

A Discussion on Improving Commissioner Service

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Council Commissioner

Indian Waters Council

Boy Scouts of America

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Piedmont-Appalachian College of Commissioner Science

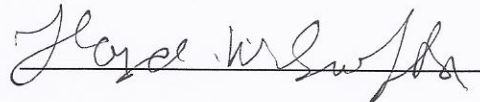
Ridgecrest Conference Center

Ridgecrest, North Carolina

Lloyd W. Swift, Jr., Advisor

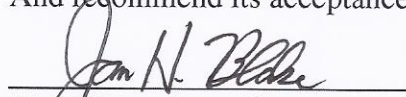
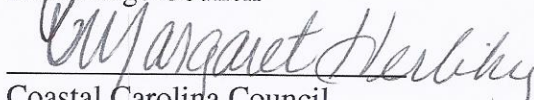
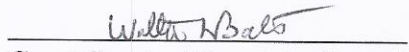
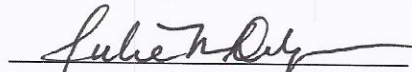
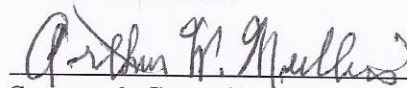
To the Doctoral Candidate Review Board:

I am submitting herewith a Dissertation written by Jeff G. Will, entitled "A Discussion on Improving Commissioner Service." I have examined the final copy of this report for format and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment for the Degree of Doctor of Commissioner Science.



Lloyd W. Swift, Jr.

We have read this Dissertation
And recommend its acceptance:


Blue Ridge Council
Coastal Carolina Council
Great Smoky Mountain Council
Indian Waters Council
Palmetto Council
Sequoyah Council

Accepted for the Piedmont-Appalachian College
of Commissioner Science:



Chairman
Doctoral Candidate Review Board
and Daniel Boone Council

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Acknowledgments

My sincere thanks must go to all of the Commissioners and Scouters in the *Indian Waters Council-553* that have trained and provided the support and encouragement to me that is necessary to sustain one's focus on the purpose of our great endeavor; the shaping of youth into future leaders of tomorrow. It is impossible to believe that a more complete program exists to achieve such a lofty goal. Our continuing path into the future, our next century, gives me the perseverance to strive for excellence as my future, our future, is dependent on our success in encouraging, developing, training and empowering the leadership that will succeed us and provide for us as we fade into the past and join the history of Scouting. I have every hope and expectation that we will flourish and that the future leadership of Scouting will be left in capable hands as long as we continue our "**Journey to Excellence.**"

I could not have completed this work without the encouragements of my mentors at the Piedmont-Appalachian College of Commissioner Science that are my fellow Commissioners, my friends, and my brothers and sisters.

A special recognition must be noted that without the love, encouragement and a special necessary nudge from Julie, this would still be a project for next year.

May God continue to bless the **Boy Scouts of America.**

Abstract

The purpose and the design of this dissertation is to assist and guide the Council Commissioner and District Commissioner Staff in developing a program that will recruit, train, encourage, excite, motivate and retain a functioning and productive Commissioner Corps. Through an analysis of our history, individuals identified for Commissioners, Scouting and Commissioner training programs, and Commissioner Recognition we can accomplish the goal of moving Boy Scouts of America into the next century strong through Commissioner's efforts and the promotion of our "**Journey to Excellence.**"

Introduction

As a Cub Scout Leader, Boy Scout Leader, Venturing Advisor and Commissioner, I have learned that it is the program that the youth are attracted to in order to fulfill their need for adventure in their young lives. As adult leaders we must never lose the focus that the “sizzle” of the program is what is of paramount importance to the youth in our charge. To provide that interest, we must have an adult leadership corps that is prepared to provide for this yearning.

I currently serve as the Council Commissioner and have endeavored to shape the Commissioner Corps into a unit that is available and helpful to the units that we serve. Education and training is the key to this formula. Without training and the information that it gives the Commissioner Corps, we are not able to perform at the level that is necessary for our units to succeed in providing the quality program that will attract new youth to the program and certainly retain the youth that we have in our units today.

The following is a discussion and hopefully a guide for new Council Commissioners and District Commissioners in outlining the need, direction and maintenance of a vibrant Commissioner Corps.

