

WHO ARE COMMISSIONERS

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ETOWAH CREEK DISTRICT

INDIAN WATERS COUNCIL

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

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PIEDMONT-APPALACHIAN COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

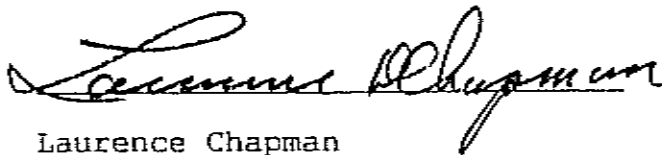
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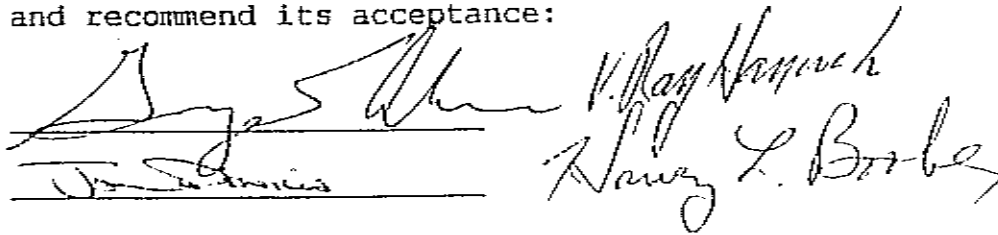
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To the Graduate Council:

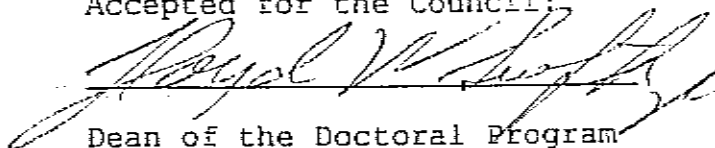
I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Steve Galloway entitled "Who Are Commissioners". I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Commissioner Science.


Laurence Chapman

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:


V. Ray Hancock
Nancy L. Borbe

Accepted for the Council:


Dean of the Doctoral Program

PREFACE PAGE

We need to provide the highest quality Commissioner we can recruit for all Units. A Unit Commissioner should be chosen based on the need of the Unit , and the knowledge and experience of the Commissioner to fit that need. I have chosen this topic because I believe we can make a better selections of Commissioners if we have a guide to make that choice.

"Commissioners are . . . involved with carrying programs to the Unit, but their main concern is to develop strength within the Unit operation" ¹ Strength can only come from a careful selections of Commissioners to meet specific needs. We can give a good example of Commissioner evaluation and selection based on experience by showing the actual job scope of Commissioners and defining what the Unit needs. We will use the experience derived from working with Units as a guideline.

It is my intent to benefit the boys and adults of Units in Etowah Creek District, Indian Waters Council. If we can produce a successful Unit this thesis should benefit any Assistant District Commissioner that needs to choose a Unit Commissioner.

¹ Boy Scouts of America, "Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service," p. 9

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THE UNIT COMMISSIONER'S ROLLS

Before we can decide who we want to select for a Commissioner, we must know what his functions is. The only function of a Commissioner is to help the Unit succeed through Unit service. Some measures of success are the number of rank advancements, on time charter renewal, Quality Unit status, adult leader training, and how many boys join the Unit. "To measure the effectiveness of a Commissioner, one need only look at the record of the Units served. Are the objectives of Scouting being carried out? Is there strong, competent Unit leadership? Do Unit committees meet regularly? Is there growth in boy membership? Do Units take an active part in District and Council activities? Is there a positive relationship between the chartered organization and their Units and Unit leaders? If the answer to these questions is "yes," the Commissioner is successful."²

Now we need to decide how the commissioner helps the Unit to succeed. He has eleven different rolls to play. The rolls are: friend, representative, counselor, lawyer, doctor, teacher, health inspector, news reporter, spiritual guide, promoter and example.

²Boy Scouts of America, "Commissioner Administration of Unit Service," p.3

FRIEND

The first thing a commissioner needs to do is to establish himself as the Unit's friend. We often hear that "HAVING AN ATTITUDE" is bad. If the "ATTITUDE" is "I care," then "ATTITUDE" is good. The Commissioner must let the Unit know that he cares about them, he is there to help them, and ask what he can do for them.³ We call on friends in times of joy and trouble. A Commissioner is called in times of trouble if the Unit considers him as their friend.

