Scoutmaster's Moment
Fall Court of Honor – September 15, 2025
Written and delivered by Troop 150 Scoutmaster Todd G. Bolick

Soaring

Setting: Start the Scoutmaster's Moment with the screening of this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1rJ3Ga75OXE. At the end, Scouts will be asked who is ready to soar to new heights and what those are.

Wilbur Wright once said, "I confess that in 1901, I said to my brother Orville that man would not fly for 50 years." As you just saw, just 25 years before Troop 150 was founded, or just 7 years before Scouting America was founded, two brothers who were bicycle mechanists from Ohio, changed the world, when on December 17, 1903, they conducted the first manned powered flight in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The Wright brothers were not aeronautical experts, they were not trained engineers with extensive experience, they did not even have any sort of advanced educational degree. They were simply curious individuals dedicated to working hard, perseverance, and finding the key to their dreams.

In the 123 years since the Wright Brothers first flight, aviation has soared to new heights and in that time has exponentially advanced, nearly every year. In just 21 years, Charles Lindbergh completed the first solo trans-Atlantic flight in 1924; in 44 years, Chuck Yeager became the first person to break the sound barrier, in 1944; in 49 years jet liners launched for passenger service in 1952, in 63 years; the SR71 Blackbird took off, operating at speeds of mach 3.2 and at heights of 85,000 feet in 1966. In only 66 years after the Wright Brother's first flight, in July, 1969, Eagle Scout Neil Armstrong launched on Apollo 11 and landed on the Moon. 74 years after the first flight, Voyager 1 rocketed off from Earth, and is today the farthest away human-made object, 15 billion miles away, in interstellar space. And

now today, companies are testing advanced un-manned drones to deliver our Amazon.com orders!

The advance of aviation and aeronautics over the last 125 years has been fueled by people striving to soar to new heights, both in literal and metaphorical terms. In some senses, like the International Space Station, it is one area where our entire planet comes together to advance an area of scientific and industrial development. To put it into perspective, it has been 533 years since Christopher Columbus sailed to the West Indies. In less than a quarter of that time, since then to now, is when all of our powered aviation history fits!

Now, I am not sharing all of this incredibly interesting aviation history with you because I am expecting our troop to create the next interstellar delivery drone. I am sharing this example with you because it shows what curious, hard-working, people, more importantly, people in teams, can achieve when they are inspired to soar past their dreams. I see it all the time with our troop! We have come together to achieve great things ranging from being two-time Troop of the week Goshen winners, to multiple Camporee and Klondike Derby top troop championships, to 127 Eagle Scouts since 1953! Scouts, I'd like each of you to think for a few seconds, now, on what personal, patrol, and/or troop pinnacle you want to soar to, and then I will call on a few of you to stand and share [wait a couple of moments then call on 3 Scouts].

Thank you, Scouts! Now to conclude, I am going to share one other quote from the Wright Brothers, "The desire to fly is an idea handed down to us by our ancestors who...looked enviously on the birds soaring freely through space...on the infinite highway of the air." I am excited to see what we will soar to. Thank you!