History of the Commissioner

The word Commissioner has its origin starting in 1344 under the reign of Edward III of England. The word was derived from the Latin *commissionem*, meaning “delegation of business.” The nation’s monarch delegated the authority to a deserving few. Individuals identified by the monarch to be commissioners had to qualify as gentlemen. As legally defined, a gentleman earned his income from property and as such was independently wealthy with time to devote to other agendas. It was exactly this kind of man that Lord Baden-Powell wanted as his volunteer Commissioners: men of both money and leisure.¹ Does this sound like the profile of today’s Commissioner? Not really, as today’s Commissioners are volunteers that have jobs, family and frequently other Scouting positions.

In 1908, Lord Baden-Powell tapped recently retired Lieutenant-General Sir Edmond Roche Elles as his first Chief Scout Commissioner, a position he held until 1922. By nominating prominent men for Commissioner Positions, Lord Baden-Powell helped gain support and recognition for the program. Some of these gentlemen were working Commissioners, others in name only, but either way the new Scouting movement benefited. To name two prominent historical figures, W. F. deBois MacLaren (benefactor who donated the property that today we refer to as Gilwell Park) was the original District Commissioner in Scotland and Rudyard Kipling (author of “The Jungle Book”) the Commissioner of Wolf Cubs.¹

When Scouting jumped the pond to America, the Boy Scouts of America needed a few good men in 1910. As Scouting units grew there was a distinct need for leadership to maintain standards,

provide camping opportunities, recruit new leaders, give training, establish local Courts of Honor, and to stimulate the Scouting program. This individual Scouter was known as a Commissioner. The Scout Commissioner represented a local community committee or council. This was an important man with a large responsibility. Selection of this individual was incumbent upon his abilities as an expert in the outdoors and as an authority of the prescribed Scout skills. Daniel Carter “Uncle Dan” Beard had these requisite skills and talents and became one of the first National Scout Commissioners for the newly formed Boy Scouts of America, a position he held until his death.

The 1912 Annual Report of the Boy Scouts of America noted that there were 290 Scout Commissioners.¹ “Commissioning a Leader meant that they were commissioned to render specific services provided for in the by-laws of the Boy Scouts of America.”²

Notice that the Commissioners were selected on their abilities and expertise in Scout skills and the outdoors. How could we ever expect someone to advise units on program content if their qualifications did not equip them with the requisite skill set? Should we expect to succeed in our working lives if the talents that we are to possess for the execution of our duties are lacking? Can we accomplish the tasks that we are given during the course of our day’s work if we do not have the training and resources? Why do we expect that recruiting a “warm body” for a 3:1 Unit to Commissioner Ratio will result in successful units and Scout and Scouter retention? The answers to these questions are evident. We have to provide our leaders and Commissioners with state-of-

the-art training and confidence to help our Units succeed. We must retrace the steps that led to our past success and learn from our failures (opportunities for future success).

The original Scout Commissioners eventually became what we know today as the Scouting Professional. Today's Commissioners share the "wreath of service" with our Scouting professionals. As Commissioners, we should endeavor to remember that we are the uniformed volunteer that assists the Scouting professionals in providing the youth in our charge with a quality program that is promoted and supported by that dedicated and trained volunteer and professional corps. Too often a schism exists between the professional staff and the volunteer staff, each one looking toward the other to offer explanations for our collective shortcomings. Too often it is easier for us to assign blame and leave a failure on the doorstep of someone else. Is this the Scouting way? Have we taken responsibility for our actions? Have we represented the ideals of Scouting to the youth that we serve? The answer to all of these questions is absolutely not. We must learn and evolve to ascribe to the original plan of Lord Baden-Powell and work together as ladies and gentlemen. For as gentlemen and ladies, we are better suited to instill the values of the Scout Oath and Law. We take the high ground and epitomize the values which we strive to instill in the youth in our programs.

Assembling the Commissioner Staff

What am I looking for? Too often we have looked for Scouting Commissioners from the ranks of the retired Scouting force, “the crusty old red coats.” This group has a great history of experience, and is a pool of individuals that are well versed in the Scouting program. Unfortunately, we also inherit their bias and their complaints about the program along with a lot of bad habits. While we need to look towards an individual who is experienced in the outdoors and Scout skills, we need to make sure that these individuals are positive, upbeat, friendly Scouters. “Know-it-all” Scouters will both intimidate and repel our new younger leaders. We need to breathe into Scouting individuals that are energized, ready, and able to serve.

