



Neighborhood Commissioner
Circa 1940

**BUILDING A
COUNCIL COMMISSIONER SERVICE**

**SUBMITTED BY
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Preface

Building a Council Commissioner Service is a work in progress. This thesis is produced as I complete 4 years of service as Council Commissioner for the Middle Tennessee Council. I previously served 5 years as a Unit Commissioner in the James E. West District of the Middle Tennessee Council. In between those 2 terms as a Commissioner I served the James E West District as a member of the District Committee and as the James E. West District Advancement Chairman.

The Commissioner represents the local council to the Scout unit. In order to put into place the various elements required to provide quality Commissioner Service to the units I first needed to understand how a commissioner could help a unit. It was the 5 years serving as a Unit Commissioner to 3 different Cub Packs and 2 different Boy Scout Troops that provided me that insight. As I began my first term as Council Commissioner, I knew that training was marginal and that many units existed without a Unit Commissioner. It appeared to me that my first task was to build up interest and numbers of commissioners. My next task was to provide adequate training for the newly formed commissioner staff and to increase the commissioner profile. Most recently I have pushed to implement a program to hold the commissioner accountable. As this work in progress continues, I believe the next step is to tackle various challenges for the Middle Tennessee Council as the Commissioners continue to provide quality unit service.

Many thanks to the numerous Scouters involved who have all been most supportive of my efforts, especially to those mentors, both volunteers and professionals, who have become friends.

It was the nominating committee of the Middle Tennessee Council's Executive Board that allowed me to serve 4 terms as Council Commissioner. It was this continuity as Council Commissioner that allowed development of the current Middle Tennessee Council Commissioner Service.

Ron Turpin brought me along as a green Council Commissioner. He introduced me to the Commissioner Conference. As the Middle Tennessee Council Director of Field Services, David Williams has provided innumerable ideas and suggestions. He has always been receptive to my ideas and provided exceptional support. Without the persistent hard work and stimulation of Tim Acree the revamped Middle Tennessee Council College of Commissioner Science would not be a reality. Tim has been diligent with a whenever/wherever Basic Commissioner Training schedule. It has been a pleasure to work with Tim in Commissioner Services.

Lastly, many thanks to the Commissioners of the Middle Tennessee Council who have provided the support to our Units and once again made possible the Middle Tennessee Council becoming a Quality Council.

Thesis Outline

College of Commissioner Science
Middle Tennessee Council
Doctorate of Commissioner Science – Thesis outline
Submitted by Doctorial Candidate - Dr. John Lea, IV

Building a Commissioner Service in the Middle Tennessee Council

- I. Introduction – A Historical Perspective
- II. Commissioner Service
- III. Commissioner Training
- IV. District and Assistant District Commissioner
- V. Recruiting an effective Commissioner Team
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 - b. Recruiting Styles
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 - a. Centennial Quality Award
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INTRODUCTION: A Historical Perspective

"History proves all things of value start with one person who acts to better the world around him."

Anonymous

100 years ago William D. Boyce, an American Businessman walking along a foggy street in London, England, lost his way. A boy came up and offered to help. After Mr. Boyce's explanation, the boy led him to his destination. When Mr. Boyce tried to pay the boy for his kindness, the boy said, "No thank you sir. I am a Scout. I won't take anything for helping."

Mr. Boyce was so impressed with this boy's attitude he looked into this "Scout thing" and learned about Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of the Boy Scouts in Great Britain. And as one thing leads to another, he knew that Boys in the United States would want to be Scouts too! On February 8, 1910, Mr. Boyce and a group of educators, political leaders, and businessmen founded the Boy Scouts of America.

What happened to the boy who guided Mr. Boyce through the London Fog? No one knows, but his memory will live forever in the hearts of all American Scouts. That Scout's single act of service brought Scouting to America.¹

It is this attitude of cheerful service that the Commissioner Service of the Boy Scouts of America is conceived upon. The idea for serving your fellow Scout. "To help every Unit in America succeed."² What could be better than Scouts helping Scouts?

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America, "preparing young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetime by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law," serves all of mankind. It is delivered through the various programs of Scouting - Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, and Venturing. It is a program for age's 7- 21, but it goes beyond those limits. Young people are the basis of the program, but training, education, and living by the Scout Oath and Scout Law continues for the adult leaders as well. Scouting is a "Handbook for Life"³

The Commissioner Service helps maintain the standards of the Boy Scouts of America. The reward for serving as a Commissioner is the same as it was for the young Scout that guided Mr. Boyce. It is the self-satisfaction of doing a Good Turn.

¹ *100 Years of Scouting: A History of the BSA and the Boy Scout Handbook*, BSA publication; Aug. 2009.

² Don Belcher, National Commissioner 2004-2008

³ Slogan; Middle Tennessee Council Capital Campaign; 1994

COMMISSIONER SERVICE: What is it?

The Commissioner Service is composed of district and council leaders who help Scout units succeed. They coach and consult with adult leaders of Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, and Venturing crews. Commissioners help maintain the standards of the Boy Scouts of America. They also oversee the unit charter renewal plan so that each unit reregisters on time with an optimum number of youth and adult members.⁴

The unit leaders deliver the programs that reach our youth on the unit level. In Cub Scouting the unit leader is the Cubmaster, who shares responsibility with den leaders. In Boy Scouting, it is the Scoutmaster and assistants. In Varsity Scouting, it is the Coach and assistants. In Venturing it is the Crew Advisor and assistants. Every resource of the district and council should be made available to the key leaders of the Scout units. This is generally achieved through the Commissioners.

The healthier the unit, the more wonderful things will happen for these youth involved in Scouting. It is the Commissioner that helps make this occur. The Commissioner serves the Unit. These adult Scouters are specifically commissioned to help chartered organizations and unit leaders to achieve the aims of Scouting by using the methods of Scouting. It is for this reason these commissioned Scouters wear a shoulder patch with a wreath of service surrounding the Scout symbol.

Because of the importance of unit service to the successful delivery of the Scouting program, you will find Commissioners at every level of Scouting. And all of these Commissioners are there as a team to help assure that individual Scouts get the best possible program.

Beginning at the national level, BSA has a National Commissioner. A National Commissioner Support Committee supports the National Commissioner. There are also Regional Commissioners and Area Commissioners. Each Council has a Council Commissioner and Assistant Council Commissioners. However, it is at the district level that you will find more than 95% of BSA Commissioners serving as District, Assistant District, Roundtable, and Unit Commissioners.

In each District there are three types of commissioners:

1. *Administrative/Management Commissioners:* This includes the District Commissioner and the Assistant District Commissioners. Their primary responsibilities are recruiting, training, guiding, and evaluating the Commissioner staff.
2. *Unit Commissioners:* Unit Commissioners are assigned to one or more units, which they serve and counsel.
3. *Roundtable Commissioners:* Roundtable Commissioners provide unit leaders

⁴ Boy Scouts of America Commissioner web-site:
<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsorce/Commissioners.aspx>

with resources and training in program skills through regularly scheduled roundtable meetings.

The Commissioner Service exists to help units provide a quality Scouting program, which ultimately helps assure that individual Scouts have the best opportunity of developing good character traits, participating citizenship skills, and personal fitness.

The goals of the Commissioner Service through the execution of a successful Unit Service Plan are to:

1. Help see that the objectives of Scouting are being carried out.
2. Assure that each unit has strong, competent unit leadership.
3. Promote regular meetings of unit committees.
4. Encourage growth in youth membership.
5. Help assure that Scouts and units take an active part in district and council activities.
6. Foster a positive relationship between the chartered organization and its unit leaders.

The "grass roots" of Commissioner Service is at the unit level. It is at this level where all Commissioners make a difference. If the Unit Commissioner is not delivering and the Unit is not benefiting, then for all the Administrative and Management Commissioners involved, the entire Commissioner program is for naught.

