

## SPELL IT HONESTY

Tonight we've spent a lot of time talking about ethics - about honesty and fairness and respect for others. Now I'll tell you a true story about a Scout who showed what those things mean.

His name is Andrew J. Flosdorf, and in 1983 he was a 1st Class Scout in Troop 42 of Fonda NY Andy was in the National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC, competing for the championship and a chance for a scholarship.

During a break in the competition, Andy went to the judges and told them that although they thought he had spelled "echolalia" correctly, he had mistakenly substituted an "e" for the first "a" in the word, which means a speech disorder. He said he discovered his error when he looked it up afterwards.

By admitting the mistake, that the judges hadn't caught, Andy eliminated himself from the competition. The chief judge said, "We want to commend him for his utter honesty," and the crowd gave him an ovation.

But Andy didn't tell them about his error to earn cheers. He wanted to win as much as the other contestants, but he wanted to win fairly. "The first rule of Scouting is honesty," Andy told the judges. "I didn't want to feel like a slime. "

I don't know what has happened to Andy Flosdorf since then, but I'm sure of two things. He learned one of Scouting's most important lessons, and gave us an example of honesty and fairness that all of us should shoot for.