

## Scouting Leadership Conference at Philmont Scout Ranch

Notes compiled by Michael B. Martin, 2<sup>nd</sup> Counselor, Stake Young Men's Presidency, Moreno Valley California Stake—[yogi-bear@iname.com](mailto:yogi-bear@iname.com). These notes represent my observations, recollections and learning from a very intense spiritual experience. I don't expect that it is possible to even convey the smallest part of the impact that this experience has had.

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[Priesthood Leadership Session](#)—02 July 2002 (Notes compiled by Douglas Patten)

### **Presentation 1 – Helping Young Men Have Spiritual Experiences and Effective Relationships with Caring Leaders**

*Presenter: Elder F. Melvin Hammond, General YM President*

Getting spirituality into ourselves and the young men is important.

“We live in an environment that is unusually remarkable.” There has never been a time when we were so wealthy. Wealth has an ability to destroy spirituality. It's not the money, but the love of money that causes this.

Our spirit of enjoyment was greater than our spirit of sacrifice. We wanted to have more than we wanted to give. We tried to spare effort and we met disaster. (French historian speaking of fall of France to Germany in WWII.)

In our society today, we're in the same situation.

Do we see in our youth strength, or the weakness from what we enjoy?

39% of U.S. young men in the church serve missions. 39% or less go to the temple to be sealed. The children of the other 61% grow up without the foundation necessary.

As Scouters, priesthood leaders, and most importantly, parents, the important thing to do about this is to prepare.

A parable by F. Melvin Hammond, 2001—think in terms of mutual in stake/ward.

“A certain king possessing many riches and desiring to share them with all his subjects planned a feast with food and drink. His servants were given instructions and preparations were made. In the evening the guests arrived fasting and most happy to be fed. The hall was spacious and the tables were beautifully set. But the cups were empty and only a few crumbs were spread upon the plates. The guests left hungering and thirsting, their loyalty shaken, not anxious to return. And the king wept because of his slothful servants.”

The prophet Gordon B. Hinckley said, “The time has come for us to stand a little taller, to lift our eyes and stretch our minds to a greater comprehension and understanding of the grand millennial mission of this the Church of Jesus Christ of LDS. This is the season to be strong. It is a time to move forward without hesitation, knowing . . .

the mission . . . It is a time to do what is right, regardless of the consequences that might follow. We have nothing to fear. God is at the helm. He will overrule for the good of the work.”

“Scouting is important.” Scouting has never been more powerful or important to the church than it is right now.

The brethren have never been more solidly behind Scouting than they are now.

Duty to God replacing Scouting? – “That’s baloney.”

We (the brethren) endorse it, and we want you to.

Friends of Scouting—We believe in it. How much is a boy worth. Just do it, go after it. You don’t tell people how much they’re supposed to give, just ask them to contribute. ¾ of the stake could give \$100 a year and not even blink an eye. Be strong and go forward.

Elder Hammond sang solo of song from primary songbook (“How will they know?”)

How will they know, unless we teach them so?

We do not receive Holy Ghost at time of confirmation—we get it when we’re worthy. Most don’t receive it at confirmation. You don’t receive the spirit (spiritual experience such as Paul or Alma the younger) unless seeking it.

A lot of people who have spiritual experiences don’t recognize them because they don’t know how to recognize the Holy Ghost.

Planning is important.

Take ‘em camping. Contrive a situation where, if things are just right, they can have an experience that’s spiritual. And you can teach them what it means to have a spiritual experience.

In 3 Nephi 19, the Lord called 12 men to serve as disciples, and they began to teach and prayed for what they most desired, for the Holy Ghost to be given to them. Christ gives thanks to Father in Heaven for giving it to them (v.20).

Large encampments are fun, but smaller ones provide more opportunity for spiritual experiences and growth. (12, 10, 8 youth).

Blood of Abraham has important responsibility to spread the gospel to all nations. When you join the church, you become of the family of Abraham. (See Abraham 1:18-19, 2:9-10)

It’s important all young men understand they are descendants of Abraham. If they don’t know, they don’t know how to act or what their responsibility is.

President Kimball said that in the preexistence, the Lord stood before all of us and asked of us to commit to give a portion of our lives to him. Every one of us raised our hand in agreement to that prospect. Therefore, every young man should go on a mission. It’s as much a commandment as paying tithing, sacrament, etc. Mission is not a volunteer opportunity. Young men have a responsibility and obligation to get the priesthood and carry it to all nations of the world. If they don’t do it, there is no one else who will. “The blood of Abraham in you demands that you do even what you’re doing right now.” (Philmont training)

If there are bishops not dealing with young men and women, if they do not understand they are not there to deal with the old, “if they’re not doing it, find somebody else to do it.” Bishops cannot delegate their responsibility as president of the Aaronic Priesthood in the ward.

## ***Presentation 2 – The BSA and the Church: A Partnership***

*Presenter: C. Bradford Allen, Director of LDS Relationships*

Video: “I pledge allegiance.”

Suggested addition to begin troop meetings: D&C 13

Remember Law is not just words—need to put them into practice.

We are the largest, continuous charter partner in BSA.

LDS membership is 12% nationally.

Our leaders in the church average a tenure of 6 months, possibly a little better.

“We have to have leaders that serve a tenure.”

The Boy Scout Handbook—the most important handbook ever produced in Scouting.

Brad’s father only got to 2<sup>nd</sup> class. When asked why—“The Scoutmaster moved.” New program did not function after that, so no advancement occurred.

Scouting allows opportunity for fathers to spend quality time with sons.

Scoutmaster to father: We’re going on a hike. I don’t need you, but your son will. You can miss it if you like, but it’s your decision.

Encourage leaders to always invite fathers, every time.

Church adopted Scouting to put into action what is taught on Sunday.

Baden Powell: "Our aim in the movement (of Scouting) is to give such help as we can in bringing about God's kingdom on earth."

Attainment of Eagle rank prepares boys for service to others.

The miracle of Scouting doesn't happen until you go Scouting. (Go and do principle.)

It is appropriate to plan spiritual moments. Too many of our men "wing it." Don't let your leaders wing it.

Invite leaders to become serious about what they have an opportunity to do.

The boy is the most important person in the organization.

Don't forget the 11-year-olds. They are a patrol of your troop.

Varsity Scouting exists because the church requested it. We're not doing a very good job supporting and implementing it.

Boys of 16-17 need us more than the 8-9 year olds. Most of the youth we lose are at age 18.

It is entirely appropriate to invite all young men to remain in Venturing until they go on a mission.

Second most critical age group in the church are the 14-15 year olds.

Each council has LDS relationships committee—part of membership/relationships committee at council level. Stake presidents or presidency members should be members of that committee.

It's important for LDS to be active at district level.

What makes Scouting work effectively in the stake?—Stake Presidency members who are involved in the program. Suggests all stake presidents wear uniform to activities/events where appropriate.—Example was given of a stake president in Idaho who made the commitment to attend a board of review in every ward at least once a quarter, in full uniform. Imagine the thoughts of the boy when he walks into the room to see the stake president, at his board of review, and in uniform.

We have Scouting to help boys come to Christ.

Pres Hinckley—"I love the Scouting movement."

Become involved—LDS trainers are some of the best in the BSA.

If it's not working for you, your people are not using the program, and the leaders are not trained with tenure.

