Message from the Young Men General Presidency

Real Growth Through Scouting

Quoting Thomas S. Monson:

“The Aaronic Priesthood prepares boys for manhood and the weightier duties of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Scouting helps our boys to walk uprightly the priesthood path to exaltation . . .

To all the Aaronic Priesthood with your fathers and your leaders, the priesthood program of the Church, with its accompanying activities, including Scouting, will help and not hinder you as you journey through life.”

“Much has been said in the media of late regarding Scouting. Let me affirm that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has not diminished in any way its support of the Scouting movement . . . . . if ever there were a time when the principles of Scouting were vitally needed—that time is now. If ever there were a generation who would benefit by keeping physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight—that generation is the present generation.”

The principles taught through Scouting are intended for every young man in America. Think of what this nation would become if each of us lived up to those few words, ‘On my honor, I will do my best.’ This Scout Oath would change education, improve social life, rid ourselves of evil designs and increase our standard of living everywhere. The twelve points of the Scout Law point young men and adults on a path better prepared for what the future brings. The purpose of Scouting provides Character Building, Citizenship Training, Leadership Development, Physical Fitness, and Spiritual Growth, all of which unite people, communities and nations.

Through Scouting, we have a great opportunity as directed by Church leaders to participate in the “Real Growth” of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is accomplished as those who are members live and honor the covenants they made after baptism. It also includes lifting and rescuing those members who are not currently participating and by inviting others to come unto Christ through faith in Jesus Christ and His atonement, repentance, baptism, and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Scouting is a gift and a way to provide “Real Growth” in all three of those areas. Scouting allows members of the Church in a heartfelt way to reach out to neighbors and communities, not only to bless them through the principles taught in Scouting, but also to introduce them to the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Consider this example of how a family’s life was changed through an invitation to participate in Scouting.

A woman named Deb Arenivar, knowing that Scouting could bless her sons, asked some Scout leaders in her neighborhood if her two boys could attend Scouts with them. Dylan (11) and Dustin (13) were invited to attend at the local LDS Church. Dylan and Dustin did very well in the Scouting program and began earning many merit badges and rank advancements. A court of honor was held where Dylan and Dustin received Scouting awards. The boys’ grandparents, parents and aunt attended the court of honor. At the end of the court of honor, Bishop Spencer Grant invited the family to take a tour of the church building and then invited them over to his house for refreshments. The bishop also invited the ward mission leader over with the family to his home.

At the bishop’s home, the Arenivar family was introduced to the gospel of Jesus Christ. At the conclusion, the grandfather was so impressed with the Scouts, the bishop and the ward mission leader, that he asked to learn more about the Church. The missionaries were contacted and regular meetings were set up with the grandparents and the aunt. After four weeks, the grandparents (Brother and Sister Mouett) were baptized. Shortly after, Jose, Deb, Dylan and Dustin Alenivar were baptized along with their aunt, Roxanne Mouett.

When Bishop Grant was asked what the critical features were in the family deciding to be baptized, he named three:

1. The Scouting program and the initial introduction into the Church
2. Ward members inviting the family over for Family Home Evening
3. Ward members performing acts of service for the family

It is our testimony that we have a tremendous opportunity to assist the Lord in this great work of gathering Israel and bringing all unto Christ. May we strengthen Scouting in our wards and stakes and may we see Scouting as a gift from God provided to bless His children and build His Kingdom.

Summary of statements by Church leaders in support of Scouting can be found on www.lds.org.
Message from the Primary General Presidency

Sister Erin Sanderson  
Primary General Board Member

What a wonderful experience I had with my family at Philmont this summer! My children (a teenage son and two Young Single Adult daughters) absolutely loved it and so did my husband. To be able to get away from the television, video games and computers and enjoy family time and the beauty of this special place was a blessing. I love this line from the Philmont Hymn “Out in God’s country tonight.”

With so many distractions for our boys in the world today, it is reassuring to gather with other like-minded parents and leaders who want good old-fashioned values for their sons, grandsons and the boys they love. We want our boys to love their God and their country, to value family, and to love and serve others.

