



Newsletter of the BPSA in Canada November 2011

FROM THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER'S DESK

Well fall is upon us and another scouting year is well underway. Firstly I would like to say a few words concerning our AGM.

The AGM is held every September and is for all registered scouts no matter what their section is. Each group holds one vote at the AGM but every one is encouraged to participate in the proceedings.



We usually hold the meeting during the day on the Saturday, however we encourage all leaders to arrive Friday evening and stay until Sunday. We enjoy a social time and get to know other leaders from around the province and share ideas and encourage one another. This time is very important to the growth of our organization.

Meetings and camps with other groups are set up at the AGM and starting with this year's addition of groups as close to us as Calgary the opportunities for some great camping with our brothers (and sisters) in scouting is a reality.

By coming together at functions like the AGM we can promote growth and sustainability within our organization. From time to time we also have representatives from other countries join with us and we learn a lot from each other.

Do not get into the rut of thinking that your own group is an island unto it's self. Reach out and get to know others in a personal way.

As the weather starts to cool down we must remember to ready our Explorers and Sr. Explorers for cold weather camping. Seeing as Halloween is only a few days away it would be a good time to hold an 'all section' party and allow the younger sections to observe the next senior levels that await them in a few short months or a couple of years down the road. Invite the parents to attend and who knows, you might glean some new leaders from them.

Speaking of new leaders, make sure that you are aware of training events available for you and your leaders.

I look forward to meeting you all personally as I travel around the province and also attend various events.

Good Scouting to All,

Mike

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WHAT ABOUT TRAINING?

One very important aspect of scouting whether traditional or mainstream is that our leaders are trained. This provides assurance that the program will be followed and everyone will be safe.

It is very tempting to balk at training. After all a lot of volunteer time is spent on the program without having to take extra time to be trained. I had that attitude when I was invited to take my first Wood Badge 1 for Cubs with the Boy Scout Association of Canada (it wasn't Scouts Canada back then). The DC told me that training was Scouting's gift to leaders to thank them for all they did for the movement. Of course, I thought that was just a con to get me recruited. But I went anyway, and boy, was I surprised. Not only did I learn more about the Cub program than I ever thought I would, I had the most fun I had ever had since I was a Cub! And what a difference it made to my next Cub meeting and thereafter. I discovered that Scouting is a "jolly game" played mainly in the outdoors and is as much fun for the leaders as it is for the youth when I followed the Founder's guidelines. It was indeed a gift; a gift I have treasured all my life.



Baden-Powell developed the first leadership program for Scout leaders. His years in the British Army, training army scouts provided the experience he needed to do it well. What was so unique about BP's training methods was that the training took place at a Scout camp for leaders and was conducted with the same program that the Scouts got. In this way, leaders learned exactly what a patrol was, how a patrol operated, how people get along, how self-discipline is the key to successful living, and so on. It was bloody marvellous.

In BPSA-BC we use the same methods that BP formulated. Training is held in the outdoors at camp. Leaders are organised in Patrols or Sixes and operate the same as they would if they were Explorers or Timberwolves. Wood Beads 1 is the first stage in a leader's training. It usually comprises one evening in a hall to

organise patrols or sixes, followed by a weekend in camp from Friday evening until Sunday afternoon. At the end of this training a leader will be able to run a Troop or Pack meeting successfully. The leader will know what the program is, how it is developed, how to solve problems, some outdoor skills, lots of songs and games, and so much more. More importantly friendships will be made with other leaders who then become your support team and information sources. And the training is free!

Wood Beads II is the second stage and is usually held over one week in camp from Friday evening through to Sunday morning 8 days later. (Sometimes scheduling problems will make it necessary to run the program over 3 consecutive weekends, but this is not as much fun as the 8 day program) By living together in camp and working in patrols you learn so much more about the program and the reasons behind the various steps. At the end of WB2, you will have passed every test in the book including the First Class Journey for the Explorer section. Did I mention that you make friends? Actually you make brothers and sisters in the huge Scouting family. Your WB2 experience will last a lifetime. Ask any Scouter who has taken it. I still remember and treasure every moment of my first WB2 and that was 40 years ago!