\*\*Teach your leaders how to take advantage of teaching moments.

Church encourages your involvement—As Stake Pres., become involved in council—volunteer. When you get involved, it makes an impact.

Two of the four regional directors are LDS.

"BSA has more literature that you'd ever wanna read."

Professional Scouters are here to serve the volunteers to be sure Scouting is successful.

Thomas S. Monson said he'd like all boys registered and charge the leaders with the responsibility to make it happen in the life of each boy. Example was given of young men who hit 17 yr. 9 mo. of age and are now ready to get their Eagle. If they're not registered, it won't happen.

BSA/LDS partnership becomes stronger at the local level.

We are Scouting, and we need to become involved.

### **Presentation 3 – The Family, the Church, and Scouting**

*Presenters: Elder Spencer J. Condie, Counselor, General YM Presidency; Sister Sydney S. Reynolds, 1<sup>st</sup> Counselor, General Primary Presidency*

#### Sister Reynolds:

Missionary preparation and how Scouting can help –

Family Proclamation—duty of parents to teach children to be law-abiding citizens.

What kinds of things does a young man need to learn/experience before going on a mission to prepare for his mission?

Audience input:

Service, seminary graduate, obedient, scripture study, testimony, work ethic, leadership opportunities, patriarchal blessing, financial planning, tithe payers, cooking skills, worthiness, commitment, perseverance.

What about when he's out on a mission? What does it take to be a successful missionary?

Love other people, communication, obedience, receptive to spirit and be able to communicate it, tolerance, patience, sense of humor, hope, faith, good physical condition, good mental condition, love of scriptures, organization skills, leader, follower, awareness of what their appearance ought to be.

How can Scouting help us bring these things into the lives of our young men?

Leadership opportunities, planning, preparation, preopening activity, opening (prayer, flag ceremony, uniform inspection), activities (more than one).

Advantages of uniforming?

Sense of belonging, group feeling, learn respect (for each other and meaning of uniform). Example given of missionary dress code/uniforming, all dressed alike.

Monthly:

Campout (don't cancel), court of honor (every 2-3 months), board of review.

During the year:

Planned service activities, advancement, summer camp, fundraising, planning, parents meeting.

What does a leader need? What kind of Scoutmaster do we want for these boys?

Cares, loves the boys, consistent, a fun grown-up, the four T's (Training, Tenure, Testimony, Time)

To primary leaders: Go to roundtable at least twice before deciding no to do Scouting. That one hour saves an entire month of "reinventing the wheel."

Dangers of running a half-baked Scouting program: Boys figure out that: appearance doesn't matter; planning is not important—it's okay to just wing it; commitment can be a casual one to the program.

It takes a while to build a tradition in Scouting and family; a tradition can be ruined quickly.

Boys come in all different shapes and sizes, and there is no one way to make it happen. We need the Lord's help.

Jimmie, a DOWNS syndrome victim; his parents were told he would never amount to anything. Through the help of loving primary teachers, loving parents, scout committee, scoutmaster, troop, they took the time to help him along with what he needed. He became an Eagle Scout. He served as a missionary with his parents when his parents were called as mission president. The Scouting program in the ward was one of the main reasons that he succeeded.

Jonathan received a \$48,000 scholarship from BSA, and when interviewed, gave as much credit as possible to Scouting.

Jesse, used to love Webelos and help out all the time. His mother was divorced, Jesse was doing well. Webelos leader was called away to another calling. When she got back, he was no longer there (about age 14). When she asked, one of the parents told her that he had a bad experience at Scout camp made him a twig sandwich and thought it was a riot. The leader were aware, and did nothing. Jesse left as he no longer felt a feeling of belonging. The young man has since been in and out of jail, and fathered a child out of wedlock.

#### Elder Condie:

What's more important—what we teach them or what we show them?

The presidency has stated, unitedly, that every young man should earn his Eagle Scout.

Elder S. Dillworth Young stated in a conference talk that he had a reputation as a great storyteller. He was famous for his Indian tales. There is a great magic with that age group and they are teachable. He was teaching them about Indians. He said that if he had to do it over again, he would tell them about Samuel Smith's mission experiences, Wilford Woodruff, Heber C. Kimball, Heber J. Grant, etc.

You can count the seeds in an apple, but how many apples are in each seed. (Referring to the passing down of the Book of Mormon from Samuel Smith to Phineas Young, Brigham Young, etc.)

Young boys are more spiritually in tune than we think they are. We don't want to take the fun out of Scouting or make it Deacon's quorum during the week.

Suggested Hymn 320, for example, in a round, around the campfire.

We're not just a tenderfoot—we're also a Deacon, etc. We shouldn't compartmentalize our lives. Scout Law should be repeated and rehearsed over-and-over again.

Alma 25:16, 1 Nephi 19:23—Scouting can be the schoolmaster to bring us to missions, and to the Melchizedek Priesthood, and to the temple.

President Monson—we kind of treat scouting and priesthood like a teeter-totter, emphasis on one, but not the other. But we can't have too much emphasis on points of Scout Law.

We can't have any "Jesse's" where they go on an outing and give him a "crabgrass sandwich."

Elder Condie's afraid we're teaching them how to be better fundraisers than we are teaching them to be of service. The teeter-totter is out of balance.

Happiness is the design of our existence. We need more happiness in our Troops and Scout meetings.

## **Presentation 4 – The Teacher/Varsity Program**

**Presenter: Elder Robert L. Backman, Emeritus Member of the Seventy**

Emeritus=today a rooster, tomorrow a feather duster.

Stakes a shelter from the world, which is caving in around us. (D&C 45)

Regarding the church, you ain't seen nothin' yet.

We get so wrapped up in our duties and responsibilities, we tend to lose sight of the church going on around us.

Characteristics of 14-15-year-old boys:

No longer have energy to do anything except to eat and grow.

No self confidence—they want to participate, but hold back.

Seek attention by being disruptive/mischievous.

Energy needs to be focused.

Often want to do things, but can't.

Ready to be more independent; the gang becomes more important; yet they still want to be home. They become torn between the two.

Love team sports; because they can hide as part of the team, and they don't stand out. Allows them to stand out when they want to, but hold back when they don't want to.

Warning: Most of us as priesthood leaders think our job is done when we provide a quorum advisor and let them go. The lessons of life are not learned simply by preaching to them on Sundays.

The end result and the true learning comes from application.

Boys will tend to be a different person for Sunday only, and they forget the rest of the week who they are.

We will not win these boys over in the sterile environment of the classroom.

Bishops need to be involved with the youth outside of normal church meetings—participate in outings and activities outside of Sunday worship.

Too often we let our stewardship extend no further than the walls of the church building.

The Sunday priesthood quorum and the Scouting organization must be merged so the boys understand they are Aaronic priesthood holders all week, not just Sunday.

Most of the boys this age have spiritual experiences, but do not recognize them.

Varsity Scout program has been adopted as a means to reach the 14-15-year-old boy. This is an official program. It was developed by LDS Scouters (priesthood holders/leaders), then was adopted by BSA.

Luke 2 (last verse) refers to Jesus' life from age 12 to the beginning of his ministry at 30.

Encourages reading Varsity Scout Coach Start-Up packet to become acquainted with program and be able to talk about it with new leaders.