How great to be taught how to be more effective in reaching and inspiring these future leaders and fathers and to be given the tools, support, and knowledge that will help us to be confident and committed to this cause.

“Nobody knows what a boy is worth. We'll have to wait and see. But every man in a noble place a boy once used to be.”

~ Anonymous

I am so proud to be part of a program like the Boy Scouts of America and to have an opportunity to shape the lives of boys and young men. Philmont is a great place to be energized and instructed about the value of Scouting in the life of a boy.

2012 Stats

• Sessions Held: 2
• Total Faculty and Family Members: 126
• Priesthood Leaders: 344
• Family Members attending Philmont: 777
• Mountain Trek Young Men & Women: 139
• Total Participants: 1,260
• Number of LDS Stakes Represented: 175
• Number of States Represented: 30
• Number of Councils Represented: 62

2013 Priesthood Leadership Conference on Scouting

Session 1: June 29 - July 5, 2013  
Session 2: July 7 - July 13, 2013

Invitations were mailed from LDS Church headquarters to each stake president in the United States in September 2012.

2013 PHILMONT PARTICIPATION POLICY:

Members of stake and district presidencies are invited to attend the annual Priesthood Leadership Conference on Scouting hosted by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Stake and district Young Men presidents and high councilors with Scouting responsibilities may attend with their stake and district presidency members.

• The conference, under the direction of the Church General Scouting Committee, is held at the Philmont Training Center (PTC) located on the Philmont Scout Ranch near Cimarron, New Mexico.
• Priesthood leadership and Scouting training is provided by members of the Young Men and Primary general presidencies and boards.
• Participants attend a conference beginning either Saturday, June 29 or July 6, 2013 (arrival between 2:00 – 4:00 PM) and concluding Friday, July 5 or July 12, 2013 (leave by 9:00 AM).
• Travel costs and conference fees for approved stake and district leaders should be paid out of the stake or district budget allowance. Expenses for family members should be paid by the participants.
• Members of stake presidencies may bring a member of the high council and/or stake Young Men president.
• The names of individuals who are not members of a stake or district presidency may be placed on a waiting list.

In addition, Philmont is a family experience as well as a marvelous training opportunity. Each priesthood leader is encouraged to bring his wife and family to Philmont.

Philmont information and updates are also available on our website: www.ldsbsa.org
Hundreds receive training at Philmont Scout Ranch
Duty to God again plays a central role in annual leadership conference

Youth leaders such as David L. Beck, Young Men general president, and his counselors, Brother Larry M. Gibson and Brother Adrian Ochoa, can almost call the Philmont Scout Ranch their second home. Each year they spend a couple of weeks in the ruggedly beautiful lands of eastern New Mexico presiding over a priesthood leadership conference designed to help leaders assist their charges in the Aaronic Priesthood to become the best young men they can be.

It's an inspiring experience that participants never forget. Hundreds of stake leaders from across the United States converge on the encampment for a week of training, fellowship and fun. The stake presidents and their counselors typically arrive with their families, who also enjoy their time at the ranch as they experience the wonders of the "Land of Enchantment" while making new friends, strengthening family relationships and building testimonies.

While the local leaders spend their time at Philmont dressed in Scout uniforms, the conference is very much a priesthood gathering. Hours are spent each day in classrooms and in large halls for Scout and priesthood-themed instruction. There are also devotionals and mountain priesthood leadership training retreats taught by the Young Men general presidency and Young Men general board, along with Rosemary M. Wixom, Primary general president, and her counselors, Sister Jean A. Stevens and Sister Cheryl A. Esplin.

Families who gathered for one of the recent two Philmont leadership conferences functioned as a ward during their week at camp. Prior to the conferences, almost all participants were given traditional assignments in their new "ward." A stake president from, say, North Carolina, may find himself in front of a group of Sunbeams. While a sister from Idaho may accept the calling of ward Young Women president for a few days.

