

Ten years later

Ten years ago, Evan Hunsberger decided he would republish a book of daily devotions his grandfather carried with him during World War II. No one would have guessed that this Eagle Scout project would have resulted in sending 310,000 copies of Strength for Service to God and Country to U.S. service men and women around the world. On this sixth anniversary of the book's publication, UM Men magazine asked Evan and his father to talk about what the effort has meant to them.

From Don:

Strength for Service to God and Country has had a life forming effect on my son, Evan, and on his brother, Alec. They have been recognized both locally and in several other areas of the country for helping to raise funds for the daily devotional. The experience of stepping out in front of the world to announce their Christian beliefs has made both of my sons more spiritually grounded than I had ever prayed they could be at their young ages.

There are two primary effects that the book has had on my life outside of its impact on my sons. First, I believe that just being the father of these two Eagles has elevated my stature in almost every sector of my life. Since Evan embarked on this venture back in the 1990s, I have earned awards that are far beyond any recognition that I would ever reasonably have expected to receive. In one case, I initially declined an award, only to have the Scouts graciously offer to let me pass the award to a friend of mine who was shot in Viet Nam and who has lived for forty years in a wheel chair as a hemiplegic. When I was able to stand before a crowd of several thousand people and introduce this man who earned his Eagle with me back in Indiana, and who

was on the wrestling team with me in high school, when I was able to talk about the shared faith we have which was the basis for his having survived the ordeal his life has been, I could only look at my friend standing in the audience between my two sons and praise God for the daily devotional that had made that tribute possible.



The second effect that *Strength for Service* has had on my life has been the ability the book has given me to present the devotional to men on three-day weekends such as Cursillo or Kairos, the prison ministry program. The story of my sons' involvement with this book and the ecumenical aspects of the devotional always had an impact on the men attending the weekends. The power of the Holy Spirit has never been more apparent in my life than when I have been blessed to present these stories as a witness to men who are seeking to grow closer to Christ in their daily lives. For this blessing, I am eternally grateful.

From Evan

It is really hard to believe that our family's involvement with *Strength for Service to God and Country* began almost ten years ago. It seems like only a month ago that my dad was taking my little brother and me to meet with Larry Coppock at the University of Redlands where he was speaking on behalf of the General Commission on UM Men.

The whole Hunsberger clan thinks United Methodists exemplify what ecumenical Christians act like; their generous and energetic support of every aspect of this blessed effort has been a benefit to people in every branch of the Body of Christ.

The book has been a major source of blessings for everyone in my family. In my case, I know that every step of my life has been helped both spiritually and practically. Work on the book enabled me to receive the Young American Award, and the writings helped keep me aware of my obligations as a Christian on a daily basis. The book also helped me get a wonderful job out of college, and it provided opportunities for me to tell



others that Christ is the center of my life.

Because of the book, I have met members of the military, their parents, their family members, and their friends who have said things about me that I didn't deserve. I have spoken to people in a dozen states. In many cases, I believed they were better men than me, but they gave me a standing ovation.

I've met some of my heroes, such as Tommy Frank, Robert Schuller, Daniel "Rudy" Ruettiger, and dozens of others. I will never forget being on stage at the Crystal Cathedral, in the stadium at Purdue, or addressing the National Boy Scout Convention. Thanks to the General Commission on

UM Men, I have been able to receive more than twenty awards around the country, and in the process learn more about how to deal with people than I ever dreamed would be possible in just a decade. My parents, my sisters, my brother and I will never be able to repay the generous members of commission for all they have done for the Hunsbergers.

God Bless you all.

Good Samaritan Awards

Amy Marie Moore-- Volunteer for service in Alaska and Louisiana

DEWEY, Okla.—
Amy received a Good Samaritan Award for serving as a Volunteer in Mission in Alaska and Louisiana.

Amy helped coordinate a Bible school in Alaska during the summer of 2005. In the afternoons she led games and youth activities, and in the evenings she helped clear brush away from the church and parsonage. The following year, she spent the summer rebuilding homes in New Orleans. She also volunteered as a member of the Youth Force in Dewey and Oklahoma City.

She is active in the Dewey Church and serves on the Youth Leadership Council and the Administrative Council. While in high school, Amy was involved with Big Brothers and Big Sisters and participated in Bowl for Kids Sake and was a volunteer at the Special Olympic Games.

Amy is a member of the National Honor Society, the Key Club, the Spanish Club and the basketball team. She was class secretary her senior year. She also attended the Oklahoma State University Student Advisory Leadership Conference in Stillwater.

Sean Pegado-- A warm welcome for visitors

BUFFALO, N.Y.—
Sean Pegado refurbished the entrance to Central Park UMC as his Eagle project, and the congregation presented him with a Good Samaritan Award.

