

Cubmaster Advancement Newsletter

Issue 1, August 2003

As an inaugural topic for this periodic newsletter, I would like to address one of my favorite topics,

Planning

Now is the time to start your Pack's year off on the right foot and there are three key steps you can take that will get you there

1. Coordinate with and coach your Den Leaders on their advancement planning
2. Work with your Pack Committee on planning your Pack meetings around an advancement schedule.
3. Start dusting off and revitalizing your advancement ceremonies.

Den Advancement Planning

This is the most important element in delivering the Scouting promise. As Cubmaster, one of your jobs is to guide and support your Den Leaders. Each Den Leader brings something different to Scouting and has different strengths to offer the boys. This is a great opportunity for you to encourage them to bring out their best. Here is a quick checklist that you can use to work with your DLs:

- Review full rank requirements for the Den's level
- Start a rough outline of the activities and electives that the Den Leader can deliver in a fun and enriching manner. Brainstorm for creative ideas and program resources that the Pack, parents and community have to offer.
- Map this outline into a Den meeting calendar.
 1. Take into consideration that many of the outdoor activities should be planned for the Minnesota fall season.
 2. Plan an even distribution of physically active activities throughout the entire year.
 3. For Wolves and Bears, be sure to throw in some of the extra fun arrow point elective activities.
 4. Try to fit in at least one outing each month.
 5. The Scouts that attend day and residence camps will complete work on achievements. Encourage all boys to attend the camps and figure this into your advancement plans.
- Project which month a majority of the boys will have earned their new rank.
- Hold a parents' meeting to explain and promote parent participation in your program.

This should give the Den Leader a roadmap for the year. Make sure that the Den Leader understands that having **FUN** with the boys is more important than following this plan to the letter.

Pack Meeting Planning

At the beginning of each year, your Pack should be developing a meeting schedule and an outline for the activities at each Pack meeting. Recognizing advancement is the most important activity for the Pack meetings. Get involved in helping map out the schedule that emphasizes these advancement ceremonies.



Your Pack will have many traditions to carry on. Some important milestones in each year include:

- Blue and Gold celebration (Cub Scouting Birthday)
- Arrow of Light ceremony(ies)
- Boy Scout transition
- Tiger Cub graduation
- Pack graduation

Make sure that your Den Leaders understand any and all of this type of tradition that your Pack may have. Traditions can be altered and a healthy discussion should occur amongst your Pack Committee and the Den Leaders in planning this year's meeting calendar for advancement. Understanding your Den Leader's program plans will help you act as a facilitator.

Consider the logistics in presenting the ceremonies. For instance... Many Packs have elaborate Arrow of Light and Transition ceremonies for their Webelos IIs. Based upon the number of boys in your Webelos II Den(s), think through the logistics in doing a good set of ceremonies. Some Packs are able to combine Arrow of Light and Transition ceremonies in a single Pack meeting. Some larger Packs have chosen to split these ceremonies into separate months in order to keep the Pack meetings on a time-balanced schedule.

Great Ceremonies

The Cubmaster is the pack meeting's master of ceremonies. You play a vital role in recognizing the Scouts for their hard work in earning their rank advancement. Start giving some thought to the ceremonies you have in your Cubmaster toolkit. Are they all as special as you would like? No?

Some resources for ideas:

- BSA publication Ceremonies for Dens and Packs
- District Roundtable – share ideas with your fellow Cubmasters
- Internet Web Sites

<http://www.macscouter.com/Ceremony/>

<http://www.scoutingthenet.com/Resources/Ceremonies/>

<http://www.scoutxing.com/ceremonies/ceremonies.htm>

<http://my.dmci.net/~dmanchester/default.htm>

<http://wtsmith.com/rt/ceremonies.html>

Following good Scouting form, *Always be Prepared!*

In the next newsletter, I will share some more ideas for ceremonies and discuss some of the finer points of advancement.

- Chad Cooper