The 2007 meeting of the National Catholic Committee’s standing committees and advisory and executive boards will be held in Milwaukee from April 15 to 21 at the Hyatt Regency hotel. Registration is now underway and there is an early bird registration fee of $140 for NCCS members, which covers meeting credentials and materials, administrative services, and all refreshment breaks. The registration fee for non members is $180.

The early bird registration is good until March 4 and after that date the fees rise to $190 and $230 respectively. The registration fee does not cover any meals and all meeting meals must be purchased separately, as well as tickets for either of the two tours scheduled for Thursday, April 19.

If you are a member of a standing committee, a regional chair or chaplain, advisory board or executive board member, plan your trip now. The standing committees use this annual meeting (coupled with the biennial conference held in even years) to evaluate what happened in the past year, plan what they will be working on in the future, and start working on the various projects as a group.

The regional chairs and chaplains meet to learn from each other as they report and discuss their region’s activities. There are also plenty of awards that will be presented including the Golden AAD, Spes Mundi, Silver St. George, and Jerusalem Cross. The meeting concludes with region and standing committee reports and voting on proposals presented by the committees.

This year, some of the work will include reviewing the challenges each standing committee agreed to accept at last year’s meeting in Schaumburg; identifying ideas for the 2008 Biennial workshops; updates to wording in religious emblems books; discussing how to implement and support the Knights of Columbus membership initiative; planning the 2007 Scouting in the Catholic Church conference at Philmont Scout Ranch; and identifying new training resources.

This meeting will also present an opportunity to thank outgoing National Chairman, Bray Barnes, and National Chaplain, Fr. Roger LaChance, as they pass the torch to Chair-elect Bill Davies and Associate Chaplain Fr. Ray Fecteau. The group will also welcome Fr. Stephen Salvador as the new Associate National Chaplain and two recently elected vice-chairs, John Ribar and Jerry Scanlan.

Registration information and materials have been mailed to all NCCS members and are also available on the NCCS website at http://www.nccs-bsa.org/.

The Hyatt Regency Milwaukee’s room rate for the conference is $124.00 plus tax. Registrations can be made by calling the hotel direct at (414) 276-1234 or toll free at (800) 233-1234. You can also register online at the Hyatt on-line system www.milwaukee.hyatt.com.

Two tours are planned for Thursday—one a “Ride and Brew” tour and the other to the Basilica, chapel and museum. Details are available on the website or on the registration form.

The Basilica of Saint Josaphat in Milwaukee is one of the many sites available to annual meeting attendees who register for the Basilica, chapel and museum tour on Thursday. It is a Minor Basilica created by Pope Pius XI in 1929 (the third church so honored in the USA). It fulfilled the necessary characteristics required by the Church to be so designated. Namely: it is a place of pilgrimage and special devotion, it is a center of historic significance for the Faith, and it is architecturally and artistically qualified for such an honor. Patterned after St. Peter’s in Rome, it has all the elements of a classical Romanesque basilica. It is recognized by the city of Milwaukee as an officially designated landmark.
**At Philmont training**

**NCCS to help celebrate World Scouting’s 100th anniversary**

You are cordially invited to celebrate World Scouting’s 100th Anniversary at Philmont while learning to see Scouting through the eyes of clergy, youth ministers, and Scouters.

The World Scouting Movement will be celebrating its 100th anniversary on Wednesday, August 1, 2007. August 1 is the day that Lord Baden-Powell sounded the kudu horn and formed 21 boys into four patrols on Brownsea Island in England, the first Scout meeting.

This year, the NCCS Scouting in the Catholic Church conference will coincide with the 100th anniversary of World Scouting. Philmont is planning a special celebration on Wednesday, August 1, which is traditionally a free day from class. Participants will receive a commemorative patch that will only be available to those that are in attendance at Philmont. After the short ceremony, you can relax on the trail by foot or horseback, take a tour of Philmont or the Cimarron area, or just kick back and do nothing.

