

TITLE PAGE

TOPIC:

ASSESSING SCOUTING'S ACCEPTANCE IN THE COUNTY OF ABBEVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA POPULATION 24000.

QUESTION:

SINCE SCOUTING'S REINTRODUCTION IN ABBEVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA IN 1983, HOW MUCH DO THE RESIDENTS KNOW ABOUT THE SCOUTING PROGRAM IN 1991?

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE PHD, COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE.

BY: EDWARD E. PATTON

11/9/91

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF HYPOTHESIS:

IT IS MY BELIEF THAT PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW A GREAT DEAL ABOUT THE SCOUTING PROGRAM BECAUSE OF THE TREMENDOUS DIFFICULTY IN RECRUITING YOUNG MEN AND ADULT LEADERS. THIS IS THE GENERAL OVERALL QUESTION. IS IT VERY SIMPLY TRUE OR NOT? THIS QUESTION IS PERTINENT AT THIS TIME FOR SEVERAL REASONS. AN UNFORTUNATE OCCURRENCE TOOK PLACE IN A LARGE TOWN NEAR-BY THAT ATTRACTED NEGATIVE MEDIA ATTENTION. IT INVOLVED THE FORMATION AND REPORTING OF FAKE SCOUTING UNITS IN ORDER FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS TO MAKE THEIR GOALS IN RECRUITMENT. THERE HAVE BEEN HARD FEELINGS EVER SINCE AND SCOUTING HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT LOOKED DOWN ON. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT PEOPLE SOMETIMES DO NOT REALIZE WHAT THEIR SEEMINGLY INSIGNIFICANT ACTIONS MIGHT CAUSE DOWN THE ROAD. THIS IS A TOUCHY SUBJECT IN OUR AREA AND THOSE ACTIVELY INVOLVED RARELY IF EVER BRING IT UP BUT THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS PERSIST. I WANTED TO KNOW IF THESE FEELINGS WERE STILL AROUND AND IF IT MIGHT BE KEEPING YOUNG MEN OUT OF SCOUTING. NEXT I WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WAS KNOWN IN A FAIRLY GENERAL SENSE ABOUT SCOUTING IN MY AREA. THERE ARE FEW INQUIRIES MADE AS TO THE AVAILABILITY OF SCOUTING UNITS IN OUR COUNTY. AND VERY LITTLE SUPPORT FROM INSTITUTIONS WOULD INDICATE AN UNDERLYING CURRENT OF POOR SUPPORT. WE HAVE WORKED FOR 9 YEARS TRYING TO REMEDY THIS AND I FELT IT WAS TIME TO TEST THE WATERS. ALSO KNOWING ABOUT AND ACCEPTING A YOUTH PROGRAM ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS ENTIRELY. I WANTED TO NOT ONLY FIND OUT IF PEOPLE KNEW ABOUT SCOUTING IN OUR COUNTY BUT WOULD THEY ACCEPT, RECOMMEND AND GENERALLY SUPPORT SCOUTING. WITHOUT A HIGH ACCEPTANCE LEVEL OUR EFFORTS WOULD BE MADE MORE DIFFICULT.

PLAN OF RESEARCH:

TO CONDUCT A LARGE SCALE TELEPHONE SURVEY ASKING 5 BASIC QUESTIONS IN ORDER TO ASSESS WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT SCOUTING IN MY AREA. THIS SURVEY WILL BE TAKEN RANDOMLY THROUGHOUT ABBEVILLE COUNTY SOUTH CAROLINA ENCOMPASSING BOTH RURAL AND SMALL TOWN ENVIRONMENTS. MY PLAN IS TO SECURE A MINIMUM OF 50 GOOD RESPONSES MAKING ALL OF THE NECESSARY PHONE CALL THAT ARE REQUIRED. THE QUESTIONS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

1. ARE YOU AWARE THAT THERE IS A BOY SCOUT TROOP IN ABBEVILLE COUNTY?
2. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT SCOUTING OFFERS A GOOD PROGRAM TO YOUNG MEN IN OUR AREA?
3. WOULD YOU RECOMMEND SCOUTING TO A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER?
4. WOULD YOU PUT YOUR SON IN A BOY SCOUT TROOP IN THIS AREA?
5. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE NUMBER ONE PROBLEM THAT CONFRONTS OUR YOUTH IN THIS AREA?

