

CAMP OLJATO 2005: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Transportation logistics

1. How do the Scouts get to and from Oljato?

Scouts attending week #1 must be **at the Scout House at Lucie Stern Center by 6:30 a.m. on Sunday, July 14th** to complete the check in process prior to departure at 7:00 a.m. There will be a chartered bus to take Scouts to Oljato on July 17th, returning Saturday, July 30th. On the return trip, the adult leaders will call one parent from each patrol with an estimated arrival time in Palo Alto. This information should be passed on to other parents in the same patrol using a phone tree set up in advance. In addition, Margaret Yarak will have the arrival information and she will send email updates to the Troop's parent distribution list.

2. What are the transportation arrangements if my son is not traveling either to or from camp with Troop-provided transportation?

Troop 57 provides a bus for those scouts going to Oljato on Sunday, July 17th and returning to Palo Alto on Saturday, July 30th. Transportation home for those scouts attending Week 1 only is provided on Sunday, July 24th after the weekend hike. Transportation to camp for Week 2 only scouts is provided on Friday, July 22nd in cars driven by Assistant Scoutmasters going to Oljato for the weekend hikes.

Parents must arrange transportation for all scouts who need other transportation arrangements. For example, those scouts who attend **only week #1** and who need to return to Palo Alto on Saturday July 20th. Similarly, parents must arrange transportation for those Week 2 scouts who can not go to Oljato on Friday, July 22nd. They will need to be driven to Oljato on Sunday July 24th by parents.

In all cases, driving logistics, departure times and other arrangements must be communicated to Margaret so the Troop is fully informed and so she can coordinate overall transportation.

“What do I take to Camp”?

3. Is there a pack list for Camp Oljato?

Yes, there is an official Camp Oljato pack list for Troop #57 that **must be used by each Scout attending camp**. This list, available on the Troop #57 web site, is a detailed list of the items that the Scouts should take to camp as well as those additional items needed for the weekend hike.

Please put Scout's name and “Troop #57” on everything using a permanent marker.

4. How much will it cost to outfit a Scout for camp?

You should not have to spend a fortune in order to be equipped for Oljato. If you do not have some of the high-cost items (backpack, sleeping bag, etc.) you may be able to borrow them from others in the troop or rent at REI or other similar places. If you have questions on the pack list, please call Bob Cory or Dave Olson.

5. Will there be a pack check prior to Oljato?

We will not conduct a full pack check for Scouts attending Oljato. Each Scout (with parental supervision) is responsible to ensure that the pack list is followed carefully. Parents, please check to make sure that your scout can carry both his fully loaded duffel, as well as his fully-loaded backpack. If either one is too heavy for him, you are welcome to call either Dave Olson or Bob Cory for ideas about how to lighten the load. Backpack weight should not exceed 30-35% of a boy's weight.

6. Are uniforms required at Oljato?

Yes, you must have a full "Class A" uniform as described on the pack list. Scouts must wear the full "class A" uniform on arriving at the Scout House at 6:30 a.m. on July 14th. In addition, each Scout must get signed off by a Scout leader (either SPL Jeremy Jacob or JASM Max Keeler) before changing into shorts and the gray troop #57 T-shirt for the bus ride to Oljato. **If you don't have the uniform, you don't get on the bus.** Scouts who lose a neckerchief or slide at camp can purchase replacement neckerchiefs and slides from the Oljato Scoutmasters, at "market prices." Once again, put your name on all your clothing, including your uniform, with a permanent marker.

Scout Behavior in Camp

7. What standards of behavior will apply at Oljato?

All Troop #57 Scouts attending camp are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Scout Oath and Law. There will be several hundred Scouts and leaders at Camp Oljato and the watchwords are: helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, and clean. Scouts and their parents have also signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which parents have agreed to come to camp and pick up any Scout who ignores camp policies. All Scouts in leadership positions at Oljato are expected to demonstrate the best in leadership skills at camp.

