

# University of Scouting 2011

## “The Youth-Run, Adult-Guided Troop”

### **PRESENTER:**

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### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- ❖ Understand the Patrol Method approach to Scouting
- ❖ Recognize the purpose of and need for the Patrol Method
- ❖ Describe ways to enhance patrol identity
- ❖ Provide ideas to stimulate patrol spirit
- ❖ Understand the roles of the adults and Scouts in a troop that uses the Patrol Method

**OPENING (5-7 minutes):** Complete the “You know your troop uses the Patrol Method if... Characteristics Sheet by checking off any statement that you think characterizes a troop utilizing the Patrol Method approach to Scouting. *(This sheet is included as the next page of this document)*

### **THE QUESTION(S):**

- ❖ What is the Patrol Method?
- ❖ How do we improve patrol spirit?
- ❖ Is your troop using the Patrol Method?

**THE ANSWER:** The youth-run, adult-guided troop

- ❖ Three ways to run a troop
- ❖ What is the Patrol Method?
- ❖ What is a patrol?
- ❖ Building patrol identity and spirit
- ❖ Youth leadership in a Scout-run troop
- ❖ Understanding everyone’s roles: Scouts, PLC, Adult Leaders, Committee, Parents
- ❖ How can adults promote the Patrol Method?
- ❖ Applying the Patrol Method at outdoor activities
- ❖ Training and sign-offs: done by Scouts or adults?
- ❖ [If time] Common issues and the patrol method solution: Q&A session; discuss items in the “You Know Your Troop Uses the Patrol Method if” Sheet.

**SUMMARY:** “Train ‘em, Trust ‘em, Let them lead!”

For the answers to the “You Know Your Troop Uses the Patrol Method if” survey see the last page of this document.

## You know your troop uses the Patrol Method if...

*[Check each statement that characterizes a youth-run, adult-supported troop – one using the Patrol Method rather than the adult-run, Troop Method]*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. At game time, the SPL lines everyone up and they count off by twos.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The Patrol Leader Council (PLC) is planning everything and the Committee empowers these decisions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Everyone is eating the same well-balanced, nutritious and perfectly cooked meals at campouts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The prime focus of weekly troop meetings are merit badges.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Every patrol has its own cooking gear and rain fly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The troop regularly holds patrol competitions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) spends more time talking to patrol members than the Patrol Leaders.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. When a Scout asks a question the first answer is always "Have you asked your Patrol Leader?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The scoutmaster (SM) is in front of the group more than the SPL is.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Scout has never received a phone call or e-mail from his Patrol Leader.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Adults sign off on all T21 (FCE) advancement requirements.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. All of the adults have dish-pan hands.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. You regularly use "virtual" patrols (creating new patrols for each activity).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Each patrol has and regularly uses a patrol flag, symbol, song, and/or yell.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. The younger scouts in the troop are being taught by adults while the older scouts form cliques and goof around during a meeting because they've learned it already.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. The Scouts are allowed to struggle in their activities and are given the freedom to fail.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Each Patrol has assigned jobs they perform continually or on a recurring basis.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. All of the leaders are trained (both Scouts *and* Adults)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Scouts are told to "find" their own canoe to bring to a planned canoe trip.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. When it comes time to elect an SPL, no one wants the job because it's the only position in the Troop that requires a Scout to actually do something.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Boys are allowed to pick who they want to be in patrols with.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. The Adult leader motto is "If a Scout can do it, adults don't!"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. The Patrol Leaders have outvoted the SPL in the PLC meeting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. You only have one troop Quartermaster; there aren't any patrol Quartermasters.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. The Scoutmaster's two favorite pieces of equipment are his coffee cup and a comfortable chair.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. The PLC, SM, and Committee all share the same vision for the Troop and the Program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. Membership in Patrols is mixed up frequently to maintain the "right" size for each patrol.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. Most behavior problems are handled by the Patrol Leader, SPL, or PLC.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. A Scout has been given a position of responsibility (POR) and no one has told him what he needs to do in the position, nor has he asked.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. At a PLC the Scouts meet in one room and the adults in another room (close, but separate).

# “The Youth-Run, Adult-Guided Troop”

## **INTRODUCTION:**

This class is “The Youth-Run and Adult-Guided Troop.” The focus of this course is simply “What is the Patrol Method and how do we insure it is being properly and fully applied in our troops?” A troop utilizing the patrol method is “a youth-run, adult-guided Troop”. Today I want to explain how the Patrol Method, patrol spirit, and a youth-run, adult-supported troop are intimately related.

Perhaps a better title for the class should be “Train ‘em, Trust ‘em, Let them lead!” This statement epitomizes the Patrol Method and the youth-run, adult-supported troop model.

You all received a sheet of paper when you arrived in this class and have been asked to check those characteristics you believe reflect a troop that is boy-run and using the Patrol Method.

## **WHY BELIEVE WHAT I HAVE TO SAY?**

Your presenter today is Dave Byrne.

I have been an adult Scouter for almost 8 years. During the first two and a half years of that time I served as a Bear and Webelos Den Leader, and as Assistant Cubmaster. In January 2006 my son and I both joined Troop 1333 where I was an ASM for two and a half years, specifically serving as a New Scout ASM and as the patrol method ASM. In October 2007 I assumed the role of Scoutmaster in a new troop, Troop 414, and in 2009 my son officially transferred to 414 where he is currently a Life Scout working on his Eagle rank. After three years as Scoutmaster I “abdicated my throne” and accepted the Troop Committee Chair position, where I currently serve.

