

SCOUTING

IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

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Read This First!

OK, it's the Introduction. But you wouldn't even have read this far if we called it that, and it has useful information that will make the rest of the booklet work for you. So read it—just once.

Rural communities are important markets for Scouting. They present different challenges than urban and suburban communities do, and some of them may require extra effort for good results. You might ask, is getting Scouting to rural areas worth the extra effort? This is a job that can and must be done. It is a part of our Scouting mission with deep historical roots. Our first Chief Scout Executive, James E. West, established a rural department in the national office in 1916 and a National Committee on Rural Scouting in 1927. It's worth it because *all* American youth are worth it

Whether you are a volunteer or professional—whether you see yourself as a pioneer or traditionalist—whether you are new or experienced—you are the key to providing Scouting in your rural community. You can help determine the impact that Scouting will—or will not—have on the lives of its young people. You can help bring a better life to adults, community organizations, and whole counties in rural districts. This book exists to help you do it

What Is Rural America?

The federal government defines *rural* as all places of less than 2,500 population. The U.S. Census Bureau counted nearly 17 percent of the U.S. population as rural in 2007. That means there are millions of young people in rural areas available for Scouting.

Today there is a great variety of rural communities. Some are quite stable, some are experiencing high growth, some have somewhat depressed or static economies and minimal social services, and some are geographically remote. In some, conventional Scouting methods work well. Others aren't responsive to all of the conventional Scouting methods.

Conventional Scouting Works Here

Excluded from the focus of this book are rural areas that have a stable economy and social services. These are closest to the classic American ideal of rural areas. Their economies are primarily middle class. They may be largely agricultural or have an economy based on local geographical resources. Community services such as schools, youth programs, and health facilities are well established. Conventional Scouting methods work reasonably well in these areas.

Also excluded are rural areas in transition due to population growth. They may be areas that appear to be rural or have recently been rural, but are undergoing suburbanization. They may be areas experiencing a population boom because of local scenic or recreational attractions, newly available employment opportunities, or any other reason people move to new places in large numbers, by choice. Growth areas of your council will present challenges in planning for, funding, and managing Scouting for a suddenly expanded population. Conventional Scouting methods seem to work generally well in growth areas, although it may be wise to anticipate some friction between long-time residents and newcomers over values, lifestyles, and social change.

A Different Approach May Be Needed

The rural areas that pose the greatest challenge to normal Scouting operation are those with a static or depressed economy and remote areas—those with a very decentralized and low-density population. These areas are the special focus of this book.

Rural areas with a relatively underdeveloped or depressed economy, marginal sources of income, and a pattern of out-migration might be anywhere: near larger population centers or far from them. These areas tend to pose the most complex challenges to Scouting and need the most specialized approaches from the providers of all community services.

Isolated areas are farthest from metropolitan areas. Most have very low population density. They may be isolated because of geography or climate. People there may have less contact with the rest of the world than residents of other rural areas. Resources for adequate community services may be limited because of the distances involved. Providing Scouting for the young people in isolated areas may be difficult for the same reason and may require a great deal of creativity.

Meeting Special Needs

Council Scouters are involved in more than Scouting service issues; they are also involved in advocacy for youth. This means expanding traditional Scouting values to include responses for immediate community issues—issues such as drug abuse, hunger, and illiteracy. Advocacy means working side-by-side with residents, helping them meet the needs of their youth. Advocacy leads to trust. Trust leads to greater participation in Scouting.

The goals and methods of Scouting are oriented toward personal growth. The ideals of the Scouting movement involve duty to others and helping other people at all times. Thus, local councils are committed to enrich programs in ways that meet some of the special needs and problems of rural people, especially those whose families have low incomes. Many funding sources expect it. Many low-income families need to see it if we are to maintain credibility in their eyes. And Scouting always operates in the context of the local community, its organizations, and their interests and concerns.

Councils should provide rural units with the same Scouting experience as in other communities.

Youth Needs

Young people in low-income rural communities are much like youth everywhere, except for some needs and problems that many of us may not have experienced. The following are a few examples of too-often unmet needs of these young people that you may encounter.

Meaningful activity. Because their parents must spend so much time earning a living, low-income children may lack the opportunity for meaningful activity under adult guidance. Scouting offers a series of activities with adult guidance built around physical and outdoor adventures.

Economic opportunity. Because low-income rural communities may offer little economic opportunity, young people there may need special help in the areas of education and preparation for employment. Scouting can help with training in the personal qualities needed to survive in the job market, and support services for young people who have jobs. Emphasis should be on stay-in-school support, alternative education, job search/job placement, and other programs that help link youth to stable economic resources.

Positive self-image. Some low-income youth have a poor self-image and lack of confidence in their future. Scouting helps young people see themselves as persons of worth. Children can take pride in their own achievement.

Status. Rural youth may have fewer opportunities to achieve, and perceive themselves as lacking status. Scouting offers a planned system of recognition for mastering useful and often lifelong skills. The uniform offers “instant status.” A boy needs to be in on decisions affecting his life, and Scouting offers leadership responsibilities to children through elected and appointed offices.

Communication. Scouting can help with opportunities to practice written and oral communication. Scouting helps develop positive links to a wider world of people and resources, thus helping to overcome feelings of isolation.

Understanding. Paradoxically, by fulfilling one of the greatest needs that rural youth may have—a need for understanding—Scouting also can fill a need of volunteers living outside rural areas. Their involvement helps them know and understand the importance of a healthy rural America. Scouting can help them learn to respond to people they knew little about before, and so that “other America” becomes their America also.

Needs, Wants, and Scouting

Effective councils not only understand needs, they also know what rural people want. For example, boys **need** a healthy self-image, consumer education, and a positive attitude toward education. These same boys **want** adventure, money, recognition, and a friend when they are in trouble. Link needs and wants in a program that makes its presence felt every day, every week, every season of the year.

Do not change the fundamentals of the program of Scouting. Use the same program outcomes; they are valid. Use the same badge requirements; they work. But modify and adjust various aspects of the Scouting delivery system and remove barriers that some program methods may present to low-income people. Adapt and enrich and adjust, but do not do away with the important values of the program of the Boy Scouts of America.

Keys to Success in Rural Areas

The overall shift of population of the United States is from several urbanized areas. As of 2007, 83 percent of the population lives in urban America and has a predominantly urban way of life. During the 20th century there was a steady shift of the United States from a rural to an urban majority. Those who stayed probably did so because they wanted to. Life in rural areas is different than life in cities and suburbs. Someone raised in a city may view an area's slower pace of life or smaller number of cultural choices as limiting while to residents of that area, those same factors are seen as positive for a number of reasons. Further, an outward appearance of simplicity may be deceiving, particularly with the increased cultural choices offered by the Internet and other modern communication media.

Life in rural areas is different than life in cities and suburbs, and it is also different in one rural community as compared to another. You may feel right at home in the rural areas of a new council, or you may find unfamiliar basic mores, attitudes, and philosophies. In any community, urban or rural, nothing can create more skepticism than an outsider who knows little about the people of the community but who tries to tell people there what to do and how to do it. More of your success than you may realize stems from how well you come to know this particular rural community and how well you can tailor Scouting methods for it.

Depending on the rural community you serve, one or more of these keys to success may be yours:

If people in a rural community seem suspicious of or resistant to your efforts to introduce Scouting, it could be because of the community's history with "outsiders" coming in and trying to change things

without regard for the residents' wishes. Don't make the same mistake.

Resistance to Scouting could come from a perception of Scouting as an organization primarily for urban/metropolitan youth, and a desire to protect their community from the negative aspects of urban and metropolitan life. Be sure you present Scouting as *their* program; and emphasize that they, not you, will operate the Scouting unit.

If the community is fairly homogenous in ethnicity and/or religion, there may be resistance due to a perception that Scouting is tied to a particular group or religion that is not their own. Emphasize the ways in which Scouting shares their goals, and the fact that it is used by many kinds of groups to further their own goals for their youth.

You are more likely to gain communitywide acceptance if you take care to deal with people individually and on a personal basis; get to know them and let them learn about you, not by being pushy, but by being caring and interested in them. You don't have to meet every single person in the community, but only meeting and dealing with a few "community leaders" could hurt your cause.

In some rural communities, organizations may operate fairly informally and with a straightforward approach. Other rural communities may value formal organization. You will do well to find out and suit your style to the style that predominates in the community.

Many rural communities have a history of people helping each other in time of need or crisis and a well developed way of organizing volunteer work, whether they call it that or not. If you encounter this, count yourself lucky! Provide guidelines, then step back and be ready to lend a hand, but let them do much of the volunteer coordination for Scouting.

In some cultures, people value the goodwill and acceptance of their group so much that they will reject any advancement or formal post of leadership that could distinguish them from others in the group. Informal leadership may exist, but one does not give appearances of being "above" one's neighbors and peers. In this case, it would be wise to emphasize the service role and de-emphasize rank in adult volunteer leader positions.

If a rural area you serve seems very different from other areas you have served or lived in, focus not on the *differences*, but on the *commonalities*. Any area, urban, suburban, or rural, has parents and children. What those parents want is what is best for their children. All these keys to success add up to the one that always applies, anywhere: Remember that you are there to *serve the parents* in establishing Scouting *as they want it to be* for their children.

Getting Started



The Strategic Plan

A council with both metropolitan and rural areas should have a rural component in its long-range strategic plan and a council-level committee that focuses on Scouting in rural areas to guide development of that component. The committee determines directions and opportunities for improving council service in rural areas. Because this cuts across all aspects of council and district operation, it can best be guided by a group that can consider all aspects of Scouting service.

Depending on council demographics, there may be urban, Hispanic, and a rural service committee, or the Multicultural Markets committee may include a rural component. If your council has all three of these committees, they should work very closely together to ensure the highest level of service for all areas of the council without duplication of effort. See chapter 2 of *Scoutreach in the Local Council*, No. 11-016A, for a wealth of detail on organizing such a committee.

Process Overview

1. The executive board makes a commitment to expand Scouting opportunities in rural areas and appoints a Multicultural Markets Scouting advisory committee.
2. The committee gathers pertinent facts about rural areas.
3. The committee solicits input from rural community leaders about and analyzes the current level of Scouting services needed and those provided.
4. The committee develops several alternative courses of action.
5. The committee selects the best plan and presents it to the executive board for approval.
6. With the executive board's approval of a plan, the committee secures financial support for implementing it.
7. With committee assistance, the council employs and trains staff to carry out the plan.
8. The staff and committee put the plan into action.
9. The committee periodically evaluates progress and updates and refines the plan, as needed.

The Rural Scouting Committee

The committee's role is to analyze service opportunities in the council's rural communities, plan an effective approach, work with other service organizations in these areas; find resources to support the council's commitment, and oversee the plan's implementation.

This is a council-level committee. The chair, appointed by the council president, is a member of and reports to the executive board. The chair should be a key person in the rural community, active in area affairs, with a keen interest in opportunities for serving youth in rural communities.

Members of the committee should be men and women active in fields such as community planning, rural redevelopment, juvenile justice, rural schools, rural religious outreach, human services, labor, industry, county extension, and county government. As many as possible should be from the areas being served or have a strong personal interest in those areas. Appropriate district chairs serve as ex officio members.

If there are separate service committees, a member of the rural committee should serve as liaison to the Multicultural Markets committee, or at least one member from each committee should be on a Multicultural Markets joint subcommittee.

Sample Committee Mission Statement

Our mission is to establish and maintain Scouting opportunities for young people in the rural areas of our council. Toward that end, we will recommend and implement a plan of effective Scouting service, improve councilwide communication, secure resources to support rural Scouting, work with other community service organizations, and serve as a council advocate for rural youth.

Committee Responsibilities

1. Learn about the needs and interests of the young people living in rural areas of the council.
2. Become familiar with the literature and presentation materials available through BSA and elsewhere that can be helpful in serving rural communities.

3. Recommend refinements and adaptations in council service methods to better relate to the needs of rural residents.
4. Develop and recommend a comprehensive rural service plan for the council. Present the plan to the executive board for approval. Periodically update the plan.
5. Find and help mobilize the resources needed for effective Scouting service in rural communities (key volunteers, community organizations, other youth-serving organizations, financial resources, equipment, and other special resources).
6. Keep the executive board informed. At least quarterly, review the council's accomplishments in implementing the rural service plan.

Committee Tasks

Here are some examples of tasks that the members of a committee on Scouting in rural areas might take on:

- Establish and maintain close contact with the council's Scoutreach committee.
- Analyze council services from the perspective of a rural membership. Recommend needed changes to the executive board. Periodically monitor services for needed adjustments.
- Review the *District Operations Manual for Professionals*, No. 14-938, either in printed form or on the BSA extranet, to determine what conventional methods may or may not work well in the council's rural areas.
- Review unit program materials, including *Delivery System Manual Cub Scout Program—Year A*, No. 523-006, to determine what might be needed for the council's rural areas.
- Prepare a map of the target rural areas in the council.
- Build a case to justify additional staffing for the rural outreach effort.
- Research and identify potential funding sources.
- Research and identify potential chartered organizations in the rural community.
- Divide the rural outreach plan into packages that will be attractive to potential funding sources.
- Visit key employers in rural areas to solicit their support as chartered organizations or as a source of volunteer leaders.
- Establish contacts in nearby colleges for student participation in college work/study programs, internships, and Alpha Phi Omega projects.
- Develop yearly budgets for council outreach and administer the approved budgets.
- Establish contacts in other youth service organizations active in rural areas of the council and work with them to minimize resources needed and maximize the benefits to young people.
- Design a program that helps rural youth with career investigation, preparation for employment, and job training.
- Assist the Scout executive with recommendations and screening applicants for rural staff positions.

Cultivate Council Commitment

The committee is there to recommend, guide, and help the council establish Scouting in rural areas. The job cannot be done without support throughout the council. It may seem that some people in the council demonstrate a strong urban/suburban bias when it comes to Scouting. This is most likely to occur in councils centered in a metropolitan area. It may also occur in a "pie-shaped" district, in which a remote rural area is included with a major urban area, where much of the district activity and leadership are centered. How might you handle this? Don't assume that others understand the challenges and opportunities that rural communities provide for Scouting. Understand that the bias is probably invisible to those who have it, and that it is a natural result of lack of exposure. Work at developing an even better understanding on the part of the executive board, professional staff, and other volunteer committees. Be sure the committee does its job of keeping rural issues visible in the council and that rural members are a visible part of councilwide activities. Local council support for this aspect of Scouting's mission depends on the ability of someone in the council to adequately interpret effective rural operation. These are some ways to cultivate support; you may think of others:

- Take individual council-level volunteers with you to selected meetings and programs in rural communities. This can show them how Scouting touches the lives of rural children and adults, and broaden their understanding of rural lifestyles, needs, and problems. It can also make them aware

of the special problems encountered and the methods staff members use to serve these communities.

