

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## Success Stories: Pursuit of Commissioner Award Leads to Excellence in Units

By Larry Chase, Recruitment and Retention Chair

The newest recognition available to commissioners was introduced at the 2011 National Annual Meeting. But because the requirements take at least 24 months to complete, we're just beginning to learn the impact of the Commissioner Award of Excellence in Unit Service.

Developed by a team of commissioners from throughout the United States under the leadership of then-Recruitment and Retention Chair Ellie Morrison, the Award of Excellence identifies tools and techniques commissioners should be using in Scouting's second century. Its requirements set the standard for "Second Century Service" to units.



Here are two stories that illustrate the award's impact:

### Los Padres Council

Rick TerBorch had a vision for unit service when he agreed to serve as council commissioner in 2011. He knew his council needed an adequate number of engaged commissioners, understood the importance of training, believed in leading by example, and found a way to leverage recognition of his team members to improve unit service.

Rick set an example of his commitment to training by attending the Council Commissioner course at Philmont Training Center. Over the next two years, an emphasis on recruitment resulted in a dramatic increase (over 600 percent!) in the number of commissioners actively engaged with units in his council. He and his administrative commissioners set an example by volunteering to serve units personally using contemporary tools and techniques (including the Unit Visit Tracking System), which also enabled them to relate better to the experience of the commissioners they were recruiting. They began leveraging recognition by using the Arrowhead Honor Award to set the standard for the basic skills their commissioners should have, and then he and his administrative commissioners raised the bar by beginning to work on earning the new Award of Excellence. Several unit commissioners and two district commissioners began working on the Award of Excellence as well. Several awards have already been presented and more will be presented over the next few months.

As a result, the Los Padres team achieved JTE Gold for unit service categories in each of the last two years, which contributed to the council's JTE Silver awards for the same period. **Every unit** served by commissioners who were working on the Award of Excellence completed charter renewal on a timely basis, achieved either Gold or Silver JTE recognition, and received customized support in areas such as program development, adult leadership succession planning, and membership growth. And unit visits recorded in UVTS increased dramatically overall.

That's success!

### Daniel Webster Council

R. Brian Snow serves as an assistant council commissioner and willingly offered to provide input on developing the requirements for the Award of Excellence. Never one to take the easy path, he accepted the challenge to earn the award himself. Brian worked hard to develop personal relationships with the leaders of the unit he served. The Award of Excellence requires the completion of a project—agreed upon with unit leadership—that will improve unit performance. Brian's assigned troop asked for help in improving communications with its district and council. Over time, he linked the unit to district resources by introducing its leaders to district advancement opportunities. He also helped create a First Aid merit badge opportunity for the Scouts. The unit is now more engaged with its district and council, youth retention has improved, and charter renewals have been completed on a timely basis. Brian benefited by attending the Council Commissioner course at Philmont Training Center and then taught others at his council's College of Commissioner Science and at the Northeast Region's Area 1A conference.

That's success!

Have a success story to share?  
Effective use of commissioner recognition strengthens unit service. Send your story to Larry Chase at [lhc@chasehome.net](mailto:lhc@chasehome.net).



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®



## Why Recognize Commissioners?

It's a fair question: Is there *really* any value to be gained from recognizing commissioners?

And there's probably a related question: Do commissioners even *care* about recognition?

Recognition has been a fundamental concept in Scouting from its beginning. Done right, it's a powerful tool that offers at least four benefits:

### 1. Celebration of Achievement and Commitment

Probably the first benefit to come to mind, recognition does offer the opportunity to acknowledge individual achievements. Equally important for commissioners, and beginning with the commission they receive, it demonstrates the commitment they have made to help our units serve more kids better.

### 2. Definition

In Scouting, we know (or can easily find out) what it means to achieve the Arrow of Light Award, or the Eagle Scout rank, or the Quartermaster Award, or the Silver Award, or the Award of Excellence in Unit Service. The definition of requirements that Scouting recognitions provide not only tells us what has been accomplished but also facilitates personal and team goal setting.

### 3. Skill Development

Learning and skill development are an important byproduct of recognition. Even receiving their commission results from newly appointed commissioners having completed basic training, received an orientation to the role they have accepted, and completed some of the fundamental tasks that position requires. With more advanced recognition comes increased experience and the development of advanced skills that enable greater effectiveness in supporting units.

### 4. Inspiration

We're inspired by achievement. Seeing what others have accomplished enables us to see greater potential in ourselves and to strive to fulfill it.

Knots, pins, patches, and certificates may not be important to all commissioners, but serving more kids better is. Also, what we say to them in acknowledging their achievement can have a powerful impact—on them and on other commissioners present (and we should *always* strive to recognize achievements publicly).



Larry Chase  
National Commissioner Service  
Recruitment and Retention Chair  
[lhc@chasehome.net](mailto:lhc@chasehome.net)

The recognitions available to commissioners help define the skills and experience needed to provide effective unit service. And that's why we're working on revisions to commissioner recognitions: to ensure they incorporate the tools and techniques that our units need in Scouting's second century. Changes to the Commissioners website will make it easier to learn about those recognitions, track progress, and provide tangible appreciation.

Elsewhere in this issue you'll find an article detailing success stories about our newest recognition for commissioners, the Commissioner Award of Excellence in Unit Service. That article tells how two councils have leveraged recognition to improve unit service.

*There is real value in recognizing commissioners: Done right, it helps us help more units better serve more kids, and that's what unit service is all about.*



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).



Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## USES for UVTS

UVTS, our Unit Visit Tracking System, can be a valuable unit service tool, but perhaps we are too focused on its *tracking* capabilities. If we think of it as USES, our Unit Support and Engagement System, we may be able to better see the opportunities it offers.

### Use No. 1: The Unit Visit

Unit visit reports should include more than just a date, some numbers, and quality indicator check marks. Observations about the visit or the unit or comments in general can make the visit report far more insightful.

Many of our commissioners may be used to unit visit “worksheets” that were developed to help document unit visits before UVTS was available or Journey to Excellence was implemented. We need to help those commissioners move from our “First Century” approach to unit visits to “Second Century Service.” For example, when considering the “Planning” quality indicator in UVTS, consideration should be given to worksheet categories such as “meeting operation,” “budget plan,” and “planned program.” We need to help our commissioners think in JTE terms.

A simple indicator of overall unit health (“Red,” “Yellow,” or “Green”) may be a useful entry in the Visit Comments field. It could serve to identify where the unit is on JTE progress (“Green” = healthy and on track to JTE recognition; “Yellow” = struggles with several JTE elements; “Red” = the unit’s future is in jeopardy) and be helpful in identifying units that may benefit from resources available through the district operations committee.

### Use No. 2: The Unit Health Assessment

Unit commissioners should complete unit health assessments at least twice each year, in January and July. In addition, an assessment should be completed whenever there has been a significant change in unit leadership (unit leader, committee chair, or chartered organization representative).

With a bit of planning, unit health assessments can be recorded in UVTS along with key elements of the action plan for improving unit performance.

