Scout honors
Four LDS men recognized for Scouting contributions

Article from LDS Church News, week ending June 10, 2006

Meanwhile, three Church members received the regional Silver Antelope Award at the annual business meeting.

- Mervin “Ray” Cook of Roosevelt, Utah, was presented with the Silver Antelope by Scouting’s Western Region. Brother Cook is no stranger to Scouting. As a boy he participated in Cub and Boy Scouting and has served as an assistant Scoutmaster since 1972. He also serves on Scouting’s National Task Force “Leave No Trace”, the National Order of the Arrow Conference staff and National Camp School staffs.

- Charles W. Dahlquist II, Young Men General President, also was presented the Silver Antelope award by the Western Region. A member of the National Executive Board and the Western Region Executive Board, Brother Dahlquist has served as vice president of the Great Salt Lake Council as a member of the council’s executive committee.

- J. Russell Hunsaker was awarded the Silver Antelope by Scouting’s Northeast Region. Brother Hunsaker is credited with playing a pivotal role in the development of Troop Committee Training programs while a member of the National Training Committee. He is also a frequent trainer at the Philmont Training Center and has served on the steering committee for the past two National Jamborees.

LDS businessman Wayne M. Perry received the Silver Buffalo at the national function. The award is the BSA’s highest national commendation.

President Thomas S. Monson, first counselor in the First Presidency, attended the meeting and also spoke to a gathering of some 225 LDS Scouters in attendance. He was accompanied by his wife, Sister Frances Monson.

The Boy Scouts of America honored several Church members for their service during the organization’s annual business meeting May 25-27 in Washington, D.C.

President Thomas S. Monson is a lifelong advocate and friend of Scouting. He holds the Silver Beaver and Silver Buffalo awards, as well as the Bronze Wolf, international Scouting’s highest recognition.

- LDS businessman Wayne M. Perry received the Silver Buffalo at the national function. The award is the BSA’s highest national commendation.

Brother Perry has experienced Scout leadership at all levels over the past 25 years—serving as Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, Exploring Adviser, district chairman, president of the Chief Seattle Council, president of Scouting’s Western Region, and a member of the National Executive Board.

Such service has earned Brother Perry numerous honors, including the regional Silver Antelope Award and the Heroism Award, which he received for heroic action during one of this Scout troop’s canoe trips, according to the BSA.

Brother Perry is the latest in a long list of Church members to receive the Silver Buffalo that includes President Monson, along with church presidents Heber J. Grant, George Albert Smith, David O. McKay, Spencer W. Kimball, Ezra Taft Benson and Gordon B. Hinckley.

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“Let Every Man Learn His Duty to God”

Charles W. Dahlquist, II
Young Men General President
Fall 2006 Open House

“Let me share with you an experience I had just a couple of weeks ago. I received a call from a friend of mine who had been called to serve as the priest quorum adviser and the Venturer adviser in a ward not far from Temple Square. In his quorum he had young men with very busy schedules.

They were so busy individually doing things – good things, for the most part – that they really had little time to come to Mutual and participate in their Aaronic Priesthood activity program. Yet my friend knew that if they were to become missionaries before they entered the MTC; if they were to have their hearts prepared and become the type of young men who are worthy to have the Spirit touch their hearts when they enter the temple; if they were to become the type of young men who will be worthy husbands and fathers when they return from their full-time missions, then they must experience just what a quorum is and what it can do to help them become true Latter-day Saints.

So under the direction of his bishop, who also serves as the president of the Aaronic Priesthood and of the priests quorum, my friend took to heart the instruction that in the United States and Canada, Scouting in all its families is part of the activity program of the Aaronic Priesthood – designed to help the members of the quorum accomplish the purposes of the Aaronic Priesthood. He set about to help the members of the Cottonwood 14th Ward organize a Venturing crew. I saw them several months into their experience. When they visited my office, they were dressed in blazers and ties and gave me a wonderful report of the activity of their quorum, which included service projects; spiritual experiences; and visits to businesses, including our law firm, to understand various occupations – and the report was delivered by the young men themselves, and not the adult advisers or even the bishop, who was in attendance.

