

Visioning Team Meeting Wednesday, April 28, 2010

Present: Dick Broene, Steve Machiele, John Kaas-hoek, Bob deJonge, Mike Feys, Don VanDerKlok, Ron Noorman, and Mike VanderMeer

Dick Broene shared that the cadeting ministry has taken steps to implement some of the suggestions made by the visioning team, especially in the area of encouraging prayer (developing a culture of prayer).

1. At council visits, executive director, Dick Broene has briefed the attendees on the activities of the visioning team and introduced how vital prayer is to the ministry of cadeting. Many meetings included a prayer time meant to provide an example of how prayer can be a part of any cadet related gathering.
2. Just a reminder that there is a prayer calendar on the Cadet web site and in Clarion Newsletter.
3. The theme for November 2010 Quest will be “conversations with God.”
4. The executive committee members are making follow-up calls to congressmen to get their reaction to the Friday sessions of congress that emphasized prayer.
5. The Corps office is now sending out a monthly e-newsletter to every e-mail address in our database that provides counselors with opportunity to share their prayer requests and praises.
6. The culture of prayer is being promoted in all Cadet Corps publications including Clarion, DCE Connection, and Cadeting Today.
7. DCE summit meetings have included information on the culture of prayer concept.

Comments were made by committee members about having short prayer times before and/or after Cadet club meetings and that the organization should find ways to promote this.

Observations about the age of men involved in the ministry.

In looking at Cadet counselors some committee members observed that the average age of men participating in the Cadet ministry seemed to be higher than ten or twenty years ago — thus raising questions whether

the cadeting is bringing enough new and younger men into the ministry. Dick Broene said that there is no data on the club registration forms to help us determine whether this observation is true, but looking at the camporee registrations over past decades, where birth dates are provided, he was able to provide some useful information. The following information seems to confirm the observations about the “aging” of the men participating in the cadeting ministry.

- a. In 1987, 65% of the men at the camporee were between 26 and 40. Ten men were over 50.
- b. In 1996, 65% of the men at the camporee were between 31 and 45. 42 men were over 50.
- c. In 2008, 61% of the men at the camporee were between 41 and 55. 54 men were over 50.

The committee divided in to three discussion groups and were asked to provide their thoughts on the following three questions:

1. What would attract a man to get involved with the Cadet organization?
2. What would keep him there?
3. How could training in the Cadet Corps be more effective than it is? Not only training the mind or gaining skills, but nurturing, encouraging, and building the man in his life and as a counselor.

The ideas that the groups came up with were:

For Question 1.

- Pray for the prospective counselor, then invite him to consider being used by this ministry, then ask him to pray for God’s leading.
- They must see the cadeting ministry as dynamic and vital
- They must see a purpose in being involved
- Share the “success” stories of cadeting with friends and your church family (promote cadeting).
- Having a Cadet-age boy encourages them to be involved
- A chance to avoid consistory
- A chance to grow
- He’s a kid at heart
- He knows he’s “investing”
- He sees a well-organized, effective, promoted club
- Sees a place for his skills / gifts

For Question 2

- A sense of belonging and fellowship
- Intentionally affirm / nurture new guys
- Seeing boys grow, mature
- A supportive wife
- Seeing his gifts being used
- A supportive church
- Seeing he's valued by the church (e.g. a commissioning service that begins the cadeting season)
- The club has to stay new and growing (e.g. trying new activities, crafts, ways of conducting meetings)

And Question 3

- Councils have to reach men who don't come to council meetings or other council ed opportunities — possibly by going to their church for training or the organization can utilize the internet and webinars
- Personal development workshops
- Counselor rental / exchange (counselors being shared amongst clubs so if your club has an activity or craft that has been very successful you can spend a couple nights at another club helping them)
- Multiple simultaneous seminars
- Make sure workshops are on relevant topics
- Head counselors gives full orientation to each new counselor, perhaps including his wife
- Train the wives
- Regional conventions with wives and children for a weekend.

The committee looked at recent correspondence received via our visioning web page and other contacts.

1. A person with a long history of involvement in cadeting, disagrees that the visioning team should focus their discussions primarily on the counselor. He sees cadeting as increasingly irrelevant in today's world, with the same name, uniform, and military terminology as we have had for more than 50 years.
2. One church in West Michigan also believe the military model is outdated and that the CCC structure requires too much of the men, especially in preparation time.

3. Another West Michigan Church thinks the lesson materials and the merit badges cause a division between Christian and community boys. They also objected to the council requirements of fund raising and counselor meetings.
4. A PCA (Presbyterian Church in America) church in Tennessee loves our program but say they can't use it because of the "Calvinist" in the name. The powerful Baptist churches in their area have poisoned the neighborhood families against Calvin so it would be hard to get those neighborhood families in the door of their church with that name.
5. A Wesleyen Church in New York would love to use our material. Their investigations show it is the best stuff out there. Unfortunately, they are not Calvinist and are not eligible.

Dick Broene distributed a discussion worksheet for the committee to ponder as topics for the next visioning team meeting. These questions are based on the above correspondence.

1. What, if anything, should we do about churches like the ones in contacts 2 and 3?
2. What, if anything, should we do about churches like the one in New York?
3. What, if anything, should we do about churches like the Tennessee PCAs?
4. What is the best way to attract new churches in our target audience?

The meeting ended committee members sharing some personal prayer concerns and setting the next meeting date — May 21 at 6:00 PM.