Most Scouters start off as a parent of a youth in the program. Sometimes they enjoyed the program so much as a youth that they stay involved as a young adult. These individuals have great enthusiasm, but will only know the Scouting program from program experience. This is a great start, but unless this individual is open to new and evolving ideas, they will probably have a very narrow vision and will be lacking in some critical thinking skills and methods of program execution. On the other hand, an individual who has time and again promoted a program in a specific format, or may never have been involved in Scouting, sometimes has difficulty seeing the program from the Scouts perspective. It is important that we as Commissioners expose ourselves constantly to new and innovative methods for program development and program execution. Commissioners need to be a mixture of the two behaviors; enthusiastic and adaptive. We forget what it was like to be an eight-year-old boy and therefore what interests a youth of

that age. We must assemble groups of individuals who can visualize the program from many perspectives, the youth's, the leader's, the District's and the Council's perspective. We need to lead the program in such a way that the program grows and evolves with the youth needs and expectations. This is not an easy task and one many would say does not fall within the parameter of the Commissioner's responsibilities. That is why we fail (opportunity). If it is not our duty to see that the youth are engaged in the program, then we should not be surprised when the retention of the youth and volunteer adult leaders declines.

We live in a society of immediate information and our young Scouts and new Scout leaders do not like to wait for the Commissioner Corps to evolve. The youth and young adult volunteer leader are by definition much more versed in immediate communication and therefore immediate results. Commissioners need to learn the new ways of communication, so that we can better serve the needs of our new leaders and Scouts. As we search for new Commissioners to recruit and train, we must take into consideration communication skills and the willingness to be open to new methods of communication. Telephone calls and e-mail are no longer the preferred method of communication. Social media is a large part of our youth's and new leader's lives. Even current methods of communication will be replaced with newer modalities that might not yet exist. We must adapt and learn these methods if we are to provide quality service and meet our Units' needs.

We measure our success and the success of the Commissioner Corps by unit visitation and the reporting of these visits in the Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS). A Commissioner that

refuses to adapt to new methods of information distribution will not serve the unit well and will not serve the District and Council well. Administrative Commissioners (District and Council Commissioners) must be able to identify those individuals that will perform their duties as Commissioners within the guidelines of Commissioner Responsibilities. Those “crusty, old, red coats” might not be our best choices and would be better served both individually and collectively, as would Scouting in general, if we identified another role for them in Scouting, such as on District Committees, Council Committees, or the Council Board. We need to focus on putting the right people on the bus so that on our *Journey to Excellence*, all are served to the best of our collective abilities and we move toward the destination of a preparing our youth into responsible and productive adults.

Look for a Scouter that has time. A Commissioner is not a Scouter that can fit into the “one hour a week” category. That individual must be able to visit the units and provide the service the unit requires and deserves. The Commissioner must be well-trained in the Scouting Program. This means Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Venturing, Sea Scouting, and Exploring. This individual might not have the skill set for all of these programs, but **MUST** be willing to take the training that will assist this person in obtaining a basic understanding of the program, and must possess the skills that the unit leaders are teaching to the youth. This might seem like a lot to ask, but how can we serve the units if we do not understand the day-to-day problems that the unit leader faces. If we are not willing to take the time to learn more about Scouting programs, then how can we expect the unit leader to take his or her basic training, BALOO, OWL, IOLS, Safe Swim Defense, Hazardous Weather, Climb-On Safely, CPR, Wilderness First-Aid, or more advanced

training like University of Scouting, Wood Badge, Powder Horn, National Camping School Training, National Leadership Skills, and Philmont Training Center Courses. This may seem like a lot, but our Commissioner Corps must be willing to take training that will align our Corps with the volunteers that mean to lead and help lead in their units' success. I also believe, and have been supported by the professional staff of Indian Waters Council, that the Professional Scouters must be trained in these courses as well. Administrative Commissioners need to recruit Commissioners that are willing to take the advice that we offer to our unit leaders; get TRAINED! The benefit will be noted immediately and the fellowship and camaraderie that is established with the unit leaders during these training sessions will pay large dividends in unit success and unit leader personal satisfaction. It is also important that the Commissioner Corps serve on the staff of these training courses. This raises our visibility with the unit leaders and makes it clear that you are there to be supportive and are interested in their success. There is nothing more meaningful to a unit leader than seeing their Unit Commissioner taking, teaching, and supporting training courses. It solidifies our position in Scouting and proves to that unit leader that you care and are ready to be of service to them. I am not a recognized Scouter because I am the Council Commissioner; I am recognized because I participate in the program at all levels, Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing. Commissioners need to be a visible member of the Scouting program. Both youth and adult leaders need to recognize the Commissioner Corps as true Scouters and through this model we are able to achieve successfully the title of counselor, friend, and mentor. The Commissioner Corps must share in Scouter

recognition so that we can be a vital force in the success of the units' program and a positive visible force in the Scouting movement.

