By Austin Cannon

The 2009 Saint George Trek of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting was held at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico in late July. Sixty-four Scouts representing forty arch/dioceses from twenty-six states hiked the Sangre de Cristo Range of the Rocky Mountains. The advisors included Bishop Dan Conlon, Bishop of Steubenville, Ohio, six priests from California to New York and an Air Force Chaplain from the Military Archdiocese. Seminarians from Tennessee, Michigan, Arizona and New York completed the team of crew advisors.

Tuesday, July 21 saw this diverse group of scouts arriving at the Madonna Retreat House in Albuquerque, N.M. for two days of getting to know one another, separating into crews, meeting their advisors and choosing their crew leaders. Course Director, Father Kevin Smith emphasized the idea that the Saint George Trek is a leadership development experience encouraging the integration of morality, values, spirituality, faith, and scripture with the responsibilities of Christian leadership and vocations as well as on opportunity to hike Philmont and enjoy its programs and natural beauty.

After an opening campfire and a good night’s sleep, Friday had each of the crews begin their eleven day, fifty plus mile hike through what Philmont veterans call, “God’s Country.” Each member of the crew shared the burden of carrying food, tents, bear bags, pots, pans and all the gear that makes for a safe and enjoyable journey. Horseback riding, mountain climbing, blacksmithing, black powder rifles, prospecting for gold, and conservation projects were among the many programs experienced by the Saint George Trekkers. What made the Saint George Trek different and special was the spiritual dimension that saw Mass on top of 12,000 foot Mount Baldy, daily Mass on the trail, discussions on faith and prayer, and the leadership retreat that was held midway in the week.

Teams of advisors presented thoughts on Christian leadership as Scouts and adult Catholics, vocations to the priesthood, the importance of prayer in a person’s life and other appropriate topics. The retreat ended with a Penance Service, and Eucharistic Adoration in the evening. All were up in the morning to celebrate Mass together as the sun rose over the beautiful rock formation called Cathedral Rock.

During mid-morning of Monday, August 3rd the crews returned to Base Camp and all headed to the Catholic Chapel. All expressed their excitement on completing the trek. “Awesome”, “Best experience of my life,” “Wow” were heard time after time as they dove into the snacks and treats that were there for them.

Part of the welcoming committee were members of the Sacred Military Constantinian Order of Saint George headed by Jeff Ludwig, Jr. and Charles Scholz. The Order has been most generous in its financial and spiritual support for the trek for many years. The rest of the day was for hot showers, calls to family, trips to Cimarron and of course, souvenirs for themselves and their families back home, and a final Mass.

(continued on page 2)
Sixty-four Scouts complete Saint George Trek at Philmont
(Continued from Page 1)

Tuesday, all gathered for a final session where they were asked to bring their adventure home by sharing their experiences with the local Catholic Committee that sponsored them, their individual troops and by becoming leaders in the activities of the Catholic Committee. Here they received a special gift from Padre, a Saint George Trek belt buckle. This limited edition numbered buckle is presented to the hikers and support staff as a sign of their participation.

Thanks go to Bishop Gerald “Padre” Gettelfinger, Episcopal Liaison to the NCCS, Father Ray Fecteau, Father Mike Hanifin and the entire Philmont team. Thanks as well to the advisors for their dedication and perseverance. Each gave up family and vacation time to hike with our Scouts and offer them an “awesome experience.” Thanks also to Father Gerard Gentleman, who in addition to hiking the 50 plus miles with his crew, served as program director for the trek. And to Father Kevin Smith, Trek Director, for his leadership.

National Chaplain will oversee all NCCS participation at Jamboree

There have been a number of inquiries about participation at the 2010 National Boy Scout Jamboree to be held at Fort A.P. Hill, Va. Please note that the NCCS bylaws state that the National Chaplain is the NCCS official contact and he is responsible for all NCCS participation at the Jamboree. The National Chaplain at the time of the Jamboree will be Father Stephen Salvador. He has been making all plans for the Jamboree and has appointed Col. (Retired) John Halloran to be responsible for the NCCS exhibition booth and Father Mike Hanifin to be responsible for all NCCS Chaplain assignments. If anyone has ideas or is interested in participating, please contact Father Salvador at sbshg@aol.com

Chairman’s Message

Kay and I recently returned from Baltimore where Padre hosted a breakfast for over 50 Bishops at the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. What an exciting time where the highlights of the 100th year of Scouting were discussed.

Two months ago, John Ribar, NCCS Vice Chair, passed away. John will be missed by everyone. He was a strong advocate for Scouting, a great volunteer and a generous contributor. Please keep John and his family in your prayers.

