Session Length: three 50 Minute sessions plus conclusion

Learning objectives:

- Part 1: ESTHETICS - The basic elements of a patch’s design and how they relate to each other. Going from concept to drawing to finished patch. Sources for ideas.
- Part 2: ECONOMICS – How patches can contribute to your lodge’s finances.

Required Materials:

- Flipchart or chalkboard, if possible
- Power Point presentation file with screen and projector
- A podium with light is useful, if available
- The venue should be dim enough to see the Power Point images, yet light enough to identify contributing participants

TRAINER PREPARATION

The trainer should try to pull participants into the subject matter by asking for their responses, as in a Wood Badge style “Guided Discovery” method of teaching. This will encourage them to develop their own personal criteria for good patch design. One technique that helps is to point out or indicate with a gesture the person making a response. It also helps to give positive feedback to responses – “That’s right.” “Good” “Yes” “Anybody else?” etc.

The trainer should not remain static. He will hold the participants’ attention better by moving back and forth across the front of the group, as well as forward and back when he indicates something on the Power Point screen.

Trainers should place their names (and email addresses, if desired) in a prominent place, and introduce themselves at the beginning of the session.

SESSION NARRATIVE

Part One – ESTHETICS 50-60 Minutes

(A) Elements of Design

For starters, let me make it clear that this session is NOT about how to design patches with a computer. There’s always somebody disappointed when that’s not what it turns out to be, even if that was never
suggested in the advance materials. Just like colored pencils can be used for drawing, so is there software you can use for drawing, like Coreldraw. There is no software specifically for drawing patch designs just as there are no colored markers specifically for drawing patch designs. If there was, it would probably cost you about $500 to get, and I know a couple of patch companies who would be delighted to spend that much for instantly it if it existed. This session is no more about computer design than a course on comparative architecture is about how to use a drafting table.

The purpose of this session is to go over some things that make a patch look good, and show you some ways to look at a patch. I'm not setting myself up as an authority or some kind of last word on patches. You'll be getting my personal opinions and biases, which I invite you to use as a starting point towards forming your own standards for good patch design. Even if you disagree with something here, that disagreement can be a foundation on which to form your own opinions.

Because we're here at an Order of the Arrow event where people have a special interest in flaps, I'll be using OA flaps for many of my examples. But, please don't let the use of specific examples mean that we're talking only about specific cases. What will be covered applies to almost any camp, camporee, council, lodge, or activity patch, in almost any size.

Many of my examples will be from Florida. Please don't take this to mean that the best and worst patches come from Florida. It just means that I can face my friends there easier than a stranger from some other part of the country when it comes to talking about their patches.

To decide if a patch's design works, it helps to know what the patch's design is meant to do. We should have an idea of what the patch was for to know if it is effective. What, then, are the basic purposes for even having a patch the first place? [Write responses on chalkboard or flip chart, in this order. Or, encourage all four responses verbally before showing Power Point slide in summary.]

- Identifier
- Souvenir
- Trader
- Fundraiser

**Trainer Tip:** You may need to make hints or ask leading questions if you don’t get all four responses:

- Why are there patches on the uniform? (Tells you something about the person wearing them: Identifier.)
- Why do people save patches of something they went to? (Souvenir.)
- Why do people sometimes buy extra patches? (To trade with)
Why would a lodge or council make more patches than they need just for attendees? (To make money)

We'll cover each of these, and see how one purpose can overlap into the next.

Picture an old, original Scout uniform. What kinds of patches did this uniform have? [Write responses on chalkboard or flip chart, in any order. Or, elicit all responses verbally before showing Power Point slide]

- Troop number
- Community and state strip
- Badge of rank
- Badge of office

What do all of these have in common with each other? (They tell us something about the person wearing the uniform - where he’s from, what he’s done, etc.)

What do these patches need to have on them to tell us that information? (Lettering, simple symbols)

How elaborate or colorful or detailed do they need to be to communicate that information to us? (Not at all)

Yes, these basic patches were very clean. In fact, rank was often shown on the uniform with a pin instead of a patch. We read in old Scout fiction how highly prized the rank’s pin was, or how much the boy looked forward to the next rank being "pinned" onto him. By the way, I understand that option of pin OR patch is still proper uniform wear today.

If a patch only needs to have lettering on it to do its job, how should it display that lettering? (Legibly, clearly)

Originally, community strips were red on khaki.

Why khaki? (The color of the uniform) How readable is it? (Not very) Later on, the strips were changed to be white on red.

Isn’t this better? What makes it easier to read? (Better color contrast between lettering and background)

Councils early on started having patches for their summer camp activities.

Because the technology just wasn’t there, most summer camp patches from the 1920’s and 1930’s seem to have been silkscreened felt patches. Sometimes, they were just two pieces of felt glued together by
volunteer hands. Obviously, these weren’t going to survive very many washings, or last very long at all. Why, then, would they even have gone to the trouble to have a patch for summer camp? (Identifier of those who’d been to camp, souvenir of the summer camp experience.)

To do either of these, the patch has to be able to convey information. Whether it was hand assembled, and spoke in terms of symbols, or whether it was silkscreened in one color of ink and spoke in terms of a few words, its design was by necessity very simple. Even with the first embroidered patches, we see very simple designs.

We know that these identifier and souvenir patches of summer camp easily became “traded” patches. In the early 1960’s serving their councils and lodges as fundraisers. How many of you are here from lodges that maybe made a few many formerly partially embroidered OA flaps became fully embroidered to improve both their appearance and their trading value. Patches sold for souvenirs and for trading very quickly became patches also more NOAC contingent flaps than the contingent itself really needed, and also saw a good chance to raise some money for the lodge? (Responses)

We see something on all embroidered patches, a stitched border. This kept the cloth from crimping up as it went through the wash, and added a framing device to whatever was on the patch. So, what parts do we see that all of these patches have in their design? If you were going to describe what a patch is to somebody, what parts would you have to describe? [Write responses on chalkboard or flip chart, in any order. Or, elicit all four responses verbally before showing Power Point slide in summary.]

- Border
- Background
- Lettering
- Central thing (which we’ll call a “key item”)

When we first look at a patch, we don’t look at these things separately. We see the pattern all of them make together. The relationship of these parts to each other affects how well or how disappointing the whole patch looks.

In what ways do these four things relate to each other? How can they be changed on a patch relative to each other? [Write responses on chalkboard or flip chart, in any order. Or, elicit all three responses verbally before showing Power Point slide in summary.]

Their size on the patch

- Their placement, or arrangement on the patch
- Their colors

Possibly the most subjective part of a patch’s artwork are its colors. It’s reasonable to think that a brightly colored flap will be more desirable than a plain looking flap. Fancy patches tend to be more pictorial than merely informative. Their written information is often less important or even only incidental to the patch’s eye-catching appeal. The original purpose of a patch as an identifier may these days be the least reason for having a patch, But, is a brightly color patch also always an attractive looking patch? Is it a requirement that a good-looking patch have a lot of detail and a lot o colors? (Responses) I hope to show you that the answer is... “Not necessarily.” And, I would like to show you how use of colors on a patch can balance a patch or imbalance it.
Timuquan Lodge’s flap design was unchanged for more than fifteen years. They decided to have a special issue for the American Bicentennial. This is the drawing that their lodge chief approved. As you can see, it’s an adaptation of their regular patch’s design. But then, they decided they were just a little bit tired of having a flap with a plain white background unchanged for so many years.

When they sent the drawing to the manufacturer, they told him to make it the way it was drawn, except to make the background light blue. Anybody see any problems with the flap the way it was made? (You can’t read the lettering)

The flap was so successful that they decided to order some more. When they did, they also decided to change the color of one more part of the flap. What part do you suppose they changed? (Get responses)

As you can see, they changed the lettering. Which do you prefer? (#B) Why? (It’s easier to read.) Why is it easier to read? (Better color contrast with the background) Both flaps start from exactly the same line drawing. Which would you say is the better designed flap? (Responses)

Does it take bright colors to make a colorful patch? Well, let me show you some patches and see what you think. How about a patch that’s nothing except dark brown and pastels. Stop and imagine that... dark brown and pale yellow and light blue and lilac. Doesn’t sound real colorful, does it?

Here it is… what do you think? (Responses) By the way, this was derived from an early 1960’s Boys’ Life cover. Look what we have here - yellow, lilac, pink, light blue. I think this is colorful, but I’m prejudiced; what do you think? How many colors did it take to make these patches, a lot or a few? (Not many) If you do think that it's colorful, what makes these soft colors look bright? (Color contrast)

Notice that the border is pale yellow and not deep yellow or gold. A gold border would have added its own contrast, and it was decided that the only contrast on the patch would be with the eagle.

How about a patch that’s nothing but gray, navy blue, dark blue, and maroon. Picture those colors in your head. Sounds kind of murky, doesn’t it?

Do these patches appeal to you? If so, why? (Responses). Does it look dramatic? If so, what do you attribute that to? (Good key item, color contrast) How many colors did it take to make this a good-looking patch? (Not many) How many bright colors were needed to make it look good? (None at all)

There used to be a couple of theories on what it takes to make a good looking patch. One was that, for some reason, an odd number of colors worked better than an even number of colors. A slightly better theory is to have either two cool colors and one hot color, or two hot color and one cool color? Do you know what hot and cool colors are? (Responses)

**Trainer Tip:** Briefly explain, if necessary. “Hot” colors are the red, yellows, and maroons. “Cool” colors are the blues, greens, and violets.
If you would like to explore how colors go with each other, there are books on color theory in your library. A good one that I found in my library that was a lot of help to me is (write on board or show PowerPoint slide):

**CREATIVE COLOR**  
by Faber Birren

All the examples so far have a strong key item. How important is that? Let me show you an example. There is a watercolor in the Central Florida Council office of a scene from the camp’s waterfront.

That scene was used for the summer camp patch for a couple of years. Here’s one of those patches.

It’s kind of a pretty patch, isn’t it? But what does it tell you to look at? Is there a key item on this patch? (Responses) The central item in this patch is that green thing on the log. It’s supposed to be an alligator. Kind of hard to see, isn’t it? But, if you’ve been to that camp, you’d recognize the scene and you could spot the alligator. Now look at the trees to the left and the right of the alligator. Here’s another patch that uses exactly the same trees.

It’s the same scene on both sides, isn’t it? But now, what does this patch tell your eyes to look at? (The center logo or design) Why? (Bigger item, better color contrast) Let’s compare the two.

Here are two patches side by side that have essentially the same background. They’re both colorful, they both have a bright contrasting border, and they both have a key item. They both have the same parts, except that the parts have been emphasized differently. Which way works better? (The one with the strong key item) Why is that? these to patches have the same wording position on the outside, a key item in the same center, the same coloring, all the parts are in the same places, except that some of the parts are two different sizes and one has a strong color contrast than the other. Which do you prefer? (Get general responses)

Is it possible for a patch to have a strong key item, and still fail to fulfill its potential? Here is a pretty good-looking patch.

Basically this is a good design. It has a dominant key item, and it’s an effective eye grabber. Yet, somehow it’s a little disappointing. Why? (No bright colors, no contrasting colors, design is a little cluttered) What does this patch tell you to look at? (The owl) But, what else does this patch tell your eye to see? (The arrow, the Scout emblem, the three W’s) These other things more or less compete with the key item for your attention, don’t they? But are they all pieces of information that need to be included on the patch?

Does this patch have a lot of wasted space? No, because any space that was open was filled in with something so this patch wouldn’t look blank and empty. But, those pieces kind of look like they’re just floating there, don’t they? Could there have been a better arrangement of those floating parts?
Does this patch’s key item stand out from its background? (Not really) Why not? (No strong color contrast) This patch basically does have a very good design. It’s just that its designer fell into a trap that’s very easy to fall into. It’s the feeling that “open space is (somehow) wasted space,” and “I need to put this thingy someplace, and there’s some open space here, so that’s where I’ll drop it in.”

OK then, let’s look at another patch that happened to approach almost exactly the same set of problems. That is, an oversize OA patch featuring a bird on a branch that needs to communicate certain information.

What does this patch tell you to look at? (The eagle) What’s competing for your eye’s attention? (Nothing)

Both patches need to include a Scout emblem, but does the Scout emblem have to be a major part of the design? (No) We see the Scout emblem is there in the eagle patch, but discreetly, off to the side. Does it compete with the key item? (No)

Both patches want to include a “WWW” as an OA identifier. In the owl patch, it’s very plain, clear, and easy to read… and it kind of crowds the key items, doesn’t it? In the eagle patch, it’s off in the bottom, in yellow on white. It’s NOT plain, clear, and easy to read. What does the eagle patch want you to look at, the eagle or the three W’s? (The eagle) What do you wind up actually looking at? (The eagle) What does the Gokhos patch want you to look at? (The owl) What do you wind up actually looking at? (The owl, but not right away)

How does the eagle appear against its background? Does it fade in or does it stand out? (Stands out) Why? (strong color contrast) Incidentally, do you think that the lettering on the eagle patch would have looked better if it was in black instead of in yellow? Or do you think that would have distracted your attention away too much from the eagle? The lettering would have looked better. Would the patch have looked better? What do you think? (Responses)

The owl patch also has a red arrow on it. Why did the designer of the eagle patch not put one on his? Because he made a stylistic decision. When you see a red arrow on a patch, what does it almost always mean? (The Order of the Arrow) When you see three W’s on a patch, what does that tell you about the patch? (It has something to do with the OA)

So the owl patch tells you it’s an OA patch twice, in two different ways, doesn’t it? That’s fine if the W’s and the red arrow contribute to the patch’s overall appearance. Do you feel that the floating arrow and W’s on the owl patch contribute, or are they just “there?” (They’re just “there”) Incidentally, that red dab on the eagle patch is a red tipi, which has to be someplace on all of that lodge’s patches.

Then if we were to make a list of what’s on these two patches, the lists would be almost identical in writing. (Point these out as they are referred to) They both have a centrally located key item, the lodge name and number, a Scout emblem, three W’s, a red colored symbol, and a couple of extra words. The biggest difference is in the ARRANGEMENT of these pieces. The owl patch fills up its empty paces, and the eagle patch has a lot of empty space. Are these open areas wasted space? Or, is it possible to have empty space that contributes to the overall appearance of the patch? What do you think?

These two have the name number and kinds of pieces. Are they the same kind of patch? Which do you prefer? (General responses) Actually, when I ask you that question, it doesn’t matter to me which you prefer. They’re both attractive patches that well fulfilled their purpose. What I’m really asking you is for you to develop your own appreciation for what YOU feel is good patch design.

While we’re here, let’s talk about color. Is the owl patch colorful? (Possibly) How many colors does it have? Let’s count. (Dark green, green, blue, light blue, tan, yellow, white, red, black”’ nine colors) Is the
eagle patch colorful? (Probably) How many colors does it have? (White, yellow, red, dark green, blue, light blue… six) How is it that the patch with only six colors APPEARS to be more colorful than the one with nine colors? (Color contrast)

Look also how the design emphasizes the key item. It’s full of diagonals radiating outward, lines that reinforce pulling the eye into that central key item. The outer edges of the tree, the slopes of the mountains, and the eagles of the wings all radiate out making a hypothetical central bull’s eye. And what’s at that bull’s eye? (the eagle, the key item)

You may get the impression from the examples I’ve used that a key item and a strong color contrast are very important. Yes, I’m afraid that is my own strong opinion… However, be clear that we’re talking about color contrast, not color clash. I know of a seven-color design that got simplified to a three-color patch, and the three colors were simply red, white, and blue. Good color contrast, sure, but a lot of other stuff was unnecessarily tossed aside.

