

Winter 2012

THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



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National Commissioner Minute

My fellow commissioners,

We have had a lot on our plate in the year 2011 and took on new challenges that resulted in great accomplishments in unit service for serving local councils. Together, we accomplished the following:

- Achieved the third consecutive year of unit commissioner growth. We increased the number of new unit commissioners with a 4 percent increase from over a year ago—exceeding the 30,000 unit commissioner mark for the first time ever, with a total of 30,349.
- Provided key unit service components in both the New-Unit Retention Guide and Strengthening Organizations through Scouting manuals, with a focus on implementation of the role of the new-unit commissioner and unit Key 3 concepts.
- Developed a Commissioner Award of Service progress award and knot for recognizing all commissioner serving units for youth and unit retention.
- Increased the number of councils utilizing the Unit Visit Tracking System. In 2010, 52,657 visits were entered in UVTS, but in 2011, we saw a substantial increase—with 260,789 visits entered. All councils are engaged in using the system.
- Helped launch the Journey to Excellence measurement performance program.
- Increased the commissioner-to-unit ratio to 3.7.
- Updated the commissioner website and online resources.
- Recruited a first-time national commissioner service roundtable chair to coordinate a nationwide roundtable study on the effectiveness of our programs.
- Provided a new College of Commissioner Science course syllabus at Philmont Training Center.
- Introduced a commissioner service best methods website.

In 2012, we are excited and committed to continue helping units succeed on their Journey to Excellence requirements, with its continuous improvement performance recognition program of Bronze, Silver, and Gold. Did you notice JTE 2012 has featured some new requirements, and even a fitness requirement for each



*Tico Perez
National Commissioner*

unit? That's awesome! You can find them in the 2012 Journey to Excellence Requirement Changes article.

We also play an important role in the promotion of the BeAScout program to support youth and their parents to join existing units, the Voice of the Scout program to receive feedback from parents and Scouts on how our programs are doing, and the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve for the 2013 National Scout Jamboree.

Yes, 2011 was a great year for unit service and, with your continued support, 2012 will be even better.

Thanks for all you do for unit service. You truly make a difference.



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Empowering the Key 3

You have heard the saying, “a picture is worth a thousand words.” Our feature article, “Key 3 is KEY,” showcases the national Key 3 gallery located outside the Chief Scout Executive’s office. You no doubt recognize our national commissioner Tico Perez (though this version of his uniform seems to be short of a number of knots).

The national Key 3 gallery is symbolic of the importance of the Key 3 concept. It demonstrates that our national president Rex Tillerson, our national commissioner, and our Chief Scout Executive Bob Mazduca are working together as a team to chart the vision of Scouting in our second century. When you witness their chemistry as team, you can see that each person understands his role in the Key 3. Each person appreciates, respects, and yes, demands that the others contribute his unique strengths, abilities, and perspectives to a common effort. We would be well served if we can emulate their example in every Key 3 throughout the Boy Scouts of America.

Volunteer empowerment has been a focus of our national Key 3. “Volunteer-led, professionally guided” is not a sound bite. It is a call to our volunteers, paired with our outstanding professional staff, to work together to bring Scouting to more youth throughout America. One common characteristic among our most successful districts, councils, areas, and regions is that a committed Key 3 understand and feel empowered to serve their roles. Not surprisingly, many of the same levels of Scouting where we have not been as successful as we might like are often missing an empowered and effective Key 3.

We occasionally hear from commissioner Key 3 that they do not feel as if their Key 3 is functioning as well as it should. Most troubling are those situations where a professional may direct the program to the exclusion of the president/chair and the commissioner, or a “Key 2” functions without the benefit of the commissioner leadership. We should not wait to be asked to assume our seat at the Key 3 table. We challenge our commissioner leadership to boldly assume their place at the Key 3 table and demonstrate the value and commitment that the commissioner corps brings to the delivery of a quality program.

Units need a Key 3 as well. The New-Unit Retention Guide introduces the concept of the unit Key 3. The unit Key 3, consisting of the unit leader, the chartered organization representative, and the unit committee chairman, is a new theory,



*Scott Sorrels
National Commissioner Service Chair*

but it recognizes the critical role the unit leadership and the chartered organization play in the success of the unit. Maybe we should have called it the Unit Key 4, since the unit commissioner is an advisor to the unit Key 3. It is a distinction with a difference, however, and recognizes that the unit commissioner is a coach, supporter, and catalyst to assist the unit’s leadership. We urge you to support and implement the unit Key 3 as a powerful means of empowering your units.

Congratulations, Tico. It’s a great picture and a great reminder of the contribution that you have made in your service as national commissioner. We would all be well served to follow your example.



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Key 3 is KEY

One of the main concerns of commissioners is the retention of units. We look for reasons that membership declines and units fail. Very often the causes are really just symptoms; many times the core of the problem is a lack of strong leadership. That's where the Key 3 comes into play. A strong, balanced, actively involved Key 3 is the key to sustaining a unit.

Last summer at Philmont, there was a remarkable opportunity for those gathered during Week 2 to see such a Key 3. The national Key 3—Chief Scout Executive Bob Mazzuca, National President Rex Tillerson, and National Commissioner Tico Perez—held a fireside chat. It was obvious to all how equally involved, informed, and integrated they were. Regardless of the question, any one of them could answer it. And it was equally obvious that they tackle concerns from different perspectives and strengths to come to a solution with the best interests of the youth of our movement in mind. It was a joy to watch.

That's what a real Key 3 does. They meet frequently in a quiet situation where successes and concerns can be shared and solutions reached. To work well, all three need to be actively involved. We need those Key 3s in every region, area, council, district, and unit—yes, unit.

In the New-Unit Retention Guide, which was released in May 2011 at the National Annual Meeting, a unit Key 3 is described and recommended. But a Key 3 isn't just for new units—it is good practice for all units. A unit Key 3 has a little different look from district and council Key 3s. It is composed of the unit leader, the committee chair, and the chartered organization representative. The unit commissioner acts as an adviser—not a member—to the group. Here, concerns of the unit can be discussed and solutions found before they become problems.



