



**A VOICE IN THE
WILDERNESS...**

**A SCOUTS' OWN SERVICE
PLANNING GUIDE**

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Foreword

The concept of ‘Scout’s Own’ isn’t a new one. Even more importantly is what you do with the concept in your own Unit. Regardless of whatever the main religious affiliation is of your key leaders, “Duty to God” is universal to Scouting. Over the past many years it has been quite common to rely upon traditional Biblical readings and the singing of traditional songs but a non-denominational service can be presented in a great many creative ways. It is our hope that, with the help of this guide, you may find the inspiration for your own ideas to grow in different directions.

I am an assistant Scoutmaster and quite fortunate to belong to a Boy Scout Troop with a small staff of leaders whose job it is to plan and present a Scout’s Own service at each and every one of our regular weekend campouts. I can honestly tell you, first hand, that during the past few years stopping the program to spend a short amount of time together in the middle of all of that camp chaos has resulted in many ‘signature moments’ which will be remembered forever in the hearts of those who were present.

Music and theme is most important in the planning phase of preparing a Scout’s Own. If you’re lucky enough to have people in the Unit who play a musical instrument then by all means utilize their talents. If not then pre-recorded music is also appropriate and don’t limit yourself to just traditional hymns and songs of praise.

Even many years ago B-P himself was aware of the value of Scout’s Own. A belief in God, no matter which religion, is a universal constant and it does the Unit good to worship together for a brief time. Scouts play and compete and learn. The program is designed to help them become aware of good citizenship and to learn about life and to reflect upon the good found in nature and man.

So enjoy this guide and use it as a tool. Don’t be afraid to experiment a little with the Scout’s Own idea if you haven’t done so before. I’m sure you and your boys will find it to be an uplifting experience in which everyone can get involved. Remember, too, that the twelfth point of the Scout Law is “A Scout is Reverent”.

Gary Malicki
Asst. Scoutmaster
Troop 659
Cheektowaga, NY

Scouts Own Service Planning Guide

What is A Scouts' Own Service?

As scouts and scouters we need to find a way to worship God when we are away at camp. Since we come from diverse religious backgrounds, Lord Baden Powell felt a Scouts' Own Service would allow scouts and scouters to worship God together.

We're Here to Help!

We were first introduced to the Scouts' Own Service when we attended Scoutmastership Fundamentals in 1999. Since that time we have been conducting Scouts' Own Services at troop and council-wide campouts. We have received many inquiries on the planning of our Scouts' Own Services. This is designed as a guide to help scouts and scouters interested in planning Scouts' Own Services.



2002 ONONDAGA WINTER KLONDIKE

Lighting of the Troop 659 Scouts' Own candle

Using Our Guide

As you browse through this guide you will find many of our thoughts and ideas about Scouts' Own Services which are based on the thoughts of Lord Baden Powell. Sample services are listed, as well as examples of readings and music. You will also find a page that lists some of the internet sites where we find our inspirational readings and songs.

We hope you enjoy our guide and find many ideas here that can be taken back and used in your troops. If you have Internet access visit us at (<http://scoutsownplanningguide.faihw.com/>). Please be sure to leave us a message on our corkboard to let us know what you think or to leave us some of your thoughts or ideas about your Scouts' Own Services.



Deep In Thought

What should the theme be for our next Scouts' Own Service...

Baden Powell's Thought's

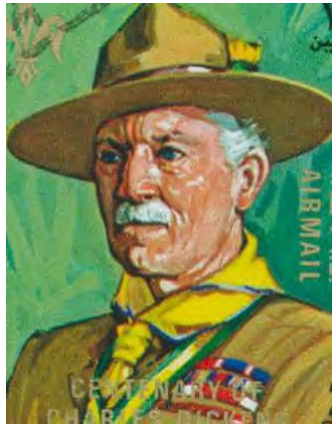
Lord Baden Powell's Thoughts About the Scouts' Own Service

For an open Troop, or for Troops in camp, I think the Scouts' Own should be open to all denominations, and carried on in such a manner as to offend none. There should not be any special form, but it should abound in the right spirit, and should be conducted not from any ecclesiastical point of view, but from that of the boy. Everything likely to make an artificial atmosphere should be avoided. We do not want a kind of imposed Church parade, but a voluntary uplifting of their hearts by the boys in thanksgiving for the joys of life, and a desire on their part to seek inspiration and strength for greater love and service for others.

