

CUB PARTIES – You never get a second chance at a first impression.



While serving in Benton District a few years back, I attended the “Joining Night” for Pack 161 in Philomath. The Pack held the “joining” activities as part of the September Pack meeting. Typically, I don’t think this is a good idea, but for Pack 161 it really worked, and here’s why:

Picture coming into the school gym and being greeted by a uniformed Pack adult. If you were a returning family you were directed to one table, where you would update your family’s information and pay for the next scout year. If you were new to the Pack you were greeted and directed to another table where Pack volunteers helped you fill out the Youth and Adult applications, explained the cost, and got you signed up.

While Adults were filling out paper work, kids (including siblings) were greeted with a Pack Carnival of games. So the kids were having fun right away, not sitting through paperwork processes. After 20 to 30 minutes of “Carnival Fun”, the Pack meeting would begin and new parents were escorted to the school library for their orientation meeting. During this 10 to 15 minute briefing – remember kids are still enjoying a Pack meeting program – the Committee Chair would outline the Calendar of Events for the coming year and how the Pack operates, to include filling needed den leader or committee positions. After the 10 – 15 minute chat, parents were taken back to the Pack meeting to join in the fun with their kids.

The entire night took about an hour and half. Pack 161 had all new boys signed up, in dens, with Den Leaders, and had completed most of the paperwork for Recharter. The real secret here is two things: Organization and Expectation. Pack 161 was well organized and had a great group of leaders. If your Pack is missing a few volunteers, call your Unit Commissioner or District Executive to get a few more bodies to help with this meeting. That’s what “DISTRICT” volunteers do, they help units succeed. The Expectation of Pack 161 is that every family that comes to the meeting is there to SIGN UP! There was very little time spent on “selling” Scouting. The Pack just made the entire process very simple for everyone to get involved.

What does your Pack do to help new and returning families really connect with Cub Scouting?