If “Other” is selected for Visit Type and “January Health Assessment” (or “July” or “Other”) is entered in the Description field, unit health assessments can easily be extracted from UVTS to facilitate planning by the district or council unit service team

or to assist in accessing operating committee resources to meet specific unit needs.

### Use No. 3: Ad Hoc Reporting

Unique information needs can and do arise. For example, is unit leader training a particular need? If so, reports with “Other” selected for Visit Type, “Training” entered in the Description field, and training needs entered into the General Comments field would enable the capture of each unit’s specific training needs. A report could then be generated for the district training committee identifying units in need of training to enable them to develop a plan to meet those needs.

Those are just three possible USES for UVTS. The common element to all of them is thinking beyond tracking and considering how this tool can be used to collect *actionable information* that our unit service and operations teams can use together to help our units serve more kids better.

*Extracting information from UVTS and sorting it to develop actionable information isn’t hard, but it isn’t for everyone. See “What’s a Data Dog?” elsewhere in this issue.*



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## Commissioner Recruiting Tip: What's a Data Dog?

Successful unit service teams need members with different skills. An excellent unit commissioner may not be the best candidate to serve as a roundtable commissioner; one administrative commissioner might be excellent at leading a team of unit commissioners while another might be better suited to take responsibility for unit service communications.

If you haven't already read "USES for UVTS" elsewhere in this issue, take a minute to do so.

Effective use of UVTS by a unit service team requires the ability to identify and extract *actionable information* from the system. It isn't hard, but making the best use of information from UVTS today requires someone who is adept at manipulating data in Excel. Not every commissioner, and certainly not every district or council commissioner, is skilled at or comfortable with Excel. And learning those skills may not be the best use of their time when their focus needs to be on helping more units serve more kids better.

The solution? A **data dog!** There are individuals throughout Scouting who are skilled at and enjoy manipulating data (data to them is like a bone to a dog—something enjoyable to chew on). All they need is access to the *data* in UVTS in Excel format (easy to do—for them) and an understanding of the *information* that you're after.

Add a data dog to your district or council team. You'll be amazed at the *USES* you'll find for *UVTS* once you have someone who can convert data into *actionable information* for you. A data dog will also make it easier for you to link units that have unique service needs to resources available on your district or council operating committee.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®





## Four Steps to Unit Retention

Commissioners *own* unit retention. Unit commissioners can take ownership by taking these four steps:

### 1. Unit Visits

Unit visits are the foundation of unit service; without them, commissioners can't develop the relationships with unit leaders and the knowledge of unit operations needed to provide effective service. Engaged unit commissioners visit their units regularly. Journey to Excellence requirements for the number of visits made can set a district or council unit service team on the path to continuous improvement. The current defined standard for JTE Gold is a total of six visits in the course of a year. The Commissioner Award of Excellence in Unit Service sets the bar for excellence at 12 visits per year, six of which are physical visits (such as unit meetings, unit activities, leader meetings, and summer camp) and six of which may be significant contacts by telephone, two-way electronic communication, or in person. Our *Unit Performance Guide* sets a similar standard for visits to new units during their first 36 months of operation: one per month.

### 2. Unit Health Assessments

Unit commissioners are called upon to complete at least two unit health assessments per year (in January and July). For units not achieving *any* JTE level, an action plan to assist in reaching at least JTE Bronze should be developed. The July assessment is also an excellent opportunity to conduct a midyear review with unit leaders of progress toward JTE goals; the January assessment is an equally excellent opportunity to review JTE performance for the year just completed and set new goals for the coming year. Unit health assessments should be shared with the district's Key 3 to identify opportunities to link units needing additional support with district operating committee resources.

There is one additional opportunity for a unit health assessment: whenever a unit experiences a significant change in key unit leadership (unit leader, committee chair, or chartered organization representative). Commissioners should also incorporate Voice of the Scout data in developing unit health assessments.

*The Unit Performance Guide* is an excellent resource for unit-serving commissioners on a variety of topics, including unit health assessments. All commissioners should be familiar with this guide and review it periodically to remain current on the contemporary unit service processes it details.

### 3. Making and Sharing Unit Visit Reports and Action Plans

Reports of unit visits should be recorded in our Unit Visit Tracking System. Reports should include more than dates, numbers, and quality indicator check marks. Brief comments, using JTE terminology, enable data entered into UVTS to become *actionable information* that can be shared with other members of the district or council unit service team and members of the district or council operations committee to link units to expertise needed to meet unique needs. Unit health assessments and key elements of action plans can also be entered in UVTS, which will facilitate linkage to needed expertise.

### 4. Charter Renewal

Timely renewal of unit charters is the last—and most critical—step to unit retention. If the previous three steps have been completed effectively throughout the year, this last one is far easier. The relationships built through regular unit visits will facilitate communication to support charter renewal and identify potential challenges. Unit health assessments and action plans will identify units at risk and enable them to access additional resources that may be needed to ensure timely charter renewal and unit retention. If unit visits have been made (and reported in UVTS) throughout the year, there should be no surprises during charter renewal.

See "USES for UVTS" elsewhere in this issue for ways to collect actionable information in our Unit Visit Tracking System.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).



Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## MyScouting Tools for Commissioners

With the recent release of the newest MyScouting Tools, we were prompted to inquire when the commissioners might see a new release of UVTS. The following is some information from the development team about what is on the horizon for UVTS and what might replace UVTS for commissioners.

The development team does not envision anything that will have the current look and feel of UVTS as new development will follow the model of the toolkits that have been released recently.

Here is a high-level view of the initial approach:

- Dashboard reporting that incorporates Journey to Excellence metrics. (While award levels will not initially be implemented, appropriate measurements will be displayed.)
- Reporting metrics on unit visit activity that are precalculated and the addition of “alerts” to direct the attention of administrative commissioners to new reports and/or potential concerns.
- More robust and easy-to-use report forms for commissioners. This will resolve the current navigation challenges that require additional time when entering visit reports.
- Mobile platform deployment for use on handheld and other devices. The tools will still be accessible through Web browsers on laptops and PCs.

We're very excited about proceeding with the next generation of tools for commissioners and look forward to sharing information in the future.

Another opportunity recently presented itself to a group of commissioners: the formation of a Commissioner Information Technology Toolbox Focus Group. Our charter and scope is to concentrate on how to give commissioners access to track and review unit health to align with Journey to Excellence metrics. We hope to answer this question: What do commissioners need to best perform their Scouting role? In addition to the need to replace the current tracking tool for visits, what other areas does a commissioner need insight into to provide guidance for strengthening the administration of the Scouting program? (These could include advancement, charter renewal, growth, Friends of Scouting, etc.)



*Darlene Sprague*  
*National Commissioner Service Resources Chair*  
*darsprague@roadrunner.com*

Commissioners in all regions will participate, but we need to move swiftly. We plan to gather and refine the requirements we have been collecting and present them to the development team by the end of October. If all goes according to schedule, the commissioner tools will be released in January.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## Commissioner College Schedule

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

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

Note: To have your council's college listed, please send information to Darlene Sprague at [darsprague@roadrunner.com](mailto:darsprague@roadrunner.com).