At the end of WB2 you will serve a 6 month probation in your section after which you will be awarded the "Wood Beads" representing the beads from Denizulu's necklace that BP used for his first leaders. You be a member of the first Stainsby Troop and get to wear the national colours in your neckerchief.

And that is just the beginning.....





LEST WE FORGET

On November 11, especially, but also throughout the year, we have the duty to remember the efforts of some very special Canadians. In remembering, we pay homage to those who respond to their country's needs. On November 11, we pause for two minutes of silent tribute, and we attend commemorative ceremonies in memory of our war dead.

Following the First World War a French woman, Madame E. Guérin, suggested to British Field-Marshal Earl Haig that women and children in devastated areas of France could produce poppies for sale to support wounded Veterans. The first of these poppies were distributed in Canada in November of 1921, and the tradition has continued ever since, both here and in many parts of the world.

Poppies are worn as the symbol of remembrance, a reminder of the blood-red flower that still grows on the former battlefields of France and Belgium. During the terrible bloodshed of the second Battle of Ypres in the spring of 1915, Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae, a doctor serving with the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, wrote of these flowers which lived on among the graves of dead soldiers:

In Flanders Fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

The flowers and the larks serve as reminders of nature's ability to withstand the destructive elements of war by men, a symbol of hope in a period of human despair. In Canada, traditionally the poppies which we wear were made by disabled Veterans. They are reminders of those who died while fighting for peace: we wear them as reminders of the horrors of conflict and the preciousness of the peace they fought hard to achieve.



Wear it proudly!





SCOUT LAW No. 5

A Scout is Courteous.

Another installment of Scouter Roland Philipps' Letters to a Patrol Leader on the meaning of the Scout Law.

My dear Jim,

We know that if somebody who is in the habit of being sad practises smiling regularly, both when with other people and also when alone, that person will slip into the better habit of being happy.

It has been found to be true, not only that happiness makes one smile, but that smiling gives one happiness.

In just the same way it is true that by behaving like a gentleman we will become gentlemen in the truest sense. A gentleman has been described as one who behaves like one, and there is no better definition than that.

A Scout is courteous, that is to say, that he is polite. He is polite to everybody.

Politeness consists not in what you do, but in the way you do it.

One evening I saw a boy give up his seat to a lady on the District Railway. He looked quite angry at having to do it, and while he was standing his face seemed to say: "I hope she will get out at the next station, and then I will be able to sit down again."

The lady looked at him and felt very unhappy. She did get out at the next station, but I have a sort of idea that she had only travelled a pennyworth with a twopenny ticket, and that she could endure his unscoutlike expression no longer.

That boy probably went home thinking that he had been very polite; but as a matter of fact he was quite definitely rude.

The polite way would have been to get up with a smile, and in offering the seat to raise his hat. He would then have stood by looking perfectly happy, which would make the lady happy, too.

And if something inside him said: "You have been working very hard, and you are very tired, so what a fool you are not to be sitting down," something else inside him would be able to answer:

"What a lucky chap you are! There are 25,000 Scouts in London looking for chances of performing an act of courtesy, and you have had a better chance than any of them. You are a lucky chap in having had the chance; but you are more than that—you are a Scout because you have taken it."

From morning to night every day of your life you are doing things and saying things when you are with other people. All the things you do and all the words you say are done either in one way or in the other—they are done either with courtesy or without.

The advantage of living a life of courtesy is not only that it adds enormously to the happiness of those one meets, but also that it enriches oneself by making one into a true gentleman.

Every time that we open our mouths we can try to let a kind word pass instead of an unkind word; to let fall something which will help rather than something which will hurt; to be gentle and generous rather than hard and cruel.

It has been well said that we are almost certain sometimes to be unintentionally cruel unless we are trying to be intentionally kind.

