

SEA SCOUTING
THE BEST KEPT SECRET IN BOY SCOUTING

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to bring together information accumulated over many years of leadership in Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Exploring, and Sea Scouting and pass it on for the benefit of those who will become the Scouters of tomorrow. A more specific emphasis is to focus that information on the hypothesis that "Sea Scouting is the Best Kept Secret in Boy Scouting". It is hoped that by discussing several points, it will be apparent to Scouters that starting and carrying out a Sea Scouting program is very similar to that of Boy Scouting. If Scouters can be informed to realized that they already know how to deliver the program, it is hoped that more Sea Scout Ships will be started and more boys and girls will be given the opportunity to benefit from such a worthwhile and fun program.

The subjects covered are listed in the table of contents. By presenting them in a simplified manner, and adding experience to the discussion, it is hoped that Scouters will be introduced to Sea Scouting in a straight-forward manner so they can know that they can easily conduct the program.

The official Sea Scout Manual (No.Z33239B) is referred to often in the text. It is well written, and contains a wealth of information essential to Sea Scouting. It has much technical and skills development material, which is most helpful in conducting a ship program. It should be referred to as the main source for answers when questions arise.

Introduction

Sea Scouting is the best kept secret in the Boy Scout Program. It has been said that Boy Scouting is “a precious tradition that has endured through time.” Many situations have come and gone through the years, testing Scouting’s many facets. With a tremendous breadth of endorsement and participation by Scouting alumni and countless supporters, Scouting has maintained its high standards and gone on to a much broader scope for young men and women in America.

Each part of the Boy Scout Program has its place in contributing to this tradition that is held dear by millions of Americans. Generally the most widely known programs are Tiger Cubs, Cub Scouts, and Boy Scouts which serve boys ages 6-13. Ventures serves boys and girls ages 14-20. Sea Scouting also serves boys and girls ages 14-20.

If more Scouters were informed about the Sea Scouting Program, it is hoped that more boys and girls could benefit from the Scouting movement. It is a method of retaining older boys in the program, enabling fathers of girls to enjoy Scouting where they might not otherwise, teaching girls Scouting skills of water safety, knots, first aid, compass, etc. Also, it’s just plain fun.

The delivery of the Sea Scouting program is like delivering Boy Scouting to Scouts. Scout Leaders already know how to do Sea Scouting, but most don’t realize it. Much of the material is the same, with obvious added nautical material. Another important point is that it is not necessary to own a boat to have a Sea Scout Ship. Neither is it required that the whole program has to be oriented toward aquatic activities.

This document will attempt to cover many of the topics of Sea Scouting necessary to start a Ship and conduct a Sea Scouting Program. Selection of this topic fits the experience of the author, and definitely fills a need for the youth of today, and the promotion of Boy Scouting in general. The Sea Scout Manual (No. Z33239B) covers the program in detail, and should be referred to for further information, and answers to questions.

The author has many years of experience in Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouting, and would like to pass on what he has been through over the years for the benefit of those who might become interested, and for the preservation and advancement of Sea Scouting.

General Sea Scouting Information

A Sea Scout Ship may be started for a number of reasons. Several of them will be covered below. As boys get older and possibly lose interest in Boy Scouting, Sea Scouting can retain many of them in the Scouting program. A Ship works well in conjunction with an existing Troop, often meeting at the same time, at the same place, and being sponsored by the same chartering organization. Activities done with the Troop save planning time, may make functions more do-able, and share leadership. Some separate activities are necessary for the individual identity of the ship. Fund raisers, camping trips, camporees, etc. can all be handled in combination with the Troop. Sisters and friends of Boy Scouts are good sources of new members. Having girl members in a Ship attracts and retains boys, and there seems to be a more gentlemanly attitude among all the boys when girls are a part of activities. Behavior is on a better plane, too. Mothers of girl members can be a great help, too.

Ships chartered as units separate from a Scout Troop may be sponsored by a separate church, civic club, yacht club, Coast Guard Auxiliary, Naval ROTC Program, etc. Yacht clubs especially like to promote sailing, and are an excellent source of leadership and skills instruction for the program, as are Coast Guard Auxiliary units. In any situation, aquatic enthusiasts of any kind are good sources to tap. Many are eager to encourage interest in boating and aquatic activities and share their expertise.

Ships have been started by men who were Boy Scouts, but who have daughters, with or without sons. They would like to be involved in Boy Scouting again, but might

not have had the opportunity until informed of Sea Scouting. Many of these fathers would like for their daughters to learn how to tie knots, use a compass, row a boat, learn first aid, camp, hike, and do what might be called "Boy Scout things". Also, with the requirement that there be female leadership for co-ed activities, many mothers who might have been categorized as "Scouting Widows" get in on the program, and become real assets. Such was the case with the author's Ship. Involving families makes for a strong program, and increases resources and leadership.