- Hold occasional staff meetings in typical rural community organizations to expose the entire staff to the climate of the community. Conduct your normal business, but also take time to have a local community leader talk with the staff.
- Take video and photos of Scouting activities in your rural communities. The staff member who serves the area can show them at meetings of top council volunteers. They can be used as a part of United Way or other fundraising presentations, and in council literature. Keep the photo and video collection current.
- Give frequent, brief reports at executive board and council commissioner meetings. Include positive items, but don't gloss over real needs and problems. Use these reports to inspire as well as educate.
- A council with sizable rural areas should have some executive board members who are advocates of better Scouting for rural areas. The point of view of rural, racial, religious, or nationality groups coming within the council's area of service should be adequately represented when decisions affecting these groups are being made. It may be necessary to purposely select and elect new board members who can provide this perspective.
- Arrange for the top council Scouters, professional and volunteer, to meet with unit volunteers in rural districts. This can help council officers understand the special character of the council's rural districts and the need for rural Scouting methods, and it can help show rural unit volunteers that the entire council is invested in their success.
- Arrange for discussions between staff members serving rural areas and selected executive board members. Eliminating the middle (you) from their communication, even if it is only done once, can make a big difference in their understanding of each others' needs and concerns.

When the committee has executive board commitment and councilwide support, the rural outreach plan will find the resources needed for success. Without that support, even if some resources are available, success may prove elusive.

The Council's Responsibilities Adapt Services for Rural Areas

If the council service center has previously served a mainly metropolitan membership, it may need changes in hours of operation, in the way services are provided, in communication methods, and perhaps even in staffing, atmosphere, and décor.

Hours of operation. If the service center doesn't have hours that would allow people who live and work in more remote parts of the council to conduct their business, something needs to change. The council might keep the service center open later one or two evenings a week, and/or on Saturday morning. Working hours can be adjusted to accommodate a varied schedule.

Location. If the service center location is good for most council inhabitants, but not good for those in a rural area, you could consider a periodic (weekly?) "mobile service center" that would deliver phoned-in supply orders and equipment being borrowed, accept registrations and other forms, and provide other assistance needed. For more on this idea, see "Try a Scoutmobile!" on page 15. Another possibility is a volunteer district messenger who collects papers and supply orders from unit volunteers in the district and goes to the service center for them.

Communications. Find ways to make it easier for rural Scouters to get help and do business by phone, mail, fax, and the Internet. Consider the possibility of adding an 800 number to give volunteers easier access to council services. To meet the problems of distance or weather in some rural districts, use telephone conference calls for some district committee or commissioner staff meetings. This permits members to meet at a number of places (or on a county basis) throughout the district, such as high schools, utility offices, farm bureaus, etc. Advance distribution of the meeting agenda is essential for this type of meeting, and brief reporting is required.

Staff training and skills. If your rural outreach program will mean that employees will be helping people different than those they have been used to working with, diversity training might be a good idea. If the service center staff is not representative of the council's entire service area, this would be a good

time to add staff members to correct the imbalance. For instance, if your rural outreach will result in a significant increase in Spanish-speaking customers for your service center, you need to have an employee who speaks fluent Spanish.

Décor. If the service center's décor includes photos and posters showing council activities, be sure that rural areas in the council are included. (Remember those photos a committee member is going to collect?)

Adapt Methods and Program

Any time you enter a new market, it makes sense to be prepared to use a flexible approach and identify and adapt to local needs. Flexibility is an attitude; not of carelessness or indifference, but of willingness to change and to adapt to reality. Flexibility is necessary in serving a widely diverse council that includes rural districts.

The effect of a particular council program or methods may be different in one area than in another. Programs generally work best overall when the council sets guidelines, policy, and standards, but leaves it to district and community personnel to use a variety of alternative administrative and operational approaches.

Council flexibility also means a somewhat different outlook on Scouting expertise. Years of Scouter

experience (volunteer or professional) has a positive effect in communities that have had a thriving Scouting program for a long time. But long Scouter experience could have a negative effect on communities new to Scouting. It will pay off to mix Scouting expertise with practical human relations skills.

Think in terms of alternatives to most tasks. Things that are the "rock" of our organization in some communities may not work in others.

Adapt District Staffing

If a large metropolitan council has several rural districts, it is most effective to select a single staff leader, perhaps a field director, to supervise these district executives. Such a staff supervisor can concentrate on the common needs of these district executives, and should be selected on the basis of special sensitivity to these communities. Rural areas may require other adaptations to traditional staffing, such as program specialist help. See "Staffing Rural Districts" for other ideas on successful staffing strategies.

Adapting District Operation



A well-organized district focuses on the communities it serves and the work to be done, not on complicated charts with too many slots to fill. All districts carry out the same functions, but the method of carrying out these functions may need to be more flexible to adapt to the needs of rural districts. One way to do this is the neighborhood plan of district operation. A council could use this plan in one or more of its districts. The objective of district operation remains the same for all districts; the operation and structure differ to fit different situations and needs.

Types of Districts

Just as there are different kinds of rural communities, there are different kinds of rural Scouting districts. First are the all-rural districts in all-rural councils. All or nearly all of the district's service area is rural. Because the council is also predominantly rural, staff and volunteers of the council have a lot in common.

Second are the all-rural districts in councils that include metropolitan areas. Staff and volunteers of these rural districts may have a lot in common with each other, but less in common with personnel in the urban/metro districts of the same council. These councils typically are predominately urban/metro-oriented, and may have to work at maintaining equity in their approach to their rural districts.

Third are the "pie-shaped" districts. These districts have a significant rural area—perhaps an entire rural county—but also contain a suburban or urban portion. Pie-shaped districts pose the special challenges of comprising two or more very different kinds of communities. With a pie-shaped district, it is important to be flexible and willing to use the different methods and approaches needed for success in these different communities. Some rural districts may be successful with the more traditional form of operation. But councils should beware: Particularly in a pie-shaped district, traditional district activities and personnel may be active and thriving while a large percentage of rural units are underserved. A district's operation must be truly responsive to all its units. A less conventional plan may be needed for greater success.

Rural communities usually will receive more effective service from a homogenous district than from a pie-shaped district. The pie-shaped district includes a

rural county or other large rural area, with major sections of middle-income city and suburban communities. The aim should be to create districts in which people can work together easily, and not to put territory together for administrative convenience. The ideal rural district is one that serves a trade area or other area natural to the people concerned. Further, from the council's perspective, if district boundaries correspond to census groups, population figures and other facts can be obtained more easily.

The District "Committee of the Whole"

A small district may find it best to have all district volunteers working as a "committee of the whole." One committee carries out all district functions and projects. Some committee members are unit commissioners who perform all services for units in their geographical part of the district. Some committee members also chair task forces for specific functions, projects, or events. All members assist as needed.

The Neighborhood/Small Community Plan

This alternative plan of district operation focuses on smaller geographical communities. It provides greater flexibility, makes the most efficient use of volunteers in a scarce volunteer market, and is based on more informal relationships than traditional district operation.

For our purposes, a *neighborhood* is a geographical area that includes one or more well-defined local communities in the district. It may be an entire county in a multicounty district. It may be several closely related small towns, an Indian reservation, or a Hispanic barrio. Neighborhood operation builds on the strengths of local community control, ethnic self-determination, and other grassroots sources of interest and motivation. Local residents can get involved more easily in the actual management of services to units.

Neighborhood operation helps fit service patterns to the needs, characteristics, happenings, and people of the local community. People are more likely to recognize the value of Scouting if they see it closely identified with the life of their community. The plan provides greater visibility of the council's support of units, and services that are more accessible and more responsive to those served. The social and

geographical distance that most people are willing to travel to participate in activities such as Scouting is fairly short. The closer Scouting services are to the home, the greater the possibilities for participation.

Neighborhood operation is a simple administrative plan providing unit service at a level where districtwide structure may be ineffective. Before making the transition to this plan in a district, the council must see that the district staff, as well as council supervisory and support staff, are thoroughly trained in its use. Key district volunteer leaders must also be well oriented to the plan.

Neighborhood Plan Basics

In the neighborhood plan, most district functions are carried out on a decentralized neighborhood or small-community basis rather than on a district level. There are three primary ways this can work: through a community committee, in a neighborhood Scouting center established by the committee, or without a committee or a Scouting center. A community committee serves five to 15 units. The committee includes at least five people—a committee chair; Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Venturing chairs; and a staff person. Their job is to provide direct service to units, their chartered organizations, and the surrounding area. They recruit and conduct regular planning and training meetings for unit volunteers. Others may serve on the community committee as needed for help with things like camping, finance, or assisting one of the other committee members.

If possible, the committee establishes a permanent community Scouting center in donated space. It's a one-stop service station geared to meet the needs of unit leaders and chartered organizations of the community. It's concrete evidence of credibility and permanence. If the community Scouting center can be permanent in a small physical location like a storefront or trailer in a popular retail area, it will be a highly visible focus for district support. If it is borrowed space that is used for other functions, such as space in a church, it's best to use the same place every week and have a regular schedule so it comes to be seen as "the Scouting place." In either case, the Scouting center should be open on a day when a large number of people "come to town."

When the time is not ripe to establish a community committee or Scouting center because no volunteer structure is initially feasible, the professional or paraprofessional provides the main contact with units, organizations, and the community. Gradually, the staff member recruits one or more service chairs. Together they organize units, provide unit service, and maintain the close community relationship that the community committee would otherwise provide. The staff member's eventual goal is to organize a community committee as soon as the community can support it.

Districts can use either of these approaches in different parts of their territory, using the approach best adapted to the needs of a given community. As conditions within the community change, its form of operation and boundaries may also be changed. Whichever neighborhood approach is used, it must be linked to the local district and council in some sort of structure. The council selects the structure best adapted to a given district and its neighborhoods:

Complete neighborhood structure. The entire district is organized into Scouting neighborhoods that are supported by a small group of district leaders and optional support specialists (not committees) for special events, finance, public relations, merit badge programs, training, Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing. There is also a volunteer resource list used for short-term assignments.

District-level structure is simple—no large pyramids of personnel—only a district chair, a vice chair, if needed, and the chair of each community committee. Support specialists give a community committee concentrated help, as assigned by the district chairman. They may train a community committee in their specialties. Districtwide events are kept to a minimum to permit more time for helping individual units. Care is taken not to drain unit leaders' limited available energies away from their unit program. The district committee may only meet quarterly, with the smaller community committees meeting monthly.

Partial neighborhood structure. Those units in the part of the district using a neighborhood operation are served by their community committee, while the rest of the district's units are served by the regular district structure. This is often effective when a large

semi-urban district has an isolated rural area, where traditional district structures are often ineffective.

In this structure, the community committee chair is one of the key leaders of the district, and reports directly to the district chair. Though unit volunteers are invited to districtwide events, they are not pushed to participate, since their needs usually can be better met at the neighborhood level.

Council-to-neighborhood direct service. This is most often used when geographical or social isolation makes it impractical to relate a community to a district. Here the link is direct, from community chair to a selected council Scouter, without working through a district at all. The key chair is probably someone who knows organizations, companies, and people who regularly communicate with this remote community.

Volunteers in the Neighborhood Plan

The neighborhood plan relies heavily on using volunteers in ways that are short-term and task oriented—for example, organizing a unit, training a unit committee, or running a neighborhood-level activity. Only a few district volunteers carry year-long normal assignments. Often, people who cannot be part of the formal structure will help with short-term projects. The approach also avoids overspecialization, a barrier in serving some rural people. It's an easier way to recruit people who find ongoing participation difficult. It provides a more efficient use of a very small number of available people.

The key meeting for unit volunteers is the neighborhood planning and training meeting. In this “mini-roundtable,” the three functions of training, providing roundtable program resources, and helping with unit program planning all occur at the same time, in the same place, and with the guidance of the same unit service professional.

More Information

For details, see the *Neighborhood/Small Community Plan of District Operation*, No. 7-402. This publication suggests criteria for defining neighborhood boundaries, gives detailed suggestions for each approach to neighborhood operation, has sample position descriptions for professionals and paraprofessionals,

and contains many other exciting ideas for both rural and inner-city districts.

Learning for Life and Exploring

Because Learning for Life and Exploring are separately staffed, it is important to have regular and detailed communication between the Learning for Life executives and Scouting professionals serving rural areas. They can provide each other valuable information about the young people, their parents, community makeup, and community events and concerns.

Work Patterns

Professional service in remote rural districts may require some work pattern adaptations, including these:

Plan your field trips. If distances are greater, it's more important to think through in advance all the things you need to do in each community you plan to visit in a day's travel. Be sure you have solid plans, appointments, and contingency plans. You may not be back there for several weeks, and when you invest so much time and money to drive so far, you want to take the best advantage of your time there. Take extra work along and plan in advance activities that will make good use of your time if an appointment falls through or you have an extra hour's wait before a meeting.

Craft your travel plan to minimize backtracking. Plan your field trips on a circle or triangle route, not in “rabbit runs”: you'll cover twice the number of communities in a day's travel.

Plan trips on a recurring cycle. Some rural district executives have a set day of the week to be in each community. Your cycle may be weekly, biweekly, or monthly; whatever works in that district. Volunteers will know when they can count on seeing their district executive.

Consider longer trips. In exceptionally large rural districts, it makes sense to plan trips of more than one day. An overnight could really cut down on wasteful windshield time, and some motels might be willing to provide discounts for a district Scout executive.

Plan multipurpose trips. Each trip to a community should include visits with community key players, leaving them with something to do, and checking to see how they are doing on their other assignments.

Each trip to a town should include work on several projects that will help further develop Scouting in that town or that are part of your district's work plan.

Stock your car. Your car is your office, your home away from home, and in rare instances, your means of survival. Be sure your car is stocked with program items and administrative materials. Also keep in it supplies for survival in severe weather, for car breakdowns, and other emergencies—things like a flashlight and flares; a heavy blanket, shovel, and chains in snow country; and extra water, sunscreen, and a cap. That's only a start. You complete it, depending on local factors. Find out what other people in the area keep in their cars. Make a written list and check it frequently to be sure you have everything you need.

A good, detailed map of the district with all units clearly marked is vital to good planning. Hang it next to the telephone. It enables you to be more articulate on the phone when making plans with people in your district.

Establish temporary work sites. In each segment of the district, find a location where you are welcome to sit and work for a couple of hours and/or make local phone calls. Also identify people who are friendly to Scouting who have WATS lines, 800 numbers, copy machines, fax machines, Internet connections, and other communication devices they will let you use. Small town "mini-workplaces" not only increase your work efficiency but also increase Scouting visibility.

Keep community folders. Create a file folder of a different color for each community. Drop items in the folder that need attention on your next trip. Pack the folders you may need for a particular trip. Before you leave town, the last thing you do is give the folder a final look; you may not be back for another month.

Establish a service center shuttle. Plan several ways to shuttle materials between the council and the district executives' home base. Consider enlisting district Scouters, other council staff, "circuit riders" (see page 26–27), commuters, USPS, FedEx, UPS, commercial bus, train, or air service, and crop duster pilots. You might also find a volunteer with a business branch in the rural area as well as in the city, or set up a relay with a couple of Scouters. For some information, you can use e-mail or a fax.

Keep unit field files. As you serve the district, you will learn all kinds of bits of information about units and unit people—more information than you are likely to remember—things like a Scouter who has a truck that can be used for district projects; the Scouter whose dad took the troop to summer camp a year ago; a pay phone near a unit leader's workstation; or the pack committee chairman whose brother-in-law is president of the rescue squad in the next township. Record special bits of information about unit people, their resources and relationships in your files—on paper, on computer, or in a PDA.

Take advantage of phone and computer systems. Consider the special rural value of cell phones (if there is good coverage), answering machines, call waiting, WATS lines, and conference calling. Study the various phone features and technologies and figure out how they can save you time and make you more productive. Good communication is absolutely essential to Scouting's success in rural America.

