

Scoutmasters Minutes
A Private Collection
by a Very Old Scoutmaster

Manuel R. Pablo, SM T1518, Springfield VA

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Forward

These Minutes have been collected from various and sundry sources. Credit is included where known. Some of the official BSA minutes are a bit dated, and care should be exercised to update them. They are included mostly verbatim to avoid editorializing.

Manuel R. Pablo
SM T1518, Springfield, VA
March 2001

The Light of Scouting

[Needed: glass Pyrex clear baking pan; one clear glass Pyrex mixing bowl; one tea light. Float tea light, unlit, in pan of an inch of water in the clear baking pan.] “You are light this candle. When you join the scouting program, you learn the skills of the outdoor life. The light of Scouting burns brightly in you [*light the candle*]. But sometimes, in our eagerness to preserve that flame, we build a shell around us [*place upended bowl over candle*], just as I protect this candle with this bowl. At first, your flame glows brighter, because you are not distracted by others, and are not subject to winds of change, or conflict, or controversy. You are responsible only to yourself.

But then the inevitable happens. Little by little, the longer you are cut off from other people, and the more you work only with yourself, what you can accomplish, and the satisfaction you receive, grows less and less. Eventually, cut off from everyone and everything, your flame flickers and dies.

We benefit best when we act as a troop. Together, we support each other, learn from each other, enjoy good times with each other. As a troop we learn what we can give, and what we really need.

Don’t let the light of scouting go out in your life because you have ceased to share, to give and receive. Let your flame burn bright in the troop, so that you will be a beacon to others, and not a puff of smoke that vanishes without a trace.”

MRP. February 2001

Temper

There was a little boy with a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, to hammer a nail in the back fence.

The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Then it gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone.

The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. 'You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out, it won't matter how many times you say 'I'm sorry,' the wound is still there. A verbal wound is as bad as a physical one.'

=====

Don't Be Afraid to Fail

"You've failed many times, although you may not remember.

You fell down the first time you walked.

You almost drowned the first time you tried to swim.

Did you hit the ball the first time you swung a bat ? ?

Heavy hitters, the one who hit the most home runs, also strike out the most. Babe Ruth struck out 1,330 times, but he also hit 714 home runs.

R.H. Macy failed seven times before his store in New York caught on.

Don't worry about failure.

Worry about the chances you miss when you don't even try...."

Lorie McGraw
Bear Den Leader Pack 410 /Indian Waters Council, Columbia, SC
Etowah Creek District Webmaster

A Game of Pickup Basketball

I didn't take it out on you guys as we went through the basketball playoffs, but remembering some of this other stuff because of Pinewoods and such made me remember a story I used as a SM minute during the playoffs a few years ago. It IS true, but with a bit of literary license.

I don't remember how I started exactly, but it had to do with some heresy (when spouted in a Chicago suburb, at least) about how the team besides the Bulls might have a chance. That was just to get their attention however, after a long EOY COH.

"You know, there's one player in these playoffs who is famous for non-basketball reasons. Seems he was driving home from a game through a pretty rough neighborhood and he stopped at a corner where there was a late-night pick-up game being played. He got over and went to visit and play with a bunch of boys who would never have the money to see him play a game, and they sat with him and went over that night's game play by play.

"In exchange, however, he made them talk about school and their grades. He promised to stop again after his next home game, but they all had to have their homework done for him to see. He asked them for more and more each time, and it got to the point they were waiting for him after every game to show him their report cards, their grades, their homework, and everything else from school that they did well on that you can imagine.

"Game after game he would stop, play with these kids, check on them. Soon he had someone checking on them with their teachers at school and he knew about the things they did both good and bad before they met after a game. As some finished High School - much better off than they would have been had they continued without the player, they each chose someone to take their place, and they continue to this day to meet with the player.

"This man, a rather famous basketball player, was doing all he could to make a difference in a neighborhood where he didn't even live.

"Can any of you guess who the player is?" (NOTE: Believe it or not, it took them about 6 guesses to hit the name Michael Jordan.)

"That's right, even though he had a family to go home to and other things that some people would think is more important, but instead he was going out of his way to do a good turn for some youth he didn't even know.

"Now how do you think YOU can do a good turn over the next few days?"

Tom Petrick
Thu, 18 Jun 1998 23:06:07 -0400

The Station

Tucked away in our subconscious is an idyllic vision. We are traveling by train - out the windows, we drink in the passing scenes of children waving at a crossing, cattle grazing on a distant hillside, row upon row of corn and wheat, flatlands and valleys, mountains and rolling hillsides and city skylines.

But uppermost in our minds is the final destination. On a certain day, we will pull into the station. Bands will be playing and flags waving. Once we get there, our dreams will come true and the pieces of our lives will fit together like a completed jigsaw puzzle. Restlessly we pace the aisles, damning the minutes - waiting, waiting, waiting for the station.

"When we reach the station, that will be it!" we cry. "When I'm 18." "When I buy a new 450sl Mercedes Benz!" "When I put the last kid through college." "When I have paid off the mortgage!" "When I get a promotion." "When I reach retirement, I shall live happily ever after!"

Sooner or later, we realize there is no station, no one place to arrive. The true joy of life is the trip. The station is only a dream. It constantly outdistances us. "Relish the moment" is a good motto, especially when coupled with Psalm 118.34: "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." It isn't the burdens of today that drive men mad. It is the regrets over yesterday and the fear of tomorrow.

Regret and fear are twin thieves who rob us of today.

So stop pacing the aisles and counting the miles. Instead, climb more mountains, eat more ice cream, go barefoot more often, swim more rivers, watch more sunsets, laugh more, cry less. Life must be lived as we go along.

The station will come soon enough.

By Robert J. Hastings
from Condensed Chicken Soup for the Soul
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Victor Hansen & Patty Hansen

Redwoods

I don't know how many of you have seen redwood trees but I'm sure you've all seen pictures of them. They average over 200 feet tall and can grow to well over 300 feet. They can be so big around the base that sometimes tunnels are carved right through them so people can drive their cars through.

You'd think that a tree that large would have to have deep roots to hold them upright and keep them from falling over. But that's not so. Their root systems are extremely shallow and it wouldn't take much to knock them down.

So what keeps them standing upright? Well, there's something else about the redwood trees--you never see just one. There's always a group of them: a redwood grove. The roots that spread out from each tree intertwine with the roots from all the others in the grove. So these huge trees hold each other up. One, or two, or three alone couldn't do it; it takes all of them together.

You know, a Scout Troop is sort of like the redwoods. A couple of us, or even a whole Patrol wouldn't be as good of a Troop. It takes all of us working together to do it; helping, and encouraging, and supporting each other.

On my Honor

On My Honor. Every week we start out our meetings with these words and I suspect that some nights some of you just sort of mumble through them without giving them much thought. But what is honor?

The Scout Handbook says that honor is loyalty to high ideals. Webster's Unabridged uses words like: "good name, reputation, excellence of character, high moral worth, nobleness, integrity, uprightness, trustworthiness" in its definition.

However you define it, Honor goes to the very core of what you are. If you have it, everyone knows--they can tell it by your actions. And if you don't have it--well, it's equally obvious.

So when you say "On my honor, I will do my best" and so on, you are pledging yourself to do the best you can. No half-measures or goofing off. You are saying that you will do it.

And I know that you will.

How Big is Your Jar?

How big is your jar?

Here's an interesting science fair experiment I read about. The student took a baby food jar, a peanut butter jar, a gallon jar, & a big five-gallon bucket and filled each one with dirt. Then he planted a bean seed in each and tried to raise it.

Well you can probably guess that the one in the baby food jar never amounted to much and the one in the peanut butter jar was stunted too. The one in the gallon jar did OK but the one in the big bucket did the best. The plants that sprouted in the small containers just didn't have enough room for the roots to grow & spread.

You may not realize it but you are all like those plants; you've been planted in different sized jars--some big and some small. But the jars aren't physical ones, they're mental ones. The jars are the limits you impose on yourselves. If you believe yourself to be inferior or if you believe you aren't able to do something you are indeed inferior & unable to do it.

But you can face up to your shortcomings and work around them or overcome them. You can say "I'm not very good at this but with work I can improve", or "I can't do this but I can do that & that, and being able to do those things compensates for not being able to do this".

So even though you may be in a small jar you're not stuck there. You can transplant yourself to a larger one. It might not be easy, but it can be done.

So, how big is your jar?

A Place to Stand

If you have ever gone through a toll booth, you know that your relationship to the person in the booth is not the most intimate you'll ever have. It is one of life's frequent nonencounters: You hand over some money; you might get change; you drive off.

Late one morning in 1984, headed for lunch in San Francisco, I drove toward a booth. I heard loud music. It sounded like a party. I looked around. No other cars with their windows open. No sound trucks. I looked at the toll booth. Inside it, the man was dancing.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"I'm having a party," he said.

"What about the rest of the people?" I looked at the other toll booths.

He said, "What do those look like to you?" He pointed down the row of toll booths. "They look like...toll booths. What do they look like to you?"

He said, "Vertical coffins. At 8:30 every morning, live people get in. Then they die for eight hours. At 4:30, like Lazarus from the dead, they reemerge and go home. For eight hours, brain is on hold, dead on the job. Going through the motions."

I was amazed. This guy had developed a philosophy, a mythology about his job. Sixteen people dead on the job, and the seventeenth, in precisely the same situation, figures out a way to live. I could not help asking the next question:

"Why is it different for you? You're having a good time."

He looked at me. "I knew you were going to ask that. I don't understand why anybody would think my job is boring. I have a corner office, glass on all sides. I can see the Golden Gate, San Francisco, and the Berkeley hills. Half the Western world vacations here...and I just stroll in every day and practice dancing."

By Dr. Charles Garfield
from Condensed Chicken Soup for the Soul
Copyright 1996 by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen & Patty Hansen

The Picture of Peace

There once was a King who offered a prize to the artist who would paint the best picture of peace. Many artists tried. The King looked at all the pictures, but there were only two he really liked and he had to choose between them.

One picture was of a calm lake. The lake was a perfect mirror for peaceful towering mountains were all around it. Overhead was a blue sky with fluffy white clouds. All who saw this picture thought that it was a perfect picture of peace.

The other picture had mountains too. But these were rugged and bare. Above was an angry sky from which rain fell, in which lightning played. Down the side of the mountain tumbled a foaming waterfall. This did not look peaceful at all.

But when the King looked, he saw behind the waterfall a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock.

In the bush a mother bird had built her nest. There, in the midst of the rush of angry water, sat the mother bird on her nest... perfect peace.

Which picture do you think won the prize?

The King chose the second picture.

Do you know why?

"Because," explained the King, "peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the real meaning of peace."

Author Unknown
Fri, 4 Sep 1998
From: Lorie McGraw

Titanic Memorial

Reading the Washington Post this morning, the style section had an article about a local group of men who get together every year on the night of April 15 to "celebrate" (not exactly the right word, but...) a particular event in our history that is rapidly becoming forgotten, but shouldn't be. No, I'm not talking about tax time! Instead, I'm referring to something far more edifying.

How many of you remember--or ever learned--about the events of April 15, 1912? I am, of course, referring to the sinking of the HMS Titanic, one of history's great sea disasters. While this disaster cost the lives of more than 1,300 members of the ship's passengers and crew, there were displayed that night virtues that are very much in keeping with what we are trying to teach our charges.

The Titanic went to sea with only sixteen lifeboats, enough for only about 400 of the 1800 or so people aboard. After all, the ship was a triumph of modern technology, and therefore unsinkable, right? So why did it need lifeboats? Guess again!

The ship was on its maiden voyage when it struck an iceberg 400 miles east of Newfoundland. It went down four hours later. What was so amazing, however, was the courage displayed by the men aboard--and I say "men" deliberately. With only lifeboats for 400, EVERY MAN ABOARD gave up his place for a woman or child.

The bravery with which these men--rich and poor alike, captain and crew alike--met death is positively astounding. But also astounding is that they met death not only with bravery, but with dignity and style! As the ship went down, they all gathered in the stern, the last part to disappear beneath the sea--and sang "Nearer My God to Thee". One man, knowing death was inevitable, retired to his cabin and donned his tuxedo--so he "could die like a gentleman"!

Anyway, a memorial was built in the 1930s on the DC waterfront, and a small group of guys get together every April 15--in tuxedos--and have dinner, then retire to the monument and drink a toast to the men of the Titanic and the virtues they displayed on that fateful night.

