

Fall 2012

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS

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## Commissioner Week at Philmont an Opportunity to Learn

Week 6 at Philmont Training Center was June 16–20, which coincided with Commissioner Week. In addition, the National Executive Committee held a meeting at PTC the weekend of June 13–15 to transition to the new BSA leadership. Because of the overlap of these two events, everyone at the training center had the opportunity to attend a rather unique event—an evening with the national Key 3 and both the incoming president and Chief Scout Executive!

Sunday evening began with a meeting hosted by outgoing President Rex Tillerson, retiring Chief Scout Executive Bob Mazzuca, incoming President Wayne Perry, incoming Chief Scout Executive Wayne Brock, and National Commissioner Tico Perez. The meeting—the first time such an event has occurred—was an open forum where each addressed the audience and then the floor was opened for questions. The questions were direct and some of the answers were quite interesting. It was obvious that both professionals and volunteers are very passionate about Scouting. Everyone who attended left the meeting enthusiastic about the direction Scouting is headed and the new leadership. What a fantastic way to start the week!



*Chief Scout Executive Bob Mazzuca, President Rex Tillerson, incoming President Wayne Perry, National Commissioner Tico Perez, and incoming Chief Scout Executive Wayne Brock at an open forum during Commissioner Week.*

Continuing the special events for Commissioner Week, a reception was held Tuesday evening at the L. Martin Pavletich Art Gallery where there was a brief program and an extended social

hour. Martin, who offers some very distinctive paintings of the area, was a very gracious host who opened his gallery especially for this event. It was a good opportunity to relax and network with commissioners from other councils.



*Commissioners enjoy a reception at the L. Martin Pavletich Art Gallery in Cimarron, New Mexico.*

As previously announced at the National Annual Meeting in May, Mark Wappel and Ellie Morrison are moving to the new-unit committee. At the reception, Mark was presented a gift for his support of commissioner service as the professional liaison for the past four years.

On Friday the How to Conduct a Commissioner College class conducted a commissioner college. This is the third year the college has been held. There were 32 commissioners who attended the Bachelors course, 16 who attended the Masters course, and 37 who attended the Doctorate course. A total of 35 degrees were conferred. This class is a unique workshop where the participants have a day and a half of instruction and then spend the rest of the week in a workshop in preparation for the college on Friday.



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All who attended the week received a special patch at the beginning of the week, and those who attended the college received a special patch at graduation.

This year, the following commissioner courses were offered at PTC:

- Administrative Commissioner—Instructors Tom Armstrong and Darlene Sprague
- Council Commissioner—Instructors Larry Chase and Ellie Morrison
- Roundtable Commissioner—Instructors Cheri Pepka and Richard Keisker
- How to Conduct a Commissioner College—Instructors Terry Chapman, Jeff McKinney, and Tim Acree
- Unit Commissioner—Instructors Dave Fornadel and Kevin Taylor

Our national commissioner and many of the national commissioner support team spent a week in July at Philmont for Commissioner Week. We thought it would be beneficial for commissioners across the country to get an idea of how valuable this training can be for them. Following are descriptions of each of the courses with a link to specific comments from the more than 100 commissioners who attended Commissioner Week.

The **Council Commissioner** conference is offered annually during Commissioner Week. This conference is a hands-on experience that is specifically designed to help council commissioners improve unit service by developing a personal vision as well as supporting goals for their term of service. Assistant council commissioners and professionals supporting council commissioners can also benefit from and contribute to the conference.

[Click here to see participants' comments.](#)

The **Administrative Commissioner** course is offered annually during Commissioner Week for district commissioners, assistant district commissioner, and assistant council commissioners. This conference is for experienced commissioners seeking more insights to help units deliver a quality program to youth. Learn about advanced strategies for quality unit service, implementation of a strong commissioner program in your district or council, strategic planning objectives, and other district and unit topics. You will leave with a vision for success and tools for

setting a clear direction in improving commissioner service in your district and council.

[Click here to see participants' comments.](#)

**How to Conduct a Commissioner College** is a course where participants learn how to conduct a commissioner college and then actually plan a one-day college that is conducted with all those attending Commissioner Week. Participants can complete their bachelor's or master's degree during the college, while doctoral students learn how to write their thesis or do a project.

[Click here to see participants' comments.](#)

The **Effective Roundtables** conference is offered annually during Commissioner Week. This conference is a hands-on discussion and problem-solving oriented program specifically designed to help roundtable commissioners understand how to improve unit service by preparing unit leaders to deliver better programs to youth.

[Click here to see participants' comments.](#)

**Next year, Commissioner Week is scheduled for Week 3, which is June 23–29.** Plan to attend and bring your family as well. The national commissioner support staff will be in attendance, along with Tico Perez, our national commissioner. While we may not have another opportunity to meet with the incoming and outgoing presidents and Chief Scout Executives to kick off Sunday evening, it will be another excellent week. It truly is something you need to put on your list of things to do!



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## Council Commissioner comments:



### Steve Small, council commissioner, Del-Mar-Va Council:

I was very excited to attend Philmont during Commissioner Week and the experience did not disappoint. The training at Philmont was exceptional as always. Many of the themes were familiar to what we have been discussing here in Del-Mar-Va but with a national slant. We were able to share our successes and challenges and listen to discussions from council commissioners from all over the country as they tackle the very issues we work on here. Several sessions were taught by guest speakers; normally they were a national leader in that area.

### Lee Murdoch, field director, Del-Mar-Va Council:

The course content and interactions with Scouters from across the country were engaging, inspiring, and challenging and left me feeling ... committed to where it is we need to go in order to best support all of our units. I'd encourage each one of you to consider attending PTC to enjoy the fellowship, learning, and inspiration that you'll find.

### R. Brian Snow, assistant council commissioner, Daniel Webster Council:

What emerged from my participation at this event was a truly remarkable and beneficial experience. A variety of entertaining and useful insights concerning commissioner service was imparted by the training program. For example, the new-unit commissioner program was presented by the national staff in such a meaningful manner that it completely altered my ... view

of this initiative. As a result, upon my return, I crafted a one-page primer detailing how this program will be highly beneficial to our entire council commissioner's staff and that is now distributed throughout the state. It is also true that a great deal was learned and has been applied from my association with other participants.