A good Unit Service Plan is invaluable to both the chartered organization and the council when it is thoroughly understood and wisely administered. This means a commitment to exceptional customer service by the Commissioner, developing and maintaining a quality youth program by the unit, and maintaining a growth in unit membership.

When the Council Professionals, the Commissioners, and Unit Leaders interface together with common ground is when Scouting is most effective and America's youth benefit. It is a well thought-out and executed Unit Service Plan that ensures that it will occur.

COMMISSIONER TRAINING

One of the principal responsibilities of the Council Commissioner is to see that a complete program is in place to train every Commissioner in the council. Nationally developed course materials are available and provide a good structure for commissioner training. The council's mission is to add fun, inspiration, and motivation to this structure along with adequate training opportunities.

A dynamic quality of today's society is the need for learning as a lifetime activity. This is also true in Scouting and specifically true of Commissioners. All Commissioners should view learning as an important part of their commitment to Scouting. Scouting is a dynamic program. The core fundamentals of Scouting remain constant, but Scouting's programs change. A well-trained Commissioner stays current. Sometimes a refresher course is well worthwhile. A well-trained Commissioner is an effective Commissioner.

Posting of training dates in advance allows all to participate. A council forum such as a Council Commissioner website is ideal for this purpose. A council posts the council wide commissioner training programs. A district posts its scheduled commissioner training programs. For this to be effective, commissioner-to-commissioner communication is required. This will allow other Districts to participate should they have someone who needs the training. And this will ensure that every District offers Basic training.

Nine Elements of Good Commissioner Training:⁵

1. **Unit Commissioner Fast Start:** www.scouting.org
This new online fast start training is an orientation designed for all commissioners to learn about the job responsibilities for a Unit Commissioner. This 'fast start' training is designed to be taken by all Commissioners within the first few weeks of agreeing to be a Commissioner (ideally within 48 hours). The Council and District Commissioners support the new volunteer as a commissioner by providing additional training opportunities. Fast start is only the introduction of one's new position in Scouting.
2. **Orientation Video/DVD:**
Shortly after being recruited (within 2 weeks), each new commissioner views the video - The Unit Commissioner's Orientation—Helping units Succeed (AV-04V001R). This video is part of a DVD, "Commissioner Service and District Operation Support". Next, the new commissioner sets a date for a personal coaching and orientation session with the District and/or Assistant District Commissioner.

⁵ *Administration of Commissioner Service*, BSA 34051; Feb. 2009.

3. Personal Coaching / Orientation:

After viewing the video, new Commissioners should have an orientation session with their District Commissioner or Assistant District Commissioner. During this session they discuss the video and cover the orientation projects listed in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.⁶ (The Council Commissioner or an Assistant Council Commissioner for Training usually conducts District Commissioner Orientation.)

4. Basic Commissioner Training:

The District Commissioner or Assistant Council Commissioner for Training conducts Basic Commissioner Training. It should be noted that Basic Training is **not** equivalent to Continuing Education provided at the District Commissioners Staff Meeting. After completion of basic training, the "Trained" leader emblem may be worn on the uniform.⁷ At this point in a commissioner's development they are ready to "be commissioned". Recognition is a key element in developing a strong Commissioner Service corps. Ideally, a short ceremony is conducted by the Unit Commissioner's District Commissioner (the one to which the Unit Commissioner is responsible). In this ceremony the Unit Commissioner position emblem and the "Trained" leader emblem are presented. For an outline of such a ceremony see appendix H in *Administration of Commissioner Service* section 1.⁸

Of importance, in this ceremony, the newly commissioned Commissioner is asked, "Will you commit your top priority Scouting time to identifying unit needs and helping unit adults meet those needs? ..." **It is important, that it is understood, that wearing the wreath of Commissioner Service means a commitment of your top priority Scouting time.**

5. Arrowhead Honor:

Commissioners accepting a new commissioner position should be encouraged to pursue the Arrowhead projects specific to that position. To wear the Arrowhead signifies that a commissioner has completed Basic Commissioner Training and has put their training into action with a series of performance projects. Position specific projects are outlined in *Administration of Commissioner Service*, Section 1.⁹ Upon commissioning, the new Commissioner is encouraged to complete the Arrowhead Honor within the next 12 months.

⁶ *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service: A Guidebook for Unit Commissioners*; Chapter 3; BSA 33621A; 2006.

⁷ *Administration of Commissioner Service*, Section 2 "Commissioner Basic Training Manual; BSA 34051; Feb. 2009.

⁸ *Administration of Commissioner Service*, Section 1, Appendix H, BSA 34051; Feb. 2009.

⁹ *Administration of Commissioner Service*, Section 1, page 20; BSA 34051; Feb. 2009

6. Commissioner's Key:

The Commissioner's Key is an important training award for completing Commissioner Basic Training, the Arrowhead Honor projects, and three years' tenure as a registered commissioner within a five-year period. Roundtable Commissioners also must complete Fast Start and basic training for Cub Scout or Boy Scout Roundtable Commissioners.

7. Continuing Education:

Continuing education takes many forms at many levels. A Commissioner is always learning, always trying to improve his/her-self so that they can help their units succeed. A short training topic is included at every monthly district and council meeting. A Commissioner's Conference can cover a wide variety of training topics and/or be used to discuss and review council challenges. It can also be used to set direction for a Council's Commissioner Service with intermediate range goals. A College of Commissioner Science is the best opportunity for a council to directly influence the quality of commissioner training. The ultimate in commissioner training is through the Philmont Training Center. The National Commissioner and the National Commissioner Support Services Committee support this program. It is at the PTC where the latest in Commissioner Service is disseminated.

8. Doctorate of Commissioner Science Knot:

The commissioner is the mainstay for Scouting program administration. It is Commissioner Service that ensures that units are healthy, productive, and assist in the growth of the program. This award was developed to further involved Commissioners in providing support to units in their delivery of a quality program experience for all Scouting youth. It recognizes completion of a standardized program leading to the completion of a thesis or project and the award of the Doctorate of Commissioner Science from a College of Commissioner Science.

9. Distinguished Commissioner:

In every area in Scouting there are those individuals who go the extra mile, there are those individuals that make a difference, those that do their job exceedingly well, those that don't give up, that think "outside the box" and use those concepts effectively. Recognition is a key part of training. Tenure and the ability to be flexible over time are prime distinguishing features of this select group of Commissioners. The Distinguished Commissioner award is for those individuals who provide quality unit service and help units succeed.

Training Records:

It is important to maintain good training records. Each participant keeps track of his or her training on pocket training cards. The training instructor keeps a Training Record - a multi-part form obtained from the council. Each participant is asked to "sign in". The Training Record is submitted to the Council with the names of all attendees. The council records each individuals training in ScoutNet. The instructor keeps a copy of attendance for their records. A copy of the training should be forwarded to the Council Commissioner or Assistant Council Commissioner for Training.

Summary of Training Materials referenced in this section -

1. **Fast Start:** Can be accessed through the Online Learning Center (OLC) accessed through the MyScouting portal linked from www.scouting.org. Fast start commissioner training is listed under E-Learning, Orientation Training, Unit Commissioner Fast Start.
2. **Commissioner Service and District Operation Support, AV-06DVD08**
Unit Commissioner's Orientation: Helping Units Succeed, Time—
17:10 Discusses the varied roles of the unit commissioner and dramatizes how the unit commissioner and dramatizes how the unit commissioner is a friend, teacher, unit "paramedic," problem solver, and resource person. Unit commissioners are shown working with the unit leader, unit committee, and chartered organization as well as attending meetings to check the unit's "vital signs."
3. **Commissioner Annual Orientation, AV-04DVD03**
This DVD will assist the Council and District in the orientation of new Commissioners and can be used with experienced Commissioners as a motivational tool and an orientation to the new process.

