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Audience Participation Stories

The Brutal Miner

(Each character in the skit has a distinctive sound to make when the Narrator says their name during the reading of the skit. The Narrator should pause, after reading the name of each character so they can make their sound and for audience reaction.) Brutal Miner -- Grrrrrrrrrr

Tired Wife -- Oh dear.

Lazy Son -- (Yawning sound)

Young Daughter -- (Giggles)

Beautiful Daughter -- "Ahhhhh"

Handsome Harry -- Ah Ha !

Automobile -- Honk Honk

Cat -- Meow

Narrator:

Once upon a time in the far west, there lived a BRUTAL MINER, who had a TIRED WIFE, a LAZY SON, a giggling YOUNG DAUGHTER, and a BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER. On the other side of the mountain lived HANDSOME HARRY. This young man drove his AUTOMOBILE over the mountains and carried mail to the BRUTAL MINER.

One day, the TIRED WIFE was cleaning the house. The BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER was helping her. The YOUNG DAUGHTER was playing with the CAT on the steps and the LAZY SON was sleeping. The BRUTAL MINER came out and kicked the CAT. The TIRED WIFE and the BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER rushed out with brooms and hit the BRUTAL MINER, but this did not bother him. He grabbed the TIRED WIFE by one arm and the BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER by the other and shoved them into the house. The YOUNG DAUGHTER ran away with the CAT. Just then, HANDSOME HARRY drove up in his AUTOMOBILE and saw the BRUTAL MINER beating the TIRED

WIFE and the BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER. HANDSOME HARRY rushed to the rescue and grabbed the BRUTAL MINER and threw him down the mine shaft. The BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER flew into the waiting arms of HANDSOME HARRY, while the TIRED WIFE and the YOUNG DAUGHTER watched with enthusiasm. The LAZY SON slept on. HANDSOME HARRY took the BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER in his AUTOMOBILE to the little church in the wildwood and they lived happily every after.

The Story of Running Deer

The Cast (respond when these words from the story are said aloud):

Old Chief: Stand, raise right hand and give a hearty "HOW!" in a low, loud voice.

Running Deer: Place open hands on side of head to make deer antlers, and stomp feet as if running.

Falling Rock: Stand, make a short whistling sound, then sit down abruptly with a loud "BOOM!"

Wilderness: One group howls like wolves; another raises swaying hands above head and make sound of wind blowing through the trees.

Babbling Brook: (Standing in front of audience for the entire storytelling) Gargles water with head back until the story narrator says . . . "Above the Waterfall."

Outdoor version. Spray gargled water onto the ground in front of audience.

Indoor version. Have a bucket or pail to catch water coming out of the "Babbling Brook's" mouth.

The Story:

Long ago, there was a small Indian (Native American) village. In this village lived an Old Chief with his two sons, Running Deer and Falling Rock. This village was situated deep in the Wilderness, next to a Babbling Brook [pause], Above a Waterfall.

The Old Chief, knowing he would not live forever, decided it was time to choose one of his sons to take his place when the time came to pass on. "But, which one?" pondered the Old

Chief. And he devised a plan: Running Deer and Falling Rock were sent off into the Wilderness, far from the village-next to the Babbling Brook [pause], Above the Waterfall. The Old Chief had told the lads, "The one of you who is able to live out longest in the Wilderness will take my place as Chief."

Much time passed. The Old Chief feared the worst, and began to worry. "How long will it be before the return of Running Deer and Falling Rock?" thought the Old Chief. Soon after, a member of the tribe announced the approach of the beloved son, Running Deer. The Old Chief was very happy, and threw a grand celebration. For his first son, Running Deer had returned to the village - next to the Babbling Brook [pause], Above the Waterfall. The ordeal was over, and Scouts were sent out into the Wilderness to find and return Falling Rock to his village, where he would become Chief someday.

Many moons went by (as happens in Native American stories). The Old Chief, now passed on (sorry), never saw the return of his younger son, Falling Rock. Falling Rock has never returned from the Wilderness to his village-next to the Babbling Brook [pause], Above the Waterfall. His brother, Running Deer, still looks for him.

We know this because, all along the highways and byways of New Hampshire and Vermont, we still see the signs [show sign if you made one]:

WATCH_FOR_FALLING_ROCK

This is how the story ended until, in 1990, a small child sitting in the front row at a campfire (just like this one) raised a hand, and with a serious look said in a voice that was loud and clear, "I know where he lives!"

So the narrator of the story asked, "Where?"

The answer came back, "He's in Pennsylvania!"

The child had been touring with family and had seen this sign
[show sign if you made one]:

FALLING_ROCK_AHEAD

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Quiet Please

THE FIRE SIREN (Moan)
THE LIBRARIAN (SSSSh!)
THE DOG (Arf, Arf)
THE PIGS (Snort, Oink)
THE POLICEMAN (Loud Whistle)
THE DUCKS (Quack-quack)
THE CHICKENS (Bok-Bok-Bok)
TWO BOYS (sing, Row, Row, Row your Boat)

If there is room, appropriate motions can accompany the sounds, such as marching feet for the boys, flapping wings for chickens, etc.

Narrator:

It was a beautiful spring afternoon in the sleepy little town of Blodgettville. In the balmy air the fragrance of early tulips mingled with the rich aroma of skunk cabbages in nearby marshes. The only sounds to be heard were the faint moan of a FIRE SIREN in a neighboring village, the distant barking of a DOG, and the occasional whistle of the POLICEMAN at the main intersection. Within the town library, someone turned a page too loudly, and the LIBRARIAN said, "SSSH!". On the main road, at the outskirts of the town, a farmer was lazily driving his animals to market. Each time he hit a bump, the PIGS grunted, the CHICKENS squawked, and the DUCKS quacked. Yes, all was peaceful in the sleepy little town of Blodgettville.

Suddenly, TWO BOYS appeared on the quiet street. They were singing "ROW YOUR BOAT" and marching in time to the rhythm. They reached the center of town where the POLICEMAN blew his whistle to let them cross. Still singing, they marched up the steps of the library. The LIBRARIAN looked up quickly and said, "SSSH". EACH BOY took a book, then sat down at one of the tables. One of the boys looked

around the almost empty library and said, "They'd do a lot more business in here if they had comic books!" Guess what the LIBRARIAN said? That's right, "SSSh".

Outside, the DOG'S barking could be heard more strongly. The POLICEMAN blew his whistle as a car approached the intersection, followed by the farmer's truck. As they started up again, the woman driving the car signalled a right turn. Oddly enough, her car made a left turn. The farmer slammed on his brakes, and there was a LOUD CRASH (everyone clap their hands together). Down went the tail gate of the truck and out tumbled the PIGS, the crates burst and out flew the CHICKENS and the DUCKS. The DOG, who by now was quite close, began an excited chase, barking wildly.

Frightened, the PIGS ran up the library steps, grunting, followed by squawking CHICKENS, quacking DUCKS, and yelping DOG. The LIBRARIAN was so startled she had time to let out only one "SSSH", before a CHICKEN flew into her face. The BOYS jumped up and delightedly burst into song. In rushed the POLICEMAN, frantically whistling. From across the street, old Miss Spindle saw the disturbance, and called the FIRE DEPARTMENT.

So then, at that moment in the quiet library of the quiet town of Blodgettville, these things were going on: The PIGS were grunting, the CHICKENS were clucking, the DUCKS were quacking, the BOYS were singing, the FIRE SIREN was screaming, the POLICEMAN was whistling, and the LIBRARIAN was hopelessly saying over and over again "SSSh, SSSh!". And for awhile at least, all these things were going on at the same time (EVERYBODY). But an hour later, everything was peaceful again in the sleepy little town of Blodgettville. The PIGS, DUCKS and CHICKENS had somehow been caught and put back in the truck; the BOYS and DOG had gone home for supper, the FIRE TRUCK was back in the station house, and the POLICEMAN again stood at his post by the intersection.

And the LIBRARIAN?? Well, the LIBRARIAN looked around the library at the floating feathers, the muddy floor, the mixed up books, the overturned tables and the broken chairs.

And then, all of a sudden, the LIBRARIAN SCREAMED
(EVERYBODY)

(Do not rehearse the audience on the ending; let it be a surprise)

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A Pirate Story

The Characters:

Old Sea Pirate -- Ho! Ho! Ho! and a bottle of Rum

Bosun -- snore, snore

Black Cloud -- Blow wind Blow

Sea Gulls -- caw, caw (flapping arms)

Long John Silver -- Aharr me maties

Polly Parrot -- Polly wants a cracker

Croaky Crocodile -- Tic Toc, Tic Toc (shake head)

The Story:

Once upon a time there was an Old Sea Pirate and his Bosun who sailed out on the ocean blue in their sturdy ship the Black Cloud.

Far off in the distance he could hear the Sea Gulls cry.

The Old Sea Pirate and his Bosun dropped anchor and went fast asleep, first making sure all the hatches were secured on the Black Cloud.

Now creeping up the side of the ship came Long John Silver and his parrot Polly looking for the treasure of the Old Sea Pirate and his Bosun.

Looking for Long John Silver was Croaky Crocodile who had swallowed a clock.

Just as Long John Silver and Polly Parrot discovered the treasure chest, Croaky Crocodile's clock woke up the Old Sea Pirate and his Bosun who thought it was the Sea Gulls landing on the deck of the Black Cloud.

Well Long John Silver grabbed hold of Polly Parrot and turned to run, and only in his haste he tripped overboard, much to the glee of Croaky Crocodile. The Old Sea Pirate and his Bosun chased after them, but the Black Cloud rolled in the waves,

clearing the deck of Sea Gulls, the Old Sea Pirate and his Bosun.

Now, from a very good source, I am told that the last anyone heard of all these characters was strange sounds in the night as the Sea Gulls flew overhead followed by Long John Silver and Polly Parrot, chased by the Old Sea Pirate and his Bosun, all frantically swimming away from Croaky Crocodile with his ticking clock, while to this day, the Black Cloud is anchored far out at sea with its treasure chest still aboard.

Oscar and His Dream Trip

"....." denotes a space that the listeners fill in. The best way is to give each a piece of paper with a noun on it (just about any -- the crazier the better) and at each stop, point to a different person so that they know to read their paper.

