

District Committee Meeting
February 6, 2013
One Bergen County Plaza
Hackensack, NJ,

Key People

Leslie Sonkin, District Vice Chair for Program (outgoing)
Steve Leonardi, District Field Director
Joel Lieberman, Senior District Executive
See attachment for other attendees

District Annual Meeting - Election Results

Election for District Chairman: Pat Stamato
Election for District Vice Chair: Eric Makar
Election for District Vice Chair: Mark Wrightington
Recommendation for District Commissioner: Barry Goldman

The District's Journey to Excellence" (JTE) Dashboard" report

Steve and Joel passed around copies of the "Dashboard Report," looking a bit like an automobile dashboard consisting of only fuel gauge dials. Some of the points raised and questions posed were:

- Although the Dashboard is a monthly report, categories such as Cub Scout Advancement and Fund-Raising are cumulative, thus the dial will show January plus February. However, each dial's far-right goal is also cumulative.
- The dial for "Market Share" tells how many boys are registered versus the far-right goal of "total available youth" (TAY). Clearly the TAY goal is fixed and not cumulative.
- Each dial contributes points towards the district earning a Journey to Excellence award.
- The dial for "Youth Growth" compares total registered youth in the current month versus the same month last year. But it only works when there is an increase. If there is a decrease, the dial simply shows "minus 100%".
- "Youth Retention" can only be measured when units recharter.
- For "Advancement," Gerry Beatty predicted an uptick in the months of February and March and Joel agreed and thought that the dial might go as high as 20%.
- In response to Leslie's question about "Community Service", Joel said that the goal is for each boy to work two hours per boy per unit. The numbers are taken from National's "Messengers of Peace" project website, where units are expected to list their service projects at the same time they submit their "Journey to Excellence" award applications. Eagle Scout projects also count.

- The district's "Unit Performance" is based on how many packs and troops were awarded at least a bronze level JTE. Joel said that 7 of the 9 units he handled for rechartering had qualified.
- Gerry said that parts of the unit JTE application are hard to fill out, and Norman Kasser gave the example of "retention," which requires the unit in January 2014 to remember exactly who was on its roster as of January 2013. Steve agreed and said that he often gets phone calls asking for statistics.
- Gerry asked how the district tracks "Chartered Organization Visits," and Steve replied that the visits are usually done by Unit Commissioners ("but anyone can do it") and that he and Joel record the visits.
- Joel pointed out that the unit's recharter form requires a signature from the organization's executive officer, but sometimes a unit leader might sign in his place. When that happens, the Unit Commissioner or District Exec might give his okay and add his initials. This also counts as a "visit."

Membership

Steve pointed to a handout that showed "pretty good numbers because we're in the middle of a rechartering month." He said the comparison was made to the same month last year, and "we're only 66 kids behind where we were last year." Steve looked ahead to June and said, "It will take everybody and also an engaged Membership Committee to ensure we end with a plus and don't have another year like last year."

Biff Van Kleef asked how many January units came in on time. Joel estimated that 30% have completed both the online portion and submitted paperwork, another 20% did just the online portion, and another 20% are partway through the online process. Thus Steve's response was, "70% are now late."

Financial - Friends of Scouting (FOS) Family campaign

Dave Wolf said that his committee had just met. He said that they have 90 unit presentations scheduled so far with a goal of 125, and that Biff will assign a list to each of the presenters. Dave cautioned the presenters that they must notify Biff immediately any time it looks like they will have to miss a presentation, saying, "Timely communications is a 'must.'" Dave added that Biff can use assistance from "someone good with a computer who has time on their hands." He said that so far presenters had raised about \$11K or about 14% of their goal.

Financial - FOS Community campaign

Dave had three sample packets to be used for selling ads in the "Program Resource Guide" ("formerly known as our calendar") containing a copy of last year's 40-page 2013-14 booklet. He offered the packets to anyone who planned to do some serious selling in his community. Also in the packet was a 1-page "sell sheet" that Dave said will shortly be posted on the district website, and Leslie offered to upload a copy to the district Facebook page. Dave said that so far the campaign had raised \$4,500 or 18% of the goal.

