



TRAIL LIFE USA[®]

**WOODLANDS TRAIL
LEADERS GUIDE**



WOODLANDS TRAIL LEADERS GUIDE

for
Program Version 1.5, revised 2016

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WORTHY
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PRESS

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Second edition.

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the children of the world,
in whose freshness and innocence we see replayed,
on a small scale, God's creation of the world.

Welcome to the Woodlands Trail

Congratulations! You are about to embark upon an exciting new adventure. Trail Life USA combines outdoor experiences, leadership opportunities, and team adventures with a focus on biblical values, principles, and wisdom. The Woodlands Trail program is where the youngest members begin their journey.

The Woodlands Trail program has been carefully constructed with several goals in mind. First, the program is designed to provide a curriculum-based youth development program focused on active cumulative learning rather than on earning the next uniform insignia or emblem. Success is not measured in the quantity of insignia but in the quality of the young man. Second, the program has been intentionally crafted to create a sense of belonging and familiarity among all Woodlands Trail program age groups. A young boy joining the program at the kindergarten level will understand common terms, customs, and awards that extend to his fifth grade year. Third, the program was developed to encourage multi-age groupings of boys. This allows the boys to interact with older youth who may encourage the younger boys. It also affords an opportunity to older youth in the program to learn about leadership of those younger than themselves. Finally, the program was written so that it may be easily administered by adult leaders in a variety of circumstances and geographic locations.

It is the fervent hope of both Trail Life USA and the Woodlands Trail Program Development Team that the fun and experiences of this program will create a desire within boys to complete the entire Trailman adventure, culminating with the Freedom Award and that through the entire experience, each boy will grow strong spiritually as well as physically and mentally.

Sincerely,

The Woodlands Trail Development Team

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ABOUT THIS GUIDEBOOK

This book is the main guide to implementation of the Woodlands Trail Program, version 1.5 revised in 2016. These materials are to be used in conjunction with the original Woodlands Trail, version 1.0, meeting plans that are provided separately.

This guidebook is meant to be used by registered adult leaders within Trail Life USA. Portions of the guidebook may be printed by registered adult leaders for use by participants during meetings. Registered adult leaders and/or members in the Trail Life USA program are expressly allowed to make copies of any portion or this entire guidebook for the purpose of delivering the Woodlands Trail program.

The Woodlands Trail program provides a wide range of meeting plans and ideas; however, it is not meant to be the exclusive source of ideas for program delivery. Registered adult leaders, parents, and guardians should feel free to use other appropriate sources that might be unique to their home locale. Community assets such as museums, historic sites, battlegrounds, national parks, and local places of worship can add considerably to the Woodlands Trail experience. Unique local planning is specifically encouraged within the instructional areas of hobbies and science and technology.

Within each meeting plan there is a section called "Faith (Trail Guide Thoughts)." As part of the Woodlands Trail meeting framework, the Trail Guide Thoughts creates a tie-in between the meeting topic and the Holy Scriptures; therefore, successful delivery of the Woodlands Trail program as envisioned and created can only be accomplished with this guidebook in one hand and the inspired and authoritative Word of God in the other.

NEW! Summary of Version 1.5 Changes to the Woodlands Trail Program

Based on feedback from numerous volunteers in the field and the work of the Woodlands Trail Volunteer Committee at the Program 2.0 Summit at Camp Aiken in January 2016, the chart below summarizes the changes included in this version of the Woodlands Trail program that take effect immediately. Both the original version 1.0 and revised version 1.5 will be available for use during the current 2015-2016 program year. Those desiring instruction on the original version 1.0 program should consult the *Woodlands Trail Leader Guide version 1.2* on TroopTrack. This guide only reflects the revised version 1.5 program.

The revised version may be used retroactively to the beginning of the program year if desired.

Some Trailman may benefit from staying in version 1.0 because of the leaf credit chart included in that version or for other reasons, so the decision may be best handled on a Trailman by Trailman basis rather than for the entire unit or age group.



We encourage Trail Guides to use the most advantageous version for each Trailman for the current program year. Beginning with the 2016-2017 program year, only version 1.5, should be used. These changes do not necessitate changes in the use of leaf tracking cards, other cards or awards.

The following table is a summary, full instructions are outlined in the program area of this guide and should be consulted prior to implementation. Questions about these changes should be directed to Program@TrailLifeUSA.com.

Version 1.0	Version 1.5	Comments
Organized by Meeting Theme and Emphasis	Organized by Branch	Allows Trailman to earn Branch Awards every six to eight weeks. They will receive awards more regularly and wear them longer on their uniform.
18 leaves to complete a Branch Award	Nine (9) leaves to complete a Branch Award	Allows the Forest Award to be earned within the first year of the two year program.
Forest Award earned upon completion of all seven Branch Awards for a total of 126 leaves total.	Forest Award earned upon completion of all seven (7) Branch Awards plus 18 additional leaves from any Branch or combination of Branches for a total of 81 leaves.	The additional 18 leaves shows continued participation by the Trailman beyond the minimum needed for a Branch Award.
A Sylvan Star earned by completing four (4) additional leaves on a branch.	A Sylvan Star earned by completing nine (9) additional leaves on a branch after earning the Forest Award.	This is the second year advancement program after earning the Forest Award.
No leaf credit for activities completed at home.	Earn one leaf for completing the Family activity from the Lesson Plan. Up to two leaves maximum for each Branch Award and up to two leaves maximum for each Sylvan Star at each level (Fox, Hawk, Mtn Lion).	This addresses the desire for families to be more involved in their son's program .
Leaf credit when joining beyond the first few months of an age level.	No leaf credit when joining.	Due to the adjusted requirements above, no leaf credit is necessary as Trailman can earn branches in a matter of weeks and the Forest Award in a year.
Hit the Trail! Lessons designated by age group.	All Hit the Trail! Lesson Plans are available for all age groups.	This allows greater flexibility when combining levels or scheduling a Hit the Trail! outing by Branch.

Timberline Award Changes

The Timberline Award will now require the completion of the Forest Award plus a Sylvan Star from each Branch to make it a more robust capstone award. Additional changes include the addition of an approved faith building activity to more closely align with other program levels as well as other changes designed to more closely align the award with the Four Manhood Principles on which it is based. Details are outlined in Chapter 9, Special Awards, on page 30.

Version 2.0 Improvements

Further changes to address additional concerns are planned for a full version 2.0 release in 2017 based on field feedback and the recommendations of the Woodlands Trail Volunteer Committee at the Program 2.0 Summit. Trail Life USA is committed to continually reviewing our program offerings and how they can be improved to best meet the Mission of Trail Life USA “to guide generations of courageous young men to honor God, lead with integrity, serve others, and experience outdoor adventure.”

The revisions will be made to better prepare the Woodlands Trailman to move to the Navigator badge based program. This may include progressive skill instruction through the three Woodlands Trail age groups and a handbook for parents with learning objectives for each age group as well as other changes. These changes will allow for a clearer picture for parents and registered adult leaders as to the progression from level to level and how it prepares the Trailman for the Navigator program skills, responsibility, service, leadership and character. The program will still be participation based but should increase family involvement. The current plan is to use the same awards.

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SAFETY FIRST, LAST AND ALWAYS

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of everyone involved with Trail Life USA to ensure the safety of all program participants. This includes registered adult leaders, parents and guardians, and the program participants themselves. **Leaders should refer to the current version of the Health and Safety Guide when planning activities.** For child-protection purposes, there will never be fewer than two registered adult leaders with the boys at any time at any location for any reason. There will also be a targeted ratio of registered adult leaders to boys at all levels. The ratio of registered adults to boys is:

1 to 4 for boys in grades K-1
1 to 8 for boys in grades 2-3
1 to 10 for boys in grades 4-5

Registered Adult Leaders

Registered adult leaders at all levels (including “Registered Adults,” who are leaders not assigned to specific designated roles) are required to undergo a criminal background check and complete the Child Safety Youth Protection Training (CSYPT) course prior to final approval of their membership. CSYPT training must be renewed every two (2) years when reregistering for Trail Life USA. Therefore, all leaders with unexpired registrations are current in CSYPT.

All registered adult leaders are issued a Membership Identification and lanyard which should be worn at all Troop meetings and events. **This ID reflects the volunteer’s expiration date.** An adult leader who allows his or her registration to lapse may not participate in the program until their training is renewed.



Trail Life USA maintains a zero-tolerance policy for violation of child safety standards. Any failure on the part of local Troops or patrols to follow child safety standards shall be immediately addressed at the regional and national levels.

Parents/Guardians and Program Participants

Parents or guardians should be shown the Membership ID card of **their son’s** registered adult leader(s) to verify current membership and CSYPT completion at the first meeting of each patrol during the program year. Parents and guardians should understand their own role in child safety and support Rangers, Trail Guides, and other registered adult leaders in the implementation and enforcement of safety standards and procedures.

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VISION, MISSION, and MOTTO

Vision

Our vision is to be the premier national character development organization for young men which produces Godly and responsible husbands, fathers, and citizens.

The Trail Life USA program is open to all boys irrespective of race, religion, ethnicity, or national origin. While boys may come from every religious background, registered adult leaders in the program – from the National Executive Board to individual unit volunteers – will adhere to a standard Statement of Faith and Values.

The program and themes seek to teach practical life skills, an appreciation for the outdoors, service, leadership, and character development.

Mission

Our mission is simple and clear: to guide generations of courageous young men to honor God, lead with integrity, serve others, and experience outdoor adventure.

Motto

“Walk Worthy”

Based on Colossians 1:10 (NKJV)

“...that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God ...”

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND VALUES

The Statement of Faith and Values is designed to affirm the need for those in leadership to follow biblical standards. Leaders are held to a higher standard than those who are not in leadership and must agree to the tenets contained in the Statement. All adults in leadership roles—whether staff or volunteer at any level—must agree to sign and adhere to the Statement of Faith. Youth members are not required to sign this statement.

Statement of Faith

We believe there is One Triune God – God the Father; Jesus Christ, His one and only Son; and the Holy Spirit – Creator of the universe and eternally existent. We believe the Holy Scriptures (Old and New Testaments) to be the inspired and authoritative Word of God. We believe each person is created in His image for the purpose of communing with and worshiping God. We believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit, Who enables us to live godly lives. We believe each of us is called to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We believe God calls us to lives of purity, service, stewardship and integrity.

Statement of Values

Purity // God calls us to lives of holiness, being pure of heart, mind, word and deed. We are to reserve sexual activity for the sanctity of marriage, a lifelong commitment before God between a man and a woman.

Service // God calls us to become responsible members of our community and the world through selfless acts that contribute to the welfare of others.

Stewardship // God calls us to use our God-given time, talents, and money wisely.

Integrity // God calls us to live moral lives that demonstrate an inward motivation to do what is biblically right regardless of the cost.