Many men who were Sea Scouts as boys want their children to enjoy the same program they did years ago. These men are also valuable sources for Ship leaders and consultants for skill instruction. Once found, these men can serve as a nucleus for starting a new Ship, or as resources for an existing one. Utilizing and passing on this sort of experience can do a lot to preserve and develop interest in Sea Scouting.

Chartering a new Sea Scout Ship works well as a Wood Badge ticket item. Doing the research, recruiting leaders and members, finding a chartering organization, and completing the chartering process has fulfilled several Wood Badge tickets.

Sea Scout Ships have been started in many other situations. Details for chartering a new ship may be found in the Sea Scout Manual (No. Z33239B).

Ship Organization

Ships are organized much like Scout Troops and Venture Crews, but use other terminology. They have a Boatswain instead of a Senior Patrol Leader or President, a Skipper instead of a Scoutmaster or Advisor, a Mate instead of an Assistant Scoutmaster or Associate Advisor, etc. The program is run by the Sea Scouts with guidance and advice from the Skipper and Mates. Much of the material is the same as Boy Scouting,

but taken to a more advanced level. Boy Scout leaders come to realize that they have done a lot of the same program material in a Troop, and that they are already well qualified to conduct the same for a ship. When subject matter becomes more involved, resource people can be located and involved to cover these areas. This will be covered in more detail later.

Rank Advancement

One appealing and similar aspect to the Boy Scouts is that Sea Scouting has a rank structure. Venturing does also, but obviously is different. The rank material has much in common with Boy Scout ranks, but adds much more in the areas of seamanship and aquatic skills. As a Sea Scout advances from Apprentice to Ordinary to Able to Quartermaster, more skills are involved, and those covered are more advanced. Many requirements are fulfilled by passing the merit badge of that subject. Examples include: swimming, motorboating, lifesaving, fire safety, first aid, rowing, cooking, and weather. Others with helpful information include: pioneering, small-boat sailing, orienteering, painting, safety, public speaking, communications, woodworking, metalworking, canoeing, citizenship in the world, and whitewater. Other BSA material referred to in the Sea Scout Manual includes: BSA Lifeguard, Safety Afloat, Safe Swim Defense, Snorkeling BSA, Board Sailing BSA, Mile Swim, Eagle Service Project Workbook, Religious Awards, and the Boy Scout Handbook. Other references include: Federal Requirements and Safety Tips for Recreational Boats (U.S. Coast Guard), U.S. Navy Bluejacket Manual, Marine Radio Could Be a Lifesaver (U.S. Coast Guard), International Code of Signals, and Federal Communications Commission Marine Radio Operator Permit.

For boys, instruction in many of the merit badges is available at Boy Scout summer camp. Others are routinely taught as a regular part of a Troop's annual program, and it works well for girls to be included in learning the skills along with the boys. Some of the Sea Scout requirements include teaching a skill on certain areas. This lends itself to helping with instruction in a Troop, as well as with younger Sea Scouts. Camping trips are good opportunities for learning skills in knots, first aid, cooking, compass, weather, first aid, etc. Merit Badge Colleges and Universities that have been developed in recent years are a good source for Sea Scouts to learn the skills for various merit badges. Some have let female Sea Scouts enroll. Many times satisfying the requirements for a merit badge more than fulfills the Sea Scout requirements in that subject area.

Consultant Services

For topics involving more technical information, it is good to find and schedule a consultant to cover a particular subject. The local Power Squadron or Coast Guard Auxiliary normally has classes covering such topics as rules of the road, navigation, boat handling and the like. Or they might agree to come to Ship meetings and cover specific areas. Boating supply and equipment store owners are glad to provide instruction for use of products they sell and service. Many also have safety programs that they give for various groups. Military personnel, active or retired are glad to help teach drill and military courtesies, as are Naval ROTC Units. Navy and Coast Guard retirees are often rich in the traditions of the sea, and are usually eager to pass on skills and knowledge they learned during their time on active duty. Yacht club members can relate lots of experiences pertaining to sailing, boat safety, etc., and are often a source for outings on various kinds of craft. Meteorologists are a valuable source for weather knowledge.

College and high school history faculty could serve as Naval and sea history resources. Scuba shop owners and instructors are glad to inform the public about what they sell and teach. Many consultants may already be members of the Ship Committee and/or are parents of Sea Scouts. Once it is known that a Sea Scout Ship exists, folks of like interest are easily located, or even volunteer their services unsolicited. Consultants are a very good source of additional consultants.

