d Venturer Camp – July 2008

Scouting in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by Bob Hamilton

Scouting, with its spiritual background and cultural ideals, appealed to leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as an excellent program for boys. In 1913, the Church adopted Scouting as part of the activity program for young men aged 8 – 18. By providing opportunities for young men to put into practice the gospel lessons they learn in the home and at Church, Scouting programs have supported the rounded development of young men for almost a century.

In November 1998, Scouts Canada adopted a national program of coeducational Scouting, but allowed organizations that have a religious or traditional history of all-male Scout groups to maintain that status. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not sponsor coeducational Scouting in any country where it is affiliated with Scouting. There is a separate program for the young women of the church.

In Canada, the Church sponsors Cubs, Scouts, and Venturing programs for boys and young men. There were 243 LDS congregations that sponsored a Scouting group, in 2007-2008, with 6,241 members from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints registered with Scouts Canada.

President Thomas S. Monson on Scouting (current Prophet and President of the Church)

"Youth need fewer critics and more models. One wise builder of faith counseled, 'It does not pay to scold. I believe you can get people to do anything, if you can get them to do it at all, by loving them into doing it. 'We are builders of boys and menders of men. In doing so, we remember that the greatest verb in the vocabulary is to love; the second is to help. It is the mission of the Scouts to serve others by helping to instill values in young people and, in other ways, to prepare them to make ethical choices over their lifetime in achieving their full potential.'" (*Church News*, *June 7, 2003*, 4).

"In this world where some misguided men and women strive to tear down and destroy great Movements such as Scouting, I am pleased to stand firm for an organization that teaches duty to God and country, that embraces the Scout Law. Yes, an organization whose motto is 'Be Prepared' and whose slogan is 'Do a good turn daily' (*Ensign*, *Nov. 1993*, *48*).

"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" (*Ensign*, *Nov. 1991*, *47*).

– Bob Hamilton is a High Councilor in the Edmonton North Stake and led the committee that organized the LDS Scout and Venturer camp.

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