* * * * *

Oscar followed the little creek to where it passed by the stone wall and the sand cliffs. The spring air was full of the singing of birds and the gentle whisper of the wind. He was getting tired from such a long walk and he sat down to rest on a large stump. As he sat in the soft drowsy air, he noticed the big sand cliffs all covered with swallow holes and little scrawny bushes growing here and there on its face. Oscar grew very sleepy in the warm sunshine. It was then that he noticed the yellow door in the side of the sandy cliff.

"This is very strange," Oscar thought. "I've been here often and never noticed that door before." He got up with the true Wolf Cub curiosity and went to the door to open it. He was surprised to find that it opened so easily.

Inside he was surprised to see that he was in a huge garden surrounding a funny little house. He went to the door and knocked. There was no answer, so Oscar went inside. Then, the strangest things began to happen.

..... jumped out at him and said in a deep voice, "will you stay for dinner?" told Oscar to shut the door while stared fearfully at him with enormous eyes. At the sound of the closing door took its feet off which ran circles on the floor at his feet. invited Oscar to sit in a chair at the table.

He sat beside which was always poking with brought in on a big silver platter which was set before Oscar. Everyone began to eat and which was placed on

the plate. When the waiter brought in a big bowl which had all fried up Oscar decided that he really wasn't hungry.

He excused himself and nearly tripped over as he left the table. He saw which he thought would make a nice pet if only his mother would let him keep it. As he went to pick it up hit him across the hand and told him to leave it alone. Oscar was sorry that silver platter which was set before Oscar. Everyone began to eat and which was placed on the plate. When the waiter brought in a big bowl which had all fried up Oscar decided that he really wasn't hungry.

He excused himself and nearly tripped over as he left the table. He saw which he thought would make a nice pet if only his mother would let him keep it. As he went to pick it up hit him across the hand and told him to leave it alone.

Oscar was sorry that he couldn't have a which he sat on because he couldn't carry it. "Excuse me," he said, as a and a came flying across the room. Oscar felt that the things here had very rude manners, especially a which kept wiping its mouth with a With a sudden noise a came running through the door, followed by a and a

Oscar knew that these were the owners of the house as everything suddenly became very quiet and well behaved. These owners did not say a word, but very threateningly one of them picked up a Oscar thought he had better leave.

He tried to get to the door but a got in his way and a caught him around the neck and tried to keep him there. Oscar rushed out the door very frightened. As he ran to the yellow door in the cliff he heard a chasing him. A almost caught up to him. Upon reaching the door, he caught a last look at a and a which were right behind him.

Breathlessly he banged the door shut and ran to the stump to sit and catch his breath. When he next looked at the cliff he saw that the door was gone and he felt very sleepy.

Fred's Trip

"....." denotes a space that the listeners fill in. The best way is to give each a piece of paper with a noun on it (just about any -- the crazier the better) and at each stop, point to a different person so that they know to read their paper.

* * * * *

Fred went on a magical trip to see that his travel agent arranged for him. First, he had to pack and so that he would feel right at home while on his trip.

The ride on wasn't all too comfortable, as all of a sudden, went up to him and asked, "Are you feeling all right? You look like"

Well, Fred made it all right to his destination, but he was still in for the shock of his life when, as he tried to hail to take him to his hotel, asked him where he wanted to go. Fred was so surprised that all he could say was the name of the hotel he was going to.

At the hotel, asked him for his name and if he had a reservation. Fred just stared at him, vaguely noticing playing pool in the corner. Finally, he got his room key and went up to see his room. soon followed with his bags. But when he got there, he found swimming in his waterbed. Somewhat perturbed, he asked him to leave his room and find a room of his own.

The next morning, Fred woke up, thinking, "Gee, what a bad dream." But he was surprised to find he was still in the hotel room. He called room service and asked for breakfast, not expecting which was on the tray that was brought up and placed before him. "Well, at least it's not"

Fred left the hotel to look at the sights. He saw,, and had a ride around on, Fred was beginning to think that this place was a little strange. Even more so when he ate of the city for lunch. Later, he found with big, googly eyes asking him if he would donate money to

Late in the afternoon, came up to him and asked, "Are you new around here?"

Fred said, a little annoyed, "Well, I'm a tourist, if that's what you mean."

He was promptly told, "Take my advice. Most people don't go around carrying, The police might get suspicious."

Fred decided that he should. Fortunately, the rest of the day was uneventful, except for, which he passed by that night.

The next morning, Fred called accidentally called, thinking that he'd really called the airport. He'd had enough of his trip and wanted to go home.

Back at home, he exclaimed to his friends, "Next time I go on vacation, I won't ask my travel agent. Instead I'm going someplace normal, to see,!"

The Nouns for the Fred and Oscar stories:

Try these or use your own.

Fred story: 26 different spaces

Oscar story: 32 different spaces

The Beatles, The Eiffel Tower, China, A Dead Psychiatrist, The Enterprise, A 3 Handed Doctor, Florida, A Pink Stereo, Micheal Jackson, A Submarine, A Bakery, A Shallow Sewer, A Moon Car, The Sun, A Heavy Watch, Superman, A Bad Movie, A Dog, T-Shirt, A Fat Nurse, A Rotten Apple, A Crooked Hockey Stick, A Hot Light Bulb, A Bottle of Warm Milk, A Bottle of Yellow Ink, A Witche's Broom, A Wilted Pickle, A Pink Mouse, A Baby Chick, A Coffee Pot, A Burnt Pancake, A Pillow, A Bar of Dirty Soap, A

Bent Hammer, A Bowl of Dead Flies, An Elephant with Bad Breath, A Rotten Egg, A Large Rubber Band, A Bunch of Rotten Bananas, A Black Snake, A Big Toothbrush, A Harmonica, A Puppy Dog, A Leaky Fire Hose, The Staff Show, The Cafeteria

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Let's Go on a Ghost Hunt

Want to go on a ghost hunt?
Then repeat everything I say and do.

All right?

Let's go!

(Begin to walk in place while slapping thighs with hands. Keep this up during the following chant.)

Oh look!

There a bridge!
Can't go 'round it.
Can't go under it.
Better go over it.

All right?

Let's go!

(Beat your chest to make a thumping sound for crossing the bridge. When you read the other side, begin walking again.)

Oh look!

There's a field.
Can't go round it.
Can't go under it.
Better go through it.

All right?

Let's go!

(Make motions of parting grass and tiptoeing through, making swish...Swish" sounds. After having crossed the field, begin walking again.)

Oh look!

There's a swamp!
Can't go round it.
Can't go under it.
Better wade in it.

All right?
Let's go!

(Pretend your hands are boots: pick them up one by one and make sucking noises with your mouth as you wade across the swamp. When you reach the other side, start walking again.)

Oh look!
There's a stream!
Can't go 'round it.
Can't go under it.
Better swim through it.

All right?
Let's go!

(Making swimming motions with your arms: after you have crossed the stream, begin walking again.)

Oh look!
There's a tree!
Can't go 'round it.
Can't go under it.
Better climb up it.

All right?
Let's go!

(Make motions of climbing a tree. When you are at the top, put hand to brow and look out one way.)

Oooooooooohhhhhhhh!
(Look other way)

Oooooooooohhhhhhhh!

I see a house!
It looks like a haunted house.

All right?
Let's go!

(Make motions of climbing down a tree. When you are at the bottom, continue walking very softly and cautiously as you enter the haunted house.)

OOOOOOOOHHHHHHHH!
It's DARK in here!
I see some stairs.
Better go up them.
(Walk upstairs cautiously.)

I see a dark, dark door.
Better open it.
(Open door with one hand, making screeching noise.)

Oh NO!
(Reach out with your hand as if feeling something.)

I feel something.
(Put your hand to your ear.)

I hear something.

It sounds like a GHOST.
(Cup hands around your eyes and look ahead.)

I see something.
It looks like a GHOST.
IT IS A GHOST!!!
(Jump in the air.)

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!!
(Retrace your steps as rapidly as possible doing all the motions.)

Out the door...
Down the steps...
Up the tree...
Down the tree...
Across the stream...
Through the swamp...
Across the field...
Over the bridge...
Back home and
SLAM THE DOOR!

Tall Tales and Campfire Stories

The Bronze Rat

A tourist wanders into a back-alley antique shop in San Francisco's Chinatown. Picking through the objects on display he discovers a detailed, life-sized bronze sculpture of a rat. The sculpture is so interesting and unique that he picks it up and asks the shop owner what it costs.

"Twelve dollars for the rat, sir," says the shop owner, "and a thousand dollars more for the story behind it."

"You can keep the story, old man," he replies, "but I'll take the rat."

The transaction complete, the tourist leaves the store with the bronze rat under his arm. As he crosses the street in front of the store, two live rats emerge from a sewer drain and fall into step behind him. Nervously looking over his shoulder, he begins to walk faster, but every time he passes another sewer drain, more rats come out and follow him. By the time he's walked two blocks, at least a hundred rats are at his heels, and people begin to point and shout. He walks even faster, and soon breaks into a trot as multitudes of rats swarm from sewers, basements, vacant lots, and abandoned cars. Rats by the thousands are at his heels, and as he sees the waterfront at the bottom of the hill, he panics and starts to run full tilt.

No matter how fast he runs, the rats keep up, squealing hideously, now not just thousands but millions, so that by the time he comes rushing up to the water's edge a trail of rats twelve city blocks long is behind him. Making a mighty leap, he jumps up onto a light post, grasping it with one arm while he hurls the bronze rat into San Francisco Bay with the other, as far as he can heave it. Pulling his legs up and clinging to the light post, he watches in amazement as the seething tide of

rats surges over the breakwater into the sea, where they drown.

Shaken and mumbling, he makes his way back to the antique shop.

"Ah, so you've come back for the rest of the story," says the owner.

"No," says the tourist, "I was wondering if you have a bronze lawyer."

Betty Rapkins

Once upon a time, way up in the very north of Canada, there lived a trapper named Sam. He was a poor man, but a great reader, who shared his hard and lonely life with several well-thumbed adventure yarns and a large shaggy dog called Rover.

Now Rover wasn't much of a dog as purebreds go, his pedigree having taken many a turn for the worse. You'd be hard put to say whether he was mostly terrier or wolfhound or huskie. But he was big and likable and, because of the cold climate, had a really exceptionally thick shaggy coat.