Sundays are always a highlight at Philmont as families worship together, fulfill their weeklong callings and spend time together with scripture study and quiet reflection. Philmont becomes a tent city during the LDS conferences and a Sabbath-day walk through the peaceful encampment offers participants an opportunity to make new friends and build special family memories.

In a perfect world, every youth leader in the Church would have an opportunity to spend a week at Philmont. Local leaders return home with a better understanding of Scouting and its place in Aaronic Priesthood quorums in the United States. But much of the instruction also focuses on the essential role of the Duty to God program that functions in wards and branches across the globe.

During his service at Philmont, Brother Beck was quick to note that Duty to God cannot be entirely defined as a program. Instead "it is a resource to help young men become great fathers," he said. "It is not something we can complete and not do anymore."

During the training, Brother Beck taught that "the fullest expression of the priesthood is fatherhood and motherhood. ... All that we have talked about this week is designed to strengthen relationships with God and family."

Before young men can "fulfill" their duty to God, they must first "understand" their duties, he added. They need the support of wise parents, peers and leaders. "This triangle represents the key relationships in the life of a young man: His relationship with God. His relationship with his parents. His relationship with his peers. Young men who successfully stay on the path and prepare themselves to receive the Melchezidek Priesthood, go to the temple and on missions and prepare themselves to be wonderful husbands and fathers."

Not all participants in the recent Philmont conferences camped at the ranch. Most of the older teens participated in trek through the New Mexico backcountry. The young men and women enjoyed respite from their tiring sojourn by participating in Sabbath-day worship services in the woods. Members of the Young Men and Primary presidencies traveled to the makeshift outdoor worship sites to join the trekkers for the meetings.

Article and photos by Jason Swensen, Church News, week of July 28, 2012
LDS-BSA Relationships Committees

Statement from the LDS Church “Scouting Handbook”, June 2012

2.4 - 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 advisor to this committee.

Purpose of the LDS-BSA Relationships Committee

The effort to establish LDS-BSA Relationships Committees across the nation has increased the number of BSA councils working more effectively with local LDS Church leadership to deliver the quality Scouting program that LDS boys, young men, adult leaders and the surrounding communities deserve. The LDS-BSA Relationships Committee allows local Church key holders to interface with the local BSA Council officers. When stake presidencies serve on Relationships Committees, they are engaged and aware of important local, regional and national issues and can influence the decisions of the BSA Council in positive ways.

Stakes that support functioning LDS-BSA Relationships Committees have a profound impact on Scouting within the Aaronic Priesthood. Since the committee agenda is focused on matters relating specifically to the Church, communication is significantly improved within local wards and stakes, and the delivery of Scouting in the Church and community is enhanced. The five main goals of the LDS-BSA Relationships Committee are as follows:

1) Provide boys and young men a quality Scouting experience, blessed with priesthood guidance.
2) Strengthen working relationships between the Church and Scout councils.
3) Collaborate with the local BSA council and executive board, including key community, religious, business and educational organizations.
4) Provide counsel on policies, procedures, budgets, calendars and training. Resolve issues and concerns.
5) Encourage participation in and support of the BSA council to ensure “Real Growth.”

The LDS-BSA Relationships office in Salt Lake City is available to work with each BSA council and Relationships Committee to create a tradition of better correlation between the LDS Church and the BSA.

For more information about organizing a committee, job descriptions and best practices, visit our website at www.ldsbsa.org.

100th Anniversary Update

On June 9, 1913, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints became the Boy Scouts of America’s first official chartered organization. Since then, this extraordinary relationship has impacted millions of young men preparing them to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and become good citizens. To celebrate this exciting occasion, the following events will take place:

