Message from the Primary General Presidency

Primary is happy to celebrate, along with the rest of the country, the Boy Scouts of America’s 100 years of Scouting. We are grateful for the partnership the Church has with Scouting and know this is an inspired program. We encourage you to become involved with your local council celebration. You may want to go online for ideas for your own celebrations.

The Scouting program plays an important part in preparing young men to receive the priesthood of our Heavenly Father, serve missions, and to be the provider for their family.

Thank you for your service and all you do for our boys. You may not be remembered exactly for what you did or what you said, but the boys will always remember how you made them feel. President Monson said: “I am grateful for that spirit which you men bring to Scouting, and which you men and women bring to Cubbing. It is far better to build boys than to mend men.” (Ensign, April 1988, 76-77)

Celebrate 100 Years of Scouting

In 1913 the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints became a charter partner with the Boy Scouts of America, the first religious group to charter Scout troops.

As Scouting celebrates 100 years, the Church celebrates 97 years of partnership in fulfilling the mission of Scouting: “...to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.”

Don’t miss out on this opportunity to be a part of this historic celebratory year. Visit www.Scouting.org/100years to see the many different ways you can take part in 100 years of Scouting celebrations.

Share Your Celebrations!

Is your unit, ward or stake doing something to commemorate 100 years of Scouting? We would love to have your stories and photos (optional). There is no limit to how many can be submitted. A few of the events will be highlighted on our Web site www.ldsbsa.org. All submissions should be sent to Joanne.Reinertson@Scouting.org

Visit us online at www.ldsbsa.org
**Highlight on Young Men General Presidency: President Larry M. Gibson**

**Service to Youth Never an Inconvenience**

*For Larry Gibson, blessing young men is sacred privilege*

"Dad, I don't ever want to do anything like that again," said Colby. Then the young Scout paused, looked at his exhausted father and added: "I'll do it again if my own son asks me to do it with him."

Brother Gibson — who was called as first counselor in the Young Men general presidency last April — was reminded at that moment in his son's bedroom of a lasting gospel principle: service on behalf of those you love is never an inconvenience, a mere duty or a gift — it's a sacred privilege.

After spending much of his life finding joy serving young people in his wards and stake, Brother Gibson said it's now his privilege to work with the young men of the Church across the globe. He spoke to the *Church News* about his pledge to labor alongside the Aaronic Priesthood with loving tenaciousness.

"One definition of tenacity is to retain something of great worth — there is nothing of greater worth than our youth."

Brother Gibson learned lessons of "great worth" during his own childhood in Boulder City, Nev. His first memory is being carried in his mother's arms as she leaned over to kiss his father good-bye before he left home, most likely on a Church errand. "She kissed him and said, "Goodbye, bishop."

Robert and Thais Gibson were hard-working folks who taught young Larry and his siblings the lessons needed to survive in the desert landscape of southern Nevada. One's daily bread was awarded following one's daily labor. The challenges of the region were felt beyond the arid soil. The worldly attractions of nearby Las Vegas forced young men and women in the local wards and congregations to make tough choices early in their lives.

"You really had to pick sides," said Brother Gibson. He feels empathy for the youth of the Church today being asked to make similar decisions.

The examples of his parents helped him whenever he faced such options. To this day, Brother Gibson said, he finds himself asking what his mother and father would do whenever he meets the challenges of the day.

Larry kept himself out of trouble by getting involved in school, Scouting and sports. He was his ward's first Eagle Scout and later found joy on the high school gridiron. Football and a teenage Larry Gibson were made for each other. "I loved to carry the ball and I loved to hit — so I played fullback," he said, smiling at the memory. It was in high school where Larry became better acquainted with Shirley Barton, an underclassman at the rival school in Henderson, Nev. The two belonged to the same stake, their respective families were good friends and Larry and Shirley soon discovered they enjoyed one another's company. Still, there were no promises for the future when Larry graduated from high school and, after a year spent at BYU, accepted a mission call to the British South Mission.

"Elder" Gibson never forgot about Shirley during his missionary service, but he was keenly focused on sharing the gospel with the British people while building his own gospel testimony. Full-time missionary work, he said, had a dramatic impact on his subsequent ecclesiastical, professional and personal life. "My mission prepared me physically, emotionally and spiritually."

He would return to BYU and continue his courtship of Shirley Barton. The two would marry in the Manti Utah Temple in 1968. The Gibsons never seem to sit together long before one reaches over and takes the hand of the other. Brother Gibson calls his wife an answer to personal prayers. Sister Gibson most admires her husband's devotion to the Lord. Such a quality, she said, is what makes him a good husband, father and priesthood holder.

