

*Fulfilling Your*

# DUTY TO GOD

*through*

# SCOUTING

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*Scouting provides a great way to invite young men to come unto Christ.*

**M**issionary work has been an important part of Scouting in the Church for the past 100 years. In fact, back in 1913, one reason the general leaders of the young men first recommended that the Church participate with the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) was because of “the missionary work of our boys associating with their fellows.”<sup>1</sup> The spirit of brotherhood and inviting others to join with our Scout troops continues today as “young men of other faiths who agree to abide by Church standards [are] welcomed warmly and encouraged to participate in youth activities.”<sup>2</sup>

Inviting your friends to Scouting activities is a great opportunity to share the gospel and help you fulfill your Aaronic Priesthood duties. Young Men general president

*(continued on page 38)*







## 100 YEARS OF SCOUTING IN THE CHURCH

Scouting activities were first established as part of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association in 1911 with the formation of the MIA Scouts (see an early troop at lower left). Two years later, in 1913, the Church officially joined the MIA Scouts with the Boy Scouts of America. May 21, 2013, marked the 100-year anniversary of the Church's affiliation with the BSA. On October 29, 2013, a special broadcast will commemorate 100 years of Scouting in the Church; for details, visit [lds.org/go/93100](http://lds.org/go/93100).

## SNOWSHOES AND SCOUTING

Wyoming can be a cold and snowy place in the wintertime. That's why one troop decided to make snowshoes. During the fall they were looking ahead to the Klondike derby coming up in January. They wanted an activity that could prepare them for winter camping.

Under the direction of their Scoutmaster and deacons quorum adviser, the young men went online to find a pattern and instructions for making snowshoes out of rawhide and wood. "We realized this project was going to take a long time," says Sam F., deacons quorum president, "but we were all excited, and we had a plan."

As the young men worked on their snowshoe frames, they discussed how they could help others in the quorum who were less active, and they made a plan to visit them. "We visited every boy on our list and invited them to come to Scouts," Sam says. "We told them we were making snowshoes for the winter campout coming up." Having a clear goal was helpful in drawing other boys to the troop.

As the snowshoes progressed, so did the quorum. Six young men started the snowshoe project, but soon others joined in, including one of another faith.

John B.'s friend, Timothy N., was active in his church, but it didn't have a Scout troop, so he started coming with his friend. His brother, Thomas, even joined



the ward's 11-year-old Scout patrol and earned his religious award. He was then presented with the award at his own church service.

While the young men and leaders worked, they made religious connections between wrapping the rawhide tightly and bringing their quorum together.

Jacob D. started coming regularly to the Scout meetings. His mother, Heather P., later thanked the troop for welcoming her son and their family. Other young men who had never attended church came to the Scout meetings to make snowshoes.

By January, the snowshoes were finished and each young man had a pair to use during the Klondike derby. Aiden H. said what they all felt about making snowshoes: "It was fun because we got to use them!"

"We learned a lot about enduring to the end on a project and about strengthening our quorum through Scouting," Sam says. "My snowshoes will last a long time, and whenever I see them I'll remember this experience, as well as the great friends we made in our troop and quorum."





David L. Beck calls this work “real growth through Scouting.” When young men of other faiths join Church-sponsored Scout troops, two things happen: (1) Latter-day Saint Scouts have an opportunity to share the gospel through their testimonies and actions and prepare for their full-time missions by inviting others “to come unto Christ” (D&C 20:59), which is one of your Aaronic Priesthood duties; and (2) Scouts of other faiths then have an opportunity to participate in Scouting activities under the direction of priesthood leadership.

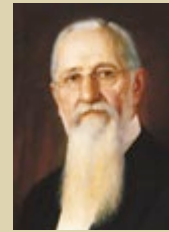
Here are some of the ways you can encourage others to join with you in Scouting:

- Talk about your Scouting activities with friends, classmates, and neighbors.
- When you’re studying a particular merit badge, share your excitement with your friends and ask if they’re interested in learning about that topic with you.
- Help plan quality troop and patrol activities so that other youth will want to attend. Have a calendar of upcoming activities to share.
- Invite other young men to attend unit meetings, activities, and courts of honor with you.
- Look for ways to expand your Scouting activities to include others.
- Use Scouting as a tool to involve less-active young men who may not be interested in attending Sunday meetings.

As you invite your friends to participate with you in Scouting, they can begin to understand what it means to do their duty to God (see the Scout Oath), and all of you will be blessed in the effort. **NE**



**Many prophets participated in Scouting.**



**Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918)** was the prophet when Scouting was organized as a part of the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association.



**Heber J. Grant (1856–1945)** attended the 1937 World Scout Jamboree in Holland.

**George Albert Smith (1870–1951)** was the first Church member to serve on the BSA National Executive Board.



**David O. McKay (1873–1970)** was the prophet when Cub Scouting and 11-year-old Scouts were made part of the Primary association.

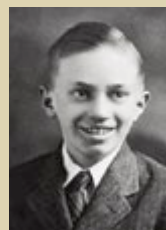


**Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)** was commissioned as an assistant Scoutmaster of his Whitney, Idaho, ward Scout troop at age 18.



**Howard W. Hunter (1907–95)** was the second boy in Idaho to receive his Eagle Scout award.

**Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008)** was a Boy Scout in his youth.



**Thomas S. Monson** has served on the BSA National Executive Board longer than any other member.

**NOTES**

1. Adapted from a letter to the General Superintendent and General Board of YMMIA, Feb. 19, 1913; see also *Century of Honor: 100 Years of Scouting in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* [2013], 30.
2. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], 8.17.3.