

# Monthly Program Advisor Duties

*“In Scouting, a boy is encouraged to educate himself instead of being instructed.”*

-Baden-Powell

# The Boy Scout Program Planning Process

In recent research, the Boy Scouts of America determined that inadequately planned and executed troop meetings were the number one cause for boys leaving Scouting.

The Troop Operations Plan introduced in 1989 addressed some of the issues dealing with "boring troop meetings."

- ☑ New Scouts should have opportunities to learn and practice basic Scout skills.
- ☑ Delivery of skills instruction should be segmented according to a Scout's knowledge and abilities.
- ☑ Programs should be developed to provide challenging experiences for those Scouts aged 13 and older.

## **The Challenge**

The challenge is for leaders and Scouts to implement these ingredients to create a successful troop program.

Good troop planning and execution depends on:

- A Scoutmaster who understands the process;
- Trained junior leaders who can both plan and successfully execute meetings;
- A sufficient workforce in the form of assistant Scoutmasters, troop committee members, and parents;
- And a group of knowledgeable and informed parents.

## **Steps to Success**

Some of the key steps to accomplish this:

- Set goals for the troop.
- Train junior leaders in the planning process. Then give them the responsibility and authority to plan and implement the troop program.
- Everyone support this "boy-planned" program.

# What is Planning

- “To form a scheme or method of doing, to have an intent or purpose”
- Planning simply means taking time to get ready for whatever it is you want to do
- Part of “Being Prepared”
- “Road Map to Success” – “Road Map to Fun”

# Why Plan

- Make sure you do all that you need and go where you want to – “Goal”
- Get more Scouts involved – more help for success – learning for others – share responsibility
- A well planned program
- Helps make sure you get where you want to go – “Goal”
- Makes meetings, campout, and other events easier and much more enjoyable
- Increases your confidence as a leader
- Increases the excitement of meetings, builds anticipation

## **Who Plans**

- Individual – patrols – patrol leader council
- Program patrol – not just the program patrol leader!
  - One of the most important responsibilities as a junior leader
- Adults (their activities – how they help scout) – planned and prepare for the JLT.
  - Adults not here to plan the troop activities – here to help (coach)

Business plans, military makes extensive use of plans – all good things are planned

## **Things to Plan (Monthly Programming)**

- Troop meetings
- Campouts
- Campfires –
- Games/Patrol Competitions
- Demonstrations
- Ceremonies
- Courts of honor

## **When to Plan**

- Before everything that is important
- Different degrees and detail for different things

## **What – When – Where – Who**

- Equipment – meals – who does what – fuel – location – transportation – water
- Use a check list
- Delegate – patrol can plan opening, games, etc – delegate – delegate – delegate
- Adult support (two deep)
- Safety – if you don't plan for it you plan for unsafe activity

## **Planning Resources**

Venture books – Scoutmaster handbook – Patrol leaders handbook – Junior leaders handbook – Scout handbook – Woods wisdom

Scoutmaster – Old Buffs – parents – experts – check lists – library

## **How to Plan**

- Plan to plan
- Start early – Don't rush (have another meeting)
- Make sure you understand and agree upon your goal or objective you wish to accomplish
- Get input, do your home work, talk to your patrol, before and after the AP & PLC meetings
- Start with the event (campout, scout show) and work backward
- Things to always include – Safety & Backup Plan  
– Games, Alternative last minute programs,  
Backup instructors

## **Publish the Plan**

Scribe makes sure every junior leader and adult leader (SM & ASM) have plan

Good idea to publish to troop – a good plan and program will encourage participation

## **Execute the Plan**

- A basic rule in scuba is “plan your dive and dive your plan”
- Plan can be changed – a plan is not the law
- A good plan without external surprises should be followed
- Good execution can overcome weaknesses (be prepared)
- A good plan is a great help to execution

## **Follow Up**

After the event – talk about it – how could the plan have been better – how could the execution have been better – lessons learned



# Planning Cycle

Patrol Leader Council (PLC) meets annually to set the Annual Plan (general schedule/program topics).