A Scouts' Own should have as big an effect on the boys as any service in church, if in conducting the Scouts' Own we remember that boys are not grown men, and if we go by the pace of the youngest and most uneducated of those present. Boredom is not reverence, nor will it breed religion.

To interest the boys, the Scout's Own must be a cheery and varied function. Short hymns (three verses are as a rule quite enough-never four); understandable prayers; a good address from a man who really understands boys (a homily "talk" rather than an address), which grips the boys, and in which they may laugh or applaud as the spirit moves them, so that they take a real interest in what is said. If a man cannot make his point to keen boys in ten minutes he ought to be shot! If he has not got them keen, it would be better not to hold a Scouts' Own at all.

Written by Baden Powell
B.-P.'S OUTLOOK
November 1928



Our Thoughts on the Scouts' Own Service

We have read the words written by Baden Powell many times. We have tried to interpret their meanings. Our Scouts' Own Services have changed many times based on our interpretations.

We feel a Scouts' Own service should be a nondenominational service where anyone being of any religious denomination can worship. Those present at the service should feel a voluntary uplifting of their hearts in thanksgiving for the joys of life. The Scouts' Own Service should be an inspiration and strength for a greater love and service for others to all who attend.

We have found following a theme keeps the boys keen and interested in our services. We use short and varied readings and prayers as suggested by Baden Powell. Our readings are understandable to all boys, even the youngest and most uneducated. Most of all our services are enjoyable and fun.

Both scouts and scouters look forward to our Scouts' Own Services. Adults and boys alike are eager to have even the smallest part in one of the services.

How To Plan A Scouts' Own Service

Where To Begin? ...Choose A Theme!

We have found the best way to plan a scouts' own service is to begin by picking a theme. Services held by religious denominations usually follow a thematic structure and we have found this technique works!

Your theme can be based on seasons, holidays or current events. We have also used themes that reflect scouting ideals such as leadership, cooperation and respect. Basically any theme that is appropriate can be used!

What's Next?

Once a theme has been chosen, the search begins for material that supports the theme such as stories, poems, prayers and songs. Ceremonials may also be used in the service. We find most of our material by searching the internet.

YOU ARE NOW READY TO PLAN A "SCOUTS' OWN SERVICE"

Use the outline below to help you. Adjust the number of readings and songs to fit your needs. Good luck and have fun!

Scouts' Own Service Outline

Theme: _____

Opening Song: _____

Reading #1: _____

Reading #2: _____

Reading #3: _____

Reading #4: _____

Inspirational Song: _____

Reading #5: _____

Reading #6: _____

Reading #7: _____

Reading #8: _____

Closing Song: _____

Sample Scouts' Own Services

Winter Klondike 2002

SONG: Olympic Theme

WHAT REALLY MATTERS

It has been said that a few years ago, at the Seattle Special Olympics, nine contestants, all physically or mentally disabled, assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash. At the gun, they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with a relish to run the race to the finish and win. All, that is, except one little boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times, and began to cry. The other eight heard the boy cry. They slowed down and looked back. Then they all turned around and went back; every one of them.

One girl with Down's Syndrome bent down and kissed him and said: "This will make it better." Then all nine linked arms and walked together to the finish line. Everyone in the stadium stood, and the cheering went on for several minutes.

People who were there are still telling the story. Why? Because deep down we know this one thing:

What matters in this life is more than winning for ourselves. What matters in this life is helping others win, even if it means slowing down and changing our course.
Pass it on...we need to change our hearts.

THE SPIRIT LIVES

The spirit lives, there is no doubt,
Within the heart of every Scout,
The hope lives on, the dreams survive,
The Scouting spirit is alive.
In England, many years ago,
There lived a man who sought to sow,
The seeds of brotherhood of man,
And there the spirit began.
The Scouting spirit spread about
To nations east, west, north and south,
And soon, on every land and shore,
Young men were taught the Scouting Law.
We camped and learned nature's ways,
We gloried in our youthful days,
We ventured where all others feared,
Because we knew we were prepared.
The world has changed as years went by,
Society's values went awry,
And many ask, "What is the worth
of Scouting on this wretched earth?"
But each new Scout who learns our law
Brings with him hope and so much, much more;
Each generation of Scouts gives
The proof that Scouting's spirit lives.
The treasured values of the past
Still guide Scouts of today; they last
in spite of changes that we see
Around us in society.
And, still adventures filled with fun
Await today's Scouts, every one;
In them that spirit, born of old
May yet transform this sorry world.