Then there are patch designs that get lost in themselves. Here are some examples of what I feel are ambiguous patches.

**Advance PP Slide**

Eeluak 1988 Spring, New Orleans Area csp, Toledo Area csp, Yosemite Area csp

Frankly, I’m not at all sure what these patches want me to look at. Do any of them have a key item for the eye to center on? I’m sure that these patches suited their purpose very well in their local areas. The csp’s are probably buffet variety of things distinctive to their local areas, and so are locally topical. They certainly have a lot of colors on them, and a lot of detail, the Toledo Area especially. But are they successful as patch designs? There’s little color contrast on the Eeluak patch. What stands out and grabs your attention on it? What succeeds? (Nothing) On the other hand, there’s a lot of color contrast on the Toledo patch with a lot competing for your attention. What succeeds? (Nothing) What’s your opinion of these patches? (Responses)

**Advance PP Slide**

Overland Trails, Pine Tree, Montana, Idaho Panhandle

Aren’t these patches just as colorful and just as detailed as the others? Is there any doubt which are probably more distinctive looking on a uniform?

**Advance PP Slide**

New Orleans, Yosemite, Toledo, Overland, Pine Tree, Idaho

What do the patches on the right have in common that the patches on the left do not? (A strong key item, effective color contrast)

So that you don’t think that I’m dogmatic about this, let me mention that a strong key item in the patch is important IF you keep in mind what a particular patch’s purpose is. If it’s meant to be worn on a uniform, I feel that it’s meant to be SEEN on a uniform, probably at a middle distance of five to ten feet. Here’s a patch with a strong key item that can be seen and recognized from a good distance.

**Advance PP Slide**

Atchafalaya restricted flap

How hard is it to figure out what this lodge’s totem is? (Not hard at all) How hard is it to tell from a distance what lodge a wearer of his flap is from? (not hard at all) This lodge also had a trading flap.

**Advance PP Slide**

Atchafalaya restricted and trading flap

Is a trading patch meant to be worn? (No) What is it meant for? (For trading) That means it gets passed from hand to hand, doesn’t it? And that means that the flap is rarely going to be seen any farther away than arm’s length. This patch serves its purpose. As an identifier to be seen from a distance, it wouldn’t
work. But, as a patch that’s supposed to be very detailed and colorful, that can be appreciated when seen up close, it works just fine.

Here are some other patches without a strong key item that suit their purpose perfectly well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advance PP Slide</th>
<th>Tipisa 1987 Ordeal, Reunion, Gulf Stream csp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The activity patch is from a series that featured different kinds of Florida environments. It’s flat, boring, and uninteresting with no key item or color contrast at all. BUT, it accurately shows a typical view of the Everglades, which ARE flat, boring, and uninteresting. The other patch was given to attendees at a reunion held at a Jamboree. It has good color contrast, but it’s too crowded to single out one key item. It’s a souvenir, with a little something representing everybody - Far East Council, Transatlantic Council, and so forth. And everybody was happy with it. The Gulf Stream csp does have a sunburst for a key item (a very easy solution) but it’s weak in its color contrast and does appear to be a little confusing. That is, until you know that the Seminole on the left does appear on almost all of their camp patches, and the gator on the log is off of their lodge flap. The people in that Council are satisfied that this patch well represents the Scouting program in their council. In terms of abstract design, these patches are a little weak. In terms of fulfilling their purposes, they work very well.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A patch doesn’t have to have a blank background to emphasize its key item. The background just has to be controlled and color contrast kept in mind. To illustrate that, I’m going to show you a couple of patches with key items in neutral or muted colors. Do you think gray would make an item stand out? How about tan and brown? (Responses) They don’t sound really dynamic, do they? Gray, tan, brown, they’re pretty unglamorous colors, aren’t they? Well, I understand that probably the two most desired flaps at a recent Jamboree were the “shark” and the “snake.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advance PP Slide</th>
<th>Malibu, Cahuilla</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What color is the shark? (Gray) What color is the snake? (Tan, brown, red) Why don’t the strong background colors dominate over the neutral colored key items? (Responses) Do the key items stand out? (Yes) Why? (Size of the key item on the patch, strong color contrast with background) These patches do not have flat backgrounds. Yet, looking at them, is there any doubt what the key item is? Why is that? (Contrast) Do you have any trouble figuring out what the designers of these patches wanted to emphasize? (No)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are the older versions of a couple of council strips.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advance PP Slide</th>
<th>Quivera, Old Colony, Yocona old styles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>These patches are OK, but may be just a little bit boring. These councils decided to add a little pizzazz to their patches. In many places, that means using the “MORE” equation and making the patch a smorgasbord buffet of things local to the council - industries, history, landmarks, or whatever.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advance PP Slide</th>
<th>Fort Simcoe, Mahoning, DeSoto</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That’s fine for patches that are going to be seen at no more than arm’s length. Or if it doesn’t bother you that a patch is really too small to try to show a buffet selection or a panoramic landscape. Are these patches telling you look at anything in particular? (Not really) The eye kind of looks here and then there, and just wanders around back and forth. If a patch doesn’t really tell you to look at anything on it, do you look at it for very long? (No)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advance PP Slide</th>
<th>Quivera, Old Colony, Yokona old and new styles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
When these council changed their CSP’s, they used color contrast to make their patches look better. They did not change their symbols - a calumet, a sailing ship, local Indians. Yet look how much a little color contrast improves their council’s shoulder patches. Their older versions gave you something to focus on. Their newer versions make it a pleasure to look at them.

There is an equation for attractive patches that almost always works. [Write responses on chalkboard or flip chart. Or, elicit responses verbally before showing Power Point slide in summary.]

\[ \text{COLOR + DETAIL} = \text{COLORFUL} \]

COLOR + DETAIL = COLORFUL

This is a perfectly good, valid question that works well. But, people start to get into trouble when they start unnecessarily complicating that equation. They go on to assume that this is true:

\[ \text{LOTS OF COLORS} = \text{COLORFUL} \]

LOTS OF COLORS = COLORFUL

Well, sure, that’s true. Their mistake is when they then jump to the conclusion that you HAVE to have lots of colors for a patch to be colorful.

\[ \text{LOTS OF COLORS} + \text{LOTS OF DETAIL} = \text{OVERWHELMINGLY ATTRACTIVE} \]

LOTS OF COLORS + LOTS OF DETAIL = OVERWHELMINGLY ATTRACTIVE

This equation is NOT valid and, more often than not, will NOT work. Yes, it IS possible to have too much of a good thing. While this may be a good goal, what you wind up with is an equation that works more like this: (Cross off “ATTRACTIVE”)

\[ \text{LOTS OF COLORS} + \text{LOTS OF DETAIL} = \text{OVERWHELMING} \]

LOTS OF COLORS + LOTS OF DETAIL = OVERWHELMING

Here are a couple of OA 75th anniversary flaps:

- **Echockotee, Aal-Pa-Tah, Semialachee**

Their designers spent a lot of time working on them because they wanted these special flaps to look especially nice. We have here a LOT of color and a LOT of detail. And, unfortunately, a certain amount of confusion. Yes, they have key items, and the key items are the lodge totems. But, look how much else on the patch is competing with the totems for your attention.

The Aal-Pa-Tah looks nice as a scene, but here’s a Scout emblem in the water and three W’s floating in the air. Wouldn’t open space right there have given the alligator some room to breathe? The Echcockotee looks real nice, but what are we supposed to really look at? The tipi on the left or the “75” in the fire on the right? And what’s that loose red arrow laying on the ground for? The Semialachee emphasizes the key item better, but why do I get the feeling that he’s caught in a thunderstorm?

By the way, if you aren’t careful with what you do, you may not like the nickname your friends give to the patch you designed. The members of Semialachee wound up calling this flap the “Flaming Fart.”

- **Florida OA 75th set**
Here’s a set of the Florida OA 75th flaps that are various solutions to the same problem: how to commemorate the OA’s 75th Anniversary using the lodge totem. They cover the whole design range from simple to complex. My feeling is that it’s the ones in the middle of that range that look the best. And look, the lodge totem is not even the central item on those patches. Yet, is there any doubt that O-Shot-Caw’s totem is a white heron or that Tipisa’s is a red tipi. No, because those patches emphasize those things with good color contrast.

This drawing for a patch meets all of our criteria, doesn’t it? Strong key item, good contrast? Still, it’s not all that impressive, is it? This design, which was done on three days’ notice, is good enough for the purpose it needed to serve. It also shows that just following rules doesn’t guarantee a real good-looking patch. It only GUIDES towards a good-looking patch. The rules can be broken, if you have a specific reason for breaking them.

The next part will go over how to get from your first idea to the finished patch. Any questions at this point?

(B) From Pencil To Patch

Before we get into this topic, let me answer a question that I know I’m going to get asked. That is, “What is a good patch company?” It’s not the place of this session to officially recommend one supplier over another. This person has made an effort to list all the ones that he could find out about.

You might also look at the ads in the back of SCOUTING Magazine for some reputable suppliers. By the way, one of those ads is run by Chief Neckerchief. Let me give them an unsolicited plug. If you ever want a neckerchief, get your patches made wherever, and send them to Chief. They will make the cloth and bias tape neckerchief in whatever colors you want, sew your patches on for a VERY modest fee, and ship them back to you. I have not yet figured out how they do all of that cheaper and very often much faster than any nice ladies that I can locate locally.

First, I have to give you some very basic ground rules.
- Don’t make lettering too small. (Try Helvetica Bold Outline, no smaller than 16 point.)
- If you can’t draw it with a colored pencil, it can’t be stitched with a needle and thread.

Make the drawing the same size as the finished patch. If you make your drawing oversized “so the manufacturer can see all the detail,” you might put in detail that cannot be shrunk down to something that can be embroidered. So you’re leaving it to the manufacturer to decide how to shrink it down for you. Now a manufacturer is in the business of making patches and getting them out the door. Who do you want to make decisions when it comes to shrinking your drawing done, somebody who wants to hurry up and get it done, or somebody who cares about your design as much as you do? And who’s the most obvious person to care about your own design? Why, you, of course! So you make those decisions for yourself when you start out by making your drawing the same size as the finished patch.

After you’ve decided on the shape and size of your patch, the very first thing you have to do is insert space for the border. That’s the merrowed edge that most patches have. How many times have I seen artwork that goes all the way to the edge of the drawing, and then the manufacturer is told to add a border, when there’s no room left for a border. He has two choices – he can make the patch bigger to include the border, which might cost you more; or he can cram the border inside and reduce your artwork slightly. And what happens when he has to reduce your artwork to fit? He decides what happens to it, not you.

It’s very easy to unintentionally put in lettering that just can’t be embroidered. Although a thin line drawn by a pencil looks fine on a drawing, stitched lettering is not thin lines; just look at any patch. Stitched lettering takes up a lot more space than printed lettering. Your lettering should be no shorter than 3/8 inch tall. One-quarter inch is just too small and can’t be done. If you use a computer to generate your lettering, my favorite is Helvetica, because it looks most like standard patch lettering, in Bold, to take up as much space in print as stitched lettering would in thread, and Hollow so that I get a lettering outline instead of all black letters. The title of this slide is Helvetica Bold Hollow. Black lettering is fine if you want all of your patch lettering to be black. It’s kind of tricky to have black lettering on your drawing but tell the manufacturer to actually do it in a different color, because you are never completely sure how the finished color balance is going to work out. Hollow, or outlined, lettering allows me to color in whatever I want. The trouble is that Helvetica Bold Outline is not one of the default fonts that come with Windows, although it does seem to come with an Apple computer. I got mine by buying a ten-dollar cd of public domain typestyles at a computer show. If you want, give me your name and email address, write down why I have your email address, and I’ll send it to you in an email attachment. Then download it into your Windows Fonts folder when you get it.

Remember that our ultimate media is needle and thread. The sharpened point of a pencil is just an intermediary step between our imagined image in our head and the embroidered image on the patch. Don’t try to put in detail that you know can’t be stitched. Not all eyes have to have whites, not all hands need to have all five fingers, and not all trees have to have branches. If drawing a detail seems to be beyond your skill as an artist, that’s a good warning that detail just might be beyond the capacity of embroidered thread.

I will throw in a note about color. Use a little flair. Don’t stay locked into the standard kindergarten primary colors – red, blue, green, yellow. Besides American flag blue, there’s royal blue, turquoise, aquamarine, and bright blue. Besides yellow, there’s canary, gold, deep gold, and old gold. Do you want red, or do you really mean crimson? There are even two colors of white, flat white and polar (or brilliant) white.

I will also give you a little caution. While there are a lot of thread colors, there is not an infinite amount. From time to time, a commercial artist might draw up a concept for a patch for a council to use. He or she probably isn’t familiar with patch manufacturing, so they use the reference they know best, which is the Pantone coloring system.
Pantone is a manufacturer of printing inks. Their Pantone Matching System, or PMS, shows how to mix their inks to get exactly the right color, and has become the industry standard for color reference. If somebody wants to be clear about what specific color they want, they put down the PMS color number. The problem is that there are more than three thousand PMS colors, and there aren’t near that many thread colors available. The standard Tung Li two-panel thread chart has 126 colors, and the big expensive four-panel sample card has about 250. That’s a lot, but it’s nowhere near more than three thousand.

These suppliers have made thread color charts available on their websites. Keep in mind, though, that the colors shown will be no more accurate than the settings on your computer monitor or the quality of your printer.

Let’s go into how I draw up a patch. This is not the only way. It may not be the best way. But it is a way that gets good results for me. I am not a good free hand artist at all, but I can do a decent job of tracing.

If we’re starting from a picture, the first thing is to decide what shape the patch is going to be, and draw that outline. It helps to have an initial idea of how the lettering is going to be arranged. Then I trace the picture onto a piece of acetate. The acetate is what photocopy places use when they make a transparency for you. I get the fine point pen from an art supply house, specifically made for drawing on acetate. In the old days, I used Rapidograph pens like draftsmen used.

I then have the key item on one small cutout piece of paper, the lettering on other small pieces of paper, and the blank outline of my patch’s border. I push the pieces of paper around until they are arranged the way I like.

And how do you arrange them? You wouldn’t make a mistake to read a book on how to do Japanese flower arrangement, in which you learn to start with one element and develop from there, always keeping the balance of the whole in mind. Putting in particular element might be tempting, like a bright flower or a blazing sunset, but not if doesn’t complement everything else. You should be continually monitoring yourself so you don’t get carried away with too much of this or too much of that. To be trite for a moment, sometimes less really is more when the whole can add up to more than the sum of its parts.

