

Fall 2018

THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



www.scouting.org/commissioners

National Commissioner's Minute

"Ensuring a great Scouting experience for every member" is my vision for unit service. I think that sums up what we do. We visit units and support and encourage them. We work collaboratively with unit leadership to analyze their strengths and needs. With them, we develop and execute a Unit Service Plan with the help of the district committee. That begins to add up to "ensuring a great Scouting experience" for the youth in that unit. Still, more is needed.

We also support on-time charter renewal so units don't miss a beat in serving kids. We put on effective roundtables where Scouters can share experiences and learn new ways of doing things.

We do all these things at different times during the year and in conjunction with the unit's program. We also pay attention to where we are in Scouting's history.

We are entering a new chapter in the history of the Boy Scouts of America. We are welcoming girls for the first time into packs and troops. I'm excited about that—girls will get to DO what I watched my brother do. Not only will they have the fun of Scouting, but they will also have that great Scouting experience boys have had for 108 years. As commissioners, we have a role to play in starting, sustaining, and growing units. Our role is to ensure that those units are ready and able to serve kids now and into the future.

Now is the time to start those new Scouts BSA troops for girls. I know that February sounds like a long way off, but there are the mid-November through New Year's holidays that distract us all. Additionally, for many of us there will also be charter renewal. I urge each district commissioner corps to join with the membership committees and work together to determine which chartered organizations want to have a troop for girls and begin to start the process outlined in the *Unit Performance Guide*. It is the commissioner's role to make sure those new units start off on balanced footing and are positioned to serve kids for years to come. Don't forget to insist on having a new member coordinator—they are an important key to unit success.

Every article in this newsletter contains information to help you. Kevin Baker has tips on recruiting that adequate number of commissioners. John Cherry writes about developing commissioners. Darlene Sprague has information on tools to use that were created for this organizing process. Scott McKenzie



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shows you how to focus your roundtables in support of starting units. Mike Moegenburg's article will help you communicate with other commissioners, other Scouters, and those units you are establishing. Rick Hillenbrand's tech article zeroes in on the BeAScout pin. Larry Chase talks about work that's been done to help your National Commissioner Service Team support you most effectively.

It is an exciting time—and it is going to be a busy time as well. I know you are up to it. Let's get out there and get started!



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Simple and Unified

Your National Commissioner Service Team was created to serve you, the BSA's commissioners, and help you focus on serving *units* and enabling them to better serve more youth through Scouting.

Simple and unified is a phrase that has had special meaning to your team. Throughout its 10-year existence, it has sought to develop a simple and unified approach to *unit* service. The result has been better, more accessible training, expanded resources and reference tools, tools and techniques to use in recruiting and recognizing commissioners, improved technology that enables commissioners to work more efficiently and effectively, improved resources for roundtable commissioners, and the replacement of lengthy task lists and position descriptions with a focus on just five things and a process of assessment, planning, and execution.

Over the last few months your team has engaged in assessment and planning to renew its focus. Eight areas on which it does—or should—have an impact have been identified (commissioner recruitment and retention, commissioner development, commissioner resources, marketing and communications, program support, roundtable, technology, and unit growth and retention). Increasing diversity and inclusion must be a shared responsibility of each.

Significant strengths and important needs were identified in each area. A common need for increased collaboration among unit commissioners and the unit leaders they serve was confirmed, as well as a need for increased partnership between commissioners and the BSA's operating committees. Some adjustments in your team's structure have been made (you'll learn more about that in another article) and each member of the team developed a limited number of goals that will be our primary focus over the next several months. You'll find summaries of those goals elsewhere in this issue, and we'll provide periodic updates on our progress. As already announced, in at least one area (roundtable), we'll be working with other commissioned professionals and volunteers using the Polaris Method to achieve our goals. More than 60 volunteers are already at work helping the team execute its plans. More volunteers will be needed and, as we proceed with execution, we may find additional team members will be needed, too.

Starting, sustaining, and growing units will be a common theme over the coming year. We had real growth in new units last year, there are promising trends for 2018, and family Scouting will require that we do more and even better work in the future. It presents a wonderful opportunity to partner with our fellow membership growth volunteers.

The single, greatest need we face is recruiting an adequate number of unit commissioners. Even greater focus and creativity will be needed there.

Your service team has completed a significant assessment and planning effort; it is now focused on execution. We look forward to working together with you and supporting your efforts to enable units to better serve more youth through Scouting. Our success will ensure that every member of the BSA has a great Scouting experience!

On the uptrail ...



Larry Chase
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Welcome, Mike Moegenburg!



Mike Moegenburg

Your National Commissioner Service Team has a new member: Mike Moegenburg has joined as marketing and communications chair.

Communications was recognized as an area in which your team needed to have an impact back in 2012 when Rick Hillenbrand was asked to join as communications chair. Shortly after that, Rick took on the added responsibility of supporting the development and

implementation of Commissioner Tools, and his technology-related responsibilities have only increased since then. Rick has done extraordinary work as the communications chair, but his combined responsibilities were no longer a reasonable workload. Rick will now be able to focus on technology as the commissioner technology chair.