- In May 2013 at the BSA National Annual Meeting, the partnership will be highlighted at the Duty to God Breakfast and the LDS Reception.
- In July 2013 at the 2013 National Jamboree, a special Monday Family Home Evening will be held for all jamboree participants at the main stadium. In addition, during the jamboree, participants will have a chance to earn a special 100th Anniversary award.
- From mid-July to December 2013 there will be a special exhibit at the Church History Museum in Salt Lake City, Utah highlighting the partnership. This exhibit will be called “United in Our Duty to God: Celebrating a Century of Faith, Family and Leadership.” It is being presented by the Church and the BSA National Scouting Museum. Thirty original Rockwell and Csartari paintings will be on display as well as several original documents and memorabilia items.
- On Tuesday, October 29, 2013, a special commemoration will be held at the Conference Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. It is scheduled to start at 6 PM (MDT) and will be broadcast through the Church’s satellite system to all stake centers in the United States. It will also be available on the internet.
- The LDS-BSA Relationships office will produce a patch, pin and coin. An additional patch will also be available with recommended requirements to help the recipient know something more about the significance of the partnership.
- We are encouraging local BSA councils to utilize their LDS-BSA Relationships Committee to identify additional ways to celebrate this wonderful partnership. Please keep the LDS-BSA Relationships office informed with what you plan to do, so that plans may be posted on the LDS-BSA Relationships website www.ldsbsa.org.

As updates become available, they will be posted on the LDS-BSA Relationships website www.ldsbsa.org.

Celebrating 100 Years

Scouting and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Articles by Mark Francis, Associate Director, LDS-BSA Relationships
2012 BSA National Annual Meeting
LDS Scouters Lead and Receive National Recognitions

The BSA Annual Meeting is an opportunity for Scouting’s leadership to discuss future strategy for the Boy Scouts of America. To a theme of “Continuing Our Journey,” Scouters gathered this year in Orlando, Florida, May 30 - June 1. They shared best practices, set goals for the future, elected board and committee members and recognized the achievements of regions, areas, councils and individuals. It was noted that the very successful “Journey to Excellence” recognition program has had a very positive impact on council performance and will be continued.

In attendance and participating in strategic meetings were the Young Men General Presidency of the Church—David Beck, Larry Gibson and Adrian Ochoa; the Primary General Presidency—Rosemary Wixom, Jean Stevens and Cheryl Esplin; as well as LDS-BSA Relationships Director Brad Allen and Associate Director Mark Francis—along with their spouses.

In program highlights, there is greater emphasis being placed on having a functioning Key 3 at every level. Regions, areas and councils should all pattern after the national leadership. A Unit Service Plan was introduced to commissioners which will facilitate better use of council and district resources in helping each unit improve. Increased volunteer participation and action is critical to the success of Scouting everywhere. It was also noted that BSA membership is showing positive growth for the first time in several years. The Church has had the largest growth during the past year among all the chartered organizations.

Some significant leadership changes were made. Chief Scout Executive Bob Mazucca is retiring and will be succeeded by Wayne Brock on September 1. Wayne Perry of Seattle, Washington, will serve as the National President of Boy Scouts of America for the next two years. Brother Perry is the first member of the LDS Church to hold this position in the BSA’s 102-year history. In an enthusiastic and exciting presentation at the closing banquet, Perry called Scouting leaders to action in making renewed efforts to save boys. He cited dismal statistics regarding discipline problems, high school drop-out rates, poor grades and decreasing college populations among young men. “Boys are in trouble and they need our help,” he stated.

A highlight of the National Annual Meeting was an LDS Reception attended by 187 Scouters prior to the closing program. A 25 Scout choir from the Orlando Stake presented two musical numbers. Speakers included Rosemary Wixom, Primary General President, and David Beck, Young Men General President. Sister Wixom discussed the importance of seeking out and working with “the one.” Brother Beck focused on using Scouting to help achieve the goals of the Aaronic Priesthood. Wayne Perry and Wayne Brock also shared remarks.