8. What responsibilities do Scouts have in Camp?

Scouts spend most of their time in camp earning merit badges and just having fun. However, they also have several daily responsibilities that enhance the functioning of the camp. Each camp site (Troop 57's site is Cheyenne Camp) has a duty roster, with a set of responsibilities that include cleaning up the camp, refilling fire-fighting "coffee cans" filled with dirt and water and topping up the water pump, making sure all food is safely stowed on the bear-proof "Family Porch," and other responsibilities. Cheyenne Camp is

evaluated daily by BSA Commissioners on a variety of health and safety criteria, and the boys are responsible for carrying out these tasks. Troops who consistently achieve a high score on these Commissioner ratings are awarded “Honor Troop” status at the closing campfire on Friday night; Troop 57 invariably is an Honor Troop and scouts are expected to maintain that level of performance.

The Troop also has Latrine duty several times during the week, and crews will assigned on the first day in camp to clean a latrine at the designated times. Scouts are not only expected to participate in this “all scout” effort, but also to support their scout leaders as they assign responsibilities for this popular task.

Scouts also volunteer for a Community Service project, which is a prerequisite for their earning their Tribe of Oljato “rockers” awarded at the Fall Court of Honor. These projects typically occur during scout free time in the mid- to late afternoon, after merit badge classes are over.

Of course, all Scouts are expected to uphold scout standards of behavior, respect their fellow scouts and support their leaders.

Money

9. How much money should each Scout take to Oljato?

The guidelines for cash at camp are as follows:

- \$20.00 for lunch on the trip to and from Oljato -- \$10.00 each way.
- \$25.00 to a maximum of \$30.00 per week of camp.
- Bottom line: a typical Scout attending the two week session should take \$70 to \$80 to camp. One week Scouts should take \$35 to \$45.

Other than the Trading Post, the only needs for cash at camp are for certain merit badge classes (shotgun, motor boating, archery and a few others), merit badge books, Camp Oljato T-shirts, etc. Taking too much money to camp will only result in unnecessarily high consumption of candy bars, ice cream and other similar items from the Trading Post.

10. How is cash managed at Camp Oljato?

All cash for Scouts is kept in a locked container maintained by the troop and Scouts can withdraw from their account two or three times per day. A troop #57 adult leader acts as treasurer. Scouts are strongly discouraged from carrying substantial cash or leaving it in their tents. (There will be several hundred Scouts at camp and while all of them promise to “do their best”, not all of them are trustworthy.)

Communications

11. How can Scout families communicate during camp?

The preferred form of communication with Scouts is through the postal service. Allow several days for delivery to remote Lakeshore, California. The address is as follows:

Name of Scout
Troop # 57
Camp Oljato
Boy Scouts of America
P.O. Box 217
Lakeshore, CA 93634

Unless there is an emergency, all incoming calls will be treated as messages and Camp staff will pass the information to a Scoutmaster. For incoming emergency calls, the number is 1 559 893 3393

12. How can parents find out what is going on at Oljato?

Every few days, an adult leader for Troop #57 will talk with Margaret Yarak to give an update on the troop and any interesting camp news. This news will be passed on through email to Troop #57 families with sons at camp.

13. Can parents send food to their sons at Camp?

We prefer that the only food sent to camp be brought up by the adult leaders for the overnight or week #2. This will be coordinated through Margaret Yarak. Please keep in mind that the Scouts are well fed at camp and have access to the Trading Post where snacks are available. If you wish, you may send your scout a “care package” with goodies, but please be aware that all such “care packages” received at camp are shared among the entire troop.

Bears and Parents

14. Are there bears at Oljato?

Yes, Oljato is in the high Sierras and we are in the bears’ natural habitat. There are no food, food wrappers, trash, etc. allowed in camp after dark. In addition, if you are driving to Oljato and plan on leaving a car in the parking lot at Lakeshore, it is **essential** that you remove all food, crumbs, wrappers, coolers (even if empty), etc. from the car. Each year several vehicles are vandalized by bears and, on one occasion, a single fast food wrapper was the cause.

15. Can parents visit their sons at Oljato?

Due to recent changes in the format of our two week camp program, there is not a good time to visit your son in Camp. Scouts are of course busy during the week with merit badges, community service hours and other activities. The “middle weekend” is now devoted to our high country hikes, so the boys are not in Camp.