DISTRICT AND ASSISTANT DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS¹⁰

District Commissioners mobilize their staff to strive for the highest quality of unit program for youth. They make sure that Unit Commissioners counsel and inspire unit adults, improve their assigned units' program, and help units solve problems before problems can sink the unit.

Ultimately the District Commissioner is the builder of a complete team of commissioners for the entire district. The District Commissioner has help - the Assistant District Commissioner. Together they manage and coach an effective team of commissioners.

At their monthly staff meetings they allot major time for Assistant District Commissioners and their respective Unit Commissioners to review the health of each unit. During this time they share important observations from recent visits with unit people (Scouts, leaders, parents). They give priority to unit trouble spots that could badly disrupt a unit. They identify specific ways to help each unit improve its program.

Remember, the purpose of the monthly district commissioner staff meeting is 100% focused on the needs of individual units, rather than on the many other events or projects going on in the district or council. An effective District Commissioner does not hold his commissioner meetings in conjunction with other meetings in the district (roundtables, district meetings, etc.). A combined meeting short changes units as well as the district. It also prevents the District Executive and District Commissioner from fulfilling their defined roles at either meeting. Everyone in attendance at the commissioners' meeting has tremendous responsibility for the success of Scout Units in the district. And it is the attendance of all commissioners in the district that makes the commissioner team functional.

How does the ADC breakout session work?¹¹

1. Each ADC team shares important observations from recent visits and conversations with unit people. What are the needs? How might each unit improve its program for kids?
2. They give priority to unit trouble spots that could disrupt a unit.
3. They identify specific ways to help each unit upgrade its program or improve its operation.
4. They determine who will provide specific help during the coming month. Usually, this is the assigned Unit Commissioner, but more challenging

¹⁰ *The Commissioner: A publication for Council Commissioners and Scout Executives; Spring, 2004.*

¹¹ *The Commissioner: A publication for Council Commissioners and Scout Executives; Winter, 2005.*

situations may require assistance from the ADC, a district committee member specialist (camping, advancement, training, etc.), or even the District Commissioner.

5. They also check the progress on last month's assignments.

The hands-on involvement of the District Commissioner and District Executive is also key. During the breakouts, they will each sit in on the ADC group where their direct input is needed the most. In a nutshell, the ADC breakout sessions prepare the commissioner to be a friend of the Unit and help unit adult leaders provide a better program for our youth. What could be more important than that?

Selecting a District Commissioner

"Greatness is not a quality of circumstance. Greatness is largely a matter of conscious choice and discipline"

Jim Collins¹²

Jim Collins, in his book *Good to Great*, identifies that perhaps the greatest quality of a leader is found by examining the teachers of leaders. Collins' extensive research links leadership success to a blend of personal humility and unwavering resolve for results in the organization.

The District Commissioner must be a proven leader capable of enlisting other effective persons to serve. District Commissioners are upbeat, personable, and a role model for Scouting ideals. They are passionate about the benefits of Scouting and champion the unit to make Scouting happen in the lives of young people. Great District Commissioners channel their ego needs, from themselves to the larger goal of a great commissioner staff that serve units and a great program for kids. This compelling modesty is in stark contrast to the popular image of larger-than-life charismatic leaders. Great District Commissioners are also fanatically driven to do whatever must be done to assure that each Commissioner works with each Unit to improve that unit's program for its youth. This unwavering resolve produces sustained results as Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venturers stay in the program longer and learn Scouting values that last a lifetime.

Next to the Council Commissioner's professional adviser, District commissioners are the most important members of the Council Commissioner's scouting team! Yes, assistant council commissioners are important. Other members of the council structure are also important. But it is District Commissioners whom the Council Commissioner must rely on to accomplish what he/she is held accountable for as a

¹² Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... and Others Don't*

member of the Council Key 3/4.¹³

The District Commissioner and Assistant District Commissioner are the key elements to a successful District Commissioner Service that ensures healthy, quality Units.

¹³ Some BSA Councils use a Key 3 structure, that being a Council President, Council Commissioner, and Scout Executive. Other, usually larger, BSA Councils use a Key 4 structure, that being a Council President, Council Vice-President for District Operations, Council Commissioner, and Scout Executive. Both work effectively well.

RECRUITING AN EFFECTIVE COMMISSIONER TEAM¹⁴

“Recruiting is a journey, not a destination.”¹⁵

William F. “Rick” Cronk
BSA, National Commissioner

This 2002 quote from Rick Cronk, when he was National Commissioner of the Boy Scouts of America, says it all. As a Council Commissioner, as a District Commissioner, as an Assistant District Commissioner one must always recruit. A quality program flourishes and membership grows in a Scouting district when there is a complete team of quality commissioners.

The newly recruited commissioner is the life-blood of any council’s commissioner service. People move on to new locations and new opportunities. Even if the council has achieved 100% of the commissioners needed, consider recruiting quality trainees to fill future vacancies.

A 3:1 Unit to Commissioner ratio is the National Standard. Enough commissioners on the council staff make light work of a big task. A Council Commissioner must have a complete team to serve the Units correctly. As Council Commissioner let everyone know you expect a complete team – don’t forfeit the game because you can’t field a complete team. As a Council Commissioner being persistent in your quest for a complete team will provide dividends towards quality status.

There is no correct technique to recruit new commissioners, but there can be many incorrect techniques. If a technique works and is effective in recruiting a quality Commissioner then the technique must be correct. Recruiting can be done one-to-one or by group recruiting events.

As Council Commissioner a simple plan considering the three “R’s” of recruiting is quite effective.

Review roster. Because some active commissioners might not be registered, ask each district commissioner/district executive team to compare its staff list with a list of registered commissioners provided by the council registrar. The registrar also indicates the number of new commissioners needed to achieve the 1-per-3 unit ratio. The District registers any Commissioner not registered. In the case of multiple positions, the primary registration is as a Commissioner.

Recruitment. Some districts will still have vacancies. Challenge the districts to adopt a recruiting plan to achieve a 1-per-3 unit ratio as well as provide a couple of trainees to fill future vacancies. Set a deadline for completion.

Recognition. Recognize district commissioner/district executive teams for meeting their recruiting goals.

¹⁴ *Administration of Commissioner Service*; BSA 34051; Feb. 2009.

¹⁵ William F. “Rick” Cronk; BSA National Commissioner 1999-2004.

Recruiting Resources

The District Commissioner says, "Find them wherever you can." There is some degree of truth in this statement. But remember not everyone is cut out to be a Commissioner. The Commissioner Staff is not looking just for anyone to join their "team". The goal is to build a quality Commissioner Service team. The Commissioner Staff is looking for self-starters who openly communicate. Individuals who can understand the needs, prioritize the needs, and with guidance run their team. This applies to commissioners at all levels. Whether you are a Council Commissioner building a council leadership team or a District Commissioner building a district commissioner team. As a Council Commissioner expand those principles you learned at the district level when you were building teams of Unit Commissioners led by Assistant District Commissioners.

In past years, the Commissioner Service was thought of as the place to put older Scouters "out to pasture". It was the place you put "burned-out" Scouters, those who felt they deserved tenure, but did not want to do anything further for it. Twenty-first century Commissioners are a very dynamic group; they have a belief in the system (they have had a drink of the "Kool-Aid"); they are engaged; they have a passion for the program; and they are good communicators!

Don't discard that older Scouter. They have had a lot of experience. They are a tremendous resource; they have a vast body of knowledge. As a District or Council Commissioner find another avenue for them, use their talent and put it to good use.