Transition in Methods of Training from Classic to Digital and Back to Classic

Has E-Learning been a great innovation for Scouting training? Difficult to prove as on-line training has not resulted in an increase in trained leaders.³ E-learning, on-line training, removes the human touch from the training experience, loss of discussion, questions, and certainly the fellowship that members of my generation crave at Scouting events. Administrative Commissioners need to make sure that as our new Scouting leaders and newly recruited Commissioners transition to a more digital training module, they still attain the requisite skills required for their position.

This emphasizes the need for more social training settings such as monthly District Roundtable Programs. District Roundtables have had an inconsistent effect on the leaders in a District because of many different reasons. Some Districts have excellent programs, some have good programs, but poor attendance, some have weak or non-existent programs or programs that are inconsistent. These problems (opportunities) all fall squarely on the shoulders of our Commissioner Corps. We need to identify volunteers in the District that can assemble both a program and a staff. It is of paramount importance that one person not be tasked to run the program alone. This fails in almost all instances as the program is seen from only the provider's perspective and is reliant on those individuals' abilities as a trainer and a performer. The most successful programs are ones that have Roundtable staffs that work as a performing team

resulting in their collective talents providing an exceptional program. This is an excellent opportunity to identify energetic, skilled, and available Commissioners that do not have the time for direct unit service, but can function as a Roundtable Commissioner.

The Unit Commissioners responsibility is to attend the Roundtable so that interaction between the Unit Leader and Unit Commissioner can take place. Again, as a role model, you are demonstrating to your unit that it is as important for you to receive supplemental training as it is for them. It is the responsibility of the Unit Commissioner to get individual unit leaders, Cubmasters, Scoutmasters, Venturing advisors to the Roundtable programs. It is very difficult to get Den Leaders, Assistant Den Leaders, Assistant Scoutmasters, and Assistant Venturing Advisors to attend if the head of the unit is absent on a regular basis. You need buy-in of the Cubmaster, Scoutmaster and Venturing Advisor if you ever expect to get the rest of the leadership involved. This is where it is very important that Roundtable is promoted to the unit leadership. Visiting unit Committee meetings is the best way to promote this. Unit self assessment is another vital method to communicate the benefits of Roundtable. Get input and feedback from the units so that the Roundtable staff can be a dynamic and an adaptive group to meet the needs of the unit and the wishes for future Roundtables. Use Roundtables to recognize the accomplishments of the unit leaders whether it is Training Award recognition, Wood Badge beading, National Camping School Certification, or unit success stories. Use a travelling totem, a stuffed animal, funny hat or some other visible item that can be passed out at Roundtable for use in the unit during the succeeding month. Have the unit take the totem on Go-See-Its, Troop outings, Crew events and take pictures of the totem and unit engaged in a Den, Pack, Patrol,

Troop, or Crew event. Have a posting of these “Packtivities, Trooptivities, or Crewtivities” with pictures of the Unit with the totem or any other Pack, Troop or Crew event and share with the Roundtable family. Invite members of other Districts to your Roundtables to get feedback on the program so that the program can evolve and grow. Identify individuals that are savvy in computer publishing skills to do a Roundtable newsletter that will both promote and engage the reader. These can be distributed most efficiently, and with conservation in mind, digitally, and allows for other Districts to view what is going on at your Roundtable. Have the units identify an individual in their unit that is their “spark-plug” and have your Unit Commissioners call on this individual frequently for insight into the unit’s health and what the unit might need or be able to offer to other units. Encourage the Senior Patrol Leader to attend with the Scoutmaster as they can add an incentive to Scoutmaster participation and can increase the bond between Scoutmaster and Senior Patrol Leader. Stimulate the local chapter of the Order of the Arrow to have its meeting time coincidental with some of the Roundtable meetings as it will increase Boy Scout Leader participation and improve the bond between the youth leadership and the adult leadership. The best ideas are usually not new ideas, but ideas that are transformed to meet the needs and desires of the next evolution or generation of Scouters.

The most successful units in my home District have multiple members of the unit participating actively in Roundtable, no big surprise. It is always important to recruit, recognize and reward your leaders as they, like all Commissioners, are volunteers sharing their enthusiasm, talent and skills with the District.

