

WORLD FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT
SCOUTS



THE HANDBOOK FOR OTTER LEADERS

ONTARIO EDITION

NOTE

This handbook, originally published by the BPSA – BC Program Committee, is for the use of Otter Leaders and others working with Otter Packs in Groups registered with CFIS & BPSA, and replaces all previous editions. Amendments will be published from time to time as necessary.

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been produced to assist Otter Leaders to run their Section more efficiently. It has been published in loose-leaf format in order that subsequent changes may be made to the content with the minimum of disturbance.

Any suggestions for changes in this handbook should be made to your Headquarters Commissioner for Otters so that they may be considered.

GENERAL POLICY OF THE OTTER SECTION

1. **Object.** The object of the Otter Section is to provide an organization for young boys and girls where they can take part in suitable activities appropriate to their age and development prior to entering the Timber Wolf Section.
2. **Name or Title.** The Section will be known as an Otter Pack. This will be divided into Dens, a Den being the equivalent of a Six or Patrol. A senior Otter is appointed a Den Leader and he or she may pick an Assistant Den Leader. The Section will be an integral part of the Group and will be known by the Group title.
3. **Age Limits.** Boys and Girls are eligible to join this Section when they have reached their fifth birthday. They transfer to the Timber Wolf Pack when they reach their eighth birthday, or after seven and a half years of age at the discretion of the Otter Leader.
4. **Registration.** As members of the Registration of a Group with an Otter Pack should include the number of Otters and details of Scout Officers in the same way that other Sections are included. Registration is held the Second Tuesday in September.
5. **Uniform.** The philosophy of the Association is that the uniform should not involve the parents in any unnecessary expense. As members of the Group, Otters will wear the Group neckerchief.

The complete uniform is as follows: Red sweatshirt with a red baseball cap. A red t-shirt may be worn during warm weather. Dark coloured trousers will be worn.

6. **Meetings.** It is recommended that the Pack Council should be held at regular intervals. This is an informal body consisting of the Pack Scouters and the Pack Leader to discuss and plan Pack programming and activities.

Pack meetings should be arranged to suit the younger age group and should normally not be later than early evening. It may be found that after-school meetings are more suitable than evening meetings. Meetings should normally last no longer than an hour and a half.

7. **Representation.** The Pack is represented on the Group Council by the Pack Scouters. The Group Council is a meeting of all registered Scouters in the Group. The Group Council is Chaired by the Group Scouter (GSM). The Group Council is responsible for the operation of the Group. The Group Committee is responsible ONLY for the raising of funds and other logistical support.
8. **Finance.** Weekly dues may be levied on the individual Otter. This should be determined by the Otter Leader and approved by the GSM. The weekly amount should keep in mind local conditions and expenses. The monies should be properly accounted for and banked in the Section Bank Account. The money is to be spent solely for the benefit of the Otter Pack.

9. **Insurance.** Otters and their leaders, Instructors and persons helping are insured for Public Liability purposes, by virtue of the Annual Registration Fee paid by each registered member, in September of each year. Any claim, or incident, which may give rise to a claim, should be notified in writing to the GSM so that they may inform the Association Insurance Representative without delay.
10. **Co-operation between Sections.** The Otter Pack cannot exist in isolation as it is, or should be, a Section of a Group. There must be contact with the Timber Wolf Pack as it is to that Section that the Otter will eventually go. Knowing other Scouters and members from other Sections will help the Otter to understand that he/she is a member of a family in Scouting. The Jumping Otter Badge will help to forge the link between Otter and Timber Wolves.
11. **Co-operation with other Organizations.** Joint activities with children of comparable ages in other organizations such as Sparks, Beavers, or Church Youth Groups. We all live in a world outside Scouting as well as with those inside it. As our aim is to make our Youth more reliable and take a useful place in society we must participate in outside activities.
12. **Church Parades.** Otters should be encouraged to participate in St. George's Day Service, Founders Day, Remembrance Day Parade and special services for Scouting, but it should always be remembered that parents have their say in this and their wishes should be respected.
13. **Programs.** The program of activities should be appropriate to the 5 to 7 year olds and should avoid anything which may be part of the Timber Wolf Training Program – except for the requirements of the Jumping Otter Badge. As well as outdoor activities the program should consist of, amongst other things, games with a purpose to promote character building and self-reliance, a sense of duty to others, fun and interest in the outdoors.
14. **Leaders.** Try to avoid, wherever possible, the use of Akelas or other Section Leaders as Otter Leaders. Use may be made of Rovers, Senior Explorers, and Explorers of at least 2nd Class standard. Use of Guides and Rangers is permitted, with the approval of the appropriate Guider or Commissioner. The minimum age for appointment to the rank of Otter Leader or Assistant Otter Leaders is 18 years of age.
15. **Training Restrictions.** Where a Otter Pack is part of a Seafarer or Air Explorer Group, Otters must receive only the ordinary Otter training. The designation and uniform of the Otters must be the same as for other Otters and no form of sea or air training may be given.

THE OTTER

The ancestors of otters probably lived on land. Over millions of years, they adapted to life in the water. The two main kinds of otters are river otters and sea otters. They are found on every continent except Australia and Antarctica.

The American river otter is found throughout most of North and South America. Sea Otters live along the Pacific coast of North America, the Aleutian Islands off Alaska, and northeastern Asia.

Otters are mammals. They are covered with fur and nurse their young with milk. They Breathe oxygen from the air. Otters are related to Skunks, mink, weasels, martens, and badgers.

Otters belong to the weasel family – Mustelidae. The scientific name for the American river otter is *Lutra Canadensis*. The sea otter is *Enhydra Lutris*.

RIVER OTTERS

River otters live near rivers and lakes. They spend much of their time swimming. Otters feed on fish and small animals such as crayfish. They can crush shells and slice fish with their strong sharp teeth. They also eat snakes, clams, snails, frogs, and even earthworms. River otters have a small, flattened head, long whiskers, and a thick neck. They have a powerful, tapered tail that makes up one-third of their length.

Adult male river otters weigh 4.5 to 14 Kilograms. They measure up to 1.4 metres long, including the tail. Females are somewhat smaller. Otters can hold their breath and stay under water for up to four minutes.

River otters have good eyesight and a very keen sense of smell. They make many different sounds. They chatter, chuckle, grunt, snort, and growl. They also warn other otters of danger with a shrill whistle.

LEGS, FEET, and EARS

Otters have short legs with five toes on each foot. Elastic skin called webbing between the toes helps them swim. Except for pads on their toes and soles, their feet are covered with fur. They use their paws to feel for crayfish under rocks in muddy riverbeds. They hold food in their front paws while they eat it. Special muscles allow otters to close their small ears and nostrils to keep water out.

OTTER FUR

The fur on the river otter's sides and back is a rich black-brown colour. The fur on the belly is lighter, and the chin and throat are grayish. Coarse guard hairs cover their thick, soft under-fur.

