

# Pack 214 New Parent Orientation

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## **WELCOME TO PACK 214!**

Pack 214 is a very large and active Pack. Our Pack is blessed with very knowledgeable and caring leaders that are well trained. This document is a quick overview designed to answer many questions that you may have about the different aspects of our Pack.

## **MEETING**

Pack 214 meets at Matthews United Methodist Church located at 810 S. Trade St. in Matthews, NC in class rooms on the second floor. Den meetings usually begin at 6:30 pm and last about an hour. Den meetings usually consist of 6-8 boys that work on achievements or crafts associated with their rank that are planned out in advanced by the den leader. Once a month, one of the three den meetings will be substituted by a field trip that will fulfill the requirements for rank advancement that will also be planned out in advance by the den leader. On the third Tuesday of each month there is normally a Pack meeting that starts at 7:00pm and lasts about an hour. A Pack meeting is attended by all dens in the Pack. After a flag ceremony and Pack announcements, usually each den contributes to the meeting by performing a song, skit, or a skill. Pack meetings are also where we have special Pack ceremonies such as our Arrow of Light Ceremony or our Blue and Gold Banquet. Pack competitions like our pinewood derby or rain gutter regatta are also held at Pack meetings.

Parents are required to attend all meetings with their son during their first grade year. As the boys grow older and advance in rank, parents are encouraged to continue helping but not at every meeting.

## **UNIFORM**

Pack 214 uses the belt up rule for its Class A uniform that includes a Scout belt, shirt, hat, neckerchief, and slide. These items can be purchased from The Scout Shop located at 1410 E. 7<sup>th</sup> St. Charlotte, NC (near downtown) wp# (704) 333-5471 or the Scout Store located at 2121 Westinghouse Blvd. Charlotte, NC wp# (704) 583-2127. When purchasing a new uniform, simply tell the sales clerk which pack and den you are in and they will help you with all of the necessary patches for the uniform. Remember to ask for

the quality unit patch. Uniforms for Tiger, Wolf, and Bear, and Webelos I are the same but are accessorized differently so buy uniforms a little big as your son will be growing and you don't want to buy uniforms every year. Belt up uniforms at the Scout Shop costs just under \$85 for Tigers, Wolves, Bears, and Webelos I and just under \$105 for Webelos II. Webelos I change their shirt at the Blue and Gold (Cub Scout colors) Banquet in February when they are in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Pants costs \$35 or \$50 depending on the style and socks are \$6 per pair. Because of the increase in cost, we (and many other packs) chose the belt up uniform for our required uniform.

Patches can be attached with glue or by sewing. Sewing the patches is the preferred method of attaching patches because the uniforms will have to endure being worn by your son for several years as well as being washed many times. If sewing is not one of your skill sets, there is a local business that will attach all patches to a new uniform for about \$10. The business is Matthews Alteration-Cleaners and they are located at 2217 Matthews Township Parkway, Matthews, NC, 28105 wp# (704) 847-0236.

## **ACTIVITIES**

Pack 214 participates in the Matthews Alive Parade every year and plans on attending the Veterans Day parade this year in November. This past summer we also started marching in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade in Indian Trail. Pack 214 participates in an annual food drive, a collection of gifts for soldiers overseas, and popcorn sales that help reduce the costs of our supertrip and summer day/webelos resident camp. We also have Pack competitions where the boys race cars (that they build) at Pinewood Derby and boats (that they build) at the Rain Gutter Regatta. We schedule several camp outs during the year where we have campfire activities. At camp outs the boys help make their own meals and get to roast marshmallows over open campfires. Camp outs almost always have fishing as an activity and the boys are encouraged to play games and sports. Some camp outs are family events where entire families are invited to camp. Some camp outs are more intimate and just include the cub scout and one of his parents. We decorate cookies at our (Christmas Party) December Pack meeting. We also run a booth (service project) at Matthews Alive and participate in a Sunday morning trash cleanup at Matthews Alive (conservation project). This year we have started a new conservation project marking storm water drains with labels to let people know that everything that goes down a storm drain gets deposited into a creek. Our dens go on a field trip once a month that can vary from a trip to a local police or fire station to a trip to a place like the botanical garden or the Raptor Center. Field trips are helpful in getting the boys through their list of requirements for each of their levels of rank advancement.