In addition, the camp has strict rules governing visitors including parents. If you are considering a visit to Oljato, please talk with Margaret Yarak or Bob Cory. Note that you

need to take a boat across Huntington Lake to get from Lakeshore to Camp Oljato. The boat schedule runs on "Oljato Time" which includes a large random element.

16. What if parents need to pick up a Scout from Oljato?

Any parent picking up a Scout at camp must take a boat from Lakeshore to Camp Oljato -- Scouts may not be turned over to parents at Lakeshore. In addition, a Scout will not be released to a parent without the signoff of both the Camp Director and Troop Scoutmaster. Typically, this "signoff" takes place at a joint meeting of all parties which will need to be arranged in advance through Margaret Yarak.

Health and Safety

17. How are medications handled at Oljato?

Parents whose sons will be taking prescription medications to camp need to notify Margaret Yarak by e-mail before departure for camp, along with the medicine's name and dosage schedule. With the exception of inhalers or epinephrine pens, all prescription medicines will be deposited with the camp medic/nurse. Although Scoutmasters will have a master list of which Scouts need to visit the medic, Scouts should learn to visit the medic on their own. Parents will need to provide prescription medications in original containers and package them together in a large, "Ziploc" plastic bag labeled with the Scout's name. Please make sure that the Scout has sufficient medication for the entire period of his Oljato trip. The zip lock bags will be turned in to Margaret Yarak upon bus check-in. She will label them and give them to the Scoutmaster, who then turns them over to the medic upon arrival in camp.

Scouts needing inhalers or epinephrine pens must carry them with them at all times, using a fanny pack or a day pack. Scoutmaster will know which Scouts have these for emergency use.

On the overnight, Scouts will take their prescription medications just prior to departure and immediately upon return, unless a stricter dosage schedule is called for. This will be at the judgment of the camp medic.

18. Why can't Scouts use Walkmans, CD players, hand held games and similar devices at Oljato?

We do not allow electronic devices at Oljato including the ones identified above. This is due both to Oljato camp policy as well as a desire to retain a genuine, high-Sierra outdoor experience. We ask that, in keeping with this spirit, such devices not be brought even for use on the bus.

LEADERSHIP AT OLJATO

19. Who are the leaders for Oljato this summer?

The table below summarizes Scout and Adult leadership for this summer. Please note: hike leaders are destinations are not yet decided.

Week #1 Leaders	Overnight Leaders	Week #2 Leaders
Jeremy Jacob, SPL	Dave Olson and Thomas Brenner – Nellie Lake	Miguel Fittoria, SPL
Miguel Fittoria, ASPL	Eric and Nate Keller – George Lake	Eben LaPier, JASM
Max Keeler, JASM	Mark Christopherson and Nick Tran– Idaho Lake	Bob Cory., Scoutmaster
Dave Olson, Scoutmaster		Jon Yee, ASM
Mark Christopherson, ASM	Joe Carter & Jim Kleckner – Upper Twin Lake	Jim Fitzgerald, ASM
Tad Doxsee, ASM		Chuck Enderby, Troop Commissioner will join the Troop as a Scoutmaster for the last part of Week 2

20. Will we use the patrol system at Oljato?

Yes, a modified Patrol system using patrols #1 through #6 will be in place at Oljato with recently elected Patrol leaders or APL's as Scout leaders. New Troop #57 Scouts will be assigned to patrols prior to camp. Troop #57 is led by the Scout leaders rather than adult leaders and this policy naturally pertains at Camp Oljato.

MERIT BADGES AND ADVANCEMENT

21. What is Skills Patrol?

Skills Patrol is designed for Scouts who have not reached the rank of First Class Scout and focuses on the skills necessary for the first three ranks of Scouting: Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class. Although not every requirement can be completed at camp, many will be covered in Skills Patrol. In terms of the Troop 57 program, Oljato Skills Patrol is for Incoming Scouts who have recently joined the Troop.

22. Can those in Skills Patrol earn merit badges at Oljato?

Yes, because the Skills Patrol program typically takes place during the two morning merit badge classes. Scouts in this program can earn at least one merit badge during the afternoon merit badge session, and some choose to earn a second badge during their late

afternoon “free time.” Thus, as long as it does not interfere with Skills Patrol, Scouts can earn one or two merit badges while at Oljato.