Mike Moegenburg has been instrumental in developing a new approach to promoting our national conferences and impact sessions that resulted in higher registration rates by commissioners than we've seen in several years. He has helped your team consider new approaches to how it communicates more effectively and in a more timely manner with you. And he's only getting started.

Mike has been in Scouting most of his life. An Eagle Scout, like many of us he returned to Scouting and became a den leader when his son turned 7 and joined Scouting. Since then, he has led both a pack and a troop, been involved in training, and served as a unit commissioner. He currently serves as an assistant council commissioner for the Bay-Lakes Council.

Mike has seen the power of transformation at his employer, Acuity Insurance, where moving from a 1950s management approach to a culture of empowerment has produced extraordinary results. Mike serves as Acuity's director of commercial lines product development.

Many of you have been seeing Mike's work over the last several months in emails that have provided you with information about commissioner training opportunities. Those of you who have been engaged with our various commissioner social media channels have seen his increasing involvement there as well.

When you have an opportunity to meet Mike, thank him for all he has already done, and will be doing, to ensure your service team provides you with accurate, timely information that will help you help unit leaders better serve more youth through Scouting.

Welcome, Gary Carroll



Gary Carroll

Your National Commissioner Service Team has another new member: Gary Carroll has joined the team as its staff advisor, a role critical to its continuing success.

Gary serves as the team lead for the Western Region BSA Growth Group. He is passionate about serving youth and families from all communities and ensuring that all young people have an opportunity to experience the promise of Scouting.

Gary began his career as a district executive in Bethesda, Maryland. A self-described "camp kid," he spent 15 years on summer camp staff and provided leadership for Goshen Scout Reservation, including administration of the annual \$3 million operating budget. In 2015, he was selected to serve as a field director in the Cascade Pacific Council. Recently, he was promoted to his new position at the BSA's national service center. In this position, he and the Western Region growth coaches provide "boots on the ground" support in focus councils, formulating growth messages and sharpening our workforce's skills in recruiting new youth and adults into Scouting.

Gary is a Vigil Honor member of the Order of the Arrow.



The Importance of Communication As You Start a New Unit

Better communication makes starting a unit easier. Commissioners need to share the important role good communication plays as we start units and how it makes life easier for the new unit leaders. Think about this quote from Lord Baden-Powell:

“A fisherman does not bait his hook with food he likes. He uses food the fish likes. So with boys.”

These words are as relevant today as they were when they were spoken. We want to catch new Scouts for these new units. We need to think of what a Scout wants to hear about the adventure we are inviting them to join. We also want to think of what a Scout parent is concerned about so that we can bring them onboard as well. Today, we talk about focusing on our customers. I like Lord Baden-Powell’s words. I feel he was a great communicator.

The best question to coach your units to answer is: “What’s in it for me?”

If a unit can answer that question for a Scout and his or her family, there is a really good chance to bring them all into the program.

Another question families will want the unit to answer is: “What are you doing for the rest of the school year?”

A unit calendar with every meeting and activity mapped out communicates to families when to plan for Scout time in their year. Distributing a calendar also reduces conflicts and increases attendance down the road.

Recruiting a new member coordinator is also part of your unit’s communication plan. New members have questions and they often don’t know where to turn, and the other leaders seem so busy at the meetings. But new member coordinators answer these questions and do so much more. They help communicate that the new members are welcome and valued members of the unit.

Enthusiasm is another key thing we want our unit leaders to communicate. Authentic enthusiasm is contagious and is something that draws Scouts into the program. It also brings their family into the program. Be sure everyone knows that you are excited for the upcoming Scout year and can’t wait to get started. I know I am!



Mike Meogenburg
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Marketing and Communications Goals

I am excited for the opportunity to serve as the marketing and communications chair. The service team spent time over the summer focusing on how best to serve you, and I joined that process on September 1. The major marketing and communications goals that came out of the process are as follows:

- Create a team to create and manage all commissioner marketing and communications.
- Create a social media content calendar so that our communication can be more intentional.
- Increase awareness of weeklong national conferences at Florida Sea Base and Philmont Training Center as well as commissioner impact sessions.
- Address new initiatives.

In this issue of *The Commissioner*, we will report on the progress and plans for marketing and communication.



Commissioner Resources for Starting a New Unit

There are several resources commissioners can use when working with new units.

The methodology for starting new units is spelled out in the *Unit Performance Guide* and should be used by the team working on establishing a new unit. This activity begins with the district commissioner as part of the team. The *Unit Performance Guide* mentions using the **Council Market Analysis Report** to determine the right location for a new unit. This report can be obtained by the Scout executive.

Once a new-unit commissioner is assigned, he or she will work with the unit to get it going. Chapter 3 in the *Unit Performance Guide* guides the team in building the unit. Additionally, enlisting the help of a volunteer in the role of new member coordinator will help in welcoming new families into the unit. Resources for new member coordinators can be found at <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/councils/new-member-coordinator/>.

The new-unit commissioner can make use of the publication *Selecting Cub Scout Leadership*, No. 510-500, to help in volunteer recruitment. When selecting a chartered organization representative, the publication *The Chartered Organization Representative Guidebook*, No. 511-421, will be helpful.