## Administrative Commissioner comments:



### John Fernandez, district commissioner, Marion District, North Florida Council:

The best part of the Commissioner Week at Philmont was sharing information, new ideas, latest changes, and what's coming soon. I enjoyed exchanging ideas with other commissioners from around the country. As a direct result of this important conference, our district commissioner team has developed and conducted our own commissioner conference. It was also important to have met the national commissioner leaders who actually put *The Commissioner* newsletter together. Our district team has been revitalized, energized, and now know the latest tools we need to service the youth in our area. We are recruiting more of our team (three attended this year) to sign up and attend the Commissioner Week at Philmont for 2013. Nowhere else can a commissioner



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get the best and latest information while sharing ideas with other commissioners than at Philmont Commissioner Week.

**Rick Bronson, unit commissioner,  
Cherokee Area Council, Oklahoma:**

I was especially encouraged with Tim Acree's presentation on the completion of the commissioners' curricula and availability. ... I have downloaded most of the courses already. I am quietly campaigning across my council on the need for an assistant council commissioner of training.

Commissioners meetings are frequently the last 15 minutes after roundtable, just before we have to clear out of the school room. I want to have dedicated commissioner meetings so we can actually provide some education! And I am willing to travel to the other side of the council to do it!

**John Blanchard, Narragansett Council:**

Gosh, there are so many things that I have taken from the course and my week at PTC. It seems every day I am reflecting back on the Administrative Commissioner course. One of the items that has been very successful so far is to start to recruit commissioners. The course has enabled me to look in some unlikely places for unit commissioners and challenge existing Scouting volunteers and council staff to make recommendations. I have started to research some of these names, have scheduled interviews, and I am starting to see the fruits of that effort. It looks like shortly we could recruit perhaps as many as five new unit commissioners and have a good working list of perhaps another 10 possibilities.

**Chuck Hartill, Grand Canyon Council:**

The opportunity to share ideas with similar "gray-haired" Scouters from all across our wonderful country allowed us to have as much learning in the tent cities and the dining hall as we had in the classroom. The wealth of experience and knowledge of different approaches to problems gave us a new and re-energized approach to our own Scouting programs. As only a small token of the ideas we learned and will use, we will be doing the "cold call" recruitment exercise for our next commissioners conference.

**James Dixon Gardner, district commissioner, Konza District,  
Coronado Area Council, Kansas:**

Since coming back to Konza District in Kansas after the training in Philmont, I feel that I have discovered that I was doing about half of what needs to be done in our district for good unit

service. As a Key 3, we discussed the importance of volunteer leadership and plan to use the rechartering process to increase the unit commissioner service activities in improving all of our efforts. This coming weekend we as a council are offering the new up-to-date basic training for unit commissioners and we will also have afterward an hour of focus for the new-unit commissioner concept. I especially was inspired to work harder and better by the national leadership imparting their words of wisdom. Philmont itself was a new experience for me and I was very impressed with the organization and facilities and enjoyed the two hikes that I went on. I have a son who recently was recruited to work with the young men in his stake and encouraged him to step up and volunteer as a unit or assistant commissioner in his home district. I shared with him some of the education that I received from Philmont.

**George Burnett, Indian Waters District, Columbia,  
South Carolina:**

Aside from the contact with distinguished Scouters from all over the country and sharing thoughts and problems, the most valuable part of the course was the deeper understanding of how to be a district commissioner. I am able, I trust, to be more assertive in taking charge of the commissioner corps and assisting the chairman to run the district more effectively. I have drafted and gotten acceptance of a "vision statement" for the commissioner corps so that whenever the time comes for me to move out, I will leave a strong functioning group of commissioners and a district chair who will take charge of the district with the district executive's guidance.

The contact with the national Scouters who attended was most helpful. It helps to "know" who to call with a problem with, for example, UVTs. The talent available to teach the courses and run the Commissioner Week was impressive. I really could go on and on. I wish I could attend every year but, I fear, it'll be several years before I can get back to "God's country."

**David Sitler, Northern Lights district  
commissioner, Northern Star Council,  
St. Paul, Minnesota:**

I consider my experience at the Administrative Commissioner



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Conference 2012 on par with Wood Badge. The knowledge I gained has enabled me to more effectively manage my district. I have established a set of goals for the next 12–18 months similar to a Wood Badge ticket. I will use the things I learned from our instructors, our national commissioner, and his staff to mold the future of my district's commissioner corps throughout my remaining years of tenure. This conference has given me the tools to build a legacy of superior unit service, which will benefit our youth of today and tomorrow. The interaction between my peers from across the nation was both rewarding and empowering.

**Harold and Carole Booth, district commissioner and unit commissioner, Blue Ridge Mountains Council, Virginia:**

My week at Philmont and the training was priceless. It has helped me know how to run our district meeting as well as understand how the commissioner is supposed to work. The week with all those Scouters and all there was also priceless. We enjoyed every minute of it, even my wife. Thanks for all the info.

## Commissioner College comments:



**Bruce L. Dolder, assistant council commissioner of training, Hawkeye Area Council, Eastern Iowa:**

This was my third visit to PTC, and the "How to Conduct a Commissioner College" session was by far the most beneficial and most hands-on experience I have had at PTC. As an assistant council commissioner for training, my council commissioner and I both attended the session.

Over the past two years, we have put on a local council commissioner college in 2010 and a cluster college, which included the neighboring councils, in 2012. In 2013, we are hosting the Daniel Carter Beard Commissioner College for Area 3 of the Central Region. We are expecting participants from as many as 20 councils in April 2013.

The practical experience we gained while arranging all of the details for our Friday commissioner college was very beneficial, especially having to deal with all of the logistics, paperwork, previous training validation, and all of the certificates for awarded degrees or for participation.

