

**The Pack 777**

**GUIDE TO SPECIAL EVENTS**

**and**

**CAMPS**

**For Den Leaders**

## Introduction

This short guide is intended as a resource to den leaders in Pack 777 as they go through the years as a Scout Leader. The responsibilities can seem overwhelming unless a leader receives support and advice from other leaders as they go along. Resource guides such as this are really only the start. The monthly PALM meetings are also an excellent resource, as well as the district Roundtable meetings in Moore. Most important, however, are the individual conversations between leaders of different levels, as they all mentor each other.

This guide intends to deal with just one aspect of being a den leader in Pack 777, namely the organization of the special events and camps. In short, here are the responsibilities:

<b>Event</b>	<b>Primary Responsibility</b>	<b>Helping/Apprentice</b>
Raingutter Regatta	Wolf Den	Tiger Den
Pinewood Derby	Bear Den	Wolf Den
Blue and Gold Banquet	Webelos I Den	Bear Den

<b>Camp</b>	<b>Primary Organizer</b>
Day Camp	Wolf Den
Resident Camp	Webelos I (just turned from Bear)

## "It's Only an Hour a Week!"

There is a popular misconception that being a den leader means you are giving just one hour a week of your time to support these boys. This is simply not true, as anyone who has done this for more than a month will know. It is easy to feel taken for granted by the parents (and boys) in your den. Some parents will volunteer to help, simply grateful that it's YOU and not THEM being den leader. Others will sit back and expect amazing experiences for their son, with little or no help from themselves.

For every one of these events covered in this guide, the den leader must remember that the den parents are the best resource for help. Often den parents simply don't know what they can do to help, or don't really know how much their help is needed. Sometimes it is wise to simply provide parents a list of tasks that need to be done, and be firm in insisting that they take on these responsibilities. Don't be afraid to be specific about asking a particular individual to take on a certain task. After all, you as den leader are providing a weekly program to their boys; you are part of the "village" raising their children. It is never too much to ask a parent to help enhance that experience for their children and others as well. Some parents never will participate; others take on more than their share. In the end, however, be sure to protect your own needs, so that you can continue to be the best den leader you can be, to best guide those boys in your care along their path to adulthood. After all, that's why we are Scouters!

# Raingutter Regatta

The Raingutter Regatta is a boat race. Boys are given a kit that needs minimal assembly and preparation to be ready to race. With a little sanding, some gluing and maybe some paint, even the new Tigers are ready to go. Pack 777 alternates each year between the two kinds of boats: standard edition and trimaran.

When: Late September or early October

Where: Alameda Church of Christ, outside the North doors

Responsibilities: The Wolf den is responsible for running the races, with the Tigers as apprentices available to help.

These races were previously held on a Tuesday evening, but recently have been occurring on a Saturday morning. There are pros and cons to both options.

Boat kits are generally handed out at the first Pack Meeting or first Den Meeting of the year. Leftovers are stored in the Scout Closet, so a count should be made in early August as to how many need to be ordered. Donna Goodwin handles the acquisition of boats.

Prizes also need to be acquired. Every boy who participates should get a participation ribbon. First, second and third place winners within a den receive medals to wear on his uniform. Overall winners (first, second and third) receive trophies. Check with pack leaders for ordering sources. Extras from the previous year are stored in the Scout Closet

Raingutters are also stored in the Scout Closet, often on a high shelf. A few weeks in advance of the event, it is wise to check on their location and make sure they do not leak. Make sure to use the wider gutters for the trimaran years. On the day of the event, tables need to be set up to hold the gutters and the gutters need to be filled with water to a level such that the boats won't "stick" on the sides. A hose faucet key can be obtained either from Mrs. B or the local hardware store. Hoses and buckets are also handy to have for this task.

Some years the boys have been given straws to blow through; other years they blow directly onto the sails. This is a decision to be made at a PALM meeting on a year-by-year basis, but if straws are to be used, they will need to be acquired.

The main thing the Wolf den needs to provide is race supervisors. Each set of two gutters will need someone to start the races and determine the winner of the heat. Fred Goodwin has a system for keeping track of the double-elimination races, and narrowing it down to the winners for each den. The ordering of which den races first, second, etc., varies some on individual need each year. A set of open division races (for siblings, adults, etc) occurs at the end.

The Wolf Den is welcome to use this event for fund-raising, if they wish to sell concessions.