River otters take good care of their beautiful fur. They groom their coats every day. They roll on the ground to dry their fur and keep it waterproof. Their fur protects them from the cold.

RIVER OTTER TERRITORIES

River otters mark their territory by rubbing musk on logs and stones. Musk is a sweet smelling liquid produced by scent glands near the tail. Otters have dens, or homes, on land, in the banks of rivers and ponds. Sometimes they take over an abandoned muskrat or beaver den dug into a riverbank.

Otters are nocturnal animals. They are active at night and usually sleep in the daytime. When they are not hunting for food or grooming their beautiful fur, otters love to run around. They wrestle and chase each other. Otters like to slide down a slippery slope into a pond or stream. Then they race up the slope so that they can slide down again.

RIVER OTTER PUPS

Otters must be at least two years old to mate. The mating season usually comes at the end of winter. Two months later up to four pups, or cubs, are born. The pups' eyes are closed for five weeks. They have no teeth. They feed on their mothers milk. The mother otter takes care of their pups for almost a year. When she takes out of the den, the father may join his family. The parents teach their pups to swim, dive, catch food, groom their fur, and slide down slopes.

ENEMIES

For hundreds of years, river otters were killed for their thick, beautiful fur. It was used to make coats, hats, and other articles of clothing. Today many governments have laws against otter hunting. But humans are still one of the worst enemies. Many of these wonderful animals are killed by cars when they cross roads at night.

The Children of Otter Age

One of the difficulties of Otter Leaders and their Assistants is coming to terms with the fact that Otters are not just a younger Timber Wolf, doing what Timber Wolves do. Otters are Otters and nothing else. They will expect to try very hard in all they do and nothing else but the very best is acceptable. The effort should be channeled into making the youngster a good Otter.

Growth and progress are not the same in all Otters, as they are not the same in all of us, and we must not expect all Otters to conform to a particular standard set at an age level. The standard is that of the Otter him/herself. Particular emphasis is placed on regular attendances at Pack Meetings and this is a form of self-discipline which does not need a yard-stick to measure an Otter by as it is self-evident.

PHYSICALLY the growth rate of children at Otter age varies enormously and what is within the capabilities of some Otters may not be within the capabilities of an Otter of similar age but different stature. Team spirit has to be taught and it is at this age 5-8 that the structure of future generations has to be built. Competing against another Den and competing against each other are of equal importance. Finding out their own limitations can only be done by competition, of whatever type, team or individual. Another point to remember is that at this age shyness is difficult to overcome and more individual attention is required. The larger built youngster tends to be more self-assured, successful and more popular. This can lead to less developed youngsters being envious and withdrawing into themselves. Unpopular children at Otters are usually unpopular at school and in their environment outside of the Pack. Careful handling is needed in these cases. At Otter age concentration is rewarding to the Otter Leader but it doesn't last for long. The Otters will soon become bored and concentration is lost. Trying to keep bored Otters in one place is almost impossible.

INTELLECTUALLY the mental age for Otters will be below the age range to well above it. Some may be able to read, others unable. Most of them will have just started school for the first time and will be in a world of drastic change. Those Otters will be less able to cope than those who have already been to Daycare or some similar activity. The Otters will be learning about their new friends and where they live; the Scouting World, the classroom and the world about them is an exiting new place. We must help them to adapt and become one of the family, so to speak. All sorts of activities must be made available in the Pack to this end, e.g. toys, games materials, dressing up, clay, plasticine or play-dough. Books with lots of pictures and simple jigsaws will also aid the act of discovering.

Children learn what they live –

A CHILD WHO –

- Lives with criticism, learns to condemn;
- Lives with hostility, learns to fight;
- Lives with ridicule, learns to be shy;
- Lives with shame, learns to feel guilty;
- Lives with tolerance, learns to be patient;
- Lives with encouragement, learns confidence;
- Lives with praise, learns to appreciate;
- Lives with fairness, learns justice;
- Lives with security, learns to have faith;
- Lives with approval, learns to like him/her self;
- Lives with acceptance and friendship, learns to find love in the world.

THE LEADER IN THE PACK must at all times try to beyond reproach. The Otters will look up to you to show the way and will mimic what you do. Simple speech, clearly expressed, should be the order of the day. Listen to the things that children say, not only to you but amongst themselves. Encourage them to discuss things and not just to accept things blindly. We should be prepared to tell them why a certain thing has to be done so that they may more fully understand and learn. As your mood will be reflected in them, a relaxed, friendly atmosphere with lots of activity for healthy exercise, coupled with love and sympathy and understanding should be aimed for.

Handicraft sessions provide a creative outlet and some Otters will be more at home with some types of handicraft than others. Try to provide the special type for the youngster rather than just provide a general 'all of you will do this tonight' type of session. Obviously you will have to find out what special handicraft suits the child so the full range will have to be tested first.

Story time is an essential part of the Pack Meetings as it provides an opportunity for relaxation between boisterous periods.

GENERAL ORGANISATION

THE OTTER PACK:

A Section of the Scouting Group aimed at youngsters aged from 5 to 8 years. The Scouter-in-charge of the Pack will be the Otter Leader and he/she will be assisted by Assistant Otter Leaders. Parents may also be called upon to assist. The maximum number of Otters permitted in one Pack is 32 (4 dens of 8 Otters each).

THE DEN:

The Pack will be divided into a number of Dens, each Den to consist of a maximum of 8 Otters but preferably not more than 6 Otters. The Otter in charge of a Den is called a Den Leader and he/she is assisted by an Assistant Den Leader. Where there is an outstanding Otter who is in the later stages of the training scheme then he/she may be appointed as Pack Leader. This is a similar position to a Senior Sixer in the Timber Wolf Pack. The Pack Leader will assist the Otter Leader. The Den will normally be the working unit.

THE GROUP:

The Group will consist of one or more Sections but will not be thought to be complete until all Sections possible are fully operating. A complete Scouting Group will consist of:

- An Otter Pack;
- A Timber Wolf Pack;
- An Explorer Troop;
- A Senior Explorer Troop;
- A Rover Crew.

The Scouting Group will be in the charge of a Group Scouter and each Section of the Group will have a Section Leader with Assistants.

THE GROUP COUNCIL:

This will consist of all the registered Scouters in the Group and this Council will, under the guidance of the Group Scouter, deal with all matters affecting the training of the Group. The Group Council is responsible for determining what requirements are necessary to carry out its' duties, and the views of the Group Council are put to the Group Committee by the Group Scouter.

THE GROUP COMMITTEE:

The Group Committee consists of a Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, representatives of the Sponsoring Authority and parents, supporters and friends of the Group. The main function of this Committee is to support the Group Scouter to efficiently run the Group. The main task is the raising of finance for equipment and normal running costs of the Group.

