



SQUARE KNOT NOTES

From your Sam Houston Area Council Commissioner Team

Monthly Edition

May 2008

Now is the Time for Annual Program Planning

Every Scouting unit – pack, troop, team, or crew - should establish the year’s program at its **annual program planning conference** held prior to the start of the new school year. This is the time to decide a Scouting unit’s dates and places for the coming year. It is not time for detailed monthly plans, meeting plans or work assignments. Key unit leaders use the annual plan to develop these additional details later.



It’s time to get started!

Six Steps to Program Planning

1. Gather your resources
2. Get unit input
3. Set a date and invite the appropriate people
4. Conduct the planning conference
5. Get unit committee support
6. Distribute the plan

Gather Your Resources

- ✓ **Youth leadership** – top unit leader meets with top youth leader to explain the process and enable youth leadership to conduct the conference (all programs except Cub Scouting)
- ✓ **Calendars** - Including those from the council and your district, chartered organization, community, schools, and any organization whose dates will affect the planning.
- ✓ **The previous year’s calendar**
- ✓ **BSA resources** such as *The Guide to Safe Scouting*
- ✓ **Advancement** requirements and the needs of your youth members
- ✓ **Goals** for the unit including Centennial Quality Unit Award goals

Get Unit Input

Find out what the members want to do and don’t want to do. This will be done differently depending on the type of Scouting program.

Invite the Appropriate People

The **pack** planning conference should include all registered leaders, den chiefs and interested parents. For **troops and teams**, the patrol leaders’ council will conduct this meeting, assisted by the unit leader. In **crews and ships**, the youth members plan their calendar with the guidance of the Advisor.

Conducting the Planning Conference

Using the data and unit input, the planning team develops a **one-year calendar** showing:

- ✓ Major theme or emphasis for each month
- ✓ Dates for unit activities and meetings
- ✓ District training, fund raising and event dates
- ✓ Council dates for training and events (*including University of Scouting, Akela’s Trail, Scout Fair, Wood Badge, NYLT, Den Chief and Chaplain Aide conferences*)
- ✓ Monthly outings and summer activities
- ✓ Service projects, community and chartered organization plans
- ✓ Important deadlines. *These should include the advance deadlines set for the unit members to insure that council and district deadlines are met.*

Distribute the Plan

Once the unit committee approves, distribute the plan to the unit members as soon as possible so that *your* events can get on the members’ calendars before they fill up. Make extra copies of the plan to use in recruiting new members who will want to know what you are doing. **Then, work the plan!**

Your Unit Commissioner is: _____

Contact Information: _____

Enjoy this issue of Square Knot Notes. If you have a question about this topic or any of the Square Knot Notes, contact us at: squareknotnotes@comcast.net

“To Improve the Quality of Program for Scouting in Every Unit in America”

