National Commissioner’s Minute

It has now been just over 100 days since I took over the role of national commissioner. In those days and weeks, it has been my pleasure to meet some of the most dedicated Scouters in the world. I am honored to serve with each of you who call the Commissioner Service Team “home,” and express my appreciation to each of you for your devoted service in strengthening the units, leaders, and youth you serve. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you!

As we begin our second 100 days serving together, I have three specific themes I would like to address in this edition of the National Commissioner’s Minute: our mission, the 2017 jamboree at the Summit, and “stories.”

Our Mission as Commissioners. This past week, one of my partners pulled me into his office and said, “You won't believe what happened this past weekend at one of our Scouting events. A Scoutmaster was working on a project and a bee landed on his hand, got stuck under his watch, and stung him. He simply brushed the bee off and didn’t think any more about it—until he began to swell rapidly and was unable to breathe. The adults were all concerned and panicking, and the decision was made to call 911. Unknown to them, a 9-year-old Cub Scout was in the group and, seeing the problem, immediately went to his family’s tent, grabbed an EpiPen, and ran back to the Scoutmaster. He injected the epinephrine into the Scoutmaster as he had been taught, and immediately the crisis was over.” My partner then said, “I was so impressed with this young man. I just thought you’d like to know!”

A similar experience occurred at Fire Mountain Scout Reservation in the Mount Baker Council when Scoutmaster Bill Hoffman suddenly suffered a heart attack. Had he been anywhere else but at Scout camp, the outcome might have been devastating. But at Fire Mountain, two Scouts on the camp’s lifeguard staff, Drew and Jacob, immediately ran up the hill on a gravel road in bare feet, where they found the Scoutmaster. They immediately went to work, providing CPR and appropriate emergency care for 12 minutes until the medics arrived. Bill’s wife said, “It's a miracle story. It really is. They gave me my husband back.” And for Bill, he has a second chance because of the life skills and quick thinking of two Scouts.

I mention these two stories because they help me realize that our work is not simply about numbers or meetings or training or even visits. It is about the lives and preparation of the youth of this country—to help them be prepared to courageously apply the principles of the Scout Oath and Scout Law in making moral and ethical choices throughout their lives.

Of course visits are important. Of course charter renewal and retention are vital in what we do. Of course it important to do our unit assessments and then have a plan of action to help each unit under our charge grow and improve in the way it serves today’s youth and tomorrow’s leaders. Of course it is important to record our visits in Commissioner Tools and to know the significance of “2.5” as we work with units and record our assessments and visits. Thomas S. Monson, the longest-serving member of the BSA’s National Executive Board, once said, “When we deal in generalities, we shall never succeed. When we deal in specifics, we shall rarely have a failure. When performance is measured, performance improves. When performance is measured and reported, the rate in improvement accelerates.” It is true—all of it.

And for your dedicated service, I am deeply appreciative. Thank you for all you do.
That having been said, in the midst of all this activity it is important that we remember our mission—the mission of the Boy Scouts of America. I wonder what would have happened in these two situations if Drew and Jacob had dropped out of Scouting years ago because of a poor program or if that 9-year-old hadn’t joined Cub Scouting. The end of the stories would have been significantly different. But because of devoted leaders and because of the resources that are available to them, including skilled and devoted commissioner teams, two Scoutmasters are still alive today. I am grateful for those leaders, Scoutmasters, Cub Scout leaders, Varsity Coaches, Venturing Advisors, Sea Scout Skippers, and diligent commissioners who are focused on making sure that our youth are prepared for the challenges they will face in the future. Thank you to each of you for going the extra mile (or, if you’re in Sea Scouting, thanks for sailing the extra nautical mile).

2017 National Scout Jamboree. Recently when I attended a Scouting event, a district commissioner grabbed me and said, “Thanks for the invitation to be on staff at the jamboree. My wife and I are working to see if we can make it work. We’ll do our best to be there!” Thanks to each of you who has already responded positively to my personal invitation and registered to serve on staff at the 2017 National Scout Jamboree. As I mentioned in my invitation, we will have a grand time and will have a personal opportunity to serve the youth attending the jamboree, as well as to celebrate commissioner service at the jamboree’s Commissioner’s Corner. Cristi in jamboree registration is keeping track of all commissioners, regardless of where you serve in the jamboree, partially so we can ensure that you get your special three-part jamboree patch. As a fail-safe measure to ensure we don’t miss anyone, as soon as you have registered, please also contact Steve Sawyer at the National Service Center and let him know your registration number. His email is steve.sawyer@scouting.org. Thanks.

Stories. I have been touched recently by stories of commissioners, Scouting leaders, and youth who have gone the extra mile. These stories, such as those I shared at the beginning of this article, are helpful in spreading the excitement about the growth of Scouting that I feel wherever I go across the country. For that reason, I am soliciting your assistance to help me become aware of those stories so I can share them with others throughout the BSA. We are inspired by true stories of heroism and dedication to the principles of Scouting, and I love to share those stories as I speak throughout the country. I am looking for stories in the following categories: commissioner success stories, including commissioners who have gone the extra mile to strengthen the units they serve; adult unit leaders (including committee members) who have done something particularly significant to strengthen and help the youth they serve; administrative leaders in councils and districts who have made a profound difference because of their vision and diligence; and youth who have excelled in the way they exemplify the principles of the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout motto, and Scout slogan. Please send those stories to me at cdahlquist@kmclaw.com with “Scout Stories” in the subject line.

Finally, I would appreciate your help in identifying those in your council or district or unit who might benefit from a letter from the national commissioner. These would include those who have excelled in unusual ways or served extraordinarily and those who have experienced personal or family challenges where a letter of comfort or sympathy would help them through their challenge. Thanks for your help! And thanks for serving. We are making great headway, but there is much more that we can do to bring about our game plan and put the BSA into positive growth mode again after a hiatus of many, many years—and bring the great plan of character building into the lives of more youth, more cities, more neighbors, and more homes. Please know how proud I am of each of you for the great work you are doing and that I stand ready to assist and support however I can.

Best wishes and Good Scouting!

Charles Dahlquist
Rounding Out the Support Suite—MyScouting Tool App and More

This edition of The Commissioner focuses on various hallmarks of our “simple and unified” approach to commissioner service—meaning a simple method of delivering effective unit service, unified by a broad platform of support resources. With every refinement, we need to ask whether it advances our ability to support a unit commissioner in accomplishing four things:

1. Supporting unit growth through the Journey to Excellence
2. Contacting units and capturing their strengths and weaknesses in Commissioner Tools
3. Linking unit needs to district operating committee resources
4. Supporting timely charter renewal

If these four objectives are our core focus, we know that more units will be retained and we will provide a life-changing experience for more youth. We also know that we can only provide unit service if we are out in the field contacting units. We are gratified to see that the use of Commissioner Tools is increasing at a rapid pace, and with it, the number of recorded unit contacts is also climbing. As with most things, we can do better.

