Message from the Young Men General Presidency

A Time to Invite

All of us have been to family-related Church activities where we felt a real connection—a genuine draw. Think about what gives rise to that feeling—that desire to be with these families again. Was it the quality of the leaders who staged the activity? Was it the feelings engendered through the activity? Was it the quality of the activity? Was it the purpose of the activity?

What did these individuals do to make you feel so at home, so welcome? Were these individuals exceptionally friendly and caring? Did they take a personal interest in you? Did they give you the sense that you could be something better? Did they contribute to your feelings of confidence—that you could grow in unique ways affiliating with them? Did you feel inspired just by being with them? Did you feel engaged? Did you feel uplifted?

Did you come away saying to yourself: “I like what I have felt.” “I think they like me and my family.” “I think I would like to spend more time with these families and their children.” “I like what they are trying to do with their lives, with their children, with their families.” “I would like to do what they are doing.” “I like what they have planned for future activities and events.” “I want to be part of this.”

The answers to these questions and related comments help us understand what draws and retains boys, young men, and their families in Scouting. When the quality of Scouting activities and events are consistently high—their capacity for drawing and retaining boys and families is without equal. When we personally see and experience the immediate as well as the long-term outcomes of quality Scouting programs, we are generally excited, even exuberant about inviting others to join with us pursuing its aims.

So many boys, young men, and their families, not of our faith, could and should be blessed through quality Scouting and related Primary and Aaronic Priesthood activities offered through our Church. Most families are looking for experiences that will actually make a difference in the lives of their sons and families.

What prevents us from inviting families, not of our faith, and their sons to join with us in developing the next generation of fathers and leaders? What prevents us from inviting them to join our packs, troops, teams, and crews? Is it the quality of our activities? Could we make our Scouting activities so compelling, so engaging, and so meaningful that no one would be reluctant to invite others to join with us in preparing the men of the next generation?

For many families and their sons, not of our faith, the ideal entry point is Cub Scouting. This family of Scouting is specifically designed for young boys and their families. It naturally involves families in developing character in their sons, helping them give friendly service, joining with them in having fun and adventure, and growing with them in other significant ways. These are outcomes every parent wants for their sons. Cub Scouting is also an ideal pathway to the other families of Scouting.

Once again, think about the questions posed at the opening of this article. What would it take for you and other families in your branch or ward to want to invite every boy and his family in your neighborhood and surrounding community to join your pack, troop, team, or crew and be involved with your Church family? Think about how many boys, young men, and their families could be blessed because of this invitation. Truly, this is a time to invite others to join with us in preparing the next generation of boys to be men, husbands, and fathers.
Message from the Primary General Presidency

Sister Erin Sanderson
Primary General Board Member

These funny looking glasses are actually very high-tech, custom-made instruments. My husband is a micro-vascular surgeon and, with these highly specialized loupes, he can see to put blood vessels and nerves back together with suture that is finer than a human hair. When he is performing these surgeries, his field of vision is very narrow. His focus is on only one thing – the small operating field he is working on.

Scouting in the Church has a specific focus as well. It is to build boys into honorable, faithful, righteous men of God. Sister Rosemary Wixom, the Primary General President, reminds us that “Scout leaders have a sacred responsibility. They help boys to learn Scouting principles that also help them live the gospel. We thank each leader as they foster faith in Christ and prepare boys to make temple covenants and become a missionary, husband and father.”

We in Primary are so grateful for dedicated Scout leaders who love God and love the boys. We thank all who are helping them to build character and develop a moral commitment that will bless them for the rest of their lives.

New Online Tour and Activity Plan

On May 10, 2012 a new version of the Online Tour and Activity Plan was introduced. It is available at www.myscouting.org. If units will follow the plan, their chances for a purpose driven, safe and successful activity are significantly increased.

The plan will help you identify that:

1) Appropriate preparation has been conducted
2) Qualified and trained leadership is in place
3) The right equipment is available
4) Appropriate transportation to and from the event is secured

The purpose of this plan is not for the local council to enforce national policy; its purpose is to provide a tool to assist in your planning efforts.

The first step is for an adult leader in the unit to complete and submit the online tour and activity plan 21 days in advance of the tour or activity. When the plan is submitted to the local council, a copy is emailed to the charter organization representative, unit committee chair, primary tour and activity leader and the emergency contact for their review. The local council then reviews the plan and identifies any discrepancies. It is the responsibility of the unit leadership to correct these discrepancies. They have until the day before going on the tour or activity to submit these corrections online.

