

LAURA CRAFT: THE FINAL PIECES OF THE PUZZLE



WHAT IS 'BRIDGING THE GAPP'?

The Bridging The GAPP resource was originally created through the Global Awareness Partnership Project between The Scout Association and the National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs, writes Chris Lomas from GAPP.

It contains a wide range of activities focusing on different aspects of global awareness, such as Fair Trade, the environment, healthy living, landmines and so on. It is also constantly updated by members of the National GAPP Network. The resource was originally written for all Sections, so it includes activities suitable for Explorer Scouts. Some of them are short games while others can take a whole evening. The activities have all been tried and tested across the world at events such as World Jamborees and Moots, as well as in this country at International Camps and in Groups and Units.

You can get a copy of the Bridging The GAPP resource by contacting the Scout Information Centre on 0845 300 1818, or at info.centre@scout.org.uk.

Alternatively, the GAPP Network has a website – www.gapp.me.uk – with electronic versions of all the resources and activities. You can contact the GAPP network via its website and ask for more information, or even ask for somebody trained in delivering GAPP activities to come and help you with an event. It's likely that in your County/Area somebody has been trained as a 'GAPPster' and can help you.

were an intrepid Explorer Scout Leader.

Pal: I don't know why you bother asking, Laura.

Laura: I like to make you feel useful.

She dons her climbing harness and abseils out of the window.

First of all, she heads to the nearest outdoors shop and has a look at *Unit Programmes* – a booklet full of ideas that are definitely worth a try and that is also available from the Scout Information Centre.

Then she fetches out her copies of the wonderful *Scouting Magazine* – they almost seem to be surrounded by a shimmering halo [*Ed: Steady on!*] – and looks back through the Explorer Scout

now for your chance to take part in this momentous, historical gathering of Scouts from all over the world to celebrate 100 years of Scouting.

Belt can be found in *Unit Essentials*, and there are also six linked fact sheets at www.scoutbase.org.uk, which give additional information to guide and inspire you through the process of organising your expedition.

Complete your International Friendship Award

The International Friendship Award is one of the three Group Awards. You need to work with other Sections to complete a long-term International Project. For example, you might find yourself doing a project with a local Cub Pack, Beaver Colony and Scout Network to support the development of Scouting in Russia. Again, there's more information on this Award in *Unit Essentials*.

Take an active part in an International Camp in the UK

A couple of good opportunities for this will occur in the next few years.

In 2005, the European Jamboree (known as EuroJam to its friends) will be rolling in to Hylands Park, Chelmsford in Essex. This European extravaganza – 10 days of 'jamming' in the park – will be a fabulous opportunity to get to know our European Scouting neighbours.

If you didn't spot that one coming, look out for the 21st World Scout Jamboree in 2007, which just happens to be the Centenary of Scouting. In that year of celebration, Scouting is coming home, with the Jamboree being held right here in the UK. Start preparing



If you can't get to either of those, keep your eyes peeled. All over the UK and abroad there are many international camps and jamborees that you can get involved with.

Laura can't wait to try those. She checks her passport and makes sure it's still valid. Hang on, though. These are all big ideas; what about simple things to try on a normal meeting night? She goes to Pal once more.

Laura: Go on then, Pal, tell me where I would need to go to get some International Programme Ideas if I

Laura Craft, Inspiration Raider, returns for the last time, investigating the International and Community Service Programme Zones...

"Laura, our past few issues have seen you flying around in helicopters, riding horses and motorbikes and driving fast cars. Refresh our memories on why you have been doing this..."

"Well, X, I have been doing what all good heroines do – fighting the good fight and solving mysteries. In this case, I had to find out more about the different Programme Zones in the Explorer Scout Section: how they fit together, how they can be planned, how they link to awards and badges, and – on the practical side – where to find ideas for running these Programme Zones."

"Have you finished?"

"No, X, as a matter of fact, I have two more Programme Zones to investigate. This month, I am searching out clues for the International and the Community Service Programme Zones. I feel sure it will be another great adventure, and I can't wait to get going. It's like waiting for the last few pieces of a jigsaw, knowing that the completed picture will be a brilliant Balanced Explorer Scout Programme. A Programme full of opportunities for the young people to achieve badges and awards, to take part in managing the Explorer Scout Section, as well as celebrate achievements and set exciting targets for the future with Certificates of Achievement."