This issue is full of content about enhancements in our unified support platform. When we started on the Commissioner Tools journey, we dreamed about the day when technology would allow a unit commissioner to conduct a unit contact, electronic device in hand, and have the ability to perform a unit assessment, request special support needs, drill down on unit health elements, and instantly record a unit contact, all in real time. With the launch of the MyScouting Tool app, that day has arrived. We invite you to try the app, for free, on your iPhone or iPad, and experience just how much information is available at your fingertips. We hope that you agree that this is a milestone in using technology to make your service as a commissioner easier and more effective. Android users, support is on the way as we continue to round out the suite of support tools.

The good news extends beyond the MyScouting Tool app. This issue features articles on other support elements, including:

- Tips for administrative commissioners on managing information generated by unit visits in Commissioner Tools
- Guidance on how to build a foundation to recruit new commissioners
- A wealth of training updates, including the 2017 course schedule at Philmont and the Summit Bechtel Reserve, and how to use the BSA Learn Center
- The role that unit commissioners can play in effective roundtables
- How to use Commissioner Tools to collaborate with unit leadership and assess unit needs and strengths though a Unit Service Plan

Let us hear how we can support you in your service to units, and let’s drive more unit contacts as we finish up 2016.

We hope that you plan to join us at the 2017 National Scout Jamboree, the biggest show in Scouting. Our new national commissioner, Charles Dahliquist, is leading the effort to create a special experience for the commissioner corps, with exhibits, program, and special networking opportunities for our commissioners.

Thanks for all you do for Scouting,
Scott Sorrels
National Commissioner Service Chair

Scott Sorrels
National Commissioner Service Chair
scott.sorrels@sutherland.com
Uniforms for Underserved Markets

One of the eight methods of Scouting is wearing the Scout uniform. This makes it very important that every Scout is able to have a uniform. A Scout uniform consists of pants, shirt, belt, and socks. A Scout shirt alone is not a complete uniform. Besides being the attire for Scouting activities, the uniform also provides the Scout with a way to display the belt loops, activity pins, or merit badges he has earned.

Over the last several years, I have had several discussions with commissioners regarding the challenges faced by a new unit leader when working with parents who are financially unable to acquire Scout uniforms for their Scout. Purchasing uniforms at the Scout shop can be very expensive and some parents may lack the financial resources to purchase uniforms for their son. As a commissioner, we know that we play several roles in helping the unit leader by being a friend, teacher, and counselor to the unit and a resource for the unit leader. As a resource, what can we do as commissioners to help the unit leader work with the parents of a Scout who is having difficulty acquiring a uniform for their Scout?

Here are some suggestions:

• As a starter, the unit could provide every new Scout who officially joins the unit with a neckerchief. Every Scout in the unit will then have a neckerchief to wear and would be required to wear their neckerchief to every meeting until they are able to obtain their uniform. This does not negate the need of having a uniform but provides the new Scout with a sense of belonging.

• The unit can acquire funds by selling popcorn and use those funds to purchase uniforms. A Scout who needs a uniform could be required to do a service project to “earn” his uniform.

• Parents sometimes drop off used Scout uniforms at Goodwill stores. These stores could be a resource for purchasing uniforms at a lower cost than at the Scout shop.

• Uniform banks can be established by a council or district to assist units in acquiring uniforms.

• Partnering with another unit that can share its resources to assist the new unit can be very helpful. The two units can work together on service projects as well as go camping together.

It is also helpful for the commissioner to ensure that the new unit leader is aware that awards and insignia must be properly displayed on Scout uniforms. Click here for a guide to wearing awards and insignia.

One important final point: When providing assistance to obtain a Scout uniform, care should be taken during the process so that the new Scout and his parents are not embarrassed by the fact that they were not financially able to acquire the uniform.
Commissioner Call to Action for 2017 Jamboree

The 2017 National Scout Jamboree is just about nine months from now. There are still many staff opportunities available that need to be filled in order for the jamboree to provide a mountaintop experience for our Scouting youth. As commissioners, there are a few things we can do to help fill these staff positions:

1. **Become informed about jamboree opportunities.**
   
   Review the Commissioner’s Guide for 2017 National Scout Jamboree so you are aware of the various opportunities available at the jamboree. Please click [here](#) to view the guide.

2. **Promote the staff opportunities to the units you serve.**
   
   Talk about the many staff opportunities that are available at the jamboree with your unit leaders, district volunteers, and even parents of Scouts. A couple of activity areas that still have a critical need for staff volunteers are Aerial Sports and Wheeled Sports. There is also a big need for many more medical staff members (doctors, nurses, and EMTs) for the medical base camps and hospital.

3. **Volunteer to be a staff member.**
   
   This summer, all commissioners received an invitation from our national commissioner, Charles Dahlquist, to volunteer at the jamboree. Many have responded, but there is still time to make this commitment.

   Charles has prepared a special 2017 jamboree commissioner staff service patch, which is a three-part patch. You will receive the first part when you register, the second upon completion of payment, and the third at the Commissioner’s Corner at the jamboree.

**My Story**

The 2017 jamboree will mark the third time I have volunteered for the national jamboree. I was a subcamp commissioner in 2010 and a subcamp chief in 2013. I will be serving in 2017 as the subcamp chief in Alpha 2 Subcamp, now named the Badlands. (All the subcamps have been named for national parks at the 2017 jamboree to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service.) I am looking forward to working with the wonderful staff we have assembled to serve the 2,000 Scouts and leaders who will be assigned to live in our subcamp. (By the way, I still need a few staff members too.) **There is nothing like seeing the excitement of the youth to remind you why we serve as we do.**

The Summit Bechtel Reserve is a beautiful setting for all of the fun and adventure a jamboree can offer. So how was it to live at the Summit for three weeks, you ask? I found my tent accommodations to be comfortable, and I even enjoyed the ambient showers in the subcamps, finding them refreshing at the end of a great day. I hear the staff assigned to stay at the staff camp will have warm showers this time. Bonus! I did a fair amount of walking at the jamboree (which was great exercise), but this time around there will be transportation for staff to help cover the distances between job and “home.” The food that was provided in the staff dining area during our preparation period (before the Scouts arrived) was wonderful, and seeing all the staff from across the jamboree site gather for meals was amazing. The food that the units prepared for us was also good, but being able to sit down with the Scouts and leaders and hear about their day was priceless. And this time around they promise even better fare. Yes, we had a bit of rain and our share of mud in Alpha 2 last time, but oh the stories we can tell, and the pictures …!

I am sure the grass there is much more established now and will tolerate any moisture that might show up. And most important to my adventure was meeting new friends whom I look forward to seeing again in July! Won’t you join me in this adventure and help give our Scouts that mountaintop experience?
Commissioner College Schedule

The College of Commissioner Science program is a great way to get additional training. The Commissioners website provides a listing of colleges of commissioner science that we receive information about.

Please check the list, found on the Commissioner Training page, if you would like to experience a college outside of your area or if your council does not currently run a college.

Note: To have your council’s college listed, please send information to Darlene Sprague at darsprague@roadrunner.com.
Commissioner Tools Power Pivot Tables, or How You Can Analyze Your Commissioner Tools Data Without a “Data Dog”

By Rick Hillenbrand and Ron Blaisdell

Back in 2012, Ron Blaisdell had the opportunity to hear Larry Chase mention in one of his discussions during the Council Commissioner course at Philmont Training Center the need for a council commissioner to have a “data dog” who could help with the task of wrangling data out of our then-current unit contact management system known as Unit Visitation Tracking System (UVTS). Since Ron wrote his commissioner science doctoral thesis on exactly that topic, he figured that meant he qualified for the “Data Dog” title, and he has carried it proudly ever since.

