

Sisters and Brothers,

One of our grandsons recently received his Arrow of Light with his advancement in Webelos Scouts. He was extremely excited about the award and showed us his wood token with an arrowhead attached to it and even more excited that at their next Cub Scout meeting his Pack Leader would be giving him a homemade arrow to hang on his bedroom wall. Seeing the spark in his eye and the thrill in his voice reminded me of why our Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron made working with and supporting youth groups one of their prime directives during their year(s).

It also reminded me of my work in Scouting over many years and the various ceremonies that Scouts use for advancement. I thought you might be interested in reading one of the many used for the Arrow of Light Ceremony. I always found this one very meaningful because of the lessons it provides in story form and the reminder of the work they had completed for each Cub Scout rank.

“Arrow of Light recipients and their parents are at the front of the room (or on stage) with Akela (Akela is the name used for an adult leader of the Cub Scout Pack).

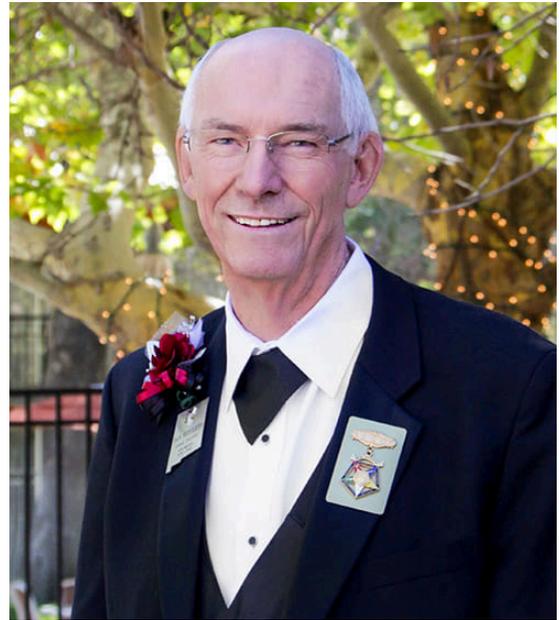
**AKELA:** *Tonight, we have the honor of presenting the Arrow of Light rank to members of this pack. But before I present these ranks, let me take a moment to relate an appropriate story.*

*Afar in our dry southwestern country was an Indian village, behind which a high mountain towered above the desert. It was considered a great feat to climb this mountain, so all the young braves of the village were eager to attempt it.*

*One day, the chief said, “Now, Scouts, you may all go today and try to climb the mountain. Start right after breakfast and go as far as you can. Then when you are tired, come back; but each of you must bring me a twig from the place where you turned.”*

*Away they all went, full of hope, each feeling that they surely could reach the top. Soon the first Scout came slowly back, puffing and sweating. He stood before the chief, and in his hand, he held a piece of cactus. The chief smiled and said, “My child, you barely got started.”*

*“You did not reach the mountain; you did not even cross the desert. I like to think this Scout is like a new Bobcat; they have just barely started.”*



*An hour later the second Scout returned. He carried a twig of sagebrush. "Well," said the chief, "You reached the foot of the mountain, but you did not start the climb." This Scout is like the Cub Scout who has earned their Tiger badge; they have progressed on their journey but has not really started his climb.*

*After another hour, the third Scout came back. They held out a cottonwood spray. "Good," said the chief, "You got as far as the springs." This might represent the Cub Scout who has reached the next level of their climb and received their Wolf badge.*

*A while later, another Scout came back with some cedar. The chief smiled when he saw it, and spoke, "Well done, my child, you went halfway up." This is like the Cub Scout who has progressed halfway up the advancement trail and earned their Bear badge.*

*Later in the afternoon, the next Scout returned carrying a branch of pine. To that Scout, the chief said, "Good, you went to the third level. You made three-quarters of the climb. Keep on trying. Next year, you will undoubtedly reach the top." The Cub Scout who has earned their Webelos badge has reached the three-quarter mark and is in sight of the top.*

*The sun was low when the last Scout returned. He was a tall, splendid child of noble character. He approached the chief and held up his hand. It was empty. But he was radiant as he spoke. "My father, there were no trees where I went. I saw no twigs, no living thing upon the peak. But far and away I saw other mountain peaks and beyond them the shining sea."*

*Now the old chief's face glowed as he said, "I knew it! I knew it when I looked upon your face. You have reached the top. It is written in your eyes and it rings in your voice. My child, you need no twigs for token, you have seen the glory of the mountain."*

*The brave who reached the top is like the Cub Scout who has reached the top – the Arrow of Light rank. But, beyond the top are the peaks of the Scouts BSA program that must be met and climbed to reach the shining sea of adulthood. I would like now to call forward [names] and present them their Arrow of Light badge.*

*Because your parents helped you on your climb, I will hand the badge to them and ask them, in turn, to present it to you.*

*It is an honor for me to recognize you Webelos Scouts and to present you with these arrows (or plaques). Use this (arrow or plaque) to remind you of the good times we have had together in Pack [number]. (Presents arrows or plaques)"*

*I hope you and your Chapter have found much personal satisfaction in your contact with youth groups in your area.*

Dan Sutcliffe  
Grand Trustee