The interaction between all of the team members was amazing and the amount of work that we accomplished on Wednesday and Thursday to prepare for Friday was a testament to the abilities and skill sets of each member. Some of us were put into roles that forced us to spread our wings and work outside of our comfort zone, but in retrospect, that was all done for reasons unbeknownst to us at the time.

**Eric Randau, district commissioner, Zane Grey District, Grand Canyon Council, Arizona:**

Commissioner Week gave me a better understanding of what the commissioner role truly is. I had some idea, but the perspective I gained was invaluable. Meeting and hearing from the outgoing and incoming national Key 3 and the many others who shared that week was an experience that I will never forget. In addition to the Conducting a Commissioner College coursework, I met many friends who have helped me prepare for the commissioner college my council will be putting on Sept. 22.

**Larry Hess, Miami Valley Council, Ohio:**

Philmont was a great experience for me. I had a good time meeting new Scouting friends and sharing ideas. I have already used the new commissioner basic training and my council is planning to have a commissioner college. Philmont was an experience that all Scouters should take part in, and I am looking forward to coming back.



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## Steve Trimble, Calusa District, Gulf Ridge Council, Florida:

I started my College of Commissioner Science at Gulf Ridge Council in Tampa, Florida. I spend my winters in Sebring, Florida, where I am an assistant district commissioner. In the summer I live in Heart of Ohio Council in Norwalk. Heart of Ohio has a University of Scouting that offers a few commissioner courses of a general nature. I felt (as did my council commissioner) that Heart of Ohio could support a College of Commissioner Science as well. I was promoted to assistant council commissioner for training and went to Philmont to learn how to conduct a College of Commissioner Science. My five-year training plan is as follows: Year 1—Two basic commissioner courses, one in the spring and one in the fall; year 2—Same as above and add Bachelor of Commissioner Science; year 3—All of the above and add Masters; year 4—All of the above and add Doctorate; year 5—All of the above and add Continuing Education.

The Philmont course helped me firm up my ideas and kept me from "shooting in the dark." I highly recommend having the course again.

## Scouters Barry Nelson and Kris Jones, Great Southwest Council, Albuquerque, New Mexico:

In 2010, three councils came together and started a very basic College of Commissioner Science. During three annual sessions, it grew and improved. Next year, however, we will add many new features learned at Philmont this past summer. Two Scouters from our council attended the "How to Conduct a Commissioner College" course in July, and they returned with lots of superb information. BSA National is dynamically changing the commissioner's world and the commissioners' training week at Philmont is the premier venue to learn all about these changes.

## Effective Roundtables comments:



## General comments made by various participants:

We have an extremely important position to help units, districts, and councils succeed.

A wealth of information, resources, and ideas were given.

Roundtable is alive and well and will be better now.  
Thank you!

I feel much more comfortable in this role.

Many tips on urban and rural challenges.

We need to include more promotion and pizzazz.

Lots of information about roundtable staffing, displays, and presentations.

How to deal with challenges and disappointment.

## Betsy O'Connor, Wichita Falls, Texas:

I had a wonderful week. I always come back from Philmont renewed with new ideas and approaches to problems that we all seem to have. I have several new ideas to try out at roundtable this fall.



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**Susan Chotkevys, Dana Point, California:**

I thoroughly enjoyed my conference with both Richard and Cheri as well as our team of crazies! It gave me so much more confidence and knowledge to share with my district. I love sharing with others. Thank you for your time and great ideas. It was one of the most personally satisfying weeks I have enjoyed.

**Dennis Snodgrass, Hesperus, Colorado:**

I am still talking about your class at Philmont. Wow, what a great time I had with everyone. I did my first roundtable this month and it went off without a hitch. I have to admit that I was nervous at first, but it all fell into place with everyone participating. The class was awesome and now the Boy Scout side of roundtable is interested in how we did things and wants to implement the same techniques. I give credit to Richard and Cheri. Thank you for your help and knowledge in roundtable.



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## Training for Commissioner Service

The new commissioner training materials are now ready. These include basic training, as well as the College of Commissioner Science courses.

### Basic Training

There are now four position-specific basic training courses available for commissioner training:

- Unit Commissioner Basic Training
- New-Unit Commissioner Basic Training
- Roundtable Commissioner Basic Training
- District Commissioner and Assistant District Commissioner Basic Training



Each of these is an instructor-led course that can be completed in 2½ to 3 hours. The course material can be downloaded from the Commissioners website under the Commissioner Training tab. Instructors should download and read the Instructor Guide before attempting to teach the course.

The Council Commissioner Basic Training course is in development and should be completed before the end of the year. That course is the last of the position-specific basic training courses planned for this year.

Upon completion of basic training, a pocket card or commissioner certificate (No. 34774) should be issued to the student. Basic training should be completed before commissioning.

Note: Every commissioner is required to complete basic training for their position, and a yearly review is not a bad idea!



Tim Acree  
National Commissioner Service Training Chair  
[tim.acree@comcast.net](mailto:tim.acree@comcast.net)



### College of Commissioner Science

The course offerings for the Bachelors, Masters, and Doctorate degrees are now complete. The Continuing Education section will have a few more courses added and then will be considered complete for this year. The courses for each degree can be downloaded from the Commissioners website under the Commissioner Training tab.

You will also find a General folder on the training website that contains a backdater spreadsheet, templates for college certificates, a sample budget, and a sample one-day course schedule. The updated manual section will be posted in this folder when it is complete. The General folder will contain resources to make it easier for the dean and staff to conduct a college.

Note that Section III, Chapter 4 of *Administration of Commissioner Service*



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is being updated to include much more information on how to plan and conduct a commissioner college. The additional information covers budgeting, using Internet techniques for conducting a remote college, degree requirements, reciprocity for those attending other colleges, record keeping, and more.

## Future Plans for Training

All of the current basic training has been reviewed by the National Volunteer Training Committee. When the new council commissioner course is completed, it will also be reviewed before it is made available.

The National Volunteer Training Committee professional course developers are reviewing all of the updated commissioner college courses. This is a complex job due to the number of courses and multiple teaching methods within each course. Their recommendations will be incorporated into the current courses.