### Commissioners Website Updates

The Commissioners website has been updated recently. We did experience some technical difficulties where some new material disappeared for a period of time. These issues have been fixed, and we invite you to return for a look at several pages, particularly Roundtable Support, Commissioner Training, Awards and Recognition, Commissioner Recruitment and Retention, and the new Commissioner Logos page.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®



## Questions and Answers

We received the following multipart question (in bold text) from a commissioner. The answers are inserted within the question.

**In the *Administration of Commissioner Service* manual in the section “Using the Unit Self-Assessment Tools” (pages 156–157) right before the summary the following statement appears:**

**“The self-assessment form is designed to take the place of the commissioner worksheet previously used by commissioners.”**

That is correct. The worksheets are still available for those who prefer to use them. But we now encourage the use of the Unit Self-Assessment form. And that is what is also recommended in the latest [Unit Performance Guide](#).

**My confusion with this statement is that the Unit Commissioner Worksheet is still listed in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* and the *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*. Is the form in these two manuals the same form referenced in the statement above, or is that a different (maybe an older) form?**

Yes, the worksheets are still there in both manuals. See the [instruction sheet](#) and unit self-assessment forms (located at the bottom of the [Commissioner Manuals and Resources page](#) under “Forms”).

**The way that I have always viewed this is that the unit (Cubmaster/Scoutmaster/Advisor and committee chair) completes the Unit Self-Assessment form and provides a copy for the unit commissioner. Then, after the first visit or a unit visit, the commissioner completes his unit worksheet and starts to compare his observations to what the unit provided. This gives the commissioner several important pieces of information:**

1. **Are the commissioner’s observations similar to the unit leadership’s assessment of where the unit is?**
2. **Will the actions that the unit commissioner was planning address the observations?**
3. **Development of a complete picture of the key areas where the unit commissioner can help the program of the unit.**

Please see the [instruction sheet](#). You can do it that way, or some commissioners fill out the sheet independently and then review the sheets from the committee chair and unit leader. The important part is that this occurs and that a plan for improving the program is created and executed.

**If the Unit Commissioner Worksheet is to be replaced, is there another form or process where unit commissioners come up with action plans or do they base them off of the unit self-assessment only now?**

The action plan is created after reviewing the self-assessment.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**







## MyScouting Tools Update

At this year's Top Hands conference, a second version of MyScouting Tools was released to Key 3 unit and district volunteers on [my.scouting.org](http://my.scouting.org).

This release moves toward the vision of volunteer empowerment. The new tools provide more intuitive functionality and improved navigation. It's made easy and transparent so that volunteers can focus more on Scouting.

To become familiar with and learn more about the new tools, select a link below to download instructions.

### Training Manager

- See dashboard view of Trained Leaders and Youth Protection Training status and counts
- Add adult training information—not just YPT—for members in their organization structure
- View members' training history and YPT status
- Print training certificate(s)
- Print Youth Protection Aging Report (lists those who have not taken YPT, those whose YPT has expired, and those whose YPT will expire in 30, 60, and 90 days)

### Member Manager

- Assign members to functional roles in suborganizations
- View unit roster details
- Edit/update certain member profile information
- Print membership cards for each registered position
- Print Youth Member Age Report

### Organization Manager

- Create suborganizations in their unit
- Maintain unit's organizational details (social media information)

### My Dashboard (enhancements)

- Update additional profile information (education, employer, civic, and professional associations)
- View personal training history
- Print training certificate(s)
- Print membership card(s)

### **What You Need to Know**

Supported browsers:

- Best experienced with Google Chrome 14+.
- Firefox 21+ also supported.
- Safari and Internet Explorer are not fully supported at this time.

To access their Key 3 role in a district, district executives must be registered at the district rather than the council. You may "multiple" a district executive currently registered to the council into the district for Key 3 access.

Non-Key 3 members will have access only to the My Dashboard tool.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## Membership Fee Increase

The National Council has increased the membership fee from \$15 to \$24 effective January 1, 2014.

[Click here](#) for answers to frequently answered questions.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## Great Information Links for Commissioners

The following links can help commissioners perform their role of unit service.

[Advancement News](http://www.scouting.org/sitecore/content/Home/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/advancement_news.aspx): [http://www.scouting.org/sitecore/content/Home/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/advancement\\_news.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/sitecore/content/Home/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/advancement_news.aspx)

[The Training Times newsletter](http://www.scouting.org/Training/TrainingUpdates.aspx): <http://www.scouting.org/Training/TrainingUpdates.aspx>

[Guide to Advancement](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf): <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf> (also available on the Advancement Resources website)