In order to help administrative commissioners better understand the data in Commissioner Tools, the Commissioner Tools Task Force developed the “Creating Pivot Tables” training video (available in the BSA Learn Center under Commissioner Tools) and the associated step-by-step instructions, “Commissioner Tools Pivot Table Documentation.” But doing this project made us realize that there was so much more that could be done, provided some “data dog” was willing to build easy-to-use tools for administrative commissioners who may not have someone on their team who can do this analysis.

The number of data fields per entry in UVTS was less than one-tenth the number of data fields in Commissioner Tools, yet there was not a simple way to analyze the UVTS data. In the past, the use of Excel spreadsheet pivot tables was about the best we could do. The two biggest problems with pivot tables are: 1) they are not inherently simple and not everybody knows how to create and use pivot tables, and 2) each time you had new data you had to re-create the pivot table. However, not too long ago, Microsoft released and then improved a Power Pivot tool that could automate the creation of pivot tables and charts when applied to “raw” data files that were similarly constructed.

When combined with the existing reports already available through Commissioner Tools, Power Pivot tables take the pain out of creating pivot tables and charts, which can greatly simplify the job of analyzing the copious amounts of information found in Commissioner Tools. Fortunately, Ron Blaisdell is a member of the Commissioner Tools Task Force and an expert at creating Power Pivot tables. Together, the entire Commissioner Tools Task Force has been able to develop, over the course of four months, four new spreadsheets that will give administrative commissioners the ability to easily dive deeply into their data to get a solid understanding of how their units, and their commissioners, are performing.

The process for using these four Power Pivot tables is simple:
1. Run the required report in Commissioner Tools.
2. Download the report as a CSV file.
3. Open the associated Power Pivot table spreadsheet.
4. Tell the Power Pivot table spreadsheet where your downloaded CSV file is located.

Once it’s loaded, the spreadsheet will perform all the analysis for you. You just need to read and print the results.

The Unit Contact Analysis spreadsheet (District_Contact_Stats_Analysis_Tool.xlsx) works with the District Contact Stats report from Commissioner Tools. This spreadsheet will summarize your data to let you know how many of your units have been contacted at least once this year, how many of your new units have been contacted at least once, and how your districts are doing on recording the pro rata number of contacts to meet the Journey to Excellence requirements. In addition, we
have added the ability to find out how many units have received a detailed contact in each district and how many units that have a detailed contact also have the pro rata number of contacts in preparation for the 2017 JTE requirements. Other tabs in the spreadsheet show you the number of contacts in each district by month, as well as a listing of the units in each district (plus the ability to filter and show only new units).

The Unit Health Analysis spreadsheet (Unit_Health_Assessment_Tool.xlsx) works with the Unit Health Report in Commissioner Tools. This spreadsheet was developed as a way to implement the reporting described in the article “Units with a Commissioner Tools Score of 2.5 or Lower” from the Spring 2016 issue of The Commissioner. This spreadsheet provides summaries (both statistical and graphical) at the council and district level, as well as a listing by district (and subdistrict if desired) of the units whose last score was 2.5 or lower and those that have never had an assessment entered in Commissioner Tools (since the council started using Commissioner Tools).

The Roundtable Analysis spreadsheet (RT_Assessment_Tool.xlsx) also works with the Unit Health Report. This spreadsheet looks at each district and the programs in the district (Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouting) to identify the participation of the units and their roundtable attendance for each month. Additionally, there is a tab that identifies units that have never had roundtable attendance recorded. The information is available in both statistical and graphical formats.

The Commissioner Contact Analysis spreadsheet (Commissioner_Contacts_Analysis.xlsx) works with the Commissioner Contacts Without Subtotal report to quickly allow a commissioner to identify those districts where unassigned commissioners are filling the requirement to help the units or where the district may not have assigned a specific commissioner to a unit. This information is available both statistically and graphically and is summarized at the district and unit level.

All the information, files, and samples you need to run your own Power Pivot tables—with the exception of the raw data CSV files—can be found on the Commissioners website. Each of these spreadsheets has been developed by volunteers. Consequently, they are not supported by the BSA or the BSA’s Information Delivery Group. Support is available via email by contacting commissioner.support@scouting.org.

We hope that these spreadsheets will help ease the burden of doing data analysis by councils and districts and will help you get more out of the vast array of information available in Commissioner Tools. If you have suggestions for additional spreadsheet tools, please contact us at the email address listed above.

Ron Blaisdell is an assistant area commissioner for Area 4 of the Southern Region, assistant council commissioner for the Michigan Crossroads Council, and a member of the Commissioner Tools Task Force.
Online Registration

By Claudia Hanks, Senior Project Manager, BSA Information Delivery Group

Have you ever wondered when we’d be able to fill out applications online? Well, wonder no more. The time is now! The Online Registration tools were opened for beta testing on August 1. Click here to see the list of 23 councils that are participating. As of early September, we had received more than 500 applications and had processed more than half of them. That’s over 250 youth and adults added to our rosters without touching a piece of paper! With the majority of our beta councils holding their fall recruitment nights in the next few weeks, we anticipate tripling that number by the time you read this. Reach out and congratulate your friends in our beta councils!

Online Registration includes six new tools that are found in the my.Scouting menu. The Organization Manager now has a new Settings tab where councils and units can maintain their selections for numerous options such as payment types or customization options units can use to send their own welcome emails to new Scouts. The Invitation Manager collects and tracks the Requests for Information submitted from BeAScout. These, along with the information for manually entered leads, are used to send invitations that contain the URL for the application that’s specific to each unit. Application Manager is the bread and butter of this tool. It lists the applications and provides the means for the Key 3 to review and accept them. If there are any leads or applications waiting for you to take action, the system will alert you by adding a single notification to the new My Inbox tool. The My Applications tool is for parents or volunteers to track and access the applications they’ve submitted.

The process is pretty straightforward. Interested parents and volunteers can access BeAScout to begin their journey. They can either submit a request for more information or select the option, if provided, to begin an application immediately. Other paths could be the URL sent through a personal email or the QR code (those funny little square thingies that look like a checkerboard) printed on a flier. No matter how they get to it, the application form is the goal. Once at the online registration site, the parent or guardian fills out their own personal information and that of their Scout. Volunteers and Venturing participants will see a screen where they will enter their background information. The “happy path” for an application that’s paid online is a single button click by the unit leader for a youth or the chartered organization representative for an adult. If the membership fee is being paid by check, it will take another button click at the
council when the payment is made. The Online Registration Team tried to cover all eventualities so there are exception processes available for situations where an application doesn’t follow the “happy path.”