In addition, you are asked to provide feedback. Several courses have been changed as the result of excellent suggestions. To provide feedback, please use the feedback form available on the Commissioner Training page of the Commissioners website.

Beginning next year, review committees will be formed to update the current course offerings to include changes in the program like JTE and the changes received from the commissioner staff and the National Volunteer Training Committee. That update should result in even better course offerings and more complete and up-to-date information. If you are interested in serving on one of these review committees, please contact Tim Acree.

We would also like to update all of the commissioner videos offered on DVD to make them more current and have them available for download so you don't have to request a DVD from your professional.

## National-Level Training

The Unit Commissioner course is being offered at Sea Base on January 13–18, 2013. The course will be taught by Dave Fornadel and Kresha Alvarado of Circle Ten Council. Please see the "Sea Base Training" article.

If you have any questions about commissioner training, please contact Tim Acree, National Commissioner Service Training Chair, at [tim.acree@comcast.net](mailto:tim.acree@comcast.net).



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## Sea Base Training

The Florida National High Adventure Sea Base will be conducting the Unit Commissioner training course from January 13–18, 2013. For more information, see the 2013 Florida Sea Base Volunteer Training Conferences handout.



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## Philmont Training Center

The national commissioner conferences take place each summer at the Philmont Training Center near Cimarron, New Mexico. Commissioner Week is scheduled for June 23–29, 2013. For more information, see the 2013 Conference Schedule page on the Philmont Training Center website.



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## National Commissioner Minute

My fellow commissioners,

A special welcome to the fall edition of *The Commissioner*. It is an exciting time to be a commissioner with the Boy Scouts of America. We are thrilled to welcome Wayne Brock as our new Chief Scout Executive. Many of us have known Wayne for many years, and it was my pleasure to serve with him while he was Scout executive in the Central Florida Council in Orlando. I am confident that he has the right vision to take us forward into the next century of Scouting. I invite you to learn a little more about Wayne and his plans by reading "Wayne's World," a question-and-answer article from the recent edition of *Scouting* magazine. Welcome, Wayne, and thank you for your ongoing support of the commissioner corps and its mission to increase retention in the Boy Scouts of America.

We own retention, and thanks to your efforts, we are continuing to see an increase in retention numbers. That means that more young people are continuing to enjoy the Scouting experience and that the commissioner corps is making a positive, game-changing impact on our membership numbers. Our retention mission statement summarizes the most important elements of our mission:

"The retention mission of the commissioner corps is best achieved by providing an adequate number of trained unit commissioners who provide a link to district committee resources in support of a quality unit program."

It is a lot easier to improve and keep a unit than it is to start a new one. You can make the difference by supporting unit growth in the Journey to Excellence criteria, linking district committee resources to meet the unique needs of each unit you serve, visiting those units and logging the visits with UVTS, and supporting on-time charter renewal. We continue to build our commissioner corps numbers year-over-year, which is great, but the real change comes when our volunteer force feels and acts empowered to achieve our Retention Mission goals. Whatever your job in the commissioner corps or in Scouting, make 2012 the year that we as volunteers boldly step forward and own unit retention.

Thank you all for the service you provide to youth in your local councils.



*Tico Perez*  
National Commissioner



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## A Simple and Unified Approach to Commissioner Training

Earlier this year, the National Commissioner Service Task Force announced a “simple and unified” theme as a guiding principle for how we can make the duties of unit commissioners and the administrative commissioners who support them both easier and more fulfilling. In short, we need to make the expectations that we have for our volunteers more manageable and easier to achieve. We spoke about the need to carry that same message throughout our commissioner service support resources.

Now some six months later, and as noted in our two feature stories, we are in the process of rolling out new basic training materials for many of our key commissioner positions. The materials are shorter in length, simpler to use in terms of presentation ease, take less volunteer time to achieve the same training thresholds, and deliver more of a unified approach within the broader aims of serving units and supporting the National Strategic Plan.

In the coming days, the “simple and unified” College of Commissioner Science courses will be added to the national website. The new College of Commissioner Science courses are designed to provide a uniform set of materials in order to provide excellence and consistency in content whether you attend a college in Florida or in Oregon. This approach meets the challenge by National Commissioner Tico Perez to provide a uniform high standard of materials in support of all of our commissioner colleges. As Tim Acree, our training chair would say, we do not want to be a “slave” to PowerPoint presentations, and thus the materials offer teaching notes and alternative means of presentation to make a commissioner college course both engaging for the participants and responsive to the specific needs of the local council. Tim and his team of 35-plus volunteers have been writing the materials for a number of months, and we owe them a great thank you for their innovation and service.

We will continue to strive to make the functions of unit commissioner as simple as possible. It is also supposed to be fun. During our analysis, the task force identified various job descriptions with at least 38 different tasks that we ask of a unit commissioner. That is hardly a simple job description. Put more simply, the BSA needs unit commissioners to focus on the following four primary areas:



Scott Sorrels  
National Commissioner Service Chair



- **Supporting unit growth in the Journey to Excellence criteria:** JTE measures performance characteristics that unlock the door to a successful unit. We should analyze the unit's program and identify JTE areas where help is needed to move the unit to a higher level of JTE success.
- **Linking district committee resources to the unit:** We should support the district committee's delivery of a “catalog of services” to support the specific JTE elements needed for a particular unit's health and success.
- **Visiting units and logging the visits into the Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS):** Our core task remains visiting the unit. UVTS input feeds critical information to the district committee to help link resources to the unit.



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- **Supporting on-time charter renewal:** The commissioner's focus is the retention of the unit, though we should be especially mindful of supporting new youth membership efforts as we move more toward a volunteer-led, professionally guided approach to increasing membership.

The concept of linkage is critical to our execution mission. In the best of worlds, the unit commissioner is a link to the subject matter experts and resources who reside at the district committee level. Where those subject matter experts do not yet exist, our commissioners should support the efforts of the district Key 3 to recruit and deploy the right resource specialists. There can be little doubt that we need to strengthen our district operations in order to increase unit and youth retention.