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS

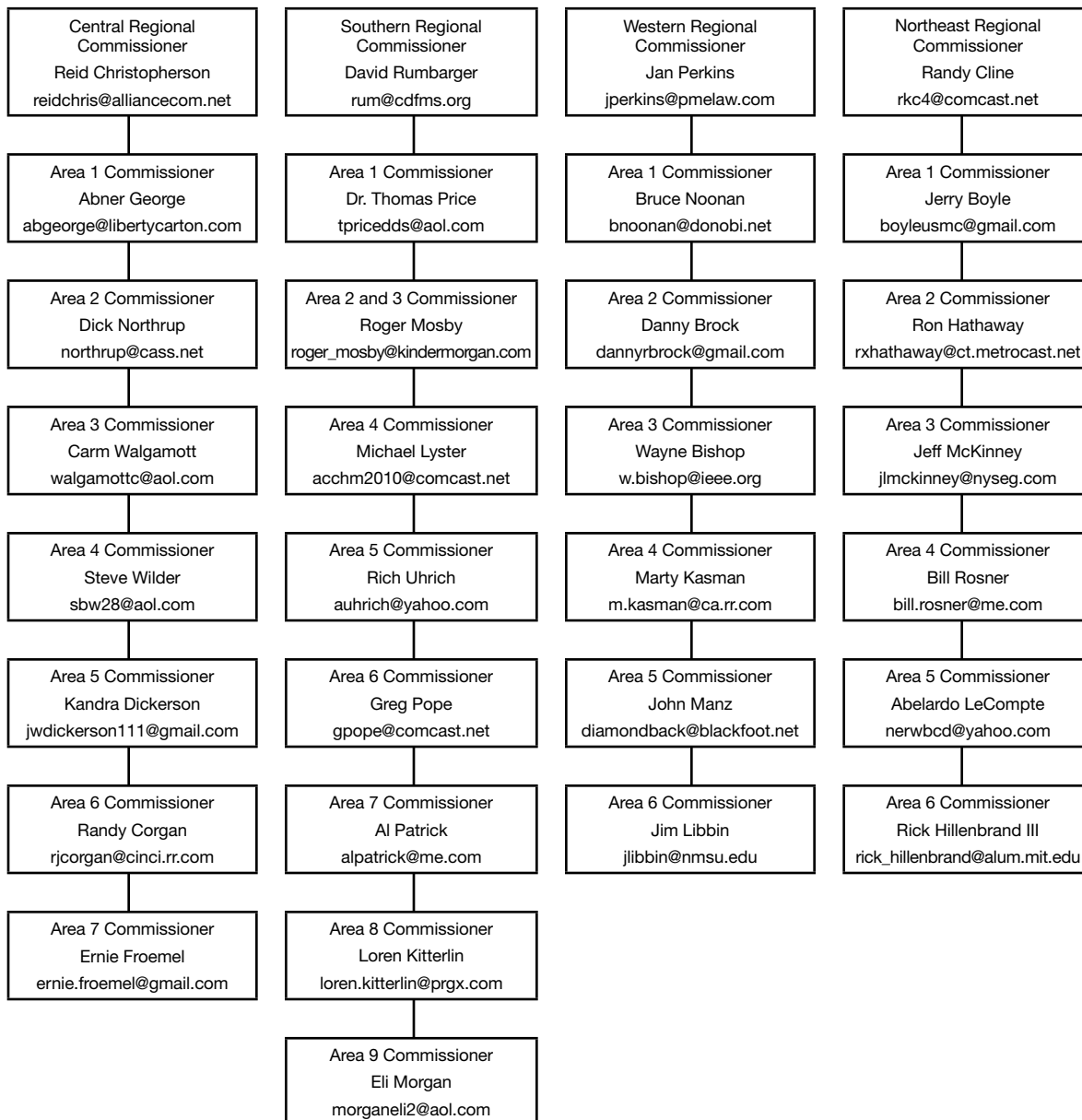


[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## Regional and Area Commissioners Organization Chart



Updated September 16, 2013



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®



Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## Commissioner Support Team

|                     |   |  |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Tim Acree           | National Commissioner Service Training Chair                  | <a href="mailto:tim.acree@comcast.net">tim.acree@comcast.net</a>               |
| Randy Cline         | Northeast Region Commissioner                                 | <a href="mailto:rkc4@comcast.net">rkc4@comcast.net</a>                         |
| Larry Chase         | National Commissioner Service Recruitment and Retention Chair | <a href="mailto:lhc@chasehome.net">lhc@chasehome.net</a>                       |
| Reid Christopherson | Central Region Commissioner                                   | <a href="mailto:reidchris@alliancecom.net">reidchris@alliancecom.net</a>       |
| David Rumbarger     | Southern Region Commissioner                                  | <a href="mailto:rum@cdfms.com">rum@cdfms.com</a>                               |
| Dan Maxfield        | National Commissioner Service Roundtable Chair                | <a href="mailto:dmaxfil@yahoo.com">dmaxfil@yahoo.com</a>                       |
| Tico Perez          | National Commissioner   | <a href="mailto:ticip@aol.com">ticip@aol.com</a>                               |
| Jan Perkins         | Western Region Commissioner                                   | <a href="mailto:jperkins@pmelaw.com">jperkins@pmelaw.com</a>                   |
| Steve Sawyer        | Staff Advisor   | <a href="mailto:steve.sawyer@scouting.org">steve.sawyer@scouting.org</a>       |
| Scott Sorrels       | Commissioner Service Chair                                    | <a href="mailto:scott.sorrels@sutherland.com">scott.sorrels@sutherland.com</a> |
| Darlene Sprague     | National Commissioner Service Resources Chair                 | <a href="mailto:darsprague@roadrunner.com">darsprague@roadrunner.com</a>       |



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## Upcoming Events

### October 28–30, 2013

National Executive Board and Committee Meetings—Invitation only  
Hilton Salt Lake City Center, Salt Lake City, Utah

### October 30–November 1, 2013

Regional Executive Board and Committee Meetings—Invitation only  
Hilton Salt Lake City Center, Salt Lake City, Utah

### October 29, 2013

100th Anniversary Commemoration—Celebrating Scouting and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
[Click here](#) for event information.

### January 2014

MyScouting Tools for Commissioners released

### January 20–25, 2014

Commissioner Training Conferences  
Sea Base Conference Center, Islamorada, Florida

### February 2, 2014

Scout Sunday

### February 3–5, 2014

National Executive Board and Committee Meetings—Invitation only  
DFW Marriott North, Irving, Texas

### February 8, 2014

Scouting Anniversary Day

### February 8, 2014

Scout Sabbath

### February 23–26, 2014

New BSA merit badge—Mining in Society—debuts  
[Society for Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration's Annual Meeting](#)  
Salt Lake City, Utah



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## National Commissioner Minute

My fellow commissioners,

This year has seen some extraordinary milestones in terms of service by the commissioner corps. Let's talk about a few of the milestones we accomplished in 2013:

- The "Peg the Needle" unit visitation project was a huge success, with a more than 30 percent increase in recorded unit visits nationally over the previous year. A number of our councils recorded unit visit rates that were multiples of prior performance. We have recorded 153,070 unit visits through August 2013. That performance is amazing and shows once again how our commissioner corps responds to support the needs of the Scouting program.
- The roundtable study committee completed the initial phase of its study and has rolled out the new Cub Scout and Boy Scout roundtable guides, both of which can be downloaded from the national website.
- Our training team released a comprehensive revision of our College of Commissioner Science curriculum, including adding more than nine courses, all of which are free to download from the national website.
- The *Unit Performance Guide*, including the use of a new-unit commissioner to shepherd a new unit through two charter renewal cycles, was approved as a standardized best practice. The genesis of the guide can be traced to the commissioner corps.
- The BSA will celebrate 100 years of Scouting by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints this October in Salt Lake City, and all commissioners in attendance at the regional board meetings will join together in a first-ever joint meeting to chart the future of commissioner service.
- Commissioner Week at the Philmont Training Center had record attendance and participants enjoyed a special visit by National President Wayne Perry.
- A new training course titled Commissioner Service for Non-Traditional or Faith Based Units will be offered in 2014. The course was created in response to requests from commissioners for a program that covers a wide range of commissioner topics and developments.

Any discussion of 2013 milestones has to include the inaugural national Scout jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Family National



*Tico Perez*  
National Commissioner

Scout Reserve in West Virginia. The jamboree was, by any measure, extraordinary in so many respects. Most importantly, the young people I met had the experience of a lifetime. One Scout after another told me that the Summit was "awesome"—a phrase used a lot in West Virginia this summer. Venturers came to the jamboree as participants for the first time, and we hosted Scout delegations from 22 countries and gave them a glimpse of what the 2019 world Scout jamboree will be like at the Summit.

The jamboree—and the Summit itself—could not have happened without the selfless service of many of you who served on staff and as volunteer unit leaders. Our staff performed a herculean effort and worked tirelessly to ensure that each Scout and Venturer had that "awesome" experience. Many of you were a part of this historic effort, and I especially want you to know how much your service is appreciated.

Everywhere across America Scouting is happening because of our volunteers. As commissioners, we often work behind the scenes, but our role in ensuring a quality program and improving unit retention is more important than ever.