Let's see--honor, bravery, reverence, charity, selflessness, loyalty, helpfulness, duty--gee, do these ideas and words sound familiar

Tue, 16 Apr 1996
Pete Farnham SM, Troop 113 GW District, NCAC Alexandria, VA

Can You Sleep When the Wind Blows?

A young man applied for a job as a farmhand. When the farmer asked for his qualifications, he said, "I can sleep when the wind blows." This puzzled the farmer. But he liked the young man, and hired him. A few days later, the farmer and his wife were awakened in the night by a violent storm.

They quickly began to check things out to see if all was secure. They found that the shutters of the farmhouse had been securely fastened. A good supply of logs had been set next to the fireplace.

The young man slept soundly.

The farmer and his wife then inspected their property. They found that the farm tools had been placed in the storage shed, safe from the elements. The tractor had been moved into the garage. The barn was properly locked. Even the animals were calm. All was well. The farmer then understood the meaning of the young man's words, "I can sleep when the wind blows." Because the farmhand did his work loyally and faithfully when the skies were clear, he was prepared for the storm when it broke. So when the wind blew, he was not afraid. He could sleep in peace.

>

> Author Unknown

HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO OUR LIVES?

The story about the young farmhand illustrates a principle that is often overlooked about being prepared for various events that occur in life. There was nothing dramatic or sensational in the young farmhand's preparations--he just faithfully did what was needed each day. Consequently, peace was his, even in a storm. A short poem expresses this principle as it pertains to your life.

It isn't the things you do,
It's the things you leave undone,
Which gives you a bit of heartache,
At the setting of the sun.

What are you leaving undone?

Goodnight Scouts

>

Lorie McGraw
Etowah Creek District WebMaster
Indian Waters Council, Columbia, SC

Love: The One Creative Force

A college professor had his sociology class go into the Baltimore slums to get case histories of 200 young boys. They were asked to write an evaluation of each boy's future. In every case the students wrote, "He hasn't got a chance." Twenty-five years later another sociology professor came across the earlier study. He had his students follow up on the project to see what had happened to these boys. With the exception of 20 boys who had moved away or died, the students learned that 176 of the remaining 180 had achieved more than ordinary success as lawyers, doctors and businessmen.

The professor was astounded and decided to pursue the matter further. Fortunately, all the men were in the area and he was able to ask each one, "How do you account for your success?" In each case the reply came with feeling, "There was a teacher."

The teacher was still alive, so he sought her out and asked the old but still alert lady what magic formula she had used to pull these boys out of the slums into successful achievement.

The teacher's eyes sparkled and her lips broke into a gentle smile. "It's really very simple," she said. "I loved those boys."

By Eric Butterworth
from Chicken Soup for the Soul
Copyright 1993 by Jack Canfield & Mark Victor Hansen

Those Hands

Back in the fifteenth century, in a tiny village near Nuremberg, lived a family with eighteen children. Eighteen! In order merely to keep food on the table for this mob, the father and head of the household, a goldsmith by profession, worked almost eighteen hours a day at his trade and any other paying chore he could find in the neighborhood. Despite their seemingly hopeless condition, two of Albrecht Durer the Elder's children had a dream. They both wanted to pursue their talent for art, but they knew full well that their father would never be financially able to send either of them to Nuremberg to study at the Academy.

After many long discussions at night in their crowded bed, the two boys finally worked out a pact. They would toss a coin. The loser would go down into the nearby mines and, with his earnings, support his brother while he attended the academy. Then, when that brother who won the toss completed his studies, in four years, he would support the other brother at the academy, either with sales of his artwork or, if necessary, also by laboring in the mines.

They tossed a coin on a Sunday morning after church. Albrecht Durer won the toss and went off to Nuremberg. Albert went down into the dangerous mines and, for the next four years, financed his brother, whose work at the academy was almost an immediate sensation. Albrecht's etchings, his woodcuts, and his oils were far better than those of most of his professors, and by the time he graduated, he was beginning to earn considerable fees for his commissioned works.

When the young artist returned to his village, the Durer family held a festive dinner on their lawn to celebrate Albrecht's triumphant homecoming. After a long and memorable meal, punctuated with music and laughter, Albrecht rose from his honored position at the head of the table to drink a toast to his beloved brother for the years of sacrifice that had enabled Albrecht to fulfill his ambition. His closing words were, "And now, Albert, blessed brother of mine, now it is your turn. Now you can go to Nuremberg to pursue your dream, and I will take care of you."

All heads turned in eager expectation to the far end of the table where Albert sat, tears streaming down his pale face, shaking his lowered head from side to side while he sobbed and repeated, over and over, "No ...no ...no ..no." Finally, Albert rose and wiped the tears from his cheeks. He glanced down the long table at the faces he loved, and then, holding his hands close to his right cheek, he said softly, "No, brother. I cannot go to Nuremberg. It is too late for me. Look ... look what four year in the mines have done to my hands! The bones in every finger have been smashed at least once, and lately I have been suffering from arthritis so badly in my right hand that I cannot even hold a glass to return your toast, much less make delicate lines on parchment or canvas with a pen or a brush. No, brother ... for me it is too late."

More than 450 years have passed. By now, Albrecht Durer's hundreds of masterful portraits, pen and silver-point sketches, watercolors, charcoals, woodcuts, and copper engravings hang in every great museum in the world, but the odds are great that you, like most people, are familiar with only one of Albrecht Durer's works. More than merely being familiar with it, you very well may have a reproduction hanging in your home or office.

One day, to pay homage to Albert for all that he had sacrificed, Albrecht Durer painstakingly drew his brother's abused hands with palms together and thin fingers stretched skyward. He called his

powerful drawing simply "Hands," but the entire world almost immediately opened their hearts to his great masterpiece and renamed his tribute of love "The Praying Hands."

The next time you see a copy of that touching creation, take a second look. Let it be your reminder, if you still need one, that no one - no one - ever makes it alone!

author unknown

Lorie McGraw

Etowah Creek District Indian Waters Council, Columbia, SC

21 Nov 1998

What Comes Around

His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to eke out a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog.

He dropped his tools and ran to the bog. There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved.

"I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life."

"No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied, waving off the offer.

At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family hovel.

"Is that your son?" the nobleman asked.

"Yes," the farmer replied proudly.

"I'll make you a deal. Let me take him and give him a good education. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll grow to a man you can be proud of."

And that he did. In time, Farmer Fleming's son graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin.

Years afterward, the nobleman's son was stricken with pneumonia. What saved him? Penicillin.

The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill. His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill.

**Lydia Pourciau, "THE Free Agent"
Baton Rouge, LA USA**

Within my Power

I am not a very important man, as importance is commonly rated. I do not have great wealth, control a big business, or occupy a position of great honor or authority.

Yet I may someday mould destiny. For it is within my power to become the most important man in the world in the life of a boy. And every boy is a potential atom bomb in human history.

A humble citizen like myself might have been the organizer of a Scout Troop in which a Russian boy called Joe might have learned the lessons of democratic cooperation.

These men would never have known that they had averted world tragedy, yet actually they would have been among the most important men who ever lived.

All about me are boys. They are the makers of history, the builders of tomorrow. If I can have some part in guiding them up the trail of Scouting, on to the high road of noble character and constructive citizenship, I may prove to be the most important man in the community.

A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove. But the world may be different, because I was important in the life of a boy.

Forest Witcraft
first published in the October, 1950 issue of Scouting magazine

Cracked Pot

A Water Bearer in India had two large pots; each hung on each end of a pole, which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, and while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water at the end of the long walk from the stream to the master's house, the cracked pot arrived only half full.

For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his master's house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect to the end for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do. After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the Water Bearer one day by the stream.

"I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you."

"Why?" asked the bearer. "What are you ashamed of?"

"I have been able, for these past two years, to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your master's house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

The Water Bearer felt sorry for the old cracked pot and in his compassion he said, "As we return to the master's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path."

Indeed, as they went up the hill, the old cracked pot took notice of the sun warming the beautiful wild flowers on the side of the path, and this cheered it some. But at the end of the trail, it still felt bad because it had leaked out half its load, and so again it apologized to the bearer for its failure.

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of your path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I took advantage of it. I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back from the stream, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate my master's table. Without you being just the way you are, he would not have this beauty to grace his house."

Each of us has our own unique flaws. We're all cracked pots. But if we will allow it, the Lord will use our flaws to grace His Father's table. In God's great economy, nothing goes to waste. So as we seek ways to minister together, and as God calls you to the tasks He has appointed for you, don't be afraid of your flaws. Acknowledge them, and allow Him to take advantage of them, and you, too, can be the cause of beauty in His pathway. Go out boldly, knowing that in our weakness we find His strength, and that "In Him every one of God's promises is a Yes."

The Window

Two men, both seriously ill, occupied the same hospital room. One man was allowed to sit up in his bed for an hour each afternoon to help drain the fluid from his lungs. His bed was next to the room's only window.

The other man had to spend all his time flat on his back. The men talked for hours on end. They spoke of their wives and families, their homes, their jobs, their involvement in the military service, where they had been on vacation. And every afternoon when the man in the bed by the window could sit up, he would pass the time by describing to his roommate all the things he could see outside the window.

The man in the other bed began to live for those one-hour periods where his world would be broadened and enlivened by all the activity and color of the world outside. The window overlooked a park with a lovely lake. Ducks and swans played on the water while children sailed their model boats.

Young lovers walked arm in arm amidst flowers of every color of the rainbow. Grand old trees graced the landscape, and a fine view of the city skyline could be seen in the distance.

As the man by the window described all this exquisite detail, the man on the other side of the room would close his eyes and imagine the picturesque scene. One warm afternoon the man by the window described a parade passing by. Although the other man couldn't hear the band-he could see it in his mind's eye as the gentleman by the window portrayed it with descriptive words.

Then unexpectedly, a sinister thought entered his mind. Why should the other man alone experience all the pleasures of seeing everything while he himself never got to see anything?

It didn't seem fair.

At first thought the man felt ashamed. But as the days passed and he missed seeing more sights, his envy eroded into resentment and soon turned him sour.

He began to brood and he found himself unable to sleep. He should be by that window-that thought, and only that thought now controlled his life.

Late one night as he lay staring at the ceiling, the man by the window began to cough. He was choking on the fluid in his lungs. The other man watched in the dimly lit room as the struggling man by the window groped for the button to call for help. Listening from across the room he never moved, never pushed his own button which would have brought the nurse running in. In less than five minutes the coughing and choking stopped along with that the sound of breathing. Now there was only silence-deathly silence.

The following morning the day nurse arrived to bring water for their baths. When she found the lifeless body of the man by the window, she was saddened and called the hospital attendants to take it away. As soon as it seemed appropriate, the other man asked if he could be moved next to the

window. The nurse was happy to make the switch, and after making sure he was comfortable, she left him alone.

Slowly, painfully, he propped himself up on one elbow to take his first look at the world outside. Finally, he would have the joy of seeing it all himself. He strained to slowly turn to look out the window beside the bed. It faced a blank wall.

The man asked the nurse what could have compelled his deceased roommate who had described such wonderful things outside this window. The nurse responded that the man was blind and could not even see the wall.

