

## **Your Blue & Gold Banquet**

**I borrowed the following from December's Baloo's Bugle. It has a wealth of information in it.**

### **NO – It is NOT too early!!!**

The Blue & Gold banquet is the highlight of the winter months for most Cub Packs. If yours isn't, it probably needs help. Here are some simple guidelines to help you plan a successful Blue & Gold.

### **2 to 3 months before the Blue & Gold Banquet.**

You need to make your final decision on your date & time with the Pack Committee. Ask some of the parents to help with the arrangements (this is your Blue & Gold Committee). This will make the job much easier. You will have a lot of ideas to share with each other.

**Dates** - Dates for the Banquet are usually set by the Pack Committee at the beginning of the calendar year. You may use the date that corresponds with your monthly Pack meeting. Some groups like to choose a Friday night, Saturday night or a Sunday afternoon.

**Locations** - Use your regular Pack meeting place. Some groups are allowed to use the Charter Organization facilities to hold their Blue & Gold dinner. Check with your Charter Organization to see if this could be a possibility for your Pack. Check with local Churches. Some local churches will allow you to use their Fellowship Hall to have your dinner. Don't be afraid to check with the church you attend or maybe that of another member of Pack Committee. Other churches will allow you to use their Fellowship Hall if you use their Youth Group to help with the dinner. Some youth group raise money by preparing and serving dinners. This will help them earn money towards their mission trips. Check with your school - some areas will allow you to use the school. CFE is another alternative. Remember you **MUST** file a tour permit and camp closes at noon on Sundays.

**Budgeting for the Dinner** - Check with your Pack Committee to see what type of money has been set aside for the Blue & Gold Dinner. You may see if the Committee will set money aside from the Popcorn sales to pay for professional entertainment. You may decide to charge each family a small fee to cover the cost of the meal or entertainment.

### **Planning Your Menu**

**Cover Dish dinners** - This is a fun way for families to show off their best dishes. It is fun to share you favorite dish with a friends. The down fall to this is - most parents work. If your dinner is on a week night it is hard to get home from work and prepare something for the dinner. This is why we see a lot more hot deli in the grocery stores now.

**Have a spaghetti dinner** - Your committee could prepare a simple spaghetti dinner for the Pack. Ask for volunteers to help with the dinner. There is always a Mother or Grandmother that would enjoy helping with something like this. Don't be afraid to **ask**.

**Check with a local restaurant** - Local restaurants may have catering for family style meals. Often you can get a good deal on chicken or pizza if you mention you are from a Scout group.

Check with a local church youth group - Several area youth groups are always raising money for from the Popcorn sales to pay for professional entertainment. You may decide to charge each family a small fee to cover the cost of the meal or entertainment.

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Check with a local church youth group - Several area youth groups are always raising money for some funds from the popcorn sale, you may consider hiring a professional entertainer. There are a lot of people out there to choose from. If you local school has a program, check with them to see who they have used. Check with local Colleges - They may have students that will perform for a fee, or maybe for free.

## **4 - 6 Weeks before the Banquet**

Send out flyers reservation flyers. You need to include the date, time, cost and location on your sign up sheet. Always include a date when you need your RSVP turned back in by. It works best to collect the money ahead of time. You will always have a few people call at the minute wanting to attend. Always include a person's name on the flyer that the family members may contact if they have a question. Make your den leaders responsible for collecting the flyers and money to turn into you.

## **Select a Theme for the Blue & Gold Dinner**

Your imagination does not even limit you here. There is a wealth of information of the internet for decorations, themes, and often with instructions and pictures. Simply search for "cub blue gold" and see what you like. There are also several other resources such as:

**Cub Scout Program Helps** - Each year the Program helps will give you a theme idea. You may want to want to use this idea or use it as a building block for something similar. I have used old ideas from the old Program helps.

**Roundtable Meeting** - Each month the Roundtable will focus on a theme that could be used for your dinner. The CS RT Planning Guide calls for a Blue & Gold presentation in the Pack Admin break Out this (October) month. In January the Roundtable will focus on the February theme, which you may want to consider for the banquet.

**Traditional Blue & Gold** - Many groups like to use the traditional Blue & Gold theme. Decorate your tables with Blue & Gold table clothes, placemats, napkins and balloons. This is great, and underscores the theme of a celebration of Scouting.

**Use your imagination** - Have fun with your ideas. You can use any type of theme you would like. Examples: Happy Birthday Cub Scouts, Fiesta, Celebrate Ohio Anniversary, Celebrate your Pack Founding Date (Milestone Marks), Red/White/Blue

### **Plan Decorations**

Use decorations that go along with your theme. The decorations could be made by the committee or ask the dens to help make the centerpieces for the dinner. Demonstrate the centerpiece project at your Pack Committee meeting and have each den make their own centerpieces for the banquet theme. This can be especially helpful if you are shorthanded. Purchase placemats or allow each den to make their own placemats for their families. Be sure the Scout makes enough for his entire family so no one is left out. If you want to go with purchasing, there are special Blue & Gold placemats at most Council stores. Use Blue & Gold Balloons tied in the center of each table or on the backs of chairs. Plan for some special treats at each place setting: theme cookies, candy, nut cups.

### **Send Out Invitations**

Make sure you include a name and phone number for them to follow-up with. Unit Commissioners, your Church Minister, Chartered Organization Rep, District Executive, District Commissioner and District Chairman can all be invited. Be sure and contact the District Family Friends of Scouting Chair to schedule your FOS presenter, and confirm the time you have allotted them.

### **1 to 2 Weeks before the Banquet**

Finalize EVERYTHING - Get your final count together. Collect and balance your money from families ahead of time. You may have to call the den leaders and remind them that the counts are due. If you are having another group catering your banquet, call them and confirm the date and count for the dinner. Also check to see if they plan for any additional people. There is always a few people that will call the day before or the day of the dinner wanting to attend. Remind Pack Treasurer, which checks need to be issued and amounts the night of the dinner. Often your entertainment or caterer wants paid the night of the dinner. Make a sign in sheet. Check everyone in as they arrive, if any one owes money, collect it then.

**Programs** - The banquet is a special celebration. You should consider printing a simple program. Include all the award that the boys are receiving that night. Everyone likes to see their name in print. It is nice if the Den Leaders plan for the boys to get their rank badges during the Blue & Gold. It also a great time to print a small thank you to everyone that has helped put the dinner together. You should also include a thank you to the parents for their support during the year.

Blue & Gold's are should be the showcase of your winter program. If your unit has special awards, you may want to give them out there. Other units plan the a father/son cake bake auction as a fund raiser to help pay for the entertainment. Be sure to recognize the Pack Committee at the banquet for a big round of applause. An "atta-boy" goes along way to getting people to help in the future.