"He made it more welcoming and visitor-friendly space" said Pastor Richard W. Neal.

The congregation expressed its appreciation by presenting Sean with a Good Samaritan Award. He had earlier received all four God and Country Awards.

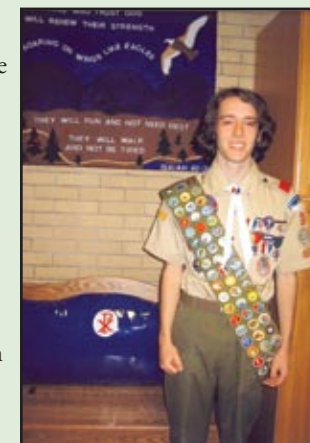
Sean applied for, and received, a grant to finance the project, which included felt banners of the UMC symbol and an illustration of Isaiah 40:31. He also provided a cushioned bench with a storage compartment.

Sean also volunteered at a local garden/community food center and wrote an article for the city newspaper about the center.

He engaged in these activities while keeping up with rigorous academic demands, and he graduated from high school with higher honors and was named a National AP Scholar.

Brian Lane-- Have hammer will travel

MEDINA, Ohio—
"It has been some time since I have met a youth with Brian's passion for putting his faith into action," said Beverly Pancoast, director of youth at Granger UMC. "Brian began his mission trip experiences





Matthew Hamilton stands in the prayer garden he completed as his Eagle Scout project.

with Granger UMC upon completion of the 8th grade. Immediately we saw a work ethic different from most youth. He was the first to begin working on a site and the last one to quit for the day.”

Brian has built or repaired structures at the Henderson Settlement in Kentucky (2003), an Appalachia Service Project in Virginia (2004), a Volunteers in Mission project in Claremore, Okla. (2006), the Toledo Service Project in Ohio (2006) and Camp Mechuwana, Maine (2007).

He has also participated in four Habitat for Humanity builds in the past three years.

Little wonder that Granger UMC presented Brian with a Good Samaritan Award.

Matthew Hamilton-- Builds prayer garden

COLUMBIA, Tenn.—

For his Eagle Scout project, Matthew led efforts to construct a \$70,000 prayer garden in honor of Mae Duncan for her years of service to the First UMC and Maury County Girl Scouts. Matthew raised \$15,000 in cash donations and received \$25,000 in supplies and donated professional labor from 15 local companies. The project has an estimated value of \$70,000. Volunteers contributed 1,300 hours of labor excavating 70 yards of dirt, laying 25 yards of compacted aggregate base, and installing 17 pallets of retaining wall blocks and 3,000 concrete pavers.

Larry Coppock, a staff executive with the General Commission on UM Men, presented Matthew with the 800th Good Samaritan Award during an October ceremony.

UM Men Foundation aids Scout troop in Philippines

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

The UM Men Foundation agreed to support a Boy Scout Troop in the Philippines.

Last June, Filipino parents and elementary school boys who had been participating in a training group for boys, met at a school in Kidapawan City.

At that meeting, the “Barug” MT. APO KIDs (Montgomery Training and Advancement Program of Kidapawan Scouts) was formally organized as the only non-school based “open community” scouting unit.

After six years of the KIDs existence as a training and advancement group, four adult trainers asked the Cotabato Boy Scout Council for permission to become the only open-community scouting unit within the council.

“Barug” is a Cebuano term which means “stand up.” More specifically, it refers to defending one’s rights. Mount Apo is a dormant 9,000-foot volcano, the highest peak in the Philippines.

In August, 109 boys and adults participated in their first formal ceremony as a Scout troop. At that time, many of the boys received promotional rank cards, patches, merit badges and sashes.

In October, Camilo N. Toledo Jr., a member of the General Commission on UM Men and the technical staff of the bishop’s office in Kidapawan City, told

the commission that many of the boys could not participate in Scouts because they cannot afford the cost for annual registration, insurance and uniforms. The General Commission on UM Men agreed to become a partner organization with

the troop and the UM Foundation pledged \$1,500. Members are encouraged to send their contributions through the commission.

The new troop will now open its doors to all interested boys

including out-of-school youth, students or individuals whose schools or churches do not have a registered troop and those who could not register and join scouting activities because of insufficient funds.

Scouting in the Philippines is organized in six groups:

KID (Kabataang Imumulat Diwa) Scouting—4-5 years old.

KAB (Kabataang Alay sa Bayan) Scouting—6-9 years old.

The Home and Institution Boy Scouting—10-12 years old

Outdoors & Community Senior Scouting—13-17 years old

Outdoors Rover Scouting—16-24 years old.

Service-Oriented Projects/Activities (for young men and women)

Thirty two scouts are now in training; the group hopes to recruit up to 300 trainees out of the 3,000 Scouts in the city.

