

APPENDIX

SAMPLE CAMPFIRE PROGRAM

Campfire events can be conducted at the council, district, or troop level. The ingredients are mostly the same for all levels. Below is a suggested format of what a campfire program can include. It has been designed to demonstrate the “flow” of an effective campfire program, which follows the rise and flow of a campfire. If desired, a narrator can be assigned to explain each step as it is delivered.

- 1. Opening:** The master of ceremonies should conduct the opening.
- 2. Light the fire** (if one isn't already lit): Lighting the fire is a good way to show effect and acts as a time-keeper/gauge for the program. As the fire diminishes and dies down, so should the intensity of the program.
- 3. Icebreaker:** Sing a song, usually fast and short (upbeat, funny, or happy). See *Group Meeting Sparklers* or the *Boy Scout Songbook* for examples.
- 4. Greeting:** The senior patrol leader or other assigned staff member greets participants.
- 5. Skits:** When conducted at the council or district level, each troop can be responsible for a skit, song, or story. For the Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills course, staff members should prepare five or six skits. These skits can be punctuated with run-ons and/or songs. Skits can involve the crowd, staff members, or fellow troop members.
- 6. Story:** Stories can be fun or scary, but all stories must be age appropriate, so adult oversight helps to keep things in order. A serious story is a wonderful way to begin the closing of a campfire. Serious stories can be patriotic, heroic, or inspirational. The story of the beginning of the BSA, “Lost in the Fog,” is a good one.

In 1909, a Chicago publisher named William D. Boyce was visiting London. These were the days of horse-drawn carriages and gas-powered street lamps. In those days a dense fog was often created by cool air moving across the River Thames, and one foggy evening Boyce became lost in the winding streets and alleyways of the city.

A boy came to his aid and guided him back to his hotel. Upon reaching the hotel, Boyce pulled out some coins, but the boy refused a tip. The boy explained that he was a Boy Scout and would not accept a reward for doing a Good Turn. Instead, this unknown Boy Scout turned and disappeared back into the London fog.

So impressed was Boyce that he organized a meeting with Robert Baden-Powell, the British Army general who had founded the Boy Scouts. Boyce learned all he could about the mission and methods of the Boy Scouts. Upon returning to the United States, William Boyce petitioned Congress to incorporate a new organization for young men. It was called the Boy Scouts of America. Perhaps you've heard of it ...

- 7. Serious or moving song:** Perhaps in theme with the serious story, a serious song can be patriotic or spiritual in nature such as the “Battle Hymn of the Republic.”
- 8. Scoutmaster's Minute:** The Scoutmaster provides a brief message such as the example “Footprints” below.

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along a beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand: one belonging to the Lord and one belonging to him. When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life. This really bothered him, and he questioned the Lord about it. “Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you would walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there was only one set of footprints. I don't understand why, when I needed you the most, you would leave me.” The Lord replied, “My son, my precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, where you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you.”
- 9. Closing song:** The closing song should be sung low and quieter than the other songs, as it's meant to bring down the excitement and cue the end of the day. A great example of a closing song is “Scout Vespers.”