

In Friend of Scouting Awards Luncheon

Larkey named Doc Herren Distinguished Citizen

Harlan County Black Bear Football Coach Tom Larkey was named the 2011 Dock Herren Distinguished Citizen during the Friends of Scouting Awards luncheon held recently at the Harlan Center.

The Doc Herren Award was given for the first time seven years ago and is presented to an individual who has given extraordinary service to youth. It is named in honor of longtime Scouting leader, the late Doc Herren.

With the program and luncheon hosted by the Harlan Rotary Club, Rotarian Jeremy Clem gave the introduction of the honoree, noting that he has spent many years teaching youth "how to do things right, how to act, and other immeasurable life lessons that is helping turn them into men."

"I do appreciate the honor," said Larkey. "It is a very distinguished award in honor of Doc Herren. Sadly, I did not know him, but I have heard a lot about him."

Larkey spoke of statistics concerning scouting, noting that he had learned only half of one percent of Boy Scouts in the U.S. earn all 121 merit badges offered by scouting. He noted that only about two percent of scouts receive the Eagle award. He quoted the famous words uttered on July 20, 1969, by Eagle Scout Neil Armstrong when The Apollo landed on the moon, "The Eagle has landed." Armstrong was an Eagle Scout.

After learning he had been selected to receive the award, Larkey said he contacted longtime friend Pat Greene who teaches in Rockcastle County. Greene actually left coaching to support his sons and to volunteer in the Boy Scout program. Larkey noted his admiration for Greene and his sons and their dedication to scouting.

Figures indicated that for every 100 boys that join scouting, rarely will one be brought before the juvenile court system, two will become Eagle Scouts, 17 will become future scout volunteers, 12 will have their first contact with church, one will enter the ministry, five will earn their church award, 18 will develop a hobby that lasts a lifetime, eight will enter a vocation learned through the merit badge system, one will use his scout skills to save his own life and one will use his scout skills to save someone else's life.

It was noted that 85 percent of student council presidents were scouts, while 71 percent of football team captains participated in scouting.

Larkey spoke of what scouting teaches youth, including responsibility, hard work and team work. "This will get you a lot in life," he said. "The Boy Scouts of America do not get the recognition they deserve when we should be supporting them more and more each day."

During the recognition program, Scout Jay Phillips said he had heard Coach Larkey always wanted to be a scout. "While it would be great for him to start at the top as an Eagle Scout, that isn't allowed so he would begin as a tenderfoot," said Phillips. "I would like to ask Coach Larkey to help me tie a 'joining knot,' better known as a square knot which is traditionally tied when a new scout joins a troop."

Phillips noted that he has participated in scouting for about eight years, noting "I have been fortunate to take part in a wide variety of activities that have helped me to grow physically and morally sound while striving to reach the Eagle Scout rank myself someday."

He spoke of “rewarding and challenging activities” he has participated in during scouting, including summer camps, community service, survival skills and various other trainings that led to merit badges.

David Howard, Leader of Troop 149 in Harlan, said “Harlan County boasts one of the most storied scouting histories in the state of Kentucky. Scouting was begun in Harlan County by Will Ward Duffield a mere two years after it was introduced to the United States from England in 1910. From its beginning, scouting has affected the lives of literally thousands of youth in our county.”

Howard noted that during its peak in the 1940s, there were more than 70 scout troops throughout Harlan County. “Scouting is still affecting the lives of Harlan County youth today with six units throughout our county serving approximately 126 youth with 73 volunteers,” he said.

Boy Scouts Logan Murray and Logan Clark of Troop 149 presented the colors and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Murray also presented the invocation.

Also during the luncheon, Danny Ashlock, district executive for the Bluegrass Council of the Boy Scouts of America, presented Harlan County Schools Superintendent Tim Saylor with a certificate of appreciation for his school district’s support of Scouting. Ashlock noted that it has become a challenge for scouting to be in some districts, but noted Harlan County Schools have continued to be supportive and open to the organization. The award noted the “generous commitment of time, support and inspiration given to the youth of Harlan County.”

During the luncheon, opportunities were presented to support scouting which costs approximately \$165 per year per scout.

For information on donating to the Harlan County Friends of Scouting event, visit www.bgbsa.org, call 859-231-7811 or Howard at 573-6924.