AS WE CAN PLAINLY SEE THESE ARE YES AND NO QUESTIONS DESIGNED NOT TO CONFUSE BUT TO OFFER SOME CLEAR CUT ANSWERS. I HAVE DETERMINED THAT QUESTIONS OF ANY MORE DEPTH WOULD NOT BE READILY ANSWERED.

COUNTY SCOUTING HISTORY:

THE SCOUT TROOP WITH WHICH I AM ASSOCIATED WITH DATES BACK INTO THE LATE 1930'S. IT REMAINED RELATIVELY ACTIVE UNTIL THE 1970'S WHEN A MAJOR LEADER IN THE AREA LEFT SCOUTING DUE TO HEALTH REASONS. THE TROOP HAD DONE A GREAT DEAL OF GOOD WORK WITH MANY OF THE SCOUTS REACHING THE UPPER RANKS OF SCOUTING BUT UNFORTUNATELY NONE MAKING IT TO THE RANK OF EAGLE. SCOUTING REMAINED INACTIVE IN THE COUNTY UNTIL PACK 93 WAS RESTARTED IN 1983 AND THEN THE TROOP IN 1984. SCOUTING HAD APPARENTLY BEEN INACTIVE FOR ABOUT 8 OR 9 YEARS AND DID NOT HAVE THE BEST OF REPUTATIONS BECAUSE OF THE ABOVE REASONS.

THE TROOP, AS IT EXISTS TODAY, HAS USED LOCAL MEDIA TO IT'S FULLEST IN AN ATTEMPT TO BRING THE SCOUTING STORY BEFORE THE COMMUNITY. ALSO TO ENCOURAGE RECRUITING AND TO BUILD A REPUTATION IN THE COMMUNITY THAT WILL INSURE IT'S CONTINUED SERVICE. THE TROOP HAS PRODUCED 10 EAGLE SCOUTS, IT'S ADULT LEADERSHIP IS WOODBADGE TRAINED AND IS VERY ACTIVE IN THE DISTRICT. THE BACKGROUND OF THE ADULT LEADERSHIP CONSISTS OF EXPERIENCE IN RUNNING JUNIOR LEADERSHIP ORIENTATIONS, TEACHING SLD'S, COMMISSIONER TRAINING AND MANY OTHER AREAS OF INVOLVED SCOUT LEADERSHIP. ALL OF THE SENIOR BOY SCOUTS IN THE TROOP ARE JLT TRAINED AND HAVE SERVED ON THE JLT STAFF IN THE PAST. THE TROOP HAS ATTENDED CAMP OLD INDIAN FOR THE PAST 7 YEARS AND EARNS ON THE AVERAGE OF 60 MERIT BADGES EACH TIME AT CAMP.

THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER HAS FAITHFULLY PRINTED UNTOLD NUMBERS OF ARTICLES ABOUT THE TROOP AND GLADLY AGREES TO PRINT MOST ANY PICTURE AND ARTICLE THAT WE SUBMIT.

THESE ARE THE MAIN THINGS THAT HAS BROUGHT THE TROOP BEFORE

THE PUBLIC.

THE TROOP, ON A REGULAR BASIS STRESSES THE GOD AND COUNTRY PROGRAM TO IT'S SCOUTS AND AS OF THIS WRITING 3 YOUNG MEN ARE WORKING ON THE GOD AND CHURCH AWARD.

KEEPING THE NEW BOY PATROL AT A REASONABLE LEVEL CONTINUES TO BE A REAL CHALLENGE BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTY IN BRINGING NEW BOYS INTO THE TROOP. I AM HOPING THAT THIS SURVEY WILL SHED SOME LIGHT ONTO THIS MATTER.