REPRESENTATIVE

Most Unit leaders think the Commissioner is a professional in the Boy Scouts of America organization when they first meet him. District Executives did not exist in the early years of scouting. Commissioners filled that roll as volunteers. Today the Commissioner represents the scouting organization by showing he believes the ideals, principles, programs and policies of the scouting movement will help today's boys. A positive attitude toward scouting is essential for a good representative.

³Boy Scouts of America, "Commissioner Field book for Unit Service," p.10

This is not the place for criticizing activities or people in the District or Council. The successful salesman will be enthusiastic about his project. A good Commissioner is excited about scouting. He gives encouragement and service where it is needed. The Unit Commissioner represents the Unit to the District and the District to the Unit.

COUNSELOR

"Tommy is always disrupting our meetings. What can I do?" This is only one of many questions a Unit leader will have for the Unit Commissioner. A Commissioner must be able to "help the Unit leader find his own answer." A counselor guides others. He does not provide the answer. Counselors must be able to listen. The Unit Commissioner helps the Unit leader find the real problem. Then the leader can be guided to determine his own best solution to the problem.

Most of us are not professional counselors. When the Commissioner hears of a problem concerning child or sex abuse, he must report the problem to the Council.

LAWYER

A lawyer should know the law. A Commissioner should know the policies and rules of the Boy Scouts of America. This is another reason for careful selection of a Commissioner. He must know the policies and be able to determine if the Unit is following these policies.

. DOCTOR

It is easier to keep a patient healthy with preventive medicine. We can generally avoid major surgery by keeping close track of the health of the Unit. Discover symptoms early. Diagnose the problem. Prescribe the cure. Every good physician makes a follow-up appointment.⁴ If the Commissioner does not follow-up with the Unit he is working, he may lose the momentum the Unit has going for it.

⁴Boy Scouts of America, "Commissioner Fieldbook for unit Service," p.10

TEACHER

Another good title for this Commissioner role could be On-The-Job-Training. The Unit leaders are usually learning as they work with the boys. The scouter is working in a dynamic environment. Their lessons are vital and immediately put to use. The Unit leader can carry out solutions and see results.

HEALTH INSPECTOR

We need to make sure our boys have a safe environment in which to have fun. Watch for things like dirty dishes left out during a camping trip, faulty extension cords and any other health or safety problem. Do not let Tommy run through the campsite with a hatchet in his hand. Stop Tommy immediately. Explain to him how he could get hurt if he fell. Find the Unit leader and give the hatchet to him.

NEWS REPORTER

A good Commissioner will always have something for the Unit leader. Let them know of activities in the Council or District. Much of this information is presented in the Council newspaper, and Round Tables. Make sure the leader is aware of training schedules, camporees, Round Table meeting, etc. Report activities of the

Unit. If the Unit or leader has recently completed some successful activity, recognize it in the Council newspaper. Try to find awards the Unit leaders have earned or deserve. Make a special issue of leader recognition at Round Tables, camporees, or District award dinners.

SPIRITUAL GUIDE

A Scout Is Reverent. The Commissioner should encourage the Unit to earn religious emblems that represent the individual boy's faith. Packets are available at the Council office. If the sponsoring organization is a religious institution, they may want to help the boys earn the award. When they help the boys earn the religious award, they will feel a closer tie to the Unit.

PROMOTER

The Commissioner should be enthusiastic about the scouting movement and program. Encourage the Units to attend summer camp, Round Tables, training, school night and Scout Sunday. Make sure the new Unit charter is appropriately presented to the charter organization.

EXAMPLE

Baden-Powell once said, "Remember that, as a Scoutmaster you are always being 'snap-shot' by the boys."⁵ The Commissioner is a person who is 'snap-shot' by the boys and adult leaders. He must maintain the uniform standard.⁶ He must have that positive attitude, which is so important in setting the example.

⁵Boy Scouts of America, "Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge Staff Guide for a Weekend Course," p.64

⁶Boy Scouts of America, "Commissioner Administration of Unit Service," p.26

WHAT DOES THE UNIT NEED FROM THE COMMISSIONER?

Some Unit leaders feel they do not need a Commissioner. If they have people that work at the Unit, District, and Council levels they probably already have a good program in place. They probably participate in District and Council activities. Their leaders are probably Wood Badge trained. They go to Round Tables. Their boys have lots of activities to encourage advancement and character building. This is the Unit that consistently recharter on time, receives the Quality Unit Award each year, has consistent boy number growth, an active committee, and everything a Commissioner would hope for in a Unit. The Unit leaders' job would be even easier if they had a Commissioner to help with recharter and have a Charter Presentation to the sponsoring organization.