Susan Barriball will be filling the open Vice Chair position. Susan will be working with the Membership and International Committees. Other changes include: Gerard Scanlan will be working with Marketing and Public Relations and Contract Management, and Austin Cannon will be overseeing Religious Emblems, Training, Vocations and the Activities Committees.

I had an opportunity to visit the Omni Hotel in Richmond, Va., the site of the April, 2010 Biennial. What an ideal location. Bishop DiLorenzo and the Richmond committee are excited about this conference. Now is the time to start making your plans. Information is on the web site.

The June membership numbers are not very encouraging. Catholic sponsored units are down over 300 units since June, 2008. In addition, youth membership numbers are down 10,000. Are parish priests being contacted about starting a new unit? What can we do to invite new Scouts to join a unit? What can we do to keep Scouts in units? Remember Scouting is “Youth Ministry”.

Kay and I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

In Memoriam

John Ribar, 81, of Louisville, died at home Friday, October 9, 2009. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Jean; his children, John (Judy), David (Susan), Richard (Susan), Don (Tracee), and Susan Loveland (Mike); eight grandchildren, Rachel, Beth, Erin, Matt, Thomas, Carly, Zoe and Max; and numerous nieces and nephews.

John began service to the BSA in 1960. He was a cubmaster and scoutmaster, and then held positions at the District, Council and Regional levels. John was a recipient of many Scouting awards, including the Silver Antelope, the Silver Saint George, and the Golden Ad Altare Dei. He was proud of all those he helped to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout, including his four sons and two of his grandsons.

In 1995 John represented the BSA on a trip to Siberia. He was a leader and course instructor at Philmont, and attended five National Jamborees. John formerly chaired the Louisville Catholic Committee on Scouting and organized many popular Flaget Trail camp-outs. He was a vice-chair of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, and was awarded the prestigious Brother Barnabas Founders Award in 2008.

Memorials may be made to the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, P.O. Box 152079, Irving, TX 75015; The Lincoln Heritage Council, P.O. Box 36273, Louisville KY 40233, or another charity of your choice.
Scouting in the Catholic Church Conference set for Philmont in August 2010

The NCCS has announced the appointment of faculty for the 2010 “Scouting in the Catholic Church” Conference. The director for the 2010 will be Susan Barriball. The faculty includes Chris Manning, Margaret Matarese, and Course Advisor Father Raymond L. Fecteau. The Conference will be held August 1-7, 2010 at the Philmont Training Center in Cimarron, New Mexico.

Families of Conference participants are always welcome at the Philmont Training Center. It is an experience that both you and your family will that will last a lifetime. Please check the information on the NCCS website to help plan your trip to one of the most beautiful parts of the country.

The Philmont Training Center (PTC) is nestled in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of northeastern New Mexico near Cimarron. Rich in history and natural beauty, this area offers exciting educational experiences for the entire family. PTC has served as the National Training Center for the Boy Scouts of America since 1950. A variety of week-long conferences will be conducted for unit, district, and council volunteers and professionals. Each conference features the latest tools, audiovisuals, and techniques led by a faculty of experienced Scouters. In addition to hosting these Conferences, the Training Center also provides the opportunity for families to join their Scouters and enjoy a wide range of Family Programs—making the Philmont Training Center experience one of a kind. The summer staff will lead hiking, tours, handicrafts, and other outdoor activities. A week-long backcountry Mountain Trek is offered for Venturing-aged youth. Full details on programs are sent to participants upon acceptance. Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

For information on the conference go to the NCCS website at http://www.nccs-bsa.org/

Did You Know . . . ?
By Bob Oldowski

As we celebrate the birth of Scouting in the United States, let’s look back on how Lord Baden-Powell developed his ideas for this new Scouting program.

“When Lord Baden-Powell went to Cardinal Bourne [Archbishop of Westminster (London) England] for his advice and assistance in formulating the organization and program of Scouting, the Cardinal pointed out that Scouting, if it was to include Catholic boys, must not try to supply a religious element, but that the program must allow the Church to provide that. The plan of agreement worked out between Lord Baden-Powell and Cardinal Bourne has served as a model of relationship for our own Catholic set-up and plan of agreement.

“When Lord Baden-Powell asked the Cardinal for help in formulating a suitable Scout promise and a code or law, the Cardinal directed him to the monks of the Benedictine Order as past masters in rule giving. So the great Benedictine Order helped to formulate the wonderful Scout promise, which we call the Scout oath in this country, and the Scout law.”

