



the Serra Leader

The wisdom of chili A recipe for building membership

by USA Council President Douglas P. McRoy

The Kiwanis Club in my town is very active. The club, which includes many well known community leaders, sponsored a fantastic chili dinner which was their main fund raiser. You could tell that the public as well as the members enjoyed the festivity and the camaraderie involved. Needless to say, their club was well thought of throughout the community.

About 15 years ago, one of their members passed away. He left quite a substantial bequest to the Kiwanis Club. I don't know the amount, but it was in the high six figures. Several members of the club thought they should put this money into an endowment-type savings and use the interest to pay for their community projects. Because of this windfall, they decided that they would no longer host the chili dinner.

Within a few years, the attendance at their meetings dropped significantly, the enthusiasm for their community projects diminished, and their membership was reduced to almost half. This was quite loss a to our community.

Then, about five years ago, this club started to revive itself. One of the first things it did was to resume the chili dinner, now refashioned as a chili cook-off. As you can imagine the club has now rebounded well.

Putting the Fun in Fund Raiser!

The moral of this story is pretty clear. I am sure you can attest that Serra clubs who do a lot together are stronger and their members are more enthused. Many of our members have priorities that require seeing results and accomplishments while they are serving their church.

Fund raisers can and do bring in needed monies, but the biggest advantage is that they give Serra members something worthwhile, active and fun toward which to direct their efforts. As illustrated by my Kiwanis story, the camaraderie and community spirit present at such events goes a long way toward generating interest and enthusiasm, both inside and outside the club. Likewise, district governors could and should coordinate with their diocese and vocation offices to host activities arranged



Douglas P. McRoy

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the USA Council leader datebook

ALL YEAR UNTIL JUNE 19, 2010

The Year of the Priest,
as proclaimed by Pope
Benedict XVI. See
www.usccb.org/yearforpriests
for more details.

APRIL

25

World Day of Prayer
for Vocations

MAY

1

Award nominee forms, club
president and vice presidents'
reports due to USAC office in
Chicago, IL

15

District governor report due to
regional director

24

District SLPC report due to
regional director and USAC
office

30

Regional Director report due to
regional coordinator and USAC
office

30

Club president's incoming offi-
cers form due to USAC office

JUNE

17-20

USA Council Annual Meeting
and SuperWeekend, Chicago IL

SEPTEMBER

2-5

Serra International Convention
Anchorage, AK

SAVE THE DATE!

**JOIN US in Chicago, June 17-20, 2010
for our Super Weekend and Annual meeting!**

Try this in YOUR club!

Adopt a seminarian, priest, or religious

Objective: To affirm seminarians, priest and religious

Go to your diocesan vocation office and ask for a list of names, addresses, phone numbers and emails of the seminarians in your diocese, or pick a priest or religious and get the same information.

Ask each member of your club to pick one of the names. They can then make contact via letter, card, phone or email, and inform the seminarian, priest or religious that they would like to "adopt" them.

Adoption means that the Serran will support them in any way they are able, which could include:

- Keep them in your daily prayers, as well as include in your daily prayers a request for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life.
- Send them cards on their birthday, Easter, Christmas, and other holidays. For priests include cards for Priesthood Sunday, anniversary of ordination, and for religious a card for World Day for Consecrated Life.
- Take them to lunch, dinner, sports or cultural activities.
- Invite them to your home for a meal or a special event.
- For seminarians, novices, and others in formation send a roll of stamps or a phone card or other small gifts and follow them through to ordination or consecration.
- Attend their ordination or consecration event.
- Take them on vacation with you.
- Provide financial assistance (always check with the Diocesan Vocation Office).
- Give immediate sincere commendation and praise to priests for good homilies or some other good action.
- Write notes of thanks and appreciation to parish ministers on special occasions such as baptisms, weddings, sickness, and funerals.
- Make positive statements and observations to neighbors, friends, and parishioners about parish ministers.
- Maintain a spirit of friendliness, cooperation and assistance with the parish staff.
- Show recognition, understanding, and appreciation of the heavy work load of priests and other parish staff personnel.
- Do something special for a particular anniversary, date or year. ★

The Wisdom of Chili

Continued from page 1

within their district. If you want to get noticed in your area, create a worthwhile project and get the community involved.

The USA Council national leadership are putting a high priority on this type of effort and we hope individual clubs will be enhanced by it. We strongly encourage participation in programs such as College Connection for Catholics, Priesthood Sunday, and the Parish Contact Program because we believe they will help raise club enthusiasm and public awareness.

Join the St. Andrew Society

We are expanding our St. Andrew Society, which recognizes gifts to the Bishop Britt Fund and other USA Council Board restricted funds. Most of these dollars go to the vocations projects mentioned above, but we will also use the funds to provide more and better leadership training, primarily using the many services available via the Internet and other electronic conferencing technologies.

When you donate \$1,000 (at once or over time) to any of the USA Council funds, you become a member of the St. Andrew Society. In the future, we will create higher levels of recognition and special benefits and communications for Society members.