She said, "Perhaps he just wanted to encourage you."

~~~~~  
Epilogue . . .

**You can interpret the story in any way you like, but one moral stands out:**

**There is tremendous happiness in making others happy, despite our own situations. Shared grief is half the sorrow, but happiness when shared, is doubled. If you want to feel rich, just count all of the things you have that money can't buy.**

## **Boy Scout Training True Story**

Thanks to the office of Rep. Edward Royce, California Republican, for sending us the following excerpt from a local radio interview:

The female newscaster is interviewing the leader of a youth club:

Interviewer: "So, Mr. Jones, what are you going to do with these children on this adventure holiday?"

Mr. Jones: "We're going to teach them climbing, canoeing, archery, and shooting."

Interviewer: "Shooting! That's a bit irresponsible, isn't it?"

Mr. Jones: "I don't see why, they'll be properly supervised on the range."

Interviewer: "Don't you admit that this is a terribly dangerous activity to be teaching children?"

Mr. Jones: "I don't see how, we will be teaching them proper range discipline before they even touch a firearm."

Interviewer: "But you're equipping them to become violent killers."

Mr. Jones: "Well, you're equipped to be a prostitute but you're not one, are you?"

**End of the interview**

6 Apr 1999  
TIMOTHY ZICH

## **Tuesday the Thirteenth**

Anyone know what the date is today? The thirteenth. Sometimes on the thirteenth I think of a character in a comic strip I used to see in the paper. He was very superstitious and every month on the 13th he'd moan and groan and say something like "Friday the 13th came on a Tuesday this month".

Now, a lot of people are superstitious about Friday the 13th, but I've never heard of anyone else who was worried about Tuesday the 13th or Sunday the 13th or any other 13ths.

Anyway, getting back to the comic strip, sometimes something bad would happen and this character would say that it was because "Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> came on a Tuesday this month", or whatever day it was and blame it on bad luck.

Now, of course, being the 13th had nothing to do with it, and neither did bad luck. Generally whatever happened was because of his own stupidity or carelessness, or that of someone else.

And that's the way that bad luck often is. Sometimes it's truly because of circumstances outside of anyone's control. But as often as not bad luck is caused by carelessness, or lack of preparation, or by doing something dumb. Good luck works the same, too. It's often a result of attention to detail and being able to recognize potential opportunities and potential hazards, and being prepared to act on that knowledge.

So when something happens don't be too quick to blame it on bad luck or good luck. Examine the situation and perhaps you'll find that you've created your own luck, either bad or good.

**Mark W. Erand**

## The Brick

About ten years ago, a young and very successful executive named Josh was traveling down a Chicago neighborhood street. He was going a bit too fast in his sleek, black, 12 cylinder Jaguar XKE, which was only two months old. He was watching for kids darting out from between parked cars and slowed down when he thought he saw something. As his car passed, no child darted out, but a brick sailed out and-WHUMP! – it smashed into the Jag's shiny black side door! SCREECH!!!! Brakes slammed! Gears ground into reverse, and tires madly spun the Jaguar back to the spot from where the brick had been thrown. Josh jumped out of the car, grabbed the kid and pushed him up against a parked car. He shouted at the kid, "What was that all about and who are you? Just what the heck are you doing?!" Building up a head of steam, he went on.

"That's my new Jag, that brick you threw is gonna cost you a lot of money." "Why did you throw it?"

"Please, mister, please- I'm sorry! I didn't know what else to do!",>pleaded the youngster. "I threw the brick because no one would stop!" Tears were dripping down the boy's chin as he pointed around the parked car. "It's my brother, mister," he said. "He rolled off the curb and fell out of his wheelchair and I can't lift him up." Sobbing, the boy asked the executive, "Would you please help me get him back into his wheelchair? He's hurt and he's too heavy for me."

Moved beyond words, the young executive tried desperately to swallow the rapidly swelling lump in his throat. Straining, he lifted the young man back into the wheel chair and took out his handkerchief and wiped the scrapes and cuts, checking to see that everything was going to be OK. He then watched the younger brother push him down the sidewalk toward their home. It was a long walk back to the sleek, black, shining, 12 cylinder Jaguar XKE- a long and slow walk. Josh never did fix the side door of his Jaguar. He kept the dent to remind him not to go through life so fast that someone or someone has to throw a brick at him to get his attention.

Some bricks are softer than others. Feel for the bricks of life coming at you.

## Harry Truman & the BSA

You will remember my "Presidential Scouting" posting of a month ago; I have been continuing my researches into this. I got a nice package of materials from the Harry S Truman Library, among which was a letter the President sent to the BSA for a training conference in 1947. Several paragraphs in this letter make a good Scoutmasters Minute:

"The Boy Scouts of America, since it was founded in 1910, has contributed greatly to the character training of our youth. With all the problems we face today, not only in the United States, but in the world, there is nothing more important than the proper education and guidance of young people from whom will come the leaders of tomorrow.

We Americans have a tremendous responsibility. While food, clothing and shelter are urgently needed the major task which faces us is not economic, it is \*moral\*. The world needs self-reliant young people who have a sincere regard for others, irrespective of racial origin or religious belief. If we can impress upon our youth principles of friendliness and mutual respect, we shall go a long way toward establishing a better understanding among the nations of the world. The Boy Scouts of America is making a vital contribution to the character building of our boys and young men. Scouting is giving them leadership, adventure in the out-of-doors, training in woodcraft, nature study and other worthwhile activities.

As more and more boys become Scouts, they will be inspired to do their best to do their duty to God and their country and to obey the Scout Law, to help other people at all times and keep themselves physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.

What a greater nation this would be if the principles of Scouting could be woven more closely into our daily lives. Let us work together to make the program of the Boy Scouts available to every American Boy."

30 Nov 1996  
Mark W. Arend  
Beaver Dam Community Library

## Our Lives, Fortunes, Sacred Honor

~~ What Happened To Them? ~~

Just take a moment to read and have a great 4th. . .

Have you ever wondered what happened to the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence?

Five signers were captured by the British as traitors, and tortured before they died. Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned. Two lost their sons serving in the Revolutionary Army, another had two sons captured. Nine of the 56 fought and died from wounds or hard-ships of the Revolutionary War.

They signed and they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. What kind of men were they?

Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists. Eleven were merchants, nine were farmers and large plantation owners; men of means, well educated. But they signed the Declaration of Independence knowing full well that the penalty would be death if they were captured.

Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his ships swept from the seas by the British Navy. He sold his home and properties to pay his debts, and died in rags.

Thomas McKeam was so hounded by the British that he was forced to leave his family almost constantly. He served in the Congress with-out pay, and his family was kept in hiding. His possessions were taken from him, and poverty was his reward.

Vandals or soldiers looted the properties of Dillery, Hall, Clymer, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Rutledge, and Middleton.

At the battle of Yorktown, Thomas Nelson, Jr., noted that the British General Cornwallis had taken over the Nelson home for his head-quarters. He quietly urged General George Washington to open fire. The home was destroyed, and Nelson died bankrupt.

Francis Lewis had his home and properties destroyed. The enemy jailed his wife, and she died within a few months.

John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their 13 children fled for their lives. His fields and his gristmill were laid to waste. For more than a year he lived in forests and caves, returning home to find his wife dead and his children vanished. A few weeks later he died from exhaustion and a broken heart. Norris and Livingston suffered similar fates.

Such were the stories and sacrifices of the American Revolution. These were not wild eyed, rabble-raising ruffians. They were soft-spoken men of means and education. They had security, but they valued liberty more. Standing tall, straight, and unwavering, they pledged:

"For the support of this declaration, with firm reliance on the protection of the divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes, and our honor."

They gave you and me a free and independent America. The history books never told you a lot of what happened in the Revolutionary War. We didn't just fight the British. We were British subjects at that time and we fought our own government! Some of us take these liberties so much for granted. We shouldn't.

So, take a couple of minutes while enjoying your 4th holiday and silently thank these patriots. It's not much to ask for the price they paid.

**Chuck Bramlet ASM Troop 323, Firebird District, Grand Canyon Council, Phoenix, Az.**

## The Power of One Man's Example

During the course of World War II, many people gained fame in one way or another. One man was Butch O'Hare. He was a fighter pilot assigned to an aircraft carrier in the Pacific. One time his entire squadron was assigned to fly a particular mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone had forgotten to top off his fuel tank. Because of this, he would not have enough fuel to complete his mission and get back to his ship.

His flight leader told him to leave formation and return. As he was returning to the mother ship, he could see a squadron of Japanese Zeroes heading toward the fleet to attack. And with all the fighter planes gone, the fleet was almost defenseless. This was the only opportunity to distract and divert them.

Single-handedly, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes and attacked them. The American fighter planes were rigged with cameras, so that as they flew and fought, pictures were taken so pilots could learn more about the terrain, enemy maneuvers, etc. Butch dove at them and shot until all his ammunition was gone, then he would dive and try to clip off a wing or tail or anything that would make the enemy planes unfit to fly. He did anything he could to keep them from reaching the American ships.

Finally, the Japanese squadron took off in another direction, and Butch O'Hare and his fighter, both badly shot up, limped back to the carrier. He told his story, but not until the film from the camera on his plane was developed, did they realize the extent he really went to, to protect his fleet. He was recognized as a hero and given one of the nation's highest military honors. And as you may know, the O'Hare Airport was also named after him.

Prior to this time in Chicago, there was a man named Easy Eddie. He was working for a man you've all heard about, Al Capone. Al Capone wasn't famous for anything heroic, but he was notorious for the murders he'd committed and the illegal things he'd done.

Easy Eddie was Al Capone's lawyer and he was very good. In fact, because of his skill, he was able to keep Al Capone out of jail. To show his appreciation, Al Capone paid him very well. He not only earned big money, he would get extra things, like a residence that filled an entire Chicago city block. The house was fenced, and he had live-in help and all of the conveniences of the day.

Easy Eddie had a son. He loved his son and gave him all the best things while he was growing up; clothes, cars, and a good education. And because he loved his son he tried to teach him right from wrong. But one thing he couldn't give his son was a good name, and a good example. Easy Eddie decided that this was much more important than all the riches he had given him. So, he went to the authorities in order to rectify the wrong he had done. In order to tell the truth, it meant he must testify against Al Capone, and he knew that Al Capone would do his best to have him killed. But he wanted most of all to try to be an example and to do the best he could to give back to his son, a good name. So he testified. Within the year, he was shot and killed on a lonely street in Chicago.

This sounds like two unrelated stories. But Butch O'Hare was Easy Eddie's son.

Do you need an ice-breaker for a Roundtable or other scout meeting? Try this test. I found it at <http://www.densa.com/densa> and took some of the easier questions to make this 12 question test.

### Smart Test

1. How far can a Webelo Scout run into the woods?
2. Tom was born on December 27, on a hot summer day. How is this possible?
3. Why are 1990 dollar bills worth more than 1989 dollar bills?
4. Even when the Arctic natives are starving, why won't they eat penguin eggs?
5. While traveling in Africa, why can't you take a picture of a man with a wooden leg?
6. How many times can you subtract 5 from 25?
7. Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the tallest mountain in the world?
8. How is it possible for two fathers and two sons to pay only \$21 for a buffet when the buffet costs \$7 per person?
9. Which weighs more, a pound of pennies or a pound of dimes?
10. Two U.S. coins add up to 55 cents, but one coin is not a nickel. What are these two coins?
11. A man rides into town on Sunday, three days later, he leaves on Sunday. How can this be?
12. Johnny's mother had three children. The first child was named April. The second child was named May. What was the third child's name?

### BONUS QUESTION

What's more powerful than God, the rich don't want it, the poor have much of it, and if you eat it you'll die.

### **\*ANSWERS\***

1. Half way because then he's on is way out.
2. He was born in the southern hemisphere where their summer is our winter.
3. Because 1990 is always more than 1989.
4. Penguins only live in the Antarctic.
5. Wooden legs don't take pictures anywhere, cameras do.
6. Only once and then you have 20.
7. Mt. Everest was still the tallest even if it wasn't discovered yet.
8. One was a Grandfather, one was a son, and one was a grandson.
9. They weigh the same. A pound of anything still weighs a pound.

10. A half dollar and a nickel. One coin is not a nickel, but the other one is.
11. Sunday is his horse.
12. Johnny. No further explanation.

Bonus: The answer is Nothing. Nothing is more powerful than God. The rich don't want nothing. The poor have too much nothing. If you eat nothing, you will surely die.

For more dumb questions, go to <http://www.densa.com/densa>

**How did you do?**

- |                  |                                                                 |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12-10 correct    | You either cheated or you need to sign up with Mensa.           |
| 9-6 correct      | You are pretty average for a regular person.                    |
| 7-4 correct      | You may need to go back to school because these were real easy. |
| 3-1 correct      | Where have you been all your life? Maybe under a rock.          |
| Missed them all. | You must work for the government and you are here to help us.   |