Uniformed, Warranted Leaders do not take on the roles of Officials of the Group Committee. They may, subject to the Group's own desires, sit on the Group Committee but should not take an active part and should be acting in an advisory capacity. To put a halt to any hint of a conflict of interest, Parents who are also Scouters in the Group may not sit on the Group Committee in any capacity.

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL:

The Group is represented on the District Council by its' Group Scouter.

THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL:

This is the central governing body of the Provincial Association and meets to transact the normal business of the association from time to time. Each District Commissioner, appointed by the Chief Commissioner, on the advice of the District he/she serves. The DC is appointed to the Provincial Council to see that the wishes of the District concerned are fairly represented.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

This takes place in October of each year and all Warranted, registered Scouters have a vote in the matters of the Association. The meeting is an open meeting and it is at this meeting that the affairs of the Association during the past year are recounted and the election of any officials (if required) takes place (note: Officials are elected for a period of 3 years for all positions). Thus it will be seen that there is a grass-roots presence at the heart of the affairs of The Association.

PACK PARENTS:

These are either Instructors (of any sort) or assisting parents who are allocated to supervise a particular Den and in some cases to actively participate in and encourage the Den to do its' best in activities of whatever description. This is not to take away from the Den Leader any responsibility but to act as a normal parent would to his/her family, which is what the Den is meant to be. It should be the aim of the Otter Leader to have a Den Parent for each Den, as adequate supervision is at all times a necessity.

NOTE: It is essential that a PRC be done by ANY parent who volunteers to work with the Pack

PACK SCOUTERS NAMES

All registered Otter Pack Sections are required to use the name "AHMEEK" for the Otter Leader. Names for Assistant Leaders and for other instructors (of any sort) and Adult helpers will be left to the discretion of the Section concerned.

Names for Assistant Otter Leaders may be taken from:

Atsak – The Black Bear	Nanuk – The Polar Bear
Qimmik – The Huskey Dog	Nauyat – The Seagull
Aiviq – The Walrus	Tuktu – Caribou
Amaruq – The Wolf	Ukpiq – The Owl
Iguttag – The Bumblebee	Tiriganiaq – The Artic Fox
Qilalugaq – The Beluga Whale	Oomingmak – The MuskoX

Christian or forenames and forms of address such as Mr., Mrs., Miss, etc should be Discouraged.

BADGES OF RANK

The Pack Leader will wear three half-inch wide white tape rings around the left arm between the shoulder and elbow.

The Den Leader will wear two half-inch wide white tape rings around the left arm between the shoulder and elbow.

The Assistant Den Leader will wear a single half-inch wide white tape ring around the left arm between shoulder and elbow.

OTTER INSTRUCTORS

Otter instructors may be Explorers or Senior Explorers of at least Second Class standard and the approval of the Explorer Leader or Senior Explorer Leader must first be obtained before the appointment is made. A suggested approval period of 1 month is recommended to allow the instructor to be assessed.

ROVER INSTRUCTORS

A Rover wishing to take the Rover Instructor Badge with the Otter Section and with the approval of the Rover Skipper, must hold the Service Training Star and act as an instructor to the satisfaction of the Otter Leader and Group Scouter.

LEADER RESPONSIBILITY

The person chosen to lead an Otter Pack, must of course, be a person of good character, as with all Scouters. As they are in the limelight and open to criticism they should be above reproach and be seen to be living up to the image that Scouting projects world-wide. This also applies to those assisting in the Pack in whatever position. The Association will be judged by the worst one of us, unfortunately, and we must endeavor at all times to do our best. When in public, always consider that you are being watched, because you are!

A friendly disposition is necessary and this rubs off on the youngsters in the Pack. We must be able to be “one of the gang” and at the same time make the youngsters understand that we, as Scouters, although brothers and sisters in Scouting, are there to know better than they do and therefore to be obeyed.

As relationships build up between Scouters and the Otters it will become apparent that the Otters place a lot of faith in ‘Ahmeek’ or whoever and this faith should never be shattered. All their problems will end at the Scouters feet and, although to us they will be at times trifling, to the Otters they will be problems of great magnitude. We must ensure that we are absolutely fair in resolving their little problems and youngsters who seem to stand out as ‘Loners’ should be put at ease and integrated into a ‘team’, which is what a Den should be.

Scouters will find that, as time goes by, they will gain experience and will be able to use that experience in efficiently administering the Pack. Intimate knowledge of a youngster’s home environment, likes and dislikes, physical infirmity and standard of education is necessary, to enable a fuller understanding of that youngsters attitudes and to enable him/her to take a more active part in Pack activities. A good relationship with the parents is a must as we need the co-operation of the parents and their support in our activities. With the Otter Section a lot more interest is shown by parents and when the youngsters are brought to meetings or activities the parents should be able to see that we care about their children and at this stage contact can be made, sometimes to good advantage, by getting the parents involved.

As time passes we find that more and more children are from broken homes or single parent families. No stigma should be attached to an Otter as he/she is not to blame for what has gone before. All Otters should be treated as to their individual requirements without fear or favour, for once the youngster thinks that someone else is being favoured their respect for the Scouter concerned is lost. Contact with your local Pastor or Minister will probably result in information being available to assist in understanding a particular child and can only be an advantage.

Not all parents are interested in the activities of their children and an effort should be made to form a friendly relationship with all parents and to promote an interest in those parents who are not keen.

Ahmeek must make full use of all assistance available to him/her as not to do so will result in the offer of that assistance sometimes being withdrawn. There is nothing worse for a keen person than to be left standing like an ornament during activities. All Otter Section Scouters and instructors are a team and all their various skills should be fully utilized. Use may also be made of Scouters from other Sections of the Group. This not only makes available a fuller range of skills but shows to the Otter that he/she is part of a bigger family than just the Pack.

Where Pack Scouters have a problem remember the old adage “A problem shared is a problem halved” and the Group Scouter should be in a position to give good advice. We are not perfect in ourselves but between us we should be in a position to resolve most problems. Remember another old adage that says “Nothing is a problem until you make one!

LEADER TRAINING

As with training for other Sections this consists of a Part One Training Course which will last for one weekend or several evening sessions. At the end of the course a certificate will be issued and a two-strand Turk's Head Woggle will be presented. Following this 12 months later will be Part Two Training, which will consist of several weekends, normally a month apart, in which the practical skills of Scouting will be presented.

Part Three will consist of a probationary period of 6 months, after which a report will be submitted by the Group Scouter, on the suitability of the candidate in putting into practice what has been learned during the Wood Beads Badge Training.

When a recommendation as to suitability has been received by the trainers, a further certificate will be issued, together with the Wood Beads Badge proper and the Wood Beads Neckerchief.

Whilst the above is not at this time compulsory, it is hoped that all Scouters will want to become as proficient as possible and will take that training. We can all benefit from an exchange of ideas, which is inevitably a product of such training.

SAFETY

SAFETY IN THE DEN. Where there are boisterous games it is necessary to remove, out of harm's way, all things which are likely to cause injury e.g. tables, chairs, ropes and equipment not necessary for that game and especially anything sharp or pointed. Remember safety in the home and treat the Pack Meeting on the same terms – look out for things likely to lead to accidents.

