Message from the Young Men General Presidency

The Value of Strong LDS-BSA Relationship Committees

By Ron L. Andersen
Young Men General Board Member

The LDS Church “Scouting Handbook” 2.4 states:

An LDS-BSA Relationships Committee should be organized in each BSA Council to help maintain and strengthen working relationships between the Church and the BSA Council. An assigned Area Seventy chairs or designates a stake president to chair this committee, which includes a member of each stake presidency within the local BSA council. If designated, the stake president provides the Area Seventy with regular reports at coordinating council meetings or at other times. The BSA Council Scout Executive or his designee serves as an adviser to this committee.

The following stake presidents shared their thoughts with us on the value of the LDS BSA Relationship Committees that they chair:

"The LDS/BSA Relationships committee connects the two significant forces for the good of our young men. Understanding and trust are forged together in this setting that then provides common goal direction to the participants in both organizations. Time is a precious commodity and utilizing the benefit of a LDS/BSA Relationships Committee helps me maximize and efficiently use the time for it's greatest good." DarVel Andersen, President of the Blackfoot, Idaho West Stake

"The LDS Relationships Committee, of stake presidency members and Scout council leadership, is a powerful forum for aligning resources of the Church and Scouting across the region. Stake presidency committee members bring stake needs and resources, and partner with council programs and leaders. We advocate LDS needs to the council, and then reciprocate by advocating scouting to our stakes. We are committed to the success of Scouting overall.” President Brian Pitcher of the Spokane Valley Stake

And lastly, President Michael Anderson, Renton Washington Stake had this to say: “I feel that the relationship that has been developed within the LDS BSA relations committee has benefitted us on several levels. It has improved participation in Friends of Scouting, increased the quality as well as the number of attendees at scout camp sessions and enhanced Wood Badge participation”.

We express deep appreciation for the time and contribution each of you give to make your LDS-BSA relationship committee meaningful and productive. Your leadership and guidance provides opportunities for young men to develop important skills and talents and provide meaningful service. Thanks for your efforts to achieve real growth through Scouting.
When I was first called to be a Wolf Den Leader years ago, I didn’t know much at all about Cub Scouts. I was invited to attend Roundtable meeting. I wasn’t very excited about another meeting, but realized that if I was going to be a Den Leader, I better learn about what that meant. I was in for a real surprise… the Roundtable meeting was fun! Since it was designed to model a Pack Meeting, we played games, did cheers, and learned new ideas for giving out awards. In the breakout session for Wolf Den Leaders we were given ideas for games, crafts and activities to use with our boys. We were given so many great ideas that I didn’t need to create my own.

Everyone in attendance was given an opportunity to share their ideas and ask questions. It was truly a support group for Den Leaders! As I listened to the sweet volunteers who taught our session, my testimony of the value of Scouting grew. I could see that it wasn’t just an activity program, but an opportunity to help the boys feel loved and included, to teach them gospel principles and help them to reach their potential.

Boys are always so excited to start Cub Scouts. Providing fun, interesting, and meaningful activities for them is what keeps them coming back. It is much easier to do this if you take advantage of what Roundtable meetings have to offer.

I have heard some complaints about Roundtable meetings not being that helpful. I have a solution: GET INVOLVED! Go to the meetings and contribute your ideas. Help new leaders with their questions and challenges. Volunteer to teach some sessions yourself.

Since our end goal is to provide the best program for our boys, let’s make our best effort to do just that!
Five Boy Scouts receive the Thomas S. Monson Award

Five Boy Scouts from Trapper Trails Troop 293 at Saint James the Just Parish in Ogden were the only Scouts in Utah who are not members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to receive the Thomas S. Monson Award.

Benjamin McCraw, Jonathan Robbins, Sam Lecain, Riley Crezee and Anthony Kowalcayk were the Scouts to earn the award.

McCraw, Robbins and Lecain were presented with the award during a Feb. 16 Mass at Saint James the Just Parish. Father Erik Richtsteig, pastor, and Deacon Herschel Hester, Trapper Trails executive council board member and Diocese of Salt Lake City Committee on Scouting chairman, presented the award. Crezee and Kowalcayk were not present.

"We wanted to support the partnership the LDS Church has with the Boy Scouts of America and encouraged the boys to pursue the award," said Freeman Robbins, Troop 293 scout master.

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Thomas S. Monson is the president of the LDS Church; the award is part of the centennial celebration of the relationship between the LDS Church and the Boy Scouts of America and the award is available to all Scouts and Scouters independent of religion.

