

District Committee Meeting
October 4, 2012
One Bergen County Plaza
Hackensack, NJ,

Key People

Leslie Sonkin, District Vice-Chair for Program
Sal Bellomo, District Commissioner
Joel Lieberman, Senior District Executive
Oliris Ramos, District Executive
Guest: Dr. Phil Mollica, Council Commissioner

Membership - Recruitment

Susie Becker spoke about her recruitment efforts including taking advantage of a kiosk in the Bergen Mall (see below for details), where units will sell popcorn, but, equally important, give Scouting some public exposure and do some recruiting.

Susie asked the Unit Commissioners, "Touch base with your units and let them know that you're there for assistance." They should also ask what plans the unit has for recruitment and, if needed, give them some ideas. Sal told Susie that he intends to contact all the Commissioners and let them know that Susie is the one to contact if they have questions.

Susie said that there will be a Scouting Day in Lodi this Saturday, with assistance from Bob Hastings, Ken Hesse, and Jim Africano. Jim urged others to attend as well. Susie said, "It sounds fantastic. We'll see how it turns out, and we can certainly do it in other areas." Gerry Beatty described the annual Scouting Day run in Rochelle Park, saying, "Some of the events are like the Tiger Tumble. It's a smash and a lot of fun, and the kids look forward to it every year."

Bill Metts asked about 31 Cub packs that scheduled recruitment events. He saw that 4 of them had already turned in Youth Application forms and asked about the other 27. Joel assured him that all of them were contacted and that all of them also had done something during the month of September.

Training - New Style of Training in the Works

Warren Dressler said, "As we start new units, especially packs, and we identify training needs, they should not depend on the calendar to find out when the next scheduled session will be." Warren then described a new training philosophy and methodology that will be implemented soon. The goal is to have one or more certified trainers in a given community who can set up an ad-hoc session for new leaders. He said, "At the Cub level, you don't need an entire classroom, but instead can do it around a kitchen table." He said that the LDS Church had tried out this method with Den Leaders with some success, while recognizing that other kinds of training should remain in a classroom.

Warren then described how a "Community Trainer" has to be someone who relates well with other people, and who will not yield to the temptation to tell lots of war stories from the old days. He said, "It has to be someone that you would actually enjoy spending an hour with around the kitchen table as they share their Cub experiences and training information."

Warren asked to be informed of new units ("after I get organized") so that he can find someone to conduct the new-style training. He said, "You want to strike while the iron is hot." In response to Norman Kasser's question about a target date, Warren said that the first real discussion will take place in October, and that the proposal will be made to each of the three districts. Warren made it clear that Three Rivers will start using the new-style training as quickly as he can set it up. He liked the idea that a session can be scheduled at the convenience of both the Community Trainer and the unit leaders.

Training - Council and District Calendars

Warren said that the Council's training calendar appears to be fully populated, and apologized for not bringing copies to hand out. In response to Leslie's question, Warren said that he asked Ken Dutcher for information about TRD training events but had not yet received it.

One event on the Council calendar is this weekend's Wood Badge training, which Warren said had seven patrols, 34 people, and "good representation from Three Rivers, both staff and participants." He recommended that anyone who missed this course should sign up for the one in the spring (Leslie noted that the Course Director will be Eric Dlugosz from TRD). Warren said that we run Wood Badge together with the Patriots' Path Council (he called it a "cluster course") but that NNJC sends far more participants.

Returning to District training, Warren repeated his preference for "Community Trainers" to handle ad-hoc Cub sessions, but Leslie urged him to have a Plan-B, saying, "Past history shows that we are always short of trainers."

Three other sessions were mentioned: Bill Metts said that Patriots' Path will run a session for Commissioners [*editor's note: Nov 17*]. Warren said that Patriots' Path also runs a University of Scouting, but NNJC is considering doing the next one jointly with them. Warren also said that arrangements are being made for the annual March Pow Wow for Cub Leaders.

Finance - Family FOS (Friends of Scouting)

Biff Van Kleef asked for volunteers to assist in scheduling Family FOS presentations, and he passed around a sign-up sheet that listed 30 units and their towns that have not had one yet. He said, "What I'm asking is that each of you contact one unit. You don't have to do the presentation. You just have to e-mail or speak to someone and ask them if they want to schedule an FOS presentation, or, if not, are they willing to make a 'unit FOS donation.' Two questions and two answers." Biff warned against scheduling a troop and pack on the same night and described how it can lead to errors in the follow-up paperwork.