Varsity Scout Guidebook outlines program in detail. Leaders of this age group should be very familiar with its contents.

It's important that the quorum president also be the Team Captain so that activities can be carried out consistently.

Quorum identity is important. If wards combine to form a larger unit, keep quorum identity intact, and assure bishop is aware of the concerns and status of the quorum in his ward.

Scouting needs to be an outgrowth of the quorum.

If you have small numbers, but you have good leadership, you will draw other boys in.

BSA has two criticisms of Scouting in the church:

1. Tenure
2. Training—we sometimes think that by virtue of being priesthood holders all things come automatically.

We need to have trained leaders.

Woodbadge is excellent leader training, not just Scouting training. Bishops should attend to learn more about Scouting *and* leadership.

It is important for us as men of God to influence these young boys.

Where does a boy have many experiences with men. Most areas of society are co-ed, and boys don't have much chance to have an association with men.

Scouting provides the opportunity for boys to be exposed to righteous men who can set examples for the young men to grow to become a great individual.

Quotes from S.I. Hayakawa about boys growing up surrounded by women. They need men to develop men. (As quoted by John Mooney in the Salt Lake Tribune:)

Dr. S.I. Hayakawa feels males are surrounded too much by females influence already. "Never has it been so difficult for boys to grow up into men." "Becoming a man is not a matter of chronology. It is a matter of proof. Throughout the history of mankind, boys have had to prove themselves men . . . To become a man it has always been necessary for boys to associate with men, as helpers on father's farm, as apprentices to craftsmen, as squires to knights, as waterboys to baseball teams.

"Through such associations they learned the secrets of adult culture: What rituals to observe, how to care for equipment, how to drink and curse and fight, perhaps, how to earn and maintain the respect of other men in a society of men.

"But today, most boys are separated from the lives of men. Men leave for the factory or the office early in the morning, commuting many miles to work. They do not return until evening. Boys are brought up by mothers and school teachers. Boys do not have an idea what a man does that makes him a man."

" . . . he is likely to spend his entire life with women around . . ."

"Boys need challenges. Their whole being cries out for them . . . If the affluent society does not provide boys with challenges, they are compelled by inner necessity to improvise their own. Is this not one of the reasons gangs of youths try to provoke authorities into confrontation? What about drugs and the young? If challenge and risk are what so many youths need and are not getting, is it not likely that drug warnings and their dangers simply make them more attractive?"

"It takes men to develop men. Mothers cannot do it by themselves. Neither can high schools. Nor colleges."

## **Presentation 5 – The Aaronic Priesthood Duty to God Program and Scouting**

*Presenter: Elder Glenn L. Pace, Counselor, General YM Presidency*

Two most frequently asked questions:

1. Complaints about finances (Friends of Scouting).
2. Is this going to do away with Scouting?

It's very easy to focus on a specific thing and forget about the big picture.

A fanatic is someone who, once having lost track of their objective, doubles his effort.

Let's step back and get the bigger picture. What is our objective?

Review of Aaronic Priesthood purposes.

There is danger in losing sight of the end, and focusing on the means.

What's this program all about? It's not replacing Scouting.

Presiding Bishopric had authority, but no responsibility to young men's program in the church.

General YM presidency has responsibility, but no authority (by scriptural mandate).

There has not been a concentrated focus at the general authority level on the young men of the church for years, where it was not diluted with other assignments. The Scouting organization has been focused. Therefore, there has been better training, better leadership, etc., better than the Aaronic priesthood focus. Somehow, focus needs to be brought back between Aaronic priesthood and Scouting.

The brethren are extremely concerned about the youth. (Pres. Hinckley is "brooding" over the youth.)

Taps to pendulum:

1. Get a light shining on Aaronic priesthood. Not to bring Eagle down, but to elevate Eagle and bring DTG even further up, equal to Eagle.
2. Activities in the church (including youth) (regional conferences, basketball tournaments, dance festivals, etc.) President Kimball stated they would no longer be held on a church level, but in the same talk emphasized that they would occur on a regional level.

There was nothing said/mentioned to de-emphasize Scouting.

Eagle and DTG are not the objective. It's too easy to have them become the objective rather than a means to an end.

\*\*Elder Pace emphasized and reemphasized, many times, that the Eagle is not being diminished or de-emphasized; rather an increased emphasis on Aaronic priesthood and the DTG award.

We must not lose sight of the objective and become fanatics.

Primary is to prepare young men for Aaronic priesthood program and Scouting program.

"It's easier to build a boy than to mend a man."

The new program is designed to be available to every Aaronic Priesthood young man, including those outside the United States who do not have Scouting available to them. It is a magnification of the spiritual elements.

It was also designed as a continuum to hold the interest of the boys at different age levels, and keep them focused throughout their Aaronic priesthood years.

Emphasis on being well-rounded, involving parents, bishop, advisers, teachers, and mutual.

Another emphasis from Elder Pace—DTG is not the “beginning of the end” of Scouting. Scouting is not going away.

Elder Pace is member of National Advisory Committee, as are many members of the church. Church is well-respected at national level. Those that are in the organization in the highest levels are men of great integrity and traditional values, even those who are not members of the church.

Make sure there is a healthy dose of testimony and spiritual experiences around the campfire.

Don't let advisers slip into misconception that their duty is to teach spiritual things, and the duty of the Scoutmaster is to teach knots. They both are spiritual leaders. The love of the Lord is more important for a Scoutmaster than a love of the outdoors. Both should go on the campouts.

Every boy deserves to have a well-trained leader.

Make sure leaders get trained; BSA has excellent resources for training.

Friends of Scouting—Don't kick against the pricks. Most of the boys spend more on a rock concert or a pro basketball game than then FOS requesting. Just do it, and do it now. How much is a boy worth. It's the best bargain goin'. How much do boys pay for a computer game or other software?

If you want to fail, change your leader every six months; if you want to succeed, leave him in a few years.

Elder Pace relates his experiences with being an Explorer Advisor for seven years. It took a good year before he was “in” with the boys, before they would tell him how they really felt. Not replacing a father or bishop, but being an adult friend. You can't get that relationship in a year.

Elder Pace pleads for leaders to be in long enough to get “in” with the boys. They can be much more effective with longer tenure with the boys.

## **Presentation 6 – Financing Youth Programs, Including Scouting**

**Presenter: Dale R. McClellan, Young Men Executive Secretary, [mccllellandr@ldschurch.org](mailto:mccllellandr@ldschurch.org), x2-6854**

Budget guidelines implemented in 1990 to reduce financial demands on families.

Also helped eliminate some of the “creative financing” which was occurring throughout the church.

“Effective January 1, 1990, all of the operating costs of wards and stakes will be financed from the general funds of the Church, thus relieving members of budget assessments. The governing principle is that members who pay their tithes and offerings may expect that from these contributions the other expenses incident to membership will be met.” First Presidency Letter, 15 Nov 1989

“This change in budgeting will have the effect of returning much of the responsibility for teaching and counseling and activity to the family where it belongs. While there will still be many activities, they will be scaled down in cost of both time and money. There will be fewer intrusions into family schedules and family purses.” Elder Boyd K. Packer, “Teach Them Correct Principles”, Ensign, May 1990, p. 90

Four basic principles governing the budget allowance program. (Budget Allowance Guidelines 1998)

“In addition, leaders and teachers should not be made to feel obligated to provide materials, supplies, transportation, etc., because of their callings. These items should be provided from the budget allowance.” The First Presidency, Circular Letter, 12 December 1994

Planning ahead is important to budgeting.

