**After-action Prestia ASCRIBE**

My job was essentially reporter and editor of the Gilwell Gazette, my secondary duties was to help the Scribe - David Anderson, and Techno Scribe - Charlie Fleet in anything they needed completed and thirdly any other assignments given from the course director or his assigns.

In the preparation stage of my duties, I mind mapped the anatomy of the Gilwell Gazette (GG), to help me gather a grasp of my reporter/editor job duties in a perfect world, this visual helped me develop the GG final copy.



Seven header sections (shown above in the blue rectangles) are the essence of the publication; two header sections; patrols reports, and today’s photos, by design can put the scribe staff at the indulgence of participants for completion, the remainder is completed by the GG staff, or in our case David Anderson, and I.

The headlines section is an important section of the GG, this page needs to capture the readers by recapping or foreshadowing events of the course. Because Wood Badge courses follow BSA uniformity, many articles have been written well from past Wood Badge courses which allowed for a appropriating in our GG. In five issues this section came from past Wood Badge course GG that I rewritten specific to our course, I wrote original articles in four issues, the course director contributed in three issues and staffers had articles in two issues. I feel my best articles came from a roving reporter approach which was actual interviews with course staff and participants; unfortunately I did not come up with this idea until the 4th Gilwell Gazette, when I interviewed the Venture Crew Presidents. For the future I would recommend a roving reporter approach for a couple of articles in each issue, I find those articles more interesting, beneficial, and insightful by giving a point of view from the participants’ perspective.

The editorial and letters section provided useful commentary and was used as a continuation of the headlines in some issues. No actual emails or letters were sent to the editor for print in the GG, but the scribe staff created witty letters in some of the issues. This section can lend itself to be prewritten before the course, which I utilized half the time throughout the course.

Scouting lore section is easily developed, can be done in advance of the course, and has a plethora of information available on the internet for use in the GG. The same goes for the lifestyles pages, both these section I sometimes did while observing the various modules in Gilwell hall to better fit in with lessons of the day. The schedule and field notes section was another easy section that was done in advance of the course and simply amended before the final copy for accuracy. These three header sections gave the scribe staff very little concern during the course.

The patrol reports done by the participants has special issues of its own such as; content of article, length of the article, timeliness of the article and transferring the article into the GG format. Our constant dilemma was fitting the articles into the line space formatted into our issue, we used all the tricks of the trade, rewrites and font sizing, but when we wanted a few words, we got a lot, when we prepared for many words we got very little. I do think that there is not much we can do to correct this predicament with our GG newspaper format, and I do feel that this is one of the most important section of the GG since the articles are written by the patrols. This dilemma is caused by our choice of a newspaper four column format, which would not be an issue if a one column newsletter format was used, but either choice has its downside; I personally enjoy our chosen format of 4 columns.

The today’s photo section is time consuming; the scribes reviewed all the photos of the day, and then select the best photos, while at the same time made sure that everyone was well represented in the chosen photographs. We found that doing the today’s photo selection as a committee worked best; took less time, and made for better photo selections to include in the GG. The scribe staff found that having staff photographer, is an important position to have in the course, Craig Britt our course mentor wore a second hat as GG staff photographer for which he did an excellent job for us, in hind sight I could of helped Craig (any staff photographer) by developing a photo shot list for each day of the course.

Prior Wood Badge scribes produced issues for; SDM 1 through 3, Day 0 through 6, our scribe staff created one SDM issue, Day 0 through 6, plus an issue 6.5, I am not certain that GG are needed for the SDMs, although I am convinced that a Picture Book of participants is well received and useful to the staff. I would prefer to eliminate GG issues for SDM 1 through 3, in lieu of concentrating on a better picture book that would include in-depth insight on the participants and their course expectations prior to Wood Badge arrival.

As for doing my job, and other aspect of the Wood Badge experience; Dave Anderson, was great, he took care of all the other scribe matters and documented the various needs and request for each day of the course. He also served as another set of eyes on each issue before the final copy was printed. Dave was instrumental in setting up the computer network, the web page, the printing, and delivery of the GG. I was delighted to have my presentation early on the first weekend, it got the task out of the way and allowed me to better focus on the GG. I was also happy that David Anderson had his presentation on the following weekend, for on that evening he was able to get to bed early, while I finished the Gazette.

The Wood Badge staff experience for me was enlightening, continue this format; we all understood what was required of us, and performed to and beyond that level.