In response to Norman's question about "unit donations," Biff explained that some units, for whatever reason, don't want a visitor to come and make a presentation. He said, "The money can come out of unit funds, the leader might pay out of his own pocket, they might tax each boy, they might call each family... however they want to do it. It's been successful in other districts within our council."

Joel said that FOS accounting is by calendar year, so any money raised between now and December 31 counts toward 2012. He added, "We're trying to keep FOS condensed into the first 6 months of the year with popcorn in the last 6. But the reality is that we had to extend due to our size and number of units."

Finance - Popcorn

Biff referred back to how he wants volunteers to contact units about FOS presentations, and said that he likewise wants to have a "popcorn coordinator" in each community to contact units about selling popcorn. Lillian Molnar said she had never been able to get volunteers to do that job, calling them "Community Kernels."

Oliris said that 109 units had signed up to sell popcorn this year, and that a number of them had already obtained boxes of popcorn for their Show-n-Sell events. Take-Order sales are ongoing and will continue until the end of October.

Oliris said she had arranged for a Scout kiosk to be set up in the Bergen Town Center mall on Oct 12-13, and that seven units had reserved 90 minute slots to take a turn at Show-n-Sell. She will provide sign-up sheets for families interested in joining, saying that getting contact information is much more productive than handing out Youth Application forms. If the Bergen event is successful, she hopes to do the same thing in other towns next year. Mike Carp suggested contacting the Hudson Mall in Jersey City, saying, "They will be happy -- even overjoyed -- to have us." Leslie recalled how cooperative they were when she ran a Pinewood Derby there.

Susie elaborated on the kiosk, saying that Scouts will be in uniform, and, although they can't approach people or have activities, they may say things from their kiosk (Norman suggested, "Getcha popcorn heah!") Susie vetoed Paul Adams' suggestion of free samples based on health reasons. She said that the maximum for a unit is 10 Scouts with 4 adults supervising.

Finance - Upcoming Golf Classic and Dinner (Oct 18)

Event organizer Dave Wolf was visibly irritated with the low number of players and others signed up so far. A show of hands verified that few present tonight had sold a sponsorship, agreed to attend the dinner, or mailed a check. Dave said, "I've been asking you guys to help out with this. This is *our* district. It's not just my district. We have to work on this together." Dave said that he sold \$10,000 worth of sponsorships, and that he was asking District Committee members to each sell one \$150 sponsorship. So far 30 players have signed up instead of the 50 that was planned for.

Dave pointed out that past golf events had raised \$20,000 when they were formerly run by the smaller Twin Valleys District. He concluded, "I'm sorry, but if no one is going to help, I'm not doing it!"

Leslie seconded Dave and said, "I appreciate what Dave said about this being our district. Sometimes we forget about it, especially if we're not golfers, and we think, 'Oh, it's for those people.' But the fact is that *we* are 'those people.'" She urged everyone to assist and promised that she would also write a check before the night was over.

Finance - Upcoming "Words to Live By" Event (TBD)

Leslie introduced Dr. Phil Mollica as the current Council Commissioner and the former District Chair for the old Tantaqua District. Phil described the concept of a "Words to Live By" event, saying that the last one was held in Jersey City, but the next one is still in the planning stage. He said, "We invite friends of ours to spend an hour while we talk about 'our story'". He added, "You can't tell a better story than the story of Scouting."

In response to Warren's question about enthusiastic older Boy Scouts being present to speak, Phil agreed and said, "There is no better story than coming from our youth." Joel said, "That's part of the program," and continued by explaining that we want to invite people we know who are "too busy and not directly connected with Scouting, or maybe former Scouts who grew up and now have daughters." He said, "We tell them that we're still alive and well, and we think that this is something you can help us with."

Leslie told about the first "Words to Live By" event she went to, where she expected a boring fund-raiser but was pleasantly surprised. She pointed out that everyone present tonight is familiar with Scouting, but the people at her event were not. She said, "When you hear a success story from a youth, or when you hear an adult like Phil talk about his commitment, you look at it from a whole different perspective." She urged everyone to invite friends and colleagues. Joel said that he will prepare formal invitations to download as soon as the next event is firmed up.