In the coming months, the task force will "tear the covers off" of our printed and online resources and will move forward in support of a simple and unified message that is consistent across our platforms. Similarly, the findings and recommendations of our Roundtable Study Committee will be finalized and presented for your review and implementation.

We welcome your comments, innovative ideas, and partnership as we continue to move toward a simpler and more unified approach to commissioner service.



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## Larry Chase Tapped as New Recruiting and Retention Chair

A special welcome to Larry Chase of Atlanta, Georgia, who has been appointed the new national recruiting and retention chair on the National Commissioner Service Task Force. Larry attended his first task force meeting just prior to the most recent National Annual Meeting held in Orlando. Larry succeeds Ellie Morrison, who is now serving as the new-unit retention task force chair.

Those of you who have been to the Philmont Training Center or the Florida Sea Base in the past several years may have had the opportunity to work with Larry, particularly in our council commissioner courses. The reviews indicate that Larry is one of our most distinguished national faculty. Larry has been instrumental in the design and delivery of the council commissioner courses held in both venues and the various national support materials that are now available to assist council commissioners. Larry's primary responsibility on the task force will be to focus on the retention of our existing 30,000 plus unit commissioners and explore new avenues to recruit volunteers who may not yet realize the rewarding experience that can be found in commissioner service.

Larry is currently serving as the council commissioner for the Atlanta Area Council. We look forward to benefiting from his expertise and practical leadership experience as we continue to focus on recruiting and retaining talented commissioners and, by doing so, supporting the units that they serve throughout the country. Congratulations, Larry.



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## Magnetic or True North?

The Scoutmaster of any troop we serve expects a Second Class Scout to know the difference. With training and forethought, either one will get you to your destination; but without it, magnetic north is a rough reference that will, at best, get you somewhere in the general area of your destination. Progress can be made using only magnetic north, but reaching a goal requires greater accuracy.

The same is true when recruiting unit commissioners: a 3–1 ratio of units to commissioners is our magnetic north. Any council that achieves that ratio will likely be providing unit service that will help those units serve youth. But a 3–1 ratio may not be good enough to provide “second-century service” in your council. When recruiting commissioners, true north requires a more detailed assessment of local needs.

True north is the number of unit commissioners needed to engage and effectively serve every unit in your council. There are a number of factors to consider when recruiting commissioners:

1. Individual skills (unit commissioners with stronger organizational and communications skills may have greater capacity).
2. Experience (experienced unit commissioners may be able to handle more units).
3. Schedule (some individuals have personal or professional commitments that limit the time they have available to serve as a unit commissioner).
4. Turnover, an ongoing process, will require ongoing recruitment of unit commissioners simply to hold your current ratio.
5. Geography (unit commissioners in councils with large territories will likely spend more time traveling).
6. New units—and our commitment to assign a dedicated, experienced unit commissioner to each one—will require a lower ratio to provide “second-century service.”



*Larry Chase  
National Commissioner Service  
Recruiting and Retention Chair  
[lhc@chasehome.net](mailto:lhc@chasehome.net)*

A characteristic of “second-century service” must be engaged commissioners: commissioners who are supporting unit growth in the Journey to Excellence, linking district committee resources to the unit, visiting units and logging their visits into the Unit Visit Tracking System, and supporting on-time charter renewal.

Identify true north for your council and use it to chart your course for recruiting engaged unit commissioners. Your units will serve more youth better as a result.



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## Commissioner Questions and Answers

**Going forward with UVTS, will we be able to enter information concerning the Explorer Posts that we service?**

No enhancement to UVTS is planned to provide for the entry of Explorer Post visit reports.

**Are there any changes on the horizon for Internet charter renewal that I should alert my council commissioners to as they prepare to enter the charter renewal cycle? Also, will the PowerPoint be updated this year or should folks use the old one?**

There will be no changes to the online applications for Internet rechartering and Explorer Post renewal EXCEPT for a fee increase and name change. What used to be known as the "Unit Charter Fee" and "Post Participation Fee" will be called the "Unit Liability Insurance Fee." The Unit Liability Insurance Fee will be \$40, an increase of \$20 from the \$20 Unit Charter Fee and Post Participation Fee starting with units that have a December 31, 2012, renewal date (a charter period beginning January 1, 2013). The tutorial and online help will not be changed because of the name change to Unit Liability Insurance Fee.

For more information, see "Changes to General Liability Insurance Program Affects Fees."

**Have the Roundtable Planning Guides been updated and where can they be found?**

Answer: Yes, they have. They can be found on the training page.

**I am trying to clean up the last of the Commissioner Award details. One of those details is the requirements for Distinguished Commissioner. Requirement 4 was based on the National Quality Unit Award. National Quality became Centennial Quality, which became Journey to Excellence. I cannot find anywhere that the requirements have been updated. It wasn't a problem with Centennial, but it is a problem with JTE because there are three levels (Gold, Silver, and Bronze). Should it be 50 percent at a specific level or 50 percent at any level?**

From the February 2012 printing of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*:

"Assist units so that more than 60 percent of the units in your area of service achieve the national Journey to Excellence Unit Award for a minimum of the past two consecutive years." (To clarify, it is 60 percent at any level for two consecutive years.)



**Darlene Sprague**  
National Commissioner Service Resources Chair  
[dasprague@roadrunner.com](mailto:dasprague@roadrunner.com)

**Have the new Unit College Reserve Scouter codes been added to the Unit Charter Renewal System?**

At this time it is not expected that this position will be in the unit pick list. The guidance is to register the individual as an assistant leader and note for the council to change the position code when it gets updated in the system.

**Should the units previously known as Scoutreach units or units that require assistance to individuals have entries in UVTS?**

After further study of our Scoutreach units, we are enhancing our statements from our last issue. Currently there is no method to separate Scoutreach units from any other traditional unit type for JTE purposes regarding, for example, either advancement or unit visitations. Scoutreach units should, and need to have a unit commissioner assigned to them. Commissioners should be recording UVTS visits to all units. All visits are counted in the Journey to Excellence numbers.