Applications can be submitted to units, districts, and councils. National membership fees and, if selected, fees for Boys’ Life subscription are prorated for the remainder the charter year. **Unit activity fees and General Liability Insurance Policy (GLIP) are not included.** The system recognizes LDS units and does not charge the membership fee. It will also search the council to see if the applicant already has an active registration and, if found, will not charge for the multiple registration. Transfers will still need to be processed through ScoutNET. **At this time we can only process applications for fee-paying positions. Anyone applying for merit badge counselor, Nova counselor, or Supernova mentor positions will still need to use a paper application.**

Are you curious to see what it looks like? Go to my.Scouting.org and click into your district. You’ll see Application Manager ReadOnly and Invitation Manager buttons. When you first open either of these tools, you’ll see the My Actions screen that lists the applications or leads that you have the authority and responsibility to take action on. If you’re in a “read-only” menu item, there will not be any actions available for you to take. For both tools, the top portion of the page gives you counts by age and access to reports. The left section is the organization navigator where you can drill down to individual units. The Application Manager has two other tabs to the right of My Actions. The Youth and Adult tabs will list the various status values that apply to applications. There will be a count on the right that indicates how many applications are in that status in the district plus all units within the district. Clicking into a status bar will open the list of applications in that status. You can open the applications to view them in more detail. Similarly, the Invitation Manager will open in the My Actions screen. The other two tabs to the right are By Status and By Source, and with these tabs you can see the number of leads by either status or source for the district and all units within it.

For more information, go to www.scouting.org/onlineregistration where training videos and PDFs are available. Be sure to check out the FAQs, too.
News You Can Use

By Rick Hillenbrand with gracious help from Garry Lewis and Tom Ritchey

IT Roadmap

Have you ever wondered whether the BSA has an IT plan? And if so, whether it is comprehensive or even going in the right direction?

Click here to learn more about the BSA’s IT Roadmap, including a “State of IT” video by Chief Scout Executive Michael Surbaugh, plus videos on “Understanding Our IT Challenges” and “Moving Toward IT Solutions” by BSA Information Technology Group Director Sam Thompson and the BSA’s new chief technology officer, Vijay Challa. Be sure to listen to Sam’s talk on what’s important to our audience, which starts at 6:45 into the “Moving Toward IT Solutions” video.

Be forewarned: The more you listen to these videos, the more you may find that you have become an IT guru and need to borrow Mike’s “geek uniform” from his video.

Journey to Excellence

The 2017 Journey to Excellence scorecards are now available at http://www.scouting.org/Awards/JourneyToExcellence/scorecards/2017.aspx (English only so far). The following are noteworthy changes to the council and district scorecards:

- **Council**
  - Added new item, No. 6–New member recruiting, but did not change total points for Membership (800 maximum).
  - Dropped Voice of the Scout but did not change total points for Unit Service overall (600 maximum). The points were added to Unit retention/growth.
  - No. 15–Unit contacts. Dropped any mention of Detailed Assessments on the front but made one annual Detailed Assessment mandatory (per our request) for each unit. The contact rate has been increased to 45 percent, up from 35 percent, to achieve Gold.

- **District**
  - No. 13–New unit contacts. Dropped any mention of Detailed Assessments on the front, but the back states, “Every unit is required to have a detailed health assessment annually.”

The big change that will catch a lot of people off guard is the note on the back of both the council and district scorecards about the mandatory Detailed Assessment. Also note the bonus points box for councils and districts, which sets in place a process for councils to define their own criteria for districts to obtain bonus points.

The two tables below summarize changes to the council and district JTE scorecards:

- **Council JTE Scorecard changes comparing 2017 to 2016**
- **District JTE Scorecard changes comparing 2017 to 2016**
Online Registration

First, please see the “Online Registration” article elsewhere in this issue of The Commissioner.

Now that you’ve read that, you’re probably thinking: So what does all THAT mean to us as commissioners? First, we need to frame the question to put it in the proper context, and for that I refer to the commissioner’s four primary focus areas:

1) supporting unit growth through the Journey to Excellence,
2) contacting units and capturing their strengths and needs in Commissioner Tools,
3) linking unit needs to district operating committee resources, and
4) supporting timely charter renewal.

When you think about those four commissioner focus areas, I think we can readily see the connections between Online Registration and unit growth, linking unit needs, and supporting charter renewal. Hence, as commissioners we need to both be aware of this important new membership tool and make sure that we are communicating with our units how to use this tool when it is available locally. As commissioners, we tend to be “jacks of all trades” with at least enough knowledge that we can help the units that we serve when they are “stuck.” This means that while it would be nice for us to have expertise in the use of the tool, as commissioners we just need to know where to find the expert and be able to link the unit and its leaders to the expert.

For those who don’t yet have Online Registration available in your council, I would at a minimum make sure that your units’ BeAScout “pin” has accurate information.

Internet Rechartering

Internet Rechartering will be updated for the upcoming renewal cycle beginning October 1.

The current presentation for Internet Rechartering will be replaced in October with an updated presentation.

The basic navigation will remain unchanged; however, there are some changes that all commissioners should be aware of with this renewal cycle:

• With the launch of the Lion pilot, the renewal of Lions will be integrated into Internet Rechartering. This will include the Lion members, Lion adult partners, and the Lion guide position. In addition, packs may add new Lion youth and their adult partners and Lion guides. The pilot will provide flexibility in the assignment of adults to the Lion guide position, except for the chartered organization representative, committee chair, and Cubmaster who, as members of the unit Key 3, may not dual register as the Lion guide.

• When it comes to the Venturing program, the BSA is treating Venturing youth as either a Venturing Member or a Venturing Participant. The difference is that Venturing Participant describes Venturers who are age 18 and over AND must meet the Youth Protection requirement for adults and give authorization for a Criminal Background Check.

— All NEW Venturers who are over the age of 18 must register as Venturing Participants and must take the adult version of Venturing Youth Protection training. Existing Venturers who are 18 will initially be grandfathered in the system but are encouraged to become Venturing Participants and to complete the adult version of Venturing Youth Protection training. New Venturing Participants must submit completed Adult Applications.

Councils will support renewing units as before by providing unit access codes and information for units.

Commissioner Tools Enhancements on the Horizon

With the release of the 2017 JTE scorecards, the Commissioner Tools Focus Group and Information Delivery Group are working to have in place several enhancements not later than January 1, 2017. Those enhancements include:

• New blank commissioner assessment and unit assessment forms both from within Commissioner Tools and on the Commissioners website

• Revisions required due to any changes in unit JTE scorecard criteria

• Updated reports (either a series of new 2017 reports, or, ideally, the implementation of a selectable date range for all reports)

Additionally the following enhancements should also be in place for 2017:

• Having a way to identify that a Unit Service Plan has been created and its status from the unit-level dashboard

• Administrative and individual unit summary reports in support of Unit Service Plans

There are other Commissioner Tools enhancements already in development, but the timing of their availability is not yet certain.

Garry Lewis is the council commissioner for the National Capital Area Council and Tom Ritchey is a BSA Information Technology Group team leader. Both Garry and Tom are also members of the Commissioner Tools Task Force.
Introducing the MyScouting Tool App

By Larry Tuell and Rick Hillenbrand

When Commissioner Tools was originally conceived, it was always part of the design to include a mobile app to make it easy for commissioners to quickly perform an assessment while sitting in their cars before leaving the meeting parking lot while the details were still fresh in their minds. Well, that time has finally arrived!

Apple now has a mobile app that can be downloaded to your iPhone or iPad. (Sorry, Android users; not yet.) To get the app, go to the App Store and search for “MyScouting Tool.”

