

SCOUTMASTER'S INSTITUTE

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Palmetto Council
Boy Scouts of America**

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Piedmont-Appalachian College of Commissioner Science

Lees-McCrae College, Banner Elk, North Carolina

Hulic Ratterree, Advisor

To the Doctoral Candidate Review Board:

I am submitting herewith a Dissertation written by Jon Humphries, entitled "Scoutmaster's Institute ". I have examined the final copy of this report for format and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Commissioner Science.



Advisor

We have read this Dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:



Blue Ridge Council



Great Smoky Mountain Council




Palmetto Council



Sequoyah Council

Accepted for the Piedmont-Appalachian College
of Commissioner Science:



Chairman,
Doctoral Candidate Review Board
and Daniel Boone Council

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Hulic Ratterree for his support, thoughts, and encouragement as I strived to complete my Dissertation. I will always remember his commitment to keep me on task.

I would like to thank my Review Board members for their time and thoughts. I would also like to thank my former Scoutmaster Marion Outen for his contribution and involvement through my years of scouting.

I appreciate the support of my family during this long process of completing my Dissertation.

Last but not least I would like to thank God for giving me the ability to complete this project.

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Abstract

The purpose of this project was the coming together of leaders in the Palmetto Council for a weekend of training, fun, and fellowship; and to expand our knowledge in the latest training to further benefit our scout units. The methods used in this project were examining what training Scoutmasters in my area already possessed and what a big need in the area was. I did this by asking around to different Scoutmasters. I then established a need of a Scoutmaster's Institute to inform the Scoutmasters of new available training courses and events that their scout could participate in. I then sent out a questionnaire asking what would be desired in a Scoutmaster's Institute. This questionnaire was sent out to Scoutmasters and adult leaders of the area. For convenience to the respondents, a self-addressed stamped envelope was sent with each questionnaire. I followed up the questionnaires with discussion at the next round table about the Scoutmaster's Institute.

The information gathered indicated that there was a need for more training in the district and better communication between council and Scoutmasters. This showed that an event that offered great fellowship, training, and sharing of ideas was a need in our area. One solution to this problem is presented in this dissertation.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Growing up in Lancaster County's scout program I remember the Scoutmasters being well trained and well informed of upcoming events. Scoutmasters would get together and teach each other about scout related things. It seemed as though they had more experience and dedication than Scoutmasters of today. The three major things to impact Scoutmasters today are technology, requirements, and policy. These three things are what make the older Scoutmasters feel handicapped compared to the younger Scoutmasters. But the older Scoutmasters are not the only ones affected by this. The younger scoutmasters are also affected because of the speed of the change. It seems that once you get used to one thing it changes again.

I know that with the advance of technology in America it is like being on a very fast roller coaster you have to hold on to or it will throw you off. Technology today has advanced the scout program tremendously. Some of the older scoutmasters do not know how to go online and apply for summer camp or training courses. Year after year new things are being invented to make camping an easier thing. The new camp stoves, backpacks, tents, mess kits, Leave No Trace essentials, shoes, and food are hard to grasp all at one time. This leaves the older scouts left in the dust.

As the years progress and technology progresses so do the requirements for the merit badges. As you can imagine when the GPS system was invented the camping, orienteering, and other badges were changed in order to incorporate the new invention in to its standards. As new things are being invented the requirements change to stay up to date. These requirements replace the traditional requirements and require that the Scoutmaster learn before they can teach the boys. This requires a lot of training that has not yet happened.

The policies of the Boy Scouts of America have also changed. The policies that used to be in place are still there but each year just like technology and merit badge requirements, more are added to the list. New training is required each year. Today you have to be trained in everything from Child Protection to Safe Swim Defense. During my boyhood years Scoutmasters were not asked to be trained in all these things but now it is scout policy. Scoutmaster's are not allowed to take the scouts anywhere without first being trained in numerous courses.

It all began with the advance of technology. I plan to investigate the need of annual or semi-annual training courses deeper and find a solution to this growing problem. I plan to do this by asking around to fellow Scoutmasters. My hopes are to get a better understanding of what is best for the boys. In return I will use the information to better our units and to have a much higher quality program in Lancaster. The measurement of my

project will be that our units will become quality units in the future.

Chapter 2

Problem Identification

The problem as I discussed in my introduction is that the Boy Scouts of America is changing too fast for Scoutmasters to keep up with. There are three parts to this problem; being unaware, incapable, and inopportune. This problem is larger than you may think. If the Scoutmasters don't know what has changed how are we to expect the boys to know what is new.