Sometimes I have to blow up or shrink down my individual pieces of artwork a little bit, and a photocopier helps for that. Sometimes I don’t realize until I’m trying to fit it in the wording that it might have to be revised a little bit. When the pieces are where I want them, I set them down with a gluestick and photocopy the paste-up. When you do that, it might be useful to know to lighten the photocopier a notch or two so the edges of the little papers don’t leave ghost lines behind. The copies I make at that stage are my uncolored line drawings.

There are probably better ways to do this, but this way is cheap and easy for me. These days, I do use the computer for a couple of short cuts. Like I said, I can type it in different point sizes and then print it out
instead of having to crudely hand draw the outlined lettering like you see here. Also, it’s a lot easier for me to make my patch outlines on a computer instead of trying to be neat with a ruler and a compass. Since all I need for outlines are lines and curves, I don’t need fancy software. I’m able to do what I want with the basic drawing tools available inside PowerPoint, arrange the outlines that I need, and then print that out. It does help to change the scale of the PowerPoint view to 100% when I’m putting together those outlines.

Then to go from uncolored line drawings to colored renderings. In the old days when I had more time and patience, I did all my coloring with acrylic paints because I could mix the paints very close to the colors of the threads I had in mind to use. In those days, I did not color a copy of the line drawing. I secured a piece of clear acetate over the drawing with some masking tape and painted all the detail on one side of the acetate. When that side was dry, I turned the acetate over and painted the background colors on the other side. This is very tedious and exacting, but you can see that the finished result is almost as bright the embroidered patch.

Later on, I got lazy and started finishing my renderings with colored pencils and nylon tip markers.

---

Here’s our starting point, an 1840’s painting by George Catlin of a buffalo hunt. It wasn’t too hard to trace, but some things had to be kept in mind when we decided how to color it. Notice that the hills in the background are lighter, softer colors, a characteristic of things in the distance. The sky is not light blue; it is actually pale aquamarine. Light blue would have been a darker shade of blue. The shadows under the buffalo and the horseman are dark green, not black. The different color areas of the ground have been broken into color blocks. Think in terms of converting your image to a paint by number picture.

When it comes to blocking out the colors, I admit that I’m strongly influenced by French Impressionism when I translate an image into a patch drawing. Generally speaking, the Impressionists believed that the eye does not see the item itself. It only sees the colors that come to the eye, and the individual then translates those colors into an image for himself. So the Impressionists tried to paint the colors that convey the image of the item to the eye, not the item itself. You don’t have to get in every detail to convey a good concept of your image.

Which leads us into another technical problem. You line drawing is, of course, all black lines on a white background. How does the patch company know which lines you want embroidered in black, like the detail on the horse and rider, which lines you want embroidered in a color other than black, like the dark green lines in the distant hills, and which lines you don’t want embroidered at all, like the lines separating the color areas in the foreground? You could hope that the manufacturer might pay close attention to your color rendering and use that as a guide to try to figure out your intent, and it’s true that some patch companies are indeed very good at that. Or, you can make it easy for them by sending in separations along with your drawing.

What is a separation? That’s when you indicate on a separate piece of paper exactly where a specific color goes. For this patch, I took an extra-uncolored line drawing and went over all the lines I wanted embroidered in black with a red nylon tip marker. Then I added the comment that anything I had not specified by being marked in red was not to be embroidered in black. On another uncolored line drawing, I colored in with a red marker everything that I wanted embroidered in dark green, from the shadows in the bottom to the detail lines in the hills at the top. If the manufacturer wondered where to stitch that color of thread, all he had to do was look at the particular sheet of paper, the separation for that color, for his guide. And so on with the rest of the colors.

So when I put together a packet for ordering a patch, it includes a colored rendering, an uncolored line drawing, and as many additional line drawings marked to indicate what color goes where as I think would be useful. If possible, I also include a color copy of the original picture to give the manufacturer a better idea of what we have in mind. It tells the manufacturer what your intent is, whether or not you have the
skill to render it well. And many times I've been pleasantly surprised when the manufacturer actually added details or effects that I left out of my drawing because it was I'd hesitated to ask for it.

And always, always send an uncolored line drawing along with your color drawing.

A word on attached button loops. My lodge likes them because it means that we can wear the patch immediately at the activity they are for. Also, it represents the fact that the unit always comes first, so that we don't have to take off the patch from something we did with our unit to sew on an OA patch. The added cost is very moderate, usually only 5c to 7c per patch, or about the same as a single color. That means it only costs $14.00 to put loops on 200 patches. We think it is well worth it.

Now, let's go over again some stages in getting to a final design. I was invited to suggest something for a lodge's contingent patch to the Indian Summer activity in North Carolina last year. Hmm, I thought. Traveling to a Native American event. One idea would be a patch showing a Native American traveling someplace. The lodge is in Miami, and they are very big on Seminole Indians on their patches, so I looked for pictures of a Seminole going someplace.

I found one in this 1950's tourist brochure. There's a decent looking Seminole poling along in his dugout. Next, I had to decide on the size of the patch, and how much space there was to work with, which would define how much of the brochure I could borrow from.

The challenge was to work out in my head what my color balance was going to be. The lodge totem, the white heron, and the words were all on separate slips of paper which I played with by moving around until getting a balance that seemed to work. It has just recently become possible for some patch companies to do a patch with only a partially merrowed edge. I liked that “exploded view” approach and decided to play with it here.

Then came deciding how to color it. First you work with what you're locked into, and then you work out from there.

This patch plays some games. What is the biggest thing on it? (The dugout) Is the dugout necessarily the key item? (Maybe) It would be easy for the large size of the dugout to overwhelm the rest of the patch. That's why it wasn’t done in brown or any dark color. The biggest thing on this patch is the one has the most neutral color. It is at once shoved in your face by bursting out of the patch and then subdued by appearing in a shy retiring color.

Most of the rest of the scene has to be in blues and greens by the very nature of water and foliage. Many people would not figure to use three colors of green in such a small area. They would have used just one or two and let it go at that. Darker colors were used for the near left hand foliage, and the lighter colors were used for the horizon foliage. Instead of trying to do the palm trees with a brown trunk that small, they are done as a silhouette. Do those palm trees fade into the background because they are dark, or do they thrust themselves forward? What do you think? (Comments) The water is broken up, not by thin lines as we’ve seen before, but by heavier ripples. That was also a great place to hide the three W's. Have you spotted them yet?

The lodge totem is a great white heron, so we know what color that had to be. It was outlined in black so it wouldn’t fade into the light blue sky. Should the bird have been positioned higher? Yes, maybe it could have gone up and to the left a little bit. The idea at the time was to put it at head level with the Seminole top balance the patch.
And there’s the Seminole. The patch is all cool or neutral colors except for him. He could have been done in predominantly gold or in red. I decided to go with red because if I was going to do him in hot colors, I may as well use the hottest color.

How to arrange the lettering? I didn’t want to put any lettering across the upper edge, because I wanted to leave the sky open and uncluttered. It seemed to make sense to use the same color for the lodge name that was used for the lodge totem. If the lodge name was put across the upper edge, black would clutter up the open sky, and white on light blue would be unreadable. Positioning white lettering beneath the heron puts the lodge name in close conjunction with the lodge totem, and putting white over the green made the white legible. Does it crowd the patch at that point, or is that forgiven by leaving the sky open? (Comments) How would black lettering have worked right there? (Comments.)

Putting a gold border on the patch makes a comfortable medium hot contrast against all the cool and neutral colors inside. It also makes gold a given for the “Indian Summer” lettering. The lettering for the activity is the same color as the border color for the patch for the activity.

Let’s develop a couple of other pictures into patches.

Is there a key item in this picture? (The standing Indian.) Why does it stand out of all of the crowd? (Contrast with the sky.) What color would you usually say that a sky is? (Get comments) What thread colors would you use for the sky, and where? (Get comments) If you were going to arrange lettering on this picture, where would you place it? (Get comments) What colors would you use for the lettering? For the border? (Get comments) Does this picture have too much detail to make a reasonable patch?

Here is the finished patch. The wampum belt was changed to an OA sash. Does the key figure still stand out? What works and what doesn’t? (Get comments) To push some of the figures into the background, the ones in the rear are outlined in brown instead of black. Did that work? (Get comments) How would it have worked if all the figures had been outlined in black? (Get comments) Notice that while the front figures are OUTLINED in black, most of their interior detail is not. How do you think that worked? (Get comments)

The sky is a couple of shades of light blue, plus white, PLUS lavender. How does it look? Is it too busy? Is it embroidered in TOO many colors? (Get comments. Point out stitch directions) The lettering might logically have gone all across the top of the patch in a color easy to read. Here, the lettering is off to the side in less than completely contrasting colors. How does that work?

Look also how the shading was effected in this patch. Remember that not all shadows are black or grey. Black is used to indicate drapery on the left hand dark blue robe, and dark blue (not black) is used for drapery in the medium blue dresses. Drapery in the brown robes is also shown with two shades of the same color. However, it is possible to over engineer your shading. The face of the standing figure has way more colors in it than are necessary.

Then let’s take on another challenge. Here’s the picture:

Would this picture make a good patch? Would we even WANT this picture to be a patch? If we did, what would be the key item? (Get comments)

Could the key item in this picture be not a specific thing, but be simply the contrast line between the top and the middle third? Or, is it the line between the middle and the bottom third? Your eye may catch on
the waterfall and move around from there. Does this patch have a central focal point? Does it really need one?

By the way, this is from a huge 10 feet by 25 feet painting by Karl Bierstadt titled “Long’s Peak.” It’s in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. You walk into that room in the American Wing and this painting takes up an entire wall. We see what it looks like as a painting. It’s a fantasy-idealized view of the Rockies. For that mountain to be that tall at that perspective, it would have to be seven miles high. Let’s see what it could look like as a patch.

Because things in the distance are softer colors than things up close, this patch really has three horizontal blocks, a near that’s very dark, a middle that uses medium shades of brown, and the distant mountains in lighter whites and pastels. The key item in this patch would appear to be the distant mountains, but it could be argued that the eye is drawn to the waterfall just off center. Look also how the trees were stitched to simulate foliage, instead of just indicating a flat green to the patch company.

For that matter, what color is a tree?

The puzzle patch across the top will serve as our example of mistakes that are easy to make. What color are trees and foliage? (Green) Right, so this person made his trees and foliage shades of green. Flat green, like painting a flat wall. That’s how we can tell that it’s foliage, because it’s green. Let’s look at how that was approached a little differently.

On the Robin Hood patch, which was part of a set of “Archers,” the foreground is stitched flat in medium green, with a few dark green tufts of grass so that it would look horizontal. The light green foliage in the middle background is broken up into random areas outlined in the medium green that are stitched in different directions. That breaks it up so that it does not lay flat, and adds texture to the color. The tree’s foliage is dark green with black detailing to give it fullness. The tree trunk in the puzzle patch is stitched flat. The trunk in the Robin Hood patch is also medium brown stitched flat, but it has black tracery over it to give it more texture. The background brown thread is stitched flat because the trunk doesn’t need as much texture as foliage does.

The trees on the Chulee patch in the center are a highly detailed dark silhouette against a plain lighter colored background. There are only two shades of green used here, which work together to make a decent forest effect.

The trees in the background of the cedar house on the center right are only outlined in black. If they hadn’t been outlined, they would have been nothing more than a blurry green background. If the trees had black detail in them, all that detail would have crowded into the detail of the patch’s key item, the house. As it is, the green stitching inside the trees has been “shaped” to emphasize that they are trees and not a flat background. You indicate that kind of shaping by drawing stitch direction on the color separation for that color.

The foliage on the lower left trees are very fine detail that are so thin that the sky shows through. While its true that only a single color is used for these trees, it could be said that two colors make them work, the green of the foliage and the light blue that shows through them.

Notice that not only are the trees in the longhouse patch not embroidered in flat green, but also the hills in the distance have been broken up with two shades of green. Detail in the clouds is not marked in that standard detail color of black, but in light grey. If you’re ever going to put clouds in your patches, you need to look up at them once in a while and study how black hardly ever appears in any of them and, for
that matter, they aren’t always white, either. Start looking for those shades of grey and even pale lavender in your clouds.

Notice that exactly the same longhouses and trees were used again in the lower right hand patch. Did any of you spot that already? Because the trees and foliage are much smaller on the re-use, they don’t need as much detail, but they’re still broken up instead of merely being stitched flat. The landscape uses medium colors for the foreground, and lighter colors for the distant hills. Dark green is used for outlining and texture. All the foliage detail happens above and out beyond the figures in the foreground. Those highly detailed figures are surrounded by plenty of blank space to help them stand out better. The foliage in the distance doesn’t crowd them because all of that is in shades of the same color, green.

We started out by asking what color is a tree? Perhaps a better question might be what colors do your trees need to be?

The next question is, what color is water? Any takers? In my opinion, you can rarely stitch water. Unless you’re showing a fountain or a waterfall, or white water, you can pretty much only show the effect of light on water.

Advance PP Slide Stitching Water

All across the bottom of our unfortunate example is a strip of turquoise blue. We can assume that’s meant to be water. Wouldn’t it be nice if there was anything to help us along in our assumption?

We can tell that the area in the foreground of the shuttle patch is water because yellow ripple lines were added to the reflection of the exhaust.

Horizontal single stitch lines were put on top of the water in the sabal palm patch to make clear that is a water reflection there. It also helps that the water is a different color than the sky.

The very name of the Osceola Chapter is camouflaged in the wavy ripple lines in the moon’s reflection on water.

We know that the waterfall on the Rocky Mountain patch is reflected in the lake not only because of single stitch ripple lines run over it to break up the surface, but also because of the pale blue dividing line running between the water and the shore. It can even be possible to have a water effect where you didn’t intend one. In an earlier version of this patch, the green pasture in the forepart was blank, and people kept asking what the dark green pond was there for. That’s when the horses were added, to make it look like land.

The key deer patch in the lower center uses several of these effects at the same time. There is a line between the deer’s legs and their reflections, and the reflections are wavy. The water area is broken up with two wavy color areas, and is overlaid with thin single stitch lines of light grey to simulate ripples.

One thing our unfortunate example does show us is a puzzle patch. That’s a series of several patches that fit together side by side to make a greater whole. Puzzle patches can be fun.

Advance PP Slide Puzzle Patches #1

The parts of a puzzle patch set can go together to make a single picture, or they can just fit together side by side to make a bigger shape.

The composite scene on the left is borrowed from the large lodge charters issued in the late 1950’s and early 1950’s. It does make a nice overall set, but look how odd each patch is shaped when by itself.
The set in the top center is a historical map of Florida. Here they played a little bit with unusual colors. The ripple lines in the water aren’t white, they are silver Mylar. The background of the upper left patch isn’t light blue, it’s peacock blue. The background of the lower right patch isn’t yellow, it’s yellow-green.

The other two sets go together to make a large shape. The arrowhead on the bottom set is supposed to sit on top of the edges of the four other patches. The pieces of the puzzle patch in the right look a little disconnected because that lodge’s Executive Committee decided on what those patches’ shape would be before they started figuring out what would be on them. It took them half an hour of discussion to work out that shape, too.

Here are some more examples. The set on the left uses strips of Seminole patchwork to give continuity from one patch to the next.