Portable mailboxes. Place a folder for each unit in a box or crate. Place in the folders all the notes, reminders, and other materials you want each unit to have. Take the box to all roundtables. Encourage unit volunteers to develop the habit of checking their mailboxes as they enter the meeting room and sign the attendance sheet.

Make deliberate communication choices. Most volunteers will respond much better to more personal, more informal styles of communication. That means face-to-face communication is better than the telephone, and telephone contacts are much better than the mail. However, we can't always get around to see people face to face as often as we'd like.

That means you need to become far more intentional about how you communicate in different situations. Learn to determine which situations need face-to-face contact, which situations need at least a telephone contact, and which could probably be handled by email or mail.

Try a Scoutmobile!

An outreach method that has proved highly effective in several councils is mobile Scouting, using a van, trailer, bus, or panel truck. The vehicle can transform your district's operation by taking

Scouting to young people in the most unlikely of rural situations. It's a good tool for those communities with the fewest facilities, the weakest units, the poorest image, and "closed doors." It's a way of serving people in spite of obstacles. For instant recognition, it's a good idea to name the mobile unit: some have been called "Scoutmobile," "Operation Scoutreach," "Instant Scouting," and "Scout-A-Bout"; here, we'll call it the "Scoutmobile."

Ways to Use Your Scoutmobile

Scoutmobiles can fulfill a variety of purposes, depending on local needs, ingenuity, and the nature of the total rural operation of the council:

A unit meeting place and organizing center.

Where good meeting places are nonexistent and unit leadership at its shakiest, the Scoutmobile assures that kids will get a Scouting experience every single week, no matter what! Most parts of the meeting can be held just outside the Scoutmobile, with a dining fly (Scouting ambience!) set up for wet weather. Before a unit is added to the schedule, there must be a preliminary agreement that a local adult will serve as unit leader. The driver serves as unit commissioner.

One Scoutmobile could be scheduled for up to 14 unit meetings a week (3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and four meetings on Saturday). In the morning and until school is out, the van and its driver/unit commissioner can contact neighborhood people, cultivate community organizations, and carry out other tasks in unit organization.

Support service delivery for unit leaders. The mobile unit can carry Scouting equipment, supplies, and information, and the practical, helping hand of the driver/ commissioner to rural unit volunteers when trips to the service center or even district training and roundtables are difficult to arrange. A scheduled visit to each volunteer every two to four weeks should suffice in most cases, with "emergency" trips as needed.

Community visibility, Good Turns, and goodwill for Scouting. A little money spent on clear, professional identification of the mobile unit will pay off, particularly when it is used for participation in and assistance with community fairs, school carnivals, parades, shopping center demonstrations, and other special events. It can be placed prominently to put

Scouting on display at community theaters, sports events, and other places where kids and their parents congregate in large numbers; perhaps even with Scouting skills demonstrations. In addition to permanent identification of the Scoutmobile, temporary signs on the vehicle could turn it into a "moving advertisement" to promote unit meetings and events, parents' meetings, etc.

When not otherwise in use, a Scoutmobile could help a church moving to a new location, or be used as a place for after-school tutoring. One equipped with a PA system could be made available to a school or community group for an outdoor activity. As council insurance allows, the Scoutmobile could even be used occasionally for special personal situations, like taking a Scout or parent to the hospital.

Unit transportation. As long as the schedule allows and **safe Scouting practices are followed**, the Scoutmobile can be used to transport units to Scouting events, camp, etc. See the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 34416, (and at www.Scouting.org) for guidance on transporting youth members.

Mobile youth activity center. When school is out, a Scoutmobile could provide "Recreation on Wheels," "Scouting on Wheels," or "Mobile Scout Camp" for Scouts and non-Scouts in rural locations easy for kids to reach. Load the vehicle with a "portable gym," Scoutcraft supplies, music, movies, and refreshments. Schedule stops based on need, requests from local groups, community hot spots, and the nature of the area.

Operating and Funding a Scoutmobile

A Scoutmobile could be staffed by a professional, full- or part-time paraprofessionals, college work/study students, or by a professional/volunteer team.

Proper scheduling and supervision are essential, particularly if one vehicle is shared by more than one district. Its use and operation should be coordinated by a field director, or experienced district executive. The vehicle should be available for use morning, noon, or night, seven days a week. All scheduled commitments must be strictly kept to maintain the trust of the community.

Equipment will vary, but most Scoutmobiles will have shelves and bins with Scoutcraft and camping equipment, audiovisual equipment, ceremony props, Cub Scout games and crafts, a folding table, and sports gear. Trailers and larger vehicles could have space for combination storage compartment/benches, display boards, and even a portable generator with lights, heater, and sound system.

Mobile Scouting units have been project-sold to department stores, foundations, service clubs, United Ways, truck dealers, board members, and other community sources. If you use it effectively, you can get a lot of mileage out of your Scoutmobile!

Funding Rural Services



Funding council services in low-income rural communities is just as successful, just as important, and just as exciting as funding Scouting elsewhere. The same sound fundraising practices and principles that are outlined in BSA finance material should be used. Services to these areas are established as part of the regular council budgeting and funding processes. There are, however, some additional considerations.

Such sound funding starts with a deep council commitment to Scouting outreach in rural areas. That commitment may have to include the council's willingness to spend more staff time and more council dollars in low-income and sparsely populated areas than in other areas, for the same results. Councils should develop programs based on established community need, and then seek required funding. It should not be the reverse. Executive board advocacy, as discussed in chapter 2, is vital.

Foundations and Other Large Donors

Service to rural areas must be ongoing. Many funding sources will shy away from temporary, one-time efforts. And, to a greater extent than anywhere else, units in rural districts are not likely to survive without the continuity of meaningful council services. Reduction in services in these areas does the greatest damage to our credibility, making it more difficult to reorganize at a later date. Council projects should be planned for continuous service rather than as temporary projects that result in the discontinuance of needed services after a year or so. Avoid "post-project neglect" with the resulting shattered expectations, disillusionment, and hostility that often result when services are withdrawn in low-income areas.

Money raised for Scouting in low-income areas should always carry with it the commitment to use the most complete and up-to-date programs/methods/staff training/ philosophies/and materials. Avoid single solutions. Avoid narrowly focused crash programs. Single solution or crash approaches usually result in disappointment and fragmented efforts. Scouting in rural America requires a well-integrated system of approaches. Be sure that your funding proposals reflect a comprehensive council effort.

Some large councils may use a rural advisory committee responsible to the executive board, for maintaining adequate council attention to such districts. The committee recommends a plan of appropriate service methods, helps raise funds, and develops meaningful relationships within the community.

You may want to develop funding proposals built around a comprehensive package of services for a specific target area. Consider including such items as professional staff, a paraprofessional, camperships, loaned camp equipment, audiovisuals, and low-income program literature. Spell out some of the special tasks that paid staff will carry out in the community. Sell this community service package to a prospect with some interest in the community. See *Best Methods for Multicultural Markets Growth*, No. 523-035, for details on how to target likely donor corporations and foundations and write grant proposals to secure financial support for your rural program.

Other funding ideas that might be adaptable to your area are below.

- Check to see if your state allows a special tax credit to businesses that contribute to neighborhood assistance, job training, education, or other community services in an impoverished area.
- Project-sell such items as special staff, camperships, "instant Scouting vans," special unit leader program materials, ten new units in unserved areas, or Scouting outreach on an American Indian reservation.
- Secure support from donors who would not support other council programs. Some funds are available exclusively for low-income programs. Some funds are available for paraprofessionals that would not be available for professional staff.
- Check out the possibility of loaned executives from industry, business, and civic agencies.
- Look into obtaining "gifts in kind," particularly in agricultural areas. These gifts can offset camp expenses.
- Consider the possibility of endowing rural services so they will not be vulnerable to possible future funding cuts.

Do your homework. Review this and other resources on serving low-income rural areas. Know your statistics,

but go beyond the statistics. Know the real obstacles in serving rural areas. Plan your solutions to problems. Then be sure your proposals reflect your insights.

In preparing proposals:

- Write in plain language.
- Write from the donor's point of view.
- Minimize Scouting jargon.
- Link Scouting action to solving local community problems.
- Be positive.

Know your funding prospect. Be prepared to interpret the benefits of your proposal from many possible points of view. Bear in mind that you can't motivate anybody to give; givers are motivated by their own needs and interests. Your role in the process is to find out an individual's needs and interests, and then help him or her fill them. Be prepared with convincing benefits from some of these angles:

- The needs and problems of rural youth
- Benefits to low-income adults
- Benefits to rural communities, or to a specific community
- Helping the council achieve a membership representative of the population
- The benefits to the larger community and the nation
- Affirmative action and equal rights
- Lower crime rates—safety and security
- Increasing the self-reliance of community residents
- Traditional Scouting objectives
- Recognition and achievement of the giver
- Overcoming a major challenge
- Joining a coalition of effort

Some people give to people—not causes. But others throughout America today are cause-oriented, and they are giving to causes they deem important. Be sure you can spell out the causes we relate to as we serve new populations. People give to promising programs, not to needy institutions.

Don't forget to make a prompt and periodic interpretation of results to the donor. Use funds for the purpose provided, and account in detail how they were used. Be factual. Be inspirational.

Funding rural services is truly an opportunity as well as a challenge for your council. By enriching the lives of rural areas, Scouting helps enrich the whole nation. By so doing, your council also helps fulfill several moral and ethical goals of both the Scouting movement and our nation.

Rural Friends of Scouting

Fund-raising works pretty much the same everywhere. People need to know that what they are giving their hard-earned money to is something they believe in and something that will help their community. Some or all of these tips might help you convey to the rural community how Scouting fulfills both criteria:

- Emphasize what donations will do for the community, not what they will do for the council.
- Emphasize how Scouting furthers what is important to people in the area. Link Scouting to what they believe in (the promise of youth, patriotism, volunteer service, jobs, religion, and community events).
- Build your team with local leaders rather than bringing people "in from the outside" to show how it is done.
- Structure the campaign to fit the situation. For some small communities, instead of captains and majors, recruit one or two people to work five cards each.
- The campaign should include businesses in or near the area, major individual donors, and units. Try to get the chairman to give 25 percent of the area's goal.
- Success is much more likely if a key community person gives his or her personal endorsement that the money is well spent by the council in support of "our own youth."
- How is the local unit doing? It matters to boys, but it also matters at fund-raising time. Scouting's credibility is always a key to success. Once a unit is organized, it must have constant service to make certain it succeeds. That will be noticed by the very people you will be asking to support Scouting in the area.
- The ongoing visibility of the district executive in the community is essential for fund-raising success. Dollars will be raised more easily if people see, recognize, and respect the district executive at work.

- It might be effective to give an estimate of the number of Scouting dollars that will come back to the community. A simple calculation is to divide the total council budget by the total council youth membership and multiply the resulting cost-per-youth figure by the number of youth members in the rural areas. If you know that the council invests more per youth member in the rural community than in other areas, you can adjust your math accordingly.
- Use the presentation outlined on the next page, and tailor it to show how the money raised will serve local interests.

Topics to Include in Your Friends of Scouting Presentation

How Your Dollars Help Scouting Serve Your Youth:

- A. Scouting helps the community:
 - 1. Troops can collect food and clothes for disadvantaged families in your community.
 - 2. Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venturers can earn the Emergency Preparedness BSA badge when they learn age-appropriate ways to be of help in case of a major disaster. Cub Scouts learn what to do to protect themselves, their family, and home; older Scouts and Venturers learn to assist in crowd control, safety, first aid, clean-up, and messenger service.
 - 3. To be an Eagle Scout, a boy must accomplish a community project such as a park clean-up, bike rodeo, blood donor sign-up, etc.
 - 4. Cub Scout packs and Boy Scout troops can provide color- or honor-guards and participate in parades, meetings, etc.
 - 5. Boy Scouts often participate in the clean-up of highways, rivers, and parks.
 - 6. Some Scouts visit and spend time with shut-ins and the elderly in the community.
 - 7. Scouts often help restore historical structures or develop historical trails.
 - 8. Scouts can usher, park cars, or participate in other ways at festivals, parades, and events.
 - 9. Some Scouts plant trees, help renovate local landmarks, or improve community parks.
 - 10. Scouts do service projects for churches, schools, and community centers.
 - 11. Scouts and Venturers can cooperate with local law enforcement to promote crime prevention.
- B. Scouting instills values in youth with a code of conduct that emphasizes duty to God, to country, and to self.
- C. Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venturers in your community can have wonderful outdoor experiences at (name(s) of council's camping facilities).
- D. Scouting provides an opportunity for local kids to learn and play together in an organized program that stresses family involvement, ethical values, and service to others.
- E. Communication between your local Scout groups and the council service center include a monthly newsletter, meeting announcements, Scouting materials, telephone help, records of boys' achievement, badges, and literature.
- F. Liability insurance is provided to protect all registered Scouts and leaders. Unit accident insurance can be purchased for a nominal cost.
- G. Scouting protects your Scouts by screening requests for services and money-earning proposals, and by guarding against improper commercialism and exploitation.
- H. The BSA local council provides program help, videos, leader awards, and other services for the people of your area (county, district, etc.).
- I. The district executive is the paid Scouting person in your community. The district executive:
 - 1. Organizes the youth of your community into a Scouting program, and through the adult volunteers, supports community objectives.
 - 2. Provides training for the community adults who become volunteer Scouting leaders.
 - 3. Helps community leaders fight local problems (drug abuse, gangs, illiteracy, hunger, etc.) through Scouting, and also helps accomplish local objectives through unit service projects, Eagle Scout projects, and Good Turns.
 - 4. Helps pastors, school principals, and other local leaders use Scouting to serve youth.
 - 5. Counsels volunteer leaders on program resources, camping, other activity areas, and good troop operation.Obviously, your district executive needs to spend time in your area helping and working with people. Besides salary, a travel allowance is provided to cover the cost of gasoline, tires, meals, lodging for overnight visits, etc.
- J. Here in (community), the cost of instilling values in one Scout is \$(amount) per year. Scouting depends on families, individuals, and businesses to support this cost, which is above and beyond the national registration fee, camp, and uniform costs.

Staffing Rural Districts



An effective staff is the catalyst to councils, districts, and units that are truly responsive to rural people. Staffing patterns vary, and there are several successful approaches to staffing rural areas. Many councils use a single professional, the district executive, to give staff leadership to each rural district. The district executive should have as small a homogeneous service area as possible, within council budget limits.

Some councils use a multiple-person team in one or more of their districts. The multiple-person district has the advantage of not having to replicate involved district structures, which can be difficult to maintain in rural districts. However, the multiple-person district has the disadvantage of removing district staff from close contact with the grassroots community. District volunteers in a large multiple-staff district may be less effective in relating to rural parts of the district. These disadvantages can be overcome by the use of the decentralized “neighborhood plan of district operation.” In this plan, the multiple staff members are known as neighborhood executives, and even the district executive staffs one neighborhood. This is preferable to having all staff try to cover the entire district service area.

It may be necessary, for at least an interim period, to have one district executive serve two districts; this is usually preferable to merging districts to fit a council budget. District mergers may not only be unsettling to volunteers, but may remove district operation even further from the rural people being served.

Full-time program specialists can be successful in serving these communities as part of a close professional/program specialist team. Program specialists should be assigned to a single district for greatest effectiveness. Part-time program specialists may also be a valuable staffing option, particularly in districts where the rural community is a relatively small part of the district. They may be veteran indigenous Scouters or college students.