## Pinewood Derby

This is the wood car race that Cub Scouting is famous for! Each boy is given essentially a rough block of wood, wheels and axles, and is given about six weeks to build a car from it. While some parent involvement is expected, especially in the early years, over time the boys take more responsibility and use more creativity to build their own creations to race. There are numerous websites and books out there with useful and sometimes wild ideas about creating the perfect racing car. Some boys will send a painted (or not) block of wood down the tracks, and others will send a true racing car or even a banana or hot dog on wheels! The boys love this event. Emotions can run high (after all, not every car can be a winner), so the focus needs to be on fun.

When: Late January or early February, on a Saturday morning

Where: Gym at Alameda Church of Christ or the fellowship hall at St. John's Episcopal Church near Campus Corner (depending on availability and size of pack).

Responsibilities: Bear Den, with Wolves as backup/apprentice.

Car kits are generally distributed at the December pack meeting. Historically, the Fears Lab at OU offers an opportunity for boys to have their blocks of wood rough cut in early January on a Saturday morning, for boys who may not have power tools at home, or the know-how or patience to work with hand tools. Boys will still need to sand and paint (if desired) their creations, and attach the wheels with the provided axles. Each December, the latest rules for the derby are provided by the Cubmaster.

Pack 777 rents the electronic racing track from another pack, and they provide the know-how and computer system to track race times. The contact is [mhansen4@cox.net](mailto:mhansen4@cox.net). They need to be contacted as soon as a date for the derby is set (August or September), to confirm their availability. Cost is around \$200, which the pack covers.

It is best to obtain access to the venue an hour before check-in so that the Bear den can begin set up. Track set-up takes just 20 minutes; registration should begin about 30 minutes before the races. Tables need to be set up for registration, and chairs for race viewing. Special aluminum pans are used to hold the cars for each category: Tiger, Wolf, Bear, Webelos I, Webelos II and Open and Super Open divisions. Special scales are also held in storage, as well as cones and flags to mark off the racing area.

As with the Raingutter Regatta, the Bear Den can use this event as a fundraiser by selling concessions. Parents should be put in charge of organizing and running this. Donations of breakfast items, coffee, cocoa, juice and milk can be sought. Proceeds are often used to purchase items needed for the den as they enter Webelos: the "Colors" shoulder ribbon and/or patrol patches.

A Bear leader should be prepared to be Emcee for the event, announcing winners for each den as they go. With cleanup after the event, the venue should be vacated before noon (for planning purposes).

Awards for this event also need to be planned for, just as for the Regatta. Participation ribbons are given to every boy who races a car, and medals for first, second and third place in each den. Trophies are given for the first five places in the finals, which can be either the five first-place winners from the dens, or all three placing cars from the dens (a field of fifteen cars in the finals). Both ways have been done successfully; having a larger field of racers in the finals added to the excitement, though the event does last longer this way.

## Blue and Gold Banquet

This is a yearly commemoration of the birth of the Scouting program, and is one of the best-attended Pack meetings of the year. Generally, the theme changes each year, but some aspects remain the same from year to year. This is an intense undertaking, and **REQUIRES** the help and support of parents from the beginning of planning through the clean-up process.

When: February. Currently held on a Tuesday evening, but has been held on a Saturday midday in the past.

Where: Alameda Church of Christ gym (be sure to reserve space)

Responsibilities: Webelos I den, with help from the Bears

I recommend beginning to plan as soon as the last one has ended, so that it sits in parents' minds and they can begin to consider their role. Certainly by October before the event, conversations need to begin to occur at least monthly, with a real push coming after the winter holidays.

A theme needs to be decided on. Dens can be responsible for decorating their own table/s in accordance with the theme. Games for Scouts and siblings are often a part of the evening's activities. Numerous tables need to be set up for Scouts and their families (often extended) for eating. Food needs to be planned for (catered or pot-luck, or some mix of the two), as well as dinnerware, dessert, etc. It is crucial to get an approximate headcount from each den at least a week in advance simply to set up seating, and further in advance if food needs to be procured.

In 2014, attendance was at 140, to give an idea of the scale of this event.

Some aspects of the banquet that remain the same:

- Awards, just as at a regular pack meeting.
- Cake Auction: Boys (with adult help as needed) make and decorate cakes to auction off as a fund raiser for the pack. Plastic cups next to each cake allow boys to vote by pennies for their favorites. Silent auction sheets need to be made for each cake, and often silly award certificates are given for some favorites of the crowd and/or Cubmaster
- Food: Your den can decide how to handle this, whether by catering or by pot-luck. Both have been successful in the past. Cost also needs to be considered (what to charge families, and when to collect the funds). Paper goods (plates, bowls, plasticware, napkins, etc) also need to be considered.

