Sample email to parents with summer camp details (send ~1-2 weeks out from start of camp) – edit as needed

Hello Troop 333 Parents,

Boy Scout Summer Camp is drawing closer!  We're a little over a week and a half away, and I want to provide you with another update / information message.  This message is not intended to be all-inclusive, nor will it be the final update / informational message before camp.....  I apologize in advance for the length of this e-mail message, but I want you to have as many details as possible.  Here we go:

**Arrival at Camp:** We arrive at camp on SUNDAY, 21 JUNE.  Please arrive between 11:30 AM and 12:00 Noon.  You can enter the Manatoc property either from the Main Gate off Truxell Road, or from the Service Entrance off Truxell Road, which is about 1/4 to 1/2 mile *before* the Main Gate entrance.  Either way, you'll park in the large gravel parking lot adjacent to the Manatoc Dining Hall.  The farther away from the dining hall you can park, the closer you'll be to our campsite.  Upon arrival, your son should carry (or wheel if you bring a 2-wheeler / dolly) his gear to our campsite, which is Buckeye.  If you're not familiar with the location of the Buckeye Campsite, we have a map of Manatoc on our Troop Website (www.troop333.info).  Once in camp, your son and his tent-mate can select a tent and set up his gear.  **YOUR SON SHOULD WEAR HIS FULL CLASS A UNIFORM TO CAMP FOR ARRIVAL.**

**Medical Forms**: We're down to just 2 or 3 medical forms that are either incomplete or need attention in some way.  **If you are working directly with (name of person coordinating med forms) and/or have received one or more e-mail messages and/or phone calls regarding your son's medical form, it's IMPERATIVE that you respond to him immediately and resolve any and all problems / open issues with your son's medical form.  Please DO NOT delay working with James to resolve this!  Remember, without a fully and properly completed medical form, your son CANNOT attend Summer Camp!**

**Medications**: This is really critical, so please read this information extra carefully......  If your son is on ANY medications, either prescription or over-the-counter (OTC), and either "as needed" or according to a recurring / regular schedule, the following rules apply:

* ALL medications \*MUST BE\* in their original bottle / box / packaging, clearly showing what it is.  We cannot allow any "loose pills" in a bag or pill container (for example).
* For all prescription medications, the original pharmacy pill bottle must clearly show your son's name, as well as the dosage and frequency instructions.
* NO MEDICATIONS can be expired.  Be sure everything is 'current'.
* ALL medications - Rx and/or OTC - MUST be in ONE Ziplock bag, and your son's name clearly written with Sharpie marker on the bag.
* When you deliver your son to camp on Sunday, please know / be clear on the dosage / frequency of any medications, Rx or OTC.  The reason is because when you arrive at our Buckeye Campsite, part of your check in process with me will include filling out a yellow Medication Card (I have a supply of them that were issued to me by Camp Manatoc last week) that tracks all of your son's medications, the dosage, frequency, etc.
* A quick note on Seasonal Allergy Medications - Many of us, myself included, suffer from seasonal allergies.  Like many people, I take an OTC allergy medication (such as Allegra, Zyrtec, or Claritin) daily during peak season, and as needed the rest of the year.  *If your son takes regularly or may need seasonal allergy pills, you must send some to camp with your son.  Further, you must note such pills on his yellow card when you check in.  I am NOT authorized to administer an allergy pill to your son either from my personal supply or if you haven't noted it on his yellow card and medical form!!!*If your son is lucky enough to not suffer from seasonal allergies, you can happily ignore this bullet point......

**Tent Camping in the Buckeye Campsite:** The tents in our campsite (and across Camp Manatoc) are the lightweight canvas 2-man tents, with door flaps on either end.  They are floorless, and are each erected on a wooden platform.  Each Scout must tent with another Scout, for a total of TWO boys per tent.  Your son can (and probably should) determine his tent-mate prior to arriving at camp (if he hasn't done so already!).  *It's highly recommended that each Scout bring a COT to sleep on, for being in a sleeping bag on the wood platform floor is far less desirable....*

**Swim Test:** On Day One, all Scouts will need to complete the Manatoc Swim Test at the pool, unless your son chooses to be a "non-swimmer" for the week - meaning he's limited to the shallowest end of the pool for any open swim time we may have.  NOTE that any and all water-related Merit Badges REQUIRE completion of the Swim Test!  There are 3 classifications resulting from the Swim Test: Non-Swimmer; Beginner; and Swimmer.  All Scouts are encouraged to do the Swim Test, regardless of the outcome.  We will have at least one open swim night that is lots of fun.

