

# President's Message

## *Barn raising*

We looked at each other and shook our heads. The old barn had long since collapsed from the effects of Mother Nature and father time. "We should have an old fashioned barn raising" I said. That was followed by my other two coaches looking at me like I was from another planet. How could three coaches possibly find enough help to raise those heavy wooden sides to restore the huge structure to its glory days? Most people thought we were crazy to buy an old farm with the intent to turn it into a football, wrestling, cheer, band camp. "Well can't we at least ask around I replied?" Community Barn raising during the days of the early settlers was common. The entire community would show up to help by pulling on the heavy ropes until the side walls were upright. Other neighbors on scaffolding nailed the walls together and connected the roofs trusses. Then it was party time with dancing and food to celebrate. O K, so I was square for thinking we could find enough help in the community to again pull the walls upright. My partners were right. Not enough volunteered to help, even when I promised food and dance after we resurrected that old barn. We had to settle for constructing a sturdier "post and beam" barn. A post and beam building consists of individual pillars that in return support a large beam ceiling. Post and beam construction only requires a few good workers to build solid barn.

Today that lesson still resonates. If your reading this your probably one of those few good workers. With your help we can continue to instill strong community values that help raise our children? We can't do it alone any more than we could raise that barn. Our children need adult leaders who are pillars of strength. Kids need to see stand up exemplary adults with a like-minded vision to help them through their problems so common today. We are at war for the minds of our youth. Our youth are bombarded with heavy issues that confuse and often discourage them. Like the days of old, we need to raise them up to self-worth if we can ever expect to stop the sense less violence. We can all remember someone helped us in our early years; be that guy for kids.

Using the services of AYF AYC can help every community. Perhaps not in one year, but let us begin now to embrace the pillars of AYF. The pillars are Training, Participation, Sportsmanship, and Community. The training is a complete 360 project for protection starting with our administrative Leaders liability to sound coaching and fundamental techniques taught to our student athletes. Participation must include all kids participating with many choices of divisional play so no one will be cut from the team. Sportsmanship is simply providing ego less fair and equal play with respect for all. Communities will benefit from adult leadership that promote citizenship, academic achievement, giving back projects. AYF has experienced continued success providing these services to thousands of communities. We continue to ask our leaders to be pillars of their communities. Being a football leader provides you with instant credibility. Remember as the opportunity - so the responsibility! Together we can build a sturdy structure that will endure.