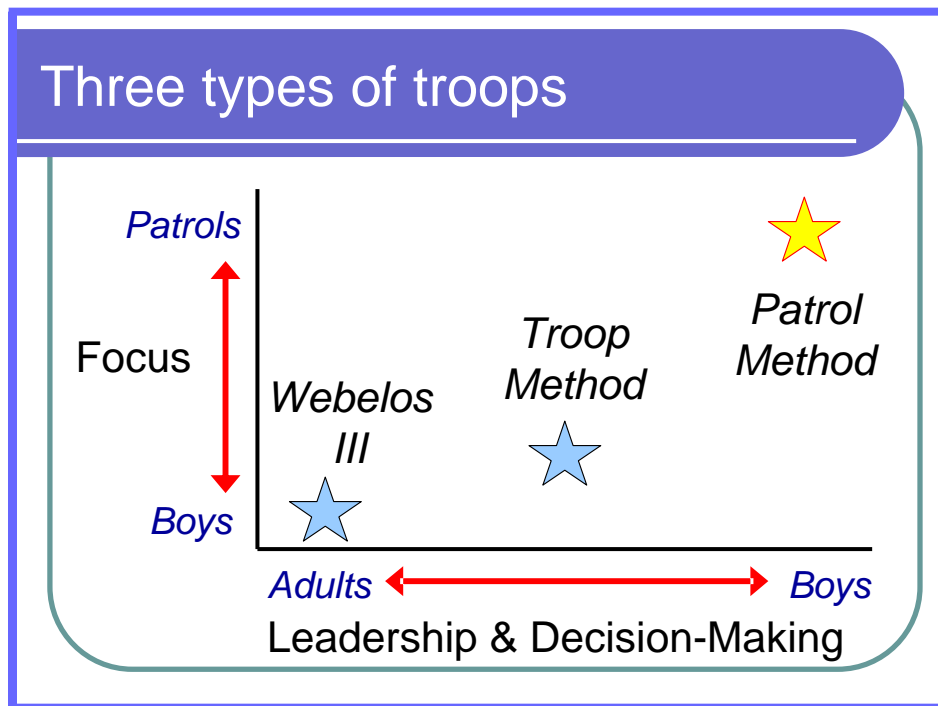
I don’t promise to have all the answers, but the content presented in this course is based on my own personal experience, conversations with quite a few Boy Scouts and adult leaders, contemporary Boy Scout literature, and a lot of reading and interaction in Scouting web threads. So, today I will bring you my experience on this topic and that of the many senior Scouters I’ve interacted with over the past few years.

### THREE WAYS TO RUN A TROOP

Before I begin let me generally define some terms I will use today that refer to the three kinds of troops that you may encounter. Each troop may have a great vision and program but, as their name describes, the way they deliver the program differs:

1. **Webelos III troop:** The focus is the troop as a whole; the troop is seen as a group of individual boys with all of the leadership and decision making provided by adults. This is a Boy Scout troop that acts like a giant Webelos den.
2. **Troop Method troop:** The focus is the troop, not the patrols; the troop is seen as a group of boys and the main leadership and decision-making is provided by the adults with some involvement of the troop leadership (SPL, ASPL, Troop QM., etc.).
3. **Patrol Method troop:** The focus is the patrols, so the troop is seen as a group of patrols and the main leadership and decision-making is provided by the boys.

The chart below demonstrates the relationship between these three program delivery methods.



Our focus today will be on the Patrol Method since it's "...the *only* way to operate a troop."

## **WHAT IS THE PATROL METHOD?**

Let's start by talking about the first part of the question: What is the Patrol Method?

As we all know Scouting has three major "Aims"; these are character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness. Scouting has also identified eight "Methods" by which the aims can be met. The eight methods, as listed in the Scoutmaster Handbook, are:

1. The Ideals
- 2. The Patrol Method**
3. The Outdoors
4. Advancement
5. Association with Adults
6. Personal Growth
7. Leadership Development
8. The Uniform

## **RELATING SCOUTING TO THE PATROL METHOD:**

Obviously Boy Scouting's founders and executives since all agree that the Patrol Method is an important part of the Scouting program. It's not too difficult to understand conceptually but it can be pretty hard to deliver. That's why we're here today; to discuss ways to make it happen in our troops.

In the time we have together I want to focus on the following aspects of Scouting as they relate to the delivering the Patrol Method:

1. What is a patrol
2. How does a patrol establish, grow, and maintain its identity
3. Leadership in the patrol method
4. The importance of competition
5. Who's in charge
6. What about the adults?
7. The importance of outdoor activities

We've all heard the famous statement that, "Scouting is a game with a purpose." William "Green Bar Bill" Hartcourt described Scouting as, "A game for boys under the leadership of boys with the wise guidance and counsel of a grown-up who still has the enthusiasm of youth in him." He went on to say it's "A purposeful game, but a game just the same, a game that develops character by practice, that trains for citizenship through experience in the out-of-doors." He essentially described the Patrol Method.

Several phrases stand out in this description of Boy Scouting that are at the heart of the Patrol Method:

- ❖ A game for boys
- ❖ Under the leadership of boys
- ❖ Adults provide the wise counsel and guidance
- ❖ The game is purposeful
- ❖ Develops character by practice
- ❖ Trains for citizenship
- ❖ In the out-of-doors

## **A GAME FOR BOYS: WHAT IS A PATROL?**

Scouting is a game for boys because it is built on the idea that boys of similar age and interests will by nature form small gangs for the purpose of fun and adventure. Scouting simply redefines these gangs as patrols and adds the components of direction, purpose, and method to the game. I call it the vision and program.

So, boys like to form groups or gangs – “patrols”. What I know about boys defines how I should form patrols and how they should be structured. So, what do I know about boys?

- ❖ Boys want to be with their friends
- ❖ Boys want fun and adventure
- ❖ Boys need a reason to be where they are

## **WHO CHOOSES WHO IS IN EACH PATROL?**

Patrols can be either mixed age or mostly of one basic age, but regardless it is important that boys be allowed to choose who they are in a patrol with. Patrols membership should never be purely assigned by an adult based on numbers, trying to achieve the “right” size for a patrol, with no regard for the boys’ desires. For instance, boys that have historically not gotten along in Cub Scouting should not be combined in the same patrol under the theory that they will work it out as Boy Scouts. Most Scoutmasters will tell you this seldom works.

Assembling the patrol marks the first step in the patrol establishing its identity. I will discuss many other ways to develop and solidify this identity, but it starts here. As soon as the crossover occurs the Scoutmaster will typically decide who is in each New Scout Patrol. Never throw a group of boys together haphazardly. The boys in a patrol should *want* to be in that patrol.

Before the boys are put into patrols explain to the boys what a patrol is, how it functions, and what patrol membership entails. Focus on the fun and adventure that lies ahead. If you have a small number of boys entering the troop consider merging them into existing patrols by twos. Explain the pros and cons of them forming a New Scout Patrol versus joining a mixed-age patrol of older Scouts. Then let them choose.

If you have a large number of incoming Scouts then talk to each boy and have him tell you who he would like to be with. Also let him tell you who he doesn’t want to be with! Then work with the resulting request matrix and form the new patrols. When organizing new patrols try to be sure that every boy has at least one friend in his patrol. Whether forming New Scout Patrols or merging the boys into existing patrols, let the boys choose where they want to go. The key here is for each boy to feel that he is choosing his destiny. In the end the Scoutmaster will decide upon the patrol membership assignments but it will be based upon the boys’ wishes and they will appreciate it.

## **HOW LARGE SHOULD A PATROL BE?**

How large should a patrol be? The ideal number in a patrol is eight, and can usually endure with 6 to 10 boys. But don’t be afraid to make a patrol a bit larger than 10. Some attrition will probably occur, but getting the right mix of boys in each new patrol will reduce the likelihood of significant losses in the first year and beyond.

