



100 YEARS OF SCOUTING

Celebrating the Adventure ★ Continuing the Journey

October 22, 2009

An Open Letter to the Volunteers, Scouting Alumni and Scouting Families in the Grand Columbia Council:

The Grand Columbia Council is at a crossroads. As a council we are facing a financial situation that must be addressed so that we can effectively serve the Scouting volunteers, units, and Scouts of our council. To this end, the Executive Board has developed a business plan to make our council financially sustainable both now and in the future. This plan includes fund raising, sale of some assets, and reversing the decline in annual support that is our 'life-blood' known as Friends of Scouting.

The Executive Board (our volunteer Board of Directors) has made the extremely difficult and emotional decision to authorize the sale of part or all of our properties at Scout-A-Vista (SAV) and Summit Lake to help accomplish this goal.

Just prior to our recent Board Meeting, we received a request from Dr. Richard Bennion, Apple Valley District Chairman and Steve Clive, District Finance Chairman to look at options that could save the portion of Scout-A-Vista that has been used for many years for unit, district, and council events. We have received similar requests from others throughout the council. During the meeting, ***we discussed these ideas and Dr. Michael Murphy, Council President, stated in the meeting that if adequate funds could be raised to retire the council debt through fund raising or selling excess property at SAV for an adequate amount, etc., the council would not sell the portion that everyone knows and loves as Scout-A-Vista,*** (please see pages 32-33 of the Business Plan).

Selling properties will take time as the council officers will involve real estate and development professionals as well as conservation easement experts to evaluate the value of these camps prior to listing them on the market. Robert Fawcett, our Scout Executive, has been approached by volunteers interested in raising major gifts to retire the debt and for the possible preservation of Scout-A-Vista. He has offered the *full support of the council* to such an effort.

Again, the need of the council is to raise operating funds and eliminate the council's debt. This debt was caused by several years of accumulated operating deficits as well as cost over-runs for infrastructure development at a *council camp that serves Scouts throughout the council* as a Boy Scout Camp facility. We also need each Scouting unit within the council to work to achieve their fair-share Friends of Scouting goal on an annual basis, so that this type of situation does not develop again.

After the debt is retired, it is also our plan and need to develop donor designated endowment funds for the support of the council and for the maintenance and operation of our camps. Our executive and support staff, council officers and Executive Board members are committed to providing quality camping facilities that are operated efficiently and effectively for the youth of our council. We are committed to have an effective and exciting Scouting Program for youth throughout Central Washington as an autonomous council.

Sincerely,

Grand Columbia Council Executive Committee

Dr. Michael Murphy, President	Randy Webb, Council Commissioner	David Cobia, Treasurer
Fr. Sam Bellino, Vice President	LeRoy Thompson, Vice President	Dr. Bob McLaughlin, Vice President
Bruce Heiser, Vice President	Pete Feltrup, Vice President	Robert Fawcett, Scout Executive
Bob Sinclair, Council Int'l. Rep.	Dr. Bruce Noonan, Vice President	



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