

# Leader's Minutes

## The Legend of the Eagle

One a man who was walking through the woods happened upon a baby eagle that was orphaned. The man took the eagle home and put it in the chicken pen with the chickens. As the months went by, the eagle grew with the chickens, and began to believe he was a chicken. He would peck at the ground like the chickens, cackle like the chickens, and like the chickens, never flew.

One day a naturalist happened to be walking by and saw the eagle in the chicken coop acting like a chicken. He thought this strange, and went to talk to the man about the chicken. The man told the story of finding the eagle and letting it grow up with the chickens. The naturalist thought this was not a good situation, and convinced the man to let him teach the eagle to be an eagle.

The next day the naturalist came, picked the eagle up from the chicken pen, held it up to the sky, and said, "You are an eagle. You should be soaring like an eagle." He let the eagle go, but all it did was go right back to scratching with the chickens.

The next day, the naturalist returned again, took the chicken to the roof of the man's house, and said, "You are an eagle. You should be soaring through the sky like the proud bird you are. Fly away!" But when he let the eagle go, it just flapped back down to the ground to be with the chickens.

The next day he returned again, took the eagle, and climbed to the top of the highest mountain he could find. He said, "You are an eagle. You do not belong with chickens on the ground, you belong soaring free through the sky. Go now, do what eagles do." The naturalist held the eagle towards the sun. The eagle looked up, spread his wings, and with a mighty cry was gone, soaring through the air like an eagle should.

Now, the eagle may have looked back at his time as a chicken with fondness. He might have even gone back to the coop to visit his chicken friends from time to time. But the eagle never again believed he was a chicken, and always ended up where he belonged, soaring through the sky.

Many of us are like the eagle. Sometimes we put ourselves in positions that are below us, and we do not feel we can go back to being what we know we can be. But like the eagle, we can remember how to become everything we are supposed to be.

## The Boy Scout Neckerchief

You new Scouts probably learned tonight that our troop neckerchief has other uses besides looking good and showing our troop's colours. You found that it can be used in first aid, too. Over the next few months, you'll find that the neckerchief has other uses, too. There's one use, though, that you may not think of - and that's to remind you of the Scout Oath. The neckerchief is a triangle, and its' three corners should remind you of something you recently learned - our Scout Oath. The Oath, you remember, has three corners, too - duty to God and country, duty to others and duty to self. From now on, every time you put on your neckerchief, it should remind you of the things you pledge each time you repeat the Scout Oath.

## The Bullfrog

Once there was a very large green bullfrog that lived in a modest sized pond. Even though many other animals and fish lived around this pond the bullfrog didn't have any friends. You see, the friends he once had were gone. They were tired of his boasting and tried to stay out of his way. This situation changed when the geese began to migrate through the area. Two geese actually became his friends. They spent many a long day visiting, swimming and doing the things friends do. Then one day the two geese told the frog it was time for them to continue their migration. The frog was sad and asked if they could take him with them. He suggested that they let him climb on one of their backs and hang onto their neck. Both geese agreed that he was entirely too fat for one goose to carry. Further saddened, the frog began to think and finally came up with an idea. Listen, he said, How about we take a string and each of you take hold of a end with your mouth and bite down hard, then I will bite in the middle of the string and you can fly me between you. The geese pondered the idea and decided to give it a try. All were ready and the geese began to flap and run. The frog hopped along with the string in his mouth until he was lifted from the ground and was airborne. Oh what a feeling thought the frog. Onward they flew for days on end until they flew over a farmer out in his field.

The farmer looked up and upon seeing the geese and frog remarked, "My, my, a flying frog. I wonder who taught those geese to fly such a big frog?" Hearing this the frog said, "I DID!". That night the farmer feasted on very large succulent frog legs.

Check your ego. Don't let it get so far out of control that you lose your friends or worse yet, end up on someone's plate

## Look for the Good

Once I was driving along on a road that I often took from my home. As I came over a rise, I noticed a Police cruiser sitting beside the road. Immediately I was stressing, hoping he would not catch me. I was not really doing anything wrong, mind you, but my mind was racing anyway. I glanced down at my speedometer, and noticed that I was doing 2 MPH under the speed limit. I breathed a sigh of relief, but as I got closer to the cruiser, I still felt very anxious.

Just as I was starting to feel better, the cruiser door opened, and the officer inside got out and flagged me to the side of the road. What had I done wrong? I know I wasn't speeding. How could he pull me over? I pulled over, and worried more and more as the officer approached.

