

ROB MARKS

The Eagle Scout Speaks

I would like to begin with a presentation to my Eagle Mentors: Russell, will you please escort my Grandpa, and my Uncle Ray to the front of the room?

Grandpa, Uncle Ray, you have supported me in Scouting from the time I was a Cub Scout and needed a fill-in father– to the time I became an Eagle Scout and you had a special surprise cake for me on the night of my Board of Review.

You never missed a Court of Honor, school function, or anything I asked you to attend. For those reasons and so much more, I present you with an Eagle Scout Mentor pin.

Russell will you escort my uncle and grandfather back to their seats and escort Mr. Tim Jackson to the front of the room.

Mr. Jackson. Four years ago, you welcomed me into Troop 262 with a smile and a handshake. Since that time you've made me feel welcome whether it was at roundtable, in your home, or in our new Venturing Crew. You invited me and my father on the C&O canal bike trip which was one of the greatest trips of our lives. Whenever I needed advise and help you've been there for me. Your guidance before and during my Eagle project helped me understand the value of planning. It was both fun and interesting to work with you on the required merit badges I needed for Eagle Scout.

The definition of mentor is "a wise and trusted counselor". You are all of that and more. For your wise mentoring during most of my time in Boy Scouts, I present you with this Silver Mentor Pin.

THANK YOU'S

Thank you – everyone – for being here. You honor me with your presence!

I will take a few minutes to recognize some people who have helped with this Court of Honor and who have been exceptionally important in my life.

Russell Coensgen flew here from California to take part in this ceremony. Russell and I have been friends since the time we were born – and when I lived in California we used to have joint birthday parties (his birthday is tomorrow). Russell has visited Pittsburgh nearly every summer and spent a week at summer camp with me. If he had started sooner, he probably would have made it to Eagle Scout – but Russ, in my eyes you are an Eagle! Thank you for being here. And thank you Linda for bringing him with you and helping my Mom.

Justin Frear and his entire Family have been examples of the kind of Scout and person I would like to be. They are one of the nicest Scout families I know. I was proud to be in a Jamboree where Justin was an Assistant Scoutmaster, Mr. Frear was the Scoutmaster, Tyler was the Senior Patrol Leader and I was the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. Thank you Justin.

I first met Mike Erlinger at Heritage Reservation about 4 or 5 years ago. Mike and his brother Jim have been two people that I most look up to on how to act in Scouting. How they care for everyone –especially the young, new Scouts like I was when we first met- this is a virtue that I try to follow. They have also taught me how to play football and bull in the ring which was an unforgettable experience!

Chris Jackson has been a friend for some time. We've shared tents, we've shared good times and bad. Over the years, I have observed his great leadership qualities and have tried to incorporate them in my life. THANK YOU for being the MC tonight.

Adam Macino and the entire Macino family have invited me to events at Troop 831 and have always made me feel a part of their group. Thank

you for participating, Adam. I look forward to helping with your Eagle project and watching as you receive your Eagle rank.

Thank you to the Cub Scouts of Pack 358. Your presence here today is a reminder to everyone about why we spend so much time with our youth. You Cub Scouts are the future of this troop – and you will someday be the future Eagle Scouts standing where I am now.

Thank you to Mr. Henry Levith who took the time to bring his historic display. I've long admired this display and I'm honored you would bring it here.

Mrs. Shirley Derbis who sang the beautiful "On My Honor" song. My Dad has known Mrs. Derbis for some time through Wood Badge and the Training Committee. She agreed to sing for this event on the condition she NOT be mentioned in the program or given credit. My Dad printed the program so he knew better than to go against her wishes, but I'm at the microphone and I really want to thank her!

Mr. Ken Kucel thank you for being our photographer. I've seen some of your pictures and I know after today I'll have an extraordinary memento of this occasion.

Cousin Curtis thank you for helping video tape this day. I know the tape will bring tears to my moms' eyes for years to come.

Mr. Scott. You and the other leaders in Coraopolis welcomed me to this troop over two years ago. You invited me to join you, knowing I would be your first Eagle Scout. I was honored by this invitation as I continue to be honored every time you ask me to help out and teach a new Scout an outdoor skill. You've been a friend and a mentor. Thank you for all the time you invested in me and in this troop.

