

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS

THE COMMISSIONER



www.scouting.org/commissioners

The role of the unit commissioner is to help every unit be successful. Unit success is defined by the unit achieving Journey to Excellence status and demonstrating an improvement in the retention of its members.

Journey to Excellence Incorporates UVTS 2.0

The new Journey to Excellence (JTE) performance assessment and recognition program for the years 2011 through 2015 incorporates the Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS 2.0). JTE is designed to maximize council, district, and unit results in key performance areas directly related to success, growth, and sustainability.

Currently, two of the 17 items in Journey to Excellence relate to commissioner service. One concerns a need for the council commissioners to increase the number of commissioners over the previous year in order to score the maximum number of points toward earning this award. The second incorporates, for the first time, UVTS 2.0 to encourage a council to increase the number of visits its commissioners make to units throughout the year.

Councils will use both of these items to create data that will populate a new “balanced scorecard” approach to improving the function of BSA local councils nationwide. This balanced scorecard approach will make available to councils a “dashboard” on which there will be 17 measures indicating how councils are performing in these vital areas. These scorecards will be published regularly.

Councils that have trouble with any of these 17 performance items—say, with getting all commissioners to use UVTS—can contact councils that are doing well in that area to ask for advice and help in how to improve their performance. This is exchanging a best practice between councils—one of the most significant ways Scouting is able to increase the successful, functioning program, finance, and service.

It should be noted that there are areas in which all councils are now registered for UVTS 2.0 and are beginning to use it. It’s hoped that within the next year, with the support of regional, area, and council commissioners, all commissioners in Scouting will be on UVTS 2.0. This will give Scouting, for the first time, national numbers about how our nearly 30,000 commissioners are working to help units.

Visit Tracking System home page at www.scouting.org/commissioners. Click on Unit Visit Tracking System 2.0.

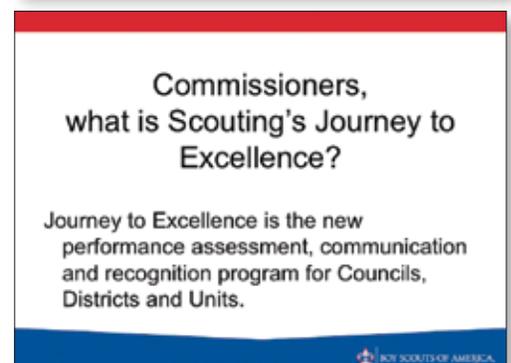
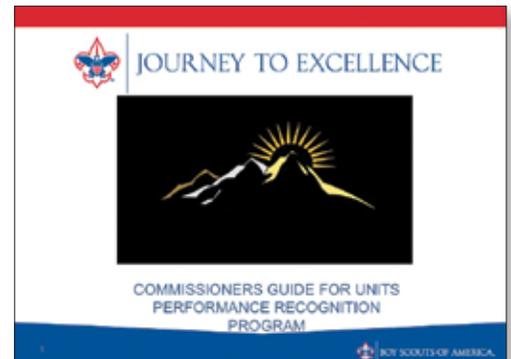


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National Commissioner Minute

My fellow commissioners,

As we welcome the new year, let me express my thanks and gratitude for an outstanding year of commissioner service in 2010. Together, we celebrated 100 years of commissioner service, along with the 100th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America. And what a year it was! Let me mention some of the highlights of 2010.



At year-end, 29,659 unit commissioners were registered (an increase of 376 over the previous year).

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of commissioner service, we introduced a centennial commissioner patch for each position and made available for purchase the centennial commissioner patch framed collection. The patch was a huge success and is just a token of recognition for the significant role that you play in your local council's success.

Hundreds of commissioners joined me at the 2010 National Scout Jamboree as we held commissioner celebrations in the four regional camps. The enthusiasm of the commissioners that I met was impressive, and it was clear to me that our commissioner corps played a significant role in staffing the jamboree.

The Unit Visit Tracking System was rejuvenated with added enhancements and relaunched with version 2.0. This new program addresses the concerns we heard from the field. Additional support items include a special UVTS 2.0 commissioner support hotline, as well as a PowerPoint and support video that can be found in the UVTS 2.0 section of the national commissioner website.

Two new, first-time Philmont commissioner courses were introduced—the College of Commissioner Science and the Council Commissioner. Both courses were well-attended (we had record attendance at our Philmont courses in 2010) and marked the redevelopment of our course offerings at the BSA's national training centers. We will continue to offer quality commissioner courses at Philmont during week 2, June 12–18, 2011. For more information, check the Philmont Training Center flier on the commissioner website and in this newsletter.

We updated the *Administration of Commissioner Service* manual and the national commissioner website at www.scouting.org/commissioners. Many of our printed materials are posted on the national site, so you have access to more support materials than ever before.

We developed a *Council Commissioner Manual*, a first for the BSA, in recognition of the key role that council commissioners play in the leadership of local councils and as an integral part of the council key 3.

A new unit recruitment and retention plan has been developed and will be highlighted at the May 2011 National Annual Meeting. Other new developments include a *Boys' Life* Commissioner Award, nine new commissioner recognition certificates, and three national commissioner newsletters, including our special edition on the history of commissioner service.