I MUST MENTION THAT COMMUNITY SUPPORT HAS BEGUN TO INCREASE IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS OF THIS YEAR. WE HAVE BEEN OFFERED AND ARE USING A LARGE HOUSE OWNED BY A LOCAL MANUFACTURING COMPANY AND PARENTAL SUPPORT IS GROWING AT A SLOW PACE. THE TROOP UNFORTUNATELY CONTINUES TO LOOSE GOOD BOYS DUE TO TRANSFERS OF THEIR PARENTS OUT OF THE AREA. THE TROOP CONTINUES IT'S GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. FORESTRY DEPARTMENT AND CONTINUES TO COLLECT FOOD FOR THE NEEDY ON A REGULAR BASIS. HOPEFULLY ALL OF THESE THINGS ARE HELPING TO BRING SCOUTING BEFORE OUR COMMUNITY.

SURVEY:

NOW TO THE SURVEY ITSELF. A TOTAL OF 138 PHONE CALLS WERE MADE OVER A PERIOD OF 4 WEEK DAYS. OF THESE 138 CALLS WE SECURED 50 GOOD RESPONSES THAT WE COULD INTERPRET. IT HAS BEEN NOTED THAT WE WERE ABLE TO SECURE ONLY A 36% RESPONSE LEVEL OF THE 138 PHONE CALLS MADE. POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THE LOW RESPONSE ARE:

1. MANY PEOPLE DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE WORD 'AWARE' AND I HAD TO ALTER THE USE OF THE WORD IN SOME CALLS,
2. I FOUND THAT WE HAD TO TAKE THE EDUCATION ELEMENT INTO CONSIDERATION AS WE MADE OUR CALLS,
3. SOME RESPONSES WERE THROWN OUT WHEN WE THOUGHT WE DID NOT GET THROUGH TO THE PERSON TRYING TO RESPOND TO OUR SURVEY,
4. A LARGE NUMBER OF ELDERLY PEOPLE WERE TALKED TO THAT COULD NOT DISCUSS ANY ASPECT OF SCOUTING,
5. THERE WERE A NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO REFUSED TO ANSWER THE SURVEY QUESTIONS SINCERELY,
6. THOSE WHO ATTEMPTED TO CHANGE THEIR ANSWERS BECAUSE OF LACK OF UNDERSTANDING AND
7. THOSE WHO JUST PLAIN HUNG UP.

IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT I ENCOUNTERED INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE AFRAID TO TALK TO ME BELIEVING IT WAS SOME SORT OF SCAM OR TRICK. THE 50 PHONE CALL I AM REFERENCING ARE THOSE WHERE I OBTAINED ENOUGH INFORMATION TO INTERPRET.

SURVEY RESULTS:

TO QUESTION NUMBER ONE--ARE YOU AWARE THAT THERE IS A BOY SCOUT TROOP IN ABBEVILLE COUNTY WE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING RESPONSE:

QUESTION #1- YES 68%

NO 32%

DID NOT KNOW 0%

THIS INDICATES THAT 68% OF THE ADULTS SURVEYED KNEW THAT THERE IS A SCOUT TROOP IN THE ABBEVILLE AREA. I CONSIDER THAT EXCELLENT AND WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT FIGURE IS UP. I BASE THIS ON THE 9 YEARS I HAVE IN PERSONAL SCOUTING IN THE COUNTY. WHEN WE REORGANIZED AWARENESS WAS A FLAT CURVE ON THE GRAPH. WE COULD NOT LOCATE ANYONE WHO KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT SCOUTING IN THE AREA. IT WAS A COMPLETE VOID AS FAR AS I WAS CONCERNED. I RECEIVED LITTLE VERBAL OR MATERIAL ASSISTANCE. WE ESSENTIALLY STARTED OUT ALONE AND WORKED ALONE WITHIN THE PROGRAM.