"The Thomas S. Monson Award is significant in that it fosters good will and cohesiveness among all of the various faiths in the State of Utah, even though its genesis is from the LDS faith," said George Hall, Trapper Trails Council president.

The idea of pursuing the Thomas S. Monson Award began when a portion of the "2013 Duty to God" Scout video was shot by the LDS Church during a fundraiser for the Cathedral of the Madeleine at which some LDS dignitaries were present, said Deacon Hester.

"The focus of the video was on the scouts’ duty to God, coming from the scout oath and then the 12th point of the Scout Law – the scout is reverent," said Deacon Hester. "That is why they wanted to shoot the film in chapels, and had the scouts do the sign of the cross at the baptismal font, genuflect before the altar and kneel before entering the pew."

Following the filming of the video was a series of Boy Scout camporees focused on the 100-year heritage of scouting in the LDS Church and scouting in general, including its founding by Lord Baden-Powell, said Deacon Hester.

To earn the award, the Boy Scouts in Troop 293 read the 100-year history of Scouting in the LDS Church, and the conference talk "Run, Boy, Run," by Thomas S. Monson. The scouts also visited the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and completed requirements toward the Family Life merit badge.

The Family Life merit badge gave the Scouts an opportunity to "stop and think about the family and ways to strengthen it by being a part of it," said Lecain. "It was nice to do a merit badge with my family."

McCraw found it interesting to learn about how others connect their faith to scouting, he said. "The LDS Scouts connect the 13 Articles of Faith of their religion with the Scout Oath; so they connect scouting with their religion," he said.

Catholics, on the other hand, put things together differently, said Lecain. "Catholics learn about scouting and its opportunities and learn about faith and then learn about faith through scouting," he said.

Robbins liked the way the Catholics and the LDS Scouts came together as one and put their beliefs aside to form one community, he said. "It was fun working together."

The Scouts said they enjoyed visiting the Norman Rockwell exhibit and the genealogy library.

"I really enjoyed the paintings and we got to meet a World War II veteran who was a scout," said McCraw. The veteran talked about how his "basic scouting experience helped him a lot more than the other soldiers who didn’t know how to put up a tent or start a campfire," said Lecain.

Article and photos by By Marie Mischel, Intermountain Catholic
What Leaders Can Do to Keep LDS Units Safe

April is safety month in the BSA, so we’ve gathered some helpful articles and resources for you to review as spring and summer outdoor activities get on their way.

Too often, a scout or leader participating in a unit sponsored by a ward or branch from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is injured. These tips are meant to highlight the balance needed between providing exciting adventures and bringing your scouts home safely at the end of the day.

• **Become familiar with the Church's new website** that provides guidance and instruction on planning safe activities. [http://safety.lds.org](http://safety.lds.org).

• **Keep good trained leaders in their scout callings as long as possible.** Former LDS Church Young Men General President, Charles W. Dahlquist II emphasized the Four T’s. Tenure is the third member of this mnemonic. President Dahlquist affectionately refers to tenure as “ten-year.” In his May 2007 Aaronic Priesthood–Scouting satellite broadcast talk he stated, “Ideally it would be wonderful to leave leaders of the youth in callings as long as possible, but we recognize that is subject to revelation. Over time, leaders become trained, establish strong Scouting traditions, and build relationships of trust with the boys and their families. This usually takes years, rather than months.”

• **Read, know, and use BSA’s Guide to Safe Scouting.** This manual contains all of the basic information a unit needs to ensure that they are following the guidelines established by National Boy Scouts of America and the LDS Church that will help keep boys and leaders safe. It also ensures that the unit will retain liability coverage that may be lost if they are engaged in an unauthorized or restricted activity. Yet very few leaders even know it exists. No activity plan is complete without a review of the Guide to Safe Scouting. This resource is available online through a link on the National BSA website at [http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx), or through [http://safety.lds.org](http://safety.lds.org). Occasionally, I hear about units that try to get around the principles found in the Guide to Safe Scouting by calling it a “quorum activity” instead of working within these potentially life-saving guidelines. Once a leader takes these steps, the leader places the liability for the activity squarely on his shoulders. The leader’s homeowner policy now becomes the first line of defense in case of a liability claim, because the primary layer of BSA insurance now becomes a secondary layer, it is even possible there will be no coverage from BSA at all.

• **File a local or national tour plan,** whenever required by your council, by your bishop, stake president, or whenever specified by the Guide to Safe Scouting. This simple act solidifies all of the protection that the National Boy Scouts of America organization has to offer. This plan helps to ensure that you are doing everything necessary to carry out a top notch program. For more information about submitting a tour plan see [http://safety.lds.org](http://safety.lds.org).

