Welcome to Trail Life Troop IL-13:20

Proverbs 13:20, “ He who walks with wise men will be wise…”

Walk Worthy!

Membership Standards

Membership in Trail Life USA has youth, young adult, and adult classifications. Each classification requires that the qualifications relevant to the particular classification and prescribed in these Standards are met.

- Youth membership is open to all boys at least 5 years old and less than 18 years of age.
- Young adult membership is open to men and women who are at least 18 years old yet have not reached their 21st birthday.
- Adult membership is open to men and women 21 years of age or older.

We welcome youth members who aspire to live in accordance with the values expressed in the program’s Oath and Motto and whose parents or guardians seek a faith-based outdoor adventure program that places an emphasis on character development, leadership, and moral purity. The program is undergirded by biblical values and unapologetically reflects a Christian worldview. Our goal is to enable families to place their boys in a program that endeavors to instruct and instill moral integrity and consistency in its members. All members must honor their God-given identity revealed in their biological sex by presenting as and living consistent with that sex. We affirm that sexual immorality—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. All members, therefore, should refrain from engaging in or promoting sexual immorality or any other behavior that would become a distraction to the mission of the program. Young adult and adult members must subscribe to and abide by the Trail Life USA Statement of Christian Faith and Values as well as the Oath and Motto.

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.

Vision

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

Mission

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

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;…”

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

Schedule

We meet Monday evening from 6:30PM-8:00PM, except on federal holidays. Since our program is boy-led, they will plan additional events/activities for the year. All official Troop events will be communicated through TrailLifeConnect.com. Traillife is a participation-based program, we encourage regular attendance.

Meeting Nights

We begin our program at 6:30PM with a flag ceremony, prayer, and announcements. Please arrive a couple minutes early to sign trailmen in to allow them time to prepare for the opening ceremony. Boys are expected to wear their uniform (see UNIFORM info below). Parents are expected to stay during this portion of the meeting to remain informed. Afterward, we will break into Patrols (see PATROLS below) to work on a group game/activity. Boys should be prepared to go outside (be sure to bring rainwear, gloves/hats, etc) for most of the fall/spring. We would like to teach skills in an outdoor setting. Before the night ends, we will come back together for a closing prayer. Meetings end at 8:00PM. We ask that a parent or designated adult pick up their Trailman promptly. Please note and verbally inform leaders if someone else will be picking up your Trailman. Woodland Trails need to be signed out, however both Navigators and Adventures may be released without a parent or guardian's signature.

Patrols

Ages 5-10 (K-5th Grade) - Woodland Trails, which is divided into 3 sub-patrols:

Ages 5-6 (K and 1st Grade) – Foxes: Our troop mandates that all boys in the Fox Patrol have an adult with them at all meetings as well as other events. It is possible for a parent of a Fox working in American Heritage Girls to count as their adult.

Ages 7-8 (2nd and 3rd Grade) – Hawks

Ages 9-10 (4th and 5th Grade) – Mountain Lions

Ages 11-13 (6th, 7th and 8th Grade) – Navigators

Ages 14-17 (9th-12th Grade) – Adventurers

Guests

We love to have new boys and their parents come and visit a troop meeting to experience Trail Life USA.. A boy is welcome to come and observe for two meetings. If he returns, he will need to be a registered Trail Life member before being allowed to participate. This is due to insurance coverage that is needed by the Charter Organization as well as Trail Life USA.

Registration Forms

Visit FindATroop.com to connect with the troop closest to you. You can connect with our troop through that web site or by emailing TrailLife@EdgemontBibleChurch.org with your name and cell number or email. A leader will send an invite by text or email with additional information on how to join Trail Life Connect and register your son. The Health and Medical Form that must be on file for each boy and leader will also be sent to you and must be brought to the next meeting. This form will include any emergency contact information, medical concerns/needs and basic information. There is a ~$43 fee paid online, directly to Trail Life to register with the organization. There are also annual dues and supplies that are purchased through the troop locally (See “Uniforms and Handbooks” below)

Uniforms and Handbooks

Our troop wears the “Troop” uniform: a Trail Life USA Troop uniform shirt and jeans or khakis. Uniforms should be worn to all meetings, ceremonies and other events as specified. There are additional Travel and Trail uniforms, but the Troop doesn't require them.

Each boy should have a handbook for tracking their awards and levels. Boys in the Woodlands group use the same book for the entire time in that program, and families with multiple woodland trails age boys only need one book. Boys in the Nav/Adv group use the same book for their entire time in the program.

All supplies can be ordered together with the troop at the beginning of the year. Our troop places an order for uniforms and books in early October so parents can save on the shipping fees. Order forms will be available at meetings or by emailing TrailLife@EdgemontBibleChurch.org. Payment for this order will need to be made before October 1. At any point during the year, items can be purchased individually at https://www.traillifeusa.com/shop.

