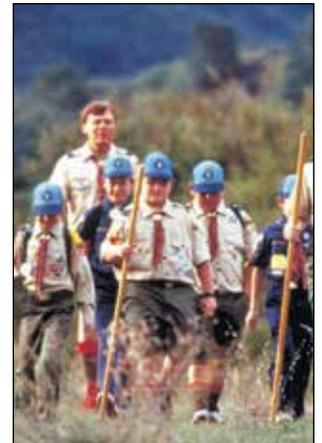


# KEEPING OUR PROMISE

A Successful \$17.5 Million Capital and Endowment Campaign

# “Keeping Our Promise”



**Campaign Name:** “Keeping Our Promise”

**Original Campaign Goal:** \$15.25 million

**Amount Raised:** \$17.5 million

**Length of Campaign:** 36 months

**Campaign Task:** To raise funding for capital improvements to the Theodore Naish Scout Reservation in Bonner Springs, Kansas and the H. Roe Bartle Scout Reservation near Osceola, Missouri and endowment funds for the ongoing maintenance of both camps.

**Campaign Highlights:** \$1 million J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation challenge grant — one of the largest ever conferred by the foundation

**Tribe of Mic-O-Say, a Council honor camping program, gave individual gifts totalling more than \$250,000**



One way to estimate true value is to consider whether the worth of something will increase or diminish with time. What will be its significance in one year? In five years? A decade from now? Over the course of a lifetime?

When it comes to appraising the value of the Boy Scouts of America, it is only necessary to ask those who have participated how Scouting has changed their lives. The answers reveal a passion and commitment to Scouting and the power of the organization to produce lives characterized by great purpose and true value.

Such is the mission of Heart of America Council, Boy Scouts of America of Kansas City, Missouri: To prepare the young people of eastern Kansas and western Missouri to make ethical choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

Traditionally, one of the primary ways the Boy Scouts of America has forged these values into young lives has been through its

camping program. From “Be Prepared” to “Leave No Trace”—and every lesson in between—young people are taught invaluable lessons through the camping experience.

Due to its camping program’s long history, the Heart of America Council’s two summer camps were stretched far beyond capacity. The facilities at H. Roe Bartle Scout Reservation near Osceola, Missouri and Theodore Naish Scout Reservation in Bonner Springs, Kansas were aging and in need of significant repairs and upgrades.

In order to adequately address these needs, the Council sought professional fundraising expertise from Hartsook Companies, Inc., a national fundraising consulting firm, for a multi-million dollar capital and endowment campaign called “Keeping Our Promise”—with \$6 million earmarked for renovations to Bartle, \$6.5 million to Naish and approximately \$3 million in endowment for the on-going maintenance of both camps.

While the Council had completed successful campaigns in the past, it had never attempted such a large effort or utilized professional fundraising counsel. Said Hartsook Companies President Matt Beem (Eagle Scout and Cubmaster in the Council): “This campaign was significantly larger than anything the Council had ever undertaken—probably twice as large. What we had going for us in Kansas City was tremendous support among area leaders, who were also personally connected to the Scouting program.”

All three Campaign Chairs—Terry Dunn, Dr. John Hunkeler and Cliff Illig—have long been involved in Scouting. Each had benefited from the skills, lessons and experiences espoused by the organization and knew firsthand its inestimable value.

A lead gift from Illig and his wife, Bonne, set the stage for the kind of generosity this campaign would enjoy. The other couples, Dr. John and Mary Hunkeler and Terry and the Hon. Peggy Dunn, followed the Illig’s lead with substantial gifts.

Early in the campaign, the leadership committee flew to Tulsa, Oklahoma to make a proposal to the J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation. The campaign had already garnered approximately \$5 million in commitments but still had a long way to go. Said then Heart of America Council Scout Executive Jim Terry: “After landing in Tulsa, we headed right into the airport conference room and ran through the questions we expected to be asked by Mabee. Once we were in the meeting, things clicked. We were prepared for every question they asked us. Nothing took us by surprise.” Scouting’s motto, “Be Prepared,” characterized the preparation for each and every major solicitation.

Offered Beem: “Our firm brought experience in approaching Mabee; we all had a personal appreciation and understanding of the Scouting program; and a few of us had many years of success in major-gift fundraising. We had a prepared script, the right people going into the meeting and the right people traveling along for pre-game coaching. It was clearly a successful team effort.”

After receiving the \$1 million challenge grant from Mabee—one of the largest ever conferred by the foundation—the leadership had only one year to meet the foundation’s requirement and raise the remaining \$12 million. Fortunately, other foundation gifts, including \$500,000 from the Hall Family Foundation; \$250,000 each from the Sunderland, the Victor E. and Caroline E. Schutte and the William T. Kemper Foundations; and others propelled the campaign toward its goal. A generous gift from Joe Jack and Ellen Merriman also provided a tremendous boost to the campaign.

Said Beem: “Jim Terry accompanied committee members on virtually every solicitation. At the very beginning of the campaign, we compiled a long list of prospects and rated them according to our sense of their financial capacity and their commitment to the organization. We made our solicitation requests based on the amount we thought a prospect could realistically give.” This philosophy assumed that unless one asks each and every prospect for the largest, most significant gift, a campaign risks leaving considerable amounts of money on the table.