Although Scouting in the Catholic Church is listed as advanced training, it is available to all Scouters (both volunteer and professional), clergy, and youth ministers. It is advanced because it goes through the basics with more information than you may get at the local level. The topics are explored through the catechism (how the clergy might view the topic) Renewing the Vision (how a youth minister might view the topic), Scouter Development (how a Scouter can use the topic to tie together Scouting and the word of God), and what resources NCCS provides to help. The goal is to help you, as a part of Youth Ministry, use the Scouting program. When you return home, you should have an insight of complementary topics to assist you to discuss Scouting with others.

For more information on Scouting in the Catholic Church and how to register, go to the NCCS website at: [http://nccs-bsa.org/activities/philmont.php](http://nccs-bsa.org/activities/philmont.php).

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**Chairman’s Message** by Bray Barnes

This will be my last message to you as National Chairman. Bill Davies and I have worked closely together this past year and I know that he is ready and very able to take over leadership of NCCS. I have no doubt that he will do an outstanding job. I look forward to our continued working relationship as I assume the role of Immediate Past National Chair and Bill has asked me to continue to oversee several projects that were started over the past three years as well as chair the Nominating Committee.

It has been my pleasure to have served as your Chairman for the past three years. I have traveled throughout the country on behalf of NCCS and I have had the pleasure of meeting many wonderful Catholic Scouters who serve as youth ministers delivering our program every day to Catholic Scouts. They are truly an inspiration to us all.

I must tell you that you have been well served by those members of the executive board who have undertaken the additional role of a standing committee chair or advisor. I cannot think of a time that when I called on them that they did not respond immediately. They each continue to work with their respective committees to assure that we can best serve the Catholic youth of Scouting. My hat is off to each of them and their committees for all that they do.

I also recognize our regional chairs and chairpersons who assure that their diocesan committees are functioning and that program is being delivered. They too are to be commended for their energy and commitment to youth ministry.

I cannot begin to tell you how proud I am of the executive committee. There is not a day that goes by that I am not in touch with them. They have wisely guided me and have unselfishly given of their time, talents and, yes, their treasure. They each deserve a very special thanks.

My advisor, my mentor, my sounding post, and, most of all, my friend, Fr. Roger has done yeoman’s work as your National Chaplain. A priest’s priest, Fr. Roger is a man of humble devotion to his fellow man. I count myself so very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with him and have him as my friend.

To those very special people that advise us along the Church and Scouting path, you are very much a part of the NCCS family. Bishop Gettelfinger, Don York, George Sparks, Carey Keane and Bob Mazzucchi have been our ardent supporters and continually provide advice and counsel, often times, beyond their role as advisor. Each of them has my utmost respect and gratitude.

I would be remiss if I did not thank Barb Nestel who is always there for us and greets us with her laughter or a smile no matter what. If it were not for her, we would not be able to achieve all that we do. She is our glue that binds.

And to all of you, from the bottom of my heart thank you, thank you, thank you for allowing me to serve you.

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**NCCS CALENDAR 2007**

- **April 9-15**: ICCS World Peace Forum—Santiago de Compostela, Spain
- **April 15-21**: Standing Committee, Advisory and Executive Board Meeting—Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- **July 27—Aug 8**: World Jamboree—Hylands Park, Chelmsford England
- **July 29—Aug 4**: Scouting in the Catholic Church Training Course at Philmont Scout Ranch

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**Support for ICCS**

Contributions are still needed to support the International Catholic Conference on Scouting. The membership goal of $20,000 will supplement the $80,000 allocated from NCCS general funds. To make a donation send your check to the NCCS office and note on the check that it is for the ICCS fund.

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**NCCS Website** www.nccs-bsa.org/
Did You Know . . .?
By Bob Oldowski

The relationship between Scouting and the Knights of Columbus is a long one. Today there are about 1,400 Scout units chartered to KC councils.

Back in 1912 Brother Barnabas, FSC (a Christian Brother), was named director of the Catholic Bureau of the Boy Scouts of America, working to expand Scouting throughout the nation.

In 1922 the Knights of Columbus established a special Boy Life Bureau and in April 1923, Brother Barnabas was appointed the bureau’s first executive secretary. In this spot, Br. Barnabas visited many of the nation’s bishops, advising them of the virtues of the Scouting program.

Brother Barnabas later helped develop the Squires program of the Knights, a program that is still being used today. In his honor the KCs established the Supreme Council Brother Barnabas Award program which each year recognizes the efforts of Squires circles conducting various programs.