Key 3 Gallery, National Council

If you are a commissioner serving as a unit commissioner, district commissioner, or council commissioner, stand up and be counted. Support Key 3 meetings, ask for help from the other members of the Key 3, and offer your assistance in return. Work toward having your Key 3 look and act like the national Key 3. They set the bar for all of us.



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Recruitment and Retention

What do Journey to Excellence and commissioners have in common?

They both help units succeed!

Commissioners play a role in Journey to Excellence. First, they must do their share—make those visits, record them in UVTS, and recruit sufficient commissioners so that their council's ratio improves. Second, they help their units understand the importance of Journey to Excellence and encourage and support the unit's participation in the program.

Journey to Excellence does a lot for a unit beyond providing recognition for having a good unit. It helps provide a framework for planning the program for the unit for a year with a balanced approach to those items that make a unit great. It sets a benchmark for good performance and encourages goal setting for the unit. And there is the all-important assessment, which is done twice annually to help reveal where the unit is on target and determine areas of improvement.

There are some changes in the criteria for Journey to Excellence for 2012, and there will be more changes next year. The tool, like the unit, is supposed to be constantly raising the bar, helping units provide better and better service. This 2012 Journey to Excellence Requirement Changes article in this issue outlines all the changes for this year.

Every unit wants to be the best it can be. Journey to Excellence is a tool to help a unit get there.

Visit Scouting's Journey to Excellence website for scorecards and more JTE information.



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The Unit Commissioner Role in Retention

The commissioner's role is to support and encourage units. When this is done correctly and with the best interest of the unit in mind, unit retention usually results.

There are several tools for the unit commissioner. The Annual Service Plan and Recharter service immediately come to mind. Those plans get the UC into the unit on regular visits. Of course, "It's not a visit until it's in UVTS," as NER Regional Commissioner Peter Casey would say. But there are more tools than that.

The unit self-assessment tool has been underutilized in the past. It takes time to do it correctly. As a result, many units have skipped this step. But here is where encouragement and a little how-to assistance from the UC can make all the difference. This issue's [\[article name/link\]](#) regarding the self-assessment. The use of this tool twice a year (as required by Journey to Excellence) can reveal sore spots as well as strengths to unit

leadership. That makes the job of the UC easier—it becomes more of a how-to rather than convincing the unit of what it needs to do. It certainly makes the unit annual program planning easier.

Another tool that is just becoming available is the Voice of the Scout (see the "Voice of the Scout" article in this issue). Unit members and/or parents will have a chance to weigh in on the strengths and weaknesses of the program from their perspective. The unit commissioner will be privy to this information and can better guide unit leadership in how to make things better.

Good programs that interest youth draw more youth to the unit. Happy parents help with the operations of the unit. With all that energy and enthusiasm focused on a good unit annual program, the results can be astounding.



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Voice of the Scout

Several years ago the director of a wildly successful and popular Cub event was asked, "How do you do it?" "It's easy," he replied. "Just find out what they want and give it to them." That's just what Voice of the Scout is all about.

The Voice of the Scout program will capture the experiences of our members and volunteers during a 10-week survey period in both the spring and fall. Surveys will be sent to leaders, chartered organization representatives, parents of Scouts, and Scouts over age 14. To receive a survey, someone in the Scouting household must have email information on file in the BSA ScoutNET system. The information will be aggregated and displayed at unit, district, council, area, and region levels on a new VOS dashboard available to council employees and board-level volunteers.

Council employees can share feedback results with commissioner staff and district committee members for appropriate, actionable coaching of unit leadership at the summer and fall unit health reviews. This feedback will help units and the BSA be continuously aware of what members and volunteers want, so we, at every level, can find ways to meet and exceed their expectations. The end goal is to discover what we need to do to, operationally and strategically, to make sure every unit is a great unit while maintaining the values of Scouting.



Our main role as commissioners will be similar to our role in JTE, to communicate and promote the use of Voice of the Scout to unit leadership. The unit Key 3 (chartered organization representative, unit leader, and committee chair) should encourage and inform parents about the importance of the Voice of the Scout survey and encourage them to complete it. Consider the impact it could have: the unit leader will have the opportunity to make changes in the program before it's "too late." Small adjustments now can avoid major overhauls later. It won't be a mandatory part of JTE in 2012, but it will be in 2013. And besides, who wants to wait to have a better unit?



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SCOUTStrong PALA

“Have you got your 30 in today?” “I’ve already got four miles logged in and that’s just from walking around CCS!” These and comments like them are being heard wherever commissioners gather together these days. Why? They are all working on the SCOUTStrong PALA Challenge.

SCOUTStrong PALA is the result of an alliance between the BSA and the President’s Council on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition. The PCFSN created the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award, an activity challenge of the President’s Challenge program. In 2011, the BSA and the PCFSN began working together to create a challenge specifically for Scouts. Each BSA local council will have its own PALA group. Members of these groups will be able to compare their progress relative to the group and be able to send messages back and forth to group members.

All registered Scouts, Scouters and parents can participate. The challenge is to have a daily activity goal (30 minutes for adults; 60 minutes for youth under 18) for at least five days a week, six out of eight weeks. The SCOUTStrong website provides a list of more than 100 activities that count toward the goal and participants log in each day, recording their activities.

So what will we get out of it? Well, a patch, of course. Everybody likes those. But we also commit to a daily activity goal and are challenged to stick with it. Experts tell us that it only takes 21 days to make a habit. With 30 days of an active lifestyle, a lifelong habit is a shoe-in.



FIT • FUEL • FUN



PALA+
activity+nutrition

What is the commissioner’s role in all of this? Encourage units and individuals to join in! After all, Tico’s doing it—and if he’s doing it, we can!