Thank you for all that you do and will continue to do to serve the youth of America.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## “Peg the Needle” Effort a Success

The magic performed by Scouters every day is not hard to measure. We hear stories every week about one success story or another where Scouting made the difference in the life of a youth member. In every case, a group of volunteers—often unheralded and definitely not thanked often enough—is responsible for the difference.

The story is just as true with the commissioner corps, as demonstrated by the extraordinary response to the effort to “Peg the Needle” in unit visits following the membership standards vote at the National Annual Meeting in May. We asked the commissioner corps to make an extra effort to reach out and touch units across America, reminding them that the BSA is here to serve youth and that the commissioner corps is here to serve the unit. The results were amazing, with a more than 30 percent increase in year-over-year recorded unit visits in the Unit Visit Tracking System. That is truly extraordinary, and we want to say thank you.

The commissioner corps lives on the front lines of ensuring that Scouting units continue to meet the needs and expectations of our membership. The unit commissioner, supported by a talented administrative commissioner corps, works to ensure an effective Scouting program. We encourage you to stay informed by reviewing the new support materials, tools, and other resources that are available on the [Membership Standards website](#).

We acknowledge that it has not always been easy. Our task requires the very best in all of us as commissioners, and sometimes a little patience. One challenging aspect of the “Peg the Needle” effort was that we had delays and outage issues in posting visits to UVTS. Believe me, we understand the frustration. The task force took your calls and issues to the senior levels of the national office within hours of their receipt. We will continue to work with the national office to improve this situation, but as with anything involving rapid change, it does not come often or fast enough. We will continue to work to make the responsibilities of the commissioner corps as easy and rewarding as possible.



**Scott Sorrels**  
*National Commissioner Service Chair*  
[scott.sorrels@sutherland.com](mailto:scott.sorrels@sutherland.com)

The effort represented by the “Peg the Needle” campaign needs to continue every week. Whatever the needs of the unit, we need to identify them and link the resources of the district to address them. We should be systematic in our approach, using tried-and-true tools like the unit service plan and self-assessments and our new training and roundtable materials to help us identify and meet those needs.

Thank you. Thank you for the many thousands of unit visits that have been made in the last several months and for your continuing efforts to support the delivery of the Scouting program.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®



Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## 2014 Commissioner Workshop at the Sea Base Conference Center

“Overview of Commissioner Service” is the title of the next Commissioner Training Conference to be held the week of January 20–25, 2014, at the Sea Base Conference Center in Islamorada, Florida. The conference will be taught by Kandra Dickerson, Central Region Area 5 commissioner, and Kresha Alvarado, assistant council commissioner for Circle 10 Council.

The topics covered in this conference are designed to help you bring “best practices” and current ideas to your role as a commissioner whether you directly serve a unit, serve as a roundtable commissioner, or are an administrative commissioner. The course outline includes:

- Four main focus areas for commissioners
- Finding and using commissioner resources
- Annual service plan
- Commissioner’s role in retention
- Linking district resources to unit needs
- UVTS as a tool to aid unit improvement
- Roundtable organization and the new program planning guides
- Building better relationships with unit leaders through effective communication
- Commissioner support to new units
- Voice of the Scout and what it means to your units
- Managing conflict
- Best practices forum

See the [conference center flier](#) for more information about Sea Base conferences. If you would like to attend commissioner training at Sea Base in January, [click here](#) to register.

If you have any questions about attending Sea Base, please contact Tim Acree, national commissioner service training chair, at [tim.acree@comcast.net](mailto:tim.acree@comcast.net).



Tim Acree  
National Commissioner Service Training Chair  
[tim.acree@comcast.net](mailto:tim.acree@comcast.net)



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®



## Commissioner Training at Philmont

### Commissioner Week 2013

Week 3, June 23–29, was Commissioner Week at the Philmont Training Center. This year we had record attendance for the commissioner conferences. At the beginning of the year, National Commissioner Tico Perez sent personal invitations to every registered commissioner, and it sure made a difference in attendance! The attendance per course is listed below:

| Course   | Students   | Faculty   |
|--|------------|-----------|
| The Council Commissioner   | 27         | 2         |
| District Commissioner and Assistant District Commissioner Training | 34         | 3         |
| Effective Roundtables  | 14         | 2         |
| How to Conduct a Commissioner College                              | 10         | 3         |
| The Unit Commissioner  | 31         | 2         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>116</b> | <b>12</b> |

Special thanks to our faculty. The Council Commissioner was taught by Larry Chase and Gail Plucker. District Commissioner and Assistant District Commissioner Training was taught by Randy Corgan, Charles Bucklew, and Betsy Huddleston. Effective Roundtables was conducted by George Costigan and Dave Lyons. How to Conduct a Commissioner College was led by Terry Chapman, Jeff McKinney, and Tim Acree. The Unit Commissioner faculty was Dave Fornadel and Kandra Dickerson.

The reviews for every conference were outstanding. For the rating of “Way above Average” the conference scores ranged from 62.5 percent to 91.7 percent. That means at least two-thirds of the participants in every conference thought their experience was way above average! Here are some of the comments:

“The overall experience was great. Excellent instructors, super opportunity to network with others in similar positions, and wonderful setting with a staff that went out of their way to make the participants feel welcome and valued.”

“The training was top-notch and you can’t beat the setting! I also felt that the diversity and experience of the participants provided an additional benefit that can’t be found in local training sessions.”



*Cub Scout Daniel Early and College Dean Bernie Kilcoyne*

“I got all the info I was looking for and the staff was outstanding. It was a great training experience, probably in the top two BSA training courses that I have taken.”

Friday was the fourth annual PTC Commissioner College conducted by students in the How to Conduct a Commissioner College course. There were 45 bachelor’s degrees, 18 master’s degrees, and 56 certificates of attendance awarded to 147 students. Several other courses had their students participate in the college. Daniel Early, a very well-spoken Cub Scout from Pack 29 in Longview, East Texas Area Council, welcomed the commissioners to the college.

There was a special guest at graduation: National President Wayne Perry conferred degrees during the graduation ceremony. What a great college!



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)



## Commissioner Week 2014

Commissioner Week at the Philmont Training Center for 2014 will be Week 2, June 15–21. A new conference, Commissioner Service for Non-Traditional or Faith Based Units, will be offered. This course has been one of the most requested over the past several years. Of course, all of the conferences offered in 2013 will be offered again in 2014. [Click here](#) to see the Philmont flier.

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

Please consider making a personal commitment to attend one of the conferences in 2014. You will not be disappointed!

If you have any questions about commissioner training, please contact Tim Acree, national commissioner service training chair, at [tim.acree@comcast.net](mailto:tim.acree@comcast.net).



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®





## Whose Job Is It?

Who's responsible for commissioner training? The answer may seem obvious. The council training chair should conduct commissioner training at the University of Scouting, right? Wrong! Commissioner training is very different from program leader training. Commissioners have a different set of training courses from those offered for leadership training because our focus as commissioners is different from that of unit leaders or program chairs. Note that the [Commissioner Training Web page](#) contains only commissioner courses, and the [Adult Training Web page](#) lists only program training. Again, our focus is different so our training is different.