"Larry has always loved our Father in Heaven more than anything else," she said.

After earning business-related undergraduate and graduate degrees at BYU, Brother Gibson began a professional career that has placed him in boardrooms across the country. Along the way, the Gibsons raised five sons and a daughter. The couple now reside in Highland, Utah, and cherish the time they can spend with their 32 grandchildren.

They have enjoyed an active life together. When not involved in Church activities, Brother and Sister Gibson might be found with their family scuba diving, hot air ballooning, cycling, hiking and traveling.

When discussing the young men of the Church, Brother Gibson is quick to repeat the counsel Alma offered his son, Helaman, to "learn wisdom in thy youth" (Alma 37:34). If young men — and young women — can "learn wisdom" in their youth, they can sidestep many of the pitfalls that jeopardize the lives and futures of so many today, he said. The challenges are great — so young people have to be equally great and up to the task.

Brother Gibson said he is honored to work alongside the many parents and youth advisers of the Church who are anxious for their sacred charges to realize their vast potential. His counsel to his ward and stake counterparts is simple: "First of all, love the youth — that really encompasses all the other aspects of [the calling]."

Remember, he added, miracles can happen in the lives of young men. "The Lord will help them….He wants us to be successful."

Brother Gibson is excited and hopeful for the tens of thousands of young men he will come in contact with over the coming years. It's his prayer that the Church's Aaronic Priesthood will follow that true, preparatory path to the Melchizedek Priesthood and become faithful missionaries, loving husbands and diligent fathers — men of integrity.

Article by Jason Swensen, *Church News*, August 22, 2009
Bugle No Obstacle in Scouting Quest
Twins learn to play instrument on way to earning all 121 merit badges

After several years and hundreds of hours of intense effort, the only two things standing between Nathan and Matthew Anderson and their goal of earning all 121 Boy Scout merit badges were a beagle and a bugle.

After Nathan and Matthew, 17-year-old identical twins from the Crosswinds 1st Ward, Spanish Fork Utah South Stake, finished the requirements for their Eagle at only 12½ (the youngest age possible to receive the award), they set their sights on another Scouting goal.

"When we got our Eagles, we already had 48 merit badges," Nathan said. "We were so young, and we thought we might as well try to get all of the merit badges."

Scouting achievement has run in the family. Their grandfather, Ray L. Anderson, achieved the rank of Eagle and earned every merit badge offered at the time, a total of 117. Their father, Eric L. Anderson, earned his Eagle at age 14 and has been involved in Scouting as an adult for more than 25 years.

The goal was a lofty one, but, as they set in, Nathan and Matthew began crossing off the merit badges one by one.

Dog care was the last merit badge the boys earned, but not because it was the most difficult. As part of the requirements, the boys had to care for a dog for at least three months. Hesitant to take on a dog and the ensuing responsibility, Brother and Sister Anderson made an agreement — earn all the other merit badges first and the boys get the dog.

Before long, they had finished the requirements for all of the other badges except one — bugling.

The twins have musical talent, playing both the violin and the viola, but brass does not come naturally. Wearing braces and having to learn 16 bugle calls that many seasoned buglers don't even know how to play stretched them to their limits.

But even through the struggle, the two did what they do best and finished what they set out to do. Living up to their side of the deal, Brother and Sister Anderson then welcomed Bridger, the boys' new beagle, into the home.

"They definitely earned that dog," Sister Anderson said. "Watching them suffer through bugling was enough to earn the dog."

Compared to bugling, dog care was a breeze. The twins share a great love for animals. Before caring for Bridger, the twins had their hands full, caring for pet lizards, frogs, snakes, turtles and an iguana.

After seeing a golden eagle at their Eagle Court of Honor, the twins became intrigued by the sport of falconry and took on perhaps their most unique pet — a red-tailed hawk. They have successfully trapped and trained two red-tailed hawks — Horus and Hank. Using construction skills gained in the merit badge process, they built a shed in the backyard, giving Horus and Hank a place to call home.

The twins, 17, accomplished the goal, and a feat it was. According to many who have been involved with Scouting for years, it is possibly the first time a set of twins has earned all the merit badges that BSA has to offer.

Though it was difficult, the twins, who have spent only one night apart from each other their entire lives, accomplished the feat the same way they have everything else — together.

"We did everything together," Nathan said. "There were only two merit badges that we did at different times. We never tried to outdo each other. We would always try to help each other out on all the badges."