In volunteer recruitment, all National Commissioner Service Task Force volunteer positions were filled following the succession plan, and we welcomed two new regional commissioners, Jan Perkins from the Western Region and Peter Casey from the Northeast Region. We continued to fill area commissioner vacancies.

The National Commissioner Service Task Force participated in the development of the new Journey to Excellence award, and we launched our national support effort to deliver JTE to units across America, as two of the 17 success criteria relate to commissioner service.

The year 2011 will see a continuation of our focus on supporting unit retention—our most important function as a commissioner corps. We will achieve that goal in part by:

- Helping local councils, districts, and units achieve their Journey to Excellence goals
- Initiating phase 3 of UVTS by engaging all councils to use UVTS 2.0
- Implementing a new unit retention plan that focuses on the importance of the unit commissioner role in supporting new units
- Fast Start training for commissioners
- A renewed focus on and support of roundtable commissioners

I look forward to working with you all for another outstanding year of commissioner service as we move into the next 100 years!

God bless you all,



Tico A. Perez

Welcome to a New Century of Service

By Scott Sorrels, National Commissioner Service Chairman

For commissioner service and the Boy Scouts of America, 2010 was a special year as we celebrated 100 years. Now it is time to turn to our next century of service.

All-Time High for Registered Unit Commissioners

The year-end 2010 reports appear on the back page of this newsletter. We are pleased to report that we ended the year with growth in the number of registered unit commissioners to an all-time annual high of 29,659, and improved our commissioner-to-unit ratio to our best-ever national rating of 3.9 units per commissioner. Similarly, the number of volunteers serving our districts ended the year at a robust average of 19.8. Those are good numbers and reflect that we are gathering resources to better serve and retain our units across America.



Journey to Excellence

Journey to Excellence (JTE) is the new performance assessment, communication, and recognition program used by the BSA to help measure and improve the elements of our council, district, and unit performance. The commissioner corps has a critical role in the rollout and implementation of JTE. It is important that the commissioner corps review the elements of the program and are able to talk knowledgeably with the units about how they can take advantage of JTE.

Two of the 17 elements in JTE relate to commissioner service. One focuses on the need to register the commissioner corps, in all capacities, and increase our numbers over the prior year. The second element focuses on the use of the Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS 2.0) to record a minimum level of unit visits per year.

The national commissioner website has a special link for Journey to Excellence and features orientation webinars at the council, district, crew, troop, and pack levels that you can use to familiarize yourself with JTE in virtually every aspect. A new resource includes slide packs that commissioners can use to explain JTE. A special slide deck is included just for commissioners so you can understand the critical role that the commissioner corps plays in the launch and implementation of JTE. These are excellent resources and program materials available for use at our roundtables.

UVTS 2.0

UVTS 2.0 had been embraced by 295 councils as of December 20, 2010, and we experienced an increase of 68 percent in recorded unit visits since July 2010, with an increase of more than 20,000 recorded visits from the new version's launch date. A wealth of resources about UVTS 2.0 is on the national commissioner website, including an orientation video and a related PowerPoint presentation.

We continue to get feedback from the field and, as with any technology, we are going to have some growing pains along the way. We want you to know that we are tracking the nature of problems reported to the special helpline, and for the most part, the issues have been primarily related to other BSA technological events that have had an indirect impact on your ability, from time to time, to access UVTS. We are moving to phase 3 of our implementation strategy, which focuses on adoption of UVTS 2.0 by all of our councils. We will continue to work together to make this a viable resource and to build our database of unit visits so that we have a measurable platform that can be used to support unit retention.



Unit Visit Tracking System 2.0 Statistics As of December 20, 2010

Unit Visit Tracking System Statistics	7/31/2010 UVTS 2.0	8/31/2010 UVTS 2.0	9/30/2010 UVTS 2.0	10/31/2010 UVTS 2.0	11/30/2010 UVTS 2.0	12/20/2010 UVTS 2.0
Councils with unit visit reports entered	260	273	290	293	293	295
Total visit reports entered by unit commissioners	29,475	31,426	37,703	42,758	47,314	49,697
Distinct number of units with unit visit reports	7,098	7,781	9,609	11,047	12,057	12,593
Distinct number of commissioners with reports	3,698	4,254	5,159	5,717	6,136	6,305

Totals are cumulative since original system deployment on December 1, 2008; UVTS 2.0 deployment was July 15, 2010.



Letter From a Unit Commissioner

With several decades as an adult leader in successful Scouting units (packs, troops, and crews), I thought something really new regarding Scouting was unlikely to come my way. Well, I was wrong, and delightfully so. I

have recently realized how little I knew of the importance and legacy of the commissioner service at the unit, district, council, and national levels to the successful functioning of Scouting units.

How did this transformation occur? I became a unit commissioner at the start of 2010 and participated in unit commissioner training at the district, council, and national levels at Philmont for a week, including the College of Commissioner Science. Most importantly, serving as a new unit commissioner to a couple units that needed assistance has been an eye-opener to the challenge and gratification of helping units become successful and remain that way.

I learned that commissioner service is as old as the BSA itself—both celebrated 100th anniversaries in 2010. As I listened to several great instructors and Tico Perez describe the history and vitality of commissioner service (past, present, and—most importantly—future plans), I quickly felt a sense of added purpose and pride with my choice to serve units as a commissioner.