SAFETY ON THE ROAD. All Otters should be taught NOT to cross the road unless it is absolutely safe to do so. It should also be stressed that the Otter should ALWAYS WALK when crossing the road and NEVER RUN! Scouters will escort Otters across the road nearest the Pack meeting but the best way to ensure no accidents is to have the Parents collect the Otters as well as to bring them. During the time they are in our care we must show “due diligence” and be extra careful. Pack outings must have sufficient supervision to enable at least ONE Scouter to be free of a Den so that he/she can keep a general eye on things.

FIRST AID. We should all be in possession of an adequate First Aid Kit within the Pack. This should contain the normally required items to cope with cuts and scratches, grazes and bruises and the Kit should be easily accessible to all Pack Scouters. With the Kit should be a small notebook into which should be entered all details of injuries received by either Otters or Scouters giving the name, date, time, location and nature of the accident and the treatment given and by whom. A current edition of the First Aid Manual should also be available and kept with or near the Kit. Any head injury which appears to have concussed the injured person should be dealt with at the nearest hospital. Pack Scouters should be trained in First Aid to the St John Ambulance Emergency Standard. A First Aid Kit WILL be carried on all Pack outings.

If you are not equipped to deal with it get someone who can!

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION.

Legal duty to report.

The *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, section 14(1), requires any person who has reason to believe that a child (under 19 years of age) has been, or is likely to be, physically harmed, sexually abused or sexually exploited by a parent or other person or needs protection under section 13(1) (a)-(k) of that Act, is to promptly report the matter to a Child Protection Social Worker.

Section 13(1) (a) to (k) of the Act reads:

- (A) If a child has been, or is likely to be, physically harmed by the child's parent;
- (B) If the child has been, or is likely to be, sexually abused or exploited by the child's parent;
- (C) If the child has been, or is likely to be, physically harmed, sexually abused or sexually exploited by another person and if the child's parent is unwilling or unable to protect the child;
- (D) If the child has been, or is likely to be, physically harmed because of neglect by the child's parent;
- (E) If the child is emotionally harmed by the parent's conduct;
- (F) If the child is deprived of necessary health care;
- (G) If the child's development is likely to be seriously impaired by a treatable condition and the child's parent refuses to provide or consent to treatment;
- (H) If the child's parent is unable or unwilling to care for the child and has not made adequate provision for the child's care;
- (I) If the child is or has been absent from the home in circumstances that endanger the child's safety or well-being;
- (J) If the child's parents are dead and adequate provision has not been made for the child's care;
- (K) If the child has been abandoned and adequate provision has not been made for the child's care.

Section 13(2) further specifies:

For the purpose of subsection 13(1)(E), a child is emotionally harmed if the child demonstrates sever

- (A) Anxiety;
- (B) Depression;
- (C) Withdrawal; or
- (D) Self-destruction or aggressive behavior.

If the child is in immediate danger and requires police assistance, the RCMP should be called without delay.

The obligation to report remains, even if a person believes someone else will make a report about the same situation. In addition, the duty to report overrides any duty of confidentiality established between persons and/or clients, with the exception of client - solicitor relationship.

Failing to promptly report suspected abuse or neglect to a Child Protection Social Worker is a serious offence under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*. So is knowingly making a false report. Both offences carry a maximum penalty of a \$10,000 fine, or six months in jail, or both. No action for damages may be brought against a person for reporting information under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* unless the person knowingly reported false information.

When a Child Protection Social Worker learns that someone may have failed to report child abuse or neglect, or has knowingly made a false report, they assess this information.

If they believe there has been a failure to report, or that false information was reported, they inform the Police, who may investigate and recommend charges under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*.

CEREMONIES

THE OTTER SALUTE. This is carried out with the right hand. The thumb holds down the last two fingers across the palm and the other two fingers are held straight up. The right hand is then used in the same way as the Military salute, i.e. touching the cap.

THE OTTER SIGN. The fingers are held in the same position as the salute but the hand is held straight up with the elbow touching the side of the body. This position is adopted when making or renewing the Promise.

THE OPENING CEREMONY. This should be preferably be taken by Ahmeek and should be the first event of any Pack meeting.

The first command by Ahmeek will be the shout “Council Rock”. At this command the Otters will form an open ended tri-angle, Otters are facing inward and holding hands. An Assistant Leader will raise the National Flag and all will salute.

The Pack will then say the opening prayer together:

O Great Spirit, how good you are. We thank you for our families and our friends and our brother and sister Otters, and for the good times we share together. Help us to have fun, and be busy and bright.

The Pack then sing (to the tune “The Old Grey Mare”):

Here we sit like Otters on a Cedar log,
Otters on a Cedar log,
Otters on a Cedar log,
Here we sit like Otters on a Cedar log,
Waiting for the fun to start,
Waiting for the fun to start,
Waiting for the fun to start,
Here we sit like Otters on a Cedar log waiting for
The fun to start. YEAH!!!!

The Pack then breaks off to their corners for uniform and paw inspection and the collection of dues.

This is a simple, but effective opening, which will not task the children too much. It is recommended that ALL Otters, invested or not, take part in the opening and closing ceremonies.

THE CLOSING CEREMONY. This should be preferably be taken by Ahmeek and should be the last event of any Pack meeting.

The first command by Ahmeek will be the shout “Council Rock”. At this command the Otters will form an open ended tri-angle, Otters are facing inward and holding hands. The Pack sings ‘Taps’:

Day is done,	<i>(stand motionless)</i>
Gone the sun,	<i>(point Skyward)</i>
From the lake,	<i>(Extend both arms towards floor)</i>
From the hills,	<i>(move both arms, parallel to floor)</i>
From the sky,	<i>(move both arms towards sky)</i>
All is well, safely rest,	<i>(lower arms slowly)</i>
God is near.	<i>(bow head)</i>

The Pack then says the Closing Prayer:

Thank you, fiends, for this day
For my family, and for my play.
Thank you for the good things to eat,
For eyes and ears, and hands and feet.
Thank you friends for all you do
And, I will try to help you, too.

An Assistant Leader then lowers the National Flag.

Ahmeek will now make any Pack announcements.

The Pack will then sing the Scout Vesper Song (to the tune “Oh Christmas Tree”):

Softly falls the light of day
As our meeting fades away;
Silently each Otter asks
Have I done my daily task?
Have I kept my honour bright?
Can I guiltless rest tonight?
Have I done and have I dared
Everything to ‘Be Prepared’.

The Pack is then dismissed.

THE INVESTITURE OF AN OTTER. At the first Pack meeting a new Otter is placed in a Den, preferably with someone who is a friend. The new Otter may wear the Otter uniform with the exception of badges and neckerchief.