There are pack funds budgeted for this event (generally regained in the cake sales); check with the treasurer for what that amount is each year. This money can be used to obtain paper goods or other necessities for the event. Attendance at this event does seem to be higher when costs are kept low or non-existent.

Recommended: obtain access to the gym at least 2 hours ahead of the event to set up tables and chairs for eating (if borrowing from elsewhere in the church – other than gym closet – those specific tables need to go back exactly where they were found, which can be a hassle at clean-up time; best to mark clearly as they are moved) as well as tables for the food line, a special allergy-friendly table (keep very separate and plan to keep supervised so as to avoid contamination), tables for the cake auction (at least four), and a table at the entrance for check-in. Disposable table coverings are recommended for cleanliness and ease of clean-up. Plan for clean-up to last at least an hour after the event ends; make sure your parents know this and have some of them volunteer to stay for this. This is an ideal opportunity for the Bear den to help out, if they couldn't come early to help with set-up.

Some items to have on hand on the day of the event in case they are needed: tape, scissors, markers, paper. A Scout is Prepared!

## Day Camp

Day camp is a local day-time only camp experience for cubs as young as entering Tigers. Activities include some requirements and electives of various levels of Scouting, as well as lots of summer camp fun. Recently, the Webelos program has expanded and become a wonderful experience for boys not ready for a resident camp experience, or simply in addition to Resident Camp.

When: One week in June, currently Monday-Friday during the day.

Where: Traditionally at John Nichols Scout Ranch, but this year has been moved, and the future location is uncertain.

Responsibilities: The brand new Bear leader, meaning that during the spring of the Wolf year, that leader is organizing and preparing for this event.

Recruitment should begin in February, as soon as information is available. The District should provide a leader guide to camp and how to register at about that time. Registration (first and last name, phone number, e-mail contact, and T-shirt size) with a deposit will be due from each boy. Money should be submitted to the Pack Treasurer for a single check to be taken to Council for registration. Online registration seems to work better than in-person; be sure to keep all receipts and check the work of the Council. As leader, you will need to get a completed health form from each boy attending as well (no physician examination required) before the camp starts.

Each boy attending should provide his own meal and snacks, as well as a water container. A camp T-shirt will be provided, and will need to be worn every day of camp.

Parents are NEEDED to make this camp a success. While one or two leaders should stay with the group for the entire week, other adults (parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc – all have participated in the past) can volunteer for just one or two days, as long as the minimum adult-child ratio (currently 1 adult to 4 Scouts) is maintained. All participating adults will also need to submit a completed health form, and “older” adults will also need Part B, which requires a physical.



# Resident Camp

This is a camp intended for Webelos scouts to experience some of what camping as a Boy Scout will be, on a much abbreviated schedule. Currently the program runs from Sunday afternoon until Wednesday morning, or from Wednesday afternoon until Saturday morning (three nights away from home). As registration opens, the organizing leader needs to have some information immediately on hand so that the pack can register for their preferred time.

When: June

Where: Camp George Thomas in Apache, OK, southwest of Norman.

Responsibilities: Webelos I leader (this means the spring of the leader's Bear year), with guidance from the experienced Webelos II leader.

In February or March, the Leader's Guide to Resident Camp is published online by the Council. Read through it carefully, and in coordination with other attending leaders, determine the first few choices of dates for camp. Create a flyer for parents telling about the camp, activities, and preferred dates. Ask for the following information along with the deposit: full name, T-shirt size, phone number, e-mail contact and allergies for each boy attending. All of this information will be asked of you during the online registration process, so it's best to have it all on hand to begin.

As with Day Camp, adult participation is NEEDED to make this camp a success, with the same registration and health information required.

Also required at registration will be activity choices. Depending on the size of the group attending and the number of adults willing to attend and help, the pack boys attending may all do the same activities, or divide into dens for activities. The boys can be polled for their preference of activities, but need to be told this is just a vote and not every boy will get their first choices as the den/group will be sticking together.

As registrations are taken, provide the boys with a packing list (part of the leader's guide, or write your own), so they can begin to plan, and consider whether they will tent with an attending parent, with another boy, or on their own. About a week or so prior to camp departure, plan to have a "shake-down" meeting, when each boy will bring their gear packed and ready to go, and have it checked by a leader or non-parent adult.

Remaining monies will need to be collected and submitted to the Treasurer so that one payment can be made on behalf of the pack, before the deadline the Council sets.

Be aware that for some boys, this will be their first multi-night outing without their parents, so they may become homesick. Other boys may take advantage of the lack of parental supervision to attempt actions that otherwise they never would. In other words, follow the Scout motto and Be Prepared for anything!