

Scoutmaster Minute

The Dash

I recently completed my first practical session for Wood Badge. Much of the value from the training you receive in this course comes from the fact that it makes you think a lot about your life; what is important to you; how are you using your time; how can you make a difference; and what is going on around you. The following was one of the messages delivered during the weekend and I would like to share it with you today. Think about it as you look back over your life, no matter how long or short that has been to this point.

I heard of a person who stood to speak at the funeral of a friend. She referred to the dates on her tombstone from the beginning to the end.

She noted that first came the date of her birth, and spoke of the second date with tears in her eyes; but the woman said what mattered most of all was the dash between those years.

For that dash represented all of the time her friend had spent alive on this Earth, and now only the ones who knew and loved her, knew best what that little line was all about. Everything her friend had done and accomplished in her life was reduced to one little dash.

For it matters not how much we own: the cars, the house, the cash, the fancy clothes, the big boat. What matters most is how we live, and love, and spend our dash. So, think about this long and hard? Are there things you would like to change? Are there still things you want to accomplish in your time on this earth?

For you never know how much time is left.. If we could just sit down long enough to consider what is true; and what is real; what is really important to us and are we spending enough time with it ; do we always try and understand the way other people feel; or are we constantly putting out fires and “reacting” to the life around us?

Let's be less quick to anger and show appreciation more; let's love the people in our lives like we have never loved before; let's never be afraid to let them know how we feel; let's treat each other with respect and wear a smile more often; let's ask not what someone is willing to do for you, but rather go out of your way to do something nice for someone else. Remembering all the time that this special dash might only last a little while and be all that people have to remember you by.

So, when your eulogy is being read with your life's action to rehash, will you be pleased with the things they say about how you spent your little dash? Will there be people bursting with stories about things you accomplished and people you influenced, or will there be long periods of silence?

That concludes this Eagle Court of Honor. I would like to thank you for attending and supporting our troop, its programs, and most importantly – your sons. I would like to thank our special guests for taking their time to attend this ceremony and help us recognize these young men and what they have accomplished. These boys truly are what this program is all about. For the parents in the audience, especially the ones here for the first time, I hope someday you will get the thrill of standing up here and crying in front of an auditorium full of people, when you get to put that Eagle Scout neckerchief around your son's neck. But remember, the crowning jewel in Scouting is becoming an Eagle Scout, but that alone does not define all that your son learns along the Scouting Trail.

To our newest Eagle Scouts, congratulations on your tremendous achievements! After we have retired the colors, you and your families are requested to remain in the foyer to meet those in attendance today as they leave. Once the troop has filed out, everyone is invited to a reception in the cafeteria to congratulate these outstanding young men on their accomplishments.

Thank you for coming! Senior Patrol Leader, you may retire the colors and dismiss the troop.