And so we say without a doubt,
That in the heart of every Scout
The hope lives on, the dream survives
The Scouting Spirit is alive!
By G.K. Sammy, former Scout of 31st Trinidad,
dedicated to the Naparima

WHY ARE YOU IN SCOUTING?

You know, there are more than a million Scouts in our country. I wonder how many of them will stay in Scouting and climb to the top, don't you?

Tell me why are you in Scouting? (Pause for answers) So many boys enter Scouting for just one reason-to have fun. If you think that's the only reason you're in Scouting, believe me, there are other good reasons too.

Sure Scouting is fun. But a lot of other things are fun too. If you're just looking for fun, you can play all kinds of indoor and outdoor games, go to the movies, watch television-or a thousand other things.

Scouting must be more than just fun for you. It must be a way of life, a law and an oath to which you are loyal. Unless you try to live Scouting, you'll find that other kinds of fun are a lot easier and you'll quit. The loyal Scout is dedicated to the Scout Oath and the 12 points of the Scout Law. He has a deeper reason for sticking than just having fun. He sees the importance of learning the Scout skills, of developing himself so that he can be prepared to face anything that comes. He wants to grow to be a real man. That's why he's loyal. That's why he sticks.

I hope you won't ever quit until you're up before a court of honor to get your Eagle Scout badge. That will be one of the biggest days of your whole life--and mine, too.

THE EAGLE AND THE WOLF

There is a great battle that rages inside me.

One side is the soaring eagle. Everything the eagle stands for is good and true and beautiful, and it soars above the clouds. Even though it dips down into the valleys, it lays its eggs on the mountaintops.

The other side of me is the howling wolf. And that raging, howling wolf represents the worst in me. He eats upon my downfalls and justifies himself by his presence in the pack.

Who wins this great battle?

The one I feed.

INSPIRATIONAL SONG: The River

by Garth Brooks

WEAKNESS OR STRENGTH

Sometimes your biggest weakness can become your biggest strength. Take, for example, the story of one ten-year-old boy who decided to study judo despite the fact that he had lost his left arm in a devastating car accident.

The boy began lessons with an old Japanese judo master. The boy was doing well, so he couldn't understand why, after three months of training the master had taught him only one move.

"Sensei," the boy finally said, "Shouldn't I be learning more moves?"

"This is only move you know, but this is the only move you'll ever need to know," the sensei replied.

Not quite understanding, but believing his teacher, the boy kept training.

Several months later, the sensei took the boy to his first tournament. Surprising himself, the boy easily won his first two matches. The third proved to be more difficult, but after some time, his opponent became impatient and charged; the boy deftly used his one move to win the match. Still amazed by his success, the boy was now in the finals.

This time his opponent was bigger, stronger and more experienced. For a while, the boy appeared to be overmatched. Concerned that the boy might get hurt, the referee called a time-out. He was about to stop the match when the sensei intervened.

"No," the sensei insisted, "Let him continue."

Soon after the match resumed, his opponent made a critical mistake: he dropped his guard. Instantly the boy used his move to pin him. The boy had won the match and the tournament. He was the champion.

On the way home, the boy and the sensei reviewed every move in each and every match. Then the boy summoned the courage to ask what was really on his mind.

"Sensei, how did I win the tournament with only one move?"

"You won for two reasons," the sensei answered, "First, you've almost mastered one of the most difficult throws in all of judo. And second, the only known defense for that move is for your opponent to grab your left arm."

The boy's biggest weakness had become his biggest strength.

BE PREPARED FOR WHAT?

Scouts, every one of you can tell me, without thinking what the two words on the Second Class pin are. That's right, "Be Prepared."