Ship Activities

When a Sea Scout Ship is chartered and gets going in a district or council, others may be established. When this occurs, pooling resources and efforts is a great way to learn skills, promote comradeship, and in general increase interest among Sea Scouting enthusiasts. A social aspect to these instructional gatherings always adds to everyone's enjoyment.

One particular scenario that has been efficient, productive, and fun is where more than one Ship exists in a district. During Boy Scout Camporees while Scouts are in skills competition, or participating in the program, Sea Scouts can pool their resources and gather separately for a day of compass instruction and games, knot instruction and games, uniform inspections, drill, or any other subjects that might be difficult to otherwise include in an individual Ship's program. Consultants brought in to cover unique topics can instruct members of several Ships to fill in where subject matter is lacking in the individual Ship leadership. Cooking meals as a part of the camporee, or even participating in appropriate activities with the Scouts are always options. Many camporee committees can use the help of Sea Scouts for Troop registration, directing

traffic, escorting Troops to their campsite, conducting flag ceremonies, serving refreshments at leader meetings, and in general serving as support staff. Not only is this a great help to the camporee leadership, but it gets Sea Scouts in view of all who attend. Interest expressed by Scouts and leaders could lead to the chartering of more Sea Scout Ships. This in turn can lead to more of the same—more boys retained in Scouting, female membership, more people knowledgeable about marine safety and activities, etc. Campfire performances by talented Sea Scouts individually or as a group contribute to the effort, and also increase the visibility of Sea Scouting. Boy Scouts and parents attending campfire programs are a captive audience to be informed about Sea Scouting.

All such activities require much brainstorming, planning, communication with concerned parties, and commitment by the Sea Scouts. Everything should be done in the best taste and genuineness to put the best foot of Sea Scouting forward. Thorough training and personnel understanding their jobs and what is expected of them insures success. Everyone should be in proper uniform at all times, and be equipped to positively respond to questions that might be asked. Much interest is generated in these kinds of situations.

Multi-Ship events are valuable for many reasons. In addition to pooling resources to cover unique subject matter and having a good time, they give leaders a chance to compare notes on Ship meeting programs, rank advancement, service projects, etc.

Individual Ship meetings can be used to learn about traditional more commonplace nautical topics, and plan the program for coming months. The rank status of members oftentimes dictates what subjects to include in the regular meetings. Covering

topics that are required for rank advancement at meetings is a good way for members to see they are advancing and learning skills necessary for outings involving sailing, motor boating, etc. Keeping track or at least checking with members to see what they lack to pass their next rank keeps the program serving the needs of the Sea Scouts, and generates enthusiasm. When a given topic is chosen, requirements on that topic for more than one rank might as well be covered, if possible. For example, knots and splices, called marlinspike seamanship, required for Apprentice, Ordinary, and Able might as well be taught at the same time. By having a Quartermaster candidate teach these to fulfill his requirements, everyone benefits. At the outset, a consultant might need to be brought in to teach marlinspike seamanship to a new Ship.

There are times when certain subjects need to be covered for upcoming outings like a day of sailing or traveling on a consultant's boat. It is a good idea for everyone to participate in those sessions, even though the material might be for a rank or two up the line for certain individuals. Such topics as rules of the road, navigation, piloting, etc. will be used by members at future dates, and are good to start early in a Sea Scout's career. Members enjoy learning and doing these various things, and with more members skilled in various areas, the safer outings can be. They enjoy using what they have learned.

Sea Scouting also has an alternate advancement plan that can be worked on along with the traditional program, or as an independent effort. It includes the Sea Scouting Safe Boating and Advanced Seamanship Training courses. These courses fulfill the requirements for the Small Boat Handler and Qualified Seaman. They are designed for members to learn boating skills, safety, chart reading, rules of the road, emergency

equipment, firefighting, hull inspection, etc. The topics covered are those used on board a craft of any kind, and are geared toward safety, and the details of actually handling a boat.

The Venturing Recognition Program is also an option for Sea Scouts. They can work on the Venturing Bronze, Gold, Silver, and Ranger Awards in addition to the traditional Sea Scout ranks. Requirements and information about the Venturing Program are available in the Venturing Handbook (No. Z334493).

A Boy Scout may be registered in both a Troop and a Ship, and may continue to work on advancement toward the Eagle Scout rank. If, however, a boy decides not to be a Boy Scout, but only a member of a Sea Scout Ship, he must have attained the rank of First Class as a Boy Scout to continue working toward his Eagle Rank as a Sea Scout. Also, he must earn his Eagle before his eighteenth birthday.