The amount of meaningful, helpful, and thoughtful information available to assist units is astounding. And the unit commissioners are right in the middle of it all! We have complete access to everything the BSA puts out through the district, council, and national Scouting support centers, whose primary purpose is to help units succeed.

- Publications—Hundreds of BSA books, pamphlets, guides, and brochures exist and are regularly updated to incorporate best practices into Scouting methodologies.
- Training—On-point courses are specific to the leadership position and to the overall wellbeing of the unit.
- Other commissioners—Commissioners at all levels within Scouting are a wealth of practical information and are always ready to share what they know and to accept something new that is helpful to the units they serve.
- Roundtables—The knowledge imparted at roundtables has been the primary source to unit leaders over the years, and I now have a better perspective on the work of these commissioners in performing this valuable function.

Besides having access to instructive information from council service centers, the unit commissioners have opportunities to develop tremendous insight into the units they serve—what is working, what isn't, and what are areas for improvement. All of which can be incorporated via the commissioner system downstream to the service centers

through recommendations on ways to improve BSA service to Scouting units going forward.

So the unit commissioner is the primary vehicle in this two-way information highway: helping units perform up to their potential and to succeed in reaching our youth with the quality character-building and leadership-developing goals and methodologies of Scouting, and also helping council service centers better serve the units. Our ability to share this information is vital to the short- and long-term success of Scouting units. That is a tall order for us as unit commissioners—one that can be very time-intensive, at a time when most of us are looking for ways to be more productive and to do more in the limited amount of time we have available each day and week.

As I reflected on the challenge for me to be more productive as a unit commissioner, I centered on a few workable points.

No need to re-create the wheel. While innovative ideas create new best practices, the vast majority of solutions to units' issues already exist in other commissioners' heads, in publications, and in training courses. I just need to avail myself of these resources to be more efficient and effective.

Schedule my interactions with the units I serve well ahead of time. Know my units' calendars for courts of honor, blue and gold banquets, committee meetings, campouts, Friends of Scouting presentations, regular unit meetings, and rechartering, to mention a few. By scheduling my visits months ahead of time with the unit leaders, the meetings become predictable, timely, and more likely to be effective for everyone involved.

Specialize. Trying to keep up with the vast amount of frequently changing information on packs versus troops versus crews/teams, to the point of being an expert, can be daunting and time-consuming. If one has the time, it is well-worth the effort. On the other hand, serving only one Scouting demographic where possible—troops, as an example—can allow a unit commissioner to better deliver on the concept of sharing valuable information, while also keeping one's time commitment to Scouting in the manageable category.

Job share. When I retired from unit leadership responsibilities, I wanted to stay involved in Scouting but needed to scale back the time commitment. The unit



commissioner position, with the “won’t take much more than an hour a week” mantra, seemed appealing. Still, the dim voice in the back of my head said, “You know it will take more time, much more, to do the job right.” So in the category of being prepared, I discussed with my friend, John, the possibility of job-sharing to mitigate the progressive time commitment that was sure to come. John is a great friend and another longtime Scouter, who was at a similar stage of life and was amenable to the idea of job-sharing a unit commissioner role. Picking a job-sharing partner is critical. John is not only a friend, but is highly competent, reliable, and humble, so the prospects of being successful at this joint venture were high.

So far, so good. This has been very productive and will likely continue to be so. We have a pack and an unrelated troop, each with different issues. We keep each other current on the workings and progress of each unit, with both of us

meeting with each unit from time to time. John has specialized on the pack, and I on the troop. We are built-in backups for each other in making meetings and sharing the workload and, with the concept of “two heads are better than one,” are coming up with decent ways to help out the units with their challenges.

It’s been my experience that once one understands and embraces the core values and methodologies of Scouting, the lifelong dedication to seeing this organization and its youth prosper is not only natural, it becomes an essential part of a successful and well-lived life. I see being a unit commissioner as the next logical step in serving Scouts, Scouters, and Scouting units. I am looking forward to becoming a competent member of the commissioner service in its business of sharing valuable Scouting information, and am most appreciative of all the commissioners and their timeless leadership and efforts to help Scouting succeed.

Commissioning Ceremony



One thing that differentiates commissioners from other volunteers is that commissioners are “commissioned” just like the professional staff. To be commissioned means to be held accountable for something. Commissioners are held accountable for the quality of the Scouting program, and each commissioner should take an oath to that effect.

Commissioning ceremonies should take place throughout the year so that a new commissioner receives their commission promptly after completing Commissioner Basic Training. While one ceremony may take place at the annual council commissioner conference or other council event, commissioning should also take place as needed at district and council commissioner staff meetings, or even in front of unit leaders at a district roundtable.

The ceremony is conducted by an administrative commissioner, usually a district commissioner or assistant district commissioner. The commissioning of a new district commissioner may be conducted by the council commissioner or assistant.

Suggested Script

Administrative Commissioner: (*Facing audience*) The acceptance of a commission to provide effective service to Scouting units is among the most important obligations taken up by an adult in the Boy Scouts of America. We are privileged today to present commissions to several new individuals who will undertake this obligation.

