

**The New York Say Thank You Foundation**  
**NewYorkSaysThankYou.org**

**Boy Scouts of America**  
**Mid-America Council**

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## **New Yorkers Commemorate 9/11 Generosity by Helping Iowa Tornado Survivors Rebuild**

**FDNY Firefighters who survived World Trade Center attack to work shoulder-to shoulder with Boy Scouts who survived the Little Sioux tornado as they rebuild Scout Camp hit by deadly twister June 11, 2008**

**Hundreds of disaster survivors from around the United States to 'pay it forward' at Little Sioux Scout Ranch rebuilding celebration, Sept. 3-6, 2009**

**NEW YORK, NY & LITTLE SIOUX, IA – September 1, 2009** – A unique volunteer organization born out of the ashes of Sept. 11 will be coming to western Iowa this 9/11 anniversary to help raise the spirits of the Boy Scouts and families who survived last year's June 11 tornado at the Little Sioux Scout Ranch. The New York Says Thank You Foundation, working in partnership with the Mid-America Council of the Boy Scouts of America, will be coordinating a large scale community service project at the Little Sioux Scout Ranch on September 3-6, 2009, in commemoration of the eighth anniversary of 9/11.

Each year on the 9/11 anniversary, the New York Says Thank You Foundation sends New York City firefighters, many of them survivors of the World Trade Center attack, to help rebuild communities across the U.S. affected by disaster. It's the group's way of saying "thank you" for all the love and support Americans from across the country gave to New Yorkers in the days, weeks and months following September 11, 2001. The group is often joined by hundreds of local volunteers, as well as by a growing group of disaster survivors from every community across the U.S. that the organization has helped on previous anniversaries of 9/11, who continually volunteer on subsequent rebuilding projects as their way to "pay it forward."

### **THE CHAPEL**

This year, the New York Says Thank You Foundation will bring over 220 volunteers from New York and from around the U.S. – including 20 FDNY firefighters – to help build a chapel on the foundation of the structure where four young Scouts were lost during the deadly tornado on June 11, 2008. The group will use reclaimed timber from the camp and surrounding areas to construct the chapel, literally transforming the devastation into something full of hope. In addition to the chapel, the volunteers will help build trails to reach the peak of the North Valley overlooking the chapel, and will participate in various other projects around the 1,800-acre wilderness camp.

“What the Scouts went through in the devastating aftermath of the tornado was in so many ways reminiscent of what many first responders experienced in the wake of the 9/11 tragedy here in New York,” stated Jeff Parness, founder of the New York Says Thank You Foundation. “The Scouts responded with grace and the highest levels of service and sacrifice and we could not think of a better group of young people to build with on the 9/11 anniversary 2009 than the Boy Scouts at Little Sioux Scout Ranch.”

### **A VERY SPECIAL AMERICAN FLAG PROJECT**

In addition to building the chapel and trail projects, one of the highlights of the 9/11 anniversary service project at the Little Sioux Scout Ranch will be the restoration and quilting of a 32-foot American flag that was destroyed when the Twin Towers collapsed. It was sewn back together by the residents of Greensburg, Kansas, during last year’s New York Says Thank You 9/11 anniversary rebuilding project. The group will be bringing this living piece of American history to Little Sioux Scout Ranch for the Scouts and their families to add items to as well – literally stitching together the shared history of both the tragedy and triumph in New York and in Little Sioux. The flag will eventually be displayed at the National 9/11 Memorial Museum when it opens in lower Manhattan.

### **1,000 PEOPLE EXPECTED FOR A WEEKEND OF COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Hundreds of Scouts and their families from Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota are expected to join the New York Says Thank You Foundation for the weekend community service project on September 3-6, 2009. In addition, hundreds of local first responders are expected to participate in an emotional and patriotic closing service on Sunday, September 6, led by Chaplain Steve Holden of the United States Emergency Chaplains Corps. As many as 200 disaster survivors from around the country, including San Diego wildfire survivors, Hurricane Katrina survivors from Slidell, Louisiana and Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, and tornado survivors from Utica, Illinois; DeGonia Springs, Indiana; Groesbeck, Texas; and Greensburg, Kansas, are expected to join the effort in Little Sioux as well. These communities have all been assisted by the New York Says Thank You Foundation on previous 9/11 anniversaries. As with all rebuilding projects, the Foundation welcomes the participation of volunteers from the local community to create a unique weekend of community service.