College students are sometimes deployed through a scholarship plan, whereby the council pays part or all of their tuition. College students may also be obtained through a variety of work/study programs. Other students may serve as part of a full- or part-time academic internship.

Occasionally, a council may use the services of a *loaned executive*. A loaned executive is a full- or part-time person whose salary and benefits are paid directly by the “lending” organization, but who is temporarily assigned by the employer to the local council while performing a specific assignment.

Regardless of the staffing option used, those who work in rural communities should be part of the operation of a single district.

Staff members should be employed according to their qualifications for the job. However, the staff as a whole should be representative of different cultural groups, particularly those living in the council territory. The services of a staff member of a minority group should not be confined to serving that group. However, sometimes it is helpful to a group new to Scouting to be served first by the staff member who seems most familiar to them.

Don’t assume that all district volunteers can relate effectively to rural situations. Quietly select and recruit individuals, build a team of people who can best relate, and assign them to work in rural areas.

Who Provides Rural Unit Service?

Though unit service is most often provided by unit commissioners, in some rural districts, a small community committee may be organized by the council to provide all unit service needs for eight to 10 units in an area separated from the rest of the district by considerable distance—geographic or social. Some units will be best served by the district assigning the best person to help the unit, regardless of that person’s title. The best person may be the one with the best understanding of the community or unit situation; it may be the one who can best relate to the adults of a particular unit. It’s important to remember, though, that one aspect of unit service in which the district executive should always be directly involved is working with leaders of chartered organizations.

When units are extremely isolated, two other kinds of people may be essential to the district’s unit service plan: “circuit riders” and “local contacts.”

“Circuit riders” could be people who travel throughout a far-flung rural area on a regular basis, usually because of their jobs. The Scouting district recruits these people to stop by and visit or perform some act of service when they are in the area for other reasons. These people might present a charter, make an award, sit in on a charter review, run a training session, deliver a package, help solve a problem, etc. Likely prospects are state highway patrol officers, sales representatives, truck drivers, delivery people, U.S. Forest Service workers, public health workers, farm agents, circuit pastors, visiting health-care workers, utility company service workers, and other business, professional, and government agency personnel. In arranging for their help, be sure it can be accomplished without infringing on their employers’ time.

“Local contacts” are people who live near an isolated Scouting unit and will do most anything to help people in their community, but not elsewhere in the district. They, too, could be asked to do short-term tasks to help a local unit.

A local contact might also provide a “drop-off/pick-up center” for the district executive or district volunteers. This person should always know when the district executive will make rounds through the community, and could help relay messages or alert district leaders to unit needs. Who makes a good local contact person? Perhaps the postmaster, mail carriers, store or service station owners, school principals or teachers, bank managers, or other community leaders.

Don’t forget to appoint a **Lone Scout commissioner** or committee person to implement the Lone Scout plan and act as liaison between the council and Lone Scouts and their counselors. He or she reregisters Lone Scouts, promotes summer camp, consults with Lone Scout counselors, and conducts an annual gathering of Lone Scouts and counselors of the district. The Lone Scout commissioner also watches for opportunities to organize a small unit around a Lone Scout and his counselor.

Personal continuity of relationships with a unit is important for success. Hit-and-run service won’t do. With many rural units, it’s better to have one district service provider for all of the unit’s needs than to try to have three or four district volunteers each help

with only one aspect. Establishing a good trust level and being accessible are far more important than the Scouting specialty or title.

Roles of the Unit-Serving Executive

The objective of every Scouting professional is to maintain continuously functioning, effective units, totally in tune with the community and its chartered organizations, and to serve the largest possible number of active registered members in the community. What roles does the professional play in achieving this objective?

While unit-serving executives for rural areas play many of the same roles as professionals anywhere, there are six that should be heavily weighted in these executives’ priorities. These six roles also provide direction for position descriptions, professional training, position tenure, desired personal qualities, and a determination of realistic membership workloads.

Community volunteer. This unit-serving executive is deeply and personally involved in the community and its needs. Some involvement may appear to be only indirectly related to Scouting. Such extensive community relations work can have these positive results:

- **The executive learns about and better understands the community and its people.** It can take time to understand the complex network of inter-relationships in a community and get to know the real local opinion leaders (often submerged from the sight of outsiders). It can take time and ongoing work to be knowledgeable and remain thoroughly familiar with lifestyles, news, and climate of the service area, in order to be effective in serving chartered organizations, units, and volunteers.
- **The executive becomes known in the community.** The staff person is Scouting to some people in these communities.
- **The executive becomes accepted and trusted in the community.** It takes time and active involvement to develop a general climate in the service area of acceptance and trust of Scouting. In some cases, this is critical to overcome self-protective and suspicious attitudes resulting if the community has been conditioned to expect a quick sell—here

today and gone tomorrow—from outsiders. It will take ongoing evidence of sincerity and for the professional to prove he is different. People have to watch him in action; words won't do.

- **The community adopts a neighborhood or small community concept of Scouting.** The community- volunteer Scouter becomes involved in selected non-Scouting groups and activities. The criteria for selecting those groups and activities should include:
 - The executive can make a substantive contribution to the goals for that group or activity.
 - Participation has a good chance of building local influence and trust.
 - The group or activity is related to the real needs of the community **as the community perceives them.**
 - Participation might result in securing or developing a new chartered organization.

This professional is more of a community developer than an organizational manager. The resulting image is that Scouting is there to help the community, rather than constantly the community being asked to help Scouting meet its goals.

Recruiter. This professional works through volunteers and community contacts, encouraging them to recruit adult volunteers for Scouting whenever possible. The professional needs to be personally and directly involved in recruiting adults at every level of the organization—district, neighborhood, and unit. Volunteer recruiting must include people who have influence in the local communities. The professional's role as a recruiter is particularly crucial because isolated rural communities may have higher than usual volunteer turnover, lack of backup volunteers, and a shortage of district volunteer support.

Personal coach. This professional personally trains and supervises small teams of volunteers to serve units and carry out assignments throughout the service area. This means working side by side with district and neighborhood volunteers; for example, visiting units with a commissioner or other unit-serving volunteer, assisting a neighborhood chairman in conducting a neighborhood meeting, or showing a volunteer how to organize a unit. The personal-coach professional constantly coordinates the details related to Scouting in the service area and provides constant encouragement. An important part is played in training volunteers at all

levels, working with volunteer trainers whenever possible. Scouting is interpreted to volunteers in terms that they can relate to and find meaningful.

Unit-oriented Scouter. This professional is directly involved with many units. This is because of:

- Shortage of volunteers
- High rate of volunteer turnover
- Inability of many district volunteers to solve some unit problems
- Communication difficulties between many district and unit volunteers
- Units with problems multiplying faster than volunteers can handle

The individual needs and problems of Scouting units in the community, and support for neighborhood volunteers meeting these needs and problems, should be the overriding priority of the every unit-serving professional, but particularly, of the professional serving rural areas.

The unit-serving professional maintains at least monthly contact with many units and knows the unit leader, the head of the chartered organization, and the unit committee of each. This intensity of service to units is usually necessary to

- Adequately know the unit
- Gain the confidence of unit personnel
- Solve major unit problems, and
- Guarantee the continuity of unit program.

Communicator. This professional develops close personal relationships with both community members and Scouters. Communication is direct, informal, and spontaneous. Communications are sustained rather than sporadic. The professional plays a critical role in interpreting Scouting to the community.

Advocate. This professional identifies with the people of the community. The professional interprets the community to the council and recommends how council services can be made more relevant to both community and Scouting needs and helps the council provide the best possible Scouting for the rural community. If this Scouting professional has built trust with both, he or she may also be an advocate for the community with the power structure (business, government) of the larger community.

The professional Scouter serving rural units will at some time need to be all of these in varying amounts.

Employing Program Specialists

Program specialists are employed to carry out job duties for which professional training and credentials are not necessary but that are directly linked and closely related to the duties of the professional supervisor. These jobs are designed at the entry level so the new program specialist can become sufficiently skilled to perform the work in relatively short time periods.

There are several kinds of program specialist employment; this discussion is about program specialists hired from within the population of the rural community where they are assigned to serve. They can provide highly effective community contact and program delivery because they are already part of the community. They can help bridge the gap between a rural community and the council and district, having both roots in the community and a formal tie and loyalty to the council. The paraprofessional can provide more individualized attention, more immediate help, and with a more personal style—important qualities when serving people new to Scouting. Not all volunteers will respond better to the program specialist than to the professional, but having a second and different type of staff member in the district gives the option of an alternative person to relate to, work with, and see as a role model.

As a program specialist increasingly plays a leadership role in the community and starts moving up the job ladder, that brings more local expertise to the team's partnership. Their employment helps councils make more effective use of professional time and talent. Properly designed jobs can release professionals from a number of duties that require a lesser degree of expertise and training.

Before hiring a program specialist, these basic components of good personnel management must be planned and carried out:

- Employment process designed to ensure selection of the right employee(s)
- Formal job description prepared
- Wage and benefits program based on national guidelines adopted

- Sensitive and stable professional supervision secured
- A specialist job ladder devised
- Training opportunities planned
- Preprofessional training (for selected individuals) planned

Note: Do not use program specialists to substitute as professionals. They are in a unique employment category and have special talents to do a special job. All persons working in these jobs should be registered as council employees and employed as official members of the council staff. The employment of indigenous members should be seen as a part of an interrelated network of approaches and services designed for success in rural areas.

Program specialist employment takes careful planning and some cost, but it can have huge payoffs for council operation, the employee, and the local units and rural community.

Supervising Rural-Serving Professionals

Unit-service skills will need to take precedence over other council activity for rural district staff. There must be a climate of expectation in which almost no unit is permitted to remain inactive or fail before it gets adequate individual attention from the district. The council must monitor district progress in responding to the realities of rural units and their chartered organizations. The staff member serving rural areas must be provided with the moral, physical, financial, and emotional support that are required for success. The supervisor can help a rural-serving staff member achieve success in many ways. These are a few of them:

- Understand the different kinds of issues the executive faces in rural areas, and the adaptations in procedure that must be made to deal with them.
- Give advice and support for the executive's adaptations of Scouting methods to accommodate the area.
- Work to gain council support for the executive's efforts. Setting realistic goals and workloads for the rural executive; taking into account that for a given number of youth members, it takes more

working hours to provide effective Scouting service in a rural area.

- Help with personal adjustment. There can be personal difficulties for executives and their families when working in unfamiliar or isolated environments. There may be a sense of: “Does anyone know I’m here? Where are the resources I had in a metropolitan area? Will I be forgotten for professional promotion?” Field supervision is essential, backed up by professional training. Weekly scheduled phone meetings, occasional trips and social activities for staff families, regular staff leader visits to the district, regular district executive visits to the council service center, and immediate informal recognition can all help.
- Provide the training and other resources needed for this particular job.
- Give careful attention to staff changes. If possible, schedule so that there is an overlap of several weeks between outgoing and incoming staff members. Intensify temporary staff service to assure continuity of units. Attend a few key district meetings yourself. Have the new staff member give immediate and priority attention

to getting acquainted with the condition of all units. If a newly assigned professional has no overlap with his or her predecessor, a detailed two- to three-month get-acquainted plan tailored to the district is in order. At a minimum, it should include:

- Walking and driving every street and road in the area served
- Locating and visiting with people in every Scouting unit
- Meeting community opinion leaders
- Becoming involved in some selected need or problem of the community
- Providing the staff member with detailed maps for office wall and field book
- Reviewing the predecessor’s notes on community organizations, meeting places, and special resources
- Locating those friendly places in the district that can be used as part-time work places and telephone stops
- Meeting all district volunteers

Working With the Community



Multicultural Markets Methods

Learn About the Culture

Throughout its history, ethnic and nationality groups have been what our country is all about. Your rural area may include residents who seem different than others in the council area because of recent immigration, language, culture, ethnicity, or religion. This is where the local council has a great opportunity to help fulfill the Scouting mission for all boys and young adults. The first major key for extending Scouting to these communities is to learn about and try to understand their cultural background.

It is important to learn about people's customs but also to avoid stereotyping them. For example, you may appeal to the growing Hispanic or Latino population by emphasizing traditional values such as family, masculinity, holidays, their homeland, music, and food. But don't go to extremes. Anything that even hints at stereotyping could mean failure. The key word is sensitivity. Involve knowledgeable members of the target population in your planning.

Within most ethnic groups in the U.S., people may be at any point along a continuum on which one end represents total absorption in their ethnic culture and the other represents complete adoption of mainstream U.S. culture. Council leaders and unit-serving executives must recognize that different people may be—and want to be—at different places along that continuum.

Respect for people's language is important. Language conveys a person's culture. Anytime we ignore a person's language, we ignore the whole person. The Multicultural Markets Team at the national office has introductory materials for parents in many languages. See *Multicultural Markets Resources*, No. 523-067, for those that are currently available. You may even want to produce your own materials with local faces and local voices to help communicate further with these parents, or to reach out to other language groups.

Learn About the People

The second major key for extending Scouting to these communities is in identifying and working with organizations and opinion leaders. You need to know the local power structure.

Cultivate and work with ethnic organizations; they can make Scouting happen. In the African American community, get acquainted with black business and professional associations, Alpha Phi Alpha, the NAACP, community churches, and other black organizations. See *Scouting in the African American Community*, No. 11-056, for some great ideas.

In the Hispanic community, work cooperatively with such organizations as the GI Forum, League of United Latin-American Citizens (LULAC), and the state governor's council on Hispanic affairs. See *Marketing to Hispanic Americans in Your Local Council*, No. 523-012, for more resources and ideas.

If your council area includes an American Indian reservation, intertribal council, or community, work closely with the tribal or intertribal council or group opinion leaders. Know the tribal chairman or president well. Some Scouting councils and respective tribal councils have passed formal resolutions of cooperation. The reservation or agency superintendent who is the representative of the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs is also an important person to know. Show Indian school boards how Scouting can be a resource for them. Do your homework by studying *Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing in American Indian Communities*, No. 7-110, and chapter 9 of *Scoutreach in the Local Council*, No. 11-016A.

Councils with concentrations of Asian people should contact local representatives of the Japanese-American Citizens League, the Chinese-American Civic Council, or local groups of the more recently arrived Southeast Asian population groups. See *Asian American Emphasis in Your Local Council*, No. 11-082. Materials are available in Cambodian, Chinese, Hmong, Laotian, Korean, and Vietnamese; see *Multicultural Markets Resources*, No. 523-067, for those that are currently available.

Also develop good working relationships with ethnic community organizations, locally published ethnic newspaper editors, ethnic-oriented radio and TV stations, and ethnic churches.