Send any questions about UVTS to [dasprague@roadrunner.com](mailto:dasprague@roadrunner.com).



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## Need help?

The Unit Visit Tracking System help desk provides personal assistance from an operator and details on the system with links to each section of content.

Phone (for commissioners only): 972-672-4389

Hours: The operator is on call to answer questions 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Leave a message and an operator will call you back.

## Have another question?

For volunteer questions, issues about JTE, or any other related items, call the National Service Desk at 972-580-2330.



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## Roundtable Study Team Update

The survey and recommendation process has been completed and the report has been submitted to the commissioner cabinet for review. The basis of the report is that the roundtable/forum program needs to continue, but changes must be made in how it is administered in order to maintain focus on viable product delivery to support better programs in units. The next step is to participate with volunteer groups being organized to revise and update the roundtable/forum guides. This process will occur between October and February in order to have a rollout in May 2013.

While there is much work still to be done, we want to thank all of you great Scouters out there who send us fabulous thoughts and ideas that are very helpful to our effort.



**Daniel B. Maxfield**  
National Commissioner Service Roundtable Chair  
[dmaxfil@yahoo.com](mailto:dmaxfil@yahoo.com)

### Best Practice Idea:

*Provide materials for participants to view as part of the pre-meeting. Having those with upcoming events to promote, share information and discuss programs with participants as they arrive can reduce the time needed for announcements during the meeting. This can often take the place of major announcements if people with information about upcoming events are there ahead of the meeting to share information and discuss programs with participants as they arrive.*



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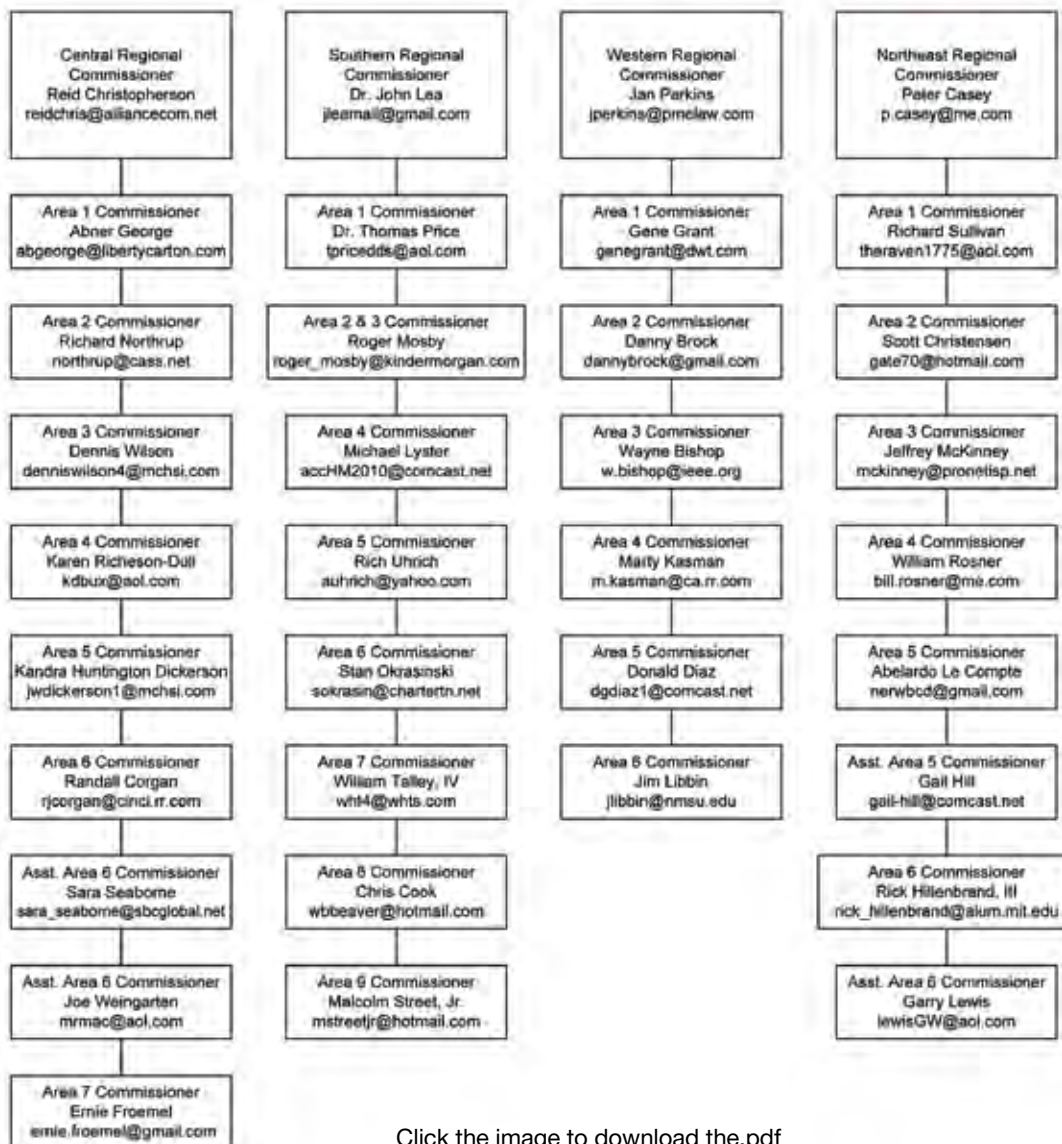
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## Regional and Area Commissioners Organization Chart

### Regional and Area Commissioners Organization Chart

May 25, 2012 Update



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## Unit Commissioner Box Score

As of August 2012

Region	Traditional Units*		Unit Commissioners Needed		Unit Commissioners Registered		Need to Recruit		Percent of Need Filled		Commissioner Ratio	
	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year
Northeast	16,569	16,074	5,523	5,362	3,880	3,919	1,643	1,443	70.3%	73.1%	4.3	4.1
Southern	25,921	25,370	8,640	8,455	6,692	7,042	1,948	1,413	77.5%	83.3%	3.9	3.6
Central	23,133	22,464	7,712	7,486	5,374	5,688	2,338	1,798	69.7%	76.0%	4.3	3.9
Western	42,103	41,762	14,033	13,920	9,125	9,919	4,908	4,001	65.0%	71.3%	4.6	4.2
National	107,726	105,670	35,908	35,223	25,071	26,568	10,837	8,655	69.8%	75.4%	4.3	4.0

\*Does not include Explorer posts or Learning for Life groups



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## Changes to General Liability Insurance Program Affects Fees

Changes have been announced in the general liability insurance program for all local Scouting units.

