

**SCOUTS-L**

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**JUNIOR LEADER  
TRAINING**

**Date:** Thu, 13 Jun 1996 04:37:31 -0600  
**From:** Charlie Thorpe <charlie2@RO.COM>  
**Subject:** Super youth training

Hello All -

Got back a few days ago from our Council's Junior Leader Training Conference (JLTC). I do the Junior Leader Training Coordinator job on our Council Training Committee and have had the wonderful opportunity to be involved (in some way) with all the JLTC's that our Council has done since we started in '88. Our JLTC is known locally as "Whitefire."

**Whitefire '96 was OUTSTANDING!**

First, a little info for folks on the list who haven't been involved with BSA's JLTC training program. This course is a week-long boy leadership training effort that is based on teaching leadership and Scoutcraft skills similar to those taught in Boy Scout Unit Leader Wood Badge. There is an outstanding Staff Guide published by BSA. BTW, this Staff Guide has (Scouts-L's own!) Lew Orans' fingerprints and ink splotches all over it...<g>

In Tennessee Valley Council we choose to move the course around the Council from year to year, so that different groups of Troops can participate fully in the course and its support logistics. This year we held Whitefire at an old camp property on the west side of the Council that hasn't been used as a summer camp since the late '70's. We did have good well water piped to one hose bib in the middle of camp and we did have power at a small building within a half mile of the course location. We dug latrines and the milk company loaned us a refrigerated truck to store food in. We bush-hogged some of the poison ivy and cleaned out a couple of the old (1940's) structures that were still standing. Got the old shower house going with cold water only! Local Scouters helped a bunch and the site was rustic...but ready...when the participants arrived.

We like to have Whitefire be youth-run. We recruit a handful of Scoutmasters to stand around and look "official," but we try to keep them out of the kid's way as much as possible <g>. The Scoutmaster does the "Setting the Example" presentation at the end of the course and the adults

get together to help with the "Communicating With Adults" presentation (we start it off by sharing our ideas about the youth/adult communication problem and then we leave so that the Senior Patrol Leader can "tell it like it really is" <g>). ALL the rest of the presentations, skill sessions, and activities are run by the youth staff (seven FULL days worth!).

We had been concerned because many of the kids selected by the Senior Patrol Leader for staff had been heavily involved in getting ready for our Order of the Arrow Section Conclave in April. We didn't get to do as much staff development as we wanted and the adults were a little unsure about how prepared the kids really were. HAH, no problemo...the youth staff did an absolutely fantastic job of running their course!

We like to use group shelters for each of the various "teams" at Whitefire. Each Patrol is given a 20'x50' piece of plastic (clear, 6 mil), 400' of rope, and a roll of duct tape. They come up with some VERY interesting shelter/fly designs <g>. The course started and ended in a driving rain (good old southern thunderstorms). LOTS of rain during the week. A couple of the shelters leaked at first, but by the end of the week all were snug and dry. The Venture Crew (youth staff) made a "long house" out of their plastic (PLENTY of room for 12 staffers) and they borrowed a 20'x30' piece from the Scoutmasters to make a big Patrol Leader's Council meeting place in the Venture Crew camp area. The Scoutmasters made a tipi out of their plastic.

We have learned over the years that uniforming is very important in this training. We find that the kids fit in a LOT better if all look like members of the same team. We help the participants find (beg, borrow, ...) needed uniform parts so that all can show up in the same uniform (we don't care about sleeve or pants lengths, but we do insist that the color be uniform). We provide a Whitefire neckerchief to each participant (white with green piping). We include a couple of Whitefire t-shirts in the fee and everybody (youth and adults) stay in uniform all week. The Senior Patrol Leader decides which uniform is appropriate at any given time...full "class A" (Scout mesh/twill "baseball" cap, Whitefire neckerchief, tan shirt, green pants, Scout web belt, red top socks if shorts are worn) or "class B" (Whitefire t-shirt, green pants, Scout web belt, red top socks if shorts are worn). Traditionally we have done class A at assembly and for supper, with class B all other times. No exceptions for any reason. The

Patrols get a "Whitefire washing machine" (pickle bucket and plumber's plunger) to do laundry in.

We sing a lot. We have a Whitefire song and it gets sung as "call and response" for the first couple of days. About the middle of the week the participants are singing it on their own and often get into "song wars." By the end of the week most of the Patrols have invented their own song in addition to the Whitefire song. We went to bed the night of the outpost hike (private overnight backpacking trip for the Patrols) with the sounds of nearby Patrols singing the Whitefire song. They woke us up at 5am the same way <g>.

We really (really, Really, REALLY) like to see the Patrols gel together as a team during the week of training. We keep hoping that having a good time in a Patrol during Whitefire will encourage the Scouts to go back to their home Troop and help get the Patrol method get going there (many of the Troops in our Council make little or no effort to really use the Patrol method <f>). We consider Whitefire to be working well if many of the Patrols "come together" by the middle of the week and we hope that all will do so by the outpost hike. This time we had one Patrol already formed into a team by the evening of the first day and half the Patrols teamed up by the end of the second day! All but one Patrol were solid teams by the third day.