MEMBERSHIP STANDARDS

Membership in the program has both youth and adult elements. Youth membership in the program is open to all who meet the membership requirements, and is currently designed for biologically male children under the age of 18. The adult applicant must be at least 18 years of age and subscribe to and abide by the Trail Life USA Statement of Christian Faith and Values as well as the Oath and Motto of the program. While the program is undergirded by Biblical values and unapologetically reflects a Christian worldview, there is also a clearly defined inclusion policy for youth. Accordingly, all boys are welcome irrespective of religion, race, national origin or socio-economic status. Our goal is for parents and families of every faith to be able to place their boys in a youth program that endeavors to provide moral consistency and ethical integrity in its adult leaders. Charter partners own and operate local groups, selecting leaders and admitting members as they deem beneficial to their group and within the parameters of the national policy. The basis for the program's ethical and moral standards is found in the Bible. In terms of sexual identification and behavior, we affirm that any sexual activity outside the context of the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman is sinful before God and therefore inconsistent with the values and principles of the program. Within these limits, we grant membership to adults and youth who do not engage in or promote sexual immorality of any kind, or engage in behavior that would become a distraction to the mission of the program. We welcome boys whose parents are seeking a faith-based outdoor adventure program that places an emphasis on character development, leadership, and moral purity, and who aspire to live in accordance with the values expressed in the program's Oath and Creed.

Trailman Oath

**On my honor, I will do my best
To serve God and my country;
To respect authority;
To be a good steward of creation;
And to treat others as I want to be treated.**

Trailman Salute

The Trailman salute is made by raising your right hand. The tip of your fingers should almost touch your right temple. If you wear glasses, the tip of your fingers should almost touch the frames of your glasses. If you are wearing a uniform hat, the tip of your fingers should touch the brim.

The Trailman Salute is used by members in uniform*, when:

- They recite the Pledge of Allegiance (stand at attention and face the flag)
- The flag passes in a parade, or ceremony (at the moment the flag passes, stand at attention facing the flag)
- While in a parade or procession, you pass a flag posted on a stage/podium erected for the event (continue moving forward, turning head so eyes are on the flag until you have passed)
- The flag is hoisted and lowered (the salute is held until the flag is unsnapped from the halyard or through the last note of the national anthem, whichever is longer)
- The national anthem is played or sung (stand at attention and hold the salute through the last note. The salute is directed to the flag, if displayed, otherwise to the music)
- The flag is retired at flag retirement ceremonies.



(Men will remove hats when saluting, except for a uniform hat. Women do not have to remove head covering)

**uniform - whatever official Trail Life USA uniform piece(s) is deemed appropriate for that activity by the Activity Coordinator.*

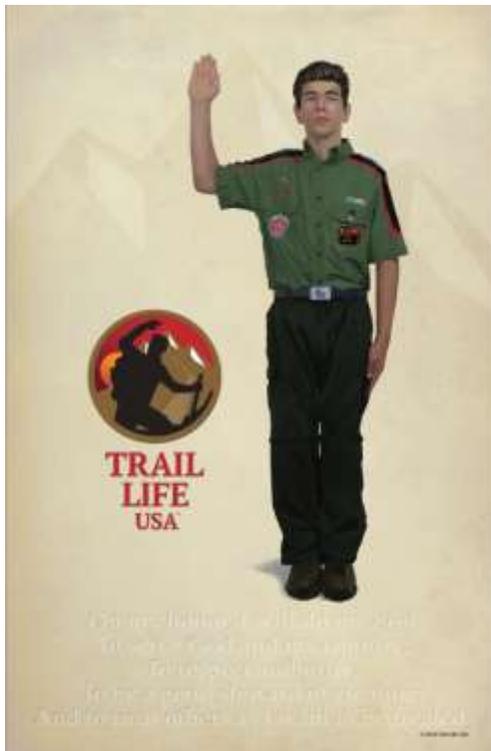
NEW! How to do a Proper Hand Salute

(from www.usarmystudyguide.com)

A proud, smart salute shows pride in yourself and your unit and that you are confident in your abilities as a soldier. A sloppy salute might mean that you're ashamed of your unit, lack confidence, or at the very least, that you haven't learned how to salute correctly.

In saluting, turn your head and eyes toward the person or flag you are saluting. Bring your hand up to the correct position in one, smart motion without any preparatory movement. When dropping the salute, bring your hand directly down to its natural position at your side, without slapping your leg or moving your hand out to the side. Any flourish in the salute is improper.

The proper way to salute when wearing the beret or without headgear is to raise your right hand until the tip of your forefinger touches the outer edge of your right eyebrow (just above and to the right of your right eye). When wearing headgear, the forefinger touches the headgear slightly above and to the right of your right eye. Your fingers are together, straight, and your thumb snug along the hand in line with the fingers. Your hand, wrist, and forearm are straight, forming a straight line from your elbow to your fingertips. Your upper arm (elbow to shoulder) is horizontal to the ground.



Trailman Sign

The Trailman sign is made with the right hand held open, palm forward, raising your right arm with your elbow at a right angle.

The sign is used during reciting of the Trailman Oath. It is also used by the Troopmaster, Ranger, Trail Guides, or other Adult Leader to gain the attention of and silence the Trailmen as needed to focus on the business at hand.

Trailman Handshake

The Trailman Handshake is a wrist to wrist handshake.



ORGANIZATION OF THE LOCALLY CHARTERED TROOP

Within the boundaries of the Trail Life USA nationally adopted beliefs and values, locally charter organizations are given some latitude to customize the organization of their locally chartered Troop to fit the unique environment and circumstances of each charter organization. Local leadership is called upon to exercise wisdom and good judgment as they deliver program components to the youth being served.

Troop Structure

The locally chartered Troop is organized according to the following structure:

A *Troop* is locally chartered and inclusive of all units and age groups.

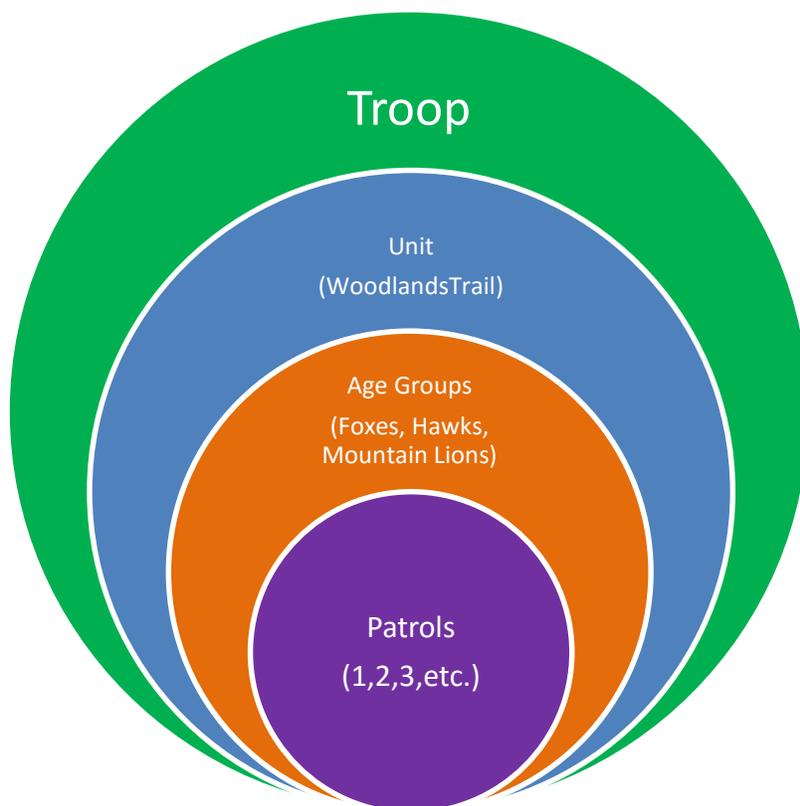
Units are segments of Trail Life USA serving a specific age group of boys. These include Woodlands Trail, Navigators, and Adventurers.

Age Groups are found within a unit and are designations assigned to a boy based on his current age. For the Woodlands Trail Unit, age groups include Foxes, Hawks, and Mountain Lions.

A *Patrol* is a small grouping of Trailmen within the unit. For ease of reference, patrols may be given numeric designations. (i.e. Fox Patrol 1, Fox Patrol 2). Within the Woodlands Trail unit, patrols will be led by registered adult leaders. In Navigators and Adventurers units, patrols will be led by boys within the program, with advice and support from adult volunteers. The program is designed for age groups to be separated; however, based on program participation and availability of registered adult leaders, age groups may need to be merged into combination patrols. If so, the local Troop should make accommodations to allow each boy to complete his individual program.

Patrols in all units will be given a numerical designation. Fox and Hawk patrols would ideally number no more than ten boys. Mountain Lion patrols would ideally number no more than fifteen boys.

Below is a diagram of a Troop from the perspective of a Woodlands Trail unit participant:



Leadership within the Troop

Registered adult leaders provide Troop-level leadership. Within the Woodlands Trail program, registered adult leaders will lead patrols. As boys mature and move into the Navigators and Adventurers Programs, they will assume increasing levels of responsibility themselves for leadership within their own patrols.

Various sized Troops will have varying levels of support. The local Troop has the responsibility of determining how adult registered leaders may be best utilized. Registered adult leaders leading patrols would ideally make a two-year commitment to lead their patrol. The Troopmaster and the heads of each unit would have only one job within the Troop. It is possible, however, to combine positions when necessary.

Age Restrictions

Most positions require a registered adult leader to be at least 21 years of age. Those between the ages of 18-21 can (upon be approved as registered adult leaders) serve as Trail Guides, Registered Adults or Guidon Members. These young adults can be valuable, hardworking, assets to your leadership team. However, they cannot be counted as part of two-deep leadership coverage.

Troop Level Positions

In keeping with our emphasis on the value of male mentorship, the following positions are restricted to males: Troop Chaplain, Troopmaster, Ranger, Trailmaster, Advisors and all Trail Guides in the Navigators and Adventurers Units. The Charter Organization Representative is not restricted to males unless dual registering as the Troop Chaplain. Trail Guides in the Mountain Lion patrols are recommended to be males, but not restricted. All other positions may be held by females including Committee Chair, Treasurer, all other Committee Members, and Trail Guides in the Woodlands Unit.

TROOP COMMITTEE: CORE LEADERSHIP TEAM (Required Positions to Charter a Troop):

Charter Organization Representative (C.O.R.)—Appointed by the pastor/institutional head to serve as liaison between the Troop and the Charter Organization, making sure that both recognize the other's importance and roles as part of the same team. The C.O.R. serves as the Troop's representative to (and may be appointed the organization's voter on major decisions of) the national board. The C.O.R. may dual-register as Troop Chaplain. [This is the only position that may dual-register]

Committee Chair—Appointed by the C.O.R., he convenes and presides over Troop Committee meetings; appoints and supervises the Troop Committee (and additional adult leadership positions as needed); and indirectly oversees "direct contact leaders" (see below) through the Troopmaster.

Troopmaster—Oversees all direct contact leaders; understands all programmatic operations of the Troop; reports successes and systemic challenges faced by leaders and youth. The Troopmaster is coach of, and Troop Committee representative for, the Ranger, Trailmaster, and Advisor; and their Trail Guide assistants.

Troop Chaplain—Assures that the Troop emphasizes and stays true to its Christian mission (organizing prayer for meetings, services at campouts, etc.). He is qualified to give spiritual counseling and promotes the regular religious participation of each member.