For more information, visit the SCOUTStrong website.



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UVTS Updated in Mid-December

I have been working with the Information Delivery Group tech specialists and our BSA adviser to help support issues with Unit Visit Tracking System. We encourage you to continue to use the UVTS hotline at 972-672-4389.

Throughout the late summer and fall, UVTS suffered from some performance issues that caused the system to be sluggish, abruptly end sessions, and even prevent users from accessing the system. Many commissioners were patient with the system and the process of reporting problems to the help line. The national commissioner support team participated in many conversations with the IT development team who then relayed issues as they were reported.

After a period of weeks spent on resolving issues that were reported in the current UVTS application, an update to UVTS was released on December 13, 2011. This update included a correction to the Export Visits Summary report so that its output is consistent with the filters that are applied on the Visits page. This will allow, for example, a district commissioner to filter by date range to obtain the number of unit visit reports entered for units during a specific period of time.

Just prior to the December update, the Information Technology Development Office shared the department's direction in resolving problems with the current UVTS application. They have been working on a solution for you every day. On average, each day and a half, they find a new improvement based on how the applications run on various operating systems and networks. Although the application performance and reliability have slightly improved, they have come to the conclusion that we have a very old, poorly written application, which is exacerbated by updates to server and operating systems and networks for which it cannot adapt. In short, the more they update and modernize around the UVTS app just to run the business, the worse this app performs.

IDG reviewed four possibilities:

1. Stabilize the app until it can be rewritten. Establish a predictable, stable level of performance that may not be optimal. This may mean the creation of old infrastructure, with old unsupported operating systems and network configurations to support the app.
2. Update the app in the form of work-arounds and patches.
3. Rewrite the app in the new architecture of our new platforms. This platform will be in SharePoint 2010 and is on the IDG road map as part of District Tools.
4. Shut down the app until it is rewritten. This is not recommended for many reasons.



*Darlene Sprague
National Commissioner Service Resources Chair
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They are now working on numbers 1 and 3 concurrently. They meet every day and have dedicated, highly skilled resources focused on a resolution.

The goal of the December 13 update was to support number 1, which is to stabilize the application. The evidence that this goal has been accomplished will come from the use of UVTS by commissioners. The update addressed all issues that had been plaguing the application. We will keep close track of any UVTS-related calls to the commissioner hotline and evaluate to determine if there are remaining issues.

Supported Browsers

We are reaffirming the information that appears on the MyScouting login page. The officially supported browsers are Internet Explorer (7.0 and above) and Firefox (3.0 and above).

We appreciate the patience and forbearance of the many commissioners who have offered their feedback to help us find and correct any problems with the present version of the application.

For technical questions or issues, contact the UVTS hotline at 972-672-4389 or myscouting@scouting.org



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UVTS Frequently Asked Questions

UVTS: What counts?

What gets counted as a visit? How is it reported for Journey to Excellence? These questions often arise at the end of year. Every visit recorded in UVTS for a unit gets counted for the unit, regardless of who makes the visit—unit commissioner, administrative commissioner, etc.—they all count. Here is the key: the visits must be entered as soon as possible. The date they are created in UVTS is the trigger, not the date of the visit. The JTE measure is met when a unit is visited six or more times during the year. If all of the December visits were entered after Jan. 1, they did not count in 2011. Visits should be made throughout the year, not all at once to meet the measure.

What about roundtables?

Does seeing a unit leader at roundtable count as a visit? If a roundtable is the only option for a meeting due to distance and there is discussion about the unit, it may be entered as a visit.

However, active discussion on unit health should occur. In other words, unit service has been rendered; this was not simply an opportunity to communicate. For most all unit commissioners, having their unit leader attend a roundtable should not be entered as a visit as it is not possible to observe the unit in operation.

What is the point?

The point of visiting a unit is to observe how it is doing and to determine if it needs any help from the commissioner or the district. The recording of the visit should contain some detail of what was discussed. If there any unit health issues are uncovered, they need to be communicated up the chain to an administrative commissioner or a council commissioner so action can be taken to help the unit out of any difficult situations. Simply recording those issues in UVTS may not bring it to anyone's immediate attention.



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A Council's Attention to Detail with UVTS Pays Off

In a best methods council, a council commissioner and district commissioners made a great effort to contact all unit commissioners to make sure that they were properly registered, that they knew how to use the UVTS program, and that they properly entered their data. As a result, the council had 52 units with six or more visits recorded on the UVTS Visit Summary Report.



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Best Methods Portal

Have you seen the Best Methods portal? Available through the Commissioner website (or log in through MyScouting and click Council Tools), the portal is your resource for best practices related to finance, membership, program leadership and governance, unit service, marketing, and more.

If you have a best practice for unit service, share it for other commissioners to use. Take a look to see if there is a best practice you can use!



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Commissioner Touch Point Checklist

Organizing your visits with your units is essential to helping the units succeed. With so many aspects of Scouting, it is sometimes difficult to remember when tasks need to be done or to know when to remind units that they need to prepare for Scouting events. Here we have prepared a commissioner focus point checklist for commissioners to use. It can be adapted to include council-specific activities. Some of the items we have listed in a certain season may need to be moved based on your council calendar.

Remember to make your visits meaningful and productive for the unit. You are helping units succeed if you prepare them for meeting the needs of operating a successful program for their youth.

Download the Commissioner Touch Point Checklist.



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Training for Commissioner Service

Commissioner training will be going through a revision for 2012. Below is a listing of the formal training sequence available to commissioners. It does not take into account personal coaching or training awards. This overview is a preview of the training goals being developed for the second century of commissioner service. The new and updated training should be available shortly after approval at the National Annual Meeting in May.

