Scoutmaster's Moment

Fall Court of Honor – September 18, 2023

Written and delivered by Troop 150 Scoutmaster Todd G. Bolick

Virtues of Hard Work

Setting: Three pre-selected Scouts are invited to come forward at the beginning of my Scoutmaster's moment to read a quote I printed for each: "I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work the more I have of it."- President Thomas Jefferson, "Preparation for tomorrow is hard work today."- Bruce Lee, "Success isn't always about greatness. It's about consistency. Consistent hard work leads to success. Greatness will come."- Dwayne "the Rock" Johnson, about hard Work. They return to their seat after they have all read their quotes.

"We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard." President John F. Kennedy. President Kennedy made that renown declaration almost exactly 61 years ago, today, on Sept. 12, 1962. It was a visionary and bold declaration, as powered flight was only just invented 59 years before, and the first man to travel in space had occurred just 5 months earlier. However, our nation took that declaration to heart and through the work of over 400,000 Americans, Apollo 11, carrying Eagle Scout astronaut Neil Armstrong and former Scout Buzz Aldrin, landed on the Moon, less than eight years later.

Last year, at Goshen Scout Reservation, a leader from each troop was called to an urgent meeting, in the middle of dinner preparation and during a big storm. While waiting for that meeting to begin, I discussed with a counterpart about how dinner was going in the storm. When he heard me say that my troop was working hard to keep fires going so the Scouts could cook, he exasperatedly asked me why

we hadn't changed to stoves in the deluge. That is a similar reaction that we get when most other troops and staff hear how we cook at Goshen. Just this last summer, the Phoenix patrol proved why our troop does the hard work. During another storm, they were all working in concert with each other, covered in mud, huddled under an Assistant Scoutmaster's poncho, conjuring a fire into shear existence, and coming out of the experience with the proud sense of accomplishment that they couldn't possibly have otherwise had!

During our troop's last expedition to Philmont Scout Ranch, our crew's trek was already slated to be a strenuous 57 mile adventure. However, we sought to do more. We knew there were more inspiring sights to see that would require extremely early mornings, many extra miles, and thousands of additional vertical feet up mountains. On our first night in the backcountry at Philmont, after a long hike, with heavy packs, from basecamp to a mosquito filled campground, we decided to add an extra round-trip hike back down the mountain, then up another, to the beautiful Lover's Leap vista, in order to see a truly incredible experience we wouldn't have had otherwise. When we embarked out of camp late that afternoon, we passed other crews who were reclining and settling in for the day as they watched us with puzzled and confused expressions of why we do more.

I share these stories and our Scouts earlier shared those quotes because the value of hard work is a critical virtue. We choose to work harder, by striving to be a rare troop that earns the demanding Goshen Camp Time Adventure Award, and to collect over three tons of food at Scouting for Food, or to cook a Thanksgiving Feast in the freezing cold, because it builds better teamwork, leadership, communication, Scouting, and lifetime skills. More importantly, it builds a deeper sense of self satisfaction that would not be possible had we gone the easy way. I

see our Scouts working hard all the time. Consequently, I want to pose a rhetorical prompt for each of you to think about. What are you willing to put in hard work for and why? I urge and challenge each of you to put in the true hard work, sweat equity, and arduous effort for your passions and it will benefit you forever.