Timuquan’s set in the top center celebrates their lodge totem

The set on the right features Florida flowers, and the assembled set simulates a stylized flower.

Aal-Pa-Tah’s set on the bottom is a simple building block arrangement that looks very attractive.

Let’s change gears here and talk about some patches that I think came out very well. These are patches that I traded for just because I very much liked the way that they looked.

This very simple design appeals to me for many reasons. It has classic balance with good bilateral symmetry. That means that one side is a reflection of the other side. It uses colors very simply and very effectively. They used a motif local to their area in North Carolina, and showed imagination in the unusual shape of the dangle. Nobody was out to show off with this one, just be quietly impressive.

I really liked the verticals in this set. That guitar shaped item is a turtle effigy mound in their Council, and is their lodge’s symbol. Look how it is brought down to merge with the tree trunks, which are arranged just a little bit irregularly. They are set off from each other just enough so they don’t appear to be a rigid grid. And the ceremonial figures aren’t set in the standard formal positions. They, too, are casually rearranged. Something about this patch makes me feel like what I hope it is intended to do, give me a hint of the feel of being in their own ceremonial ring.

These flaps are very cool because they do the same thing in so many different ways. We all know of Ordeal, Brotherhood, and Vigil flaps that use different color borders. This lodge uses different seasons, summer, fall, and winter. Their 2000 NOAC patch set is a nighttime view of the same scene (which, incidentally, glows in the dark).

Here we see a very muddled and a very successful csp from the same council. The Philmont csp really attempts to do too much. When we already have the very detailed hikers and the nicely rendered Tooth of Time and the Philmont logo standing out in hot colors and the palm tree bursting out of the patch, do we really need a roaring sunrise/ sunset dropped into everything, too?
I, personally, tend to be suspicious of a big sunset or sunrise added to a patch to make it look more colorful. That can mean that the rest of the patch is falling short and need to be fixed somehow. It’s like adding a flashing neon sign.

We still have palm trees and a sunset on the bottom patch, and a fair amount of detail in the heron. It could be said that the sky is a little busy, yet we are not overloaded with details and the overall balance on this patch comes together a lot more effectively.

It’s possible to be bold and exciting without getting lost.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advance PP Slide</th>
<th>Amangamek Wipit and Apoxky Aio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The set on the left uses red white and blue with good dramatic effect. How many patches do you ever see where fireworks fade into the background? There is hidden subtlety in this set, as there is in the set on the right.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A verbal description of that two-part set might lead you to believe that it was crowded with way too much detail. Yet look how the heavy solid figures of the bears in neutral dark brown gives stability to all the flaming hot colors going on all around them in their grass dance outfits. Yet when this lodge used this same design two years later with a blue background instead of this deep red, the overall effect didn’t work nearly as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advance PP Slide</th>
<th>Mischigonong and Nisqually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Here are some two-part sets that show unusual creativity. See how the round pocket dangle is completed where the curve continues into the flap. I can just picture the wheel turning to give motion to the set. I’m told that the figures on the outer background are that lodge’s chapter totems.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It’s not too hard to come up with the idea of having your lodge totem rise up out of a ceremonial campfire. What’s exceptional about this set is the extra care given to the trees, and to the arrangement of the ceremonial figures variously in front, profile, and three-quarter view. I like the non-generic ceremonial outfits, too.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advance PP Slide</th>
<th>Bears</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Here are two excellent renditions of bears. Not only are they not done all in the same color of brown, not only are different colors to give them full form and shape, they do a good job of simulating a bear’s shaggy hair. The one on the left does it with a little well placed black detailing. The one on the right does a great job of putting the colors edge to edge.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advance PP Slide</th>
<th>Creative flaps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Here are some flaps that do a great job of balancing creativity with self-restraint. The cedar house would be lost in a dark forest except that it is set off and framed very nicely with a gold and red outer background.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I like that Wapashuwi’s lodge number of 56 is made part of the background to increase the effect of the snarling bobcat. I think I would have rearranged that arrow slightly so that it wasn’t sticking out of his nose.

I really like the nice mountains on the Ut-In-Selica flap that was done in only three colors of thread. Look, too, that there is no light bulb of a sun. It is made to appear more of a general glow. How many of you have already spotted the two eagle’s heads silhouetted on the patch?
I’m not sure I can pronounce the next flap correctly, so I’ll just call it the octopus patch. I’m not sure about the Scout emblem that’s being roasted in a fire. This lodge was formed by a merger of two other lodges, and what I really like are the totems of the old two lodges in the background, just like the histories of those lodges are the background to this new one.

Speaking of mergers here is a jacket patch from a lodge ultimately formed by the merger of many smaller lodges. The jacket patch is the design of a medicine wheel. The single smaller patch represents the current lodge. I’m told that what you’re supposed to do is wear the two with the arrow patch sewn on to point to your own former lodge.

Here are some two part sets that are kind of fun. You might remember Mikano Lodge’s turtle effigy mound. There is their lodge totem, and there is a turtle desperately hanging on to the edge of a pocket flap.

The middle set is the lodge totem as seen through the barrel of a gun moving back and forth until it zeroes in on it.

On the right is a very festive two part in which the lettering is the key item by becoming a panorama of symbols and references from that lodge and council.

This is another six-inch patch that features all the chapter totems of that lodge. In the center is a map of the lodge showing the chapters in their colors. Around the patch, Chief Tomokie pours water into a “small winding river” (Econlockhatchee) which flows into a “view of Beautiful water” (Wewahitchka) which is the background for Eluwak’s white buffalo of spiritual strength and Micconope’s “little chief.” Wahitlaw means “Southern Star” and here it is on the bottom edge of the patch. Chulee Afopkeh means “pine shore” and here are the pines on the shore. In the clouds above it is Dakota’s Indian handclasp of friendship, and Woapalanne’s eagle flies in the blue sky over that.

This was an exercise in getting the chapter totems to flow from one into another, while still preserving their separate individuality. When this council added a couple of districts, the lodge also added a couple of new chapters. There just isn’t enough room to add any more chapters to this version, so it was completely revised.

Here we see many of the same chapter totems arranged on their part of a map of the lodge. Again, the lettering of the chapter names is in the same color as the chapter totems. An attempt was made to have contrast between the background colors of the chapter areas. The council name is on the patch, too, ghosted in black lettering on black.

Here, for one more time is the website that lists patch suppliers.

Are there any questions at this point? (Take questions for a few minutes, if any.)
We have gone over some ways to translate your ideas into patches. Now, where can you get some good ideas? That will be the next part of this session.

(C) Ideas And Inspiration 15-20 Minutes

Probably the most obvious inspirations for OA patches are the speakers of an OA Ceremonial team.

Here is that idea developed by three lodges. The figures in the lower left are derived from illustrations in the OA Handbook. There were only enough illustrations for three patches, and they needed something for a fourth patch, so they hand drew a fire. Notice that the logs are not all sitting edge to edge. They are put in kind of “floating” in the fire, which helps augment the impression of burning. While the background colors are different from patch to patch to give them individuality, they all have the same color border to tie them together as a set. The background colors are all dark – dark blue, dark red, dark violet, and dark green. The year patch also has a dark background, which is dark yellow. You might not think of yellow as having a dark shade, but there it is. Notice that these patches are just a little bit narrower than usual. That was done to accommodate the collectors. The average notebook page is 8-1/2 inches by 11 inches. The average patch would be 3 inches by four inches. Four times three inches is 12 inches, too big to display on a standard page, so these patches are 2-3/4" by 4 inches so that they can still be mounted side by side.

Let’s compare the upper left and the lower left sets of patches. The upper left set from Timuquan Lodge are all straight rectangles. That set includes a year patch, which merely repeats the puzzle patch picture. The Tipisa set has rounded patches on the left and ride ends to give closure to the set, and its year patch generally follows that rounded side shape.

The figures on the Osceola Lodge patches to the right were all taken from photographs of their own ceremony team. There are no background or border colors repeated from patch to patch, but what does emphasize the set is the internal construction of the patches. There is an inner border emphasized by a Southeastern Indian motif, and the central figure “blows out” of that inner border instead of being restricted by it. The Year patch repeats the individual figures to pull the whole set together.

A higher level of sophistication inspired by the OA ceremony is not the physical figures, but images inspired by lines from the Ceremony.

The set on the left is a mix of detailed and plain backgrounds to illustrate lines from the Legend. When remarks were made about the gory violence on the Spring Conclave patch, it was pointed out that it was derived from an 1830’s drawing by George Catlin. The Service Weekend patch was a response to a comment that a patch with a plain blah white background can’t ever look colorful.

The puzzle patch to the right uses a continuous sash to tie together the set, which, once again, uses different background colors to give individuality to the patches with the same color border on them all.
case you think you don’t have any artistic talent, let me mention that this very decent looking set was
drawn by a chapter adviser who was a security guard during his break time in the middle of the night in
the front seat of a pickup truck by the light of a street light.

The O-Shot-Caw Lodge patches in the lower right combine images of their lodge’s Ceremony Team with
lines from the ceremony. There are no common background or border colors, yet there is no doubt that
this is a set because all the patches are the same size and shape, all the ceremonial figures are about the
same size, and the lettering is arranged in the same places from patch to patch. Each patch also features
Seminole patchwork as an ornamental inner border.

The Native American theme in a ceremony team naturally leads us to consider Native American culture in
general. This can go in several directions. The most obvious might be dancers.

The Echockotee Lodge set uses a variety of dancers on plain backgrounds within an unusual lozenge
shape. Notice how the year patch repeats the lozenge shape.

The year patch is a very detailed scene of Karl Bodmer’s “Mandan Buffalo Dance.” The individual patches
are individual dancers lifted out of the group dance on plain backgrounds. The dancer on each individual
patch is exactly the same size that it is on the year patch. At first, the manufacturer complained about the
difficulty of embroidering so much detail. The compromise was to simplify the background dancers to
neutral silhouettes. This did not diminish the effect of a crowded group dance, and did have the incidental
effect of actually better showing off the dancers used again on the individual patches. Again, the general
shape of the individual patches, a flat top and a rounded bottom, is repeated in the year patch.

The next set uses completely different colors with a uniform construction to create a set. We have here a
hoop dancer, a straight dancer, a Yeibichei line dancer, and a Koshare clown. You might hesitate to use
pink on a Boy Scout patch, yet it works here because this is meant to be watermelon pink, and a
watermelon is associated with the Koshare clown, a symbol of gluttony. On the year patch are two from
the Kwakiutl Winter Dance. Raven is on the left, and on the right is the Hukhukwa Bird, a servant of the
“many hundred eyed great Cannibal of the North.” He has a long beak so he can poke holes in the skulls
of his human victims to eat their brains out.

The set on the right “borrows” Native American dancers that were used on a set of US postage stamps.
See how O-Shot-Caw Lodge once again marks these patches as their own by using decorative strips of
Seminole patchwork patterns.

We have seen images of Native Americans used from around the country. I know of a lodge in North
Carolina that, for years, did annual three patch sets featuring a different tribe. You have seen how O-
Shot-Caw Lodge of Miami uses local Seminole motifs to give local flavor to their patches. OK then, how
about Native Americans from your own local area?

The Timuquan Lodge set for their 50th Anniversary shows, of all things, the Timucuan tribe that their lodge
was named after. See how the drapery in the chief’s robe is done with medium and dark blue, not just
black lines on a blue background. While that works, the shading on the figures is a too dark brown. We
learn from this that shading probably works best when it's medium on light, or dark on medium. Dark on
light as you see here doesn't work so well. The tan shading under their feet was mainly put there to give
them something to stand on, so it wouldn’t look like they were floating in air. It could be argued that the
key item in this patch is not the figures, but the blue drapery, which is a cool color. The figures
themselves are a neutral light brown. The background and lettering are hot colors of light gold and red.
What does that create? (Contrast)
In the rest of these patches, we see various solutions to the puzzle patch problem: how to balance each patch making a part of a coherent whole picture while being capable of standing alone by itself. Some work with more or less success than others.

In the Timuquan set, the hut does not have good continuity from the top left to the top right patch. Its details are even embroidered differently from one patch to the other. That’s what happens when you send in the patchwork for each patch one at a time. I’m not saying that you have to order them all at one time; that would be a huge expense. What you should do is send in the artwork for the set when you order the first one, so the patch company knows what’s coming.

If the water had just been embroidered in blue, it would have looked like they were canoeing over a flat blue floor. To break up that flatness, thin dark blue lines were stitched over it.

The Semialachee Lodge patches are a nice three-patch side by side set. For many years, this lodge required itself to feature a Florida Indian “motif” on all its patches. There are no ripple lines on the water and, in fact, the water is embroidered in the same light blue color as the sky. Yet we do see that the flat blue of the water is broken up by a few lily pads and the shadows on the figures in the canoe. It helps that the edges of the shadows are wavy instead of straight as they would be when reflected off of water. In the middle patch, we see that turquoise on light blue does not work effectively for lettering, even though the turquoise is darker than the light blue. Turquoise works on the woman only because it is outlined in black, which provides a contrast to the turquoise and the light blue on either side of the black lines. The lettering probably would have worked better if lavender had been used for it. The lavender is also a light color, but it might have contrasted better than turquoise because it’s a different color group than light blue.

In an earlier version if this drawing, the chickee stood by itself in the third patch. Then it was expanded in size a little bit to overlap into the middle patch. That way, what’s merely part of the background in one patch becomes the key item in the next patch, helping to tie together the whole set.

The set on the right is a history of Florida Indians, with a 20th century seated Billy Bowlegs III wearing a Seminole jacket, two 19th century Seminole, Tukoseemathla and Micanopy showing off the red leggings he was very proud of and a 16th century Timucuan chief going off to war. This set is probably just a little overdone. We can already tell it’s a set because of the common lozenge shape and rust borders. The idea was to create a puzzle patch set by having soft colors move from patch to patch. That probably wasn’t necessary at all.

No matter what part of the country you’re from, you’re bound to have had local Native Americans at some time. You’ve seen how you can show them in static portraits or engaged in some activity. If your lodge is around or east of the Mississippi, there is a good resource that might be useful to you.

You are probably familiar with the Audubon prints of North American birds. There is an equivalent for North American Native Americans, the McKenney-Hall lithographs.

William McKenney was Secretary of the Interior through much of the 1820’s. Whenever tribal chiefs were brought to Washington DC for treaty making, and also to be suitably impressed by the might of the white man, McKenney arranged to have their portraits painted. He used several artists, primarily Charles Bird King. He and many others knew even then that Native American culture was a vanishing thing, and wouldn’t be around much more.

Later, he enlisted the skills of a Mr. Hall to make stone lithographs of those pictures, like the Audubon prints. Stone lithography involves drawing with a wax pencil on the flat surface of a very fine-grained stone imported from Germany. The images were then transferred with ink to high quality rag paper and hand colored, then bound in big books with several pages of description about each picture.
You can imagine that this was a very expensive procedure, and the finished books were very expensive to buy, maybe about $10,000 apiece in today's money. In fact, the three books in the series were made by different companies as they went bankrupt one after another. The first lithographs from the 1830's and 1840's were folio sized, about 14 inches by 18 to 20 inches. In the 1870's and later, they were reproduced quarto sized, or one-fourth size, about 8 inches by 12 inches. The trend has been for the pages to get cut out of the books and sold separately. The ones from the more populous states sell for more than the ones from the states with smaller populations. For example, there are just as many Seminole prints as there are for the Iowan tribes, but Seminoles sell for more because there is a greater population looking for them.

