Scoutmaster's Moment

95th Anniversary Spring Court of Honor – May 15, 2023

Written and delivered by Troop 150 Scoutmaster Todd G. Bolick

History and Future

Setting: Have 6 pre-selected Scouts ready to join the front of the room at the start of my Scoutmaster's Moment. 4 of the Scouts will be holding a prior CoH's signing board positioned 2 on each side of the lectern. 2 Scouts will stand on either side of me holding the Eagle Scout plaque boards. They will each be prepared to read one name on their board that they do not know.

Picture yourself, 95 years ago, standing with a group of fellow youth, from around the country-side, in the farming region of Northern Virginia, known as Annandale. You are at the local meeting spot, which is located on top of the hill at the little white civil war era church and school building, discussing how you could find a fun way to get together, to develop into strong and capable leaders, while getting to thrive in the great outdoors. [pause] While nothing would look the same as it does now, as all the schools, shopping centers, and housing developments that we know and visit today, would still be decades away from being built, there would however remain something familiar and consistent. That feeling is the spirit of youth in Annandale desiring to achieve something great, wanting to learn all they can, yearning to be apart of something bigger than themselves, and of course craving to become avid outdoorsmen. Someone in that group might mention how they know some Annandale area leaders who are putting together a Scout Troop in the 18 year old fledgling movement of the Boy Scouts, in Annandale! That troop would soon be established, and shortly thereafter, the first animal an early group of those Scouts would see on a campout is a turtle. The rest is history for Troop 150!

Today, we are coming together to recognize the incredible legacy of our troop. While we are all proud to regularly boast about how we are the oldest

continuously operating troop in Fairfax County, it is important to recognize all that our troop accomplished during that time, to get here to 2023. The traditions built over the decades ranging from being the first unit in the Annandale parade, to being the troop that collects the most food for Scouting for Food, to being the troop that Camp Olmsted most fears, and to our renowned troop cheer are all what contributes to our legacy of being a great troop today!

None of that, however, would be possible without the Scouts and leaders who made up our troop over our first 95 years! Committee Chair Barry and I's predecessors, the 18th Scoutmaster Holly Byrne and the 14th Committee Chair Joseph C. Windham wrote a letter to the church in the mid-1970s that illustrates the importance of the legacy the membership of Troop 150. I am paraphrasing but part of what they said was, "The boys who meet here now are part of a long procession of young men who have related to the Annandale United Methodist Church as their scout home. Troop 150 was called upon recently to absorb the remnants of another troop… If we allow Troop 150 to suffer the same fate, we will be rejecting not only the boys who are currently enrolled in Scout Troop 150, but also the unnumbered youngsters who would have become the future members of the troop." Those leaders were writing about how important the legacy and future of the troop was. I don't think they could have possibly imagined the impact and realization of their words through you sitting here nearly 50 years later!

In preparing for this Court of Honor, I was asked to provide some statistics about our troop. I wanted to share them with you tonight so you can see the significant concrete impact that we have in our community and for our Scouts.

- Our troop currently serves 50 Scouts and has 34 registered volunteer adult leaders. Over our history we have literally served thousands of youth.

- Since Jan. 2022, we have recorded over 328 hours of community service and that doesn't even include spontaneous community service projects or Eagle Scout Service projects, which would add hundreds more hours!
- Last year, we collected 6,316lbs or 3.2 tons of food to donate to local Annandale area food pantries for the 2022 Scouting for Food campaign. That included over 170 hours of service by our Scouts and adult members!
- Over the last 17 months, our troop has logged 899 days of camping by our Scout and adult members through Troop 150 outdoors events! This includes our annual week-long summer camp trip to Goshen Scout Reservation where we have earned the Honor Oar an uncountable number of times and have been recognized as the troop of the week!
- Our troop has sent six crews on expeditions to BSA high adventure bases over the last 10 years, with the last crew being in 2021 on an expedition to Philmont Scout Ranch where we backpacked around 142 miles in 12 days.
- Our troop has consistently earned the gold level Journey to Excellence recognition each year that the JTE metrics have been used (not including COVID years).
- 14 of our current youth Scouts and adult leaders are members of the Boy Scouts of America's national honor society, the Order of the Arrow. 6 more Scouts were recently elected and 1 more adult was recently nominated to be candidates for the OA and should be members later this year!
- Some of our recent major highlights have been serving as the honor guard for President Bush at the White House in 2005, marching in the BSA's Washington D. C. Centennial parade in 2010, being featured on WUSA channel 9 for our Scouting for Food work in 2018, and visiting the World Scout Jamboree in 2019.

- Most renown is that we have had 123 Scout earn the rank of Eagle Scout since we started keeping records in 1951!
- Oh and one more, I think our Scout's armada of vessels on Pirate's Breakfast have triumphed in more clashes with Camp Olmsted vessels than any other troop!

Standing before you is a visual presentation of our troop's history! Each name on these signing boards and our Eagle Scout plaque boards contributed to the heritage of our troop. Scouts, please share a name from each board. Each of the Scouts on these boards were members who worked to ensure the great legacy of our troop.

Current Scouts, as you sign your name on our signing board for our 95th anniversary Court of Honor, I call on you to think on how you will contribute to our legacy as you leave your name in our history. And for the alumni with us today, even if I wasn't your Scoutmaster when you were in the troop, you are a member of the Troop 150 family, and I am the Scoutmaster of the Troop 150 family, so you don't get away without a call to action either! I call on you to continue to live up to the ideals you learned in our great troop and to also sign on our signing board tonight to reinforce that.

Now, today, as we look back, with reverence, at our distinguished history while simultaneously looking forward to the future with hope, optimism, and determination, we re-dedicate Troop 150 in the epitome of Scout Spirit. Here's to Troop 150! [SPL starts the Mahe Maha!]