Whether it was the constant encouragement from their parents and sisters or ward members loaning out a boat to help them achieve the waterskiing badge, among other acts, help was necessary, too.

Their dad has been one of their biggest supporters, going hiking and camping with them often. He said that the boys do far more than just Scouting.

"Besides being great Scouts, they excel in their priesthood responsibilities, too," Brother Anderson said. "They are just the guys to follow through. They always volunteer to help, and they are the first ones people go to when they need help."

The skills and talents they have gained from Scouting have helped the Andersons prepare for any challenge in life. Their next goal is to serve missions as soon as they become eligible.

Many fear going to a place where there might not be hot water or adequate housing. These two actually welcome it, seeing it as their idea of a dream vacation — a two-year "Scout camp."

*Article by David Packard, Church News, August 22, 2009*
Scouts Respond to Cry for Relief in Haiti

The news coming out of Haiti is very grave. So many citizens are missing or are in need of immediate care. “Our hearts and prayers go out to those suffering at this very difficult time,” said BSA International Commissioner Jim Turley.

There is one small beacon of hope. World Scouting has been in contact with a member of the Scouts and Guides of France who happened to be in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, during this horrific earthquake. “This Scout reports that our brother and sister Scouts are helping in the relief effort. No one should ever underestimate the power of Scouting! ‘Be Prepared’ are not just words on a piece of paper. Rather, they are a call to action,” explained Turley.

Agencies trained in disaster relief are already on the ground in Haiti. Additionally, the U.S. is sending military troops and supplies to further assist rescue and relief efforts. But there are still a number of ways members of the BSA can help in Haiti. The biggest need right now is financial resources to purchase emergency supplies; later it will be to help rebuild once the emergency of the coming days has passed.

The Boy Scouts of America is rallying its troops in an effort to join the World Organization of the Scouting Movement (WOSM) in assisting families devastated by recent earthquakes as many Scouts and Scouters have been looking for ways to assist in Haitian relief efforts. After communicating with officials of WOSM on current, mid-term and long term needs of the Haitian people, the BSA has decided to focus on sending new tents and new sleeping bags to assist those who have no shelter.

You can help the BSA effort by making a contribution to BSA’s World Friendship Fund. Contributions to this fund are tax deductible and will help provide much needed shelter and sleeping comfort to those who have lost their homes. Donations to the World Friendship Fund can be made online by [visiting www.scouting.org] or by giving through your local council. Additionally, you can support the efforts of our friends at the American Red Cross or the Salvation Army. Contact your local American Red Cross chapter or your local Salvation Army Corps community center for more information.

Many councils and units have considered starting or have already implemented relief efforts on their own. While the effort and concern is admirable, the BSA discourages such efforts due to the complexities of shipping and distribution. The BSA is working with the WOSM to ensure shipping, necessary storage, and a smooth distribution system. Therefore, financial contributions are by far the most effective means of support at this time.

Throughout its first 100 years, the BSA has been known for coming to the aid of those who are in need. As the organization begins its second century, the need is indeed great. Fortunately, the BSA’s commitment of service to others is just as strong today as it was in 1910. This is an opportunity to involve Scouts and Scouters at every level in a “good turn” that will make a significant difference in thousands of lives.

Roger Schurman, chairman of the BSA’s International Committee, adds, “At the end of the day, it does not matter how big or small an individual’s contribution is. We all give what we can afford. That’s what we do in Scouting. These are our friends, our fellow Scouts. They need our help. ‘On my honor, I will do my best!’ is a pledge that each of us has taken as a Scout.”

First Presidency Appeals to Church Members to Help People in Haiti

In a statement published on the Church’s official website, Church President Thomas S. Monson and counselors Henry B. Eyring and Dieter F. Uchtdorf said they are “keenly aware that many in America are dealing with economic challenges brought on by the recent recession.” Many Church members have made substantial contributions to Church Humanitarian Services, but more is needed.

Church members and others wishing to contribute to the aid efforts may do so by using the Donation Slip they normally use for Church donations or by logging onto lds.org and clicking on Humanitarian Services Emergency Response.

The Church’s humanitarian outreach to the poor dates from its earliest beginnings, but major international efforts have included relief shipments at the end of World War II, aid during the Ethiopian famine in the 1980s and most recently relief after the Asian tsunami. Efforts include not only immediate relief but long-term restructuring.

Often, the Church collaborates with other organizations to provide shipments of food and other needed items.

The First Presidency statement also addressed the emotional trauma the Haitian people are experiencing in the wake of the devastating earthquake.