In order to be invested an Otter must pass the tests as outlined in the Otter Badges and Award Scheme. Ahmeek will take the investiture and this should be done at the beginning of a Pack meeting. When the Pack is in the 'Council Rock' formation, Ahmeek will ask the Den Leader of the Den concerned to bring forward the new recruit to be invested. The Otter then makes the Otter Sign and repeats the Otter Promise. First having given the Otter Law. The newly invested Otter is then presented with the Membership Badge and group neckerchief and is welcomed into the Worldwide Brotherhood of Scouting with the Scout Handshake. The new Otter turns and salutes the Pack and all invested Otters return the Salute.

SWIMMING UP TO TIMBER WOLVES. This is the ultimate ceremony in the Otter Pack for the Otter, as it marks the departure for new pastures in the Timber Wolf Pack. This is a joint affair between Ahmeek and Akela who must work together to make it a success.

Before finally moving up to the Timber Wolf Pack, the Otter will have visited the Timber Wolf Pack on several occasions to meet the Old Wolves and their prospective Sixer.

The Otters are in 'Council Rock' formation and the Timber Wolves are in 'Pack Circle' Formation. The open ends of both formations will face each other.

The Otter to 'Swim Up' will face Ahmeek in the centre of the 'V' of the Council Rock formation and the Otters will do their opening ceremony. The Timber Wolves will then do their opening ceremony. The Otter concerned will then go around the Pack and shake hands for the last time as an Otter. Ahmeek will then take the Otter forward to meet Akela. The new Cub will then be formally presented to his new Sixer and the members of his new Six.

The Otters and Timber Wolves will then take part in a joint game, and refreshments before the Otters leave for home.

OTTER BADGES AND AWARD SCHEME

This scheme is designed to develop and stimulate the Otter and give a variety and interest to the Program. It is progressive throughout the period between 5 years and 8 years of age and should be spread over the full three years.

The scheme consists of an Investiture Badge, Four Footprint Badges, a link to the Timber Wolf Pack with the Swimming Otter Badge, Two Holiday Awards, a Project Badge and a Service Badge.

Each Otter Den should wear a 4 cm square cloth patch of their Den colour at the top of their right arm. Acceptable colours are: Red, Purple, White, Green, Blue, and Orange.

INVESTITURE BADGE:

- 1) Know a little about Otters
- 2) Know the Otter Motto (Busy and Bright)
- 3) Know the Otter Salute and Sign
- 4) Know a little about B-P, the Founder of Scouting
- 5) Take part in an Opening and Closing Ceremony
 - 6) Know the Otter Law:
An Otter is always busy and bright and helps other people by doing a good turn every day.
- 7) Know the Otter Promise: **I promise to do my best, to obey my Leaders and my parents and to be a good Otter.**

1ST FOOTPRINT (GREEN)

The 1st Footprint is based around activities designed to promote learning and consists of activities in the areas of safety and handicraft. The completion of the requirements from one or the other of these activities qualifies for this badge.

SAFETY:

- 1) Know your name and address
- 2) Know your phone number
- 3) Be able to print your name
- 4) Know how to cross the road safely
- 5) Know about safety with strangers
- 6) Know the basic rules of health and hygiene
- 7) Know about safety around the home
- 8) Be able to tie your own shoe laces
- 9) Know what 911 is for and how to call it
- 10) Know how to put a Band-Aid on a cut
- 11) Know your Mom and Dad's full names

HANDICRAFT:

- 1) Draw, and colour, a scene or event from a story
- 2) Draw a picture of your house
- 3) Make a Thank You card
- 4) Make a model
- 5) Make a collage
- 6) Collect 25 stamps and mount them in a book
- 7) Make two craft items
- 8) Tie a reef knot
- 9) Make a bird feeder from a milk jug
- 10) Visit a petting zoo

2ND FOOTPRINT (PURPLE)

The 2nd footprint is based around activities designed to promote developing and consists of activities in the areas of helping and physical activity. The completion of the requirements from one or the other of these activities, qualifies for this badge.

HELPING:

- 1) Know about helping others and sharing with others
- 2) Know about cleanliness and caring for your clothes
- 3) Be helpful around the house
- 4) Do a good turn for a relative or a neighbour
- 5) Take part in a Kim's Game
- 6) Take part in the Message Game
- 7) Know how to wash dishes and clean up a table
- 8) Take part in a Pack good turn
- 9) Visit a seniors residence and help serve tea and cookies
- 10) Help set up your meeting hall

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:

- 1) Be able to throw and catch a ball
- 2) Take part in a night hike
- 3) Take part in two day hikes
- 4) Be able to sing 3 songs
- 5) Have an awareness of children with disabilities
- 6) Know how to skip rope
- 7) Take part in team and solo games or sports
- 8) Know how to be a good loser and a good winner

3RD FOOTPRINT (RED)

The 3rd footprint is based around activities designed to promote exploring and the outdoors and consists of activities in the areas of nature and expedition. The completion of the requirements from one or the other of these activities qualifies for this badge.

NATURE:

- 1) Know about caring for the outdoors
- 2) Name 6 animals that are kept as pets
- 3) Make a scrap book about Otters
- 4) Collect 10 flowers and 10 leaves and press them
- 5) Grow a seed in a water soaked paper towel
- 6) Grow a carrot top in water
- 7) Take part in a Pack Nature Walk
- 8) Take part in a trail clean-up
- 9) Plant a tree or flower

EXPEDITION:

- 1) Take part in a hike, which includes having your lunch on the trail
- 2) Visit a museum or area of local interest
- 3) Know what to do if you are lost
- 4) Explain why wearing a hat and sunscreen is important
- 5) Show what you wear on a hot, cold, or rainy day

4TH FOOTPRINT (BLUE)

The 4th footprint is designed to promote discovering and consists of activities in storytelling and entertainment. The completion of the requirements in one or the other of these activities qualifies for this badge.

STORYTELLING:

- 1) Listen attentively to stories told or read by a leader on several occasions.
- 2) Be able to explain a story you heard by acting, drawing, or re-telling.
- 3) Write a poem of two verses and read it to your Otter pack.
- 4) Make up a story, that includes you as the main character and tell it to your pack.

ENTERTAINMENT:

- 1) Take an active part in singing, either alone, or with the Otter pack.
- 2) Take part in a school play or pageant, or participate in one organized by your Otter pack.
- 3) Learn how to act or mime through engaging in a pack activity.
- 4) Learn how to make a costume and wear it in a play or pageant.

5) If you play a musical instrument, perform a short song for your pack.

SWIMMING OTTER BADGE:

- 1) Know the Timber Wolf law & Promise
- 2) Know the Timber Wolf Motto
- 3) Know the Timber Wolf Salute & Grand Howl
- 4) Know about the Jungle Book and how Mowgli entered the Pack
- 5) Know a little about B-P and how Scouting started
- 6) Have earned all 4 Paws
- 7) Take part in two activities with the Timber Wolf Pack and get to know the Akela

(This badge will be worn on the Otter uniform and on the Timber Wolf uniform until they have earned the Leaping Wolf badge.)