Then there is the brand new Unit. Let's take a few minutes and look at the needs and characteristics of this Unit. They need lots of help. The Unit leaders need a knowledgeable Unit Commissioner to tell them everything from adult application to Youth's Frontier, Making Ethical Decisions. The Commissioner for this Unit will fill all of the rolls mentioned earlier.

The charter organization needs to be involved. They need to know what roll they will play. Who will be the Charter Representative? How does he fill out the

adult application? How much does it cost? Who pays the cost? Who signs and approves the application? What do the codes mean? How does he interact with the District and Council? What are the district and Council? How does the sponsoring organization appoint a committee chairman? What does the committee chairman do? How does the committee chairman select his committee? What does the committee do? How does the committee select the Scoutmaster or Cubmaster?

Do you begin to get the idea of the Commissioner's roll? The Charter Representative is going to need to be trained. The Unit leaders are going to need to be trained. Make sure the committee members are not overlooked during training. Let them know when the training is available, where it is going to be held, and finally how much will it cost. Tell them about the people putting on the training. If necessary, take them to the training sessions. When they complete their training, the Commissioner's job is not quite so difficult. However, the Commissioner needs to be sure to follow-up weekly. Obviously, this is not all the Unit will need. Much more detail could be covered in another thesis.

What about the characteristics of the new Unit? You should have a few advantages here. They want the guidance to get them started. They want their sons to have a good scouting experience. Some of them may have been scouts

in their youth. Others know nothing about the scouting movement other than they have seen scouts and heard the thing is good. They are appreciative of any help and guidance given to them. The new scouters will be apprehensive. How much of my time will it take? Can I actually be a leader of these boys? Remember that these are legitimate concerns and need to be answered openly and honestly. The answer is yes. Assure them you will be there to help them get started. you will also be there later to help them find answers to other questions they will have. Help them find the answers. Keep your promises.

Another type of Unit is the one that needs major surgery. An example of this Unit would be a Cub Pack that did not meet during the summer. Their last meeting was four and a half months ago. Their Cub master has resigned. The parents are waiting for someone to call and tell them when the next meeting is going to be held. This Unit probably did not even have a Commissioner assigned to it. If a Commissioner was assigned to it, he probably needs to be trained or replaced.

The parents in the last type of Unit will probably become quite angry when they find out what has happened to their Unit. They will want to know why they were not notified earlier about the problems. Did I mention earlier that every Unit should have an active, knowledgeable Commissioner?

VOLUNTEER DUTIES

COUNCIL COMMISSIONER

*Report to the council president and serve as an officer of the local council, a member of its executive committee, and as a National Council member representing the local council.

*Be responsible for the unit service function of the council.

*Chair the regular meetings of the district commissioners.

*Provide sufficient training opportunities so that every commissioner may receive training shortly after commissioning.

*Plan and conduct an annual commissioner conference for training, recognition, seminar discussion, and morale.

*Appoint assistant council commissioners.

*Encourage and help district commissioners recruit full staffs. Assist in recruiting district commissioners as needed.

*Verify that proper techniques are used to select and recruit unit leaders.

VOLUNTEER DUTIES
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

A District Commissioner leads the commissioner staff and does the following:

*Identify and recruit enough of the right people as commissioners so that all scouting units in the district receive regular, helpful service.

--Assistant district commissioners.

--Cub Scout roundtable commissioner.

--Boy Scout roundtable commissioner.

--Enough unit commissioners for each to serve only three units.

*Train members of the Commissioner staff.

--Conduct Commissioner Basic Training.

--Conduct orientation/personal coaching.

--Guide commissioners toward Arrowhead Honor and Scouter's Key.

*Supervise and motivate unit commissioners to visit each unit regularly, identify unit needs, and make plans to meet unit needs.

*Administer the annual commissioner service plan, which gives specific purposes for commissioner contact with units at designated times of the year.

VOLUNTEER DUTIES
ASSISTANT DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

- *Report to the district commissioner.

- *Recruit a full staff of unit commissioners to serve the assigned area.