The new-unit commissioner will use **Commissioner Tools** to enter the contacts and create a Unit Service Plan once the unit is registered. **Member Manager** in *my.Scouting* displays all of the members of the unit with their positions and contact information and can be used to create a printed roster.

The new-unit commissioner should be familiar with the **BSA Learn Center** to help new leaders obtain the required training for their volunteer position. Using **Training Manager** in *my.Scouting* will help the new-unit commissioner keep track of training progress for the new unit volunteers.

Resources Goals

As part of the National Commissioner Service Team, the resources chair provides some of the necessary resources for commissioners in the field, such as the commissioner manuals. This position also involves updating the Commissioners website, editing *The Commissioner* newsletter, working with www.scoutshop.org to offer commissioner apparel and accessories, and distributing some analytical reports. In setting some goals for the coming year, I have been asked to add a new dimension to this position: providing more analytics to the commissioners in the field; in other words, taking data that is available and analyzing the effect commissioners have on serving our units and leaders.

The goals for the resources chair are:

- Create a team of commissioners to evaluate, develop, and process analytics that are needed by all levels of commissioners in all regions, areas, and councils. The



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Information in helping the unit establish a budget can be found at www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/program-planning-tools/.

And finally, recognition can be earned for starting the unit. There are two awards: the **Founders' Bar** and the **William D. Boyce New-Unit Organizer Award**.

team will be built with a cross section of commissioners in all regions.

- Update all the pages on the Commissioners website with the most up-to-date information and remove obsolete information.
- Work with the National Commissioner Service Team to publish at least three issues of *The Commissioner* newsletter each year.
- Work with the National Commissioner Service Team to update the manual modules, certificates, and forms needed by commissioners in the field.
- Continue to respond to requests for information from commissioners across the country.



Questions and Answers

I have heard the phrase “Glue and Grease”; what does this mean?

In the May issue of *The Commissioner*, our new national commissioner, Ellie Morrison, introduced the Glue and Grease concept and challenged all commissioners to earn the patch she developed.

“So I have a challenge for you—we need more people in commissioner service and we need new member coordinator teams within units to work toward the same goals we are pursuing. This is the challenge:

1. If you successfully recruit, register, and get trained one person new to commissioner service and have them log in one visit in Commissioner Tools
2. AND if you successfully encourage a unit to recruit, register, and get trained at least one new member coordinator, you are eligible for the *Glue and Grease* patch.

Email Ellie Morrison at esmorrison@sbcglobal.net the names of those individuals and your snail mail address. After checking the records, we'll send you a patch.”

And Ellie reports:

Congratulations to Tim Moss of the Atlanta Area Council! He is the newest commissioner to earn the Glue and Grease patch. You can earn it too.

To earn the patch, Tim recruited, registered, and trained one person new to commissioner service and encouraged a troop to recruit, register, and get trained a new member coordinator.

New members of commissioner service and new member coordinators are both critical to the success of our mission—to support and retain units.

Please send Ellie Morrison the names of those you recruit, register, and train for commissioner service and the name of the individual your unit recruits, registers, and trains as a new member coordinator.

There's a patch in it for you!



Commissioner College Schedule

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

Please check the list, found on the [Upcoming Commissioner Colleges 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.



Using Technology When Starting a Unit

Congratulations! A new Scouting unit is about to form locally. This article is intended to provide the commissioners serving units on the use of technology when a unit is starting.

First, we must recognize that until a unit is formed, the unit and its members do NOT have the ability to use most BSA applications, but there are exceptions. One of the early steps in the formation of a unit is the identification of unit leaders, some or all of whom might not yet be registered Scout leaders, but that is OK. Even individuals who are not registered leaders can go to [my.Scouting](#) and take the following two important technology-based actions: create an account using the blue Create Account button on the [my.Scouting](#) login page and then take Youth Protection training online through the BSA Learn Center.

As a commissioner, we can act as a trusted advisor to instruct the leaders for the soon-to-be new unit that there are two primary ways to access BSA technology: Traditional web-based processes are available using a laptop or desktop computer and there is a mobile platform-based approach for Apple (iOS) or Android users.

When advising people about technology, it is suggested that you do not assume either a level of technology expertise or equipment “currency.” Most technology has minimum system requirements, and people need to make sure that their equipment meets or exceeds those requirements. For example, [my.Scouting](#) has the following note on the login page: “This site will not work properly if you don’t have the latest version of Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Safari and Internet Explorer (v11). Internet Explorer requires compatibility mode be turned off.”

At the time of this writing, all new users of [my.Scouting](#) have to create their account using the web-based portal (i.e., on a computer). The [myScouting](#) mobile app does not currently allow a user to create a [my.Scouting](#) account, but that is an enhancement that will be coming in the not-too-distant future. However, once new users have created a [my.Scouting](#) account and received their credentials, they can use the mobile app, which many younger folks (and those who don’t like to travel with a bulky laptop) prefer. People might ask questions like, “How do I get the [myScouting](#) mobile app?” to which you, as a “tech-savvy” commissioner, would reply, “For an Android device through the Google Play Store, and for an Apple device through the Apple Store.” With an established [my.Scouting](#) account, even a soon-to-be registered leader without any registered BSA position can use the mobile app to update his or her profile and access the BSA Learn Center to take Youth Protection training.

