

**District Committee Meeting  
October 2, 2014  
One Bergen County Plaza  
Hackensack, NJ,**

**Key People**

Oliris Ramos, District Exec

**Opening**

Norman Kasser led the Pledge followed by the Scout Oath. Oliris passed out copies of the agenda, a membership report, a Friends of Scouting (FOS) report, and a flyer concerning new rules for unit rechartering in 2015. She also had envelope-size flyer cards for this year's "Golf Classic and Dinner" outing.

**Membership - Numbers**

Referring to the October 1 membership report, Oliris said. "Membership was strong," and referred to the Three Rivers numbers comparing Oct 2014 to Oct 2013. Although the number of Wolves, Bears, and Webelos went down compared to last year, Tigers had increased by 66, which Oliris said was a number to be "excited about." The Boy Scout count also increased by 19, but she could not verify if the Boy Scout +19 was directly tied to the Webelos -15 due to bridging.

**Membership - Recruiting in October**

Oliris said, "We're looking forward to a strong October," and spoke about the Council-wide push for a "second recruitment," saying that several Three Rivers packs had already reported their plans to do so and that "we are forcefully attacking" the problem. In response to Norman's question, Oliris said that she and DE Joe Mertens were directly phoning and e-mailing unit leaders urging them to schedule October recruitments, including Cubmasters, Committee Chairs, and even Den Leaders when appropriate. She added that they are also considering running a phone-a-thon and predicted that we would soon be contacted about it.

Oliris said that packets had been mailed to Scout troops, with information about running an open house, using peer-to-peer invitations, and flyer request forms. Similar packets will soon be going out to Cub packs.

**Membership - Assistance by District Execs**

Paul Adams said that his pack had recently run a Family Fun Day that resulted in a few sign-ups, adding that District Director Steve Leonardi had also attended. Oliris said that Joe Mertens had attended similar events, and that she herself had recently recruited at "Field Station Dinosaurs" in Secaucus.

**Finance - Family Friends of Scouting (FOS)**

Pointing to the FOS handout, Oliris said that we are close to reaching our goal [*about \$71K versus a goal of \$85K or 96%*]. She said that Joe was currently making a

presentation to a "first-time troop." Sal Bellomo said, "We actually had four or five units asking for their very first FOS presentation this year." Oliris asked for a volunteer to make a presentation in Jersey City, explaining that she will be busy working with the leadership of a Cub pack in Fort Lee and that Steve will be at the golf outing (see below).

### **Finance - Leadership FOS**

Bob Lilley said, "We're over our goal, so I'm giving everyone two months off, but in December I'll start asking people for donations for 2015." Pointing to the handout, Bob noted that Three Rivers had a higher goal than the other two districts and also had a higher percentage of money raised compared to its goal. Bob proposed that any additional Leadership money received this year should be credited to either the Community campaign or preferably to the Family campaign, since it's so close to its goal.

### **Finance - Golf Outing (Oct 7)**

Bob said that event coordinator Dave Wolf told him that 36 golfers had signed up, and that they were hoping for some more hole sponsors in order to help reach the \$10,000 profit goal. Oliris asked people to take some of her envelope-size flyers to give to friends. Bob joked about the \$10,000 hole-in-one prize, saying that he would hand over the check to the winner only if he promised to make a \$5,000 donation to the FOS campaign.

### **Finance - Popcorn Sale Now in Progress**

Oliris said that Show-n-Sell and Take-Order sales were "in full swing" but had no numbers to pass on other than 103 units had signed up to sell and that Show-n-Sell pickups had increased over last year. In response to Sal's question, Oliris recalled that last year 90 units had signed up with 85 actually selling.

### **Camping - Proposal to Mail Flyers to Families**

About camping Oliris asked, "What can we do better?" Bob replied that we should use flyers modeled on the ones that had been prepared for the golf outing, saying that various sponsors, such as the Hanson Group, had used adjectives like "wonderful," "great," and the "best they had seen." Bob described a marketing survey that found that, although e-mail has its advantages, flyers that are mailed and can be held in a parent's hand worked much better, saying, "They just blow away through an e-mail."

Continuing, Bob said, "We thought of doing something like the golf flyers for camping. They're good-looking, they're glossy, they fit into an envelope, and we can mail them directly to parents." He pointed out that a parent might get interested in a camp, whereas, if something were sent to a unit leader who is not interested, "Then the kids aren't going." Lillian Molnar agreed and said that she had been pushing the same idea "for years." She said, "As a parent, I want something in my hand that I can look at to see where I'm going to send my child." Sal said that the golf mailing had actually caused him to sign up for that event, or, more precisely, had caused his wife to encourage him to sign up.