"What are you waiting for, Laura? Get to it!"

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME ZONE

Laura races to Pal, her trusty computer, and requests more information about the International Programme Zone.

Pal: According to *Unit Programmes*, the International Programme Zone is to help Explorer Scouts 'develop a better understanding of other countries, their people, customs, cultures and Scouting. The activities should also help young people understand their own local and national identities and develop their understanding of global issues.'

"Hmm... I've seen something

somewhere," Laura thinks to herself, while jet-skiing over to the Awards Island.

With delight, she realises that she last encountered this Zone for the Chief Scout's Platinum Award, the Chief Scout's Diamond Award, and Queen's Scout Award. The Explorer Scout must choose two activities from three lists, one of which is International – the other two are Environment and Values.

Lots of the suggestions on this list of International Activities could be carried out with an Explorer Scout Unit within the International Programme Zone, while contributing towards one of the Awards! Fantastic!

Heading back to base in her mini-submarine, Laura glances at the collection of International Activities on the list she's just obtained. There are some exciting ideas, but she thinks she might need to investigate some a little further...

Complete your Explorer Belt

The Explorer Belt is a brilliant Award, open to those aged 16. In a nutshell, the Award involves a small group travelling through a foreign country for 10 days, getting to know the local culture by carrying out one major project and 10 minor projects. It's an experience of a lifetime.

Further information on the Explorer



'Programmes On A Plate'. "Aha!" she exclaims, spotting the issues she was looking for.

"In March 2003, there were activities leading up to an International Expedition, and in February 2004 there were some more ideas. Hey! November 2003 will come in handy later for Community Service. It's very helpful of them to have dedicated 'Programmes On A Plate' to a Programme Zone each month."

As she goes to catch the fast train back to base, Laura stops dead in her tracks. A sign above the train door states 'Mind the gap'. Laura gasps as she remembers hearing about a resource that was absolutely perfect for International Activities, The Bridging The GAPP Pack (see box on previous page).

"So, there are some great ideas available that you can use for the International Programme Zone, and they are all amazing. Better than that, though – as an Explorer Scout Leader, you don't have to do it all on your own.

"Your County, Area or District may well have an Assistant County Commissioner/Assistant Area Commissioner/Assistant District Commissioner International. It is their job to support you in running International Activities, so make plenty of use of their expertise."

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMME ZONE

Pal runs off a print-out containing a quotation from *Unit Programmes*: "The Community Service Zone is all about Explorer Scouts contributing something of themselves, their skills and their time, to help other people."

Pal: What about the Community Service Programme Zone?

Laura: Thanks, Pal. I know that Service is part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award, as well as part of the Chief Scout's Award and Queen's Scouts Award, but I'm not entirely certain what people do. I'll go and find out.

Laura swings on a rope across a bottomless chasm, before running to a nearby Explorer Scout Unit.

"I help out at Cubs," says one Explorer Scout. "And I help Beavers," says another. "I help out at a local club for adults with learning difficulties," interjects a third. The Explorer Scouts all start talking at once about the various Community Service elements of their Awards.