(*Facing candidates*) You have been duly selected and oriented to serve as a commissioner in the Boy Scouts of America. You have also completed the important Commissioner Basic Training course. You have undertaken a leadership role in the council and district to help units succeed. You succeed only when the units that you serve succeed.

Let me now ask you three questions. Please raise your hand(s) in the Scout sign.

1. Administrative Commissioner:

Do you promise, by example in your daily life, to make the Scout Oath and Scout Law a vital force in the lives of the youth and unit adults you serve? If so, say, “I do.”

Candidates: I do.

2. Administrative Commissioner:

Do you promise to help make the program of the units you serve the best that can be given, rich in fun and adventure for youth and full of opportunities for their personal growth and service to others in the community? If so, say, “I do.”

Candidates: I do.

3. Administrative Commissioner:

Will you commit your top-priority Scouting time to identifying unit needs and helping unit adults to meet those needs? Will you achieve this by doing such things as observing unit programs, coaching unit leaders, guiding unit committees, and extending the Scouting hand of friendship through at least a monthly contact with the unit? If so, say, “I will.”

Candidates: I will.

Administrative Commissioner: It is now my privilege and honor, on behalf of the Boy Scouts of America, to present your commissions.

(*For each individual: Call out their name; present the commission, No. 34773; and shake the hand of each new commissioner.*)



An Update on Commissioner Resources



Tim Acree
National Commissioner
Service Resources Chair

Commissioner Manuals

All of the manuals are under review to bring them into compliance with the new Journey to Excellence program. All references to previous quality programs are being updated. You will be notified on the manuals section of the commissioner website when an updated manual is posted.

Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews, No. 33618, was just updated and should be posted

soon. It will then be available for download like the rest of the manual set. In the meantime, you can download it from the council and district operations area of the website.

Commissioner Website

You may have noticed a few more headings on the left side of the commissioner website. Some of the changes include:

- Journey to Excellence—Lists the requirements, FAQs, support documents, slide decks, etc.
- Council and District Operations—Many forms and manuals to supplement your knowledge.
- New Products—Lists the new commissioner certificates.
- Philmont Training Center Courses—Lists the courses for 2011. Hope to see you there!
- Unit Visit Tracking System 2.0—An update on the new version of UVTS.



Roundtable Planning

As roundtable commissioners, you realize that roundtable is the single most important event in the district. You are charged with teaching the program, informing leaders about upcoming events, and even entertaining the masses. You know that you will need help to be successful, so you recruit a staff and make sure everyone is fully trained. (One great training opportunity is at the Philmont Training Center in Cimarron, New Mexico.)

Now that you have your fully trained staff, it's time for your yearly planning conference. This is where you plan the entire year for your roundtable, using all the information provided to you by the National Supply Group. You should also consult your council's calendar, as well as your district key 3, for events and programs unique to your district.

Each quarter, you will have a planning session to assign staff their parts for the next few roundtables, so they can be prepared for their program and presentations. Staff members will make sure they have all the craft supplies, books, and guest speakers lined up for your roundtable.

Studies have shown that roundtable staffs who have monthly planning meetings and practice their presentations have higher participation and attendance at roundtables. This meeting is your staff's opportunity to iron out any rough spots.

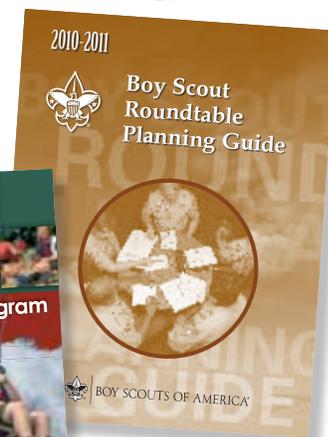
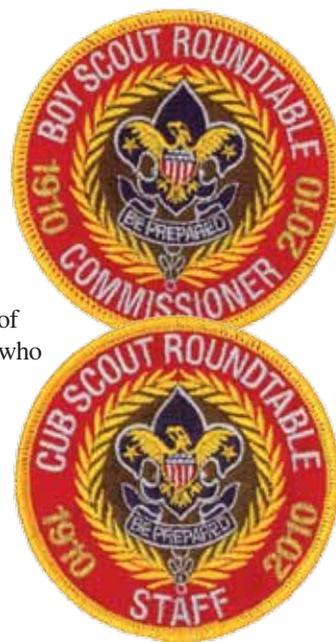
Congratulations! Your roundtable was a success! There was representation from every unit in your district and attendance is growing each month. Roundtable is a success and you can rest on your laurels until next month, right?

Wrong! The BEST roundtables in the nation have one more critical step, and that's the after-action report.

This is, without a doubt, one of the most important steps in your roundtable program. Winston Churchill said, "Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it." If your program is great, find a way to make it fantastic. A serious look at what was good, what worked, and what needs improvement

will take your roundtable to the next level in supporting your unit leaders.

Roundtable commissioners should want roundtables to be the best. Remember, "Roundtable is the single most important event of the district." If you are wondering who said that, you need look no further than Sir Robert Baden-Powell.



Summer 2011 Philmont Training Center Courses Offered in Support of Quality Commissioner Service

Register at www.myscouting.org under Event Registration in the Events tab.
For more information, to www.philmonttrainingcenter.org,
e-mail us at trainingcenter@philmontscout ranch.org, or call us at 575-376-2281.