## **HOW LONG SHOULD A PATROL STAY TOGETHER?**

I've heard of troops that "mix up" the patrols every year or so. Avoid doing this! Remember that every time a change occurs it is a pause or a step back in the development of a high-performing, unified patrol. Keep in mind that ideally a patrol should remain intact throughout the tenure of its members in the troop. Patrols need to stay together as much and as long as reasonably possible to become everything a patrol can and should be.

If you lose some Scouts or gain a few new ones and need to revitalize a patrol, then talk with the boys and ask them what they want to do. Tell them they can mix it up a bit but only if they follow the house rules. One Scoutmaster, for instance, told his patrols that a Scout can shift to any patrol he wanted to with one stipulation. If one Scout left Patrol "A" to go to another patrol then a boy from another patrol had to enter Patrol "A" to keep the numbers somewhat even. He said it took 90 minutes of horse-trading, but in the end everyone was happy. Again, the Scoutmaster provided guidance but the boys chose their destiny.

It's very important that everyone in the troop, both the boys and the adults, understand and appreciate the true concept of a patrol. It is *not* a group of boys put together for the convenience of the adult leaders.

## **WHAT ABOUT "VIRTUAL" PATROLS?**

On this note, avoid the creation and use of "virtual" patrols. This is NOT the patrol method! Virtual patrols are often formed as a result of low attendance at a troop event and a decision to merge the boys present from each patrol into one temporary patrol. Remember a troop is not a group of boys; it's a group of patrols. Even if a patrol only has two or three boys present they need to continue functioning as a patrol. Do they need some additional bodies for an activity or a requirement, such as cooking a meal for four patrol members? Then have them invite some adults or the troop leadership to join them for the meal or activity. If attendance at troop activities is consistently low to the point that one-man patrols are the norm then maybe it's time to look at how the program is being delivered. Or maybe the activity decisions aren't being made by the boys...but more on this issue later.

Does this mean you should never bring Scouts from several patrols together as a temporary "super patrol" for an activity or outing? No, but make sure everyone understands they are patrols working together, not individual Scouts pulled out of their regular patrols and combined into another "virtual" patrol to which they have no connection.

Patrols must be real entities with their own identities. Each boy must see his place in the patrol and each patrol must see its place in the troop. They must recognize that they have a responsibility to help maintain the troop and see that the troop will in turn take care of them. And they must have a voice in the troop vision and program.

Before we move on to Green Bar Bill's second key phrase let's discuss ways to build patrol identity and patrol spirit.

## **PATROL NAME**

You really know a patrol has established its identity if they literally recite the chant, "All for one, and one for all." Once a patrol is put together its first duty is usually to come up with a patrol name. This is usually tied to one of the many BSA shoulder patches or medallions. Each patrol should do more than just select a name; they should dress up that name with one or more adjectives or verbs. Give them a list of common Scouting adjectives and verbs. Make it fun! For instance, they shouldn't just be the Eagles they should be the screaming Eagles. This modifier should reflect the way they see themselves or what they want to be.

## **PATROL SYMBOL**

Then they should come up with a patrol symbol that they can use to mark their belongings and patrol equipment. It should be an easy to draw symbol but fun and representative of the boys in the patrol. It should be easy to recognize the patrol by its symbol. Have them try to incorporate the troop number and their initials in the symbol to really make it “theirs.”

## **PATROL FLAG**

This symbol should then be incorporated into a patrol flag. Keep in mind that boys don’t want to waste time on tasks that will not have any purpose. If you are going to have your patrols make flags then they need to be encouraged to bring them everywhere the patrols go. When a patrol isn’t carrying around its flag there should be a permanent stand for it, located in a place of prominence somewhere in the Scout Hut.

## **PATROL YELL**

Each patrol should have its own distinct, and loud, yell or song. Patrols should be encouraged to sit together at all troop meetings and activities and use their yell or song to make their presence known at these events during roll call or during competitions. At the troop meeting have the PL call out “Foxes all present, Sir!” Have each patrol signal it has finished a task or a competition by giving its call or yell. Some of the older Scouts may think this is kind of “hoakie”. Consider making frequent use of the patrol yell part a troop-wide Patrol Spirit award. You might also remind them that it helps build camaraderie and doesn’t seem to bother our military guys that have all kinds of unit shouts, songs, and yells.

## **MEETING PLACE AND EQUIPMENT**

Finally, boys need a special place to gather during patrol meetings and equipment to call their own. So provide them with their own place and their own “stuff”. Each patrol should have its own area or table to meet at each week. Inasmuch as it is possible they should be allowed to hang their patrol awards and items here that identify them as a patrol. Each patrol should have its own camping gear, cooking gear, tents, and dinner fly; and each should be labeled with the patrol symbol or name. Don’t expect boys to work as patrols if all of their resources are organized as a troop. Having their own place, and their own “stuff”, and doing everything together go miles toward building patrol identity and patrol spirit.

## **SCOUTING: UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF BOYS**

Green Bar Bill’s description noted that this game is under the leadership of *boys*. He recognized that the only way to develop leadership in a boy is to give him a chance to practice it. This practice occurs when the boys are given the responsibility of running their own patrols and either succeeding or failing.

The Patrol Method provides a broad array of positions that are real jobs with real responsibilities and real consequences. In each of these positions each boy is given the opportunity to awaken and develop his leadership *and* followship skills. Some of these positions will come about through election and others through an appointment process. In either case the boy must be allowed and encouraged to willingly seek a position of responsibility and not be mechanically placed in that position of leadership by a well-meaning adult.

## **HOW ARE LEADERS SELECTED? HOW LONG IS THEIR TENURE?**

One of the issues I’ve heard about that totally contradicts the Patrol Method philosophy is the proclivity of some Scoutmasters to either assign the Scouts to their leadership roles or rig the vote to get what they want. This sets a bad tone for the troop and sends a clear message to the Scouts that this Scouting experience isn’t really about them; rather it’s about the adults’ wishes or convenience.

If a troop is using a top-down, adult-led, Troop Method approach to Scouting then the boys may feel that they are just puppets to the adults. To this the Boy Scout Handbook, the Scoutmaster Handbook, and the Patrol Leader handbook all clearly state that there are two elected positions in the troop and the rest of the leadership positions are appointed by the elected boy leaders. In every case adult guidance is valuable, but in the end the decisions – and the consequences, good or bad – belong to the boys.