The BIG day arrives, the unit becomes “official,” and the registrar has entered it into the BSA’s system. Once it’s official, but not before (for good reasons), the unit can start using [Scoutbook](#) as its unit management software. [Scoutbook](#) works well either from your computer or on most mobile devices. Effective January 1, 2019, [Scoutbook](#) will be free to all units. [Scoutbook](#)’s easy-to-use advancement tracking directly uses the BSA’s advancement database of record. It also has a unit calendar with attendance and reminder functions; the ability to track service hours and hiking and camping trips; and the ability to communicate with the families of a unit’s Scouts via either email or text messages. (Expert trick: Today practically everyone has a cellphone that can send and receive text messages. Even if the Scout’s or Scouter’s



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“connection” doesn’t have a bona fide email address, did you know that with most phone providers you can send a simple email directly to their phone? Different domains are used with different service providers, but as an example, for a cellphone with 999-888-7777 as the number, for AT&T you would send an email to 9998887777@mms.att.net, and for Verizon you would send an email to 9998887777@vtext.com.)

And then there is the [my.Scouting](#) suite. The first step that a new leader needs to do is establish their council name and member ID by going into [my.Scouting](#) and accessing the **Manage Member ID** function (found under **Legacy Web Tools**). Often a newly registered leader does not know their member ID, but YOU, as the unit commissioner, can go into **Member Manager** for the unit in [my.Scouting](#) and get a list of all the registered member IDs for the entire unit! With the new leader’s member ID entered into [my.Scouting](#), the leader will have access to several key applications and capabilities, depending on their unit role.

As a commissioner, you can help familiarize your unit leaders with the key [my.Scouting](#) applications that they need to be familiar with (beyond the BSA Learn Center):

- **Organization Manager**—Verify and edit the unit’s organizational information as needed on the Details tab, then go to the Settings tab to add details—including whether the unit accepts boys, girls, or both—and select options that will be used in [my.Scouting](#)’s online registration capability including the family program options that display on the unit’s BeAScout pin.
- **BeAScout** (found under Legacy Web Tools)—This is where the unit personalizes its BeAScout unit pin information using the Unit Pin Management tab.
- **Invitation Manager**—For the management of youth and adult leads, regardless of source. This is where internet inquiries



from BeAScout.org can be found. This is also where leaders can generate micro-URLs and QR codes for use on fliers and other unit publicity. An electronic application to join the unit can be sent directly to a lead from within Invitation Manager. Invitation Manager sends regular reports to unit and district leaders about leads that have not been closed.

- **Application Manager**—For the processing of applications for youth and, if your council permits, adults. If the council fees have been paid, once the appropriate approvals have been made, a new member receives several welcoming emails and their record can be immediately found in Member Manager (and Training Manager if an adult). Application Manager also sends regular reports to unit and district leaders about leads that have not been closed.
- **Organization Security Manager**—Through the Organization Details tab, the Organization Security Manager allows the establishment of roles for different registered leaders in the unit, including the delegation of some Key 3 functions within *my.Scouting*.
- **Member Manager**—Provides rosters and reports with contact information and member ID numbers for both youth and adult members of the unit. Depending on the user's privileges (such as a unit Key 3), it may be possible to edit and update individuals' profile information, such as contact information.
- **Training Manager**—This important tool allows the Key 3 to monitor the training status of the unit's adults. It provides pie charts and individual training details and creates reports about Youth Protection training and the general training status of the adults in the unit. The report function of this application is especially helpful when trying to help leaders determine what training they need to yet complete to be considered position-specific trained.

In addition to the above BSA technology-based information that you can help your new unit with, there are many other technological ways you can provide your unit commissioner service help and advice; however, one topic that should definitely be discussed is social media. Many units have a web presence, or at least a Facebook page. You should make your unit aware of the fact that the BSA has social media guidelines, which can be found at <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/social-media/social-media-guidelines/>.

Technology Goals

Without an objective, how will you know when you have arrived? Specific to commissioner technology and myself, in no particular order, we have established the following primary goals:

- Deploy a revised web and mobile-based Commissioner Tools 2.0.
- Review and revise the Commissioner Tools requirements document after the full deployment of Commissioner Tools 2.0.
- On an annual basis, modify, disseminate, and implement within the application revisions required to Commissioner Tools unit contact forms as soon after January 1 as practicable in support of Journey to Excellence annual revisions.
- Recruit additional Commissioner Technology Focus Group team members with an eye toward increasing team diversity.
- With the assistance of a special commissioner focus group, create a clear description of what role commissioners should have with respect to charter renewal.



Technology for the New Commissioner

Because we are always recruiting new commissioners, periodically it is appropriate to review the technology that is available to commissioners. As much as some of us are very comfortable with technology, not all commissioners are “tech savvy” AND THAT IS OK; you don’t have to be a technology guru to be a commissioner. Some commissioners function very effectively without the benefit of personally using technology; yes, there still are some commissioners who work with a pen or pencil and a notebook. But even the commissioner who is technologically “shy” can take advantage of technology with the help of a more technologically adept assistant. For example, Commissioner Tools was specifically designed to allow unit contacts to be logged “on behalf of” a commissioner by another commissioner or professional. But where do you start and what do you need to know as a minimum?

