

BEING AN OFFICER

By TOPS Regional Director, Ruth Gielow

As I began to gather my thoughts on being an officer, an analogy came to mind. Recently someone used the example of an old fashioned wagon wheel to explain an educational process. I thought the structure of the TOPS organization of officers could be depicted in a similar way. Since 1948, the 3 major components of the TOPS wheel of officers have progressed as follows:

1. First is the hub of the wheel made up of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors makes all of the decisions in TOPS by establishing rules and regulations. They provide the solid foundation for the TOPS organization. They determine what direction the wheel will follow. It is under their guidance the next part of the wheel begins to roll.

2. This part of the wheel is full of the individual spokes. These are all of the officers who dedicate themselves to implement the goals and objectives set by the Board of Directors. Without their effort, a chapter cannot function. The chapter officers strive to help each member take off and keep off pounds sensibly. Now all of us know this is no easy trick. At one time or another, we face a lack of enthusiasm and concern among our members. Yet we must always assume a positive attitude, even when we feel it is hard to smile. It is that "never say die" attitude that has kept TOPS growing. The little spark that ignites this feeling and recharges the chapter may very well be that awesome creatures known as our Leaders and Co-Leaders.

We can't slight the other dedicated officers that helped this wheel continue a smooth ride down the path of weight loss. Weight Recorders diligently record each person's progress. This is undeniably the most important job in the chapter. Their encouraging words or sympathetic smiles make that weekly weigh-in as meaningful as possible.

The Treasurer's monetary organization helps each chapter secure their expenses for materials, recognition funds and general operational needs. No one can operate without a successful handling of funds.

The final spoke to the wheel is the Secretary. She must keep the chapter up to date on all past, present and future events. She must share all communications and keep the minutes up to date. So you see, each office intermeshes with the others to make a successful group of officers. Successful officers make successful chapters and that proceeds to many good weight- losing members.

3. The final component of the wheel is the rim. The Rim is made up of the Regional Directors, Coordinators and Area Captains. The Field Staff is similar to the rim of the wheel in that it aligns the spoke (namely the officers) and gives the stability needed to move in the right direction. It has been the success of this "wheel of dedicated people" that has made the TOPS organization grow throughout the years to what it is today. You all deserve a pat on the back for the concern and willingness to give so much of your valuable time and talents. AS we begin to share this exciting day of recognition of our peers, please remember that because of your caring, you are each a part of these success stories.