We are also grateful for the reports we hear about many who have been trained in the past six months through BSA basic training, Wood Badge, and regular attendance at roundtables. We have local councils throughout the country generously sponsor Wood Badge courses that do not go over Sunday in order to accommodate our brethren and their desire to keep the Sabbath holy. In doing so, they have been surprised to see those courses fill to overflowing. The result is an increased understanding of why the Church, nearly one hundred years ago, adopted Scouting as part of the activity program of the Aaronic Priesthood, and why it has such a profound effect in strengthening young men of the Aaronic Priesthood in so many ways – with many presidents of the Church speaking out on the value of Scouting as a vital part of the Aaronic Priesthood experience.

In 1963, when Scouting in the Church was just 50 years old, David O. McKay was the President of the Church. Of Scouting and its values, President McKay said, during a radio broadcast to Scouts and Scouters:

Fellow Scouts and Scouters. I am happy to participate with you tonight in this recommittal ceremony in which we will dedicate ourselves to the principles of the Scout Oath and Law...  

These ideals are in keeping with the ideals of the Church and the ideals of good citizenship. I urge and encourage you to incorporate these principles into your daily lives and into your dealings with your friends and associates, so that you may become better members of your families, church, and better citizens in this great land. [“Scouts Hear President McKay,” Church News, Feb. 12, 1966, 3]

Today, Scouting is nearly 100 years old. President Gordon B. Hinckley has said:

I love the Scouting movement. The promise of the Scout Oath and the twelve points of the Scout Law point young men along the path of being prepared for the 21st century. They provide a solid and powerful magnetic force toward development of a well-rounded and noteworthy character that counts. If every boy in America knew and observed the Scout Oath, we would do away with most of the jails and prisons in this country. If each of us would live up to those few words, “On my honor, I will do my best,” whether it be in school, whether it be in our social life, whether it be in our business or professional life, if I will do my very best, success and happiness will be mine. [Boy Scout Jamboral, Fillmore, Utah, Sept. 27, 1996]

Thank you, brethren, for your diligent service in immersing yourselves in this grand movement and its timeless values as you seek to vitalize the Aaronic Priesthood quorums within your wards and stakes.

May God bless us in these next six months that we may do all in our power to strengthen the young men of the Aaronic Priesthood by utilizing all our resources, including Scouting, in all its families, and Duty to God in the process. May we utilize each of these resources effectively to continue the challenge to reactivate one young man in each Aaronic Priesthood quorum in the next six months. We have already seen some wonderful success from our previous challenge and encourage you to continue to reach out to retain, to reclaim, and to grow the quorums of the Aaronic Priesthood.”

Entire talk can be found at http://www.lds.org
Excerpts and photos taken from “Philmont’s Miracles” by Jason Swensen, LDS Church News, week ending July 22, 2006

Philmont Scout Ranch again hosted the Church's annual Scouting Leadership Conference in two sessions - July 1-7 and July 8-14. The hundreds who participated enjoyed a week of fellowship and instruction from, among others, Elder John B. Dickson of the Seventy, along with members of the Young Men and Primary general presidencies and members of their respective general boards.

Philmont faculty, participants and their families gathered for classroom training, priesthood meeting, firesides, Sunday worship (including Primary, Relief Society and priesthood classes), family home evening, family banner parade, primary children parade and plenty of outdoor fun. Throughout the training, "Philmonters" were asked to look for those small, spiritual miracles existing alongside the ranch's remarkable physical beauty.

Philmont "was a Zion-like experience," said Elder Dickson, who attended the first session with his wife, Delores, and several grandchildren. All who attended Philmont, he said, were gathered for one common purpose: the cause of youth. That shared location and purpose helped spark a miracle of desire in each participant's heart to better serve young people.

Other miracles were found at Philmont. "This has been a bit of heaven," said Young Men General President Charles W. Dahlquist during the second session's closing testimony meeting, "We have caught a glimpse of Zion."

Participants at Philmont have been given the sacred charge of helping the young men of the Aaronic Priesthood arise and become men of Christ, he added. Such a miracle often occurs in the lives of youth when Priesthood, Scout and Primary leaders and teachers first offer prayer, persistence and perspiration.

"When we've done all we can and we still can't quite reach them -- it will be then when the windows of heaven will open and miracles will occur," Brother Dahlquist said.

