



## COMMUNICATION MERIT BADGE AT RIVERBEND PARK

### Important general Merit Badge information for parents:

- Be sure that you are familiar with the requirements for the merit badge your scout has selected. Some badges may take considerable time and planning to complete and may not be appropriate for younger scouts. Blue cards must be signed by your Troop Leader prior to attending the merit badge class. Park staff will not sign off on any blue cards missing this signature.
- Most merit badges are not designed to be completed in a single session with an instructor, so it is not always possible to walk away with a completed and signed blue card at the end of a program. Every badge requires some independent work by your scout.
- FCPA-Riverbend Park will provide staff, meeting BSA Youth Protection guidelines for male and female scouts, and supervision ratios. Parent/guardian **MUST** sign-in, and sign-out each participant(s) from the class. If you provided your own transportation, you may sign-in and sign-out yourself from the class. There is no fee if adults wish to stay during the class.

### Below is the recommended pre-work to be completed before the program:

Please record the responses to these questions in your merit badge workbook or on a separate piece of paper **AND BRING THIS PREWORK TO CLASS.** Please attach photo evidence or any supplementary data sheets if the question requires you to provide this information. Merit badge worksheets may be downloaded from [Communication Merit Badge \(usscouts.org\)](http://usscouts.org) and brought to class. These worksheets help scouts organize their homework and classwork.

3. Write a five-minute speech. Give it at a meeting of a group. ***It must be a speech written within the last 6 months and you must be prepared to give the speech to everyone at this Merit Badge class!*** Provide a copy for your counselor to review.\*

4. Interview a person you know, like, or respect because of his or her position, talent, career, or life experiences. Listen actively and take notes. Use this information to prepare a formal introduction as if they were a guest speaker at an event. Highlight their experiences, education, and important qualities.

5. Attend a public meeting (city council, school board, debate) approved by your counselor where several points of view are given on a single issue. Practice active listening skills and take careful notes of each point of view. Communication Merit Badge at Riverbend Park Prepare an objective report that includes all points of view that were expressed.\*\*

7. Do ONE of the following:

- a. Write to the editor of a magazine or your local newspaper to express your opinion or share information on any subject you choose. Send your message by fax, email or regular mail. Provide a copy for your counselor to review.
- b. Create a web page or blog of special interest to you (for instance, your troop or crew, a hobby, or a sport). Include at least three articles or entries and one photograph or illustration, and one link to some other Web page or blog that would be helpful to someone who visits the Web page or blog you have created. It is not necessary to post your Web page or blog to the Internet, but if you decide to do so, you must first share it with your parents and counselor and get their permission. Provide a copy for your counselor to review.
- c. Use desktop publishing to produce a newsletter, brochure, flier or other printed material for your scout troop, class at school, or other group. Include at least one article and one photograph or illustration. Provide a copy for your counselor to review.

8. Plan a troop or crew court of honor, campfire program, or an interfaith worship service. Have the patrol leaders' council approve it, then write the script and prepare the program. Serve as master of ceremonies. Provide a copy of the script and other evidence, such as photos or an outline, for your counselor to review. ***You must have your troop leader or scoutmaster email confirmation of completion of your Master of Ceremony duty to the program counselor before their blue card can be signed off for this requirement.***

\*Several other merit badges have requirements that can be counted for number 3. If your Scout has already completed the Weather merit badge (Requirement 10a), the Reptiles and Amphibians merit badge (Requirement 9c) or the Public Speaking merit badge (Requirements 1-4) they may use those requirements for number 3.

\*\*If your Scout has already attended a meeting for the Citizenship in the Community merit badge (Requirement 3) they may use that requirement for number 5.

**What to bring to the program:**

- Your completed homework. It is OK if you cannot complete the homework before class. You can email completed homework at a later date for sign-off.
- Come prepared to discuss and present your homework. As we move from one topic to the next during class, scouts will be asked to present homework elements completed. It will be more important to prove that you have understood a requirement orally rather than just presenting written information.
- Your blue card signed off by your Troop Leader
- Wear weather appropriate clothing/outerwear. We will not go outdoors in heavy rain or thunderstorms but many of our badges include some outdoor element.
- You may wear your scout uniform but it is NOT required.
- Pencil, pen, or some sort of writing utensil.

- Download the merit badge worksheets from meritbadge.com and bring these worksheets to class with your prework written in them. We usually will not require the scouts to fill out every part of this workbook during the merit badge but they can use it to take notes while listening to the lecture.
- Flashlight, if the program is held after dusk.
- Bring a water and snack and a lunch if you think you may need it as many of these sessions are very long and run past normal lunch hours.

### **WHAT NOT TO BRING:**

Merit badges are a place for learning and require the same attention and respect as would be expected in a school setting. In order for your scout to be successful and stay on task, the following items should stay at home or in backpacks and will not be permitted during the program:

- Weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited and will be confiscated and may or may not be returned. Depending on the type of weapon, further disciplinary or legal action may be pursued. Exceptions include camping or fishing tools/knives as long as they stay concealed and are used appropriately.
- Vapes, E-cigarettes, & other nicotine products are illegal for anyone under 21 years of age to possess. They are strictly prohibited and will be confiscated and not returned.
- Handheld gaming systems such as a DS or a Switch are not permitted and will be confiscated and given back at the close of the program.
- Cell phones ARE PERMITTED for emergency use and/or contacting parents & guardians but if they become a distraction they may be confiscated.
- Toys, books, games, or anything deemed a distraction during the program will be confiscated and returned at the end. Exceptions include quiet and inconspicuous fidget toys. If your scout has accommodations that would require them to use fidget toys to focus please let us know before the program.
- Headphones/Air pods are not allowed but we understand that these devices can be helpful for some people with sensory processing disorders. Again, if your scout has accommodations that would require them to use headphones please let us know before the program.

### **Work completed after the program:**

During the program, the merit badge counselor will do a demonstration or explain the process for completing the final merit badge requirements. Your scout must provide evidence of completion in order to obtain blue card sign-off. Digital photographs of your scout doing the element and a picture of the completed requirement will be sufficient evidence, unless otherwise stated.

If your scout needs blue card sign-off after the class date, your merit badge counselor will let you know how to contact them with remaining requirements. Please call the park at 703-759-9018 to arrange a time to meet with a merit badge counselor or email your counselor directly.

Thank you and we look forward to working with your Scout!

**Casey Tinius**

Sr. Interpreter & Programs Director

Riverbend Park, FCPA

[8700 Potomac Hills Street](#)

[Great Falls, VA 22066](#)

(703)759-9018