SOME 'BITE SIZE' IDEAS FOR YOUR DISTRICT



- If you have a large District, you could produce a newsletter each term for all Explorer Scouts, Scouts over the age of 13, Scout Leaders and Explorer Scout Leaders. As well as District Explorer Scout news, dates of meetings and information on the District Explorer Scout Commissioner and Administrator, each Unit could have a page to give information about themselves, where and when they meet and what type of Unit they are, including their Programme for the term. In this way, all Explorer Scouts and Leaders will know what is going on in the Units around the District. This will help in the sharing of activities and ideas. You could cover the production cost with some limited advertising space.
- Explorer Scouts in one District decided that their District Explorer Scout Committee meeting would be better attended if each Explorer brought £2 so they could send out for pizza.
- Through your Explorer Scout Unit or District, organise a 'Battle of the Bands'. Charge a small fee for the bands to enter, and finish up with a concert finale with the winners. You could also charge a small entry price on the door.
- When bringing in new Members, try to make it as memorable as possible. Ask the Explorer Scouts to think about the best ways of welcoming someone to the Unit. I heard one Leader recently describe how his Explorer Scouts had to find their way through a darkened room/assault course using a head torch. Other ideas include a dramatic 'kidnap' from Scouts – once they've got to know the Explorer Scouts, of course – and investing new members on ski slopes, climbing walls, or even in the cockpit of a glider.
- Encourage Explorer Scouts to use some blank pages from their Navigator file to record any extra things they do – such as using a Nights Away Passport or organising an activity – to prepare for their Certificate Of Achievement. When you're as busy as most Explorer Scouts, it's sometimes difficult to keep track of all the great stuff you get involved with. This will help them to remember.

It seems that for some it was not an easy thing to do at the beginning. The time commitment involved, in often difficult and unusual situations, made it quite a stretch, but many have completed their stint and don't want to stop volunteering – they've discovered they get something valuable out of putting something back into their local community.

Laura nods, happy with what she has witnessed, and goes off to talk to the Explorer Scout Leaders.

"What do you do to incorporate Community Service into your Balanced Programme?"

"We tell the Explorer Scouts we need to do some and ask for their ideas," explains one of the Leaders.

"They are very vocal. At Christmas we spent an evening giving out hot chocolate to the homeless, and handing out warm jumpers and blankets that the Explorer Scouts had collected.

"During the spring, we put on a barbecue at the local children's care

home. This term, we're making toys and puppets for the playgroup who use our headquarters. Some of the ideas they have are fantastic."

Laura ponders a moment. "Thank you. You've not only given me some information, but you've helped me to complete a beautiful picture – the complete Balanced Explorer Scout Programme.

"Explorer Scouts do activities in each of the Programme Zones – Physical Recreation, Outdoors, Skills, Values, Relationships, Environment, International and Community Service.

"They have the opportunity to do their Awards and achieve Activity Badges along the way. They talk to their Leader about what they have done, are doing, and wish to do in the future, while celebrating their successes with Certificates of Achievement, and having their say in the running of the Programme and the Unit, and then they move on to Scout Network. What a perfect picture!" ■



PROGRAMMES ON A PLATE

WRITTEN BY MEL KESTEVEN

TIME	ACTIVITY	ZONE	METHOD	INSTRUCTIONS
Evening or weekend	Campsite conservation	Outdoors, Skills, Environment, Community Service	Working with others, Projects, Service	Work with your local Scout Campsite Warden or Manager, undertaking some environmental work to support them in the summer camping season. A weekend environmental service camp is a great way to begin your summer. You could create a nature walk for the Cubs and Scouts who camp there.
One evening	Wildlife audit	Environment, Outdoors	Project, Study, Research	Take clipboards, glass jars, trays and classification books, and identify the wildlife around your meeting place. Make an identification poster for other users of the meeting place.
Half an hour	'Imaginarium'	Environment	Ideas	Come up with a list of environmental activities that: a) People could carry out as mini-projects during an Explorer Belt Expedition b) Would count as one of the Environmental Activities in the Chief Scout's Platinum, Chief Scout's Diamond and Queen Scout's Award.
One evening	Where does it go?	Environment, Values	Visit	Visit your nearest recycling centre. Find out more about the disposal of waste in your area.
One afternoon	Surfers Against Sewage	Physical Recreation, Environment, Skills, Outdoors	Visit, Learning new skills, Talking, Research	Take a surfing lesson and find out more about the Surfers Against Sewage campaign.
One evening	BMC speaker	Environment, Values	Visitor	Invite a speaker from the British Mountaineering Council to talk about conservation issues involved in hill-walking and climbing.
Part of walk	Car litter	Environment, Outdoors, Values	Outdoor activity	As part of a longer walk, spend some time alongside a well-used road (for safety reasons, it is best if it has a footpath). As you pass through this bit, invite the Explorer Scouts to notice any pollution, be it the dust on the plants or the more obvious litter in the verges and hedgerows.