National Scout Jamboree 2013 (Jul 15-24)

Phil said that he went to the Summit Reservation in West Virginia for the shakedown weekend and will soon go again in his role as a Jamboree Commissioner. He said, "I'm looking for more Commissioners to help our staff. We'll be concentrating on the international and the Venturing crews." Phil described the "beautiful and amazing camp that is developing there," and said, "If you're able-bodied and want to have some fun baby-sitting 5,000-6,000 teenagers, you're more than welcome."

Leslie said that the Council will offer a spectator tour, probably taking three days with "a day or so" at the Jamboree. Lillian asked Phil about how much access visitors will have and whether or not they can meet up with Scouts or staff (Tom Molnar expects to be part of the staff). Phil said that Jambo participants can come to the visitor's area but not vice-

versa. Jim Africano said that visitors will be able to visit and participate in all the Jambo activities, but will be restricted from the Scout subcamps.

Phil said that he is part of the planning process, which is very much in flux, and he used terms such as "dynamic" and "fluid." When Paul Adams asked if he had to advance-purchase a pass for the Arena Show, Phil simply was not able to give a definite yes or no. However, Phil said that they are currently building a stadium, so he expects the "Arena Show" to become the "Stadium Show."

Advancement - Problems with Eagle Project Proposals

Ed Ference said that several Eagle project proposals had been put on hold or not approved because they used the word "maintenance," which often means a simple painting project. He asked the Roundtable staff for a 10-minute slot on their agenda to talk about it with unit leaders.

Ed said that his committee plans another workshop similar to the one held in September, where they can brief Scoutmasters and other unit leaders about the new Eagle Project workbook. When he said that the session will run for 2-3 hours, Norman asked, "Is the new workbook so darn complicated that you need that much time to explain it?" Ed responded, "The problem is that people just don't want to read!" He told about one troop Advancement Chair who complained to Ken Dutcher, "There's too much to read!"

Activities - Klondike Derby (Jan 26)

Gerry passed on a message from event organizer Allen Sterk, saying that several "mayors" (heads of competition stations) had dropped out and that volunteer replacements are needed. Gerry did not know which stations were affected.

Activities - Upcoming Merit Badge Fair (Nov 17)

Gerry said that information is available on the TRD website and described how to find it. She said that the information consists of badges offered, their prerequisites, and contact information needed to reach the Fair's counselors. She explained that each Scout going for a badge is expected to contact the counselor directly and schedule a time slot when they can get together during the Fair. She said, "Kids can do multiple badges if they schedule their time right," and insisted that each Scout arrive in full uniform with a blue card already signed by the Scoutmaster, "or they will be sent on their way."

Leslie recalled last year's fair where she and District Chair Pat Stamato worked the registration desk, and told how Susie Becker's son had surely set the event record with 8 completions. Susie assured everyone that the badges were truly earned, and Bob Lilley also verified. Gerry said, "We work hard to ensure that merit badges are not 'giveaways,'" and that counselors will report a "partial" when appropriate. She told Paul Adams that Scouts can also bring in partials from summer camp in order to convert them to completions. Gerry thanked Norman for the e-mail broadcast that allowed her to find new counselors, saying, "It was so much easier for me this year. People called me instead of my having to call them."

Activities - Upcoming District Camporee (Oct 12-14)

Leslie urged unit leaders planning to attend the Camporee to register now, saying, "We have to know how many to expect." So far 149 have registered.

Referring back to Ed's problem with the Eagle workbook, Leslie had her own "too-much-to-read story." She told about an e-mail query she received, where every question in a long list was answered precisely in Dennis Ng's leader's packet. Gerry had the opposite problem when one parent read all the Merit Badge Fair instructions carefully but apparently didn't believe them. Gerry said, "Everything that was in the directions, she repeated back to me and asked, 'Do you really mean this?'"

Activities - Webelos Conservation Weekend (Sep 22-23)

Event organizer Ken Hesse said, "We set the bar for 100, but the actual attendance was 147," which meant that Webelos and parents pitched their tents in two different campsites at Camp Lewis. He said, "This year's program ran well, but Henry Hahn from Pack 17 has volunteered to take over for future events.