TO QUESTION NUMBER TWO--DO YOU BELIEVE THAT SCOUTING OFFERS A GOOD PROGRAM TO YOUNG MEN IN OUR AREA? WE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES:

QUESTION #2- YES 96%

NO 2%

DID NOT KNOW 2%

THIS MEANS THAT 96% OF THOSE SURVEYED AGREED THAT SCOUTING OFFERED A GOOD PROGRAM TO OUR COUNTY'S YOUNG MEN. I THINK THIS IS AN EXCELLENT RESPONSE AND SHOWS THAT WE HAVE MADE NO MAJOR MISTAKES IN OUR AREA AND THAT POSSIBLE NEGATIVE NATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE HAS NOT DONE ANY SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE.

TO QUESTION NUMBER THREE--WOULD YOU RECOMMEND SCOUTING TO A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER? WE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES:

QUESTION #3- YES 92%

NO 2%

DID NOT KNOW 6%

THIS WAS A WONDERFUL SURPRISE TO FIND THAT 92% OF THOSE SURVEYED WOULD RECOMMEND SCOUTING TO A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER. THE 6% THAT DID NOT KNOW STATED THEY DID NOT KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT SCOUTING TO ANSWER THE QUESTION.

TO QUESTION NUMBER FOUR--WOULD YOU PUT YOUR SON IN A BOY SCOUT TROOP IN THIS AREA? WE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES:

QUESTION #4- YES 82%

NO 8%

DID NOT KNOW 10%

THIS TELLS ME THAT 82% OF THOSE SURVEYED WOULD PUT THEIR SON IN A LOCAL SCOUT TROOP IN THE ABBEVILLE AREA. THIS IS WAY DOWN FROM THE 92% IN QUESTION #3 IN THAT IT HITS DIRECTLY HOME WITH THOSE SURVEYED. THIS FIGURE SHOULD BE HIGHER BUT IT MAY REFLECT THE PERCEIVED TIME AND TROUBLE A PARENT MIGHT THINK IS INVOLVED IN HAVING A SON IN SCOUTING. WE ALSO FEEL THAT SOME OF THOSE WHO SAID NO; FELT WE WERE TRYING TO GET THEM TO COMMIT THEIR SON TO JOINING. THIS WAS NOT THE INTENT BUT MAY HAVE HAD A BEARING.

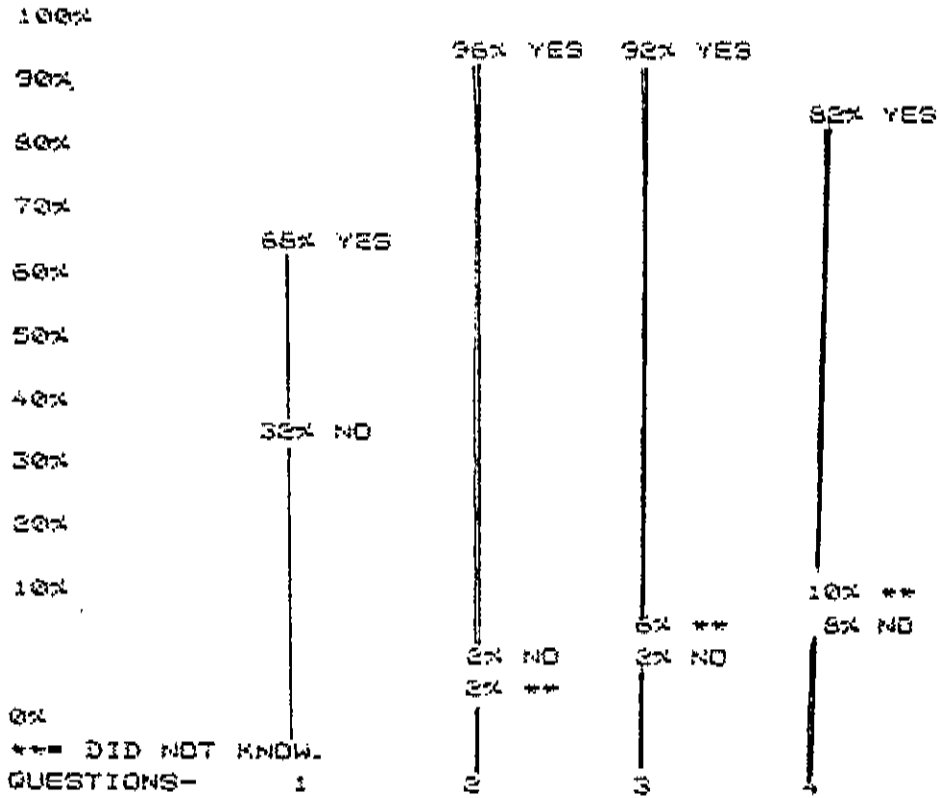
TO QUESTION NUMBER FIVE--WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE NUMBER ONE PROBLEM THAT CONFRONTS OUR YOUTH IN THIS AREA? THIS IS WHAT I RECEIVED:

