the community, for it provided the meat that sustained them through the year, provided the skins and furs for their clothing, their beds, and in many cases their lodgings. They didn't kill for fun or sport, but for their needs. When an animal was taken, a prayer was offered giving thanks and honoring the noble beast. Thus, they learned not to waste, so there would always be game for future years. And what was harvested was always used to its fullest capacity. When the youth finally brought down a large animal, it marked part of the passage into manhood, for he was taking care of his village.

Tonight we have a room full of youth, growing into young men. Just like the small boys who have only played games of pretending, we have boys who are entering the pack. As a bobcat they are as the boys who are just learning of the animal tracks and signs. As they gain more experience and learn more skills they become wolves and bears, much like the boys who are learning to track their prey. All these experiences make them stronger and increase their knowledge. They are exposed to so many different themes and activities along their scouting journey. As they become Webelos, they are young hunters, having developed the skills through their long journey. But not all will become the great hunter they desire. It takes hard work and dedication to achieve the highest goal. They must pass many tests and achieve many awards along the journey. Those who do are qualified to receive the highest honor bestowed upon a Cub Scout. Like the young brave who has made his first step towards being a great hunter, we have a young scout who is making his first step towards boy scouts as he is ready to receive his Arrow of Light award. This is the only Cub Scout award that you can continue to wear on the Boy Scout uniform, and will be represented as a knot badge on your adult scout uniform. It is an award of that significance.

Tonight we have such a Scout in our midst.

By Eric Christiansen, Wood Badge ticket, WE7-590-3-08

ARROW OF LIGHT CEREMONY
A HUNTERS TALE

Our Native American forefathers have left us with many insights and examples of working with nature. Some nations were farmer hunters, while others were hunter gatherers. The nations were small in comparison to today's population, making each group autonomous and self sufficient for food and most supplies. Although there was a healthy market of trade among the tribes, items traded were small that could carried over long distances. Food, shelter and skins had to be acquired by each group.

The hunter became a very important and valuable member of the tribe, and many young men aspired to become a great hunter. As small boys they would play games through the village pretending to stalk and capture prey. These games were the beginning of their training. As they grew a little older, the men would take them out and show them how to recognize animal signs and tracks. They would learn the difference between the cottontail and the jack rabbit, fox and the coyote, the wolf and the bear, the deer and the elk, the sheep and the buffalo.

The young men grew and had the chance to learn new skills. They were taught to handle the spear and the bow and arrow. For hours they would practice throwing and shooting, honing their skills and growing in confidence. Next they would go out on small hunting parties, learning how to track with stealth, never making a sound. They learned to read the winds so to always stay down wind. Their prey must never catch their scent. They learned to use the sun to their advantage, never casting a shadow that would give away their position. Even the calls of the prey could be learned to be mimicked to draw them in close to the hunters.

Many years of preparation brought them to this point. The small boys started hunting by taking small animals such a rabbits and prairie fowl, making their first contribution to the family meals. But the large game was reserved for the men. This was the prey that was so important to