The Religious Award Program of the Boy Scouts of America also includes Sea Scouts, male and female. Having a Ship chartered to a church is a way to facilitate members working on these awards. It is likely that all members won't attend the chartering church, but if they are informed of the program and encouraged to become involved in completing the parts, they can complete it with their own pastor and/or church official. Promotion of this program by leaders sets the tone for the whole personality of a Ship, and is in accordance with the character building principles of the Boy Scouts of America. Covering what is involved in religious awards as a meeting topic from time to time is a way to inform all members about this opportunity, and to let those working on them relate their experiences. Having grace before meals, devotions

before retiring at night, and church service on outings over Sundays has a way of keeping a lot of credibility and integrity in the whole program. When outside people hear of this, the reputation of Sea Scouting and Boy Scouting as a whole grows. Some Ships are thought of as church youth groups in uniform. That's a good thing. Parents like to have their children involved in that kind of organization.

Uniforms

Uniforms are an important traditional part of the Sea Scout program. They are an outward visible sign that set Sea Scouts apart from other Scouts, other aquatic organizations, and the Navy and Coast Guard. Several options are exercised by different Ships. There are summer and winter dress uniforms and work uniforms. The particular guidelines are outlined in detail in the Sea Scout Manual (No. Z33239B). Some of the main points are that all military insignia must be removed. All must bear the Sea Scouts, B.S.A. strip over the right pocket, and all insignia must be worn exactly as outlined in the Sea Scout Manual so they are not mistaken for military personnel. Uniforms can be of either the Navy or Coast Guard type. Most Ships that wear the Coast Guard type are sponsored by Coast Guard Auxiliary units. Others traditionally wear the Navy type. Whatever is chosen, all members must wear the same type. It is against the law to copy military uniforms, but the Boy Scouts have been granted specific permission to wear them as long as there are certain alterations. On dress blue jumpers, the center stripe of piping must be removed from the cuffs and collar, and the stars in the corners of the collar covered with a small Sea Scout First Class Anchor patch. This same patch must be worn on the front of the white sailor hat. The dress blues for boys consist of the Navy blue or black jumper, bell bottom trousers, black socks, plain slick black shoes, white

sailor hat, and black cravat style scarf. Female members wear a Sea Scout adapted Navy issue single breasted coat with either slacks or an a-line skirt, a plain white blouse with black tab tie, and a garrison hat. These dress blues are worn to all special occasions and whenever Sea Scouting is on public display. Navy pea coats are standard for youth and adults in cold weather. It is important to remember to use a lot of mothballs for dress blues in the summertime during storage.

The availability of uniforms often dictates uniform options for a Ship. When the dress blue and the white jumpers are the only types available, youth and adult members, both male and female wear them. As adult uniforms become available, they can be phased in.

Adult uniforms traditionally have been Naval officer uniforms with silver Sea Scout buttons and appropriate Sea Scout insignia. Leaders wear the traditional naval officer's hat for men, and the "bucket" style hat for women. For summer wear, male and female leaders wear the Navy-style white open collared short sleeved shirt, with white trousers, or women may wear a white skirt. An option for leaders is the summer khaki uniform, with appropriate Sea Scouting changes. The traditional khaki hat or a black ball cap with Sea Scouting insignia on the front may be worn.

All Sea Scouts and leaders should demonstrate true military bearing when in uniform, looking as though they have just stood uniform inspection.

Work uniforms should be worn during activities where dress uniforms would not be appropriate. Generally these are usually chambray shirts with proper Sea Scout insignia and blue rental-type trousers. These can often be purchased from large chain

stores, military surplus stores, or other sources dealing in work clothes. Either the white sailor hat or a black ball cap with Sea Scout insignia sewn on may be worn. Shoe styles are optional for the task at hand. Old worn out clothes that can be discarded are the best to wear when doing jobs that permanently damage clothing such as painting, welding, paint stripping, etc.

Many ships have their own t-shirts and sweat shirts made with designs involving the Sea Scout First Class Anchor. Others have ball caps with a Sea Scout design silk screened on the front, or have a Sea Scout patch sewn on the front for both boys and girls, youth and adult.

Sources for uniforms can be where ever they can be found. -Army-Navy stores, retired sailors, flea markets, thrift stores, yard sales, etc. are excellent places to check. In the Sea Scout Manual, there are references given for procuring uniforms from the U.S. Navy resale system, Sea Scouts Ship Store in California, and others. Where surplus uniforms exist, an established Ship can really give a new Ship a boost by donating uniforms to help them get started.

Ships that become fully uniformed have a better overall program, and have more pride in their Ship. Oftentime they are invited to participate in such things as Veteran's Day parades, American Flag retirement ceremonies, litter pick up, "get out and vote" campaigns, and patriotic celebrations of various types. These put the Ship on public display, and are excellent opportunities to recruit new members.

Service Projects

Service projects are an important part of the Sea Scout Program. These fit into any community, and may involve a wide scope of things, or just be support staff for an event.