## Patience

While up north a few weekends ago camping, I had an experience that I found a bit disconcerting. I was driving to Church, and pulled into the left-turn lane to make the turn into the church Parking lot. The car in front of me turned a bit earlier, and I had to slow down. As I was moving on the parking lot entrance, someone behind me cut around me and into the parking lot ahead of me.

I began to think a bit about patience...

We don't normally tend to think of patience as being part of the Scout law, but it's there just the same. Right in behind a few of the other points. Like helpful for instance. Or friendly, courteous, kind, and cheerful. Can you really be any of those, and still be impatient?

We are being drowned by a culture of impatience, from channel surfing to tailgating. We channel surf to avoid commercials, or parts of the movies that we think are boring. (We like the car chases and lots of shooting.)

We ignore speed limits, and slide through the intersection just as, or after, the light turns red. We tailgate the person in front of us, whether he's going the speed limit or not. Sometimes, we cut around him, causing or almost causing an accident.

We crowd in front of other people, whether it's in Church, shopping, or at the Scout meeting or the concert. We angrily take the materials away from our kids, or the boys or girls we're teaching, and do the jobs ourselves because they aren't doing it right, or fast enough to suit us.

I suggest that it's time that we started emphasizing some patience in our daily lives. After all, an impatient person is more likely to be unhelpful, unfriendly, discourteous, unkind, and not in the least cheerful.

You can use the commercial breaks as intermissions. Or even better, watch a few of them. There are some pretty good stories hidden in some commercials.

Take the time to drive safely - and not tailgate the guy ahead of you. You really don't have to be the fastest car on the road. Wait your turn. Go ahead and let Johnny collect the wood and build that campfire himself. He'll learn more from doing it himself, and you'll learn that he can take some pride in his own work. It won't add that much time before it's ready.

As it was put in a song many years ago, "You've got to stop and smell the roses." And when you stop, you might find out that there are more roses than you thought, and more good things for you to smell than just the roses.

**Original by C. Bramlet**  
ASM Troop 323, Firebird Dist, Grand Canyon Council, Phoenix, Az.

## **The Lone Ranger Creed**

I believe

That to have a friend, a man must be one.

That all men are created equal and that everyone has within himself the power to make this a better world.

That God put the firewood there but that every man must gather and light it himself.

In being prepared physically, mentally, and morally to fight when necessary for that which is right.

That a man should make the most of what equipment he has.

That 'This government, of the people, by the people and for the people' shall live always.

That men should live by the rule of what is best for the greatest number.

That sooner or later... somewhere...somehow... we must settle with the world and make payment for what we have taken.

That all things change but truth, and that truth alone, lives on forever. In my Creator, my country, my fellow man.

**Clayton Moore, 1914-1999**

## Failure

Einstein was four years old before he could speak.

Isaac Newton did poorly in grade school and was considered 'unpromising.'

Beethoven's music teacher once said of him, 'As a composer, he is hopeless.'

When Thomas Edison was a youngster, his teacher told him he was too stupid to learn anything. He was counseled to go into a field where he might succeed by virtue of his pleasant personality.

F.W. Woolworth got a job in a dry goods store when he was 21, but his employer would not permit him to wait on customers because he 'didn't have enough sense to close a sale.'

Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team. Boston Celtics Hall of Famer Bob Cousy suffered the same fate.

A newspaper editor fired Walt Disney because he 'lacked imagination and had no good ideas.'

Winston Churchill failed the sixth grade and had to repeat it because he did not complete the tests that were required for promotion.

Babe Ruth struck out 1,300 times- a major league record.

A person may make mistakes, but isn't a failure until he (or she) starts blaming someone else. We must believe in ourselves, and somewhere along the road of life, we must meet someone who sees greatness in us, expects it from us, and lets us know it. It is the golden key to success.

## As Much Sense As A Goose

This fall, when you see geese heading south for the winter, flying along in "V" formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in "V" formation, the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

*People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily, because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.*

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone--and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front.

*If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those people who are headed the same way we are.*

When the goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point.

*It is sensible to take turns doing the demanding jobs in life and at work.*

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

*What messages do we give from behind?*

Finally, and probably most important, whenever a goose gets sick or is wounded, and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly or until it dies, and only then do they launch out on their own, or with another formation to catch up with their group.

*If we have the sense of a goose, we will stand by each other like that.*

Author unknown  
David T. Berg  
Scoutmaster Troop 465  
Beech Grove, IN

### Arapaho Scoutmasters Minute

A group of Arapaho Indian boys decided it was time to prove to the tribe elders that they were old enough to be considered men. By custom, the rite of manhood included living alone for one week in the wilderness. Each boy was instructed to only take a knife with him and come back seven days later and tell of his adventures. One boy, wanting to prove that he was more of a man than the others, decided that he would climb the snow-capped mountains for his week of adventure. Surely, living in the snow and cold is a hardship that the elders must agree that only a man could endure. So, he walked an entire day across the plains to the foot of the mountains. He climbed halfway up the mountains to the snowline when a snake spoke to him.

"Help me," the snake cried.

"Why should I help you, a rattlesnake? You are known to bite and kill people," replied the Arapaho brave.

"I am cold and almost frozen. Please put me in your warm shirt and take me down the mountain to where it is warm where I can survive," said the rattlesnake.

"How do I know that you are not going to bite and kill me?" asked the brave.

"Why should I bite the person who saves my life?" replies the snake.

"Ok. I do not like to see anyone die. Promise you won't bite me?" asked the brave.

"I Promise," replied the snake.

So the Indian boy placed the snake in his shirt and walked down the mountain. As he opened his shirt to let the snake out, the rattlesnake bit him.

"WHY DID YOU BITE ME? You promised you wouldn't bite and kill me!" yelled the young brave.

The snake replied, "You knew who I was when you picked me up. You have nobody to blame for your death but yourself."

Today scouts, one doesn't prove his maturity by living alone in the wilderness anymore, but instead shows that he is a man by living wisely in the streets and making good decisions by himself. There are rattlesnakes hiding in the streets today that go by the names of marijuana, cocaine, crack, speed, acid, ...drugs. Drugs will falsely promise a lot of good times and laughs, but will instead lie to you, get you to steal and break the law in other ways, and if not kill you, rob you of your health and brains. The few hours of chemical-induced pleasure may cost you the rest of your life in permanent brain damage and physical disability.

When you decide to prove to others that you are mature enough to be a man, prove it by making the right choice not to do any drugs and stick to that decision. Ok?

## **Turn Back**

There's a Turkish proverb that states: "No matter how far you've gone down the wrong road, turn back". This is good advice. Each one of us goes down some wrong roads from time to time.

We might start some bad habits. Or make a wrong decision about what class to take or what job to work at. Or we get involved in some wrong activities.

But you don't have to keep going down that wrong road. You can always stop, and turn around, and go back. Don't ever let anyone tell you otherwise. There may be consequences for what you've done, but you can always stop and turn back.

About 250 years ago, when sailors were a pretty rough bunch of guys, there was a tough captain of a slave ship. One day, he realized what he was doing was wrong. And he stopped. And he turned back. That captain was named John Newton. He became a clergyman and wrote a number of well-known hymns, most notably "Amazing Grace".

We can all do the same thing. Just remember: "No matter how far you've gone down the wrong road, turn back".

**11 Aug 1997**  
**Mark Arend**  
**Beaver Dam Community Library**

## Leadership

I've been reading a lot about leadership lately; there are a couple of books that examine the leadership abilities and techniques of some of our country's leaders (George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Paine, and others) and explaining how contemporary leaders can develop their qualities and use their techniques here and now. There's a few common traits that all great leaders have.

Leaders learn. They can learn from their successes and from their mistakes.

Leaders listen to what people have to say. They realize that they have to talk to the people they lead and they are not afraid to go and find out what people think and what they want.

Leaders work. They put in the time and effort to do a good job. Sometimes extra time and extra effort.

Leaders set goals. They can look at the whole situation, tell what's important and what's unimportant, and see what needs to be done.

Leaders are persistent. Once they have a goal they continue to work towards it.

Leaders inspire trust. Or, in the words of the Scout Law, they are Trustworthy. You know that you can depend on them.

Next week we'll be holding Troop elections. We've held nominations tonight. I want you to think about these guys who have been nominated. Who do you think will be the best leader?

The particular book which inspired this is "The Founding Fathers on leadership" by Donald Phillips which examines the leadership styles and techniques of the men who led our Revolution. It's a companion to "Lincoln on Leadership" by the same author, which I mentioned here a month or two ago. I recommend both highly.

8 Aug 2000  
Mark Arend

## Trained Fleas

[The following is adapted from a column by Harvey Mackay that appeared in our local paper today. I have added the final paragraph for my minute.] Flea trainers have observed a predicable and strange habit of fleas while training them. Fleas are trained by putting them in a cardboard box with a top on it. The fleas will jump up and hit the top of the box over and over and over again. As you watch them jump and hit the lid, something very interesting becomes obvious. The fleas continue to jump, but they are no longer jumping high enough to hit the top.

When you take off the lid, the fleas continue to jump, but they will not jump out of the box. They won't jump out because they can't jump out. Why? They have conditioned themselves to jump just so high.

Many times, people do the same thing. They restrict themselves and never reach their potential. Just like the fleas, they fail to jump higher, thinking they are doing all they can do.

Far too many people exist in a world of 'what is' rather than giving thought or applying their energies to 'what can be.'

Each week you stand at this meeting and promise to do your best. That means that you should not take someone else's limits as your own, but be ready to jump out of the box when the opportunity presents itself.

**Alan R. Houser \*\* troop24@emf.net  
Scoutmaster, Troop 24, Berkeley, California \*\***

## The Youngest Rose

[Editor's Note: The following story came to us from friend, colleague and mentor, Rod Hanna. There is no author identified, although I wish there were. We share it to you, not as an original work, but as a universal reminder that we should enjoy every day we have.] The first day of school our professor introduced himself and challenged us to get to know someone we didn't already know. I stood up to look around when a gentle hand touched my shoulder. I turned around to find a wrinkled, little old lady beaming up at me with a smile that lit up her entire being.

She said, "Hi handsome. My name is Rose. I'm eighty-seven years old. Can I give you a hug?"

I laughed and enthusiastically responded, "Of course you may!" and she gave me a giant squeeze.

"Why are you in college at such a young, innocent age?" I asked.

She jokingly replied, "I'm here to meet a rich husband, get married, have a couple of children, and then retire and travel."

"No, seriously," I asked. I was curious what may have motivated her to be taking on this challenge at her age.

"I always dreamed of having a college education and now I'm getting one!" she told me.

After class we walked to the student union building and shared a chocolate milkshake. We became instant friends. Every day for the next three months we would leave class together and talk nonstop. I was always mesmerized listening to this "time machine" as she shared her wisdom and experience with me.

Over the course of the year, Rose became a campus icon and she easily made friends wherever she went. She loved to dress up and she reveled in the attention bestowed upon her from the other students. She was living it up.

At the end of the semester we invited Rose to speak at our football banquet. I'll never forget what she taught us. She was introduced and stepped up to the podium. As she began to deliver her prepared speech, she dropped her three by five cards on the floor. Frustrated and a little embarrassed she leaned into the microphone and simply said, "I'm sorry I'm so jittery. I gave up beer for Lent and this whiskey is killing me! I'll never get my speech back in order so let me just tell you what I know." As we laughed she cleared her throat and began:

"We do not stop playing because we are old; we grow old because we stop playing. There are only four secrets to staying young, being happy, and achieving success.

[1] You have to laugh and find humor every day.

[2] You've got to have a dream. When you lose your dreams, you die. We have so many people walking around who are dead and don't even know it!"

[3] "There is a huge difference between growing older and growing up. If you are nineteen years old and lie in bed for one full year and don't do one productive thing, you will turn twenty

years old. If I am eighty-seven years old and stay in bed for a year and never do anything I will turn eighty-eight. Anybody can grow older. That doesn't take any talent or ability. The idea is to grow up by always finding the opportunity in change."

[4]"Have no regrets. The elderly usually don't have regrets for what we did, but rather for things we did not do. The only people who fear death are those with regrets."

She concluded her speech by courageously singing "The Rose." She challenged each of us to study the lyrics and live them out in our daily lives.

At the years end Rose finished the college degree she had begun all those years ago. One week after graduation Rose died peacefully in her sleep.

Over two thousand college students attended her funeral in tribute to the wonderful woman who taught by example that it's never too late to be all you can possibly be.

If you read this, please send this peaceful word of advice to your friends and family, they'll really enjoy it! We send these words in loving memory of ROSE.