The reasons for the changes are as follows:

- The reserves for open claims have increased significantly over the last several years.
- The average cost per claim has nearly doubled in the last five years.
- Claims payments have doubled in the last two years compared to a five-year average from 2005–2009.

It was also announced that what is now known as the Unit Charter Fee will be called the Unit Liability Insurance Fee. The general liability insurance program receives 100 percent of this fee.

**The fee will increase from \$20 to \$40 effective January 1, 2013**, which means the new fee will begin with units that have a December 2012 charter renewal date (a charter period beginning January 1, 2013).

Units are required to submit the annual Unit Liability Insurance Fee with the unit's charter renewal application. This fee helps defray expenses of the general liability insurance program.

The general liability insurance policy provides primary liability insurance coverage for registered adults and for all chartered organizations on file with the BSA for liability arising out of their chartering a traditional Scouting unit. This policy provides coverage for claims alleging negligent actions that result in either personal injury or property damage.

A chartered organization is an organization that has applied for and received a current Boy Scouts of America charter to operate a Scouting unit. A chartered organization as defined within the policy shall include the chartered organization, its board of directors and/or trustees, its officer, and its employees in their official and individual capacity. This definition also includes a specific position: chartered organization representative.

Chartered organizations do not need a certificate of insurance. The chartered organization endorsement is a part of the insurance policy contract and is enforceable under the policy contract.

Old Republic Insurance Company provides the first \$1 million in coverage. Additional policies, all providing primary coverage to the chartered organization, have been purchased so that more than \$5 million in primary coverage is provided.

There is no coverage for those who commit intentional or criminal acts. Liability insurance is purchased to provide financial protection in the event of accidents or injury that occur during an official Scouting activity.



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## Changes Made in Journey to Excellence Requirements

Changes have been made to the Journey to Excellence program for 2013 after months of gathering suggestions and discussing ideas. The process involved collecting suggestions from the field throughout the year and holding two volunteer conference calls in June. During the conference calls, ideas from volunteers and the field were reviewed and all suggestions were listed. The final step was three days of interdepartmental meetings in July to agree upon and set the new criteria and breakpoints.

### 2013 Journey to Excellence Council Changes

- Minimum points needed in each category for overall gold instead of one circuit breaker.
- Fundraising growth is based upon exceeding the average of the prior three years.
- Council leadership includes diversity and achieving strategic goals in board development.

### 2013 Journey to Excellence District Changes

- Minimum points needed in each category for overall gold.
- New fundraising criterion for staffing.
- District leadership includes staffing of district operating committees.



### 2013 Journey to Excellence Unit Changes

- New Explorer Post scorecard.
- ScoutStrong is now in the physical fitness criterion.
- Training changes now require two-thirds of leaders instead of all.



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## Registration for Nonunit Volunteers

Don't forget that council and district volunteers must renew their membership annually. For a refresher on the procedure, [click here](#).



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## Staff the 2013 National Scout Jamboree

It's not every day in Scouting's more than one hundred-year history that you can do something historic, but the chance to serve on staff at the first jamboree at the Summit is that opportunity. Help shape Scouting's history by volunteering to staff the 2013 National Scout Jamboree. There will be many firsts at this one!

- New programming including zip lines, mountain biking, white water rafting, new shooting sports area, and many other activities.
- New Day of Service effort. Every Scout will spend one day in southern West Virginia doing a service project. What a gift to our neighbors!
- Volunteers may select to work the entire jamboree or the first or last half of the jamboree.

To serve as a staff member, you need to:

- Have a current BSA membership.
- Have completed Youth Protection Training within one year of the first day of the jamboree.
- Be able to arrive on site at the jamboree up to but not limited to one week before the jamboree as deemed necessary by the service director of the area you select to serve in to receive training and assist in the final preparations for troop arrivals.
- Be at least 16 years of age by the first day of the jamboree.

- Submit all registration fees per the published payment schedule.
- Complete any jamboree-specific training as deemed necessary by the service director of the area selected to serve in.
- File a Personal Health and Medical Record as instructed by the deadline.
- Meet the medical and BMI (Body Mass Index) requirements.

The cost of the 2013 National Scout Jamboree for staff ages 16–25 years of age through July 14, 2013, is as follows:

- Session 1 (July 11–25, 2013) \$425
- Session 2 (July 11–18, 2013) \$425
- Session 3 (July 18–25, 2013) \$425

The cost of the 2013 National Scout Jamboree for staff age 26+ on or after July 15, 2013, is as follows:

- Session 1 (July 11–25, 2013) \$850
- Session 2 (July 11–18, 2013) \$425
- Session 3 (July 18–25, 2013) \$425

Details, staff guide, videos, and just about anything you want to know about the Jamboree are available on the Jamboree website.



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## SCOUTStrong PALA: Jumpstart Your Journey to Better Health for the 2013 National Scout Jamboree



An excellent way to start regular exercise and improve eating habits is to earn a SCOUTStrong Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA). The SCOUTStrong PALA is designed to motivate participants to be physically active on a regular basis by encouraging them to participate in activities they enjoy and to improve their eating habits.

To earn the SCOUTStrong PALA Challenge Award, a participant is required to meet an activity goal of 30 minutes a day for adults and 60 minutes a day for those under 18 at least five days a week for a total of six weeks. The participants choose their activities and strive to reach their goals, logging their physical activity along the way. Participants can take up to eight weeks to complete the program.

You can learn more about the SCOUTStrong PALA at the SCOUTStrong PALA website.

