



# District Event Organization Guide

## District Events are for Scouts

Seeking information from District Troops and keeping them informed will encourage Scout participation. Understanding what interests and engages Scouts will help structure the event and make it successful.

This guide provides an understanding of the organization and operating elements for a district wide event (e.g., camporee, first aid meet). This document is not a checklist, but provides guidance for Troops to understand the elements in organizing and putting on a district-wide event. Many elements are controlled by the Pathway to Adventure Council, PTAC, and may change from time to time. The District Executive or Program Chairman should be consulted to verify processes currently in effect.

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## Why District Events

District events have included the Spring and Fall Camporees, Klondike and First Aid meets. The events are provided annually by and for Troops and Crews for all units in the Signal Hill District in support of the Scouting program and mission. The organization and delivery of these events on a District basis has proved worthwhile in three respects:

- First, the combined resources provide a higher level of programming increasing potential Scout interest.
- Second, the events provide the opportunity for District units to benefit from resources and expertise not available in every unit.
- Third, more Scouts participating can make the event more fun, challenging and exciting for all Scouts.

## Boy Scout District Event Timeline

This timeline has been developed from the experience of those who have participated in the planning and conduct of events for Boy Scouts in the Signal Hill District. The timeline identifies activities, administrative aspects, and predefined services and processes event organizers can utilize. The time references should be considered benchmarks when the noted activity has been completed. Using existing services and processes will allow more time and energy to be devoted to the design and delivery of a successful event. If there are questions about BSA policies and practices, or finances, the District Executive is available to provide clarification and guidance. The District Program Chair is available to facilitate coordination, and provide materials and information.

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## 8-12 MONTHS PRIOR – EVENT TEAM INTRODUCTION AND FORMATION

Leaders and adults from units sponsoring the event meet to

- Understand volunteer personnel and resources available
- Promote sharing responsibility for preparing and conducting the event
- Establish points of contact with each unit
- Explore desired Scout outcome from the event
- Confirm desired event date to enable a “Save the Date” announcement to be communicated to units
- Establish regular meeting schedule for remaining activities

The District Program Chair can assist in arranging the introduction meeting.

## 6 MONTHS PRIOR – SITE SELECTION

Representatives of units responsible for the event should meet to select and reserve a place for the event. Determine if you will need any buildings (cabins, pavilions or program centers) and reserve them as well. For outdoor events, it is always good to have a protected area for the First Aid station out of the elements. A tour of the potential sites will help identify the “best” site and features you may want to include in the event planning. The facility and usage fees and discounts should be negotiated with the owner engaging the District Executive as needed. If a deposit is needed, ask the District Executive to initiate a requisition request. The District Program Chair can assist in providing ideas and potential locations. (See: [Location Picking and Procuring](#))

## 5 MONTHS PRIOR – EVENT DEVELOPMENT

Members of units responsible for the event should begin to meet regularly. Critical people needed at these meetings should include at least two or three adults from each unit organizing the event. The District Executive and District Program Chair should be invited and asked for input applicable to the event. It is recommended that a Chairperson be selected as well as review some event basics:

- Understand the potential population of Scouts who could attend – the District Executive can provide a list of Troops with the number of Scouts registered, and the count of Scouts who attended comparable events in the last 3 years. Get a list from the District Executive of all Troop Scoutmasters & phone #s to use for planning input, finalizing registrations and other follow up
- The camporee theme and special events, such as a cook-off; patch design contest, or campfire programs should be agreed on in concept. Including senior Scouts from the organizing units in these planning discussions can help assure the event is of maximum interest and appeal to Scouts.
- A financial plan for the event should be drafted based on number of Scouts expected to attend, registration fees, facilities and supply expenses. The District Executive may be able to provide the draft event budget/financial plan. Review the financial plan fees and operating expenses, and submit to the District Executive for approvals. (See [Financial Considerations](#))
- Identify any participant special needs, e.g., Webelos invited, that need to be considered and provided for in event planning.
- Define registration information to be obtained, event fees and dates for opening and closing registration.
- Request through the PTAC website for the event and registration to be placed on the [PTAC Calendar](#). With the request, provide details of the registration information to be obtained, event

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fees and dates for opening and closing registration. Will there be a late fee for registrations after closing date? Will walk-in registration be allowed? (See [Registration](#))

- Promote program elements being mindful of timing. Use of roundtable flyers and presentations, website posting, registration forms, Newsletter, direct unit contact, and OA promotion should be planned. (See [Promotional Resources](#))

### 4 MONTHS PRIOR – BEGIN PROMOTION

PROMOTION to the units is essential to a successful event.

