

# Help for the Children: Hope for the World

by Tyler Arrell

**A**t a Monday night Cub meeting while shouting out "PACK PACK PACK," and having 20 kids running towards you, it can be easy to forget the size and impact of Scouting throughout the world. That small group of people meeting weekly in a church basement forms part of one of the largest and most prestigious organizations in the world.

There are more than 28 million Scouts, youth and adults, boys and girls, in 216 countries around the globe. Since 1907 Scouting has spread across the world and contributed to the development of countless young people. While the positive impact Scouting has had on the world is obvious, we cannot forget the millions of children in the world today who live in poverty and suffering. Children represent society's future and there are too

many children in the world today who face a future with no hope. How is a society supposed to thrive if its children do not have access to a decent meal, let alone a decent education? How are we to develop and prosper if our children are rendered incapable of becoming tomorrow's leaders?

In 2001, the AIDS epidemic orphaned 12 million children living in sub-Saharan Africa alone. By the end of this decade that number will rise to over 40 million children - that's one child for every Canadian. While some of these children rely on grandparents or other family members to take care of them, many are left to fend for themselves. In Kenya there are over 60,000 children living on the streets of Nairobi and other major cities. Street children who don't have a home or any place to go at night survive by scavenging for food; by begging; by stealing. It is a problem of immense proportions that will have repercussions for years to come.

I would be lying if I said there was an easy way for us to solve this problem. But it would be equally untrue for

me to say that there is nothing that we can do. If you want to get involved and take action, what I ask of you is very simple. I ask that you plant a tree.

Scouts Canada's official spring fundraiser is Scoutrees. Most everyone knows the important environmental impact of this program. The recently launched Scouts Canada Climate Change Education Action Program further informs our youth of the dangers the environment faces and the need for initiatives like Scoutrees.

What is often overlooked is the international community development aid provided by Scoutrees. Of the money raised through Scoutrees, none of it goes towards Scouts Canada's national operation. Instead, that portion is placed in the Canadian Scout Brotherhood Fund.

Created in 1950, the Brotherhood Fund works to support and develop Scouting and community development throughout the world. Over the past fifty years more than five million dollars has been granted to support projects in developing countries.



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From building schools in Ghana to training Scout leaders in Bhutan, the Brotherhood Fund has helped Scouts around the world.

I know that Scoutrees is not the easiest program to run. Simply finding trees to plant and a place to plant them can be a lengthy process. Deciding that the program is more effort than it is worth may appear to be an easy decision to make. And on top of that, it's not an easy product to sell. We live in a world of instant gratification, from high-speed Internet to giant mega-stores where every desire can be fulfilled with the swipe of a credit card. When you sell someone popcorn, they know what they are getting and they experience it directly.

Scoutrees doesn't provide an instant return on the dollar. We aren't selling a product or service that gives immediate pleasure. But what we are selling is worth so much more: we're selling a better future. Every dollar we raise and every tree we plant is a down payment on a healthier world for tomorrow.

With global warming and more pollutants being released into the air every day, the environment is in dire straits. If we do not act, our world may be placed in jeopardy. For this reason alone, the need for the Scoutrees program is clear.

But there is another reason. As I have said, there are today 60,000 children living on the streets in Kenya. Which is why this year, the Brotherhood Fund portion of all Scoutrees money raised will be donated to the Kenyan Scouts Extension Program.

For the past ten years the Kenyan Scout Association has been running the program commonly known as "Street Scouts". The program creates Scout groups made up of children who live on the street and have nowhere else to turn. These children have the opportunity to start taking classes in school, they receive nutritious meals, they work on projects that provide them with valuable skills and means to live by, they receive medical attention and become members of the world brotherhood of Scouting.

Today, there are 1,200 Street Scouts in Kenya working towards a better life. This has been achieved, in part, due to many years of support by Scouting in New Brunswick which has raised funds to support the Kenyan Street Scouts. It is in an effort to further assist with this important work that the money raised through Scoutrees this



**Money raised through Scoutrees allows children to have the opportunity to go to school, receive nutritious meals, work on projects that provide them with valuable skills and receive medical attention at clinics like the one pictured above.**

year will be used to support children living on the streets of Kenya. And so I ask once again, go out and plant a tree.

Apart from Scoutrees, there are many other ways for Scouts to become involved in the international side of Scouting.

The Kenyan Street Scouts is just one of many valuable projects that the Brotherhood Fund is able to support. Another important area of funding is international community development projects. If you know a group that is looking to find a greater challenge, they may want to consider putting together one of these projects.