Source: The Catholic Review, Archdiocese of Baltimore, February 11, 1938

Alaskan Archbishop says Scouting program has spiritual side and Scouts are a “bridge between our faith and citizenship”

By Effie Caldarola

Reprinted by permission of Catholicanchor.org

If you’ve only observed Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts from a distance, you may think of them as just another American secular organization that teaches kids how to pitch a tent and “be prepared.”

In fact, according to Anchorage Archbishop Roger Schwietz, who has a whole bagful of his own Scouting patches, Scouting has a definite spiritual side, and he hopes to encourage more Catholic kids to participate in Scouting.

“Scouting builds character; it gives kids goals and self-confidence as they reach those goals,” the archbishop told the Anchor. “When you can put that together with faith, it’s marvelous.”

Pairing Scouting with faith is inherent to the program, according to Kim Bakie, who is executive secretary to Archbishop Schwietz. She has been heavily involved in Scouting for years.

“There are over 100 religious Scouting awards given out by various denominations,” said Bakie, who serves on the Alaska Catholic Committee on Scouting. From the Baha’i faith to Judaism to every Christian denomination, there are awards a young person can attain which relate to his or her religious tradition.

Bakie said these awards and activities help kids realize that “their religious beliefs apply to their whole lives. You need to see how the world thinks and what the church stands for.”

Archbishop Schwietz’s enthusiasm for Scouting led him to appoint one of the newly ordained deacons, Harry Moore of Palmer, to serve as his liaison to the program.

“I’ve always had a strong interest in youth ministry,” said Deacon Moore. His own son was once a Scout, and he hopes to help form and promote Catholic Scouting.

“Catholic Scouting really can help kids understand and enrich their Catholic faith,” Deacon Moore said.

“Like the Knights of Columbus, Scouts are a bridge between our faith and our citizenship,” said Archbishop Schwietz. “In Scouting, you grow as Americans as you grow into your faith.”

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The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom was celebrated on October 4 at the Greater New York Council Camp in Alpine, N.J. for the first time by Eastern Catholic clergy. This liturgy occurred at the conclusion of the Brooklyn-Queens Catholic Committee on Scouting’s annual Catholic Scout Retreat.

The celebrant was Father Fred Saato, Catechetical Director for the Melkite Catholic Eparchy of Newton and a Director for “God With Us” Publications, the publishing arm of the Region 15 eparchial/diocesan catechetical directors. He was assisted by Deacon Thomas, who arranged with St. Basil’s Ukrainian Catholic Seminary in Stamford (Conn.) to borrow their portative icons. Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church supplied the chalice and diskos set, linens, altar wine, and a gospel book, St. Michael’s Russian Catholic Church, loaned vestments and supplied the proskophora. Finally the Italo-Greek style antimension used at the liturgy was loaned by Italo-Greek Catholic Archdeacon John Demeis; it had been consecrated by Bishop John Michael Botein of the Romanian Catholic Eparchy of St. George in Canton, Ohio. Some 30 Scouts and Scouters attended the liturgy and subsequent question and answer session.
The Catholic military community in Afghanistan is in need of all types of supplies to support their worship needs. This would make an excellent project for a Pack, Troop, Diocesan Committee, or other Scout organization that would like to help support our Catholic military. If you can help, please contact Bray Barnes at bbbtrcolt@aol.com for further information and details.

According to the priests ministering to the troops in Afghanistan they are in desperate need of the following items.

- 60 Corporals
- 6 Pattens (bowl shaped, no handle)
- 4 hand washing towels
- 2 new cruets sets
- Medium and large Albs.

Imagine 22,500 Catholic Youth and chaperones coming together from more than 100 dioceses in a convention center for three days to celebrate their Catholic Faith. It’s almost like a Jamboree, and the NCCS was at the National Catholic Youth Conference in Kansas City, Mo. on November 19-21 to represent Catholic Scouters committed to Scouting Youth Ministry.

The team, led by George Sparks, consisted of Father Dennis O’Rourke, Tom Nishikubo, Homer Radford, Tom Jewitt, Bill and Kay Davies and Ed Gargiulo. Homer Radford and Tom Jewitt are also members of the Catholic Committee on Scouting for the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph—one of the sponsoring dioceses. Youth and adults were greeted in the booth with information advocating Venturing, the St. George Trek, and the Doerr Scholarship to support the organization and continuity of their youth ministry.
LATEST UPDATE! The promotional materials for our ideas sharing/best practices extravaganza “Showcase 2010” are ready and have been sent for mailing/emailing/posting to our website with all the other extensive biennial conference information that is there! So plan to reserve a display table to exhibit and share the best programs and activities from your (arch) diocese/eparchy! (display tables are limited, and will be reserved on a “first come, first served” basis) After your display table reservation form is received, you’ll receive instructions in case you’ll need to ship any of your display materials to the hotel in advance.

