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Date: Friday, 21 January 2005

West Lancashire Scouts : Tsunami Earthquake

The Scouting community of West Lancashire would like to let all those who have been tragically affected by the earthquake and tsunami, which has hit so many countries, know that they are in our thoughts and prayers.

Half of the world's 28 million Scouts live in the affected countries, and we know that they will be involved in the recovery work. Many of us will remember the kindness and joy of the Thai people who hosted the 20th World Scout Jamboree. This time two years ago, over 24,000 young people joined in a celebration of International Scouting and Guiding in Sattahip, Thailand. Although the location of the Jamboree is on the unaffected area of Thailand, participants were from all over the country and many where from Sri Lanka and India.

One of the most popular and important activities of a Jamboree is always the Community Action day where groups of Scouts help on a local project. Our projects were in local schools where we assisted with the renovation of playgrounds and the surrounding gardens. We worked for half a day and then spent the rest of the time playing and making friends with the local children. It was great way to meet people and a great way to thank the local Thai people for hosting the Jamboree. Hugh, a leader with the West Lancashire group said "Thai s are such friendly caring people, we made so many friends. It was an experience of a lifetime."

Most importantly, across all the activities, was the opportunity to make friends with people from other parts of the World. Just by working and learning together great friendships were made enabling people to get a better understanding of how people's cultures, values and lives vary tremendously.

You will want to know how you can help. We suggest financial donations for immediate emergency relief work should be made to the "DEC Tusami National Appeal" Please see www.dec.org.uk for details of how to help.

Additionally, the World Scout Organization of the Scout Movement is accepting donations which can be used to fund specific projects of the Scout organizations affected. These may be projects to re-start and re-equip Scout groups, or to support projects to help affected communities.

Contributions for this purpose can be made by credit card:

<http://www.scout.org/donate/index.shtml>

David Bull, International Commissioner for UK Scouting said "Later, we shall be looking at ways in which Scouting in the UK can help longer term. Your ideas on this, and any other comments, will be very welcome."

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Editor's Notes:

- Scouting is the largest co-educational youth movement in the UK with a total of 476,992 members (March 2002 figures)
- Worldwide, there are well over 28 million members in over 216 Countries. Two thirds of the membership lives in developing Countries.
- The Aim of the Association is "To promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities.
- Scouting in West Lancashire has a membership of just under 10,000 members in the following 8 Districts: Chorley, Blackpool, Preston, Ormskirk, South Ribble, Fylde, Wyre and Lonsdale.

For further information, please contact the County Scout Office below:

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