As the commissioner training chair, I receive a number of requests from council training chairs wanting to offer commissioner courses at their universities of Scouting. And they are always amazed when I explain to them that commissioners should be holding a Commissioner College and that it is not their responsibility to offer commissioner training. Commissioners should be conducting the training. In other words, commissioners train commissioners.

The *Administration of Commissioner Service* manual has many references to commissioner training. Chapter 10, "Commissioner Training and Recognition," says: "One of the council commissioner's principal responsibilities is to see that a complete program is in place to train every commissioner in the council. District commissioners are responsible to see that every member of their staff receives adequate training.

"Councils may appoint an assistant council commissioner for training. This person is responsible for the annual commissioner training conference/College of Commissioner Science, ongoing training opportunities, training recognitions, and promotion of the annual Philmont Training Center courses."

And Chapter 4, "Administrative Commissioners," says:

"... the council commissioners shall:

- Be sure that districts provide opportunities for immediate commissioner orientation through online Fast Start, frequent basic training, and monthly learning experiences for all commissioners. ...

- Conduct an annual council commissioner conference. Be sure that the conference includes the best in training sessions, fellowship, inspiration, and information on the latest in Scouting. Do everything possible to make it easy for everyone to attend (e.g., attractive setting and close to home)."

Note that a commissioner college is a type of commissioner conference. Both a conference and a college can be offered if so desired.

Additionally, Chapter 4 says, "The assistant council commissioner for training coordinates commissioner training in the council, sees that basic training is available somewhere in the council during all parts of the year, trains district trainers, and sees that the concept of 'continuing education for commissioners' really works."

And finally, specific responsibilities of the district commissioner include: "Provide opportunities for immediate commissioner orientation through online Fast Start, frequent basic training, and monthly learning experiences for all commissioners."

If you are a council commissioner, please make sure that you are fulfilling your responsibilities by offering commissioner training in your council and ensuring that it is being taught by commissioners. If you don't have trainers on staff, consider adding them to your staff before the start of next year. District commissioners, please offer a training segment as part of your monthly meetings.

If your council doesn't offer a Commissioner College, you can have your staff attend a college in a neighboring council or you can start one. There is an excellent course offered at Philmont that focuses on starting and conducting a Commissioner College.

Should you need assistance with training at any level, contact Tim Acree at [tim.acree@comcast.net](mailto:tim.acree@comcast.net).



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**





Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## Roundtable Update

In 2011 it was recognized that roundtables nationally were having difficulties. Thus, the Roundtable Task Force was created. It spent much time surveying Scouters around the country. The results were very clear and included the following:

- Roundtable needed some organizational/structural attention at the council and district levels.
- Roundtable must be well organized so as not to waste people's time.
- Announcement time must be reduced.
- Roundtable must provide actionable content that includes training and program content.
- Technology usage should be explored as to how to extend the distribution of materials, especially to those not able to attend.

The organizational/structural changes were announced in October 2012, were outlined in the winter 2013 edition of *The Commissioner*, and are posted on the Commissioners website on the [Roundtable Support page](#).

The 2013–2014 roundtable guides were developed with these concepts in mind. The guides were rolled out at the National Annual Meeting in May 2013, and some of the changes were outlined in the spring 2013 edition of *The Commissioner*. Links to the guides are also on the Roundtable Support page. (Note that the Roundtable Support page has been fixed and updated with new material. Please visit at <http://www.scouting.org/Commissioners/roundtable.aspx>.)

What is new in these guides? There are four planning outlines that provide options and flexibility to planners in meeting geography, time, and other constraints. In addition, it is being recommended that all roundtable program groups have a common opening with a major “big rock” group topic presentation before splitting into separate program groups. These group topics include charter renewal, special needs, and weather awareness. Also, specific program group “topics of interest” were developed to assist leaders with behavioral issues, long-term camps, and religious emblems and awards, among other topics. In the *Cub Scout Roundtable Guide*, a fabulous set of materials was designed to assist den leaders with exciting program ideas. Finally, the *Troop Program Features* series is being redesigned and some of these materials should be released by January 2014.



**Daniel B. Maxfield**  
National Commissioner Service Roundtable Chair  
[dmaxfil@yahoo.com](mailto:dmaxfil@yahoo.com)

The technology issue discussion has begun but will require some extensive review of what others are doing and what is and isn't working. This is addressed further in the “Roundtable Delivery Methods” article elsewhere in this issue and will be the subject of an ongoing review for the next several months.

Releasing the guides in May should give councils time to review the agenda and content recommendations and make plans to conduct a councilwide annual planning conference so all districts are ready to launch an exciting September/October format.

Update work for the next set of roundtable guides will occur between September 2013 and January 2014 and will be ready for publication by May. Changes will include additional big rock topics, additional program group topics of interest, and updated/additional Cub Scout program ideas. Also included will be an expanded technology section and other adjustments to current materials based on input received from those of you using the materials.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

If you have not yet reviewed the 2013–2014 guides, it is highly recommended that you do so. If you have already done so, we want to get feedback about what works and what doesn't to help in making effective revisions for the next update. Also, we would love to hear success stories! Please send thoughts/comments to Dan Maxfield at [dbmaxi05@gmail.com](mailto:dbmaxi05@gmail.com).

Good roundtables equal better programs in units, which equal increased youth and unit retention. These are Journey to Excellence goals that roundtable can affect. We hope you have a great year of super roundtables!



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®



## Roundtable Delivery Methods

The traditional model for roundtable delivery is the monthly face-to-face meeting. Some districts meet every other month or even quarterly because of distance issues, but these meetings are still mostly conducted on a face-to-face basis. This is the preferred method that most agree works best. However, for a variety of reasons, it is typical that districts have an average monthly attendance of fewer than 50 percent of their units.

If roundtables are well organized, provide valuable information, and help units build better programs for their youth, then the issue becomes one of how to get this material to those who do not attend. The question is “Are there other ways to deliver the message?”

One vehicle that we have not explored well is technology. Thus, we are beginning a discussion of possible options councils and districts might experiment with as additional delivery methods. During the next few months, there will be much outreach to councils and districts to see how—or if—they are using technology and what result they are getting. This process is already underway.

Councils in Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Wisconsin, Georgia, Tennessee, and Kentucky as well as the Transatlantic Council and Far East Council have contributed thus far. Several results have come out of these contacts. First, where there are rural areas involved, often two or even three roundtables are being run per month in different towns within a district. Also, a variety of technology packages are being tried as a way to engage those too far away to attend. In several places, GoToMeeting and GoToWebinar are being used to deliver roundtables, district meetings, staff meetings, and other similar meetings. For a monthly fee, these offer available contacts of between 25 and 100 people and seem to work well where there is high-speed Internet or viable G3 or G4 service. Another system being used is the free Google Hangout and Google Voice, which allow up to 10 people to join at a time and also seem to work well where there is high-speed Internet or viable G3 or G4 service. However, in very rural areas where dial-up is the only service available and there is limited G3 or G4 service, these reportedly don't work well. A couple of councils are developing videos of three to five minutes that deliver specific detailed program messages or invitations outlining an upcoming roundtable or meeting agenda and posting them on YouTube.