Miracles also happen when parents and youth leaders enlist the scriptures to meet life's day-to-day troubles, said Primary General President Cheryl C. Lant during Philmont's adult fireside. "Every issue that faces families can be addressed by the scriptures."

The mission of Philmont's Scouting Leadership Conference is simple: to inspire and prepare priesthood and Primary leaders to perform the miracle of retaining, reclaiming and converting young people to the gospel. By doing so, Scouting-age LDS boys can develop and grow into faithful Melchizedek Priesthood holders, and countless families can be blessed.

The Scout Slogan implores doing a good turn daily. Each simple turn by a wise youth leader -- learned Philmont participants -- might be another's small miracle.

Despite life's challenges, "there are those little miracles that lift us up and move us on," Brother Dahlquist said.
Role of Preparing
Scouting activities should teach priesthood principles
Taken from article by Jason Swensen in Church News, week ending August 26, 2006

Priesthood and Scouting leaders are in the preparation business—preparing young men for missions, preparing for future families and preparing for faithful Church service.

As part of the LDS Scouting Leadership Conference at Philmont July 8-14, Young Men leaders Dean R. Burgess and Bradley D. Harris conducted a training session on how Scouting can be the laboratory for priesthood principles that prepare LDS youth for lifelong Church activity.

Priesthood leaders can start the preparation process by investing in each one of the boys in the Aaronic Priesthood quorum and Scout unit, said Brother Burgess, first counselor in the Young Men General Presidency.

“That means more than just those boys that show up on Sunday,” he added, “We need to invest in every young man. Go out and lead.”

Brother Burgess spoke of the challenge issued by President Gordon B. Hinckley and other Church leaders to retain the youth of the Church. Shepherding a Church member is easier done when that member is a young man. Don’t wait until he turns 30 to begin the activation and retention process. Priesthood leaders should work to ensure that every newly ordained deacon remains active throughout his Aaronic Priesthood years so he can receive the Melchizedek Priesthood as soon as he becomes an adult.

Parents, family members and priesthood leaders all play a role in strengthening a young man. Brother Burgess suggested that faithful men from the ward should wear the dual hat of Aaronic Priesthood and Scout leader. One man shouldn’t be a Sunday adviser and another man a weekday Scout leader.

Together, Scouting and the Church’s Duty to God program “build faith in Jesus Christ,” Brother Burgess said.

Brother Harris, a member of the Young Men General Board, said family, priesthood and Scouting can work together to help a young man prepare for lifelong activity and future Church service. He noted the similarity between Church publications such as “For the Strength of Youth” and the lessons taught in the Boy Scout Manual is going to match what you read in the Church [materials].”

Scouting activities should first be opportunities to teach and demonstrate priesthood principles.

“A camp-out should be a spiritual activity,” said Brother Harris, adding that rank advancements and merit badges are the icing on the LDS Scouting experience. A Scoutmaster’s “spiritual antennae” should be in tune during any Scouting activity.

Brother Burgess reminded Philmont participants that priesthood and Scout leaders have only six years to prepare a young man for missionary service and the challenges of adulthood. The bar has been raised; Scouting, he said, helps young men clear that bar.
Recognizing Outstanding Scouting

A Unique Field Trip

Ron L. Smith, Scoutmaster of Troop 769 of Woods Cross 6th Ward, Woods Cross Utah North Stake takes his troop to see Air Force One when President Bush came to Salt Lake City on August 30th.

Varsity Scouting Success

The Varsity Team of the Canyon View Ward, Canyon View Stake should be proud of the accomplishments of several of their team members. Their Varsity Team Coach, Warlough Crane, has good reason to be especially proud of three of the team members—his sons. Brothers Derek, Dallin, & Jaren Crane have all earned the Denali Award, the highest award possible in Varsity Scouting. These three brothers have over 200 merit badges between them.

Historical Day for Venturing

August 13, 2006 marked a historical day for Venturing Crew 584 (South Hill Ward, Puyallup Washington South Stake) and for all of Venturing. With the Honor Guard from McChord Air Force Base acting as the color guard for the night, the culmination of two years of hard work and dedication, 8 young men of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints achieved what no other Venturing Crew had ever done. Not only did they earn one of the Venturing awards, but received as many as 8 awards, including three of Venturing’s most elite awards.

