

PADDLE POWER

Out of the darkness of the early morning came eight rafts of various shapes and designs with their youth crews and supporters. It was the annual raft race for the Auckland New Zealand Harbour Stake, and the first of 12 races was underway.

Races were varied, including combined young men/young women teams and a leaders team. A good day was had by all with the Takapuna Ward young men regaining top prize, the Title of Liberty Challenge Shield.

Work on the Takapuna Ward raft started five months earlier as their deacons, teachers, and priests spent many hours splitting bamboo, heating and bending it into shape, and then lashing every



crossbeam. More than 5½ miles of twine (9 km) was used to tie over 3,000 knots—all of which held the raft together. When all the lashings were completed, it was time to stretch the canvas over the frame.

The young men and women helped sew the canvas at the top. Then it was painted and left to dry. Practices were held at every opportunity if the sea at Takapuna Beach was smooth enough and everyone got in the racing mode. All the boys and girls got closer together, and a really strong brotherhood and sisterhood was formed.

One thing teachers quorum president Hunter Amende learned from all the hard work and paddling was, "There is no / in team."

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF JACOB MARSHALL



IN A WORD

Conversion: Are you converted? To be converted means to be changed, and in a gospel sense, it means that a person has overcome unrighteous desires and has become “spiritually minded” (Romans 8:6) through the power of the Savior’s Atonement and through the power of the Holy Ghost.

The process of conversion includes a change in behavior, but it also is a change in our very nature. It is such a significant change that the Lord and His prophets refer to it as a rebirth, a change of heart, and a baptism of fire. A person who is converted desires to “do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2), does not rebel against the Lord, shares the gospel, and is filled with love.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

June 8, 1900

The First Presidency announced the beginning of missionary training classes, one of the foundation platforms for future missionary training programs.



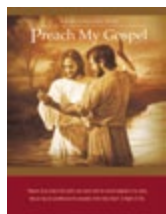
PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINA SMITH

MISSION PREPARATION

Why do we study the gospel? The purpose of personal study is to strengthen your knowledge and testimony of the restored gospel. As your own testimony grows, you can then testify to others and teach them the truths of the Restoration. As you prepare for your mission, focus first on the Book of Mormon and other scriptures, and then you

may want to study these other works from the missionary library:

- *Jesus the Christ*
- *Our Search for Happiness*
- *Preach My Gospel*
- *True to the Faith*
- *Our Heritage*



BY THE NUMBERS

81,000

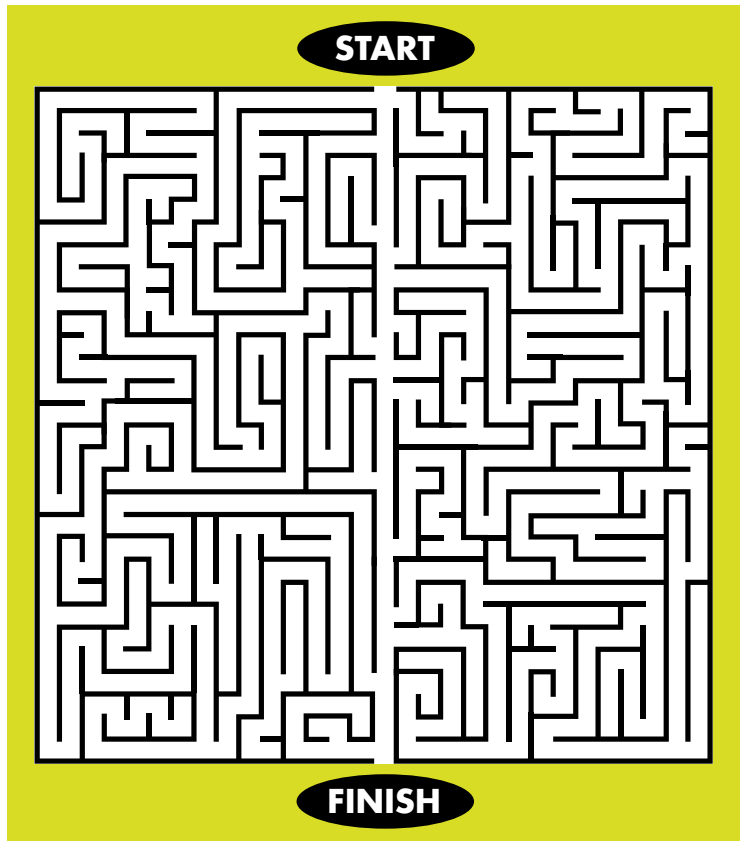
Total number of individuals' names indexed by the youth of the American Fork Utah Hillcrest Stake last summer.

The youth were challenged to use the FamilySearch Indexing program to index 64,045 names (enough to fill up the football stadium at Brigham Young University). In the end the stadium wouldn't even hold all the people whose names were indexed by the youth.

NARROW IS THE MAZE

“Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:14).

MAZE SUBMITTED BY GLENN HARMON



BE A GREAT DATE

Here are seven traits that can help you and your date have an enjoyable time:

1. Smile and be positive.
2. Be neat and clean in dress and appearance.
3. Show confidence.
4. Be a good listener.
5. Be respectful.
6. Use clean language.
7. Be a good example.