One day, as Sam tramped along his trap lines, he called in at another trapper's hut. The hut was empty but, on the table, was a newspaper. Not a very up-to-the-minute newspaper, but a lot more up-to-date than anything Sam had read lately. So he fell upon it eagerly and read it from cover to cover. And there, on the back page, an item caught his eye. It said that, way down in the southern part of the country, an eccentric millionaire was offering half his fortune if only someone would bring him his dying wish, a really shaggy dog.

This piece of news had a startling effect on Sam. Here at last was a way to make his fortune. It was obvious! No more struggling through bitter winters. No more loneliness and hardship. He would simply head south with big, oh-so-shaggy Rover and the ailing millionaire would be a happy man. And so, of course, would Sam.

Carefully he tore the item from the newspaper and placed it in his innermost pocket. Whistling for the dog, he hurried to his own cabin and there made preparations for his journey. It would be a long haul through some of the worst of the winter months, but he could do it!

And so, with packsack and snowshoes, and Rover on a makeshift lead, he headed south.

(At this point you should add your own horrific tales of icy crevasses, blizzards, starvation, polar bears, thin ice, thick snow- anything to make the journey as difficult and as courageous as possible.)

Weeks passed as Sam and Rover, footsore, frostbitten and fuddled from lack of food, fought their way nearer and nearer to the millionaire's deathbed. Would they find his house? Would he have found another dog? Would he still be alive? Urgently, Sam made inquiries at each trading post or small homestead he passed.

"My word, that's a shaggy dog you have there!" folks remarked whenever he stopped.

As he drew nearer to civilization, he learned with great relief that the search for a dog continued and that the millionaire's mansion lay at the top of a steep hill just visible on the horizon.

Up they climbed, tired and tattered, arriving eventually at the huge oak-studded front door. Raising a weatherbeaten hand, Sam tugged at the wrought iron bell-pull. Distantly the bell clanged. The door opened and a butler stood in the doorway.

"I've come about the shaggy dog story in this newspaper," said Sam, carefully drawing out the clipping from his innermost pocket and offering Rover's lead to the manservant.

Silently the butler withdrew with the dog. Sam listened to his footsteps cross the vast hall and ascend the massive circular staircase. He waited patiently on the doorstep, dreaming of the luxury soon to be his. At last the butler reappeared. Solemnly he handed back the dog.

"Not shaggy enough," he said, and shut the door.

A young Scout was travelling on a long train trip across Canada. Sitting across from him was an older man, very neatly and precisely dressed. Across his knees he carried a briefcase upon which he nervously drummed his fingers. Since he looked to be rather an angry sort of man, the boy didn't like to start a conversation.

Presently the man opened the briefcase and took out two paper napkins, a pocket knife and an apple. Carefully he peeled and cored the apple. He placed all the peelings on one of the two napkins and folded it into a neat parcel. Then he moved his briefcase to one side, stood up, and walked to the end of the coach. By craning his neck, the boy was able to watch him move out onto the little platform at the end of the car and throw the parcel of peel onto the tracks.

When the man returned he dusted his hands, sat down and lifted the briefcase back up across his knees. He picked up the peeled and cored apple, carefully cut it into thin slices, placed the slices onto the second napkin and made a similar neat parcel. To the boy's amazement he then repeated his routine. He moved to the end of the coach and threw the parcel on the line. When he returned, he picked up his briefcase, took out two more napkins and an orange which he began to peel... (Now you spin out the story, having the man take all kinds of fruit, one at a time, from his case, peel each piece and throw away first the peel and then the fruit itself)

At last the young Scout could contain himself no longer and simply had to ask the man what he was doing.

"I'm making a fruit salad," said the man.

"Then why do you keep throwing it away?" the boy asked.

"I should think that was obvious," snapped the man. "I'm throwing it away because I don't like fruit salad!"

There once was a sailor returning to his ship. Just as he approached the edge of the dock, he slipped and fell into the water between ship and dockside. As he hit the water, the ship began to swing toward the harbour wall, and he would have been crushed to death had not a little man, with great presence of mind, thrown a rope and hauled him to safety.

"Whew, thanks!" said the sailor. "You saved my life. Tell me, is there anything I can do for you in return?"

"Well actually," said the man, "there is something. I'd dearly like to work aboard ship and, in fact, I was just on my way to look for a job when I saw you in the water. If you could put in a word for me. I'd be greatly obliged."

"Done!" said the sailor. He took the little man on board and tracked down his immediate superior. "This man saved my life just now, and he really would very much like to have a job on the ship."

"Well, I don't know," said the Petty Officer. "We have a full ship's complement, but I'll certainly put in a word on his behalf to my superior. What does he do?"

"I'm a Gloop Maker," said the little man eagerly.

Not wishing to appear ignorant in front of his subordinate, the Petty Officer didn't like to ask what exactly a Gloop Maker was, so he went to see the Chief Petty Officer.

"This man saved the life of one of my seamen," he told the Chief. "Do you think we could find him a job aboard? He's a Gloop Maker."

Not wishing to appear ignorant in front of his subordinate, the Chief asked the Warrant Officer, who asked the Sub-Lieutenant and so on, all the way through the chain of command until the request reached the Captain. After congratulating the little man, the Captain, not wanting to appear ignorant, named him

ship's Gloop Maker and ordered the Supply Officer to provide whatever materials were necessary for work to commence.

The little man asked for a strong block and tackle fitted up on the afterdeck, a small stool, a hammer and chisel, a portable furnace, a lump of iron measuring four metres by four metres, several kilograms of copper and several more of silver.

As the ship sailed, the little man set his stool alongside the huge chunk of iron, lit the furnace and began to melt down the copper and silver. Then, with much hammering and chiseling, he began to add blobs of copper and curlicues of silver to the sides of the lump of iron.

Each day crew members stopped and stared at the wondrously strange thing taking shape at the ship's stern. But not wishing to appear ignorant, nobody asked the Gloop Maker what he actually was making.

"Coming along nicely," said the captain as he made his daily rounds.

"Any idea precisely when it will be-ah-ready?"

"Oh yes," said the man. "At 1400 hrs. on July 15 we shall sail through the centre of the Bermuda Triangle. That's when it'll be ready, and I'd like the crew assembled on deck at that hour, if you please, sir."

And so, the great day dawned, the men assembled and the Gloop Maker put down his hammer and chisel. Proudly he stood back and indicated that the block and tackle should be lowered onto his masterpiece, whose copper and silver curlicues gleamed in the sun. Carefully he directed it to be lifted from the deck and swung round until it hung over the sea at the ship's stern.

"Ready, steady, go!" he cried, and he cut it free. And, as it fell into the deep blue waters of the Atlantic, it went, "GLOOP!"

Old John and the Devil

A long while back, there was a blacksmith named old John, who lived in a little Georgia village. Now John, he was a mean tempered old codger who didn't like anyone, especially children. One day, an old man came hobbling up to old John's blacksmith shop.

"Mister," said John with a nod. John's pa had told him that if he was ever disrespectful to anyone older than himself he'd give him the licking of his life. Old John's pa was dead, but he had been mean enough when he was alive for John to half expect him to leap up out of the grave with a switch a-ready.

"Can ah have some water?" The old man asked.

John reckoned he could and brought him a cold dipperfull.

Instead of drinking it, the old man threw it down; and before you could say Jee Whitikers, there stood before John, Saint Peter in all of his glory.

"John, I am Saint Peter. Once a year I come down from Heaven and see if there's one man who will help someone else. If he does, I give 'em three wishes."

A couple beats passed.

"You fer real, mister?" John asked.

"Yes."

"Well, alright. Number one: I have me this rose bush out front. Every day, some durn kid comes by and picks one for his girl. Gets to so there ain't none left by the middle of June. I wish that who ever picks one of them roses gets grabbed up in that bush and gets beat by them thorns until I say when!"

Saint Peter looked at John. "You sure you want such a mean wish?"

"Durn right."

Peter glared. "Well I have to give it to you but I really hate doing it."

The Rose bush shivered and shook and was still.

"There, John. Two more."

"Two. I have me a rocking chair on the front porch. After a long day of workin', I like t' sit down and rest, but there's always some durn kid siting in it. I wish that whenever somebody sits in that chair, they have to rock and rock and rock until I say quit."

"Nothing I can say to dissuade you, John?"

"Nope."

At that, the chair rocked back and forth madly for a moment, and stood still.

"Well John, I must say, you're a-makin' me upset. You've got one wish left. If'n I were you, I'd make it a good one. The Lord's-a watching you."

"Well then he should see it when those durn kids come in mah shop and tap at my anvil - keeps me from working! I wish that they'd have to keep hammerin' and hammerin' that thing until I say stop."

"John, that's positively reprehensible! If I wasn't a saint, I'd hit ye for wanting stuff like that. But a deal is a deal."

The hammer lept up in the air and smote the anvil so hard it sounded like thunder. Then all was still, and Saint Peter, still shaking his head in disgust, faded from view.

Boy, old John sure had his bit of fun with those wishes. Kids went home with scratches all over their legs from getting bush-whipped. They stumbled home after rocking hours and hours. They had sore arms for weeks after beating the anvil with a hammer for a whole day. Yes, indeed, he had his fun.

And so did the Devil. Every day for years, he would look in glee to see what John did next. It was fun watching, but one day, he decided it was time to take John on down to Hades. He sent one of his smaller devils to bring John in.

John was sitting on his chair that day, rocking contentedly, when in a puff of smoke, a little devil appeared before him.

"John, I aim to take ye back to mah Daddy." The small demon said.

John smoked his pipe. "Alright, let me get some clothes. You sit here and I'll be back in a jiffy."

The devil sat and rocked. When John came back, the little guy tried to stand, but he was stuck to the chair!

"Rock, chair, Rock!" shouted John.

The little devil was snapped back and forth until he got the worst whiplash you've ever seen.

Finally, he shouted, "Let me go and I'll leave ye alone!"

So John said, "Stop rocking, chair."

The chair tossed the devil into the yard and stopped. The little devil glared at John and disappeared in a black cloud of smoke.

John chuckled.

The next day, the Devil sent his older son.

The little devil appeared in a boiling cloud of brimstone.

"You're coming with me, John, and I ain't a-gonna sit in that there chair!"