Several LDS Church members were recognized for their service to Scouting. The Silver Buffalo, the highest distinguished service award for noteworthy and extraordinary service to youth on a national basis, was presented to Ray Louis Russell of Mesa, Arizona. The Silver Antelope award for distinguished service to youth on a regional level was presented to Roma Bishop of Pleasanton, California; Robert J. Johnston of Las Vegas, Nevada; and James D. Virgin of Vancouver, Washington—all from the Western Region. J. Patrick Anderson of Kalamazoo, Michigan, also received the Silver Antelope in the Central Region. He is currently serving as Mission President in Colorado Spring, Colorado. Congratulations to each of these Scouters on these great recognitions!
Remembering Bill
A Tribute to the Life and Legacy of Bill Burch

“I always knew that we had a successful LDS Conference based on the size of the wood chip piles,” noted Mark S. Anderson, Director of Program at Philmont Scout Ranch. The wood chip piles referred to were those made by long-time Scouter and whittler, Bill Burch. Brother Burch—who carved nearly 50,000 bolo ties during his lifetime—died Tuesday, September 25, 2012 at his home in Orem, Utah.

“Bill was an icon around this land and in many nations of the world,” noted fellow woodcarver, Gary Dollar, upon his passing. Brother Burch and Brother Dollar would often sit together at Scouting functions—including the LDS Philmont Conferences—and whittle bolo ties. Their activity would inevitably draw Scouts, youth, and leaders to their wood-carving circle, where Scouting values would be talked of and taught to a captive audience.

A Church News article by Jason Swensen, dated September 3, 2006 referred to Bill as a “Pied Piper”:

Youngsters, teens and middle-aged folks alike are inevitably drawn (Piper-like) to the great-grandfather with the angel-white mustache. This diverse tableau hovers about Brother Burch, conversing with the man or simply listening to one of his time-earned stories of Scouting or gospel living. But their eyes always return to Brother Burch’s 83-year-old hands. They watch as the whittling knife in his right hand shifts and sways while his left steadies a fist-sized block of aspen.

Brother Burch was a Scoutmaster long before whittling became his avocation. In fact, he was camping with a Scout troop in Washington in the early 1960s when he carved his first Scout-themed face. Soon Brother Burch was carving neckerchief slides to reward local Scouts for earning merit badges and advancement awards. Whenever Brother Burch participated in national and international Jamborees he would hand out as many of his carvings as possible. Payment would come in the form of a young man’s promise to live the Scout Oath and Law.

Besides hanging his ties around the necks of legions of Scouts, Brother Burch has also placed his humorous creations with plenty of famous folk. President Ronald Reagan, owned a “Burch bolo.” Former First Lady Nancy Reagan was once spotted on the news sporting one of Brother Burch’s cowboy clasps… George W. Bush, Ezra Taft Benson, and Gordon B. Hinckley are among other notable people who received Burch bolo ties.

“As we help others, we are fulfilling our life’s need — that’s what we’re here for,” commented Brother Burch.

Upon hearing of Brother Burch’s passing, many friends emailed thoughts and condolences, including the following:

“Very few get a chance to influence so many Scouts in a positive, quiet, humble manner as Bill did.”

“Bill’s joy was in his family and in being with Scouts and leaders wherever they were.”

“Bill has now taken his ‘journey,’ and I bet he had a pocket knife in his hand!”

“What a marvelous legacy Bill has provided that will live on through nearly 50,000 bolo ties.”

“We who remain must insure that the art of teaching youth life lessons must never cease. Bill was most at home in his Scout uniform.”

“I suspect that Bill is already attracting a crowd…and being an example and a guide to others there as he was here.”

“I am sure that there was a large contingent of former Scouts and Scouters, along with family and friends, to welcome him to that ‘Big Rendezvous in the Sky.’”

The entire Church News article by Jason Swensen may be read in the LDS-BSA Relationships Newsletter, October 2007, page 6, available online at www.ldsbsa.org.

Two Bill Burch videos are available for purchase at: www.ldsbsa.org > LDS-BSA Scout Shop > Shop Online > Categories: Purchase Videos

Article submitted by Nettie Francis

“No Do a Good Turn Daily”
A Promise Made to Bill Burch

I first met Bill Burch at the 1993 National Jamboree as a 13-year-old Scout. I was wearing a campaign hat and was looking for a bolo tie with a campaign hat. When I could not find one, I asked Bill if I could have the one around his neck. He told me that the one around his neck was his self-portrait and that there were only three self-portrait bolos ever created.