Treasurer—Record keeper, maintaining accounts for all financial transactions. Regularly reports the financial status of the Troop. The Treasurer coordinates (and communicates to parents the process of) Troop budgeting. Understands and communicates approved Trail Life USA fundraising guidelines. Handles unit funds; pays bills; coordinates and supervises fundraising (any of these duties listed can—and should—be delegated to other volunteers but will still fall under the Treasurer's supervision).

DIRECT CONTACT LEADERS:

Ranger, Trailmaster, and Advisor - Adults (age 21 or over) who oversee the operation of specific age-levels within the Troop by providing direction, coaching, and support. These positions are NOT voting members of the Committee, but they may be asked to attend Troop Committee meetings.

Trail Guides—are registered adults (age 18 or over) who assist the Ranger, Trailmaster, or Advisor in delivering the Troop program. Trail Guides are NOT formal members of the Committee. They do NOT attend Troop Committee meetings.

OTHER LEADERSHIP ROLES:

Troop Advancement Chair—Appointed by the Committee Chair to ensure that the unit has at least monthly boards of review, regular courts of honor, and that the unit is providing opportunity for timely advancement within the Trail Life USA model. The Advancement Chair is also responsible for record-keeping and submitting advancement reports.

Troop Outdoor/Activities Chair—Appointed by the Committee Chair to obtain permission to use camping sites, serves as transportation coordinator, and ensures a monthly outdoor program.

Troop Membership Chair—Appointed by the Committee Chair to help ensure regular recruiting of new members, provide a smooth transition of new Trailmen into the unit, and orientation for new parents.

Troop Training Chair—Appointed by the Committee Chair to ensure that training opportunities are available and maintain training records and materials; also responsible for ensuring current Child Safety Youth Protection Training for all registered leaders.

Troop Community Service Chair—Appointed by the Committee Chair to coordinate the annual community service program, recommended to include four Troop service projects per year.

Troop Secretary—Appointed by the Committee Chair to keep minutes and records, send notices to members, etc.

Troop Equipment Coordinator—Appointed by the Committee Chair to work with the youth Quartermaster and is responsible for inventory, storage, and maintenance of unit equipment.

Troop Public Relations Chair—Appointed by the Committee Chair to provide news and announcements about the unit to newspapers, websites, etc. May also be the Troop's Webmaster (if desired). Promotes service projects. Promotes new membership and informs people in the town or neighborhood that Trail Life USA is available.

Troop Fundraising Chair—Appointed by the treasurer to organize and supervise fundraising events and ensure that every youth member has the opportunity, and tools needed, to participate.

Registered Adult—This position is for registering parents or guardians who, while not serving in an officially designated leadership position, may want to have a more active role with their boys in the program. They pay the regular member fee, agree with the Statement of Faith, submit to a background check, complete the Child Safety Youth Protection Training and are approved by the Chartered Organization Representative. They will receive an ID card from the Home Office that identifies them as registered adult leaders. This allows the local leadership to confidently request their assistance at Troop activities, but doesn't obligate the Registered Adult to service.

Uniforms

There are three distinct levels of uniforms within Trail Life USA. Participants in the Woodlands Trail Unit should wear one of these three uniforms when participating in organized patrol or Troop events. All officially sanctioned uniforms are available at the online Trail Life USA store:

www.TrailLifeUSAstore.com

The Trail uniform shirt is the least formal of the three uniform selections. It consists of the forest green Woodlands Trail T-shirt and Troop approved pants. As its name implies, this informal uniform is suitable for hiking, camping, service project or other outdoor event where comfort is key but Trailman identification is desired.



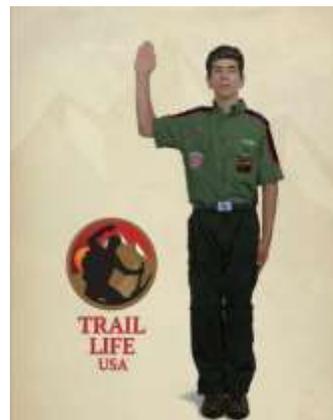
Woodlands Trail
Trail Uniform



Woodlands Trail
Travel Uniform

The Travel uniform is more formal than the Trail uniform and is an option suitable for Troop or patrol travel, certain meetings, or events where the full Troop uniform is not desired or would be impractical.

The official Trail Life USA Troop Uniform is the preferred selection, is the most formal uniform and is designed to display Troop and other identifying information, as well as the rank and awards of the Trailman. It is suitable for Troop or Patrol meetings, leader meetings, award ceremonies and fundraising.



The Trail Life USA
Official Troop Uniform

NEW! Troop Uniform Insignia Placement

Troop Uniform Shirt Insignia Placement

Sew the Troop Numeral & State Patch on the right shirt sleeve (1/4" below the shoulder seam). Troop and Numeral Patches can be purchased at www.embroideryondemand.com/trail-life-usa-troop-patch/

Slide the appropriate **Shoulder Loops** for your program / leadership position onto the shirt epaulette bars.

Sew an optional **Denominational Patch** on the left shirt sleeve just below the USA Flag (if available from your denomination).

Sew the **Mountain Lion Timberline Patch** centered above the left pocket.

Pin these to left pocket flap:
• **Worthy Life Award**
• **Denomination Religious Recognition**

Sew **Vanguard Award Patch** patch to left flap.

Hang these patches from the right pocket flap button:
• **Woodlands Trail Forest Award**
• **Navigators Rank**
• **Adventurers Award**

Hang these patches from the left pocket flap button:
• **Woodlands Trail Patrol Branch Patches**
• **Navigators /Adventurers Discipleship Program Participation Patches**
ie Manhood Journey and Bend of Brothers

Uniform advancement items can be purchased (with proper access permissions) through the **Troop Leader Store** in **TroopTrack**, except for Troop Numeral and State Patch, as noted above.
Other items can be purchased at www.TrailLifeUSAstore.com

- Questions regarding the proper display of uniforms should be resolved by the Trail Guide, Ranger, or Troopmaster.
- Trailmen should not wear torn or otherwise defaced or altered uniforms and should be neat in appearance.
- Closed-toed shoes are required.
- There is no official Trail Life USA uniform hat.
- The Troop leadership can determine the appropriate headwear for their Troop. Several options are available in the Trail Life USA store.

NEW! Award Placement

Trailmen may wear their current apex award (for Woodlands Trail, the Forest Award) until they earn another apex award.

For instance, a Hawk Trailman may wear his Fox Forest Award while he is a Hawk until he earns his Hawk Forest Award. Only one apex award may be worn on the uniform at any given time.

As shown on the Insignia Placement Chart above,

- Forest Awards are hung on the right pocket flap button of the uniform.
- Branch Patches are worn on the left pocket flap button of the uniform.

Therefore, it is permissible to wear the Forest Award of a previous level (including the earned Sylvan Stars affixed to it) on the uniform at the same time as the Branch Patch for the current level.

However, at no time should the previous age groups Branch Patch be worn beyond the **Trailman's time** at that level even if he has not earned the Forest Award or his current Branch patch. For instance, if a Trailman does not earn his Fox Forest Award, when he crosses to Hawk he must remove his Fox Branch Patch from his uniform. He may wear the Hawk Branch patch when the appropriate requirements for doing so are completed.

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DELIVERING THE WOODLANDS TRAIL PROGRAM

Age Groups

Foxes: Kindergarten and 5 years old by 10/31

Hawks: 2nd Grade and 7 years old by 10/31

Mountain Lions: 4th Grade and 9 years old by 10/31

Exceptions to the above participation requirements may be submitted in writing to the Troop Committee for final decision.

Advancement

Both age and school grade eligibility will be factors in placement and advancement.

Boys remain at their age group until completion of their current grade level within school. Therefore, a first grade boy who enters the program midway through his first grade year is a Fox and will be eligible to become a Hawk upon completion of the first grade. Within the Mountain Lion age group, boys entering during their fifth grade year will be eligible to advance to Navigator upon completion of the fifth grade.

Awards

While the Woodlands Trail Program includes numerous awards such as Branch Awards and the Forest Badge, it should be specifically noted that acquiring awards is not the goal of the Woodlands Trail experience. The program provides a structure or framework to motivate boys to actively participate in a program designed to not only teach essential life skills, but also to teach them about eternal life possible through Jesus Christ.

The Woodlands Trail curriculum is built, in part, around the instructional components of the Forest Badge Award. There are seven main instructional areas, with an individual award possible in each of those areas.

Each individual award is called a "Branch." Branch awards are designed to be worn on the Troop Uniform on the Branch Patch. The same seven Branches are earned within all three age groups (Fox, Hawk, and Mountain Lion). When a boy has completed work for all seven Branches in his specific age group, he is said to have earned his [Fox/Hawk/Mountain Lion] Forest Badge. The Forest Badge is the first apex Award earned by a Trailman who joins the Woodlands Trail program. Upon earning a Forest Badge, the boy is granted a special Forest Badge uniform patch unique to that age

group. The Forest Badges are unique to the Woodlands Trail program and are not worn once boys are inducted into the Navigators program.

The following categories of awards may be earned by boys within the Woodlands Trail program:

Branch Patch (Joining Award)

When a boy qualifies to enter one of the three Woodlands Trail program age groups, the boy earns the respective patch for that group.

This is the first award to be earned within the Woodlands Trail program. This award represents the age group and must be earned by method A or B below:



A. If the boy is a new Trailman, he must complete the following steps:

- Memorize the Trailman Oath
- Learn the Trailman Sign and when to use it
- Learn the Trailman Salute and when to use it
- Learn the Trailman Handshake
- Memorize the Pledge of Allegiance (Foxes recite only)
- Understand how to properly fold the American flag (Mountain Lions only)

OR

B. If the boy is a continuing Trailman and has previously completed the above requirements within a lower age group, the boy must meet the age/grade criteria as outlined in this document.

Branches

The seven (7) Branches of the Forest Badge and a brief description of each follow. Examples included within the descriptions are not meant to be exclusive but are provided for illustrative purposes only. The seven colored branches on the patch correspond to respective branch program areas:

- **Heritage Branch (Brown):** An exploration of a **boy's family heritage**, American heritage, and Christian heritage. Emphasis is placed on upholding the finest traditions of the heritage we obtain from our forefathers. This branch would include, but not be limited to, such items as visiting historical sites, learning about the early church, conducting genealogical research, and exploring American history.
- **Hobbies Branch (Black):** An exploration of various indoor and outdoor hobbies that demand varying levels of knowledge, skill, or aptitude. This branch would include, but not be limited to, such items as bowling, horticulture, photography, bird watching, model building, strategy games, creating collections, and art.

Woodlands Trail program developers have responded to feedback that many hobbies are dependent on geographical areas, as well as the resources available to individual Trailmen. Therefore, additional latitude in local meeting planning has been incorporated into the program. Trail Guides are asked to plan and organize local events and overnight outings for Trailmen to learn about hobbies both common to many people and unique to the Troop's geographical region. While some lesson plans involving hobbies have been provided, it is anticipated that most activities providing leaves for this branch would center on events planned by the local Trail Guide.