Orientation

Commissioner training starts with an overview for those who are new to Scouting and those who are new to commissioner service. New commissioner training begins by completing the following e-learning sessions:

- Youth Protection: required to register as an adult volunteer
- This is Scouting: provides a basic understanding of the Scouting movement (if needed)
- Unit Commissioner Fast Start: provides a basic understanding of the commissioner's role
- Unit Visit Tracking System video: provides an understanding of how to report unit visits

Youth Protection can be taken without logging into with MyScouting, but a MyScouting logon is required to complete the remaining courses. Links to all courses are in the E-Learning section of MyScouting.

Basic Training

Assuming the commissioner has completed the e-learning sessions above and is still interested in commissioner service, Basic Training is the next step in the process. Note that Basic Training is undergoing a major revision. Rather than having three two-hour sessions with role-playing exercises and buzz groups targeted at unit commissioners, the new training will be position-specific and will be one two-and-a-half- to three-hour session. This training will be basically a transfer of knowledge necessary for the role so that a commissioner can get started as soon as possible after being recruited. It should also allow a higher completion rate since completing three separate sessions is no longer required. Note: Every commissioner is required to complete Basic Training, and a yearly review is not a bad idea!



Tim Acree
National Commissioner Service Training Chair
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Continuous Training

District commissioners are responsible to see that every member of their staff receives adequate training. After completing Basic Training and being commissioned, commissioners should attend training at the monthly district commissioner cabinet meeting. It is the responsibility of the district commissioner to provide monthly training at the cabinet meeting. As a result, every month commissioners are enhancing their knowledge of the program and learning how they can best serve units through continuous training.

Annual Training Event

One of the principal responsibilities of the council commissioner is to see that a complete program is in place to train every Commissioner in the Council. In addition to enhancing their knowledge



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at the monthly cabinet meetings, a Commissioner should plan to attend an annual training event which can be in the form of a commissioner conference or the College of Commissioner Science or both. Nationally developed courses, resource materials, and training recognition provide the structure for good commissioner training. It is the local council's mission to provide fun, sparkle, motivation, and frequent training opportunities so that commissioners will learn good unit service skills.

Learning is a lifetime activity. As commissioners, we must continually adjust our skills to provide a more valuable service to our units. Therefore, commissioners should view learning as an important part of their Scouting lives—every month, every year.”
—Administration of Commissioner Service manual, Section III preface

The courses available for the College of Commissioner Science are being reviewed and updated. Section III, Chapter 4 of the Administration of Commissioner Service is being rewritten and will have more detail about conducting a college as well as additional guidelines for doctoral projects. (For more information, see this month's article, College of Commissioner Science: Possible Doctoral Projects.

National-level Training

The national commissioner conferences that take place each summer at the Philmont Training Center near Cimarron, New Mexico, offer commissioners:

- A mountaintop training conference with a topflight faculty
- The inspiring ambiance of a big sky sunset over a working ranch in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains
- Family programs for all groups from nursery through adult—the whole family benefits
- Recreation and personal time in an area rich in history and natural beauty
- A week of Scouting fellowship

Courses are also being offered at Florida National High Adventure Sea Base in January. The council commissioner course is scheduled for this year.

Training Overview

Note: The following chart is a summary of the concepts expressed in the article and is not an absolute guide.

Unit Commissioner

	Unit Commissioner	Roundtable Commissioner	District Commissioner and Assistant	Council Commissioner and Assistant
E-Learning				
Youth Protection	Required	Required	Required	Required
This is Scouting	If new to Scouting	If new to Scouting	If new to Scouting	If new to Scouting
UC Fast Start	If new to commissioner service	If new to commissioner service	If new to commissioner service	If new to commissioner service
UVTS Video	Yes	Suggested	Yes	Suggested
Basic Training	UC-specific	RT-specific (pending)	DC/ADC-specific	CC/ACC-specific (pending)
Monthly Training	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Annual Training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
National Training	Strongly recommended	Strongly recommended	Strongly recommended	Strongly recommended

If you have any questions about commissioner training, please contact Tim Acree, national commissioner service training chair, at tim.acree@comcast.net.



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Philmont Training Center 2012 Commissioner Course Offerings

Week 3: June 24–30

- Southern Region Journey to Excellence
- Council Key 3*
- District Key 3*
- The Unit Commissioner

Week 6: July 15–21

- Northeast Region Journey to Excellence
- How to Conduct a Commissioner College
- Council Commissioner
- Administrative Commissioner
- The Unit Commissioner
- Effective Roundtables
- District Key 3*

Week 7: July 22–28

- Central Region Journey to Excellence
- Council Key 3*
- District Key 3*
- The Unit Commissioner

Visit the 2012 Conference Schedule page on the Philmont Training Center website for more information.

**These courses cover aspects of commissioner service but are staffed by volunteer training.*



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College of Commissioner Science: Possible Doctoral Projects

As you read the requirements for earning a Doctor of Commissioner Science degree (available in Section III, Chapter 4 of the current Administration of Commissioner Service manual), you will find a fair amount of information on writing a thesis but there is scant mention of doing a project. A team is currently updating that chapter of the manual with additional information on doing projects.

Although that section is not ready for publication, there have been a number of questions about doing a project in lieu of a thesis. The following guidelines below are recommended for doctoral projects until the manual update has been approved and released:

1. The project should be related to the enhancement or improvement of commissioner service in the council. Examples include conducting an effective recruiting program or facilitating the next council commissioner conference. Conducting a weekend camporee or a merit badge midway are great projects, but they are not commissioner-related.
2. A project plan should be created with specific objectives, timelines, measurable goals, resources required, etc. Doing a project requires a written project plan that should be followed.
3. The project plan should be submitted for review by the Doctoral Review Committee, the doctoral dean, and/or the council commissioner. Each Council Commissioner College should have guidelines for an approval process for a project or a thesis.
4. The project is then reviewed and approved by the Doctoral Review Committee, the doctoral dean, and/or the council commissioner.
5. The project should be worthy of a doctoral degree and not part of a standard program. Recruiting three new commissioners would not be an acceptable project because each commissioner should always look for new commissioners. However, conducting a recruiting program that holds three group recruiting sessions in local companies and increases the number of commissioners councilwide by 25 commissioners would probably be a worthwhile project.
6. Related to number 5, there should be an accounting of the amount of time required to perform the project. Just like Eagle Scout projects where there is not a specific time requirement, doctoral projects do not have a specific time requirement. But the amount of time spent should be equivalent to the time required to write a thesis.
7. The completed project should have an after-action summary report stating that the goals of the project were met and the expected benefit has been derived.