HOTEL RATES & RESERVATIONS: Our special NCCS rates at the AAA 4-diamond-rated Omni Richmond Hotel, (good from Wednesday night, April 7, 2010, thru Wednesday night, April 21, 2010), will be $109.00 (plus tax) single or double occupancy, and $119.00 (plus tax) triple or quad occupancy. If you plan to share a room, please make only one room reservation, and insure that both names are listed under the same reservation. Make a reservation even if you know that you will be on a pre-assigned room list we will be providing to the hotel. Reservations at these special group rates may be made by phone 1-804-344-7000, and be sure to mention our group code 12200698551 or on-line at our own NCCS reservation webpage: http://www.omnihotels.com/FindAHotel/Richmond/MeetingFacilities/41stNCCSBiennialConference4.aspx

AIR & GROUND TRANSPORTATION & PARKING: Air -- The Richmond International Airport is only 8 miles from the Omni Richmond Hotel, and is served by Air Tran, American, Continental, Delta, Jet Blue, Northwest, United, and US Airways Airlines, which provide non-stop flights to Richmond from many major U.S. hubs. Ground -- Groome Transportation provides nonstop limo/shuttle service between the Richmond International Airport (RIC) and Omni Richmond. Special rates for NCCS Biennial Conference participants have been arranged: $15.00 per person (including luggage) each way. No reservation from airport required. Groome transportation requires 24 hr notice in order to accommodate your desired pick up day and time from the Omni Richmond for return to the airport. Parking garages adjacent and under the Omni Richmond are available for personal/rental vehicles, but the parking costs are HIGH: Valet parking $20 per day with unlimited in/out privileges; Self parking $21 per day – does not include in/out privileges. (The parking garages are not owned, operated, or regulated by the hotel, but valet parking charges can be applied to guestroom bills for registered Omni guests)

PLANNING THE DATES OF YOUR STAY: The Religious Activities, Religious Emblems, and Training Standing Committees have meetings scheduled to begin on Monday afternoon, April 12. The other standing committee meetings/activities begin on Tuesday, April 13. First meeting of Regional Chairs and Chaplains is on Tuesday, April 13. Showcase 2010! Our ideas sharing/best practices extravaganza will be all morning on Wednesday, April 14. The first General Membership meeting is on Wednesday afternoon, April 14. Workshops are scheduled all day on Thursday, April 15, and all morning on Friday, April 16. The first Advisory Board meeting is on Thursday afternoon, April 15. The last general business meeting ends on Friday afternoon, April 16. The conference banquet with the keynote address will be Friday night, April 16. The Executive Board meeting is on Saturday morning, April 17.
Boy Scouts share faith, explore state’s history during second annual West Virginia Catholic Scouting retreat

Reprinted with permission of The Catholic Spirit Catholic Newspaper of the Diocese of Wheeling/Charleston, WV

by Martina Hart

WHEELING, W.V. — Boy Scouts from the diocese and three neighboring states shared their faith and explored West Virginia’s rich history at the second annual Diocesan Catholic Boy Scout Camporee at Sandcrest Scout Reservation in Wheeling Sept. 11-13. “It’s been a great experience for everyone,” said Craig O’Leary, a member of the Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting and assistant scout master of Troop No. 5 at St. Michael Parish, who hosted this year’s event. “We showed them what Wheeling is about and what the Diocese has to offer. We had a lot of good feedback about the program.”

After breakfast at their campsites, scouts gathered for a flag-raising ceremony and morning prayers Saturday. They then participated in various activities in the “Cabela’s Scout Challenge” and, in the afternoon, toured West Virginia Independence Hall in Wheeling, Wheeling Heritage Port and trails along the cave of local frontiersman Lewis Wetzel. The scouts also worked on a service project, clearing brush from railroad tracks that are to become a hiking and biking trail.

Father Dennis R. Schuelkens Jr., administrator of Our Lady of Peace Parish in Wheeling and diocesan chaplain to the Boy Scouts, as well as seminarians Matt Abott and Ryan Stichweh gave guided tours at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Wheeling and talked about their call to serve as priests.

Father Chapin Engler, associate pastor of St. Leo Parish in Inwood, delivered the homily at an evening outdoor Mass celebrated by Father Schuelkens. During the Mass, Kevin Frank was awarded the St. George Emblem by the Diocesan Committee on Scouting for his outstanding contribution to the spiritual development of Catholic youth in the Boy Scouts and successfully chartering a troop at St. Michael’s Parish in Wheeling.