Involve the District Commissioner

As a Council Commissioner, it is important to identify with the help and assistance of the youth serving District Executives, a leader in the Commissioner Corps that can serve as a District Commissioner within your Council. This individual needs, again, to have time to serve. He or she must be able to act as a Unit Commissioner and not just as an administrative Commissioner to provide valuable and meaningful Unit Service. The District Commissioner must be a leader that leads by example, promoting the Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Venturing programs and regularly attend these programs available to the units at the District and Council level. Administrative Commissioners need to conduct thoughtful and meaningful monthly Commissioner Meetings that discuss, in a positive manner, the health and vitality of the units within the District. The Commissioner Staff needs to have a strong relationship with the youth serving District Executive so that important information such as membership, advancement and camping participation can be discussed. The Commissioner Corps need to have strong leaders and have good communication and teaching skills as they will be responsible for recruiting, training, and retaining the Commissioners within their District. District Commissioners need to be a friend, counselor, teacher and doctor to their Unit Commissioners as they will need to field the questions that the Unit Commissioners on the ground are referring. Administrative Commissioners, District and Council, need to be seen by the Unit Commissioners in their charge as unit leaders see their Unit Commissioners. District Commissioners should appoint Assistant District Commissioners to aid them in supporting the Commissioner Corps in that District. This

can be important in districts with many units or large geographic Districts. Assistant District Commissioners can have specific responsibilities or can just oversee a group of Unit Commissioners.

Monthly, the District Commissioner needs to meet with the Key Three for the District. This triumvirate of the District Executive, District Chairperson and District Commissioner handles most of the business of the District as it exists as an arm of the Council. They discuss and solve the District's needs in the area of district operations: program, membership, recognition, and financing. The Key Three supports, recognizes and rewards the Unit Leaders of the District. A successful District is comprised of successful units that are succeeding due to a quality program led by trained and involved leaders.

Council Commissioners need to involve and communicate with Assistant Council Commissioners and District Commissioners. A quarterly Commissioner Cabinet meeting keeps these lines of communication open and viable. The Commissioner Cabinet gives the Council's leading Commissioners a chance for fellowship and to share ideas, "roses and thorns," from their Districts. Although all Commissioners are invited, Assistant Council Commissioners, District Commissioners, their identified key Commissioners and professional staff advisors should attend. This should be a positive exchange emphasizing the opportunities available rather than the negatives that occur. The quarterly meeting should have some training aspect so that the Assistant Council Commissioners and District Commissioners can learn new ideas that are sent from the Area, Region and National through the Council Commissioner. Opportunities for

improving the Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Venturing programs begin through thoughtful and meaningful discussion amongst the Commissioner Corps. Commissioners are among the most highly trained and knowledgeable uniformed, volunteer Scouters in the Council. These Commissioner Cabinet meetings are essential for Administrative Commissioners to keep up to date with the methods and practices of the Boy Scouts of America and serve the units and their leaders through improvements in the execution of the program.

Commissioner recognition items such as neckerchiefs, hats, jackets, coffee mugs, and special Council Service Patches can be methods to raise the morale of the Commissioner Corps. Individual uniform items can assist in building camaraderie in the Commissioner Corps. Many Commissioners are “thread-heads” and any patch recognition is a good recognition. The Commissioner staff must be firm though in their uniform etiquette. As an example to adult leaders and the youth, we must strive to keep our uniforms in accordance with BSA Uniform Insignia Guide. As an example, the new Commissioner Patches that recognize Commissioner College, Bachelor, Master and Doctorate Degrees are not uniform patches and are more appropriately designed to be worn as a jacket patches. If individual College or Conference patches are designed and are the size of a right pocket temporary patch, they may be worn there, one patch at a time. Likewise, any Council Service Patch must have the approval of the local Scout Executive before the patches can be worn on the official field uniform. Always remember that the Commissioner Corps is setting an example as the lead uniformed Scouters in the District and Council. We need to uphold a strict compliance with the Boy Scouts of America uniform guide.

Promote Commissioner Science

I have tried to instill in you, the reader, a thirst and a desire for continued education. Any honest expert will tell you that the reason they are an expert in the field is that they continue to study the subject. There is no way learning at any level is complete. We all must endeavor to improve ourselves through training and continued experiences in the field which we claim to have mastered. Who among us has all of the answers to all of the questions? A good Commissioner program cannot be complete without continued training and education. It is the duty of the Council Commissioner and District Commissioner to lead by example and encourage your staff to practice life-long learning. The Boy Scouts of America has incorporated this into every training module inasmuch as each training module will build on additional training programs. As with all of the Boy Scouts of America programs, Commissioners start with *Youth Protection, Fast Start, This is Scouting, and Basic Commissioner Training*. You build on this initial training with experience in the field, helping our units succeed. All over the country there are Councils or groups of Councils that promote and execute Colleges of Commissioner Science and Commissioner Conferences. These programs will expand our knowledge base and enlarge our tool box of skills needed to be an expert Commissioner. Encourage your Commissioners to pursue their advanced degrees of Commissioner Science by attending these colleges and working toward advanced degrees in Commissioner Science. Reward their achievements with recognition of their accomplishments in obtaining their Bachelor, Master, Candidate for Doctorate and Doctorate degrees in Commissioner Science. Stimulate them to want more by

participating in the Philmont Training Center's Commissioner Week held every summer at the Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico. They will thank you for the recommendation and report, "mountain-top," experiences in Scouting. Commissioners will thirst for more information if you lead them by example and encourage that they continually better themselves in their knowledge and experience as a Commissioner.