Popcorn? No hard-and-fast guidelines, but you should ask yourself, “Do we really wanna do that?”

Fundraising, if absolutely necessary, should occur on an individual basis. Group fundraising events should occur only as a last resort.

While church funds do not pay for it, *Boy's Life* is an excellent magazine and parents should be made aware of it and encouraged to subscribe.

Church properties and buildings should generally not be used for fundraising activities.

It's a good idea to look at doing things without fundraising. Many stakes have been successful at eliminating all fundraising.

## **Presentation 7 – The Priest/Venture Program**

**Presenter: Elder Glenn L. Pace, Counselor, General YM Presidency**

Reminder of the purposes of the Aaronic Priesthood

Wants of Priest-age boys: Car, girl, independence/make their own decisions, money/job, adventure, challenge, achievement, to be entertained/music, respect/treated like adults, acceptance by peers, trust, older/big/grown-up, non-conformity, success/fear of failure, not singled out, testimony, future direction, to be helpful

Needs of Priest-age boys: Testimony, opportunities, how to serve, recognize spirit, see potential, know who they are, our time/attention, positive role model, patience, understanding, good friends (adult & peers), recognition (pat on back), develop healthy relationships with young women, love, accountability, work ethic

“Venture-age young men are on the threshold to adulthood. It is an exciting, but often confusing, and sometimes frightening time. Getting the young men through this time prepared to receive the Melchizedek priesthood and to receive temple ordinances is crucial”

“It is important to keep these young men . . .”

We have a tendency to assume the boys want fun. That is not true. They want something meaningful that is also fun.

“Do you come to Mutual? And if not, why?” Sample compilation of responses:

Leaders do not follow through on commitments for planned activities

Activities seem to lack meaning and substance

Service activities need to be of longer duration rather than just a single event

They end up being fun activities rather than focused service

Too many activities are “fun oriented” and are often “boring” compared to that which is available elsewhere

Teachers are often unprepared, and activities are not well planned

Pressures from peers and school activities don’t leave enough time for Church activities, especially when there is more meaning and substance in school activities

Even active parents don’t show much enthusiasm or support for mutual activities for children.

Subjects we are teaching the youth: Don’t date until you are 16; date in groups; dress modestly; avoid profanity; don’t watch R rated movies; don’t smoke or drink; say no to drugs; don’t listen to bad music; stay sexually pure.

We need to spend more time on doctrine, testimony, and involvement.

Venturing: A new and improved approach for the 16-18 year old young men in the LDS church.

If stakes/wards choose not to sponsor Venturing, they need to have something better.

Elder Pace’s opinion is, if you can find something better, welcome to it. If you want to reinvent the wheel, welcome to it. But if you want something that’s already out there, that the church endorses, give it a try.

17 year old boys think Scouting is merit badges, parents bugging me, wearing uniform, I already have Eagle, why more awards?

We need to think anew . . . Elder pace presented comparison of old paradigm vs. new paradigm relating to scouts vs. venturing, uniforming, advancement vs. mission prep/testimony, activity planning around advancement vs. individual needs, puppet leadership vs. shadow leadership. We need to avoid the “Spalding program” (basketball when the leader doesn’t know what’s supposed to be happening in his program).

It’s asking too much of a leader to plan something every single week on his own. We now have something to go on with the DTG program and the Venturing awards. Planning should be done by the youth with adult guidance.

We cannot compete with entertainment and schools. However, they can’t compete with us either. There are things we offer that no one else can.

“Boys need heroes close by. They need to know some man of towering strength and basic integrity, personally. They need to meet them on the street . . .” Spencer W. Kimball

Venturing program offers lots of resources: Venturer Handbook, venturing leader manual, venturing leader fast start, ranger guidebook, council planning calendar, venturing leadership skills course, venturing leader specific training, program capability inventory, activity interest survey, local “where to go camping” guide, council properties, national high adventure bases, venturing “new crew fast start” videotape.

Venturing leader manual has a plethora of information which provides a reference for the boys to pick and choose resources for their activities according to their interests.



Awards are not pushed in Venturing, but they are still there as part of the program.

The ranger program provides outdoor activities in 18 different areas (must earn four for ranger award), and also outdoor and high adventure programs in 12 different areas.

Also offered are arts, hobbies, and sports program ideas: arts, athletics, energy, conservation, photography, theater and media arts, olympic lore.

Ethical controversy activities are also available. Such topics could include: adversary system, censorship, competition, entrapment, moonlight, paternalism, capital punishment, e-mail etiquette, jury duty, quotas, tainted money, etc. (Issues that are better learned under priesthood leadership rather than in high school history/government classes (for example).)

“Can the wants and needs of the young men in your Priests quorum be met with no planned mutual night activities?”

“Is the current program for your Priests quorum meeting the needs and wants of the young men better than Venturing can?”

“Can the bishop afford to delegate the responsibility of meeting the needs and wants of his Priests quorum to any other program or plan?”

Optional status of Venturing program is provided due to worldwide status of church, which allows flexibility where Venturing is not offered.

Call the right leaders: The call to service should not be equated with the thought of limited service.

Training: At the time of the call a leader should be given crew fast start video, fast start packet and encouraged to attend basic training within 90 days.

Experience (ideal): Returned missionary, devoted husband and father, outdoorsman.

Attributes: Spiritually strong and temple worthy, personal interest in boys, enthusiastic.

Two items of Venturing not supported by church: Co-ed and specialization.

Mutual activities should focus on purposes of AP, and DTG and Venturing are tools to reach that objective.

Elder Pace referred to the relationship of the Venturing and DTG programs as similar to that of the Bible and Book of Mormon.

## **Presentation 8 – Cub Scout Program**

**Presenter: Sister Linda Magleby, General Primary Board Member**

Video: Cub Scouting is for boys, for families, and for fun.

“Children need sunlight. They need happiness. They need love and nurture. They need kindness and refreshment and affection.” President Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, P. 54

The boys need activities during the week that help cement the things they learn on Sunday.

In LDS sponsored troops in 1998, 32.3% are Cub Scouts, 11.5% are in 11-year-old patrols, making a total of 43.8% of boys in LDS sponsored troops in Primary.

Proclamation on the Family: Goals in Cub Scouts can help reinforce these principles, particularly in paragraph 7

Parents are trying their best, but they need help.

Cub Scouting is a valuable resource to help parents.

It’s important for Cub Scout leaders to at least have available the Cub Scout Leader Book.

Cub Scouts teaches: character development, spiritual growth, good citizenship, sportsmanship & fitness, family understanding, respectful relationships, personal achievement, friendly service, fun and adventure, preparation for Boy Scouts (87% of all Cub Scouts go on to be Boy Scouts), and preparation for the Aaronic Priesthood.

We do not use all Cub Scouting programs. We view scouting as a huge library of programs, and we use those that fit our needs.

CAR: Conversion, activation, retention (priesthood purposes) Sis. Magleby has a CAR neckerchief slide.

A story was told of a young boy who attended Cub Scouts with his friend. Through seeing their example of praying every week, he went home and said he wanted to do that at home also, because he learned it in Cub Scouts.