Council Commissioner, Stephanie Ricketts, of the Greater Cleveland Council says it best, "Commissioners to Centennial and Beyond". As Council Commissioner she's building a team of commissioners for the second century of the Boy Scouts in Cleveland.¹⁶

Where do you find potential commissioners? They are found in many places. This list is not inclusive, but as reference, it serves as a starting place.

- Former successful Scouters
- Eagle Scouts
- BSA Alumni
- Order of the Arrow (adults active in their local lodge, but are not primary unit leaders)
- Wood Badge
- Friends of Scouting donor lists
- Parents with previous Scouting experience
- Eagle Scout Parents

¹⁶ Commissioner Podcast; *Quality Commissioner Service*, Part One, Fall, 2007.
<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsorce/Commissioners/Podcast/Fall2007C.aspx>

- Service Club membership rosters
- Your friends, associates, and business associates

Recruiting Styles

Methods of recruiting vary, but can be related to one of two styles – 1. One-on-one recruiting where a single individual is approached, and 2. Group recruiting. Both styles have their advantages.

Individual Recruiting

If not approached the correct way the harvest will be fruitless. A step-by step method for recruiting new commissioners follows:

1. Determine what position is needed.
2. Determine the best prospect for the job.
3. Research the prospect at the top of the list.
4. Make an appointment.
5. Make the sale.
6. Ask for a commitment.
7. Have a fallback position in mind if the prospect says no.
8. Follow up if the prospect says yes.

Group Recruiting

Group recruiting involves bring three or more people together to hear about Commissioner Service and then asking them to serve as commissioners. Group recruiting has the advantage that no recruit feels saddled with an overwhelming task. People seek association with others and if the approach has been effective and a vision for an effective service team has been laid out, then the reaction is positive and many will agree to serve as Commissioners.

First, Administrative Commissioners meet and are ready to execute a plan to engage the new Commissioners. Second, deliver the sales pitch. This approach can bring the commissioner staff up to strength quickly. But third, it requires a commitment from key Administrative Commissioners to follow up quickly and not let the freshly pick fruit wither on the counter. Get the newly recruited Commissioner engaged.

COUNCIL COMMISSIONER SERVICE PLAN

IS COMMISSIONER SERVICE PERCEIVED AS IMPORTANT IN YOUR COUNCIL?

This annual Council Commissioner Service Plan gives specific purpose for regular and specific supportive leadership and direction to the Commissioner Service. It is discussed and approved by the Council Key 3/4 (Council President, Council Commissioner, Council Scout Executive, Council Vice-President for District Operations). It takes into account membership, finances, unit leadership, program planning, quality status, the council charter renewal process, and the council's long-range strategic plan.

Commissioner Service and the Council Commissioner Service Plan begin with the Council Commissioner. By setting a high standard and by setting the example the Council Commissioner lets everyone know that exceptional service is expected and required. If the Council Commissioner is respected, the Commissioner Service will be respected. If the Council Commissioner is an exceptional role model for Commissioners in the Council, Commissioners will be exceptional role models for the adult Unit leaders. The quality of the working relationship between the Council Commissioner and the Scout Executive and the Council Commissioner's staff adviser will affect the prestige of Commissioner Service in the Council. As Council Commissioner, you set the example. As a Council Commissioner you must stand tall as a symbol of service and commitment.

Setting specific goals for the Council's Commissioner Service is the vital element of the Council Commissioner Service Plan. The goals set forth in the plan have been discussed, approved, and are consistent with the council's long-range strategic plan. The overall goal is to achieve Council Quality Status (reference Quality Status in Centennial Quality Award section below). A sample of goals outlined at the 2009 Middle Tennessee Commissioners' Summit is found in Appendix D. These goals or objectives define the Council's Commissioner Services for the Council over the next year.

After formulation and approval, the Council Commissioner Service Plan is presented to key Administrative Commissioners, the core commissioner leadership. This presentation can take place at a Commissioners' Summit or Commissioners' Conference. An outline for continued progress and goals are set in motion for the next year. Some goals are fairly straight forward, while some other goals may stretch the Commissioner Service and be fairly lofty. A sample of a Council Commissioner Service Plan is shown in Appendix C.

During the Leadership Summit it is important that there is time to discuss and mold the Commissioner Service Plan. The Council Commissioner keeps the Council's specific objectives and strategic plan in mind. The Council Commissioner guides the group in the correct direction to remain aligned with the council's executive board and the long-range strategic plan. It is important that the Council Commissioner

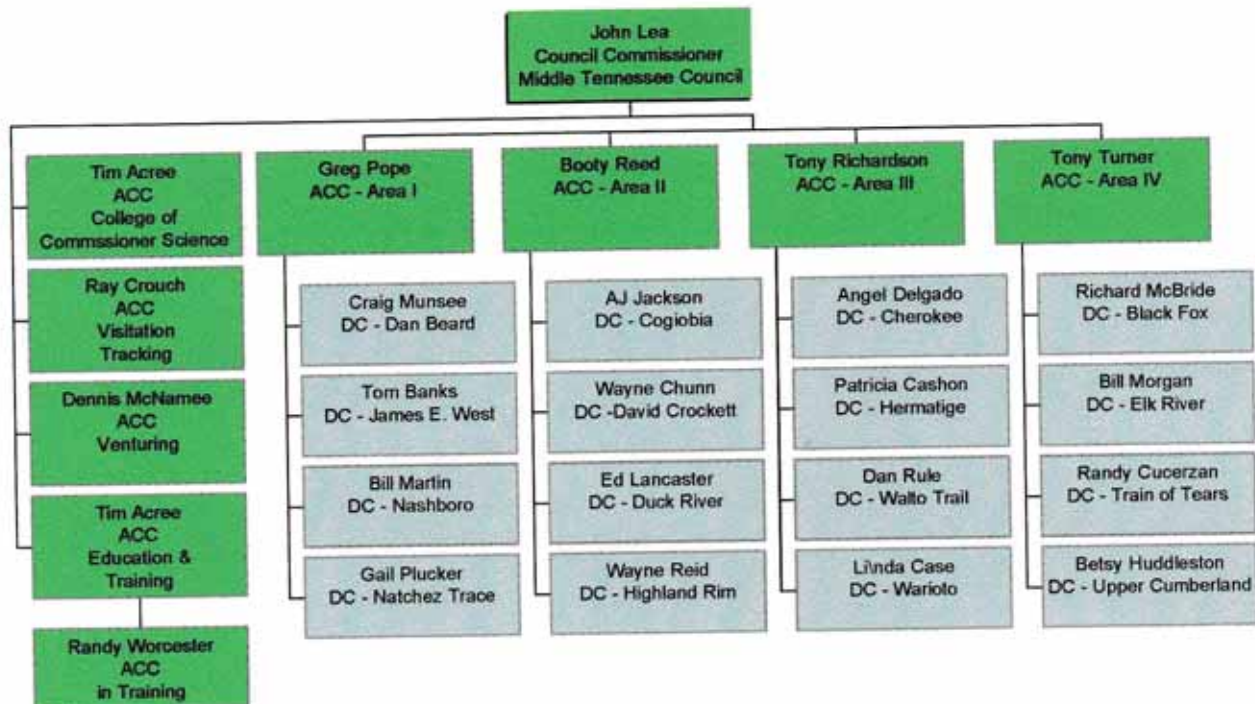
receive acceptance from his core leadership commissioners and that the Leadership Summit ends with each and every Commissioner “buying into” the Commissioner Service Plan. The core leadership commissioners depart the Leadership Summit excited and enthusiastic about the upcoming year of Commissioner Service. The Council Commissioner should feel a great sense of accomplishment. His challenge is to oversee the Commissioner Service Plan and ensure that it is implemented.

