

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The Seventy

47 East South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

July 1997

Dear Fellow Varsity Scouts:

It is a thrill to imagine that I am standing on this high mountain peak in the clean, fresh air shoulder to shoulder with you. There are great lessons in life to be learned by putting forth the kind of effort it has taken to stand at the very pinnacle of this mountain range. I congratulate you. Look around you at the other members of the team who stand at the top with you. You know what kind of effort they had to put forth because they did what you have done.

Hamblin Garland gave this tribute to Dan Beard:

*Do you fear the force of the wind, the slash of the rain?
Go face them and fight them, be savage again.
Go hungry and cold like the wolf,
Go wade like the crane.
For the palms of your hands will toughen
And the skin on your forehead will tan.
You'll be ragged and swarthy and weary,
But you'll walk like a man.*

There is a wonderful spiritual and physical exhilaration that comes from being tested like a man. You are all men or you wouldn't be standing here. Boys can't do what you have done; it takes a man.

High on this peak you can think clearer, you feel closer to God. The prophets have always gone to the high mountains to communicate with God. Satan's power is minimal here. You have to get back down to the cities where you find him pushing drugs, distributing pornography, compromising morals for lust and sex, self-abuse, and homosexuality. He is most effective and his filth is most pervasive in the dark streets and alleys of the cities.

Standing on this peak today is a time to make some spiritual resolutions:

- Make up your mind to serve God with all your heart. (I did when I was a young man, and that is when I truly became "free.")
- Decide you are going to be a "man's" man. Have integrity and character, be moral and honest, and respect womanhood. Be in good physical condition and take care of yourself.

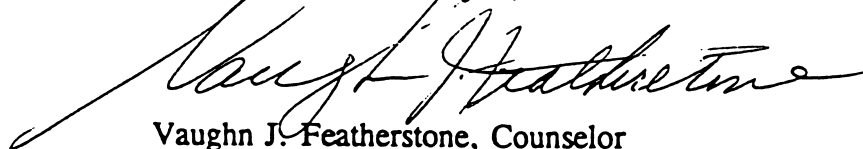
- Believe in yourself; believe that you are special, that God loves you and has great work for you to do. (He did for me, and I came from a broken home with an alcoholic father.) He believes in you and has great confidence in your future.

Rudyard Kipling wrote "The Law of the Jungle." He teaches a not only wonderful but also true principle of survival:

*Now this is the law of the jungle,
It's as old and true as the sky.
And the wolf that obeys it shall prosper
But the wolf that denies it must die.
As the creeper encircles the tree trunk,
Ever weaving forward and back,
So the strength of the pack is the wolf,
But the strength of the wolf is the pack.*

Unite with good, wholesome young men; there is strength on a "team," in a quorum, and in a "righteous band of Christians who possess the land." Use as ideals for living men from the scriptures—Captain Moroni, Helaman's 2,000 stripling warriors, Nephi, Ammon, the Brother of Jared, and the Nephi who was here when the Savior visited this continent. You will do wonderful and magnificent things if you stay true to the faith and are obedient to God's commandments. From among you God will call bishops, stake presidents, temple presidents, General Authorities, and apostles. Live clean and sweet and pure. We pray with all our heart that God will protect and watch over you so that each one of you can fill your divine destiny. We are proud of you. Stand tall as the mountains and firm as the prophets of God. We love you. God bless you always.

With love and faith in you,



Vaughn J. Featherstone, Counselor
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