Finalize and follow a promotional schedule with materials to promote the event (See [Promotional Resources](#))

A flyer should be prepared and submitted to the District Communications contact [SHCubNews@yahoo.com] two weeks prior to the Roundtable. If there are special circumstances (such as no ground fires, parking restrictions, trailer space and parking) these should be noted on the flyer or in the Leader Guide.

Arrangements for a presentation at the Roundtable can be made through the District Roundtable Commissioner.

At this time, the event committee should be defining the individual event activities, and how they will be operated and manned. Decide if the units organizing the event will provide all manpower or if units participating are to assist in staffing.

### 3 MONTHS PRIOR – FOLLOW-UP ON LOCATION AND PARTICIPATION

Double-check the arrangements for the location and plan out where in the facility individual event activities will take place. Decide on a patch design and submit to the NWSC Scout Shop for a proof to be generated for review and approval. Recruit a Medical Officer. Decide who will be responsible for a non-denominational invocation at the start or service at the end of the event. Decide which unit will provide the Honor Guard for opening and closing flags.

### 2 MONTHS PRIOR -- ARRANGE FOR EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Remind those purchasing event items they need to follow the financial plan, use the tax exempt letter where possible [ <http://www.pathwaytoadventure.org/resources/taxexempt> ] and get receipts for all purchases. Reimbursement requests are given to the District Executive for processing through the Council finance office. If there are questions about the financial plan, notify the District Executive in advance to prevent delay or decline of reimbursement requests. If reimbursements need to be cash, arrange with the District Executive to have cash available at the event.

Arrange through the District Communications team [shcubnews@yanoo.com or signal.hill.nwsc@gmail.com]for the flyer updated with new graphics and information to be inserted with the Roundtable flyers. Include a list of any preparation or extra equipment that will be needed by each Troop, Patrol or Scout to be successful at the event.

Obtain a map of the Camp/Forest Preserve/location. Assign camping sites, event placement, and scoring procedure. Decide who will be responsible for parking plans, and determine who will handle registration/check-in and departure. If you need event ribbons / trophies / medals, submit an order through the District Executive.

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If you are having Troops provide event staffing, instructions and details for the individual events should be given to units now.

Call the last Troop to have won the traveling event trophy and remind them to embellish it and bring it to the event.

### 1 MONTH PRIOR – FINAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Get everyone together to go over last-minute arrangements.

- Who is bringing coffee or refreshments for the volunteers, event first aid kit, signage needed, camping assignments and attendee guidelines on a map to hand out at check-in, scoresheets and guidelines for judges. If the unit's American flag and Troop flags won't be used, ask the District Executive to request an American flag and Council Flag for the event.
- Confirm that the volunteers within each unit know what they are accountable for supplying for their individual events (or who will be supplying these items for the event) and flags.

Get a roster of paid units from *the* PTAC calendar. If assistance is needed, contact Paul Whittenhall paul.whittenhall@scouting.org or Mary Demski mary.demski@scouting.org. Monitor registration and adjust promotion to assure awareness and registration. If needed, contact each unit directly to assure they are aware of the event and obtain preliminary registration numbers.

By this point, units involved in the planning are probably phoning and e-mailing each other on a daily basis. Good communication is always the key to success and so is having FUN. If you are having a good time and enthusiastic about the event, then the Scouts will follow your lead.

### 1 WEEK PRIOR – FINALIZE REGISTRATION

Obtain final roster of paid units from the PTAC calendars and communicate registration to those responsible for supplies and onsite check in.

### EVENT WEEKEND

Set up and carry out the event registration and activities. If units participating are to assist at the event, provide the unit leadership directions and needed supplies.

### WEEK FOLLOWING EVENT

Finalize event patch design and number of patches needed for participants and volunteers. Place the patch order with the NWSC Scout Shop for delivery at the discounted 60 day delayed rate, and request the District Executive to have the NWSC PO generated and submitted to the Scout Shop for the patches.

*Note: As of Sept 2017 PTAC, professional leadership has established the policy of allowing purchase orders for patches to be generated only after events. This practice designed to reduce the expense for patches not needed for the event needs to be followed.*

### 3 WEEKS PAST – WRAP-UP

Meet one last time to be sure that there are no open items. Assure bills are paid, equipment returned, lost and found items sent to the Roundtable, etc. Assure all expense receipts are delivered to the District Executive for reimbursement.

Put together a file with pertinent event information; e.g. event agenda and activities, instructions, checklists, flyers used, location contacts, final registration and expense recap, supply sources; to be passed on to the District Program Chair along with any supplies and equipment remaining from the event. If you put the

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event documents on a flash drive, it will save time and storage space, so please consider this approach for your files.

Prepare next event draft budget and submit to the District Executive.