### **PATROL POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Each patrol has a boy leader selected by the boys in the patrol. He is not appointed by an adult or an older Scout. He is elected by his fellow patrol members. In Baden Powell's original Patrol System this elected boy remained the patrol leader throughout the patrol's tenure with the troop unless the boys opted to replace him with another boy in the patrol. This method of selecting of a patrol leader is still in place today although BSA guidelines now recommend that PL terms last only 6 months. In keeping with the spirit of Baden Powell's system, though, a Scout may be re-elected by his patrol as many times as they choose.

The Patrol Leader in turn selects who will serve as the Assistant Patrol Leader, Scribe, Quartermaster, Grubmaster, and Cheermaster. Unlike his position, these are appointed positions, but they are appointed by the boy leader, not by an adult. This is the first leadership decision the PL will make and he will quickly find out whether he made wise or foolish choices.

So each patrol is its own entity with a complete leadership corp. But there needs to be higher level of leadership that unites the group of patrols that comprise the troop. This leadership team also consists entirely of boys. Boys will respond to other boys. Boys will listen to other boys, especially those a bit older and more experienced than they, who exhibit good leadership and demonstrate an obvious love and respect for Scouting.

### **TROOP POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

The second elected position is the Senior Patrol Leader, the highest leadership position in the troop. He is elected by all of the boys in the troop and like the Patrol Leader he is not appointed by an adult. Like the PL he also appoints his assistants, fellow Scouts he thinks are best suited to help him with the various troop leadership responsibilities. The SPL specifically appoints the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Scribe, Troop QM, Chaplain Aide, Librarian, Historian, OA Representative, Instructors, Troop Guides, and Den Chiefs. He even appoints JASMs, but explicitly with the guidance of the Scoutmaster.

As Scoutmasters, don't "force the vote", either. The boys will know what you're up to and won't appreciate it. If you have a strong sense of what will work best then use a series of questions and possibly a few observations to guide them toward your desired outcome. But don't decide for them. They will never learn the importance of evaluating options and living with their decisions if you force the outcome on them. You may find yourself the focus of blame when things go wrong, even when it's of their own doing.

Does this mean that the Scoutmaster can't effectively high-grade the list of boys that can be nominated for Patrol Leader or SPL? No, but the Scoutmaster should sit with the PLC beforehand and together set minimum standards that must be met for a Scout to run for Patrol Leader or SPL, or to be appointed to a troop-level position of responsibility (POR). This might include a minimum time in the troop, a minimum rank to be PL or SPL, minimum age, minimum attendance in troop activities and/or outings, and/or required previous position(s) of responsibility. These must be objective, measurable criteria that can be easily communicated to and understood by the troop. Allow this criteria-based approach to narrow the field to the better qualified candidates while letting the boys to come up with the base criteria they want for their leaders. The PLC may even consider including some clause in the guidelines to allow them

to vote to allow a particular Scout to run even though he may not have met all the criteria; for example if an older scout joins the troop and shows a real ability to lead well but hasn't been a member of the troop for the minimum time period. Again, the adult guides and recommends and allows the Scouts, the PLC in this case, to make the final decision.

The purpose here is not to squelch a boy's interest in being a leader. It should, rather, be a means for encouraging boys to run for lower levels of leadership and do a good job at it so they will be prepared and eligible for the higher levels of leadership. This is true whether a Scout is interested in an elected or appointed position.

When the newly elected SPL develops his list of appointees he should first share it with the Scoutmaster and together they should determine if each Scout meets the minimum criteria set forth by the PLC. This is also the Scoutmaster's opportunity to voice concern and discuss any warning flags that may exist for a potential appointee. Together they can refine the list to include those appointees best prepared to take on each job. By the end of the discussion the Scoutmaster and SPL should be in full agreement on this troop level staff list, although ultimately it should be the decision of the SPL and he should be able to articulate in a constructive manner to each appointee why he has been selected.

Each of these positions of responsibility carries with it opportunities to lead. These leaders will be confronted with Scouts that don't want to help, that do it wrong, that need instruction, and that need praise or discipline. There will be time issues, money issues, efficiency issues, attitude issues, storage issues, and resource issues. But with proper training and guidance by the adults each boy leader will find exuberance in overcoming and finding a way to make it work and still be fun.

### **USING COMPETITION TO FOSTER LEADERSHIP**

This is where the patrol method shines. When the boys know they are in charge and have been given the freedom to succeed or fail each assignment becomes "their" personal quest. Add some friendly, well-spirited competition between the leaders to see who can get the job done the best the and the quickest, and it becomes a game rather than a chore.

Three great leadership positions for which this can be done are the Troop Guides, the Instructors, and the Patrol Quartermasters. The Scoutmaster or SPL can promise a special prize to the Troop Guide whose New Scout Patrol wins a scout skills competition or demonstrates the greatest patrol spirit over a season. The same can be done for the Instructors when preparing for patrol competitions or a Troop Olympics event. Offer a prize to the winning patrol and an additional incentive to the QM that can get his guys to demonstrate the most efficiency setting up or tearing down camp, or cleaning up after cooking a meal. Award a patrol Grubmaster for coming up with the best recipe or organizing his patrol into an efficient meal preparation and cooking team.

Patrol competitions can be used to encourage behavior the adults want to see. If your troop is new to the Patrol Method have the Scoutmaster take an active role in helping the PLC design some of these competitions, then let them take it from there. Use patrol competitions to further teamwork within the patrols and offer additional awards to the leaders for demonstrating outstanding leadership. Over time everyone in the patrol will learn how to follow effectively to succeed as a unit, and the leaders will learn how to successfully lead and guide their peers in a variety of situations.

### **LEADERSHIP & TEAMWORK**

For this to happen, though, the patrols must be assigned regularly occurring, complex, meaningful tasks that will force them to work together and with the direction of their respective leaders. The patrols must stay busy carrying out their patrol responsibilities. This includes being the service patrol at the troop

meeting every “X” weeks, helping the Troop QM organize the trailer or storage unit, mowing the grass at the Scout Hut, setting up the 3- or 4-pot cleaning station at the campout, and the like. The challenge to the leaders is figuring out how to motivate the patrol to do what is asked, do it well, and do it in a timely manner. Being boys they will probably have a keen sense of how to make it fun, too.

The more opportunities the patrol has to practice teamwork the better the Patrol Method will work. Patrols that are mostly intact most of the time will develop faster. Patrols with random meetings, disorganized activities, and poor attendance take much longer to solidify. By working together on a regular basis the patrol identity is strengthened and the sense of community grows.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION**

Regular activities require planning. Planning requires communication. Just as boys need a reason to be somewhere they also typically need a reason to communicate. Again, it’s the Patrol Method to the rescue. We all know that in Boy Scouts the onus is on the Scout to go to his Patrol Leader for information. He may be tempted to go to a Scout in another patrol or to the SPL or to the Scoutmaster to get some information. In every case the answer needs to be, “Have you asked your Patrol Leader?” This serves two purposes. It teaches the Scout to look to his selected leader for answers, teaching him to honor and utilize the chain of command. It also requires the Patrol Leader to stay on top of things and have the answers when asked – he must be a prepared leader.

