Bay Ridge Troop 13, Scouts, BSA

Meets at Bay Ridge Catholic Academy, Monday nights 7:00 pm
Contact John McCluskey, jtunnel@aol.com
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or https://beascout.scouting.org

Looking for Adventure?

Looking to Get Outside?

Scouts BSA Boys Troop 13 is one of the oldest and largest Scout troops in Brooklyn. We are housed at Bay Ridge Catholic Academy on 83rd Street and 4th Avenue. Founded in 1948, we maintain a strong and active outdoor program including camping, hiking, backpacking, summer camp, rafting, and more. Youth gain confidence through hands-on activities, learning numerous outdoor skills. The outdoor focus is a means to an end which is confidence, character, and citizenship building. Skills training in our meetings gets practiced in our outdoor program where scouts learn that they can overcome challenges and solve real-life problems. With that success comes confidence that carries over into other areas of life.

Standing on kayaks in the Hudson River.

The troop meets weekly on Monday nights at 7:00 pm (except for holidays), October through May with summer camp in July. The weekly meetings provide the core instruction and training for the program. Scouts learn about first aid skills, food safety and cooking, navigation and orienteering skills tying together map reading learned in the school classroom with practical field use. Each month we have one weekend activity which may be a camping trip where skills learned in a classroom setting are put into practice. Successful execution of those skills, be it fire starting, cooking a meal, hiking a trail, result in both confidence gains as well as the scout being recognized by rank advancement. Not every month is a camping trip. Sometimes it may be a a day trip that includes a hike, visit to an educational site, or a service project.

Scouts at Operation Zero in the Adirondacks.

Scouts work through a series of “ranks” which indicate their skill level starting at “Scout” and culminating at Eagle. In the process, scouts not only learn outdoor skills, but must perform community service. That rank of Eagle requires that a scout organize and manage a significant

community service project. Troop 13 projects have included service at the Bay Ridge Center for Older Adults, the Park Slope Women's Shelter, various parks enhancement projects, and more.

While the weekly meetings provide the basic instruction and training for scouting skills, some thing can only be done outdoors. Each month, we do some outdoor activity. This can be a camping trip, a hike, a visit to a historic, cultural, or scientific site, or a service project. There are also occasional special events open to more experienced scouts such as multiday backpacking trips, canoe and kayaking trips. All trips are overseen by experienced, trained adults but the scouts learn to manage themselves. Some trips are organzied as family trips with all family members welcome to come. We have done whitewater rafting on the Lehigh River, and have visited Gettysburg, PA multiple times.

Scouts preparing dinner at a campsite while hiking the Appalachian Trail.

Rappelling during summer camp at Ten Mile River Scout Camp.

There are over 130 merit badges a scout can earn. Each merit badge has specific requirements that include both knowledge and activity to apply that knowledge. Most scouts earn 5 or more merit badges each year after their firstyear, but the merit badge program is self-paced so scouts can earn more or less depending on their motivation and interest. The wide range of topics includes something for everyone. Scouts start at age 11 or after having completed the 5th grade and can remain until age 18. Younger boys can join Cub Scout Pack 313 which also meets at St. Anselm's, but on Tuesday nights.

In addition to the merit badges, scouts can also work on STEM subjects and earn the NOVA and SuperNOVA awards. These awards recognize and encourage the work and knowledge scouts gain when researching science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects.

If you think you might be interested, come visit us and see us in action. Participate in a couple of meetings, and possibly join us for a trip. We think you'll want to come back.

Yours in Scouting,

John McCluskey, PhD
Troop 13 Scoutmaster