### Promotion Resources

Event promotion is a key factor in the level of participation. Promotion should begin at least 8 months in advance with a “save the date” notice. One of the primary reasons that units report not attending is that they did not know of the event or already had an event planned. With unit calendars and camping plans set up with a long lead time, it is imperative that units have an advanced notice of District Events. The following promotional channels are available. Use all and communicate often in interesting ways to assure the message is received and gets a positive response.

- Personal communications with Scoutmaster of Troops in the District is the most effective – The District Executive can provide the phone number and email address for each Scoutmaster.
- Roundtable announcements – contact the Roundtable Commissioner to request an announcement at the district Roundtable
- Flyer (see example below) can be included in the monthly flyer distribution by emailing to [SHCubNews@yahoo.com](mailto:SHCubNews@yahoo.com)
- Messages can be emailed to all Boy Scout unit adult leaders. Email the message for distribution to [signal.hill.nwsc@gmail.com](mailto:signal.hill.nwsc@gmail.com)
- Post on the PTAC calendar – for event information and online registration submit [Promotional Request through the PTAC Website / Calendar / Add](#) an event to the calendar. Provide a copy of the promotional flyer to post on the event date along with Leader Guide and other material for units to reference
- Message in the midmonth NWSC Newsletter should be submitted in the online Newsletter submission form through the [PTAC Website / Resources / Newsletter / Submit content](#)
- Post on the Signal Hill Facebook page. If you need assistance, email to [signal.hill.nwsc@gmail.com](mailto:signal.hill.nwsc@gmail.com)
- Post on the Signal Hill Webpage events tab. Email request to [signal.hill.nwsc@gmail.com](mailto:signal.hill.nwsc@gmail.com)

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Sample Flyer Content:



Boy Scout Spring Camp-o-ree

# **THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE TROOPS**

Camp Lakota (Deep Cut Road, Woodstock, IL)

April 15 – 17, 2016

**Registration is open** and online through the PTAC Calendar.

[Click Here](#)

Cost: **\$20.00**, (\$25.00 AFTER APRIL 6 and closes April 12)

\*\* Cost includes Saturday Night Dinner for all participants\*\*

T-Shirt flyer and orders are being taken online too

[Click Here](#)

Leader Guide to be provided  
Questions: Contact Stephen Corcoran, Camporee Committee Chair  
[Corcoran.s@comcast.net](mailto:Corcoran.s@comcast.net)

*The Camp-o-ree is hosted by Troops 35, 92, and 188 of Signal Hill District*

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### **Location – picking and procuring**

The event location can be held at any place that satisfies the BSA Safe Scouting guidance. PTAC operated camps (i.e., Camp Lakota, Camp Betz, Adventure Base) can be used and reserved by contacting the PTAC service center in Arlington Heights. Camps operated by other councils are options too as well as forest preserves, public and private facilities. The facilities need to be sufficient for the expected attendance and type of event. The location is an important factor since travel time can negatively impact participation. Visiting the locations being considered is a good idea to assure there is a clear understanding of the facility. Meet with those responsible for the facilities to understand what would be available and expectations. Negotiate the use fee and ask for available discounts. Assure the site cost is consistent with the financial plan. If the cost would exceed the plan notify the District Executive immediately. If a deposit is required, contact the District Executive to arrange for payment.

### **Registration – set up, requesting and obtaining**

Registration is handled through the PTAC calendar with payment by charge card. Specifications for the desired information to be captured during registration should be detailed and submitted with the [PTAC Promotional Request through the PTAC Website](#). The registration information is captured and can be provided as desired to monitor the possible attendance and identify units that have not registered so they can be contacted directly.

### **Financial Considerations – budgets, fees, expense reimbursement and closing**

Scouting is and should be fun, but thrifty is also being a Scout. All events must have a budget / financial plan approved by the District Executive and PTAC Activities Professional. The financial plan developed when the prior event was closed out can be used as the event financial plan. The financial plan needs to be reviewed by those organizing the event and any adjustments noted immediately. If during the course of planning the event changes are needed, they should be communicated to the District Executive. Financial plan changes more than 5% need to be communicated immediately once identified. A 15% contingent revenue exceeding expenses should be part of the financial plan.

Receipts should be obtained for all purchases and tax-exempt letter [\[http://www.pathwaytoadventure.org/resources/taxexempt\]](http://www.pathwaytoadventure.org/resources/taxexempt) used whenever possible to avoid paying sales tax. If deposits are required contact the District Executive. They can arrange for payment checks to be issued. The District Executive should be contacted to handle any cash receipts and payments.

Requests for event expense reimbursement should be documented with receipts and / or explanation. The requests and associated documentation should be submitted to the District Executive within 30 days of the event to assure reimbursement.