The intent of doing a project is for improved commissioner service as well as personal growth. A well-executed project will have multiple benefits.



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Roundtable Study Project Report

The Roundtable Study Project Team has collected data from Scouters across the U.S. for the last five months. Some 800 of you contributed to that effort, and the team thanks each of you!

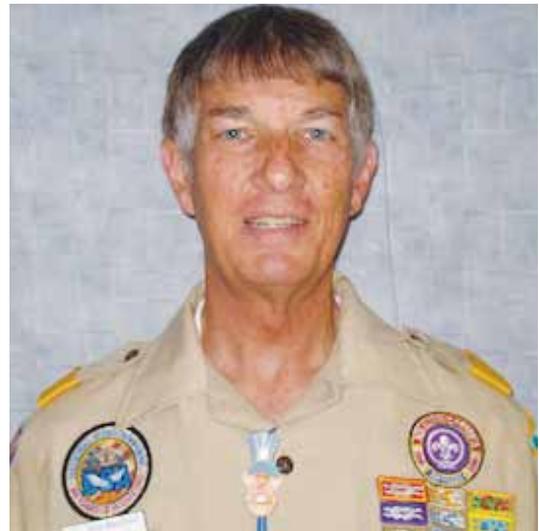
The data has been compiled and is now being analyzed for trends and interesting themes. This process will result in some preliminary recommendations that will be sent to many of the original data contributors for review and comment. The result of all of this will be some specific recommendations that will be presented to the National Commissioner Service Team, and others, at the May 2012 National Annual Meeting in Orlando. If you attend the Orlando NAM, there may be an opportunity for you to participate in a session that will review the Roundtable Study Project process and explore and evaluate these recommendations.

In the next newsletter, we hope to be able to share some of the preliminary results and recommendations.

A Best Practices Idea

Send monthly email reminders to leaders at least five days before the roundtable with information about what is planned for the meeting and when appropriate offer attending leaders a chance to register for upcoming events or activities before the registration is opened to the rest of the district.

Send me your best practice ideas. They may appear in future newsletters!



Daniel B. Maxfield
National Commissioner Service Roundtable Chair
dmaxfil@yahoo.com



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Journey to Excellence Requirement Changes

Journey to Excellence is a performance measurement recognition program that focuses on continuous improvement within councils, districts, and units. Where many of the original 2011 JTE requirements were continued in the 2012 with slight modifications of the Bronze, Silver, and Gold standards, some have actually been updated. See the list below and visit the Journey to Excellence website for 2012 scorecards:

2012 Journey to Excellence Council Requirements

The following are new council requirements:

No. 15 Voice of the Scout: Actively participate in the program and improve the Net Promoter Score on constituent surveys (bonus points in 2012).

No. 16 Council Leadership: Have a trained and engaged executive board.

2012 Journey to Excellence District Requirements

The following are new district requirements:

No. 2 Market Share: Increase market share (Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Venturers, and Explorers).

No. 3 Membership/Youth Growth: Increase number of registered youth (Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Venturers, and Explorers).

No. 5 Cub Scout Advancement: Increase the percentage of Cub Scouts earning rank advancements.

No. 6 Boy Scout Advancement: Increase the percentage of Boy Scouts earning rank advancements.

No. 9 Community Service: Increase the amount of community service provided by Scouts, leaders, and other participants.

No. 11 Commissioner Service: Increase the number of registered unit commissioners over prior year.

No. 14 Voice of the Scout: Improve response rate and Net Promoter Score on constituent surveys (bonus points in 2012).

No. 15 District Leadership: Increase the number of volunteers serving on the district committee.

No. 16 District Committee: Increase the effectiveness of the district committee.

2012 Journey to Excellence Unit Requirements

The following are new unit requirements:

Pack

No. 12 Fitness: Pack and den meetings have activities that include a physical fitness component.

Troop

No. 12 Fitness: Troop meetings and activities include physical fitness components.

Team

No. 12 Fitness: Team meetings and activities include physical fitness components.

Crew

No. 10 Fitness: Crew meetings and activities include physical fitness components.

Ship

No. 10 Fitness: Ship meetings and activities include physical fitness components.

Increase the percentage of Cub Scouts earning rank advancements.



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New Commissioner College of Science Patches

These 4-inch emblems are earned by completing the Commissioner of Science courses and are not for uniform wear. The emblems will be available by February 10 from the Supply Group and in Scout shops.



*College of Commissioner Science,
No. 614824*



*Bachelor's degree,
No. 614825*



*Master's degree,
No. 614826*



*Doctorate,
No. 614823*



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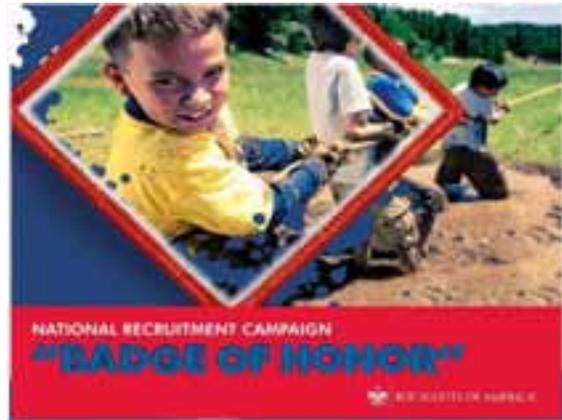
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National Recruitment Campaign: Badge of Honor

The new 2012 national recruitment campaign Badge of Honor was built on the premise that the only thing more exciting than being awarded a badge is the unforgettable, once-in-a-lifetime experience that went into earning it.