**Gear to Bring:** Instead of me attempting to give you a comprehensive list here, I'm simply going to refer you to the Suggested Gear List on our Troop Website at www.troop333.info.  While that list is not necessarily all-inclusive, it's reasonably accurate and helpful.  IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS on what (or what not) to bring, simply call or e-mail me.  As for what to bring your gear in, I recommend either a large plastic footlocker (many models have built-in wheels or rollers, along with carry handles) or large Rubbermaid plastic tub.....  Both are readily available at stores like Walmart, Target, etc.  This type of container keeps each Scout's gear clean, dry, bug-free, and at least somewhat organized......

IMPORTANT: It's imperative that your son's NAME be on EVERYTHING!  I assure you that all gear and all clothing look the same, and I'd really like your son to go home with everything he comes with.....  As such, label everything!

Here are some gear items that are commonly forgotten.  Again, not all-inclusive:

* Camping chair
* Swimsuit and Towel (and swim goggles if needed / desired)
* Boy Scout Handbook
* Proper footwear (remember, no open toed shoes {i.e. flip flops} anywhere other than in the shower or pool deck area)
* Extra pair of footwear in the event the first pair gets wet
* Toothbrush / toothpaste
* Soap / shampoo for shower
* Money for the Trading Post (more details below)
* Water bottle or canteen
* Sunscreen
* Baseball cap or some kind of hat - the sun can get intense!
* Rain gear
* Watch (Scouts need to manage their own time with the Merit Badge classes, etc.)
* Headlamp or flashlight
* Day pack or cinch sack to carry one's stuff around the camp each day
* Pillow / blanket
* Medicines (Rx or OTC) - all in *original labeled bottles.*
* All Merit Badge PRE-WORK, requirements sheets, worksheets, required supplies, etc.

Even though it's June and the days are likely to be warm, the nights can certainly get cool if not cold.....  As such, pack accordingly.  A jacket or hoodie is never a bad idea......

**Electronic Devices**: Troop 333's policy, as well as Camp Manatoc's policy, is that the boys do NOT bring any personal electronic devices with them to camp.  This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, handheld video games, iPods or MP3 players, DVD players, etc.  The reasons are twofold.  First, we obviously don't want any such devices lost, stolen, or broken.  Second, the Scouts are at camp to focus on earning Merit Badges, participating in Scout activities, and simply being a Boy Scout for the week.  Electronic devices tend to be a major distraction.  So the request is simple: Please leave all such devices at home.

What the boys CAN bring - and often do - to satisfy their need for periodic entertainment are things like a deck of cards, puzzle books, etc.

Thanks for your understanding and for helping with compliance on this front!

**Troop 333 "Class B" T-Shirts**: As you know, there are two "flavors" of the Boy Scout Uniform.  The first, and most obvious, is the Official Class A Uniform, which is the Official Boy Scout Khaki Shirt, Scout Shorts, and Scout Belt.  The Official Scout hat and neckerchief are optional in our Troop.  Given that the Class A uniform is an inherent part of Summer Camp, your son should of course bring his full Class A uniform with him.  In fact, he should wear it to camp on Sunday.

The other uniform type is the "Class B" uniform, which is most typically a Troop T-shirt.  Our Troop has Class B shirts that we made up a year or two ago.  I realize that most (perhaps all) of the new(er) Scouts don't yet have one or more Troop 333 Class B shirts......  They are nice to wear at Summer Camp during times when you don't have your Class A uniform on.

We have a supply of 333 Class B shirts, and I will have them with me at camp.  I believe we sell them for $13.00 each (I'm in the process of validating this price).  If your son does not yet have one, you can purchase one on Sunday for him to have for the week.  Simply bring cash (though we will not have change, so please bring exact cash) or your checkbook with you.

**Money at Camp/Scout Accounts:** Your son should bring some MONEY for his week at camp.  As noted earlier, Manatoc operates a Trading Post, which is essentially a general store selling Scout gear, Manatoc-branded shirts and related stuff, candy, pop, slushies, ice cream bars, etc.  While it's your call as to how much money to give your son, I would not recommend that he bring any significant amount of money.....  In my humble opinion, $20 is probably more than sufficient.  It should go without saying that junk food purchases should be minimized due to the zero nutritional value and potential for sickness if over-indulged.  SMALL BILLS work best, and any money your son brings should be somehow secured among his gear (i.e in a wallet or ziplock bag).

Finally, please NOTE: Scouts who currently have money in their TROOP 333 SCOUT ACCOUNT may use that money for spending money at Manatoc during Summer Camp week.  If this pertains to you, simply let our Treasurer, (name), know that you'd like to do so and she will validate your Scout Account balance and accommodate your request on the arrival day at camp.  (name) can be reached at (treasurer@troop333.info).

**Group Picture:** On the day of arrival (Sunday, 6/21, our Troop will have a group picture taken by the Camp Staff).  The cost of the picture, should you choose to buy one, is $7.00.  They make a nice memento.  Your son should have $7.00 in exact CASH on hand for the picture on Day One.

