

Interest Topic: Blue and Gold Banquet

Cub Scout Roundtable			
Time Allotted	Activity	Assigned to	Content
30–40 minutes	General session for all participants	Cub Scout roundtable team	Set the meeting room up as a mock blue and gold banquet to demonstrate table arrangement, decorations, etc. Conduct the session by addressing all the questions included in the General Session section below, and share best practices among the group. Print out and share the sample blue and gold banquet planning timeline below.
10 minutes	Q&A	Cub Scout roundtable team	Opportunity to answer any additional questions
5 minutes	Closing	Cub Scout roundtable commissioner	Closing flag ceremony

Takeaway: The blue and gold banquet is a celebration of the birthday of the Boy Scouts of America. The anniversary of that date is February 8, so these banquets are usually held in February. Working together and including everyone in the pack will make the event fun for everyone. Many hands make light work. It's a good idea to include Lion, Tiger, Wolf, Bear and Webelos parents in the planning and preparations. This develops a plan of succession for future years by giving parents of younger Scouts and opportunity to learn. This event is an ideal time to conduct the Arrow of Light Ceremony, crossing Webelos over to a Scouts BSA troop.

GENERAL SESSION

Blue and Gold Banquets

Most Cub Scouts celebrate Scouting Anniversary Week in February with a "birthday party" called the blue and gold banquet. In nearly all packs, the blue and gold banquet is the highlight of the year. It brings families together for an evening of fun and friendship. It's often the pack meeting for February. The purpose of the blue and gold banquet is to celebrate the date of the founding of Scouting, February 8, 1910. It is also a time to thank pack leaders and other adults who have helped the pack, and inspire the leaders, Scouts, and parents. Packs often like to invite former members and other Scouting or community leaders to take part in their blue and gold banquet.

By awarding the badges of rank to the Cub Scouts in the pack and including the Arrow of Light ceremony, the event will draw a large crowd of parents who will be pleased to see their children receive awards. You could have a video or slide show of what the pack did over the past year. You might consider having your annual Friends of Scouting appeal at this event, since the crowd will be large.

The following are points to address during this roundtable session:

- What is a blue and gold banquet?
- Why do we celebrate it?
- How can we make it successful?
- What are some important aspects of the dinner?

- Length of the event is important. Try to keep the entire event (banquet and Arrow of Light ceremony) to less than two hours. Consider families with young children.
- Will the banquet be held on a weeknight or a weekend?
- Who will provide the food?
- Discuss types of table decorations (if desired), invitations, etc., that the pack may wish to create.
- If the Arrow of Light ceremony is part of the event, who is planning that? Have the Scout troop(s) and their leader(s) been invited?
- Prior to the Arrow of Light ceremony, will Lions, Tigers, Wolves, Bears, and Webelos Scouts be presented with their badge of rank?
- Plan to recognize the graduating Webelos leaders.
- Do you want to recognize the other den leaders? Do you want to recognize anyone else?
- Are there any special guests to be invited (school principal, school superintendent, mayor, Chartered Partner)?
- Will the Friends of Scouting appeal be conducted at the banquet or at the ceremony following?
- How will the banquet be financed?
- Who needs to help to make it successful?
- Share commercial and other pack party planning resources.
- Share best practices among the group.

Share the sample blue and gold banquet planning timeline below.

Blue and Gold Banquet Planning Timeline

A good banquet needs lots of planning. Most packs begin to plan at least two months ahead of time. The timeline here is a suggestion and may be changed to fit your event.

Two to three months before the blue and gold banquet Review last year—

Review evaluations of last year's banquet if available. If not, ask several parents and leaders to share something from the event that was positive and something that could use improvement. This will enable you to avoid past mistakes.

Date and time—

Confirm the date and time of the banquet with the pack committee. Was the date set by the committee at the annual planning meeting? You may use the date that corresponds with your monthly pack meeting, or choose Friday night, Saturday night, or a Sunday afternoon.

Location—

Use your regular pack meeting place if possible. Make certain the date is on the calendar of the site you will use for the banquet (school gym, place of worship fellowship hall, community center, etc.). This reservation may need to be placed many months in advance of the event. Check with those who manage the location.

Budgeting for the dinner/event—

Check with your pack committee to see what type of money has been set aside for the banquet. You may see if the committee will set money aside from the pack fundraisers to pay for expenses or you may decide to charge each family a small fee to cover the cost of the meal.

Decide on the menu—

What has worked well in the past? Some ideas might include:

- Covered dishes
- Desserts-only event
- Spaghetti dinner
- Catering

Program

- Badge of rank for Lions, Tigers, Wolves, Bears, and Webelos
- Other awards and/or recognitions
- Arrow of Light ceremony and crossover into Scouts BSA

Four to six weeks before the banquet

- Send out event fliers. Include the date, time, cost, location, and contact information. (Always include a date when

RSVPs need to be turned in.)

- Plan decorations. Be sure to involve all the dens in the pack. Decorations may be simple or elaborate, but remember this point of the Scout Law: A Scout Is Thrifty.
- Invite the Scoutmaster(s) or assistant(s) and some Scouts from the local troop(s) to participate in the Arrow of Light/crossover ceremony. Invite them to be the guest of the pack for the dinner.
- Work with the Cubmaster to establish the program for the banquet, award ceremony, and Arrow of Light ceremony so nothing will be forgotten.
- Plan for setup and cleanup at the event.

One to two weeks before the banquet

- Reconfirm location, food, and any speaker, special guests, etc., that you have previously booked.
- Reconfirm that the Scoutmaster(s) or assistant(s) and some of the Scouts from the local troop(s) will participate in the Arrow of Light crossover ceremony. Remind them to join the pack for the dinner preceding the ceremony.
- Send reminder notices via social media and email.
- Reconfirm plans for setup of the banquet site and cleanup afterward.

On the day of the banquet

- Arrive in plenty of time and with plenty of people to complete setup.
- Have fun!

One week AFTER the banquet

- Evaluate the event and make notes of challenges and successes for next year's planning.