Serra International Foundation

Finally, I cannot speak of fund raising without mentioning and acknowledging the Serra International Foundation. Our clubs in the United States have a solid reputation for contributing to the Foundation. We definitely should continue.

I hope that as we come together and create a "good works" atmosphere with fun fund raisers and community outreach, we will fulfill all of these worthwhile achievements. It starts with leadership at all levels, but especially with our valued clubs and members.

God bless us all and I wish everyone a very healthy and prosperous 2010. ★

World Day of Prayer for Vocations: April 25, 2010

A worldwide celebration that begins in each parish

Pope Paul VI instituted the World Day of Prayer for Vocations on April 11, 1964, saying: "O Jesus, divine Shepherd of the spirit, you have called the Apostles in order to make them fishermen of men, you still attract to you burning spirits and generous young people, in order to render them your followers and ministers to us."

For the 46 years since, successive pontiffs have called on the Church to focus and pray for vocations. The World Day of Prayer for Vocations is one of four church vocations events promoted by the USA Council each year. Celebration resource kits for three of these are provided by the National Coalition for Church Vocations (NCCV). This is the fourth year that the USA Council has had a special price per kit for parishes in their service area.

Serra clubs can help parishes to prepare for this day by ordering the kits, which provide prayers, age-appropriate Catholic school activities, and other useful information. The kits are available from the USA Council office for \$4.50 for the printed version or \$2.25 for a .pdf version sent to an

e-mail address. *One kit or .pdf copy should be ordered for each parish being served.** The fee per parish gives permission for copies to be made for use as needed in the parish. Call 888-777-6681 to place the order using a credit card for payment and have your club reimburse the expense. Please make full use of the resource.

*Purchase of any of the Annual Celebration Kits includes duplication rights for a single parish or school only. The Kits may not be duplicated for quantity distribution by a diocese, religious congregation, or other organizations without the purchase of a bulk distribution permit from NCCV. Contact USAC of SI for a permit number. All Annual Celebration Kits are copyrighted by NCCV. ★

Plan Ahead!

Annual Vocations Events for 2011 Cycle C

NVAW	January 9-15
WDCL	February 6
WDPV	May 11



boring but important

by Ed Verbeke, USAC Executive Director

Spring is finally here. I can begin to think about putting the snow shovels away and prepping my lawnmower for summer. (But knowing the weather here in the Chicago area, I won't put the snow shovels away until mid May.)

Spring is my favorite time of year because it is a time of new beginning and preparation. I know if I want to have a beautiful yard, I have to start work now with the seeding, fertilizing and mulching. Waiting until very warm weather will have some impact, but not as much as starting now in early Spring.

Likewise, **now is the time when club officers prepare for the new Serra year, using the Spring Leadership Planning Conference (SLPC.)** This USA Council program has proven to be

most successful in readying club officers for the new year. Members of the Leadership Development

Committee have done a fantastic job in creating the lesson plans and PowerPoint presentations, eliminating any extra work for you. As a part of the SLPC, participants develop their planning calendars for the coming year. If you are responsible for obtaining speakers or programs for your club meetings, now is a great time to get the speakers and programs booked. Leadership Development Committee members are ready to answer any questions you may have about the SLPC program.

Our next Super Weekend and Annual meeting will be held here in Chicago, June 17-20, 2010. We have been able to negotiate a great rate at the newly renovated Chicago O'Hare Crowne Plaza Hotel of \$85.00 a night. Your participation is wanted and needed. Stay tuned to your snail- and e-mail boxes for more details! ★



Up to your ears in report forms?



We've reduced the number of forms officers are requested to fill out! Some forms have been replaced by a request for short narrative reports. Here are the only forms you need to complete:

Club Presidents:

- Report of Incoming Officers (due May 31)

District Governors:

- Governor's SLPC Conference Report (due May 15)
- Governor's Club Visit Report (due Dec. 15)

District Governor, Regional Director or Convention Chair:

- District/Regional Conventions Recap (due ASAP after event)

Download the forms from www.serraus.org or call 888.777.6681 to request e-mail or print copies. ★



Attention club newsletter editors!

Are you proud of your attractive, informative club newsletter? Enter to win the USAC Outstanding Newsletter Award!

1. Make **three copies each** of your favorite **two consecutive** issues published between August 2009 and the present.
2. Prepare a cover sheet listing your club's name, club number, region number, newsletter editor and club contact.
3. Send these materials to: USA Council Outstanding Newsletter Contest
65 E. Wacker Place, Suite 802
Chicago IL 60601

Entries are due at USAC headquarters by May 1, 2010. Regional winners and one council winner will be recognized this June at the USAC Annual Meeting at the Super Weekend in Chicago. The council winner will receive a framed, matted, personalized poster of Fr. Serra by artist George Pollard. Judging criteria are appearance and content. Winners are selected by a panel of judges from across the U.S.A.

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