Become Acquainted With the Community

1. Get detailed road maps of the district and mark pertinent information, including boundary lines, community organizations, Scouting units, etc.
2. Review the checkout report from your predecessor.
3. Discuss the community with your staff leader, others who have served the area, and volunteers at all levels.
4. Analyze and understand the lifestyles and points of view of various ethnic groups of the community.
5. Analyze the district with respect to the natural neighborhoods and sub-communities within it.
6. Identify and check out anything in the community that has been successful in the past.
7. Ask your staff leader to send out an introductory biographical flyer about you.
8. If possible, live in the district you serve.
9. Obtain important statistics about the district and its neighborhoods, including community boundary lines, school districts, income level, populations, and percentages of ethnic groups.
10. Review all weekly or neighborhood newspapers in the district.
11. Identify respected and knowledgeable persons in the neighborhood who can introduce you to others.
12. Begin and maintain a database of contact information and notes on community opinion leaders.
13. Drive all roads of the district.
14. Visit all other community agencies in the district.
15. Be seen at community happenings and events.
16. Spend time in community gathering places.
17. Shop in local stores.
18. Attend the meetings of a variety of community organizations.
19. Join selected organizations.
20. Attend unit meetings.
21. Visit businessmen, clergy, principals, and other community leaders.
22. Meet and talk with other community workers and organizers in the area.
23. Attend or acknowledge weddings, funerals, hospitalizations, business openings, or other events important to the lives of Scouts, Scouters, and others in the community.
24. Occasionally attend religious services in the area.
25. Find ways in which you can be helpful to individuals, neighborhood groups, or join hands in a communitywide Good Turn project.
26. Establish small work areas in some other agencies or businesses in various parts of the district.
27. Leave your business card for posting in local businesses.
28. Place brochures about local units with the local "welcome wagon."

Consider these additional guidelines:

- Get to know people. Win people's trust and confidence by having trust and confidence in them.
- Find out what ethnic leaders see as the needs and problems of their people. Be prepared to show how Scouting can contribute to the overall development of their young people.
- Meet a variety of people: don't assume that one leader is influential with all segments of an ethnic population.
- Encourage ethnic community member participation in council and district administration, including the executive board. At all costs, avoid tokenism.

- Acquaint yourself with a brief historical overview of any ethnic group in the local community.
- Ask ethnic community leaders to suggest people to serve as professional, program specialist, and staff employees of the local council.
- Refrain from using expressions or terms that might embarrass or belittle anyone. Never refer to “you people” or “the people down here,” etc. The use of a single wrong expression may set up barriers between Scouting and the groups with whom we wish to join hands.
- Develop Scouting participation in ethnic events such as parades, festivals, pageants, holidays, and other happenings.
- Get acquainted and work with other agencies that have a meaningful involvement with a community ethnic group.

Identify the Challenge

When you identify an ethnic group as a challenging unserved population, do not assume that the reason for previous ineffectiveness of Scouting in that community is based on ethnic differences. Poverty-linked problems, not ethnic characteristics, may be what necessitate alternative Scouting methods. Often, middle-class families of any background are served effectively with conventional Scouting programs and operation. But low-income neighborhoods usually need special approaches. Consider carefully whether your approach should take into consideration ethnic differences, or whether the real need for special emphasis is economic. The most effective councils are flexible in their response to both.

Resources

Best Methods for Multicultural Markets Growth, No. 523-035, will help you with marketing Scouting in the rural community. The Multicultural Markets Team has a wealth of other material and expertise to help you work effectively with different populations. See *Multicultural Markets Resources*, No. 523-067, for more information.

Migrant Family Outreach

Many councils have the opportunity to reach out to migrant worker families. They are an important part of our communities even though they may only

reside there for a part of the year. During the winter, the home base areas for many are southern Texas, Florida, and California. From early spring until late fall, migrant farm-worker families follow the planting and harvesting seasons, moving north and then back south along predictable routes. Many return to the same areas along the way year after year. Find out where the migrants live in your council area, and then try these ideas.

Best Methods

Don't reinvent the wheel! It's likely that other councils have encountered some of the challenges you face in extending Scouting to the children of migrant workers.

Strategies Using Current Staff and Volunteers

Explore special funding sources for Scouting service to migrant workers' families, such as:

- State discretionary funds designated for services for migrant workers
- Large corporate employers of migrant workers
- Farm cooperatives and other groups of smaller migrant employers
- Foundations or other philanthropists interested primarily in services to migrant workers' families

Establish contact with selected agencies and organizations providing services to migrant workers' families. They can help with

- Further information
- Joint efforts
- Identifying funding sources
- Identifying possible consultants or advisory committee members

Recruit a commissioner to serve migrant workers' families in each district or area of migrant worker concentration to

- Coordinate unit Good Turns for migrant workers' families.
- Set up and run Scouting activities where migrant families live.
- Recruit a bilingual assistant.

Develop a council-level advisory committee on service for migrant workers' families to

- Obtain resources.
- Further educate the council.
- Brainstorm program ideas.
- Prepare proposals.
- Provide liaison with the executive board.

Assign a staff person to become better informed about the lives of migrant workers' families in your area.

Strategies Using Additional Staff and Volunteers

If you can establish staff or volunteer positions to direct more involved Scouting work with the children of migrant workers, they might be:

- A full-time professional coordinator/director to work throughout the council in areas including migrant workers and to serve as adviser to the council advisory committee on migrant workers' families
- A full-time paraprofessional in each migrant family activity center or district to serve as a full-time, paid, roving commissioner
- College work/study students assigned to particular migrant family activity areas, schools, or districts
- Former migrant workers and their family members who have settled in the community permanently and could assist in developing program ideas, provide interpreter services, or be employed as program specialists or professionals

These additional staff members or volunteers could use some or all of these ideas:

- Provide Scouting activities for children of migrant workers in existing after-school and summer education programs, or establish such programs yourself.
- Run a mobile Cub Scout day camp or other type of mobile Scouting unit (See "Try a Scoutmobile" on page 15).
- Establish a Scouting Friend program with pocket cards for participating children. This is local recognition that a child can carry with him, and is presented for participation in short-term Scouting activities of any type.

- When they leave your area, provide children a "letter of Scouting introduction" to be presented in other councils.
- Find out where else the migrant workers in your area live during the year. Contact those councils and establish a joint program to keep the children involved in Scouting as they move from council to council.
- Organize a councilwide Good Turn project, offering a variety of ways for units or individuals to provide camperships, clothing, equipment, or volunteer time for children of migrant workers.
- Develop a list of service projects for units:
 - Hold a get-acquainted-with-Scouting barbecue just as families enter the area.
 - Hold an "evening camp" for children who cannot attend day camp because they are in education programs, working, or taking care of siblings. The program could include instruction in first aid, health and safety, camp sanitation, tool use, camp cooking, fire building, nature, etc. The boys cook their own evening meal and clean up afterward. The program also includes recreational games, Scoutcraft games, short hikes, and star study, etc. It would climax with a rousing campfire with songs, stunts, skits, and inspiration. Parents, younger brothers and sisters, could be invited to attend the campfire program before they take the boys home.
 - In areas with day-care centers for children of migrant workers, units could supply volunteer aides, materials, program assistance, etc.
 - Unit leaders could provide transportation to take children to Scouting events.
 - Unit members could invite migrant workers and their families to attend worship services and provide transportation for them.
 - Units could invite migrant workers' children to their meetings and help them prepare short programs in which they teach the Scouts their own songs, tell about their home, share their games, prepare their foods, etc.
 - Units could take children of migrant workers along when they visit places of interest in the local area: field trips to hospitals, fire departments, police departments, museums, libraries,

historic points of interest, etc., could help develop mutual understanding.

- Teach “no equipment games” such as steal the bacon, capture the flag, SWAT tag, hide-and-go-seek, bulldog, and others.
- Set up a clothing depot. As a cooperative program with other agencies, units can determine clothing needs, establish a program of collection, and distribute clothing to migrant families. Clothing should be cleaned, pressed, and sorted by size.
- Bilingual road signs. Many migrant workers are Spanish-speaking, and some can’t read signs in English. Through local councils and state motor vehicle agencies, units could sponsor road signs in English and Spanish that provide information on rest stops,

agricultural employment information, major road information, public camping areas, location of emergency help, etc.

- Take children of migrant workers for a day of Scouting activity in the council camp.

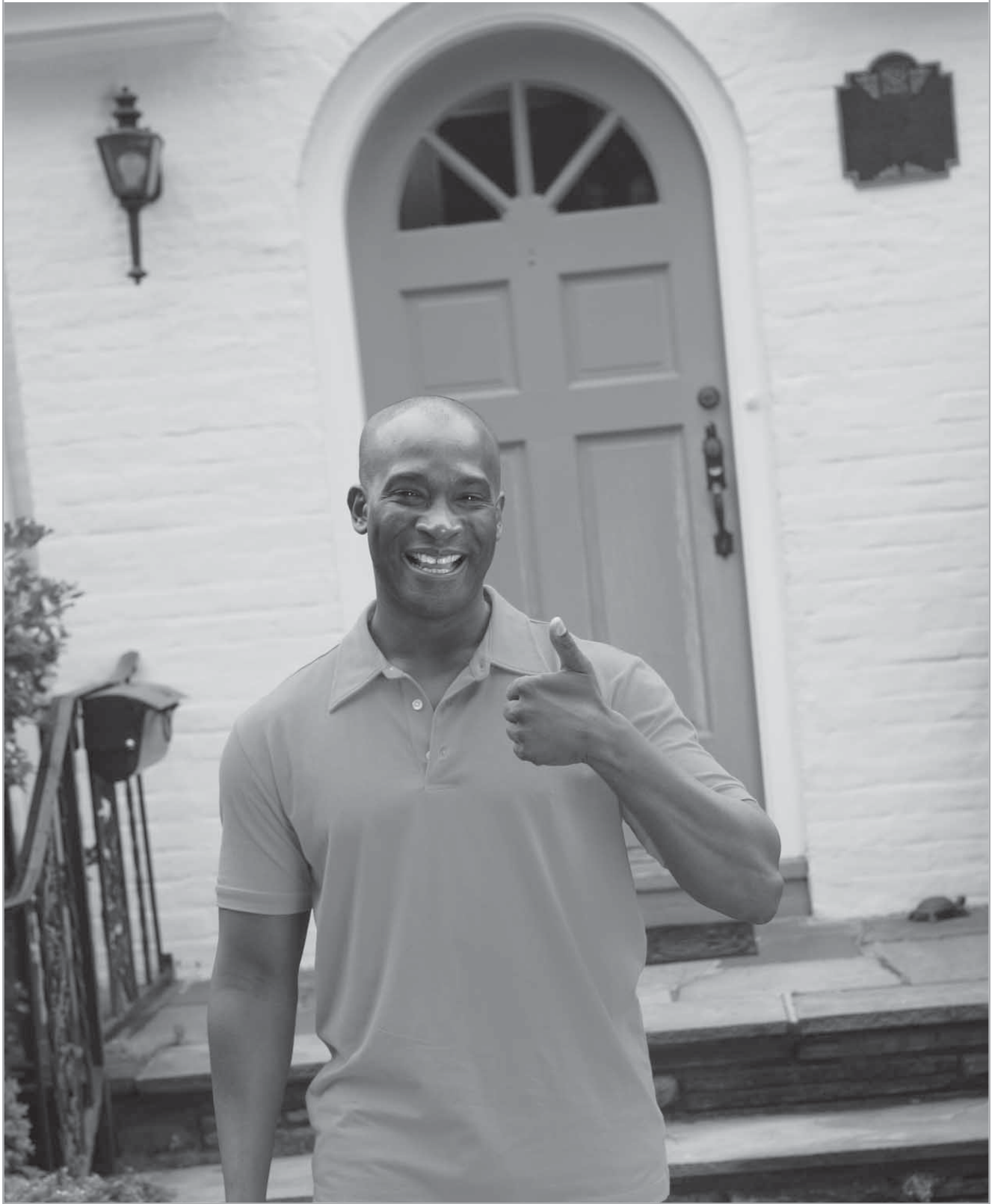
In all the council does in its outreach to families of migrant workers, emphasis should be placed on giving children recognition, helping build a positive self-image, helping build feelings of security . . . and building friendships.

Councils and units that serve families in their home-base communities during the winter can render an important service by helping children establish a program to carry out as they travel during the rest of the year.

Make Scouting More Visible

- Use large, attractive signs in front of chartered organizations such as “Boy Scout Troop _____ meets here every _____ night.”
- Have staff drive a car or van marked “Boy Scouts of America,” perhaps personalized to the community, county, or district. Give all volunteers Scouting decals to put in their car windows.
- Use large Scouting emblems in local business locations where people gather. Use small emblems to mark the front door or mailbox of a Scout or leader.
- Hold in-town camporees.
- Run community service projects, cleanup campaigns, and fix-up and beautification projects.
- Have Scouting units participate in community parades and special Scouting parades.
- Place articles in local newspapers and organizational newsletters. Deliver reports on local radio and TV programs.
- Create community window displays and exhibits.
- Ensure Scouting participation in fairs, festivals, and other local happenings. Help set up, park cars, pass out literature, put on a ceremony, and be there in uniform.
- Have Scouts usher at sports events and community meetings.
- Hold a wheelbarrow barbecue at a shopping center or public gathering.
- Hold mini-Scouting-in-action shows at shopping centers and trade centers on key shopping days.
- Arrange for Scouts to raise and lower the flag each day at school.
- Erect a sign at the entrance to your town or community—“Welcome to _____. Boy Scout Troop _____ meets here every _____ night.”
- Plan to take community members on tours of summer camp, Cub Scout day camp, and Scouting shows.
- Show appropriate Scouting film, slides, or video at community meetings.
- Get special event tickets; charter a bus for Scouts and non-Scouts.
- Create and market a BSA license-plate frame or car bumper sticker.
- Have a Scout color guard at high school sports events.
- Have Scouts “take over” town or county government for a day.
- Have civic officials present certificates of rank at a meeting of town council or county supervisors.
- Hold flag ceremonies at town council and school board meetings.
- Have Lone Scouts in a community without a unit demonstrate a Scout activity for the local news media, organization, or community event.
- Get to know the local radio personalities. Encourage them to talk about Scouting.
- Use rural Scouting fliers and posters to create a Scouting awareness in people, cause them to see Scouting as a part of their rural community, and help them want to get involved in the program. The fliers and posters have space at the bottom to write a name, phone number, or other local information. District Scouters can place them in a variety of highly visible locations—community bulletin boards, school offices, the customer side of cash registers, across from the barber chair—use your rural imagination! The fliers are No. 7-117; the posters are No. 7-118.

Unit Volunteer Recruiting



Adults can be identified and recruited in many ways; no single solution will do. As you work with chartered organizations, be prepared to try many approaches. The traditional BSA approach to recruiting unit adults is described in detail in *Selecting Cub Scout Leadership*, No. 510-500; and *Selecting Quality Leaders*, No. 522-981. Each folder outlines the following six steps for success. (1) A district Scouter meets with the head of the chartered organization to discuss how leaders will be selected. The head of the organization appoints a task force to select a new leader. (2) The task force develops a prospect list, rates each prospect, and rank orders the list. (3) An appointment is made with the top name on the list. (4) A team of people calls on the prospect to convince him/her to accept this opportunity for service to youth. (5) The new leader is welcomed at a special get-acquainted meeting. The application is approved by the head of the chartered organization or chartered organization representatives and the new leader is formally recognized. (6) The district Scouter sees that the new leader completes Fast Start training.

This plan works in some situations. However, in many rural areas, you may need other methods. The more sparsely populated or low-income an area is, the more you may need to try other methods. One option is for the district Scouter and the head of the organization to be the “task force” mentioned in the above six steps. If that is the case, take time to know the people in the community and gain their confidence. In everything you do, have a “recruiting attitude,” and develop this attitude among your volunteers. Get them to size up everyone they know and meet as to how they might help Scouting. Be “recruiter ready.”