If the Patrol Leader doesn’t have the answer he must, in turn, go to the SPL or to the Scout in the appropriate troop leadership position of responsibility for the answer to his patrol’s question. He must then relay this back to his patrol in a timely manner. He may also choose to delegate this task to one of his patrol members and have them report back to him. As an adult resist the temptation to answer a Scout’s question unless he was sent directly to you by the SPL. Do all you can to reinforce the chain of command for communication!

The Patrol Method also requires the Patrol Leader to be in regular contact with his patrol members during the week. He does this to inform them of upcoming events and verify that they will be there. If a patrol member misses a patrol or troop event then he should call him to find out why he missed, see if all is well, and let him know he was missed and what he missed and may need to do before the next meeting. This should be a weekly activity for the Patrol Leader and occasionally delegated to the Assistant Patrol Leader.

This communication should also include keeping up with the advancement status of each patrol member. With this information in hand the PL should then be approaching the SPL or Patrol Leaders Council to request the necessary resources or opportunities to help his patrol continue advancing at a good pace. This type of attention to the Patrol reflects the development of servant leadership that is the hallmark of all great and effective leaders. Without this communication the patrol will falter and probably remain a listless, disorganized, and possibly dissatisfied group of boys with a high likelihood of dropping out of Scouts.

### **WORKING TOGETHER – PLC & THE PATROL METHOD**

Beyond the patrol communications and efforts the Patrol Method relies upon the close interaction of the primary troop leadership group in the PLC to set and fulfill the troop’s vision and program. This is the quintessential leadership forum where each patrol provides input into the goals and direction of the troop. And, by the way, the PLC should also be the main place where most discipline issues are handled. The SM should be on hand, but the PLC needs to handle the majority of the troop discipline. An exception to this approach, though, involves issues that are of a particularly serious or sensitive nature and/or require extreme discretion; these should be handled by the adults.

Remember, a Boy Scout troop is really a small democracy of sorts. It's not always pretty, but it's a must if the boys are to learn the real lessons of leadership. I read the following, great analogy for the roles and relationships of the boy leaders and the Patrol Leaders Council:

The troop is similar to the United States

Each patrol a state

The PL is like the Governor a state.

The SPL is the President

The troop officers are the SPL's cabinet

Each patrol (state) is totally independent yet receives and shares resources through the Troop.

The SPL has no power over the PL. His job is to coordinate the efforts of each patrol for the good of the troop.

The troop only exists as a gathering of patrols; just as the United States only exists as a gathering of independent states.

At the PLC the roles change slightly but the civics model remains intact:

The SPL takes the role of the Vice-President and acts as the leader of the Senate. The Patrol Leaders become Senators representing their individual, independent State but charged with governing for the good of the Country (the troop) as a whole.

The writer noted that we should always look at scouting as a microcosm of the adult world. That is how it was designed. It's a living civics lesson.

In keeping with the boy-run philosophy of the Patrol Method the PLC should be entirely planned, run, and executed by the boys. The SPL should plan and direct the PLC from start to finish. So, what about the Scoutmaster and other adult leaders? Are they needed? Yes, but not in the same room as the PLC. They should be in another room, close but separate, available for advice, clarification, or guidance. Likewise the Scoutmaster should be on the sidelines during the Troop meetings, which are also run by the SPL. The only exception to this is the Scoutmaster minute and closing when the floor is his.

### **WILL IT ALWAYS WORK?**

Will everything always go well for the boys and boy leaders? Absolutely not! The lessons of leadership for most boy leaders will be a situation of one step backward for every two steps forward. This is where the adults, both the Scoutmaster Corp, the Committee, and the parents must reign in their desire to jump in and help. The problem most adults have with the Patrol Method is how hard it can be to give up control and have faith that the boys will ever learn and figure out how to successfully deliver the program and fulfill the troop's vision. Every Scoutmaster has his or her favorite story of how a parent stepped into a situation where the boys were struggling and effectively ruined the learning opportunity. And most Scoutmasters will tell you they have fewer problems with the Scouts than they do with the adults.

You must give boys full responsibility; as Baden-Powell says, "If you only give partial responsibility, you will get partial results." This involves a sincere belief in the capabilities of the boys to get it right. We must trust them in everything and in the end they will come out better leaders and better citizens.

Remember the goal is boys working together as patrols under the leadership of boys they've selected to be in charge. So where do the adults fit into the Patrol Method? Although the focus is boys, it needs to be remembered that Boy Scouting is an adult program designed to develop boys into honorable men and moral decision makers. This leads nicely into Green Bar Bill's third key phrase.

## **WITH THE WISE GUIDANCE AND COUNSEL OF A GROWN-UP...**

So far it may sound like I've basically said let the boys decide everything and let them lead. But "boy-run" doesn't mean "boys left alone"! Without the thoughtful, patient guidance of an experienced Scoutmaster Corp the troop is likely to become one of those "boy-led into the ground" troops. It's our job as adult Scouters to create opportunities for the boys to have safe fun and experience new adventures, and in the process learn practical citizenship, experience new levels of teamwork, develop their leadership skills, and achieve the Aims of Scouting.

Within the context of the Patrol Method this means we must all strive to fulfill this one, not-so-simple goal: Train 'em, trust 'em, let them lead!

The Scoutmaster handbook completely supports this goal: "A Scoutmaster trains boys to be leaders, makes available to them the resources and guidance they need to lead well, and then steps in the background and lets them do their jobs."

So, the role of the Scoutmaster and, therefore, the assistant Scoutmasters and any other adult supporting the boys, is to direct, train, support, coach, advise, and get out of the way. To do anything else is to not deliver the Patrol Method in your troop.

It has occurred to me that the Scoutmaster "patrol" in every troop should be called the *Shadow* Patrol.

The role of the adults is really pretty straight-forward. We just all have to agree to it.

## **TRAINING THE LEADERS FOR SUCCESS IN THE PATROL METHOD**

The first step toward the aforementioned goal is training the boy leaders. Just as every Scout deserves a trained adult leader, every adult leader deserves a trained Scout. How can we enjoy watching the boys develop the qualities that make Scouting satisfying to us if they never get the training they need to be successful in their leadership roles? Without this training and on-going mentoring the Patrol Method is more likely to fail in our troops.