HOLIDAY AWARDS:

The Den Camping Award is awarded to an Otter who spends one night away from home with Otters either in a tent or sleeping in a building.

The Pack Camping Award is awarded to an Otter who spends two more nights away from home with Otters either in a tent or sleeping in a building.

THE PROJECT BADGE:

The Project badge is awarded to an Otter who has completed all TEN of the projects in the Otter Project Book over a period of at least ONE year, commencing not before the sixth birthday.

MYSELF – Know things about yourself, such as your birthday, how much you weigh, how tall are you, your school, your favorite subjects, your teacher’s names, your Otter Pack and where they meet.

MY COUNTRY – Know where you live. What province do you live in and what is the name of your town, village, or city. What is the capital city of your province and Canada.

FLAGS – Draw the flag of Canada and your province and colour in both.

MY PETS – Draw a picture of your pet and know its name. What does it eat and where does it sleep. What is its favorite pet toy and activity. If you do not have a pet, draw your favorite animal and know where it lives in Canada.

MY HOBBIES – Do you have a hobby such as collecting cards or playing a sport. What is your most favorite object in your collection or tell about the sports and games you like to play the most.

TRAVELLING – Tell your Otter Pack what happened when you last traveled either by car, airplane, bus, train, or even a boat. Where did you go and how long did it take to get there.

NATURE – Collect tree leaves and make a pressed book that includes the leaves from 8 different trees.

FOUR SEASONS – Tell of the different seasons and show pictures to illustrate the change.

WILDLIFE – What food and water do birds and animals in your area eat throughout the year.

THINGS TO KNOW – Know about Timber Wolves, your leader, and your friends who will welcome you.

THE SERVICE BADGE:

The Service badge is awarded to an Otter who has completed all of the following Activities, which must be carried out over a period of at least 6 months.

- 1) Visit the local Police Station and find out some ways to help prevent crime
- 2) Visit the local Fire department and find out the danger of fire and some ways of preventing it
- 3) Find out about preventing accidents –
 - a) in the home
 - b) on the road
 - c) in the playground
 - d) in the swimming pool
- 4) Find out about recycling of waste, what use can be made of recycled items.
- 5) Find out the effects of vandalism on an area and how the cost of repair affects your family
- 6) Visit the local Ambulance Station and learn about what they do

PROGRAM PLANNING

A planned program is an essential part of training the young Otter. It is only by planning that progress can be plotted. Programs should be planned as far in advance as is possible, with the co-operation of all the Scouters and Instructors in the Pack, so that all concerned are fully aware of the part they have to play in each individual program. Obviously, when programs are planned for out-of-doors, alternative programs should be at hand if the weather is not too kind.

One of the great things about the Canadian way of life is the tradition we have built up over the years and tradition plays a large part in the mysticism of Scouting. The general outline of the Pack meeting should always be similar from meeting to meeting. This allows games to be slotted in between work periods and quiet periods. The main objective with young children is to keep them occupied at all times, either boisterously or quietly, so that they never become bored or run around aimlessly. Always ensure that there is adequate supervision for every Pack activity. Where a game has to be explained to the Pack, always make sure that the rules are fully understood before the game starts. The use of hand signals reduces the need for the spoken word.

Each Den should be allocated a particular place in the Headquarters, which they can regard as their own for the length of the meeting. If work is to be done in Dens then the Den will know where it has to go in order to do that work.

When the attention of the whole Pack is required and it does not necessitate standing, then the Pack should sit on the floor, comfortably, preferably in a square formation. The best position is cross-legged with straight back and hands on knees and with all the Pack sitting exactly the same. This is the start of disciplined behaviour.

Both the opening and closing ceremonies should be of a set pattern so that the Otters know what to do.

The length and content of the program will be limited to the number of Scouters and Instructors available and to their limitations regarding training. The essential ingredient is a well-balanced and varied program.

SPECIMEN PROGRAM:

Council Rock

Roll Call, Inspection, and Dues

Two games or outdoor activities depending on weather and season

Story, either read by a Scouter or a visitor

Handicrafts

Musical game, singing or play-acting

Council Rock

Dismissal

Ingredients of Program Planning:

Building -	Handicrafts, Model Making, Drawing and Painting
Energy Release -	Games, Physical Effort
Adventure -	Exploring, Visit to Park, Zoos, Beach, Farm
Entertaining -	Music Making, Singing, Poetry, Play-acting
Variety -	Visitors to give talks (e.g. Policeman, Firemen, Postman)
Story Telling -	Short, simple stories read or told
Religion -	Prayers, Bible stories.

Always keep a program book to record what you have done for reference purposes.

NOTE: Handicrafts should always have a use, and not just be ornaments.

GAMES

Games which are suitable for other Scouting Sections are not always suitable for Otters. Variations of other games may be found suitable and all suitable games can be entered into a notebook and thus the Pack will have a games book which provides a ready supply of favourite games. As has been explained in Program Planning, the rules of a game should be thoroughly explained before the game commences. Try to use games which bring out the individualism of the Otter. It should be realized that the games chosen may sometimes be played at school, or at home, with different rules and this may vary from school to school, so that all the Otters should be made to understand that the Pack rules apply to all Pack games. All games used in Scouting should have a purpose and games should not be chosen just to fill in a space in the Pack program.

The younger the child the more time spent in playing and games can be made up from all sorts of odd items. Games help a child to develop self-discipline, body control – co-ordination of eyes and limbs, unselfishness, physical development and the realization that the society in which the Otter lives exists by rules being observed. Keep your Otters happy and alertly occupied and you will have a good Otter. The Founder said, “Play is the first great education” and we should use playing wisely.

It may seem stupid to some people to enter the land of make-believe with youngsters but to that youngster that world of make-believe is real. You must look at the world through the eyes of children to be a successful Otter Leader. One of the qualities of a good Otter Leader is the ability to let your hair down and enter into the spirit of things.

Hints for Games:

1. Stop the Otters from wondering about by having them sitting down while you explain the game.
2. No complicated games – use simple games with simple rules well explained.
3. First time is a practice game – no penalties.
4. Try to prevent having to eliminate Otters during games.
5. Remember, a long game becomes boring.
6. Remove all objects which may give rise to accidents. Clothing should be in accordance with the weather conditions. ALWAYS guard against hazards.
7. A First Aid Kit is essential. Keep a plentiful supply of band-aids on hand.
8. Vary games week to week by referring to your game book and program book.

HANDICRAFTS

Youngsters like to make things from all sorts of what adults would call junk. Handicrafts suitable for Otters are well within the capability of Scouters within the Pack. It is not necessary to have a lot of expensive items as most things can be constructed from odds and ends using the old Scouting tradition of IMPROVISATION.