You will need to be spontaneous; when only one person shows up for a recruiting meeting—you expected at least six!—silently set your agenda aside. Make that one person feel that he or she is the most important reason you came out tonight. Brainstorm names of people he knows who might help out. Mention various categories of adults in their lives (neighbors, co-workers, relatives, shopkeepers, church members, etc.). Be prepared to go, at a moment’s notice, to call on a prospect if suggested by others in the community. Check out the name with the head of the chartered organization. Take them with you. (Let them take you.)

For recruiting people new to Scouting, show them what other new people have done for kids. Send in someone who has just had a first success, not the “super Scouting expert.” Instill self-confidence; don’t take it away. And if people have had problems with Scouting before, or felt exploited, deal with their feelings in an open and honest manner.

The phone is a useful tool, but not for recruiting; you should recruit in person so that you can communicate your own commitment to Scouting and to the local community. Before you start, learn as much about your prospects as possible—how they think and live, what they like and dislike. Link Scouting to the needs and interests of the prospect. People’s survival needs often come first. Stress the benefits of Scouting to the prospect. People are far more likely to participate in programs that they see having an impact on their community.

You may find it is more effective if you first ask a person to help out with one task rather than asking for a commitment to be a leader. Many people who don’t initially feel comfortable with formal leadership structures are willing to help kids but need to gain confidence in their ability to lead and become comfortable with the program.

Beware of recruiter stereotypes about who is qualified to be a leader. People with little education; people from the most disadvantaged community; people who have never lead before can be effective leaders of youth. Don’t forget retired people; they have leisure time and valuable talents. Many senior citizens want to feel needed and Scouting can give them a worthwhile activity, help overcome their feelings of loneliness, and offer them an opportunity to work with young people or with other adults.

Practice patience, persistence, and flexibility. Be willing to meet and accept failure—but don’t give up! When you’ve made the “sale,” give the new recruit a specific task immediately, and offer training as soon as possible. Be prepared with step-by-step instructions about the job or tasks they are being asked to do.

If there is no unit committee, or if this is too structured an approach, try some of the alternative approaches below. But always check out the prospect with knowledgeable people, including the head of

the chartered organization or chartered organization representative. No matter what recruiting methods you use, the head of the chartered organization or chartered organization representative and the local council must approve the registration of the leader on the Adult Leader Application, No. 524-501.

Target Prospects

Learn about prospects from local opinion leaders.

Talk with people you know in the community about people who work well with youth. Work with local opinion leaders and influence groups to find people to help. Develop a trust level with the right people in the town or rural area; then get them to help you recruit. Spend time with an opinion leader in the area, just meeting and talking with people about Scouting. Brainstorm with key people in the chartered organization to develop a list of prospects. Never underestimate the importance of local opinion leaders.

With local helpers, go door-to-door to talk with local residents about helping kids, about the unit, and about the need for people to help. Get residents committed to attend a get-acquainted meeting a couple of days later to learn how Scouting can help local kids. Don't overlook mobile home parks, company housing, and remote villages.

Help a group of young people select and recruit a leader for their troop or crew. Hold a session with the kids, and ask them, "Who do you know whom you would like to have work with you?" Or—"If you had a question you had to ask somebody, what adult would you ask?" Kids are quick to identify adults they will trust and feel good about. The group probably will agree on a name or two. Check out the name with knowledgeable local persons, including the head of the chartered organization. Go with a group of the young people to ask the adult to be their leader. If they have selected the right kind of person, the answer won't be "No."

Arrange to visit school classrooms to interest children in Scouting, followed the same night, or the next night, with a get-acquainted-with-Scouting meeting. In each classroom, give children a colorful flyer promoting the meeting and indicating that their "ticket of admission" is an adult. Tell each class that no child will be admitted without at least one adult (parent, neighbor, older brother or sister,

godparent, foster parent, other relative, or adult friend). Children can influence adults to attend. You will have a group of people to work with at the get-acquainted meeting.

Give old unit field sheets to a knowledgeable person in the organization or neighborhood to identify former Scouts or committee members who might be good prospects.

Hold Meetings

Before a recruiting meeting, type several clusters of specific unit committee tasks on no more than two sheets of paper. Keep them simple and avoid a lot of Scouting jargon. Beside each cluster of tasks, put a place to write a name and phone number. At the get-acquainted-with-Scouting meeting, parents' meeting, or other meeting, give each person this worksheet. Have each person put their name next to the task they would most like to do. Have everybody put everybody else's name and phone by the tasks they have selected. Then get the group to suggest who should be the unit leader. Have a person who is truly "pre-recruited" agree during the meeting to help out or be on the committee. That will encourage others to agree to help.

These are some of the meetings you might want to hold:

A corporate rural emphasis luncheon. Work with your district chairman or other key county Scouter to host a "rural emphasis luncheon" of top corporate leaders of the county. Include an inspiring challenge of the opportunities to bring Scouting to rural kids. Corporate leaders are then asked to recruit, through their own personal invitation, or by invitation of their department heads, people to help serve these areas. They select people who they know are competent and have some reason to be interested in the local area. You follow up with each company and each volunteer, placing them in the most appropriate unit or unit service position. Some employers may even give the person released time to carry out Scouter responsibilities.

A get-acquainted-with-Scouting night. Use any of the methods outlined above, or others that fit the local area, to encourage people to attend a get-acquainted-with-Scouting night to discuss local youth needs and

Scouting opportunities. At the meeting, people can be recruited to help out in various ways. At the get-acquainted meeting, help the group feel good about Scouting. Be inspirational. Answer all questions. With the help of other Scouters, local religious leaders, and other local leaders, inform the group about Scouting. Then, recruit people to support the unit and get commitments that very night.

A local coffee, lunch, barbecue, or dessert meeting.

Work with a key grassroots Scouter or local opinion leader to host this meeting of local prospects. The location could be a home, business, restaurant, club, or farm co-op in the area to be served.

A parents' meeting. Ask them to recruit the best person in the community to lead their sons.

The two ideas below are less conventional, but they might work for you:

Ask a few chartered organizations (business, church, or social agency) to provide leaders from among their employees, giving them released time from their job.

Bring in a neighboring troop to put on a town fair or mini Scouting-in-action show in the town square, shopping center, or churchyard. Let everybody in the community participate—hands on. Recruit new leaders on the spot.

An ideal resource is *Best Methods for District Volunteers Serving Rural Communities*, No. 7-504. Each kit contains eight easy-to-use folders on unit service, recruiting adults, training adults, unit funding, organizing units, unit programs, special activities, and boy and leader success stories. Like this guidebook, each folder contains ideas that supplement the information in conventional BSA literature. Photocopy individual folders as needed to use in training, coaching, and self-study for district volunteers.

Are Local Leaders the Best?

Sometimes councils get into a debate over the relative merits of recruiting local, inexperienced unit leaders or more experienced unit leaders from “outside” to work with kids. Some will say that “imported” leaders are better because they:

- Are more confident
- Have more Scouting experience
- Can give Scouting a higher priority
- Have more time
- Reflect traditional Scouting

Others will point out that insiders are best because they

- Feel more comfortable in the area
- Better understand the boys and families served
- Are more personally motivated
- Can more easily get additional help
- Know the real opinion leaders and influence groups

Try to avoid the debate. Recognize that you need *both*: you need all the help you can get. Learn to use both—building on the strengths and compensating for the weaknesses of each. And, deal with individuals, not labels.

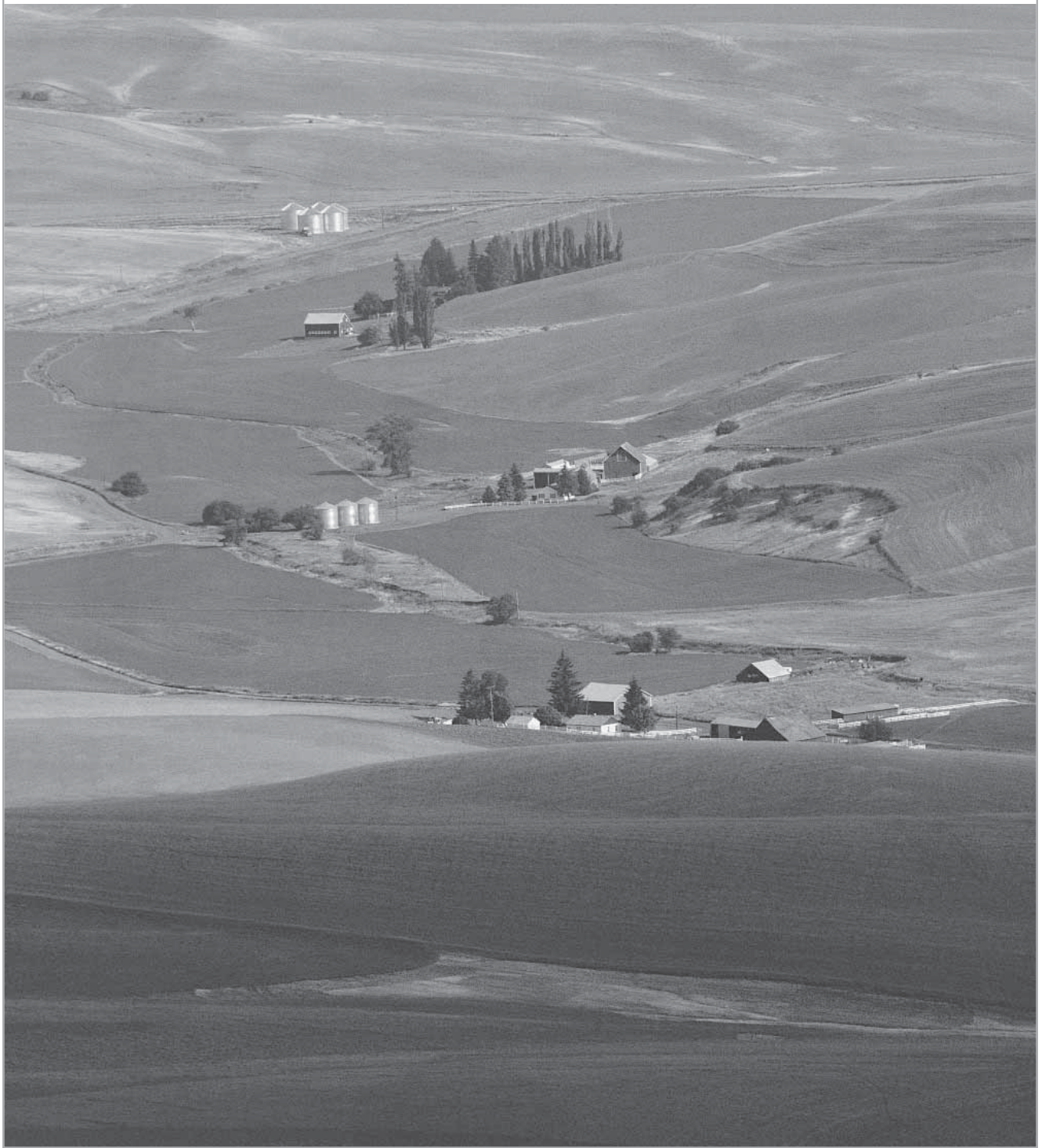
Whitney M. Young Jr. Service Award

This national award is used by local councils to recognize an adult or an organization that has made an outstanding contribution in providing Scouting for low-income rural or urban youth. The award nominee must have demonstrated significant accomplishments in some combination of the specific criteria listed on the award application, No. 523-427. The contribution may have been at any level of Scouting, but must involve Scouting advocacy for low-income rural or urban people.

Nominees are to be screened carefully by a committee appointed by the council president. Nominations are then submitted to the national Whitney M. Young Jr. Service Award committee for review and approval before the award is announced. An appropriate award ceremony is conducted at an auspicious council or district event. The application contains details.

Also see *Best Methods for Multicultural Markets Growth*, No. 523-035, for a detailed outline of how one council organized a successful Whitney M. Young Jr. Service Award banquet.

Establishing and Serving Units



This chapter gives a set of guidelines for anyone who is concerned with serving units in isolated or low-income rural communities.

Basic and more traditional unit service information is not repeated here, since it can be found in other publications such as the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, No. 33621 (Commissioner Tracking Tool online). While some units in a rural district will succeed with normal unit service efforts, council planning for these districts must be responsive to those units that are new, weak, struggling, isolated, or otherwise require far more service from the district.

Making the individual needs and problems of units your top Scouting priority is the basic principle of good rural unit service and the key to your success. Here are some tips and techniques to help you help a unit survive, its problems, and provide a good program. Most of these tips and techniques are really just putting other people first. But, then, you are in the “people business.” And when serving rural units, these behaviors and attitudes are often far more important than technical Scouting procedures.

Be flexible and spontaneous. Rural unit situations may differ greatly from urban ones, and from each other; each may require different responses on your part. Be prepared to use the resources that are at hand, and know that the help you provide on a unit visit may not be exactly what you expected to accomplish. Conditions in the unit and neighborhood may change fast, and your unit service plans may have to be modified quickly. Be prepared to spend more time with those units that need the most help. Visit or otherwise stay in touch, more than once a month. With a new or reorganized unit, make some kind of weekly contact until the unit has “taken root.”

Be responsive. Pay attention and respond to unit needs and circumstances. Don’t put the wants and needs of the district ahead of the wants and needs of the unit. Your most important role is as an advocate of the unit and a helper of unit volunteers.

Be friendly and informal. Probably the most welcome help will be that provided on a friendly, informal basis. Don’t sell Scouting so hard that you aren’t listening to what unit leaders are saying. Watch and listen to the unit in action, but with no suggestion of snooping or prying, of course. Place less reliance

on formal rules, paper flow, and other administrative formalities that don’t fit local lifestyles. Formal council operating procedures can be limited to broad, essential policies and those procedures that have specific relevance to the communities served.

Be active. Don’t wait to be told about what is needed: Learn about the unit. Listen. What are their interests, needs, resources, and background? How can they be reached? Who do they know? What groups do they belong to? Some unit volunteers won’t seek your help with their problems. You may have to go the extra mile to make your assistance available to units.

Be supportive. When people lack confidence in doing something new, they fear failure. What they need most to succeed is a feeling of confidence. You can help them increase their self-confidence. Emphasize the strengths of the rural community and the people in it. Provide immediate recognition for small successes. Say “well done.” Write a note. Make a phone call. Or present a small award. Material awards are more effective than abstract recognition.

Be a guide. Use the show-and-do method of training; don’t just tell people what to do. Be sure both the “show” and the “do” are related to the unit’s environment and lifestyle. Link your coaching to what unit leaders are presently doing in their units.

Be comprehensive in approach. Try to look at the total unit situation. The work of the unit is made up of many things and may have more than one problem. Be aware of both problems expressed by unit people and problems they don’t know they have.

Think in terms of alternative approaches, not single solutions. We can be bound together in Scouting fellowship even though we use somewhat different methods to meet different situations.

Each week, review a few units in-depth with the Scouter to whom you report or with those whom report to you. For each unit: (1) Look at the total condition of the unit. (2) Determine the highest priority for help. (3) Decide the best individual service efforts you can provide in the next 30 days. (4) Who will make it happen and how? The next week review several more units. After a month or so, you’ll be back around to the original group, and the cycle repeats itself. This method helps focus time and effort on the total picture of individual units rather

than on a number of categorical checklists for the district. It assures a constant updating of individual needs and service plans to meet those needs.