• **Properly register** each of your young men and adults involved in Scouting. Registration provides significant insurance protection to both Scouts and Scout Leaders. With the help from Church Headquarters it has never been easier. If you have boys/young men in your unit who are not members of our faith make sure they get registered as well.

• **Obtaining the appropriate training** for your calling as a Scout Leader. Start with available online training, but then follow up with basic training and Wood Badge. The scriptures tell us in Doctrine and Covenants, Section 107: 99 “Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence.” In addition, leaders have a responsibility to teach and train the scouts regarding the safety requirements of a proposed activity. For some of the higher risk activities, we need to spend as much time and effort with the principles of safety as we do teaching about the “fun” side of the activity. Remember . . . the only good activity is a safe activity. We want these times to be memorable for the right reason and not because of an incident or injury.

Hopefully, these tips will help your unit have a safe (and exciting!) summer as you experience the beauties of nature, for it is within these environments that Lord Robert Baden Powell was convinced that Scouts learned to understand their God and Creator. In an excerpt of a good-bye note to Boy Scouts, Baden-Powell wrote the following, which was found among his personal papers after his death, “Nature study will show you how full of beautiful and wonderful things God has made the world for you to enjoy.”

**Additional Resources**


**Article by Paul Riley, Global Safety Manager, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Reprinted by Permission of Utah National Parks Council**
Scouting Leaders Attend April General Conference

In a weekend of learning and camaraderie, Scouting leaders from across the country gathered in Salt Lake City April 3-5, 2014, to attend the 184th Annual General Conference of the Church and to tour some Church facilities. The LDS/BSA Relationships office, under Director Mark R. Francis and Administrative Assistant Dawn Harvey, hosted the group who came to better understand the relationship of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Boy Scouts of America. The objective of the gathering was to better understand how this partnership can be strengthened in local Councils. The group included professional representatives from the National Office and 15 Councils, plus some of their volunteer counterparts.

On Thursday night in the Church History Museum, Larry M. Gibson led a training session to familiarize the leaders with the terminology and organization of the Church and BSA and how to establish the best working relationship between them. As both First Counselor in the Young Men General Presidency of the Church and Executive Vice President of the Western Region of BSA, Brother Gibson fully understands the objectives of each group. Leaders were encouraged to establish a strong LDS Relationships Committee in each of their Councils. The Church and Scouting work together to help boys become self-reliant in six key areas: spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually and financially. He also emphasized that Church-sponsored units are open to and welcome ALL boys.

On Friday morning participants toured the Missionary Training Center (MTC) on the campus of Brigham Young University in Provo, UT. This facility, along with 14 other smaller facilities in various parts of the world, is home for the first few weeks for each of the Church’s 85,000 currently-serving full-time missionaries. A welcome and introduction of the facility was given by MTC President Lon Nally. Scout leaders were able to see the activities of a typical day inside the MTC including intensive language training, scripture study, and physical activity. The tours were conducted by four young returned missionaries—all Eagle Scouts—who now work and teach at the Training Center.

The next stop was a visit to the Bishops’ Central Storehouse, a new state-of-the-art facility that serves as the main storage center for the Church’s welfare system. Food and essential household items are stored in the building before being shipped to central storehouses in five other regions of the United States and Canada, then on to one of the nearly 200 smaller Bishops’ Storehouses in local communities. After lunch, Director Mark Francis presented training on LDS-BSA Relationships Committees including the purpose of the committee, how the committee is organized, who should be on the committee, and Best Practices that have been used in some councils.

At the Humanitarian Center the visitors learned about the Church’s humanitarian efforts worldwide—assistance for those in need regardless of race, religion, or location. The Scouters then went to Welfare Square to see the Bishops’ Storehouse, Church Employment Center and Deseret Industries. It was emphasized that the Church takes care of its own but also reaches out worldwide to help the poor and the needy.

A dinner that evening was held in the President’s Room of the Joseph Smith Memorial Building. The Scouters again heard from Brother Larry Gibson who thanked them for their willingness to come and learn. He spoke of working with youth to help them develop to their full potential and related his experience of having his Eagle Board of Review in a federal courtroom before a judge. Participants also heard from Primary General President Rosemary Wixom. The Primary directs the children of the Church ages 18 months through age 11 and consequently works with Cub Scouts and Eleven-year-old Scouts. Also in attendance were Cheryl Esplin, a counselor
to Sister Wixom, and Shirley Gibson, wife of Brother Larry Gibson. Guests were given personalized copies of the LDS Scriptures. Tours of two Visitor Centers after dinner introduced the Scouters to exhibits of The Christus, a cut-away view of the inside of the Salt Lake Temple, a tour of the historic tabernacle, and an inspiring video about the Plan of Happiness.