Some basic materials are:

Drawing paper
Round end scissors
Powder paints
Paste and Glue
Felt tip pens
Magic markers
Thin cardboard
Paper clips
Elastic bands
Paper scraps
Toilet paper rolls
Empty match boxes
Paint brushes
Coloured cord
Paint pots
Old postage stamps
Old postcards
Egg cartons
Feathers
Sea-shells
Crayons

The purpose of handicrafts in the Pack is to allow the youngsters to develop their creativity and to enjoy the pleasure of making things. It also helps development of simple manipulative skills. If the handicraft has a practical use, it is more likely to be used around the house, once it is taken home – a self-esteem builder for the Otter concerned.

PREPARATION. Before you start the session there must be available a good supply of things to be used in it. As has been mentioned, in the section entitled “The Leader in the Pack”, not all Otters will want to be doing the same thing at the same time in handicrafts unless it is something which interests them all. As all youngsters will have different mental ages a varied number of articles can be made at the same time and afterwards can be displayed within the Den.

Before the session it is best to try out the ideas yourself and see if they work. You will then be able to demonstrate to the Otters and prove another Scouting tradition “Never ask the youngsters in your care to do something that you couldn’t or wouldn’t do in the same circumstances”. Consult and have handy some suitable books and handicrafts.

PRODUCTION. A few hints:

- A) Be able to show a finished article to provide incentive and show how it was made. Something mentioned in the course of Pack meetings as a result of a few dropped hints could be an ideal subject.
- B) Select something that preferably WORKS and which can be completed quickly in several stages.
- C) Don’t select anything which is complex and complicated. Make it FUN.
- D) Make sure that there is plenty of help available where you need it.
- E) Don’t allow a little gooey mess to put you off. Paints and glues tend to be messy.
- F) Drawing, painting and coloured sticky shapes are popular and simple to start off with. Don’t forget to put plenty of old newspapers or plastic sheeting on the floor. You’ll need plastic aprons for painting. If you don’t protect the clothes you will find the parents NOT on your side.

SOME IDEAS FOR HANDICRAFTS

First Nations Headdress. Feathers from any available source and lengths of duct tape. The feathers can be coloured. The headdress can be worn on the head or as a Chief’s headdress, down the back.

Pipe Cone Christmas Decorations. Collect the cones in the woods and either glue and then sprinkle with glitter or paint the cones and attach a wire around the stem to enable them to hang on the tree.

Snowmen. Use a liquid dish soap bottle and pad it with cotton wool. Use cotton wool for the head and paint on eyes, mouth and nose. Hat and scarf can be made from scraps of cloth.

Animals from rocks. When on a trip to the local beach, pick up the rounded beach stones. Pieces of wool or felt can be glued on, and they can be then painted to resemble many different animals.

Masks. Paper bags can be used for this. Cut eye and mouth holes out and paint or crayon the funny face on to it.

Cut-out designs. This can be done by folding the paper into a number of folds and then cutting out small pieces of paper. When the paper is opened out a pattern emerges. By experimenting, the Otters will also be able to make long chains of figures in the same way.

Decorated flower pots. Each Otter brings a flower pot to Pack meeting. A supply of shells from the visit to the beach and a supply of Polyfilla or putty is all that is needed. Cover the pot in the putty and then stick shells into the putty in patterns until the whole of the sides of the pot are covered.

Shells. Large shells such as scallops can be used to make ornaments for the home.

Cardboard Knights. Old cardboard boxes can be used to make “armour” and swords. These are just a few examples. You can probably think of a lot more. Books in your local library will also provide some ideas.

PARENTS AND OPEN NIGHTS

Open nights present an opportunity for the interested parties to see what goes on in the Pack and for the parents it enables them to see what their child has achieved.

The first step is to decide when to have the Open Night. It can either be by invitation or by a note to the parents taken home by the Otter. If presentations are to be made a special guest could be invited to carry out the presentations.

Normally, an Otter Pack program should be the basis of the night. One or two special items should be included to add to the interest of the spectators, such as dressing-up and performing a short play. Games which involve the parents are also a good idea. If the weather is fine an outside program gives much more scope for games.

Presentation of badges and Jumping Up ceremony to Timber Wolves make an ideal subject for an Open Night.

A display of Pack and individual achievements and of Pack handicrafts should prove of interest to parents. Other Scouters of the Group could be invited and they would normally then gain further insight into the workings of the youngest Section.

A short report of Pack activities to date, together with a word of appreciation and thanks for the interest and help provided by parents, should either open or close the meeting.

HINTS:

DO NOT allow or select any one Otter to become a star performer. The more extrovert youngster will tend to overact to catch the eye. This should be discouraged. It is a PACK night.

EACH MEMBER of the Pack should have something to do during the program.

EACH MEMBER of the Pack should be awarded some small award for taking part.

EVERY SCOUTER in the Pack should have something to do in the program. It is a

“family” night and the Scouters are part of the Pack family.

CONSULT with the Pack Council. The Otter Leader can put his/her own ideas and those of the Otters so that the program includes things that the Pack would like to do on a special night.

KNOWLEDGE of any Otter having a disability or having a retiring nature is a must and Ahmeek should be able to find a suitable part in the activities to slot the Otter concerned into the pattern of the program.

PLAN AHEAD and allow for variations in the weather.

PLAY ACTING

PLAY IS A TOTAL EXPERIENCE to the Otter. Not a minute of the day is wasted and sometimes the youngster can be so totally involved as not to notice anything going on around him/her.

Play acting can take several forms. When the Otter is mixing clay he/she may play act, imagining that he/she is being a sculptor. When taking part in team games such as the rhyming games, again the Otter may be play acting. The most easily understood form, for us, is the dramatic play which involves either acting out a small play from a script or an improvised form devised by the ‘actors’ themselves, either from a hurried huddle in the corner or by being totally ‘impromptu’.

Not all of us are Thespians and sometimes we ourselves may gain the confidence we need from our Otters. The Otter has a freedom within him/her self that is not available anywhere else. It is safe to say that most of us at sometime have imagined that we are somewhere else and doing more exciting things. All that has to be done to turn daydreaming into play acting is to put dreams into actions. Guidance is still necessary where the Otters are concerned in the choice of materials made available and the choice of stories made available; also in the decision as to when to participate in the play acting with the Otters.

In play children learn about the world through playing about it and also have an outlet for complex and often conflicting emotions.

As no part of the Timber Wolf program should be used for Pack activities except those Otters attempting the Jumping Otter Badge, it is not thought advisable for the Jungle Book dances to be used in the Pack.

Your local library will be able to assist in suggesting suitable material for Pack Programs. Finally, free play is also important and the occasional 5 –10 minute period of allowing Otters to freely express themselves is a good thing, provided that it is not allowed to get out of control, as there must still be limits beyond which the Otters realize that they cannot go.

SINGING AND MUSIC MAKING

Otter age children are not likely to play an instrument and sing at the same time. The main objective at first is to get the Otter to take part in Pack music-making.