The BSA honored Brother Barnabas in 1927 with one of the first Silver Buffalo awards that was ever presented. In 1992 the NCCS executive committee established the Brother Barnabas Founders Award to recognize leaders who have given exceptional service to the programs of Catholic Scouting.

Thanks to Brother Barnabas, the Knights use both Scouting and the Squires programs as their youth programs.

NCCS membership elect new regional leaders and National Vice Chairmen

John Ribar and Jerry Scanlan were elected as new National Vice Chairmen in the election held in December, 2006. They will assume their new positions in April and will serve two year terms.

The following were elected for three year terms that began in Jan 2007.

Region 1   Art Keegan - Chair
Region 2   Rev. Kevin Smith - Chaplain
Region 3   Rev. John Wendrychowicz - Chaplain
Region 4   Msgr. John Brady - Chaplain
Region 5   George LeCrone - Chair
Region 7   Rev. Roger Strebel - Chaplain
Region 8   Jim Witzman - Chair
Region 10  Charles Raimond - Chair
Region 11  Marie Simons - Chair
Region 13  Rev. Jim Blaine - Chaplain

2007 National Catholic Youth Conference to be held in Columbus, Ohio

By Mark Butler
Director, Columbus OYM

The Diocese of Columbus will host the 2007 National Catholic Youth Conference in November 2007. This event, sponsored by the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, is the largest Catholic youth event in the United States.

The Diocese of Columbus Catholic Committee on Scouting has created a special five-inch NCYC patch to mark this special occasion. It can be purchased or can serve as the award for completing a series of discussion questions. The award is for teens in youth-serving organizations such as the Boys Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, or Camp Fire USA. It is a great way to help young people prepare for the NCYC.

Please share this information with all your contacts in the Scouting movement. The Diocese of Columbus is planning additional initiatives to promote the NCYC to Scouts. These include use of and activities at Camp Lazarus, located just north of Columbus. Additionally, they will provide opportunities to earn religious emblems, such as the Santa Maria award, while participating at NCYC.

Accommodations at Camp Lazarus Scout Reservation can be made by units planning to attend the event by contacting Rebecca Miller at becca4427@wowway.com. There will be cabins and campsites available and we are working to have transportation to and from the camp and the conference site. For more information on the NCYC visit www.ncycColumbus.org. For patch orders you can find the forms at www.cdeducation.org.

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NCCS members visit Rome —

His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI greets Father Don Hummel, past National Chaplain, while Bishop Gerald Gettlefinger, NCCS Episcopal Liaison, and Father Dennis O’Rourke, another past National Chaplain, look on.

Basilica of St. Peter
Bishop Gettlefinger confers with a member of the Swiss Guard, who are responsible for maintaining order and security within the walls of Vatican City.

Morning Mass was concelebrated at St. Peter’s tomb with (l-r) Father Dennis O'Rourke, Father Roger LaChance, Deacon Tom Holsworth, Father Don Hummel, Bishop Gerald Gettlefinger, and Father Ray Fecteau.

Twenty members of the NCCS joined with a tour group from Father Dennis O'Rourke's parish in Cave Creek, Ariz. to visit Italy in February. The group visited Rome, Padua (St. Anthony's Basilica, Florence, and Assisi (St. Francis Basilica).
NCCS Regional Chaplain says “Scouting program can help youth discern their own vocations” in Scouting Magazine interview

By Catholic News Service
Reprinted with permission from CNS (www.CatholicNews.com)

IRVING, Texas (CNS) – Participating in Boys Scouts is a great way for youths to meet people in all walks of life and help them discern their own vocations, says Msgr. John B. Brady, a 65 year-veteran of Scouting.

In an interview with Scouting, a family magazine published by the Boy Scouts of America, Msgr. Brady said jamborees – nine-day national or international gatherings of Scouts and their leaders – provide opportunities for vocational discernment “not equaled in any other environment.”

“At each of the seven jamborees on which I have privileged to serve on staff, I have had the opportunity to help about 1,000 Scouts discern their life’s calling” he said. “Other jamboree staffers, such as doctors, surgeons, optometrists, engineers, pilots, military personnel and the like, have shared their professions and experiences with Scouts who consult them.”