QUESTION #5- DRUGS	60%
ADULTS NOT CARING	6%
PEER PRESSURE	6%
DID NOT KNOW	14%
POOR EDUCATION	4%

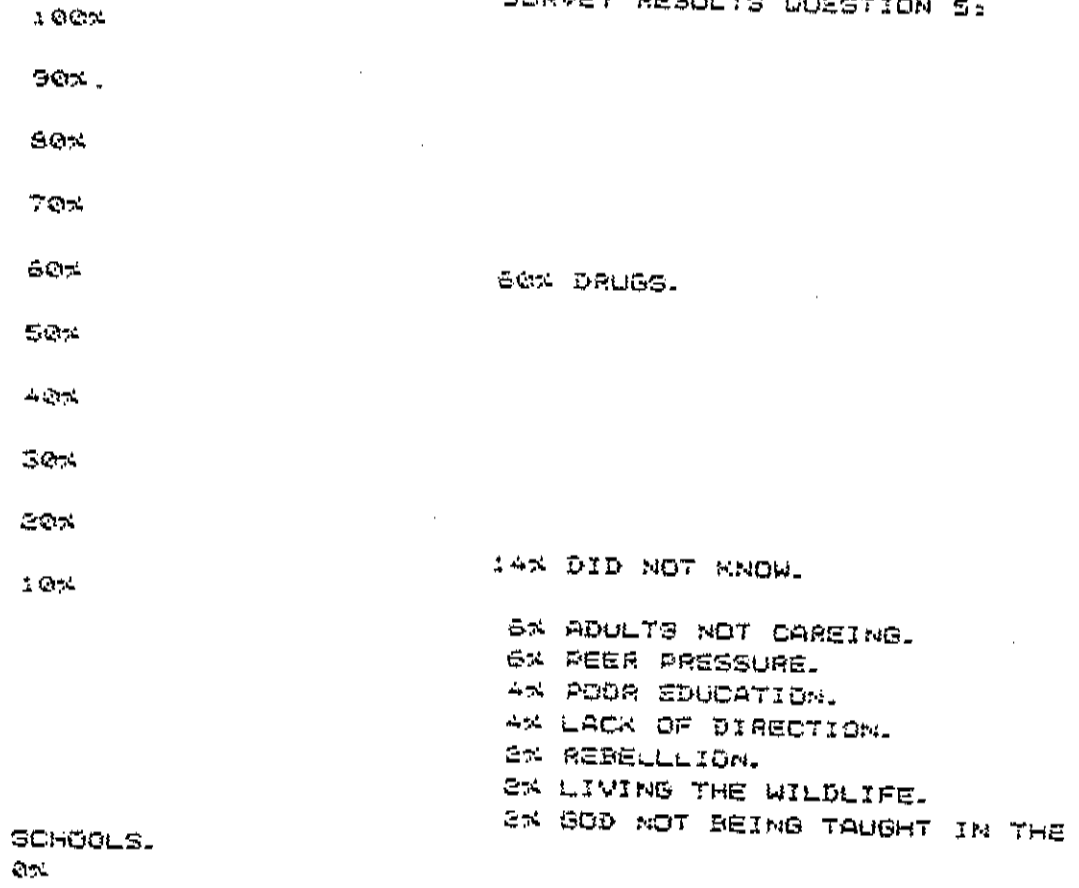
REBELLION	2%
LIVING THE WILDLIFE	2%
GOD NOT BEING TAUGHT IN HOME OR SCHOOL	2%
LACK OF DIRECTION	4%

