Scoutmaster's Moment
Spring Court of Honor – May 10, 2021
Written and delivered by Troop 150 Scoutmaster Todd G. Bolick

Carpe Opportunitas

Setting: Three pre-selected Scouts, a younger Scout, a Scout in middle school, and a Scout in high school will be prepared with how they will seize the opportunity given to them in Scouting. They'll stand from their seat in the audience.

My high school band director often used the mantra, Carpe Diem, when motivating the Marching Band in preparation for our final States competition. Carpe Diem is Latin for Seize the Day and means to not wait for tomorrow to achieve greatness today. Tonight, I am going to talk about a related mantra, Carpe Opportunitas, which is Latin for Seize the Opportunity. While it may not be as catchy as Carpe Diem, it strongly conveys the moment we are entering.

As we are on the verge of finally fully re-starting troop outdoors operations in just a few weeks, with our first campout in 17 months, and as we prepare for our summer adventures to Goshen Scout Reservation and an expedition to Philmont Scout Ranch, we are on the cusp of being able to seize opportunities that have been un-available to us for over the last year!

Carpe Opportunitas, to the two years of Scouts in our troop who haven't even been able to camp with us yet, may mean seizing the opportunity to learn and exhibit outdoors skills, proving that they can not only survive but thrive in the wilderness for a week. They'll have the opportunity to cook meals over open fires, trying new activities for the first time, earning new Merit Badges, and so much more. They'll need to seize these opportunities while pushing the boundaries of their bravery. It may be by being away from their parents for a week, or maybe by swimming in a lake, or any of the other un-told new experiences they'll have.

Carpe Opportunitas for some of our older Scouts may mean Seizing the Opportunity to lead our troop, which is coming out of what is likely the longest tenure of limited outdoor overnight activities in our 93-year legacy. These older Scouts are going to be needed to train our younger Scouts in outdoor skills, Scoutcraft, cooking, and so much more. Maybe, even more importantly, the older Scouts have a duty to instill our Troop 150 traditions with the new Scouts. They will need to know the importance of things like the Honor Oar, our troop cheer, and the true meaning of Pirate's Breakfast. I know our older Scouts are up to the task of seizing this daunting opportunity.

For our oldest Scouts, Carpe Opportunitas may involve trying something new that will push the boundaries of their comfortability and give them some new experiences and legacies before they age out of Scouting. For some, that will involve taking the COPE program at Goshen, for others it will mean hiking an extra few miles after a long day of backpacking at Philmont to enjoy an extra program or setting, and for others yet, it may mean summiting the mountain of Scouting and earning the coveted and highly honored title of Eagle Scout! Pursuing this rank may seem like a huge hurdle, not worth tackling with so many other obstacles in our current environment, but I assure you it is worth seizing that opportunity to achieve that life-long glory of being a proud member of the elite assembly of those few others who endeavored to seize that opportunity.

Now, let's hear from some of those very Scouts to learn how they will Carpe Opportunitas. [Three pre-selected Scouts stand and speak.] How are you going to the seize the opportunities about to be given to you? It's time to consider, prepare, plan, and make goals for it now. Carpe Opportunitas! Thank you.