First, if you don't already have a *my.Scouting* account, read the portion on how to create one in the article “Using Technology When Starting a New Unit” elsewhere in this issue of *The Commissioner*, including establishing your role as a commissioner using the Manage Member ID legacy web application.

The primary commissioner application that you may find yourself using is **Commissioner Tools**. Commissioner Tools gives commissioners and professionals the ability to plan and log unit contacts (known as Simple and Detailed Assessments*), review high-level unit membership and training information, and plan and log roundtables. Additionally, administrative commissioners have the ability to assign commissioners to and remove them from units and to review summary information about commissioner contacts. Commissioner Tools also has a plethora of built-in reports, but if you really want to impress your peers, you should learn how to use and create some of the Power Pivot Table analytical tools. More information on Power Pivot Tables can be found at www.scouting.org/commissioners/tools/inst-for-creating-advanced-power-pivot-table/.

* Note: Unit Service Plans are created and managed through the Detailed Assessment process.

Referring again to “Using Technology When Starting a New Unit,” commissioners also have the ability to access Commissioner Tools by going to <https://my.scouting.org> on your computer or via the *myScouting* mobile app. When using the *myScouting* mobile app, click on the commissioner logo in the lower right-hand corner to open Commissioner Tools. For those commissioners who might have more than one member ID, the commissioner icon in the *myScouting* mobile app only displays if your commissioner member ID has been selected as Primary.

Because you are a commissioner, you have also been granted access to both **Training Manager** and **Member Manager**, both accessed via *my.Scouting*. These allow you to look at the records for any individual in any unit in the council. Commissioners also have the ability to add training for any registered leader under their organizational purview in Training Manager (except themselves); this is a special privilege that must be used with the greatest of discretion and must not be abused.

While Scoutbook is considered unit management software, as a unit-serving commissioner you can gain tremendous insight into your unit—particularly the advancement progress of the youth—

and stay more closely connected overall if the unit adds you to its leader roster as unit commissioner.

Without significant discussion, other important technology resources commissioners who are just starting out might want to consider becoming familiar with include the following:

- The BSA’s primary webpage: www.scouting.org/. Organized into the following major topics (click Menu at the right of the page):
 - Scouting Programs
 - Training
 - Scouting Safely
 - Scouting Resources
 - Awards
 - Outdoor Programs
 - About the BSA
- Commissioners: www.scouting.org/commissioners/
- The official BSA Newsroom: www.scoutingnewsroom.org/
- Social media
 - Official BSA Facebook page: www.facebook.com/theboyscoutsofamerica/
 - Official commissioner’s Facebook page: www.facebook.com/CommissionersOfTheBoyScoutsOfAmerica/
 - Commissioner Service (Boy Scouts of America) unofficial Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/bsa.commissioners/
 - BSA Roundtable Commissioners Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/ScoutRTCommish/
 - Commissioner Training—BSA Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/1976324522626471/
 - LinkedIn Commissioners Group: www.linkedin.com/groups/92833
 - Yahoo Groups Scout Commissioner Corner: https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Scout_Commissioner/info
- Scouting Wire is the official blog of the Scouting movement (<https://scoutingwire.org/>). You can subscribe to have postings sent directly to your email.
- Bryan on Scouting, aka “Bryan’s Blog,” is a blog for the BSA’s adult leaders and is the official blog of Scouting magazine (<https://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/>). You can subscribe to have daily postings sent directly to your email.
- Scout Shop: www.scoutshop.org/
- The official YouTube channel of the BSA: www.youtube.com/user/BSA100years



Recruiting Enough Commissioners for New Units and Putting the Right Commissioner With a New Unit

My article in the spring edition of *The Commissioner* focused on recruiting volunteers and new leaders. I invite you to take another look at that article for more tips on recruiting volunteers.

Welcoming girls into Cub Scouting is well underway, and girls will be welcomed into Scouts BSA February 1, 2019. Timelines are being developed by councils through their professional staff and volunteers. Personally, I've been involved in many conversations about different scenarios to make transitions as smooth as possible. These scenarios vary:

- Existing resources/units
- New girl dens
- New girl packs
- Linked troops where committees have the resources to develop new troops for girls
- New stand-alone troops for girls
- And what it may look like a year from now:
 - As we near the end of 2019 and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints ceases to be a chartered organization, we want to ensure that every Scouter and Scout who has the desire to stay in Scouting has the opportunity to join an existing unit or a new unit formed by families of an existing church unit, whichever is the “right fit.”

I want to echo the quote from our national commissioner, Ellie Morrison, in this edition of our newsletter: “Ensuring a great Scouting experience for every member.” We all need to “own” this and do what we can to make it happen. Unit service from an engaged commissioner can mean everything to a unit, especially new unit leaders, but not to the exclusion of seasoned leaders either.

The challenge remains the same: **We need more commissioners to help coach and mentor unit leaders** in our mission to “ensure a great Scouting experience for every member.” We were all new leaders—once upon a time—and we can't forget what that was like. We were all looking to someone else to help us along the way. And while we are working toward finding that “adequate number,” some reallocation of resources could be the best short-term option. Reallocation of existing commissioners to work with new units as they form will make the effort more successful. New units won't be sustainable without a solid base of support as they form, storm, norm, and perform. This includes a new-unit commissioner and support from membership, training, and other operating committees of the council and districts.