WE RECEIVED SOME ADDITIONAL COMMENTS THAT WERE NOT ADDRESSED IN THE SURVEY ITSELF. SUCH ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AS IRRESPONSIBILITY ON THE PARTS OF PARENTS AND MOTHERS NOT BEING HOME FOR THEIR CHILDREN. MATERIALISM WAS ALSO LISTED AS ONE OF THE UNDERLYING PROBLEMS OF TODAY'S YOUTH. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT DRUGS STOOD OUT AS THE NUMBER ONE THOUGHT OF PROBLEM FOR OUR YOUTH TODAY. I FEEL THAT THE B.S.A. MADE A FINE MOVE WHEN IT INSERTED INTO THE FRONT OF THE SCOUT HANDBOOK THE DRUG AWARENESS REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SCOUT PATCH AND RANK ADVANCEMENTS. IT MUST BE NOTED THAT BEING DRUG FREE IS ONE OF NATIONALS FOUR GOALS FOR SCOUTING IN THE 1990'S. WE ON THE TROOP, DISTRICT AND COUNCIL LEVELS MUST MAKE SURE WE UTILIZE THIS SEGMENT OF THE PROGRAM TO IT'S FULLEST.

SURVEY RESULTS:



SURVEY RESULTS QUESTION 5:



RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS:

NOW TO ADDRESS THE STEPS THAT I FEEL MUST BE TAKEN TO INCREASE THE AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE OF SCOUTING WITHIN OUR AREA. IN QUESTION NUMBER ONE 68% KNEW THAT THERE WAS A SCOUT TROOP IN THE AREA. I BELIEVE WE CAN INCREASE THIS PERCENTAGE BY A MORE AGGRESSIVE RECRUITING EFFORT IN THE LOCAL MIDDLE SCHOOL. I WILL BE IN-TOUCH WITH OUR DISTRICT EXECUTIVE TO SEE HOW WE CAN IMPROVE THE WAY WE DO IT AND HOW TO INCREASE OUR INITIAL COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE BOY'S PARENTS OR GUARDIANS. PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED INFORMATIONAL SHEET THAT I HAVE DEVELOPED TO QUICKLY AND THOROUGHLY INFORM NEW SCOUTING PARENTS ABOUT OUR PROGRAM. I AM HOPING THIS WILL INCREASE THE RETENTION RATE OF NEW SCOUTS IN OUR UNIT. THIS SHOULD NOT BE TOO DIFFICULT. I WOULD NOT CONSIDER ANOTHER SURVEY TO SEE IF THERE IS MORE AWARENESS OF SCOUTING IN THE COUNTY UNTIL AT LEAST ONE YEAR AFTER OUR INTENSIFIED RECRUITING DRIVE. THE REASON FOR THIS IS THAT THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION IN OUR AREA TENDS TO BE AS MUCH WORD OF MOUTH AS ANYTHING ELSE. ONE MUST ALWAYS KEEP IN MIND THAT THIS IS A RURAL COUNTY OF 24000 SOULS WITH THEIR METHODS AND THEIR WAYS. THEY WILL NOT BE INFRINGED UPON. I WAS ONCE TOLD BY A VERY GOOD FRIEND THAT IN OUR AREA ALL THINGS COME SLOWLY WITH TIME AND EFFORT. HOW TRUE!

ON ADDRESSING THE RESULTS OF QUESTION NUMBER TWO, I BELIEVE THAT AN ACCEPTANCE RATE OF 96% STATING THAT SCOUTING OFFERS A GOOD PROGRAM TO OUR YOUTH WOULD BE TOUGH TO INCREASE WITHOUT INCREASING THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE BEING AWARE THAT THERE IS A SCOUT TROOP IN EXISTENCE. THIS PERCENTAGE SHOULD GROW AS THE STATUS OF

SCOUTING GROWS IN ABBEVILLE COUNTY.