Successful Commissioners recognize that the Scouting program exists for the youth. We must endeavor to be our best so that they will note our dedication to them. Scouting's future is dependent on the youth recognizing that this is their program and as Scouters, believe in the program for their future. After all, the Scouters of tomorrow are the youth of today. We must do a good job so that we protect the future of Scouting for the future adult leaders of tomorrow.

Recognize Your Commissioners

Everyone deserves and appreciates recognition for a job well done. Recognize Commissioners when they have made an accomplishment in improving the units in their charge or made efforts toward self-improvement by taking more of their time and resources to improve Scouting. The Boy Scouts of America has a built in recognition system for Commissioners much like the advancements that our youth have in rank. After recruiting and getting your Commissioner staff to complete Basic Commissioner Training, show them the first advancement rung by encouraging them to earn their Commissioner's Arrowhead. This can be accomplished in their first year of becoming a Commissioner and can be an immediate uniform recognition, evidence that the Commissioner is striving to help his or her unit succeed. The Commissioner's Arrowhead is worn on the left sleeve and has appropriate positions on the uniform depending on which field uniform is worn.

After three years of service as a Commissioner, the Commissioner's Key can be earned. This shows the Commissioner's dedication to the Commissioner Corps and is worn on the uniform as a square knot or medal with the Commissioner Device.

After five years of tenure in Commissioner Service along with requirements complete, Distinguished Commissioner recognition can be earned. This recognition is a square knot and a bolo tie that denotes the level of Commissioner Service the Commissioner has earned; Bronze as a Unit Commissioner or Roundtable Commissioner, Gold for a District Commissioner and Silver for a Council Commissioner.

As previously discussed under promoting Commissioner Science, recognition of the Doctorate of Commissioner Science is embodied as a square knot and can be earned after completing the required courses of study, serving as faculty staff at a College, recruitment of Commissioners, completion of an approved thesis, and Council Commissioner and Scout Executive approval.

In 2011, at the National Scout Meeting, an award for Excellence in Commissioner Service was approved and can be earned by a Commissioner with both requirements and tenure starting in 2011 (the earliest this award could be earned is June of 2013.)

Although not a specific Commissioner Award, the aforementioned course work at the Philmont Training Center can recognize a Scouter for multiple year participation, recruitment of three additional participants or serving on faculty at the Philmont Training Center teaching course work in any level of Scouting. This recognition, the Philmont Master Track and device award, was approved in 2008 and is a rare and esteemed award for any Scouter.

Commissioners, like all Scouters, should be recognized for their accomplishments, and should receive these awards at public ceremonies that are meaningful and represent the effort and achievement of the Commissioner.

Most Scouters are not in the program because of their desire for recognition and awards. It is the points of the Scout Law that guide my words, and make me want to recognize all of the deserving Scouters hard at work for the youth in our Councils, which propels me to note their achievements. It does me great honor to recognize and bestow an award on my Commissioners

or any other adult Scouter as they have given a part of themselves in the service of others. What greater example can we give to our youth than this?

Promote Scouting

The Commissioner promotes all aspects of Scouting and represents the Boy Scout movement to all. Be proud of your position in Scouting as it helps provide a safe environment for youth to fail, learn from that failure, and develop into the leaders of tomorrow. Wear your uniform with pride as you travel to and from Scouting events. Be an ambassador for the Scouting movement with all of your daily duties. This is truly the best youth program in the world. It has lasted over a century adhering to the principles of duty to God, duty to others and duty to self. Scouting promotes a sound mind and body that also encourages youthful play and interaction. Human social behavior will develop whether Scouting exists or does not exist, but will not the world be a better place if the ideals and values of Scouting were instilled into all of the available youth? We are only attracting a percentage of the available youth into the Scouting Program. It needs to be our goal to expand our reach and bring Scouting to more youth. We are in the Scouting program and recognize its benefits and the fun that the youth experience and the life-changing moments that each Scout notes as he or she passes through the program. Talk about Scouting at work, where you worship, where you play, as it is our duty to expand the reach of Scouting to all youth so that they too will know the benefit of “Being Prepared” for life.