Try to find things to say to the boys about the things they are doing during the week that will correlate to the things they will be doing when they grow up (e.g. long nature hike relates to walking a lot on a mission).

How can we involve families in Cub Scouting? Activities (pinewood derbies), pack meetings, assigning families to a particular portion of a pack meeting, committee positions, signing off achievements/electives,

planning/calendaring/communication, as a specialist in a den meeting (sharing talents/abilities), den leaders, Cubmaster, Asst. Cubmaster.

Get parent and talent survey form from each parent in order to see what talents, etc., they have that can be shared with the Scouts.

Cub leader(s) should make a personal visit to the family of a new 8-year-old boy to explain Cub Scout program.

Attributes of 8-9-year-old boys: energetic, curious, like recognition, moldable (can also be easily discouraged), enthusiastic, short attention span, strong family ties, want to belong, need to be involved with peers, very sensitive to criticism.

Resources available: Bear, Wolf, Webelos handbooks; monthly roundtable; Cub Scout program helps; academic and sports program guide; Cub Scouting's BSA Family Activity Book.

Cub Scouting has a family award that can be earned by every family, once a year.

Important points to note in the church's Scouting Handbook (although not all-inclusive, and one should read the entire booklet):

1. Under priesthood leadership, Scouting can complement the purposes of Aaronic Priesthood quorums and Primary classes in building testimonies in boys and young men. (p.1)
2. Scouting under Church sponsorship must not operate independently of the priesthood and the family. (p.1)
3. While responsibility for Scouting rests primarily at the ward level, stake presidencies encourage bishoprics to train ward Scout leaders. (p.1)
4. The counselor in the stake presidency sees that Scouting is organized and functioning in the stake and develops a positive working relationship with the Boy Scouts of America (p.2)
5. Under the direction of the stake presidency, the stake primary presidency is responsible to oversee Scouting for eight-, nine-, ten-, and eleven-year-old boys. (p.2)
6. No Scout-sponsored overnight camping should be planned for boys under age 11. (p.4)
7. Scout meetings and activities for Primary-age boys are preferably held in the daytime. (p.4)
8. All boys, young men, and their adult leaders participating in approved Scouting in the Church are to be duly registered with the Boy Scouts of America through local councils. (p.5)
9. Cub Scouts who are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints earn the Faith in God Award for their religious emblem.
10. The Church does not approve Scouting programs for boys younger than 8 years old. (p.4)
11. The original aims and purposes of Scouting outlined by Lord Baden Powell were to teach boys and young men spirituality, self reliance, service, leadership skills, emergency preparedness, and conservation of natural resources. (p.1)
12. Boys enter the Webelos program when they are 10 years old. (p.4)

Reminder of 11 Feb 1999 letter from the Brethren about centrality of family.

Every leader ought to be BSA trained. Responsibility for LDS-related Scouting training should be provided by bishopric.

One stake has the 2<sup>nd</sup> counselor in Stake YM attend a troop meeting each week and meet with the SM and bishopric counselor after the meeting.

Proverbs 21:6—Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

KISMIF: Keep it simple, make it fun

## **Presentation 9 – Scouting for the Eleven-Year-Old Boy**

*Presenter: Sister Sydney S. Reynolds, 1<sup>st</sup> Counselor, General Primary Presidency*

The most fun year and most critical year in Scouting.

Matthew 18:14

Look up to older boys; need approval of peers, but not quite ready to break away from parents; beginning to experiment with independence; like to play games; competitive.

How do we run a program that meets the needs of these boys?

They meet separately from Aaronic priesthood age boys.

Scouting coordinates with aims of primary—if you have the right leader chosen.

If a boy has a bad experience in the 11-year-old patrol, he will have a tough time the rest of his Scouting career.

“This is a program that is really designed for one of the good women in your ward.”

If this is the case, the bishopric must be very supportive in order to provide leadership for campouts.

Good committees are important.

Emphasis on four T's (Testimony, Time, Training, Tenure) in leadership selection.

These boys open up more easily than older boys, and are easier to get through to. But you need someone in long enough to get the program up and going well.

From the stake presidency level, the bishops have to decide how important the stake feels the Scouting program is in the church. It won't happen for the whole stake unless the stake presidency are committee to it.

Reference Booklet: *The Day Camp Guide*; important to get for the Stake Primary Presidency

A patch is also available through the Distribution Center.

Review guidelines for 11-year-old scouting programs on pages 1, 4, and 5.

In BSA, the "New Scout Patrol" refers to the "11-year-old" patrol in the church.

If you're going to go home and think about, "What should I do now" to give the program a head-start, think about the On My Honor Award.

Boys' Life should be suggested to the parents; make them aware that it's available. Cost comes from Scout's family. There are two different issues (Cubs and Scouts) which will be delivered based on the Scout's registration.

## Presentation 10 – The Deacon/Scout Program

Presenter: Elder Spencer J. Condie, Counselor, General YM Presidency

Moses 1:39, D&C 2, D&C 130:20-21, D&C 121

		Structured Expectations / Deacon/Scout Program	
		High	Low
Perceived warmth and concern	High	Conformity Nephi	Marginal Compliance/low compliance Amulek (Alma 10 :6) Enos (v. 3)
	Low	Rebellion Laman	Deviance Corianton (Alma 39-42) "My son" 27 times D&C 84:106 1 Corinthians 12

Laman and Lemuel grew up in a family with goody-two-shoes little brothers. Nephi grew up in a family with rebellious older brothers. Did they have the same upbringing?

If you want the blessing, you have to keep the commandment.

The sunburn story: When you signed up for the navy, you became government property. You have misused and abused government property.

Reference in Corinthians indicates our bodies are not our own, but given to us by heavenly father.

Cannot have continuous revelation without change, and vice versa.

Titanic syndrome: There were 2,224 aboard, life boat capacity was 1,178, so 1,046 more passenger than lifeboats. 1,513 lives were lost as people were thinking about themselves rather than others. Therefore, 467 more could have been saved.

Lifeboat mentality: Big brothers need to look after little brothers, teachers need to look after deacons, etc.

One of our challenges is that the brethren we sustain as priesthood leaders didn't have a good Scouting experience. We need to make room in the lifeboat.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if priests, who earned their Eagle three years previous, helped deacons earn their advancements. Hymn 320, Elder Condie pointed out the importance of "deacons, teachers, priests and elders, seeking virtue side by side."

Amulek said, I heard, but I would not hear.

Enos said, the words of my father concerning eternal life sunk deep in my heart.

We need to alert them to the dangers out there.

Teach them to make the decision before they come to the fork in the road.

D&C 46: We all have spiritual gifts. The quorum of the 12 are as different as can be. No one has the same gifts.

Look at the young men through the eyes of heavenly father.

Remember the incremental increase of learning in youth.

When leaders mention they do not have the time to spend with young men, ask them—How many minutes/hours a day/week do you spend reading the newspaper, watching TV, watching ball games, internet, etc. Add all of that up, and you will find you can squeeze out a good deal of time.

There's a time for re-creation and a time for recreation.

D&C 72:4

Some bishops will say that DTG in our ward is going to replace Scouting. That bishop has not read his mail.

Brethren have stated every young man should duty DTG and Eagle (both, not either/or).