John said, OK, he'd been found out. Just come here and help him finish the horse shoe he was making and he'd come.

The devil picked up the hammer and started pounding. But when he was through, he couldn't stop. He kept pounding harder and harder until he thought his arm would fall off.

"Let off, John! Let off and I'll go back home!"

John let off and the little devil limped off home.

When the Devil heard from his son what had happened, he was furious.

"If ye can't do a job right, I'll do it mah-self!" he roared.

The next day, John was in the front yard pitching horseshoes on a Sunday when the Big Daddy Devil himself appeared.

"John!" He shouted, 'midst thunder and lightning and smoke. "John, you're a-comin' with me and a-comin' now!"

John was scared now, but he didn't dare let it show.

"I reckon you can wait until I feel like going, old man," He said impudently.

This really set the devil off! "Ah've a mind to thrash ye, living in my land and talking like that to me!" (For everyone who's been to Georgia knows that the Devil must favor it - why else would he make it so hot?)

Well, the Devil went to make good on his threat and tried to grab a thorny stick off the rose bush. The rosebush grabbed the Devil and pulled him inside and stuck and pricked and scratched and scraped him until the thunder died down and the smoke cleared off and left the Devil crying for mercy!

"Let me go John and I'll never bother you again! I promise!"

John let him be pricked a while longer, for good measure, and then let him leave to lick his wounds.

John lived a happy (for him) life and died years later.

After climbing the stairs to Heaven, he saw Saint Peter going down to grant another person three wishes, just as he had granted John those many years ago.

"Oh no ye don't, John!" he cried when he saw where John was headed, "You ain't wanted up there! Go down to the Devil where ye belong!"

John turned sadly and went to the gates of Hades.

"Let me in!" He called.

"No!" shouted the Devil. "I'm afraid of ye. Go to Heaven!" The last word was spoken like a curse.

"They won't have me."

"Neither will I. But here," -and he handed him a glowing bucket, filled with burning embers- "Take these coals from mah Hades and go start one of your own. Just find a good place and dump 'em down on the ground."

John took them and reluctantly left.

And so long after this happened, whenever the Mountain People see a will-o-the-wisp floating ghostly red across the mountains, they say, "There goes old John, still trying to find a place to put his own pocket of Hades"

The story you just read was passed down along the generations to a wise old storyteller I met in Georgia. By telling it to others, you can continue the tradition of oral story telling that has survived for hundreds of years. Just one thing - tell it in your own words; that's one of the aspects to oral story telling that makes the craft unique.

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Home Alone

I hate to admit it, but this happened to me way back in 1980--

A few years after graduating from university, I returned to my parents' home to retrieve a considerable number of storage boxes that I had left with them. These boxes were filled with books, course notes, old homework projects, etc that I had kept. I decided to weed through them and eliminate as much junk as I could.

Not having the heart to dump all that hard work into the dustbin, I decided to grab a six-pack, settle down in front of the downstairs fire place and ceremoniously burn four years worth of college memorabilia. I managed to get through about five of the 15 or so boxes piled around me when I realized I could not possibly sort through each box page-by-page. In the interest of time, I decided to do a cursory scan of the contents to determine if anything 'jumped out' as worth saving. Well, box number six appeared to be loaded with Psychology and Logic 101 junk so I took the short cut and tossed the whole box on the funeral pyre before me.

I popped open beer number four and watched the box smoulder. Raising the can, I gave one last salute to those two unmemorable courses as the box erupted into a roaring inferno.

The papers were consumed rapidly.

So were the ancient contents of the dresser drawer that I had hastily dropped into the bottom of that box when packing two years earlier. Dang, I had forgotten all about that stuff. The toothbrush and hairbrush went up rather well.....also that packet of disposable plastic razors, dental floss and contact lens case and a bunch of junk I don't even remember. Of course, I didn't even know that stuff was going up in smoke as I sat there. Just chugged the beer and watched. It burned

great...right down to that full can of deodorant that was in there with it all.

I had got about half the beer down when that deodorant can finally decided it had had enough. What happened next I can only compare to the scene from "2001" where that Dave Bowman guy is falling through all those lights with that look on his face. I heard a BOOM so loud that my brain only registered it as a high-pitched squeal. The contents of the fireplace right down to the last ash were propelled out with such velocity that all I could see were a multitude of bright streaks emanating from a point about three feet in front of me (ala 2001). Big blue shock wave knocked me back. Spill the beer? You bet. Caught me off guard? He-- yes. Felt like I jumped on a live grenade? Guess so. One second I was watching that inferno burn from the outside, the next second I was watching it from the inside.

The human brain reverts to 'primordial slime' mode when thrown into a situation like this. All higher-order functions vaporize. Guess it's all those endorphins and endomorphines hitting it at once. It took a couple of seconds to get the 'reasoning' capability of my brain back on-line. I jumped up, looked at my hands and feet, touched my face and realized that I was indeed intact. Holy Cow, I was completely untouched. Not even a soot mark on me. Although I might possibly qualify as a human cannon ball, there would be no Richard Pryor imitation tonight, folks.

I looked through the thick smoke toward the fireplace. What WAS a 6-inch deep accumulation of one winter's ashes was now squeaky clean. Blasted it right out. All those burning embers were now sitting on the deep-pile carpet behind me. ALL over the room. I grabbed the little shovel from the fireplace set and scooped as fast as I could. As soon as I filled the shovel, I'd run to the fireplace, empty it and run back. Some embers were 30 feet down the hall. I guess I set the Guinness World Record for "Hot ember pickup with a little

shovel" in those next few minutes. I did manage to avoid setting my folks' house on fire, and the carpet only had one or two real serious melted spots on it. I DID find the deodorant can too- it had left the fireplace at some ungodly serious velocity, hit the wall at the far end of the room and come to rest directly behind where I was sitting. Dang thing was split wide open along the weld and peeled back almost flat. Burned black, too. Looked like reentry junk.

After I got the Fire Marshal Bill stuff under control, I grabbed beer number five, popped the top and thought about how I was gonna get the remaining mess cleaned up. Close examination revealed that everything was coated with a heavy layer of ash. Heck, a vacuum cleaner will get this stuff up no problem.

Gee, how lucky could I be? I didn't get decapitated, the house is still on its foundation, I got a GREAT story for the grandkids and the cleanup is gonna be a cinch. I grabbed my mom's upright out of the closet and started to work.

Ever have one of those split-seconds of consciousness when you realize you survived something really bad but you sense that it's not quite over yet? Well, I never have, but I wish I had felt that way at this point. Would have clued me in as to what was about to happen.

There I was, sucking up ashes with an upright vacuum. Too bad not all of them were cold. That upright vacuum swallowed ONE LITTLE ITTY BITTY HOT EMBER that was sitting there on the carpet. It flew right up inside it and sat on that big ol' pile of carpet lint way up in that bag. Heck, that bag hadn't been emptied in a long time. And all that air rushing in there made that little bitty hot ember REAL happy. Next thing I know, the side of that vacuum is glowing red hot. By the time I figured out what was happening, there was a two foot flame blowing out a hole in the side. It really looked and sounded sorta

pretty, like a fighter jet on full afterburner. Diamond shock pattern and all.

Again, my brain reverted to primordial slime mode. All higher-order functions ceased and all I remember thinking was "T-h-r-o-w v-a-c-u-u-m".

I pitched it as hard as I could towards the open basement door, hoping it would make it to the patio outside. The distance was about 20 feet. In slow-motion it looked like one of those old NASA films where the rocket goes psycho right off the launch pad. There it was, sailing brush end first with a nice slow roll...fire belching out the side. As the umbilical pulled out of the wall, the flame settled into a long trail of sparks. The vehicle had plenty of initial velocity and it looked like a good downrange trajectory.....right up to the point it passed through the plate glass window to the right side of the door.

Yep, I swear this happened as written.

Nuclear Picnic

Today's culinary topic is: how to light a charcoal fire.

Everybody loves a backyard barbecue. For some reason, food just seems to taste better when it has been cooked outdoors, where flies can lay eggs on it. But there's nothing worse than trying to set fire to a pile of balky charcoal.

The average back-yard chef, wishing to cook hamburgers, tries to ignite the charcoal via the squirt, light, and wait method, wherein you squirt lighter fluid on a pile of briquettes, light the pile, then wait until they have turned a uniform gray colour. When I say "they have turned a uniform gray colour," I am referring to the hamburgers. The briquettes will remain as cold and lifeless as Leonard Nimoy. The backyard chef will keep this up - squirting, lighting, waiting; squirting, lighting, waiting - until the bacterial level in the side dishes has reached the point where the potato salad rises up from its bowl, Bloblike, and attempts to mate with the corn. This is the signal that it's time to order Chinese food.

The problem is that modern charcoal, manufactured under strict consumer- safety guidelines, is one of the least-flammable substances on Earth. On more than one occasion, quick-thinking individuals have extinguished a raging house fire by throwing charcoal on it. Your backyard chef would be just as successful trying to ignite a pile of rocks.

Is there a solution? Yes. There happens to be a technique that is guaranteed to get your charcoal burning very, very quickly, although you should not attempt this technique unless you meet the following criterion: You are a complete idiot.

I found out about this technique from alert reader George Rasko, who sent me a letter describing something he came across on the World Wide Web, a computer network that you

should definitely learn more about, because as you read these words, your 11-year-old is downloading pornography from it.

By hooking into the World Wide Web, you can look at a variety of electronic "pages," consisting of documents, pictures, and videos created by people all over the world. One of these is a guy named (really) George Goble, a computer person in the Purdue University engineering department. Each year, Goble and a bunch of other engineers hold a picnic in West Lafayette, Indiana, at which they cook hamburgers on a big grill. Being engineers, they began looking for practical ways to speed up the charcoal-lighting process.

"We started by blowing the charcoal with a hair dryer," Goble told me in a telephone interview. "Then we figured out that it would light faster if we used a vacuum cleaner."

If you know anything about (1) engineers and (2) guys in general, you know what happened: The purpose of the charcoal-lighting shifted from cooking hamburgers to seeing how fast they could light the charcoal.

From the vacuum cleaner, they escalated to using a propane torch, then an acetylene torch. Then Goble started using compressed pure oxygen, which caused the charcoal to burn much faster, because as you recall from chemistry class, fire is essentially the rapid combination of oxygen with the cosine to form the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (or something along those lines).