Commissioners are the ambassadors for the Scouting program to the leaders that are actively engaged in only one program i.e., Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing. We are the

Corps of volunteers that will promote Boy Scouting to Cub Scouters; Cub Scouting to Boy Scouters; Venturing to Boy Scouters, Cub Scouting to Venturing adults. Remember that over 90 percent of Boy Scouts were once Cub Scouts. Almost all male Venturers were Boy Scouts. Each of these programs can help serve or recruit from the other. It is up to us as Commissioners to help open the eyes of the specific program adults to the next step in the program or in the case of Boy Scouting and Venturing, service and leadership opportunities for the youth in these programs to serve the Cub Scouting program.

Lead by Example

If you keep this to heart, you will never go wrong. The Scout Law always serves as a beacon for truth in this manner. (The following passage is paraphrased from “What the Scout Law Means to Me.” Source was used as inspiration.)⁴

“Trustworthy: A badge of honesty. Keep this one at the top of your list. If you lose your unit leaders trust, it is difficult to get it back and the relationship that you need to help the youth succeed will be lost in adult conflict. Remember it is important that we help our units succeed and doing your best and being true to your word is a necessary start.

Loyal: Without loyalty we have no love of person or country. We need to remember to be loyal to ourselves, our fellow human beings and to our country.

Helpful: Certainly part of the Commissioner’s promise to our units. By helping each other, we help ourselves, not to mention mankind. It is the greatest of the Commissioners duties.

Friendly: We are all in this together. We need to work together towards the objectives of the Boy Scouts of America. Being a friend is not only one of our responsibilities as a Commissioner, but one of our duties to one another.

Courteous: Each Scouting adult, both volunteer and professional should be treated with dignity. It reflects an attitude that you hope other people think of when your name is mentioned. It is hard to be of service without being courteous.

Kind: Remember that we are all in Scouting for the same purpose: to prepare our youth to make ethical and moral decisions by instilling the values of the Scout Oath and Law. Those small and petty differences that we perceive others articulate to or at us should not detract our vision from this goal.

Obedient: Start this at home. Practice it with your family; enlarge it with your friends and acquaintances; share it with all with whom you come into contact.

Cheerful: Always put on a happy face, especially when you're troubled. You might be surprised how contagious it becomes.

Thrifty: Be aware of your time and the time of others. Remember that most of the leaders are volunteers and are taking time away from their family. Be aware of all of our resources and be a good steward of those resources.

Brave: Go out and do a good job every day. Remember that everyone faces adversity at one time or another. Keep your chin up and face your problems head on. It is the only way that you will ever affect any kind of positive change.

Clean: Always present yourself at your best. It is always what is on the inside that counts, do not ever forget this.

Reverent: Believe in anything that you want to believe in, but keep God at the top. With God, life can be beautiful, without God you are just biding time.”⁴

Conclusion and Challenge

You would not be reading this if you were not in agreement with me that the Scouting movement, now 102 years old, is the best youth program in the world. Sure, our youth have other outlets for the expressions of their talents- academics, music, art, sports, but all of these, while worthy and necessary endeavors, will not instill in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law- Duty to God, Duty to Others, Duty to Self. Commissioners provide an opportunity in the future to assist in taking the Scouting program to more available youth. Exposure to training citizenship, development of good character and promotion of a healthy lifestyle will help our great nation in the future. I am proud to serve as a Commissioner and encourage all Commissioners to reach out to other adults that can make a difference in the lives of our future leaders. Help us to engage the youth of today to be good citizens of tomorrow. Feed the drive to succeed in life and provide for future generations of Scouts and Scouters.

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Appendix

Arrowhead Honor⁵



Council Commissioner and Assistant Council Commissioner

1. Work with your Scout Executive or other staff adviser and evaluate all District Commissioners in the council.
2. Have an active, effective District Commissioner in every district of the council.
3. Develop and put into action a suitable recruiting plan throughout the council.
4. Achieve a ratio in the council of one Unit Commissioner for every three units.
5. Chair or actively take part in six council Commissioner meetings.
6. Give leadership to a council Commissioner conference, and
7. In consultation with the Scout Executive, select and carry out a major project in the council.⁵