Be respectful. Don't be a super Scouting expert. Avoid discouraging unit people with a showy display of expertise. Help them be the experts. Guard against the "I-did-it-the-right-way-why-can't-you?" attitude. Your attitude toward unit people is more important than any information you have to share. Counsel unit people in a way that bolsters their pride and provides solutions that fit their unit and their community situation. At all costs, avoid using labels for people.

Plan around the other important events in community volunteers' lives—weddings, funerals, hospitalizations, etc. Also take into consideration key events for the chartered organization.

Be empathetic. Always try to understand how things look and feel to the other person. Put yourself in the other person's shoes. Empathy can be one of the most valuable and powerful qualities you can develop to strengthen your relationship with each unit, your communications, and your ability to get things done through other people.

Be present. Face-to-face communication is usually preferable to telephone or Internet. Telephone is usually preferable to written forms of communication. Instant messaging would be better than email. When you write, use more informal, handwritten notes and letters.

Be discreet. Don't take sides in neighborhood or unit disagreements. Respect confidences. Don't gossip about *anyone*.

If a unit requires the use of alternative methods because, for instance, there is a lower level of parent participation, avoid emphasizing the fact that the methods are different or unusual; emphasize the strength of the solution.

Training Rural Volunteers

Use these guidelines to help you train a higher percentage of leaders in rural communities.

Tips for the Trainer

Pace your training to what leaders need at the time, rather than strictly following prescribed outlines or timetables.

Advantages of Serving a Rural District

- It is a professional privilege to serve a rural district.
- Rural people are often very warm, personable, and responsive.
- Rural services provide the opportunity to develop a wider range of professional skills.
- There may be greater opportunity for creativity.
- There may be more freedom to manage one's own time.
- Many rural districts have a unique quality of life: good outdoor recreation and a more comfortable pace.
- The new professional is less likely to feel lost than in a big city.
- The professional may have a higher initial status in the community, with easier access to top community resources.
- In many rural areas, the cost of living is lower than in most urban and suburban areas.
- Well-done work is more quickly appreciated.

Continue to provide training opportunities even if there is poor attendance. Be willing to carry on training programs with one or two people.

Personalize training to the needs of rural leaders. Training should be provided when leaders are available, and as soon as they are recruited. Link training to what they are presently doing on the job. Adapt subject matter to meet the particular needs of the leaders present. Don't be so rigid about making a "presentation" that you can't respond spontaneously to the needs and reactions of learners. Encourage trainees to talk about experiences and situations in which they normally find themselves. This will help bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Avoid a showy display of expertise. A "how-can-I-help-you" attitude is more effective than a "this-is-how-to-do-it" approach. Help people build confidence in themselves.

Tips for Training Administration

Be flexible. Use a variety of training approaches in

rural areas. Be prepared to do both individual and unit-based training and to run neighborhood planning and training meetings, as well as conducting more formal district training. In one area, a number of relatively short training experiences may work better than fewer but longer training sessions. In another, a longer training session may be the only way people can attend.

In some areas, the trainer may need to maintain a sustained relationship with a unit. In such cases, the trainer's role may be combined with the role normally played by the unit and/or roundtable commissioner or other unit service person. This provides for a more personal relationship with the unit.

It's a good idea to arrange for child care during training sessions, and to conduct training in centers where people normally trade or gather.

Balance workloads. Workloads of professionals with rural assignments should permit enough time for training trainers and coaching rural leaders. This is essential for maintaining the relative permanence of units.

Fund training, if necessary. Councils may have to find ways to give away essential program materials and literature, where the need exists, and keep training course fees, if any, to a minimum.

Be inclusive. Training teams should include people from the community who have authority as well as responsibility for training. District and council leaders should learn how to identify potential trainers, give them a "spot" job (a taste of success first), and then recruit them for longer-term responsibility.

Include all types of training. Some type of "campmaster program" may be needed to guarantee that a new troop has an outdoor experience during its first 60 days of operation. The district or council should have a team of experienced campmasters who will be careful not to "take over" the troop during the day or weekend. Instead, the campmaster works at the Scoutmaster's side as he teaches outdoor skills to boy leaders and troop members. The equipment for this experience should be provided by the council, and the event held on council property.

Don't compromise on training because it is more difficult to deliver. Program success may require more, not less training. If you encounter resistance to required training, such as Youth Protection training, you must persist, but do so in a non-confrontational way.

Use technology wisely. Basic leader training on CD or online is a great tool—if the new leaders are familiar with using CDs and have computers. You may need to train key community leaders first, and then lend computers to them for additional leader training. You may need to conduct basic leader training "the old-fashioned way." Do what works.

Unit Program Costs

Some Scouting units and members may have big problems in paying for the program. Low-income families may be leery of what they have heard about Scouting costs and reluctant to let their children join. Councils and districts can help in a variety of ways.

First, it is important to keep fees and monetary requests to a bare minimum. Prevent creating the image or the reality that Scouting costs a lot of money. But some things just do cost money. Some councils have a special rural/inner-city assistance fund to help provide essential program literature, training course scholarships, transportation, equipment, and camperships.

Financial aid should be granted only when the unit has done its best to provide its own resources. Control of the fund should be vested in a council rural advisory committee, staff leaders, or other responsible parties designated by the Scout executive. Income for such a fund could come from service clubs, individual gifts, the council budget, or a special council endowment.

Uniforms

A boy does not have to have a uniform to be a good Scout, but most will want one. If units need help with uniforming, try these ideas:

- Have boys start with only a Scouting T-shirt or neckerchief.
- Establish a district or community uniform and equipment center. Leaders bring boys with special needs to buy used uniforms at a low cost (\$2–\$4). Uniform parts are collected from used clothing stores, former Scouts, flea markets, and

used uniform drives held in the council. Recruit people to clean and repair the uniforms—ask a local laundry and dry cleaning association to help. Locate the center in a town hall, mountain mission, or other central location.

- Some councils have cooperative agreements with agencies that repair and distribute used clothing (the Salvation Army, Volunteers of America, St. Vincent de Paul Society, and Goodwill Industries, for example). Scouting units throughout the council help the agency with a big used clothing drive. The agency then collects, cleans, and repairs uniforms that are made available to Scouts through their leaders. The district executive issues approval forms or coupons to leaders of units where need has been established.
- Some units collect “experienced uniforms” for a unit uniform exchange, with a parent or leader in charge.
- Some social service agencies will buy uniforms for boys whose families are receiving assistance. Have parents or guardians ask, or follow up yourself.
- An individual or organization wanting to help could provide matching funds for those earned by unit members through unit work projects.
- The chartered organization might be able to help with uniforms and equipment. It never hurts to ask.

Camping and Other Outdoor Activities

A week in summer camp is important for every Cub Scout and Boy Scout, but some will need help getting there. Outdoor adventure is an important part of Venturing. A pack, troop, or team could use one or more of the following ideas to spread the cost out over time so that it is easier to manage:

Set up a camp savings fund. Each week, the youth brings 25 cents to 50 cents for camp. The young member and the unit leader each have a card showing the dates and amounts that have been “deposited.”

Saving nonperishable food. Each member brings a can or box each week to the unit meeting. This keeps the food secure, and it is used for weekend camping or for the unit’s meals at summer camp.

These are ways the district and council can help defray the personal cost of camping and summer camp:

Facilitate unit money-earning projects for camp. These could be holding a car wash, bake sale, flea market, yard sale, spaghetti dinner, pancake breakfast, or barbecue; selling takeout dinners, craft projects, or other products; setting up an odd-job, lawn care, snow shoveling, or babysitting service, washing store windows, collecting and selling recyclables, carrying or delivering groceries, parking cars, painting house numbers on street curbs, selling refreshments or staffing concessions at rodeos and other sports events, picking fruit or vegetables, or distributing circulars or phone books. Be creative—other ideas may work better in your area. Whatever is chosen, check details with the council to be sure the unit follows BSA rules about commercialism.

Provide council camperships. Money for camperships could come from:

- A council tribute fund honoring a well-known council or district Scouter, perhaps the outgoing president
- Annual council souvenir patch sold at the council trading post to benefit the campership fund
- Special fund-raising events (districtwide unit recycling drive, theater party, celebrity golf, a walk or run, etc.)
- A company, labor union, service club, or fraternal organization that adopts a troop, pack, or crew
- United Way special project funds
- Individual donors
- Local or state government programs
- Order of the Arrow or National Eagle Scout Association chapter
- The council budget
- Council endowment for camperships, perhaps named for a famous Scouter

Provide transportation to camp. Funds for this could come from the campership fund or be provided by a community action agency. Council-owned vehicles could be used, other units in the council could help, or school or church buses could be rented or borrowed.

Equipment

Most units can pay for some equipment from dues money and unit money-earning projects. For others, try some of these ideas:

- Good unit program activities can also result in some equipment items, such as tin-can cooking gear and ground cloths. Simple packs can be improvised from blankets.
- A council or district uniform and equipment center could lend tents, patrol cooking gear, and other essential equipment. Recruit a team of Scouters or the district Order of the Arrow chapter to run the center.
- Unit and U.S. flags might be presented by veterans' organizations or chartered organizations.
- Craft materials for Cub Scouts are easily adapted from scrap materials. Be sure show-and-go projects at roundtables and training courses use free or minimal-cost materials that can be easily obtained in the community.
- Some councils provide camping gear if the unit camps at a council camp or training center.
- National Guard units might lend equipment.
- Used summer camp tents can be repaired and sold to units for a token price.
- The council could gather equipment from permanently dropped units and distribute it to new units.

Registration and Charter Fees

The ideas listed above under council camperships and unit money-earning can also be used to help units with registration and charter fees. The council should have a clearly defined plan to help units that have no other way to pay these fees.

Unit Meeting Places

In some rural areas, great distances, lower population densities, and community rivalries may require modification of conventional meeting patterns.

Cub Scout packs could organize their dens along school bus routes. On den meeting afternoon, Cub Scouts get off the bus at the den leader's home. The boys' parents take turns driving them home from meetings. Once each month, all Cub Scouts and parents meet at a central point for a pack meeting. In other areas, Cub Scout dens can meet in local schools after classes are dismissed. The den leader comes to the school to conduct the meeting. Parents take turns driving the boys home or boys take the late-activity bus.

Although most troops meet weekly, in some small communities it is more practical to meet only once or twice a month. Patrols, organized by neighborhoods, meet weekly under boy leadership, with parent or other adult helping. The program of the patrols is coordinated by the Scoutmaster. Probably held on a weekend day, the monthly troop meeting starts with a conventional troop meeting followed by a cookout or other meal activity and an afternoon outdoor activity such as a troop hike, wide game, or service project. Later in the afternoon, parents return for a brief parents' meeting and/or court of honor. Patrols may also be organized to meet on a school bus route basis. The group spirit that develops while riding the bus makes it easy to talk about Scouting, practice advancement skills, and make plans. Some school-bus patrols get off the bus to meet at the home of one of the patrol members.

- In sparsely populated areas it may be more realistic to organize additional dens and patrols attached to an existing troop or pack rather than to start new units.
- In some rare instances a group of boys and leaders are simultaneously a Scouting unit and a 4-H group, carrying out both programs in their group.
- If the available chartered organizations do not have adequate meeting facilities in small, isolated, or new communities, consider using the family rooms or basements of boys or leaders, a town hall, fire department, or police station, garages, trailers, empty store buildings, National Guard armories, barns, community rooms, council camp dining halls, store attics, and self-storage units.
- In warmer climates, some successful troops conduct all of their meetings outdoors. Some units erect a dining fly for each patrol in the event of inclement weather. Other troops use two-wheeled trailers to carry all of the troop's meeting equipment, with each patrol having a patrol box on the trailer. For the troop meeting, the unit merely brings the trailer to the meeting place.

Getting to Camp

The adventure of camp is the climax of a Cub Scout or Boy Scout's year. Be sure that each of your units gets to camp or go camping. The units that are new or didn't go last year need your help the most. Here are things you can do:

Camp Fees

Camp fees are a big barrier for some boys. See page 46 for ideas on how to help troops pay for camp fees.

Leaders in Camp

Getting adult leadership in camp can be a problem in some units. Help the unit plan to have capable adults in camp. These are the possibilities for camp leaders of a unit, in order of preference:

1. Scoutmaster
2. Assistant Scoutmaster
3. Troop committee member
4. Parents of boys
5. Other adults in the chartered organization
6. Other relatives of boys
7. District Scouter (recruited during the spring to donate a week's vacation for a last-minute unit need)
8. Qualified college student
9. Paraprofessional

If leadership for the unit cannot be found, the unit could join a district- or council-organized provisional troop or go with another troop that has adequate leadership for both.

In some cases, a district or council may contact a Scoutmaster's employer to request an extra paid week of vacation for the Scoutmaster to take his troop to camp (only with his permission, of course).

Parental Approval

Any of us may be against what we don't understand. Many parents and new leaders don't know about camp. Provide information. Help Scoutmasters to run a parents' camp night. Show slides or videos of summer camp so that parents can see what the camp looks like. Better yet, take a group of adults to visit the camp while in operation. During the summer camp season, some district executives take a number of new troops, chartered organization leaders, and neighborhood opinion leaders to camp for dinner, tour, and a campfire. The ride there and back is a priceless opportunity to talk camp, get better acquainted, provide informal coaching, and increase your trust level with community members.

Unit Operation Alternatives

If your rural area lacks sufficient community organizations with the resources, stability, and acceptability to have their own units, or lacks a sufficient number of available adults to complete the normal unit structure, you might consider some alternative methods of unit operation. Here is a brief explanation of the traditional method (for comparison) and some alternatives that might work in the area:

Traditional Chartered Organization

We make the Scouting program available to an organization that provides adult leadership and a meeting place, and takes total responsibility for units. Each unit has a separate unit committee. With this approach, each pack needs at least six adults and each troop or post needs at least four adults.

Multiple Units

A community organization operates several units, even in different locations, but with a single committee for all units. A person may be multiple-registered on more than one unit committee. A church might have mission outposts in more than one location. They could, if necessary, have unit leaders in each outpost but with a single committee supporting all their units. A large consolidated rural school might use this approach in operating units in several far-flung parts of its school district.

Multiple Organizations

Two or more organizations pool their resources to jointly operate one or more units. Bring the heads of the organization together to agree on who will be the chartered organization representative and to approve the other adult leaders. Local councils can issue duplicate charters listing the multiple organizations so each may receive and display a charter.

Group of Citizens

The Scouting program is made available to a previously unorganized group of citizens. District Scouters organize a group of citizens into an organization that, in turn, provides adult leadership, a meeting place, and responsibility for units. The group of citizens acts in lieu of an already established organization.

Neighborhood Committee

A single committee of community people provides the services of chartered organization, unit committee, and some district services for a number of units.

Neighborhood Scouting Center

A small Scouting center, with its neighborhood committee, provides the services of chartered organization, unit committee, and district services for a number of units.

District Committee

The district committee is chartered to operate the unit through a special district subcommittee. The subcommittee serves one or more units. This approach is intended when you have a couple of willing unit leaders with a group of youth but no

current possibility for a chartered organization or group of citizens. This alternative should be considered as an interim step to eventually tying the unit to a community organization.