He said the “excitement, enlightenment, reverence and camaraderie” of a jamboree combine to increase youth’s openness to thinking about what direction their life should take.

Scouting interviewed Msgr. Brady after he received the National Catholic Committee on Scouting’s 2006 Silver St. George Award, given to Catholic Scouting leaders for “especially significant” accomplishments and service at the national level.

A priest of the Washington Archdiocese, Msgr. Brady, 77, was archdiocesan chaplain for Boy Scouting, Girl Scouting, and Camp Fire from 1960 to 1984. He is a longtime member of the national committee’s board and currently acting Scouting chaplain for the committee’s Region 4, covering dioceses in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, and the District of Columbia. (EDITOR’S NOTE: Msgr. Brady was elected Region 4 Chaplain in December). He helped found the committee’s national Scouter Development program.

According to the magazine, there are currently some 9,500 Boy Scout units chartered by Catholic institutions in the United States, serving more than 305,000 Scouts.

Msgr. Brady said he experienced his first U.S. national jamboree in 1947, when he was 8 years old and he visited the encampment on the National Mall in Washington.

He joined Boy Scouts in the seventh grade and went on to become an Eagle Scout. Speaking of jamborees on occasions for vocational discernment, he said, “This happened in my own life. Msgr. Robert Brown, the chaplain of the international section of the second jamboree, held at Valley Forge, Pa. in 1950, helped me to discern that God was calling me to be a Catholic priest rather than a Signal Corps Army officer, a patent attorney or a professional Scouter.”

He said that Scouts have to meet personally with one of the camp chaplains sometime during the jamboree in order to qualify for the “Duty to God” segment of the jamboree patch.

He cited Scouting as a “powerful program” to help meet the goals that the U.S. bishops set out in the 1997 document on Catholic youth ministry, “Renewing the Vision.”

“The goals,” he said, “are these: to empower the young to live as Christ in our world; to draw them to responsible participation in the life, mission and work of the faith community; and to foster the personal and spiritual growth of each young person.”

He added that Scouting is especially effective in fostering all-around personal and spiritual growth.

“Taken together, the Scout Oath and (Scout) Law – beginning with ‘duty to God’ and ending with ‘a Scout is reverent,’ two bookends for the entire Scouting program – comprises one of the world’s best tools to challenge young people to live by the highest standards that God expects of the human beings he places on this earth,” Msgr. Brady said.

He also had special praise for Scouting’s high adventure programs, such as the one at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, where he has also served as chaplain.

“I think that a 12-day high adventure trek can accomplish more for a young person than two years in a troop or crew program back at home – because the challenge is greater, the difficulty is greater,” he said.

“It’s just a wonderful opportunity for a young person to change from a very scared, unsure person to someone who goes home more mature and filled with confidence about what he or she can actually do,” he said.

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Changes announced for Pope Paul VI unit award program in 2007

The National Catholic Committee on Scouting has announced changes in the Pope Paul VI program. In a letter sent to all unit leaders of Scouting units chartered under Catholic auspices, it was reported the Membership Committee had plans to revise the PVI program by changing the name from the Pope Paul VI National Unit Recognition to the National Catholic Quality Unit Award - Pope Paul VI.

The plan is to begin using the new name effective for the calendar year 2007, along with a new application form, and at the end of this year when the new applications for 2007 are turned in, the units will receive the new patch, streamers, etc. Bob Nelson, the Membership Committee chairman, said “this program is similar to the BSA Quality Unit Award, and in fact, they go hand in hand.”

He also pointed out that other programs being reviewed by the membership committee include updates to the Golden Bow award, the Gold Medallion unit awards, and the Duty to God Awards. He urged all Scouters to visit the NCCS website (www.nccs-bsa.org) to stay current with new items and changes to existing programs.
Father Dan Mode, NCCS Chaplain
Update from Afghanistan - - - -

Editor’s Note: Father Dan Mode, a long time NCCS member and past Region 4 Chaplain, is a priest for the Diocese of Arlington and a chaplain in the United States Naval Reserve. He deployed to Afghanistan in May of 2005 to support the Global War on Terror. This is the latest of update letters he has provided during his deployment.

