**I AM A DEN LEADER.**

I own a hot glue gun, a ring toss game, an American flag, and a 12 passenger van.

I know all about tour permits, permission slips, and registration forms.

I save bits of string, scraps of lumber, old tin cans, and a whole garage full of newspaper.

I am a den leader.

I get excited over paper sack kites that really fly, boys who remember to bring their books, and first aid kits that finally sell.

I laugh at Boy's Life jokes, cheer for my den kick ball teams, sing Frankenstein songs at pack meetings, and once wept with a Cub who just found out parents are getting a divorce.

I am a den leader.

I have bribed new Cubs through the Bobcat trail, herded unruly boys along library tours, puffed my way up steep mountain tracks, and panicked when I looked down the other side. I have threatened to quit more than once.

But I am still a den leader

My patch says I'm "trained", but I know I still have a lot to learn from district and council leaders, Cubmasters, other den leaders, and especially my boys. And I still have one more lesson to teach. I will not give up, especially on any of my boys.

So I am still a den leader.

I like to think there is a special place in heaven reserved for den leaders. Surely, they would have a need for bird feeders and barometers and someone who could love a dirty faced Cub Scout.

I hope when I die there is a hot glue gun plugged in and waiting.

For I am a den leader

Julie H. Erickson, Pack 64, Weber View District, Lake Bonneville Coucil, Ogden, UT