Remember, GROWING OLDER IS MANDATORY, GROWING UP IS OPTIONAL.

## Life's Choices

Life isn't about keeping score.

It's not about how many friends you have or how accepted you are.

It's not about if you have plans this weekend or if you're alone.

It isn't about who you're dating, who you used to date, how many people you've dated, or if you've dated anyone at all.

It isn't about who your family is or how much money they have or what kind of car you drive or where you go to school.

It's not about how beautiful or ugly you are, the clothes you wear, the shoes you wear, or what kind of music you listen to.

It's not about if your hair is blonde, red, black, or brown or if your skin is too light or too dark.

It's not about how smart you are, how smart everybody else thinks you are, or how smart standardized tests say you are.

It's not about what clubs you're in or how good you are at "your" sport.

It's not about representing your whole being on a piece of paper called a resume and then seeing who will "accept the written you."

Life just isn't about those things.

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Life is about choices.

Life is about who you love.

It's about who you make happy.

It's about kindness and generosity.

It's about holding and sharing trust.

It's about friendship.

It's about what you say, what you mean, and thinking heartening thoughts.

It's about faith, integrity, and knowing your own heart.

It's about carrying inner love, letting it grow, and spreading it.

Most of all, it's about using your life to touch other people's hearts in such a way that could have never occurred alone.

Only you choose the way those hearts are affected, and those choices make up what your life is all about.

**Cliff Golden**  
**Scoutmaster Troop 33; DeKalb, Illinois**  
**Three Fires Council BSA**

## Who is Packing Your Parachute?

Charles Plum, was a jet fighter pilot in Vietnam.

After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed. Plumb ejected and parachuted and spent six years in a P.O.W. camp.

One day, when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters from the carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!"

"How in the world did you know that?" asked Plumb.

"I packed your parachute," the man replied.

Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude.

The man pumped his hand and said, "I guess it worked!"

Plumb assured him, "It sure did -- if your chute hadn't worked, I wouldn't be here today."

Plumb couldn't sleep that night, thinking about that man. Plumb says, "I kept wondering what he might have looked like in a Navy uniform and how many times he might have passed him on the Kitty Hawk not even said 'Good Morning'.

You see, I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor."

Plumb thought of the many hours the sailor had spent on a long wooden table carefully folding the silks of each chute, holding in his hands each time the fate of someone he didn't know.

Plumb, a lecturer now asks his audience, "Who's packing your parachute?"

Everyone has someone who provides what they need to help them make it through the day.

### **Pickup in the Rain**

One night, at 11:30 pm, an older African-American woman was standing on the side of a Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rain storm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride. Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car. A young white man stopped to help her-generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960s. The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxi cab. She seemed to be in a big hurry! She wrote down his address, thanked him and drove away. Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant combination console color TV and stereo record player were delivered to his home. A special note was attached. The note read:

Dear Mr. James:

Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes but my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband's bedside just before he passed away. God bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others.

Sincerely, Mrs. Nat King Cole.

## The Spirit of Scouting

Kyoto, Japan, is a city of many temples. Among those temples stands a statue somewhat different than its surroundings. It is a statue of two young men, an American Scout, and a Japanese Scout, clasping hands. How it came to be there is a story worth telling.

Some of the worst fighting of World War II was in Okinawa. It was protracted, and bloody, and fought with fierce determination by both sides. In the midst of one of the battles, near the beach, a young American soldier fell wounded. As he lay there, bleeding and in pain, his vision out of focus, about to lose consciousness, he saw a Japanese soldier standing over him, bayonet at the ready, poised to strike. He said afterwards he did not even know himself why he did what he then did. He was weak from blood loss and blacking out. But he raised his right hand in a familiar sign - the universally recognized Scout sign. Then he lost consciousness, expecting never to awake.

He did wake, though. When he came to, he was in an American field hospital. His wounds had been dressed. And in his pocket was a note, written in Japanese. He was able to find someone to translate the note eventually, and this is what it said: "I could not bring myself to kill a fellow Scout." The note also bore the name and address of the Japanese soldier who, instead of taking his life, had spared it, and tended to his wounds before moving on.

When the war had ended, the young soldier was assigned to the occupation force. He went to find his savior at the first opportunity. He discovered that the Japanese soldier who had both spared and saved his life had died later in the fighting there on Okinawa. But his family had survived, and the American became their friend and helped them in every way he could during his time in Japan. When asked why, he explained what had occurred, and showed the note, which he still kept. The people were so touched by this story, that they erected the monument which stands in Kyoto today. It is a monument to our shared humanity- that in the midst of war and violence, of hatred and bloodshed, two young men found that they were in fact brothers. It is a monument to the ideals of Scouting - that even when thus deeply divided, Scouting is a link that joins us and encourages compassion, mercy, understanding, and peace.

The statue stands among the temples of Kyoto, a monument to the spiritual values of the world-wide movement known as Scouting. It is also a monument to hope - the hope that if we can only recognize our common bonds, the world would be a better place.

**This was told to me by a former dean of the U.F. Law School, Tom Read, who had at the time just returned from a trip to Japan.  
Bruce Major, SM. T84, Gainesville, FL**

## **Scouting's Directions**

Tonight we've been learning how to find direction on a map and use the compass to stay on course. By now I hope most of you can orient a map and use map and compass to travel in unknown territory.

In scouting we have another kind of 'map and compass'. They are the Scout Oath, Law, motto, and slogan. They are excellent guides for traveling through life.

Whenever you are wondering what's the right thing to do, consult these 'maps and compasses'. They won't always provide an easy answer. Sometimes you will have to think through your decision, but it will be easier if you ask yourself, "What if I act according to the Scout Law?" Chances are the Law will help to show you the right thing to do.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, 4 Oct 1987**

## **The Wilderness Pledge**

Next week we'll be outdoors again and it's a good time to remind ourselves that Scouts obey the Wilderness Pledge whenever they are hiking, camping, or on other activities away from the meeting place.

You all should be familiar with the Wilderness Pledge. It says, "Through good camping and hiking practices, I pledge myself to preserve the beauty and splendor of America's wilderness, primitive, and backcountry areas. I commit myself to:

- Set a personal example in following the Outdoor Code.
- Train those I lead in the skills and attitudes needed to protect and preserve wilderness for future generations.
- Assure that parties of which I am a part observe the hiking and camping standards that will leave no trace of our passing.

It seems to me that what it boils down to is that in the Wilderness Pledge we commit ourselves as Scouts not only to preserve the environment but to make it better. For example, not only don't we leave litter ourselves, we pick up other people's litter. And we not only build safe fires, we try to make sure that others do, too. In other words, we take responsibility as Scouts to do whatever we can to keep America beautiful.

That may seem like a tall order. Nobody enjoys picking up other people's litter. It's a lot easier just to say, "Boy, what a mess!" and pass it by. But that's not Scouting's way.

On all our hikes and campouts, let's leave the land better than we found it. That's Scouting's way.

## Scouting's Plumb Line

[Show a carpenter's plumb line] Does anybody know what this is? That's right, it's a plumb line. Carpenters and masons use a plumb line to make sure their work is perfectly straight and vertical.

Suppose you were building a brick wall and you built it just by guesswork. Then I came along with this plumb line and laid it against your wall. Both of us could see that the wall is crooked if the plumb line told us so.

You might get mad about it and throw my plumb line as far as you could. But that wouldn't make the wall any straighter, would it?

In Scouting we have another kind of plumb line, and in a way it shows how straight we are. Scouting's plumb line is the Scout Oath and Law. They tell us how to build our lives straight and true. When we don't follow the Oath and Law, we know it, don't we? If we've been untrustworthy, disloyal, or unfriendly to someone, our plumb line- the Scout Law- is there in the back of our mind to remind us that we are not building our lives in the straight and true way.

The Scout never lived who never once violated the Oath and Law. But these pledges, our plumb line, should always be our guide.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Dec 1987**

## **Freedom for What?**

We've been talking about the Constitution and the freedoms it gives us as citizens.

But how free are we? What does freedom mean? Does it mean we can do anything we want?

I think we'll agree that the answer is no. Freedom of speech, for example, doesn't mean that we can go into a crowded theater and yell, "Fire!" And freedom certainly doesn't mean that we can steal from people or assault them without fear of being arrested, tried, and perhaps thrown into jail. As somebody once said, "Your freedom to swing your fist ends just beyond the tip of my nose."

So what does freedom mean in the sense of the Constitution? It means, I believe, that we are free to live according to the laws of God, free to worship as we choose, to speak and write the truth as we see it, to choose our life's work, and to travel where we want to go- and to grant the same rights to others.

The Constitution does not give us unlimited rights to act without regard to other people. But it does guarantee us the right to live as free men in a society whose citizens are equal in the eyes of the law.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Dec 1987**

## **Spring Phenoms**

I know that some of you read the sports pages and follow the big league pennant races. So probably you have heard of Spring Phenoms. Who can tell me what a spring phenom is?

He's a player who starts the season like a superstar. In April, May, and June he's hitting about .350, stealing a lot of bases, and never missing a ball in the field. Comes July and August and he can't do anything right. That's a spring phenom.

Maybe you've seen spring phenoms in Scouting, too. They start up the advancement trail like a house afire, making Second Class and First Class as fast as the rules allow. Then, when the going gets tougher for Star, Life, and Eagle, they sort of fade away like spring phenoms.

Maybe it's the troop's fault. Maybe we just don't challenge them enough. If so, let's change that. I'm challenging all of you now to set your sights on the next rank and make up your mind you're going to make it by Christmas at the latest.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Aug 1988**

## Olympic Oath

I imagine most of us have watched the Olympic Games on television. It's really great seeing the world's greatest athletes competing, isn't it?

Did you know that these athletes take an oath before they begin competition? Let me read the oath:

"We swear that we will take part in the Olympic Games in loyal competition, respecting the regulations which govern them and desirous of participating in them in the true spirit of sportsmanship for the honor of our country and for the glory of sport."

Did you notice that the oath says nothing about winning? Of course the athletes want to win. After all, they have been training for four years or more to get ready for the games.

But the Olympic ideal is fair competition, not winning at all costs. Let's remember that ideal when we have our Aqua-Olympics and any other competitions.

Play to win. But remember that every athlete must learn how to lose gracefully, without alibi or complaint. That's the Olympic ideal in a nutshell. It's also the ideal in Scouting.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Aug 88**

## **The Knot That Tells a Story**

Scouts, if your rank is between Second Class and Life, take a look at your badge of rank. What do all those badges have in common?

That's right, they all have the "Be Prepared" scroll with a knot dangling from it. Does anyone remember what the knot is supposed to remind you of?

Right again. It's a reminder that you have pledged yourself to do a Good Turn every day. If the knot could talk, it would tell us of billions of Good Turns stretching back [90] years. Are you adding a chapter to that story each day?

Our troop often does big Good Turns for our chartered organization of the community. But does that mean you can forget about Good Turns the rest of the time? Of course not. As Scouts you have pledged to do a Good turn daily. Obviously that doesn't mean you have to spend several hours on some major project.

But it does mean that at home, in school, and when you're with friends you will go out of your way to do a simple kindness- take out the garbage without being asked, help a buddy with his homework, or run an errand for your mother without grumbling.

Those little Good Turns make life more pleasant for other people. They also add another link in that long string of Good Turns going back to Scouting's beginnings.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Apr 1988**

## **Solid to the Core**

Every once in a while when you're working on a pioneering job, you'll find a spar that looks great but that turns out to be weak and unreliable.

Maybe its center has been eaten away by insects. Or it may have natural splits inside that you can't see. You can test a spar for soundness by holding one and rapping the other end sharply on a rock. If it's sound, you'll hear it ring.

Some people are like defective spars. They look great on the outside and they may have appealing personalities, the kind of guys and girls you think you would like to know. But when you do get to know them better, you find they're like a defective spar, weak inside. They don't have the strength of character to resist things you know are wrong, and chances are they will want you to do those things, too.

When that happens, do the same thing you do when you have a defective spar- cast it aside and find a sounder one. In other words, choose friends who are solid to the core.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Apr 1988**

## **Road Test Yourself**

Did you know that car manufacturers try out their new models on some of the worst roads in the world? They can't find any ordinary roads that are bad enough for the purpose, so they build special tracks with ruts, bumps, and potholes that are incredibly bad.