- **Life Skills Branch (Burgundy):** Teaching life lessons ranging from the practical to higher-level interpersonal skill sets. This branch would include, but not be limited to, such items as food preparation, home or personal item repairs, construction, mechanics, public speaking, knowledge of safety practices, health and fitness, first aid, and dealing with difficult people or situations.
- **Outdoor Activities Branch (Green):** Having fun in the outdoors with sports and other activities. This branch would include, but not be limited to, such items as baseball, football, soccer, bicycling, track and field, and group or team games.
- **Pioneering Skills Branch (Blue):** Gaining basic understanding of woodcraft, hiking, exploration, and camping skills. This branch would include, but not be limited to, such items as learning knots and lashings, proper use of knives (Mountain Lions only), Tread Lightly (outdoor principles), navigation, and plant/animal/hazard identification.
- **Science and Technology Branch (Yellow):** An exploration of physical and natural science concerning our created world. Woodlands Trail program developers recognize the extreme importance of science and technology skills in life today. Entire schools are devoted to the study of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (S.T.E.M.). Trailmen would be more likely to benefit from hands-on events and overnight outings. Several meeting plans involving science and technology have been provided. Additional meetings providing leaves for this branch would involve outings to unique local sites. Trailmen could take advantage of such things as: science labs, factory tours, mines, beaches, ships, quarries, planetariums, museums, observatories, aquariums, hospitals, airports, aquaculture farms, veterinarian office, broadcasting stations, children's hands-on science centers, nature centers, commercial caves, and farms. In the absence of these options, the Troop could plan science and technology fairs or other events to expose the boys to S.T.E.M. Trail Guides are expected to plan and organize these local opportunities.
- **Values Branch (Red):** Instilling biblically based values within the boys regarding any number of pertinent topics. A central focus of this branch are teachings of the Christian faith.

Leaves

Through active participation in meetings as well as completion of activities and projects with their patrol, Trailmen earn a pre-determined number of Leaves. Accumulation of Leaves occurs within each of the seven different Branches. Trailmen use Leaf Tracking Cards (right) to record their progress earning Leaves among the various Branches which they carry in their lanyard. The Trail Guide records the leaves earned by



each boy on similar leaf tracking sheets which can be kept in a binder. Leaf tracking cards and lanyards are available to purchase on the Trail Leader Store in TroopTrack. Leader leaf tracking sheets are available to download on the TroopTrack Leader Pages.

Leaves at Meetings

Within the Woodlands Trail program, every meeting plan includes instructional materials that are organized around one or more of the seven general areas of instruction (Branches). **A boy's participation in the meeting earns him Leaves toward the Branches identified in the meeting plan.** Active participation in a regular meeting of the patrol, including completion of all elements within the meeting, will earn the boy two (2) leaves. The Leaves may be assigned to multiple Branches, as listed within the provided lesson plan.

Leaves for *Hit the Trail!* Activities

Hit the Trail! activities and projects can take many forms ranging from weekend events, after-school events, overnight events, camping trips, service projects or a summer adventure. Hit the Trail! meeting plans are provided for every Branch. If different age groups or Patrols are going to be attending the Hit the Trail! event together, it is suggested that the Woodlands Trail Trail Guides work together to schedule which Branch Awards will be worked on over the program year. For activities which do not require an overnight stay, the boy will earn three (3) Leaves. For any activity which includes one (1) or more overnight stays (such as camping) the boy will earn five (5) leaves.

NEW! Leaves for Family Activities

The Trailman may earn one (1) leaf for completing the assigned Family activity portion of the lesson plan up to a maximum of two (2) leaves per branch and an additional two (2) leaves per Sylvan Star. The Trail Guide determines the criteria for evaluation of completion and has the sole discretion to allow leaf credit. Evaluation methods may include discussion with the Trailman about how he completed the activity or evidence of completion (pictures, paperwork, and memorization) as appropriate for

the activity but should be clearly communicated to the Trailman when the activity is discussed. Trail Guides may substitute another family activity for the Family portion of the lesson plan to take advantage of local opportunities. Leaf credit will be on the same branch as the lesson plan from which it is based. Trail Guides may determine which branch to award credit for the family activity when a lesson plan awards split credit. For instance, if the lesson plan awards one Heritage leaf and one Values leaf, the Trail Guide determines whether completion of the Family activity earns one Heritage leaf or one Values leaf.

UPDATED! Branch Awards

Trailmen earn Branch Awards by earning leaves in accordance with the following:

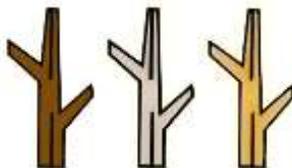
Branch Award

Earned by obtaining 9 Leaves on that Branch.

The Branch Award designs are different colors with each successive age group so that differentiation is created between Branches earned as a Fox, a Hawk, and a Mountain Lion. A single requirement that goes toward earning a Branch is called a Leaf. Trail Life USA reserves the right to revise the number of required leaves within branches or to otherwise make program modifications and adjustments as needed in future years.

Although Leaves may be issued at each meeting, Branch Awards should be presented to Trailmen at a meeting of the entire Troop, if at all possible.

- An award will be given for each Branch earned for a maximum of seven branches per age group.
- Only one branch award is earned for each area at each level.
- Branch Awards are displayed on the Branch Patch in their respective branch colors (see Branches above).



Fox Branch Awards are bronze, Hawks are silver and Mountain Lions are gold.

UPDATED! Forest Award

Trailmen who earn all 7 Branch Awards for Foxes, Hawks, or Mountain Lions plus an additional 18 leaves on any combination of branches for a total of 81 leaves will earn their Forest Badge for their respective age group. It is general expected that a Trailman would earn his Forest Award during his first year in his age group. Deficiencies can be picked up during the second year while earning Sylvan Stars and for Mountain Lions the Timberline Award.



Forest Award

All 7 Branch Awards earned at their Level (Fox, Hawk, or Mountain Lion) and 81 leaves earned overall.

It should be noted that Troops may initiate additional programming, in accordance with instructions in this Guidebook, to provide additional opportunities for Trailmen to earn leaves, branches, and thereby their Forest Badges.

Forest Awards are displayed on the Troop Uniform, hanging on the right pocket.

UPDATED! Forest Badge Sylvan Stars



Trailmen who receive their Forest Badge shall be eligible to earn additional Leaves through continued participation in the program within their age group.

Sylvan Star

After earning the Forest Award, completing nine (9) additional Leaves in a single branch earns a Sylvan Star for that branch.

- One Sylvan Star shall be awarded for each branch making a maximum of seven stars.
- Sylvan Stars are pinned to the Forest Badge and are worn on the uniform.
- Sylvan Stars may not be awarded until the Forest Award has been earned.

GENERAL MEETING INFORMATION

Program Emphases

The Trail Life USA program is designed to instill six (6) basic values. As Trail Guides emphasize different values through the meeting plans, boys develop these values and learn how to live them daily, building a strong foundation to live as godly men.



UPDATED! Trail Life USA Troop Meetings

The program provides the flexibility to meet weekly or biweekly during the school year or to meet year-round. During regular meetings, the entire Troop should convene together in an opening ceremony. The Units would then breakout to their respective patrols. Patrols will then close their patrol meetings individually or return to close as a Troop.

*Youth Retention Tip:
During the summer,
there should be at
least one meeting or
outing per month.
This keeps the
Trailmen connected to
the Troop and
provides better youth
retention.*

Pre-meeting

Set-up (adult and youth leaders arrive 20-30 minutes early)

Gathering – 15 min (pre-meeting activity for Trailmen as they arrive)

Meeting

1. Opening Ceremony – 7 min including Call to Order, Opening Prayer, Presentation of the Colors (rotate patrols, see TroopTrack for specific structure)
2. Announcements – 4 min (First Officer)
3. Chaplain Mentoring Moment – 2 min (Chaplain)
4. Patrols Breakouts – 40 min
5. Troop-wide game or activity – 15 min

6. Wisdom for the Wild – 1 min (Faith Component, Troopmaster)
7. Retiring of the Colors, Closing prayer – 3 min
8. Dismissal to parents

In addition, any Branch Patches, Branch Awards or other recognitions may be presented either during opening Announcements, during closing before the Wisdom for the Wild segment or may be awarded in the Patrol Breakout segment of the meeting.

Common Opening

The First Officer (Adventurer) or rarely the Troopmaster will be responsible for planning and presiding over the Troop Opening involving all level of Trailmen.

The concept of the gathering of all boys at the Troop Opening Ceremony serves several functions:

- It helps create a new culture and sense of community by combining all boys.
- It allows older boys to mentor younger boys.
- It allows younger boys the opportunity to watch older boys as they take an active role in the program.
- It provides a platform for the dissemination of necessary information.
- It allows siblings and family to observe any interim award presentations.

The opening ceremony should be very brief to grant maximum time for Unit and patrol meetings. If time allows, a song, skit or stunt may be added.

Woodlands Trail Patrol Breakout

After the opening, the Trailman break into their respective age Patrols for meetings presided over by the Trail Guide.

Lesson plans for regular meetings and Hit the Trail! outings are available in the TroopTrack Leader Pages in the Woodlands Trail section.

THE TRAIL GUIDE SELECTS ONE BRANCH AREA TO COMPLETE OVER A SIX WEEK PERIOD AND USES THE PROVIDED LESSON PLANS TO CONDUCT THOSE MEETINGS AND *HIT THE TRAIL!* OUTINGS.

Lesson plans are written for three different levels, Fox, Hawk and Mountain Lion. He may also utilize the "Create Your Own" meeting plan option (below) to take advantage of local opportunities for earning leaves in the planned Branch.

Standard Meeting - **Six F's Lesson Plans**

Patrol meetings shall follow Trail Life USA patrol meeting lesson plans. These plans include **the six F's** outlined below.

Necessary Resources: At the beginning of each lesson plan, this section provides a list of items that will be needed for each meeting whether they are for a craft project

or a visual aid component needed during the meeting. In the development of the Fingers segment, the goal was to keep the projects as simple as possible yet focusing on learning the main principle for the lesson.

1. **FOCUS:** The Focus portion of the patrol meeting is to provide an academic or instructional element. This is the emphasis of the patrol time together to lay a foundation that the other F's will build upon.

There are two simple guidelines to help Trail Guides preparing to teach a FOCUS segment:

(1.) **BE CREATIVE.** Be visual in your teaching if at all possible. Always teach with something in your hands. Any object is a great tool to use to teach the lesson. Use pictures when an object is not the right tool for the lesson. This will help capture the attention of the Trailmen and make the lesson interesting to them. There might be an opportunity to use a poem or song where they can learn the month's lesson.

(2.) **KEEP IT SIMPLE.** Think about your audience and their age. Think about how they will receive what you are communicating. When there are history lessons or lessons about characters from the Bible, the Trail Guide doesn't need to teach "above" the Trailmen's knowledge with language or concepts they may not understand. Remember, you want them to leave the meeting with the sense of learning something that they can recall later in life. This is why this segment is labeled FOCUS.

2. **FINGERS:** This portion of the meeting is to offer an opportunity for the Trailmen to experience a project with "hands-on" learning. This should be based from the Focus teaching segment. It is understood that boys learn to apply a lesson better when they can see and build or make something that would remind them of what is being taught. If the fingers project or activity needs to be changed, feel free to develop your own ideas.
3. **FUN:** This portion of the meeting is to allow a time where Trailmen can burn off some energy. This is the time of the meeting for the Trailmen to play games or participate in a physical activity. Some of the games or activities may need to be played indoors due to the weather in your area. If the game or activity is not appropriate for the season in your area, feel free to develop your own ideas and lead something that is more appropriate.