- *Help the district commissioner train unit commissioners and roundtable commissioners:
 - Conduct personal coaching/orientation sessions.
 - Participate in the formal basic training courses.
 - Help unit commissioners attain the Arrowhead Honor, Scout's Key, and Distinguished Commissioner Service Award.

- *Attend monthly district commissioner staff meetings.

- *Serve units with no assigned unit commissioner.

- *Maintain regular contact with unit commissioners under your supervision:
 - To assess units' strengths and weaknesses.
 - To help find solutions to units' problem.
 - To provide information, informal training, program ideas, and recognition.

- *Coach the chartered organization representative.

- *Involve unit adults in training and roundtables.

VOLUNTEER DUTIES
UNIT COMMISSIONER

*Report to the district commissioner or assistant district commissioner as assigned.

*Help each unit earn the Quality Unit Award.

*Use the annual commissioner service plan, with its scheduled opportunities to commissioner contact with units.

*Know each phase of scouting and its literature. Be able to describe how each works.

*Visit meeting of assigned packs/troops/teams/post regularly, usually once a month.

*Visit regularly with the unit leader;

--Listen to what the unit leader has to say.

--Offer encouragement and support.

--Using literature and profile sheet, help the leader see opportunities for improvement.

--Maintain good unit leader relationships.

--Encourage unit participation in district and council events and training.

*Work to ensure effective unit committees;

--Visit with the unit committee periodically.

--Observe the committee, offer suggestions for improvement, and work to solve problems.

VOLUNTEER DUTIES
ROUNDTABLE COMMISSIONER

*Report to the district commissioner.

*Conduct monthly roundtable meeting:

--Develop regular roundtable plans.

--Participate in the annual council roundtable planning conference.

--Meet with the district executive and district commissioner to review the council's master roundtable plan adapt to the district plans.

--Lead a monthly roundtable planning session.

--Use national aids: Boy Scout or Cub Scout Roundtable Planning Guide,

Roundtable planning sheets, Scouting magazine, Program Helps, Boys Life, etc.

--Determine what contributions can be made by resource people, and arrange for their participation.

*Recruit roundtable staff, as needed, to handle program elements, hosting, and participation.

*Coach the chartered organization representative.

*Involve unit adults in training and roundtables.

CONCLUSION

We have previously discussed the rolls of the Unit Commissioner. To fulfill each of these rolls a commissioner must come with people talents. Before we discuss the people talents needed, we need to list the rolls the commissioner plans.

1. EXAMPLE
2. FRIEND
3. REPRESENTATIVE
4. COUNSELOR
5. LAWYER
6. DOCTOR
7. TEACHER
8. HEALTH INSPECTOR
9. NEWS REPORTER
10. SPIRITUAL GUIDE
11. PROMOTER

All of these things require someone to be able to communicate. The communications must start with listening. Hear what the problems and desires of the units are. We must remember the units are not numbers but people. People want to be heard and understood. They want assurance that they are doing the right thing. Most people will appreciate guidance and correction if they truly believe their teacher is concerned about them as a person. This message is delivered verbally, physically by body language and facial expressions, and by the actions of the commissioner. If the commissioner delivers service to the unit in a

timely manner, he will communicate to the unit that he is truly concerned about them.

The commissioner must leave his ego at home. The unit is not interested that the commissioner has been to "Commissioner college" or that he has earned his Masters or Doctorate. They want service. COMMISSIONER - GIVE SERVICE.

We could list many "people talents" needed. Motivator, leader, listener, etc. This is probably a good topic for another thesis.

Where do we find these people to become commissioners? Many people think that a NESA or contributor list is a good place to start. A good source is a list of long time Scoutmasters, Assistant Scoutmasters, and committee members. These people know the program. They may also be looking for a change or may have already dropped out of Scouting. If they are happy and effective in their active roll, serve them. Otherwise, they are good candidates for becoming a commissioner.

How to choose and recruit a commissioner is discussed in many other doctoral thesis. I will not go into a lot of detail here. Simply use common sense. The first step to take is to determine the needs of the unit to be served. Does the unit need someone to help them start a program? Do they need emergency first aid? Are their leaders already Wood Badge caliber? Is their program effective ?

Find someone who knows the program. Set up an appointment to discuss scouting with them. Make sure they are the type of person to set the example. Make sure they want to help. Make sure they are not on an ego trip or think this is a " position ".

~~Once you are convinced they can contribute and~~
serve, serve them. Give them the tools they need. let them know of training available. take them to training.