One of the many benefits of partnering with the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) is the BSA liability protection. This insurance policy protects Scouting leaders from claims arising from personal injury or property damage as a result of participation in or sponsorship of official Scouting activities. However, when injury or property damage results from restricted or unauthorized activities or where BSA guidelines have been disregarded, the unit, its leaders and the chartered organization may forfeit this protection, hence the importance of submitting a Tour and Activity Plan.

Remember your local council may have more detailed instructions. Please contact your local council with any questions.

Priesthood Leadership Conference on Scouting at Philmont

We are excited to announce that the 2012 Priesthood Leadership Conference on Scouting at Philmont is full again for another year. The Philmont faculty is working hard to ensure that the Priesthood Leadership Conference is the highlight of the year for all of the participants. If you are interested in attending, we encourage you to apply as cancellations do occur and space becomes available.

Session 1: June 30 – July 6, 2012
Session 2: July 72 – 13, 2012

If you are unable to join us this summer but interested in attending the Priesthood Leadership Conference on Scouting at Philmont next year, watch for the 2013 application packet to become available in November 2012 on www.ldsbsa.org. We hope to see you at Scouting’s paradise!
Scout Executives attend LDS General Conference

In an exceptional weekend of learning and camaraderie, 67 Scouting professionals from across the nation came to Salt Lake City, March 29-31, 2012, for the Church’s General Conference. The program was conducted by LDS-BSA Relationships Director C. Bradford Allen and his wife, Dantzelle; Associate Director Mark Francis; and Administrative Assistant Joanne Reinertson. The objectives of the weekend were to help familiarize the Scout leaders with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to emphasize the purposes and goals it has in using Scouting, and to build a stronger relationship between the Church and Boy Scouts of America. Most of the participants were not members of the Church and sought a better understanding of how to help the LDS Scouting units that they serve. The group included professional representatives from the National Office, Area Directors, 16 Councils, Philmont Scout Ranch and some of their volunteer counterparts including president-elect of the Western Region, Bill Stark.

An opening training meeting on Thursday night in the LDS Church Office Building was directed by Larry M. Gibson, First Counselor in the Young Men General Presidency. He spoke to the Scouters about the importance of using Relationships Committees to bridge the gap between the Church and Scouting. He encouraged developing a strong partnership with stake presidents and the Area Seventies in their respective councils. An open forum for questions addressed specific challenges and concerns.

On Friday, March 30, participants traveled to Provo, Utah, home of Brigham Young University and the Missionary Training Center of the Church. After a greeting and some discussion by the President of the MTC, a rare tour allowed Scouters to witness the initial doctrinal and language training of some of the Church’s 52,000 full-time missionaries. Nearly all of the missionaries in training had been Scouts, with over 80% Eagle Scouts. This tour was followed by a welcome to BYU in the Hinckley Alumni Center. Seven students were introduced who are studying at BYU to become Scouting professionals.

After an informative training by Brad Allen, the group enjoyed a delicious buffet in the BYU Sky Room. The Scouters then left for their next stop at the Church’s Humanitarian Center where emergency relief supplies of clothing, personal care kits and medical supplies are shipped worldwide without regard to religion, race or political persuasion. Many immigrants and refugees are being trained at the Center to join the work force and become self-reliant.

The next stop on the tour was Welfare Square, the Church facility to help care for its own members. Deseret Industries, the Bishops’ Storehouse and Church Employment Center assist Church members in need. At a dinner that evening, 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 of learning and doing their Duty to God.

The dates for these semi-annual visits are chosen to coincide with the Church’s General Conference, so all participants attended the opening session on Saturday morning. This was followed by a lunch with speakers Brad Farmer, Assistant Chief Scout Executive, and David L. Beck, Young Men General President. Farmer expressed that in a partnership the partners have faith in one another to do what they are best at doing. In the Scouting/Church relationship we should be able to trust that BSA will do an excellent job in providing a program while the Church will provide and register the youth and leaders. Brother Beck emphasized the long-term relationship of the LDS Church with BSA. Next year will mark the 100th anniversary of this association and will be celebrated in the Church across the country.

Tours were conducted of the Church History Museum and Temple Square. Male participants also attended the Priesthood session of General Conference that evening. After Conference, goodbyes were said at an ice cream social at the nearby historic Lion House. Special thanks go to Gary and Laura Dollar and Paul Moffat who planned and coordinated the successful weekend activities. Also assisting with hosting, driving and instruction were Wayne and Roma Bishop, Jon Lanenga, and Grant and Jackie Davis.

