

May 23, 2015

A ground breaking day for Camp William Hinds - By Michelle Libby

Monday morning ground was broken on the multi-million dollar dining hall and Thornton Family STEM/NOVA Education Center at Camp William Hinds in Raymond. With the newly arrived IRT soldiers watching on, Captain Christopher Scannell acted as master of ceremonies.

“The Pine Tree Council is striving to become the number one Scouting destination in the Northeast region and this IRT partnership is a key component to reaching that goal,” said Scannell.

Through the IRT program, military personnel from all over the country and two British Army Commandos, come to Raymond in partnership “where the Pentagon provides leadership, tradesmen, fuel, vehicles, and equipment for four months each summer.”

“This will be a place where young men come to learn skills that will last throughout their lives,” said Scannell, referring to Camp Hinds.

Scout executive and CEO Eric Tarbox addressed the gathering. “Founder [of Boy Scouts] Baden Powell did not come from a family of means.” Baden Powell dreamed of success through hard work, merit and achievement regardless of where they came from, Tarbox continued. Camp Hinds is within a day’s drive of 50 percent of the nation’s population and he’d like to see the camp a household name across the country.



“This isn’t tactical, it’s strategic,” Tarbox said.

Colonel Eric Lind from the Maine Air Guard spoke about his experiences as a 10-year Scoutmaster with his sons, who are both Eagle Scouts, the highest rank in Boy Scouting. “It’s emotional and unbelievable. Something happens in a week down here without electronics. It’s magic,” he said.

Lind compared the training leaders in the military versus the Boy Scouts training leaders. The military spends millions of dollars to produce leaders, but the Scouts create leaders in a safe environment where they are allowed to make mistakes, he said.

“Hundreds of kids that come through here will talk about this for the rest of their lives,” he finished. Horace Horton, the capital campaign co-chair and the current president of the board of directors for Pine Tree Council BSA, described the partnership as a “Once in a century opportunity to do what we are doing.” He also announced that Camp Hinds will be purchasing the last remaining piece of land on the other side of the Tenny River, thus expanding the camp.



Donors from all over were also in attendance. Tom Yost from Smith & Wesson has been a sponsor for the shooting sports programs at Camp Hinds and said he was “proud to be a part of the team.”



Joe Picoraro, vice president of PC Construction and an Eagle Scout, has been involved in Scouting for 25 years as a Scoutmaster and on all of his camping trips with his troop 23 to Camp Hinds he stayed in the Baden Powell campsite, which is now the new location of the dining hall. PC Construction donated all of the pre-planning services including estimating, scheduling and constructability reviews between the military and the Scouts. He predicts that in 10 to 20 years, the site of the dining hall will be the center of Camp Hinds.

Architect Janet Hansen with SMRT and Andrew Bradley the structural engineer from SMRT were both on hand to help in the groundbreaking.

Other donors present, but not all, were Lowes, Walmart, American Steel and Aluminum LLC, R.J. Grondin & Sons, The Hissong Group, Casco Bay Steel Structures, Inc., Nox-Crete and Yerxa’s Oil & Power Equipment.

The Town of Raymond will also benefit from having the IRT staying at Camp Hinds. Town Manager Don Willard thanked the military for what they are doing for Raymond and the country.

“This is a great asset for us to have,” said Raymond assessing assistant Danielle Loring.

From Theodore Roosevelt’s quote to demonstrate the mission of the Boy Scouts of America, “Every child has inside him an aching void for excitement and if we don’t fill it with something which is exciting and interesting and good for him, he will fill it with something which is exciting and interesting and which isn’t good for him.”