There may be a few items needed to gather for the game(s) before the meeting, so be sure to check the Necessary Resources section and/or

the lesson plan carefully. This is a great opportunity for one of your assistant leaders to be responsible for and lead.

4. **FAMILY:** The Family portion of the meeting is simply the family emphasis for the principle taught. As the Trailmen learn throughout the years, it is the desire of Trail Life USA and the Woodland Trails Program to inform and involve the family in the learning process as much as possible. Complete a parent Take Home Sheet for each meeting with reminders about what was discussed (Focus and Faith), the Family activity they can complete at home for possible leaf credit, and what is coming up at future meetings. A sample is provided in the Forms section of this guide.
5. **FOREST BADGE:** The Forest Badge portion of the meeting is to help identify the Branches taught and Leaves earned during a meeting for each age group. After the meeting, the Leaves earned should be recorded on leaf tracking cards.
6. **FAITH:** This portion of the meeting is the final segment of the meeting. This portion of the meeting communicates pertinent biblical truths, values, and wisdom corresponding to the lesson. The Trail Guide will close the patrol meeting with prayer and a custom or tradition they would like to include. The Trail Guide is welcome to ask a member of the patrol or a registered adult leader to lead the closing prayer.

The Trail Guide is to use the version of the Bible used by the Charter organization. If a different version is to be used, then permission is to be obtained by the Troopmaster. What a great example of opening **God's Word, placing this on our laps as we teach Trailmen godly principles and values to build "workmen who are not ashamed."** Trail Life USA purposely desires to share God's truth and to learn to apply these truths to our lives. **This is a core value behind our motto "Walk Worthy."**

UPDATED! Hit the Trail! Meetings

For at least one meeting each month, the patrol, Unit, or Troop conducts a *Hit the Trail!* activity in which they have a fun experience and/or perform community service. The Trail Guide shall preside over *Hit the Trail!* meetings. Hit the Trail! Meeting plans are available on TroopTrack in the Leader Pages and are organized by Branch. All *Hit the Trail!* monthly meetings shall contain the following elements:

1. Gathering
2. Prayer
3. *Hit the Trail!* Activity, Event, Trip, or Community Project
4. Closing Prayer

“Create Your Own” Meeting Plans

The Woodlands Trail program allows boys to earn Leaves for meetings, activities, or projects which are not specifically outlined within the provided lesson plans. This is allowed in recognition of the wide variation in climate, geography, and available resources throughout the nation.

For example, Troops may not have access to bicycles for a bicycle rodeo, or Troops within heavily urbanized areas may not be able to go camping in the great outdoors.

While it is the intention of the program that provided lesson plans are followed whenever possible, latitude is given to the local Troop as outlined below.

Approval of Create Your Own Meetings and Assigning Leaves

When a Trail Guide decides to cover topics which are not provided within the pre-written meeting plans, it is called a **“Create-Your-Own Meeting Plan.”** Create-Your-Own meeting plans must follow the meeting outline of the 6-Fs (Focus, Fingers, Fun, Family, Forest Badge, Faith).

Trail Guides should submit a simple written summary of such meeting plans to their Ranger for approval. The Ranger should ensure that lesson plans, activities, or projects are (1) safe for all involved; (2) age-appropriate; and (3) consistent with the values and purposes of the organization. If any doubt exists, the Ranger should consult the Troopmaster or the Troop Committee. A copy of the alternative plan must be kept on file with the Ranger for the remainder of that program year. At the discretion of the Ranger, previously approved lesson plans may be reused. Lesson plans may also be submitted to the national office, where they will be considered for distribution to all Troops, with credit given to the author.

After approval of the alternative, the Trail Guide and Ranger shall assign Leaves for the alternative, in accordance with the standard presented within the section of this document entitled, **“Leaves for the Branches,”** above. In assigning Leaves to the Branch, the Ranger and Trail Guide should carefully consider the Branch in which the Leaves fit. Use of the Branch definitions should be consulted within the section of this document entitled **“Branch Patch.”**

New! Annual Meeting Plan by Branch

The following annual plan is provided as an example:

Troop XX-#### Woodlands Trail Annual Meeting Plan

Week	Month	Branch	Plan	Leaves
1	January	Life Skills	Meeting	2
2	January	Life Skills	Meeting	2
3	January	Life Skills	Meeting	2
4	January	Life Skills	Hit The Trail! Overnight	5
5	February	Life Skills	Meeting	2
6	February	Life Skills	Meeting	2
7	February	Life Skills	Meeting	2
8	February	Hobbies	Meeting	2
9	March	Hobbies	Meeting	2
10	March	Hobbies	Meeting	2
11	March	Spring Break - No Meeting		
12	March	Hobbies	Hit The Trail!	3
13	March	Hobbies	Meeting	2
14	April	Hobbies	Meeting	2
15	April	Heritage	Meeting	2
16	April	Heritage	Meeting	2
17	April	Heritage	Meeting	2
18	May	Heritage	Hit The Trail!	3
19	May	Heritage	Meeting	2
20	May	Heritage	Meeting	2
21	May	Pioneering Skills	Meeting	2
22	May	Pioneering Skills	Meeting	2
23	June	Pioneering Skills	Meeting	2
24	June			
25	June	Pioneering Skills	Hit The Trail!	3
26	June			
27	July	Pioneering Skills	Meeting	2
28	July			
29	July	Pioneering Skills	Hit The Trail! Overnight	5
30	July			
31	July			
32	August	Outdoor Skills	Hit The Trail!	3
33	August			
34	August	Outdoor Skills	Meeting	2
35	August			
36	September	Outdoor Skills	Meeting	2
37	September	Outdoor Skills	Meeting	2
38	September	Outdoor Skills	Meeting	2
39	September	Outdoor Skills	Hit The Trail!	3
40	October	Science and Technology	Meeting	2

41	October	Science and Technology	Meeting	2
42	October	Science and Technology	Meeting	2
43	October	Science and Technology	Hit The Trail!	3
44	October	Science and Technology	Meeting	2
45	November	Science and Technology	Meeting	2
46	November	Values	Meeting	2
47	November	Values	Meeting	2
48	November	Values	Hit The Trail!	3
49	December	Values	Meeting	2
50	December	Values	Meeting	2
51	December	Christmas Break - No Meeting		
52	December	Christmas Break - No Meeting		
Total Leaves				97

This type of plan repeated every two years provides 194 leaf opportunities overall and 26 to 32 leaves in each Branch!

The overall meeting schedule for the year will be decided by the local Troop and the Woodlands Trail Ranger and Trail Guides.

Trail Guide Weekly Message

The original concept within the Woodlands Trail program was to provide a weekly printable handout accompanying each lesson plan. However, the development team has received specific feedback concerning this idea. Developers now understand that many Trail Guides would likely send a weekly electronic message to parents or guardians. These communications would include instructions regarding meetings, events, or other important information. This practice is encouraged as a way to conserve natural resources and communicate more effectively with parents or guardians.

A set handout would not allow the full amount of customization desired within the program. In deference to the individual needs of Trail Guides and Troops, a template has been provided within the Forms Section of this document. Trail Guides are able to use this template or create one of their own when they communicate electronically with parents/guardians. Trail Guides may choose to do such things as:

- Add links to websites pertinent to the lesson or monthly theme
- Add links to online surveys (such as Survey Monkey) or scheduling software (such as Doodle)
- Add additional scripture references or value-based lesson tie-ins
- Embed their own video clip (such as a how-to guide)
- Add resource requests for parents/guardians

Given today's electronic devices, the possibilities are nearly endless! The development team encourages the entire Trail Life USA family to share your best ideas and examples of your weekly messages. Based on the initial program year feedback, the template will be changed to best meet program needs.

=9=

SPECIAL AWARDS

TIMBERLINE AWARD



Updated! The Timberline Award is the highest award a Trailman can achieve in the Woodlands Trail program and it is available only to Mountain Lion Trailmen. It was developed to celebrate a boy's entrance into the new world of Trail Life USA's Navigators program.

Just as the tall timbers stop at the Timberline's edge, **so must** a Mountain Lion's time stop in the Woodlands Trail program. As the Trailman proceeds on his individual path, he leaves the Woodlands Trail and embarks on a new trail of exploration and experiences. The Trailman leaves with many good wishes and prayers that he will continue to Walk Worthy with the God that created him, loves him, and guides him.

There are four Manhood Principles and requirements for the Timberline Award.

MANHOOD PRINCIPLES

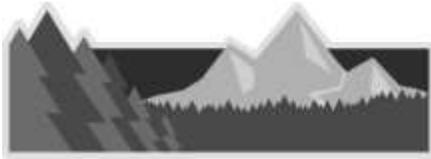
To live boldly and avoid being passive

To live responsibly

To lead courageously

To live for the greater rewards of God

Timberline Requirements & Checklist for Trail Guides



Mountain Lion's Name: _____

To show that he is living boldly and is avoiding being passive he has

- _____ Earned his Mountain Lion Forest Badge
- _____ Earned all 7 Sylvan Stars (one from each branch) at the Mountain Lion level
- _____ Invited a friend that is a potential member to a Woodlands Trail meeting, outing or activity.
- _____ Attended an overnight campout with the Troop during his Mountain Lion year(s).

To show that he is living responsibly he has

- _____ Discussed, defined and developed with his parents a plan to meet a measurable, quantifiable goal or fulfill an area of responsibility.
 - Minimum duration: 2 months and requires prior Trail Guide approval
 - A goal might be improved physical fitness or improved academic success.
 - An area of responsibility might be specific jobs or chores to do.

To show that he is leading courageously he has

- _____ Helped plan and lead a service project in his community and enlisted help from his fellow Trailmen to complete it. His service project helped to make his community cleaner, better, safer or fulfilled a need. Requires prior Trail Guide approval. Service exclusively to members of the Trailman's family are not eligible.

To show that he lives for the greater rewards of God he has

- _____ Completed an approved faith based option for the Mountain Lion level.
Approved options include:
 - The *Worthy Life Award* for Mountain Lions (available on TroopTrack)
- OR
- One of the following approved religious recognitions: *God and Family* by [PRAY Publications](#), *Joyful Servant* by [MCCS](#), *Familia Dei Emblem* by [NCCTL](#) (in development), *Chi-Rho Award* by [EOCS](#)

FIREGUARD



(for Mountain Lions Only)

This is an additional learning tool for the **Mountain Lions** to help instruct them on fire safety.



Upon the completion of this instruction, as well as hands on learning, the Mountain Lion may earn the **FIREGUARD CARD**, which may be carried as proof of completion of skills necessary to handle all aspects of camp fire safety when going on outdoor activities with his Patrol, Troop, or family. The **FIREGUARD CARD** is available at the Trail Leader store on TroopTrack. Foxes and Hawks should not start or guard a fire.



PART 1: Where can I start a fire?

