



Commissioner Newsletter

Your Single, Best Resource.

February 16, 2026 Edition

“When all is said and done, more is said than done.” – Lou Holtz

Reminder: Commissioner Week at Philmont Training Center, June 7 – 13

Join a community of passionate commissioners at the Philmont Training Center the week of June 7 – 13. Expand your skills, explore new ideas, and connect with like-minded leaders while experiencing the magic of Philmont. Learn more and register [here](#).

Introducing Impact365: Scouting’s New National Service Initiative

Scouting has always believed that service is not just what we do—it’s who we are. That legacy continues with Impact365, Scouting America’s new multi-year national service initiative designed to inspire Scouts, families, and volunteers to make meaningful contributions to their communities every day of the year. To learn more about Impact365, and a new National Day of Service coming in November, click [here](#) to read more.

Scouting is For All!

The 2026 version of the Inclusion Toolbox has been posted in a single PDF. [This](#) is designed for people who want to print it all out as a single document. Check out new Module BB-7, General Merit Badge Teaching.

2026–2027 Academic Year Calendar Now Available

Scout Life magazine provides monthly themes units can use when planning meetings and outings. Scouts will see stories connected to these themes in the magazine and on scoutlife.org, helping to reinforce what they are learning and experiencing in their units. Find the upcoming academic year calendar [here](#).

Have You Earned the Commissioner’s Key?

The Commissioner’s Key encourages and recognizes continuing training, performance, and tenure by commissioners. Find the requirements [here](#).

Latest Enhancement to Scoutbook Plus

A new tab has been added to the Permissions Manager that displays all permissions for every leader in the unit on a single screen. This read-only view makes it easy to see an individual's permissions.

Ask A Commissioner

Q. How do I encourage parents to send their kids camping when it might rain, be too hot, be too cold, the hike might be too long, and the ground might be too hard? My unit never seems to have a just right Goldilocks moment when it comes to camping.

A. Ah yes, the mythical perfect weather campout. Not too hot, not too cold, no bugs, flat trail, soft grass, zero chance of rain. I have heard legends of it. No one has actually been there.

This is such a normal challenge, and honestly it is more about parent confidence than kid capability. Most youth are far more resilient than the adults giving permission.

First, shift the goal from comfort to growth.

Parents are often picturing misery. Remember, 80% of today's Scouting parents were not involved in the program as a youth. Leaders are picturing memories. Help them see that a little discomfort is not a failure of the trip, it is part of the experience that builds confidence.

You can say something like, we do not camp because conditions are perfect. We camp so youth learn they can handle things when conditions are not perfect. A little rain becomes a story. A long hike becomes an accomplishment. A cold morning becomes the moment they learned how to layer properly.

Second, show them that challenge is managed, not ignored.

Parents worry when they think kids will just be left to suffer. Be very clear that you plan for weather and difficulty.

Explain things like:

- How you check forecasts and adjust plans if conditions are unsafe
- How leaders are trained and experienced
- How you build in rest breaks, water stops, and warm up or cool down strategies
- That there is always supervision and a backup plan

When parents see that discomfort is expected but safety is never compromised, trust goes way up.

Third, teach parents the gear mindset.

A lot of resistance comes from bad past experiences, usually caused by poor gear. Cold because of cotton. Wet because of no rain layer. Miserable sleep because of no pad.

Offer a simple packing guide that explains why each item matters. Even better, host a quick gear check before the trip where families can ask questions. When parents know their kid will be warm, dry, and able to sleep, most of their fear drops.

You can frame it as, there is no bad weather, only bad gear and bad planning, and we help with both.

Fourth, highlight the outcomes they actually want.

Tie camping directly to traits parents care about.

Camping builds:

- Resilience when things are uncomfortable
- Problem solving when plans change
- Confidence from doing hard things
- Independence from being away from home
- Social skills from shared challenges

Those are life skills. Adulthood rewards people who can function when things are not ideal. Do they want their child to be living in their basement when they are 40 years old wearing a t-shirt that says “There is no place like 127.0.0.1” and playing video games while waiting for mom to bring down meals?

Fifth, use stories, not just explanations.

Nothing convinces a parent like hearing, my kid was nervous about the rain, but now they will not stop talking about cooking bacon in a downpour and laughing about it.

After each trip, share photos and short recaps that show smiling faces in less than perfect conditions. Wet kids grinning. Muddy boots by a fire. Bundled up youth making breakfast. That visual proof is powerful.

Finally, normalize that camping is never perfect, and that is the point. You can even lean into the humor a bit.

We do not wait for a Goldilocks weekend, because if we did, we would never go camping. Instead, we teach youth how to be the kind of people who can thrive when it is too hot, too cold, too wet, or the hike feels too long. Those are the people who handle real life well later on. Those are the people “Prepared. For Life.™”

When parents start to see camping not as a comfort activity but as a character-building lab, the weather forecast stops being the deciding factor.

Good luck and never give up.

You have questions? Commissioners have answers!
Reach out by email: commissionerserviceteam@scouting.org



Prepared. For Life.®