When the Scoutmasters are unaware of the changes in scouts there is no way of the changes being effective. This is the fault of poor communication between our council office and our Scoutmasters. There needs to be more opportunities to inform than there is. This first step in being able to make a change in something is to know what change is being made. Unless you know the details of the change you're not going to be able to make the necessary changes.

The second part of this problem is that Scoutmasters are unable to make it to weekday training events. Some of the new things that are known about by local scouters are possible to spread to others because of a Scoutmaster's inability to attend weekday meetings. A lot of the Scoutmasters are involved in many programs other than scouting. These include school improvement councils, sport teams, church events, family time and many others. They don't really have another night of the week

beside their regular scout night to devote to yet another scout meeting.

This leaves the weekends free for training events.

Once I was aware of the changes and identified the fact that weekdays are out. I began consider from whom and where are we going to get training? Well right now such weekend training event is non-existent. The only events in place are the weekday training programs. So this leaves us with a big problem. Who is trained enough to train a couple dozen Scoutmasters on a weekend? Will it be a council member, district member, or just a couple of Scoutmasters all together?

As you can see this problem gets bigger and bigger the longer you ponder on it. A project like this would require more than a couple of people. The opportunities for training are slim to none. This is why I would like find a way to do this as easy as possible and as convenient as possible.

Chapter 3

Brainstorm of Solution Ideas

As I was thinking of what I could do to solve this problem I began to ask around to some of the older scouts that were Scoutmasters when I was a boy and they reminded me of an event that used to take place at camp every year but slowly faded out. This event was called the Scoutmaster's Institute. The weekend was a weekend to come together at camp with other Scoutmasters of the area and share and train in order to make your personal unit a better unit for the boys. This idea was like kindling to my flame. I had to then decide how I wanted to conduct my training. I came up with three different ways to institute this idea. These ways were a representative taught weekend, a Scoutmaster taught weekend, or a weekend mixed of Scoutmaster and representative taught lessons.

A weekend of training taught by strictly representatives would include representatives from local parks and companies that could enlighten the Scoutmasters of the do's and don'ts of planning trips on their land. It would also include lessons from professionals in the scouting program. But this idea would not include time to fellowship and share ideas that worked and didn't work in certain units.

A weekend of training with just Scoutmasters would be one of lots and lots of brainstorming. A weekend like this would be focused more on

things that the scoutmaster's already know and time to share to others what they know. It would be a Scoutmaster to Scoutmaster weekend of sharing personal talent. This type of weekend would not include professional training of recent changes nor representative discussion.

The last possible type of weekend would be a mix of both of the previously talked about weekends. This weekend would include Scoutmaster to Scoutmaster time, professional instruction, and representative discussion. This type of program could also be stretched to two separate weekends one with the first type of weekend and one with the second type of weekend.

I now had three different choices on how to conduct my newly remodeled Scoutmaster's Institute. I had to make the choice on which one I would pick.

Chapter 4

Problem Solution

I plan to reinstate the Scoutmaster's Institute. I decided to have a weekend of both scoutmaster to scoutmaster as well as the professional instruction and representative discussion. My plan is to bring all the adults together annually or semi-annually, depending on participation. Identify the needs and wants of the adult leaders and have available any yearly training or re-training that may be needed. I would also like to offer all the new training courses available and any new changes that have been made national, council, or even district wide. There will be a professional present so that if any questions were to arise we will be able to get them answered as soon as possible. I would like to bring in representatives from local parks that get visited by Boy Scout groups throughout our council. I would also like to incorporate one motivational speaker for the event. Sometimes all we need is a little push with a motivational speaker showing Scoutmasters how to go back and put these new things in place back in their units and showing them that if at first they do not work, to keep trying and something will come of it. I feel that by gathering all the adults together, everyone will be able to discuss what works and what does not work, also why we do not have participation where it is needed. By giving time for Scoutmasters to share with other Scoutmasters the things that

they find work in their units and to give other Scoutmasters ideas on how to fix some things that may be happening in their units. These ideas might be on camping, rank, leadership, or even how do deal with that one scout that you can never get to behave. If we have better qualified and trained adult leaders, then in turn our programs will be of higher quality. Mark Twain once said "There is nothing training cannot do. Nothing is above its reach. It can turn bad morals to good; it can destroy bad principles and recreate good ones; it can lift men to angelship." When you have a great program, boys have fun and you don't have to make them do their badges or stay on their backs as they will take the initiative themselves and maybe even push each other to do better. A better quality program will retain boys in scouting longer and this is what we are here for.