How to Conduct a College of Commissioner Science

This is a special course for future council “deans” of Colleges of Commissioner Science. The first three days of the course will be spent with new material on how to develop, market, and present the training needed for your council commissioners at a College of Commissioner Science. On the final class day, course participants will actually run a College of Commissioner Science at the Philmont Training Center for participants from other commissioner courses. They will be able to work on their bachelor’s, master’s, or doctorate degrees in Commissioner Science. **June 12–18**

Council Commissioners

This course covers the roles and responsibilities of council commissioners and assistant council commissioners. It will be taught by capable instructors with Commissioner Service experience from local councils. They developed materials and publications over the past years for council commissioners. Be among the first to be formally trained as council commissioners or assistant council commissioners. Current council commissioners will be given priority registration. **June 12–18**

Effective Leadership of Commissioner Service

A conference for experienced commissioners seeking more insights to help units deliver a quality program to youth. Learn more about the College of Commissioner Science program, advanced strategies for quality unit service, implementation of a strong commissioner’s program in your district or council, strategic planning objectives, and other topics. **June 12–18**

The Unit Commissioner—Supporting Unit Needs

For unit commissioners prepared to set a positive example in quality service to chartered organizations and Scouting units. Features effective monthly unit visits, unit self-assessment and action planning, coaching skills, charter renewal, annual service plan, commissioner priorities, unit problem-solving, leader development, the National Centennial Quality Unit Award program, and commissioner lifesaving techniques. **June 12–18**

Cub Scout and Boy Scout Roundtables and Venturing Forums

When you think you know all you need to know to conduct high-quality Cub Scout and Boy Scout roundtables and Venturing forums, it is time to attend this conference. The program is built around a forum of experienced roundtable commissioners who address roundtable ideas and lead discussions about problem-solving techniques. **July 17–23**

Council Key 3

A great team-building experience for council presidents, council commissioners, and Scout executives! Topics include board management, building effective districts, quality program, membership growth, volunteer/professional relationships, strategic planning, council and district operations, commissioner service, endowment, council fund-raising, and asset management. The week includes plenty of time for breakout sessions by position. Participants are encouraged to attend as a council Key 3 team. **June 12–18**

District Key 3—Key Leadership for the Future

A great team-building opportunity for district chair, district commissioner, and district executive teams. This course covers the role of the district Key 3 and how they work together to build and operate a successful district. It includes plenty of idea-sharing and problem-solving time, and explores successful district operation techniques, recruiting district volunteers, and other topics of interest. Each Key 3 will develop an action plan. A scholarship is available for district executives attending this conference with both their district chair and district commissioner. Participants are encouraged to attend as a district Key 3 team. **June 12–18, July 31–August 6**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

522-013
2010 Printing

The New Council Commissioner Manual



Bob Coons
National Commissioner
Service Training Chair

The new *Council Commissioner Manual*, No. 522-015, is now available in hard copy and for download from the commissioner website. This is the first-ever manual designed to train men and women for the all-important job of council commissioner.

Utilizing input from council commissioners around the country, this was a major collaborative effort with many different councils and Scouting professionals. In addition, much of the information in the manual was secured from other BSA published materials; gathered from Scouters and councils around the country; and pulled from BSA presentations at National Annual Meetings, the Philmont Training Center, and Colleges of Commissioner Science in various regions.

The *Council Commissioner Manual* was created to be a basic, yet comprehensive, guide to someone who has never been a council commissioner before. It is meant to be used by regional and area commissioners to orient and train council commissioners, even if they haven't had many years of Scouter experience at the council level. It was recognized that sometimes council commissioners are recruited as community leaders who are willing to serve in this high-level council position; at other times they may be recruited from Scouting volunteers with experience and extensive lists of previous Scouting and commissioner service.

Given the range of individuals who are asked to serve as council commissioners, it was difficult to compile a manual that would meet everyone's needs. The new manual is meant to be comprehensive, covering all subjects that one might need to know about in the role, but not be an exhaustive collection of detailed information or go in-depth about any one subject. That is, it was not intended to discuss every subtlety, nuance, and observation that could be made regarding all the components of the council commissioner role.

An observation noted when compiling this material was the great variation from council to council about the role of the council commissioner. The manual was written to allow for those variations and should be read in that way. The paramount goal in writing the

manual is that it should be seen as the beginning of bringing some uniformity and agreement to the council commissioner role. The manual is more of an outline; if council commissioners follow it throughout the country, Scouting will have more consistent and knowledgeable council commissioners over time.

There will soon be an online Fast Start training for the new council commissioner, designed as a quick orientation to either recruit someone to the position or help them understand the major points of the position within the first several weeks on the job. This Fast Start is based on the outline of Fast Start in chapter 1 (page 9) of the *Council Commissioner Manual* and can be found in the commissioner training section of the commissioner website.



 COMMUNITY ALLIANCES
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Happy Commissioners Serve Longer

What makes a happy commissioner? How can you as a district or council commissioner improve job satisfaction within your commissioner corps?

Research tells us that people do things primarily for one of three reasons: achievement, influence, or fellowship. And then there is the fourth thing that makes a big difference: appreciation. As an administrative commissioner, you can play a role in all of those.