Financial - FOS Leadership campaign

Dave said that Bob Lilley chairs this campaign and had mailed letters to all the district's members-at-large two days ago. He said, "As far as we're concerned, the campaign is complete. The letters went out, and now we're waiting for the money to come in." He said that so far the campaign had reached 48% of its goal, and hopefully responses from the letters would result in 100%.

Financial - FOS Summary

Dave said that the Council had set a time line for FOS progress and that our district was right on time for everything. He said that we have over \$23K in the bank or 19% of the total FOS goal. He added that we're doing better than the other two districts and thanked everyone for their help.

Referring to the 90 Family FOS presentations, Steve noted that they are almost all scheduled for February and March, and will thus require extensive help from all the district's presenters. He said, "If you receive an e-mail from Biff, please respond as timely as possible." He said that sometimes a unit leader phones at the last minute asking for a presentation, and so he and Biff need to know who's available.

Program - The 2014-15 Calendar

Bill Metts said that he had contacted all of last year's event chairs and had started his draft 2014-15 calendar looking as closely as possible to 2013-14. Steve gave Bill additional information that he had. Leslie said that Ken Hesse was working with Mark Wrightington on a Camporee but still was not sure if it would take place in the spring or fall. Steve said that March 15 is the "drop dead date" for finalizing, because that is when the "Program Resource Guide" booklet will be sent to the printer in order to be ready in time for the Program Launch. Leslie added, "If you have a new event to be added, now is the time to suggest it."

When Biff asked if training sessions can be put onto the district's online calendar, Joel offered to add them instead to the Council's online training calendar "if you have any firm dates."

Program - Tiger Tumble (Jan 18)

Leslie said that the event was very successful with over 140 kids plus parents and staff for something like 300 people in the gym. She said, "The kids had a great time," and told about an "exit poll" that she and Lillian Molnar conducted, saying that many Cubs couldn't decide which station was best, which presumably meant that many of them were equally good. Lillian pointed out that Jim Africano's Stomp Rocket station took up "half the gym floor with kids and adults spread out all over the floor building their rockets." Leslie concluded, "The parents who were new to Scouting were very happy to have something to participate in."

Program - Klondike Derby (Jan 25)

No one present had firm information. From memory Steve recalled that 61 sleds had signed up, and Gerry recalled that Tenafly Troop 125 won first place for Boy Scouts, with maybe River Edge and Paramus. However, Steve said that event organizer Allen Sterk had sent him the complete standings and that he will make them available for posting.

Gerry and Jim both remarked that 61 sleds was quite a bit lower than last year -- Jim guessed 84. Gerry said that unit leaders told her that they were having a harder time getting boys to sign up. Leslie remarked that publicity was also delayed this year, and Norman explained that the leader's guide was not available, saying, "As soon as we had a leaders guide to post we started pushing the event." [*Editor's note: See the Dec 13 TRD newsletter*]. In response to Steve's question, Gerry said that the leader's guide does in fact change from year to year and gave her own Fire-Building station as an example.

Leslie congratulated Dave Wolf for his extra no-points-awarded station where boys could throw a tomahawk at a target. She said, "It was pretty cool". Speaking about whether the leaders guide should be posted early or late, Steve pointed out a downside, saying, "Some troops [start way in advance to] have Olympic-like training, whereas the events are really meant to challenge the resourcefulness of the Scout." Ed Quinn said that he will put winning Troop 125's numerals onto a Three Rivers flag that he has. Gerry had nice words for the Klondike EMTs who had several cases of numb feet to contend with. She also had a nice story about a very polite and very cold Scout from Weehawken, and how he was made warm again.

Program - Pinewood Derby (Mar 15)

Leslie said that she had just found a location for the Pinewood in the Secaucus Recreation Center, "a beautiful facility with a huge gym and easy to get to." She said that last year's scheduling with staggered hours worked well and will be repeated except that all the times will be earlier, starting in the morning instead of the afternoon. She said the flyer will be ready for distribution shortly.

Leslie said that her crew also runs Pinewoods for packs without their own track, with five already done out of the dozen scheduled. She told of parents who clearly built the cars themselves and don't even let their sons touch them in their protective shoe boxes. She said, "I tell the parent, 'Get your son over here, because *he* needs to register *his* car.' And I make the son hand me the car, which of course drives the father..." Leslie had another story, where she was told of a parent who paid \$500 to purchase a car that was guaranteed to win. She said, "The car looked OK and it did win."