Activities - Upcoming Cub Outdoor Activity Day (Nov 3)

Mark Wrightington said that the event will take place at Camp Alpine on Nov 3. He called it an "instructional" event with various how-to stations set up around the camp. He named some of last year's stations, such as fire-building, knots, tent set-up, and samples of useful camping gear. Gerry added that one station will do camp promotion, and Mark added that boys will do their own tin foil cooking for lunch.

Activities - Upcoming Bowl-a-Thon (Dec 28)

Mark said that this year's event will be the same as last year's, which took place simultaneously at two different bowling alleys. Mark said, "We're discussing having a third alley available in Hudson County."

Activities - Upcoming Tiger Tumble (Jan 19)

Mark said that this will be the 8th annual Tiger Tumble and then reminded Leslie that he had committed to running 10 before turning the event over to someone else. He said that he had already reserved the gym at the Palisades Park High School along with the cafeteria where early birds could wait until the gym doors are opened. Mark said that Tigers rotate through 8 stations with "Donut Eating" as the favorite.

Leslie said, "If you ever questioned why you are still involved with Scouting, you must come to the Tiger Tumble and see these kids, and just fall in love with the program all over again. It's so much fun to work with these Tigers! They're so eager!"

Fund-Raisers - Upcoming OA Trade-o-Ree (Mar 10)

Ed Quinn reminded people that the Trade-o-Ree will take place in Allendale and is a good fund-raiser for the Council, "but we want more people to attend. Send the kids there to have a ball."

Fund-Raisers - Scouter of the Year (Feb 8)

Ed said that this beefsteak dinner will take place at the American Legion in Rochelle Park, but flyers are not yet ready.

Fund-Raisers - Train Trip (Oct 27+28)

Ed said that his railroad club offers train rides that can be used as a fund-raiser. He said, "You can take your troop or pack and have a lot of fun." Ed passed out flyers but noted that he can offer cheaper prices than those printed: \$7 for a youth and \$12 for an adult. Part of the tour includes a huge corn maze in the shape of a locomotive. Ed said, "Don't get your ticket through these people, because you'll pay the usual fee. Instead go through the Council."

A New Flag for the District

Ed said that he is in the process of creating a new 6x10 flag for the Three Rivers District. He said that he already has the flag, but it came from the Ingersoll Rand Company, so it will require some tailoring, such as changing "IR" to "3R" to "3Rivers". Ed estimated that the Gates Flag Company in Clifton will charge about \$100. He said, "If the District doesn't want to buy it, I'll buy it myself and put it into the museum."

Scout Promotion - EMS Club Days (Oct 5-6)

Leslie handed out flyers from EMS on Route 17 in Paramus that offered 20% and 25% discounts to Scouts and members of other outdoor clubs. Oliris said she got us a table at EMS and will man it herself on Friday, handing out brochures, balloons, and taking contact information. She asked for a volunteer for Saturday, but Leslie pointed out the conflict with Scouting Day in Lodi.

Joel liked the idea and said, "This is a good opportunity to have some exposure with the other clubs and groups that do the same things we do, such as white-water rafting. All those adrenaline junkies will be talking about their clubs, and it's an ideal opportunity for us to interact."

Fund-Raisers - Camp Cards

In response to Biff's question, Joel said that the subject of Camp Cards had not been raised this year. Barry Messner agreed that no one on the Camping Committee had mentioned it either. Dave Wolf recalled that ShopRite was the major sponsor when we tried Camp Cards in 2011 and that we raised about \$6,000. Biff said that the cards became available too late in the spring and guessed that better timing might have resulted in three times that amount.

Fund-Raisers - Provident Bank Sweepstakes

Mark said that he saw an e-mail from another council talking about a sweepstakes that will run through November 30. Each daily drawing is worth \$200, with \$100 going to the winner and \$100 going to the charity of his choice. He said, "If you frequent Provident Bank, it won't hurt to drop in a card and name NNJC as your charity."