- PLC Meeting 3 months prior to the program month
  - The Program Patrol briefs the PLC as to its general plans for the months and seeks PLC approval or input.
- PLC Meeting 2 months prior to the program month
  - The Program Patrol informs the PLC of the arrangements that have been made for the campout and program (ie speakers, equipment).
- PLC Meeting 1 month prior to the program month
  - The Program Patrol assures the PLC that the campout site and program has been confirmed.
  - Advise patrols of food, type of fire, water, equipment & other requirements for meetings & campout.

## **Planning Cycle, Continued**

- Meeting before Money Monday
  - Permission slips handed out.
  - Patrols reminded to have menus planned and approved by PA.
  - Estimated participation and other requirements discussed with the Monthly Advisor.
- Money Monday
  - Collect permission slips and money (Patrol Scribes).
  - Scribe and SPL discuss last minute needs with the Monthly Advisor.
  - Food money to the patrol after the meeting.

# The Monthly Advisor's Role in Planning the Monthly Troop Program

(As Approved and Posted 12/18/01)

## Purpose/Assignment

- ☑ T1000 assigns a qualified ASM to assist the Program Patrol in planning, preparing, and executing the monthly program.
- ☑ This includes troop meetings, outings, and any other events.
- ☑ In addition, the duties of this position are designed to make sure that certain tasks that are required to support the troop get done.
- ☑ Further to remove these 'routine' burdens from the Scoutmaster.
  - The intent is to allow the Scoutmaster, in addition to the duties outlined in the SM handbook, to spend more time managing the whole organization rather than doing detailed work.

## **How Assigned**

The assignments for each year are done shortly after each annual planning meeting and are on the Troop Calendar.

ASM's will be assigned to months (or topics) they have experience and an interest in.

The Scoutmaster (SM) makes the assignments with concurrence of the assigned individual.

### ***IMPORTANT!***

The advisor must work closely with the Program Patrol Leader, the PLC, the Camping Coordinator, the Program Patrol PA (Patrol Advisor), other ASM's, and the SM.

# Duties and Responsibilities

## Advisor Duties

Give advice to the Program Patrol in sufficient time and nature as to allow them to meet the planning schedule.

Plans should encompass all needs of the troop. The nature of the advice will vary with the maturity of the patrol and what mode they are in at the time.

- Watch out for new Patrol Leaders – They Need More help!

As a minimum, attendance at the four PLC meetings leading up to that month is essential.

Teach the Program Patrol how to plan and how to follow up.

- Attend patrol meetings as needed.
- Make sure they confirm their plans and programs.

*We can not afford to let the program fail and we cannot do it for them - balance!*

## **Advisor Duties, Continued**

Check plans before the PLC meetings for sanity and BSA safety rules.

- See the “Guide to Safe Scouting”

Advising the Camping Coordinator and Committee/Troop Quartermaster of any needs for the program is the duty of the Program Patrol and PLC.

- To avoid the need for last minute miracles, the Monthly Advisor should forewarn the appropriate Troop Committee members that the Program Patrol or PLC member will be making contact and the purpose of the contact.

### **Make sure we have adult support and transportation for all outings.**

- Email the herd prior to Money Monday to get preliminary commitments. It will help you spot trouble early.
- Worth with the SM for the campout to determine rolling stock to be used for the outing (white trailer, blue trailer, etc.). *Be sure you have drivers and vehicles to pull these!*

## **Advisor Duties, Continued**

### **Confirm needs on Money Monday.**

- Determine number of Scouts attending and how many seats available and required.

Arrange for the Buffalo Patrol Grubmaster - you do not have to be it!

- Get a volunteer for Grubmaster if Old Buffs will cook alone for the outing.
- Grub Master should collect food money from adults attending (usually \$10 a head).

Work with the Merit Badge Coordinator to make sure there are councilors assigned for the merit badge(s) for that month.

Work closely with the SM keeping him informed as needed.

Get a stand in if needed!