I rolled down my window, and was ready to start protesting loudly, when the officer said, "excuse me sir. I am really sorry to disturb you. But I just had to stop you. You are the first person all day to come over that rise doing the speed limit. I just wanted to thank you for being responsible."

I mumbled a relieved thanks, closed the window, and took off, carefully observing the speed limit, of course.

This incident got me thinking. I knew I had not done anything wrong, but just the site of a police officer made me nervous. It got me thinking about the Troop. How often did a Scout see me coming and automatically assume I was going to reprimand him? And the only reason was because I do it so much?

I decided right there and then that I was going to find good in what people do more than I found bad. I was going to make sure that when people saw me coming, they would assume I had something good to say about them, not something bad.

You, as leaders of the Troop, leaders of your Patrols, and as members of the Troop, should think about the same thing. Sure, pointing out when someone has made a mistake, and helping him to correct it is important. But remember; find things to praise more than you find mistakes. You will be a better leader, and everyone will work together better

## Geese

We live in an area where geese are very common. Seeing them fly in their "V" pattern is an awesome sight. There is an interdependence in the way geese function, and we can learn a lot by learning about them.

**FACT:** As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an "uplift" for the bird following. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

**LESSON:** People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are travelling on the thrust of one another.

**FACT:** Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone. It quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the "lifting power" of the bird immediately in front.

**LESSON:** If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those who are headed where we want to go.

**FACT:** When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies at the point position.

**LESSON:** It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership--people, as with geese, are interdependent with each other.

**FACT:** The geese in formation honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

**LESSON:** We need to make sure our "honking" from behind is encouraging, not something less helpful.

**FACT:** When a goose gets sick or wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow the bird down to help and protect it. They stay with him the hurt bird until it is either able to fly again or dies. Then they launch out on their own with another formation or catch up with their flock.

**LESSON:** If we have as much sense as the geese, we will stand by each other

## Stupid Ideas?

I have been thinking about stupid ideas lately. The idea that I have been thinking about is the guy that decided to slice bread. You know the phrase, "The greatest thing since sliced bread"? Now, understand that before they sliced bread it just came in a lump, usually called a loaf, and everyone either cut it or tore it to pieces to eat it. I can just see the baker who, when trying to sell more bread than the baker down the street, decided to slice the bread for his customers. Everyone must have thought he was nuts! What a dumb idea! Well, the idea was so dumb that now it is hard to buy a loaf of bread that is not sliced. Can you imagine the baker in the next town who started to see his bread sales slipping? I bet he started slicing his bread pretty quickly!

Stupid ideas need a second thought. Today's stupid ideas might be the ideas that change the world tomorrow. When you come up with an idea, don't dismiss it without some thought. It might be a better way to run the Patrol, or an idea to make the Troop work better, or a way to make a hard job easier. At first, it might seem really stupid. But it might be worth giving it a try. If it does not work, that is OK. If it does, you might have invented the best thing since sliced bread

## No Burden to Carry

There is an old story of two men. They were travelling through the Himalayas on a bitter cold evening. Night was coming and the one man said, "If we don't reach the city by nightfall, we are in danger of freezing to death." Just as they reached a narrow path, they heard the cries of a man who had fallen over the edge. One man said, "Do not stop. God has brought him to his fate. He must work it out himself." The other man replied, "God sent me here to help my brother. I cannot abandon him." The first man went on and the second climbed down a steep path. When he found the man, he saw that his leg was broken and he could not walk. He made a sling from his blanket and tied the man to his back. He then began a body-torturing climb. He made his way through the deepening snow. It was dark and it was all he could do to follow the path. He persevered, and faint with exhaustion, he finally saw the lights of the city. As he moved toward the light, he stumbled for the first time and nearly fell. He did not stumble from exhaustion, but over an object. As he brushed the snow off the object, he looked down and saw that it was the body of the first man.

Years later when a student asked him, "What is life's most difficult task?" he replied, "To have no burden to carry."

## The Important Things

A philosophy professor stood before his class and had some items in front of him. When class began, wordlessly he picked up a large empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with rocks, rocks about 2" in diameter. He then asked the students if the jar was full? They agreed that it was.

So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles, of course, rolled into the open areas between the rocks. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was. The students laughed as the professor picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else.

"Now," said the professor, "I want you to recognize that this is your life. The rocks are the important things - your family, your partner, your health, and your children - anything that is so important to you that if it were lost, you would be nearly destroyed. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house, and your car. And the sand is everything else - The small stuff."

"If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles or the rocks. The same goes for your life. If you spend all your energy and time on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your partner out dancing. There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, give a dinner party and fix the disposal. Take care of the rocks first - the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand.