

Tiwahe Lodge, Order of the Arrow Arrow of Light Ceremony

The principals (Chief, Medicine Man, Guide) enter from the rear and take their positions: Chief behind the table, Medicine Man to his right, Guide to the left of the Chief. Chief should pause and scan the audience for a few seconds.

Chief: Cub Scouts, leaders, parents and guests. My brothers, the Medicine Man and the Guide, and I, the Mighty Chief, bring you greetings and salutations. We have come before you tonight to recognize those of you who have earned the Arrow of Light. We who stand before you are members of the Order of the Arrow, the National Boy Scout Honor Society of Campers. Our purpose is to give service to Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venture Scouts, and to promote overall camping.

Medicine Man: The words of a prophecy say that in the springtime of each year, young braves will be found who have met the challenges of Akela and are ready to become warriors. My brothers and I have watched your Pack and have found such braves among you. We have come to present them with the highest honor of Cub Scouting: the Arrow of Light.

Guide: Will the Arrow of Light Candidates please come forward and stand before us.
(Arrowmen escort Webelos to front to stand before the Principals)

Guide: Many moons ago, you entered the Cub Pack. The first challenges you encountered were from the Bobcat Clan. As you met them, you learned what it means to be a Cub, the Law of the Pack, and the three words that would inspire you to meet all other challenges: “do your best”. Your first steps along the trail were spent with the Tiger Clan. There, you experienced many challenges for a young boy. You became part of the Clan, and looked ahead for more. Having started on the trail, you next sought to join the Wolf Clan. Here you were met with more challenges, harder than the Bobcat and Tiger tests, but with the cleverness of the Wolf itself, you met them and continued on your journey.

Medicine Man: Then the trail became darker and fainter as you came to the Bear clan. Again many challenges were presented before you. As you met them, your knowledge grew and your spirit strengthened. It was this strength of spirit, like the Bear, that prompted you to move onward.

Chief: As you neared the summit, you joined the Webelos Clan. The time of your testing had begun. In the Webelos Clan you began to learn about Scouting. You learned the ways of the Brave as a Bobcat, Wolf, and Bear. As a member of the Webelos Clan you learned the ways of the warrior. In time, you earned the Webelos badge, blazing the rest of the trail on your own. Now at last you have reached the summit and end of this journey.

(to Medicine Man and Guide) **Let the Arrow of Light be conferred upon them!** *(Steps forward)*

Guide: Wait, brother! Before receiving this most high honor, they must hear its legend so they may understand and appreciate what they are to receive.

Chief: Very well. *(to Medicine Man)* Let the legend of the Arrow of Light be known to all present.

(Choose either story. It does not need to be memorized but can be inscribed on one side of a piece of leather hide and read by the Medicine Man.)

Story 1

Medicine Man: (moves forward) In the ages past, when the tribes spread across the land, there was a young member of one tribe called Akela. Akela wished to be a warrior as the older men of his tribe were, but no one would consider him so. "Little Akela, he is too young to join the hunt," they would say. "Too slow to run with the Bobcat clan. Not clever enough to hunt with the Wolf clan. Such a young one is not strong enough to join the Bear clan." No matter how hard Akela worked, all ways were barred to him. But the aged chieftain of the tribe saw Akela differently than the rest. "The spirit of this young one burns brighter than the largest fire. Akela has served his brethren well for one his age. The time will come when the tribe will need only that which Akela can give."

One night in the fall during the harvest, a party of warriors was canoeing back to their village after a hunt. On this night, the fog rolled thick across the river. The fog was so heavy, the river path back to the village was hidden from view. A nearby river path to the right led to a roaring chasm. The warriors did not know the safe path to take and were trapped. Akela had been practicing his hunting skills in the hills and had seen the danger to the canoe. He wrapped an arrow in a skin, set it aflame, and shot it into the sky towards the safe river path. The warriors in the canoe saw the flaming arrow through the fog and followed it towards the safe river path and the village. The warriors went to the chieftain saying, "we were trapped on the river and the High Father sent an Arrow of Light through the sky to guide us." The chieftain smiled and said, "the sign which led you to safety came not from the heavens but from one who you thought was too young to do anything." He brought Akela forward, to the surprise of the warriors. "Akela has proved himself worthy to wear the name of warrior. He has aided his brothers in their time of greatest need. Hereafter, all young members of our tribe shall become warriors only after meeting the challenges of the Arrow of Light. Let them each be filled with the spirit of Akela and follow his example of unselfish service to our brethren." And it was made so and carried through to the present day as you Webelos stand before us now, ready to receive the Arrow of Light.

Story 2

Medicine Man: Once, long ago, when all the animals of the earth were equal, there was great unrest. The animals began to quarrel among themselves. The Bear quarreled with the Eagle, the Buffalo argued with the Youth. Finally, the wise old Grandmother called the animals to her teepee and she spoke to them, saying, "You have argued among yourselves about many things. Now I will ask one question. You will have one year to think about your answer. I will reward each of you according to the merit of your answer."

The animals became excited because they each thought it would be easy to answer any question in a year's time. And besides, the old Grandmother was not only wise, she was also generous with her rewards. Was it not the old Grandmother who had given grass to the fields and fruit to the trees? "What is the question, Grandmother?" they asked, and she said, "You must answer me this. What is it your most important duty?" And with that they all left. The Eagle flew to the high mountain to think about the question. The Bear returned to the deep forest, the Buffalo to the grassy plains. The Youth returned to his campfire. They all began to think about their answer.