Steve told of an inter-district "Blast Car" race conducted during an FOS meeting. He said that Jim Africano's car, powered by a CO₂ cartridge easily beat the other two districts.

Program - Weboree (Jun 6-8)

Leslie explained that the annual end-of-April Weboree had to be delayed until June in order to accommodate construction at Camp No-Be-Bo-Sco. She said that long-time organizer George Davis had stepped down and that Eric Dlugosz had volunteered to take

over. There was some discussion about which boys will be eligible, since the event is restricted to 4th graders or Webelos-1, but some schools will have promoted their 4th graders to 5th by the time June rolls around. Eric's rule was, "A boy is eligible if he was in the 4th grade at the end of April." However he joked, "We don't card the kids." Eric said that he notified all the people who were on staff last year and invited anyone else who wants to join to contact him.

Program - Scouter of the Year dinner (Feb 28)

Reading from a flyer, Leslie quoted that the Scout Museum will sponsor a dinner to honor Ken Hesse as the 2014 Scouter of the Year. She said, "If you need tickets, please see Ed Quinn." Recalling the Ken usually wears shorts, Tom Molnar proposed that proper attire for the dinner should likewise be shorts. Leslie added, "And a bright orange shirt."

Program - Silver Beaver Award (May ??)

Leslie noted that the January 31 deadline for Silver Beavers applications had passed but guessed that late entries would be accepted. Gerry wondered if a potential awardee she had in mind might have already been proposed by someone else. Joel told her that he can provide a yes or no later if she tells him the name. Rich Curran said that he has a list of all prior awardees from the three former districts that now comprise Three Rivers. Gerry proposed posting that list in order to make it generally available.

Program - District Award of Merit Dinner (DAM) (Apr 6)

Rich Curran gave the deadline for nominations as the March 11 Roundtable, saying that a committee comprised of former winners will meet after the Roundtable and will make selections then. Rich wanted to make sure that people understood that the DAM nominee had done "notable service at the district level -- you don't get the award just because you're a great Scoutmaster or Cubmaster."

Program - Scout Window Display Competition (Scout Week in February)

Bob Lilley said that he had received six submissions, and that possibly Mark Wrightington had received others. Bob said that he wanted to hand out prizes at the upcoming Roundtable, and he asked for a vote authorizing him to buy Campmor gift cards -- approval was given. Norman offered to post his photos, and Leslie volunteered to post them on the Facebook page. If any one wanted to see the windows, Bob offered a list of units along with towns and addresses. He also had black-and-white photos with him.

Camping

Leslie said that Barry Messner had agreed to be the "Camping Liaison" for the district and that he will continue to attend Council-level meetings. Joel pointed out that we need to pay more attention to camping for several reasons. The district needs the numbers in order to get a good rating in its JTE application, but more important is the fact that Cubs who attend camp have a better retention rate, are more likely to become Boy Scouts, and have parents who are more likely to donate to FOS.

Leslie said, "This means that we should aim for camp promotions at all the upcoming Blue-and-Gold dinners," and asked who is doing such promotions. Joel named Joe Mertz, Henry Hahn, and Matt Dalzell. He then asked the people present to make sure that units they are affiliated with "open their doors" to camp promotions. Leslie added that Unit Commissioners should also promote summer camp, but said that no one in the District Committee actually has the job of coordinating or overseeing.

Barry Goldman recommended that a camp promotion should accompany any FOS presentation -- or at least the presenter should have a stack of flyers to hand out. He recalled a presentation/promotion that Steve made for his pack resulting in three or four boys signing up, and he arranged for the same thing to happen again this year, with either Tom or Lillian Molnar or both doing the promotion for either or both Yaw Paw and Lewis.

Steve made the point that it's more important to promote Cub camping in general as opposed to a given camp. He joked, "When I joined Boy Scouts, I joined in order to have my character developed..." (Leslie retorted, "How did that work out for you?") Turning serious, Steve said, "Kids join Scouting because they want to have fun! And summer camp is fun." He explained that the Cubmaster should provide the guidance that lets the parents decide to send their boys to Scout camp, and to point out that day camp and resident camp are both available.