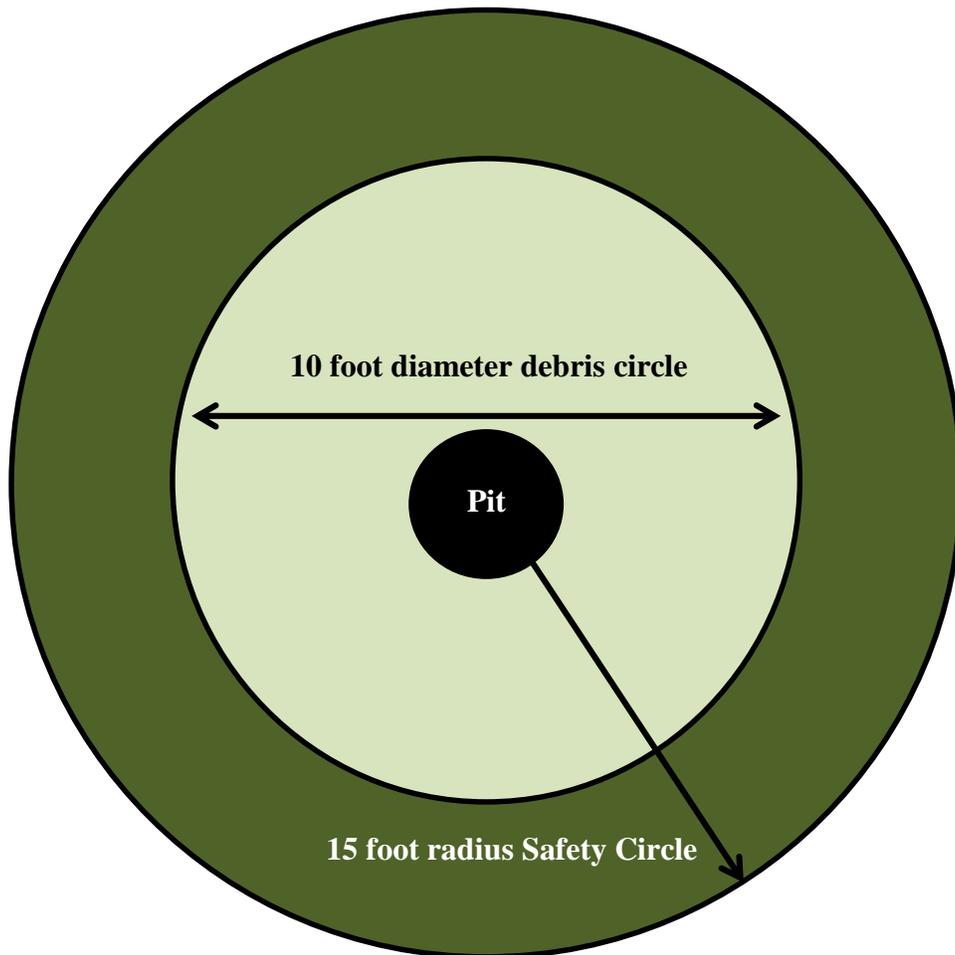
1. Check with local authorities regarding your state or county rules and regulations (as well as burn bans) in the area you are planning to camp or have a campfire. If you are staying at a state or national park, the Park Ranger will have the needed information posted. Some locations or areas prohibit campfires, so be aware of any posted restrictions.
2. If you are at a campground, look for an existing campfire ring or area where the fire can be safely built.
3. If there is no existing campfire ring, you will need to make one.

Safety Rules about setting up a Campfire Ring:

1. SAFETY CIRCLE: Make sure you are at a safe distance away from tents and picnic areas. Smoky Bear recommends a fifteen foot radius that is clear of any potential dangers. <http://www.smokeybear.com/campfire-safety.asp> Clear all debris and leaves for 10 feet around an established fire pit before lighting.
2. POTENTIAL DANGERS:
 - a. Trees and bushes - Never start a fire by or under a tree or bushes – this potential danger could spread the fire across many acres of land, causing damage to trees, land, and wildlife habitation.
 - b. Buildings and Structures - Never start a fire close to or by a building or structure. This potential danger, if the fire were to get out of control, could spread to the building or structure causing them to burn.

3. TREAD LIGHTLY: Follow the Tread Lightly principles
<http://treadlightly.org/tread-lightlys-tips-for-responsible-camping/>
4. SAFETY TOOLS NEEDED: Make sure you have a shovel and a bucket of water or sand (depending on your location) close to your campfire pit for emergencies.

PART 2: Where and How to Dig a Campfire Pit



- STEP 1: Find a space big enough for a fifteen foot safety circle. Follow the safety rules for obstructions.
- STEP 2: Within the safety circle, form a ten foot debris circle and pick up twigs and remove other objects that could cause the fire to spread or be a fire hazard.
- STEP 3: In the center of the debris circle, dig a campfire pit that is about one foot deep.
- STEP 4: Find some rocks to form a ring around your campfire pit.

PART 3: How to Build a Campfire

1. There are three types of wood that need to be gathered or brought into the campsite:
 - a. Tinder – twigs, leaves or pine needles

- b. Kindling – small twigs bigger than kindling
 - c. Wood – bigger pieces of wood, logs
2. Use a stacking method – Tinder first, then add Kindling, then add large pieces of wood on last.

(Make sure you leave room to light the tinder with a match) – you can study different types of campfires - <http://www.campfiredeude.com/campfire-lays.shtml> or <http://www.artofmanliness.com/2009/09/22/three-essential-campfires-snack-fire-cooking-fire-and-comfort-fire/>

Things to Consider: If we follow Tread Lightly Guidelines, we should not remove branches from live trees where we camp. This damages the trees. Use twigs and or wood on the ground from trees that have fallen. Make sure you comply with national or state park rules and regulations on gathering firewood. Some national and state parks allow you to bring your own firewood to the camping facility; however, it is suggested that you contact them to check before camping. While hiking or camping in wilderness settings, be careful to use Tread Lightly [www.treadlightly.org] or US Forestry Service Campfire guidelines.

PART 4: How to Start a Campfire

1. Lighting the Fire
 - a. Light the tinder with flint and steel (If Trail Guides want to instruct on this, research the safety and use of flint and steel on the internet) or,
 - b. Light the tinder with a match or lighter. Always use matches safely. Mountain Lions should show to the Trail Guide proper striking technique and safe storage of matches or any lighters before use at a Trail Life USA meeting or event
 - c. Waterproof matches are a good item to have when backpacking, hiking or camping. Place them in a small Ziploc bag or a small container when packing for a hiking trip. Show the proper use and care of waterproof or strike type matches.
2. Wait until the tinder is lit and add some more tinder to the flame.
3. Blow towards the bottom of the fire. Once the fire is established, add kindling and wood to the flame to keep it going.
4. The fire needs to be a manageable circumference and height. Keep safety in mind as you build your fire. It needs to be one you can control. Remember, a tall fire at some point will fall.
5. **Never leave a fire unattended.** Someone always needs to be on “fire watch.”
6. Do not put anything into or take anything out of the fire except for adding more wood.
7. Do not put any foreign objects in the fire; some will explode and could be potentially hazardous.

PART 5: Putting Out a Campfire

1. It is best to let the fire burn all the wood down to ash.

2. If time will not permit all of the wood to burn down to ash, use water to extinguish the fire. Douse the fire completely. Pay attention to the red parts that still glow. (Tip: if water is not available, use dirt)
3. Use the shovel to stir the ash, wood, and water together. It will help put out all of the warm spots.
4. **You shouldn't feel any more heat coming from where the fire is. The goal is to make the area cold.** Add water and stir with the shovel, as needed, until the fire is completely out.
5. Since the fire is in a pit, make sure it is completely cold and out before you cover it up.
6. If the fire was not made within the boundaries of a pre-determined fire ring, you are to make the area look as if there was no fire or pit. Do your best to cover the spot well with a shovel.

Campfire Safety Videos Resources:

<http://www.smokeybear.com/campfire-safety.asp> - US Forestry Service Short Videos

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YY_1aBQZ2JM - Campfire Safety with the HEAT Team



Requirements & Checklist for Trail Guides

Mountain Lion's Name:

FIREGUARD

PART 1: Where can I start a Fire?

- _____The Mountain Lion can adequately explain where and when it is appropriate to start a fire.
- _____He can define the Safety Circle regarding campfires
- _____He can identify potential dangers near a campfire area.
- _____He knows the Tread Lightly rules that pertain to campfires.
- _____He knows the required safety tools needed at a campfire.

PART 2: Where and How to Dig a Campfire Pit

- _____He can correctly name the steps to building a safe campfire pit.

PART 3: How to Build a Campfire

- _____He knows the three types of fuel for a campfire and in what order they are layered.

PART 4: How to Start a Campfire

- _____He knows how to safely light a match or handle a lighter.
- _____He has safely built a fire using the three types of fuel.
- _____He knows why fires should not be left unattended.
- _____He knows to keep items besides fuel out of the fire.

PART 5: Putting Out a Campfire

- _____He has safely helped extinguish a fire.

WOODSMAN



(for Mountain Lions Only)

This an additional learning tool for the Trailmen to help instruct on knife use and safety.



Upon the completion of instruction, as well as hands on learning, the Trailmen may earn the **WOODSMAN CARD** which may be carried as proof of completion of skills necessary to handle all aspects of knife safety when going on outdoor activities with his family, Patrol, or Troop. The **WOODSMAN CARD** is available at the Trail Leader store in TroopTrack. Foxes and Hawks should not handle knives.



Folding knives make the best “first” knife for a Trailmen because they are smaller and lighter and can be safely carried in a pocket. Pocket knives are best used to teach children basic knife safety. Before any Trailmen use a pocketknife, it is important to teach safety and proper use. The following is a guide to some common-sense, yet instructive, folding knife safety rules for children.

SAFETY SAYING: When using a knife, always keep in mind –

“A knife is a tool, not a toy.”

Allow the Trailmen to repeat this phrase back to you several times before picking up a knife, and remind them of it frequently during this training and outings. Make sure it is known to only use a knife when it is needed. We should never use a knife to show off or use it while we are angry. Remembering a knife as a tool will help when making decisions on its use.

PART 1: Where can I carry a knife?

Set clear rules on when and where it’s appropriate to carry the blade. A knife should only be brought out and used with the Trail Guide or parent’s permission and under

close supervision in places such as a Trail Life USA Meeting, Campout or other Outdoor Event. An inappropriate place would be to carry a knife to school or the store.

PART 2: How do I use a knife?

1. Establish a SAFETY CIRCLE: Before opening and using a folding knife, a Trailman should learn to become aware of their surroundings in order to prevent injuring **others. Instruct the Trailman to hold the closed knife at arm's length and slowly spin around in a circle.** If the Trailman is able to turn without bumping into anyone, he has a safe zone where the knife can be used without hurting anyone. Never walk or run with an open knife. Stay still when using a knife in the safety circle.
2. Passing the Knife: A Trailman should also be taught how to safely pass a knife to someone else. A knife that folds should always be closed before passing. Practice handing off an open knife: Hold it by the blade, cutting edge facing away from the hand, and present the handle to the other person. The Trailmen receiving the **knife should acknowledge with a, "Thank you, I have it,"** to let the passer know he or she has control of the knife.
3. Show how to safely open and close the knife.
 - a. First, grip the handle with your thumb and finger tips of your non-dominant hand so that no fingers are in the way of the blade opening.
 - b. Place the thumbnail of your dominant hand into the groove on the back of the blade.
 - c. **Pull the blade out as far as possible, ensuring it won't snap back.**
 - d. Use your dominant hand to pull back on the thick point of the blade to lock it into place.
 - e. Reverse the process to close the knife, gripping the knife with your thumb and finger tips so that no fingers are in the way of the blade closing.
4. Show how to properly cut with a folding knife. When we learn this skill, a good way to practice is to carve a bar of soap.
 - a. Double-check that the blade is locked in the open position.
 - b. Grip the handle with your thumb and finger tips so that no fingers are in the way of the blade closing.
 - c. Cut away from your body.
 - d. **Don't use too much force.**

PART 3: How do I care for my knife?