Submitted by Sister Roma Bishop, Young Men General Presidency Service Missionary
Safety First in Church Activities is Focus of New Young Men Website

Online resource can be utilized to protect members

President Thomas S. Monson often enjoys quoting James Barrie, who said, "God gave us memories, that we might have June roses in the December of our lives."

For countless members, such "June roses" are cherished memories from an adventuresome Scout camp, a life-changing youth handcart trek or, perhaps, a few fun days spent roughing it at a Young Women camp. Church-sponsored activities and events have enriched the lives of Latter-day Saints for generations. But the success of all such activities — and the happy memories they promise — will depend on keeping all participants free from harm and injury.

The vast majority of Church-sponsored activities are enjoyed without incident. LDS-sponsored Scout units, for example, spend more than 265,000 nights a year with only a miniscule percentage resulting in injury to Scouts or their leaders.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to ensure complete and certain safety in each and every Church activity. But the risk of harm or accident can be minimized through effective planning, by following defined safety precautions and, of course, by enlisting common sense.

A recently released section on the Church’s web site lds.org focuses on safety in Church activities. It’s found in the site’s "Aaronic Priesthood" section and is rich in resources, information and direction. If followed properly, the page can help bishops, Scoutmasters, youth leaders and others lessen the likelihood of trouble in activities.

In a letter released earlier this year, the First Presidency emphasized the importance of "safety first" in all Church events:

"Stake presidencies and bishoprics are responsible to oversee the planning of Church-sponsored activities. Stake and ward council meetings provide opportunities to carefully plan activities and to discuss safety guidelines and safety practices. When considering activities, leaders should use good judgment and only approve those with a minimal risk for injury or illness."

In that same letter, the First Presidency references the "Activities" chapter of the Church Handbook 2: Administering the Church (pages 101-111). The safety-related topics addressed in Handbook 2 are also highlighted on the web site's "Safety in Church Activities" page.

The handbook reminds readers of the importance of proper activity planning, appropriate training and leader supervision. "Leaders should be prepared for emergencies that may occur. They should also know in advance how to contact local law enforcement and emergency services."

An "Accident Response" and "Accident Reporting" checklist is included in the site and could prove invaluable to leaders when incidents occur. Also included on the web page are "help line" phone numbers that bishops, stake presidents and other leaders should use to report accidents, abuse or other incidents.

The web page also posts excerpts from Handbook 2 regarding Church policy and guidelines on travel for Church-sponsored activities, including direction on necessary travel forms and parental permission slips.

Another section emphasizes the importance of proper adult supervision at all such activities and detailed guidelines for overnight youth activities.

Also found are safety-related information from the Scouting Handbook such as the importance of proper Scout registration for adults and the fundamental rule of "two-deep leadership": "Two registered adult leaders or one registered adult leader and a parent of a participant are required on all Scouting trips, outings, classes and meetings" (Scouting Handbook, p. 5).

The recently-released "Risk Management" page also features several downloadable materials for priesthood leaders, Scoutmasters and others assigned to plan activities. These downloads include necessary medical and parental release forms, Scouting tour plans, youth handcart trek guidelines and a time-tested guide to safe Scouting.

Visitors can also click on a link that allows them to email a specific question to a representative from Church's risk management office.

The risks of accident or injury on a Church activity can be minimized when faithful leaders and participants of all ages utilize prayer, careful planning and proper preparation. Then that chilly winter Scout camp or youth handcart trek under the summer sun will be defined by gospel learning, personal growth and journal pages filled with testimony and fun.

Article by Jason Swensen, Church News, week of November 5, 2011
S.A.F.E.

It is often stated that we must get the “outing” back in Scouting. Further within the LDS Church in Handbook 2, activities are encouraged to ‘bring Church members together ‘as fellow citizens with the saints’ (Ephesians2:19), to strengthen members, to develop talents, to improve physical fitness, to develop leadership skills and self reliance (Handbook 2, 13.1).”

The question is can these objectives be achieved in the absence of risk? Risk is everywhere. We have learned that life in general consists of managing a series of risks, without doing so we probably would not last long or at a minimum our quality of life would diminish. In fact, Dr. Marvin Zuckerman claims that we humans are predisposed to risk taking. That only our ancestors who were not risk averse survived, since these were the folks who were most willing to take the risks necessary to survive and flourish. (Zuckerman, M, Are You a Risk Taker? Psychology Today).