If you want member of YM presidency at Little Philmont, it'll have to be multiple stakes, not just one.

Suggests, write a letter with several dates (3 or more) as possibilities so scheduling will be okay.

Suggested titles: How to build a boy, how to build a man, how to build a missionary.

E-mail: [hammondm@ldschurch.org](mailto:hammondm@ldschurch.org); [pacegl@ldschurch.org](mailto:pacegl@ldschurch.org); [condiesj@ldschurch.org](mailto:condiesj@ldschurch.org)

Go back to stake presidency—you sent me, now here's what you're supposed to know.

If having problems getting information to the stake presidency, drop the general YM presidency an e-mail, and they'll get the word down through the area presidency.

If you don't include the stake president, nothing's going to happen. But you have to do it in a gentle way.

"You can always tell the stake president in his ninth year, but you can't tell him much."

Be careful, all the resources you have will not specifically address every boy. Where the manuals do not address the issue, that's where inspiration comes in.

We need to teach the Deacons they're just about the same age as Joseph Smith, and his life changed when he learned how to receive revelation.

## **Presentation 11 – “On My Honor I Will Do My Best . . .”**

*Presenters: Elder Robert L. Backman, Emeritus Member of the Seventy; C. Bradford Allen, Director of LDS Relationships*

### Brad Allen:

Review of mission statement of BSA

Review of aims of BSA: Citizenship training, character development, personal fitness

Video: National Leaders Jim Lovell, Astronaut, Distinguished Eagle Scout; Earl G. Graves, Publisher, BSA Vice President; Steve Fossett, World Class Balloonist, Distinguished Eagle Scout; Tony Burns, CEO Ryder System; Stake President in Florida; Milton Ward, CEO Cypress Amex Minerals Co, Distinguished Eagle Scout; Norm Augustine, Former CEO Lockheed Martin, Distinguished Eagle Scout; Bob Gates, Former Director of CIA, Distinguished Eagle Scout—Strong Leader, Strong Values, Character Counts

Aims of Scouting fulfilled by methods of Scouting (methods listed in syllabus, pg. 42)

Video: Excerpt from “Follow Me Boys”

Don't underestimate the impact your leaders can have on a boy.

The most effective teaching moments take place in the out-of-doors.

Expect Scouts (and remind them) to wear their uniforms all the time.

Rating methods of Scouting, as a church:

Personal growth – A

Small group method – C

Youth leadership – C

Adult association – A

Outdoor activities – B

Advancement – A-

Uniform – C

Ideals – A

Questions to ask on a stake level: Are youth advancing, are they camping, summer camp, trained leaders.

Review of the five unacceptables: Drug use, hunger, child abuse, illiteracy, unemployment.

Challenges facing BSA (review handouts): Girls, God, and Homosexuals. BSA is very solid in its positions of traditional values.

Two-deep leadership, to protect youth and adults.

Elder Backman:

All BSA methods conform to the priesthood methods. They are compatible.

LDS and BSA became partners only after LDS study group was sent to review BSA in detail. LDS adopted BSA in 1913, and we were the first large organization to adopt Scouting.

The rumors of the Church getting out of Scouting have been floating around for 25 years.

Reiterated that Church has never been stronger in Scouting.

One issue that we face is that we forget this is a worldwide church, and that any instruction from Salt Lake has to have worldwide application.

Other scouting organizations have not been adopted due to their mandates of using the program for their purposes rather than ours.

Scouting is vital to the Aaronic priesthood in the USA. That's as far as we need to know.

Until we are told differently, it is our duty to follow every policy that is part of that great program (BSA).

Use this program as it's intended, which will bless the lives of our boys and give them opportunities to grow to be men of God.

Scouting is an outgrowth of the Aaronic priesthood quorums.

The only trouble is that in too many cases we have separated Scouting so far from the Aaronic priesthood that the Scouting leaders forget to meld the two programs as they are supposed to be.

It all comes down to our own attitudes.

"I don't know when the church has ever had a better Scouting program."

The men on the national leaders video are not just figureheads. They are devoted to the Scouting program, both in word and deed.

National President of BSA promised to never sell short on the traditional values of Scouting (particularly the recent homosexual issue).

It's important to note that we use Scouting as we want to use it. There are programs of BSA not compatible with church principles. 1. We do not have Tiger Cubs. 2. We do not have girls in Scouting (as it's an Aaronic priesthood program). 3. 11-year-olds not in Scout troop as they are not yet in Aaronic priesthood.

BSA goes along with us to use the program the best we possibly can to meet the aims of scouting.

If BSA ever changes policy where there's a question that LDS will accept it, they have a conference with Pres. Monson first to see if we can live with it.

Few of us know the impact the church has on Scouting. Pres. Monson is the longest serving member of the executive board. Everyone in Scouting knows Tom Monson and respects/admires him because of his stand.

LDS influence: Much of the cub program was developed with the leadership of one person that everybody in National council knows as Sis. Parmerlee. Duan Young has also had a tremendous impact on Cubs. The church developed the Venturing program, to replace Exploring. Varsity program was developed in Utah by LDS leaders.

BSA allows us to choose our own leaders. BSA literature states SPL should be elected. LDS convinced BSA that sustaining of new quorum president constitutes election within the church.

Some of Elder Backman's greatest spiritual experiences have come with his assignment within BSA National Council.

The LDS church does not just take from Scouting; we give a great deal.

Quote from Thane Packer's book, *On My Honor*.

"Scouting's safe in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

Relates story of Joseph being sold into Egypt; Ruben said something significant when Joseph kept Benjamin as hostage; "How can I return to my father and the lad not be with me?"

## **Presentation 12 – Therefore, What?**

**Presenters: Elder F. Melvin Hammond, General YM President; Sister Sydney S. Reynolds, 1<sup>st</sup> Counselor, General Primary Presidency**

### Sister Reynolds:

Reminder: 48% of registered Scouts in the church are in Primary.

If you begin at the beginning, you're half done.

85% of those registered in cubs go on to Boy Scouts nationwide; percentage is certainly higher within the church.

From experience, those who make first class within their 11-year-old year, 85% go on to be Eagle Scouts. (No documented data, just experience and observation.)

This next year is the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Primary program.

The sister (Sis. Rogers) who originally organized Primary in Farmington, did so because she saw all the young men in the area misbehaving, and they wanted the young men brought up properly to provide good young men for their daughters to marry.

Boys learn differently than girls.

From Sis. Reynolds' perspective, there has been much more focus on women in the world, and not much focus on men and boys. We, as a society, are not encouraging our young men at the same level as the young women; which Sis. Reynolds believes is not how it should be.

We need to raise our boys in ways that are male-friendly so they grow up to be men. Scouting is the kind of program that can help us do that. Time, money, and research have been put into the development of the program, specifically designed for young men.

Sis. Rogers' charge to the primary was love the children, learn the doctrine, and prepare to teach.

Story of S. Dilworth Young's nephew earning the Cooking Merit Badge—the moral: Have you done everything you need to do?

Good board of review question: What good turn did you do today?

We need to go back and spread the learning and spirit that we've received this week.

#### Elder Hammond:

Marion G. Romney, a strong and powerful leader, said the following: "The only safety we have in the world for our children is what they build within themselves. We can make restrictions against drinking and smoking, and we can make regulations to guide the affairs of people. We can throw all the protections possible around them. But after all, the thing that holds them in the final test is what is inside of them. They must be able to stand alone."