On Saturday morning, participants were treated to special seating in the Conference Center for the opening session of General Conference. This was followed by a lunch at the nearby Lion House and remarks by David L. Beck, Young Men General President. He emphasized outreach of the Church to all boys to offer them the benefits of Scouting. He noted that if just one boy were added to each LDS unit, BSA membership would increase by 38,000. He also took individual questions and addressed specific issues and concerns. Brother Beck was accompanied by his wife, Robyn.

Saturday afternoon gave the Scouters a choice of the second session of General Conference or a visit to the immense genealogy resources available in FamilySearch. One Scouter was particularly thrilled to find records for a great grandmother, culminating his 15-year search.

Male participants also attended the Priesthood session of General Conference Saturday evening. After Conference, an ice cream social was held in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building in conjunction with the LDS Philmont Reunion. Without exception, the participants reported that the Conference Weekend was an extremely positive and enlightening experience.

Scouters represented the following areas:
- National Office (Dallas, TX) Tom Harrington; Doug Brown; Chris Wolfe
- Circle Ten Council (Dallas, TX) Pat Currie
- Los Padres Council (Santa Barbara, CA) Rebecca Fields; Justin Jepsen
- National Capital Area Council (Bethesda, MD) Les Baron; Phillip Duggins
- Pikes Peak Council (Colorado Springs, CO) Brandon Vavra; Kent Downing; Jeremy Snook; David Muirhead
- Heart of America Council (Kansas City, MO) Bruce and Diane Fray; Anthony Escobar
- Denver Area Council (Denver, CO) Josh Atherton; Scot Fuller; Will Cooper; Paul Pentilla
- Las Vegas Area Council (Las Vegas, NV) John Williams; Cameron Bomstad; Ryan Moon; Shane Calendine
- Atlanta Area Council (Atlanta, GA) Tom and Heidi Owen
- New Birth of Freedom Council (Mechanicsburg, PA) Topper and Shirley Bushey
- Anthony Wayne Area Council (Fort Wayne, IN) Larry and Gayle Shumard
- Grand Teton Council (Idaho Falls, ID) DarVel and Marilyn Andersen
- Utah National Parks Council (Provo, UT) David Pack, Scott and Davilynn Ferrin
- Trapper Trails Council (Ogden, UT) Jeff and Katherine Charlesworth
- Cascade Pacific Council (Portland, OR) Spencer Young
- Great Salt Lake Council (Salt Lake City, UT) Rick Barnes; Vic Rowberry

Assisting with hosting, driving and instruction were Wayne and Roma Bishop; Larry and Paula Call; Gary and Laura Dollar; Kimball and Betty Ann Wirig; Paul Moffat, Tom and Louann Hunsaker, Nettie Francis and Rhylie Taylor.

Submitted by Roma Bishop, Church Service Missionary to the Young Men
The LDS-BSA Relationships Office oversees the generous work of the 1913 Society. This society is made up of individuals and families who supports and provides additional funding for many of the Scouting activities of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on a National and International basis. As a member of the 1913 Society, you are not just donating financially; you are joining a group of Scouters who are furthering the cause of Scouting throughout the LDS Church. Your annual gift will benefit:

**General Conference Hosting**
During the April and October General Conference weekend a special training is held in Salt Lake City, Utah for Scouting professionals and volunteers from around the nation who represent a variety of religious backgrounds. During this time participants are taught how the LDS Church uses the mission and aims of the Boys Scouts of America to strengthen the Primary and Aaronic Priesthood age young men. One of the highlights of this training is a visit to the MTC in Provo, Utah. It is here where many of them catch of vision for why Scouting is so important to the Church. Your annual gift will ensure that an awareness of the Church and how it operates will be better understood by these Scouting leaders.

**National and World Jamborees**
Every two years a National or World Jamboree is held. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has a presence at each Jamboree in order to help all participants better understand the Church’s desire to help all youth throughout the world. Your gift will help fund the effort to teach the nation and the world about Scouting in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

**Little Philmonts**
As a result of participation at the Annual Priesthood Leadership Conference on Scouting at Philmont, stake leaders return home and plan Little Philmonts. These are usually one or two day events organized to train the ward level leadership. Your gift to the 1913 Society will help provide more training to thousands of LDS leaders around the nation.

If you are interested in joining the 1913 Society email the LDS-BSA Relationship Office at ldsbsa@scouting.org or call at 801-530-0004.