Chapter 5 **Methods**

When I began my project I started off by inviting local professionals and other scoutmasters to teach the training courses and investigating new news, finding Scoutmasters and adult leaders in the areas that they would be interested in, and last sending them a letter, questionnaire, and itinerary. My newly remodeled Scoutmaster's Institute was now under way.

The first person I contacted was the Lancaster-Chester District Executive Ben Maultsby. I asked him if he would teach all the required yearly training at my Scoutmaster's Institute. I also contacted the Lancaster-Chester District Commissioners and other local Scoutmasters that I knew who had years of experience and were qualified to help with the training. I also looked to these volunteers for advice on how to conduct a training event and other ideas for the Institute.

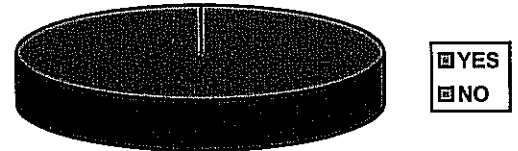
Next, I was on with my search of Scoutmasters and adult leaders in the district. I started my search with the request of a list from the council office from my local District Executive. I was issued this list not long after I requested it. This list helped me determine how many potential adults I was looking at, about how much this event was going to cost, and if I would need to make a fee to pay for food or how I would feed these men and women.

After I had made all of my decisions I sent all the men and women on my list a letter, questionnaire, itinerary, and registration form. That was a total of fifty-three people. In the letter I explained what it was I was planning on doing and why I was doing it. I also explained the importance of this type of training. (Appendix A) In the Questionnaire I asked general questions on the idea and expectations of the Scoutmaster's Institute such as time, location, and repetition. (Appendix B) The Itinerary showed exactly what would be happening at the Scoutmaster's Institute. (Appendix C) The Registration form included the fee for meals and the date and location. (Appendix D)

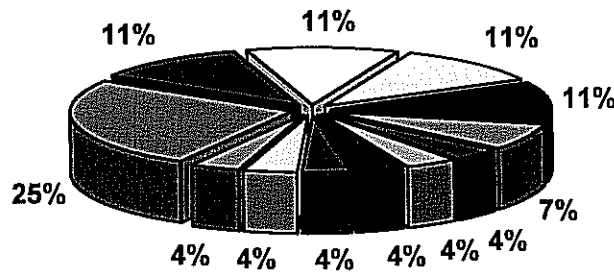
This was how I began my planning for the weekend. The results of the Questionnaire were returned from seventeen of the fifty-three people with lots of new ideas for the Scoutmaster's Institute. (See page 11) It was a hit with everyone and everyone had some idea of what they thought should be included. Unfortunately all seventeen of those could not make it to the actual event. Because of previously made engagements a lot of the Scoutmasters were not able to attend that had previously told me they would, but I had six return the questionnaire with high expectations for a great weekend of fun and fellowship.

Questionnaire for Scoutmaster Institute

1. Do you think the Scoutmaster's Institute is a good idea?



2. What would you like to see in a Scoutmaster's Institute?



- Advanced Adult Training
- Brainstorming
- Fellowship
- Scout Skills
- Learning to fill out paperwork
- Advanced Outdoor skill training
- district/council planning
- help with learning scout keys
- small projects
- park service rep. talk
- troop activities
- diversity of scoutmasters

3. What time of the year would be best for the scheduling of this event?



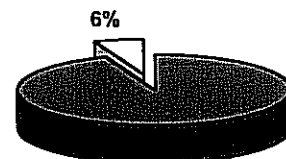
- FALL
- MAY (EARLY)
- NOT SUMMER
- UNSURE

4. Where is a desired location for this event? Council location, such as camp, or location within the district?



- Camp Bob Hardin
- District Location

5. Should this be an annual or semi-annual event?



- Annual
- Semi-Annual

Chapter 6

Accomplishing the project

On the afternoon of November 4, 2005 we ascended upon beautiful Camp Bob Hardin. We began registration at 5:00 p.m. After registration was all done and everyone was settled into their cabins we met in the dining hall for the first session of the weekend. This session included the required yearly training such as Safe Swim Defense, Safety Afloat, and Youth Protection. These courses were taught by Ben Maultsby the Lancaster Chester District Executive. We finished around 10:00 p.m. when we assembled for a delicious Cracker Barrel and fellowship with each other until 11:00 p.m. when we all went to bed.