In a change from past recruitment efforts that arrived just in time for recruitment season, all resources are available now on the National Recruitment Campaign page through the Marketing Toolbox. Bilingual and Spanish resources are also available.

All resources for recruiting are available now. The recruitment goal is to eventually move into an 18-month lead time. We're changing the conversation in recruiting. The new material is incredible. It was tested with Scout and non-Scout audiences, including Cub Scout-age boys and their parents, and incorporated feedback from professionals.



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Guidelines and Procedures for Conducting Unit Self-Assessments

Process: Prior to the meeting, the unit Key 3 should fill out page one of the JTE spreadsheet located online at the Scouting's Journey to Excellence website and print out unit self-assessment form results.

Who should attend?

The unit Key 3—the unit leader, unit committee chair, and chartered organization representative—and the unit commissioner (or district executive whenever a commissioner is unavailable).

What is the purpose of a unit self-assessment?

- To evaluate the unit's progress toward achieving the Journey to Excellence standards
- To review the unit's goals, successes, and vision for the coming year
- To identify any areas of improvement—leadership, program, and membership
- To determine any specific actions needing to be taken to assist with unit improvements and
- Identify who will follow up on those actions
- To schedule any necessary and immediate follow-up to monitor progress
- To provide unit retention

When should meetings be conducted?

- After the unit commissioner has visited the unit for the first time
- Annually to review strengths and areas of improvement to help provide direction for needed support, preferably six months prior to the annual charter renewal
- As needed when a problem arises
- When unit leadership changes

How should the arrangements for this meeting be set up?

- The unit commissioner speaks to the unit leader during the first unit visit to schedule the meeting date, time, and location.
- The dialog should include:
 - Approaching the unit leader after the meeting and requesting that a second meeting be set up with the unit Key 3: unit leader, unit committee chair, and chartered organization representative.
 - Setting the meeting, preferably at the unit leader's, chair's, or COR's home.
 - Asking them to complete the unit health self-assessment JTE form prior to the meeting.
 - Letting them know the visit will include a discussion of the JTE unit self-Assessment Form and how the goals and vision of their unit's program can be supported.

Why should only the unit leader, unit committee chair, chartered organization representative, and the unit commissioner (or district chair if not available) attend the meeting?

- Because the unit Key 3 and the unit commissioner help provide leadership and guidance to the unit. Since it is a smaller representative group, it can be more open to analyzing their program, unit needs, and necessary steps to help resolve any issues.
- It also helps open a dialog between the unit and the district. Once they meet and determine what needs to be done, others can be involved in helping determine which direction to go and any potential support or resources needed.



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What preparation should be made prior to the action planning meeting?

- Review the statistics of the unit available from the local council and the district team, especially focusing on the following:
 - Journey to Excellence status: Bronze, Silver, or Gold
 - Outdoor program participation
 - Advancement reports
 - Trained leadership status
 - Unit Succession Plan
 - Youth Protection training
 - Participation in district and council events
 - Roundtable attendance
- If the JTE unit self-assessment form had not yet been completed prior to the visit, do so at this time. Analyze and make observations, and review the statistics gathered from the council and/or district prior to the action planning meeting.
- Set another time and meeting for a follow-up prior to rechartering the unit
- The national BSA membership audit validation procedures requires unit self-assessments to be conducted two times a year and the completed form to be added into the unit file at the council office.
- Document the health assessment meetings and visits in UVTS.
- Provide positive encouragement to the unit, and most importantly, recognize the unit with its JTE recognition at one of their gatherings.



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Jamboree on the Air 2011 Results

By Jim Wilson, K5ND

National JOTA Organizer, USA

Jamboree on the Air (JOTA) is the largest Scouting event in the world. Each year on the third weekend of October some 700,000 Scouts hit the airwaves from nearly 6,000 amateur radio stations around the world. Through this activity Scouts are introduced to radio technology and to other Scouts around the USA and around the World. They get a chance to talk with one another and share information that broadens their perspective on other cultures, on geography, and on the technology and hobby that provides the means for their communication.

The most successful JOTA events around the USA occur during camporees or other troop, district, or council events. This allows a wide range of Scouts to tour the ham radio stations and, if they desire, talk on the radio with a microphone or even with a keyboard using digital communication modes. In 2011, several locations actually communicated with the International Space Station where fellow Scout and ham radio operator Mike Fossum spoke with the Scouts.

Overall, reported participation jumped in 2011. The number of stations filing a report moved to 68, an increase of over 100 percent, while the number of Scout participants hit 3,000+, an increase of 600 percent. However, over 200 stations registered their operations prior to the event, so the unreported participation was even higher.

Among the registered JOTA stations 109 councils were represented, 37 states, Puerto Rico, and a U.S. military base in South Korea, with nearly 16,000 estimated Scout participants. Of course, the broader World Scouting JOTA registration represented most national Scouting organizations around the world. The final 2011 world report is expected to be published soon.



The National Radio Scouting Committee has identified nine key areas for JOTA improvement in 2012. Among these are earlier development of the JOTA patch along with earlier promotion to Scouters and amateur radio operators. They are also working on a number of additions and improvements to the supporting materials that are provided at <http://www.scouting.org/jota>.

I encourage you to support your local council's efforts for JOTA 2012. If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know at jota@scouting.org.



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Sea Scouts: An American Tradition Since 1912

Sea Scouts in the United States is proud to kick off its 2012 centennial. Sea Scouts is a program defined by tradition, maritime adventure, and fun. Sea Scouts can be summarized in 4 Ss: Scouting, seamanship, service, and social activities.