Dear All,

Once again, being on this deployment has allowed me to see even clearer the hand of God in so many occasions. During a short trip to Texas, I had two very wonderful “God-incidences.” Both encounters “started” in Afghanistan and continued in San Antonio. The first “incident” happened when I called to make reservations at the hotel. The woman who took the reservation asked why there was an echo on the phone. I explained that I was calling from Afghanistan and coming in for a priest conference at the hotel. She became somewhat breathless as she felt honored to be talking to a guy “in the fight” over here and was especially interested in the fact that I was a priest—she had lots of spiritual questions. Long story short, my mom and I joined her and her family for dinner (I grilled the steaks) and throughout the evening we engaged in a number of conversations about the Faith. Her 13 year old son who has studied a lot about the Catholic Faith on his own was asking to be baptized so he too could be a Christian. I will continue to keep her and her family in my prayers.

The second encounter involved a soldier who was wounded in action over here. Before he was medically evacuated to the States, I had an opportunity to spend the better part of a day with him. I anointed him, offered Mass for him and prayed with him. I have done this many times for wounded soldiers, however when they leave Bagram I rarely have the opportunity to stay in touch with them. It is just a spiritual moment in time. However, this one soldier was sent to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. Once again, we were able to have Mass together. We had several meals together and even visited some of the beautiful missions that dot the San Antonio River. His burns and shrapnel wounds have healed well and it looks like he will be able to finish his tour back in the STAN, which is his desire. It is truly wonderful to see the hand of God at work.

At the end of my last update letter, I mentioned that I was starting my fourth RCIA class since the beginning of my deployment in May of 05. I was hopeful that it would be the largest class of any of the previous sessions and my hopes were certainly not disappointed—as of this week we have 49 attending. 17 who are converting to the Catholic faith (5 of these have never been baptized), 18 who are Catholic but have not yet been confirmed and the rest are taking the class as sponsors or as a way to get back to the practice of their faith. I have been impressed by their dedication and eagerness to learn about the Faith—being in a deployed environment presents constant challenges to a soldiers’ ability to dedicate himself to much else than his mission and sleep. This session classes should be completed by mid-December and then more baptisms, confirmations and professions of faiths will be celebrated. Since my last update letter one more convert made his profession of faith and was confirmed; and a Catholic was confirmed. It is truly hard for me to put in black and white the tremendous joy and grace I experience helping these souls seek the Church in their lives. While I have been involved in many RCIA programs and helped a number enter the Church, there is another level of spiritual renewal when you have the opportunity to care for troops in the midst of a combat zone—not that it is more “real” or better, but that the reality is so much more intense. Pray for these new Catholics and old ones who have rediscovered their Faith during their time “in this desert experience.”

The day to day work of visits to the Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) continues—19 missions accomplished in the last two months. This still remains my happiest “work.” There is nothing like getting off an earsplitting helicopter kicking up dust in the middle of “nowhere” and offering Mass for a few soldiers huddled together around a crate altar eagerly looking forward to finally receiving the Eucharist after many weeks without. I am sure this is what the early Church felt like when Mass was celebrated in the catacombs; minus the helicopters of course.

Some of my missions took me back to Kabul. As I have noted before, I interface a lot with our Coalition Catholic chaplains with the goal of having them assist our Catholic US soldiers. Many of these priests are in the Kabul area and also travel to other sites throughout the country. During my recent visit to the capital, I met with English speaking Catholic chaplains from Italy, France and Portugal. I really enjoyed my visit to the Italian compound—the pasta was the real deal and the Italian coffee—well, I am still awake. I also had the opportunity to offer Mass for and visit with the three religious orders that care for the Afghan people of Kabul. They are all doing very well and send their heartfelt gratitude to the many who have contributed to their missions. While I find each of 12 Sisters’ stories fascinating, I must admit that the life of Sr. Chantel from France is truly amazing. She has been serving in Afghanistan for over 51 years; she has seen it all. Her smile is infectious and while she is bowed down by the years, she is still going strong and is so happy to still be on mission. When I think I have a cross to bear; I will remember Sr. Chantel.