Bright and early Saturday morning we began breakfast at 7:00 a.m. We had a brief break between breakfast and the first planned activity of the day. At 9:00 a.m. we meet at the scout craft field for a lesson on black iron work. A local blacksmith taught us the dos and don'ts of iron forging. He explained to us how to use the different tools safely and effectively. We learned how to heat and hammer on an anvil. We made tripods for a fire pit. Every scoutmaster needs a hand forged tri-pod to hang his coffee pot on. Everyone seemed to enjoy this activity as it was a little more advanced than the usual knot tying and fire building activities that are normally performed at training sessions. At 12:00 p.m. we meet in the dining hall for

lunch. At 1:00 p.m. we reassembled in the scout craft field for a lesson on Dutch oven cooking. I never knew there were so many meals that could be prepared in a Dutch oven. We sampled just a few of the recipes that were given to us that day including beef tips and rice, corn on the cob, potato soup, cornbread, and peach cobbler. That was just about the best meal I have ever eaten, all prepared in Dutch ovens. When we finished that great sampling we began work on the new staff cabin. We only worked an hour or two for a service project to the camp for letting us use the facility for the weekend. At 6:00 p.m. we met in the dining hall for yet another meal. At 7:00 p.m. just as supper was finishing we began the round table for the weekend. The round table consisted of how the weekend went and the pros and cons of the event. Also we discussed future plans for an event like the Scoutmaster's Institute. We discussed if it would be a good idea to have another one. Where it should be, and if it should be one or two weekends. We asked what the scoutmasters present would like to see in a future Scoutmaster's Institute, and if they thought we should offer other classes or different types of things. We also of course discussed meals for the institute. Everyone loved this conversation, and we established the idea of maybe having out of the ordinary meals such as a weekend with no sandwiches and chips. Everyone with this idea, with the thought that since we were feeding adults and no youth, then the meals took a little more priority. After the discussion was over, we had a cracker barrel at 9:00 p.m.

to fellowship and talk about the day's events. Fellowship continued on into the night. Some turned in and some didn't.

On Sunday morning we ate breakfast at 7:00 a.m. At 8:00 we had a short Church service on the most important point of the scout law "A scout is reverent" and a scout's duty to God. We all then said our goodbyes and went our own separate ways after a great weekend of fellowship and fun.

Chapter 7 Results

Just as I had planned it was a great weekend of fun and fellowship. The results that I got from the weekend were that there was interest, need, and want. These three things are why I decided to continue on and try to incorporate it into the Council Calendar for an annual retreat for Scoutmasters.

Everyone that came to the event said that it was a hit. They all enjoyed themselves and said that they would definitely be back again if the opportunity presented itself. They said that it was a great weekend to learn and also tell other Scoutmasters about what worked and didn't work in their own unit. In all everyone was satisfied with the event and is looking forward to the next one.

The need for the training event was evident during the weekend. The weekend will be a weekend to train new Scoutmasters for years to come. The need district wide is slowly digressing but the need in the council is presenting itself day by day. This event would be a great one to incorporate council wide. It would train scoutmasters throughout the Palmetto Council.

Many of the older Scoutmasters wanted to see the Scoutmaster's Institute return to the Palmetto Council but never thought they would. And

the younger Scoutmasters wanted to experience a weekend of just adult leader and find out what exactly these older members have been talking about for so long. The weekend long event of fun and fellowship was established fun all, old and new, to enjoy.

Obviously this weekend will be back sooner or later. It is a need, interest, and want of the district and council. Many will be back and many will come for the first time to experience a great fun filled weekend at the annual Scoutmaster's Institute.

Chapter 8

Pros and Cons of the Project

When my project was complete and I sat back and looked over what all happened I made a list of pros and cons. My list of pros included fellowship, activities, and the location. My list of cons included marketing, more activities, and better meals. These things are things that I would do differently on the next Scoutmaster's Institute.

I like the fellowship of the weekend a lot. I liked being able to share with other Scoutmasters ideas that work and work well. I also like the activities that were planned for the weekend as they were not the normal activities for a training event. They were things unique to the Scoutmaster's Institute. This event will draw new leaders to the program because of this unique training. Most of all I liked the location of the event. Having the Institute at Camp Bob Hardin made the event that much more of a hit. Long ago when the Scoutmaster's Institute was an annual thing, it was always held at Camp Palmetto until the local scout leader Bob Hardin passed away. The camp was renamed to honor him in 1983.