Celebrations are planned across the United States, with major events being held in Texas, Chicago, Baltimore, and the San Francisco Bay Area. Many others are being planned in different regions of the U.S. Centennial Sea Scout events also include the William I. Koch International Sea Scout Cup, which is taking place in California for the first time.

“Our goal is for Sea Scouts in every part of the country to host centennial events based on the 4 Ss of Sea Scouts. This is a once in a lifetime experience and every Sea Scout deserves an opportunity to participate in a centennial celebration,” says Josh Gilliland, chair of the Sea Scout Centennial Task Force.

Sea Scout Centennial Recruiting Goals

The National Sea Scout Support Committee has set a centennial goal of reaching 10,000 Sea Scouts by the end of 2012. There are currently over 7,000 Sea Scouts in the U.S.

Sea Scout ships can help reach the goal of 10,000 Sea Scouts by hosting Welcome Aboard Days, open houses where Sea Scouts can showcase the best of their program to prospective members.

A Welcome Aboard Day should have three elements: activity, food, and fun. When planning the event, Sea Scouts can do the following to invite interested youth:

- Prospective members can be recruited through schools, churches, and community organizations.



- Sons and daughters of chartered organization members can be invited.
- Invite former Boy Scouts from a council drop list to attend.
- Set up a recruiting booth at a high school club day with posters and fliers, and collect contact information.
- Show a “What did you do this weekend” Sea Scout video to a religious youth group.
- Host a Scout cruise and take Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venturers out for a boat ride.

Additional resources, including fliers, promotional material, and “How to Organize a Sea Scout Ship” are available at <http://www.seascout.org/joinus/> under the Recruiting Tips section.



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Connecting with Sea Scouts in Your District

Your local district executive can identify Sea Scout ships within your district. Once you have your local skippers' information, call on them and ask about a good day to attend one of their meetings.

Discuss with the leaders what support they need in providing program to youth. Usually they need support with the basics, such as having trainers to help with CPR certifications, understanding changes to BSA health or tour plan forms, and assistance with rechartering.

Commissioners can use the following methods to support Sea Scout ships:

- Organize Sea Scout presentations to district roundtables on the benefits of Sea Scouts, program objectives and goals to retain older youth in Scouting with high school-age programs
- Collect inquiries from prospective Sea Scouts from BeAScout.org to Sea Scout volunteers
- Organize monthly presentations to Boy Scouts where Sea Scouts can showcase Sea Scout activities for recruiting.

Sea Scout Leader Training Opportunities

District commissioners can support Sea Scouts by attending the following training opportunities:

Leader-specific Training—Sea Scout Adult Basic Leader Training: A training program to enhance a new volunteer's knowledge of the BSA strategic plan, program, and resources, as well as emphasizing personal skills necessary for youth development in the Sea Scout program

Seabadge: A weekend management course to improve the understanding or leadership and motivation among volunteers

Seabadge Underway: A weekend course that provides basic training to prepare volunteers to teach and manage their ship for the safe operation of a Sea Scout vessel underway in moderate conditions



Sea Scout Centennial Council Patches

Boy Scout councils can also support the Sea Scout centennial by designing Sea Scout centennial council patches.

Council patch artwork can portray Sea Scouts, local aquatic landmarks, watercraft, or anything you think best represents your local program's past, present, or future.

The patch must follow the BSA Brand Identity Guide and local council approval requirements.

All centennial patches should include any variation of the theme "Sea Scouts: An American Tradition Since 1912." You are only limited by your imagination.

The Second Century of Sea Scouts

Please join us as we launch the second century of Sea Scouts. In 2012, we will have many opportunities for exciting program and service to youth. Help us build the future of Sea Scouts.

Visit the Sea Scout Centennial blog, the Facebook fan page, or www.seascout.org for more information.



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Unit Commissioner Becomes a Sea Scout

When Dennis Gaynor was assigned to Sea Scout Ship 441 in the Pathfinder District/Greater New York Councils, he did not know how to approach the task at hand. Dennis, an Eagle Scout, is a highly trained and experienced commissioner in Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing programs but did not know much about the Sea Scout program.

When he met with Skipper Noel Guzman, Dennis was invited to join the ship as a committee member. From this point on, he began to understand the complexities of this unique and specialized program, which will celebrate its centennial this year. In the past year, he has acquired an understanding of landships, ship's quarterdeck, advancement, and the types of activities that reflect the nautical environment.

Having taken SSALBT, he is set to take Seabadge in the fall, and is shown above learning basic piloting with local Sea Scouts under the watchful eye of Cathy Atela and Jim Pellegrino of the Hempstead Bay Power Squadron. Dennis is also planning to take Seabadge Underway, which requires navigation skills.

According to Dennis, the invitation to join the ship was the best way to understand marketing and recruiting of youth members and the most important aspect—programming.



In addition, this approach will help commissioners identify the parameters of a ship that would need assistance to stay viable.

Dennis hopes to pass on this experience to other commissioners who wish to help and service Sea Scout ships.



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Unit Service to Sea Scout Ships: The Tools of Success

By Bob Sirhal

National Sea Scouting Committee

Membership Development Subcommittee

The role of the commissioner is to support the programs of the BSA from the unit to the national levels. The challenge is few commissioners know how to be of help in their role as it relates to Sea Scout ships.

A solution is to develop a few tools to enable the commissioner to have information to help the ship to connect with the resources within the council to accomplish the mission. In the Summer 2011 issue of *The Commissioner* newsletter, the "Sea Scout Program and the Role of the Commissioner" article on pages 17 and 18 provided a comprehensive picture of the Sea Scouting program.

