

Nearly 45,000 Boy Scouts descended upon our nation's capital to celebrate the Boy Scouts of America centennial. The Boy Scouts National Jamboree took place July 26 through August 4, with activities in Washington, D.C. and nearby Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia. More than 240 Scouts from the Mid-American Council (Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota) made the journey to mark the incredible milestone of 100 years of Boy Scouting.

The Boy Scouts are among America's most cherished institutions. I often tell Scouts who contact me as part of their merit badge requirements that the skills and values they will obtain through their years in scouting will help shape their growth and development as young men. Scouts display an extraordinary commitment to promoting personal excellence, respect for outdoor life and nature, and responsible citizenship, as the Boy Scout Oath states:

"On my honor, I will do my best  
To do my duty to God and my country;  
To obey the Scout Law;  
To help other people at all times;  
To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight."

These invaluable lessons have helped guide more than 110 million boys and young men into adulthood for generations. In fact, Congress granted the Boy Scouts of America a Congressional charter in 1916, recognizing that Boy Scouting "promote[s] through organization, and cooperation with other agencies, the ability of boys to do things for themselves and others, to train them in scoutcraft, and to teach them patriotism, courage, self-reliance, and kindred virtues."

Though the National Jamboree has ended, the celebrations are far from over for Nebraska's Boy Scouts. This October, the largest Scouting event in the Midwest will take place at Scoutquest 2010 at Mahoney State Park in Ashland. It promises to be a very exciting event. You can learn more about Scoutquest 2010 at <http://www.mac-bsa.org/scoutquest> .

Happy 100th birthday to Boy Scouts young and old!