

{Introduction to the State of the Troop given by Phyllis Lozano Troop Committee Chair at the Annual Red and Green Dinner on February 8, 2011. State of the Troop follows the introduction}

Introduction to the State of the Troop – February 8, 2011

The Boy Scouts of America is one of the largest youth organizations in the United States and its goal is to train youth in responsible citizenship, character development, and self-reliance through participation in a wide range of activities. A long standing tradition of our troop is to celebrate the birthday of the Boy Scouts of America with this Red and Green dinner and for me to present the State of the Troop.

There have been some changes in the last year and in this volunteer organization we are all, boys and adults, doing our best. 2011 was the year of transition, the movement from one stage to another. The most significant change was the passing of the role of Scoutmaster from Mr. Guerin to Mr. Avery. Our troop maneuvered the transition with flying colors and now smoothly soaring.

Another significant change will be that I will not read this State of the Troop this year! Oh, let there be no doubt, I prepared, analyzed it and even memorized most of it. But this year, I must break tradition and ask that each and every one of you please read it at your convenience and take pride that you are part of a great organization. Once you have read it I encourage you to share your comments with Mr. Avery or me.

As I have said in the past, “Scouting is an adventure, and you get out of it what you put into it.” Tonight, I continue to challenge our troop, scouts and adults, to believe in the program -- it has worked for over a hundred years and it will continue to work. Embrace change and make next year even better.

Boy Scouts of America Troop 726

State of the Troop - February 2012

The Boy Scouts of America is one of the largest youth organizations in the United States and its goal is to train youth in responsible citizenship, character development, and self-reliance through participation in a wide range of activities.

As many of you know, when I prepared the State of the Troop address, I first review the BSA's *Aims of Scouting* and the methods we use to measure and obtain them, and then I review all the statistics available to me in our troop database. Let's start with the statistics.

Troop 726 Today:

Troop 726 now stands at 35 youth members, at the following ranks:

- 1 New Scout
- 3 Scouts
- 3 Tenderfoot Scouts
- 3 Second Class Scouts
- 3 First Class Scouts
- 6 Star Scouts
- 13 Life Scouts
- 3 Eagle Scouts

Among the scouts who were active with Troop 726 in 2011, 23 of them earned a rank advancement and there were 35 rank advancements in total.

As a troop, we spent countless hours doing community service projects, we hiked over 1,237 miles, spent over 382 nights camping and earned 155 Merit Badges. We had 56 events logged into our TroopMaster database.

The troop successfully completed 4 major fundraising events, the Hike-a-thon, the car wash, the BSA Popcorn Sales and a See's Candy Sales. We also assisted in three civic events in which the tip hat was passed at the end of the evening. Several of our ambitious scouts were able to pay for summer camp using the troop fundraising method.

Troop 726 has 32 registered Adult Leaders. We continue to have a large group of adults that continue to work with our troop even though their sons have aged out. This pool of adults allows us to maintain all the behind the scenes activities. Again, these adults are very helpful in providing continuity in the program. This year we added 3 new leaders each with scouts.

This year I will use the Aims and Methods of Scouting as a yardstick. Let's see how we measure up:

Aims and Methods of Scouting

Scouting Ideals - The ideals that we ascribe to are the Scout Oath and Law, the Motto and the Slogan. We do an excellent job ensuring that our scouts obey these principles. Many times we use these basic ideals when reviewing a scout during a Board of Review. As part of our ideals, our troop would like to recognize the Masonic Center, Faith Lutheran Church, the American Legion and Independent School for their support and generosity. In return we have done our good turn with life projects, earth cleanup days, and civic events.

Patrols – Baden-Powell implemented the Patrol method because, in his opinion, it was the only thing to do. In 2011, with our new scoutmaster, we placed new emphases on patrols and patrol advisors. We had 10 ASM step-up to the role of Patrol Advisors and working as a team they are slowly ramping up our use of patrol time during weekly meeting. This year we will revisit the true meaning of a patrol and perhaps next year we might see patrol flags and hear patrols yell at this celebration.

Outdoors – Our outdoor program has always been good. In April, our Patrol Leaders Council put together a well balanced program. This year we managed to keep ahead of reservations and deadlines thanks to our outdoor coordinators and ASMs who took care of all the behind the scenes requirements.

Advancement - As Mr. Avery took on the role of Scoutmaster, his role as Advancement Chair was quickly filled by Mrs. Platou. Thank you Mrs. Platou! The transition went very smoothly. Each month we continue to have scouts ready for Board of Reviews. The scouts are advancing and the last of the Owls are on their way to the rank of Eagle. For the first time in the history of the troop, we have two Eagle Scouts with 2nd level palms.

Personal Growth - Personal Growth is hard to put next to the yardstick and say, yes we measure up. This past year we not only measured up but surpassed any yardstick that I can use. Many of our scouts were sad when Mr. Guerin decided to retire from the Scoutmaster position. However, showing real personal growth, they not only moved quickly and smoothly through the transition, but they embraced the new Scoutmaster and the new direction.

Adult Association – All of the adults here interact with our scouts, and that's as it should be. Scouts have learned to interact with other adults and by watching how adults conduct themselves, they have grown. When you bring your son to the troop meeting, come in, listen to the announcements and then step out and let the Scoutmaster, ASM Patrol Advisors and more importantly let the boys have their space to run their meeting.

Leadership Development – The Boy Scout program encourages boys to learn and practice leadership skills. Each and every scout is given that opportunity. This year we had a strong focus on having the Scout-in-Charge step up to the plate and take ownership of his outing. They all met the challenge and should be very proud of their accomplishment. By this time next year all 6 of the Owls and 1 Dragon will age out. The remaining Dragons and Scorpions will then be our oldest patrol. I foresee leadership on the horizon for all of them.

Uniforming – The uniform is a visible sign of a positive image. Our scouts are doing a good job coming to meetings in a basic uniform. Let us pay a little more attention to details – like hats and socks. Yes, your scout hat is part of the uniform. Adults with positions that interact with the scouts – please wear your uniform all the time and set the example.

In 2010, BSA replaced the Centennial Quality Unit recognition program and replaced it with a program called “Journey To Excellence”. By measuring up to the Aims and Methods of Scouting, we can proudly say that for 2011 we obtained the Gold Level which is the highest level available and the 100% Boys Life Award.

In conclusion, I often say, “Scouting is an adventure, and you get out of it what you put into it.” This year as in years gone by, I challenge our troop to continue the growth process, to provide a better scouting program, to be a greater witness to others when we are in public view, to embrace change and to make next year even better.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis Lozano

Troop 726 Committee Chair