“Money is not the only need in Haiti,” the statement continued. “People are frightened, bewildered, and wholly uncertain about their future. In addition to what people can do in helping with food, water and shelter, there needs to be a calming influence over that troubled nation. We invite people everywhere to supplicate God for a spirit of calm and peace among the people.”

www.lds.org
2010 National Jamboree
July 26- August 4th
Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia

In 1916, Sir Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the Scouting movement, knew what success looked like for the 10th anniversary of Scouting. It was the sight of thousands of youth gathered together to celebrate. The jamboree was born! In his words, “The secret of its growth lies in that indeterminate force which we only know as the ‘Scout Spirit,’” and grow it has!

Since 1937, more than 654,000 Scouts and leaders have shared the jamboree experience and hiked the trails, paths, and roadways at 16 national Scout jamborees. Now, 100 years after Scouting reached the United States, it’s your turn to celebrate!

Nestled in the rolling green hills of Virginia, close to our nation’s capital, Fort A.P. Hill lies near many historical Civil War landmarks. This 76,000-acre facility has hosted the national Scout jamboree since 1981. The Boy Scouts of America uses approximately 3,000 acres of land to support a city of more than 43,000 Scouts and leaders.

Despite rumors, there is still room available at the 2010 National Scout Jamboree, both as participants and staff members. Prospective participants should contact their local council and get signed up as soon as possible. Prospective staff members need to fill out an application at www.MyScouting.org. After all, the 100th Anniversary comes only once. You don’t want to miss this one! Staff members should go to the staff section of this Web site, go to the bottom of that page, and click on “staff positions available–complete list” to view all of the positions available.

Additional information can be found at the National BSA Jamboree Web site: www.bsajamboree.org

Celebrating 100 Years — A Shining Light

For the first time in the history of the Boy Scouts of America, we will be bringing the entire Scouting community together for a single, nationwide event to celebrate our organization and reflect on what it has meant to millions of America’s youth.

On Saturday, July 31, 2010, at 8 p.m. EST, the Scouting family — past, present and future — will be able to take part, in a special nationwide broadcast. A Shining Light Across America will bring the Centennial Celebration Show from the 100th Anniversary National Scout Jamboree in Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia to communities across the country via Webcast and satellite transmission.

As part of this monumental event, local councils across America will gather together in venues large and small — whether a camp, community center, or a sports stadium — to host their own local activities leading up to the Shining Light broadcast. We are encouraging everyone to take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience the magic that has marked 100 years of the Boy Scouts of America. Members of the entire community at large – Scouts, Scouting volunteers, alumni, families and community supporters – are invited to join in the festivities.

We look forward to shining a light on our rich heritage, on our core values and on our role in shaping America’s youth. We hope you will join in the celebration!

Did You Know?

On June 5-11, 1963, 50 stake presidents and other church leaders participated in the first “Mormon” Leaders Training Conference held at Philmont Scout Ranch. Plans were made to continue to hold this training on an annual basis until all stake presidents in the nation had attended. Forty-seven years later and still training leaders!

Register TODAY for the Priesthood Leadership Conference on Scouting at Philmont

Session 1:
June 26 – July 2, 2010
Session 2:
July 3 – July 9, 2010

Applications are still being accepted for stake presidency members and those high councilors and stake Young Men presidents who are accompanied by a member of the stake presidency. Applications can be downloaded from our Web site 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 Web site www.ldsbsa.org.
 BYU Study: Role Models Matter

A BYU sociology professor recently coauthored a study about fathering that suggests Young Men and Scouting leaders can have a profound impact on the lives of boys who do not enjoy a close relationship with their own fathers.

Professor Renata Forste, whose article "Just Be There for Them" appeared in a recent issue of the journal Fathering, focused her study on fathers who were often single, young and low-income. Interviews from study participants got divided into two categories: those who felt close to their own fathers, and those who did not. Comparing the two groups' attitudes towards fathering revealed recurring themes.

The study concluded that "respondents close to their own fathers aspired to become the 'good dads' by whom they had been raised, [while] subjects who were distant from their fathers wished to avoid becoming the 'bad dads' they remembered from their childhood."

Also, the men in the study who did not feel a meaningful bond with their own fathers didn't know how to fill the parental void from their respective childhoods, because they lacked positive role modeling.

"Those who didn't have a father role model knew what they didn't want to do, but they didn't always know what to replace the negative parenting behavior with," Sister Forste said.