Thirteen moons later, they returned to the old Grandmother's teepee. Grandmother spoke first to the Eagle and said, "Eagle, what is your most important duty?" The Eagle replied, "My most important duty is to fly higher than anyone else." Grandmother said, "For that answer, I will give you feathers which will help you fly higher than anyone else." And the Eagle was very pleased with his gift. Next, the Grandmother spoke to the Buffalo and said, "Buffalo, what is your most important duty?" The Buffalo replied, "My most important duty is to run further than anyone else." Grandmother said, "For that answer, I will give you thick hooves that will allow you to run further than anyone else." And the Buffalo was very pleased

with his gift. The Bear replied, "My most important duty is to be stronger than anyone else." Grandmother said, "For that answer, I will give you sharp claws that will make you the strongest animal in the forest." And the Bear was also pleased with his gift.

Finally, the Youth arose and said, "Grandmother, my most important duty is to help others." Grandmother said, "For that answer, I will give you this stick." And when he saw the stick, the Youth was disappointed for he had thought long and hard about his most important duty. "Grandmother," he said, "why do you give me a stick? Did my answer displease you?" "Oh no," she said, "your answer pleased me greatly. All the others felt their most important duty was to themselves and they were rewarded accordingly. But you have learned that the most important duty is to help others, and you have been rewarded."

"But Grandmother, what can I do with this stick?"

"This is more than a stick," she replied. "This will become an arrow. With the arrow you can shoot the strongest Bear, the fastest Buffalo, or the Eagle, no matter how high he soars. He who would serve others is the strongest of all." And then the Youth knew that this was the greatest gift of all and he was pleased.

Guide: Before you receive this honor, I must see your devotion to the high ideals of Scouting. Therefore, I ask you all now raise your right hand to the Scout sign and repeat with me, the Scout Oath and Law. *(Principals raise hands in the sign of the Boy Scout and recite the Scout Oath and Law with the Webelos who will be awarded the Arrow of Light)*

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

[Recite the Scout Law]

A Scout is:
Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.

(Lighting the candles: use a candelabra or seven candle holders. If the facility does not permit candles, battery operated ones can be purchased at World Market. The bottoms screw tight to cause the candles to light. Place them in the holder so they are just unscrewed enough to be unlit, then screw them to light them.)

Chief: These seven candles represent the rays in the Arrow of Light. As they are lighted, you will hear how they stand for the seven great virtues of life.

- The first virtue is Wisdom. *(light the first candle) (Optional description):* Wisdom does not necessarily mean superior knowledge. It means putting the right use to the knowledge that one possesses.
- The second virtue is Courage. *(light the second candle) (Optional description):* Courage is not the quality that enable men to meet danger without fear, it is being able to meet danger in spite of one's fears.
- The third virtue is Self-control. *(light the third candle) (Optional description):* Self-control isn't limited to the control of one's temper, but control of one's self in all things: eating, playing, and

even working and talking.

- The fourth virtue is Justice. *(light the fourth candle) (Optional description)* Justice is the practice of dealing fairly with others without prejudice or regard to race, color or creed.
- The fifth virtue is Faith. *(light the fifth candle) (Optional description)* Faith is the conviction that something unproved by physical evidence is true. One eight-year-old Cub Scout said faith was when you turned the light switch, you knew the light would go on.
- The sixth virtue is Hope. *(light the sixth candle) (Optional description)* Hope means to expect with confidence. Always hope for better things to come. A man without hope is of little good to himself or his community.
- The seventh virtue is Love. *(light the seventh candle) (Optional description)* There are many kinds of love, love of family, love of home, love of fellow man, love of God, and love of country. All these loves are necessary for a full life.

You will find that if you live by the seven great virtues, you will become a happy man, and a happy man is a successful man.

Guide: Will the parents of these Arrow of Light recipients come up to stand with their sons. *(when parents and Webelos are assembled)* Will the Webelos Den Leader present the Arrow of Light awards?

(After the awards are presented and pictures are taken) Will the parents please return to their seats?

Chief: This ceremony marks the end of a journey. But even as this journey ends, another is just beginning. Here at the summit of Cub Scouting, you have found the start of a new trail. This trail is a pathway that leads to the realm of our brothers in the sky, the Eagles.

Medicine Man: But the trail will also be long and difficult. As you journey, you must keep the spirit of Akela strong within each of you; it will give you strength and guidance as you move onward.

Guide: *(If there is no Bridging at this time)* Will the Arrow of Light Recipients please return to their seats:

Optional Bridging Section, if the Cubmaster wishes the Team to conduct the Bridging

Guide: The time has come for you to begin on the new trail, to join the clan of the warriors: the Scout Troop. Each of you shall now cross the bridge one at a time and be welcomed by the troop members.

(Webelos now cross the bridge to be invested by their new Troop)

Medicine Man: As the night is a bridge between each day, let this be a bridge for each of you to the fellowship of Scouting.

Chief: Once again, I congratulate you on your achievements. Having finished the work for which we were called, we now depart this gathering of your Pack. Before we go, I would remind you to keep Akela's spirit alive. Let it ignite a spark within each of you that will fan into a fire as you grow.

Guide: We challenge all the younger braves present to continue on your trails and strive to reach the summit and the Arrow of Light. May the Great Master of all Scouts be with you until we meet again.

(Guide extinguishes the candles—use a candle snuffer so the wax doesn't splatter. Guide exit through the audience, followed by the Medicine Man and finally the Chief.)