He took the bolo-tie from his own neck and agreed to give it to me, if I promised to do a good turn every day for the rest of my life. That bolo tie has been a treasure in my Scouting memorabilia and reminds me often about that challenge that I was given as a young Scout. I try as often as I can to do a good turn, serve and inspire others as Bill did.

Memory and photo submitted by Talmage Allen
A Touch of Tunisia

Twenty-two National Scouting leaders from Tunisia spent a week in Salt Lake City meeting with BSA leaders, touring, and learning about Scouting in America. The participants were all members of the Tunisian Scout Association National Board. Tunisia is a country approximately the size of Utah, located in northern Africa on the Mediterranean Sea. A revolution in the country in 2011 has prompted a restructuring of their Scouting programs.

The trip was sponsored by the Wyoming National Guard, with Captain Eric McCoy of Cheyenne, Wyoming, and Terry Meyers of the BSA National Office accompanying the contingent. The Tunisians were met and welcomed at the Salt Lake International Airport by Charles Dahlquist, Chairman of the event, on Wednesday, September 12, 2012. The group included doctorate students, professors, teachers, medical doctors an employee of the US Embassy, and accountants. Four members of the Scouting contingent were women.

The Great Salt Lake Council assisted in hosting the event, and several forums were held at the council office where the Tunisian Scouts were taught about council and district organizations, BSA Basic Training courses, family involvement in Scouting, service opportunities, the Summit Bechtel Reserve, and other topics. Floyd Hatch, former member of the Young Men General Board, hosted the group at the Lazy H Ranch for dinner on Thursday evening.

The Tunisian Scouts also visited local units in the Great Salt Lake Council, as well as a Wood Badge Training Course at Camp Tracy. On Saturday, they traveled to the East Fork of the Bear Scout Reservation to learn about camping in the BSA programs, and tour the facilities. Mark Francis, event vice-chair and Associate Director of LDS-BSA Relationships, and his wife, Nettie, hosted the group for dinner at their home on Saturday evening.

Sunday included a formal welcome at the “Music and the Spoken Word” broadcast, and a visit with the Young Men General Presidency. The group also toured Temple Square and Park City. The following day, Sister Rosemary Wixom and Sister Jean Stevens of the Primary General Presidency accompanied the Tunisian Scout leaders on a tour of the Humanitarian Center. They then toured Welfare Square.

“Several Tunisians shared with me that they felt great warmth from the tour guides during these tours,” commented Terry Meyers, Direct Service Administrator with the BSA International Department.

Charles and Zella Dahlquist hosted the contingent at their cabin, “The Gathering Place,” for a farewell dinner on Monday evening. Gifts were exchanged, and the group shared several Scout songs together in Arabic, French and English as a goodwill sign. “Baden-Powell really had it right when he created Scouting not only to strengthen the Rising Generation, but to bring the people of the world together in peaceful, building and serving activities,” commented Brother Dahlquist. “This was never more evident than this past week. Peace-making most certainly begins at a Jamboree or around a campfire!”

All of the Tunisian Scout leaders were Muslim, and continued their religious observances during the week. Many warm and wonderful conversations were shared between Muslims and Latter-day Saints, Tunisians and Americans.

“This has certainly opened up hearts and doors for Scouting, and possibly for the church as well,” commented Brother Francis.

Dr. Mehdi Ben Khelil, International Commissioner for the Tunisian Scout Association, expressed gratitude for, “A wonderful experience in Salt Lake City. We went home with a lot of information that will be very helpful in the work as we start to rebuild our programs and trainings.”

Brother Dahlquist concluded, “We now have 22 new Scouting Friends in Tunisia and look forward to future opportunities to serve together.”

Article and photos submitted by Nettie Francis
Risk Management: Lightning Risk Reduction

The National Weather Service recommends “When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!” The only completely safe action is to get inside a safe building or vehicle.