*Don't do for a Scout  
that which he can do for himself.*

## **Guide for the Program Patrol**

- Follow the 3-month planning cycle. PLC must enforce and must review the plan.
- Break the troop into three skill levels (one could be the teachers)
- Explain the skill. Demonstrate the skill. Have them practice the skill and try to master the skill.
- Games must tie to the program and be patrol competitive.
- Start on time. Keep to the plan, stay on time.
- Try for at least one quest speaker per month.
- Teaching aids a must for all classes.
- No PowerPoint classes on a screen less than 6x6 feet.
- Hands-on activity (to demonstrate skill mastery). Don't just lecture (too boring). Get the Scouts up and moving.



## **Guide for the Program Patrol, Continued**

- The MA will provide a copy of the related Woods Wisdom pages to the Program Patrol well before the first PLC meeting of the 3-month cycle.
- Troop Meeting Plan/Time Line. Don't just let it happen. Campout Plan/Time Line. Don't just let it happen.
- Limit Troop meeting Patrol Corners to 10 minutes MAX. Must have a purpose for Patrol Corners, decided by the PLC and announced prior to patrol Corners. Begin and end with their patrol yell.
- The Service Patrol **MUST** be set up prior to the start of the meeting and **MUST** remain until all is back the way it was. The Service Patrol needs to set up campfires, take care of general needs, etc.

# Using the Troop Meeting Plan

The seven-part plan for troop meetings is an important guide, but use it flexibly.

The times noted in the plan are suggestions only and can vary to fit various situations.

For example, the troop may be getting ready for a campout. The usual amount of time set aside for patrol meetings might be expanded to allow Scouts time to complete their patrol camping preparations. A troop nearing the date of a district camporee may devote extra time to skills instruction so that everyone will be ready for activities involving the theme of the camporee, and the interpatrol activity can include an extended competition that also focuses on the key skills.

When the minutes allotted to one part of the troop meeting plan increase, consider shortening other portions of the plan. Every troop meeting should be interesting and useful, and it should begin and end on time.

## The Preopening

As Scouts begin to arrive for a troop meeting, a patrol leader or an older Scout assigned by the senior patrol leader should get them involved in a preopening game or project designed so that additional Scouts can join as they show up.

The preopening is often well-suited for the outdoors. Those in charge of the preopening activity should be ready to start about 15 minutes before the scheduled beginning of the meeting. Varying the activities from week to week will keep the preopening fresh.

## **The Opening (5 minutes)**

Call the meeting to order on time, instructing Scouts to line up in formation by patrol. The patrol responsible for the opening ceremony may conduct a flag ceremony and then lead the troop members in the Scout Oath and Law and the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Skills Instruction (15 to 20 minutes)**

This portion of the meeting is devoted to the mastery of knowledge that Scouts need to participate fully in an upcoming activity, or upon skills they must learn to complete advancement requirements.

The skills to be taught at each meeting will have been determined in advance by the patrol leaders' council. Often the skills will relate directly to the month's program plan for troop activities. Instruction should be hands-on learning rather than lecturing.

Those who may be effective in teaching skills are the troop guide, instructors, junior assistant Scoutmasters, assistant Scoutmasters, and members of the troop committee. Older Scouts and members of the Venture patrol also can be effective instructors, though at most meetings they will be involved in their own activities.

Whenever possible, troop skills instruction should be divided into three levels:

- Basic Scouting skills instruction for the new Scouts
- Advanced instruction for the experienced Scouts
- Expert instruction for the Venture patrol

Each instructional area should be separated from the others so there are no distractions. The Scoutmaster probably has a good idea of who has skills to teach.

## **Patrol Meetings (Corners) (5 to 20 minutes)**

End skills instruction on time and ask patrols to go to their patrol areas for their patrol meeting. Patrol leaders will take charge of the patrols.

Matters to be dealt with during a patrol meeting include taking attendance, collecting dues, planning the patrol's involvement in upcoming troop activities, selecting menus for hikes and campouts, assigning patrol members to specific tasks, and working out any other details for the smooth operation of the patrol.