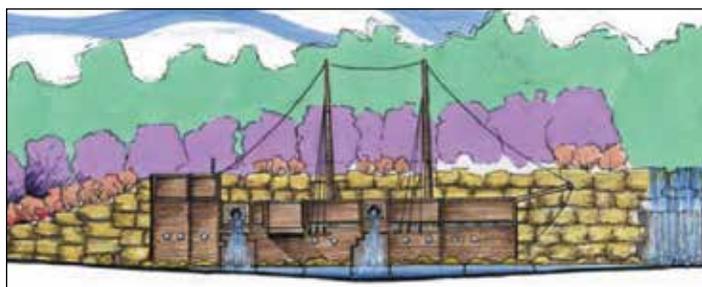
## Theodore Naish Scout Reservation



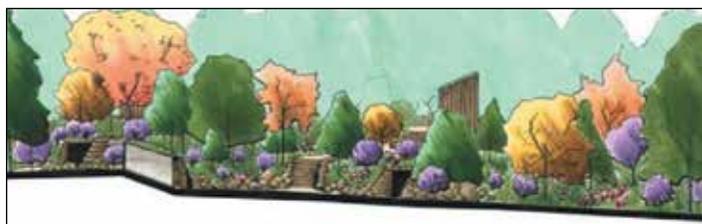
Proposed Reservation Headquarters



Proposed Trading Post



Proposed Mini-Waterpark/Pirate Ship - Cub World



Proposed Lost Mine Theme Area - Cub World

One committee member suggested a unique approach for involving a large number of Scouts in the campaign. The members of the Tribe of Mic-O-Say, an honor camping program unique to the Council, were issued a challenge. Each member was invited to donate a dollar a day for three years. The same challenge was reiterated at Council meetings, Scout camps and other Scouting events. The Tribe of Mic-O-Say supported the campaign with individual gifts totaling more than \$250,000. The challenge successfully drew many individuals to the campaign that might not have otherwise given.

A special aspect of “Keeping Our Promise” was its sense of intergenerational pride and involvement. Several gifts arrived from three generations of Scouts—son, father and grandfather—highlighting the ever-increasing and timeless value of Scouting to those who have participated.

## H. Roe Bartle Scout Reservation



Staff Shelter, Camp Sawmill



Proposed Staff Area, Camp Sawmill



Proposed Staff Site Plan, Camp Sawmill



Proposed Mic-O-Say Shelter

Such pride and commitment was also reflected in the level of naming opportunities—such as cabins and campgrounds—underwritten by Scout-affiliated donors. “The personal nature of each gift—one based in an emotional and relational tie with the organization—made this campaign one of the most rewarding I have ever experienced,” Beem added.

The intensity of these connections was also represented by the size of gifts compared to similarly sized campaigns. There were more gifts of \$25,000 and above than many campaigns receive. At the same time, this is a good lesson and an example for other organizations to build strong relationships prior to undertaking a large capital campaign.

While most organizations do the bulk of their cultivation in anticipation of soliciting gifts, the Heart of America Council had been cultivating major gifts for decades. The Scouting program was, in its own way, a form of cultivation. When it was time to ask constituents for the largest gifts possible, the Council was ready. Donors were not only prepared to give but were pleased and proud to have an opportunity to give back to an organization that had made such an impact on their lives.

In addition, the Heart of America Council used great foresight and common sense to prepare for the campaign. The Council realized that it first needed to address unmet maintenance issues at the camps before launching the drive. A portion of the operational money was used to address deferred up keep. When the Council did ask for endowment monies to support the maintenance of the camps, donors were already impressed with the improvements they had seen taking place and were prepared to support an endowment.

Even with the many major gifts received—\$460,265 from James Kidwell Construction, as well as generous gifts from Glenn and Mary Beth Illig and David and Mary Lockton—the campaign came down to the wire in meeting its Mabee grant deadline. But in

the end, the campaign “Keeping Our Promise” not only met its promise but exceeded expectations by over \$2 million to reach more than \$17 million in capital and endowment contributions.

How does one appraise the value of a thing? Consider its future worth. As this campaign demonstrated, the value of Scouting continues to grow with each passing year—one generation confirming to the next that the rewards of Scouting will last a lifetime.

This is the promise that the Heart of America Council has made to future Scouts...a promise of timeless values...and a promise that the camping program will always be there. With the success of its multi-million dollar capital and endowment campaign, the Heart of America Council has certainly fulfilled its goal and clearly kept its promise.

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*About the Consultant* – Matthew J. Beem, MPA, CFRE, President, has been a fundraising professional for more than 15 years. During that time he has helped nonprofits raise more than \$150 million. Matt works with national youth service agencies, institutions of higher education, international religious organizations and their related affiliates and local social service organizations as they seek to expand and improve services for their clients. Matt can be reached at [matt@hartsookcompanies.com](mailto:matt@hartsookcompanies.com).

*About Hartsook Companies, Inc.* – Hartsook Companies, Inc. serves nonprofit clients nationwide and around the globe with research-based fundraising counsel and professional management consulting. Hartsook is the foremost leader in fundraising education with the world's only named, endowed chair in fundraising: The Robert F. Hartsook Chair in Fundraising at Indiana University and Hartsook Institutes for Fundraising. The firm has provided services to over 3,000 nonprofit clients which include campaigns ranging from \$500,000 to more than \$1 billion. To learn more: [www.hartsookcompanies.com](http://www.hartsookcompanies.com)

*About the Author* – Denise Rhoades is a free-lance writer who regularly works with Hartsook clients to write campaign case statements, articles and stories of fundraising success.