There is a story of a Scout in Oklahoma. His younger sister went too near a gas heater and instantly her clothes were in flames. The father and his 13-year-old Scout-trained son rushed upstairs to try to help. Remembering his first-aid work, the Scout knew exactly what to do and he did it immediately. He grabbed a small rug and rolled the screaming child in it. He had been prepared.

In a moment he had smothered the flames and prevented serious injury to the child.

Thank God my son is a Scout, the boy's father told the Scoutmaster. He knew what to do while I stood confused.

That is what it means to be Prepared.

Once someone asked Baden-Powell, Be prepared-- for what? Why any old thing! he replied.

A PRAYER FOR THE BOY SCOUTS

O Lord, we thank you for the work of Sir Robert Baden-Powell, who in his dedication and wisdom founded the World Scouting Movement.

We thank you for the efforts of those thousands of men and women who have brought Scouting to millions of boys the world over.

We rededicate ourselves to the principles of our movement--To do our best, to do our duty to God and our Country.

We ask you, O Lord, to give us the strength and courage, each of us, to live up to the Scout Oath, the Scout Law and the High ideals of the World Brotherhood of Scouting.

Amen.

OUR FLAG

Our flag stands for freedom and equality. It is the banner of a people who are still willing to lay down their lives in defense of right, justice and freedom. It is the emblem by which we proclaim to the world that this is the home of the brave and the land of the free.

Our flag is an emblem of true patriotism--the patriotism of deeds, the patriotism of courage, of loyalty, of devotion to freedom, justice, and humanity; the patriotism of men who have lived and died, not for themselves but for their country.

When we look at our flag--its stars and stripes, its vivid red, white, and blue--and read its story and hear its message, when we contemplate what our flag means and what it stands for, and when we consider the sacrifices made and the lives given so that our flag could still be flying over us today, we are quietly reminded to cherish, to protect and to defend it.

SILENT FLAG CEREMONY

February 2002

SONG: Morning Has Broken by Cat Stevens

WHAT DO YOU HEAR?

A Native American and his friend were in downtown New York City, walking near Times Square in Manhattan. It was during the noon lunch hour and the streets were filled with people. Cars were honking their horns, taxicabs were squealing around corners, sirens were wailing, and the sounds of the city were almost deafening. Suddenly, the Native American said, "I hear a cricket." His friend said, "What? You must be crazy. You couldn't possibly hear a cricket in all of this noise!"

"No, I'm sure of it," the Native American said, "I heard a cricket."

"That's crazy," said the friend.

The Native American listened carefully for a moment, and then walked across the street to a big cement planter where some shrubs were growing. He looked into the bushes, beneath the branches, and sure enough, he located a small cricket. His friend was utterly amazed.

"That's incredible," said his friend. "You must have super-human ears!"

"No," said the Native American. "My ears are no different from yours. It all depends on what you're listening for."

"But that can't be!" said the friend. "I could never hear a cricket in this noise."

"Yes, it's true," came the reply. "It depends on what is really important to you. Here, let me show you."

He reached into his pocket, pulled out a few coins, and discreetly dropped them on the sidewalk. And then, with the noise of the crowded street still blaring in their ears, they noticed every head within twenty feet turn and look to see if the money that tinkled on the pavement was theirs.

"See what I mean?" asked the Native American. "It all depends on what's important to you."

57 CENTS THAT MADE HISTORY

A sobbing little girl stood near a small church from which she had been turned away because it 'was too crowded'. "I can't go to Sunday School," she sobbed to the pastor as he walked by. Seeing her shabby, unkempt appearance, the pastor guessed the reason and, taking her by the hand, took her inside and found a place for her in the Sunday School class. The child was so touched that she went to bed that night thinking of the children who have no place to worship God.

Some two years later, this child lay dead in one of the poor tenement buildings and the parents called for the kind-hearted pastor, who had befriended their daughter, to handle the final arrangements. As her poor little body was being moved, a worn and crumpled purse was found which seemed to have been rummaged from some trash dump. Inside was found 57 cents and a note scribble in childish handwriting which read, "This is to help build the little church bigger so more children can go to Sunday school."

For two years she had saved for this offering of love. When the pastor tearfully read that note, he knew instantly what he would do. Carrying this note and the cracked, red pocketbook to the pulpit, he told the story of her unselfish love and devotion. He challenged his deacons to get busy and raise enough money for the larger building. But the story does not end there!

