



STEP 5: INFORM EVERYONE

Now that you have a great troop program planned, don't keep it a secret, share it with everyone.

The best way to do it is at a parents' night program. Have some good fun and fellowship, and then share the troop's plan for the year. Let the Scouts announce the plan, but let the troop committee talk about what kinds of help will be needed from parents to make the program work.

This is the final phase of the "buy in" talked about earlier. Here is where you get those extra hands for the garage sale, transportation for outings, and maybe even a consultant for the new Venture program.

Ask a computer whiz in the troop to design an original troop calendar. Give everyone a copy. (If it is nice enough, troop families may use it to record all their family activities.)

Don't stop the sharing at the troop level. Make sure the chartered organization and your unit commissioner have a copy of your troop's plans. Develop a news article for the local newspaper highlighting the special activities the troop has planned for the coming year. Some potential Scouter parent might read it and be inspired to join your troop.

PLANNING THE MONTHLY TROOP PROGRAM

Developing an annual plan is really just the first step in planning the troop program. On a quarterly basis, the patrol leaders' council should review the annual plan and make any adjustments necessary to ensure the smooth implementation of all programs. These quarterly checkpoints are also important because some programs require more than a month to plan.

As a part of the annual program planning conference you are asked to plan the next month's troop program. Even if your troop is very experienced, this session should be used to teach your junior leaders to use *Woods Wisdom*, *Troop Program Features* or the program features in *Scouting* magazine. Once they are comfortable in using these, you can give them the option of adding flexibility to the program. But be careful—too much departure from the suggested troop meeting activities could result in less exciting meetings and poor advancement.

Each *Woods Wisdom* or *Scouting* magazine program feature provides detailed information on four weekly meetings, a monthly highlight activity, advancement requirements that can be satisfied, and some good skills suggestions.

Activities incorporating all basic and intermediate skills your Scouts need for the monthly program are interwoven into each weekly meeting. Detailed use of program features will ensure regular advancement of your Scouts and provide troop meetings that are fun and exciting, *not* dull and boring.

YOUR PROGRAM ASSISTANTS

Besides offering their readers entertaining, well-written fare, *Boys' Life* and *Scouting* magazines support the nationally suggested Boy Scout program features. In each monthly issue, *Boys' Life* dedicates a number of pages to provide ideas and inspiration to boy readers about how they can enjoy the BSA-suggested program for the following month. *Scouting* provides adult leaders similar tools to strengthen the BSA program with special articles of packs, troops, and Varsity teams that have used the monthly program feature successfully.

In addition, five of the six issues of *Scouting* contain a total of twelve segments called *Troop Program Features*. They represent one-third of the thirty-six monthly features found in the larger book titled *Woods Wisdom*, *Troop Program Features*, Supply No. 34251. Another program tool, *Boy Scout Leader Program Notebook*, is a pocket-size publication that contains space to jot down ideas and plans for troop activities. It is available at your BSA local council service center.