The scope of service projects is endless. They can start with the local chartering organization, include help for individuals, organizations, particular functions in the community and surrounding area, and even be a part of a national effort of the Boy Scouts or other wide-ranging organization. Gathering information and discussing a project thoroughly is important in planning for doing a good job that all will be proud of and that will fulfill the expectations of the recipient. Meeting with the appropriate parties concerned to learn all that is planned and expected is time well spent. Discussing the duties and opportunities and considering resources insures success. Scheduling with regard to members' obligations and responsibilities must be a major factor when considering a service project, especially for a scheduled event involving outside people. Becoming acquainted with how that project or similar ones have been handled in the past reduces unnecessary duplicate planning and time spent, when previous experience could have been utilized. This is helpful when participants expect things to be done a certain way or at certain times. Discussions of this type can lead to suggestions for change and improvement for ease of operation, increased efficiency in many ways, and an overall better function for the enjoyment and value to all concerned. Transportation, facilities, weather, equipment needed, what is expected for the Ship to supply, etc. should be included in the details as plans are finalized. Many times it is a good idea for a project to have an individual chairman, if it is involved enough for this to seem necessary. Before

the Ship commits to take on a service project, it will be necessary to get a final commitment from enough members to have sufficient personnel to successfully and easily accomplish all that has been planned. Whatever the case, large or small, each service project should be approached as if this was the only chance for making a good impression, so a top quality job will be done.

The local chartering organization may need something as simple as leaves raked or gutters cleaned on a church. When a crew of several people shows up with the proper equipment, a pretty big project can turn into one that is easily accomplished. It is a lot of fun, too. Making known that the Ship is available for such things makes for an excellent working relationship and expression of gratitude for sponsorship, meeting place, and resources of many types. It is important to remember that projects do not have to be water related.

Adopting a stretch of highway for litter pick-up is a helpful undertaking. Tackling individual litter clean-up projects for schools, rest homes, municipal grounds, etc. are easy when they involve several folks. Many times they don't take too long, and become a fun outing for the Ship. Local newspaper coverage of such service projects can help recruit new members and consultants.

Elderly citizens are most appreciative for help around their place. Raking leaves, cleaning out an old storage building, moving furniture, grocery shopping and the like are things that are hard for some older folks to accomplish. It's good for young people to be involved with helping with individual situations like this, and doing such things as serving as staff for particular senior citizen organized functions, as the opportunities arrive. There's a feeling that is hard to describe when a project is completed and there is

no doubt that it is genuinely appreciated. Expressions of gratitude and body language displayed by elderly folks say more than enough. And it is just plain fun.

Sea Scouting rank advancement requirements include service and work on Ship equipment and projects other than regular Ship meeting, parties, dances and fun events. It is a good plan to keep in mind things that need to be done to present opportunities for members to pass these requirements. Arranging for a consultant to instruct or serve as a supervisor for specialized projects is a great way to have an interesting function where everyone learns needed and desired skills. Maintenance, upkeep, or overhauling and remodeling facilities or equipment are areas where this sort of outing is time well spent. Members get to know each other better, and pride in the Ship and equipment is preserved and increased.

A situation unique to Boy Scouting is helping with a boy's Eagle Scout Service Project. It is required that an Eagle candidate supervise and plan a suitable project as partial fulfillment of the requirements. It is to involve supervising a crew for whatever things are necessary to carry it out. It is to be planned with outside people representing a civic club, municipality, community organization, or other suitable entity approved by the Boy Scouts. The Eagle candidate is to lead the entire undertaking as a part of developing assertiveness and leadership qualities. The candidate may be a member solely of the Ship, or may still have dual membership in a Troop. Whatever the case, the project is to be of the scope to require the efforts of several Boy Scouts and/or Sea Scouts helping under the supervision of the candidate.

A service project of sorts is participating in parades. Sponsoring organizations welcome Scouting units to be a part of parades commemorating a number of things. Drill

practice at Ship meetings makes it easy for a Ship to look sharp when they participate in public parades. Familiarity with marching procedures make it second nature to easily stay in formation and be impressive to observers as a parade moves along. This is especially true for parades held for July 4th, Veteran's Day, and the like. Receptions following parades at such facilities as a Veterans of Foreign Wars or American Legion Club present an opportunity for interaction with sponsoring committees, and for making a good impression on another facet of the community. In particular these organizations present opportunities for participation in or conducting activities and service projects for the community such as American Flag retirement ceremonies, memorial services for veterans, and other patriotic functions. A crew of young people to help with a project from time to time can lead to a beneficial situation for both parties. Many times they can serve as a resource for consultants, lending equipment, and even financial support. Former service men and women like to see young folks developing patriotic traits, and like to insure that these sorts of things continue.