The things that I would do differently next time include marketing. I think that I should market the event better than I did this past time and explain exactly what it is and why it is important that every Scoutmaster be trained in all fields of scouting. I would do this by attending more

roundtables and advertising in the Council Newsletter. I would also incorporate more activities in the day than I did. I would like to do even more of the non traditional activities so that the older Scoutmasters can experience the new things that have come out since they were a boy. As discussed previously, I would like to have better meals. I think that the meals of this event will help to bond it together. If you have good food Scoutmasters will come. That has always been my philosophy.

Next time there is a Scoutmaster's Institute these are the goals that I have set to make sure that the Scoutmaster's Institute stays up to date and fun. I plan to let everyone know by marketing better, adding more activities, and better meals to my event. I plan to keep the fun fellowship, unique activities, and location the same though.

Chapter 9

Conclusions

I concluded from this project that Scoutmasters need training in order to successfully teach their scouts the fundamentals of scouting. Scoutmasters all over the United States need to be trained in all the things necessary for all of the merit badge requirements. In order for this to happen we need events in place such as the Scoutmaster's Institute. Scoutmasters were taught the things that are expected of them in a unit. The Scoutmasters are the backbone of the troop. They are the ones responsible for pushing those boys to become the Eagle Scouts and become better young men in the world today. The lessons boys learn in scouts will be the lessons they take with them the rest of their lives. When they are grown and have their own family they are more likely to succeed if they were a scout than if they were not. But in order for these boys to learn the lessons they need to learn someone has to teach it to them and that requires a well educated and trained Scoutmaster.

RESOURCES

1. www.scouresources.org
2. www.scoutxing.com
3. www.scoutter.com
4. www.scoutingonline.org
5. www.lnt.org
6. www.netcommish.com
7. www.usscouts.org
8. www.scoutingresources.org.uk
9. www.webofroses.com/scouting/knots.html
10. <http://members.tripod.com/~toveza/>
11. www.scouting.org
12. www.gorp.com
13. www.scoutmaster.org
14. www.macscouter.com
15. www.nwsc.org/training
16. www.inquiry.net/outdoor/skills/index.html
17. www.inquiry.net/traditional/leader/index.html
18. Woods Wisdom
19. Woodbadge
20. Powderhorn

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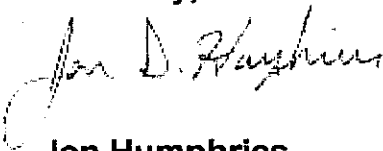
Dear Fellow Scouter:

As most of you know, the importance of the Palmetto Council of the Boy Scouts of America has become greater. As a result of the adult members of the Palmetto Council's firm belief the council was saved after a rigorous review of its strength. Currently the OHD does not offer anything other than the basic scoutmaster training. I would like to reiterate the current idea by establishing a Scoutmaster's Institute. This institute would be to meet fellow scoutmasters and share ideas.

As part of my requirements for the Doctor of Commissioner Science, I am trying to establish a bigger and better understanding for what is best for the boys in the OHD. I am enclosing a questionnaire regarding your ideas to further my planning for the Scoutmaster's Institute. Please take time to complete the questionnaire with complete honesty; your ideas will assist me in my quest to accomplish the Scoutmaster's Institute.

Your responses will be greatly appreciated. The results of this questionnaire will be available for your viewing should you need them. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,



Jon Humphries
Doctorial
Candidate

Enclosures: Questionnaire
Return envelope

Itinerary for weekend of Scoutmaster's Institute

Date: November 4, 5, and 6 2005
Location: Camp Bob Hardin, Saluda NC

Friday, November 4th

5:00 Registration
7:00-9:00 Safe swim defense
Safety afloat
Youth protection
10:00 Cracker Barrel
11:00 Taps Lights Out

Saturday, November 5th

7:00 Breakfast
9:00 Activity 1
12:00 Lunch
1:00 Activity 2
6:00 Supper
7:00 Round Table
9:00 Cracker Barrel
11:00 Taps, Lights Out

Sunday, November 6th

7:00 Breakfast
8:00 Church Services
9:00 Departure

Registration for Scoutmaster's Institute

YES I can attend

NO I can not attend

Registration will begin at your convenience. Arrive when you can.

**Place: Camp Bob Hardin
Date: November 4, 5, and 6 2005
Fee: \$25.00**

Come and join us for fun, fellowship and good food.

Yours in Scouting,

Jon D. Humphries

**P.S. Please return by October 24, 2005 or call me at (803)804-6752.
Make checks payable to:**

**Jon Humphries
PO Box 2022
Lancaster SC 29721**