Now why do they do that, do you suppose? That's right, they want to give their cars the toughest possible test so that they can learn about weak spots. The idea is that they will fix the weak spots before the cars go on sale.

Are you like a new car model that never was tested? Are you cheerful when the going is easy but grumble and gripe when there is trouble? Are you like a shiny new car that falls to pieces when it gets a tough road test?

In a way, Scouting is like a road test. We challenge ourselves with rugged backpacking trips and other adventures to see whether or not we can take it. Scouts like to find out what our limits are, and if we find weak spots, we try to correct them.

That way, we'll be ready for life's bumps and potholes. Then people will say of us, "Those guys can take it."

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Mar 1988**

## **Fit for Life**

One of the goals of Scouting is physical fitness, and we've been paying special attention to it this month. It's fun to test yourself against standards to see how fit you are and to compete against other Scouts in fitness games and contests.

But there's a more important reason for all this physical activity. It's to make you fit for life. If you become physically fit now, the chances are you will be physically fit when you reach full manhood.

You should remember, though, that physical fitness is not just being strong and athletic. It's also knowing how to take care of your body- what to feed it, how much rest it needs, and what NOT to put into it. I'm thinking, of course, of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco smoke.

Probably you will face a lot of pressure in the next few years to try drugs, smoking, and alcohol. No doubt some of you have already.

Some guys you think of as friends will tell you that trying drugs is cool. Actually, it's about as cool as sticking your hand in a campfire. Don't learn the hard way. Stay away from drugs and drinking and stay fit for life.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Mar 1988**

### **Making a Fresh Start**

Well, Scouts, the new year is here and it's time for New Year's resolutions. In other words, as your theme this month says, it time for a fresh start.

I don't know whether you make New Year's resolutions, but if you do, I hope that one of them is to move up Scouting's advancement ladder. Next month we'll be having a Court of Honor, and I'm looking forward to seeing a lot of you receiving awards the. I'm especially hopeful that those of you who haven't moved a rank since last spring will get busy this month and do it in time for the Court of Honor.

So let's have a fresh start from everybody in the troop this month so that every Scout is called forward at our Court of Honor in February.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Jan 1988**

## **Your Wild Animal**

Scouts, did you know that everybody- including you- has to tame a wild animal and keep it behind bars?

The wild animal is your tongue, and the bars are your own teeth. If your tongue is not trained, it can cause a lot of trouble, not only to yourself but to those around you. Keep those bars of teeth closed until your tongue is so well-trained that you know it won't harm anybody.

Your wild animal can make trouble by bad-mouthing other people, by gossip and slander, by wisecracks at the wrong time. Train your tongue so that it knows the right time to speak and the time to be quiet. Until you have it trained, keep that wild animal behind bars.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Jan 1981**

## **Looking for Trouble**

Scouts, the name of our theme this month is Looking for Trouble. If you think about it a minute, you'll realize that it has two meanings.

Sometimes when we say a guy is looking for trouble, we mean he's got a chip on his shoulder and is ready for a fight.

I don't think I have to tell you that that's not what our theme is all about. Guys who are constantly picking fights are not much fun to be around- and they certainly are not showing the Scout spirit.

When a real Boy Scout is looking for trouble, he's on the alert to help people, often people who are injured or otherwise in trouble. And that's what our theme is all about, learning how to help other people. We'll be learning the fundamentals of first aid, one of the most important skill you can have for helping others. Then when you're looking for trouble, people will welcome you. They won't groan and say, "Oh, no, here's the kid who's just looking for trouble!"

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Feb 1981**

## **Value Your Conscience**

It may seem funny to say so, but you're very lucky that it hurts when you hit your finger with a hammer. If it didn't hurt, you could be in big trouble.

It's a rarity when a person can't feel pain, but it does happen. Some years ago, for example, there was an eight-year-old boy in England who couldn't feel pain. For some reason, his nerves did not signal pain to his brain.

If you think he was lucky, think again. The problem could cost him his life. Once he was seriously burned by a red-hot oven door, but he didn't even know it until he was snatched away.

So it is clear that physical pain can save us from mortal danger. But there is another kind of pain, too, and all of us here can feel it. It's a spiritual or moral pain, and it's called conscience. The conscience is one of our greatest gifts. Without our conscience, we would not know enough to keep from getting burned in even more serious ways than that English boy.

So as the old saying goes, "Let your conscience be your guide." It will help you to know whether you are following the Scout Oath and Law. You have no better friend than your conscience.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Jan 1988**

## **A Scout is Kind**

Scouts, our Law say, "A Scout is kind. He does not hurt or kill harmless things without reason."

Probably some of you will become hunters as you grow older. Maybe a few of you have already hunted. Is that bad? Are you following the Scout Law when you hunt?

You should be. The key words in the Law are "without reason." If you're going to hunt for food within the law, or to kill pests that are destroying property, or are hunting animals that are dangerous to man, you are not hunting without reason. You are obeying the Scout Law.

But never aim at a target you don't intend to hit. And if your target is a living creature, be sure you're not killing it without a reason.

A Scout is kind- and he does not blast away just for fun. He shoots only with good reason.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Jan 1981**

## Mentally Awake

[Have a junior assistant scoutmaster enter the room apparently in the throes of choking. He's gasping, grabbing at his throat, turning red in the face. See what the response is.] Well, Scouts, that was scary, wasn't it? How many of you knew what apparently was happening to Jim? How many of you knew what to do?

Jim was just acting, of course, to make a point. The point is that you have to be prepared to give first aid. It's one thing to practice slapping backs and doing the manual thrusts in troop meetings. It's another to recognize trouble when it comes and know what to do without panicking. Sure you may be scared when you have to make a rescue or give real first aid when it counts. But that's the real test of a first aider.

Be alert to recognize trouble. When it comes, stay cool. Then act. You'll probably be better prepared to help than anyone else around.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Feb 1981**

## **Let's Fix It**

Our theme this month is "Let's Fix It" and we get started tonight by learning how to repair and adjust bicycles. At our next couple of troop meetings, we'll be making things for our patrols and learning how to make rope.

Most of our work will benefit ourselves. But you know, Scouts, we can apply the "Let's fix It" idea to our relations with others. How? By remembering to do our Good Turn daily.

Often around home, in school, in church, and elsewhere, we all have opportunities to help others fix something. It might be helping Mom or Dad to make some small repair around the house Or it might be helping someone you don't even know who needs a hand in some way.

Scouts should be 'fix-it' guys all the time. That's what our slogan is all about.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Mar 1981**

## **Build Yourself**

All the patrols got a fine start tonight on some building projects. I hope you'll all follow through and finish them soon because we'll need them in the months ahead.

Building things is fun, isn't it? It's good to know that you can handle tools to make things. This ability will stay with you all your life.

You scouts have an even more important building project under way right now. You are building yourselves in physical, mental, and moral fitness. Just about everything you do affects the kind of person you are becoming- your physical strength, your mental alertness, or your spiritual and moral attitudes and beliefs.

Building things is important, but none so important as building yourself.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Mar 1981**

### **On the Trail**

Once a hound was trailing a mountain lion. He came to a place where a fox had crossed the trail, and the hound decided to follow the fox instead of the lion. A short time later a rabbit track crossed that of the fox, and again the hound changed direction. Why should he chase a fox when a rabbit might be easier to catch? When the hunter finally caught up with the hound, it was barking at a small hole in the ground. Instead of the mountain lion, the hound had brought to bay a field mouse.

Do you know here the trail you are following is leading? Are you able to follow it, or are you sidetracked by easier trails that cross it from time to time?

The best way to achieve any object in life is to set a true course for it and then stick to the trail.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Apr 1981**

## **The Outdoor Code**

Scouts, from now through next summer, we'll be spending a lot of time outdoors. So it's a good time to remind ourselves that Scouts obey the Outdoor Code whenever they leave their meeting place.

You're all familiar with the Outdoor Code. It says, "As an American, I will do my best to be clean in my outdoor manners, be careful with fire, be considerate in the outdoors, and be conservation-minded."

It seems to me that what it boils down to is that in the Outdoor Code we pledge ourselves as Scouts not only to preserve the outdoors but to make it better. For example, we not only don't litter, we pick up other people's litter. And we not only build safe fires, we make sure that others' fires are safe, too. In other words, we take responsibility as Scouts to do everything we can to keep America beautiful.

That may seem like a tall order. Nobody enjoys picking up other people's litter. It's a lot easier just to say, "Boy! That's a mess!" and pass it by.

Whenever we're outdoors, let's live by the Outdoor Code. It's Scouting's way.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Apr 1981**

## **Thanksgiving**

We have an awful lot to be thankful for as Thanksgiving approaches. We live in freedom, we have an abundance of food and clothing, and we have adequate shelter. We Americans, in fact, are as blessed as any people in the world. Sometimes we take our blessings for granted. We think of them as something that's due us.

Well, let's remember that the majority of the world's peoples go to bed hungry at night in homes that few Americans would want to live in.

There's not a lot that you as Scouts can do to help the world's poor. Our country is doing its best to help them, and of course you're part of that effort because you are citizens.

What we can do is thank God for our blessings. And we can show our gratitude by doing service for our own community- the kind of work we'll be doing this month. Enjoy your Thanksgiving holiday- and don't forget to give thanks.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Nov 1980**

## **A Scout is Loyal**

Scouts, we're having a lot of fun this month learning how to become fit and stay that way. And we're enjoying some friendly competition.

I hope we're also learning what good sportsmanship means- and what it means to be loyal to your team. I think at least part of the meaning of loyalty to your team, or your patrol, is learning how to play the game to benefit the team, not just yourself.

In sports, you see that kind of loyalty in basketball when a player passes off to another guy with a better shot at the basket. In baseball, it's shown by the guy who cheerfully lays down a sacrifice bunt, even when he's sure he could hit the ball hard. And in football, it the blocker who paves the way for the running back.

That kind of team loyalty is necessary in sports. It's just as necessary in Scouting. If your patrol is going to be outstanding, each member must be loyal to the patrol, not just to his own interest.

An athlete is loyal to his team. A Scout is loyal to his patrol and troop.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Dec 1980**

### **Who Said the Sky is the Limit?**

Not many years ago you'd hear people say, "The sky is the limit." They said it when they meant that a man could make anything of himself that he wanted- at least on earth.

That limit no longer applies. Our astronauts have shown us that we're not even limited in aspiring to reach distant space.

What does that mean to you? A former Scout named Buzz Aldrin, who was the second man to walk on the moon, urged young people to learn as much as they can about many things and then select one field and strive hard to excel in it. Aldrin said, "Set your goals high and settle for nothing less than accomplishment, Don't settle for mediocrity. "

So if you want to become outstanding in some field of work when you become a man, set your goals high. The sky is no longer the limit.

Aim for the stars- even if you plan to remain right here on earth. You are building your launching pad from manhood right now by your willingness to work and take initiative in every task you tackle- at home in church, in school, and in Scouting.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, May 1981**

## **Helpful to Others**

Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of Boy Scouting, said this to Scouts everywhere:

“I often think that when the sun goes down the world is hidden by a big blanket from the light of heaven, but the stars are little holes pierced in that blanket by those who have done good deeds in the world. The stars are not all the same size; some are big, some are little, and some men have done small deeds but they have made their hole in the blanket by doing good before they went to heaven.

“Try to make your hole in the blanket by good work while you are on earth. It is something to be good, but it is far better to DO good.”

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, May 1981**

## **Our Natural Resources**

[Hold up two glasses of water, one filled with dirty water, one with clean water.] Scouts, which one would you want to drink? The answer is pretty obvious.

To make sure we always have enough clean, pure water, we have to use it wisely. Otherwise, there would not be enough clean water to go around and that would be a catastrophe for all of us.

Government conservation departments are working hard to conserve our water resources so there will be plenty for future generations. But we have to do our part, too.

So when we go fishing and swimming, let's resist the urge to drop litter into the water or along the shore. And let's pick up trash and garbage we find there. When we do that, we're making contribution to clean water for ourselves and for future generations.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Jun 1981**

## **Minnows and Whoppers**

Everybody likes to hear fish stories, the wilder the better. We enjoy them because they're funny, and nobody is fooled into thinking they really happened.

But some people tell fish stories, or fishy stories all the time. They're not usually funny stories; in fact they're really lies. I call them minnows and whoppers.