Also be sure to visit the SCOUTStrong website for various articles, videos, and podcasts on wellness-related topics.



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## Become a Member of a Scouting Research Panel

The Research & Program Innovation department invites members of the Scouting community to be a part of our research panel. Members of the panel will receive surveys (no more than three to four per year) regarding new programs or proposed changes to existing Scouting programs. We invite all current Cub Scout parents, Boy Scout parents, Boy Scout and Venturing youth members\*, and registered volunteers to submit their information.

\*PLEASE NOTE: By law we are not allowed to send surveys directly to youth ages 13 and under. However, if a younger Boy Scout would like to participate in our surveys, he can do so by having his parent register for the Boy Scout Parent Panel and indicate that their son is interested in participating.



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## Merit Badge Webinar

Find out more about new merit badges and plans for future merit badges during a free webinar on Tuesday, Oct. 30. Choose the 9 a.m. or 3 p.m. (Central) session. [Click here to register.](#)



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## New Venturing Recruitment Kits

The National Venturing Youth Cabinet and National Council's Marketing and Membership groups have teamed up to create a host of new recruitment tools designed to introduce teens to the fun and excitement of Venturing!

The new publications include the "Venturing Recruitment Guide," which features a variety of information and resources, as well as a "Fast Facts" sheet and fliers that can be customized with your crew's meeting place, time, and contact information.

Best of all, these new print resources are fully customizable and intended to be distributed by those who know the Venturing program best: Venturers.

For more information on the items and how to order, have your crews visit the Venturing website, and click on the "Venturing Recruiting Toolbox" link.



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## Cyber Chip

The Cyber Chip is an exciting new tool to help families and volunteers keep youth safe while online. Visit the Cyber Chip page for more information.

*Boy Scout/  
Varsity Scout/Venturer/  
Sea Scout Cyber Chip patch*



*Cub Scout  
Cyber Chip patch*



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## Messengers of Peace

Messengers of Peace is a global service project program carried out by millions of Scouts throughout the world. The BSA challenges Scouts and leaders to demonstrate their service spirit to make a real impact on global peace and the quality of life in local communities. Each Scout is to be recognized as a "Messenger of Peace" for his contribution to creating a better world.

### Program Overview

Launched in September 2011, Messengers of Peace is a global initiative designed to inspire millions of young men and women in more than 220 countries and territories to work toward peace. Using state-of-the-art social media, the initiative lets Scouts from around the world share what they've done and inspire fellow Scouts to undertake similar efforts in their own communities. The initiative is inspired by the World Scout Committee, administered by the World Scout Bureau, and driven by youth volunteers worldwide.

### Defining Peace

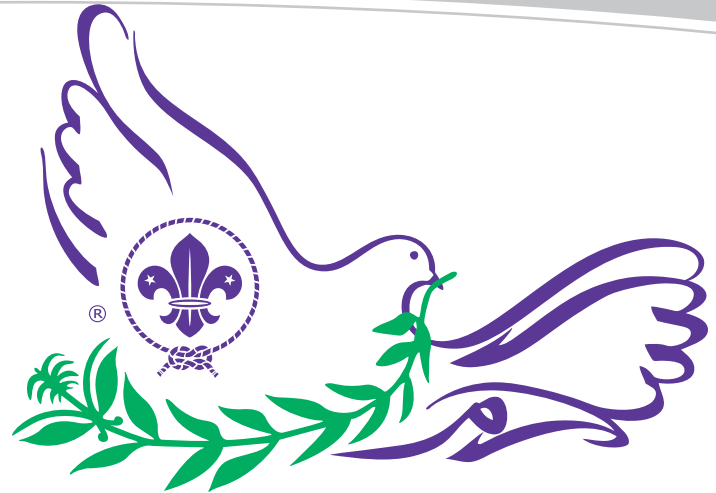
In terms of the Messengers of Peace initiative, peace encompasses three dimensions:

1. The personal dimension: harmony, justice, and equality
2. The community dimension: peace as opposed to hostility or violent conflict
3. Relationships between humankind and its environment: security, social and economic welfare, and relationship with the environment

Any Scout or Scouter who participates in a project that has had a significant impact on the community in any one of these three dimensions can qualify as a Messenger of Peace.

### Submitting Projects

Submitting Messengers of Peace related projects is easy for BSA units. All they need to do is check the Messengers of Peace box when entering a service project through the Journey to Excellence website. Doing so will add the project to the map on the Messengers of Peace website and will generate a unit certificate.



## Messengers of Peace

### Recognition Item

Any Scout or Scouter who participates in a qualifying project is eligible to wear a Messengers of Peace ring patch around the World Crest on his or her uniform. To purchase these ring patches, a unit representative should take the unit certificate to the local Scout shop or council service center.

More information about the Messengers of Peace is available at the BSA Messengers of Peace website. You can also check out the Messengers of Peace on Facebook.

Help our Scouts be proud Messengers of Peace through their service projects. Units need to do a service project and then must use the JTE system to log the project and their service hours. Unit commissioners may use this program as another motivational tool for their units to complete their Journey to Excellence requirements. One project can qualify for both recognitions!



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## Calendar of Events

### National Committee Meetings

October 15

National Commissioner Task Force Meeting (invitation only)

### Merit Badge Webinar

October 30

Merit badge webinar, 9 a.m. or 3 p.m. (Central). [Click here to register.](#)

### Boys' Life Mobile App Launch

December 12

Launch date for the *Boys' Life* magazine mobile application for BSA camps, which will include photos and videos.

### National Committee Meetings

February 4–6

National Commissioner Task Force Meeting (invitation only)

### National Annual Meeting

May 22–24

National Annual Meeting

National Executive Board and Committee Meetings

### Philmont Training Center: 2013 Commissioner Week

Week 3: June 23–29

The Council Commissioner

District Commissioner and Assistant District Commissioner Training

District Committee

Effective Roundtables

Focusing on the "Main Thing"

How to Conduct a Commissioner College

The Unit Commissioner

National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience (NAYLE)

Visit the 2013 Conference Schedule page on the Philmont Training Center website for more information.



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