According to Sister Forste, the opportunity for Young Men leaders in the Church to impact the lives of those they serve is twofold: model effective fathering skills and, when needed, continue a mentoring-type relationship even after the calling ends or the boy grows up.

"[In the Church] we have youth who do not live with their fathers all the time," Sister Forste said. "They need a man in their life, and part of what I think [leaders] need to be modeling is good fathering. I think it's an opportunity for us as an LDS community to help strengthen families by strengthening fathering."

"It is important, when possible, to continue mentoring relationships over time, not just when they're young but as they enter young adulthood too ... [and] as they attempt to be fathers to their own children."

Scouting – done right – Builds Spiritual Leaders, says Author

Scouting is so important that the very best man in an LDS ward should be the Scoutmaster, says the Mormon author of a new book about bringing young men to Christ.

And Bradley D. Harris should know.

He's not only served on the Young Men General Board for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for the past three years, but has been a professional Scouter for 22 years. He helped create the Venture Scout program and he speaks to youth all around the country about Scouting.

He knows the program and the potential – a potential he says is largely going unfulfilled.

"That's what prompted me to write this book," said Harris from his office at Brigham Young University where he currently is a full professor of Recreation Management and Youth Leadership.

Harris has seen and heard horror stories ranging from hearing about leaders who simply kept the soda pop flowing while young men played around on campouts rather than learn useful skills to leaders who took troop members to questionable movies.

That breaks his heart.

"We need a paradigm shift in our thinking," he said. "We need to be providing opportunities for young men to feel the spirit."

Harris said the focus needs to move from being centered on advancement to creating spiritual opportunities for young men.

"We've drifted away from the spiritual tenets to just checking boxes," said Harris. "Advancements should be the icing on the cake, not the cake."

Harris said if Scouting is approached properly and used well in the LDS Church, more young men would serve honorable missions and be better prepared to make and keep sacred covenants.

"This is almost a spiritual quest for me. There's certainly a spiritual dimension here," he said. "I think this book can serve as a wake-up call."

Harris was recruited to write Trails to Testimony: Bringing Young Men to Christ Through Scouting just before economic problems forced editors to pare back their plans to known authors only. In the book he outlines specific ways Scout leaders can design their programs to make them more effective. He has real life examples and anecdotes that both educate and entertain.

The CD that was designed to accompany his book was published and is available at Seagull Book and Deseret Book, but Harris was left on his own to get his book out.

Because he feels so strongly about the message involved, he's become a garage business, shipping and delivery department.

"I'm it," he said.

But despite the stresses and limitations, Harris has quietly sold 1,500 copies of Trails to Testimony since the end of April. (Books are available on Amazon.com and from ldsbsa.org.)

He hopes the book will fill a gap where books about Scouting leadership is concerned.

Article by Jamshid Askar, Church News, July 9, 2009

Article by Sharon Haddock, Mormon Times, June 30, 2009
Do You Need Roundtable?

On the second Thursday of this past month, I was at Roundtable. I had just finished teaching the theme of the month, Citizenship. After the meeting had concluded, I had an opportunity to meet with a few new leaders who were creating a new unit in Modesto, California. A new leader stated, “This is exactly what we needed to help jump start our program.” I remember feeling similar to this leader as I was called to be Scoutmaster 3½ years ago in my ward.

I was very involved with Scouting as a youth and enjoyed the opportunities and challenges that Scouting brought, but it was my first time to be an adult leader. I felt like I understood the Scouting program, but I did not know how to plan and encourage the young men to run a successful unit. I knew that, if I was to help the young men run an effective program, I was going to need to give them a lot of support and guidance in the direction we needed to be heading.

Soon after being called as Scoutmaster, I went to a good Scouting friend for advice. As I explained my anxiety to him, he gave me two pieces of advice:

• First, get trained
• Second, go to Roundtable

I was going to take his advice and not throw it to the wayside, so I committed myself to get trained and go to Roundtable. I found out when the next Roundtable was and made sure I would be there.

At Roundtable I learned of upcoming leader trainings and also got some ideas of what to do with my new troop. That next week at our troop meeting I implemented one of the new games I had learned and it was a hit and the kids were excited. I went to Roundtable again the next month and learned something new. I implemented that activity and it worked. I found myself wanting to have the opportunity to learn from others and to find the secrets that they found to help in their program.

Around this same time period I had the opportunity to hear from Charles Dahlquist, the Young Men General President at the time, who said the following statement, "If you attend your local council and district meetings and they are lacking, then that is your opportunity to get involved and make them better.” I had noticed a few areas in the district where it looked like they needed help. So I took the advice and got to work helping wherever I could in the district.

