Yes, celebration is in order! As many of you know, the Church has introduced a new website for youth and their leaders. If you have not accessed or explored the site, this is an invitation to do so. It is very easy to find. Simply go to the Church website and enter in the search window: Youth Activities.

Once there, you will find an abundance of helpful and easy-to-use tools, and activity ideas for Scouting, joint activities, and other large-scale events. The site is very functional and easy to use. You can instantly search by categories (service, Scouting, missionary work, temple and family history, etc.) or by key words. Also, you may quickly access great Scouting resources (Troop Program Features, Varsity Team Program Features, Venture Activity Planner, etc.). It really is designed with youth in mind as well as their advisers.

The site focuses on supporting young men as they learn how to plan with a purpose and how to counsel together in determining the needs and interests of their peers. As we know, one of Scouting’s major tenets is “boy-led” activities. This new site and related tools give young men and their advisers great tools for learning how plan needs-meeting and interest-centered activities that are led by young men.

The site also provides a seamless means for communicating with youth, their families, and other ward members. Imagine! One or two mouse clicks allows quorum and Scout leaders to instantly communicate with all the young men in a quorum, troop, team, or crew as well as all of their families. Parents and others are not left guessing what is happening in Mutual, nor are boys constantly asking, “What are we doing on Tuesday night?” They know what they are doing because they did the planning.

So once again, give this site a close look! Do some exploring! Involve your young men in planning with a purpose. Give them the opportunity to think about others’ needs and interests. If you are brave, submit some of your own great Scouting activities and events for review for the Youth Activity website.

This new site can be found by going to www.youth.LDS.org.
A Century of Honor

President Thomas S. Monson lauded for service to Scouting

For 100 years, LDS Scouts have hiked mountain trails, bunked under open skies and earned Eagle Awards and merit badges ranging from American Business to Woodwork. But the history of LDS Scouting transcends rank advancements, courts of honor and summer camps.

Scouting in the Church has, first and foremost, been defined by bridge building — bridges that connect a young man to his fellow Scouts, his leaders, his community and, most important, to the Lord.

A century has passed since The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints became the first organization to formally sponsor Scouting troops for its youth.

Since then, millions of LDS young men have worn the iconic uniform of the Boy Scouts of America. Legions of men and women, meanwhile, have served as leaders in Scout troops and Cub Scout packs.

The Church’s 100-year-old partnership with Scouting was celebrated Oct. 29 in the Conference Center in an original stage production chronicling the ongoing story of LDS Scouting. The program — which was broadcast live to thousands of meetinghouses across the United States — included choir music, historical reenactments and video tributes to what Church and Scouting leaders called "A Century of Honor."

President Thomas S. Monson was recognized at the event for his lifelong service and support of the Scouting movement. BSA National President Wayne Perry, a Church convert, added his voice to a variety of Church and Scout leaders who offered thanks to President Monson in video tributes — including President Monson’s two counselors in the First Presidency, President Henry B. Eyring and President Dieter F. Uchtdorf.

Earlier on the day of the event, President Monson was presented Scouting’s Medal of Honor for saving the life of a young girl who was drowning in the Provo River when he was 12.

"That was just the beginning of a lifetime of reaching out and rescuing others in need of hope, friendship, encouragement and strength," said Brother Perry. "Further evidence of President Monson's enduring commitment to the values of Scouting came in his response to that presentation, when he recited the Scout oath and law flawlessly."

Brother Perry then announced that the Leadership Excellence Complex, to be built on the 10,000-acre Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve in West Virginia, will be named the Thomas S. Monson Leadership Excellence Complex.

"This state-of-the-art facility will provide hands-on training, where Scouts cannot only learn leadership principles, but also have the opportunities to put them into practice," he said.

President Monson, who has served on Scouting's National Executive Board for nearly 44 years, said he was humbled by the recognition.

"I love the Boy Scout organization and can think of nothing with which I would rather have my name associated than the Leadership Excellence Complex of this organization," he said. "Scouting changes the lives of boys in positive ways, and I am grateful that this complex will help provide the training for them to become the leaders of tomorrow."