Again, I defer to the Scoutmaster's Handbook: "In the short term it might seem easier for adults to make all of the decisions and direct the action. However, when you invest your energy in training boys to run the show, you will find that you can watch with great satisfaction as youth leaders thrive in fulfilling the responsibilities they have been given."

This means being sure you complete Troop Leadership Training within, ideally, one week of troop elections. And it means following this later with NYLT (National Youth Leadership Training). It also means understanding that it takes time for boys to learn to lead. Key point: It's up to the Scoutmaster to explain how Scouting works, not to wait around until the Scouts discover the Patrol Method on their own through trial and error. The same is true for training the new leaders in their positions of responsibility.

## **NEW LEADERSHIP TRANSITION**

Our troop stages the leadership transition. Elections and subsequent appointments occur one month before the actual transfer of power. This allows the newly elected and appointed Scouts time to take TLT, time to more closely observe the people and jobs they will be replacing, and time to sit in on the PLC and see how it works and what they are currently working on. We started this process a couple of years ago and it has worked pretty well. The first few power swaps went pretty well although we continue to learn a few new things along the way that we will apply going forward.

For instance we've clearly seen that you have to do a position of responsibility (POR) review with each leader every six weeks or so. Take this time to ask them how they're doing in their position of responsibility, what's dogging them, what's going well, and whether they have any questions about their job. Review the responsibilities and expectations of the position again. Have them grade themselves and together come up with a plan for the next six weeks. Help them come up with a simple, realistic point-forward plan and some strategies to meet these goals. This check-up system can be done by the ASMs but with the SPL present so that as the 6-month term progresses he can do these reviews with or without the ASM "in the shadows."

## **GREEN BAR CAMPOUT**

Some troops hold a special "Green Bar" campout or day activity at the start of the new term that is just for the new leadership; the Patrol Leaders and the Scouts in Troop leadership roles. They do teambuilding games, hold TLT training (if not already done), hold a PLC, generally discuss the next 6 months' program and goals for the troop, talk about the patrols wishes and concerns, and just have fun. This is a time for the new SPL and his team to bond without the rest of the troop around to distract them or interfere.

A similar campout could be held for just the new ASPL, Troop Guides, and Instructor Scouts to review the various Scouting skills they will all be expected to teach as needed. This time can be used to not only revisit the skills for the T21 (FCE) rank requirements, but to discuss teaching methods and strategies to make instructing the younger scouts more effective and fun. Instead of a Green Bar campout this could be called a Scout Skills campout or something of that nature (*no pun intended*).

This "retreat" time is a good thing for the adults to do, too. Many troops holds a monthly Scoutmaster Corp meeting where the Committee Chair, Scoutmaster, and ASMs all get together to discuss the state of the troop, resolve calendar and logistics issues, and identify resources for upcoming projects and activities. This is a great time to refocus on the troop vision and make sure we are helping the boys deliver the program in a fun and meaningful way.

## **FOUR CRITICAL QUESTIONS**

The PLC meetings, the Green Bar campout, the Scoutmaster Corp, and the Committee meetings are all good times to step back and ask four critical questions:

- How are we doing as a troop?
- What do we need to stop doing?
- What do we need to start doing?
- What do we need to change?

The answers to these questions may be same or may differ between the adults and Scouts. And these questions aren't just for the PLC to ask each other. Each Patrol Leader should be asking the same questions of his patrol on a regular basis and bringing the answers back to the PLC. As each question is answered by the patrol, the PLC, or the Scoutmasters, each group must determine how they will put the answers into action. Again, using the Patrol Method enables the boys to recognize problems as patrols and solve them. The boys learn through the process and the adults see the growth occurring.

## **WHO'S IN CHARGE OF THE TROOP**

You might be wondering who's really in charge of the troop? Maybe you've had this discussion at the Committee meetings or at the adult campsite. The way you answer this question says a lot about whether you have a boy-run and adult-supported troop or an adult-run troop. The answer is, of course, the SPL; he's "in charge" of the troop. Better yet, through the collective decision of the troop's Scouts the troop has placed itself under his leadership.

Remember the State and Federal government analogy I used earlier? Each patrol is essentially its own entity, like a state. Every member of the PLC is essentially on equal footing and they all share common goals, but this group, and therefore the troop, is steered by the SPL. This doesn't mean he can't be outvoted by the patrol leaders in the PLC, but it means he's the guy that holds the troop together and coordinates the collective wishes of the PLC...with the assistance of his good friend and mentor, the Scoutmaster.

### **THE ADULTS' ROLES**

So where do the Scoutmasters and the Troop Committee fit in within a boy-run, adult-supported troop? They are the advisors, the enablers, the empowerers, and the voice of experience and sound judgment. If the Scouts want to go on a canoeing trip it is not the Scoutmaster's nor the Committee's place to veto it because they have "other" plans. It is their job to look at the potential safety issues, BSA guidelines, transportation requirements, equipment requirements, and the like. They then take any concerns to the PLC and let them discuss them. If the PLC comes back to the Scoutmaster and Committee and says "We still want to do it but will make these concessions or preparations" then it's a go. The Committee is then tasked with helping the boys find canoes to use, find a way to transport them and insure them, find drivers, make any necessary reservations, and secure a tour permit. It's their job to help make the adventure and fun of Boy Scouting a reality. If a request is just too onerous or something the boys are inadequately prepared for then it is incumbent upon the Committee to help the PLC understand this through their PLC representative, the SPL. It's not their place to simply veto the idea. It must be the Scouts' decision.

Likewise, if an adult has a strong desire to see the troop partake in a certain activity or make a particular change then he or she needs to bring it to the PLC for consideration, understanding that the PLC gets to decide what they want to do. Before "insisting" that something be added to the vision or program we must think like a boy. A boy's first thought when he joins Boy Scouts will always be about the fun he is going to have. We must see Scouting from the boy's perspective. We must get a personal vision of Scouting from his point of view if we are going to fulfill his hopes and keep him engaged in the program.

### **SIMPLY WAYS ADULTS CAN PROMOTE THE PATROL METHOD**

Looking for some simple ways to promote the Patrol Method in your troop by **your** actions?

- Relay all information to the troop and patrols through the SPL and Patrol Leaders. Put these leaders out in front of the troop as often as possible to explain things and describe objectives.
- Let the Scout in the appropriate position of responsibility do the talking. Guide him ahead of time, out of earshot of the troop, so he knows what he's supposed to do and has some strategies to get it done.
- Don't stand in front of or beside the Scouts when they are leading and teaching; step out of view.
- When a Scout asks you a question always ask him if he has already asked his Patrol Leader.
- If a Scout asks you a question, ask him more questions to guide him to the answer. But watch for signs of excessive frustration at which point you may lose his confidence in you as an advisor. Find the balance between making him come up with the answer and helping him out. Support learning and self-confidence in troubleshooting, but don't be a jerk.
- Have the Scouts evaluate each event and come up with solutions to make the next one better.