Over the past decade, Canadian Venturers and Rovers have traveled to Africa, Asia and South America. Past projects have included tree planting in Nepal, creating a water system in Zimbabwe and building homes as disaster relief in El Salvador. Groups interested in taking on such a project should review the *Planning your Community Development Project* document on the

Scouts Canada web site ([www.scouts.ca](http://www.scouts.ca)) and then contact me or International Relations at the national office for more information.

As well, in any given month, there's a good chance that there is a Jamboree, Camporee or some other Scouting event taking place somewhere in the world. These events provide Canadian youth a great opportunity to meet new people, learn about new cultures and enjoy a fantastic international experience. Upcoming events around the world include a Panamerican Jamboree in Argentina in January 2005; a Eurojam in the UK in the summer of 2005; and a Caribbean Jamboree in Barbados in July, 2005. The next World Jamboree will be in the UK in 2007. WJ'07 will coincide with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Scouting, ensuring that this event will be one to remember. Canadian youth (who will be Venturers at the time of the event) interested in attending WJ'07 may want to begin planning and fundraising now for this once in a lifetime event!

As the year 2007 is Scouting's centennial anniversary, many programs are already underway to help mark this momentous occasion. One such program is called the Scouts of the World Award. The aim of the award is to:

- encourage young people from 17-26 years of age to acquire skills and experience in the fields of environment, sustainable development and peace and contribute to innovative projects serving the local communities;
- recognise and promote these projects to foster the involvement of young people in the development of society;
- develop a network of Scouts of the World Centres able to provide young people with learning experiences and challenging activities in the fields of environment, development and peace;
- encourage national Scouting organizations (NSOs) to develop more educational opportunities for young people to become active "citizens of the world".

The Scouts of the World Award is obtained after a process involving a training course and a period of voluntary service in which the skills acquired are practised and strengthened. The Scouts of the World Courses are prepared and delivered by the Scouts of the World Centres, which also provide opportunities for periods of voluntary service.

The Scouts of the World Centres are committed local, national or international Scout camps or properties working to:

- promote the Scouts of the World Award among young people;
- organize and propose Scouts of the World Courses;
- offer opportunities for voluntary service;
- receive and assess applicants' reports;
- grant the Scouts of the World Award;
- share their experience with other Scouts of the World Centres in order to contribute towards evaluating and improving the program;
- publish an annual report on their participation in the Scouts of the World Award program.

Canadian camps interested in becoming Scouts of the World Centres should review the information available on the world organization web site ([www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)).

Another initiative being planned for 2007 is called Gifts for Peace. Gifts for Peace are projects taken on by youth to help make the world a better place. They should respond to needs that are important to young people, and while scale is not important, they should address issues that affect young people directly. The projects themselves will no doubt vary immensely throughout the world; what is important is that they all involve Scouts and that they involve young people in the decision-making process using practical activities to promote peace and a better world. Gifts might encourage sustainable development, assist the implementation of human rights, promote education and health, improve the environment, or any other project working toward these goals.

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One might ask why Scouting is focussing on the promotion of peace. It is because Scouting recognizes the need for renewed action to combat world problems. Chief among these is the need for a more peaceful planet achieved through a culture of peace, and not simply the absence of war. Scouting already plays a tremendous, although indirect, role in the promotion of peace at all levels. This role is performed in a quiet and unspectacular, yet in-depth way among the youth who are the citizens, and will be the leaders, of tomorrow's world.

Our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary is an excellent time to celebrate the work that has been done by Scouting in the cause of peace and to demonstrate publicly our commitment, as a Movement, to creating a more peaceful world while link-

ing with others having similar aims.

For those interested in working on a gift for peace, information will be published setting out guidelines for the projects later this year. The expectation is that these gifts for peace will be declared by groups around the world next year and that between then and 2007 every Scout in every Scout organization will have the opportunity to participate in a Centennial Gift for Peace.

For more information on any of the items I have mentioned, please read through the international section of [www.scouts.ca](http://www.scouts.ca) web site and the World Organization site at [www.scout.org](http://www.scout.org). While there are many, many ways to benefit from Scouting's international opportunities, if I could only ask you to do one thing today, it would be to contact your local Scout office to make plans to participate in Scoutrees and get out there and plant a tree.

I ask you to keep in mind the fact that we are all part of a much larger Movement that reaches out to the far corners of the planet. I commend you all for devoting your time to the development of young people and wish you good Scouting. Thank you very much. X

- Tyler Arrell is International Commissioner. The above information is taken from his speech presented to the Central Canada Conference, April 17, 2004.



### Scouting's Mission

The mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.



### Énoncé de Mission du scoutisme

La mission du scoutisme consiste à contribuer au développement des jeunes afin de leur permettre d'atteindre leur plein potentiel physique, intellectuel, social et spirituel en tant qu'individus, citoyens et membres de la collectivité sur les plans local, national et international par l'application de nos principes et pratiques.