1. Use your my.Scouting.org user name and password to log in on the initial screen.

2. The home screen will show all the tools available on your mobile device: Commissioner Tools, Training, Your Profile, and Roster Profile. (Select from the icons at the bottom of the screen.)
3. The magnifying glass icon in the upper-right corner is designated as a council search and will show you a complete list of every registered Scouter in your council. The district and council Key 3, as well as the designated Key 3 delegates, have access based on the natural context of their registered position. Notice the “Trained” icons by the names to show the current training status of each Scouter for their respective position. The blue Scouter icon is highlighted with a yellow background when the Scouter is a member of the unit’s Key 3.

4. How many times have you been asked where a Scouter was registered or needed to look someone up but didn’t know what unit they were in? Now, by selecting the magnifying glass icon again, you can search that list by name or position to find a particular Scouter, a list of Scouters in every unit, or every Scoutmaster in the district.

5. To select a Scouter, swipe to the left to display his or her contact info.
6. Or if the list is too large, you can select the funnel icon to filter the list. You can also create filters under Advanced. For example, you could select all Key 3 unit positions, assign that filter a unique name, and save it. Now this filter will appear in your personal Saved Filters list.

7. Filtering by status allows you to explore training status by position or Youth Protection training.

8. The Advanced filter allows you to select a specific position or unit.
9. The Scout emblem icon at the top of each page will take you back to the home screen. Selecting the Commissioner Tools icon on the home screen gives you options to perform an assessment for units; open up a roundtable form; or even perform commissioner administration. Details on how to use Commissioner Tools are not provided here, since they are the same for both this application and the web-based application that has been available since at least May of 2015.

10. Selecting the Training icon from the home screen displays your training status and the trainings you still need to take.

11. If you select the Roster Profile icon from the home screen, you will see the adult rosters list you have access for, along with more details about the Scouter. Left-swiping on a Scouter lets you see their contact info as before, as well as their profile.
12. Both the Organization and Roster Profile icons allow you to drill down through the organization. Once the page is open, you can select the “C” at the upper left for council and the “D” for district and then the unit icon to get down to a specific unit. District will allow you to select from all the districts you have access to.

Selecting the YPT Training button will show you the standard pie chart for your council or district, depending on your access.

13. And clicking on the Trained Leader button shows the pie chart for Scouters trained in their positions.

14. Finally, the book icon at the upper-left corner of the home screen will provide you with access to the Document Library from Scouting.org without having to log out and back in.

The new mobile app for Commissioner Tools provides you with much portable power at your fingertips using your iPhone or iPad. If you have a Wi-Fi signal, the response time will be much faster and the screens will load better. Don’t forget to clear your cache just as you should on your home computer.

I find that I use this app more for searching Scouters either at roundtable or at a unit meeting. I am always being asked how to reach a Scouter or if their application has been processed yet; if they don’t show up in the display, that means their application is not complete.

Finally, for those who use Android devices, the BSA is committed to bringing this same app to you as soon as possible.

_Larry Tuell is an assistant council commissioner for the New Birth of Freedom Council and a member of the Commissioner Tools Task Force._
What Makes a Great Commissioner?

During conversations about recruiting commissioners, the question seems to come up over and over again: “What makes a great commissioner?” Usually, the questioner is seeking a list of skills, knowledge, and experience that should be considered prerequisites when looking for new commissioners.

The answer is relatively simple, but the list isn’t universal. There is, however, one item that should be first on every list: a great commissioner has a servant’s heart! Why? All commissioners are leaders; great commissioners are servant leaders.

Robert K. Greenleaf, who coined the term “servant leadership” around 1970, said this: “The servant-leader is servant first. … It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first. … The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served.”

Those with a servant’s heart demonstrate certain characteristics that enable them to be great commissioners:

• Effective listening—They seek to understand what a speaker is saying to them, demonstrate their interest, and provide feedback.

• Empathy—They can understand and share the feelings of the person with whom they are speaking.

• Vision—They are able to assess current strengths and needs and then envision and communicate a future that builds upon the former and addresses the latter.

• Persuasion—They are able to translate vision into action; they can cause people to believe in and work toward fulfilling a vision.

• Accountability—They spend their time celebrating others’ success and looking for ways to improve performance rather than offering criticism. When issues arise, they take responsibility publicly and work privately to avoid recurrence.

• Team orientation—They build teams and engage them in creating and fulfilling a vision; they seek opportunities to enable team members to grow and develop knowledge and networks that will enable greater success.

Those with a servant’s heart are comfortable with and prepared to demonstrate the characteristics of “second-century service”:

• Visioning
• Continuous improvement
• Engagement
• Collaboration
• Linkage
• Transparency

Technical skills, experience, passion, priorities—all of the things we’ve talked about before in other articles about recruiting commissioners—are important. But a servant’s heart is the single prerequisite when seeking unit service candidates. Much of the rest of the list comes from work done before recruiting begins; see “How Do I Build My Team?” elsewhere in this issue.

Larry Chase
National Commissioner Service Recruitment and Retention Chair
lhc@chasehome.net
How Do I Build My Team?

Conversations about recruiting commissioners may start with one question—“What makes a great commissioner?”—but when those conversations involve administrative commissioners, it usually isn’t long before another question arises: “How do I build my team?” Often, that leads to a request for the rest of that list of skills and experience that a great unit service candidate should have. In fact, the rest of that list comes from work done before recruiting begins.

Consider four fundamental organizational concepts:

1. You cannot do it alone—Administrative commissioners are team leaders; they need the help of a team of equally committed volunteers.

2. Form follows function—It’s a bit like Shaker furniture. The Shakers didn’t build elaborate furniture with intricate design and decoration. Rather, their furniture was simple and utilitarian. Many find elegance in its simplicity; regardless, at the end of the day one thing was certain: It got the job done.

3. The composition of an administrative commissioner’s team flows from two places—(1) the role and responsibilities of that administrative commissioner and (2) his or her vision for the term of service.

4. There is no predefined structure—The structure of the team is fluid and flexible, and is defined by the work to be done.

Similarly, the knowledge, skills, and experience needed by each member of the team is defined by the work they will be doing.

The list for unit commissioners, for example, is different from the list for roundtable commissioners. Both lists may have common elements, but each will likely have unique elements, too. And not all commissioners in similar positions will share the same list. The knowledge and experience of the ideal candidate to serve as a unit commissioner for a pack, for example, might well be a bit different from those of the ideal candidate to serve a team.

Our ability to provide the knowledge needed will increase as more commissioner training and orientation modules become available in the BSA Learn Center. In addition, the new requirements for commissioner awards and recognition provide a clear definition of what success looks like for various unit service positions. Increasingly, our focus when identifying candidates will be on the skills needed and a candidate’s passion and priorities, rather than prior experience and training.

In short, there is no “cookie-cutter” approach to building a unit service team. The composition of the team is defined by the work to be done.

