**PASS THE TORCH CONFERENCE**

**Williamsville, New York**

**Saturday, March 14, 2015**

**David Droppa, Chairman, Battalion 2760**

**Helping your ministry to survive and thrive:**

**Strategies for recruitment, retention, and succession of adult leaders**

**and for continued support by the host church**

**1. Prayer**

**2. The Word: Ps. 71:17 & 18** Since my youth, God, you have taught me, and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds. Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, my God,
till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come.

* We can’t do this if at all we are not surviving
* And we can’t do it effectively if we are not thriving.

**3. Participants will:**

* Come away with strategies for recruitment of adult leaders… so you don’t feel like you’re leading alone
* Consider strategies for retention of skilled leaders…to prevent burnout and suddenly leaving the ministry
* Be able to develop and execute a succession plan… so when you leave, the program doesn’t die
* Learn more about how to increase the likelihood of continued support of the program(s) by the host church… so the program continues despite inter-ministry conflict and interference from above
* Leave with more ideas, hope, and energy to take into your own ministries.

**4. Recruitment of leaders** (if leading a workshop using this, first learn and discuss what has worked for

 the participants, and then address items they did not raise.)

* Prayer
* Not through announcements/pleading.
* Word of mouth.
* Spreading the word about the ministry (will discuss specifics in #7 below)
* Ministry fairs
* Inviting dads to events, especially spending a day or a weekend camping. When they experience the camaraderie and learn casually about the program, they are more likely to volunteer.
* Identifying church leaders who are connected to specific populations: men’s ministry, children’s ministry, African-American leaders, etc.
* Partnering with a men’s’ ministry… for example, as prayer supporters or brainstorming about recruitment with you.
* Once you have a solid team who click and carry each other’s burdens, the word will spread
* And you will be able to consider new prospects from the viewpoint of what they will contribute and how they fit
* In larger churches, coordinating recruitment with other ministries, so you are collaborating and learning from their experience, not body snatching!
* Grow your own: former Battalion members (we require a two year hiatus) who are ready to minister.
* Use the military model: don’t look for recruits with all of the skills; take someone who is open to learning, and mentor them.
* Invite men into a Battalion meeting to share their gifts, experience, expertise… career or hobby… for one night, or for a series of meetings or activities. When they experience your group, they may want to get plugged in.

5**. Retention of leaders**

* Having more than you need, so they can take a break, take sabbaticals, gear down.
* Creating shared vision with your guys
* Don’t assume continuation in a specific position; re-examine periodically and move people around
* Leadership style is critical: Not “do it all myself,” and not delegate everything.
* Give everyone a job.
* Focus on honest feedback so you can continually improve
* Share each other’s burdens
* Address issues and weed out as necessary
* Let your leader know they are valuable… not just what they do, but themselves. Be specific!
* Meet with each adult leader periodically to learn what’s going well, what gift they have that the program is not using, what ideas they have that they haven’t yet voiced, and if they are feeling needed and valued.
* Value their wives. Thank the wife… if possible, personally, in her husband’s presence.

6. **Succession plan**

* Easier if you have moved leaders around as discussed above
* Have clear job descriptions and revise periodically to keep current
* Establish a plan for leadership development, set goals, and monitor achievement. For a systematic way of doing this, talk with Dave Droppa (ddroppa@verizon.net).

7. **Gain and keep support of the host church**

* Keep the ministry visible to the congregation: offerings, videos, announcements, celebrate important milestones (Herald of Christ, for example)
* Meet with the church pastor or other leader responsible for your program
* Communicate the value of a single sex ministry
* Keep them informed of successes and issues
* Invite them to talk with your guys… seeing your program in action is invaluable
* Anticipate conflict; go toward it, not away from it
* Keep parents plugged in; they can be allies
* Seek consultation if necessary