COMMISSIONER SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Council Commissioner serves as a member of the Council Key 3/4. The Council Commissioner also serves as an officer of the local council, a member of the executive board, a member of the council executive committee, and a national council representative. The Council Commissioner automatically is placed in positions of high responsibility that demand active leadership. The Council Commissioner works in close association with the Council Scout Executive and Director of Field Services. The Council Commissioner supervises the activities of the commissioner staff. In large (100 -300 level) councils, an effective Commissioner Service, requires an infrastructure to carry it out. There are many key roles for the Council Commissioner ranging from reporting to the executive board on the Council's Unit Service Program to communicating with the District and Unit Commissioners.

Successful Council Commissioners know they cannot accomplish the job alone. In order to provide the highest level of quality service to the commissioner staff the Council Commissioner must enlist the assistance of others. A proposal for this infrastructure is shown on the following organizational chart.

Middle Tennessee Council Commissioner Service



Job descriptions must be developed for each specific job. Being specific clearly defines the job. As each commissioner's term begins, they understand what is expected of them in their role as an Administrative Commissioner.

Remember, it is the Council Commissioner's job to sell the Commissioner Service Plan. The success of the Commissioner Service is up to the Council Commissioner's salesman abilities, his ability to provide guidance to his assistants, and his assistant's ability to carry out the plan.

Job descriptions for the Assistant Council Commissioners, District Commissioners, and Assistant District Commissioners are included in Appendix A. Not only are the expectations for the job clearly defined, but also the term of position.

Special Projects can be added to the job descriptions. These projects are designed around focus items or challenges with the intent to improve the Commissioner Service for the Council and/or District. The Unit Visitation Tracking System (UVTS) is an example of a special project. The Middle Tennessee Council's UVTS special project job description is shown in Appendix B. Other examples of special projects might include:

1. Commissioner Service for a Council Jamboree;
2. "On-line / On-time Re-charter";
3. A "SWAT" or Rescue Unit Commissioner Team;
4. Dropped Units.

Success as a Council Commissioner (particularly in a large council) is partly dependent on delegation of authority and assignment of tasks. A clearly defined job description, which is understood at the time a Scouter accepts and is appointed as a new Commissioner, is vital to a smoothly functioning quality Commissioner Service. When Scouters understand what is expected of them, they generally perform extraordinarily well.

THE GOALS AND THE MEASURING STICK¹⁷

A. Centennial Quality Award (The Goals)

“The Centennial Quality Award objective is to improve the quality program of every Unit in America”

Donald D. Belcher
BSA National Commissioner
2007

The National BSA strategic plan presented in 2006 introduced the Centennial Quality Award Program. This replaced the old quality award program. The new program continues for the next 4 years culminating in 2010, the 100th anniversary of the BSA. The new Centennial Quality Award Program differs vastly from the previous Quality Award Program. The old adage that “There is always room for improvement” is certainly true and a council’s goal is “to improve every unit in its council”. Each unit establishes its own criteria by submitting a commitment form. The idea is for each unit to better itself from the year before. When a unit achieves quality status it makes a difference to their youth members. The award indicates that their adult leaders have provided the highest quality program possible.

The concept is simple: “Did You Improve the Quality of Your Program this Year?” Review of the years past accomplishments should be a fair and collaborative discussion with the adult unit leaders, Unit Commissioner, and District Executive (“the review committee”). The idea is to recognize those outstanding packs, troops, teams, crews, and ships that conduct a quality program for their youth on an annual basis. The spirit of the award and the integrity of the process come down to a factual agreement on the unit’s performance and a consensus that the unit did improve program quality and program delivery. If the review committee determines that “improvement” has been made in each category, then qualification for CQUA can be confirmed. There may be special circumstances that cause a unit not to reach its original established goals, but if improvement has been made it may still qualify. The review committee will make this decision after discussing the individual circumstances. After review the form is then submitted to the council indicating whether the unit qualified for CQUA. Qualified units can order specific recognitions through their council scout shops. A complimentary CQUA ribbon is presented at the district’s annual recognition banquet.

Criticism that CQUA is no standard and that this is a watered-down award has been presented. This criticism has no substance. The current Centennial Quality Award format provides incentive for all units to achieve a quality status. Yes, the floor has been lowered in some instances, but that does not prevent the high achieving units from continuing to achieve at a very high level. The current program allows for the

¹⁷ A concept of Donald D. Belcher, BSA National Commissioner 2004-2008.

less successful unit to pull itself up and work toward a better program. These units now have a chance at success, whereas they never had a realistic chance of earning quality status in the past. These units now have reason to try. Steps toward an improved program, even if only baby steps, are better than nothing. A thoughtful Unit Commissioner can help guide a unit to stretch itself toward an improved program, no matter what the starting point.

Why CQUA? Because the quality of program is the way Scouting recruits youth and retains youth. A high quality program is the drawing force for kids to the Scouting Program

B. Unit Visitation Tracking (The Measuring Stick)

The number one mission of the Commissioner is to provide service to every unit in the district. The proven way to carry out this responsibility is to have a monthly Unit Visit. A visit can take on many forms — a unit meeting, a committee meeting, a roundtable visit, a telephone call, an e-mail occasionally, a district or council activity, or a one-on-one visit with the unit leader.

In order to know the status of units and how the district can help units succeed, there needs to be accountability. Nationally, a Unit Visit Tracking System was created to help provide a systematic methodology for Unit Commissioners to report on their monthly unit visits. The system was built around the concept of providing commissioners at all levels a mechanism in which they can be more responsive to the needs of units. The Unit Visitation Tracking is all about setting expectations for our Commissioners and holding them accountable.

HOW DOES CQUA AND UVTS WORK TOGETHER?

There is no single more vital role in building the success of the Boy Scouts of America than the work of the Commissioner. That role is easy to describe, but extremely hard to execute. The Centennial Quality Unit Award gives purpose for unit visitation. It requires making a commitment. It is a joint task between the volunteer and the professional. It gives the Commissioner an opportunity to remind the unit leader as to what they have accomplished and to see how far they have come.

In every Council and in every District – if we set expectation for monthly unit visits; if we measure these visits; if we have a reporting process and we follow up on these visits – we will dramatically and positively effect the quality of Commissioner Service and we will contribute significantly to the revitalization of membership growth and retention

Clearly Don Belcher, as BSA's National Commissioner, gave Commissioners the tools, CQUA and UVTS, to do their job. Goals are set and commissioners are being held accountable for unit visitation.

COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

A College of Commissioner Science is advanced commissioner training modeled after a college format with courses, requirements, and degrees. It is a step above and beyond Basic Commissioner Training. The completion of Basic Commissioner Training is a pre-requisite for anyone registering for and seeking a degree from the college. The Council Commissioner and Dean of the College should place the highest priority on promoting and attracting all commissioners to attend the college.

The College of Commissioner Science program is designed to have a Commissioner learn, through a series of training classes, followed by work experiences to ensure a quality program throughout Scouting. This training will take a number of years to complete. Each degree and year of college training builds upon the previous one. The Commissioner finalizes their training with an approved thesis or project for the benefit of the Scouting program. This assists both new Commissioners as they learn, and seasoned Commissioners as they train others. A well-trained commissioner staff better serves the Scouting program.

Planning begins with the conclusion of the previous year's college. The Council Commissioner appoints a Dean for the next college. The Dean of the College is responsible for the college program, faculty, and all of the business and affairs of the college. A successful college includes dynamic training, information on the latest Scouting developments, good fellowship, and a big dose of inspiration. At the conclusion of a successful college, degrees with diplomas are awarded and the entire council commissioner staff is renewed with enthusiasm.