After a number of attempts during my last two visits to Kabul to meet with Fr. Moretti, the chaplain for the Italian Embassy and the Ecclesiastical Superior for Afghanistan, I was finally able to have two meetings with him at his Embassy. He has been in Afghanistan on and off for the last 30 years and was even wounded during a Soviet attack in the Capital. He like Sr. Chantel has seen much and is a man of firm faith and joy. He told that the Jesuit brothers and priests are active in the Western part of the country and that there is hope a fourth religious community will arrive from India in the Spring. May the witness these souls help to bring peace to this land.

I was a part of a military humanitarian mission in Kabul. The team delivered 225 bags of winter clothing to well over a hundred displaced Afghan people. They live in a huge unheated abandoned Soviet style building on the edge of the city. They were so grateful for what we were able to bring. A typical greeting and “thank you” is when two people shake hands each then places their hand over their heart. In thankfulness, there were many hands over hearts that afternoon.

Time passes quickly: Thanksgiving is this week, Christmas is just around the corner and soon I will be concluding my deployment. I will try to write one more update letter in February. As always, thank you for your thoughts and prayers. They mean the world to me and the troops I have the privilege to serve. God bless and keep you.
The Catholic Committee of the Diocese of Fort Worth is sponsoring a 2007 Ad Altare Dei Tour, that combines work on Catholic Scouting religious awards, a pilgrimage to religious shrines, and a visit to Philmont Scout Ranch. John Ryan, Vice Chairman of the Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting, proposed the idea because of the sharp drop in Scouts achieving Catholic Scouting religious awards nationwide. Loretto’s Chapel (home of the miraculous staircase), San Miguel Mission, St Francis Cathedral, Bandolier Monument (Indian cliff dwellings), and Capulin Volcano are among the destinations the tour group will visit. It all begins on Thursday July 26th, 2007 when a contingent of young Scouts (shown here with Bishop Kevin Vann) will embark on an adventure that will conclude on Wednesday August 1.

The Catholic Committee of the Diocese of Fort Worth is sponsoring a 2007 Ad Altare Dei Tour, that combines work on Catholic Scouting religious awards, a pilgrimage to religious shrines, and a visit to Philmont Scout Ranch. John Ryan, Vice Chairman of the Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting, proposed the idea because of the sharp drop in Scouts achieving Catholic Scouting religious awards nationwide. Loretto’s Chapel (home of the miraculous staircase), San Miguel Mission, St Francis Cathedral, Bandolier Monument (Indian cliff dwellings), and Capulin Volcano are among the destinations the tour group will visit. It all begins on Thursday July 26th, 2007 when a contingent of young Scouts (shown here with Bishop Kevin Vann) will embark on an adventure that will conclude on Wednesday August 1.

At St. Christopher Parish in Galt, Calif., parish based organizations have come together on a common mission. The Knights of Columbus Council No. 9836 sponsors three units and has teamed with them with the goal of enriching the life of the church and local community. “It is the model of inter-parochial organizations working together rather than individually, a natural exchange which benefits the whole parish community,” said Father Ryle, formerly at St. Christopher, who is now at St. Philomene Parish in Sacramento.

 Members of Troop 28 and leaders stand in front of a memorial stone for “All Unborn Children of the World” at the old St. Christopher Church in Galt prior to moving the stone to its new church site. Scouts pose at the memorial stone while Father Gerald Ryle, back row third from right, looks on.

Bishop Lori of Bridgeport Conn. Honored by Conn. Yankee Scout Council

Under the leadership of Luncheon Chair, Wiley Mullins, President of Uncle Wiley’s Specialty Foods, Inc. and Council Vice President for Connecticut Yankee Council, the Greater Bridgeport “Good Scout” Award Luncheon raised a record of more than $71,000 at this year’s Luncheon.

The luncheon, held on Nov. 30 at the Holiday Inn in Bridgeport gathered 282 people to celebrate Scouting and honor three deserving persons: First Selectman Raymond G. Baldwin, Jr., of the Town of Trumbull; the Most Reverend William E. Lori, S.T.D., Bishop of Bridgeport for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport; and Attorney Sheryl A. Shaughnessey of Fairfield. Supported by the 36 member luncheon committee, proceeds benefit more than 12,000 young men and young women in Scouting in the greater Bridgeport area.

Major donors to this event at the Benefactor Level ($5,000+) included the Catholic Charities and Diocese of Bridgeport