One of the secrets of courtesy is to be really kind. By "kind" we mean "considerate," and to think not of oneself, but of the feelings of other people.

If we are always trying to carry out the fourth Scout Law by being kind to people, we find that it almost comes natural to us to be courteous as well.

It is a good habit when one is going to meet somebody to say:

"Now I will soon be in the company of some other human being. He will feel afterwards either the better and the happier for having been with me or else the reverse. It is up to me to see that he is the better and the happier."

And then, when one meets the other person, one will try to find out in conversation how one can help.

The most frequent method of helping is not so much by doing them the big Good Turn, but by giving them a kindly word and gentle look which make all the difference.

Not only in words, but also in acts, there are little chances of quiet courtesy wherever we may go. Sometimes when a man is on trial in the dock, or when a boy has been getting into trouble with his foreman, or even with his Scoutmaster, everybody else wants to push forward and stare at him. They want to see how he looks out of a cruel curiosity.

A Scout will never stare at anybody who is in trouble, and he will never like to see anybody get into a row. His idea will be to get them out of rows and help people to overcome their troubles.

He will never laugh at a man who is down, but will try to help him up again; and he will never make fun of somebody who has made a mistake, but will try to help him not to make the same mistake again.

The Chief tells us that a Scout is polite to all, but to certain people above others.

A Scout is Courteous to women of all ages and of all classes, and whether good or bad. He is courteous to women because he would expect other men and other boys to show special courtesy to his own mother or to his own sister, and he remembers that women are the mothers and the sisters of the human race.

Women often bear the heaviest burden and trouble of the daily life, and often, too, they bear their troubles far more quietly and bravely than men do.

A Scout will never allow a man to say anything insulting or degrading to a woman, even if she be a total stranger to him. A Scout will be ready to sacrifice a great deal to carry out the fifth Scout Law.

A Scout is also specially courteous to children. They are weaker than he is, and they have not had his experience, so that they often want his help.

An unkind word hurts a little child far more than it does a grown-up person, so a Scout will go out of his way to be gentle in what he says and does with children.

In the same way, a Scout does all that he can to help people who are old. They have done their day's work, and we would like to feel that through our efforts they are able to pass their last years in happiness and peace. One day we may be looking for others to do the same for us.

A Scout is specially courteous also to invalids and cripples. Through illness or accident they have missed some of the chances which he himself is fortunate enough to possess, and he goes out of his way to make them forget their loss by giving them the benefit of his own health and his own kindly cheeriness.

Last, but not least, you will tell your patrol that true courtesy begins at home; that the Scout who is rude to his own parents and brothers and sisters is not likely to be courteous when he meets the parents and brothers and sisters of other people.

With a gentleman courtesy becomes a habit, but a habit can only be acquired by practice, and a Scout practises it the wide world over with whatever men or women or children he happens to be.

Your sincere brother Scout,

Roland B. Phillipps





Friends

From membership studies done over the years, we know that one of the main reasons children join Otters is because their friends are joining. Parents also look to Otters to provide opportunities for their children to make friends beyond those they have in school or around the neighbourhood. It can be frustrating for the child, parents, and leaders when an Otter has difficulty fitting in and making friends in the Raft. Let's take a look at how children this age make friends and how we might help Otters develop new relationships.

To help Otters begin making contact with other children, we first have to recognize that each child has his or her own level of confidence and approach. Some children are quick to mix in with a large rowdy crowd, while others prefer more quiet reserved play. This highlights one of the secrets of making childhood friendships. For Otter-age children, friendships develop through doing things together. Children usually identify as friends the peers who like and want to do the things they like to do and when they want to do them.

For children who seem to find it difficult to fit into the Raft, the Den may be the first place they find peers who let them join in. Den-based activities use small groups that eliminate the overwhelming chaos found in larger Raft activities. Dens provide a safe environment for Otters to meet new children and develop relationships through play in the Den, spend time introducing and reintroducing Otters to each other until they recognise each other by name. Everyone needs a sense of belonging in order to feel confident enough to approach new people for making friends. The Den provides that first sense of being accepted as an Otter and a value member of the Raft.