Riding on a float is appropriate at times like Christmas parades and others highlighting centennials, or other individual community events. Anytime the Ship or individual members are in uniform in public, they should be dressed properly and conduct themselves in a manner that will bring honor and make a good impression for the Boy Scout movement, and Sea Scouting in particular.

Outings

“Keep the Outing in Scouting” is an old Scout phrase that surely applies to Sea Scouting. Outings can be for service, skills instruction, education, physical development, and/or just plain fun.

A day outing for skills development adds to the fun and enthusiasm among the members. Good planning and coordination of efforts is important. A day spent as guests on a consultant's sailboat, for example, can teach a wealth of hands on skills. Dry land instruction of safety skills may be the first item on the schedule, and could even be done at meetings leading up to a day on the water. Studying in the Sea Scout Manual and knowing the requirements for rank advancement may present opportunities to become proficient and pass some needed requirements. Taking advantage of situations like these creates an attitude of accomplishment among members, and increases the overall skill level of the Ship. Planning and serving a meal during the day on board or on land is a nice way to contribute to the activities of the day, and to express gratitude to the host. It is always important to promptly send thank you notes to anyone who does anything for the Ship. If this is someone's specified job, and it is done upon returning from the function or at the next meeting, thanks is expressed in a timely manner.

A tour of some appropriate place can be an enjoyable outing. Such places as a weather station, Navy ship, Naval reserve training facility, boat manufacturing plant, boat trailer factory, etc. can be very informative and in particular apply to Sea Scouting activities. Others may be for information about careers of various types. Such outings are very appealing to members, parents, and leaders, are a lot of fun, and may lead to development of lifelong interests or occupations. Scheduling these into a day or even over a two or three day trip make an event that can be planned for and looked forward to. Including such things as an amusement park, major league baseball game, or dining out at a nice restaurant make a trip all that more memorable. Tours to places like the USS

Yorktown near Charleston, South Carolina, or Battleship Cove in Fall River, Massachusetts are certainly nautical in nature, and make a fun trip for any unit.

There is no limit to a list of fun outings. Just because the unit has the name Sea Scout Ship it doesn't always have to have aquatic activities. A day hike or other activity involving no aquatics fits into the program just as well. A progressive dinner is an enjoyable evening for all involved, and is a great occasion for inviting new recruits. If everyone brings a friend, more folks are introduced to the well-rounded program of the Ship. This is a situation where telling tales of past Sea Scout adventures contributes to the good time of members, and exposes guests to examples of good times and memorable functions enjoyed by the Ship members. Other options include all night bowling, football or baseball games, eating out as a group, roller skating, and on and on.

District or council events such as camporees and Scout Shows make for good times, and offer an opportunity to serve as staff, sell concessions, conduct ceremonies, man a booth, etc. Having Sea Scout displays at these functions draws a lot of attention, when decorated with lots of Sea Scout items. Having the Ship's flag there, international code flags, etc. add a lot of color. Plenty of handouts with a contact number is important to send home with interested folks. Such things as Sea Scout Manuals, navigation charts, rope, maps, and other seagoing items help generate interest in passers-by. Audience participation is always popular with Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts. When manned to pass out material, a lot of good contact is made with folks potentially interested.

Other council events for Ventures in particular are popular with Sea Scouts. These involve much less planning since signing up with the council is the major requirement. A program called "The Big City at Night" has included visits to a police

station, hospital morgue, night court, and an all night gymnasium, ending with breakfast at a restaurant that opens early. A Venture Ski Weekend in a local resort town offered opportunities for competition between units in a variety of skill areas. Sea Scouts have regional weekend regattas where ships compete in everything from map and compass reading to knot tying, and rowing and sailing races. All of these usually include some sort of social function each night, ending with a dance the last night. These make for a lot of fun and exchanging of ideas between Ships. Practicing and learning the skills necessary to compete in the various events make good opportunities for coming together as a Ship to develop a lot of pride and enthusiasm.

Visiting a National Boy Scout Jamboree to be a part of the National Sea Scouting Booth is a way to become acquainted with Sea Scouting on a national level. Members enjoy getting to know Sea Scouts from all over the country. Ideas and excitement from those functions carry over to the local Ship and its activities when every one gets home.