This may explain the behavior of our youth, especially our male youth, but it also may explain one reason for the value of high adventure activities. However what causes even a greater challenge is the fact that most of our early understanding of risk management tends to originate from the concept of “gambling” rather than in risk management through the implementation of appropriate controls (See Wilderness Risk Management Conference, November 2009). For example, a zip line can be an exciting and fun activity that challenges the individual. However, risk management concepts would suggest that, to reduce risk of injury while maximizing the benefit of a thrilling and challenging activity, “controls should be implemented.” These controls would consist of a helmet, a harness, breaking system and use of a properly licensed and approved course (PRCA, ANSI, ASD etc.). The “gambling” approach to risk management for a zip line might be a steel cable wrapped around a tree and car bumper. Would anyone doubt which of the two approaches would reduce the risk to acceptable levels without reducing the excitement of the activity?

Photo credit: BSA Troop 27, Fox Island, WA

Summer is upon us; the “outing” part of Scouting will be in full swing. Here are a couple of thoughts as you take your young men into the wilderness and high adventure.

In addition to following the Guide to Safe Scouting and the Sweet Sixteen of BSA Safety, think of the S.A.F.E. approach to your activities this summer.

1. Is the activity Sensible and Suitable for your youth? What gospel purpose does the activity fulfill? Does the activity bring young men closer to Christ? Does the activity further the mission of the Boy Scouts of America? Is the activity appropriate for all participants, including both youth and advisors? Is the activity appropriate given the age and skill level of the youth and leaders? Are the leaders adequately trained for the activity? Does the activity comply with the Guide to Safe Scouting?

2. Approvals—After prayerfully considering the activity, do you feel that the Lord confirms that this activity is appropriate? Have you obtained appropriate approvals from your bishop, parents/guardian, young men? Did you file a tour plan? Did you obtain approvals from any government agencies?

3. Formulate—Did you plan effectively? Planning on Tuesday for a campout on Friday may not be the best plan. When you conducted your planning session, did you use the boy leaders? Did you consider the risks and what safety controls could be implemented to make the activity safer? Did you consider the buddy system? Did you plan for enough adult leaders? What contingency plans have you made?

4. Ensure/Evaluate—Did you ensure that the safety guidelines you established were understood, committed to and then followed by all participants and leaders? As the activity was underway, did you ask yourself what you would do if there were changing circumstances? After the activity was concluded, did you conduct a reflection to determine whether your goals and objectives were met and what you can do next time to make the activity even better?

By following the S.A.F.E. guidelines as well as the Guide to Safe Scouting and the promptings of the spirit, not only will your boys reap all the rewards from the “outing” but you will increase the likelihood they will return with only fond memories and strengthened testimonies. For more ideas on safety, go to www.Safety.LDS.org or call LDS Church Risk Management at 801-240-5534.

Article submitted by Steven Hoskins, Manager, Enterprise Risk & Affiliate Relations for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
Every Youth Deserves a Trained Leader

Two years ago, our stake Young Men president at the time, Stranz Tuiasoa presented in stake council direction he received from the then Young Men General President, Charles Dahlquist, to attend Wood Badge. Our stake president, President Semisi Makai, approved the request and sent me (from the stake presidency) to go with the stake Young Men presidency. I remember going rather reluctantly, not knowing beforehand what Wood Badge was. It was bad timing for work and how could I possibly remain interested or entertained for six days! As it always turns out, that one week experience was a life changing experience for the four of us.

Because it was such a life changing experience for the four of us, it became our personal quest to get as many leaders from the Polynesian Provo Utah Wasatch Stake to Wood Badge. President Dahlquist’s challenge to not settle with sending one or two from each ward or stake but “send eight or nine and witness the miracle” really resonated. However, because we were the only Wood Badge attendees at the time, we experienced the frustration Elder Dahlquist promised when only a few are on board with the excitement, enthusiasm and the vision gifted to us from our Wood Badge experience.