Commissioners who are doing their job are always achieving things, but they may not realize it. Without a destination in mind, how do you know when you get there? Unit self-assessments can help in these situations. Once a unit commissioner knows areas that need strengthening, with the help of an assistant district commissioner, a vision of what could be in that unit can be set. Goals to help make that a reality can be established. Specific conversations between the assistant district commissioner and the unit commissioner encourage progress. And at the next unit self-assessment, achievement can be measured. (Find unit self-assessment guidelines under resources on the commissioner website.)

Influence is often looked at in two ways. How does the unit commissioner influence the unit, and how do the actions of good commissioner service influence the service of other commissioners? Keeping track of which units participate in roundtables or district activities and reporting on those at a cabinet meeting is one way to measure the unit commissioner's influence. While you don't want to compare commissioners with one another, when someone implements a tip gathered from another commissioner, it should be recognized.

Fellowship is just fun. I can remember my first encounter with commissioners years ago. We were on a district campout and they were in the next campsite having a ball. I knew I wanted to be one, just watching them enjoy one another. Commissioner cabinet meetings should be FUN! Plan fun into your meetings—everything will go better.

Appreciation is a significant part of the “paycheck” for a commissioner. Everyone likes to be recognized in some fashion. The truth is, an individual only feels appreciated when they are recognized in the way they like to receive recognition. Typically, those fall into one of five categories.

Touch. You know those guys. They are the ones who come into a gathering with a handshake and a smile or a pat on the back for everyone. And that's all you have to do for them. Give them a double-handed handshake and a well-thought-out thank-you, and they will know you appreciate all they have done.

Token. Scouting is good at this one. There is a patch for everything. Or a small token of something. I like it best when there is a tie-in between the action and the token. It need not be expensive, just something thoughtful.



Time. Quality time—how often have we heard that one? Have a cup of coffee or lunch with someone you want to say thank-you to. Have a visit—about anything but Scouting. Just two friends spending time together.

Acts of service. Those folks are easy to spot. “Need any help?” is a constant question of theirs. You can always find them with their hands dirty helping someone else. How to help them can be a difficult thing to figure out, but they will really appreciate it and know you value them.

Verbal affirmation. With these guys and gals, it's what you say that matters. Be specific about what they did, how it made you feel, and what you want to do about it. Not necessarily in that order, but you need to include all three elements.

Recognition is so easy to do and so inexpensive to distribute that there is simply no excuse for not doing it.

—Rosabeth Moss Kantor,
author and management consultant

If you build these things into your cabinet meetings and staff visits, you'll have happy—and experienced—commissioners. And who doesn't want that?



Recruiting Commissioners: It's All About "Fit"



Ellie Morrison
National Commissioner
Service Recruitment and
Retention Chair

Years ago, there was a movie called "The Abyss." It was a tense and unnerving film, because it seemed to sum up all our fears of the great unknown.

I sometimes think that those we invite to join the commissioner corps must feel like they are standing on the edge of an abyss: *Where are they wanting me to go? Am I prepared? Can I make a difference? How long will this last?* I think if we address those types of questions before we ask, we'll have more success in getting people to say yes.

This is a good time of year to assess your commissioner corps. What strengths do they have? What additional strengths do you need within your staff? The answers to those questions can help you determine the strengths you are looking for in an individual to make your cabinet stronger.

When recruiting a unit commissioner, focus on a particular unit or units that need service. Do those units need a leader or a manager to improve the quality of program they are currently providing? Perhaps you have some new units, or troubled units, or units for which their current unit commissioner's strengths aren't exactly what they need. Once you have determined the needs, much of the recruiting process falls into place.

Look around you. Look at service clubs like Lions clubs or Rotary Clubs. Look at those individuals whose occupations tend to attract mentors, like teachers or those in the medical field. Look within the units you serve for individuals not currently involved with delivering a program. Look at people in the community who have a past connection with Scouting. Follow up on parents with Scouting backgrounds or parents who have had children in the program. How about former unit leaders? Check Eagle Scout lists, Scouting alumni lists, and former camp staff lists. Potential commissioners are everywhere.

Once someone catches your eye, think about these things: Are they primarily a leader or a manager? Do they like short-term or long-term projects? Are they the type of individual who is suited to the extra care that new units or troubled units need? Match the individual in your mind with a specific unit or two. Make some notes about why you want that individual for that particular unit. What skills, interests, or personality traits does that person have that will make it a successful match both for the unit and for the potential commissioner?

Prepare for the invitation. What sorts of interests do your individual and Scouting share? What will the person like most about being a commissioner? For what timeframe do you want that individual to serve in that capacity?

Make an appointment. Take someone with you who knows the candidate well and supports your effort. When you issue the invitation, focus on the individual's skills, the match with the unit, and the timeframe for serving. Most people do things for one of three reasons: achievement, fellowship, or influence. Make sure your request addresses each of those.

Ask for a response. Allow some time for processing and for checking with calendars or family, but give the individual an idea of when you'd like to know.

If the individual says no, they may mean "not at this time" or "not for this role." You'll want to explore that or come back to them later.