Fundraising

Our goal is to keep local dues low so the troop typically participates in two fundraisers during our program year: one in the fall and trivia night in the winter season. Since we don’t divide up funds into separate accounts, we strongly encourage that each family participate in these fundraisers. We would love to find a parent who would be willing to be the fundraising chair and help find ideas to get funds for our troop. Fundraising money goes towards campouts, hikes, supplies, equipment, events and more!

Inclement Weather

If the Fairview Heights’ Schools have canceled classes or activities due to inclement weather, our troop will not be meeting. Trail life leadership will send cancellation notices by email and post an announcement on our Facebook group as soon as we know that activities

will be canceled. Also, the board reserves the right to cancel a meeting by noon if too many leaders are unable to make the meeting.

IL-13:20 Board Members –
Trail Life USA is a volunteer-driven organization. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact TrailLife@EdgemontBibleChurch.org
Pastor Doug White – Senior Ministry Leader
Randy Hemingway – Chaplain
David Berczek – Troop Chairman
Jeffrey Pitts – Troop Ministry Liaison
Joleen Neel – Treasurer
Terry Mueth – Troopmaster
Tom Pitts – Health & Safety Chair
Dale DJ Morin – Onboarding Chair

Troop Email - TrailLife@EdgemontBibleChurch.org

Joining Checklist

❏ Explore the www.traillifeusa.com website for information about TLUSA: TLUSA Who We Are, Core Values, Program Materials, General FAQs. Feel free to send any questions to TrailLife@EdgemontBibleChurch.org.
❏ Ready to join? Go to FindATroop.com or email TrailLife@EdgemontBibleChurch.org with the parent's First and Last names and email address or cell phone number.
❏ You will receive an email or text with a registration link. Register as a parent, then register your son on Trail Life Connect.
❏ Pay National Dues to TLUSA (done online)
❏ Fill out Health/Medical Form (required) and Immunization Exemption Form if desired.
❏ Pay Local Dues/Order Cost. Checks are preferred and payable to "Trail Life Troop IL-13:20"
❏ Purchase Uniform and Handbook through TLUSA Store with the troop or individually
❏ Join our Facebook group for regular information (https://www.facebook.com/groups/753400671734280/)
❏ Complete "New Adults" Learning Trail at TrailLifeConnect.com/training/basecamp **(scan QR code)**
❏ We will schedule Advancement Conferences with Navigators / Adventurers and their parents for a more detailed look at their path in Trail Life
❏ Pray about how you can come alongside TLUSA IL-13:20 and use your talents that God gifted to you
❏ Register as a registered adult (required for a parent of children in the Fox patrol)



Troop Handbook

FAQ:
EBC Guest Wifi Password: ebcguestwifi

You Protection Essentials (It's as Simple as 1-2-3)

- **No 1-on-One**: The no one-on-one rule is in place for youth protection so no boy is ever alone with an adult. This is for both the protection of the boy and the adult.
- **2-Deep Leadership**: The two-deep rule is in place for safety so there is always a minimum of two Registered Adults in proximity to provide backup and oversight. This includes any digital communication.
- **Buddy System of 3**: The buddy system of three is suggested to keep youth safe from other abusive youth when out of sight of adult leadership. Buddies must be of the same program level.

Adult Overnight Policy

- **No unregistered adults on overnight events**: While parents or visitors may attend daytime events without full registration (as observers or short-term helpers), any adult attending or supervising an overnight event—such as a hike-in, camp-out, lock-in, etc.—must be a fully registered Trail Life USA adult member. This includes completing a nationwide criminal background check and the required Child Safety Youth Protection Training (CSYPT, renewed at least every two years). This policy supports our commitment to protecting Trailmen and maintaining Trail Life USA as the premier national character development organization for young men. Registration is a simple process initiated by the Troop Ministry Liaison (TML).
- **Females on All Troop Campouts:** Foxes (ages 5–6) require close parental supervision and at least one parent/guardian in attendance at all outings, including campouts—often sharing a tent with their child for safety and comfort. For this reason, mothers are welcome to join full troop campouts when accompanying their Fox. We can provide a dedicated tent for any mother who wishes to camp with her Fox.
- **No females on Hike-ins**: Trail Life USA emphasizes male-centered leadership and mentorship for Navigators (ages 11–13) and Adventurers (ages 14–17), reserving "direct contact" roles for men in these levels. While women can serve in many supportive roles—including on the Troop Committee and as Woodlands Trail guides—females are not permitted on male-only backcountry or overnight hike-ins. This preserves the boys-only focus on bonding, adventure, leadership development, and godly male role modeling, consistent with national program guidance.