Chris Sinden, one of the youth leaders in the crew, first set the goal to earn the Ranger award, using many of his experiences with his schools JROTC program. Chris earned the Gold, Silver, Ranger, Quest, and Trust Awards for Venturing.

Clinton Levitski, another of the youth leaders, used his interest in all things outdoors to be the first in the area to earn the Shooting Sports Outstanding Achievement award in addition to his Eagle, Gold, Silver and his Ranger Awards.

Mitch Toland set out to not only match Chris’ example, but also go one step farther as he earned 4 bronze awards, one more than any of the others had. Mitch would return to school in the fall as a senior in High School having completed his Eagle, Gold, Silver, Ranger, Quest, Trust, and 4 bronze awards.

John Ehlen was the first in the area to earn the Venturing Trust Award. John also earned his Gold, Silver & Ranger Awards.

Israel Baker joined the Venturing crew a little unsure of what he was really getting into and is now the first in his family to earn the Venturing Awards of Gold, Silver, Quest & Ranger.

Chad Waddington joined the crew just months before the court of honor. He worked tirelessly to be the youngest Venturer to earn the Ranger award. He has also earned two Bronze Awards.

Ben Mollett and Skyler Messegee, two of the youngest members of the crew, have both earned their Outdoor Bronze Award and will complete the requirements for their Eagle by summer 2007. Ben is working hard to beat Chad’s record as the youngest Venturer to earn the Ranger Award.
Training and Tenure of LDS Scout Leaders Increases

For a number of years the often quoted figure for tenure of service for LDS scouting leaders has been 6-9 months. Because length of tenure and training of leaders has a direct impact on the quality of program delivered to youth members, it was recommended to conduct a survey to determine the current status. Brad Allen, LDS Relationship Director- BSA is pleased to share the survey results. The results indicated that we are currently at an average of 22 months of service per leader, which is a positive move in the right direction. However, it is most desirable to average three years or longer.

During April – May, 2006 the LDS Relationship, BSA office, along with several councils, conducted a significant survey of over 25,000 LDS scouting leaders with 5,238 individuals responding. The number of those participating is of particular importance as it establishes a baseline of validity. The method of survey included direct mail with post card response, direct mail contact with response on council websites, direct contact by personal phone call, and response to surveys distributed at round-tables. The greatest number (over 4,500) of those responding did so by the direct mail contact method.

Those councils participating included the Great Salt Lake, Utah National Parks and Trapper Trails Councils. The following gives the number of responding leaders serving in each position:

- Cub Scout Leaders 1,221
- Varsity Scout Leaders 436
- Committee Chairman or Chartered Representative 1,177
- Other positions 634
- Total participating 5,238

Scouting leaders were invited to respond to four questions. First, what is your scouting position? Second, how long have you served in your position? Third, what BSA training have you completed (Youth Protection, Fast Start, Leader Essential and Specific, and Wood Badge)? Fourth, have you read and referred to the BSA publication “Guide to Safe Scouting” (a yes or no response)?

Tenure of Service (average):
- Cubmasters -- 21 months
- Assistant Scoutmaster -- 21 months
- Assistant Varsity Coach -- 18 months
- Assistant Venturing Adviser -- 18 months
- Committee Chairman or Chartered Representative -- 25 months
- Other Positions -- 22 months
- Average of all leaders -- 22 months

The good news is that our tenure is increasing but we still need to improve. Of special concern is that 36% of our leaders serve for less than one year. The overall average tenure of 22 months is affected by an increasing number of leaders serving for years not months.

Training:
- Youth Protection -- 64% completed with Scoutmasters highest at 83%. The goal is 100%.
- Fast Start -- 63% of all leaders have completed, which is an area of improvement.
- Leader Essentials and Specific -- 67% have completed both.
- Wood Badge -- 18% of all leaders with 28% of Scoutmasters have Wood Badge training.

Guide to Safe Scouting:
62% of leaders know and use this publication. The goal is 100%. We know that a good activity or camp-out is a safe activity or camp-out.

Observations:
Every boy deserves a trained leader. With the increase in tenure from 9 to 22 months, LDS scouting leaders still rank significantly lower than the national average of 4-5 years. Therefore, it is important that LDS scouting leaders continue to serve for years not months. Our boys deserve the best program that can be offered.