A trip to visit a National Boy Scout Jamboree is just one kind that can be enjoyed by a Sea Scout Ship. Members get excited when planning starts, often months in advance. Several things are determining factors, including leaders' vacation times, dates of activities along the way, length and dates of a high adventure itineraries, and availability of rental vehicles, airline seating, etc. On trips like this, the list of places to see is endless. Again, just because the name is Sea Scouts, it does not mean that all activities have to have a nautical theme. Whatever the case, there are some things that apply to most all trips. It is good for the whole Ship to be in on the planning, with special committees or individuals in charge of food, laundry, tourist attractions, clean-up, thank you notes, duty rosters, etc. A route is chosen with regard to time that can be allotted for

travel, sights to see along the way, and schedule of events to visit. Costs and schedules of such things as major league baseball games, theme parks, museums, national parks, and other tourist attractions need to be secured for budgeting and time allotment. Food costs per person are estimated in the 1990's to be between \$8.00 and \$9.00 per day. This is a menu of a cold breakfast consisting of such things as cereal, fruit, bagels, milk, juice, sweet roll, or the like. Either lunch or supper is a sack meal of sandwiches prepared after breakfast to take in a fanny pack for lunch, put out on a picnic table in a roadside park on the way, or set out when a final destination is reached at the end of the day. Folks eat as much as they like at this meal. Having plenty of sandwich makings such as sliced beef, ham or turkey, potato chips, apples, grapes, etc. and plenty of peanut butter makes for a lot of happy campers. The other meal is eaten at a restaurant. For this, each person was given back \$5.00 from the money paid in the fee to go. If they wanted to eat more than \$5.00, they paid for it out of their spending money. The chairman of the food committee should see what travelers want when it comes time to shop. Buying in relation to consumption and storage space keeps refrigerated items fresh, and makes for more efficient storage. Grocery shopping can be done while others do laundry, fill the van with gas, or on an as needed basis.

For driving trips, renting vans is recommended. If anything goes wrong, the rental agency is contacted. The total cost of the van, gas, tolls, etc. is divided among those making the trip. This is, of course, totaled up after returning home

The nature of activities at the destination have a lot to do with determining what each person takes. When going to the High Adventure Sea Base in the Florida Keys, there wouldn't be any backpacks, just nylon zipper gym bags. That size baggage fits

prepared after returning is a clear way to show everyone all the costs. Everything from postage and phone bills to van rental, admission to baseball games, high adventure base fees, grocery and meal costs, and anything else are all totaled for the whole cost of the trip. After totaling all the costs and all the fees paid in, it is evident whether anyone owes any more or there is money due back. No one makes any money or loses any money on a trip like this. A potluck supper two or three weeks after returning home is a good time for everyone to bring photos so others can request copies, relive funny and memorable experiences along the way, and cover all the financial aspects of the trip. When it is all settled, the bank account is closed, and everyone starts planning for the next trip.

It is important to remember that Sea Scouting is still Scouting. All rules of the Boy Scouts of America, including the Guide to Safe Scouting, apply to all aspects of the program.

Leader Training

Since Sea Scouting is so much like regular Boy Scouting, the training for Troop leaders applies to Ship leaders. The same forms are used for chartering, advancement, etc. Fees are paid the same way. Skills instruction is done the same way. The charter organization has the same relationship as with a Troop. The crew organization is the same as patrols. Dealings at the Scout Office are the same such as purchase of literature, insignia, turning in the charter, etc.

There is a Skipper's Manual that has been printed in the past. If one of those could be secured, it is most helpful. The main differences are that nautical material is added to Scouting material, and the members do more of the program planning than in Boy Scouting. There is no need to own a boat. In fact some Ships don't want a boat

because it requires upkeep. Other Ships want to own a boat, and it works out fine. Having consultants, committee members, and/or parents who have boats is an option many ships enjoy. Helping with maintenance of these craft makes this a win-win situation. Other options such as renting the local Boy Scout camp canoes, sailboats, rowboats, etc. utilize council equipment for unit use when it would otherwise be stored away somewhere. Arrangements have been made for Ships to stay overnight at Scout camps during the off season for a weekend on the water. Program planning for a function like this utilizes time efficiently, and enables members to acquire skills earlier than would otherwise be possible. Time spent with consultant guests makes for good learning time. Cleaning and leaving rented and/or borrowed equipment in top condition and stored properly after its use are only small gestures of gratitude.

A leader training course for Sea Scout leaders sponsored by Boy Scouting is called Sea Badge. It is the counterpart of Wood Badge for Boy Scout leaders. The course is patterned after Wood Badge, but only involves one weekend. These courses are generally held on a regional basis every few years. The requirements are set up in a ticket item format much like Wood Badge and are handled in much the same way. There have been instances where Ship leaders of the same Ship or in the same area have ticket items that work with or are a part of a district plan for developing Sea Scouting. A combined effort like this can be quite effective and beneficial to all.

Publicizing Sea Scouting

There are many gatherings of Scout Leaders where an informative Sea Scouting program is appropriate. This thesis would hopefully be an introductory document for any information session. Along with the Sea Scout manual, many topics could be discussed,

and questions answered. It is important that professional Scouters in a council be informed about the program. A session with a Sea Scouter and/or attending Sea Badge training can provide a lot of orientation and benefit from experienced leaders. Other opportunities could be executives visiting with Ship leaders during a Scout Show, Camporee, council jamboree, or other occasion where Sea Scouts are participating.