And remember, recruiting is a continuous process. We know the key characteristic all great commissioners share: a servant’s heart. When we know the work to be done, we know the specific passions and priorities that will enable success. Experience will remain valuable, and increasingly we’ll be able to provide specific training and orientation that will enable individuals to take on new roles and responsibilities. That, in turn, enables us to continually recruit new commissioners who will strengthen our ability to help units better serve more youth through Scouting.
It’s a Great Time to Collaborate

It’s hard to believe the end of another year is rapidly approaching. Along with it comes a great opportunity for unit commissioners to engage unit leaders in a collaborative assessment of unit strengths and needs. As we move toward year-end, many units will be completing the charter renewal process and reviewing progress toward Journey to Excellence goals. Both provide an opportunity for unit commissioners to work closely with their leaders.

Consider:

• For units that haven’t yet participated in a collaborative assessment of strengths and needs, there is adequate time remaining for their unit commissioners to discuss the advantages of the process with unit leaders and gain their commitment to participate.

• Membership review, including the status of adult training, is an integral component of charter renewal. Both should also be components of a collaborative assessment.

• While the Detailed Assessment function in Commissioner Tools doesn’t make specific reference to Journey to Excellence (except to identify the unit’s goals, if any, for JTE achievement), the categories assessed are identical to those on the unit’s JTE scorecard.

As a result, there is alignment of all three: collaborative assessment, charter renewal, and JTE progress review.

Further, once a collaborative assessment is completed and recorded in Commissioner Tools, the foundation for a Unit Service Plan has been created. All that remains is to identify three to five higher priority needs that, if addressed, would improve the unit’s ability to better serve youth and then to establish SMART goals for each. The plan, too, can be recorded and managed by the unit commissioner in the Detailed Assessment function in Commissioner Tools.

Ideally, a Unit Service Plan should include goals to be completed within the next six months. Completing a collaborative assessment and establishing a plan toward the beginning of each calendar year positions unit commissioners and unit leaders to update the assessment—and the plan—toward the middle of the coming year and lays a solid foundation for continuous improvement of unit performance. Too, completing the assessment at this time of the year offers greater efficiency as it can be an extension of the charter renewal and JTE progress review.

Logging contacts in Commissioner Tools remains a JTE objective for our councils and districts. In 2017, the requirements of that objective have been modified: At least one Detailed Assessment for a unit is now mandatory. Completing a Detailed Assessment as the new year gets underway is also a great way to jump-start continued improvement of unit service. And, if that Detailed Assessment includes a Unit Service Plan, it will also serve to get improvement of the unit’s program underway early in the year.

Finally, with the new MyScouting app now available to iOS mobile device users from the App Store (similar support for Android mobile device users is on the way), it’s now possible for commissioners to develop truly collaborative assessments and Unit Service Plans, entering information directly into Commissioner Tools while working with unit leaders. All that is needed is an internet connection to provide access via a mobile device. With mobile access, Commissioner Tools now provides access to actionable information and enables commissioners to work more efficiently.

It really is a great time to collaborate!
How to Use the BSA Learn Center

The LDS Unit Commissioner Orientation and all of the Commissioner Tools courses have been available on the BSA Learn Center since May. So where is the BSA Learn Center and how do you find the courses you are interested in taking? Here is a step-by-step guide to accessing the BSA Learn Center.

1. Log in to My Scouting at https://my.scouting.org/, which should be familiar to everyone by now.

2. Once you are logged in, you will see the following page with a green box in the lower right corner labeled “BSA LEARN CENTER.” Click anywhere on the box.

3. If your commissioner registration is attached to your My.Scouting account, select the My Learning tab from the menu bar at the top of the page. Learning plans that are recommended for your position will already be populated here for you.

Tim Acree
National Commissioner Service Training Chair
tim.acree@comcast.net

Maintenance Notice
Version: 09/10/16

Please be advised that maintenance will be performed to the BSA Learn Center (loader training site) on the following days and times:

- Friday, August 12, between 8 - 10 PM CDT
- Friday, August 19, between 8 - 11 PM CDT

As a result, the BSA Learn Center will be intermittently unavailable during this maintenance window. We apologize for any inconvenience.

We Heard You!
Version: 09/04/16

Any applications used on myscouting.org were moved and now available under Legacy Web Tools after selecting the Menu button at the top left corner. No more confusion on where to go to find the tools you need. Additionally, you no longer need to login again to access any applications in my Scouting Tools. Now you have one access for all your Scouting needs.

A new feature under Legacy Web Tools is Manage Member ID. Manage Member ID allows you to add additional member IDs to your account and manage primary settings. Changing primary settings requires you to log out and log back in for it to take effect.

More enhancements are coming. My Scouting Tools is the place to go for all your needs!
4. For Commissioner Training, click the box at the very bottom labeled **Commissioners**. Note that you may have to scroll down if it is not visible in your browser. This has tripped up several folks.

5. Then select the training you wish to take—LDS Commissioner Orientation or Commissioner Tools. For this example, I selected **LDS Commissioner Orientation**.

**Note:** If you are not sure how to navigate, please click the link that says “New to the BSA Learn Center? Click here to view a short video on how it works.” There are three videos that are each less than two minutes that will help you learn how to navigate.

6. In this case, LDS Commissioner Orientation is already in my learning plan. We can determine this because there is no green plus sign by the course name when I hover the mouse over the course title. By clicking on **My Learning**—note the red boxes in the following screenshot; choose either one—we will go to my learning plan. Otherwise, I would click the green plus sign and add it to my learning plan.
7. After clicking on My Learning, my learning plan is displayed. Note I have two offerings in my plan.

8. To start the LDS Commissioner Orientation training, click on **LDS Commissioner Orientation** and the following will be displayed.

9. To launch the course, click on the Launch the Course button (highlighted in the red box in the previous screen shot). This will start the course.
Once you complete the course, your training record will be updated.

To view the Commissioner Tools courses, follow the same process, except select **Commissioner Tools** in steps 5 and 7. If you wish to see all of the courses available in the BSA Learn Center, including those that are not commissioner courses, click on **Course Catalog** in the menu bar at the top of the page. The page shown below will appear. Note the three tabs in the Course Catalog section—Learning Plans, Catalog, and Documentation. You can select a learning plan from that tab and add it your personal learning plan or you can browse course by course by going to the Catalog tab and selecting the course you wish to add. Note that there is also a search capability. The Documentation tab contains pertinent documents that relate to the training.

At the moment, navigation is not yet as elegant as we would like, but Scouting U is working to enhance navigation so users will be able to access the desired training module with fewer clicks. The goal is to have Basic Training for all commissioners available by May 2017.

If you have questions, please don’t hesitate to ask. I am available at tim.acree@comcast.net.

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### Course Catalog

Hover over the Learning Plan name and click the ✉️ to add the learning plan to MyLearning tab. Once you have added a learning plan it will be reflected in My Learning.

If you do not see the ✉️ that means the learning plan is already assigned to you based on your registered position. Select the My Learning tab to start learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Plan</th>
<th>Learning Plan Description</th>
<th>Learning Plan Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Commissioner Tools</td>
<td>Commissioner Tools is a tool available on my Scouting Tools dashboard to assist in performing not-for-profit corporate functions by improving efficiency and easy access of information.</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Crew Advisor - Before the First Meeting</td>
<td>Crew Advisor must assign a name to their leader and send an email to their leaders.</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Crew Advisor - First 30 Days</td>
<td>Crew Advisor - First 30 Days - This lesson is for new advisors and/or advisors and associate advisors during the first 30 days.</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Crew Advisor - Position Trained</td>
<td>This learning plan is designed for trained associate advisors. Associate advisors are trained to carry out the responsibilities of leaders.</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Commissioner Training Update

BSA Learn Center—Commissioner Tools and LDS Commissioner Orientation

The BSA Learn Center has been hosting the Commissioner Tools and LDS Commissioner Orientation training courses since May. So far, almost 700 commissioners have completed the LDS Commissioner Orientation course and more than 9,200 commissioners have completed the Commissioner Tools course.

There have been no complaints about the Commissioner Tools course. However, two issues have arisen with the LDS Commissioner Orientation. The first is dual registration of position code 86. The second is navigation and the number of clicks required to start the training. Both issues have been addressed.

For LDS unit commissioners, position code 86 and dual registration are no longer required to track training completion. Therefore, registrars were notified and the code was decommissioned. The course video will be updated to remove the reference to the code. Several other modifications will be made to make the course easier to use and understand.

To resolve the navigation issue, single sign-on was implemented, which removed the second entry of login credentials and made getting to the BSA Learn Center much easier. Scouting U is working to simplify navigation within the BSA Learn Center even further.

Basic Training

Commissioner training and Scouting U are continuing their work to create online Basic Training focused on on-boarding. Note that instructor-led training will continue to be available on the Commissioner Training page.

As stated previously, the development was divided into three phases:

• **Phase 1** of this project is to migrate the Commissioner Tools and LDS Commissioner Orientation videos to the BSA Learn Center. This has been completed and is working well as noted above.

• **Phase 2** is to leverage some of the content of the current District Operations Basic professional training. The courses have all been reviewed and Scouting U is in the process of updating them. Three of the 16 courses will have to be rewritten due to changes in commissioner service, primarily the implementation of Commissioner Tools and the Unit Service Plan. Work is progressing with a target completion of this work by October.

• **Phase 3** is the creation of new courses that are needed to complete the full complement of commissioner training. The development team members have received training on how to develop courses for the BSA Learn Center and work has started on 14 courses. The goal is to have all online Basic Training available by the 2017 National Annual Meeting.

The Summit 2016

The first two commissioner courses were held at the Summit Bechtel Reserve July 8–10, 2016. The courses were:

• **Commissioners—Giving the BEST Unit Service!**
  The course director was Rick Hillenbrand and faculty were Scott Douglas and Jon Kerr. The course had 11 participants and three faculty.
• **Commissioners—Developing Exciting Roundtables.**
The course director was Kandra Dickerson and the faculty were George Costigan and Dave Lyons. The course had 10 participants and two faculty.

Randy Corgan was the course coordinator for the weekend. While the courses were taught in very large tents on a rainy weekend, the reviews were excellent. Thanks to Kandra, Dave, George, Rick, Scott, Jon, and Randy for their hard work to make these two courses successful.

Please see “2017 Commissioner Course Offerings at the Summit” elsewhere in this newsletter for information about the 2017 courses.

**Dean's Retreat 2016**
The second annual Dean's Retreat was held September 23–25 at the Scouting University facility in Westlake, Texas. There were 18 attendees.

**Commissioners Week 2016**
Commissioners Week at the Philmont Training Center was Week 2, June 12–18. Please see “Report on Commissioner Training at Philmont” elsewhere in this newsletter.

**Commissioners Week 2017**
Commissioners Week at the Philmont Training Center will be Week 1, June 11–17, 2017. The following conferences will be offered:
- Advanced Leadership Skills for Administrative Commissioners
- The Council Commissioner
- Delivering Commissioner Service to Changing Communities
- District Commissioner and Assistant District Commissioner Training
- Effective Roundtables
- The Unit Commissioner

**Florida Sea Base 2017**
A commissioner training conference, Key Concepts of Commissioner Service in Scouting's Second Century, will be held at the Florida Sea Base on January 8–14, 2017. Please see the Florida Sea Base flier for more information, and check out this video.

If you have any questions about commissioner training, please contact Tim Acree, national commissioner support staff chair for training, at tim.acree@comcast.net.
Report on Commissioner Training at Philmont

Commissioners Week at the Philmont Training Center was Week 2, June 12–18. An additional course was offered during Week 11, August 14–20, for those who could not attend Week 2. We had another outstanding year of conferences. Special thanks to our excellent faculty.

The faculty for The Council Commissioner conference was Larry Chase, Miriam Olynick, and Blair Hope. The District Commissioner and Assistant District Commissioner Training conference was conducted by Dave Fornadel and Rick Hillenbrand. Faculty for The Unit Commissioner was Steve Swain and Darlene Sprague. Effective Roundtables was conducted by George Costigan and Emily Campbell. The Advanced Leadership Skills for Administrative Commissioners conference was taught by Jae Engelbrecht, Mike Moegenburg, and Terry Chapman. The Delivering Commissioner Service to Changing Communities faculty was Joe Domino, Espie Randolph, and Tom Hunsaker with some help from Tico Perez and Maria Dahl representing Underserved Markets and Philmont chaplain the Rev. Kerry Cheesman representing religious organizations.

Week 11 Key Concepts of Commissioner Service in Scouting’s Second Century conference faculty was Kresha Alvarado and Kandra Dickerson.

Here are the attendance figures for the year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2 Courses</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Leadership Skills for Administrative Commissioners</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Council Commissioner</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivering Commissioner Service to Changing Communities</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Commissioner and Assistant District Commissioner Training</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Roundtables</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Unit Commissioner</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total for Week 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>103</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 11 Course</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Concepts of Commissioner Service in Scouting’s Second Century</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total for 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>119</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were several events that made Week 2 special. A change that was implemented last year was carried over to this year. The last 45 minutes of each day was used for “end-of-day conferences.” Monday was a Commissioner Tools update, Tuesday was a recognition and training update, Thursday was a commissioner fireside chat with new National Commissioner Charles Dahlquist, and Friday was graduation. These were common sessions for all conferences that allowed for interaction and open discussion.

In several conferences, the question came up about a commission and a discussion ensued about being commissioned, how it was done, and who does it. Unfortunately, many of the commissioners in attendance had never been commissioned! So on Friday, everyone had a most unique experience—all those in attendance were commissioned by the national commissioner!

Under the guidance of instructors George Costigan and Emily Campbell, the Effective Roundtables conference attendees planned and facilitated a model roundtable on the Philmont campus. Using the roundtable guides and commissioner materials, George and Emily showed the participants how roundtable is an integral part of unit service in the district and council. They then helped the participants integrate the various parts of roundtable into a comprehensive program for leaders of Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Venturers, Sea Scouts, and Varsity Scouts.
That roundtable was held for the Sangre de Cristo District of the Great Southwest Council, and participants from New Mexico and Colorado drove in to attend it as their regular roundtable. The course participants also promoted their roundtable to the Philmont staff and students from the other classes offered during Commissioners Week.

Dr. Julie Seton, granddaughter of Scouting pioneer Ernest Thompson Seton, talked about his contributions to Scouting and to wildlife conservation as the model Big Rock Topic for roundtable. Her lecture on the start of the conservation movement and the early history of the Boy Scouts of America was well received. Dr. Seton just released a new book on her grandfather and had copies available for purchase.

The youngest attendee at Philmont was just a few weeks old. Faculty member Emily Campbell delivered future Lion Scout Rowley Montgomery Campbell two weeks before Week 2. With some help from fellow faculty member George Costigan, she remained on faculty for the week. Great dedication!

And finally, this year the world’s most interesting man was seen at Philmont during Week 2.

From left, Julie Seton, Emily Campbell with Rowley Montgomery Campbell, and George Costigan
2017 Commissioner Course Offerings at the Summit

The following commissioner courses will be held June 23–25, 2017, at the John D. Tickle National Training and Leadership Center at the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve. These are weekend courses that start on Friday afternoon and end late Sunday. The cost is $175. To register, go to http://www.summitbsa.org/programs/training/ and click on the orange REGISTER button.

Council Commissioner Retreat—Area commissioners, assistant area commissioners, council commissioners, and professional staff supporting unit service at all experience levels are welcome to attend. This retreat will consist of a guided group discussion of the following topics:

- What is my role as a member of the council Key 3, board member, representative of volunteers and youth, and chief morale officer?
- How do I strengthen my relationship with the district commissioners?
- How do I build my team?
- How do I conduct an effective commissioner cabinet meeting?
- How do I ensure the use of contemporary tools and techniques?
- What does success look like?
- How do I communicate effectively?

The discussion will also address attendees’ most pressing questions.

Commissioner Recruiting Workshop—This course is open to all commissioners. Who doesn’t need more commissioners? This workshop will take you through a process guaranteed to help you recruit more commissioners. Referencing the “Five P’s” for successful recruiting—Preparation, Passion, Potential, Priorities, and Poaching—the course will cover prospecting, building relationships, identifying needs, Friendstorming, and effective recruiting conversations, as well as continuous cultivation. There will be several role-play activities to help you practice a recruiting conversation.

Commissioning in Diverse Neighborhoods—If you are a commissioner serving units in multicultural communities, then this course is for you! Topics will include insights, tools, and resources to help you become more familiar and effective as a district commissioner, assistant district commissioner, or unit commissioner serving diverse units. As communities grow and change, more units are being formed in Scouting’s underserved markets. Many of these units may not have a history with Scouting. You will be able to successfully deliver on the mission of Scouting by better understanding the opportunities these units provide and the challenges they face, as well as the importance of commissioner service to their sustainable success and quality Scouting experience.

If you have any questions, please contact Tim Acree at tim.acree@comcast.net or Chris Smith at christopher.smith@scouting.org.
What Role Do Unit Commissioners Play in Roundtable?

The premise is that if skillfully executed, the roundtable experience should inspire, motivate, and enable unit leaders to provide a stronger program for their Scouts and increase the unit’s Journey to Excellence scores annually.

In my February newsletter article, I laid the groundwork for a sequence of articles to address making sure that we are targeting the premise above most effectively. My May article addressed what makes an effective roundtable experience. This article discusses the unit commissioner’s relationship to roundtable.

Roundtable is where Scouters in the district have an opportunity to interact with each other, learn about BSA policies and procedures, and obtain program materials. The roundtable commissioners must present a program that will make the Scout leaders want to return. Keeping good attendance records and reporting this at district commissioner meetings is important information for unit commissioners.

A unit commissioner has four primary areas of responsibility. One of those is to support unit growth through JTE. Another is to link unit needs to district committee resources. Roundtable, if operating as described in the May 2016 issue of The Commissioner, should be a primary source for accomplishing both of these tasks! Therefore, it is logical that a unit commissioner would see the value of roundtable and want to know whether the leaders of his or her units are regularly attending.

The unit commissioner's role in roundtable attendance is to promote roundtable by letting the leaders in his or her units know where and when roundtable takes place and what they can expect from attending. It is often assumed that leaders know about roundtable and just choose not to attend. In fact, many leaders, especially in the Cub Scouting program where den leadership seems to turn over fairly often, may not be aware of it at all or simply believe that it is just another night away from home with little purpose. The unit commissioner should especially pay attention to units that do not attend roundtable and have a low JTE score that indicates program issues may exist. Perhaps including roundtable in the Unit Service Plan for some units is appropriate to meet assessed needs. And it's a pretty good idea for unit commissioners to visit a roundtable from time to time and even bring a reluctant leader or two with them. It may be especially important for the unit commissioner to engage the leadership of a new unit to attend roundtable, perhaps even taking them for a couple of months to make sure they feel comfortable and welcomed. This type of interaction provides a perfect opportunity for the unit commissioner to practice being a friend, doctor, and counselor. These could be very worthwhile evenings.

The next and last article in this sequence will address roundtable commissioner training opportunities and awards that can be earned. Those of you interested in being able to engage in ongoing conversation with other roundtable commissioners can do so at www.facebook.com/groups/ScoutRTCommish.

Daniel B. Maxfield
National Commissioner Service Roundtable Chair
dbmaxi05@gmail.com
Newest Unit Performance Guide Released

The Unit Performance Guide methodology is the national BSA-approved process for starting and sustaining new units. The Unit Performance Guide, Volume 4 Gold Edition, was introduced by the National Alliances Membership Group at Top Hands in August. The guide includes information on forming units in Scouting, Exploring, and Learning for Life, as well as the 2017 Journey to Excellence standards and requirements. It is the go-to resource for organizing and retaining new packs, troops, teams, crews, ships, posts, clubs, and groups. Click here to download the guide.

Boys’ Life Planning Materials Available

Each year Boys’ Life makes available to councils key planning materials for the coming program year. These materials include the 2016–2017 Unit Commissioner Program Notebook, which is useful for all commissioners, not just unit commissioners. Click here for more information.
# Public Action for Commissioners and Professionals

## Updated May 2016

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- **Ed Yarbrough**  
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## Commissioner Support Team

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
JTE Key Performance Indicators

The Journey to Excellence Key Performance Indicators from August 2016 can be accessed here.
Coming Events

2016

October 17–19
National Executive Board and Committee Meetings
DFW Marriott North, Irving, Texas (invitation only)

2017

January 8–14
Key Concepts of Commissioner Service in Scouting’s Second Century Conference
Florida Sea Base

February 13–15
National Executive Board and Committee Meetings
DFW Marriott North, Irving, Texas (invitation only)

May 24–26
National Annual Meeting and National Executive Board and Committee Meetings
Marriott Orlando World Center, Orlando, Florida

June 11–17
Commissioners Week
Philmont Training Center

July 19–28
National Scout Jamboree
Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve, West Virginia

June 23–25
Commissioner Training: Council Commissioner Retreat, Commissioner Recruiting Workshop, Commissioning in Diverse Neighborhoods
Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve, West Virginia

October 9–11
National Executive Board and Committee Meetings
DFW Marriott North, Irving, Texas (invitation only)

2018

February 12–14
National Executive Board and Committee Meetings
DFW Marriott North, Irving, Texas (invitation only)

May 23–25
National Annual Meeting and National Executive Board and Committee Meetings
Sheraton, Dallas, Texas

October 29–30
National Executive Board and Committee Meetings
DFW Marriott North, Irving, Texas (invitation only)

2019

July 22–August 2
World Scout Jamboree
Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve, West Virginia