

Press Release

Date: February 2, 2010
Subject: Major Gifts Campaign and Scout-A-Vista
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The Grand Columbia Council, Boy Scouts of America is announcing the “Century Campaign” to raise at least \$2,000,000 over the next twelve months. The purpose of this campaign is to retire debt that is affecting the council’s operation, to grow the council’s endowment fund and to make improvements at Camp Scout-A-Vista.

Wenatchee businessman and Scouting volunteer, John McDarment has agreed to serve as the chairman for the campaign. McDarment volunteered for the position as he realized that raising a significant amount of funds was the best way to stabilize the Scouting council and ensure the future of all of our Scouting camps. McDarment said: “ I wanted to come back on the council’s Executive Board to raise \$2,000,000 to save council properties, particularly Scout-A-Vista, and to make the council financially stable by retiring the council’s debt. This will need to be a council-wide effort but with a strong focus in the Wenatchee area. I realized this is the only way to save an autonomous council for Scouting in Central Washington.” He continued, “The retention and improvement of our council camps is critical to the Scouting program in our area.”

The funds raised through this campaign will be designated as follows:

- 50% to retire existing debt
- 25% to the council’s endowment fund
- 25% to a donor designated fund for improvements at Scout-A-Vista

Arrangements have been made through the Community Foundation of North Central Washington to allow donors to make donations to this campaign through the Internet. The foundation’s web-site will also allow the community to monitor the progress of the campaign.

Those wishing to make donations can contact the Scout Service Center at 213 N. Chelan in Wenatchee or by calling 662-5501 or by contacting John McDarment at McDees Art Center at 30 North Chelan, Wenatchee or by calling 662-7117.

Richard Bennion, District Chairman for the Apple Valley Scouting District said, “It is exciting to move forward as a council, united in plan and in purpose for the benefit of Scouting.” He continued, “This is an exciting opportunity to not only preserve Scout-A-Vista, for future generations but to also improve the camp facility”.

Robert Fawcett, Scout Executive for the Grand Columbia Council commented, “The Century Campaign is a fitting celebration for the 100th Year of Scouting, some of our units in the Grand Columbia Council date back to the origins of Scouting, of note locally, is Troop 1 of Cashmere that was started in 1910 the same year Scouting has chartered by Congress. The success of this campaign will enable Scouts for generations to have the experiences that Scouts of the past have enjoyed.”

Q: What are the improvements that will be made at Scout-A-Vista?

A: Not all of the improvements needed at Scout-A-Vista have been defined and prioritized, but our council's business plan does call for refurbishing the dining hall, increasing cabin space for campers, and improving program facilities.

Q: I thought the council was selling Scout-A-Vista, what changed?

A: The council has been taking steps to evaluate several properties including Scout-A-Vista. These steps have included having appraisals of our properties, searching documents and other items that are in the fiduciary responsibility of the council's executive board. The council has not put any of the council properties up for sale. The council does not have an interest in selling the portion of Scout-A-Vista that has traditionally been the camp. By having a successful campaign the council will become stronger and there will not be a need to sell our council's camps.

Q: Does this guarantee that Scout-A-Vista will not be sold?

A: There is no guarantee that any council property will never be sold, however at this time the council's plan is to raise funds to retire the debt and to improve Scout-A-Vista for the Scouts of the Grand Columbia and the Wenatchee Community.

After the council's debt is retired the council's goal is to establish donor designated endowment funds to provide for the maintenance and operation of the camps. This will ensure that the camps individually and collectively can be self-sustaining.