

President's Corner - Volume 6 - August 2010

At the beginning of this year, our Council announced some goals (See President's Corner -Vol 1). At better than the half year mark where are we? You be the judge. If we are not getting the job done, let me know.

The following are some of the highlights of the work being done to achieve the 8 goals. We do have a new corporate structure on the Council Web site (#8). We have filled most positions and the Districts are presently working hard to fill their committees. Greg Gentry, the Council Commissioner, is enthusiastically working with our district commissioners on training, unit retention and re-chartering (#2 and #8). Vice President Jim Bennon of Properties with a host of volunteers I have mentioned in prior issues has been hard at work on the new health lodge at Camp Kootaga while the maintenance committee under the able leadership of Tom Staud is forging ahead with plans for improvements at Camp Mahonegon (#8 and #3). Under Vice Presidents Keith Butt of Program and Denise Christafore of Membership, with the help of a lot of volunteers we had success with our Pinewood Derby, Council Camporee, Cub Day Camps, Summer Camp, and contingent to the last National Jamboree to be held at Fort A.P. Hill before coming to the Summit in West Virginia in 2013. We have showcased Eagle Scout recipients in the Polar Star and on our web site. Throughout the Council troops, packs and individual Scouts have performed thousands of man hours of public service in their communities (#5 and #6). The Council hired Mary Jo Pedersen as a fund raiser because we recognized that our volunteers were stretched to the limits doing the other important work of the units, districts and Council leaving little time or energy for something most do not like to do, knock on doors and ask for money (#4). Iris McCrady and Dick Ledford have taken control of product sales and are ramped up for the fall popcorn sale (#4). There is much more to be done.

I was told at last night's *telephonic* Council Key 3+ meeting that our new Council Web Site would be up and running by September of *this year*. Yes, since February, the Council 3+ consisting of the Council President, Executive Vice President, Council Commissioner, Council Treasurer and Scout Executive have met telephonically 1-2 times per month in preparation for board meetings and to discuss ideas and make plans to meet the goals of the Long Range Plan. At the meeting I was told our Scout Service Center people now have the tools to modify and maintain the corporate structure chart without going back to its creator. While on that subject, our thanks to Council Executive Vice President Scott Freshwater and his company's personnel for creating the corporate flow chart and our continuing thanks to the Service Center Staff who maintain the records and web site that we all rely on. They do a great job without a lot of thanks. But I digress. So as names are added to positions, the corporate flow chart will be periodically updated in furtherance of better communications and a more responsive and transparent Council (#2 and #8). We will be showcasing the Arrow of Light recipients like we have been showcasing our Eagle Scouts (#5). Bill Kuryla, our National Eagle Scout Association representative and Past President of this Council will be presenting a Scout Reach Plan for our Council at the Executive Board Meeting in August and at the full board meeting in September. It is a plan to provide the benefits of Scouting to those areas that do not have available adult leadership or available units. It will work in conjunction with our campership program that seeks to reach out to those who are financially stressed to provide Scouting where it would otherwise not be available (#1 and #7). We have asked our Vice Presidents of Membership and Program to put together and implement a plan to use our Scouting units in liaison with other groups such as YMCA and ARC to provide swimming lessons to our Scouts in every one of our districts during a month or 6 week period this

winter. The goal: No Scout should be the victim of a water accident because he cannot swim. We will also use it as a means to recruit new Scouts (#1, #5, #6 and #7). Two teen Scouts are preparing the first Council Promotional DVD for use in: recruitment, fund raising, public service announcements and training. The short DVD will show case Scouts engaged in public service, patriotic acts, camping, activities, training, learning life skills and having fun together with other Scouts. Teen Scouts are being used because they understand what youth want to hear and see. This DVD will be for use in 2011 and will show case 2010 activities. It will be replicated each year with a new DVD show casing the activities of the previous year.

There is a lot going on. So how can you be a part and do your part. (1) For the DVD, send pictures you may have in digital format to the Scout Service Center Attention: John Burns. Your photos may or may not be used. That will be up to those editing for the DVD. But, there is no chance your photos will be used if you do not send them. (2) If you like to play golf, eat good food, have fun hitting a glowing ball in the dark, sign up for the Elkins Golf Tournament fund raiser being put together for August 21st by Justin Tanner, Council Vice President of Administration Jim Tanner, and Helen Tanner. I hope to see you there. (3) As the swim program is put together in your district, think: Are you willing to provide transportation so some boys can learn to swim? Do you have the skills to assist in teaching some boys how to swim? Do you know some kids, even boys who are not Scouts, who need to learn how to swim? Can you help in some way to avoid another needless death in the water because the boy did not know how to swim? (4) Is the Scout Reach Plan something you would be interested in supporting financially or with time and talent? If so, get in touch with Bill Kuryla and see how you can replicate the plan being put together in Jackson County or how you can help. (5) If you know of people Mary Jo Pedersen should be introduced to who are, have been or could be supporters of the youth served by Scouting, offer to introduce them to her. A number of the Council Board have volunteered and are doing this throughout the Council.

As I sat in Church Sunday last, I was struck with the thought that “things” are not lasting and do not provide more than immediate gratification. The saying, “He who dies with the most toys wins” is not true. Come to think of it, I never did see a moving van of worldly goods follow the hearse to the cemetery. However, a month ago I got great joy from going to my little wood shop and designing and building a two apartment birdhouse for my 1967 camp staff friend. I could not wait to get it finished and mailed. When it arrived a week later, he and his wife emailed me with their many thanks. They said it was the only bird house in all of Switzerland with a West Virginia license plate for a roof. My joy was in making it and giving it to my friends. I suspect without knowing that Dads or Moms get the same joy helping their son build his pinewood derby racer. Through all the Scouting programs, what we give is permanent and lasting and cannot be taken away once given. A boy who learns to swim always knows how to swim. How each of us can help a boy in our community is only limited by our lack of imagination or drive.

Thank you, each and every one of you for all that you do for youth.

Yours in Scouting
John S. Kaull
Council President