VOLUNTEER / PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

In 1916 some of these early Commissioners were asked to become Scout Executives. A few accepted the position and the Field Executive position was born. This shift eventually led to the separation of the roles of the executive and the commissioner. Thus began a partnership between volunteers and professionals that exists still today. It has become one of the special hallmarks of the Boy Scouts. This partnership is the core of Scouting's success at the district, council, regional, and national levels.

The "Wreath of Service" appears on the commissioner's and the professional's position patch. It symbolizes the continued partnership between volunteers and professionals. The "Wreath of Service" is a symbol for the service rendered to units and it represents the unending commitment to program and unit service.¹⁸ As a direct result of the importance of unit service to the successful delivery of the Scouting program, there are Commissioners at every level of Scouting.

Professionals are full time and have more experience; while volunteers are part time with limited experience. Both are dedicated to principles of Scouting. Both desire quality youth programs. Volunteers make the vital decisions of Scouting at the District, Council, and National levels. Professionals counsel and help prepare volunteers for decisions to be made. The unselfish service which both render and their common dedication breeds mutual respect and a feeling of kinship. When the partnership is working well, both partners are aware of their interdependence, they have complete confidence in each other, and they share the same objectives (to help units succeed in providing a quality program for youth).

They both understand what each other brings to the table and they both seek each other's counsel. Scouting's professionals and volunteers work together as a team. The team is characterized by:

- mutual trust,
- mutual respect, and
- mutual recognition of each other's role and competency.

As stated before: "When the partnership is working well, both partners are aware of their interdependence, they have complete confidence in each other and they share the same objective".

Since the early years of Scouting and at every level the volunteer-professional relationship is present. When this relationship works well, Scouting serves the youth of America.

¹⁸ History of the Commissioner; NetCommish Web site

LESSONS LEARNED AS COUNCIL COMMISSIONER

THE SCOUT UNIT IS THE CUSTOMER.

As commissioners we are here to serve the unit. One of Scouting's objectives is to make Scouting available to as many of America's youth as possible. Exceptional Commissioner service will ensure this objective.

A LESSON FROM CORPORATE AMERICA AND HOW IT APPLIES TO COMMISSIONERS -

Corporate America	Commissioner Service
<p>Companies have determined that customer retention is only about 20% of the cost of developing a new customer. A profound finding is that simply meeting the customer's expectations is no longer good enough. In our increasingly competitive environment, customers have been taught to demand more than traditional service that is "just good enough." You must exceed the customer's expectations.</p>	<p>Commissioners might note that the time to help with a major Unit problem is only a fraction of the time of organizing a new Unit. Commissioners might think about ways to exceed the expectations of unit adults.</p>
<p>Good service managers believe that customer perception is the only important reality. The reality of the service provider doesn't really matter. The excellent reasons we have for a mistake or failure do not interest the customer. The customer just knows that he or she didn't get what he or she was promised.</p>	<p>The Commissioner needs the characteristics of a diplomat. The perception of the unit adult leader is what's really important to being an effective Commissioner and a quality Unit.</p>

This suggests a formula for successful commissioners:

$$\text{EXCEPTIONAL COMMISSIONER SERVICE} = \text{UNIT LEADER'S PERCEPTION OF HELP RECEIVED} - \text{HELP THE UNIT LEADER EXPECTED}$$

This translates to: Exceptional Commissioner Service results in quality and successful Units. Remember the goal of Commissioner Service is to help every Unit succeed.

Exceptional customer service has three important qualities:

1. Exceed expectations rather than just barely satisfying expectations.
2. Provide caring service, not just competent service. Commissioners must truly care about Units. They must believe in unit people. They must have a solid relationship with their assigned Units.
3. Customers want service now, not when we get around to it. Commissioners respond promptly to Unit needs. If they don't, they may not get a second chance to help - or worse, there may not be a Unit left to help.

When these lessons from corporate America are applied, the Commissioner becomes a valuable resource for the adult unit leaders. The Unit now accepts the Commissioner. He is seen as helpful. He becomes a friend, teacher, and counselor. He is the unit doctor and he represents Scouting to the Unit. The Commissioner has fulfilled his role as a Commissioner.

PICK THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE JOB.

A major roll of the administrative Commissioner is assigning Commissioners to carry out various tasks. Different jobs in the Commissioner Service will require different skill sets. Not everyone will function well as a Unit Commissioner and not everyone is cut out to be an administrative Commissioner. Good Roundtable Commissioners are well organized, actively planning, and at ease in front of a group of peers. By fitting the right person for the job, you as an administrative Commissioner will end up with a well-accomplished task, a good result, and your job, as an administrative Commissioner becomes much easier because you successfully delegated authority. The scope of work you set forth to do has now increased with your ability to lead and delegate.

In order to be successful:

- Have a clear understanding of the assignment before recruiting.
- Get to know and have a "feel" for the recruit before recruiting (i.e. do your homework!).
- Be certain that the recruit has a good understanding of what constitutes a job well done.
- Coach and teach, but let go of the reins.

The special skills of coaching and teaching do not just belong to Unit Commissioners, they are skill sets needed by all commissioners. No commissioner responsibility demands more skill than that of coaching others. And often, those who need direction are not aware of this need and may resent "interference" from those who offer help. Special skill is required to deal with these situations effectively.

Sometimes we need for a Scouter to change direction or adopt another course of action. Thus, a good counseling or coaching approach of a Commissioner towards Scouter is all-important. Should situations then arise in which a change should be made, a different direction taken, or a problem faced head-on, the chance that a productive outcome will result is far more likely.

The Commissioner always coaches in a way that protects another's pride. The administrative Commissioner provides solutions that fit the Unit and the community situation.

COMMISSIONER SERVICE IS A WORK-IN-PROGRESS.

The needs of America's youth are changing and continue to change. The Scout of the next 100 years is not the same as the Scout of the last 100 years. Scouting is dynamic. Scouting occurs on a one-to-one basis at the unit level, just as it did in 1910. The unit is ever changing with new boys and leaders. There have been 12 editions to the *Boy Scout Handbook*. A boy's interest changes and Scouting programs must remain "ahead of the curve" to continue to attract America's youth.

In order to keep pace with the Council the Commissioner Service must be dynamic and flexible. The Commissioner is the liaison between the local council and the Scouting unit. The Commissioner's charge is to keep the unit operating at maximum efficiency. Maintaining regular contact with units and leaders, coaching leaders on where to find assistance, note weaknesses in programs, and suggest remedies is the commissioner's mission. The Commissioner is successful when Units effectively deliver the core values of Scouting to its members.

New methodologies (CQUA and UVTS)) and new technologies (Internet Unit Re-charter) will always become available. A successful Commissioner Service will embrace these change and new technology; remember its mission, and Scouting's core values as it continues to service the Unit.

DON'T LOOK BACK TO THE PAST, LOOK TO THE FUTURE.

As we move into the next century, Scouting will continue to be what it has always been. A way to teach kids how to become great leaders, great stewards, great neighbors, and great parents. Scouting is as vital and relevant today as it was when its journey began. Lessons have been learned in the past, now is the time to look into the future. Dynamic, enthusiastic, forward-thinking, self-starters are requirements for Commissioners. It is the Commissioner Service that moves Scouting forward. Every unit deserves a quality Commissioner. Few organizations have such a plethora of material - guidebooks, training tools, and manuals - available to their volunteer as does the BSA. Each step of the way is well thought out, revised, and detailed by years of experience by both volunteers and professionals. The key is to take the lessons of the past and move forward.

FINAL THOUGHTS

"History proves all things of value start with one person who acts to better the world around him."

Anonymous

History provides the example for Commissioners at all levels. Remember the young Scout who assisted Mr. Boyce.