District Commissioner and Assistant District Commissioner

1. Work with your District Executive to evaluate all Commissioners you supervise.
2. Achieve a ratio of one Unit Commissioner for every three units in the district or service area.
3. Develop and put into action a suitable recruiting plan.
4. Chair or take part actively in six District Commissioner staff meetings.
5. Attend six District Committee meetings (not required for Assistants).
6. Attend a council Commissioner conference with a majority of your staff, and
7. Provide personal coaching for the Commissioners you supervise, and
8. Develop and implement a plan to track and hold your Unit Commissioners accountable for monthly unit visits.⁵

Roundtable Commissioner

1. Review all material in the current
 - *Venturing Roundtable Guide*
 - *Boy Scout Leader Roundtable Planning Guide*, or
 - *Cub Scout Leader Roundtable Planning Guide*
2. Review all material in
 - *Troop Program Resources and Troop Program Features*, or
 - *Cub Scout Program Helps*
3. Recruit a roundtable staff
4. Lead staff in preparing a one-year roundtable outline
5. Supervise the staff in conducting these roundtables
6. With the District Commissioner and District Executive, develop and use an attendance promotion plan, and
7. Attend a council Commissioner Conference, roundtable, or planning conference.⁵

Unit Commissioner

1. Visit each assigned unit eight or more times throughout the year
 2. Fill in and follow up on Commissioner Work Sheets or self assessment forms for each assigned unit:
 3. Conduct membership and leadership inventories in each assigned unit
 4. Attend six District Commissioner staff meetings and provide the training topic for one meeting
 5. Participate in a charter review meeting that results in on-time unit re-registration
 6. Participate in a charter presentation
 7. Attend a council Commissioner conference, and
 8. Help units resolve a specific problem or improve some aspect of their unit operation.⁵
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Commissioner's Key (Scouter's Key)⁶

The **Commissioner's Key** is an award for Unit, Assistant District Commissioners, District Commissioners, Round Table Commissioners, Assistant Council Commissioners, and Council Commissioners. It is an award that succeeds and requires earning the Arrowhead Award and recognizes the Commissioner's continued service to Units, District and Council. It notes the Commissioners efforts in their sphere of responsibility and their perseverance in striving toward Unit, District and Council Excellence.⁶

Distinguished Commissioner Service Award⁷

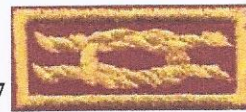


This award is presented to Unit, Assistant District, District, Assistant Council, and Council Commissioners whom have served actively as a registered commissioner for at least five years, have completed the Commissioner training courses, received the Arrowhead Honor Award, and whose units/District/Council has achieved a level of quality through the BSA's Quality Unit/District/Council program.⁷

The Doctorate of Commissioner Science Award Knot⁷



The Doctorate of Commissioner Science Award Knot is available to any currently active commissioner at any position by completing the requirements. Approval is administered by the local council through the Council Commissioner and the Council Director of Field Service.⁷



Commissioner Service Award of Excellence in Unit Service⁷

The Commissioner Service Award of Excellence in Unit Service was developed as a nationwide effort to engage Scouting volunteers and professional Scouters to work together in focusing on unit retention. Any registered commissioner who is providing direct unit service is eligible to earn the Commissioner Award of Excellence in Unit Service.⁷

Philmont Training Center Masters Award⁸



This is a three track program.

When a Scouter has completed the first track, he/she would earn a Philmont Training Center Conference Patch.

After completing the second track, the Scouter would earn the square knot.

By completing the third track the Scouter would earn the PTC square knot device.

Requirements

All actions for the Philmont Training Center Masters Track Square Knot must be completed after June 1, 2008.

Any courses taken prior this date will not be counted.

A. First Track:

Attend Philmont Training Center (PTC) as a participant.

B. Second track: (Complete all three items)

1. Take an additional Course at PTC.
2. Recruit at least 3 people to attend a PTC course.
3. Teach a BSA course in your district, council, area or region.
(The course and participation in the course must be approved by the council or area training chair prior to working on the course.)

C. Third Track: (Complete all three items)

1. Serve as a faculty member on a PTC course
OR
Attend an additional training course as a participant.
2. Recruit at least 3 people who attend a PTC course.
3. Coordinate a Council, Area or Regional Cluster approved training event
AND one of the following three items :
 - a. Coordinate and staff a promotional booth for the PTC at a council event.
 - b. Conduct a council "Philmont Family Meeting" to share PTC information and encourage family participation.
 - c. Teach a training course in a foreign county- Coordinated and approved by the BSA International Division.

Upon the completion of Track 2 the participant should contact the Philmont Training Center by letter to request the needed verification to purchase the square knot and for his/her certificate.⁸