Our "difficult" Patrol had an interesting collection of very strong personalities (that's the nice way to put it...at least two were card-carrying dingalings <g>) and we became a little concerned that they might NEVER be willing to work together. As it turned out, they came back from the outpost hike with as much (or more!) Patrol spirit than all the rest combined. They even volunteered to MC the campfire that night...and the biggest dingaling of all did a great job!

The Scouts return their Whitefire neckerchief to the staff when they go out on the outpost hike (supposedly so that we can take it to town and wash it in preparation for the closing campfire). We have a graduation ceremony where the participants get their Whitefire neckerchief back with a Whitefire patch sewn to the back of it (10 color, fully embroidered...NEAT patch!). As you might imagine in a course named "Whitefire"...fire plays a strong symbolic role during our graduation. This ceremony never fails to

bring a lump to my throat...and there was more than a few damp eyes among the 60-plus teenage boys there.

I was meeting with the home-Troop Scoutmasters (they came to pick the participants up at the end of the course) when the Whitefire Troop walked into the pick-up area. Driving rain...carrying soggy backpacks and pickle buckets...mud up to their ankles...Patrol flags waving...singing the Whitefire song and happy as clams! We got some Wood Badge recruits from among the gathered Scoutmasters that day <VBG>.

We cleaned up the site, filled in the latrines, got rid of the leftover food (no connection to the latrines...), distributed the borrowed equipment back to the Troops that loaned it, returned the milk truck, and went home for a hot shower and a milk shake!

Had our final wrap-up meeting yesterday. Clever purchasing by the Whitefire Troop Committee and some food donations by local merchants combined to give us a little left-over money. Our Scout Executive agrees that we should use this unexpected surplus to help get a couple of our youth staffers out to National Junior Leader Instructor Camp at Philmont this year. Now...if we can ONLY get a slot or two at one of the NJLIC sessions this summer...

Our Whitefire song has a couple of lines that go:

"As the week goes quickly by,  
We will feel a Brownsea high."

I am STILL feeling it <VBG>!

y'all come,  
Charlie II

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From mfbowman@CapAccess.org Sun May 19 02:49:36 1996  
Date: Sun, 19 May 1996 02:49:34 -0400 (EDT)  
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>  
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cc: Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>

**Subject: Re: SPL Asks for Help**

**Greg,**

**Your Scouts and Junior Leaders are not dumb. They know a free ride when they see it and apparently are willing to take it. :-) We've all seen the same thing in the workplace too. There are always a few that will hitch onto that free ride, when it available. Seems like a natural tendency to avoid unnecessary work. Maybe not Scoutlike, but its there.**

**So what do you do to change things? Your SPL may be well trained and super enthusiastic, but from the sound of things still has to learn one of the most difficult lessons of leadership and that is delegation. Until he masters this, he will never find his full potential as a leader.**

**He has to learn that delegation requires him to give up responsibilities and place them in the hands of other Scouts. And if the other Scouts fail, he has to stand back and let it happen. Afterwards the PLC can evaluate what went wrong and learn from it, making plans to avert similar disasters in the future.**

**Much of the learning that takes places in a Troop involves both successes and some failures. Having a Troop that always has a "successful" campout no matter what it takes, may be good for the youngest Scouts, but fails to allow leadership to develop. These Scouts learn both from mistakes and successes and need to have both opportunities.**

**When the Troop doesn't have the right gear on a campout the peer pressure on the QM should be sufficient to help him realize that he's let his buddies down and motivate him to do better. The same holds true for the other junior leaders. It may be hard to stand back, but this is what is required to be a good leader. Otherwise your SPL can expect to be a one-man show/workhorse.**

**He can start the process by making it clear to the PLC what he will and will not do on the next outing. And then he has to stick to it. In fact it might even be a good idea for him to plan on not attending one of the outings to let things take their course. In any case this process needs to start in the PLC and go from there.**

**Speaking Only for Myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman**

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**Date: Tue, 2 Jul 1996 01:28:32 -0400 (EDT)**

**From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>**

**To: SCOUTS-L - Youth Groups Discussion List <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>**

**cc: Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>**

**Subject: Re: Planning a local Junior Leadership Program**

**Ed,**

**Here are a few websites that might be of help to you (titles are my own, Web Page titles vary):**

**BSA Leadership Skills <http://w3.trib.com/~dont/scouting/elevensk.html>**

**BSA Leadership Skills [http://www.gulftel.com/~lwjones/scouts/ldr\\_skil/wb\\_index.html](http://www.gulftel.com/~lwjones/scouts/ldr_skil/wb_index.html)**

**White Stag (JLT) <http://rampages.onramp.net/~lporans/whitestg.htm/>**

**White Stag: History <http://rampages.onramp.net/~lporans/staghist.htm>**

**White Stag: A Special Heritage**

**<http://rampages.onramp.net/~lporans/whitestg.htm>**

**Someone else asked about an online resource for Eagle Projects. Here's a place to try:**

**BSA Eagle Project Online <http://192.17.6.70/district4/district4home.html>**

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