If you get a yes, begin training and all the other things you do to welcome a new member to your commissioner corps.

The abyss can be a scary place. No one wants to go there. With proper prospect selection for recruiting new commissioners, you won't have to either. Simply follow the plan.



100 Years of Good Reading 1911-2011

Boys' Life magazine marks its 100th anniversary this year. The first March edition of *Boys' Life* came off the press March 1, 1911. The cover price was five cents an issue.

Because the Boy Scouts of America saw the value of publishing an official magazine to “bind closer together the thousands of boys and men interested in Scouting,” the BSA purchased *Boys' Life* from its founder and original publisher, the George S. Barton Company, on June 10, 1912, for \$6,100. The first *Boys' Life* issue edited and published by the BSA was the July 1912 issue; it appeared as Volume II, Number 5, no change being made in the numbering set by the previous owner. Former Chief Scout Executive Dr. James E. West was the first BSA editor of *Boys' Life*.

Every issue published during the 2011 anniversary year will be highly collectible, especially the March 2011

issue—the official *Boys' Life* 100th anniversary issue. Follow the 100th anniversary celebration in the pages of *Boys' Life* and at www.boyslife.org.

Boys' Life Commissioner Award

A unit qualifies as a 100-percent *Boys' Life* unit when at least one *Boys' Life* subscription goes into the home of each youth member of the unit. A unit becomes a 100-percent *Boys' Life* unit when “100 percent *Boys' Life*” is properly marked on the unit charter. This can be done anytime during the charter year that a unit qualifies.

The purpose of the *Boys' Life* Commissioner Award is to recognize and thank all unit, roundtable, and council commissioners who successfully promote 100-percent *Boys' Life* units.



Boys' Life

FACT SHEET

What *Boys' Life* magazine is a general-interest magazine published monthly in two demographic editions for boys from first grade through high school. *Boys' Life* is the flagship youth publication of the Boy Scouts of America—many stories and articles in *Boys' Life* reflect the program themes of Cub Scouting and program features of Boy Scouting.

Mission The mission of *Boys' Life* magazine is to entertain and educate America's youth and to open their eyes to the joyous world of reading. This is accomplished through a proven mix of news, nature, sports, history, fiction, science, comics, and Scouting.

Subscribers *Boys' Life* magazine reaches 1.1 million Scout subscribers and 200,000 non-Scout subscribers. Pass-along readership means that more than 8 million people read *Boys' Life* each month.

Demographic editions *Boys' Life* publishes two demographic editions to meet the reading-level needs of subscribers from first grade through high school. The covers usually are the same, but each edition has its own 16 to 20 age-specific pages. The Cub Scout edition has more word games, puzzles, and comics than the Boy Scout edition, which has, for its older youth readers, more articles in tune with their junior high school- and high school-level reading interests.



Cub Scout
This edition goes to all Cub Scout-aged youth and all adults in the Cub Scout program who subscribe.



Boy Scout
This edition goes to all Boy Scout-aged subscribers and all other subscribers not in the Cub Scout program.

Boys' Life History *Boys' Life* magazine began publication March 1, 1911, as the “Boys” and Boy Scouts’ magazine.” (In 1911 “Boy Scouts” referred to the youth participants in several different “Scouting” organizations, including the BSA.) Founder and publisher George R. Barton of Boston, Massachusetts, issued *Boys' Life* seven monthly—the cost: 5¢ per issue. His market was the boys and “Scouts and Scouters” from several youth organizations such as Ernest Thompson Seton’s Woodcraft Indians, Daniel Carter Beard’s Sons of Daniel Boone, and the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). The first BSA-published edition was July 1912. James E. West, Chief Scout Executive, was the magazine’s first BSA editor. The cover price of *Boys' Life* remained 5¢ per issue until December 1914, when it jumped to a dime. *Boys' Life* circulation has grown from 6,000 in 1912 to 1.3 million today.



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA.

In September 1995, *Boys' Life* began publication of a “demographic” edition for Cub Scout-age subscribers. In September 1999, *Boys' Life* began a third demographic edition—this one for Tiger Cubs—by adding an eight-page poster pullout insert to the Cub Scout demographic.

In January 2002, *Boys' Life* added four editorial refinements: a new logo replaced the logo in use since 1977; a different, age-appropriate Contents page to introduce each edition; gold color bars on page edges to denote articles appearing only in the editions for ages 6 through 10; and four pages of beginner reader material just for Tiger Cubs in the same edition (these pages replace the poster-pullout insert used since September 1999). Approximately 70 to 75 percent of the editorial pages are shared among all three editions.

Values *Boys' Life* encourages good reading. *Boys' Life* is a strong mix of exciting stories and valuable information. • *Boys' Life* subscribers advance in rank faster and more often than non-subscribers—more than twice as fast as non-subscribers. • *Boys' Life* goes into the home and is read by parents and brothers and sisters who become more supportive of Scouting because of *Boys' Life*. • *Boys' Life* has long been recognized for its “retention factor.” Scouts who subscribe to *Boys' Life* stay in Scouting longer than non-subscribers, generally more than twice as long. • *Boys' Life* is the silent assistant, helping Scouting leaders and parents help Scouts to succeed.