**Who Are The Scouts Attending Summer Camp This Year?**The following boys are registered and attending Manatoc Summer Camp:

**Contact Info:** I will personally be out there the entire time.  For emergencies or important contact, my cell phone number is ….  Call or text is fine.  I also get my personal e-mails on (email address). The Emergency Only phone number for the Camp Office at Manatoc is (330) 657-2592.

**Adult Chaperoning:** For those who have stepped forward since my last plea for adult chaperone help, thank you!  Your assistance is greatly appreciated!  However, there are still a number of open volunteer slots that MUST be filled.  Remember, we MUST have a total of FOUR (4) adult chaperone volunteers for each shift.  As you know, there are 3 shifts per day: Morning, Afternoon, and Evening/Overnight.  ***Please, please, please - if you haven't done so already - volunteer for one or more shifts!  Your help is needed!***Thank you.

**Family Night:** Family Night at Manatoc Summer Camp is Wednesday, June 24.  Mom, Dad, brother, sister, grandpa, grandma, etc. are all invited!  Here's how it works: The Manatoc Dining Hall does NOT serve dinner that evening.  Instead, dinner for your son is whatever you / your family decides to bring for your Scout / you / your family to eat.  Some families cook meals at home and bring them out, others get take out from a restaurant or fast food joint, some bring pizza, etc.  It's whatever you want to bring.  Bear in mind that you will need to bring not just your dinner, but all plates, cutlery, cups, drinks, napkins, etc.  ALSO, be sure to bring camp chairs to sit in for dinner!  The general schedule for Family Night is this: Arrive at Manatoc at 5:30 PM.  Bring your food, supplies, chairs, etc. to our Buckeye Campsite.  Then, you can walk over to the Parade Field to witness daily Retreat.  Following Retreat, we'll all head back to our campsite for an evening of food, fun, and socializing.  Our Scouts will likely have a few skits to perform for your entertainment.....  You should be done and typically on your way out of camp around 8:00 or 8:30 PM.......

**Merit Badge Prerequisites / Pre-Work:** As noted in prior e-mail messages, many (if not most) Merit Badges require the completion of some prerequisites / pre-work at home BEFORE the Scout arrives at Summer Camp.  For the Merit Badges your son has chosen, be sure to review the requirements CAREFULLY.  Be sure to do (and don't forget to bring with you to camp!) all required pre-work!  Also, don't forget to bring any required supplies or materials (if applicable) for a given Merit Badge with you to camp.  On a related note, some (buy by no means all) such supplies / materials are available for sale in the Trading Post, though I would certainly not rely on that source......

As indicated before, my favorite site for Merit Badge Requirements, as well as printable Merit Badge WORKSHEETS (which are very handy to have!), is www.meritbadge.org.

I will have with me any and all needed Merit Badge Blue Cards for each Scout.

Finally, for your FYI, attached is the "final" draft of the Master Merit Badge Selection for the Troop 333 Scouts.  Strictly FYI.  If you see any inaccuracies, be sure to let me know immediately!

**Pick-Up Time and Procedure on Last Day of Camp (Saturday, 27 June):** I don't yet know the precise time we'll be done on Saturday, 27 June, but you can expect it to be around 10:00 or 10:30 AM......  THAT MORNING, I will send out a Troop-wide e-mail letting you know what time to show up to pick up your son.  Be sure to monitor your e-mails that morning for such an update.  For pick-up, you'll enter Manatoc from either gate (Main or Service) and park in the same gravel parking lot that you did for drop-off.  Head to our Buckeye Campsite to retrieve your son and all of his gear.

**Pre-Camp Campsite "Set-Up" Day:** Each summer, the day before we arrive at Summer Camp, a group of Troop 333 Leaders and Adults go out to Manatoc and to our Buckeye Campsite to do a couple of things.  First and foremost, we set up our large Troop "dining fly" (affectionately known as "HQ").  Additionally, we ensure that all of the tents in the campsite are set up properly and securely.  Further, we bring out a gas powered leaf blower to clean out / blow out each tent.  This results in everything being as clean and bug-free as possible for our arrival the next day.  *This Pre-Camp Campsite Set-Up Day will take place on Saturday, 20 June at time.  ANY VOLUNTEER HELP we can get is MOST APPRECIATED.  The entire process typically take 60 to 90 minutes max to complete.*

That's all I can think of for now......  Again, if you have ANY questions, comments, or concerns, don't hesitate to call or e-mail.  Any questions / responses that can benefit all I'll put forth as a group message.

Again, thanks in advance for your volunteer time and for helping your son prepare for Summer Camp!  I'm looking forward to a great week at camp!

YIS,