As I have taken the time to improve myself as a leader, it has had a rippling effect on our entire troop. I am able to go to Roundtable and learn from other leaders’ successes. I am able to brush up on Scouting skills that the next month’s theme is based upon. Now Roundtable is not just a place for new leaders; it is a place for every leader. Every leader can gain and give feedback that will positively reinforce the unit they are working with. I come away from Roundtable feeling excited about the Scouting program and, if I am excited the young men are excited.

If you are finding yourself in a Scouting lull, go to Roundtable. If you find yourself doing the same thing again and again at your Scout meetings, go to Roundtable to get new and exciting ideas. If you go to Roundtable and it is boring or unorganized, that is your opportunity to step up and help others. We as leaders have a great opportunity to serve and help the young men we are associated with, but we are only as good as we are willing to be.

Article by Talmage Allen, Chief Tenaya Boy Scout Roundtable Commissioner, Greater Yosemite Council, Modesto, California
Church, Scout leaders say relationships are key to building boys

David L. Beck, Young Men General President, said President Monson embodies three characteristics that are vital to working successfully with young men: first, a positive attitude; second, a commitment to duty; and third, a desire to build relationships with others.

Brother Beck's counsel came near the conclusion of the Oct. 27 Church and LDS Scouting Relationships Conference. Thousands filled the Salt Lake Tabernacle to listen to direction from Mormon Church leaders and executives from Scouting's Great Salt Lake Council. Despite an early-season snowstorm, not a seat in the historic venue went unclaimed—and many had to be turned away.

The 90-minute conference was anchored in the theme "We Instill Values." Talks reaffirmed the Church's commitment to Scouting—the activity arm of the Aaronic Priesthood.

Brother Beck spoke of recently watching President Monson as he presided at a regional conference. He was struck by the Church president's positive attitude. He marveled at President Monson's enthusiasm and energy. That same attitude can strengthen bishops, youth advisers, Scoutmasters and den leaders as they fulfill their own callings.

"Be grateful for your calling to work with the young people of this Church," said Brother Beck.

President Monson's lifelong service in Scouting is just one example of his strong commitment to his calling and the youth of the Church, he added. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' leader has challenged Aaronic Priesthood and Scout leaders to commit themselves to each and every boy in their quorum or troop. Leaders were encouraged to expect great things from their charges.

"Shun mediocrity in our callings," counseled Brother Beck. "Have high expectations of yourself and others."

President Monson is also a bridge builder—a person who crafts and nurtures relationships with folks of all backgrounds, he noted. Youth and Scout leaders can follow suit, said Brother Beck.

"Can we capture the vision of Scouting and build bridges?" Sister Margaret S. Lifferth, first counselor in the Primary General Presidency, also emphasized the importance of relationships. Local priesthood leaders must develop relationships with those men and women they have called to work with young men and Primary boys. It's important that those who work on the front lines with Scouts of all ages have the proper training and tenure they need to best fulfill their callings, she said.

It's also vital that leaders build relationships with the families of the boys, she added. She encouraged leaders to support parents by helping them understand Scouting, Cub Scouting and Church-sponsored activities such as Primary's "Faith in God."

Finally, she counseled leaders to work hard to build strong relationships with the young men themselves, and not forget the Primary boys who are preparing to receive the priesthood. It's never too early to build relationships, she observed. "The relationship between a Scout leader and the boy can be profound," said Sister Lifferth.

Elder Patrick Price, an Area Seventy and chairman of the council's LDS Relationship Committee, spoke of his gratitude for Scouting and its commitment to teach absolute values at a time when truth can seem fluid and situational. Elder Price told those gathered in the Tabernacle that their callings to serve the youth of the Church were inspired. No one is serving by accident, he commented. Today's priesthood, Scout and Primary leaders can do much in "instilling values" in today's youth.

"The best legacy you can leave is a generation prepared," he said.

Scout executive Rick Barnes spoke of the Church's 97-year-old partnership with Scouting. While many of Scouting's merit badges and activities have changed over time, Scouting's value-driven Oath and Law remains the same, he pointed out.

"That's what we're about," he said, "instilling values."

Great Salt Lake Council President John Kirkham said many LDS youth who could benefit from the lessons of Scouting are not registered in the program. It's vital that each and every young man be involved.

"Please reach out to them ... register them in your units and make them a part of your unit," said Brother Kirkham.

Article & photos by Jason Swensen, Church News, October 31, 2009