A few facts might shed some additional light on the challenge:

- Few adult leaders in Sea Scouting come from the traditional units: Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity, or Venturing. They join with their son or daughter, come from the nautical military service or from the marine trades, or have been there a long time. They may be accustomed to the ship being stand-alone with little in the way of contact with the district or council. It may take some time to establish a level of trust between you and the ship.
- This means they may have little understanding of the traditional Scouting systems—training, roundtables, and organization; district, council, and youth-led programs and trainings; and recruiting and retention concepts.
- Convincing the new leader of the importance of taking part in the basic training trifecta of This Is Scouting, Venturing Leader Youth Protection Training (both are available online), and Sea Scout adult leader basic training can sometimes be difficult to do. You may offer to help them open their MyScouting account online and then provide the sign-up information for the basic training, whether it is in council or through the flotilla/area training team. Thinking out of the box to make this happen may be necessary. Perhaps asking the Sea Scout training team to come to the unit or cluster of units to deliver the basic training?

- As a commissioner, you should bookmark www.seascout.org on your browser as a resource to you for any questions which may arise. From there, you can go to advancement, program, training, history, videos, and much more. Later in the year, the website will have totally new look and many more resources. Ensuring that this essential tool is in your commissioner's toolbox will be advantageous to you.
- You are there to mentor, coach, and counsel; to help with their rechartering; or to help strengthen the ship. Along the way, you will get to learn more and more about Scouting's best kept secret.
- Try to remember, that Sea Scouts, like Venturing, is for the teen market, and in many cases, their uniform may be their own design and not the traditional appearance as seen in the Sea Scout manual or on posters. Embrace the difference!

Commissioners to Sea Scout ships have unique opportunities to strengthen the ships they work with. Your success will depend on the variety of tools you have in your commission's toolbox. Maybe you know a couple of Boy Scouts with local troops who have dropped out and may be available to learn the lore of the sea?

Some commissioners arrive at a unit meeting with doughnuts and coffee. Wouldn't it be fun to arrive with suggestions on how the ship might grow?



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Scouting Begins and Ends in the Unit

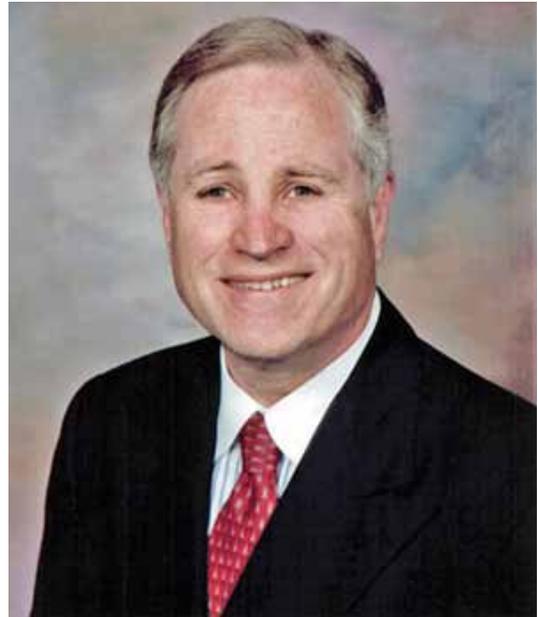
Scouting has changed so much recently and commissioners are being asked to do a great deal more in our second 100 years. Some may feel uncertain about our priorities or where to focus their attention.

Reorganizations, changing information systems, and our new Internet presence and focus on social networking are designed to allow more effective communication with each other and with youth. Journey to Excellence, UVTS 2.0, and the Voice of the Scout are designed to direct our efforts toward improving retention by helping improve unit success. These changes require that we learn more, think differently, and become guiding agents for positive change.

Even with all this change, Scouting still begins and ends in units! Units—and their mission, methods and purpose—have not changed at all!

Units still do most of the recruiting—mostly on their own, day after day. Units still deliver Scouting's programs, with some help, but mostly on their own, day to day, month to month. Scouting happens in units. Units are where youth members develop character, leadership, and fitness. Youth stay because they enjoy their units, and their friends join them only if convinced the unit is delivering on the promise. Growth and retention only occurs in strong units!

Become friends, advisors, consultants, and helpers to units. Deliver the knowledge and resources units need to be successful in person. Deliver it to unit leaders and unit committees and to chartered organization representatives. Visit often because it is the only way to truly help. Can we possibly have a more important priority?



Peter P. Casey
Northeast Region Commissioner

Growth and retention will surely follow and “The Main Thing”—providing a quality Scouting experience to as many young people as possible for the next 100 years—will be realized. Thank you for all you are doing.



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Unit Commissioner Box Score

As of December 2011

Region	Traditional Units*		Unit Commissioners Needed		Unit Commissioners Registered		Need to Recruit		Percent of Need Filled		Commissioner Ratio	
	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year
Northeast	17,884	17,165	5,962	5,723	4,249	4,591	1,713	1,1327	1.3%	80.2%	0.2	3.7
Southern	28,495	27,470	9,497	9,156	7,735	8,004	762	1,1528	1.47%	87.4%	3.7	3.4
Central	24,875	23,968	8,293	7,991	6,409	6,753	1,884	1,2387	7.3%	84.5%	3.9	3.5
Western	43,647	42,968	14,548	14,324	11,111	11,091	3,437	3,233	76.4%	77.4%	3.9	3.9
National	114,901	111,571	38,300	37,194	29,504	30,439	8,796	6,755	77.0%	81.8%	3.9	3.7

*Does not include Explorer posts or Learning for Life groups



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Philmont Training Center 2012 Commissioner Course Offerings

Week 3: June 24–30

- Southern Region Journey to Excellence
- Council Key 3*
- District Key 3*
- The Unit Commissioner

Week 6: July 15–21

- Northeast Region Journey to Excellence
- How to Conduct a Commissioner College
- Council Commissioner
- Administrative Commissioner
- The Unit Commissioner
- Effective Roundtables
- District Key 3*

Week 7: July 22–28

- Central Region Journey to Excellence
- Council Key 3*
- District Key 3*
- The Unit Commissioner

Visit the 2012 Conference Schedule page on the Philmont Training Center website for more information.

**These courses cover aspects of commissioner service but are staffed by volunteer training.*



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