By this point, Goble was getting pretty good times. But in the world of competitive charcoal-lighting, "pretty good" does not cut the mustard. Thus, Goble hit upon the idea of using - get ready - liquid oxygen. This is the form of oxygen used in rocket engines; it's 295 degrees below zero and 600 times as dense as regular oxygen. In terms of releasing energy, pouring liquid oxygen on charcoal is the equivalent of throwing a live squirrel into a room containing 50 million Labrador retrievers. On Gobel's World Wide Web page (the address is

<http://ghg.ecn.purdue.edu/>), you can see actual photographs and a video of Goble using a bucket attached to a 10-foot-long wooden handle to dump 3 gallons of liquid oxygen (not sold in stores) onto a grill containing 60 pounds of charcoal and a lit cigarette for ignition. What follows is the most impressive charcoal-lighting I have ever seen, featuring a large fireball that, according to Goble, reached 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit. The charcoal was ready for cooking in - this has to be a world record - 3 seconds.

There's also a photo of what happened when Goble used the same technique on a flimsy \$2.88 discount-store grill. All that's left is a circle of charcoal with a few shreds of metal in it. "Basically, the grill vaporized," said Goble. "We were thinking of returning it to the store for a refund."

Looking at Goble's video and photos, I became, as an American, all choked up with gratitude at the fact that I do not live anywhere near the engineers' picnic site. But also, I was proud of my country for producing guys who can be ready to barbecue in less time than it takes for guys in less-advanced nations, such as France, to spit.

Will the 3-second barrier ever be broken? Will engineers come up with a new, more powerful charcoal-lighting technology? It's something for all of us to ponder this summer as we sit outside, chewing our hamburgers, every now and then glancing in the direction of West Lafayette, Indiana, looking for a mushroom cloud.

-- Thanks to Jim Hall

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Trainers

Here is funny or scary (scream the ending) campfire story. Only his mother and father called him Todd. To every Scout in Eagle District the name Todd suggested just one nickname, "TOAD", which Toad didn't mind at all. You see, Toad wanted, more than anything else in the world to win the smelly-trainer contest.

Toad's trainers were smelly. No doubt of that. But the first year he entered the Indian Nations Council Great Smelly Trainer Contest, he didn't even get third prize.

The second year Toad entered the smelly-trainer contest, he worked hard at it all year. He had already learned from a Scout that not wearing socks mattered. By not wearing socks, Toad made his trainers much, much smellier. In addition, Toad fudged on his showers. He turned on the water. He more or less got into the shower and more or less washed most of himself, including his hair. He knew his mom and dad could tell the difference between the smell of clean hair and the smell of dirty hair, but they trusted him to wash his feet. Toad did not wash his feet, which helped the smell of his trainers considerably.

Still, that second year Toad got only second place.

Toad was bitterly disappointed. After the contest, he stood sad and dejected by a large garbage can, trying to decide if he should just chuck those second-place trainer right into the garbage.

"Hey kid!" called a hoarse voice from the other side of the can.

"Hey, kid!!!" the voice insisted.

"Yeah?" said Toad.

"How much you wanna win that contest?"

"More than anything!" said Toad.

"I know how you can win, " the voice said.

Toad peered around the garbage can, where a big skinny kid sat on the ground.

"What'll ya give me if I tell?"

Without hesitation, Toad offered his brand new back pack, the thing he loved most, the one he'd worked all summer to earn the money for. He'd give the back pack. Toad offered it to the kid sitting beside the garbage can.

"Here's what ya do," said the kid, and he whispered instructions into Toad's ear, then he put a small vial into Toad's hand.

"Thanks" said Toad.

The kid stood up, shrugged.

With a smile of pure delight, Toad offered the tall skinny kid his back pack, but the kid turned his back. "Awww....Keep it," was all he said.

Toad raced home. The contest rules said you had to start the year with a clean pair of trainers. Some Scouts tried to cheat, but not Toad. He was sure he'd win, for in the vial was essence of trainer, foot sweat mixed with scrapings from the trainers of the last four winners of the Indian Nations Council Great Smelly Trainer Contest grand prize. Toad put the precious droplets into his new trainers. The results were instant and made Toad's eyes water.

All that year he went sockless and put plastic bags on his trainers at night to keep the smell in, even though his parents made him put the trainers outside. After a few days, at the next Troop meeting, even his Scout Master, insisted that Toad's trainers be left outside. Toad did as his Scout Master said, first

bagging the trainers to keep the concentrated smell from getting diluted.

Toad's dedication and hard work paid off. As the day of the Indian Nations Council Great Smelly Trainer Contest drew closer, it was clear to all of the Scouts that Toad would be the winner.

The first judge, a new, young assistant Scout master, approached Toad's trainers. From more than a yard away, he began to retch.

The Second judge, an old, experienced Scout Master, wiped his eyes, waved a group of papers before his face, and backed away from Toad's trainers.

The Third judge, the District Executive took a whiff, grinned and said, "Now that's more like it!" and awarded Toad First Prize!

Toad was giddy with bliss. When the judges asked if he'd like to donate the trainers to the Scouting Museum, Toad said "no". He'd wear them home. He'd savor being champion.

Off Toad went, right foot, left foot, wearing championship trainers, ones you could smell from afar. Right foot, left foot.

Toad was a good long way from home when his left foot started to itch something awful right around his toes, but Toad did not stop to scratch. He went on and on. And it was not long before Toad felt something fierce right around his toes, but Toad kept on walking.

And he walked and he walked, and the itch got to itching the whole sole of his right foot and then the whole sole of his left foot.

But Toad kept on walking, without stopping to scratch until he got home. And the itching was terrible-clear up to his ankles!

With a sigh of relief, Toad got home and reached down to take off his championship smelly trainers.

But when Toad took off the Championship Smelly Trainers and got ready to scratch, Toad discovered that.....

HIS
FEET
WERE
GONE!

A Porker in the Family

I (a young veterinary student) had been asked to make the rounds of the local farms one week in the absence of my boss, Dr. Johnson. Most of the week was uneventful; the usual horse vaccinations, sprained dog paws, and sick cows. However, when I got to the MacPherson farm, I saw something extraordinary.

While I was talking to farmer MacPherson, a pig came ambling around the corner of the barn. What was extraordinary about it was that the pig had three artificial legs!

I asked farmer MacPherson about this curious animal. Why would anybody give a pig even one artificial leg, much less three?

"Wal," he drawled, "that there ain't no ordinary pig. Let me tell you -- one day ah was out baling some hay, and I hopped off'n the tractor to check the tire, which was kinda wobbly. Wouldn't'cha know it, the tractor started to roll of its own accord, and trapped me right there under the wheel. Just then old Pinky -- the pig, that is -- wandered by and saw whut'd happen, and skeedadled back to the house and fastened his teeth on my wife's dress, and wouldn't let go until he dragged her out to where I was layin', and then she got the tractor off me. That's one smart pig -- better'n Lassie, I'd say."

I was quite impressed. I new pigs were pretty intelligent, but I had never heard of a pig doing anything like that. "That's amazing," I said, "But that still doesn't explain the artificial limbs."

"Wal, lemme tell ya about another time," MacPherson said. "Mah son was down at the swimmin' hole yonder a couple summers ago, and he hit his head on a big log out in the middle of the water. He was about to go down for the third

time, when ol' Pinky jumped into the water, swam out to him, grabbed him by the shorts with the teeth, and drug 'im coughin' an' splutterin' up onto shore. Saved mah son's life, that pig did."

"Incredible!" I exclaimed. "Most pigs can't even swim! But the artificial legs...?"

"Wal, last year the old farmhouse burned down," the farmer continued. "Like as not we all would have been cinders, but for that little porker. We was all asleep when the fire started, but ol' Pinky ran squealing 'round the house 'til we all woke up, and went and dragged my youngest daughter from her bedroom just seconds 'fore the roof collapsed."

"That's one special pig," I admitted, "But please, tell me, why does Pinky have three artificial legs?"

"Wal," said farmer MacPherson, "A pig like that's just too good to eat all at once."

Just a Hike in the Woods

A guy's going on a hiking vacation through the mountains in Scotland. Before setting off into the hills, he stops into a small general store to get some supplies.

After picking out the rest of his provisions, he asks the old store owner, "Say, Mister, I'm going hiking up in the mountains, and I was wondering; do you have any wolves around here?"

"Yup," replies the owner.

"What kind?" asks the hiker.

"Well, we got black wolves and we got gnarlers," he replies.

"I see," says the hiker. "Do you have any of those wolf bells?"

"What do you mean?" asks the store owner.

"You know," replies the hiker, "those little tinkle-bells that people wear in wolf country to warn the wolves that they are coming, so they don't surprise the wolves and get attacked."

"Oh yeah," replies the owner. "They're over there," he says, pointing to a shelf on the other side of the store. The hiker selects a couple of the bells and takes them to the counter to pay for them.

"Tell me something, Mister," the hiker inquires, "how can you tell when you're in wolf territory, anyway?"

"By the scat," the old fellow replies, ringing up the hiker's purchases.

"Well, um, how can I tell if it's gnarler territory or black wolf territory?" the hiker asks.

"By the scat," the store owner replies.

"Well, what's the difference?" asks the hiker. "I mean, what's different between gnarler scat and black wolf scat?"

"The stuff that's in it," replies the store owner.

Getting a little frustrated, the hiker asks, "OK, so what's in gnarled wolf scat that isn't in black wolf scat?" he asks, an impatient tone in his voice.

"Wolf bells," replies the old man as he hands the hiker his purchases.

Save the Baby

[The following story is told much better in person, using appropriate physical gestures, than can be described in text; but I'll try. I will also admit that although the story has no sexual overtones, female Scouters invariably do not find it as amusing as male Scouters do, --- but the Cubs themselves always love it.]

In a large city apartment block, fire broke out. Fire fighters arrived on the scene only to find that a lady resident holding her small baby was stranded on an 18th floor balcony overlooking the alley at the rear of the building far above the height any rescue ladder might reach. All fire escape exits are indoors and filled with smoke or fire. There are at least twenty stories above the stranded woman and other tall apartment blocks just across the alley making the use of a helicopter rescue impossible. The fire is spreading rapidly. There is not enough time to stretch a rope from the apartment block across the alley. The only escape possible was to find a rope to lower herself, but with no rope available and a baby in tow, that option was not available. The firemen set up a rescue net below the balcony and shouted for the woman to "Jump".