### **Program - ScoutFest (Oct 10-12)**

Oliris noted that members of the district's Program Committee were currently attending a ScoutFest planning meeting, and so she sent a text to Leslie Sonkin to pose a question that Norman had about parking and transportation. Norman said that his Cub pack follows Scout guidelines for doing 1-night overnights instead of full weekend overnights, and so they plan to arrive Saturday morning, camp over Saturday night, and depart Sunday morning. He said, "The ScoutFest website posted instructions for 2-night campers and instructions for Saturday day-pass attendees, but there's nothing for the 1-night we planned. I can't figure out where they should park when they arrive, and how they will recover their cars on Sunday morning. Sal warned that the Cubs and their parents should plan on "humping in their gear" to a campsite that might be a mile or mile and a half from the registration desk.

### **Training - Scoutmasters and Assistants (Nov 2)**

Ken Dutcher said that he will run an all-day training session for Scoutmasters and assistants on Sunday Nov 2. The location will be the Senior Center in Secaucus, but he had not yet had a chance to look it over. Ken described many phone calls and conversations needed just to find the person who manages the facility. He said that his current problem is to find someone willing to open the facility around 7:00 AM Sunday morning so that he can start the session at 8:00. Ken added, "If we are forced to start at 10:00 AM, it will turn into 'bring your own lunch and bring your own dinner' -- but we will see."

In response to Tom Molnar's question, Ken said that attendance is typically 28-30. He said that Pat Stamato predicted a good response from Scouters in the southern part of the district, but Ken intends to impose a cap of 24-26, which results in the best classroom interaction.

### **Training - Commissioners College (Oct 25)**

Sal said that the Commissioners College will take place in Parsippany and will offer "bachelors, masters, and doctorates" in "commissioner science." Oliris said that she and the entire staff of professionals were instructed to attend. One of the presenters will be the National Commissioner, Tico Perez. Sal said that he will run a session, as will Bill Metts, Leslie Sonkin, Joel Lieberman, and Jim Africano. Sal said that he had been given an outline for his session that called for showing 10 videos, but the videos were not available as part of the download kit, thus preventing him from properly preparing in advance.

### **Communications**

Norman said that tonight's meeting received a timely broadcast reminder, but only 10 Scouters were currently present. On the other hand, last month's reminder was broadcast too early (a week in advance) but still resulted in 20 attendees. Bob said, "You shouldn't have to send reminders at all. We're all adults and all our district meetings occur on a fixed schedule. Reminders are needed only when something changes, like the upcoming Assistant District Commissioners meeting that was shifted from Tuesday to Wednesday."

### **Rechartering in 2015 - Strict New Rules (Oct 28)**

Oliris passed out copies of the "New Rules" handout. Norman said, "This is very important" and then read it aloud. In summary, the rules insist that all district troops, packs, and crews must renew their charters by January 15, 2015, and will no longer be allowed a 2-month grace period. Note that all Three Rivers units now have January expirations with no exceptions.

Thus unchartered units will be simply dropped from the database, which in turn means that Scouts will no longer be insured, units cannot register for summer camp, and units cannot post advancement information into the online system. Also lapsed units will "no longer be allowed to hold meetings or activities."

In order to ensure that all units are informed of these rules, District Commissioner Barry Goldman scheduled a phone-a-thon for Oct 28 at the Council office at 7:00 PM. Volunteers are urged to show up with their cell phones.

### **An Eagle Candidate with a Database Problem**

Bob reported a serious database-related problem for an Eagle candidate who will turn 18 in five months. The problem is that his Scoutmaster or Troop Advancement Chair had stopped posting advancement information some years back, so that the database shows the boy still at 2nd Class rank with very few merit badges. Bob said, "The Scoutmaster is scrambling to come up with paperwork." He added, "Part of Scoutmaster training is the advice to 'save your cards.'" Ken verified that his training sessions contain a segment about the advancement database, but, "It's only about five minutes long and takes place toward the end of the day, so I can't guarantee that I always get through."

Norman said that the upcoming issue of the district newsletter will contain an article about the importance of keeping the online advancement database current.

### **District Exec's Minute**

Oliris repeated her summary of membership so far as, "We're looking good." The morning team meeting she attended stressed membership and popcorn.

### **Commissioner's Minute**

Speaking for the Commissioners, Sal asked if everyone had already met Joe Mertens, our newest District Exec, saying, "I like him." Bill Metts added, "He's got a lot of energy."

Sal asked Bob about an old initiative from last December where each strong unit was asked to provide its own in-house quasi-Unit Commissioner -- actually a liaison to his ADC. Bob dismissed the idea as unworkable and said that a poorly-worded letter sent to units at the time caused confusion and even some angry responses.

**District Committee Meeting  
October 2, 2014**

**Attendance**

Paul Adams  
Sal Bellomo  
Ken Dutcher  
Norman Kasser  
Bob Lilley  
Bill Metts  
Tom Molnar  
Lillian Molnar  
Ed Quinn  
Oliris Ramos