He then recalled his own adventures as a Boy Scout, including his first overnight camp during a cold winter weekend at Tracy Wigwam in Millcreek Canyon. (His parents delivered ice cream to the shivering Scouts. The boys secretly wished they had brought
hot chili.) Scouting, he concluded, brings out the best in boys and their leaders.

"As you continue to participate in this fine program, your abilities to think, to plan and to achieve will be heightened. This, along with your personal integrity and spirituality, will help guide you and keep you on the right path as you journey through life."

President Monson noted that the principles taught in Scouting are more relevant today than at any time before. "May you uphold your promise as a Boy Scout to do your duty to God and your country and serve others at all times."

In a video tribute, President Eyring said President Monson does not simply teach the values of Scouting — he lives them to the fullest.

"In all that he has done throughout his life, Scouting has never been far from President Monson's mind to build a boy, and to teach him [that] to run and win the race of life is significant beyond all worldly honor."

Also in a pre-recorded message, President Uchtdorf called President Monson "a role model" because of his Scout-like commitment to help another in need. "His example has shown the world that a single Scout can be a powerful source of strength and hope by serving God and fellow man."

Video tributes also included remarks from Scouting and business leaders, including Exxon CEO Rex Tillerson. "Thomas S. Monson demonstrates the highest quality of leadership to which all of us should aspire," he said. "He set high moral standards for himself and for those around him and he leads by example. He embodies the deepest and longest lasting values of Scouting."

Reenactments and video clips told the story of the history of Scouting and its storied partnership with the Church. The program also championed Scouting's guiding principles such as honor to God, duty, parents and leaders.

The sprawling production included actors portraying Scouting founder Lord Robert Baden-Powell and W.D. Boyce, the American who would organize the Boy Scouts of America. The evening's event — which included a cast of hundreds of actors — reaffirmed LDS Scouting's commitment to adventure and outdoor fun while building bridges to God and others, including those who will come after. Clips included testimonials from World War II-era LDS Scouts who spoke of the influence the program continues to have in their lives.

Other clips highlighted the priceless tradition of young men in uniform gathering around a campfire with their leaders and discovering the wonders of God's creations and priesthood fellowship.

The stage production also celebrated the big-hearted fun that defines the Scouting experience for Aaronic Priesthood holders. One light-hearted song even saluted the essential role mothers typically play in helping their sons earn their Eagle Awards.

The evening concluded with a performance of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, who sang "This Land Is Your Land," "God Bless America" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Additional music was provided throughout the evening by a choir of Eagle Scouts and a collection of Cub Scouts.

At the beginning of the program, the Primary general president, Sister Rosemary M. Wixom, invited all those participating in the event — live or via the Internet — to use their cell phones to text a designated number to collect a tally of all those participating. By 11 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 30, almost 1.2 million people had sent texts to the designated number.

A recording of the centennial celebration can be viewed at www.scouts100.lds.org.

Article by Jason Swensen, Church News, week of November 2, 2013, Photos by Scott G. Winterton, Deseret News
Message from the Primary General Presidency

Sister Reyna Aburto
Primary General Board Member

As we start each new year, we have this natural inclination to ponder on what we accomplished the previous year and on what lies ahead for us in the near future. We feel a need to make plans and set goals.

For 100 years, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America in a “dynamic partnership, [in which] millions of youth and adults ... have worked together to instill character, citizenship, and fitness in young men.”

During 2013, we had the great privilege to be part of the “A Century of Honor” celebration that culminated with a magnificent event in the LDS Conference Center in Salt Lake City on October 29th. In that event, we were inspired as we saw the history and values of Scouting portrayed. We were reminded how the Scouting program helps boys and adults build bridges to God and bridges for those who come after.