Minnows are little lies that just shade the truth. For instance, maybe a guy is playing Skish and says he hit a target 55 feet away, when in fact it was only 40 feet. No serious damage is done, except to the guy's own character, from a minnow like that.

The trouble is, if you get used to telling minnows, it becomes easier to tell whoppers- the big lies that may hurt somebody.

The best thing to do is to stick to the truth. Minnows have a way of growing into whoppers.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Jun 1981**

## **Be Safe Outdoors**

Our theme this month has to do with keeping safe and healthy in the outdoors. Now I know safety isn't a very exciting subject, but it's very important for all of us- you, me, and your parents.

Probably when you first joined the troop, your parents worried about you when you were out hiking and camping with us. But the truth is, you're safer in the outdoors with us than you are at home. There are no stairs to fall down in the woods. There's no danger from electricity, or explosions, or automobiles. Besides, we have a lot of guys in the troop who know what to do if there is an accident.

It is true, though, that you can get hurt in the outdoors. Most of the accidents that happen are because somebody forgot simple safety rules like no horseplay around cooking fires and taking good care of knives, axes, and other tools.

We're safety conscious in this troop. Let's keep it that way. We'll all enjoy the outdoors a lot more.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Jul 1981**

## **Smiling in the Rain**

About 100 years ago a joker said, "Everybody talks about the weather but nobody does anything about it." That isn't quite true anymore because today scientists can seed clouds with chemicals to make rain fall.

But it is still true that we're pretty much at the mercy of the weather. And this is no fair-weather troop, so sometimes we're out there camping in a cloudburst. It may not be as much fun as being outdoors on a sunny summer day, but it's part of the outdoor life. And as long as you have a pair of dry socks and dry underwear in your pack, you can enjoy the rain.

At least, I hope you can. I like to see Scouts smiling in the rain because a real Scout is cheerful even when things aren't 100-percent perfect.

The weather, and life, aren't always predictable. One of the lessons you're learning as Scouts is to be prepared for foul weather as well as fair.

**Boy Scout Programming Helps, Jul 1981**

## **Light Your Law**

[The Scoutmaster lights an ordinary match, holds it up until it has burned for a few seconds, and then blows it out, breaks it, and throws it away.] Scouts, you're all familiar with a common match, and you know that with it you can start a fire- a fire that will keep you warm, cook your food, and add cheer after dark. After using the match to light your fire, you break it to be sure it is ours, and discard it.

The Scout Law and Promise are somewhat like this match. We use it to light the food things inside us, but unlike the match we threw away, we should keep the Scout Law and Promise to use over and over- in our Scout activities, in our daily living at home, in school, in our work and play, and in the future as we grow into manhood. We don't discard the Scout Law and Promise after the troop meeting or even in later years when we are not longer Scouts. The things it represents are as true and meaningful to adults as they are to Scouts.

If you follow the Scout Law and Oath every day, the points of the Law will become so much a part of your life that when you grow up and enter the world of adults, you will be able to stand erect, and look everyone squarely in the face and say, "I am a man."

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Don't Get Hooked**

[Stick a fishhook in a piece of cloth and show how difficult it is to back it out the way it went in.] Scouts, it sure was a cinch to put this fishhook into the cloth, but you can see how hard it is to back it out.

It's just like a bad habit- awfully easy to start, but awfully hard to stop.

Some guys your age have started to smoke. It was easy to start- as easy as it was for me to put the fishhook into the cloth. Across our land millions and millions of smokers have tried to stop smoking and failed. They just couldn't get the hook out.

If it's so hard to stop and if so many smokers want to quit, then why start- why get the hook in- in the first place?

Some people think it's manly to smoke. Take a look around you. Look at the girls and women who smoke. Manly to smoke? Are you kidding?

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **A Little Extra Effort**

[You will need two saplings and rope to secure them with a square lashing. Tie a square lashing. Then say:] As you watch me tie these poles together, think about how this lashing might be compared to success in life. The wrapping turns hold the two poles closely together. But notice, they are not real tight, and with a little movement of the poles, the ropes loosen to allow slipping.

Now I add the frapping turns. I might have been satisfied without these turns, but notice what happens when I make the extra effort to add them. The frapping turns took up all slack in the first turns and tightened the entire lashing so the poles are now securely bound in place. Repeated movement won't loosen the ties that bind them together.

These frapping turns that finished the job took a little extra effort, but what a difference they made in the job! In life, you will constantly be given a chance to put forth a little extra effort. When you have the chance, don't let those opportunities pass. Remember the frapping turns.

If you put extra effort into the things you undertake, you will find success in life, real lasting friendships, and the inner knowledge that, come what may, you have done your best.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Big Enough**

Scouts, for the Hiking skill award you have to use a map scale to measure distance between points.

Tonight, I'm thinking of another kind of measuring. I get the feeling that we don't realize how often we measure ourselves, day after day.

When you look at a heavy package and say, "That's too heavy for me to lift," what are you measuring? The size of the package- perhaps. But even more you're measuring yourself. You are not big enough to handle this package- or perhaps you just think you aren't!

It may be our homework. We say, "It's too much," when we really mean, "I'm not enthusiastic enough about that much work."

You see, in cases like that we're talking about making a judgment before making the effort.. Don't limit yourself by setting the mark too low. Let Scouting measure not where you are now, but what you will one day achieve.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Night is for Sleeping**

You can always spot the greenhorn- the first year camper- as soon as “Taps” sound on the first night in camp. He’s the guy that just can’t quiet down when the time comes for sleeping.

The experienced camper, comfortable and warm in his bed, knows that night is for sleeping- knows that he’ll have more fun and be in better shape for all activities the next day if he gets a good night’s sleep.

The greenhorn is the fellow who makes an uncomfortable bed with either poor insulation or inadequate covers and wakes up in the wee small hours, cold and uncomfortable and unable to get back to sleep. The greenhorn can’t stand to be cold and uncomfortable alone, so he wakes up a few other soundly sleeping fellow Scouts to share his discomfort. This, naturally, makes him a very unpopular guy, not only with the fellows that he intentionally woke up but with all the other campers who are roused by the noise created by the greenhorn out chopping wood to keep warm.

Don’t be a camp greenhorn. Night is for sleeping. Be quiet after “Taps” until you get to sleep, and if you wake up early in the morning, don’t give away your inexperience by getting up. Stay in bed until reveille.

**BSA Scoutmaster’s Minutes**

### **A Scout is Cheerful**

Two brothers once decided to leave their hometown and move to the city. Outside the city the first brother met an old man.

“How are the people here?” asked the first brother.

“Well, how were the people in your hometown?” asked the old man in return.

“Aw, they were always grumpy and dissatisfied,” answered the first brother. “There wasn’t a single one among them worth bothering about.”

“And,” the old man said, “you’ll find that the people here are exactly the same!”

Later, the other brother came along.

“How are the people in this city?” he asked.

“How were the people in your hometown?” the old man asked as before.

“Fine!” said the other brother. “Always cheerful, always kind and understanding!”

“You will find that the people here are exactly the same!” said the old man again, for he was a wise old man who knew that the attitude of the people you meet depends upon your own state of mind. If you are cheerful and frank and good-humored, you’ll find others the same.

### **Stick to It**

[Hold up envelope that has been delivered by US Postal Service] Fellows, the postage stamp you see on this envelope was given the job of making sure that this important piece of mail was delivered to me. The stamp is pretty small, but, in spite of its size, it did the job.

In your patrols, each of you has the responsibility of 'delivering the mail' in order that your patrol becomes a success. Like the postage stamp, it isn't your size that determines how well you do the job but, rather, how well you stick to it.

We can't all be good at all things. Some are better at physical skills, some at mental tasks.

Remember the stamp. It did the job in spite of its size by sticking to the job. Make up your mind that you can do the same thing. Just determine to do your best- and stick to it until the job is done.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

### **Be Prepared**

An Engineer of a fast express, as he rounded a bend, suddenly saw a freight wreck a short distance ahead on the track next to his own. Suddenly he saw a freight wreck a short distance ahead on the track next to his own. Two cars had buckled over and lay in the path of his train. There was not time to slow up; there was not a moment to think. In a flash the engineer pulled the throttle wide open and yelled to the fireman to duck down low. The terrific impetus of the express knocked the wrecked cars from the track in splintered debris and the train was brought to a stop a half mile on the other side.

As the passengers crowded about the engineer, one asked him how, in such a moment of crisis, he could think quickly enough to make and to act upon the only decision that could have saved his train from wreck. He replied, "I did not think. I did not have to think. I had often thought of such a possibility, and I made up my mind 10 years ago just what I would do if such a situation ever arose. When it did come, I acted instinctively."

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Respect for the Flag**

[Have one red, one white, and one blue piece of cloth together with an American Flag.] What is our flag? You might say it's a piece of cloth. Would that be right? Well, it's true that these pieces of cloth could make an American flag, but then we would have more than just a piece of cloth, wouldn't we? What is our flag, then? It's a symbol of our country, of the principles for which we stand. It's a guarantee of protection and security for us. And isn't it a thrill to see the flag flying at the top of a tall staff?

The blue in our flag is a symbol of faith and loyalty- the faith and loyalty of our country's founders. The red in our flag denotes sacrifice, the sacrifices made to establish our nation. The white of her stars and alternate stripes stands for purity of heart and mind. Yes, the colors stand for bravery, loyalty, and purity.

Is there anything in these pieces of cloth by themselves that demands our respect? No. they could be made into an apron just as easily as a flag. We could mop the floor with them or wipe our shoes with them. But the flag these pieces of cloth could make represents our great nation and everything America stands for. That's why, Scouts, we give our flag the respect and loyalty that we owe the United States of America.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

### **Mother [Mother's Day]**

There is a story of a boy and his widowed mother.

One day the mother found a note signed by her 12-year –old son under her plate when she turned it over. It went something like this- “Dear Mother: For making the fire four times, 15 cents. For going on two errands, 10 cents. Total, 25 cents.”

The mother said nothing but rose from her chair, went to the top dresser drawer, took out her purse, and from it took a quarter which she placed on the table near the boy's plate, and he was highly pleased.

The very next day, however, he discovered under his plat at dinner time a note addressed to him. It read: “Dear Willie: For providing food and clothing and a bed for 12 years, nothing. For dressing a baby boy for 3 years, nothing. For taking care of a boy with typhoid fever for 8 weeks, nothing. For nursing an 8-year-old boy with scarlet fever for 12 weeks, nothing. Total, nothing.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Be Prepared**

How many of you carry a ball point pen, as I do? We carry a ball point pen because although we do not know when we will need one, we are sure that we will need one before too long. We want to be prepared.

But look at the pen. The point is encased in a protective shell that makes sure it will be available when we need it. But the pen is useless unless and until the point comes out- only then is it ready for use.

You are like the point in this pen, and the troop and the adults provide you support. And like the point, none of that support will do any good until you come out and do the task at hand.

So when you look at the pen in your pocket, remember that it does no good until it comes out to perform, and that the mere presence of the pen ensures that we will always Be Prepared.

**Original SM minute**

## **Everyone Can Win**

In a competitive rally we have winners and losers in the various events, yet it is possible for everyone to win something.

A losing patrol can win in spirit and morale, if the fellows work as a team and gain a better understanding of one another. It can win respect in the eyes of all Scouts, if patrol members show good sportsmanship.

A patrol that loses in competition can still win, if in the process of losing the Scouts in the patrol gain in the knowledge of Scouting skills so they will be more proficient in future meets of this type.

Sure, it's nice to win, but with the right attitude, losers frequently benefit more in the long run than do the winners.

Nobody enters a competitive rally planning to lose, but, if this should be your lot, make the best of it- take advantage of the things learned in losing and determine to build your patrol teamwork and skill so that the next time someone else will be the loser.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Light Your Law**

[The Scoutmaster lights an ordinary match, holds it up until it has burned for a few seconds, and then blows it out, breaks it, and throws it away.] Scouts,, you're all familiar with a common match, and know that with it you can start a fire- a fire that will keep you warm, cook your food, and add cheer after dark. After using the match to light your fire, you break it to be sure it is out, and discard it.

The Scout Law is somewhat like this match. We use it to light the good things inside us, but unlike the match we threw away, we should keep the Scout Law to use over and over- in our Scout activities, in our daily living at home, in school, in our work and play, and in the future as we grow into manhood. We don't discard the Scout Law after the troop meeting or even in later years when we are no longer Scouts. The things it represents are as true and meaningful to adults as they are to Scouts.

If you follow the Scout Law every day, the points of the Law will become so much a part of your life that when you grow up and enter the world of adults, you will be able to stand erect and look everyone in the face and say, "I am a man."