1. Keep the knife sharp; explain why a dull knife is dangerous.

A dull knife doesn't serve the purpose for which it was intended. You want a knife that will cut through something; a dull knife doesn't do that. It doesn't slice through the cutting material cleanly and easily. With a dull knife, you must use more force to get something cut.

If we are using extra force to cut, we are not letting the tool do the work. As a result, the knife can slip or twist uncontrollably. The next thing you know, you've cut yourself. Cuts made with a dull knife are usually worse. This kind of cut makes it more difficult for the body to heal.

Taken from <http://preppingtosurvive.com/2012/10/22/dull-knives-are-dangerous/>

Demonstrate how to sharpen a knife with a sharpening stone. This link shows the most basic means of sharpening a blade.

<http://www.artofmanliness.com/2009/03/05/how-to-sharpen-a-pocket-knife/>

2. Keep the blade oiled for smooth opening. Demonstrate where to put the oil and how much is applied.
3. Clean and dry your knife after each use. After cleaning, place the blade in the closed position.
4. **In the beginning, the Trailman's knife**, while not in use, should be given to the Trail Guides or parents. After learning is complete, the Trailman should take responsibility to fold the knife and put it away in a safe place.



Requirements & Checklist for Trail Guides

Mountain Lion's Name:

WOODSMAN

_____ The Mountain Lion can explain why a knife is a tool, not a toy.

PART 1: Where can I carry a knife?

_____ He can adequately explain where and when it is appropriate to carry a knife.

PART 2: How do I use a knife?

_____ He can establish and demonstrate the Safety Circle.

_____ He demonstrates the proper passing and receiving of an open knife.

_____ He has mastered safely opening and closing a folding knife.

_____ He has demonstrated proficiency cutting with his knife in a safe manner.

PART 3: How do I care for my knife?

_____ He can explain why a dull knife is a dangerous knife.

_____ He has demonstrated how to sharpen a knife with a sharpening stone.

_____ He has demonstrated oiling his blade.

_____ He has demonstrated cleaning and drying his knife after use.

_____ He can relay the importance of safely storing his knife.

FAITH BUILDING ACTIVITIES



Worthy Life Program

The most important special award within the Woodlands Trail program centers on faith. This award is titled the Worthy Life Award.

Requirements are different for different levels. The award may be earned once in each level in the Woodlands Trail program. The extensive Worthy Life Program is outlined in the document of the same name and is available on TroopTrack. The award may be worn on the uniform.

Religious Recognitions

Completing the appropriate Religious Recognition is a great way to learn more about your denominations faith. The following recognitions are recognized by Trail Life USA and may be worn on the uniform.

Church of Christ (MCCS) 325-370-1679, www.goodservant.org

National Catholic Committee of Trail Life USA (NCCTL) 540-622-8070,
www.catholictrail.com

Program of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY) – 800-933-7729,
www.praypub.org

Eastern Orthodox (EOCS) –800-933-7729, www.eocs.org

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CEREMONIES

The ceremonies listed in this section are suggestions only. You are free to create your own ceremonies to use in your Troop. Additional ideas may be found on the TroopTrack Leader Pages or on the Trail Life USA Forum through a link found on the Leader Pages home page.

INDUCTION CEREMONY

Master of Ceremony (MC): We welcome you to our Annual Trail Life USA Induction Ceremony.

(Name) will conduct the Flag Ceremony. Please prepare yourselves for the Flag Ceremony.

Caller Commands:

Color Guard advance: Flags are brought forward

Color Guard post colors: Flags are posted into stands

Salute - Pledge

Pledge of Allegiance

Two

Color retreat: Color Guard leaves Flag area

MC: (Boy's name) will read Trail Life Motto

Read aloud the Motto:

"Walk Worthy" Colossians 1:10: "that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God."

MC: (Boy's name) will read a short statement of Troop Verse, number and significance or passion/vision.

Insert information here.

MC: Ranger (name) will conduct the Induction Ceremony

Read aloud the following: Welcome to our Trail Life USA Induction Ceremony. These young men are about to begin a journey that will set a noble and honorable standard for all those who follow in their footsteps. In preparation of this, we will light a special candle – which will represent the light of our creator, God. This is the representation of His light that we hope each of you will pass on to all the world as you live the Trail Life USA Motto and Oath.

(As candle is lit, read below)

It has been said,

"True strength is always strength given over to God's purposes. It is God's idea to make men strong so that they would use that strength to protect women, children or anyone else. There's something heroic in that. Male strength is a gift from God, and like all gifts from God, it's always and everywhere meant to be used to bless others." - Seven Great Men, Eric Metaxas.

This Induction Ceremony celebrates your commitment as a Trail Life Trailman - as you embark on the Trail to Manhood.

(Read individual names of those joining the Troop. Have the boys come forward as their names are called and stand facing audience. Call mothers, fathers or adult representative to come forward and stand next to the young men.)

Trailmen, prepare yourselves with the Trailman Sign as we recite the Trail Life USA Oath.

Ranger: Repeat after me.

*On my honor, I will do my best
to serve God and my country; (give time for them to echo)
to respect authority; (give time to echo)
to be a good steward of Creation; (give time to echo)
and to treat others as I want to be treated. (give time to echo).*

Trailmen turn to each other and seal your commitment with the Trailman handshake. By so doing, you commit to hold each other accountable.

Ranger: Now repeat after me Trail Life USA Adult Leaders, Fathers and Mentors.

*I ask God for grace
to live and teach these young Trailmen
the Principles of Biblical Manhood.*

Adult Leaders and Trailmen: With your right hand, raise your Standards or make the Trailman Sign.

Trail Ranger: Leaders and Trailmen, repeat after me:

*To live boldly and avoid being passive (give time to echo)
To live responsibly (give time to echo)
To lead courageously (give time to echo)
To live for greater rewards of God (give time to echo)*

Congratulations, men! You have now been Inducted into Trail Life USA . Walk Worthy! in all that you do.

MC: Troop Chaplin will now close us in prayer.

MC: Basic Flag Retirement Ceremony

Color Guard advance

Salute

Color Guard retire the colors

Color Guard Retreat

Color Guard Dismissed

MC: (Closing statements and invitation to refreshments).

Portions based on book by Robert Lewis, *Raising a Modern Day Knight* (used with permission by Focus on the Family)

TIMBERLINE AWARD CEREMONY

This ceremony can take place at the Charter Organization's large meeting place or may be held outdoors around a campfire with families involved. If there is a hill or mountain in the vicinity, the ceremony might be held atop at a high location.

Greeting

Blessing upon the Ceremony: Troop Chaplain

Flag Ceremony and Pledge of Allegiance

Introduction and Purpose of Ceremony

Calling of Recipients: Ranger

Would those who seek to pass the Timberline please come forward?

It has been said that when on the trail that the most important point to know is where you are. You cannot begin to determine where you are going or how you will get there until you are fully aware of where you are. Once your location is determined, you can then see clearly to navigate to wherever you want to go.

You have journeyed upward through the Woodlands Trail program and have reached the Timberline. Your experience on the Woodlands Trail has shown you much about who you are. With the help of faithful Trail Guides, mentors, family, and friends, you have discovered much about yourself and the world around you. The Timberline is the upper edge of the forest. The trees have passed, and you are able to see in all directions.

As you have climbed upward, there have been many mentors along the way.

Trail Guides, will you step forward and say a word or two of encouragement to these young Trailmen?

Portions based on book by Robert Lewis, *Raising a Modern Day Knight* (used with permission by Focus on the Family)

Ranger says:

Now, passing the Timberline, you are able to see in all directions around you - North, South, East, and West. Just as there are four cardinal directions, there are four Manhood Principles that, if followed, will take you far in your journey into manhood.

Falter at one point and the direction of your life will change greatly.

Have all Trailmen turn to face the cardinal direction the Ranger is speaking about.

Trailmen, turn to the East.

The East represents the eastern gate of the land of Eden. In Genesis 3:23-24, we read of how the disobedience of Adam and Eve led to them being expelled from the Garden of Eden. The Eastern gate reminds us to live boldly and reject being passive.

Genesis 3 tells of the fall of man. Within this chapter you find the account of the conversation between the serpent and Eve. In verse 6 of that chapter, the Bible tells us **that** “She also gave some to her husband, who was with her...”

Did you catch that? The scripture says that the man was with the woman. Instead of the man boldly correcting the serpent and protecting his wife, he stood in the background and was passive. He did nothing and remained silent as she argued with the serpent. It is our role as men to lead in our homes and throughout our life, protecting others and living boldly for God.

Trailmen, will you live boldly and reject living a passive life?

Trailmen, turn to the South.

As we turn South, let us be reminded to live responsibly.

We should faithfully carry our own backpack through life's trail, and we should carry **each other's pack for a while** if it becomes a burden to them. In the sixth chapter of the book of Galatians, the Apostle Paul tells us to carry our own load but to bear one **another's burdens**. **Living responsibly means that we do what is needed and what is right.** It is our responsibility to care for our family, love our neighbor as ourselves, and to be faithful leaders.

Trailmen, will you live responsibly?

Trailmen, turn to the West.

The West reminds us to lead courageously.

When we think of the American Wild West we think of tough cowboys who lived hard lives. It was John Wayne, as a cowboy, who said, "Courage is being scared to death but saddling up anyway." In the Bible, when Jesus was tested by Satan after going without any food for forty days, He responded courageously with Scripture that he had memorized. In the book of Matthew, Chapter 4, we read of Jesus standing up to Satan firmly, even after Satan offered Him **many amazing things**. **Jesus said, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.'"** Like Jesus, we will be tempted in this world to run after money, pleasure, power, and fame. Leading courageously means that we recognize that, in spite of fear, our priority is following God and leading others to do the same, regardless of the consequences.

Trailmen, will you lead courageously?

Trailmen, turn to the North.

The North is the greatest of all points. This Point reminds us to live for the greater rewards of God.

Moses was a man that had the opportunity to live under the most powerful man in Egypt, the Pharaoh. He could have anything that he wanted, but the Bible says in Hebrews 11:24-26, "24: By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the

son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25: choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin; 26: He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward." As men, we are called to live disciplined lives. Discipline is putting off something that we want so that later we can have something that we want more. Moses was looking for the greater reward in the future. You are called to do the same.

Will you live for the greater rewards of God?

Trailmen, look above.

Above you is Christ himself. If followed closely, Jesus will lead you into all truth and righteousness. The Bible says that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father, except through Him. We read also that He will never leave us nor forsake us. When we walk with Jesus, we will never go astray.

If you agree to live in accordance with these instructions, please say, "I will."

Trailmen, when your name is called, step forward to the Troopmaster.

Troopmaster gives the award.

Call for the Family or Mentors to come stand by their Trailman.