From a volunteering perspective and to get the job done, it takes more people. People are less likely to take on long-term commitments. However, short-term commitments are very likely and especially when people get to choose what they want to do. Breaking down the big tasks into smaller pieces takes time and purpose. I would hope that commissioner corps from the council to the district are taking the time and effort to develop and maintain recruiting plans.



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It's an ongoing process. What's your plan?

- What is your goal?
- Who will do the recruiting?
- Who do you recruit?
- How will you measure progress?
- When do you start? NOW!
- What skills and tools do you need?

Identify the untapped group of volunteers—alumni groups—who still may want to serve but just need to be asked through a personal invitation. And please, ask only for what is realistic and be compelling when you ask. You're more likely to hear “Sure, I can do that.” Then help them get started and stay engaged. Sometimes, just knowing you are a resource is enough to keep a commissioner engaged.



Recruiting and Retention Goals

How do you feed 20 with just a box of spaghetti and five meatballs? Not very well. The same goes for 20 units and just five unit-serving commissioners. Recruiting and engaging volunteers to commissioner service will “feed” a lot more. Unit service supports unit leaders in delivering quality program. Quality program attracts youth and parents. Commissioners support the process.

I’ve identified strengths and needs with input from our team that will serve to guide our recruitment and retention objectives. In terms of strengths, we have a very dedicated base of commissioners in all areas of service. We just need a lot more of you! The commissioners in the BSA are largely very dedicated and engaged. Passion in Scouting drives and influences that level of engagement. We know that in a volunteer-led organization, it takes a lot of volunteers to make things work—to be the best partners we can be to the professional we work with and do our best to ensure that every unit offers a top-quality program. We all want the best possible experience for the youth we serve.

The goals specific to recruitment and retention are:

- Establish and publish guidelines for a five-step process for making a compelling ask to someone to volunteer.
- Establish processes to identify and transfer LDS commissioners with the desire to continue in Scouting.
- Develop and distribute reference materials on why people volunteer that can be used to identify and recruit candidates for unit service.
- Challenge administrative commissioners to increase their local commissioner corps by 1 percent.
- Identify and recruit a diverse range of qualified volunteers that increases this team by at least two.

Let’s all get behind this effort and recruit more volunteers as unit-serving commissioners.



Commissioner Development

I am truly excited to serve as your commissioner development chair. It has been quite a journey over the last 150 days! I have had the opportunity to meet many new people and am looking forward to the opportunity to meet many more of you. It has been a time to renew existing relationships and forge new ones.

The service team spent time over the summer focusing on how best to serve you. To that end, the commissioner development team has the following major goals:

- Build a diverse team to manage all commissioner training curriculum. We plan to shift curriculum updates from a “project-based” methodology to an “ongoing update” methodology.
- Deliver a series of effective weeklong national conferences at Florida Sea Base and Philmont Training Center.
- Deliver a series of meaningful weekend impact sessions, with at least one in each region.
- Address new initiatives.

In this article, we will expand on the discussion of training, learning, and development. Elsewhere in this newsletter, we report on the progress and plans for impact sessions and highlight the 2019 national conference offerings.

Training, Learning, and Development

Earlier this year we highlighted the relationship between training, learning, and development. This concept represents a mindset of expanding our perspective on training. You will notice that we changed the name of this group from “commissioner training” to “commissioner development” to recognize this expanded perspective.

Training is the giving of information and knowledge; *learning* involves absorbing that information to increase skills and be able to apply them in a variety of situations; *development* is a process through which Scouting’s volunteers can learn and grow.

Development is a continuous cycle of training, learning, and applying new skills. *Development* is a continuous cycle of building relationships with other individuals and teams. *Development* is the continuous cycle of improving our performance in our current roles, taking on new roles, and letting go of old roles. Responsibility for *development* is shared by the individual, the leader, the influencer, the organization, and perhaps others.

We want to ensure that every commissioner has the opportunity to develop themselves. We will make this opportunity available by providing relevant curriculum for basic training and the College of Commissioner Science, by offering effective national conferences, and by offering meaningful impact sessions across the country.



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Commissioner Impact Sessions

Impact sessions were introduced in 2018 as a development opportunity for commissioners. Each session focuses on a specific topic and gives participants the opportunity to have an immediate impact. These sessions are offered in a weekend format in locations across the United States. Impact sessions offer national level training and interaction with our national commissioner and members of the National Commissioner Service Team with a reduced investment of time and resources.

The impact session concept has proven to be effective!

There were four impact sessions in 2018.



March, Southern Region—Relationships



May, Northeast Region—Applying Technology to Unit Service



August, Central Region—Delivering a Great Commissioner College

By the time you read this, our last 2018 session, Recruiting and Engaging Commissioners, will be taking place.

We have evaluated the feedback for the 2018 impact sessions and plans are underway to offer at least four impact sessions in 2019. We will continue to refine the content and delivery of these sessions as we move forward.

The first 2019 impact session is titled Starting, Sustaining, and Growing Units. This session is scheduled for March 29–30 in Salt Lake City. A great team of highly skilled volunteers and professionals is preparing to develop and deliver this new session. We will share registration information as soon as it is available.