We tend to be more strict with our first children. We always want to protect them in every way we can.

Homeschooling is good, but at sometime they're going to have to face the world and stand on their own.

Scouting is a wonderful way to teach these young men how to be on their own.

We have received much training this week, and many things have been repeated. (It takes at least six times before something is truly learned.) There are many things they haven't taught us, because there isn't time.

What are we going to do with what we've learned?

What have we learned this week?

Audience responses:

Primary is the foundation of building the saints of tomorrow. Scouting ties into that and links to the development of future Aaronic priesthood holders.

Primary leaders often do not understand the Scouting program and aren't always encouraged to learn about it.

If a young boy has a good experience in Cub Scouts, he's more likely to have a good experience in Scouts.

We need to have teachers of faith in primary in order to understand their obligations.

Transitions from nursery to Priests/Laurels needs to be seamless.

Elder Hammond: I hope you are using the brethren to teach in primary. He related that he knows a brother who is 6'6" and is the primary chorister. He takes the effort to kneel down when he directs them because he's so tall.

Leaders need to understand that they are helping young men prepare to receive the Aaronic priesthood, not to receive awards.

The reason we have Scouting in church is to keep children exposed to those with a testimony long enough for the young to nurture their own testimony.

Elder Hammond: We need to keep our leaders in office a while. Don't call people into bishoprics just because they're wonderful—leave 'em with the boys because they're wonderful.

Leaders from Stake Presidency down to ward primary presidencies need to understand the importance of their roles and the magnitude of their callings. Priesthood need to take a more active role in supporting the primary and Scouting. Parents need to be more involved, and we need to keep them more informed.

Elder Hammond summed up in two words: Parents and planning. They're critical. We've got to have parental help or we fail. We've got to plan or we fail.

Don't be afraid to use women to teach the 11-year-old Scouts. (This may also have the effect of involving priesthood more as the sisters cannot go camping with the 11-year-olds.)

The patrol method helps the youth learn to stand alone.

We need to help the youth understand the vision of the program as we do.

The four T's are extremely important—the backbone of a successful scouting program.

Scouting is a tool of the Aaronic priesthood. (S. Dilworth Young stated that if he had to do it over again, he would spend less time on Grizzly bear stories and more on Aaronic Priesthood/Book of Mormon hero stories.)

Mixing units does not allow the Deacons to develop leadership as the older boys usually will fulfill those duties.

Parental enthusiasm seen in Cub Scouting needs to be maintained throughout the Scouting programs.

The eight methods of Scouting can be correlated directly to the Aaronic Priesthood quorum methods.

Scouting can be a good missionary tool, but we should not be afraid of continuing to share priesthood experiences if nonmembers are present.

Scouting is not being replaced by new DTG program. (Elder Hammond: “Did I tell you that strongly enough. I can't emphasize that enough.”)

Friends of Scouting: Do it (without complaining). There are contributors at the national level giving thousands, even millions to Scouting.

Don't worry about where the money goes, just pay it because it's good for boys.

We may have forgotten our objective—this week has really brought our purpose to the forefront—it's not the awards, it's the conversion and preparation of our youth. We need to remind our leaders what our objective is.

Elder Hammond: “Never before has Scouting been more firmly entrenched in the Church than it has right now.” Because the leaders of the church are firmly behind it. “Leadership comes from Christ to a prophet down to stake presidents, down to a bishop.”

Elder Hammond emphasized the need for Little Philmonts to be held in each stake. It won't solve all your problems, but it will help. Bring in all your people and let them learn about Scouting.

Get it into the minds of your people.

Elder Hammond on Varsity Scouting and Venturing. He hopes what we have learned has changed our mind about these programs. “Brethren, unless you've got something better for those boys, get them involved in Venturing.”

#### Questions:

Is it proper to recite the 8 purposes of Aaronic Priesthood purposes in priesthood to memorize them?

Elder Hammond: Whatever the priesthood brethren in your area decide. The ball's in your court.

What about Mutual?

Elder Hammond: When Pres. Kimball stopped all the all-church activities (basketball tournaments, music festivals, dance festivals, June conference, etc), in that same talk, he said we hope that you will continue to have all of these programs on a stake or multistake level. The programs were not eliminated, but delegated to the local level. We need to get back to those cultural, wonderful activities. Mutual is the way to do that. “Every week we want you to hold Mutual.” We need to have a standard, organized, once-a-week program for our youth.

Can we get the servicemen copies of the Book of Mormon for the youth?

Elder Hammond: No, they're reserved just for that group of people.

When is it appropriate to discuss Friends of Scouting? Priesthood meeting, at all on Sunday?

Elder Hammond: Don't overlook giving everyone in your ward an opportunity to contribute.

#### Sister Reynolds:

Boys are all we have to make into men. It's about the boy.

Participants, be sure to tell your wives thanks for their support. Sister Reynolds appreciates them.

Be sure the wives in our wards also know they are appreciated for their support and sacrifice for their husbands to help the boys become men.

#### Elder Hammond:

Everything we've talked about is vital. Time is the most vital.

Give time and heart, and the boys which you have responsibility for will be blessed.

## **Quotes—Various Quotes from Lord Robert S. S. Baden Powell**

“Our aim in the movement (of Scouting) is to give such help as we can in bringing about God’s kingdom on earth.”

“When you have a difficult job to tackle, ask God to help you tackle it, and he will give you strength—but you must do the tackling yourself.”

“Let prayers come from the heart, not said by heart.”

“No man is much good unless he believes in God and obeys his laws. So every good scout should have a religion.”

“Our aim is to be at peace with all and to do our best in our own particular line.”

“A pat on the back is stronger stimulus than a prick with a pin. Expect a great deal of your boys and you will generally get it.”

“The aim in nature study is to develop a realization of God, the creator, and to infuse a sense of the beauty of nature.”

“While you are living your life on this earth, say and do something good which may remain after you.”

“Leadership through personal touch is the keynote to our success in the movement.”

“The four essential points to look for in a leader are: (1) He must have whole-hearted faith and belief in the righteousness of his cause. (2) He must have a cheery, energetic personality, with sympathy and friendly understanding of his followers. (3) He must have confidence in himself through knowing his job. (4) What he preaches he must himself practice.”

## **Priesthood Leadership Session—02 July 2002**

*[Not a verbatim transcription—“reconstituted” from notes by Douglas Patten]*

### Elder Backman:

Truman O. Angel said that the Big Dipper with the North Star on the Salt Lake Temple was to represent that through the priesthood of God the lost may find their way. I sense the power [of the priesthood here]. Enjoy what you’re doing – it doesn’t last forever. I know the frustrations of a general authority.

All the general authorities come together only twice a year, right before the general conferences (and that’s the only time we see the area presidencies). They all meet in an upper room [of the Salt Lake Temple] with pictures of the prophets on the walls. There are easy chairs for the First Presidency and The Twelve – and hard chairs for the Seventies.

President Benson said that he never got used to the Spirit that he felt in that concourse. President Hinckley told a group of brethren one time, “I know the Lord called you – no one else would!” This church is governed by the priesthood of God. It comes from the Prophet to the Stake President to the bishop to the [Aaronic Priesthood] quorum president.