Before their departure Sunday, the Scouts also had the opportunity to be part of a space mission at the Challenger Learning Center at Wheeling Jesuit University.

“What they’ve done these past two years was very unique,” said Sam Bridgeman, chairman of Region 4 of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, who had traveled from Virginia. He commended the setup of the program, combining various activities with the religious aspect. “They learned a lot,” he said about the scouts. “They had a lot of fun. They lived their faith.”

Bridgeman, who has been in scouting for 50 years, said that most people underestimate the value of scouting. “It’s more than just going camping,” Bridgeman said. “They’re really actually learning something out there. And if it’s a Catholic sponsored unit ... somewhere along the line in that weekend campout Christ is brought into their life.”

Father Schuelkens said that the scout oath, law, motto and slogan encourage a virtuous life.

“The Boy Scouts of America is an outstanding program that builds character during a very formative time in a boy’s life,” he explained. “I’m deeply grateful for the formation I received from scouting. I believe that I would not be the man that I am today, the priest that I am today, had I not been involved in scouting.”

Don’t forget Scout Sunday
On February 7, 2010

The Scout Sunday tradition was started to make people in houses of worship aware of Scouting, and to allow Scouts to live out their “Duty to God” pledged each week. The Scout Law says that a “Scout is Reverent” and the Scouts of all ages promise to do their “Duty to God.” These values strengthen youth character in their family, community and faith.

National Vice-Chairmen and regional leadership elected

Austin Cannon and Michael Gannon were elected as the new National Vice Chairmen in December, 2009. They were both elected for two years and will begin their terms in April, 2010 at the Biennial Conference.

There were also elections in some of the regions and those results are as follows:

Region 1 Chair - Art Keegan
Region 2 Chaplain – Father Kevin Smith
Region 3 Chaplain – Msgr. John Wendrychowicz
Region 4 Chaplain – Msgr. John Brady
Region 5 Chair – Judy Bradford
Region 7 Chaplain – Father Roger Strebel
Region 8 Chair – Scott Zimmer
Region 10 Chair – Charles Raimond
Region 10 Chaplain – Father Ahn Tran
Region 11 Chair – Chris Manning
December 26, 2009

For 100 years, the BSA has created a foundation of leadership, service, and community for millions of America’s youth. For more than 75 years, the NCCS has shared in that mission by promoting Scouting to Catholic parishes, schools and fraternal organizations. Both of these are significant milestones in which we should take pride. We are among the countless individuals over the years who have made these possible by our donations of time, talent and treasure.

In just this past year the National Catholic Committee on Scouting served over 300,000 youth members registered in more than 9,000 Catholic chartered units. Here are some highlights of what we were able to achieve with your support:

Presented over 22,000 religious emblems  
Shipped over 17,000 Rosary and Footsteps of American Saints religious activity patches  
Granted $2000 college scholarships to five Catholic Eagle Scouts  
Trained 27 leaders in the “Scouting in the Catholic Church” program at Philmont  
Recognized 107 dioceses with the Quality Diocesan Award  
Recognized 25 Catholic-chartered units with the Gold Medallion award  
Supported 4 full-time Catholic chaplains at Philmont Scout Ranch  
Hired a full-time program assistant to work for us in the BSA National Office

You have understood our continuing need to fund the National Catholic Committee on Scouting and have responded generously in the past. Please accept our deepest appreciation for your previous gift. We continually strive to be good stewards of your contributions and now ask for your continued financial support.

As we look to another great year of serving youth, I ask that you join us in celebrating our commitment by making a donation to the 2010 Annual Appeal in support of the work of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting. This year’s appeal also comes with a special incentive to participate in the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Scouting in the United States. See the postscript below for details. Again, thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

Bill Davies       Fr. Raymond L. Fecteau  
National Chairman     National Chaplain

P.S. The economy has affected the income of many families this year but for those of you who can stretch a bit, the NCCS is preparing a unique incentive in celebration of the BSA’s centennial. Donors to this year’s Annual Appeal have the opportunity to receive a special shirt embroidered with the NCCS BSA centennial logo.

Recognition will require participation in the amount of at least $200 per person. For Executive Committee members the amount is $500. Donors will be asked to wear their shirts to the Finance Committee Breakfast of Champions during the 2010 annual meeting in Richmond, Virginia where they will be recognized. The cost of the breakfast is covered by the donation. The shirts will be distributed at conference check-in. Group photos will be taken at the breakfast and presented to each donor as a memento of the event. Those who cannot attend will have their shirts mailed to them following the annual meeting.

The campaign runs from November 2009 through February 2010. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity we hope you will consider!