We also work on awards like Leave No Trace, Conservation, and National Den Award. Each of these awards involves many steps that are accomplished over several weeks and teaches the boys many lessons that are focused at the same point. Most of the ability of a den to accomplish these awards comes from planning from the den leader or leaders and is helped by den leaders mentoring new den leaders at a rank. This interaction is helpful for the leaders to have an agenda that keeps the boys moving, but is helpful to the boys because they stay active!

## RANK and ADVANCEMENT

Every boy starts by earning his Bobcat Badge no matter what age they join Cub Scouts. The Bobcat Badge is earned once and consists of 8 points that the boys will use as a foundation for their Cub Scout experience. The requirements for Bobcat are usually able to be mastered in a single meeting. After completing the Bobcat rank the boys work next on their age appropriate rank. The standard uniform for Tigers, Wolves, and Bears are the same but differ in different colored accessories.



Tigers are first graders and their uniforms are highlighted by an orange hat, neckerchief, and slide.



Wolves are second graders and their uniforms are highlighted by a red and yellow hat, neckerchief, and slide.



Bears are third graders and their uniforms are highlighted by a light blue hat, neckerchief, and slide.



Weblo Scouts are 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders and their uniforms are green and khaki like Boy Scout uniforms.



Cub Scouts at all levels work on rank advancement at den activities as well as at home with their Akela (Akela is the Cub Scout term for leader). An Akela can be a parent at home, a teacher at school, or a den leader at a den meeting. As achievements are completed, a parent marks off and dates accomplishments. The den leader records these milestones at den meetings so that the progress of each boy can be tracked. Tiger, Wolf, and Bear Scouts earn beads as they advance. After earning their rank, Wolf and Bear Scouts can earn arrow point patches for their uniform for completing tasks in their handbooks.

Weblo Scouts or 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders work on earning twenty achievements and earning a pin for their uniform for each achievement completed. Boys that earn all twenty pins will be awarded the “Super Achiever Award” in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade at the Blue and Gold Banquet. Many of the Weblo’s from Pack 214 also earn the Arrow of Light which is the highest award in Cub Scouts and the only patch that a boy can wear on his Boy Scout uniform.

Pack 214 uses Den Chiefs in their Weblo program. Den Chiefs are Boy Scouts that help run Weblo meetings and help teach the boys skills. The Den Chief program is specifically designed to help transition Weblo’s into Boy Scouts. Weblo’s crossover to boy scouts in a special ceremony in February.

## **COST**

Annual dues for Pack 214 is \$65 and this includes membership into Cub Scouts, a subscription to the magazine “Boys Life”, two t-shirts for first time scouts, which represent our Class B uniform, 3 belt loop or pins, rank advancement patches, beads, and tickets to a Bobcats Game on Scout Night.

Uniform for Tigers, Wolves, and Bears is just under \$85.

Uniform for Webelos is just under \$105.

Scout pants are \$35 or \$50 depending on the style of pants you prefer and socks are \$6. These last two are NOT required.

Supertrip is an optional camping trip for all of the boys in the Pack that travels to different locations by bus usually in March and costs between \$85-\$125. Every three years our supertrip travels to the Yorktown, an anchored Aircraft Carrier in Charleston, SC. The boys can tour the Aircraft Carrier and actually get to sleep on the ship in crew bunk beds stacked from floor to ceiling.

Summer Day Camp. The leaders at Pack 214 highly recommend that boys attend Summer Day Camp as a Tiger, Wolf, and Bear Scout. Summer Day Camp is held at Belk Scout Camp in Midland, NC very near Brief Rd and Hwy 601 during the first week after school lets out for the summer. The cost for Summer Day Camp is \$125 but the boys can reduce this cost by the sale of popcorn and camp cards. At camp the boys get to shoot archery and BB guns, use a 40' tall climbing wall, swim in an almost Olympic sized swimming pool, paddle canoes and row boats in the lake, go fishing, and participate in sports and games. Boys get exposed to everything fun about Cub Scouts all rolled up into one fantastic week.

Webelos Resident Camp. The leaders for Pack 214 highly recommend that Webelos attend Resident Camp. At Webelos Resident Camp, boys get to work on the achievements necessary to earn their Arrow of Light and learn skills that will prepare them for their entry into Boy Scouts. The cost of camp is \$125 and can be offset by selling popcorn or camp cards.