A very special thanks to all the companies donating materials and services to make this 9/11 Anniversary weekend community service project a success including: CWP Architects, Riekes Equipment, Iowa State Forestry Department, Millard Lumber, Lester Building Systems, RSC Equipment Rental, Sonnenschein, Bank of America Merrill Lynch, Union Pacific, Missouri Valley Chamber of Commerce, Congressman Steve King, Association for a Better New York Foundation, Jonathan M. Tisch, KPMG, Newmark Knight Frank, Silverstein Properties, New York Community Bank, Richmond County Savings Foundation, Lewis A. Kingsley Foundation, REBNY Foundation, Novartis, Bernstein Litowitz Berger & Grossmann, Walnut Hill Media, Individual Entertainment, and Days Inn Missouri Valley.

To date, The New York Says Thank You Foundation’s efforts have been featured on over 350 television programs including CNN, NBC, CBS and Fox and the story of how the Foundation was started by the suggestion of a 5-year-old boy in New York City is explained at [www.NewYorkSaysThankYou.org](http://www.NewYorkSaysThankYou.org).

### **DONATIONS**

Tax-deductible donations to support this special national community service project on the 9/11 Anniversary 2009 can be made via the two organizations’ websites – [www.NewYorkSaysThankYou.org](http://www.NewYorkSaysThankYou.org) or [www.mac-bsa.org](http://www.mac-bsa.org). Please specify the donations in honor of the Little Sioux Scout Ranch.

**Raising the American Spirit on the 9/11 Anniversary 2009**

**Little Sioux Scout Ranch (LSSR), Little Sioux, Iowa**

**ITINERARY**

**All events at The Little Sioux Scout Ranch (LSSR) and Missouri Valley, Iowa Fairground  
Rain Back-up for Sunday morning Memorial Procession & Closing Ceremony / Missouri Valley H.S.**

Thursday 9/3      11:30AM -- Main FDNY/NYSTY Group arrives OMAHA  
6:00PM -- NATIONAL 9/11 FLAG Ceremony and Community Welcome Dinner @ LSSR

Friday 9/4        8:00AM -- Kick-Off Ceremony at LSSR/Mid-America Pavilion + all day build until 5PM  
8:00PM -- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual City Slickers vs Locals Softball Game / Missouri Valley Fairgrounds

Saturday 9/5     8:00AM -- Rebuilding resumes at LSSR  
5:15PM -- "Signing of the Building" ceremony at North Valley Chapel LSSR  
8:00PM -- 1st Annual FDNY vs Locals Water Ball/Bucket Brigades/Mud Games / Missouri Valley Fairgrounds

Sunday 9/6       8:00AM -- Line up for Memorial Procession at LSSR (Rain back-up Missouri Valley H.S.)  
8:30AM -- Bagpipe Procession begins to North Valley Chapel  
9:00AM -- Community-Wide Celebration and Memorial Service  
10:30AM -- Community-Wide Farewell Brunch

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**THE NEW YORK SAYS THANK YOU FOUNDATION**

The mission of The New York Says Thank You Foundation is to commemorate the generosity extended to New Yorkers by Americans from all across the country in the days, weeks, and months following 9/11, by sending volunteers from New York City each year on the 9/11 anniversary to various communities around the country affected by natural or man-made disasters, in order to perform acts of community service, renewal, and rebuilding. The New York Says Thank You Foundation is registered as a charitable tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is incorporated under section 402 of the New York State Not-For-Profit Corporation Law (EIN# 20-1554830). For more information, please see [www.NewYorkSaysThankYou.org](http://www.NewYorkSaysThankYou.org)

**MID-AMERICA COUNCIL BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA**

The Mid-America Council has a strong tradition as one of the Nation's premier Scout Councils. Since 1910, the Boy Scouts of America has instilled timeless values of character, citizenship and leadership in each young man who has entered the Scouting program. The Mid-America Council continues this tradition through educational based skills and activities. Currently, there are over 33,700 Scouts and nearly 10,000 volunteer leaders. The Mid-America Council was formed from a merger of the Covered Wagon Council and the Southwest Iowa Council in 1965. The first recorded Scouting movement in the area was in 1918 as the Omaha Council. In 2000, our council merged with the Prairie Gold Council in the Sioux City, Iowa area. The Mid-America Council covers 58 counties in Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota. For more information, please see [www.MAC-BSA.org](http://www.MAC-BSA.org)

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