Good thing for us, the original lithographs have been reproduced in many books. Unfortunately for us, the most common set has been the one edited by Horan, which was available for years very inexpensively from Barnes and Noble. I think that almost every library must have a copy of that in their reference section. The problem is that the Horan reproductions are redrawn from the octavo prints, and much detail was left out. Even so, I am now starting to see pages from the Horan books appear at flea markets being sold individually.

How confident can we be of the detail accuracy in the McKenney-Hall prints. We are handicapped in that most of the original paintings were lost in a fire at the Smithsonian in the 1870's. At that time, the Smithsonian's Native American collection was on display in the top floor of the main building, the “castle.” One January, some workmen were doing some repairs and renovations in that room. It was very, very cold, so they were very happy to find a stove in a closet and fired it up. What they didn't know was that the stove didn’t have a flue to the outside; it only opened up into the attic. After two or three days of lighting fired in the stove, the attic caught fire.

Fortunately, not all of Charles Bird King’s paintings were lost in that fire. A few had gone into private hands, one is now on display in the Lowe Art Museum in Atlanta, and quite a few of them are today held by a private college in Connecticut. We can see from those few survivors that the detail in the paintings were indeed very meticulously and accurately carried into the lithographs.

Included here are examples of how different lodges put their own spin on exactly the same lithographs. Compare, for example, the two Micanopy patches, which even have similar pink backgrounds. I personally call this other one the “rabbit eared” Seminole because that’s how his turban looks to me, and look how differently he is interpreted on these two patches. You might find out if there are any McKenney-Hall lithographs for your own home area, and see what you can do with them.

We have talked about Native Americans from your own area, but you don’t have to use the whole human figures. Just using individual pieces of clothing or artifacts can make for interesting patches.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advance PP Slide</th>
<th>Local Native American Clothing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

On the left, the year patch shows the whole outfit, and the patches feature individual pieces from the outfit – a longshirt, turban and scarf, leggings, and a bandolier pouch. They tried for an interesting effect on these patches when they asked the manufacturer to stitch the backgrounds radiating outward for a sunburst pattern. It does make the thread shimmer, but the manufacturer complained about how much more stitching was needed to fill in the areas, and had to charge more.

The figure in the center is “Ol’ Tallahassee” from an 1890's photograph, and the individual patches are 19th century Southeastern bandolier bags. I, personally, am really impressed by this set in which the shape of the key item is the very shape of the patch. Although they seem to be minutely detailed, the detail is a kind not hard at all for a manufacturer to accomplish.

The set on the right are Calusa masks excavated at Key Marco. They show that your artifacts don’t need to be limited to items of clothing.
On top is an easy three part set showing Native American artwork. It was originally drawn for all three to have the same soft gold background. When the lodge chief ordered the first patch in the set, he changed the background color to bright yellow "to make it more colorful," and was quite surprised by the glaring results. The patch became just a little too bright and a little too bold, so that we see it is possible to have a little too much contrast in a patch. When he ordered the next two patches, he returned to the originally specified color, and the resulting color combinations are less stark and more appealing.

The set on the left is called "North American Indian Art." We see a Haida clan helmet from the northwest, a Huron moccasin from the northeast, a Navajo blanket from the southwest, and a Calusa turtle effigy from the southeast. The center is represented on the year patch that shows a cutaway view of the painted inside of a Plains tipi. The Haida clan helmet was probably a challenge to embroider, but look how few colors were needed to make the very effective bulls’ eye pattern on the Navajo blanket. The original picture showed zigzag white lines between the color bands. The patch company was asked to reproduce that, and darned if they didn’t do a good job of it, though I don’t know if they would have automatically included that if it hadn’t been specifically pointed out to them.

The middle patch set is "North American Indian Dwellings." There is a southeastern chickee, a northeastern long house, a southwestern pueblo, and a northwestern cedar plank house, and the center is a tipi camp in the Rocky Mountains. See how pale yellow on light beige just doesn’t work for lettering. Wouldn’t it have been better to use the brown for the lettering? The pueblo patch is effective with only half a dozen colors, and was an experiment in using all hot colors. I think that it worked. Look how the stitching in the bluff is in different directions to bring out its jagged angles while the stitching in the sky is all in the same direction to make it flat.

On some of these patches, the color used in the borders is not used inside the patch. Putting on the border is a separate manufacturing step, so a color used in the border does not count as a color used inside the patch. Even so, the border and the letter are the same on a couple of these patches where it was thought that would help frame the key item better. Which way you go is up to your own artistic discretion.

The patches on the right are Plains warshields that they got out of a souvenir set of pictures purchased at the Buffalo Bill Museum.

You might consider Native American art from your own local area.

If your lodge is from the Plains, you might also consider ledger art. If your lodge is from the Northwest, you have very rich traditions of Northwest art to dip into, and I don’t mean just totem poles, either. I have seen some beautiful carved eating utensils from the Northwest. The Great Lakes and the Northeast have many beaded items to draw upon.

Don’t be discouraged if there might not be much documentation for Native American art from your area, because you can always put your own angle on what you find. For example, look at the three different uses of the same woodpecker panel excavated at Key Marco. Many of these patches have developed, not particular items, but repeated motifs found engraved on shell or hammered into copper sheets. How much color is there in shell or copper? Not any, yet see what these lodges were able to do with those patterns by playing with color and arrangement.

If your lodge is in an area that has rich decorative traditions, perhaps in beadwork, you can get very good effects with using local motifs simply for border embellishment.
This is part of a long continuous set that featured the totems of all their chapters. The interior arrangement is the same from patch to patch, yet each patch has individuality not only in the totem medallions, but also in the widely varying types of patchwork patterns used around the outside.

We started with the Ceremonial Team and progressed from there to all things Native American. Another great source of ideas for OA patches is the natural world. How about the idea of putting animals on a patch? What a concept!

The first animals that usually come to mind are the macho animals, the big ones or the carnivores. On the left are Rocky Mountain animals tied together into a set by borders of Native American motifs. The set on the right doesn’t have fancy borders, but the left and right lettering blocks with white backgrounds do a very effective job of framing the patch.

Another popular animal is, of course, birds. We will see examples of birds on patches. How about patches of bird feathers?

The set on the left is meant to simulate a war shield with feathers hanging from it. The individual feathers are vignettes from the Seminole Wars.

You’ve heard of feathers on birds, haven’t you? Then how about birds on feathers? The center set borrowed the shield and feathers idea from the left hand set. Each has three W’s semi-camouflaged in the fluffies. The birds are all native to that state.

The right-hand set are feathers themselves, with all lettering completely camouflaged into the stitched colors. Here again, the shape of the patch is the very shape of the key item. The idea was that it would look like a feather when hanging from a participant’s button loop. Some care was given to picking out feathers that were not only different color patterns, but also different shapes.

Birds on patches look good, especially if they are also your lodge totem.

The eagle is not the totem of the lodge on the right. They still made a pretty decent set showing different aspects of an eagle. That eagle head turned out to be a big hit. See how the feathers are both shaped by stitching and detailed in light grey instead of black.

The osprey is the totem of the lodge in the center, and here it is prominently shown in each patch of this vertical puzzle set that has trees continuing through all the patches.

Eagles and ospreys fly, land, attack, soar, and look dignified. What does an alligator do except sleep, float, lurk, and occasionally yawn? And yet here is a reasonably effective set of patches showing off that lodge’s totem. So don’t be frustrated if it seems that your own lodge totem doesn’t have a wide variety of activity to work with. After all, what does a buffalo do except eat, sleep, and occasionally stampede, yet we have all seen plenty of great looking patches with buffalo on them.

There are other interesting animals that we can use, and those are our official state “things.”
Besides the state song, every state has an official state animal, a state fish, a state tree, and so on. Florida has a bunch. There’s an official state salt-water fish and freshwater fish, and an official state saltwater mammal and freshwater mammal besides the official land mammal, and even an official state rock. It is agatized coral, that in the whole world is found only in the Tampa Bay area. Pennsylvania’s official state insect is the firefly, the official state snack for Illinois is popcorn, the jalapeno is the official state hot pepper for Texas, and California has an official state soil. You might research what your state has designated as official state things and see if they might work on your patches.

The top left patch has the state tree. What can you do with a plain brown and green tree? You give it a light pink sky. Then add a cerise inner border to bring out the hot pink, and outline the cerise in red, and indicate water ripples in light yellow instead of white.

Florida’s state shell is the horse conch. It was easy to figure that light warm colors would contrast best with dark cool colors like turquoise and green, made to look even darker by outlining in black.

The stare of the panther was an effort to repeat the success of the eagle’s head. His gaze is more intense because his eyes are a pale cool color surrounded by hot colors. That green is framed by the green in the inner background for a subtle bulls’ eye effect. Where did they get the idea to do it that way? From the famous wolf on the old Kittatinny Lodge #5 flaps. If you want good ideas on what effects look good, try looking at your own patch collection to see what you like, and what there is about them that causes you to like them.

What can you do with a plain mousy grey mockingbird? It sings beautifully, but it doesn’t look very dramatic. So you start from the center and work your way out. If the center is grey, then what would contrast with that? One answer might be that deep burnt orange color you’ve never been able to use on anything else. Working outward, what contrasts with deep burnt orange? That could be a light peach color. What color lettering is going to show up on light peach and still kind of go with orange? That would be red, and maroon (a deeper shade of red) is used for inner and outer borders. So, starting from a very neutral beginning, we were able to solve our color problems by going one step at a time. Just as the conch patch was an experiment in cool colors, so is the mockingbird patch an experiment in all hot colors.

The year patch is the most official state “thing,” the state seal. We asked for, and received permission from the Florida Secretary of State to use it, which meant that we had to explain how we wanted to use it, submit our artwork to them, and make a couple of minor changes to accommodate their rules for its use.

Slightly more general than your official state animals are animals native to your state.

On the left are animals protected by state law. The key deer is about the size of a collie dog. The tree frog while more common up north, is scarce enough in Florida to be protected. Look how the addition of a single dot of yellow in the frog’s eye brings the whole patch alive. The tree snails come in hundreds of color varieties, and used to be much sought after by collectors. Sometimes, unscrupulous dealers would find a type limited to a single hammock, take all they wanted for their own use, and then burn the hammock to destroy the rest. The manatee patch was an experiment to see if a grey, dumpy looking animal could be made to look colorful.

The other two sets show animals from within their state. I like how the single tree gives continuity to a single vertical puzzle patch set with animals positioned on appropriate levels in the tree.

You don’t have to limit yourself to obvious animals, either. I know a lodge that did a set of bugs – a scorpion, a fire ant, a preying mantis eating a moth. The patch with the cockroach on it sold out right away.
So far, we’ve been talking about mostly air and land animals. Don’t forget the water.

The top left set is fish from Florida’s John Penncamp Coral Reef State Park on Key Largo. The lodge chief that year liked scuba diving. The bottom left set features underwater life in the Gulf coast, as does the right hand set. On the bottom are patches in the shape of their key items, which are fish local to the Florida Keys. The OA chapter in the Keys is 120 miles long and five miles wide. The Scout camp is on a key shared half and half with the Girl Scouts, where that chapter has its own fun weekend every May, and these are patches from some of those events. By the way, you’re all invited; so come on down.

Unless your council is in panhandle Texas and Oklahoma, surely it must have some rivers, ponds, lakes, or reservoirs in it, and there must be something in those waters for you. Even if you don’t have rainbow trout, you gotta at least have catfish, or even crawdads or snail darters.

Besides local wildlife, what’s more unique and distinct to your own area than local landmarks?

Serendipity is a five-dollar word that means something unexpected, or a pleasant surprise. One of the serendipitous things about the American Bicentennial in 1976 was that every place in America turned around and discovered that it has a history. Every location where there are people has a dimple and a pimple that is unique and distinct to the face of that particular place. Why not celebrate the uniqueness of your own locale?

The set on the left are statewide landmarks – the local Native Americans, the council’s headquarter city skyline, the oldest fort in the state, also within that council, and a famous bridge over the Florida Keys.

The central set are landmarks within the Council. Aal-Pa-Tah Lodge used items that the West Palm Beach Chamber of Commerce would have been proud of – a power plant, a classic hotel, a local landmark lighthouse. How many lodges have ever thought of putting the local civic arena on a patch? Not many, I bet, but it doesn’t look too bad, does it?

The right hand set are tourist attractions within that council’s area. Some people were a little nervous about putting Disney’s castle on a patch, but you can’t copyright a building. Gatorland is a classic old style tourist attraction from the 1950’s, and when the owner was shown one of these patches, he loved it. Notice the black lines put into the track under the race cars and the waving flag to help simulate motion so it didn’t look like they were just parked there. And what does a healthy young Boy Scout look for when he goes to the beach? That’s from a postcard bought at Albertson’s, and she’s actually wearing more on the patch than she was on the postcard. The boys nicknamed her “Monique.”

Possibly the most topically local item to your Council are its own camps.

 Doesn’t it seem appropriate that the OA lodge, which is there to support good camping, should sooner or later honor the Council’s camps on its patches? The problem is that most council camp buildings are kind of boring unless you’re lucky enough to have camp buildings that are maybe something like a rustic log cabin style. Still, of you remember the neutral grey mocking bird patch, there are ways you can add pizzazz to a patch with what you do with the elements of the patch other than the key item.

The buildings on the left are made into decent patches by playing with colors and contrast in the outer background, the lettering, and the borders. The top patch may be the best looking patch you’ll ever see featuring nothing more than two leaning slabs of grey concrete.
The year patch is the stained glass window in a camp’s A-frame chapel. Most people would have done the lettering in a dark color to make it more readable. That’s OK if all you want is a patch to read. This lettering was purposely done in gold on white so it wouldn’t crowd or distract from the detail in the stained glass, because it was decided that the colorful key item was a more important part of the overall design than the information in the lettering.

The center and right hand sets show patches from those Councils’ camping properties. The year patch is a scene of the entrance to the Council’s main camp.

Every Scout camp exists in its own ecosystem. The flat sands and pines we have in Florida are different from the hilly rocks and hardwoods of New England, which is different from grassy prairies in the West. So another thing you might have specific to your own area is your own ecology.

On the left are “Florida Environments” – pine barrens, the Everglades sea of grass, white beaches, and cypress swamps. The year patch includes elements of all four. The pine barrens patch is another experiment in hot colors. It’s stitched so that when you tilt it in the light, it changes colors depending on how light bounces off of it. How many places is black used on the patch? Just in one place, on the bottom. Then why use it at all? To provide a “base” to the patch, and to separate the burgundy of the trees from the border so that they didn’t run together. The sky and the water in the beach patch are the same color of bright blue, except that it’s stitched all vertical in the sky and all horizontal in the water so that, again, they change color relative to each other as you tilt it in the light. The sky in the cypress swamp patch is pale yellow because yellow contrasts better with the green trees than blue would have, and the bright center gives a focal point to the whole patch. If the key item on this patch is the silhouette of the Indian in the dugout, look how small it is, and how well it stands out on the patch.