Once an Otter has shown a talent for a particular thing, then that should be fostered. Commencing with something easy and working up to more involved exercises should make the Otter feel that he/she is making progress. Enjoyment and Entertainment are the two necessary objectives.

Some of we Scouters find singing difficult, so we pick songs that we can all sing – not too high a pitch and not down in your boots.

An important part of Scouting is the Campfire. Although some other Scout Associations have decided that the traditional campfire is out of date, this will not be the case as long as the youngsters enjoy them.

In organizing your Pack first find out who is a fairly good singer and who cannot sing. Don't prevent them from singing but perhaps make them your first 'instrumentalists'.

Some ideas for suitable songs:

One man went to mow
London's Burning
Ten Green Bottles
If your happy and you know it
Kum By Yah

This old man he played one
Old MacDonald had a farm
Michael Finnigan
Yankee Doodle
Amazing Grace

Material is always available from your local library. As with other parts of the Pack program the music session should not be long enough to bore, but should be long enough to enable the Otters to enter into the spirit of the thing and achieve an end result.

OUT OF DOORS

This is where we emphasize the "OUT" in Scouting. There should always be 1 adult Leader, or Parent helper, to every 4 Otters on every outing, hike, or camp.

If we do not get our Otters out of doors, they will simply pine away. The Otter is essentially an outdoor type. Outside activities give fresh air, sunshine, exercise and the space to run 'wild'. This has another benefit – that of allowing the noise to go to the four winds and not to vibrate Ahneek's eardrums.

A Pack meeting over at the local park does not take much organizing but organized it must be. An jour out of doors running wild is neither productive nor interesting to the Otter. Safety first and activity second is the order of the day. Parents place their offspring into our care and we must protect them at all times they are with us. Full use should be made of Otter instructors, Senior Explorers, Rovers, and Pack Parents.

If we are going further afield we need to plan ahead. At the age of our Otters we need to know, what mode of transport we will be using, whether anyone has motion sickness, or suffers any other affects of travel. Toilet stops will be necessary. A full day's outing may be too much for some but alright for others; therefore provision must be made for rest periods so that all may benefit and no-one will feel he/she is being treated differently from the others. During the travel it is possible to play "I SPY" games to retain their interest and prevent boredom setting in.

Before leaving home the Otters should all know what is in store for the outing. During the travel adequate supervision is necessary because in the case of small children fast action often has to be taken. The permission of parents, in writing, is necessary and also the understanding that you will be allowed to deputize for the parents if any medical treatment is required whilst away from home. This permission **MUST** be written and details of the outing **MUST** be given to the parents together with a telephone number (wherever possible) they can use to contact you in an emergency.

In the case of an overnight or weekend stay a list of necessary items should have been handed to the parents and all the medication the Otter has to take should be handed to the Scouter-in-charge, on departure for the camp, together with instructions as to dosage. Teddy Bears **ARE** allowed (free of charge!). All allergies should be known to you so that you can be prepared as, when something crops up, it can be a frightening experience.

For day outings there are numerous places to visit – Fire Station, Police Station, Museums, Zoo, the Beach, Airports, Parks, Steam trains, Adventure playground.

Can you remember when you did such things as sand castle building; collecting shells or coloured stones; looking for crabs in a rock pool? I'm sure you can, and Otters are no different to other children. Make it interesting and join in the fun.

Whether you take packed lunches or purchase the goodies wherever you are going, the fact of eating out, be it in a café or a picnic, is exciting to the youngster. The main objective is to have **FUN**. However, don't forget to make alternative arrangements in case of wet weather (Plan B!).

MOST OF ALL DON'T FORGET YOUR FIRST AID KIT!

STORY TELLING

A good story, well told, is one of the most valuable forms of teaching a child and can be used to illustrate a point. It is well known that a comic book with pictures is more easily understood than one with printed stories. 'Pictures speak louder than words'. A well-told story is, in a way, a comic book with pictures, it makes a child's imagination come alive.

HOW to tell it – not easy for some people and often takes a lot of practice. Some people are naturally shy and have to make a sincere effort to emerge from their shyness. One of the attributes of Scouting is the ability to imagine you are seeing the exercise through the eyes of the child concerned.

The story should be kept short – not more than 10 minutes in length – or should be a

chapter in a longer story – to be continued next week. The more action in the story, the more the interest created. There should be an easily understood plot to the story and the conclusion should be definite and not left to the child's imagination. Reading from the book word for word is not a good idea and the story can be emphasized with the use of hand puppets or cut-out characters. The use of long words does not help and the best way to tell a story is with a close circle of attentive Otters in a cozy, friendly atmosphere – the sort of atmosphere created when telling a story around the fire to your own young family. We are, after all, a family – the Scouting Family.

WHO to tell it - should be decided by Ahmeek by knowing who in the Otter leadership team is best acquainted with the subject matter. All the Scouters and instructors of the Pack should be able to take part in this activity at some time. A good idea for those amongst us who are timid and shy is for those people to tell a story to the assembled Scouters prior to trying it out on the Otters.

If you are expecting a visitor to the Pack Meeting it might be possible to invite them to tell a story, either real or imaginary but they should be warned beforehand so that the request is not sprung upon them.

WHAT to tell – can be difficult. The entertainment value should be assessed and also the teaching value. It should be exciting and with a point in view. It may amuse, inspire or instruct, or do all three but exciting it must be or the impact will be wasted.

WHEN to tell it - and it should be inserted in the program as a quiet period. The time depends on your planned program but would normally follow a boisterous game. It is a time of physical relaxation and allows the body to wind down and the Otter to regain his/her breath.

WHY tell it. It is part of the child's development process.

There is a wide selection of children's stories available from a large number of sources. These include the children's section of the local public library, children's bookshops and teacher's specialty stores. Most public libraries provide a CD and tape story library.

BADGES & UNIFORM FOR OTTERS

UNIFORM:

- 1) Adults wear the uniform as described in your Association PO&R. and do not wear the uniform of the youth members.
- 2) Youth members wear a red sweatshirt and a plain red baseball cap. These items are available in most clothing stores for minimum cost. A red t-shirt can be worn in summer weather, but only the sweatshirt has the official badges sewn to it.

BADGES:

- 1) Badges are worn in the following places on the youth uniform (Adult badge positions are shown in the PO&R).

WFIS Badge - worn on the right breast.

CFIS Badge - worn on the right breast above the WFIS Badge.

Investiture Badge - worn on the left breast.

Footprint Badges - worn on the right sleeve.

Service Badge - worn at the top of the right sleeve below Group Title Flash.

Project Badge - worn on the left sleeve.

Holiday Awards - worn on the left sleeve.

Group Title Flash - worn at the top of the right sleeve along the seam.

Swimming Otter Badge - The Swimming Otter badge is worn in the Otter pack, when gained, and in the Timber Wolf pack, until replaced by the Leaping Wolf, when passed. The Swimming Otter is worn 1 ½ cm centered above the CFIS Badge.

