

Plan Pack Year

Pack **418** Annual Planning Meeting



What : Annual Pack Planning Meeting

Where : Cokesbury Summit Park Fellowship Hall

When : Saturday, July 14, 2007, 9:00 - 11:00 am

All leaders and parents are encouraged to attend and participate in our annual pack planning meeting. We will be determining in what activities we want to involve the pack.

New to the council this year, we have several weekends of family camp from which we can choose to attend. There has also been discussion about a pack campout. Here is your chance to have a voice in this year's schedule. This is your son's pack—chip in to provide the best possible program for him.

See you there!

**Doug Parker
Cubmaster, Pack 418**

ANNUAL PACK PLANNING MEETING-SUGGESTED METHODS

Planning the events that your Pack will participate in is a very important event for the pack committee, the parents and most especially, the scouts. It is a tool that organizes den, pack, and district events so that scouts can maximize their fun and learning experience. It also renews the enthusiasm and involvement of the scouts and their families.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Before you can hold a Pack Annual Planning meeting, you will need to gather several items:

- Most important are calendars. You will need the dates of school vacations etc., community events, holidays, and district or council events. These can be recorded before the meeting to save time.
- Blank flip charts or large sheets of paper for brain storming sessions.
- Several different colored pens or pencils to record different events (i.e. District events are green, community events are blue, ...)
- Parent Talent Survey Sheets and Event Survey Sheets (these had been filled out at a previous pack meeting).
- Anything else you might need that would help you plan the best ever Year in Scouting.

GATHERING INFORMATION:

Getting input from as many parents and scouts is important. If interest is limited in a particular event, then it would be wiser to schedule a more popular event instead. There are several ways to gather input. The most popular is doing a survey with all possible events listed and even an optional space for new ideas. Also have the parents fill out a Parent Talent Survey Sheet. This will assist you when you have to fill out names for Event Coordinators. Hand out the Parent Talent Survey Sheet and the Events Survey Sheets at a pack event or meeting the month before the Parent Committee Meeting so that the planning committee will have an idea as to what events are wanted and who has what talents.

AT THE PLANNING MEETING:

FIRST STEP : BRAINSTORMING

Assemble your committee and parents and spend 10 to 15 minutes listing ideas that the Scouts might want to do. Don't worry about details or discuss the merits of each event. Just write them on the large flip chart or a large piece of paper so that all can see them. Large groups may be broken up into smaller group to facilitate ease and flow of ideas. Remember to check out your Parent Talent Survey sheets. A parent's talent might suggest an event to propose. For example, the survey found a Dad who is good at golf and would like to teach the boys. You could set up a pack or den event for earning the Golf Belt Loop. No talent is too small that it can't be used somehow. After you have brainstormed events, set the sheets aside until later.

SECOND STEP: CALENDAR PREPARATION

If the initial calendar preparation work has not already been completed, now would be the time to record the dates of the school calendar (with vacation and beginning and end of school), holidays, and community events such as parades, flag ceremonies, and street fairs. Next, record Council and District events such as roundtables, day and resident camps, camporees, Scout Fair, and Webelos Woods. Remember to include Leader Training dates. You may want to use a blue pen for this. Block out any dates that are unusable or unsuitable. Their degree of "unsuitability" could be colored different colors. For example, use red for closed dates that nothing can be scheduled on. Use orange for dates that may prove to be conflicting with program events. Once you have recorded all the inflexible dates, it is time to move on to the dates of pack events. Begin by recording the dates of pack meetings and den meetings. This may be done in green or yellow.

THIRD STEP: PRIORITIZE

Set aside the calendar for now and return to your sheets from the brainstorming session. No one Pack can or should do all of the ideas listed on the sheets. Use caution when filling out your calendar so that there are not too many events. You don't want families to have to pick and choose which event to attend. This can lead to a decline in overall event attendance and this affects the fun the scouts have. You need to prioritize the events. Remember to include important events such as Blue & Gold, Pinewood Derby and Graduation.

There are several ways to prioritize which events to include in your pack calendar. One way is to simply decide which events have proven to be fun and traditional events. These may include pinewood derby and summertime camping. These should be listed at the top of the chart. Then you may choose the events that have the highest interest response from the Event Survey.

Another way to prioritize which events to include is to break them down into 3 categories: The first category is "Lots of Planning Needed" events which include Blue & Gold & Camp Outs. The second category is "Some Planning Needed" events that may include day trips, Scout Fair & Popcorn site sales. The third category is "Little Planning Needed" which is something easy and fun to organize like picnics & belt loop sessions. Choose several from each category for you pack plan

Have you included dates for fundraising such as popcorn? How about campouts, roundups and several summertime activities? Once you have your list of events prioritized, it is time to move on to Step Four.

FOURTH STEP: PUTTING IN THE DATES

You should already have filled in the dates for things like Scout Fair and Webelos Woods. What you now need to enter into your calendar are pack meeting dates & the dates of events that you prioritized. Remember to not overbook your pack calendar. You should not have more than 1 or 2 pack events per month. This will prevent parents from have to choose which event to go to and which one to miss. Too many missed events will lead to a decline of attendance and interest.

FIFTH STEP: GETTING VOLUNTEERS

Now that the pack has completed the annual calendar, who will run which event? The listings from the Family Talent Sheets will come in handy now. Break the jobs down into several small jobs so that no one is too overwhelmed. By having small jobs to do with a small amount of time per year needed for it, the pack has a greater chance of parents stepping up voluntarily instead of avoiding helping out. Ask the parents to volunteer for specific jobs, making sure that they understand what the job entails and what assistance they can count on. Each pack needs to figure out how best to get parents to help.

SIXTH STEP: BUDGETING

Now that you have your events planned and volunteers to coordinate each event, you need to figure out how everything is going to be paid for. The planning committee should decide approximately how much each event will cost and how it is going to be paid for. Will the parents pay for all of it? Will the boys be able to use campership monies? Will the pack subsidize part of the cost? Don't forget to add in the cost of recognition awards and patches. You may need to go back and reconsider whether to do certain events based on their expense.

The cost of each event will give the pack an idea of their budget. Obtaining sufficient funds to run pack events leads us to our next Step.

SEVENTH STEP: FUNDRAISING

Based on your budget, you need to decide how much money your pack needs to raise? What fundraising activities does your pack want to participate in? How will monies earned be divided? For example, will individual scouts earn money to put into a campership? Remember that popcorn is the biggest fund raiser a pack can participate in. Other fund raising events may need approval by council. The planning committee should at least address these questions if not fully answer them at this meeting. Remember to include fund raising event dates in the pack calendar.

FINAL STEP: REVIEW YOUR ANNUAL PACK EVENT CALENDAR PERIODICALLY

Circumstances can change over the year. Parents who volunteered for an event may have moved away. A fire may have damaged a camp site. Reservations for an event weren't possible for the original date. It is a good idea to review your pack calendar at least quarterly at your Parent Committee Meeting to verify that events will take place as planned. These precautions will ensure that your pack runs a quality program for your scouts.