Tom pointed out an added benefit of combining FOS with a camp promotion, because the parents can see where their money is going. Barry suggested letting parents compare the cost of a Scout camp versus what he called a "real camp." He then joked, "We're a non-profit organization, and this FOS chart proves it."

Training

Leslie said that Training Chair Warren Dressler was out of town tending to his ailing mother. However, Leslie had an offer from Cindy Caposi to join the committee with an eye toward Webelos-to-Scout transition, which Leslie called "an important part of the training."

Joel named some upcoming training sessions: Feb 18 for Cub Leader-Specific, BALOO training offered by the Council every other month, and Trainer's EDGE just completed with another scheduled for March. Joel referred back to the JTE dashboard with its measurement of trained direct contact leaders. He was particularly concerned about Den Leaders without training or Den Leaders who sat through online training sessions without first entering their member IDs and thus without having the training linked to their other records. That reminded Tom of a recent live Youth Protection session that also failed to link credit with other records.

About the unlinked training, Joel said that the "Unit Leader Toolbox" has been set up to allow a unit's "Key-3" to make these kinds of updates (unit leader, Committee Chair, and Chartered Organization Representative). He already found some candidates needing

updates -- they were unit leaders showing no training even though they had recently gone through Wood Badge. Joel also corrected Ed Quinn who thought he might have two records in the database; that is, one as a member of a unit and second as a member of the District Committee. Joel said, "If in fact you do have two separate records, they really should be merged into one."

Advancement

Ed Ference said that a new 1-page Eagle Application form was posted that includes Cooking as the newest required badge. He said that Scout Shops still don't have the new booklets with the new requirements. *[Editor's note: The new requirements can be found online.]*

Eagle Presentations

Leslie reminded people that Three Rivers District likes to have someone present at each Eagle Court of Honor ceremony in order to present a certificate. She and Pat Stamato recently attended one in Leonia, but received only a day's notice. Leslie's point was that unit leaders are expected to inform the Council, and District Execs are supposed to inform Pat.

Commissioner's Minute

Instead of the usual speech where he might say "thank you for nominating me," Barry promised to "get even with anyone who thought it was a good idea," and went on to predict that "when my wife finds out that I'm the District Commissioner, I won't be wearing a ring any more and somebody with room in his house will have to take me in."

Leslie's Thank-You

This was Leslie's last meeting as District Vice-Chair. She thanked everyone for the support and respect they gave her. She promised to continue to "throw in my three cents whenever I'm asked and wherever I can."

Director's Minute

Steve opened the floor to questions, problems, and suggestions. Gerry proposed fewer Roundtables, such as four times a year, with information being disseminated electronically, Steve said that her suggestion was best discussed at a Key-3 meeting.

Steve said that he and Joel wanted to rethink district events based on something that happened at the Klondike. He said that some kids from "lesser functioning units" in Hudson County showed up without a sled, and Steve decided to hook them up with "a good active patrol." His conclusion: "Sometimes we get so immersed in organizing an event that we forget the challenges that some units face."

Steve said that he recently discovered during a Unit Commissioners meeting that many of our units are poorly represented on the "BeAScout.org" website. During a search by ZIP code, it took many tries before he found a Cub pack that gave both the Cubmaster's name and his phone number. Many other units had a name with no contact information or else

simply defaulted to "contact the NNJC office" with its phone number. Steve put himself in the place of a new parent or youth trying to hook up with a local pack or troop, starting with a Google search, and ending either with the Council office or a Cubmaster with no contact information. He asked people present to do their own research starting with a Google search that specified "join Scouting."

Steve congratulated the election winners for the next year's term: Pat Stamato, Eric Makar, and Mark Wrightington. Leslie feigned surprise, saying that she thought officers had 3-year terms.

**District Committee Meeting
February 6, 2014**

Attendance

Paul Adams
Jim Africano
Gerry Beatty
Charles Blumeling
Robert Cappiello
Mike Carp
Richard Curran
George Davis
Eric Dlugosz
Ed Ference
Barry Goldman
Norman Kasser
Steve Leonardi
Joel Lieberman
Bob Lilley
Lenny Luizzi
William Metts
Thomas Molnar
Lillian Molnar
James Preciado
Ed Quinn
Leslie Sonkin
Biff Van Kleef
Dave Wolf