When you first hear thunder, see lightning or observe dark, threatening clouds developing overhead, the best risk-reduction technique to avoid being struck or injured by lightning is to shelter in a substantial building or hard-topped vehicle. **Stay inside until 30 minutes after you last hear the rumble of thunder before resuming outdoor activities.**

- **Safe Building**—one that is fully enclosed with a roof, walls, and floor, and has plumbing or wiring. Examples of safe buildings include a home, school, church, hotel, office building or shopping center.
- **Safe Vehicle**—any fully enclosed, metal-topped vehicle such as a hard-topped car, minivan, bus, truck, etc. If you drive into a thunderstorm, slow down and use extra caution. If possible, pull off the road into a safe area. Do NOT leave the vehicle during a thunderstorm.

**WHEN A SAFE BUILDING OR HARD-TOPPED VEHICLE IS NOT CLOSE BY**

- If camping, hiking, etc., far from a safe vehicle or building, avoid open fields, the top of a hill, or a ridge top.
- Spread your group out 100 feet from each other if possible.
- Stay away from tall, isolated trees; flag poles; totem poles; or other tall objects. If you are in a forest, stay near a lower stand of trees.
- Stay away from water, wet items (such as ropes), and metal objects (such as fences and poles). Water and metal are excellent conductors of electricity.
- If boating and you cannot get back to land to a safe building or vehicle: On a small boat, drop anchor and get as low as possible. Large boats with cabins, especially those with lightning protection systems properly installed, or metal marine vessels offer a safer but not risk-free environment. Remember to stay inside the cabin and away from any metal surfaces.

Common Myths*:

- **Myth:** Lightning never strikes the same place twice. **Fact:** Lightning often strikes the same place repeatedly, especially if it’s a tall, pointy, isolated object. The Empire State Building is hit by lightning nearly 100 times a year.
- **Myth:** If it’s not raining or there aren’t clouds overhead, you’re safe from lightning. **Fact:** Lightning often strikes more than three miles from the center of the thunderstorm, far outside the rain or thunderstorm cloud. “Bolts from the blue” can strike 10-15 miles from the thunderstorm.
- **Myth:** Rubber tires on a car protect you from lightning by insulating you from the ground. **Fact:** Most cars are safe from lightning, but it is the metal roof and metal sides that protect you, NOT the rubber tires. Remember, convertibles, motorcycles, bicycles, open-shelled outdoor recreational vehicles and cars with fiberglass shells offer no protection from lightning. When lightning strikes a vehicle, it goes through the metal frame into the ground. Don’t lean on doors during a thunderstorm.
- **Myth:** A lightning victim is electrified. If you touch them, you’ll be electrocuted. **Fact:** The human body does not store electricity. It is perfectly safe to touch a lightning victim to give them first aid. This is the most chilling of lightning Mystics. Imagine if someone died because people were afraid to give CPR!
- **Myth:** If outside in a thunderstorm, you should seek shelter under a tree to stay dry. **Fact:** Being underneath a tree is the second leading cause of lightning casualties. Better to get wet than fried!
- **Myth:** Structures with metal, or metal on the body (jewelry, cell phones, Mp3 players, watches, etc), attract lightning. **Fact:** Height, pointy shape, and isolation are the dominant factors controlling where a lightning bolt will strike. The presence of metal makes absolutely no difference on where lightning strikes. Mountains are made of stone but get struck by lightning many times a year. When lightning threatens, take proper protective action immediately by seeking a safe shelter, don’t waste time removing metal. While metal does not attract lightning, it does conduct it so stay away from metal fences, railing, bleachers, etc.
- **Myth:** If trapped outside and lightning is about to strike, I should lie flat on the ground. **Fact:** Lying flat increases your chance of being affected by potentially deadly ground current. If you are caught outside in a thunderstorm, you keep moving toward a safe shelter.

*See http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/myths.htm
For additional information regarding lightning safety, see http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov

Developed by Alan Rogers and Steve Hoskins, Church Risk Management, and the Great Salt Lake Council Risk Management Committee