District roundtables are an excellent setting for a Sea Scout program. Presenting the basics to Scoutmasters, Unit Commissioners, and other leaders makes a situation where that is the subject of the evening, and gives an opportunity for answering questions, relating experiences, and in general giving a thorough idea of what Sea Scouting is all about.

Presenting Sea Scouting as a part of indoor and outdoor basic leader training in the pre-requisites to Wood Badge plant the seed of Sea Scouting in the minds of these leadership people who will perpetuate Scouting on a unit by unit basis.

Any Sea Scouting program can be adapted to the situation at hand. A brief presentation of basic facts might be appropriate in some time constraint situations, or even a slide presentation or video could be included if a more extensive presentation is desired. Appropriate handouts contribute to effectiveness, and retention of information presented.

Follow up by the District Executive or Council Venturing Executive can be a key to successfully initiating Sea Scouting. Oftentime it can be arranged for Sea Scout leaders to accompany executives, Unit Commissioners, and others on follow up meetings, to further promote the program. Enthusiastic knowledgeable resource people like these

can be invaluable. Involving Sea Scouts themselves can be a good way to visit with prospective youth members, and to create enthusiasm from that angle.

Presentations at leader programs at Merit Badge Universities and Colleges gives another chance to deliver Sea Scouting information to a captive audience. Since several councils are often represented at these functions, this can rally-broaden the scope of spreading Sea Scouting information. Presenters at all these types of programs being in Sea Scout uniforms puts Sea Scouting on public display, and has a way of creating interest among leaders and scouts alike. Many good times can be related over lunch or during breaks at any of these opportunities.

Anytime a program is presented, passing around a sign-up list for further mailings of additional information creates a list of prospects to pass on to appropriate people whether it be council personnel or other Sea Scouting leaders that might visit and follow up. A good use of this list is to keep these folks informed of Sea Scouting events and Ship meetings nearby that they and prospective members might visit. It is also important that contact names addresses, phone numbers and eMail addresses of Sea Scout resource people be given out to participants.

Informing Wood Badge coach-counselors about Sea Scouting creates another suggestion for candidates to consider when formulating their ticket. A Sea Scout resource list in the hands of these coach-counselors could be another helpful way to disseminate Sea Scouting information.

Providing Commissioner College participants with Sea Scouting material gets that information in the hands of folks who work with individual units that might need options to retain older boys, include daughters in Scouting, or otherwise help promote Boy

Scouting in general on a unit by unit basis. Including Sea Scouting in the program of Commissioner College presentations creates a way for face to face contact to occur, and questions to be answered. A weekend like that is a fun way to have time to visit about Sea Scouting experiences and successes over meals, cracker barrels, and during free time. Having several councils involved has a great multiplying effect for the effort, too.

Presentation of Sea Scouting at other Scouter gatherings can be very effective, too. Most would be conducted in a similar manner as those discussed above.

Summary

Sea Scouting is a viable and exciting program of the Boy Scouts of America, but it seems to still be the "best kept secret". The youth of today need worthwhile activities to keep them busy and to develop their talents and abilities. It's also a good program to make a lifetime of good memories for everyone involved. There is nothing better for youth than Boy Scouting. Sea Scouting presents this opportunity for boys and girls ages 14-20. If more leaders realized that they already know how to deliver the program, and a few other basic items of information, more Sea Scout Ships would be chartered, and Sea Scouting would increase in scope and membership to serve the youth of America.

It is hoped that the topics covered in this dissertation will serve to spark interest and be a basic information source for those interested in Sea Scouting.

REFERENCES

Sea Scout Manual. Boy Scouts of America, Irving, Texas, 1987.

ADDENDUM

Since submission of my thesis for the degree of Doctor of Commissioner Science, it has come to my attention that the website from the Boy Scouts of America National Office, entitled www.scouting.org has a wealth of information about Sea Scouting on it. Clicking on Venturing, and then Sea Scouts locates the specific site. The information is updated regularly, and it is recommended that anyone interested in Sea Scouting should access this website for expanded information about the program.

It was also recommended that I list the publications referred to in the body of the text. They are as follows:

Boy Scout Handbook. Boy Scouts of America, Irving, Texas, 1998.

Merit Badge Pamphlets. Boy Scouts of America, Irving, Texas

U. S. Coast Guard- Federal Requirements and Safety Tips for Recreational Boats

Marine Radio Could Be a Lifesaver

U.S. Navy Bluejacket Manual

Federal Communications Marine Radio Operator Permit