Camping

Barry Messner said that he attended the Council's Camping Committee meeting last night, and then read from extensive notes that he took:

- Barry attended with Allen Sterk and Jim Preciado.
- Good attendance at all summer camps but Yaw Paw (563 instead of goal 615).
- Camps exceeded the total goal (2,824 instead of projected 2,642).
- Grey Rolland had numbers from past years with 2010 the best and 2012 second.
- Under consideration is a modest increase in camp costs -- perhaps \$5.
- A large increase was proposed for use of the kitchen at No-Be along with a security deposit due to the expensive equipment.
- Barry was surprised to hear that the charge for heating a cabin with LP gas during winter camping actually loses money.
- Because of disappointing attendance at Yaw Paw, Grey will take suggestions for improving the program. Later in the meeting, Lillian offered to contact Grey and also to attend upcoming Camping Committee meetings with Barry.
- They are thinking about reopening Camp Conklin, which has been closed for 6 or 7 years. It will be more convenient than Lewis for Passaic County and for units from Patriots' Path. It might be a good location for the NYLT week.
- A new camp inspection program was created this year and our camps were the first to undergo (we did well).
- The COPE course has been repaired and is open. Its schedule is almost completely filled.
- Last week's OA Induction weekend was our largest ever with 95 candidates and 90 OA brothers.
- Three Scouters are willing to take over and improve Alpine: Allen Sterk, Carl Wallach, and Jim Preciado. A suggestion was made to design and sell our own Camp Alpine souvenir patch, instead of relying on patches from the Greater NY Councils.
- Steve Kallesser has conservation programs for all camps. Also, the Council works with state and federal agencies on endangered species.
- PSE&G is close to getting approval to upgrade their power lines, which will require a temporary closing of No-Be for safety reasons. Projected dates are fall and winter of next year.
- There are cell phone towers atop the mountain at Yaw Paw, and the Council is negotiating with the owners to run an underground power line in order to electrify the cabins.
- The summer camps had lots of out-of-council Scouts, but Grey doesn't have exact numbers.

Commissioner's Minute - Sal

Sal said that his experiment to decentralize Commissioner meetings is successful. Each is chaired by one of the Community Assistant District Commissioners (ADCs). Sal said, "I'm happy to say that the communities are working well among themselves and also with each other."

However, Sal was concerned about the ongoing lack of Commissioners in Hudson County. He said that he found a few willing candidates in a Wood Badge class, but overall the units just seem to want to do things their own way. He said, "It's been very difficult to make any headway down there." A few suggestions were made, and Sal said he will give them a try.

Leslie pointed out that Sal Junior was present and congratulated Sal Senior saying, "You must be very proud of your son's Eagle project." Sal Junior will turn 18 next month and intends to become an Assistant Scoutmaster in Troop 379.

Commissioner's Minute - Phil

Phil reminisced with Joel and Leslie about problems encountered and overcome seven years ago in the former Tantaqua District. He then told how he transitioned from program at the district-level to what he called "the business of Scouting." Phil concluded, "I appreciate all your efforts," and then joked, "I'm glad that it's still down to about maybe just one hour per week of our time."

DE's Minute - Joel

Joel started out by thanking Oliris. He told how he and Steve Leonardi would talk about getting more exposure for Scouting but simply didn't have the time to do it "between training and the National Jamboree and everything else." He said, "The kiosk and the table at EMS that we talked about tonight were set up by Oliris, using her public relations and marketing skills."

Referring to the date conflict between the Lodi Scouting Day and the EMS Club Days, Joel said, "Folks, if you think about your Scouting and personal calendars, you probably don't have any free weekends. I'm not sure when I can go away with my wife to celebrate our anniversary" (Someone joked, "Doesn't she like camping?") But Joel pointed out the upside, namely, "We're actually going out and doing the stuff that we need to do in order to be successful and to show people that Scouting is alive and well."

Joel said, "We talk among ourselves about all the fun and excitement and great experiences we have, such as Philmont, the Jamborees, Summit... you name it." He asked, "Why can't we offer those opportunities to other families and new kids?" He then thanked Oliris again for the work she has been doing. [applause].

**District Committee Meeting
October 4, 2012**

Attendance

Paul Adams
Jim Africano
Gerry Beatty
Sal Bellomo
Sal Bellomo, Jr
Greg Boyle
Mike Carp
Rich Curran
Warren Dressler
Ed Ference
Bob Hastings
Ken Hesse
Norman Kasser
Joel Lieberman
Bob Lilley
Scott Lomberk
Barry Messner
Bill Metts
Phil Mollica
Lillian Molnar
Ed Quinn
Oliris Ramos
Leslie Sonkin
Biff Van Kleef
Dave Wolf
Mark Wrightington