Circulate among the patrol meetings and be ready to serve as a resource if a patrol leader asks for your assistance. If you notice that patrols have completed their work, call the patrols back together and move on to the next part of the troop meeting.

## **Interpatrol Activity (15 to 20 minutes)**

You or someone appointed by you can lead this opportunity for the patrols to interact with one another in a competitive or a cooperative effort. The activity might be a game that will test the skills the Scouts are learning for an upcoming activity – pitching tents or tying knots, for example. Troop Program Resources has a wealth of games that foster friendly teamwork and competition. The BSA manual Project COPE, No. 34371, also contains many appropriate games and challenges.

## **Closing – Scoutmaster’s Minute (5 minutes)**

The closing of a meeting is the Scoutmaster’s opportunity to step forward. Ask everyone to sit quietly, and then turn the meeting over to the Scoutmaster for reminders and announcements about upcoming events, and support of the patrols for their achievements and progress.

The highlight of the closing will be the Scoutmaster’s Minute, a brief message built on one of Scouting’s values. As the concluding thought of a troop meeting, the Scoutmaster’s Minute is a message each person can carry home.

## The “After the Meeting” Meeting (5 Minutes)

Ask members of the patrol leaders’ council to stay a few moments after the closing to discuss with you and the Scoutmaster the quality of the just-concluded meeting. Offer praise for portions of the meeting that went well, and talk about ways that future troop meetings can be improved. Make a few written notes so that suggestions can be explored more fully at the next patrol leaders’ council meeting.

Here are some questions to ask about the last meeting:

- Was the meeting fun?
- Did we accomplish a purpose?
- Did we do something new and different?
- What worked well that we should do again?
- What should we not do again?
- Did we have all the resources necessary to accomplish tasks?

Finally, review the troop meeting plan for the next meeting and make sure that everyone who will have a role is aware of the assignment and is prepared to do a good job.

While the patrol leaders’ council is reviewing the meeting, the service patrol can put away troop gear and return the meeting room to order.

# Wood's Wisdom Index

## Theme and Outdoor Activity

### Troop Program Features Volume 1

- |                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Aquatics               | Swimming                            |
| • Athletics              | ----                                |
| • Backpacking            | Backpacking                         |
| • Boating/Canoeing       | Float Trip and Boundary Waters Prep |
| • Business               | Orienteering                        |
| • Camping                | Camping                             |
| • Citizenship            | Historic Trail – 10 mile hike       |
| • Communications         | 5 mile hike.                        |
| • Cooking                | General Campout Prep                |
| • Cultural Awareness     | ----                                |
| • Emergency Preparedness | Search and Rescue                   |
| • Engineering            | Pioneering                          |

### Troop Program Features Volume 2

- |                  |                                 |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Environment    | 5 mile hike                     |
| • First Aid      | Ski Campout – Search and Rescue |
| • Fishing        | ----                            |
| • Forestry       | Scouting Skills                 |
| • Health Care    | ----                            |
| • High Adventure | High Adventure Prep             |
| • Hiking         | Hiking                          |
| • Hobbies        | ----                            |
| • Leadership     | 5 mile hike.                    |
| • Mechanics      | ----                            |
| • Nature         | Nature Trail, Orienteering      |
| • Orienteering   | Orienteering                    |

### Troop Program Features Volume 3

- |                       |                                 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Physical Fitness    | ----                            |
| • Pioneering          | Pioneering, Wilderness Survival |
| • Public Safety       | Historic Trail                  |
| • Science             | ----                            |
| • Shooting            | ----                            |
| • Special Cooking     | General Campout Prep            |
| • Sports              | ----                            |
| • Tracking            | Orienteering                    |
| • Wilderness Survival | Wilderness Survival             |
| • Wildlife Management | ----                            |
| • Winter Camping      | Winter Camping Prep.            |

# Troop Program Resources

- **Scoutmaster's Minutes**
- **Games**
- **Ceremonies**
- **Interfaith Worship Service**
- **Glossary of Scouting Terms**
- **Peals of Wisdom – Quotes from Baden-Powell**
- **Founders of the BSA**
- **Forms**
- **Clip Art**