- Resist thinking your idea is better than the Scout's idea; when the Scouts get an idea just get in mind that it might work.
- Always remember: Scouts choose, adults support.
- Enable more, interfere less.
- When the Scouts develop plan A, always suggest that they also come up with a plan B.
- If something's just not working, scrap it and try something else.
- If a Scout is getting out of line quietly go to his Patrol Leader and bring it to his attention. Ask him a couple of leading questions to guide him toward appropriate actions he might take to correct the problem. Or, hand him your idea and wisdom and then walk away and support his decision.
- When the Scouts behave badly don't yell or get mad, get disappointed and point your disappointment at the Patrol Leader or SPL or PLC.
- Guide the SPL to ask each Patrol Leader, "How's the spirit in your patrol?" "Do you know what we mean by patrol spirit?" "What can you do to improve your patrol's spirit?"
- Recognize patrols that are really succeeding as patrols; do this in front of the entire troop.
- Encourage more, discourage less
- Praise more, criticize less

The bottom line needs to be this: "If a Scout can do it, adults don't!" Repeat this to yourself over and over until it's the first thing that crosses your mind before doing anything or saying anything in the presence of a Scout. If necessary make a pocket card with this saying, laminate it, and pull it out whenever you feel "the need" to act or speak. Just kidding...Well, maybe not! Be sure to pass along this bit of advice to the parents, too.

## **TROOP TRADITIONS AND THE PATROL METHOD**

While we're discussing adults let's take a minute to discuss something many adults love: Traditions. Do they fit in with the Patrol Method model? Every troop has a variety of "traditions" that are carried out over the years. Some traditions reinforce the Patrol Method while others reek of Troop Method and adult-focus.

Want to test this? Discretely ask individual Scouts "Why does the troop do *such and such*?" If he says, "Because the Scoutmaster requires it" then you have an adult-run tradition. If he says, "Because its fun" or "Because we like to look better than other troops" then you have a boy-supported tradition. If he says, "I don't have any idea" then it's probably a rut.

Beware of adult-run traditions and ruts! Too many of these can quickly undermine your attempts to use the Patrol Method and have a boy-run troop. If a troop is boy-run then it's probably normal for some traditions to change over time. Don't be afraid of change. Traditions worth keeping are ones that define the troop.

## **A PURPOSEFUL GAME...EXPERIENCED IN THE OUT-OF-DOORS**

And on that note, let's finish up by discussing a long-standing tradition in Boy Scouting; probably the one most people immediately think of when they hear the words "Boy Scouts": Camping and the outdoors. Most of us got into Boy Scouting, as kids and as adults, because we love being outdoors. This is where Baden-Powell and all the other important founders of Boy Scouting formulated their methods and manners for successfully fulfilling the Patrol Method. So, what are a few things your troop can do at campouts and other outdoor venues to grow the Patrol Method and help your patrols mature?

## **APPLYING THE PATROL METHOD TO CAMPING**

A campout is the ideal place to develop the Patrol Method, from preparing for the campout to returning to the Scout Hut. Upon arrival at the campsite have the boys work in patrols to unload the gear and separate out "their stuff". The PLC should already have a plan in place for preparing and setting up the campsite. If not, guide them to do this and see how it changes set up operations.

## **EACH PATROL AT ITS OWN SITE**

Each patrol should find and set up their tents and gear at their selected site. A couple of things are important to stress here. First, the patrols should spread out from one another. Baden-Powell suggested that each patrol should be at least 100 meters apart. Why? This reinforces the unique identity of each patrol. Have each patrol set up their own tents and cooking gear, relying on their patrol mates for help as needed. Each patrol campsite should be clearly marked by the presence of the patrol's flag.

Second, the SPL and ASPL should be monitoring this activity and making recommendations to the Patrol Leaders only when necessary for safety. Otherwise, let the patrols determine where they want to set up camp. Let them have their own "patrol space". Sure they may end up with tents full of water if it rains, but they'll do a better job evaluating their site next time!

## **SETTING UP CAMP**

This brings up another point. Troops should have two-man or three-man tents. You shouldn't be using large tents that resemble bunk houses. Boys should be able to carry and erect their own tents without any assistance from the adults or other Scouts. During the set-up the adults should watch from a distance and observe the Patrol Leaders and their patrols at work. Don't pitch in and do their work for them and don't hover over them offering advice that the boys may hear as nagging or suggesting they aren't good enough.

When each patrol has its tents set up and its campsite ready for the weekend the Patrol Leader should then come to the SPL and announce something to the effect of "Camp completed, sir!" Only then should the adults enter each patrol's campsite, after asking permission to enter the camp, and inspect their work. Note improvements that could be made and, unless there is a safety issue that needs addressing immediately, discuss these later with the SPL so he can in turn tell the Patrol Leader. The PL can then relay this information back to his patrol members.

Throughout the campout each patrol's campsite should essentially be "sacred" ground. That is, no one outside the patrol, neither Scout nor Adult, should be allowed to enter the campsite without the permission of that patrol. This reinforces each patrol's identity and distinction.

## **PATROL SPIRIT DURING THE CAMPOUT**

At roll calls before any troop activity during the campout have each patrol form separate lines and identify that everyone is present by giving their patrol yell when their name is called by the SPL. Have each patrol bring its flag to every troop or patrol event during the weekend.

## **USING THE PATROL METHOD FOR COOKING**

Some patrols like to have a central cooking area. In as much as it's possible have each patrol set up their own cook area at their campsite. The entire meal planning, preparation, cooking, and clean up process defines the Patrol Method! Each patrol should be handling all of these responsibilities on their own. It may be that the camp area requires a single cooking and/or cleaning area. If this is the case each patrol should still do things separately with the SPL or the Troop Grubmaster or QM orchestrating the sharing or scheduling of these resources.

Should the adults ever cook for the Scouts? The general answer is NO. There may be occasions, though, where this is done as a reward or as a time saver to allow the Scouts more time for a particularly long activity.

Should you combine patrols for cooking when patrols only have two or three guys at the campout? NO. They should still function as a patrol. Fact is, it's probably easier for two Scouts to prepare and clean-up a meal than eight. From a financial perspective (the "thrifty" Scout) two patrols that will be (few in number) at a campout may want to shop together for food and then divide out their respective patrol's food for packing prior to the campout. Outside of free time the Scouts should be doing everything with their patrols. Hopefully they will even get to a point where they play and compete together as patrols during free time!