I would like to publicly ACKNOWLEDGE those who helped with my Eagle Project.

There were six men who gave of their time and talents in extraordinary amounts for my Eagle Project. Mr. Frank Pashel, Mr. Stan Zesutek, Mr. Tim Jackson, CJ Miller, Chris Jackson and Ben Zesutek. Thank you for your “extra” efforts and your time.

Thank you to Mr. Rosenberger – who let me use his power tools & his Gator. Your generosity made the job easier – and a lot more fun!

To Mr. Patrick Adams – Raccoon Creek thank you giving me the opportunity to build an Adirondack at your park. Thank you for your guidance, advice and direction.

Mr. Payne and Mr. Lengyl for spending time with me planning the project and thank you for your talents and tools during the building of the shelters.

Thank you Mr. David Robinson who provided a wonderful Scouts’ Own service at the end of the project weekend which helped us understand the meaning behind the work we had just completed. Thank you to Mr. Pearce and many of the parents who came to cook for us that weekend.

To everyone who helped on the Eagle Project - and the fund raiser for the project – THANK YOU! It would not have been possible without your help.

There are a few other special people here today I would like to acknowledge:

Ranger Larry of Camp Twin Echo and his wife. Twin Echo is a special place for me. My first Camporee with my Dad was at Twin Echo. I spent weeks there earning merit badges, flying rockets, attending training and learning valuable life lessons. Twin Echo is also a special place – BECAUSE of Ranger Larry who makes you feel welcome from the moment you arrive to the time you leave.

To my OLSH / ESES friends – thank you for coming today. We've had a lot of great memories together especially you guys from Elizabeth Seton. I appreciate you coming today and sharing this experience with me.

Mr. Steven Dewick, Your support of me since Troop 66, and Troop 148 is very much appreciated. I will never forget your kindness and your generosity of you sharing your time... and your patches.

Mrs. Jean Harkins. You weren't my first Cubmaster, but you'll always be number 1 to me. I truly enjoyed the time with you in Cub Scouts and later when you allowed me to be one of your Den Chiefs. Thank you.

THANK YOU to the Scouts in Troop 358 who have accepted me, challenged me and encouraged me. Thank you to the Leaders and Parents of Troop 358 who have supported me and who give their time to support Scouting in Coraopolis!

THANK YOU – VERY MUCH – to the parents, leaders, friends, and relatives who helped set-up the church, and will serve the meal in a few minutes and assist with the clean-up afterward!

Lastly, I want to thank my Family

My aunts, uncles and cousins who have bought popcorn and candy, been to every spaghetti dinner and chicken barbecue, have made thousands of cookies and have supported me unconditionally for 17 years... THANK YOU.

To my mother – who has been there for me when I needed her, and even when I didn't. Mom, you have been my harbor in the storm, my friend and someone I can turn to anytime, anywhere. I know you are crying right now so I won't say anything more... I'll just say **THANK YOU for everything.**

To my Dad. I am glad we've been able to experience so much together in Scouting. I appreciate what you have done along my trail to Eagle and I can't wait for the adventures we'll experience next summer in Europe!

I will close with a MESSAGE TO THE SCOUTS AND LEADERS and everyone here:

Imagine you have a checking account that is part of an exclusive bank. And in your account you have \$86,400. You have only 24 hours to spend all of it – then it's gone!. But, with the start of every day, you have a new credit of \$86,400.

That \$86,400 is yours to spend however you like. (3 seconds)

Think for a few seconds -- how would you spend this money? What would you use it for? (30 seconds)

Would you spend it on the needy? The poor? The hungry? (10 seconds)

How much of it would you waste before the end of each day or any day? (5 seconds)

If you are imagining along with me, maybe a thought came across that went something like... "GEEZ, what a great dream. I can do nearly anything I want with that money!"

There are 86,400 seconds in each day to spend any way you choose. This exclusive kind of bank is your life. How will you spend it?!

I urge you take advantage of everything that Scouting and life has to offer. From weekend campouts with friends to a High Adventure Trek at Philmont... While there will be many challenges along the way, I can guarantee you will enjoy every single second you spend in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts or Venturing.

I thank you for spending some of your precious time with me. I hope that I have – and will – do the same for you! THANK YOU.