QUESTION NUMBER THREE THAT PROVIDED US WITH A RECOMMENDATION PERCENTAGE OF 92% SHOULD GIVE US THE CONFIDENCE TO MORE AGGRESSIVELY RECRUIT FOR THE TROOP. WE WILL TAKE THIS INTO ACCOUNT THIS FALL AS THE RECRUITING DRIVES BEGINS.

QUESTION NUMBER 4 WHICH ASKS IF PEOPLE WOULD PUT THEIR SON IN A LOCAL SCOUT TROOP SPEAKS FOR ITSELF AND I HAVE ONLY TO PROVIDE A GOOD QUALITY PROGRAM FOR THE YOUTH OF OUR AREA.

QUESTION NUMBER FIVE PRETTY MUCH SUBSTANTIATES WHAT MOST OF US ARE AWARE OF IN THIS AREA THAT DRUG USAGE AMONG OUR YOUTH IS A TREMENDOUS PROBLEM. I MAY CONSIDER PUTTING TOGETHER A DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM SPONSORED BY THE SCOUT TROOP IN HOPES THAT WE MAY REACH MORE BOYS OF SCOUT AGE AND KEEP THEM AWAY FROM DRUGS. THE DRUG AWARENESS PROGRAM IN THE TROOP HAS BEEN MOST SUCCESSFUL. THE BALANCE OF THE RESPONSE TO QUESTION FIVE WE CAN ADDRESS BY AGAIN PROVIDING SCOUTING AS IT'S BEST FOR THE BOYS IN OUR AREA.

CONCLUSIONS:

THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THERE IS A MARKED INCREASE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT SCOUTING IS ACTIVE IN THE COUNTY. THERE REMAINS HOWEVER MUCH WORK TO BE DONE SIMPLY BECAUSE OF THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO COULD NOT CONTRIBUTE TO OUR SURVEY IN ANY WAY. THERE IS ALSO THE FACT THAT MINORITIES KNEW LITTLE OF THE SCOUTING PROGRAM'S EXISTENCE. I BELIEVE THIS TO BE FACT BECAUSE I WAS ABLE TO IDENTIFY TO WHOM I WAS SPEAKING AND KNEW THE GENERAL AREA I WAS CALLING. THIS TO ME IS A GLARING PROBLEM AND A TREMENDOUS CHALLENGE. AS A RESULT OF THIS FINDING I AM RIGHT NOW IN THE PROCESS OF TRYING TO PUT TOGETHER A GROUP OF 4 MINORITY LEADERS IN OUR COMMUNITY IN ORDER TO TRY TO GET A SCOUT TROOP STARTED IN THIS SECTOR. AS I WRITE THIS I AM WAITING FOR A PHONE CALL FROM THE COUNTY SHERIFF WHO MAY BE INSTRUMENTAL IN AIDING ME. I HAVE THE NAMES OF 3 OTHER MINORITY LEADERS WHO MAY BECOME MEMBERS OF AN ASSEMBLED BOARD. THIS IS NOT MY FIRST ATTEMPT BUT IT WILL BE THE MORE PROFESSIONAL APPROACH OF THEM ALL. I FEEL THAT THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA IS OPEN FOR CRITICISM FOR NOT MORE AGGRESSIVELY ATTEMPTING TO RECRUIT MINORITIES IN OUR STATE. I UNDERSTAND THAT NATIONAL CAN PROVIDE EXTENSIVE HELP IN THIS AREA BUT APPARENTLY A PROGRAM FOR GETTING THE INFORMATION DOWN TO THE UNIT LEVEL IS LACKING. THERE MAY BE SOME SUCCESS STORIES THAT I AM UNAWARE OF BUT CERTAINLY NOT IN THIS IMMEDIATE AREA. IF I CANNOT PUT TOGETHER A GROUP TO TRY TO START A MINORITY SCOUT TROOP I WILL BE BITTERLY DISAPPOINTED. WE WILL SEE HOW TI GOES. AS A MEASUREMENT OF SCOUTING'S ACCEPTABILITY IN MY AREA IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT I USE ATTENDANCE AT SCOUTING ACTIVITIES AS A