The patches in the right are all rivers inside that council except where they stepped outside of it to borrow the Everglades for their year patch. Look at the different ways that the surface of water was indicated on these patches. You don’t see a lot of plain flat blue surfaces, do you? I am really impressed by how they did the white water in the rapids.

Environment and ecology can be a pretty abstract concept for a patch. Perhaps even more abstract would be nothing at all. How about air? Isn’t that just about nothing at all? And, what’s full of air? That would be the sky, and here are patches featuring different skies.

Actually, these patches are sunsets. On the left are “Florida Sunsets” and on the right are sunsets as seen from different places in that council. In both cases, the lodge chiefs did their picture research by looking for postcards that they liked. I would like to point out the high level of sophistication of the patches on the right. Most people would assume that a sunset needs to have a sun in it, and then go on to make pretty lurid sunset scenes with bright yellow hotspots in them. Hardly any of these have much of a glaring sun in them, and they work very well. The sunset sky is not even the same color in any two of them. As patches that mainly feature air, I think these patches do pretty well.

We have gone from patches showing people and things to patches showing nothing at all. Where else can you go? A couple of lodges have done sets borrowing from Scouting artwork, like Norman Rockwell. There was once a NOAC three-part set inspired by Salvador Dali’s painting, “The Persistence of Memory,” only instead of melting watches, it shows the lodge totem melting. A certain lodge’s flaps from a couple of NOAC’s ago featured lines of computer code like the opening of “The Matrix.”

What do the Parthenon, the Sydney Opera House, and Notre Dame in Paris have to do with Scouting?
When they’re on a patch set featuring the Architecture Merit Badge, of course! The other patches in this series are Frank Lloyd Wright’s house, “Falling Waters,” and the TWA terminal at JFK airport that was designed by Eero Saarinen, the same man who designed the St. Louis arch.

Just think, if you use merit badges for annual sets, you could have ideas for the next two hundred years. Here are a couple of more sets that could be tied into merit badges.

- The puzzle patch of the moon could go with what merit badge? (Astronomy)
- All those bugs could go with what merit badge? (Insect Lore)

How many of you ever thought of putting bugs on your patches? (Responses) Why not?

I hope that this part of the session has get you thinking of what you could put on your own patch designs.

**Trainer Tip:** Stop at this point for a three to five minute stand up and stretch break.

---

**Part 2: ECONOMICS**

In this part, we’ll talk about how patches can contribute to your lodge’s finances. Early on, we came up with four reasons to have a patch. Those reasons were?

- Identifier
- Souvenir
- Trader
- Fundraiser

In this section, we’ll talk about patches as Fundraisers. Some lodges are happy if they just break even. Other lodges count on profits from patch sales to be a significant part of their annual income. For our discussion, we’ll break that down into two or three topics. The first will be regular patches.

**MARKETING**

First of all, our patches come out in sets. Here’s how it works. Let’s say I have a patch that’s a stand-alone design that’s leftover from a previous activity. Somebody from this event comes up to look at what the lodge offers for sale.

(Signature between trainers)

“Say, Little Johnny Arrowman, would you like to buy this pretty patch.”
“Nah. I wasn’t at the weekend, so I don’t need that patch.”

In other words, that patch doesn’t work for him as a souvenir, so it has no value to him. On the other hand, if the patch is part of a set, this might happen:

(Dialogue between trainers)

“Say, Little Johnny Arrowman, would you like to buy this pretty patch?”

“Well, I wasn’t at that weekend. But I see it’s part of a set, and the patch that I got this weekend is part of that same set. So, yes, let me give you money for a patch that I need to have to complete my set.”

The patch now works for him as a collectible and so does have value to him that way.

Another thing we do to sell extra patches is to start selling extra patches from the very beginning of the event. In the olden days, weekend patches weren’t even distributed until the very end of the weekend. Why? (To keep people from leaving early. The patch wasn’t a souvenir of an event until the event was completed.)

If the patches weren’t distributed until the end of the weekend, then extras couldn’t be sold until the very end. That leaves you with a sales window of only an hour or so.

In our lodge, we know how many people are preregistered for an event, and set those plus an additional small amount. Then we can start selling the extras above those amounts on Friday evening.

And Saturday Lunch.

And Saturday dinner.

And Saturday crackerbarrel.

Your sales window opens much wider, at times when people aren’t anxious to pack up and get out of camp. And it’s amazing how many times people will walk past the lodge sales before they finally decide to stop and buy a patch. Then we don’t even bother to open up sales on Sunday morning because we’ve satisfied the market by the end of Saturday evening’s cracker barrel.

Many lodges do not open sales up until after a Banquet. Now when a banquet ends, many people assume things are over and get up to leave. Even if people do go to the lodge sales table to check it out, you get everybody who might be interested all at once in a big crowd.

We recommend that you open up for the half hour before the banquet starts. People will look it over as they arrive, especially with Mom and Dad’s handy wallet standing by.

By the way, let’s say that after the weekend is over, you still have unsold patches on hand. Are you going to be stuck with those unsold patches? (Responses) Should you sell it at a discount at the next event to get rid of it? (Responses)

Our policy is we do not have too many of a patch is not a loser if it sells out in a year’s time. We may have had patches still on hand after nine months, but if they’re all sold at full price within a year, then we have made off of them all of the full budgeted amount for that budget year. That doesn’t mean that discount time won’t come for some patches.

There was a small lodge in Connecticut that had an odd sales policy. The older an unsold patch was, the higher it was priced. A leftover NOAC flap from two or three NOAC’s ago was priced at three or four times as much as a more recent one. When asked why, the answer was that those old patches were ‘collectors’
items." If that was the case, then why hadn’t those collectors shown up at some time in the last few years. Did that lodge understand the nature of the Market for its patches (short discussion).

There is another way to maximize profits from your patches, and that is not to sell any at cost. When do you sell your patches at cost? (When they are included in the weekend fee.)

My lodge decided a couple of decades ago not to include a patch in the weekend registration fee. The original reason was to keep the cost of the weekend as low as possible to encourage people to attend. The side benefit was that we then started to make a profit off of every single event patch, instead of just the extra’s not needed for registration. When somebody sends in registration money, they are allowed to add money to reserve a single patch, which they pick up when they check in. Since we know how many prepaid for a patch at full price, we can start selling the rest right away at a profit.

VOLUME

Advance PP slide

(Instructor dialogue)

"Mr. Lodge Advisor, how many people will be at our Lodge Whoop-te-do?"

"Well, Tim Treasurer, how many do you think?"

"Uh, divide the total number of registered lodge members by two?"

"No."

"Uh, take the number of letters in the lodge’s name and multiply by twenty?"

"No."

"Find out how many came to the last weekend?"

"Now you’re getting close."

Many lodges provide a patch for a weekend activity. If you think you’re going to have about 150 people at your next lodge event, how many patches do you think you’ll need to order? (Responses)

If you figured about 150 is all you’ll need, you’ll satisfy the purpose of the patch as a Souvenir, but you forgot about another one of a patch’s purposes, for Trading . Might not people be willing to give you money to buy extra patches to collect or to trade with? (Responses.)

If so, then how many more patches will you need to satisfy what they want? (Responses)

It has been our experience to go by percentages, perhaps rounded up to a price break. At the very least, you probably need one and a quarter patches for every person you think will be there.

In my lodge, we need one and a half patches for everybody there. That is, if we expect to have 200 people, we order three hundred patches. Lately, that number has been increasing to about one and three quarter patches per person. At a weekend when we had 265 people, we sold out of five hundred patches, which I think is kind of amazing. How do we do it?

There are lodges that look at how its patches came out at its most recent event, and order accordingly. If they were really tight on patches then, they order more this time. If they had a lot left over last time, they order a lot fewer this time.
The problem is that most lodges don’t really have the same number at every event. If 180 people came to a weekend, and you had 200 patches, you’re going to be left with some unhappy people. If you then order more than 200 patches for the next event that happens to be a Service Day to which less than a hundred usually come, you’re going to have a LOT of extra patches.

Many lodges spasm through that kind of feast and famine, having either way too few or way too many patches, because they don’t look at how many people usually come to THAT particular event, not the most recent one. You may find that attendance will be different between your spring and your summer weekends, but that your spring weekends may be pretty consistent from year to year.

PRICING

To price your patches, you have to first answer the question of what your patch is for. You need to decide what is your balance between the patch’s purposes of Fundraiser and Trader.

Let’s say your regular issue lodge flap sells for $3.00; that’s about the national average right now. Let’s say you have a special flap coming up, maybe a contingent or an anniversary flap. What would you sell the special flap for, $3.00 or $5.00? (Responses)

It’s easy to see that people would be willing to pay more for a special flap because it, well, special. If people are willing to pay more, why not get that from them? (Responses)

Now, let’s say you’re a little Johnny Arrowman, and you have $10.00 in your pocket. Would you rather buy three flaps for $9.00 or two flaps for $5.00? (Responses)

Do you think the special flap would be any more special to you if you had to pay $5.00 for it instead of $3.00? (Responses)

Do you think the special flap would be worth any less to you if you got it for $3.00 than $5.00? (Responses)

Having figured out what Little Johnny Arrowman wants, let’s go back to what the lodge wants. Does the Lodge want to make money? (Responses)

Does the Lodge want to make LOTS or money? (Responses)

Might the lodge be willing to make only good money as well as do what its members, Little Johnny Arrowmen would want? (Responses)

You know you can make the money off of the adults. The question is whether the patch needs to make its money off of the adults or be more willing to accommodate the budgets of its youth members. Does a special issue that sells for $25.00 apiece really benefit the youth? You might say it does because the money goes to support the youth program. But do you really need to raise money for your youth program by selling items at prices that exclude the youth?

If you decide your patch’s main purpose is to be a Fundraiser, go ahead and price it as high as you think you can get away with. If you’d like to include a purpose for it as a Trader, then you might want to look for a balance there for Little Johnny Arrowman.
THE AUCTION BOX

Advance PP Slide

The Auction Box

How many of your lodges have a patch auction from time to time? (Show of hands.)

Where do the patches come from for those auctions? (Donations, old unsold patches)

That's fine if you have a deep pool of benefactors willing to come up with contributions every time. What would you think of the idea of a self-sustaining auction that doesn't need new donors every year? (Responses)

There is a lodge that sets aside ten of everything. Every time it has an event patch, it pulls twelve off the top before it sells the first one. That's one for the lodge display, one for the patch's designer (you do give your patch's designer a free patch as a courtesy, don't you?) and ten for what it calls the Auction Box.

That's ten of everything, and they are committed to the Auction Box. This is very important. If the patch sells out and people are standing in line to buy another one, you do NOT go back into that Auction Box to pull them out to sell right then and there.

The first couple-three years, that lodge held an annual election largely with donated items, like everybody else. Each year, it pulled one each of everything to add to that auction. After a few years, it had accumulated enough items of its own to where the auctions became a nice variety of recently issued patches by that lodge. That meant that recent new members to the lodge had a chance to get recent patches of the lodge. The patches hardly ever sell for less than they would have originally sold more, and often sell for more.

These days, the lodge's auction is almost all patches that it has accumulated in the Auction Box. That auction brought in more than $600.00. Not bad for an auction that didn't need to ask for donations of items for the auction.

ARROW PASS

Advance PP Slide

Arrow Pass

Seminole Lodge headquartered in Tampa has come up with an interesting idea that ties into patches. They call it the "Arrow Pass."

Instead of registering for lodge events one at a time as they happen, you can pay one flat fee, say about $70.00, to register in advance for all the lodge activities in a year. That includes the patches for the events and, get this, you still get the patches even if for some reason you can't attend the event.

They set aside enough patches that they need to satisfy the Arrow Pass registrations. If after the weekend they discover that somebody didn't attend, they mail the patch to him.

Unfortunately, Seminole Lodge does not have a perfect record of having its patches on time for its weekends. If you still want the patch for the weekend you attended, you have to plan to attend the next one to pick the patch up there. UNLESS you're in Arrow Pass, which will get that patch mailed to you.

A few adults sign up for Arrow Pass at least partly just to be sure to get the event patches.
THE BUYERS’ CLUB

You know that there are people who will buy extra’s every time, and the same amount every time. Often, they are able to get those extras only as available, if the lodge doesn’t run out. Sometimes they just can’t get as many as they want.

One lodge has an informal organization they call the Buyers’ Club. There is a list of names of how many patches each person will buy every time, no matter what it is. Do you know what else that’s called? It’s called “GUARANTEED SALES”

We’ve already talked about some rough rules of thumb to figure out how many patches to order. This lodge figures into that number the quantity it will need for the Buyers’ Club. Why, Because those patches are, in effect, already sold, even before they exist.

If you had guaranteed sales lined up, wouldn’t you want to plan to have patches on hand to fill those sales? If you wanted to be sure to always get as many as you always want, wouldn’t you be willing to put your name on a list that commits you to buy that many every time?

That lodge has chapters, and the chapters like to have patches for identifier and for raising a little extra money. If a chapter has about 35 members, how many patches do you think it would need? (Responses)

If a chapter has about 35 members, and a Buyers’ Club can guarantee sales of 60 patches, how many patches would that chapter need to get to sell? (Responses)

RESTRICTIONS

We’ll start out by saying that we come from a lodge in which nothing has ever been restricted. Our reasons are (write on board or indicate on screen)

Restrictions = hurt feelings
Restrictions = redundancy
Restrictions = lost revenue

Why are some patches restricted? (Responses)

Some lodges restrict a patch to work hours. Why might they do that? (Recognize the hard workers. Get people to come out and work.)

If you have a patch to recognize workers, isn’t that kind of redundant? Doesn’t your lodge flap already recognize its wearer as a provider of Cheerful Service?

If you say that your hard workers are special, then aren’t you also implying that they are unusual? If you say the hard workers deserve to get a special recognition, then aren’t you also say that there are a lot
more who are not hard workers? My lodge likes to believe that all of its members are hard workers. To have a recognition for those that are implies that there are plenty who are not. Isn’t that kind of an insult to the lodge, to imply that its workers are so unusual that they are special?

Some lodges have a special patch for their Lodge Executive Committee. Why? (Lodge officers work harder. Lodge officers are leaders.)

I have heard a lot of candidates stand up and say why they deserve to get elected. They might say what their qualifications are, and how experienced they are. Almost all of them say something along the lines of “I want to do a good job for you.” I have yet to hear one say, “Elect me so I can be special.”

If somebody stands up and says he wants to work for his brothers, is he special because he did what he offered to do? Does he need to get something special because he really did keep that promise he made when he ran for the office? (Responses) If his experience really is special for him, would a special patch make his experience any more special? Or would the patch be kind of redundant?

Some lodges say that if they have a restricted patch for an event, they will have more attendance because people will come out to get the patch. That’s a real interesting one. How many people went through your last Ordeal? How many of them were patch collectors at the time? How many of them have become patch collectors since then? So how many of them is a restricted patch really going to have any extra appeal? (Responses)

The same thing goes for something like a Service Patch. If a member attends a certain percentage of events, and puts in enough extra Service Hours, he earns a patch. It has been my experience that the people who earn the patch are almost always the people who would have attended those events anyway, and who would have put in the extra Cheerful Service anyway. So what’s the purpose of the patch, except maybe to have some extra bookkeeping to keep up with?