Not long after, Reed Mellor from the council visited our stake presidency and asked if our stake would be willing to sponsor his Wood Badge course that would happen a year later in May 2011. Bro. Mellor rekindled the Wood Badge spirit from two years ago with the theme “I'm Fired Up, You Fired Up? Yeah!!” I knew in my heart that this would be an experience not to be missed, so all in the stake who had been to Wood Badge signed up to be on staff. Once the stake presidency registered, it was easy to challenge all the ward leaders to sign up. President Makai’s faith to simply go to Wood Badge spearheaded the effort. Many followed his invitation to “Come with me to Wood Badge.” We challenged each ward to send at least three to Wood Badge (a member of the bishopric, Young Men presidency and Scoutmaster). Our new stake Young Men presidency (who also serve on the High Council) and other high councilors responsible for the Primary and Young Women auxiliaries quickly accepted the invitation to attend. We were “walking infomercials” for our upcoming Wood Badge course – recruiting as many leaders as possible. It was hard to completely fathom what the eventual outcome would be of this course, but we had a feeling that the blessings and impact of this course would eternally affect generations. Of course, many were expectedly reluctant at first but we were able to fill the maximum 64 spots available in a Wood Badge course.

Knowing we had filled the 64 spots, we also braced for challenges and trials. Two weeks before our Wood Badge course, we would receive at least one call a day with an “excuse” and that someone was pulling out. With many prayers and concerned faith, fasting and temple attendance, we continued our efforts to get other leaders to replace those that dropped out. There were so many who began to pull out that I was disheartened and literally fell ill the Sunday before the course. I recall a distinct impression that the adversary knew what a tremendous impact this Wood Badge course would have on those who attended, the wards and our stake as a whole, that his goal was to do everything and anything to thwart this course. On Tuesday night, before the start of the course, I was so discouraged and emotionally drained thinking Satan had won because I had lost quite a few leaders. To seek solace, I went to the temple on our stake temple night and received a priesthood blessing with the comfort and promise that those that needed to be at our course would show up at Maple Dell when it began two days later – even in the pouring rain. We had done all we could and left everything in the Lord’s hands and as it always turns out, He always comes through.

Discouraged and disheartened, but not defeated, we looked forward with faith to that first Thursday morning. One can only imagine the gratitude and humility we as staff on that course felt, when vehicle after vehicle rolled in to Maple Dell that morning. From the very beginning in that parking lot, our hearts were full as the excitement and the power of unity was just beginning. President Paula Ika, the second counselor in the stake presidency, was a perfect example of faith. He left an uncle’s funeral – as he remarked walking to his tent with his gear, “Leave the dead to bury the dead.” Brother Fano, Young Men
We ended up with 58 Wood Badge attendees, 49 were from our Polynesian Stake. That corroborated a different spirit and vibe with the loud rallying cheer “I’m Fired Up, You Fired Up? Yeah!!” Throughout the course, there was so much laughter, our faces hurt. Then through the content of the training and the power of the spirit, our hearts ached and we cried tears of joy, understanding and conviction. Each patrol (including the Angry Bird Patrol or Bobwhites) was prayerfully inspired. The bonds formed will last forever. We had many meaningful discussions on the vision of Wood Badge and set goals on both ward and stake levels. Every single attendee caught the urgency of this divine work and the importance of not losing one soul. It’s all about our youth. As our course director, Reed Mellor, constantly reminded us, “It’s not about programs, it’s about people (the boy or the youth or the Scout).” The information sessions, testimony meetings coupled with a little Polynesian flavor all added to the experience. The luau on Friday night boasted roast pig, chopsuey, Fijian curry, watermelon and mango drinks and a powerful Polynesian haka giving those who were not Polynesian another aspect to the Wood Badge experience. Not to be outdone and to ensure that we would continue to perpetuate the energy, enthusiasm and the message, we had t-shirts designed for every attendee with the graphic “Every youth deserves a trained leader.” The t-shirts also included our “3 M’s” motto – to prepare every young man for the “3 M’s” (Melchizedek Priesthood, Mission and Marriage in the temple). From the loud, welcoming “aloha” greeting at the first Gilwell assembly to the powerful and unifying haka at the last flag ceremony, there was indeed a consensus that this Wood Badge was one of the most moving, rewarding, powerful, life changing experiences we have felt. Minds were just beginning to catch the vision, hands helped others, hearts changed, and testimonies and friendships were ultimately strengthened.

Upon our return, President Makai was so fired up that he enthusiastically encouraged the rest of the High Council and stake leaders that did not attend to seek out and find their own Wood Badge experience. More significantly, he challenged them not to think only about how the Wood Badge would benefit their current callings in the stake but to understand how it would benefit the highest calling as a parent. He said, “You come away a better person, a better husband, a better father and, therefore, a better leader.”

