

**Asst. Scoutmaster -- TRAIL OF THE EAGLE**

THIS IS THE VOICE OF THE EAGLE, THE EAGLE WHOSE HEIGHTS YOU HAVE STRUGGLED HARD TO REACH. WE REMEMBER WELL WHEN YOU FIRST CAME TO THE BASE OF THE CLIFF, AND HOW YOU LOOKED UP WITH AMBITION AND DETERMINATION. LOOK BACK FOR A MOMENT; LOOK DOWN THE CLIFF YOU HAVE CLIMBED; LOOK AT THE EXPERIENCES YOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED IN YOUR ASCENT.

THESE EXPERIENCES SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN. YOU SHOULD PROFIT BY MAKING SURE ADVERSE EXPERIENCES DO NOT OCCUR AGAIN.

EXPERIENCE IS A VALUABLE TEACHER, IF YOU HEED IT'S TEACHINGS.

WE REMEMBER WHEN YOU TOOK YOUR FIRST STEP UPON THE TRAIL

THAT LEADS UPWARD. WITH THAT FIRST STEP YOU BEGAN TO

BUILD YOURSELF PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY, AND MORALLY. YOU

STARTED LIVING THE SCOUT OATH AND LAW. ALL THE WHILE YOU

WERE ON THE TRAIL, WE WATCHED YOU STUDY AND WE SAW YOU

LEARN BY DOING. FIRST, YOU WERE ONLY A SCOUT. THEN YOUR

BROTHER SCOUTS CALLED YOU A TENDERFOOT...AND THEY WERE

RIGHT, YOU WERE INDEED A TENDERFOOT SCOUT.

**(PAUSE WHILE SCOUT STEPS FORWARD)**

SOON, YOU REACHED THE SECOND LEDGE AND THERE YOU WERE

GREETED BY A LARGE GROUP OF SECOND CLASS SCOUTS. TO REACH

THE RANK OF SECOND CLASS, A SCOUT LEARNS TO WORK WITH

MEMBERS OF HIS PATROL AND HE BEGINS TO DEVELOP PATROL

SPIRIT. **(PAUSE WHILE SECOND CLASS SCOUT STEPS OUT)**

SOME, LIKE YOU, WERE STOPPING TO CATCH THEIR BREATH BEFORE CONTINUING ALONG THE TRAIL. YOU BEGAN TO STUDY MORE, YOU WORKED HARDER, AND ALMOST BEFORE YOU KNEW IT YOU CAME TO ANOTHER LEDGE WHERE FIRST CLASS SCOUTS DWELL. YOU HAD BECOME AN EXPERT IN THE OUTDOOR SKILLS OF CAMPING, COOKING, HIKING, AND FIRST AID. **(PAUSE WHILE FIRST CLASS SCOUT STEPS OUT)**

THERE YOU FOUND A TEMPTING GREEN MEADOW BY A CRYSTAL-CLEAR STREAM BATHED IN THE SUN. HERE YOU WERE TEMPTED TO REMAIN. YES, YOU COULD HAVE REMAINED THERE TO LIVE IN FIRST CLASS GLORY, BUT YOUR AMBITION STIRRED YOU ON. WE REMEMBER YOUR ADVANCEMENT TO STAR SCOUT. A STAR SCOUT LEARNS TO WORK WITH THE YOUNGER BOYS IN THE TROOP, PASSING ALONG THE KNOWLEDGE HE HAS GAINED. **(PAUSE WHILE STAR RANK STEPS OUT)**.

THE TRAIL FROM FIRST CLASS TO STAR WAS NOT AS DIFFICULT AS IT HAD SEEMED. THIS SPURRED YOU ON, AND AGAIN YOU CLIMBED FARTHER. THE TRAIL WAS STEEPER, AND LESS WORN. FEWER SCOUTS SEEMED TO BE HEADED IN YOUR DIRECTION. YOU LOOKED DOWN AND SAW THE CROWDS BELOW YOU. YOU LOOKED UP AND SAW A FEW ABOVE YOU AND, WITH THE SAME DETERMINATION WITH WHICH YOU STARTED YOUR CLIMB, YOU CONTINUED UP THE TRAIL. A LIFE SCOUT DEMONSTRATES LEADERSHIP IN THE TROOP, AND TAKES PART IN COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS. **(PAUSE FOR LIFE SCOUT SIGN).**

SOON, THE LIFE SCOUT BADGE—THE HEART BADGE—WAS PLACED ON YOUR UNIFORM. YOU WILL NEVER FORGET YOUR THOUGHTS AT

THAT MOMENT—THE FEELING THAT HAS BEEN EXPERIENCED BY MOST SCOUTS ON REACHING THE LEDGE OF LIFE: “NOW I AM CLOSE TO THE EAGLE; I WILL CARRY ON.” THE TRAIL BECOMES TOUGHER, BUT MORE INTERESTING. THE ORIGINAL PRINCIPLES, THE SCOUT OATH AND LAW, NOW HAD A FULLER MEANING. YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THEM WAS GREATER. THE RANK OF EAGLE IS SCOUTING’S HIGHEST AWARD. THE EAGLE SCOUT MUST EARN THE SPECIFIED NUMBER OF MERIT BADGES AND MUST PLAN, DEVELOP, AND CARRY OUT AN EXTENSIVE SERVICE PROJECT, GIVING LEADERSHIP TO OTHERS. HE MUST ALSO SERVE AS A TROOP OFFICER FOR A SPECIFIED TIME. **(PAUSE FOR EAGLE SCOUT SIGN).**

YES, WE HAVE WATCHED YOUR CHARACTER UNFOLD AND BECOME MATURE; WE HAVE SEEN YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF CITIZENSHIP EXPAND; WE HAVE WATCHED YOUR MIND DEVELOP AND YOUR WISDOM INCREASE; AND WE HAVE OBSERVED YOUR LEADERSHIP ABILITY GROWING INTO A VALUABLE ASSET. WE HAVE SEEN ALL THESE THINGS IN YOU, AND NOW THAT YOU ON ARE THE THRESHOLD OF YOUR GOAL WE WELCOME YOU, FOR YOU HAVE DONE YOUR CLIMBING IN A TRUE SCOUTLIKE MANNER.

**(Asst. Scoutmaster THEN SITS WITH THE SPEAKERS**