The district executive plays a major role in the proper use of alternative approaches. Considerable judgment and careful analysis are required before selecting an alternative other than the conventional one. To fit the right alternative to each situation, you must first know well all the circumstances of the unit and community situation. Next, consider the advantages, hazards, and unique features of each alternative as they might relate to the unit and its community. Consult with district volunteers who may be involved. Then make a choice.

Combinations of these alternatives may be used in the same district to help put Scouting close enough to every boy so that he can participate.

Recruiting Youth Members



Street-Corner Scouting

It sounds like a technique best used in urban areas, but “street-corner Scouting” can be equally effective in rural areas. This outreach approach can be successful in reaching a youth who are not reached through more conventional approaches. The organizer begins by personally establishing a relationship of trust with a group of young people “on the street” or wherever they hang out. The organizer may be a street-savvy volunteer or a paid staff member.

Do Your Homework

The first step must be to consult with and apprise adult local opinion leaders (and perhaps even local law enforcement agencies) about your “street-corner Scouting” efforts. Besides gaining valuable information about the young people you are targeting, you need to be sure your actions are understood by community authorities and not seen as a threat to the security of the community’s young people. Talks with youth or peer leaders may make the job easier, as well—it will depend on the local situation. **Never conduct these discussions, or the subsequent contact with community youth, without ensuring you have two-deep leadership.**

Reach Out

The organizers begin with casual visits with a group of youth wherever they get together—playground, recreation center, housing project, or shopping center. Informal meetings lead in several days or weeks to doing some activities together, such as basketball, camping trips, mechanics, singing, etc., as suggested by the interests of the youth. You can secure equipment, transportation, or whatever the activity requires. Try to include an adult from the community who has some positive influence with the kids. This can make your activities more successful, and that adult just might turn out to be a great unit leader. After gaining a degree of trust with the young people, the organizers work with them to locate a regular meeting place, in an organization and with adult leaders who are acceptable to the group. Organizers must be careful to avoid being perceived as the unit leaders. It helps to give selected community adults short-term responsibilities, having others ready when the first are complete; building the image and the confidence of the volunteers step by step.

As the group moves from the street into a community organization facility, the organizers work with the new adult leaders and help the group become a unit of the Boy Scouts of America. The organizers move into a commissioner/trainer role. To assure the continuity of the program, the “organizer/commissioners” never become completely divorced from the unit. Contact will usually be necessary every 10 days to two weeks.

Outreach Camping

Providing outdoor and camping experiences for young people who are not Scouting members is a good way to serve youth, help establish local credibility, and organize some new units. These are some successful models:

Working through other organizations. Use of the council camp is offered for a week to another organization serving low-income, rural youth. Council personnel provide helpful support.

Bring a buddy. Non-Scouts are invited by a host troop (one boy per patrol) to be its guests for a week of camp. This week of camp should prepare them to become members of the host troop or become the core of a new troop in their own community.

Provisional troop or crew. The council or district organizes provisional troop(s) or Venturing crews for non-Scouts: young people are recruited in communities where little or no Scouting exists, working through local agencies and potential chartered organizations. Local adults are also recruited to attend. They often become unit leaders after a good camp experience. This works best with 11-year-old boys for Scouting and the younger ages for Venturing.

Whatever model is used, personal calls should be made to the family of each non-member youth participant to discuss leadership, camp program, clothing, equipment, and health needs. A precamp meeting of families is held. District Scouters and/or provisional camp leaders also help plan for medical checkups, make arrangements to meet special dietary needs, and arrange for transportation to and from camp. They work with the permanent camp staff to adjust camp program routine and procedures to fit special needs and lifestyles of their new campers.

Camp staff preparation is the most essential success factor in all of these models. While camp staff should have good program know-how to help people who lack program experience, it is far more important to have staff with the right human relations ability. An attitude of caring support is needed. Don't assume that all camp staff can relate effectively to young people from a background different to what they are used to. Plan a special training session for the entire camp staff.

After camp, move quickly to get this group of campers meeting regularly as a new unit back home, or get them involved in existing units.

Lone Scouts and Lone Cub Scouts

Lone Scouting may be our oldest special outreach method. While not new, Lone Scouting is an excellent outreach for boys who can be Scouts no other way. Traced to origins in England in 1913, Lone Scouting is just as timely in reaching isolated youth today as it was then. In 1915, William D. Boyce incorporated the Lone Scouts of America, which merged with the BSA nine years later.

Today, the Lone Scout plan provides a Scouting opportunity for boys who cannot readily join a unit or attend meetings. The plan provides opportunities for:

- Boys in rural communities who live far from a Scouting unit
- Sons of migratory farm workers
- Boys who attend special schools, night schools, or boarding schools that don't have Scouting
- Boys who have jobs that conflict with unit meetings
- Boys whose families frequently travel, such as circus families, families who live on boats, and so on
- Boys with disabilities that prevent them from attending regular meetings of packs and troops
- Boys who alternate living arrangements with parents who live in different communities
- Children of American citizens who live abroad in an area that doesn't have BSA units
- Exchange students away from the United States for a year or more

Every boy registering as a Lone Cub Scout or Lone Boy Scout must have an adult, 21 years or older, who agrees to be the boy's "friend and counselor." The Lone Scout friend and counselor should

- Guide a boy in planning his Scouting activities.
- Encourage a boy to grow and develop from his Scouting experiences.
- Instruct, examine, and guide a Lone Scout on all the steps in his Scout advancement.
- Help a boy use the resources of the BSA local council and district in which the boy and counselor reside.
- Help a boy get to the local council resident camp.
- Serve as a role model of Scouting ideals.

All Lone Scouts, and friends and counselors, register with the BSA through a local council. The expiration date of their registration is the same as that for council Scouters.

Councils can encourage use of the Lone Scout and Lone Cub Scout programs in rural areas in these ways:

- Answer inquiries from Lone Scouts, their friends and counselors, and others who want to know how to join.
- Follow up promptly on registration, advancement, etc.
- Invite boys to take part in district and council activities, including camp.
- Appoint a Lone Scout commissioner or committee member to implement the Lone Scout plan and to act as liaison between the council and Lone Scouts and their counselors.

Often a Lone Scout and his counselor become the core in the formation of a new unit. The council or district's Lone Scout commissioner should encourage this. For a complete list of Lone Scout commissioner responsibilities, see *Commissioner Administration of Unit Service*, No. 34128 (Commissioner Tracking Tool online).

Finding More Help

These are some of the materials that can help with your rural Scouting efforts. See *Multicultural Markets Resources*, No. 523-067, for a more comprehensive list of available Multicultural Markets literature and audiovisuals.

Lone Scout Fact Sheet, No. 210-515 (<http://www.scouting.org/About/FactSheets/LoneScout.aspx>)

Lone Scout Friend and Counselor Guidebook, No. 14-420 (<http://www.scouting.org/filestore/commissioner/pdf/14-420.pdf>)

Lone Scout Friend and Counselor Guidebook (Spanish), No. 14-421 (http://www.scouting.org/filestore/hispanic/14-421_SP_WEB.pdf)

Lone Scout Plan Brochure, No. 14-422.

To learn more, go to www.scouting.org/membership.

Delivering a Meaningful Unit Program



The unit program is what this is all about! It's the unit program where children and adults interact to develop good character, to learn effective citizenship, and grow in personal fitness. It's also the unit program that helps meet some of the special needs of youth in rural areas.

In weighing the relevance of the program, make a clear distinction between program outcomes and program methods. Don't confuse Scouting ends and means. A variety of means may be required to meet the same end.

Most of the features of Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing are meaningful for rural youth just as they are for urban and suburban young people. What may be different is how some of these program features are carried out. Some program methods must be adapted, refined, or enriched to keep them meaningful in rural communities.

For example, if the troop in a sparsely populated area only has eight boys, why not operate the troop with buddy teams instead of patrols? On the other hand, if a local leader says it is impossible to have two-deep leadership, should you approve an activity anyway, or "look the other way"? Absolutely not! Make arrangements for a leader from another area to attend—or go yourself. Encourage and support program flexibility where it is needed and appropriate. If local leaders are aware of special needs and make their own attempts at adapting the program to meet these needs, but have no backing from the district and council, they may become frustrated and stymied. That's why program changes *consistent with the rules and regulations of the Boy Scouts of America* need to be cultivated, promoted, and supported.

As you examine the meaningfulness of unit program, ask these three questions:

1. How can we apply the current traditional program in ways that are meaningful to people in this community?
2. How can we supplement the traditional unit program to meet special needs, problems, and interests?
3. How can we package the unit program to be more useful for local leaders?

Rural Multiunit Activities

Multiunit activities may be more successful on a community, county, or partial district basis than on a council or total district basis. Communitywide activities provide important Scouting visibility in rural areas and they can help strengthen local community life and goodwill. They help retain kids in Scouting. But be careful: The unit's program should come first. Take care not to deplete unit volunteer's energies by promoting too many district and council projects. Don't make a weak unit feel inferior just because it doesn't take part in district or council events. Success is measured more accurately by meaningful unit activity than by attendance at district and council events.

Multiunit activities should be relevant to the needs and interests of local residents. Seasonal activities of the community offer opportunities for educational and festive Scouting participation. Run these activities in a flexible manner. For example, if sign-up deadlines discourage participation, do away with them. Some of these activities may be district-initiated; some will be community events that Scouts can have a role in. Adapt the best ideas for your community situation with the help of a generous dose of local imagination.

Parade

A popular and highly visible activity is the participation of Scouting units in community and ethnic parades, such as a town's centennial parade, Crispus Attucks parade, Fourth of July parade, and Mexican Independence Day parade. Some may be strictly Scouting parades throughout a local area. A parade might end up at a county fair, Scouting show, or dedication of a new firehouse.

Scouting Rally

This is an all-day or half-day activity for troops, held in a local school gym or in a park or playground. Scout skill areas may operate, followed by intertroop or interpatrol events. Ask local opinion leaders to help judge events.

Heritage Pageant

A pageant is a colorful show of cultural and historical contributions, heroes and unsung heroes of a local area

or ethnic group. The pageant can be part of some other community event or part of some other Scouting event. Such an activity builds pride among local residents and helps identify Scouting with the population.

Field Day

This is a giant, action-oriented exhibit of the entire Scouting program. It's a miniature Scouting-in-action show with demonstrations by units on a blocked-off street, highly visible park or square, playground, churchyard, courthouse lawn, shopping center, or other open space. Local people are encouraged to participate and try out games, skills, and events. This event may include ceremonies, action booths, competitive events, and even a campfire. It can be held as part of an event run by other community groups, such as a party or community carnival.

Cleanup Campaign

Such an activity may take place for an entire month and be cooperatively sponsored with a newspaper, county health department, chamber of commerce, or other group. Awards are then made for the cleanest, most attractive, most improved, etc., neighborhoods. Youth and adult members serve as clean neighborhood captains. Unit meetings, roundtables, etc., instruct in window-box making, painting, house inspection, beautification, and other skills. Some communities hold yearly cleanup days, complete with parades—Scouts could certainly be visible in such an event.

Community Good Turn

Community surveys, cemetery cleanups, creation of park facilities, tree planting, landmark renovation, car parking, highway beautification, monthly health and safety hazard inspections—the list for multiunit community Good Turns is endless.

Living Heroes/Historic Trail

A district could set up its own "trail." Units and patrols are supplied with maps. At the end of the trail, boys get immediate recognition. In addition to museums, libraries, industry, historic points of interest, and community services, include the names and addresses of the community's "living heroes" who have agreed to talk for five to 10 minutes with groups of Scouts when they stop along the trail.

"Living heroes" might be persons who have become successful in their occupations, or have become educated in spite of a poverty background, or are making some kind of contribution to their community. Be sure to have adult supervision all along the trail.

Scouter and Spouse Social

It is important that we not take rural Scouters for granted. They may need special encouragement and recognition. Some might have little opportunity for a "night out." Scouting can help by arranging a dinner, trip, river cruise, picnic, or other adult social event.

Swim Night (or Day)

Swimming is popular with boys, but some units might have difficulty setting up a swim program, perhaps because of the scarcity of pools. District leaders could arrange to reserve a pool on a Saturday for Scouting units of the district.

Community Court of Honor

The communitywide court of honor provides recognition for units, boys, and leaders in their community. It also helps train leaders in conducting courts of honor for their own units. Any number of troops may be included. Packs could also be invited to take part. Recognition is provided for community service and adult leadership, as well as rank advancement. Ceremonies, songs, yells, and action are added. Invite a community personality to be emcee or otherwise take part. Be sure local residents are encouraged to attend—flood the community with publicity. This event might be preceded by a parade.

Study Center and Tutoring Program

This service can meet a real need for boys. Literacy classes for adults might also take place here. The study center may be operated in partnership with another agency and use older Scouts, Venturers, college students, high school students, or volunteer adults as tutors.

County Fair or Local Festival

Units could be encouraged to develop demonstrations on such subjects as safety on the farm pond, home energy conservation, first aid on the ranch, home

safety survey, local crafts and folklore, fun and unusual cooking, log splitting contests, pioneering, a Venturer-staffed musical or entertainment event, or any hobbies, careers, Scouting skills, or merit badge topics.

Scouts can serve as grandstand ushers, special messengers, and honor aides to fair officials. Someone connected with Scouting should serve on the fair or festival committee to see that Scouting has an active part to play.

Town-and-Country Exchange

Scouting can be a help in overcoming polarization between city and suburb, rural and urban, white and black, rich and poor, Hispanic and Anglo. Council and district leaders can facilitate different kinds of exchange visits between units—overnights for troops and posts or day trips for packs. Be creative, be flexible, use good human relations, and watch the results.

Community Socials and Outings

Several units of a community could jointly sponsor a picnic, square dance, holiday supper, bus trip, testimonial dinner, or community celebration. Community residents, unit members, and their families are invited. Provide refreshments they will enjoy. Build on local community pride and spirit. Respect the culture and customs of different local community groups. District leaders can support and help as needed, but let the units organize the event.

Mobile Day Camp

The council hires a small core staff to run a series of Cub Scout day camps throughout the rural areas of the council. In each location, the staff helps and works with a small cluster of packs that pool their resources for their Cub Scouts. Packs can more easily get to mobile day camps. Great enthusiasm is generated for local pack programs.

Finding More Help

These are some of the materials that can help with your rural Scouting efforts. See *Multicultural Markets Resources*, No. 523-067, for a more comprehensive list of available Multicultural Markets literature and audiovisuals.

Adult Leader Application, No. 524-501

Asian American Emphasis in Your Local Council, No. 11-082

Best Methods for District Volunteers Serving Rural Communities, No. 07-504

Best Methods for Multicultural Markets Growth, No. 523-035

Commissioner Administration of Unit Service, No. 34128 (Commissioner Tracking Tool online)

Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service, No. 33621

Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing in American Indian Communities, No. 07-110

Guide to Safe Scouting, No. 34416; www.scouting.org

Marketing to Hispanic Americans in Your Local Council, No. 523-012

Scouting in the African American Community, No. 11-056

Scoutreach in the Local Council: Organizing Scouting in Urban and Rural Communities, No. 11-016A

Multicultural Markets Resources, No. 523-067

Scouting Brings Pride to Our Community fliers, No. 07-117

Scouting Brings Pride to Our Community posters, No. 07-118

Selecting Cub Scout Leadership, No. 510-500

Selecting Quality Leaders, No. 522-981

Whitney M. Young Jr. Service Award application, No. 523-427

To learn more, go to www.scouting.org/membership.



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