Publishing Staff Publisher J. Warren Young; Editor-in-Chief J.D. Owen; Managing Editor Michael Goldman; Senior Writer Aaron Derr; Senior Editor Paula Murphey; Associate Editor Brad Riddell; Online Editor Bryan Wursten; Copy Editor Belia Rangel Freedman; Assistant to the Editor-in-Chief Adryn Shackelford; Field Editors Mark Anders, Johnny D. Boggs, Eric Ottinger, Brian Payne; Editors Emeriti Robert E. Hood, William B. McMorris; Design Director Scott Feaster; Executive Art Director Kevin Hurley; Photographers John R. Fulton Jr.; Photo Editor Edna J. Lemons; Operations Director Bob Wiemers; Production Manager Lenore Bonno; Advertising Production Manager Lisa Hotz; Imaging Artist Marcie Rodriguez; Circulation Director John W. Ingram; Customer Relations Manager Judy Bramlett.

Advertising Offices Advertising Director Barry Brown; Regional Advertising Managers New York, New England, Mid-Atlantic and South: Ken Lipka, Patricia Santangelo, 271 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, 212-532-0985; Midwest Publisher's Rep: Mark Adeszko, Adeszko Media Sales, 20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 575, Chicago, IL 60606, 312-629-5230; West Coast Publisher's Rep: Chuck Carroll, Adeszko/Carroll Media Sales, 350 North Glenoaks, Suite 208, Burbank, CA 91050-3260, 818-972-9650; Classified Ad Sales: Stacy Hall, P.O. Box 152079, Irving, TX 75015-2079, 972-580-2398. National Marketing Manager Lois Roehel; Business Manager Brian Cabanban; National Traffic Manager Eugene Handon.

How to Subscribe Scouts should see their Scout leader or call their BSA local council (find “Boy Scouts of America” in the white pages of the telephone book). Persons not members of the Boy Scouts of America should call 972-580-2088. Subscription cost is \$24 per year (\$12 per year for BSA members). www.boyslife.org

Website Each year, *Boys' Life* earns youth publication industry awards that recognize the magazine's on-going literary excellence. For a list of recent recognitions, go to www.boyslife.org.

Literary Excellence Media inquiries should be directed to the Marketing & Communications Division, 5328, Boy Scouts of America, 1325 West Walnut Hill Lane, P.O. Box 152079, Irving, TX 75015-2079; telephone 972-580-2263.

Media Inquiries



Unit Commissioner Box Score

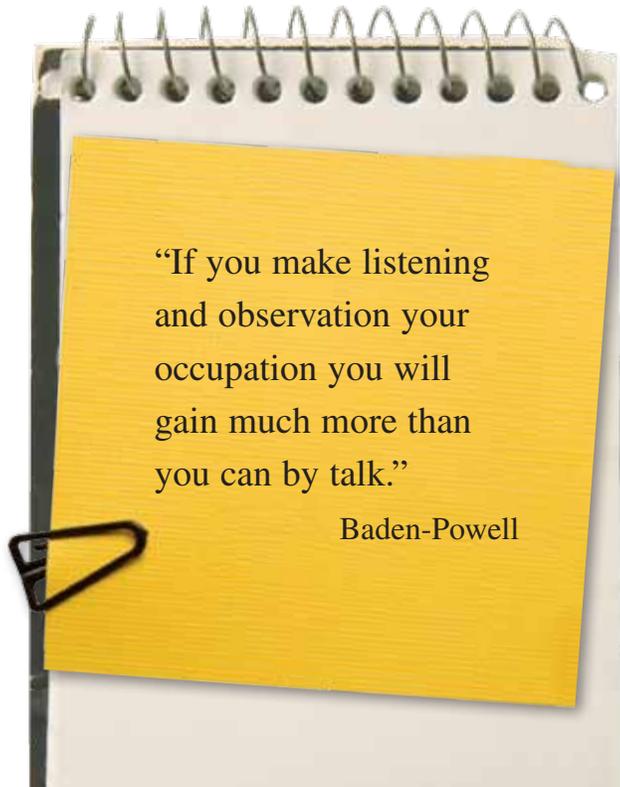
As of December 2010

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	18,364	17,884	6,120	5,963	4,309	4,278	1,811	1,685	70.4%	71.7%	4.3	4.2
Southern	29,500	28,495	9,837	9,497	7,646	7,735	2,191	1,762	77.7%	81.4%	3.9	3.7
Central	25,742	24,875	8,577	8,293	6,726	6,535	1,851	1,758	78.4%	78.8%	3.8	3.8
Western	44,582	43,647	14,857	14,548	10,602	11,111	4,255	3,437	71.4%	76.4%	4.2	3.9
National	118,188	114,901	39,391	38,301	29,283	29,659	10,108	8,642	74.3%	77.4%	4.0	3.9

* Does not include Explorer posts or Learning for Life groups

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“If you make listening and observation your occupation you will gain much more than you can by talk.”

Baden-Powell

2011 Dates of Interest

May 25–27

National Annual Meeting, San Diego, California

June 12–18

Week 2 Commissioner Service, Philmont Training Center, Cimarron, New Mexico

Thanks to the commissioners in the field who contributed to this edition of *The Commissioner*: Steve Wagner and Joseph Pierro.

For comments or more information:

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