Some patches are limited or restricted “to make it worth more.” I’ll bet an adult was involved in that decision some where. They say that if there aren’t many of them, the collectors will put a higher value on it. That’s fine if you consider it a mission of the lodge to create valuable collectibles for its youth to save in the back of a drawer. On the other hand, I have never, ever heard a YOUTH say anything like,

“Gee, I sure wish I wasn’t allowed to buy as many as I want.”

Anybody ever heard a youth say that? Go ahead, raise your hand if you have!

The worst kind of restriction is the one that penalizes a youth because of how much money his parents don’t have. If you have a patch that sells for $25.00 to raise money, you’re going to raise a lot of money, right? But haven’t you restricted it away from a youth whose family don’t have an extra $25.00 to give him for a piece of cloth?

I’ll bet some of you here are in a lodge that had a contingent only NOAC flap. Only the members of the contingent could buy that patch. Even though the contingent could buy as many as they wanted, that’s insulting to the rest of the lodge. You may not realize it, but you might be saying, “MY family can spare several hundred dollars to send me to NOAC, so that makes me special. Your family can’t afford to send you to NOAC, so you’re not special.”

My lodge believes that the name on a NOAC flap is the name of the whole lodge, not just the part of it that’s able to go to NOAC. If the name represents the whole lodge, then it represents every member of the lodge, doesn’t it? If it represents every member, then shouldn’t every member should have an equal right to buy as many as he wants of what represents him?
And that opens up your market from just who has the money to go to NOAC to whoever has money to buy patches. Believe me, a lot more people are going to have money to buy a few patches than are going to have all the money to go to NOAC.

Restrictions limit how many of a patch is allowed to be sold. Limiting sales limits income. Restrictions cost your lodge money.

**Trainer Tip:** Stop at this point for a three to five minute stand up and stretch break.

---

**Part 3: ETHICS 10-15 Minutes**

We have talked about patches as things. We have talked about patches as moneymakers. Now we’ll talk about an activity that happens around patches, and that is trading. That’s when you give up something to get something. There’s another name for that kind of thing. It’s called a contract.

It would be useful to be familiar with what is a “social contract.”

All humans are born to be selfish savages. An infant wants food, shelter, affection, and that shiny thing over there, and it wants it NOW. As it gets older, it learns that those things can be available to it if it is willing to modify its behavior.

An individual has two choices. He can go off in the desert and live by himself, and limit what he has to what he can provide all on his own. Or he can decide to be part of a society and compromise what he wants with what a human society requires for individuals to share a community. To get benefits from society, we enter into a social contract with other individuals who form that society. We all give up a little to get the benefits that society can provide to us.

If I want bread, I don’t come over and take it from you just because I want it, especially if I don’t want you to come take my chickens from me. Instead, I trade you some of my eggs for some of your bread. If we want the food that somebody else has, if we want the shelter that somebody else can provide, we have to be ready to offer something to them in exchange. If we want a need for company and social esteem to feel secure, we have to stop being self-centered jerks with no consideration for others. We voluntarily give up something to get something.

We have to learn the little rules any society evolves so it can function, so its members know how to interact with each other. One name for some of those little rules is “etiquette.” It has been said that etiquette is the lubrication by which people get along with each other.
Patch trading has its own etiquette. There are generally accepted rules of polite behavior. When in doubt, remember that as a Scout you are a gentleman dealing with gentlemen. That means stifling some of your own urges, and remembering to follow certain courtesies. As you trade patches, the first is:

(1) Never interrupt a trade in progress

You’re moving around, checking things out when, suddenly, there you see a patch you really want to have. Your first impulse is to blurt out:

Instructor (excitedly): “Is that patch for trade?”

Or

Instructor (excitedly): “How much do you want for that patch?”

The first point of courtesy is to see if they just might be already discussing a trade with somebody else. It would be rude to interrupt what they are doing just so you don’t have to wait. A gentleman would have the patience to wait until his turn, so that he can expect a similar courtesy while he is trading.

What if the patch they are talking about IS the patch that you want? It is extremely rude to blurt out:

Instructor: “I’ll give you more for that patch.”

You have to stand there and bite your tongue until they are finished with what they’re doing. It isn’t your turn yet, nor should you interrupt somebody else’s negotiation with an offer of your own. However, if they seem to be taking a long time, you can make a place for yourself in line by pointing to a specific patch and saying to its owner, “I’d like to talk to you about that one.” If nothing else, that lets its owner know that there is another possible trade waiting in the wings, so he may not want to drag out what he’s currently doing.

(2) Ask before touching

I’ve often been talking to one person about a trade, and suddenly noticed strange hands poking through my patches. That’s always a little surprising. A lot of hands riffling through my patches while I’m trying to pay attention to one person can be a little distracting. As a matter of courtesy, always ask before you handle anybody else’s patches, even if all you want to do is pick one up to look at it more closely.

What does every successful trade conclude with? (A Scout handshake.)

What does the handshake mean? “You’re a really cool guy?” (comments)

(3) Scout handshake

The handshake means that the trade is successfully completed. The handshake means that both sides are satisfied with the outcome of the trade. And to a certain extent, the handshake means that you may have started the trade as strangers, but finished it as friends.

Is there another time when you might do a handshake? (When you don’t make a trade.) Sometimes, you make that handshake even when no patches change hands. The two of you have enjoyed meeting each
other and talking about patches, or about anything else. You may not have traded pieces of cloth, but you have exchanged each other’s time and both of you are taking something nice away from that transaction. You’re satisfied with what you got out of it. If even after discussion, a trade doesn’t happen, you still thank the other person for their time and the opportunity to look at their patches. Whether or not you got their patch, you did get the pleasure of their company.

Not every trade happens live and in person. If someone contacts to you, whether by mail or by email, always respond in a timely manner, even if you do not choose to make the suggested trade. Try to send your side of the trade right away. In these days of quick and easy email, it is also good courtesy to send a short note to acknowledge that you did receive what they sent.

That’s proper trading etiquette. Now, let me offer you some trading advice:

Always start out by offering what the patch is worth to you, not how cheap you think you can get it. You’ll always be happy with what you traded to get it. You’ll build a reputation of being a fair trader. People will bring their patches to you, because they know in advance that you’ll treat them right even when they don’t know what they have or what they’re doing.

In my experience, even with a concluding handclasp, you should consider no trade to be complete until the day is over. You should always be ready to reverse the trade if the other person feels that they need to demand it. That patch you just got is never worth as much as your reputation.

It has happened to me that somebody came back later on and said they decided that I ripped them off. I instantly give them their patches back, often with the reminder that I originally gave them more for the patch than they had expected for it. I then asked them how did I rip them off if I gave them more for it than they had thought it was worth.

Never, EVER trade away the only patch you have from something you ever did. You may think you can replace it later, but you’re more likely to find out how hard it can be to get one again. If you only have one patch from something you did, keep it.

Keep your collection at home. Don’t carry around what you want to keep, just what you have for trade.

Don’t let trading take the place of attending workshops and other activities.

If a patch trade is a contract, then both sides are receiving fair value. That means being fair to yourself as well as to the other person. Then how can you figure out what is fair? How can you know what the value of the trade is?

The answer is that a patch by itself is worth nothing. It’s not like a stamp or a coin with an intrinsic value of its own. It is something that has value only when we decide it does. Did you show a patch you were happy to get to your parents, and their reaction was, “That’s very nice.” They didn’t know what it was, so they had no idea what it was worth to you.

That’s the clue. A patch’s only worth is what it’s worth to you. Unlike coins, you can’t spend it. Unlike stamps, you can’t use it for postage. Its value to you exists only in your personal satisfaction of having it.
Trading patches is about what you give and what you get. Yes, there are catalogs and price guides. But you should always keep in mind that a patch does not have a stand-alone value on its own. It’s only worth what people THINK it’s worth.

Is an old patch always a valuable patch? I don’t think so. If you do, then I’ll trade you 1950’s camporee patch from a council you never heard of for your Staff patch from this NOAC that’s been out for less than a week. No? I didn’t think so.

I once went with a friend to visit somebody who’d run a classified ad offering “old Scout patches.” What this guy had was a bunch of ten and fifteen year old camporee patches, worth about 50 cents each, if anybody was going to be interested in them at all. Each patch was packaged in its own plastic baggy, and each fifty cent patch was marked at $4.00. After talking with him for a while, I asked as tactfully as possible how he’d arrived at the $4.00 price.

“I thought they’d be worth that much to kids because they were “old.”

Would you pay $4.00 for a camporee patch? How about if it was “old?” Why not? (Responses: Not my council; don’t collect camporee patches.)

What if they were activity patches from your lodge from ten or fifteen years ago? Might you be a little more interested? (Responses)

A patch has value only if there are people willing to give up value for it. Hardly anybody collects camporee patches, so camporee patches have little value. A lot of people collect OA flaps. A lot of people are willing to give something to get OA patches. So OA flaps have come to have generally accepted values.

It’s possible for a patch to have a high value even if the number of people interested in it are very small. Only a few people in my section collect summer camp patches. Still, the number of summer camp patches that become available from the 1930’s and 1940’s is microscopic. So, an obscure camp patch in my section from the 1940’s typically goes for $40 to $50 because there are even fewer of them around than there are collectors looking for them.

On the other hand, a patch can be overpriced. I was once called to ask if I’d be interested in an extremely rare one-of-a-kind summer camp patch from the 1930’s. It was offered to me for $300.00. I passed on the offer, and commented that it seemed to be priced a little ambitiously. The dealer told me that he thought it ought to be worth that much because it was so old. I reminded him that his market for that patch was just two people – me and one other person who collected camp patches from that particular council. I told the dealer that he could offer it to the other guy.

When I ran into that other collector a few months later, he told me that he had passed on it at that price, too. Now, here’s a patch with a potential market of only two people. Either of us would have paid $100.00 for it, maybe $150.00. Neither of us was willing to pay $300.00. Is the patch worth $300.00 if the only people in the world interested at all aren’t willing to pay that for it? (Responses) Is, then, the patch worth $300.00 because it “ought” to be worth that much? (Responses)

There is a place where it only takes two people to set a value on a patch, and that’s when they’re the high bidder and second highest bidder on eBay. If a patch goes for a certain amount on eBay, is that what it’s then worth? (Responses)

Or is that merely what it’s worth to the one person who’s willing to bid that high? (Responses)

Does eBay set the market, or does eBay only give an indication of what a patch MIGHT be worth? (Responses)
Here are a few rules of thumb for deciding what a patch might be worth to me.

A worn patch is usually worth about half as much as an unused patch. How can you tell if a patch is worn? Some unused patches will be limp if they've been handled a lot. Turn it over and look on the back. If the running threads are straight, it's probably never been washed. If the running threads are curled, it's probably been worn.

If a patch has a plastic back, the plastic should be smooth and still. It won't have buckled or bubbled off the back of the patch, and the edges of the plastic won't be separated away from the cloth. If it has, the patch may have gone through a washer and a dryer in a pocket.

Yes, I've traded for patches that have been sewn on and cut off with ever being washed. You can see the stitch holes along the border, but the back of the patch still looks new. What you do in that case depends on how much you want the patch.

A lodge flap is generally worth about $3.00 these days, even though minimum bids on eBay seem to have drifted up to about $5.00. Lodges sell their regular flaps for $2.00 to $5.00.

A lodge activity patch is usually worth one lodge flap.

A NOAC contingent flap is often one for one at NOAC, but after NOAC almost immediately goes for two regularly for one NOAC. I've seen three flaps for a NOAC flap and dangle set to be a common exchange.

Common summer camp patches run $2 to $3 apiece, or about the same as a csp.

Camporee and other activity patches are rarely worth more than 50 cents to a dollar, unless they are a curiosity item of some kind, or have a local demand like the Scoutmaster's Camporees in south Florida, or the Lincoln pilgrimages in Illinois, or the cayuco races in the Panama Canal. If that's the case, though, remember that they almost always have that value ONLY in that local area.

What does it take to make a fair trade? Basically, all it takes is the handshake at the conclusion of the trade. That handshake means that both people are happy and satisfied with the trade they just made.

Let me tell you about a trade that I made at a NOAC. Somebody had the NOAC flap from one of the lodges in Florida. I collect varieties of Florida's lodges, so I was interested in it. I offered my own lodge's NOAC flap for it, and he said,

"I really need to get two for mine."

I was a little irritated, and I probably could have passed on it to look for it elsewhere. But I said to myself,

"Well OK, I'll trade two to get my first one." I went ahead and gave him two flaps for it. Then I asked him,

"By the way, how many of these did they make?"

"Oh, they only made 500 of these." I thanked him and moved on.

The problem is that there were "only" 600 made of the two flaps from my lodge that I traded to him. Why was his flap of which 500 hundred were made, worth two of my flaps, of which 600 were made? Does that seem like a fair trade to you? (Responses)
Was I ripped off? (Responses) Well, let’s look at this a little more. Let’s do a little transactional analysis on what happened.

First of all, I have a couple of personal policies. I am comfortable at trading two for one for something that I like. I figure that if I want it, I don’t mind giving up a small premium to get it. For example, I also collect my state’s summer camp patches and for a while had a small reputation as “that idiot fool who’ll trade OA flaps for camp patches.” I didn’t mind that reputation. New traders I hadn’t met yet who only had last summer’s camp patches to trade with would come to me on their friend’s recommendation. They got OA flaps they couldn’t otherwise trade for. I was happy to have camp patches come to me so I didn’t have to look them. Sure, maybe I over traded a little bit, but what I over traded also brought me other benefits.

If I run across a new patch that I would like to have, I like getting it nailed down so I don’t have to keep looking for it and hoping that there’s another one someplace out there. It humors me to start out by being more than fair. So, I generally will trade whatever it takes to get the first one I see, because sometimes it turns out that there just isn’t another one out there. Trading what it takes for the first one has paid off often enough so that I don’t mind when I sometimes find out later on that I over traded a little from time to time.

So, yes, I made a fair trade for myself on that 2 for 1, because I was satisfied with what I got for what I gave. I didn’t trade any more for it than I probably usually would have, anyway. The trade that I made was a good fair trade for me.

He did not make a fair trade, because he expected to get 2 for 1 for a patch that there were 500 have. Why did he decide that his patch was worth so much? Possibly for no other reason than that it was his patch. Was he being completely ethical in his trade? (Responses)

Here we have within a single transaction both a fair trade, and an uneven trade. So what does it take to make a fair trade? Honesty on both sides, and satisfaction on both sides. I was honest and I was satisfied. I think that he was merely satisfied. So, I think that I got a fair trade out of the deal, and he did not.

Let me tell you about a fair trade that was taken away from me. I saw that somebody had a flap that looked interesting. It was a new current issue from his lodge that I didn’t have yet, that was worth one or one for another pretty flap. I asked him if it was for trade, and if he cared to look at what I had to trade with. He said that it was, and he would, and we went to move over to where my patches were.