Equipment commonly needed include a laptop, good speakers, and a council's willingness to pay some monthly fees for these services. One problem that has arisen is that some locations where roundtables are held don't have Wi-Fi or even phone jacks for digital access.

We will continue to explore this very interesting and vital issue in the next few months. Here are some of the questions we have:

1. Does your council or some of its districts have meetings at which some (or most) of the attendees participate remotely? These could be district committee meetings, district commissioner meetings, roundtables, and/or council staff meetings for which district executives call in rather than flying or driving long distances to the meeting site.
2. Have you seen an increase in participation when people can call in from their homes or offices rather than attending in person? Is the use of technology to attend remotely the primary way some people now participate?
3. What communications methods do you use—“regular” phone lines, Internet phone service, or Internet video service?
4. What service providers do you use?
5. What special hardware or software is used/needed—speaker phones, laptops, Web cameras, video cameras, etc.?
6. Is there a cost for using your preferred service? How is that handled (who pays for it)?
7. Have you switched from one method to another to overcome deficiencies in the former service? A deficiency could be cost, voice quality, limit on number of remote participants, geographic coverage, etc. If so, please share what you can.
8. If a meeting involves an all-hands opening session followed by several separate breakout sessions, how is that handled? Have you found a way to have multiple separate call-in or logon codes to get to the right breakout?



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

9. Have you seen a drop-off in face-to-face attendance by people located in the host city who just decide to call in?
10. Do you have any general suggestions or cautions to offer someone who is just starting to think about technology as a solution to their attendance issues?

If you have some creative and successful uses of technology to deliver roundtable materials, please share with us so we can continue to collect information and pass the word to others. Send your responses and stories to Dan Maxfield at [dbmaxi05@gmail.com](mailto:dbmaxi05@gmail.com).

Good roundtables promote great Scouting. Our youth deserve the best! Go forth and provide good roundtables.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®



Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## Community Organizations and the BSA

For 103 years, the Boy Scouts of America has focused on working together to deliver the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training. Its proven and time-tested methods have made it part of the fabric of America. The BSA provides an infrastructure that offers participants unique and valuable experiences and trains and protects its members while supporting its mission.

The creation and continuous improvement of a youth development program is challenging but rewarding. The following are world-class offerings available only with the BSA. These are meant to help organizations think through important criteria when deciding which youth development program to sponsor.

- **Unique Value and Experiences:** The BSA provides unique value and experiences to its youth members through more than 1,000 independently owned, operated, and accredited outdoor camping facilities across the country. The BSA also owns and operates four national high-adventure bases that provide units once-in-a-lifetime adventures and hosts the national Scout jamboree, a 10-day event held every four years that draws tens of thousands of Scouts, Venturers, volunteers, and staff from all over the country to celebrate Scouting.
- **Independently Evaluated Program:** The BSA's programs have been independently evaluated and deemed highly effective. In "Merit Beyond the Badge," a study by the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion and Program for Prosocial Behavior, researchers found that attaining Scouting's highest rank enhances a youth's values, ethics, decision making, relationships, and personal development. The study showed that Eagle Scouts have a greater connectedness to a religious community and are significantly more likely to report volunteering time to a religious organization.
- **Liability Insurance:** The BSA provides liability insurance to chartered organizations, leaders, and families attending Scouting activities, which allows organizations to focus on delivering the program to its members. Accident and sickness insurance is also provided by local councils at no or very minimal cost for adult and youth members.
- **Youth Protection Policies and Procedures:** Scouting is a leader among youth-serving organizations in developing policies and procedures to help keep kids safe. The BSA requires background checks on all adult volunteers; provides comprehensive training programs for volunteers, staff, youth, and parents; and mandates reporting of even suspected abuse. The BSA has continually enhanced its multitiered policies and procedures to ensure it is in line with and even, where possible, ahead of society's knowledge of abuse and best practices for prevention. BSA's standards and relentless focus on youth protection have been recognized and praised by experts in child protection.
- **Oversight and Quality Control:** The BSA provides oversight to its units, which ensures quality control. In addition, nationally there are more than 1 million volunteers at the district and council level dedicated to helping grow and support more than 116,000 units. That support includes training, coaching, and mentoring volunteer leaders on how to run an effective unit. Also, Scouting provides a multilevel leader training curriculum and online leader training resources.
- **Multicultural Services and Programming:** The BSA is dedicated to serving all young people and provides multicultural services and creative programming to serve them. Further, with the changing demographics in almost all communities, the BSA continues to provide to local units a wide variety of bilingual materials, training courses, and curriculum to assist leaders.
- **Established Relationships with Chartered Organizations:** The BSA delivers the Scouting program through civic, faith-based, and educational organizations that operate Scouting units for their youth members, as well as the community at large. Of these, more than 70 percent of all units are chartered to faith-based organizations.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

The BSA is proud to have long-standing relationships with the following organizations (listed in order of number of youth members).

- |   |   |                                     |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints | American Legion                         | Parent clubs in schools             |
| United Methodist churches                       | Lions International                     | Private schools                     |
| Catholic churches                               | Rotary International                    | Groups of citizens                  |
| Presbyterian churches                           | Veterans of Foreign Wars                | Business/industry                   |
| Lutheran churches                               | Kiwanis International                   | Parent Teacher Associations         |
| Baptist churches                                | Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks | Other community organizations       |
| Episcopal churches                              | Boys & Girls Clubs                      | Community centers                   |
| United Churches of Christ                       | Optimist International                  | Nonprofit agencies                  |
| Christian Church (DOC)                          | YMCA/YWCA                               | Playgrounds/recreation centers      |
| Independent community churches                  | Masons/Eastern Star                     | Athletic booster clubs              |
| Other churches                                  | Loyal Order of Moose                    | Chambers of commerce                |
| Churches of Christ                              | Conservation Clubs/Izaak Walton Leagues | Homeowners associations             |
| Evangelical independent churches                | Ruritan National                        | Handicapped resources               |
| Church of God                                   | Labor/AFL-CIO                           | BSA council/district                |
| Church of the Nazarene                          | Grange National                         | Business-to-school support agencies |

Today, the Boy Scouts of America represents approximately 2.6 million youth and 1 million adult members across the nation. The organization remains breathtakingly popular, particularly among parents of current and former Scouts, with 85 percent of parents giving the organization a favorable rating. The BSA is a one-of-a-kind world-class program, uniting those with diverse beliefs about a number of important issues by staying focused on serving young people and preparing them for life.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## All Markets Resources Available

Recruitment resources in both English and Spanish are available in the [Marketing Toolbox](#). Other recruitment materials are available on the [Multicultural Markets Resources page](#).



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## What Is Happening in Outdoor Programs?

Outdoor Programs has a lot going on that might be of interest to you and your units. A high-level summary of items of interest are listed below. This information is also available on the [Outdoor Programs website](#), which is your resource for anything in the outdoor program for all levels of Scouting. You can access information on aquatics, NCAP, fishing, COPE/climbing, shooting sports, conservation and the Hornaday awards, outdoor ethics and Leave No Trace, camp maintenance, and national high-adventure base information.