Let's all stand, give the Scout sign , and repeat the Scout Law.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

### **Be “In Uniform”**

Fellows, what would you think of a policeman in full uniform except for trousers which were of a bright plaid material? How about a hospital intern wearing a sport coat over his white uniform while on duty? Or, what would you think of a train conductor wearing a fireman’s cap or, even more absurd, an airline pilot wearing the silks of a jockey as he boarded his plane?

They’d a; be “out of uniform,” wouldn’t they? With some of the outfits mentioned, you wouldn’t be sure what the men really were.

Scouts, we have a uniform, too. We have a full uniform- not just a neckerchief or just a shirt, but, like the men I mentioned, we have a full uniform. When we don’t wear the full uniform, we are just as “out of uniform” as the policeman with the plaid pants.

The Flag Code says that when we are “in uniform” we salute the flag with the Scout salute, but when “out of uniform” we salute by holding our right hand over our heart. How do you think a Scout should salute the flag if he’s wearing blue jeans or chinos or some other nonofficial dress along with part of the uniform? He’s not “in uniform,” is he?

**BSA Scoutmaster’s Minutes**

### **A Scout is Thrifty**

Fellows- here I have just a handful of sand, and in my other hand I have a piece of topsoil, just sod. Do you see much difference in them?

Yes, you're right. There's the difference between poverty and wealth here- the difference between starvation and prosperity for all people. This sand represents a civilization that once flourished and is now dead because of misuse of resources. People took from the soil and put nothing back.

But this sod is different for it contains the miracle power of growth. This sod is topsoil enriched through many years.

Our very existence depends on the narrow margin of about 6 inches of topsoil that covers most of the earth. Without it, we cannot survive.

If all the topsoil in the world eroded, what would people live on? Food can't be raised on sand or rock.

What things can we do, as Scouts and as citizens, to help people better understand the importance of this [gesturing with sod] and not just let our land drift to this [sand]- with the topsoil allowed to waste away?

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Working Together**

[Equipment- 20 wooden matches held together by a rubber band. See that all matches are even in the bundle so the package will stand on end. Stand the matches on the floor in front of the Scouts.] Scouts, you'll notice the matches in front of you stand easily when they are all bound together with the rubber band. But, look at what happens when I try to stand them after removing the band.

[Take the rubber band off and attempt to stand them up. Of course, they'll fall in all directions.] Our troop is like this bunch of matches. As long as we work together as a team, bound together by the ties of Scouting, we will stand as a strong troop. But, if we remove those ideals of Scouting, and each man thinks only of himself, we'll be like that bunch of matches when the rubber band was taken off.

As we all live up to the ideals of the Scout Oath and Law, motto, and slogan, we will be wrapping ourselves with the band that will strengthen our troop and make sure that it stands for the things that make Scouting great.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **What Quarters Can't Buy**

[Scoutmaster holds up a quarter] All of you recognize this coin and know that it will buy certain things. Alone, nowadays, it can purchase a candy bar, or a little time on a parking meter. Add quarters together and you can do bigger things.

However, there are many things that money, no matter how much you have, cannot buy. Some of these include the love of your family, freedom, friendships, and the great out of doors.

You can't place a value on Scouting, either. We couldn't pay salaries enough to get all the help we have. Nor could we place a value on the memorable experiences, the camping trips, the hikes, the fun of campfires.

People can't pay us for the Good Turns we do, and isn't that a good thing? Such payment would take away the good feeling that we have when we do something for others.

Remember, this little quarter and its sisters and brothers can buy many things, but not the things that really count in human happiness and dignity

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes. This originally used a nickel, and said it could buy a postage stamp. I updated it to a quarter.**

## **Badge, Book, and Candle**

[Place a Scout badge, a Scout Handbook, and a lighted candle on a table.] Scouts, since 1910 these three things have been significant in the Boy Scouts of America.

The badge is the symbol of Scouting throughout the United States. Similar badges are used by Scouts all over the world. It is the sign of a universal brotherhood of men and boys of the free world.

There are many books that are important to good Scouts: the handbooks to help us with Scoutcraft skills; the merit badge pamphlets with information about special skill and, most important of all, the Bible to guide our daily lives.

A candle is a symbol of the light of Scouting that penetrates the darkness of hate, prejudice, war, strife, and distrust. It is a light that must be kept burning in the heart of every Scout, now, and as he grows into manhood.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **The Good Turn**

[The Scoutmaster holds up an ordinary mechanical pencil with the lead turned in so it will not write. He uses this pencil as if writing on a sheet of paper and then holds up the paper to show that there is not writing on it.] Scouts, this pencil won't write. It doesn't leave a mark on this sheet of paper. But if we give it a good turn [at this point he turns the pencil so the lead comes out], to now becomes useful and will leave a mark on a sheet of paper.

The Good Turn we gave the pencil made it useful. The Good Turns we do in our daily living are the things that make us useful. The Good Turn enables us to be useful in our home, school, community, and nation. The Good Turn raises us above the ordinary. It makes our lives worthwhile.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

### **Thank You, Dad [Father's Day]**

Now, fellows, don't answer this question out loud, but how long has it been since you said, Thank you, Dad." I'm afraid that too often we take our fathers for granted.

I suppose it might be awkward to try to say- in words- "Thanks, Dad, I appreciate everything you do for me- and with me." And, of course, if we merely said those words and stopped there, they'd be a pretty empty kind of thanks, wouldn't they?

I wonder just how a fellow can go about saying thank you to his father and mother.

The best way to show our appreciation is by making our parents proud of us, happy over the kind of fellows we are and trying to be.

No matter what else we do as a gesture to show appreciation on Father's Day, certainly we want to do our very best to be the kind of fellows that our dads can be proud of all through the year.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Picking on Him**

On a hike or in camp we reveal our true self most. Did you ever know a fellow who thought people were always picking on him?

I recall a boy who pitched his tent carelessly and it blew down on him in the middle of the night. He tried hard to blame it on someone else, but finally he had to admit to himself, "Well, I guess it was my own fault."

Another time he burned a steak. "It was the fire's fault," he insisted, until the other fellows laughed at him and showed him how the same bed of coals could help turn out a well-cooked steak.

Things usually happen to us because we set the stage for them. Actually, people are too busy to spend their time picking on us.

When something goes wrong, the first place to look for the cause is within ourselves.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Your Development**

[Scoutmaster shows a roll or package of camera film to his Scouts.] If you look at this exposed film before development, you cannot tell what kind of picture it will make. Film looks exactly the same after snapping the shutter as it did before.

But after development, the image appears on the film and you can see what the picture will be when it is printed.

As I look at you scouts, I wonder how your exposure has been. You all look the same on the surface, yet I know there are differences within each of you. Like the film, you have been exposed to good and bad things that will make an impression when you develop.

Unlike the film, you have brains. You know what is inside yourself and can do something to make certain your development is good.

Follow the ideals of Scouting- the slogan, motto, Scout Oath or Promise, and Scout Law.

If you live according to these high standards, you can be sure your development will be good as you grow older, and you'll be able to enter manhood fully prepared to be a good citizen of our great nation.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Your Basic Survival Tool**

If someone told you that you would be dropped from a plane in the heart of the Canadian wilderness and could pick one tool, implement, or instrument to take with you, what would you choose? Would it be a rifle, pistol, or similar weapon? How about a tent or sleeping bag? Or would a box of matches be most useful?

An experienced woodsman was asked this question, and without hesitation he said, "My ax." He said that with his ax he could defend himself, build shelter, cut materials to make snares and fishing equipment to secure food. The steel in his ax would strike a spark from rocks in the area and provide him with fire. He said that in this day of marvelous inventions, only the simple ax could do all these things and guarantee his survival.

If the ax is this important to the experienced woodman, shouldn't we be a little more respectful of it? Shouldn't we learn how to use it correctly, to care for it and to always keep it sharp and ready for emergency use?

The woodsman, when he said, "My ax," really meant, "My sharp ax, unrusty, with a tight head, ready for hard use." An ax that doesn't meet these standards is pretty useless. Let's be sure our axes are always ready for use.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Camp is a City**

As we look at local government, perhaps we can gain a better understanding of its duties and responsibilities, if we compare it with our own troop experience in camp.

A camp is a city in many ways. First of all, the camp has certain rules and regulations [laws] developed for the good of all campers. Then, of course, someone must enforce these laws, and it is the responsibility of troop leaders [police and courts] to see that camp regulations are followed. Wherever groups of people live there is a need for fire protection, and the camp is no exception. We organize a troop fire guard [firemen] while we are in camp to protect our property from the danger of fire.

Sanitation, including proper disposal of refuse and garbage, must be taken care of both in the city and in camp. In our patrol rotation of duties we have kitchen and campsite 'cleaner-uppers' [sanitation department].

There are other similarities between camp and a city, but the ones I've mentioned are enough to point out the value of participating citizenship. You all know what happens in camp when we have indifferent citizens. Everyone suffers because of the failure of a few. The same thing is true in government.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

### **Your Mark- Which Will it Be?**

[Hold up a plaster cast of a track.] Scouts, here you see permanent evidence that an animal [or bird] has passed along the way. Before we made the cast, the track was pretty temporary- a few hours of wind and rain and all sign of the animal's passing would be erased. My making the cast, we preserved the track for future generations of Scouts to view.

Our lives can make a temporary or permanent mark on this world according to the way we live. Most of us probably will never be great leaders of nations or famous in the arts or sciences, but we can still leave a permanent mark on this earth by the things we do for others.

The daily Good Turn is one way to start making your mark, because as you give of yourself to others in unselfish service, you are making changes in their lives and in yours. Those who change the lives of others make a permanent mark in the world, because the good they do lives on long after they have passed along the way.

Has each of you done his Good Turn today? Have you decided to consciously seek out opportunities for service to others and not just wait until you happen to see a need?

Decide now to leave your permanent track as you pass through the years.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

## **Heat, Fuel, and Oxygen**

[The Scoutmaster holds a lighted candle while talking. Room lights may be turned off, if desired.] Fellows, here you see a plain, ordinary candle- a candle such as we use in our investiture ceremony for new Scouts.

This candle needs three things to keep it burning. These three things are heat, fuel, and oxygen. The heat was provided by the match I used to start it burning. The fuel is the melted wax which is absorbed by the wick. The oxygen comes from the air around us.

If we remove any one of these three things, the candle will go out. If there is no heat, the wax will not melt. If the wax is not melted, the wick cannot absorb the fuel, and if the air were cut off, the candle would soon go out.

In the same way, Scouts, you and I need three things to do our tasks in life. These three things are related to your body, your mind, and your spirit.

In dedicating yourselves to the Scout Oath, you pledge that you will do your best to make these three things meaningful in your life. You pledge to keep yourselves physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

We need these three things to do our job, just as the candle needs heat, fuel, and oxygen to keep burning.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**

### **A Scout is Trustworthy**

An architect who had just finished college was trying to get his business established and was having a hard time doing it. He still owed money for some of his college expenses and saw his debt piling up. Each day he became more and more worried, until he was looking around desperately for a solution.

Then a wealthy man, who had been a good friend of his father's, came to him one day. "I want you to built me a house," he said. Build it of the finest materials. Spare no expense. Build it just as if it were for yourself and you had all the money in the world. Here is and advance on your fee. I will be gone for some months, so take full charge."

It was like a dream come true. The advance enabled him to wipe out all his debts, and he knew that he could be married soon. For when the house was finished, he could expect other good commissions. Then his reputation would be established solidly. So he set to work with great joy.

As the building progressed, the architect was struck with an idea. The owner would not be back for months. No one was keeping check on the building. He could build the house just as he pleased. So he began to use second-rate materials where they wouldn't show. As he went on in this way, he figured he would make an extra fifty thousand dollars for himself, because, of course, he would charge the owner for the best materials throughout.

Well, the house finally was finished and the owner came back. The architect showed him the house. The man was very pleased. "It's beautiful," he said. "But, unfortunately, I will never live in it. While I was traveling, I made some investments in Europe that will keep me there, perhaps permanently. And I want you to have this house as a wedding present from me. It's so beautiful! It's a picture of your own character, true and loyal all the way through!"

Imagine how the young architect felt! Yes, the house was a picture of his own character, and would be there to remind him of his cheating as long as he lived.

**BSA Scoutmaster's Minutes**