"But the baby will be killed", shouted the frightened woman.

"Throw the baby and we will catch it.", shouted the firemen, "and then jump yourself."

"No, I'll miss and the baby will die.", screamed the panicking mother.

Just then a tall young man stepped out on a balcony one floor down in an apartment block across the alley. "Throw me the baby.", he shouted at the mother.

"No, you will not catch him and he will die.", screamed the woman. By now the fire is starting to come out the patio door on to the balcony where the woman is standing.

"Lady, I'm Jerry Rice of the San Fransico 49ers. I've never dropped a crucial pass in my life. Please, we don't have time to argue. Throw me the baby and then jump yourself." said the young man on the opposite balcony.

"Oh Jerry, you are my hero. My husband and I will find the TV channel showing every game you play. We have never missed one of your games. Thank goodness you have arrived. I know you will catch my baby and save his life." With that she throws the baby with what looks like a two handed lateral across the alley to the football player and leaps safely to the net below.

The football player catches the baby making one of those over the shoulder sensational receptions and the crowd below goes nuts cheering.

At that point, in a moment of excitement imagining he has just made another game winning touchdown, the football placer spikes his new catch to the ground and shouts, "Yesssssss."

[And now you understand why mothers seem to have no sense of humour on this one. Standing in front of your audience making numerous arm and body motions can greatly help the story. Virtually the entire last paragraph can shortened to: And he went "Yesssssss" (while you make the spiking motion with your arm).]

Why Cats Always Land on Their Feet

Long ago there was a King with a beautiful daughter. He was very fond of her and tried to make her life as happy as she made his. She loved cats and there were several kinds of beautiful cats brought as gifts from all over the world. There were Siamese cats from Siam, Russian blue point cats from Russia and many, many others. Since they had no way of spaying cats in this long ago age, there was soon a problem with the numerous cats running around the Castle. Before long there were so many cats that the King's guards came complaining that they could not walk their posts without tripping over them. They wanted to kill most of the cats, but the King would not hear of it because his daughter would be horrified. The King told his guards that they must find a humane way of ridding the castle of the cats or get used to marching around them. The guards talked among themselves and tried a few ideas, and this is how the first catapult was invented. Soon, whenever the Princess was not looking, a dozen or so cats would be flung over the castle walls. Now the castle walls were high, but not so high that all of the cats perished, just the ones that landed badly. Thus through the process of natural selection evolved in cats the ability to always land on their feet.

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The Dark-Sucker Theory

For years, it has been believed that electric bulbs emit light, but recent information has proven otherwise. Electric bulbs don't emit light; they suck dark. Thus, we call these bulbs Dark-Suckers.

The Dark-Sucker Theory and the existence of dark-suckers prove that dark has mass and is heavier than light.

First, the basis of the Dark-Sucker Theory is that electric bulbs suck dark. For example, take the Dark-Sucker in the room you are in. There is much less dark right next to it than there is elsewhere. The larger the Dark-Sucker, the greater its capacity to suck dark. Dark-Suckers in the parking lot have a much greater capacity to suck dark than the ones in this room.

As it is with all things, Dark-Suckers don't last forever. Once they are full of dark, they can no longer suck. This is proven by the dark spot on a full Dark-Sucker.

A candle is a primitive Dark-Sucker. A new candle has a white wick. You can see that after the first use, the wick turns black, representing all the dark that has been sucked into it. If you put a pencil next to the wick of an operating candle, it will turn black. This is because it got in the way of the dark flowing into the candle. One of the disadvantages of these primitive Dark-Suckers is their limited range.

There are also portable Dark-Suckers. In these, the bulbs can't handle all the dark by themselves and must be aided by a Dark Storage Unit. When the Dark Storage Unit is full, it must be either emptied or replaced before the portable Dark-Sucker can operate again.

Dark has mass. When dark goes into a Dark-Sucker, friction from the mass generates heat. Thus, it is not wise to touch an operating Dark-Sucker. Candles present a special problem as

the mass must travel into a solid wick instead of through clear glass. This generates a great amount of heat and therefore it's not wise to touch an operating candle-type Dark-Sucker.

Also, dark is heavier than light. If you were to swim just below the surface of the lake, you would see a lot of light. If you were to slowly swim deeper and deeper, you would notice it getting darker and darker. When you get really deep, you would be in total darkness. This is because the heavier dark sinks to the bottom of the lake and the lighter light floats at the top. This is why it is called light.

Finally, we must prove that dark is faster than light. If you were to stand in a lit room in front of a closed, dark closet, and slowly opened the closet door, you would see the light slowly enter the closet. But since dark is so fast, you would not be able to see the dark leave the closet.

Next time you see what is called an electric bulb, remember that it is really a Dark-Sucker.

Stories With A Moral

If Only ...

Won Lee was a stone cutter who lived in ancient China. He cut large stones and he cut small stones. He made them into ornaments for gardens. Some he cut to build houses. He was proud of his work, but sometimes he would think, "If only I had more money" or "If only I had less work."

One day, Won Lee was walking home from work. The sun was very hot and he was tired, so he sat down at the side of the road. He felt the heat of the sun and thought, "It's the sun that gives us the daylight, the warmth to grow our crops. Surely the sun must be the most powerful of all things."

Won Lee said quietly to himself, "God, if only I could be the sun. I would love to feel what it is like to be the most powerful, the greatest of all things."

God answered Won Lee. "You may become the sun." He said. And Won Lee became the sun. He felt wonderful; so strong and powerful. He shone down on the world far below.

After a few days, a puffy white cloud appeared in the sky. It drifted about and, when it came near Won Lee, it blotted out his rays and cast a shadow on the world. Won Lee was sad. Surely this cloud was more powerful than he? "If only I were the cloud. That would make me the greatest of all things," he said.

God heard, and again He answered: "Won Lee, you may become the cloud." So Won Lee floated about the sky feeling very grand.

One day, Won Lee saw a great black cloud coming his way. Soon it surrounded him, and he saw the black cloud dripping

droplets of water. The drops fell on the earth and made a mighty river.

Won Lee thought that this black cloud must be very powerful to swallow up a cloud and turn itself into a river, so he said, "If only I were the river. How mighty I would be. Then I would be truly happy."

Again God heard and answered: "Okay. You may be the river."

So Won Lee flowed along, feeling the mighty rush of water. Then he came to a bend in the river. There was a great boulder jutting out into the river. The great boulder held the river, swirling it back on itself.

Won Lee thought, "The rock ! The rock ! At last I have found the mightiest of all things. If this rock can hold back the raging river, then it is the greatest. If only I were this great big rock, I would be happy."

So God made Won Lee into the boulder and he stood there, holding back the water and feeling very great and happy. Then, one day, along came a man who cut a large piece off the boulder. Won Lee was sad. No longer was he the greatest if this man could come along and cut him up.

"If only I could be the man who cut up the stone, I would surely be the greatest," Won Lee thought.

And God said to Won Lee: "But you are the Stone Cutter!"

One Day At A Time

A friend of ours was walking down a deserted Mexican beach at sunset. As he walked along, he began to see another man in the distance. As he grew nearer, he noticed that the local native kept leaning down, picking something up and throwing it out into the water. Time and again he kept hurling things out into the ocean.

As our friend approached even closer, he noticed that the man was picking up starfish that had been washed up on the beach and, one at a time, he was throwing them back into the water.

Our friend was puzzled. He approached the man and said, "Good evening, friend. I was wondering what you are doing."

"I'm throwing these starfish back into the ocean. You see, it's low tide right now and all of these starfish have been washed up onto the shore. If I don't throw them back into the sea, they'll die up here from lack of oxygen."

"I understand," my friend replied, "but there must be thousands of starfish on this beach. You can't possibly get to all of them. There are simply too many. And don't you realize this is probably happening on hundreds of beaches all up and down this coast. Can't you see that you can't possibly make a difference?"

The local native smiled, bent down and picked up yet another starfish, and as he threw it back into the sea, he replied, "Made a difference to that one!"

(Jack Canfield and Mark V. Hansen, taken from "Chicken Soup for the Soul")

There are hundreds of thousands (millions) of boys around the world who can benefit from the Scouting experience. We can't reach them all, but even within our own groups we see our

task overwhelming, not making any difference. However, to that one boy in your den, pack, Troop or post who looked to you as a role model, a friend, an inspiration (even if he never told you) you've made a difference!

You Do Make A Difference -- in making our world a better place to be....One Boy At A Time!

Winter Cub Story

During our 1991 (Feb) winter camp, I was called to tell a story during campfire. The weather outside was bitterly cold (-25 Celsius) and the wind was howling. I hadn't given a story much thought, because I usually have one tucked away in the back of my mind for all occasions. This time I was stumped. After a couple milliseconds, the brain kicked in and the light went on. We were inside the main cabin for an indoor fire. I turned the lights down low, leaving only a small spotlight on the Wolf's head above the fireplace. I got a chair, turned it around & sat down on it backwards. The atmosphere was sombre, and quiet. You could hear the wind howling outside.

-- Start of Story

Years ago, right here at this camp, a Cub pack, much like ours came out for the weekend. As with most every pack, there's always one Cub, who's much better than everyone else in his camping skills. This Pack had an exceptional Cub, who everyone looked up to, to help them out if they were having any problems. This Cub could walk farther than anyone else, catch bigger fish, make a better snow-fort to sleep in, start a fire with one match every time, could snowshoe faster than the leaders, and many more skills. Everyone would ask him for help, because he was so good. The leaders relayed on him to help teach all the Cub skills, and he did it with a smile on his face. Everyone liked him because he was so friendly.

Saturday night, he and a few of his friends decided to sleep outside in a snow fort. The Cub helped everyone to get settled, before turning in himself. The Camp Chief came out to check on them periodically, so no one would get cold. In the middle of the night, the Cub was awoken by the call to nature. He woke up a couple of his buddies to go with him, as he knew that no one should go anywhere without a buddy. His friends told him that since he was the best Cub in the pack, and knew

so much, that there was no chance for something to go wrong. You all know, that flattery is great for one's ego, and this Cub was no different. He got dressed and ventured outside to one of the biffies, to complete his task.

