

Prairie Trail Federation

YMCA Indian Guides, Indian Princesses and Trailblazers

Greater La Grange YMCA • 1100 East 31st Street • La Grange Park, Illinois 60526 • (708) 352-7600
www.yigp.org

TO: ALL DADS OF THE PRAIRIE TRAIL FEDERATION GUIDES/PRINCESSES/TRAILBLAZERS

FROM: Nation Chief Chris Breakey and Federation Chief Tom Estey

March 2009

The Tribal Chiefs were informed at the last Longhouse that a tragedy has befallen the program. One of our own, a father, Steven Ballagh, has passed away. It is difficult to speak about this, as Steve was not only one of us, but a young man who left a family in the prime of his life. It also touched me. I too lost my father at an early age. Also my niece and nephew, 1 and 3, lost their father at far too tender an age.

This tragedy puts into perspective not only how fragile life is, but how precious our time is with our kids. The time passes in the program like a blink of an eye. Take a moment and remember what this program means. It gives us quality time to spend with our kids: time to talk, to laugh, to play and to build memories which will last a lifetime. There won't be another time like this. Make the most of it. Be involved with your tribe, but most of all, with your children.

As a Federation we will be collecting financial donations to help Steve Ballagh's three young daughters. You have shown enormous generosity through Secret Santa and The Giving Tree. I ask you to tap that generosity, again, to help soften this tragic event. Please help these three young girls to survive through the toughest time they will ever encounter.

Our mission: send all of these sisters to YMCA Camp this summer at one of the wonderful camps we use as a Federation. If we can do more than, God bless us.

All donations are to be submitted at the next Longhouse, April 6, 2009 to myself or to Federation Chief Tom Estey. Please collect donations as Tribes during the month of March. All checks, whether tribal or individual, should be payable to The Prairie Trail Federation. For those members in Trailblazers, you may submit your donations directly to me or Tom. (If anyone would like, however, you may of course send your donation directly to me at my address below.) We will then present one Federation Check to Mrs. Ballagh to send her children to one of the camps we hold so dear.

Tom Estey asked John Lorenzen to write one of his Keokuk Tips for this cause. John's story is attached; please read it, and open your hearts to Steve's young kids.

Sincerely,

Chris Breakey
Nation Chief Running Buffalo
826 Lincoln Lane
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