



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

ORDER OF THE ARROW



Spring Nature Walk

Part of our duty as Scouting's National Honor Society is to promote outdoor programs and conservation. Checkout what one lodge in western Pennsylvania does to encourage environmental conservation to local Cub Scouts.

Each spring, Wagion Lodge #6 hosts The Spring Nature Walk , a one-day event teaching Cubs about caring for the environment while having a little bit of fun along the way.

At the Spring Nature Walk, Cubs are led by Arrowmen around camp where they stop at various stations to learn outdoor awareness and conservation. Planning the event begins when the Conservation Chairman contacts local environmental groups such as the Department of Conservation and Natural resources, Fish and Game Commissions, Department of Environmental Resources, local Fish and Wildlife offices, the parks service, and other like-minded local conservation districts or agencies whose organizations are based around helping to improve the environment. These agencies are asked to run a station for the Cubs with some type of activity based around environmental awareness or conservation. The main idea of Nature Walk is to help the Cubs recognize the ways that they can help to improve the world in which we live and to reinstate the Outdoor Code:

As an American, I will do my best to -

Be clean in my outdoor manners.

Be careful with fire.

Be considerate in the outdoors.

Be conservation minded

Apart from nature-based stations, the walk also features several sports areas where Cubs can have fun playing games like kickball or Frisbee. There is even a station where they learn about wilderness cooking and get to test the foods they cooked over a fire or on a rock.

The program has been going on in Wagion Lodge since the 1980s and has been a success every year. To initiate such a program in your own lodge, start by thinking of activities for the Cubs to participate in and the information you want them to walk away with. Next you will need to contact the people to run the stations. Be sure to contact the state and federal agencies early (at least several months before the event) as their schedules can quickly fill



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up. Early promotion to the Cub packs is just as important as early communication with the event staff. Fliers, phone calls, and emails can serve as effective ways to reach local Cub Masters. When planning the event, try and keep registration costs low (enough to cover lunch and a patch) as this will attract the most attention. Be sure to mention in your promotions that your lodge is providing a fun, interactive day event at an extremely low and affordable cost!

An event like the Spring Nature Walk provides interaction between the Order of the Arrow and Cub Scouts. It serves as not only a retention tool for Cubs but also a possible recruitment outlet. The walk provides an opportunity for Arrowmen to help their lodges and offers Cubs a chance to enjoy the great outdoors. As an event that is fun and engaging for both staff and participants, the Spring Nature Walk serves as an example on how to conduct a simple event that can support large, positive outcomes.

The above resource was submitted Wagion Lodge in the Westmorland-Fayette Council, Pennsylvania. The lodge has experienced tremendous success with this program and continues to achieve great results with its continued implementation.