A newspaper learned of the story and published it. It was read by a realtor who offered them a parcel of land worth many thousands. When told that the church could not pay so much, he offered it for a 57 cent payment. Church members made large subscriptions. Checks came from far and wide. Within five years the little girl's gift had increased to 250,000 a huge sum for that time (near the turn of the century). Her unselfish love had paid large dividends.

When you are in the city of Philadelphia, look up Temple Baptist Church, with a seating capacity of 3,300, and Temple University, where hundreds of students are trained. Have a look, too, at the Good Samaritan Hospital and at a Sunday School building which houses hundreds of Sunday scholars, so that no child in the area will ever need to be left outside at Sunday school time.

In one of the rooms of this building may be seen the picture of the sweet face of the little girl whose 57 cents, so sacrificially saved, made such remarkable history. Alongside of it is a portrait of her kind pastor, Dr. Russel H. Conwell.

GOD'S WINGS

An article in National Geographic several years ago provided a penetrating picture of God's wings...

After a forest fire in Yellowstone National Park, forest rangers began their trek up a mountain to assess the inferno's damage. One ranger found a bird literally petrified in ashes, perched statuesquely on the ground at the base of a tree. Somewhat sickened by the eerie sight, he knocked over the bird with a stick.

When he struck it, three tiny chicks scurried from under their dead mother's wings.

The loving mother, keenly aware of impending disaster, had carried her offspring to the base of the tree and had gathered them under her wings, instinctively knowing that the toxic smoke would rise. She could have flown to safety but had refused to abandon her babies.

When the blaze had arrived and the heat had scorched her small body, the mother had remained steadfast. Because she had been willing to die, those under the cover of her wings would live.

"He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge" (Psalm 91:4)

Being loved this much should make a difference in your life. Remember the One who loves you and then, be different because of it.

MISSED CHANCE

A massive flood hit a small town near the Mississippi River. One levy in the river had broke, causing the flooding to occur while another levy was predicted to break in the hour.

A man who owned a house along the river stood on the roof of his house as water had engulfed the rest of it. Water levels were slowly rising. A rescue boat came to save the man from his house. The boat approached and the rescuers told the man another levy was about to break and the water would move over his house, sweeping him away to his drowning death. The man told the rescuers he did not need help because he believed in God and that God would save him.

Twenty minutes later, the rescuers returned, trying to help the man escape. Once again, the man waved off the rescuers saying that God would save him. Ten minutes afterwards, the rescuers returned again, saying it would be the last time they could return because the levy was about to break. They asked him one last time to get on the rescue boat. He said once again that he believes in God and God would save him from the levy should it break. A few minutes after the rescuers left, the levy broke and the rushing waters engulfed the house, carrying away the man to his drowning death.

When the man reached the Heavens, he stood at the gates to enter. He told the men at the gates that he wanted to see God. When he saw God, he asked, "What happened? I thought you were going to save me? Why didn't you save me?" God replied, "I did try to save you. I sent the boat three times."

MEETING GOD

There was once a little boy who wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with Twinkies and a six-pack of root beer and he started his journey.

When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old woman. She was sitting in the park just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to her and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old lady looked hungry, so he offered her a Twinkie. She gratefully accepted it and smiled at him.

Her smile was so pretty that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered her some of his root beer. Once again she smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word.

As it grew dark, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave, but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old woman and gave her a hug. She gave him her biggest smile ever. When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what ? She's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old woman, also radiant with joy, returned to her home. Her son was stunned by the look of peace on her face and he asked, "Mother, what did you do today that made you so happy?" She replied, "I ate Twinkies in the park with God." But before her son could respond, she added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

A TRUE STORY OF COURAGE AND LOVE

by David L. Kuzminski

Used with Permission

Walking down a path through some woods in Georgia, I saw a water puddle ahead on the path. I angled my direction to go around it on the part of the path that wasn't covered by water and mud. As I reached the puddle, I was suddenly attacked!

Yet I did nothing for the attack was so unpredictable and from a source so totally unexpected.