I could tell he was a new trader, and I was in a good mood, so I had already decided to give him two for it instead of one. I was already planning to give him more for it than it was worth. As we moved away, a friend of him very enthusiastically advised him,

“Now you be sure and get two for one or your flap. That’s the only way to trade, to get two for your one.”

Was his friend giving him good advice? (Responses) I stopped right there and told the young trader,

“I’m sorry, but I can’t trade with you now. I was going to give you two for one for a one for one flap just because I wanted to. Now that gift has been taken away from me. If you need to get two for one or that flap, you’ll have to trade it with somebody else.”

Does anybody see my point? Was I being petty? (Responses)

Basically, what advice was that friend giving? (Be sure you rip somebody off when you trade.)

Did that trader’s friend give him good advice? (Responses)

What else would I tell a new trader about fair trades? I would encourage him to ask, “Do I really need to make this trade?”
I once saw a new trader who had a pretty good piece from his own lodge. Another youth trader, more experienced, was trying to trade for it by offering a commemorative flap from an out of state lodge. The experienced trader explained how valuable his commemorative was, and how much it was worth.

The problem as I saw it was that the new trader was from Tallahassee, and he was being offered a commemorative flap from Chicago. The Chicago flap was very likely worth the trade. But… did the new trader collect Chicago issues? Did he even collect his own lodge’s issues? Did he know what he was collecting? A trade is fair only if both sides are satisfied with what they are getting.

I stood there watching an apparently unbalanced trade developing. Should I have said something? (Responses)

I was not part of the trade, so it would have been unethical for me to say anything. The person with the Tallahassee flap was acquainted with me and asked for my opinion. By asking that, he invited me into the trade, so then I could say out loud what I had been silently thinking. I told him that the Chicago flap was a good flap, and probably worth his flap – IF he was collecting issues from that Chicago lodge. Did I say the wrong thing? (Responses)

The Tallahassee person thought about it for a minute, and then declined the trade. The other trader was furious. He was very upset that I had been rude and stuck my nose in and interrupted a trade that was none of my business. He was going to tell everybody that I am a rotten person and that nobody should ever trade with me because I am unethical. What do you think? Should I have declined to offer my opinion even when it was asked for? (Responses)

So is a valuable patch always valuable to you? (Responses)

Is it a failure if you try to make a trade and it doesn’t happen? (Responses)

If patches have value because they’re traded, then I think that patch trading should be easy and fun. Keep trading fun and easy for yourself, and you’ll keep doing it for a long, long time.

Any questions or comments?

APPENDIX: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Trainer Tip:** These questions occasionally come up near the end of the session when it relaxes into general discussion. The answers here are only possible suggestions. It is recommended that the trainer not raise these points unless they are brought up by participants

Q1: We see that photographs or pictures in books have been used for many patch ideas. What are the rules about using copyrighted images?

A1: I am not a lawyer, and I can’t advise you on legal matters. That is for you to research for yourself according to your individual situation and uses. What I can do is relate what I have heard, and the guidelines that I use for myself.

First, there is a difference between a copyright, a logo, and a trademark. You absolutely and definitely do NOT ever use a logo or a trademark without definite and specific written permission, which you’re not likely to get anyway. That’s why Disney goes after every day care nursery that paints Snow White on a wall. Disney is vigorously protecting one of its
logos, one of its trademark images. My council was once allowed to put Mickey Mouse on a patch for a camporee held out at Disney World, and even then we had to embroider on the patch, “copyright Walt Disney Productions.”

However, you cannot copyright a building or a natural feature. I have heard of a case in California involving a distinctive wind twisted tree on a cliff overlooking the ocean. It was a local landmark on the property of a golf course, and a stylized version of it was used by the golf course on its letterhead. When the local Chamber Of Commerce started using a version of it, too, the golf course sued to protect its logo. The golf course lost, because the court ruled that the tree was a natural landmark. If we went straight from a graphic of Disney castle that it uses on tickets or brochures, we would be violating Disney's logo protection. If we work from a photo of Disney castle that we took ourselves, I think we are safe.

When we traced from a picture in a book to show cars racing at Daytona, we found out that the particular color pattern on a stock car can be a copyrighted logo owned by that driver. One of our members is a racing fan, and showed one of those patches to a member of that driver's racing team. As it turned out, that driver is a big supporter of Scouting in North Carolina, and the member of his team allowed that it would probably be OK that we had used an image of that car – if he could get one of the patches.

It might be easier than you think to get approval. We once decided to use the state seal on a patch, and wrote to the Secretary of State for permission. His office wanted a copy of the artwork we planned to use, needed to know exactly what kind of patch we were putting it on, how many we planned to make, and where we were going to sell them. We had to change a couple of details on the overall design, and got permission. Another time, we wrote to a professional photographer to ask if he would be willing to provide one or two pictures of manatees that we might use for a patch. He sent us a dozen slides to pick from, and when we returned them, we enclosed one of the patches. A few months later, National Geographic did a spread on manatees using his photography.

I have heard that a copyrighted image is not violated if it is reproduced in another media, or if it is changed at least 35%. Think, for example, of Andy Warhol's repeated silkscreened images of Campbell's Soup cans. I'm told that manually tracing a picture is often enough to be enough to make that 35% difference, and converting a printed image to a stitched one is definitely doing it in another media. I've been comfortable with doing that.

I've also heard that anything ever printed in an American Scouting publication can be used by any Council for a Scouting purpose. That opens up anything ever printed in a Scout manual, an OA handbook, or any issue of Boys' Life.

Q2: How do you feel about Ordeal, Brotherhood, and Vigil varieties of a flap?

A2: I will start out by saying that National does not approve of them. According to National, there is only one kind of membership in the Order of the Arrow, and there should be no distinction on the lodge's identifying patch for Ordeal, Brotherhood, and Vigil. In some places, the result of identifying three equal levels of membership in the Order tends to imply that some are “more equal” than others, which is not appropriate.

My lodge fudges a little on that. Our name means "red tipi", and our flap's border color is red. We use Bright Red for Ordeal, Crimson for Brotherhood, and Rust Red for Vigil, to imply that the deeper the membership, the deeper the color of red. The difference is that anybody in the lodge can get any one of the border colors. If you're an Ordeal member, you can buy as many Vigil flaps as you want. You might not be able to properly wear a Vigil flap, but you can certainly have one if you want it.
I have been impressed by the lodge in New York State that showed the same scene in three different seasons of the year for its Ordeal Brotherhood, and Vigil flaps. That showed a lot more imagination than just using three different border colors.

Q3: What is a good patch company to use?

A3: It is not my place to recommend particular companies in the course of this session. If you want to ask me afterwards, I can tell you which ones are my personal favorites.

Q4: How do you feel about restrictions?

A4: That really isn’t in the context of this session, but since we have time, I'll give you my personal opinions, if you like. I can’t speak on restrictions for everybody. That would be too presumptuous. I can only talk about what works for my own lodge back home. Shall I go ahead?

How my lodge feels about restrictions is based on some premises. The first premise is that we are all brothers in the Order of the Arrow. That is, equal brothers. We all got into the OA the same way, with election by others. If we have Brotherhood membership, that's because we all individually made a personal promise to accept the challenge to cheerful service that was shown to us during the Ordeal. If we are Vigil, that is a sign given to indicate that others feel that we have done a decent job of keeping that personal promise we made to ourselves at Brotherhood.

All that is individual and private and personal. Is your Ordeal more significant to you than mine was to me? Is the promise you made to yourself at Brotherhood more meaningful than mine? I don’t think so, and I’m not going to tell you that it’s not, because it isn’t. Then because we are all equal members of the OA, it’s hard for me to think of a restriction that doesn’t either insult a fellow lodge member, or embarrass the lodge.

Let’s say a lodge has a special project or event coming up. I have heard it said, “Let’s have a restricted patch. If we have something special, that will encourage people to come and work.” That’s OK if workers in your lodge are so rare that they need to be encouraged with a special patch. In my lodge, we take the attitude that everybody is a worker. If everybody is a worker, then what do we need a special patch for workers for? Our lodge’s workers are not so unusual that they are special. Our workers are everybody, and wouldn’t saying otherwise insult my own lodge’s members? Isn’t saying that workers are so unusual in your lodge that they are special and unusual really kind of an embarrassing thing to say about your lodge?

Sometimes an LEC will get the idea that a special patch is needed to encourage attendance. Maybe a participation patch or a limited patch will do it. That’s fine if the people you want to come to your weekends are all patch collectors. How many people go through your lodge’s Ordeals turn out to be collectors? Not many, I bet. I suggest that the way to get people to come out to your activities is to have decent activities they will want to return to. Almost any new Ordeal member will come back to at least one activity. What will be there for him at that activity? I have seen Executive Committees discuss for 30 minutes what the shape of the next patch is going to be, and then not spend three minutes discussing what is going to actually happen at that weekend.

It's been my experience that very few youth join the OA so they can become patch collectors. Instead, they look forward to how membership in the OA can enrich their Scouting activity. They look forward to what there is for them to do, not what special patches they can have a chance to get. To me, Saying that a restricted patch might be what it takes to get more people out to your events is inadvertently making a pretty poor comment on the quality of...
your events. Isn’t saying that your lodge weekends are so unappealing that people need to
be offered a incentive to attend kind of an embarrassing thing to say about your lodge?

The second premise is that the lodge name belongs to all the members of the lodge. Does
your lodge name represent everybody in the lodge, or only part of the lodge? (Everybody)
Does your lodge’s name represent you all the time, or only part of the time? (All the time.)
When does your lodge name not represent the lodge? (Never)

We feel that everybody is entitled to an equal chance to get something that represents them.
Sure, we have a NOAC contingent flap, and in our minds it works out like this. Does your
lodge’s NOAC contingent represent the whole lodge, or just the people who were able to
come to NOAC? (The whole lodge). Does your NOAC contingent flap have on it your lodge’s
name, or does it say something like, “The Guys From ABC Council Who Went To NOAC?” Of
course, it has your lodge’s name on it.

If your NOAC Contingent flap has your lodge’s name on it, does your contingent flap
represent the whole lodge, or just the guys who had the money to come to NOAC? (The
whole lodge) It’s been explained to me that the guys coming to NOAC deserve a contingent-
only flap because they are special. Why are they special? Because the experience is special,
they say. I know a lot of youth who wish they could have that special experience, too, except
that their family can’t afford for them to have it. In my lodge, we choose NOT to tell some of
our brothers that they are not special just because they don’t have the money to go to NOAC,
while the people who do have the money to go ARE special.

I know of a Florida lodge that used to give each of its NOAC contingent members a single
special flap. That’s just one, a one per life flap that was instantly worth about a hundred
dollars to rabid collectors. Now, say you’re a member of that lodge. Because you don’t have
the money to go to NOAC, you don’t get a hundred dollar gift, because you’re not special.
You’re not allowed access to something that represents you because your family doesn’t
have the money to make you special. How would that make you feel?

So what’s more important, to make a few of your lodge’s members feel extra special, or to
choose not to insult the big majority of your lodge’s membership by telling them that they are
not special. In my lodge, we feel that the special reward for going to NOAC is the NOAC
experience itself. We choose not to make the contingent members more special, which they
don’t really need, by insulting everybody else who couldn’t go. Sure, we have a NOAC
contingent flap, which everybody in the lodge can buy as many as they want. If we run out
before NOAC, we order more. We don’t have a contingent only border color and a general
membership border color, because having something limited to just the contingent insults
everybody who couldn’t be part of the contingent, because we don’t have some members
that are more special than others.

By the way, yes, my lodge has Ordeal, Brotherood, and Vigil flaps. Are you an Ordeal
member in my lodge and want a Vigil flap? Sure, you can buy one. You can’t wear it yet, but
you’re entitled to own one if you want it. After all, it has your lodge’s name on it.

I know of a couple of lodges that have LEC or “Lodge Officer” flaps. Well, that wouldn’t work
in my lodge. When somebody stands up to run for office, he usually talks about what he
wants to do for his fellow members, and how hard he wants to work for them. In other words,
he is asking to serve them as an officer for a year. He doesn’t stand up and say, “I want to be
an officer so I can be special.”

Doesn’t an officer deserve a reward for doing a good job? Well, of course he does, and that
reward is the satisfaction from a job well done. Do you reward somebody for doing something
that he asked to do? Is somebody special because he keeps a promise that he made? In my
lodge, we don’t think so.
A third premise is to keep in mind what does Little Johnny Arrowman want, and I have never, ever heard a youth Arrowman say, “Gee, I sure wish I wasn’t allowed to buy as many as I want.” There’s not a single youth in my lodge who feels that his experience in the OA is lessened because our patches are plentiful, reasonably priced, and unrestricted.

I have heard it said that if a patch is restricted, it will be worth more to the collectors. Or, if there are a lot of them, it won’t be worth as much as if it was restricted. Well, OK, who are “the collectors.” Who, ultimately, are the people most likely to want to collect patches from your lodge? They are going to be your own future members, aren’t they? And who’s going to have a harder time collecting the tough stuff then, youth or adults? So why would you want to make your stuff more difficult for your own lodge’s youth?

Some people think that if they limit the quantity that can be bought, there will be fewer in circulation, so the patch will be worth more. Worth more to who, youth or adults? They feel it will make better trades if there aren’t many around. Me, I would rather make five easy trades with five people instead of one tough trade with a single person. I would rather that a youth make several friends in trading, than just one acquaintance in a single hard-nosed transaction.

Some lodges feel that they will make a patch special if they make it a fundraiser at a stiff price. My lodge would rather sell five patches for three dollars each than one patch for $15.00. How many youth in your lodge can afford $15.00 patches? How many youth in your lodge could afford to buy several extra $15.00 patches? How many extras are going to be bought by anybody of that $15.00 patch? OK then, how many youth in your lodge could more easily afford to buy a three-dollar patch? How many then might be able to buy a few extra three-dollar patches?

If a youth buys a fifteen-dollar patch, he has it, and he’s glad to have it, and it goes into a drawer, and his experience with it is over. If a youth has five three dollar patches, he has them, and he’s glad to have them, and one or two go into the drawer, and he’s maybe able to trade the rest and make some new friends or keep up with old friends and have the fun of trading and remember the people he traded with. My lodge would rather help its members have several friendly experiences instead of a single encounter with a drawer.

My lodge feels that it’s more important to augment the experience of a youth in the OA than it is to create investment properties for him. We would rather that he have the fun of easy trading with several people rather than worrying about the value of a few special limited patches.

And because there are so many extra’s out there, who gets the fringe benefits? The people who aren’t even in your lodge yet, your lodge’s future members and the future collectors and the future traders. We made a lot of flaps for our 50th anniversary ten years ago. Today, those aren’t hard to locate. We made a LOT of flaps for the OA’s 75th anniversary fifteen years ago. Those are still out there all over the place. I am delighted that a current youth member of my lodge can get those pieces of our history without too much trouble, instead of being personally satisfied at how my own ones are getting more valuable all the time because they’re “rare.”

Next time somebody talks about restricting a patch to make it worth more, whether in price or quantity or requirements or work, remind yourself: when did you ever hear a youth say, “Gee, I sure wish I wasn’t allowed to buy as many as I want.”