After he had done, he got dressed again, and started back to his snow fort. But when he opened the door to the biffie, he saw that a storm had moved in. He started to return to his fort, but the tracks he had left had been blown over by the storm. He tried to find his way back, but the wind was driving the snow in his eyes and he couldn't see anything. He walked as fast as he could to where he thought the fort was, but he couldn't find it. He walked, and stumbled in the storm for what seemed a long time, when he realized he was in trouble. He remembered the first rule when lost in the winter: stop and build a fire. He found a spot to dig out a cave in a snow bank, and crawled in. He had an emergency kit with him, and quickly had a fire going.

The next morning, everyone awoke to find a clean, crisp layer of white snow had covered the camp. It didn't take long for the Cub's friends to realized that he was missing, and they ran to tell the rest of the camp. Everyone got dressed in their warmest clothes and quickly started a search party. They scoured the entire camp for hours, but couldn't find the Lost Cub. For the rest of the day, everyone searched for him. They called the police to help, but still couldn't find him. For days, search parties combed the area looking for the Cub, but he was never found.

It was a sad year for that Cub Pack. They had lost a great friend. In the Spring, they gathered again at the camp to search for the Cub's remains. Again, everyone searched everywhere, but couldn't find him.

I often walk through these woods at night, and often think about the Lost Cub. It's been said that if you are walking alone through these woods at night, you may feel a cold draft shiver

down your back. It maybe the Lost Cub reminding you to get a BUDDY!

-- End of Story

I've told this story a couple other times, and have gotten the same re-action; sadness & remorse from all. It's really helped to emphasize the "buddy system" in our Pack. I still get questions from older Cubs - Was that story real? I never answer.

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The Rabbi & The Soap Maker

A Rabbi and a soap maker were walking along and the soap maker questioned the Rabbi by asking, "What good is religion? There's been religion for a long time, but people are still bad to each other"

The Rabbi was silent until they saw a boy who was dirty from playing in the street. The Rabbi asked the soap maker, "What good is soap? We've had soap for many, many years and people still get dirty"

The soap maker protested the comparison and insisted that the soap had to be used in order to keep people clean. "Exactly my point", said the Rabbi. "Religion", he said, "has to be applied in order to do anybody any good."

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The Koolamunga Test

Long ago, somewhere in Africa, a little place called Koolamunga had a Scout Troop but no Cub Pack. When the missionary, John Cristy, sent out word that he was going to start a pack, all the boys who were too young to be Scouts rushed over to join.

John looked out at rows and rows of faces - black, white, brown, yellow, and some so dirty you couldn't tell. It was impossible to start a pack with 40 or 50 Cubs ! "You can't be a Cub until you are eight," he said, "so would everybody younger please go home."

Nobody left. The six and seven-year-olds stood as tall as they could and tried to look tough. John realized he would have to sort them out some other way. So he told them the Cub Law. And then he said, "Next week, we will have an obstacle race. You can all come, but I shall start the pack with the 12 boys who do their best to keep the Law during the race."

A big crowd gathered on race day. The Scouts came along to help John pick his 12 Cubs. John designed an obstacle course so tough that it automatically eliminated the boys who were too young. The others had to run half a kilometre downhill to the river through prickles and a mangrove swamp with knee-deep mud. Then they had to swim across the river. On the other side, they had to climb a steep bank, go along the top, cross over the river again by a fallen tree bridge, and finally climb 300 m up the hill to the finish.

"This is not a race," John told them. "It's a test to see who can really do his best to keep the Cub Law." And he was already sorting them out. Some jabbered away and didn't listen to the rules. One put his foot over the starting line. "Ready, steady, GO!" John shouted, and off they went.

Very soon, some of them were yelling and swearing at the prickles. In the swamp, some gave up, pretending they were hurt. One boy thought he would be clever and sneak along the bank instead of swimming across the river.

A small boy caught his foot in a floating branch and thought it was a crocodile. John didn't blame him for yelling, but noticed a red-headed boy swim back to pull the branch free. Then he saw a white hand shoot out and duck a black head. That settled the white boy's chances, but the black face came up smiling and the boy swam on without complaint. On the tree bridge, there was a good deal of bumping, some by mistake and some by mistake-on-purpose.

Only 20 boys finished the race, and the first 12 home were sure they would be chosen. But the Scouts put aside those who had cheated or taken short cuts, those who had pretended to be hurt, and those who had sworn or lost their temper.

John chose only boys who had done their best to keep the Cub Law. There were 11 of them. For the 12th, he chose a boy named Peter who was watching but hadn't taken part in the race. John knew his mother was ill. She'd asked Peter to look after the younger children to make sure they didn't fall into the river, and he did it without a grumble.

And who do you think he asked to be his sixers ? He chose the red-haired boy who had turned back to help with the crocodile that wasn't a crocodile, and the black boy who came up smiling after being ducked.

And that's how the 1st Koolamunga Pack began. If you'd been there, would you have been one of the 12 chosen ?

Miscellaneous Stories

The Farmer

There was this farmer who had many fields. And throughout all his fields, he worked very very hard at keeping all the animals away, and as such, out of his crops that he worked very very hard to plant.

And ... He was successful in keeping all the animals out. No birds, no deer, NOTHING got through all his wire fences and traps that he had set out to keep the animals out.

As time went on, this farmer got more and more lonely. So lonely as a matter of fact, that one day, he went out into his fields, held his arms out wide and called to all of the animals to come. He stood there all day and night with his arms out wide, calling to all the animals, but you know what, none of the animals came ... No, not one. ... And what was the reason none came?

All of the animals were afraid of the farmers ... new scarecrow out in the field.

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He Drew

This Poem was written by a Year 12 Student who committed suicide some 2 weeks later.

He always wanted to explain things.

But no one cared.

So he drew.

Sometimes he would draw and it wasn't anything. He wanted to carve it in stone or write it in the sky. He would lie out on the grass and look up in the sky. And it would be only him and the sky and the things inside him that needed saying. And it was after that he drew the picture. It was a beautiful picture. He kept it under his pillow and would let no one see it. And he would look at it every night and think about it. And when it was dark, and his eyes were closed, he could still see it. And it was all of him. And he loved it. When he started school he brought it with him. Not to show anyone, but just to have it with him like a friend. It was funny about school. He sat in a square, brown desk. Like all the other square, brown desks. And he thought it should be red. And his room was a square brown room. Like all the other rooms. And it was tight and close. And stiff. He hated to hold the pencil and chalk, With his arm stiff and his feet flat on the floor, Stiff. With the teacher watching and watching. The teacher came and spoke to him. She told him to wear a tie like all the other boys. He said he didn't like them. And she said it didn't matter. After that they drew. And he drew all yellow and it was the way he felt about morning. And it was beautiful. The teacher came and smiled at him. "What's this?" she said. "Why don't you draw something like Ken's drawing? Isn't that beautiful?" After that his mother bought him a tie. And he always drew airplanes and rocket ships like everyone else. And he threw the old picture away. And when he lay alone looking at the sky, it was big and blue

and all of everything. But he wasn't anymore. He was square inside And brown And his hands were stiff. And he was like everyone else. And the things inside him that needed saying didn't need it anymore. It had stopped pushing. It was crushed. Stiff. Like everything else.

Scouting Stories

Cub Scouts

Hear now the Cub Scouts legend; The tale of the Cub Scouts tribe; The tale of Akela its Chieftain.

'Hoo', called the owl in the darkness and Mowglie, the Indian boy Lay in his tipi and listened to the rustle of trees in the night.

'Boom' went the deep muffled beat of the great ceremonial drum; the braves of the tribe were convening, He wished he could answer that call.

Quick, like the flight of an arrow; Quiet, in the hush of the night; Before a great fire ring they gathered Awaiting Akela their Chief.

Here in the great council ring fire On top of the cliff there they met. Here often they come for decisions Here, too, the Great Spirit they sought.

Here they sought help from the Spirit On hunt or on warpath; in peace. Here they met their Chief Akela; Awaited his final decrees.

Now with the 'boom' of the big drum All was quiet, the night was quiet still. The great ceremonial fire, when lighted, illuminated the hill

The tom-toms began, set the rhythm, Akela stepped into the Ring. First low and slow, then ... like thunder... The beat as he danced near the fire.

Dancing with grace, full of gesture, In costume he told of his life. He told of the strength of his father, The powerful 'Arrow of Light'

'Kind Eyes' his mother, taught those things that only a mother can know. He once save her life with his arrow; His father helped fashion his bow.

The tom-toms beat on and his dance Told of trips to the forest, where wolf Taught him the ways of the wild life of the ground, of the tracks, ways to food.

Through dancing and gesture he told how he next faced the Bear and learned The meaning of Courage; and then He became a young Scout on the trail.

Akela, the Wise, closed his dance. By sign and by gesture he told How the Tribe can be strong only when The boys of the Tribe are quite strong.

He said this, 'The future is hidden But if we are strong and are brave, If we can teach our boys to be square, Our tribe will continue to be strong.'

"Let us name our tribe for the Bobcat, The Wolf and the Bear and the Scout, The Cub Scouts Tribe we'll be called and The strongest of all we will be."

Akela thus ended his dance The beat of the tom-tom was stilled. In silence the warriors stood, Then gave the great guttural "HOW"!

The fire burned low, all was still. No sound broke the hush on the hill, Save the crackle of embers and all The mysterious half- noises of night.

The braves raised their right hand toward heaven. "Living Circle" was formed with their left. The Cub Scouts pledge was then given; "To live and help live" was their pledge.

This, then, is the Cub Scouts legend. This, then, is the reason they're strong. They honor the pledge which they make; "To live and help live" is their goal.

Akela's Test

I found this as a skit in a 1962 edition of The How To Book Of Cub Scouting. I modified it for an advancement ceremony. I changed the main character from Brave Heart to Akela. I also changed the events a little to fit the advancement ranks we had. I left it as a ceremony when I included it here. You can use it as a ceremony or change it into a story or skit.

Baloo: Akela had to pass a test to prove himself worthy of becoming chief. All the braves were given four arrows. These were special arrows, once they had been used they would shatter. They could only eat food they had caught themselves. The brave who stayed out the longest would become chief.