Here are some other things to keep in mind:

- **Outdoor Ethics Awards:** These awards have recently been redone for all programs—Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, and Venturers—for both youth and adults.
- **National Camp Accreditation Program (NCAP):** All tools to support this major change in camp operations are available. Any revisions for 2014 will be shared on this site by the end of the year. These standards apply to all camping properties as well as day camps, resident camps, and high-adventure and specialty camps.
- **National Outdoor Badges:** The five National Outdoor Badges recognize a Boy Scout or Varsity Scout who demonstrates both knowledge and experience in camping, hiking, aquatics, riding, or adventure. Scouts earning the National Outdoor Badges have demonstrated that they are knowledgeable, safe, and comfortable in the outdoor activity covered by the badge.

### Sea Scouts

The Sea Scouts program is often called the nautical division of the Boy Scouts of America. It is part of Venturing and is designed for boys and girls who are 14, or who are 13 and have completed the eighth grade, through the age of 20. To learn more about the program or how to support a Sea Scout ship, go to the [Sea Scout website](#). You can also contact the National Sea Scout Office by calling 972-580-2448 or emailing the national director, Keith Christopher, at [keith.christopher@scouting.org](mailto:keith.christopher@scouting.org). Help us provide this resource to youth who want to know all about the water.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

**Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®



## Religious Emblems Coordinators Support Duty to God, Promote Growth and Retention

With the recent release of the unit religious emblems coordinator patch, the Religious Emblems Coordinator program is now in place. When properly implemented, the program not only leads to an increase in the number of religious emblems earned and provides another opportunity to affirm “duty to God” in Scouting but also serves as a tool for unit retention and growth. BSA research indicates that Scouts working on their religious emblems remain in Scouting longer. Additionally, relationships are strengthened with the chartering organizations, more than 70 percent of which are faith-based, and doors are opened to the starting of new units.

### Purpose

There are three purposes for having religious emblems coordinators at the council, district, and unit levels:

- Encourage all youth to earn the emblem of their faith
- Promote religious emblems usage the way the BSA promotes other youth advancement
- Establish goals and track the number of religious emblems earned each year

### Why?

Baden-Powell stated, “Religion seems a very simple thing: First, love and serve God. Second, love and serve your neighbor.” (*Scouting for Boys*, 1908) Here are three reasons to have religious emblems coordinator positions:

- Reinforce BSA values through religious emblems
- Improve relationships with religious chartered organizations
- Establish relationships with potential religious chartered organizations

### Responsibilities of Religious Emblems Coordinators

#### Council Religious Emblems Coordinator (patch, No. 614660)

- Is appointed by the vice president of program



- Disseminates information to district religious emblems coordinators
- Disseminates information through:
  - Trainings
    - Professional staff
    - College of Commissioner Science
    - University of Scouting
    - New leader training
    - Program at summer camp and day camp
- Works with the council Religious Relationships Committee
- Recognizes that the Religious Relationships Committee is the group that works directly with the faith community to:
  - Recruit chaplains
  - Coordinate the council calendar with religious holidays
  - Sponsor religious emblems retreats
  - Identify religious representatives from the various faith groups
  - Strengthen ties with local congregations and chartered organizations
- If the Religious Relationships Committee works primarily with the faith community, the religious emblems coordinator focuses specifically on raising awareness of religious emblems and increasing usage.
- The religious emblems coordinator can learn through the Religious Relationships Committee which faith committees are sponsoring religious emblems retreats and which congregations are offering religious emblems classes.



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).







## District Religious Emblems Coordinator (patch, No. 614645)

- Is appointed by the district program chair
- Sets goals with the district program chair
- Encourages every unit to appoint a unit religious emblems coordinator
- Disseminates information to units through charter renewal packets, roundtables, and camporees
- Encourages unit committees to set goals (i.e., number of religious emblems that will be earned that year)
- Helps unit religious emblems coordinators recruit presenters to make presentations on religious emblems, including clergy of chartered organizations, unit leaders who promote religious emblems, chaplains, etc.



## Unit Religious Emblems Coordinator (patch, No. 618744)

- Is appointed by the unit committee chair and serves on the unit committee
- Acquaints all youth with the religious emblems program and emblems available for their faith
- Provides Scout families and clergy with an orientation to the religious emblems program and encourages their involvement
- Urges all youth to earn the religious emblem(s) of their faith
- Disseminates information about any district or council religious emblems activities, retreats, camps, or classes
- Promotes religious emblems usage the way the BSA promotes other youth advancement
- Coordinates establishment of goals and tracks the number of emblems earned each year
- Serves as the unit's liaison to the district religious emblems coordinator



## More Information

### Sample Goals

- Number of emblems earned (by religion, unit, district, council, etc.)
- Number of religious presentations made to Scouts, parents, clergy, etc.
- Number of congregations offering religious emblems classes
- Number of trainings offered on religious emblems

### Recruitment of Religious Emblems Coordinators

- Establish communication with the Religious Relationships Committee and ask them to help.
- Ask clergy of chartered organizations.
- Ask leaders of units that promote religious emblems usage.

### Sharing Data

- Collect data on religious emblems usage.
- Post information on council, district, and unit websites.
- List recipients in the council newsletter.
- Recognize leaders, units, and districts that do an outstanding job.
- Market your data by posting it on the websites.

### Resources

- Online: [www.scouting.org/Awards/ReligiousAwards.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/Awards/ReligiousAwards.aspx); [www.praypub.org/rec](http://www.praypub.org/rec)
- Webinars/workshops/tutorials: [www.praypub.org/learningcenter](http://www.praypub.org/learningcenter)



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).



Fall 2013

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



[www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)

## Unit Commissioner Box Score

As of September 30, 2013

| 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 | 16,119             | 15,326    | 5,379                     | 5,109     | 4,145                         | 4,026     | 1,234           | 1,083     | 77.1%                  | 78.8%     | 3.9                | 3.8       |
| Southern  | 25,636             | 24,543    | 8,545                     | 8,180     | 7,174                         | 6,870     | 1,371           | 1,310     | 84.0%                  | 84.0%     | 3.6                | 3.6       |
| Central   | 22,496             | 21,525    | 7,500                     | 7,173     | 5,925                         | 5,735     | 1,575           | 1,438     | 79.0%                  | 80.0%     | 3.8                | 3.8       |
| Western   | 41,824             | 41,292    | 13,941                    | 13,766    | 10,199                        | 10,225    | 3,742           | 3,541     | 73.2%                  | 74.3%     | 4.1                | 4.0       |
| National  | 106,075            | 102,686   | 35,365                    | 34,228    | 27,443                        | 26,856    | 7,922           | 7,372     | 77.6%                  | 78.5%     | 3.9                | 3.8       |

\*Does not include Explorer posts or Learning for Life groups



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to [Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter](http://Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter), or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

Download a QR reader for your smartphone at [scan.mobi](http://scan.mobi).



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®