As a Commissioner, you can be that person of service. Your acts can be unimaginative or inspired, cowardly or courageous, indolent or industrious, ordinary or extraordinary. Which will they be? As a Commissioner you do things great or small that impact one or many. Imagine how Commissioner Service can be a better program. Believe that, as a Commissioner, you can make a difference. Lead because, as a Commissioner, you are trained and prepared. A Commissioner serves with and through others, for the greater good of the Unit and of Scouting. This is the essence of Commissioner Service.

The Middle Tennessee Council's Executive Board allowed me to serve 4 terms as Council Commissioner through the transition of a new Scout Executive. It has been the 4-year tenure that allowed me to get my hands around the BSA Commissioner Service and understand the potential benefits of a quality Commissioner Service. What a valuable asset it would be for the Middle Tennessee Council to have such a Commissioner Service. Development of a quality Commissioner Service requires a foundation, nurturing, and patience. Over the last 4 years the groundwork has been laid for Commissioner Service in the Middle Tennessee Council. New developments and new challenges will come along and the Commissioner Service will always be a work in progress. With this beginning the Middle Tennessee Council now has an infrastructure in place to face those challenges and to continue the development of a premier Commissioner Service for the second century of Scouting in Middle Tennessee.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A - Commissioner Job Descriptions

Middle Tennessee Council Assistant Council Commissioner - Area Commissioner Position Description - Term 1 year

1. Most importantly: Be a leader amongst commissioners. An Assistant Council Commissioner should be able to:
 - a. Communicate;
 - b. Motivate;
 - c. Adapt;
 - d. Act as a catalyst;
 - e. Have a vision for the Council as well as his/her own service area; and
 - f. Be able to align others towards a goal.
2. Assist the Council Commissioner in achieving national and council level goals and objectives.
3. Participate as part of the "Area Key 3" (Field Director, Area President, Area Commissioner).
4. Provide timely and accurate information to the Council Commissioner to keep him/her apprised of the condition of Districts and/or Units within the assigned service area.
5. Assist District Nominating Committees within his/her service area in selecting District Commissioners as needed.
6. Guide District Commissioners within his/her service area in recruiting full staffs.
7. Maintain, assess, and improve procedures to ensure maximum on-time unit charter renewal by district commissioner staffs within his/her service area.
8. Ensure that each district within his/her service area has a commitment and strategy to provide prompt, intensive, and persistent care when major problems occur that could threaten the life of a unit.
9. Educate, assist, and motivate District Commissioners within his/her service area to supervise and motivate subordinate commissioners to visit each unit regularly, identify unit needs, and make plans to meet unit needs.
10. Conduct regular visits to district commissioner meetings and roundtables of the districts within his/her service area.
11. Promote the commissioner recognition programs, including Arrowhead Honor, Commissioner Keys, Distinguished Commissioner Awards, District Awards of Merit, and Silver Beaver nominations, within the districts of his/her service area.

Middle Tennessee Council
Assistant Council Commissioner – Education & Training
Position Description – Term 1 year

1. Most importantly: Be a leader amongst commissioners. An Assistant Council Commissioner should be able to:
 - a. Communicate;
 - b. Motivate;
 - c. Adapt;
 - d. Act as a catalyst;
 - e. Have a vision for the Council as well as his/her own service area; and
 - f. Be able to align others towards a goal.
2. Assist the Council Commissioner in achieving national and council level goals and objectives.
3. Provide timely and accurate information to the Council Commissioner to keep him/her apprised of the condition of Education and Training of Commissioners within the Council.
4. Educate, assist, and motivate District Commissioners to provide Basic Commissioner Training to all new Unit Commissioners within their District.
5. Schedule, arrange and provide:
 - A "train the trainer" session for District Commissioners in late January or early February.
 - 2 - 3 DC/ADC training sessions during the calendar year.
 - 1 - 2 Roundtable Commissioner training sessions during the calendar year.
6. Give guidance to the design and implement a MTC Commissioner Internet home page as a link from the MTC web-site home page.
7. Coordinate posting of all Commissioner educational and training events on the Commissioner web page.

Middle Tennessee Council
Assistant Council Commissioner - Unit Visitation Tracking
Position Description - Term 1 year

1. Most importantly: Be a leader amongst commissioners. An Assistant Council Commissioner should be able to:
 - a. Communicate;
 - b. Motivate;
 - c. Adapt;
 - d. Act as a catalyst;
 - e. Have a vision for the Council as well as his/her own service area; and
 - f. Be able to align others towards a goal.
2. Assist the Council Commissioner in achieving national and council level goals and objectives.
3. Along with the Council Commissioner, oversee the development and implementation of the new national web-based "Unit Visitation Tracking System".
4. Chair the Commissioner Unit Visitation Tracking Committee (CUVTC). This committee is to meet as often as necessary, but at least quarterly. Members of the committee: Council Commissioner, Assistant Council Commissioner for Unit Visitation Tracking, Assistant Council Commissioners for Areas I, II, III, and IV, the MTC Director of Field Services, and any additional specific members the above committee members feel necessary to carry out the charge. The CUVTC charge: To assist the national BSA office in the beta test site implement of the new web-based Unit Visitation Tracking System in the Middle Tennessee Council.
5. Provide any reports and/or feedback required by the national BSA office in regards to the beta test site implementation of the Unit Visitation Tracking System.

By utilizing the Unit Visitation Tracking System the intention is to ensure that every Unit in the MTC is receiving the service they deserve and that the units are delivering a quality program to the youth of Middle Tennessee. This is not a policing system, but rather a system that allows the commissioner to deliver the best service possible.

Through this system we should be able to accomplish the following goals:

- a. On-time Re-charter,
- b. Centennial Quality Unit Award,
- c. Delivery of a Quality Program.

Middle Tennessee Council
Assistant Council Commissioner - Venturing
Position Description - Term 1 year

Venture Oath

As a Venturer, I promise to do my duty to God and help strengthen America, to help others, and to seek truth, fairness, and adventure in the world.

Venturing's purpose is to provide positive experiences to help young people mature and to prepare them to become responsible and caring adults.

Criteria for Selection

1. Be familiar with the Venturing program –understand the Methods of Venturing.
2. Be familiar with the literature and resources available for the Venturing program.
3. Understand Crew Advisor and Crew Officer responsibilities.
4. Know what training is available for Venturing Crew Advisors and Crew Officers.
 - a. Chapter 6 - Commissioning and Venturing Leader Training.
 - b. Chapter 7 - Commissioning and Sea Scout Leader Training.
5. Know how to effectively use the Program Inventory Capability and offer best practices in its use.

Job Description

12. Most importantly: Be a leader amongst commissioners. An Assistant Council Commissioner should be able to:
 - i. Communicate;
 - ii. Motivate;
 - iii. Adapt;
 - iv. Act as a catalyst;
 - v. Have a vision for the Council as well as his/her own service area; and
 - vi. Be able to align others towards a goal.
13. Represent the Venturing program in Council Commissioners meetings.
14. Assist the Council Commissioner in achieving national and council level goals and objectives.
15. Provide timely and accurate information to the Council Commissioner to keep him/her apprised of the condition of Venture Crews within the Council.
16. Participate as an active part of the Council Venturing Committee and communicate any needs to the Council Commissioner.
17. Be a resource for Unit Commissioners assigned a Venture Crew.

18. Proactively promote the Venturing program. Encourage Crew participation in District, Council, and Area activities. Attend and/or function as staff for Powderhorn, Kodiak Leadership Trek, and at Venturing Conferences.
19. Educate, assist, and motivate District Commissioners within his/her service area to supervise and motivate subordinate commissioners to visit each Crew regularly, identify Crew needs, and make plans to meet Crew needs. Assist Unit Commissioners that are assigned Venturing Units with a unit visit and evaluation.
20. Ensure that Crews are lead by youth officers and that the officers and activity chairs work closely with adult Advisors and other adult leaders in a spirit of partnership; that the adult leaders serve in a "shadow" leader capacity.
21. Maintain, assess, and improve procedures to ensure maximum on-time Unit charter renewal by district commissioner staffs within his/her service area.