A bridge is a structure that is built with the objective of passing over a gap; it connects two elements that were somehow distant. One of the purposes of the Scouting program is to help our boys, and in turn us, their leaders, build bridges so we can learn to communicate with our Father in Heaven and get closer to Him, in order to comprehend what our “duty to God” is, to live with a sincere desire to fulfill that duty, and to help others go through that path.

At the end of that spectacular event, we were pleased to see President Thomas S. Monson receive a memorable recognition. Wayne Perry, National President of the Boy Scouts of America, announced that the new Leadership Excellence Complex at the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve located in West Virginia, will be named after our beloved Prophet. After that, President Monson said: “Scouting helps bring out the best in each of us. ... If ever there were a time when the principles of Scouting were vitally needed, that time is now. May you uphold your promise as a Boy Scout to do your duty to God and your country and to serve others at all times”

As we begin 2014, let us all remember the great opportunity and privilege that we have to make a difference in the life of each boy within our sphere of influence. Our Heavenly Father knows each of us personally and He has entrusted us with the power to build bridges to Him, to each boy, and to the people around us. Let us continue building those bridges during this year and in the future.

Register TODAY for the Priesthood Leadership Conference on Scouting at Philmont

**Session 1:**
June 28 – July 4, 2014
Session 2:
July 5 – July 11, 2014

Applications are still being accepted for stake presidency members and those stake Young Men presidents and high councilors who are accompanied by a member of the stake presidency.

Applications can be downloaded from our website www.ldsbsa.org on the Philmont page. Please complete the one-page application form and return to the LDS-BSA Relationships office in Salt Lake City, Utah. The conferences are filling up quickly, so submit your application as soon as possible. Further information is available on the LDS-BSA Relationships website www.ldsbsa.org.
Five Suggestions for Growing our Units

During the last year of celebrating the Church’s 100 years of participation in Scouting, we have been invited to reach out to include additional young men from our wards and neighborhoods in this great program.

1. Focus on reactivating those currently not active
   ✓ Counsel together with the Ward Council to obtain their feedback and ideas.
   ✓ Involve Home teachers and Visiting Teachers, young men of corresponding age or a fellowshipping family in the outreach to the less active boy and his family
   ✓ In personal visits to the homes of the young men, extend an invitation to participate
   ▪ Provide calendar of upcoming plans, activities, campouts, etc.
   ▪ Plan meetings with the needs of new Scouts in mind

2. Involve the active boys and young men to invite their friends, classmates and neighbors
   ✓ Invite to attend unit meetings, activities, Courts of Honor
   ✓ Invite each boy or young man to bring a friend to an activity.
   ✓ Provide a calendar of upcoming planned activities

3. Have a plan to involve parents of new Cubs and Scouts
   ✓ Involve parents of new scouts with committee member assignments; invite them to be drivers or assist as newsletter editors, etc.

✓ Consider a LDS Charter document that specifies pertinent church policy as it relates to Scouting (Word of Wisdom, language and dress). May want to share copy of For Strength of Youth pamphlet with parent and young man.

4. Each Ward and Unit should populate the Council website that identifies units by geographic location with current information
✓ Provide needed information to families in areas looking for a strong Scout

5. Communicate this outreach to members of the Ward and Stake
✓ Invite the Ward Members to help spread the word to their neighbors, friends and co-workers that their children are welcome to participate in our LDS scout units.

From January 2013 Little Philmont Scout Training

2013 Year-End Membership Statistics

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was the number one chartered organization in the BSA in terms of registered traditional youth and units for the year 2013.

2012 Total Traditional Units: 37,933
2012 Total Traditional Youth: 437,160

Those units and youth are broken down into the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Packs</td>
<td>10,530</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Cub Youth</td>
<td>148,134</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Troops/Teams</td>
<td>19,349</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Scout/Varsity Youth</td>
<td>222,647</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Crews</td>
<td>8,054</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Venturing Youth</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How do the 2013 membership statistics compare to previous years?

2012 Total Traditional Units: 37,856
2012 Total Traditional Youth: 430,557
2011 Total Traditional Units: 37,894
2011 Total Traditional Youth: 421,086