We are finalizing locations, dates, and content for the other 2019 sessions and will share that information on all communication channels.

Make plans to attend an impact session to give yourself the opportunity to grow and have an impact!



National Commissioner Conferences



Second Century Service conference at Philmont Training Center

This is typically the issue of the newsletter where we celebrate the success of a summer season of great national commissioner conferences. 2018 may be remembered as the year that mostly wasn't. We had the unprecedented closure of many programs at Philmont Scout Ranch that caused cancellation of six commissioner conferences at Philmont Training Center. We planned to offer two conferences at the Summit Bechtel Reserve, but those were canceled due to low registration.

We were able to offer the Second Century Service conference at PTC July 29–August 4. This conference was well-attended, and the participant feedback suggested that this was a great experience.

While we were disappointed that 2018 saw a limited number of offerings, we are very excited to announce our national conference plans for 2019.

Florida Sea Base

Second Century Service—Provides all commissioners with the most current information on their continually changing environment, as well as the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to have impact.

This conference will be offered January 13–19, 2019. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Philmont Training Center

Commissioners Week returns to Philmont Training Center June 9–15, 2019, with six conferences:

Strengthening Council Unit Service—Provides council commissioners and those who support them with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to confidently fulfill their responsibilities.

Strengthening District Unit Service—Ensures a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of district and assistant district commissioners.

Strengthening Unit Service—Guides participants in learning what unit commissioners do when working with their units.

Second Century Service—Provides all commissioners with the most current information on their continually changing environment, as well as the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to have impact.

Starting, Sustaining, and Growing Units (NEW in 2019)—Prepares commissioners, membership team volunteers, and commissioned professionals to work together to establish the units needed to serve youth and empower those units to grow and thrive.

Recruiting and Engaging Commissioners (NEW in 2019)—Provides tips, techniques, and best practices to develop and execute a plan to recruit and engage the commissioners needed to effectively serve every unit. It also enables participants to expand their network of Scouting resources.

Conference weeks at PTC offer added value through mini-sessions offered after lunch and before conferences resume on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. During Commissioners Week, a variety of these sessions will be offered.

For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Our national commissioner and members of the National Commissioner Service Team will not be serving as faculty members during Commissioners Week. However, they will be available all week and will be visiting each conference throughout the week to interact with participants and present a variety of core content sessions. They will also support a technology lab that will be open during off-hours throughout the week to enable participants to learn more about and practice using the applications available to commissioners.

Along the way at every conference at PTC, participants will be able to see how Philmont Scout Ranch delivers unique high-adventure opportunities that provide life-changing experiences for youth. You can bring the entire family so they can experience the magic of Philmont through its great family programs.

Every one of our national commissioner training conferences is unique and special, and a visit to our national high-adventure bases is an opportunity every commissioner should experience at least once.

Pick a conference, register today, and be prepared to help your units better serve more youth through Scouting!



Focusing Roundtables to Support Volunteers Starting New Units

What should we do at our local roundtables to make sure every member has a great Scouting experience? The answer to this question is very simple to describe, but it is more difficult to implement. The first priority for determining what we do at roundtable is to determine the local needs of the units. This can be done in many different ways.

Roundtables should always focus first and foremost on meeting those local unit needs. The local roundtable team should know better than anyone else what the local units' needs are that will help them provide the best possible programs for the local youth.

Identify your local unit needs by focusing on what the boys and girls in the dens and packs need and what the young men and young women in the troops and crews need. Then focus on what the local Scouting leaders need to be successful in meeting the needs of their respective youth.

As we enter this new and exciting chapter of the Boy Scouts of America, we need to deliver roundtables that are more flexible, more efficient, and more effective in supporting our unit leaders by providing program ideas, relationship development, and timely communication for all unit leaders, but especially leaders starting new units.

Roundtable commissioners need to look at how to best support local leaders starting new units in their service area. As new units are formed to support the family Scouting program, we have some new people coming to roundtables. Are you ready to think outside of the traditional ways you have been providing roundtables?

We have always had optional roundtable breakout sessions for various groups of leaders in the Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing programs. Now is the time to consider creating a new separate breakout session for new unit leaders. This is a great opportunity for the roundtable team to support all volunteers starting new units.

Can you remember what it was like when you held your first unit meeting as a new leader? Imagine if you would have had a separate breakout session at roundtable that you could have attended while you were forming a new unit or while you were preparing for your first unit meeting.

This is an excellent opportunity for the roundtable teams to be proactive in meeting the needs of this population of unit leaders—those volunteers starting new units and those unit leaders who need help in providing the best possible program for that first year.

These breakout sessions for new leaders can be the most important type of unit service that you can provide in support of both new leaders in established units and new leaders in units that have been recently chartered.



Scott McKenzie
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Roundtable Chair
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You might ask, “Where do I find the materials to present during this breakout session?” The materials for this are all around you. Select local coaches and mentors who can best describe how they survived their first year. How did they overcome the obstacles of being a new leader or the challenges of being in a newly chartered unit?

In the last issue of *The Commissioner*, we talked about following the precepts contained in the most recent *Unit Performance Guide*, which can be found at <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/new-unit-development/unit-performance/>. The *Unit Performance Guide* is still one of your primary resources that can be used to follow proven new-unit best practices.