## **THE TRAINING & SIGN-OFF QUESTION**

One final thought about a major opportunity to display trust in the Scouts and really prove that you are committed to being a boy-run, adult-supported troop. A question that comes up a lot in troops is who should sign-off on T21 requirements. It seems that a lot of troops only let the Scoutmasters do the sign-offs. And in many of these troops the adults also do all of the training. Both of these practices, and especially the latter, are completely counter to delivering the Patrol Method in your troop.

We discussed leadership training earlier and stressed the importance and responsibility of the adults to train and then oversee the boys in their various positions of responsibility. The same is true for the instruction of Scout skills, Scouting's major tenets, and the like. Ideally a boy never advances without adequately learning the required skills needed for Tenderfoot, 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, and 1<sup>st</sup> Class rank. But boys are human and may forget things that they don't use on a regular basis or don't care as much about.

## **BOY-RUN TRAINING**

It is incumbent upon the Scoutmasters, JASMs, and truly skilled Scouts to spend time with the other older Scouts, verifying and refreshing their Scout skills so that they can teach the younger Scouts. It doesn't mean we don't oversee the teaching process and don't provide guidance to the instructing Scout when there is a question or problem. But for the most part it means we prepare them, counsel them, and then stand back while they deliver the training. They should feel comfortable going to their fellow instructing Scouts for help. Every Scout will have certain areas of expertise, so it's OK to let them primarily instruct in these areas, but don't be afraid to stretch them by having them teach skills that are more difficult for them. Remind them, too, that it's okay to reference their Boy Scout Handbook when needed.

Trust them, but remember that it doesn't have to be a blind trust. Once the PLC has set the calendar for upcoming activities the ASPL, who is over the Instructor Scouts, should be sure they are prepared to train on the scheduled skills. Likewise the ASM over the New Scout Patrol should be sure the Troop Guides possess the necessary skills for the upcoming activities. If they can't demonstrate a sound knowledge of these skills then the ASM should go to the ASPL (via the SPL) and have him direct the Instructor Scouts to work with the Troop Guides until they have the necessary skills.

This process puts the training responsibility on the boys but includes the adults as advisors and overseers. We become the quality control guys. It's our job to do frequent spot-checking of the instructors' Scout skills and mentor them on strategies to teach these skills before approving them for instruction. Whenever you do this, though, include one of the Instructor Scouts so he learns this QC process and can do it the next time for his fellow instructing Scouts.

### **LET THE BOYS SIGN-OFF ON T21 (FCE) REQUIREMENTS**

It stands to reason that if we are going to trust the advanced Scouts to teach the younger Scouts the T21 (Tenderfoot, 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, 1<sup>st</sup> Class) skills then they should also be able to sign-off in their handbooks when they have completed these requirements. Again, we need to provide oversight on this.

Some troops have the Scout divide each requirement check box with a diagonal line. The Instructor Scout then signs off in the upper part, indicating that the Scout is ready to be "officially" tested by an ASM.

The ASM signs-off the lower part after the Scout comes to him sometime thereafter and verifies his knowledge and/or mastery of the skill. Some troops use the same approach but make the process completely boy-run by allowing any Scout who is First Class or above sign off on the upper half of the box. The Scout who has been taught the skill must then go to an Instructor scout to verify he has learned and mastered the skill and get the "official" sign-off.

### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

I've presented a lot of things you can do and need to think about to have a truly boy-run, adult-supported troop, one that utilizes the Patrol Method in all of its activities.

To summarize I want to leave you with ten key truths on which we must all agree before the Patrol Method can be successfully delivered in our troops:

1. Boys want to be with their friends
2. Boys want fun and adventure
3. Boys need a reason to be where they are
4. Boys learn by doing
5. Boys must be allowed to struggle and fail in the process of trying and doing
6. Boys only learn leadership and responsibility if they have a chance to practice it
7. Boys need real, meaningful tasks and projects to perform
8. If a boy can do it, adults don't!
9. Boys need encouragement
10. Boy leaders run the troop; adults enable and keep the program aligned toward the vision and purpose.

I want to close with this thought from Baden Powell on the Patrol Method:

"The strength of the Boy Scout program is its ability to satisfy the boy's own wants and at the same time direct those wants into social channels. But the reason for our using the Patrol Method in Scouting is not alone because it fits in with the boy's nature and his desires. The remarkable thing is that it fits equally well with the adult leader's aims and purposes."

# UNIVERSITY OF SCOUTING 2011

## THE YOUTH-RUN & ADULT-GUIDED TROOP

### PRESENTER:

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### COMMON PROBLEMS THAT HINDER DELIVERY OF PATROL METHOD:

- ❖ No patrol identity – troop is seen as a group of boys, not a group of patrols
- ❖ No patrol spirit
- ❖ No patrol method – just top-down, adult-led program
- ❖ Poor understanding of patrol method
- ❖ Responsibility not being given to Scouts
- ❖ Patrols and individual Scouts not allowed to fail
- ❖ Patrol successes seldom or poorly recognized
- ❖ Inadequate POR (position of responsibility) training
- ❖ Inadequate explanation of POR responsibilities and expectations
- ❖ Low POR expectations by adults
- ❖ No or inadequate Committee support or failure of Committee to understand their role
- ❖ Resources organized as a troop, not by patrol
- ❖ Scout leadership not trained in effective leadership styles and methods nor in conflict resolution
- ❖ No opportunity for Scouts to learn leadership and citizenship
- ❖ No patrol tasks or opportunity for patrol to work together
- ❖ Scouts have a different vision for the program than the adults
- ❖ Advancement supersedes all other purposes for patrol/troop membership (“Eagle Factory” problem)
- ❖ Program isn’t FUN for boys
- ❖ Adults not guiding, supporting, advising, or mentoring at all (Boy-led into the ground” problem)
- ❖ Parents don’t understand Patrol Method and Boy-run troop methodology
- ❖ “POR = Shoulder Patch and Advancement Check-Off Only” problem
- ❖ “ASM/Committee/Parents Monkey Wrench” problem -- Scoutmaster being undermined
- ❖ Ineffective Scoutmaster
- ❖ Older scouts providing poor role models for leadership, citizenship, living Scout Oath and Law
- ❖ Poor activity planning, evaluation, and correction with and by Scouts
- ❖ “Tradition” supersedes PLC vision and interest – not fun, of no purpose to boys, seems to be a “rut”
- ❖ Not clear who’s in charge of the patrol
- ❖ The “We’re on a schedule” problem – Adults want things to “march” at a “good” cadence
- ❖ Adults not trained or only partly trained

#### **“You Know Your Troop Uses the Patrol Method if” Sheet answers:**

The following statements characterize a troop using the Patrol Method: #2, 5, 6, 8, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 30.