SOUNDING BOARD. THAT IS SOMETHING I MIGHT HAVE AND DID OVERLOOK. EACH YEAR AFTER RETURNING FROM SUMMER CAMP WE HAVE A FULL COURT-OF-HONOR. THIS YEAR WE HAD 45 PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE WHICH WAS A RECORD BREAKER FOR US TO PUT IT MILDLY. I BELIEVE THE ACCEPTABILITY FACTOR IS UP CONSIDERABLY. WE EVEN HAD THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT THERE. THAT WAS SIMPLY UNHEARD OF A FEW YEARS AGO. I HAVE ALSO LEARNED THAT WHEN ONE OF OUR YOUNG MEN RECEIVES THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT THAT IT IS ANNOUNCED OVER THE PA SYSTEM AT THE LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL. WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF A CHANGE. TO PUT IT BLUNTLY WE MUST "KEEP ON KEEPING ON." I AM CONVINCED THAT IT WILL ONLY GET BETTER AS TIME PASSES IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING WAY OUT OF LINE.

ANY NEGATIVE FACTOR THAT MAY HAVE EXISTED IN THE RECENT PAST HAS BEEN NEGATED AS PROVEN BY THE SURVEY BUT RECRUITING REMAINS AN INTENSE CHALLENGE. PEOPLE IN THE AREA ARE NOW MUCH MORE AWARE OF SCOUTING AND IT'S BENEFITS. I WOULD THINK THAT EDUCATION AND PERSISTENCE ARE THE KEY. I MUST SAY THAT MY FIRST FEELING THAT PEOPLE DID NOT KNOW MUCH ABOUT SCOUTING IN THE AREA WAS MISTAKEN. THE 9 YEARS OF CONCERTED EFFORT HAVE HAD THE POSITIVE EFFECT. THE CONTINUED DIFFICULTY IN RECRUITING LED ME TO THE BELIEF THAT THINGS HAD NOT REALLY CHANGED THAT MUCH. THIS BRINGS ME TO THE INEVITABLE CONCLUSION THAT A GIVEN STUDY GROUP, ON THE ADULT LEVEL, MAY KNOW ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF A CERTAIN PROGRAM BUT ARE STILL UNWILLING TO GIVE OF THEIR TIME AND RESOURCES. I SINCERELY BELIEVE THAT RECRUITING BOYS TO THE PROGRAM REMAINS A CHALLENGE BECAUSE OF THE PERCEPTION THAT BOYS HAVE OF SCOUTING. THEY TELL ME THAT NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE AT SCHOOL IS A REAL PROBLEM FOR THEM. IF THEY ARE A MEMBER OF A SCOUTING UNIT THEY ARE CALLED SISSIES OR THE EQUIVALENT. THEY TELL ME THIS IS ONE OF THE MAIN

REASONS THEY DO NOT JOIN OR DROP OUT OF A UNIT. AFTER DISCUSSING THIS WITH MY OTHER UNIT LEADERS WE FEEL WE CAN ADDRESS THIS BY STRENGTHING THE ORDER OF THE ARROW WITHIN THE TROOP AND PROVIDING MORE EXCITING OUTINGS FOR THE OLDER YOUNG MEN IN THE TROOP. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT YOUNG MEN OF THE AGES OF 15 AND UP CAN POSITIVELY INFLUENCE YOUNGER BOYS TO JOIN AND STAY IN. I DO NOT HAVE ALL OF THE ANSWERS YET IN THE AREA OF RECRUITING BUT AM ADDRESSING IT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. NEVERTHELESS THESE GOOD FEELINGS THAT EXIST ABOUT SCOUTING IN THE COUNTY WILL PROVIDE BENEFITS THAT CANNOT BE SEEN AT THIS TIME.

IT IS OUR FERVENT HOPE THAT SCOUTING WILL CONTINUE TO BE A REASONABLE SUCCESS IN OUR AREA AND THAT LOCAL SUPPORT WILL CONTINUE TO BUILD AND GOD WILL BLESS US IN OUR EFFORTS.

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