The time is now for roundtables to start training leaders for new Scouts BSA troops for girls and to continue to train new unit leaders for packs of boys and girls and packs for girls. We are entering a new era of Scouting, and roundtables need to be on the cutting edge, so think about how you can make your roundtables more flexible, more efficient, and more effective in meeting the needs of your local units, especially newly chartered units.

Our youth cannot have a successful program without support for our unit-level leaders.

Thank you for all of your time and service to Scouting!



Roundtable Goals

The National Commissioner Service Team has been working on some exciting goals to improve the roundtable program that we would like to share with you. These are:

- Improve and diversify the roundtable team representation at the national level.
- Strengthen relationships with key professionals and volunteers at all levels to improve the coordination and implementation of roundtables.
- Conduct an assessment of the current and future mission of roundtables to develop best-practice models that will enable stakeholders to increase the flexibility, effectiveness, and efficiency of the roundtable program.
- Create a timely process for the production and dissemination of the roundtable support materials that will allow continuous updates and online user access to the materials.

- Develop roundtable operations and program materials that can be individually tailored to meet the local unit needs and that empower local unit leaders to provide appropriate and valuable Scouting program materials to their youth.
- Promote the use of the roundtable options in Commissioner Tools and use this data and other surveys to better measure the effectiveness of the roundtable program.

These goals will be met through multiple methodologies, including a Roundtable Breakthrough project utilizing the Polaris Method that is further discussed in this section of the newsletter.

Roundtable Breakthrough Project Underway

by Larry Chase

Elsewhere in this newsletter you learned about your National Commissioner Service Team's commitment to developing a simple and unified approach to *unit* service.

Effectively delivering the key elements of effective roundtables such as continuous program training, delivery and collection of information, and development of a network of Scouting contacts had been a part of that work for some time. This included the development of roundtable planning guides and a national conference on delivering effective roundtables.

As we've continued to listen to our volunteers and professionals, however, feedback has continued to indicate that more is needed to better meet the needs of both current and future BSA leaders. We've heard, "We want roundtables to be more flexible" and "We want roundtables to make more efficient use of our time" and "I don't have time for roundtables; just give me the information I need in a way I want to receive it." We agree; more work is needed and that is one of the reasons we made delivering effective roundtables (or effectively delivering the objectives of roundtables) one of our national objectives for unit service.

The BSA has also been exploring opportunities to simplify and streamline and has adopted a new methodology, the Polaris Method, to enable volunteers and professionals to work collaboratively to find ways to do the work of Scouting better

and faster. The Polaris Method is aligned with your team's simple and unified approach: Time is precious; our commitment to serving youth is clear; working together will provide better results sooner.

Chief Scout Executive Mike Surbaugh and National Commissioner Ellie Morrison were pleased to announce recently the formation of a Roundtable Breakthrough Team that will be charged with identifying the best possible ways to continue this essential support of unit leaders.

The team, which will include both volunteers and professionals, is in the earliest stages of formation and no timeline for completion of its work has been established. We will continue to keep you updated as significant information is available. The goal of this "lean team" is to evaluate and implement the most effective and efficient ways to deliver the objectives of roundtable, using avenues that meet the needs of today's new leaders and parents.

To learn more about the Polaris Method, see www.scouting.org/polarismethod.



Scoutbook to Be Free Starting January 1, 2019

In an effort to drive program consistency and deeper engagement with our youth and leaders, the Boy Scouts of America is pleased to announce that effective January 1, 2019, Scoutbook will be free to all BSA units.

Scoutbook (www.scoutbook.com) is an online unit management tool that ensures that you never miss a Scouting moment—from tracking advancements to milestone achievements along the Scouting adventure.

When **units with a current Scoutbook account** need to renew this fall, they will not pay any renewal fees effective September 1, 2018.

When **councils with Scoutbook accounts** for their units need to renew their unit Scoutbook accounts this fall, they will not pay any renewal fees effective September 1, 2018.

Essentially, all current Scoutbook unit accounts have recently been extended—so they will not expire—at no cost to the unit or council.

Units currently without a Scoutbook account can begin their free Scoutbook unit account on January 1, 2019.

Click [here](#) for an FAQ about this announcement.



Regional and Area Commissioners

Updated October 2018

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JTE Key Performance Indicators

The Journey to Excellence Key Performance Indicators from September 2018 can be accessed [here](#).

Coming Events

2018

October 26–28

Commissioner Impact Session:
Recruiting and Engaging Commissioners
Grand Canyon Council Service Center

October 29–31

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

2019

January 13–19

Second Century Service Commissioner Conference
Click [here](#) to register for the 2019 conferences.
Florida Seabase

February 25–27

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

March 29–30

Commissioner Impact Session: Starting, Sustaining,
and Growing Units
Salt Lake City, Utah

May 29–31

National Annual Meeting and National Executive Board
and Committee Meetings
Gaylord Rockies Resort and Convention Center
Denver, Colorado

June 9–15

Week 1–Commissioners Week
Click [here](#) for more information.
Philmont Training Center

July 22–August 2

24th World Scout Jamboree
Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve

