

# GLOWING BOBCAT

*From Ida Lively on the Cub-L list server*

Boys that are to receive their Bobcat rank are called forward by the Cubmaster. They are told that the Cubmaster has some of the Spirit of the Bobcat that he has put into glass baby food jars (or transparent film canisters) for each boy. It is said that if the Spirit of the Bobcat is mixed with dew collected at midnight under the full moon at the local Scout camp, that the Spirit of the Bobcat will glow with excitement. It will only happen if the boy has completed the requirements for the rank of Bobcat, though.

The Cubmaster has a small jar of "dew." He uses an eyedropper to place a few precious drops into each boy's jar, and the result is that the liquid begins to glow. An assistant Cubmaster then seals the jars.

## **Materials:**

1. One chemical glow stick per boy receiving their Bobcat rank
2. One baby food jar or clear film canister per boy, plus one extra for the Cubmaster
3. Eyedropper
4. Glue (super glue is best)
5. Sharp knife
6. Goggles
7. Rubber gloves
8. Clear workspace, covered with newspapers
9. Paper towels
10. Needle nose pliers

## **Preparation:**

Unwrap a glow stick. It is a thick plastic tube filled with liquid, with a smaller, thin glass tube inside, filled with a second liquid. When the plastic tube is bent, the liquids are allowed to mix and a chemical reaction takes place.

One end of the plastic tube is usually capped, the other typically has a hole for looping a cord through. Wearing goggles and gloves, and using great care, cut the plastic tube just below the cap, being careful not to press on the glass tube, bend the plastic tube, or spill any of the liquid. Once the cap is cut off, pour the "outer" liquid into one of the boy's jars.

When all liquid is drained, carefully remove the glass tube, rinse it in water and dry it with paper towels. Wrap the tube completely in paper towels and hold it upright. Carefully, use the pliers to "snip" or crush the very top end of the glass tube. Once broken, pour the liquid contents into the Cubmaster's jar. It is OK if glass gets into the jar, since you will use an eyedropper to transfer the contents to the boy's jars. It's also right if one of your tubes breaks too far and some of the liquid is not recovered, since it only requires a few drops to activate the reaction.

**WARNING:** When breaking the glass tubes, they tend to shatter. If you do not have the tube wrapped in paper towels, glass shards will fly several feet in all directions! The chemical contents of the glow stick may stain clothing and skin. They should be the "NON-TOXIC" versions. Wear goggles and gloves while performing this operation!

Repeat the process for all of the glow sticks, with the "outer" chemical going into a different jar each time, and the "inner" chemical going into the Cubmaster's jar. The jars may be prepared several days in advance, provided the contents are not exposed to strong light.

This ceremony may be performed for several ranks, using different colors for each rank. For example, orange for Tigers, white for Bobcats, yellow for Wolves, aqua blue for Bears, green for Webelos, blue for Arrow of Light recipients, and red for boys bridging into Boy Scouts. However, you should not mix colors of glow sticks, as the "inner" chemical may not activate the "outer" chemical of a different color. (For example, if you try to use the inner chemical for a red glow stick with the yellow outer chemical, nothing may happen, or the color may not be what you expect.)

Glue the jars closed once the chemicals are mixed to insure that the boys do not open them, spill them, or drink them. I like Fuji brand film canisters because they won't break and super glue will seal them in a few seconds. Their lids also seal easily and obviously with a definite snap. Your local photo processor probably has several hundred that they will gladly give you.