Akela: I walked far from camp and stopped at the side of a clearing. I waited all night for a deer to come by. I took careful aim and shot. It provided me with food for many days. Its hide provided me with clothing.

Baloo: This showed that Akela had learned the basic skills he needed. It also showed the virtue of patience. The rank of Bobcat indicates the Cub Scout has learned the basic skills. Will _____ come up and join us by the campfire. Your parents will join you later. _____ has earned his (their) Bobcat badge(s).

Akela: I walked along the trail near the stream. There, I came upon a friend laying in the trail. He had used up all his arrows and was starving. I saw a squirrel in a nearby tree. I wanted to save my arrows for bigger game, but my friend was starving. So, I shot the squirrel for my friend.

Baloo: This showed Akela had learned the value of friendship and that he was unselfish. The Wolf badge indicates the Cub Scout has learned new things as he travels the trail of Scouting. Will _____ come up and join us by the campfire. _____ has earned his (their) Wolf badge(s).

Akela: As I followed the trail by the stream, I came face to face with a huge bear. It growled and started running toward me. I strung my bow, took careful aim and when he was near I shot and killed him. He provided me with food for many more days. His heavy coat provided me with shelter from the cold nights.

Baloo: This showed Akela is brave. This is also why honor the Cubs at the next level of accomplishment with the Bear badge. Will _____ come up and join us by the campfire. _____ has earned his (their) Bear badge(s).

Akela: The meat from the bear lasted for many days, but soon I had to continue on to search for more food. I came upon a wolf that had just killed a deer. The wolf saw me and ran off. I was hungry, but I had promised to only eat food I had killed, so I continued on.

Baloo: This showed Akela's honesty. To earn the Cub Scouts badge, the Cub Scout must learn the Boy Scout law which includes honesty. Will _____ come up and join us by the campfire. _____ has earned his (their) Cub Scouts badge(s).

Akela: I was many days from our camp. I needed food to give me the strength to make it back to camp. So, I tracked the wolf I had seen before. I took my last arrow, took careful aim and missed. I was scared because I had no food or arrows. As I started back to camp, I prayed to the great spirit. Suddenly, I saw the arrow; it was still whole. I followed the wolf's trail again. I took aim and shot him. I now had enough food to return home.

Baloo: Akela learned that sometimes you have to ask for help. Our Cub Scouts sometimes need help also. Their parents provide that help. So, will the parents please come up and stand behind their sons.

The Story of Dinizulu's Necklace

In 1888, when a British expedition was sent to Zululand, South Africa, it had to contend with Dinizulu, King of the Zulus - a clever, heavily built man, 6 ft. 7 ins. in height. On state occasions, Dinizulu wore a necklace about 12 feet in length. It consisted of 1,000 or more wood beads, made from a South African yellow wood and strung on a rawhide lace.

The necklace was a distinction conferred on royalty and outstanding warriors. During the hostilities that swept Natal and Zululand in those faraway days, the man who was to become the Founder of the Scout Movement - then Captain Robert Baden-Powell - gained possession of Dinizulu's Necklace.

Many years later, in 1919, when Baden-Powell instituted Wood Badge training for Scout Leaders he remembered Dinizulu's Necklace and taking two of the wooden beads and knotting them on a leather thong, he created the Wood Badge - to be worn around the neck and to be the only proficiency badge worn by Scout Leaders. The Wood Badge, with its replicas of the original Dinizulu beads, is now worn by thousands of men and women around the world.

There are a number of sequels to the story of Dinizulu's Necklace. In 1963 a grandson of Dinizulu, Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi, visited Canada to attend the Anglican World Congress in Toronto and on a side trip to Ottawa was hosted by a member of the Ottawa District staff, DSM. Oliver Belsey. The following Christmas he sent Mr. Belsey a Christmas card depicting his late father doing a Zulu dance, a picture of himself in the full regalia of a Zulu Chieftain and two wooden beads (Wood Badge) taken from the military award of one of Dinizulu's warriors who passed away in 1962.

In 1965 at Kwakhethomthandayo, the Royal Kraal, near Nongoma in Zululand, Scouting history was made with the Investiture of Paramount Chief, Bhekuzulu Nyangayizwe, before 5,000 of his people. The Paramount Chief was invested as a Scout by a South African Headquarters' field commissioner.

To mark the 12th World Jamboree and the 60th Anniversary of Scouting, the Boy Scouts of South Africa decided to make four authentic replicas of Dinizulu's Necklace. After much research and months of hard work by European Rover Scouts in Natal, and Zulu Scouts from Natal Troops, the four reproductions of the original were completed.

Three of them were taken to the 12th World Jamboree in Idaho, U.S.A., in August, 1967. For museum purposes, one necklace was presented to the Chief Scout Executive of the host country, Boy Scouts of America; one to the Acting Director of the Boy Scouts World Bureau and one to the Camp Chief, International Training Centre, Gilwell Park, London. The fourth necklace remains in South Africa as an historic memento of the land of the origin of the Wood Badge.

Humourous Stories

A Night Near The Tooth

I didn't EXACTLY stay on the Tooth of Time. We were running late when we stopped Shafer's Peak and the danger of walking fast down the narrow trail with sheer drops on each side in the falling darkness finally overcame us. We set up a dining fly in a wide spot and placed our packs (with little food) away from us. Some settled under the fly, and some under the stars.

Our Scout Leader and a couple of the boys took a miniature radio out to an overlook for a bit of news. It was to be an eventful night! One of the boys was prone to nose bleeding but had not had problems ... until now. In a fainting sway he nearly pitched over the side. Instead he body checked our small Scout Leader. With a yell that summoned two of us by name but in a tone that revealed the emergency, we jumped from our sleeping bags and (almost) streaked over to carry the boy back to his bag. He was fine.

As we slept, a deer or two came silently through our "camp" pausing astride one camper who awoke and missed seeing the stars! The sure footed animal moved on without incident (unlike burros near water!). We were sleeping peacefully despite a rising wind in the early morning darkness.

The wind had loosened a corner of our fly and it was flapping in the breeze. About that time, two hikers bound for sunrise on the tooth, heard the flapping and thought the shadows contained a hungry bear. As is procedure, they drew out their mess kits and clanged the pieces in a horrible racket to scare the bear! Our Scout Leader came out of his MUMMY bag without unzipping it! It scared US silly! We all thought we had a bear in our midst!

We were all a bit anxious about not making our designated camp but it simply was unsafe. Still, this story is repeated around our campfire with each new batch of Scouts in our Troop. OH, and we did get to see sunrise over the tooth!

Miscellaneous Stories

Ging Gang Goolee

In deepest darkest Africa there is a legend concerning the Great Gray Ghost. Every year after the rains the great gray ghost elephant arose from the mists and wandered throughout the land at dawn. When he came to a village he would stop and sniff the air, then he would either go around the village or through it. If he went around the village the village would have a prosperous year, if he went through it there would be hunger and drought.

The village of Wat-cha had been visited three years in a row by the elephant and things were very bad indeed, and the village leader Ging-ganga, was very worried, as was the village medicine man Hay-la-shay. Together they decided to do something about the problem.

Now Ging-ganga and his warriors were huge men with big shields and Spears and they decided to stand in the path of the elephant and shake their shields and swords at it to frighten off.

Hay-la-shay and his followers were going to cast magic spells to deter the elephant by shaking their medicine bags as the elephant approached which made the sound shalawally hallway shalawally.

Very early in the morning of the day the Great Gray Elephant came the villagers gathered at the edge of the village on one side were Ging-gana and his warriors (indicate right side of camp fire circle) on the other was Hay-la-shay and his followers (indicate left side of camp fire)

As they waited the warriors sang softly about their leader

Ging Gang Gooli, Gooli, Gooli, Gooli Watcha
Ging Gang Goo Ging Gang Goo
Ging Gang Gooli, Gooli, Gooli, Gooli Watcha
Ging Gang Goo Ging Gang Goo

As they waited the medicine men sang of their leader

Hayla, Hayla Shayla Heyla Shayla Halya Ho-o-o!
Hayla, Hayla Shayla Heyla Shayla Halya Ho-o-o!

And shook their medicine bags

shalawally hallway shalawally shalawally.

And from the river came the mighty great gray elephants reply
(Have all the adults do this)

Oompah Oompah Oomph Oompah!

The elephant was coming closer so the warriors beat their
shields and sang louder (signal warriors to stand and beat
thighs in time)

Ging Gang Gooli, Gooli, Gooli, Gooli Watcha
Ging Gang Goo Ging Gang Goo
Ging Gang Gooli, Gooli, Gooli, Gooli Watcha
Ging Gang Goo Ging Gang Goo

Then the medicine men rose and sang loudly

Hayla, Hayla Shayla Heyla Shayla Halya Ho-o-o!
Hayla, Hayla Shayla Heyla Shayla Halya Ho-o-o!

And shook their medicine bags

shallawally shallawally shallawally shallawally.

And mighty great gray elephant turn aside and went around
the village saying

Oompah Oompah Oompah Oompah!

There was great rejoicing in the village and all the villagers
joined to gether to sing

Ging Gang Gooli

Song: GING GANG GOOLIE

D

Ging gang goolie, goolie, goolie, goolie, watcha

A7 D

Ging gang goo, ging gang goo

D

Ging gang goolie, goolie, goolie, goolie, watcha

A7 D

Ging gang goo, ging gang goo.

G D

Heyla, heyla sheyla,

A7 D

Heyla sheyla, heyla ho-o-o

G D

Heyla, heyla sheyla,

A7 D

Heyla sheyla heyla ho.

G D G

Shully wully, Shully wully, Shully wully, Shully wully

D

Oompah, Oompah...

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The Farmer

There was this farmer who had many fields. And throughout all his fields, he worked very very hard at keeping all the animals away, and as such, out of his crops that he worked very very hard to plant.

And ... He was successful in keeping all the animals out. No birds, no deer, NOTHING got through all his wire fences and traps that he had set out to keep the animals out.

As time went on, this farmer got more and more lonely. So lonely as a matter of fact, that one day, he went out into his fields, held his arms out wide and called to all of the animals to come. He stood there all day and night with his arms out wide, calling to all the animals, but you know what, none of the animals came ... No, not one. ... And what was the reason none came?

All of the animals were afraid of the farmers ... new scarecrow out in the field.