Friends of Scouting. Friends of Scouting is a program that collects donations for Scouting specifically in Mecklenburg County. We collect for Friends of Scouting at our Blue and Gold Pack Meeting in February. This program helps fund camp operations and Scouting in Mecklenburg County. All families are asked to contribute as their budget allows.

Hidden Costs. Pack 214 goes camping and going camping involves stuff. Stuff includes things like a tent, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, flashlight/head lamp, camp stove, camp lantern, tarp, rope, mess kit, utensils, cook set, cook utensils, tin foil, matches, trash bags, a cooler, etc... DO NOT GO CRAZY AND PURCHASE ALL OF THESE THINGS!!! Start by borrowing a tent and sleeping bags for you and your son if you do not own these things and go camping with us. Before the camping trip, get together with the other parents in your den and after you decide on a menu, divide the necessary things like camp stove, cooler, cooking gear, and camp lantern between the adults in your den. When you get to camp, take a tour through all of the other camp sites and ask questions about gear from different den leaders. There will be a variety of camping gear both necessary and unnecessary as well as variations to the theme of camping. By doing this, you can make sure that you use your money wisely when investing in camping gear.

## **TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS**

There are many training opportunities at Pack 214. There is Saturday training at CPCC's Levine Campus for Leader Specific Training and Youth Protection.

Scouting Success Seminar (cost \$20), held in the fall, offers YOUTH PROTECTION, DEN LEADER TRAINING, along with a variety of other classes. Classes usually start at 8am and end at 4pm and include lunch. The pack reimburses parents for this training, so save your receipt

Pow Wow (cost \$20), also held in the fall, offers YOUTH PROTECTION, BALOO, along with a variety of other classes designed to help den leaders and adults help the boys with skills for den activities and camping. BALOO or Basic Adult Leadership Outdoor Orientation is training that teaches camping skills as well as important BSA rules and policies. A BALOO trained adult is necessary for boys to be able to go camping. The more adults that take this training, the easier it is for your den to have the freedom to go camping. Again, the Pack reimburses parents for this training.

There are also extensive opportunities for training online at [www.mcctraining.org](http://www.mcctraining.org)

Training is a commitment to Scouting and the more training that you take; the more you will have to offer to, and share with, your son and his den.

## **PACK WEBSITE**

The Pack 214 website is [www.pack214.com](http://www.pack214.com). The pack website is a wealth of information and has a Pack Calendar that will keep you up to date on the upcoming Pack activities. A quick way to see our pack in action is to visit our website and go to the "Gallery" tab and look at our boys having fun!

## **VLOUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

There are several ways to volunteer to make a positive impact on your sons Scouting experience and they are Pack Committee and District Roundtable.

The Pack Committee meets on the second Monday of each month on the second floor of Matthews United Methodist Church at 6 pm (wear street clothes not your uniform). Committee meetings are where the group of adults that do all of the planning and organizing for the Pack assemble to discuss upcoming Pack events. This is an excellent opportunity to get to know how the Pack is organized and run as well as a great way to start to help with projects and become more involved. It also exposes you to parents outside of your den which becomes a valuable resource for information when you have questions about den activities or upcoming events.

District Roundtable meets on the second Thursday of each month at Morning Star Lutheran Church located at 12509 Idlewild Rd, Matthews, NC, 28105 at 7:30 pm. Wear your uniform to this meeting. District Roundtable meetings start with District announcements that prepares leaders for upcoming events. They also present awards and make presentations before splitting up into Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts breakout sessions. Next, the meeting offers tools and activities to keep the boys active and energized during den meetings. This is an excellent opportunity to meet parents from other Packs that we wouldn't usually be exposed to during our usual Pack activities to share ideas and to gather information to help in our pack and den activities.

Committee meetings and Roundtable meetings help expand the number of connections that you can make during scouting that will result in an overall positive experience. Pack 214 strongly urges parents to attend these meetings as it will enhance your Scout experience.

Whew! Well, that is Pack 214! If you have any questions you can contact me at the next meeting or e-mail me @ [corvid12@aol.com](mailto:corvid12@aol.com).

Thanks,

David Crowe

Cub Master Pack 214