I was startled as well as unhurt, despite having been struck four or five times already. I backed up a foot and my attacker stopped attacking me. Instead of attacking more, he hovered in the air on graceful

butterfly wings in front of me. Had I been hurt I wouldn't have found it amusing, but I was unhurt, it was funny, and I was laughing. After all, I was being attacked by a butterfly!

Having stopped laughing, I took a step forward. My attacker rushed me again.

He rammed me in the chest with his head and body, striking me over and over again with all his might, still to no avail.

For a second time, I retreated a step while my attacker relented in his attack. Yet again, I tried moving forward. My attacker charged me again. I was rammed in the chest over and over again. I wasn't sure what to do, other than to retreat a third time. After all, it's just not everyday that one is attacked by a butterfly. This time, though, I stepped back several paces to look the situation over. My attacker moved back as well to land on the ground. That's when I discovered why my attacker was charging me only moments earlier. He had a mate and she was dying. She was beside the puddle where he landed. Sitting close beside her, he opened and closed his wings as if to fan her. I could only admire the love and courage of that butterfly in his concern for his mate. He had taken it upon himself to attack me for his mate's sake, even though she was clearly dying and I was so large. He did so just to give her those

extra few precious moments of life, should I have been careless enough to step on her.

Now I knew why and what he was fighting for. There was really only one option left for me. I carefully made my way around the puddle to the other side of the path, though it was only inches wide and

extremely muddy. His courage in attacking something thousands of times larger and heavier than himself just for his mate's safety justified it. I couldn't do anything other than reward him by walking on the more difficult side of the puddle. He had truly earned those moments to be with her, undisturbed. I left them in peace for those last few moments, cleaning the mud from my boots when I later reached my car.

Since then, I've always tried to remember the courage of that butterfly whenever I see huge obstacles facing me. I use that butterfly's courage as an inspiration and to remind myself that good things are worth fighting for.

A SCOUT'S PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

Help to keep my honor bright

And teach me that integrity of character

Is my most priceless possession.

Grant that I may do my best today,

And strive to do even better tomorrow.

Teach me that duty is a friend and not an enemy,

And help me face even the most disagreeable task cheerfully.

Give me the faith to understand my purpose and life,

Open my mind to the truth and fill my heart with love.

I am thankful for all the blessings you have bestowed upon my country.

Help me to do my duty to my country and

To know that a good nation must be made from good men.
Help me to remember my obligation to obey the Scout Law,
And give me understanding , so that it is more than mere words.
May I never tire of the joy of helping other people or
Look the other way when someone is in need.
You have given me the gift of a body,
Make me wise enough to keep it healthy,
That I might serve better.
You are the source of all wisdom,
Help me to have an alert mind,
Teach me to think,
And help me to learn discipline.
In all that I do and in every challenge I face,
Help me to know the difference between right and wrong,
And lead me in obedience on a straight path toward a worthy goal.
Thanks to Michael F. Bowman, DDC-Training, GW Dist. Nat Capital Area Council,
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SONG: God is the Light by Cat Stevens

Favorite Links Page

BROWSE THROUGH OUR FAVORITE SITES

Below you'll find a list of our favorite sites on the internet.

If you can't seem to find exactly what you're looking for, try using one of the search engines provided below.

When using the search engines, type in key words dealing with your theme.

Example: Inspirational stories, scouting



Scout Camp - One of our favorite sites!!!

Search Engines

[AltaVista](#) You know us as the Internet's original search engine.

[Lycos](#) One of the most visited hubs on the Internet reaching one out of every two web users.

[Yahoo!](#) With over half a million sites divided into more than 25,000 categories, Yahoo! Is both browseable and searchable.

[InfoSeek](#) GO Network is a new brand that brings together the very best of the Internet in one, easy to use place.

Favorite Sites

[Afterhours Inspirational Stories](#) Stories to inspire and make you happy!

[Inspirational Christian Stories](#) Inspirational stories, thoughts and poems.

[Motivating Moments](#) An ever growing on-line collection of motivating stories.

[Cyber Story](#) Uplifting stories and more...

[Harmony Central](#) The internet resource for musicians

[Classic Lyrics Server](#) A great collection of song lyrics

[OLGA](#) The "On Line Guitar Archive"

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Contact us to share your troops Scouts' Own Services, to give us your thoughts or ideas, or to just let us know what you think.