Family, friends and mentors please join us in prayer to encourage these award recipients to continue to Walk Worthy in all areas of their lives. (Prayer time inserted here)

Ladies and Gentlemen in our audience, would you rise and give a warm hand for our Woodlands Trail Timberline Award recipients.

BRANCH AWARDS CEREMONY

WOODLANDS TRAIL BRANCH	TREE CONNECTION
Heritage Branch	Roots
Hobbies Branch	Leaves
Life Skills Branch	Water
Outdoor Activities Branch	Branches of the Tree
Pioneering Skills Branch	Bark
Science and Tech Branch	Tree Rings
Values Branch	Sunlight

HERITAGE BRANCH

Would all of the following boys come forward to be recognized for earning the Heritage Branch Award?

CALL THE NAMES OF THE BOYS RECEIVING THE HERITAGE BRANCH AWARD.

Just as the roots form the foundation of the tree. Heritage forms the foundation of the person. It is the roots that hold the tree secure against strong winds and storms. It is the roots that allow the tree to grow straight and tall. Your knowledge of the heritage of your family and nation will have the same affect throughout your life. Your roots will **grow longer and stronger the more you know about your family's history and the heritage of our country.** The trials and successes of those who have gone before you will aid you in your own path. Everything they did was to so you could stand here today. You honor them just by wanting to know who they were, how they lived and even how some of them gave their lives to honor our country. You have collected enough leaves to complete this part of your journey and tonight you are awarded with the Heritage Branch Award for your Patrol level.

Hand each Trailman the Heritage Branch Award pin.

Please join me in congratulating these young men on their accomplishment.

HOBBIES BRANCH

Would all of the following boys come forward to be recognized for earning the Hobbies Branch Award?

CALL THE NAMES OF THE BOYS RECEIVING THE HOBBIES BRANCH AWARD.

What are some of the fun things you like to do? How do you like to spend you free time? Hobbies are so very important and fun. They allow us to show and share with others our hopes, dreams, and imagination. Freedom of expression is one of our greatest human

traits. The tree connection for the Hobbies Branch is the leaf. Leaves come in so many different shapes, colors, and fragrances. So, too, do hobbies. Hobbies help to make us different from one another, as leaves help us to pick out different trees. With all of the leaves you have acquired, you are awarded the Hobbies Branch Award pin for your Patrol level. Like the leaves on a tree that turn color and fall, your hobbies may change through the years. But growing new hobbies can be a lot of fun.

Hand each Trailman the Hobbies Branch Award pin.

Please join me in congratulating these young men on their accomplishment.

LIFE SKILLS BRANCH

Would all of the following boys come forward to be recognized for earning the Life Skills Branch Award?

CALL THE NAMES OF THE BOYS RECEIVING THE LIFE SKILLS BRANCH AWARD.

No tree can grow without water. The amount of water determines the size and strength of the tree. The life skills you learn will determine the strength and size of your character. The purity of your character will sustain many areas of your life. These life skills will water and nourish your basic abilities and allow you to use them to go further in all other areas. Completing the leaves for this branch has awarded you with the Life Skills Branch Award for you Patrol level. As water helps the body, life skills will help you in all area of your life.

Hand each Trailman the Life Skills Branch Award pin.

Please join me in congratulating these young men on their accomplishment.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Would all of the following boys come forward to be recognized for earning the Science and Technology Branch Award?

CALL THE NAMES OF THE BOYS RECEIVING THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY BRANCH AWARD.

The search for knowledge will never end. Your desire to learn more, to learn new things, or even re-learn things you already know will encompass your entire life. This is like the rings of the tree - they are ever increasing and expanding. As you travel along your path you will add new rings. These rings will form the basis of who you are. Trees create rings at different stages of their lives and no two trees have the same number or the same space between their rings. Do not let others deter you from learning all you can about the world around you. The world is God's creation just as you are, and he wishes for you to discover it and marvel in his work.

Hand each Trailman the Science and Technology Branch pin.

Please join me in congratulating these young men on their accomplishment.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES BRANCH

Would all of the following boys come forward to be recognized for earning the Outdoor Activities Branch Award?

CALL THE NAMES OF THE BOYS RECEIVING THE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES BRANCH AWARD.

Have you ever taken a long look at the branches of a tree? They vary in length, weight, and color. Some grow straight while others split. Some have many leaves while others are bare. The same is true for outdoor activities. There are many outdoor activities that you can pursue and none are exactly the same. No two people look at the same activity the same way or perform an activity the same way. How you feel about any one activity helps to show how different and unique you are to your friends. By completing the required leaves in this Branch, you are awarded the Outdoor Activities Branch pin for your Patrol level. Whether you have a few branches or many, these activities make up who you are and you should wave your branches proudly for all to see.

Hand each Trailman the Outdoor Activities Branch Award pin.

Please join me in congratulating these young men on their accomplishment.

PIONEERING SKILLS

Would all of the following boys come forward to be recognized for earning the Pioneering Skills Branch Award?

CALL THE NAMES OF THE BOYS RECEIVING THE PIONEERING SKILLS BRANCH AWARD.

The bark of the tree provides protection from wind and rain. Your pioneering skills will help you in much the same way. They will give you the tools to succeed in rough times. The bark expands and covers every inch of the tree, just as your skills will grow and aid you in every situation you face. Pliable yet strong, constant yet can grow back, the bark symbolizes your abilities to adjust to your surroundings and protect yourself when problems arise. You have completed all the necessary tasks in this branch and are awarded the Pioneering Skills Award pin. Keep your bark strong.

Hand each Trailman the Pioneering Skills Branch Award pin.

Please join me in congratulating these young men on their accomplishment.

VALUES

Would all of the following boys come forward to be recognized for earning the Values Branch Award?

CALL THE NAMES OF THE BOYS RECEIVING THE VALUES BRANCH AWARD.

How does sunlight affect the tree? What happens to a tree without sunlight? Your values serve as the sunlight to who you are. Just as the tree growing in the direction of the light, your character will grow in the direction of your values. These values are based in your connection to God and without them your character will wither, just as a tree withers without sunlight. Your faith and values cannot be touched, or seen, or smelled but we know that it is alive within you. Sunlight cannot be contained or controlled. By

completing the required leaves on the values branch you are here by awarded the Values Branch pin. Remember, your faith will shine as a beacon to everyone around you.

Hand each Trailman the Values Branch Award pin.

Please join me in congratulating these young men on their accomplishment.

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GUIDING TRAILMEN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

God has specifically crafted every person with a unique personality, behaviors, and needs. Sometimes, a boy can exhibit behaviors or needs that present a challenge in a social group setting, such as Troop and Patrol meetings. Most likely it will not be long into your service before you encounter a Trailman with a special need. The purpose of this section is to highlight Trail Life USA's benefits and provide direction to guide all boys, regardless of need.

The two main benefits Trail Life USA offers its boys and leaders are structure and consistency, both of which are vital for boys with special needs. Some of the most common special needs you can expect will be boys with ADD/ADHD, mild behavioral difficulties, and, possibly, boys on the autistic spectrum. Trail Life USA has been meticulously and purposefully structured to provide all boys with the foundation they need to become godly men.

Structure and consistency are fundamental for any program involving children. Following Trail Life USA's program prescribed in the Leader's Guide will provide boys with these necessary components. Each Standard Patrol Meeting is organized into the **6 F's: Focus, Fingers, Fun, Family, Forest Badge, and Faith**. Following the 6 F's will ensure the predictability of each meeting, alleviating the need for the boys to guess what will happen next and eliminating down time in the meeting that could be filled with unprompted physical play.

Consistency of the program is also a critical component for young boys. It is recommended that the Patrol and Troop maintain a predictable, consistent meeting schedule. Also, rotating a small number of dedicated Trail Guides will ensure consistency for the boys and allow for flexibility among the serving adults to substitute for each other as needed. On meetings when a guest speaker visits, allow the regular Trail Guide to open the meeting as normal and discuss what changes the boys can expect for the remainder of the meeting.

Unwanted behavior can be diminished or eliminated when clear expectations are initially stated and reviewed throughout the course of the year. At the start of each year, it is advisable for the Troopmaster and Trail Guides to briefly discuss desired behaviors, such as respecting others, using appropriate language, keeping hands to self and walking inside the building (which can be connected to stewardship of their charter organization). However, more explicit discussions may be needed for boys with behavioral difficulties. In such cases, the Trail Guides, using two-deep leadership, should not hesitate to instruct the boy aside from the large group and discuss the inappropriate behaviors with the parents/guardians.

Behavior problems can also be eliminated by expecting and responding to behaviors consistently during each meeting. For example, if a Trail Guide allows the boys to play rough during the Fun activity one week but then strictly enforces the “no rough play rule” another week, an inconsistent message is sent to the boys. This may result in a boy with special needs having to guess what may or may not be allowed at the current meeting. This could create anxiety and undesired behaviors.

Finally, when planning for the upcoming meeting, anticipate times during the meeting that difficult behavior could occur. Preface that activity with clear expectations. For example, if the Meeting Option calls for a Fun activity that requires a lot of physical touch, it would be wise to preface the game with a short (2 minute) discussion regarding appropriate touch and respecting others. Make a positive statement such as, “I know we will not have any problems will we? (while shaking your head)” Allow the boys to respond (which they should automatically say, “no” shaking their heads with yours) and then state something like, “If someone does get too rough or out of hand, he will be asked to sit out of the game for a few minutes. If he makes good choices with his behavior then he will be invited back with the group.” The most critical part to follow is that if a boy does need a break from the group, enforce it, and allow him to rejoin the group as you promised.

In closing, this guide is not intended to be all encompassing but a good start to provide a basic understanding and instruction in working with boys with special needs. When the Troop and Patrols are set up on the foundation of a solid structure and consistency, you will be well on your way to providing a Troop where all boys can begin their journey to the Freedom Award.

The following are among the resources available for more information on specific needs:

ADHD: <http://kidshealth.org/parent/medical/learning/adhd.html#>

Autism (Autistic Spectrum Disorder)

http://kidshealth.org/parent/medical/learning/pervasive_develop_disorders.html#cat142

Emotional/Behavioral Difficulties: <http://nichcy.org/teaching-students-with-e-d>

<http://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/teaching-strategies/5-tips-for-handling-ebd-kids-emotional-behavior-disorder-in-an-inclusive-classroom/>

How to handle specific undesired behaviors (such as a boy who continually disrupts the meeting):

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/five-persistent-behavior-problems-and-how-handle-them-grades-6%2C%968> (this resource targets middle school grades, but recommendations are applicable to younger boys.)

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/25-sure-fire-strategies-handling-difficult-students>

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FORMS

The forms included within this section are provided for your convenience.



TRAIL LIFE USA

Trail Guide Weekly Message Sample Template

Date of Meeting

Monthly Theme and Program Emphases

Main Focus of the Lesson

Leaves Earned by the Trailmen (listed by Trailman name and leaf quantity)

Bible verse reference or spiritual theme to be conveyed

Family Activity (What should be done at home with the Trailman? Homework?)

Ranger/Trail Guide Reminders for the next meeting.

- Date of the next meeting
- Location of the next meeting
- Resources to bring to the next meeting
- Special duties or responsibilities to be assigned to Trailmen or families

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Spiritual Development Team:

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Creator of Fireguard and Woodsman

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