A few months have passed since our memorable Wood Badge course. In the lives of our Scouts, already we are seeing more Eagle Scouts, more Duty to God awards, and more missionaries as they adopt the “3 M’s” into their lives. Even our Scouts are riding the vision with camps this past summer to Entrada, Tifie, Timberline, and Camp Williams. Additionally, even with the youth, occasionally you’ll catch a glimpse of the Angry Bird, or many-a-time the “Back to Gilwell – Happy Land” song, and even 50 others with their version of their Wood Badge “walking infomercial.” This is just the beginning. A highlight of this Wood Badge course was the blessing of President Larry M. Gibson, first counselor of the General Young Men Presidency, who visited our stake in December 2011 for a Scout / Aaronic Priesthood Fireside. At that fireside, we were able to recognize the increasing number of Eagle Scout recipients in our stake (28) and also all those that earned their Wood Badge tickets (55 of the 57). Every leader has begun to understand the critical and significant role in the work of not losing one soul. Trained leaders with vision, testimony and commitment save souls. Every youth deserves a trained leader.

The entire stake presidency, two high councilors and the stake Young Men president are committed to furthering their training at the 2012 Priesthood Leadership Conference on Scouting at Philmont. For those who will be attending with them, be prepared to be “fired up”!

Article submitted by Lisiate “Rich” Paongo, First Counselor in the Stake Presidency, Provo Utah Wasatch Stake
Welcome Back, Brad Allen  
LDS-BSA Relationships Director

C. Bradford “Brad” Allen has recently been invited to serve as the director, LDS-BSA Relationships in addition to his current assignment as Area 2 Director for the Western Region, BSA. During his successful and extensive 34 year career with the BSA, he served previously as council Scout executive in four different councils including Tendoy Area Council in Pocatello, ID; Grand Teton Council in Idaho Falls, ID; Trapper Trails Council in Ogden, UT and Chief Seattle Council in Seattle, WA. Brad has also served as area director for the BSA on two different occasions serving BSA councils located in the states of California, Nevada, Hawaii, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Idaho, Colorado and Montana and also served as director, LDS-BSA Relationships for five years from 2001-2006 working closely with the Young Men General Presidents Elder F. Melvin Hammond and President Charles W. Dahlquist and the Primary General Presidents Colleen Menlove and Cheryl Lant. He is very pleased to once again be serving the needs of Scouting and LDS Church leaders throughout the nation in providing a quality program for the youth members.

Brad is an Eagle Scout from Troop 35, Provo 17th Ward and also received his Duty to God. He served a mission to the Missouri Independence Mission and graduated from Brigham Young University with a degree in Youth Leadership Recreation Management with a focus on professional service with the BSA. He has been recognized from BYU with the “Outstanding Alumni Award.”

Church assignments have included service as a bishop, bishorpic counselor, stake high council, stake Young Men president, stake mission president, stake presidency, Gospel Doctrine teacher, High Priest group leader, Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, Varsity Coach and Venturing Adviser. He and his wife, Dantzelle, are the proud parents of eight children (one daughter and seven Eagle Scout sons) and thirteen grandchildren.

Indroducing Mark Francis  
LDS-BSA Relationships Associate Director

The National Boy Scout Council and Young Men and Primary General Presidencies are pleased to announce the selection of Mark R. Francis as the LDS-BSA Relationships Associate Director. He began his new position April 1, 2012.

Mark gained a love for Scouting as a Cub Scout and Boy Scout in Ogden, Utah. He achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, received the Order of the Arrow Vigil Honor, and served as Lodge Chief of the Lake Bonneville Council. Following high school, he met Nettie Hunsaker while they both worked on staff at Boy Scout Camp Bartlett near Ovid, Idaho. After serving LDS Church missions—Mark in the Philippines Quezon City Mission, and Nettie in the Japan Okayama Mission—they were married, and both graduated from Brigham Young University.

Mark started his career with the Boy Scouts as a district executive in St. George Utah, working for the Utah National Parks Council. He then transferred to the Las Vegas Area Council and worked as a senior district executive, Scoutreach director, and field director. In 2008, Mark transferred to Casper, Wyoming as the Scout executive of the Central Wyoming Council. In the church, he has served as a stake Young Men president, ward clerk, Cub Scout den leader, and elders’ quorum president.

Mark and Nettie are the parents of nine children, five girls and four boys, of whom two are currently Life Scouts. They enjoy Scouting activities as a family and look forward to this new adventure in Mark’s career.

“Great ideals and principles do not live from generation to generation just because they are right, not even because they have been carefully legislated. Ideals and principles continue from generation to generation only when they are stamped on the hearts of children as they grow up.”

- LaVerne Parmley -