**Middle Tennessee Council
Assistant Council Commissioner – Commissioner’s College
Position Description – Term 1 year**

1. Provide timely and accurate information regarding the Commissioner’s College to the Council Commissioner to assist the Council Commissioner in his duty to report to the Council President.
2. Assist the Council Commissioner in achieving those national and council level goals and objectives that are related to the Commissioner’s College.
3. Assist the Council Commissioner by overseeing and providing leadership to all aspects of annual MTC Commissioners College, including:
 - a. Recruitment of Key Staff (to include Program Deans),
 - b. Development of curriculum,
 - c. Publicity,
 - d. Selection of facility including all required logistics, and
 - e. Subsequent analysis of submitted critiques for continued improvement of Commissioner’s College.
4. Recruit the Deans for the Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctoral programs.
5. Working with College Deans, review and refine offered curriculum.
 - a. Ensure that national syllabus courses are reviewed and considered for inclusion.
 - b. Review and consider recommendations for locally developed courses.
6. Determine date and location for college.
7. Determine make-up of other key staff positions and recruit appropriate personnel.
 - a. Including, but not limited to: Logistics, Registrar and Publicity.
8. Consult with Council Commissioner on appropriate Guest Speakers and obtain support as needed in invitational process.
9. Work with the DFS or assigned staff advisor on budget development, submission and execution.
10. Ensure Program Deans recruit appropriate and qualified instructional staff for offered curriculum.
11. Work with Council professionals as needed on publicity and registration Process in time to commence registration at least 3 months prior to the event.
12. After completion of college, provide thorough review process for continued improvement.
13. Function in the role of “Immediate Past Dean of the College”, as an advisor to the next year’s MTC College Dean.

**Middle Tennessee Council
District Commissioner
Position Description – Term 2 years**

1. Most importantly: Be a leader amongst commissioners. A District Commissioner should be able to:
 - a. Communicate;
 - b. Motivate;
 - c. Adapt;
 - d. Act as a catalyst;
 - e. Have a vision for his/her District; and
 - f. Be able to align others towards a goal.
2. Assist the Council Commissioner and Area Commissioner in achieving national and council level goals and objectives.
3. Participate as part of the “District Key 3” (District Executive, District Chairman, District Commissioner).
4. Provide timely and accurate information to the Council and Area Commissioner to keep them apprised of the condition of District and/or Units within the District.
5. Help the Area Commissioner to implement the Unit Visitation Tracking System within the District. Serve on the Unit Visitation Task Force chaired by the ACC for Visitation and Tracking.
6. Assist District Nominating Committees within his/her service area in selecting District Commissioners as needed.
7. Recruit and maintain a full complement of Unit Commissioners for a 3:1 Unit:Commissioner ratio and identify the “right people” as commissioners so that all Scouting Units in the district receive regular, helpful service.
8. Arrange for training of all members of the District Commissioner Staff.
9. Guide Roundtable Commissioners to ensure that monthly roundtables are well attended and assist with practical Unit program ideas.
10. Maintain, assess, and improve procedures to ensure maximum on-time unit charter. Promote “On-Time/On-Line” for Unit re-chartering.
11. Ensure that each UC has a commitment and strategy to provide prompt, intensive, and persistent care when major problems occur that could threaten the life of a unit.
12. Conduct regular District Commissioner Meetings.
13. Promote the commissioner recognition programs, including Arrowhead Honor, Commissioner Keys, Distinguished Commissioner Awards, District Awards of Merit, and Silver Beaver nominations, within the District.

Appendix B – Defining Focus Challenges

2009 Area Commissioner Special Assignment

Guide District Commissioners within his/her service area to utilize and develop the “Unit Visitation and Tracking System”. The Middle Tennessee Council has requested to be a 2009 beta test site for the web-based “Unit Visitation and Tracking System” which is being developed by BSA national headquarters. Anticipated test site rollout is January 2009 and anticipated national rollout (availability to all units) May 2009. The system provides a database for visits to units.

The #1 mission of the Commissioner is to provide service to every Unit in the District. The proven way to carry out this responsibility is to have a monthly unit visit. A visit can take on many forms—unit meeting, committee meeting, roundtable visit, telephone call, e-mail (occasionally), district or council activity, or a one-on-one visit with the unit leader. In order to know the status of units and how the district can help units succeed, there needs to be accountability. Nationally, a Unit Visit Tracking System is being developed to help provide a way for unit commissioners to report on their monthly unit visits.

It will basically work as follows:

1. A Unit Commissioner (UC) visits an assigned Unit.
2. The UC records, on a web-based system, information gathered at the visit. This record will be kept in a secure web-based database that maybe reviewed at anytime, via the Internet, with appropriate security clearance.
3. There will be a file of records developed about the Unit and its activities. The District Commissioner may also review this file.
4. This will be a secure based system. For example a UC will only be able to view records of his/her assigned units only and a DC will only be able to view units and records of UC's in his/her district only. Likewise an Area Commissioner will be able to view all Units and Districts in his/her area only. Finally the Council Commissioner will have access to all records.

The intention is to ensure that every Unit in the MTC is receiving the service they deserve and that the units are delivering a quality program to the youth of Middle Tennessee. This is not a policing system, but rather a system that allows the commissioner to deliver the best service possible.

Through this system we should be able to accomplish the following goals:

1. On-time Re-charter,
2. Centennial Quality Unit Award,
3. Delivery of a Quality Program.

An Assistant Council Commissioner for Unit Visitation position has been created in the Middle Tennessee Council to help coordinate and implement the new Unit Visitation Tracking System. The AAC for Unit Visitation will work directly with the CC and the 4 Area ACC in regards to coordinating this effort.

Appendix C – Annual Commissioner Service Plan

2009 Commissioners Leadership Summit

January 24, 2009

9 am -12 pm

1. Organizational Structure of Commissioners Service
2. Goals for 2009
 - a. CQUA
 - b. UVTS
 - d. 3:1 Unit to Commissioners
 - c. On-line, On-Time, 2009
 - e. College of Commissioner Science
 - f. Development of Venturing Commissioner Service
3. Break
4. Introduction to Commissioner Venturing
5. Commissioner UVTS
6. Break
7. Commissioner Education and Training
 - a. Schedule
 - b. Resources for Education & Training
 - c. Train the Trainers
8. Final Comments

Appendix D – Annual Council Commissioner Plan Goals

Goals “A Team Effort”

1. Give every kid a chance to join Scouting.
 2. Make every Unit in the MTC successful. – The roll of the Commissioner.
 - a. Easy and simple to say and hard to do.
 - b. How do we do this?
 - i. How to measure success?
 - ii. How do we ensure that this is happening?
- A. How do we measure success?
1. **Centennial Quality Unit Awards Program**
 - a. How are we doing? Are we making progress?
 - b. CQUA helps set priorities / sets measurement goals.
 - c. How can I help this unit achieve the goals we set together?
- B. How do we ensure that is happening? - Holding Commissioners accountable
- Monthly Unit Visitation
1. **Unit Visitation Tracking System** on-line
 2. We retain kids by program. Do we have all aspects of the program functioning – camping, advancement, service, leadership, etc?
- C. Improve customer service – **Infrastructure** has been expanded Regional and Area Commissioners. Development of a series of forms to share best practices.
- The job of **Commissioner** is one of the most rewarding and greatest jobs in the BSA. You can truly make a difference in the youth on Middle Tennessee.