23. How should a Scout select merit badges to earn at Oljato?

For those who have achieved First Class rank, merit badge classes will be the mainstay of each day at camp. In selecting merit badges to earn at camp, Scouts should consider:

- What merit badges do I need for advancement? What Eagle-required merit badges can I earn at Oljato?
- Are there some merit badges that sound like fun or are of particular interest to me?
- What merit badges are easier to earn at Oljato than in Palo Alto?
- How difficult are the merit badges I am considering? (Ask older Scouts.)

The list of merit badges offered at camp is circulated to all scouts and parents during the week before camp, and Scouts are encouraged to discuss their choices with other Scouts as well as with their parents before going to Camp. Additional discussions with older Scouts on the bus to Oljato should help younger Scouts decide which badges to earn before they arrive in Camp.

24. Do any of the merit badges have prerequisites?

Yes, they are on the list in the accompanying email. If a Scout is interested in a merit badge with prerequisites, he should purchase the Merit Badge Book at the Palo Alto Trading Post and complete those prerequisites this week. Scoutmasters on the bus to Oljato next Sunday can sign his Blue Card, and they can also sign off his Prerequisites upon the Scout’s demonstration of knowledge and/or completion.

25. Do I need to get blue cards signed before leaving for Oljato?

No. We will have plenty of blue cards on the bus and will have you complete them at that time.

26. How many merit badges should a Scout earn at Oljato?

Typically, Scouts who are first class and higher should plan on earning at least 3 merit badges each week of camp – 6 merit badges for those attending the two week session. It may be possible for you to earn more. All Troop #57 Scouts are expected to be active in either Skills Patrol or in merit badge classes throughout the day.

27. What if the merit badge class that I want is full or otherwise not available?

Camp is going to be full this summer and, as a result, Troop #57 Scouts may not get into all their desired merit badge classes. (This is good practice for college, guys.) We have been told that, if a merit badge class is oversubscribed, positions will be allocated based

on age to help enable older Scouts get the required badges they need. We encourage Scouts to be flexible and have back-up plans for merit badges.

28. What is a “partial” merit badge?

A “partial” is a merit badge where one or more of the requirements have not been completed. In some cases, Scouts may earn partials at Oljato and will have a few requirements to compete subsequent to camp. As a general matter, we encourage Scouts to avoid partials since the troop’s experience is that many of them never get completed. However, there are no reasons partials can not be turned into merit badges upon return to Palo Alto, and we now have in place a systematic follow-up with Scouts to remind them to find Counselors to complete their partial merit badges.

29. What is Tribe of Oljato?

Tribe of Oljato is an award earned by Scouts and adult leaders who complete certain requirements which include service hours at Oljato. If you look at the uniforms of those who have been to Oljato in the past, you will likely see a Tribe of Oljato patch with a rank on it: brave, warrior, medicine man, etc. Our goal is to see that all members of Troop #57 qualify for Tribe of Oljato. This involves earning a number of merit badges and performing a number of community service hours (which can include camp improvement projects). In Troop 57 this is a form of “Advancement” because of Oljato’s importance to our Program and the fact that TOO patches symbolize both the hours spent on service to Camp Oljato as well as experiencing a great Scout environment.

OVERNIGHT

30. What is the weekend overnight hike?

Scouts attending the full two week session will attend an overnight outing departing on the morning of Saturday July 23rd returning to camp mid-day on Sunday, July 24th. This year we will have four “Crews” on separate outings, as detailed in an accompanying email to all parents. All Scouts this year will hike into the Kaiser Wilderness and experience the great Sierra High Country.

Scouts participating on each hike will be determined during the first week at camp. Food for the overnight will be provided by Troop 57, and is brought to camp by Scoutmasters on the Thursday and Friday before the hike. **Note that it is essential that Scouts participating on the overnight have the items included in the “Weekend Hike” pack list.** No Scouts will be allowed to remain at Camp Oljato during the overnight.

31. How do Scouts decide which hike they want to be on?

Each Scout will choose which hike he would like to attend after looking at maps and talking with other Scouts in camp. The number of hikers on each hike is limited due to forest service regulations to 15 per Crew. While we will work to balance the hikes with the interests of each Scout, not all Scouts may get their first choice of hike.