When the Dens break to do activities, it can be disruptive to children who are just making friends in the Den and now must readjust to a new social environment. A child's feelings are probably not unlike what we feel at a social gathering. We look for few people we know, but when the time comes to break up and mix into the larger group, we feel lost and somewhat alone in a sea of faces. If you spot any Otters hanging back from an activity, remember the 'doing' approach children use.



Ask them what they would like to do or if they need help getting started. Guide them to a group of children who are playing at their level and speed and slowly work them into the activity. As a shy Otter becomes accustomed to the setup, the others will start to draw him or her into conversation and play. Inevitably, conflict will arise when a child is excluded from a group. The sense of belonging to a group can become so strong that excluding another child is not so much an act of meanness to that

child as an act of reaffirming friendship between members of the group. Help the group accept new members by showing that they can contribute to the activity. When a group of Otters realizes they need one more child to play a certain game, the excluded child suddenly becomes someone very much in demand. This helps both the group and the individual develop a new sense of belonging and kinship, which leads to the development of new friendships.

Children are equally devastated when a best friend in the Raft no longer wants to be their friend. This can happen when a child suddenly leaves or a new child is introduced to the group and friendship pairings shift and rearrange themselves. Unfortunately, it's one of those hard lessons every child must learn. We can help children who are feeling abandoned by telling them that they still are good Otters and introducing them to other play groups in the Raft.

Letting abandoned Otters be your special helpers for a time can also help rebuild their shattered confidence and enable them to work gradually into another set of friends. Playing in Dens and provides opportunities for Otters to develop different sets of friends over time and enables them slowly to learn and adapt to changing friends.

Perhaps you have children who have difficulty making friends because of their behaviour. Sometimes the only social skills a child has acquired came from the TV. Children's cartoons, such as the Simpsons, provide ready scripts for social interaction, most of them inappropriate in the real world. Help such children by teaching them how to introduce themselves to others and how to share and cooperate. Help them learn to call people by their real names, rather than "dude" or "hey you". By developing basic social skills, an Otter will eventually be able to make friends more easily in the Raft.

Remember, too, that Otters learn most by observing what you do as leaders. Be active role models for how friends behave, introduce others, share, and cooperate. Shared leadership is not simply a concept for planning, but a way of teaching Otters how to make friends and enjoy being with them.



Timber Wolf & Otter Game

Sentry Post -

The prize goes to the quietest team in this game. Set up two chairs about seven feet apart. These are the sentry posts and two blindfolded players are seated in them, facing each other. The other players divide into two teams. At signal from the leader, the first player in each line sneaks forward on tiptoe and tries to pass between the two sentries without a sound. If either sentry hears anything, he calls out and points in the direction from which the sound came. If he's right, the player is "captured" and out of the game. If he points in the wrong direction, the player sneaks ahead. Each team goes through just once. The winner is the team that gets the most players past the sentries.





How Cubs Learn -

When you think about the Timber Wolves in your pack, different characters likely come to mind. There are those who talk a lot, give long descriptions, and become easily distracted by noise. There are quiet ones who like pictures and reading and always try to keep their uniforms looking neat. There are others who like to touch, feel, and try out things. This mixture of individuals is the "spice" in a Timber Wolf pack that makes a leader's job interesting and challenging.

We can become frustrated when some Timber Wolves don't respond to parts of the program in the way we expect. When we give instructions for a compass activity, a few of them may fidget and seem not to be listening to the directions. Or perhaps we've prepared a very interesting craft that some Timber Wolves tackle with much more enthusiasm than others. On an outing to the fire hall, some Timber Wolves may try to get into the fire engine to learn how it works while we worry about the welfare of both the truck and the others.

