

## Thorns and Roses (and Buds)

"*Thorns and Roses*" is an opportunity for a crew to review the day's events, both good (roses) and bad (thorns), and to discuss things they are looking forward to (buds). The goal is to resolve any problems that may have arisen during the day and to defuse personality clashes or other problems between members of the crew.

The Philmont Trail Crew Guide Book states:

*"The "**Thorns and Roses**" program is an excellent way to have each person learn about the others. Each evening or night after dinner and before everyone retires for the night, make sure the entire crew debriefs the days events. During the session it is important to always end the day positively. If there are any problems within the group this is an opportunity to bring them out at this time. Make it known from the start that this time is neutral time. Be creative; ask thought-provoking questions, this is the time when questions about anything can be answered. It is essential that everyone work out his problems here. Otherwise tensions may emerge the next day on the trail. Make this serious and take this time serious from the start. Encourage meaningful dialog.*

*Keep in mind that your crew consists of several different personalities. We want everyone to learn and grow. At times it may be hard getting people to talk at all. Be tactful; lead your discussions if you need to at first. Never belittle anyone or everyone."*

Immediately after dinner clean-up is finished is a good time to gather the crew for the "*Thorns and Roses*" session. The crew should sit in a circle, so that each crewmember can see all the others. Adult advisors should spread out in the circle, and not bunch together. Each crewmember will have the opportunity to vent their frustrations, and they must be allowed to speak freely and uninterrupted. The emphasis should be to balance any bad with some good. After each person presents his "thorn" (if any) and "rose", he may also present a "rose bud". The "bud" is a goal, thought, or desire of the individual of something that he would like to accomplish. It could for the next day, anytime during the trip, or long term, and one that he feels like sharing with the others.

One of the leaders (boy crew leader or adult) starts the "*Thorns and Roses*" discussion, and each person gets a chance as the turn passes around the circle. This is not a gripe session, and you only go around the circle once. Always close on a positive note, possibly following this session with a Scoutmaster minute or spiritual thought. Sometimes there might have to be a short group interaction/plan after the once around thoughts (or even following an individual's contribution) in order to be sure the "air" is cleared, and the discussion is indeed positive.