Otter Ceremonies & Recognition

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Handing out badges can be as simple as having the scouts come forward during your closing circle and recognizing their achievements, or you may wish to have an award ceremony meeting once or twice a year. When an Otter is moving to the Timberwolf pack, regardless of whether they've earned their Swimming Otter badge, it is important to recognize them and honor their time with the raft.

Swimming Up ceremonies can be quite emotional and special for the Otters and Leaders. You can hold the Swimming Up during a campout or at a regular meeting. You should go over the ceremony with the scouts involved ahead of time so they know what to expect and you could even practice parts of it (like the weaving in and out between your raft). Feel free to put your own spin on the ceremony and make it special for your Otters.

Swimming Up Ceremony

A printable version of this ceremony can be found here: Otter Swimming Up Ceremony

Otter Raft and TW Pack are in two closed circles with a log placed between them. If Pathfinders and Rovers are present, they can stand in an outer ring around the Otters and Timberwolves.

**Otter Leader: **Welcome to the Old Wolf and the Timberwolf Pack

**Old Wolf: **Look well, o wolves, look well! *(Pack Howls)*

**Otter Leader: **[Otter names], please join me in the center of the circle. I hope you will always remember your Otter promise. For the last time, I ask you to make the Otter sign and join me in reciting it..

Otters: I promise to do my best, to listen to my leaders and my parents and to be a good Otter.

Otter Leader: Do I have your honor that you will always remember and obey this promise?

Otters: Yes!

**Otter Leader: **[Names], this is the last time you will ever be addressed as Otters. I ask you to take a moment and think upon your time with the Otters and remember them well. Look up at the sky, the same cosmos that has looked down on you as an Otter will continue to look down on you as a Timberwolf. Take solace in knowing that the things you have learned as an Otter will serve you well as you make your journey into your new Timberwolf pack. Think for a moment about one of your favorite memories of your time as an Otter… *(pause)* … when you are ready, you may swim through your Otter raft, weaving in and out of the council circle until you reach the end and join [me/your leader] here.

The Otters weave through the raft and rejoin their leaders in the center.

If the Otters have earned their Swimming Otter Badges, the leader presents them now.

**Otter Leader: **[Names], you have worked hard as Otters and earned many badges, including your safety badge and all four of our Otter paws. Please take this Swimming Otter Badge with you to affix to your new uniform and remember your time with our raft.

The leaders present the Otters with their Swimming Otter badges.

Otter Leader: Old Wolf! Will you accept these Otters into your Timberwolf Pack, and will you teach them the ways and laws of the forest?

**Old Wolf: **Yes!

The Pack and Raft open their individual Council Rock circles to create two horse-shoe formations that face one another.

**Old Wolf: **Bring forth the new cubs!

Otters are escorted to the log by their leader(s) then stop.

Otter Leader: Here are the new cubs! Old wolf! Will you keep them?

Old Wolf: Of course I will keep them! BUT! What will the pack say? The old laws say that as soon as a wolf cub is ready, they must be taken to the Pack Council so that the other wolves may identify them. New cubs to the center of the circle!

The Otters step over the log and make their way to the center of the circle in front of the Old Wolf.

Old Wolf: Look well, o wolves, look well! *(Pack Howls)* The old ways say that if a Timberwolf is to be accepted into the pack, they must be spoken for by two members that are not their parents. Who speaks for these Timberwolves?

Leader 1: I speak for these Timberwolves, As cubs, they have much to learn.

**Old Wolf: **We need yet another, who else will speak for them?

Leader 2: Old wolf, I too speak for these Timberwolves. I will teach them the ways of the forest.

Old Wolf: New cubs! Do you know the Law and Promise of the Timberwolf Pack, The Grand Howl and the Salute?

**New Cubs: **Yes Old Wolf, we do.

**Old Wolf: **What is the Law?

New Cubs: The cub respects the old wolf, the cub does not give into themselves.

Old Wolf: Are you ready to make the solemn Promise of the Timberwolves?

**New Cubs: **Yes Old Wolf, we are.

Timberwolves in the horse-shoe formation all make the sign.

**New Cubs: **I promise to do my best, to do my duty to my community, to keep the law of the Timberwolf Pack, and to do a good turn every day.

Old Wolf: I trust you to do your best and to keep this promise. You are now a Timberwolf and part of the Great Worldwide Family of Scouts.

The TW leaders hand the new Timberwolf their handbook. If they have earned their Tenderpad badge, they may receive that as well. They give the new Timberwolf a left handed shake and have the new Timberwolf scouts salute the pack.

Old Wolf: Timberwolves, you have new packmates! Come greet them! Let us all sniff each other well that we may become one pack united!

Timberwolves come and sniff the new cubs.

Old Wolf: PACK!

The timberwolves stop sniffing and circling.

Old Wolf: DYB, DYB, DYB, DYB!

**Wolves: **DOB, DOB, DOB, DOB!

**Old Wolf: **The pack has welcomed these new wolves and we are stronger for it, for the strength of the Pack is the Wolf and the Strength of the Wolf is the Pack. Remember that a sharp mind, a courageous heart, and thoughtful words and deeds will always carry you far in the forest. Now let us take these new cubs and teach them well.

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