

Greetings brothers and guests!

I am your 2007 Lakota Chapter Chief, Brandon Villalpando. I am proud to stand before you all and say that this was an extremely successful year in Lakota Chapter history. I would like to take this time to thank each Officer who made this year happen.

We are here for our annual recognition dinner. This year we have combined the dinner with our regular Chapter Meeting – the last of twelve we have had this year. We have also had monthly meetings of our Chapter Executive Committee as well as participating in the Pacifica District Committee meetings and the Lodge meetings.

That is more complicated than it would usually be since we had an extra election this year following the ratification of our new Chapter Rules. It is important that we remember the service of those who served both before and after the transition.

The Chapter Rules are essentially the constitution of our Chapter. Earlier this year I appointed a Rules Review & Revision committee to examine the rules and see if they needed to be changed. I served as the Chair with Soren Fulton as the Vice Chair, and John Broadhead, Steven Gunderson, and Garrett Maldoon as members. Our committee Adviser was Will Althoff. We, as a committee, decided that it was in the Chapter's best interest to revise the current rules and create a new version that would better suit the Chapter's needs. Over the course of two months, the Committee met many times and assigned different sections to be revised and then brought back the following meeting to be reviewed as a whole. At the May meeting of our Chapter Executive Committee Soren Fulton presented the rules and the Committee voted to approve the rules for a vote at the following Chapter meeting in June. The following Chapter meeting came, and Soren once again presented these revisions. The Chapter voted to approve the new Rules. Under the new Rules we had an election at our July Chapter Meeting. From that time our current Officers were elected or appointed to their offices.

Another tremendous opportunity we were involved in was the OA's National Leadership Seminar, or NLS. This national event was put on by the Western Region. This March Lakota Arrowmen Tim Fitzsimons, Howard Limburg, my father Mike and I attended. Over the weekend, all of us participated in an extremely rigorous training – the best our national leadership has for Arrowmen. Afterwards, all of the Arrowmen from Lakota who attended this weekend were awarded with the badge and pin which is only earned after completing a ticket. The ticket consists of three items that are approved that need to be accomplished in order of demonstrating that the skills learned over the weekend. The process of completing the ticket forces the Arrowman to continue the process of training and formation.

This summer we had a Chapter Fellowship Day – the first we have had in years. We rented out the Torrance Plunge and had swimming, food, games, and more. Thomas Lidikay had our Trading Post open as well. The event was planned and ran by Howard Limburg. An added attraction of the Fellowship Day was that our new youth designed Chapter Tee Shirt was on sale for the first time. The initial design for the Tee Shirts was

drawn up by Steven Gunderson. Steven was the first Officer to lead our Tee Shirt effort and has been helped by Howard Limburg and Matt Affa.

Each year the six Chapters in Siwinis Lodge gather together at Forest Lawn Scout Reservation for Potlatch - essentially an OA Camporee. At the 2007 Potlatch there were more Lakota Arrowmen than from any other Chapter. Almost every Lakota Arrowman was wearing our new Chapter Tee Shirts. Lakota Arrowmen participated fully in the classes, sports, and competitions. We also helped out by running the Brotherhood Class & Walk and aquatics program as well as volunteering with the cook crew. On Saturday night we watched as six Lakota Arrowmen were called out for the Vigil Honor.

The Order of the Arrow is a Brotherhood of Cheerful Service. The Arrowmen of Lakota Chapter work hard to bring that to life. This year we have provided significant support to Siwinis Lodge, Pacifica District, and the units of our members.

In Siwinis Lodge Lakota Arrowmen served at LLD, Sectional, all three Ordeals, the Lodge Service Weekend and Fellowship Day, Potlatch, and the Lodge Dinner. We also supported the Lodge and Council by staffing the Cub Rocket Academies, Fall Cub Encampment, and Lodge booth at the University of Scouting.

In Pacifica District Lakota Arrowmen served on staff for the spring and Fall Camporees, Webelos Woods, and many smaller events and projects. We also conducted the OA Unit Elections and Camping Promotions program and are working to build up the OA Unit Representative program. Soon we will have a section on the District Website as well.

An Arrowman's first duty in Scouting is to his or her unit. Lakota Arrowmen have served here as well with many of our youth and adults serving their troops in leadership positions. Evidence of their success can be seen in part through the twenty or so Lakota Arrowmen who became Eagle Scouts in 2007.

Throughout this year, I believe that every single Officer and Adviser that gave of their time to serve our members has grown closer in fellowship as well as gaining valuable leadership experience. Through every success and failure we have grown closer as leaders of this Chapter. This year has been so remarkably successful. It was proved through every event, meeting, and decision that was made that this Chapter was run by excellent Officers – who have dedicated Advisers. No one person could have made all our successes happen.

I am not sure what motivates all of our Officers and Advisers. My personal motivation to aspire to be the Chief of this Chapter was quite simple. My primary goal as an Arrowmen was to do my very best to make this Chapter successful. I found that it was easier to make this goal a reality by getting out of my seat and arising to the chance to be the Chief of this Chapter. I took all of the bad days with the good days of being the Chapter Chief. But, every time I look back at the meetings I ran, at the events that were organized, and at our Chapter Executive Committee I was working with, I knew that this

whole experience was worth more than its while. Regardless of if the job was hard or easy at times, I felt that I took this upon myself to last until the last day of 2007 and make sure that I did everything I could do in order to accomplish my goal. Maybe it goes without saying that it runs in the family. All of my family – Dad, mom, & older brother – have been incredibly supportive of my involvement with the Chapter. I want to be sure to mention that my brother Steve served as the 2005 Lakota Chapter Chief and my father, Mike who served the Siwinis Lodge as the Lodge Chief in 1979.

Speaking of history, a theme of tonight's dinner is the history of the Lakota Chapter. Let me tell you a little about that. The Lakota Chapter was founded in 1994 by three Chapters merging into one. The three Chapters that combined to form Lakota were Wyandot, Gabrielino and Mescalero. They merged when Council merged three districts to form Pacifica District. Our first Chapter Chief was Chris Jarvis and Bob Shockley was our first Chapter Adviser.

Along with our founding leaders, Lakota has also produced quite a few other noteworthy Arrowmen some of whom I want to mention. In the Order of the Arrow we have Chapters, then the Lodge, then the Section, then the Region, and finally the National level. I mention that because I want you to understand what a big deal it was when Lakota Arrowmen Jim Lewis was elected as the Western Region Chief in 1994. From 1998-1999 Lakota Arrowman Justin Boren served as our Section Chief for two consecutive years. That same year Lakota Arrowman John Williams was the first of three Lakota Arrowmen to be elected Lodge Chief. Later Noble Smith in 2003 and John Cressey in 2005 also served as lodge Chief. Our adult Advisers have also been busy. In 2000 and again in 2006 Bill Roseland was the Lodge contingent leader for the National OA Conference. Three Lakota Arrowmen, Gary Yoshiki, Brian Wilder, and Joe Mahanke served as Lodge Adviser for a combined ten of the fourteen years Lakota has existed. Brian Wilder is currently serving as our Section Adviser and Steve Silbiger has served on the Western Region committee for years. That record of service is very impressive by itself but for each one of those Officers and Advisers I have mentioned we have had ten more working away behind the scenes.

Over the fourteen years since 1994, Lakota has made its mark in the OA, Pacifica Districts, and the units of our members. The outstanding commitment to service I have seen started on day one. I have no doubt it will continue into 2008 when our new Chapter Executive Committee takes over.