These situations don't happen because of our lack of leadership abilities. One of the reasons they show such different characteristics has to do with the way they learn.

Learning Styles

Research suggests that people learn best through one of three senses - seeing, hearing, or touching. These senses are referred to as learning styles or channels. For each person, one sense is usually the primary learning channel. The person learns through the other channels also, but not as easily.



People who learn best by seeing pictures and reading are called visual learners. In the pack, these Timber Wolves generally prefer order and feel it's important to have a neat uniform with all the badges sewn on correctly. They are concerned about how the items for their Collector badge are displayed and work hard to make their craft creation look just right. Visual learners often show impatience with long verbal explanations but they remember things they see on an outing more than the other Timber Wolves. They usually can work without being distracted by noise and activity around them.

The Timber Wolves in your pack who learn and remember things best by hearing them are called auditory learners. These youth usually like to talk, to be heard, and to listen to others for short periods. They are the ones who want to tell you everything that has happened to them since the last meeting. Unlike visual learners, they aren't too concerned with order and neatness. When you tell a story, they remember and understand more of the details than others. The sounds they hear on an outing make a more lasting impression on them than what they see and, in a tent, they are very conscious of the wind or the sound of rain on the roof. A good way for them to express their understanding of a pack activity is through sound in skits, songs, or stories.

People who learn best through touching or hands-on activities are called the "kinaesthetic tactual" or KT group. These Timber Wolves want to take things apart to see how they work and like to make or build things such as sand castles in summer and snow sculptures in winter. On an outing, they may remember different kinds of

trees by touching the bark on the trunk rather than by looking at the leaves. Although they enjoy making crafts, they aren't as concerned about how the final product looks as visual Timber Wolves. They may give your meetings some lively moments.

Varied Program Important

Each individual needs to find some way to express themselves within the Timber Wolf program, and we need to be aware of both what they learn and how they learn it. Because youth learn in different ways, it becomes very important to use a variety of activities and all the elements of the Timber Wolf program. By planning meetings around what the program emphasizes, you will ensure your program is suited to different kinds of learners.

Within each of the program elements, plan a range of activities to meet the needs of your different kinds of learners. Use a variety of games and even various approaches to a single game. Visual learners, for example, do best at a standard Kim's Game, auditory learners shine in a Kim's Game based on sounds, and KT learners are successful in a blindfolded Kim's Game where they feel different items. For badge or star work, you can offer a variety of approaches involving different senses: e.g., discussing, making, observing.

Timber Wolves will experience greater success from activities in which they use their primary learning channels. They can learn in other ways, too, but it is harder and less comfortable for them. Your Timber Wolves will feel better about themselves and learn more when they can do some activities in their primary learning channel.

It's not so difficult to arrange. Consider these program items, which include activities in each of the learning styles.

1. Teaching knots: show Timber Wolves how the knot is tied; tell them how it is tied and why it is used; have them tie the knot.
2. Crafts: show Timber Wolves the finished craft; help them do each stage of the project by explanation and demonstration.
3. Outing: go to see the fire hall; back at the meeting place, have the Timber Wolves talk about their visit and paint or draw what they saw.
4. Nature hike: on the hike, have Timber Wolves gather natural materials; after the hike, ask them to talk about what they saw; let them use the natural materials for a collection or to make a craft.
5. Teaching the importance of good diet: have Timber Wolves tell what foods they eat and what part each plays in a balanced diet; show pictures or samples of the foods; have Timber Wolves prepare a simple well balanced meal or, for a different touch, create and perform skits about the importance of a balanced diet.

Because leaders have different learning styles as well, the concept of shared leadership in the leadership team is also important for providing Timber Wolves a balanced program. A balanced varied program that includes all the elements reinforces and supports the activities of the school, home, and other social institutions involved in the development of young people.

When we understand that children learn in different ways, we can better understand the behaviour Timber Wolves display in some activities. Know your Timber Wolves' individual strengths and build on them so that you can help them do their best in your program.

Grey Wolf

