders.

LASTLY: Your son will need some equipment when they head into Boy Scouts. If you are pretty sure they will cross over to Boy Scouts, consider camping and other equipment items for upcoming birthdays, Christmas, etc. You can find the camping list on our website at www.bsatroop197.com under forms. If you don't know what to buy or where to find it, talk with a Boy Scout Leader.

YiS (Yours in Scouting),
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