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE BUNDERSON

• LAS CRUCES ENCAMPMENT

“Are we prepared to fulfill our duty to God?” came the call through the mountain air of New Mexico’s Gila National Forest. A resounding “Yes” echoed in the hearts and minds of 60 young men and 40 leaders gathered for a three-day Aaronic Priesthood camp. Forty-one of the boys and 19 of their adult leaders had completed a full year of age-specific Duty to God activities in preparation for this day. The Las Cruces New Mexico Stake encampment, appropriately named “Aaronic Priesthood—Fulfilling Our Duty to God,” was underway.

The nine wards were divided into six groups to participate in six round-robin events: building King Benjamin’s tower and wall climbing, geocaching, mountain biking, team building/missionary preparation, handcart pulling, and service projects. Another key element of the encampment experience was the campfire program each night, followed by ward devotionals around their own campfires. Each campfire program ended with 12 men dressed as prophets teaching the young men how they can magnify their priesthood and do their duty to God by living the 12 principles of the Scout Law.

Valian Fowler, a priest from the Rio Grande Ward, sums up his experiences from the encampment in these words: “I honestly can’t think of a campout when I felt the Spirit stronger. My father is a nonmember, and he came on the encampment with us. It was a great bonding time for us. He was in charge of the service project and spent most of his days at the encampment painting fences and cutting down trees and putting them in the gullies to help prevent erosion. We did many challenging and fun activities, but I can’t think of a time when all of us were smiling bigger and felt the Spirit stronger than when we were doing the service project. It was very challenging. We were all covered in sweat and rain, but I knew that we were doing the right thing. I could feel it in my heart. I finally know what they meant when they said ‘there is no greater happiness than when you’re serving others.’ I loved it.”

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF MICHAEL GILES



MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

D&C 88:63 “Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

I like this scripture because it teaches me what I need to do to draw closer to my Heavenly Father and have Him with me at all times.

**Rachel H., 16,
North Carolina, USA**

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF RACHEL H.

Tell us about your favorite scripture in one or two sentences. Send it to us, along with a photo, by going to newera.lds.org and clicking on Submit Your Material.

5 OCCUPATIONS OF MODERN PROPHETS

1. General manager of a printing press
2. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture
3. School principal
4. Manager of a realty business
5. Retail salesman

Who did that? 1. President Thomas S. Monson, 2. President Ezra Taft Benson, 3. President David O. McKay and President Harold B. Lee, 4. President Spencer W. Kimball, 5. President George Albert Smith

WHAT'S A QR CODE?

You may have noticed several QR codes (short for "quick response codes") like the one below in recent issues of the *New Era* and wondered what they are. If you have a camera-enabled smartphone, you can scan a QR code to link straight to a video, article, or website without having to type in its web address. It's so easy! Here's how:

1. Search for QR-code apps in the app store for your smartphone. Free apps are available for most smartphones.
2. Install your selected app to your smartphone.
3. Open the app, and then scan the QR code. Once the QR code registers, the video, article, or website it links to will appear on your smartphone.

Try out the QR code below to head straight to youth.lds.org, and check out more QR codes on pages 10 and 41. This is an emerging technology and may not work on all phones. We'd love to hear what you think of the QR codes and if you'd like to see more in the future. E-mail us at newera@ldschurch.org.



THE CHURCH IN THE NETHERLANDS



This year marks the 150th anniversary of the first Dutch convert's baptism in the Netherlands in 1861.

Twenty years earlier, in 1841, Elder Orson Hyde was traveling on a missionary journey to Jerusalem; he stopped in Rotterdam and Amsterdam for more than a week and explained the gospel to several rabbis. The first missionaries assigned to the country arrived in 1861. By May 1862, they had baptized 14 people in Amsterdam and organized the first branch.

During the Church's first century in the country, some 4,500 missionaries served there and more than 14,000 people were baptized. Many of these converts emigrated to the United States. In recent years, however, few members have emigrated, and today there are many second-, third-, and even fourth-generation Church members in the Netherlands.

Today, members total slightly fewer than 7,900 in the Netherlands, organized into 38 wards and branches. The first temple in the Netherlands is located in Zoetermeer and was dedicated in September 2002.

READING—ONE BLOCK AT A TIME

Last year, students from Mesa Skyline Seminary in Arizona agreed to work together in creating a habit of daily scripture reading. They accepted the challenge to read the scriptures each day for at least 15 minutes. For every three days a student did this, he or she could write his or her name on a new wooden block.

As the blocks were earned and marked, they were glued together, eventually forming a replica of an ancient American city the students affectionately called "Zarahemla." After seven weeks of reading and learning, a total of 1,750 blocks were cut, earned, and labeled with a name. The replica city was 12 feet in length, 8 feet wide, with a city wall, four corner towers, a large temple at the center, and hundreds of smaller buildings and shops within.

Building the city of Zarahemla "got me into the habit of reading my scriptures longer," says Marissa Madsen, 16. "I really appreciated seeing something physically being built as a reminder of my testimony growing as I continued to read the scriptures."

Randy Chavez, 17, agreed that the project was a big success. "It was nice to be unified as an entire seminary to achieve one large goal, and I felt excited to do my part. Because of the project, I read more frequently and longer."

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF AARON GOSS



QUOTES FROM CONFERENCE

"The world will refer to us as they will, but in our speech, always remember that we belong to the Church of Jesus Christ."

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Guided by the Holy Spirit," *Ensign*, May 2011, 30.