Transportation Policy

Rides to and from Trail Life events are **not part of Trail Life activities**, since this would break the two-deep leadership rule. The **Youth Health and Medical form** includes a section titled *"Adults Authorized to Take Youth To and From Events."* If you request a Trail Life Registered Adult (or any adult) to transport your Trailman, that adult must be listed on your Trailman's form.

We recommend that when a Registered Adult is asked to provide transportation, they:

1. Verify the adult is listed as authorized on the youth's form.
2. Receive the request in writing (email or text message) directly from the Trailman's **guardian**, including pickup and drop-off location and time.

Guardians may need to update the form from time to time to authorize additional adults.

Troop Communication Policy

To protect both families and leaders, our troop follows a **two-deep communication policy**.

- When leaders need to communicate with trailmen OR adults of the opposite sex (for example, arranging rides, event details, or troop needs), all emails, texts, or messages will always include at least **two Registered Leaders**.
- Whenever possible, troop-wide or group messages will be used instead of one-to-one communication.
- If a phone call takes place, a short follow-up message with another leader copied will be sent to keep everything transparent.

This policy helps ensure that all communication remains **above board, professional, and accountable**, while protecting both leaders and families.

Electronics Policy

Meetings
Trailmen are to turn off or silence cellphones, smart devices, and other electronics during regular Troop meetings, and not use these devices for the duration of the meeting.

Trailmen failing to follow this rule may be required to turn-in their devices upon arrival at a meeting.

Campouts
Trailmen are not permitted to have cellphones, smart devices, and other electronics at troop campouts. These items must be left in the locked vehicles, turned into leaders, or left at home.

Exceptions

Ordinary digital watches not connectable to the internet; traditional digital cameras (which must be in cars or another designated location overnight); and items specifically listed on the official packing list for the campout are allowed at meetings and campouts.

We welcome proposals for unusual electronic items that might be helpful for a particular meeting or campout. A Trailman should communicate his idea to troop leadership prior to the publication of the campout packet for consideration.

We also recognize the utility of cellphones for Adventurers during meetings for planning and communication. Adventurers must ask their leaders before utilizing these devices and they must be turned in at night on campouts.

Other Activities
The policy for meetings applies to other events and activities unless the adult leaders responsible for the event announce otherwise.

Enforcement & Cautions
Troop leadership may confiscate devices not allowed by this policy. Dishonesty in combination with unauthorized possession or use may lead to further disciplinary action by the troop.

The outdoors isn’t a friendly place for electronic gear. Even when a device is allowed, you should consider carefully whether it is a good idea to have it with you. Bringing items to outdoor events is at one’s own risk.

Discipline

1. Inappropriate behavior is defined as behavior unbecoming a Trailman (i.e., behavior not in accordance with the Trail Life Oath and Motto) during meetings or activities.
2. We strive to follow the Matthew 18 model of addressing sin and conflict. As such, anyone (Trailmen, Parents, Troop Leaders) who observes an issue at a meetings/activities needs to address it with the person promptly and privately.
3. If the issue is not able to be resolved then, a patrol leader should be brought in to adjudicate. The next level is the Troopmaster. The final level is the Committee.
4. Illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco use are strictly prohibited and use of such during any Troop activity by either a boy or adult, will result in immediate expulsion from that activity and may result in further action by the Troop Committee.
5. For continuous inappropriate behavior at meetings or activities, a Trailman may be put on probation. A probationary period can last up to one year. During that time, the presence of a parent or other adult who accepts responsibility for the Trailman during any Troop activity may be required.
6. When inappropriate behavior occurs at a Troop activity, parents may be called to pick up the Trailman immediately.
7. An adult leader who witnesses serious inappropriate behavior by a Trailman will provide a written report to the Trailman and his parents, the appropriate Unit Leader, and the Troop Committee. Upon receiving this report, the appropriate Unit Leader, with the approval of the Troop Committee and the advice of the Patrol Leaders' Council for Navigators and Adventurers, will counsel the Trailman and determine an appropriate action. This can include limiting the trailman's participation in troop activities until the trailman's parents meet with the Troop Committee to resolve the issue.
8. The First Officer's role is not to impose discipline, but to lead the Navigators and Adventurers. Although he does have the authority to settle minor disputes as he sees fit (with Troopmaster approval), the Troopmaster, Trailmaster, Advisor, or Trailguide in charge will deal with major disputes or disturbances.
9. The Troop seeks to encourage Christian unity, but in the event a problem does arise, the situation should first be discussed with the appropriate Unit Leader. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the chain of authority for problem resolution is as follows:

    Appropriate Unit Leader, Troopmaster, Troop Committee, Chartering Officers (5 Core Committee members)