When I was a boy a member of the Quorum of the Twelve visited every quarterly stake conference in the church. Now the brethren are nothing more than staff. When I was called into the bishopric, I was called by a member of the Quorum of the Twelve. On my way in to see him, another brother yelled “They’re really scraping the bottom of the barrel this time!” Now stake presidents call bishops and even patriarchs (The Twelve guarded the calling of patriarchs for a long time before they had to give that up too.) We shouldn’t look for detailed guidance from the Twelve. Who has the keys of salvation of the people? The stake presidents, the bishops. It’s frustrating [for general authorities] because [now] they just advise, not implore.



All you'll get from [church headquarters in] Salt Lake [now] are broad strokes of principles. No one but you has the responsibility to save and bless the lives of the people. You have the faith and the keys. The Savior lives!

#### Elder Condie:

There's a story about an Indian who was about to send a smoke signal message to his brother and saw the first atomic bomb explosion not far from here [in New Mexico]. He later told his wife that he didn't send his message, because suddenly his message didn't seem so important!

The Lord's leaning on President Hinckley, President Hinckley's leaning on us, and we're leaning on you for retention. Some have said that President Hinckley is obsessed with retention. We start with so many deacons, but we're having an exponential increase in the number of potential elders.

Jesus said to the two apostles [Peter and Andrew] – Come, follow Me. One of the impediments to ordination [of new brethren to the priesthood] is an occasional slippage. For instance they may on occasion have 1 or 2 cigarettes after a lifetime of doing 2 packs per day. Peter said to Christ on the water, "Bid me come". But then Peter looked down and said to himself, "What am I doing here?" The Savior rebuked him gently, but didn't release him. The Savior didn't give up on Peter, and Peter didn't give up on the Savior. Joseph Smith says that Peter, James and John got the keys at the Mount of Transfiguration.

When the Savior said to Peter – "Get behind Me, Satan" – He was saying, when I prophesy it will come to pass. The Savior was teaching Peter at the Last Supper "to lead is to serve" – and then Peter caught the vision ("Lord, not my feet only..."). The Savior had the First Presidency (Peter, James and John) go with Him to the Garden of Gethsemane. When Peter heard the words, "When thou art converted..." that must have stung. Though the apostles slept in the Garden, He did not release them.

Billy, a 12 or 13 year-old, is a patrol leader. But we don't release him if he acts 12 or 13. The young men will do stupid things, like the two missionaries recently who climbed the water tower guarded by the National Guard. The Savior mentored and loved His apostle. May we also be wise servants.

#### Elder Pace:

I have one feeling or message to convey. I don't know how to do it in the depth that I want. I had an impression last night that had to do with you that I want to convey and for you to feel. We Seventy are called as special witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ (I'm still learning about that 17 years later). Every once in awhile we get a finite insight into how He feels. Last night I had a finite insight into how He feels about you, and about how much he loves you individually.

As the Young Men's Presidency we went to the Nauvoo Temple dedication [on June 27, 2002]. My Great-Great Grandfather Pace died in Nauvoo in October 1844 at the age of 40, leaving a young family. No Paces are mentioned in the church histories. But my Great-Great Grandmother [Pace] who came to Utah in 1848 is a hero. It is easier to be a general authority and do what we're supposed to do that it is to be a second counselor in a bishopric and do what we're supposed to do. There's action that must be initiated.

I was in another meeting 16 or 17 years ago, when Ezra Taft Benson was president of the church, but ailing. President Benson stood to address us. It was silent for what seemed to be 10 minutes (and I could see that [his counselor] President Hinckley – who was seated behind him – was getting nervous, wondering if he should get up to help out President Benson). Then President Benson made eye contact with every one of the Quorum of the Twelve, and every Seventy, nodding and smiling at each one of us individually on that occasion. The only thing he said after that was, "I love you" – followed by "The Lord loves you, for He has made it known to me."

What I felt sitting there is what I want to convey to you. There was something special about last night (even with the banners, etc. at our family evening [last evening at the Philmont Campfire Bowl]). My spiritual eyes were open. The miracle of your wives and children, the love of the Savior for you, was as great a spiritual experience as I've ever had. I know He loves you because He told me last night.

#### Elder Hammond:

I am grateful to Elder Backman for elevating us to the position of staff. We're really lower than that.

Elder Condie and I were called to the Seventy at the same time, and have been friends ever since. I met Glen Pace as a mission president in Bolivia. We had 32 lady missionaries, LVNs, and that wasn't enough. Elder Pace was in charge of checking on them. I've loved Elder Pace ever since. Brad Allen took the place of a great man, and is measuring up completely (Hart Bullock, his predecessor, is now a mission president in Japan).

We just came from the testimony meeting of you wives. You brethren are wonderful, but you married so far above you. Bob [Backman] called first on [his wife] Janet Backman to bear testimony and set the tone for the meeting.

This is what scouting is all about – goal setting, brotherhood, camaraderie of the priesthood. This week Aaronic Priesthood and scouting is taking the fore. Back home with all the challenges we hope you won't forget this experience. I hope you can catch the vision. On February 16, 1832, Joseph Smith and Sydney Rigdon were in John Johnson's home in Hiram, Ohio. On that day they read John 5:29, and Joseph and Sidney had an incredible vision (Section 76). Joseph said he could quote that revelation at any time.

I love to read Doctrine and Covenants Section 76. It is very profound. Philo Dibble was with them when the revelation came. Later the brethren commissioned Brother Dibble to paint pictures of the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph and his brother, Hyrum. A man once said to Brother Dibble, "You were there when Doctrine and Covenants Section 76 came – did you see the vision?" Brother Dibble said, "I saw the glory and felt the power, but I did not see the vision."

There's meaning in that statement that should touch us all. This week you will feel the power and the glory. But sometime the Lord may bless you that you see the vision, and He will bring love, gratitude, feeling and energy to move forward.

You've got to get from here to there. If you don't, all you've enjoyed here [at Philmont] will go to naught. None of us are immune from occasional challenges that may cause us to be depressed. The Lord said to not put your trust in the arm of flesh. I think individuals like Elder Hartman Rector (who said he never had a bad day) are an anomaly. Most of us get discouraged some time. President Hinckley even gets discouraged occasionally. President Hinckley was at my house when he got a call about a stake president who had done something foolish. He exclaimed some things I won't repeat [not profanity]. Then he told me, "Some people don't have any sense at all." I pray we're not the problem.

When you're discouraged you go forward, you don't stop or go backwards. In the Book of Mormon, Moroni was dejected – the people had been killed, and the Lamanites were ruling. Mormon wrote Moroni:

*And now my beloved son, notwithstanding their hardness, let us labor diligently; for if we should cease to labor, we should be brought under condemnation; for we have a labor to perform whilst in this tabernacle of clay, that we may conquer the enemy of all righteousness, and rest our souls in the kingdom of God. [Moroni 9:6]*

I don't care how tired or discouraged you get. I'll worry about you and pray for you. You hold the Melchizedek Priesthood. It doesn't matter what office. Our labor is before us and we must do it.

God bless you all that will catch the vision and move forward, despite everything going on in the world about you. The gospel is true. We hold this priesthood, and have everything needed to bring to pass righteousness on this earth. We all have sufficient [ability] at this time to have Jesus Christ appear to us.

God bless you. I thank you.

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