

# executive briefing

BY BOB KOBIELUSH • CCCA PRESIDENT

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## Your Big Holy Audacious Goal

Willard Heck embodied that unique founder spirit we've talked about in recent months. In 1958, he and his partner bought almost 1,000 acres in northeast Oklahoma and founded New Life Ranch, a nondenominational Christian camp. (You can read more about Reverend Heck's vision on the [New Life Ranch website](#) or in [the camp's Wikipedia article](#).)

The audacity of his faith—like so many of our founders—was extraordinary. A fellow camping zealot shared with me some time ago that in the middle of a tour of New Life Ranch, his eyes almost popped out upon seeing the camp's extensive, well-equipped bakery.

"Bob, the bakery itself was larger than most camp kitchens," my friend told me. "So I asked Willard Heck how he was able to afford such a huge kitchen, bakery, and dining hall.

"You need to know that Reverend Heck, who was called to heaven in 2001, was as humble as he was filled with faith. I will never forget his simple response.

"Heck replied, 'Well, I just showed the Lord our plans and blueprints for New Life Ranch—and the kind of foodservice facilities we needed to do His work here. I told the Lord that if He was short of money, we could cut back on the plans. But if we were to create a facility and program that truly honored Him, then this is how much money we'd need. So the Lord provided the funds.'"

Contrast that bold trust in the One Who owns the cattle on a thousand hills with the more frequent sheepish response to kingdom work: minimal, just-get-by, conservative, bargain basement. Willard Heck had his theology right and his prayer life tuned up for action.

Founders don't have a monopoly on faith and vision. If you're a re-founder, as we've discussed in recent issues of *Executive Briefing*, you'll certainly need to understand and practice the principles set forth in my April, May, and June 2007 articles. But beyond that, you'll need extraordinary faith to move your organization into the next ministry decade. Where founders inspired donors with raw land and radical plans, you're faced with aging buildings, demanding customers, and bureaucracy. How do we exercise our faith muscles?

King David gave Solomon the blueprints to the temple in 1 Chronicles 28:9, and urged him: "Get to know well your father's God" (The Message). Get to know Willard Heck's God. Get to know your founder's God.

Then assemble your team, get on your knees, and discern His direction for the exciting years ahead. Resist the temptation to focus only on blueprints and buildings. Instead, embrace those goals that focus on the people God is calling you to reach and serve.

Jim Collins, author of HarperCollins books including *Built to Last* (1997), *Good to Great* (2001), and *Good to Great and the Social Sectors* (2005), urges organizations to craft Big Hairy Audacious Goals (BHAGs). Ministry leaders might prefer to call them Big Holy Audacious Goals.

John Naisbitt, author of *Megatrends* (Grand Central Publishing, 1988), called them strategic visions. For example, after Sputnik I orbited Earth in 1957, President Kennedy announced NASA's audacious



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## actions

- \* A wise man once said, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." If this definition sounds familiar and the numbers are flat, develop a new plan (including a BHAG), commit it to God, and get busy.
- \* "You can always amend a big plan, but you can never expand a little one. I don't believe in little plans," Harry Truman said. "I believe in plans big enough to meet a situation which we can't possibly foresee now." Select a verse to go with this quote, and post it on your staff bulletin board.
- \* Read a biography of a spiritual giant, or memorize portions of Hebrews 11. Identify five or ten key points about men and women of faith.

strategic vision, "Put a man on the moon by 1970." If you're my age, you'll certainly remember where you were on July 20, 1969, when Neil Armstrong descended from Apollo 11 and walked on the moon. *That* was audacious!

I realize that it's August and you'll be at sprint speed until the last summer camper and staff member exits your property. You might already be fantasizing about the rest and relaxation you've planned. Go for it! But once you're refreshed, take time to hear from God anew. Get to know the God of your founders. What is the Big Holy Audacious Goal for five years from now that is a Willard Heck-type goal? What target is so big, so audacious, so needing the faith of zealots, that *only* God can deliver?

When you hear from God—and your staff and board hear from God—and you put that BHAG on the wall, it will energize and propel your ministry toward the future like nothing else.

But be warned. When you only operate year to year, with modest budget and vision adjustments—without a compelling vision that is dependent on audacious faith—you lose momentum, you miss opportunities, and you settle for second best, not God's best. What's the fun in that?

BHAGs also bring out the best in donors. I just heard of a ministry that challenged a donor to consider one of three projects: a \$200,000 idea, a \$300,000 program, or a \$500,000 project. The donor's response? "Would it be OK if I funded all three?"

That's Willard Heck faith.

## perspectives

### In Pursuit of Goals

Setting goals requires a great deal of faith as we seek God in prayer for His will and guidance, and then depend on Him as we aim to pursue our objectives effectively. But successfully achieving goals—and thereby strengthening programs, operations, and overall ministry—most often requires us to not only deepen our faith but also to take specific steps toward change and growth. Consider three practical tips Cynthia McCauley and Jennifer Martineau offer in their book, *Reaching Your Development Goals* (CCL Press, 1998), as you work toward goals at your camp or conference center.

- \* **Challenging assignments:** Likely there are new skills and behaviors you'll need in order to reach your ministry goals. Make a point to practice these by purposely taking on some relevant, real-life projects that will challenge you in needed areas, and encourage leadership staff heavily involved in the pursuit of the goals to do the same.
- \* **Timely training:** Some skills you need to achieve your objectives may be out of the realm of your experience and education. Or, you may just need to brush up on or get up to date in some areas. Consider formal training sessions. This is a great time to engage in education because you'll be extra motivated to put into practice what you've learned.
- \* **Valuable relationships:** In addition to developing a stronger relationship with God, find people from whom you can learn, those who can help you grow, and individuals who can encourage you. Specifically ask them to come alongside you as you pursue your goals.

*Source: Center for Creative Leadership, [www.ccl.org](http://www.ccl.org)*



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## events

### OCTOBER 2007

16

Illinois Section  
"Camp to Camp"

### NOVEMBER 2007

26–29

CCCA National Convention  
& Exhibition

### JANUARY 2008

14–16

Texas Sectional

21–23

Tennessee/Kentucky Sectional

27–29

Ohio Sectional

29–31

Mid-Atlantic Sectional

### FEBRUARY 2008

12–14

Northern Rockies &  
Northwest Super Sectional

25–27

Allegheny Sectional

25–27

Minn-E-Dakotas Sectional

25–27

Ozark Sectional

25–27

Rocky Mountain Sectional

### MARCH 2008

3–5

Carolinas/Virginias Sectional

3–5

Illinois Sectional

3–5

Michigan Sectional

3–6

Sierra Pacific Sectional