

Spring 2017

THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



www.scouting.org/commissioners

Volunteer Paydays

It has been a remarkable nine years working with the commissioner corps. We are proud to announce that Ellie Morrison of Waco, Texas, will assume leadership of the Commissioner Service Task Force at the National Annual Meeting in Orlando, since I will be devoting my time to preparing for the 24th World Scout Jamboree in 2019. I have every confidence that Charles Dahlquist, Ellie, and the team will continue to support our commissioners in providing exceptional unit service at the local level.

When we started this journey together, regional and area commissioners were a new concept and we had no national support staff. Tico Perez, our national commissioner at the time, had a vision of building an infrastructure to unlock one of the strengths of the Boy Scouts of America, namely the passionate and committed service of thousands of commissioners who live and breathe Scouting and who provide resources, support, and leadership to drive unit retention. We hope that we have achieved our goal of making your volunteer experience easier and more rewarding. Nine years later, and thanks to each of you, we are experiencing some of the best unit and youth retention rates in our history. However, we all need to continue working together with the entire Scouting family to drive membership growth. We need and want to retain a growing Scouting population that is increasingly relevant to American life.

We have learned so many lessons along the way. One of those lessons is that Scouting is local, and the best ideas are most often found in our councils. Thousands of you responded to our quest to improve commissioner service by providing your best ideas. Hundreds of you have served on project committees, which allowed us to build an entirely new level of support and resources. Your selfless service is the embodiment of the Scouting spirit, and you have made an incredible difference.

We also learned that we have to keep our mission and methodology simple in order to be effective. Our mission statement and four methods of delivering unit service are built around that goal:

Retention Mission Statement

The retention mission of the commissioner corps is best achieved by providing an adequate number of trained unit commissioners who provide a link to district committee resources in support of a quality unit program.



Scott Sorrels
National Commissioner Service Chair
scott.sorrels@sutherland.com

Unit commissioners will focus on the following four primary areas:

- 1. Supporting unit growth through the Journey to Excellence*
- 2. Contacting units and capturing their strengths and needs in Commissioner Tools*
- 3. Linking unit needs to district operating committee resources*
- 4. Supporting timely charter renewal*

I continue to believe that a simple and unified approach of building on these elements is how we can best achieve our retention mission. The most important opportunity we have today is to hold each other accountable for increasing the number of units that we personally contact and, in doing so, to work our four methods for each unit served



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®

I am blessed to have met and worked with so many remarkable Scouters. Tico Perez deserves a special note of thanks for his vision and leadership. Our regional and area commissioners led the way in building an infrastructure of support from the national commissioner and national task force level to the unit commissioner. Our national support staff worked with you and other Scout teams to develop new platforms for training, roundtables, recruiting and retention, technology, underserved markets, and communications. The *Unit Performance Guide*, which was based upon local council best methods for starting and retaining units, is a lasting legacy. Our administrative commissioners, particularly our council and district commissioners, took their place at the Key 3 table and provided the leadership needed to support our most impactful positions—those of you who serve as unit commissioners.

One of the remarkable things about serving as a commissioner is that you serve youth whom you will probably never meet. Perhaps that is why volunteer paydays are my favorite part of Scouting. You meet a Cub Scout at the Philmont Training Center whose poise and intelligence gives you hope for future generations. You hear the story of the Eagle Scout who, despite all odds, pushed through every obstacle and is on his way to Stanford, or you hear how a young girl matured into a young woman in a matter of days while on the trail at a high-adventure base. Every Scouter you meet has dozens of these volunteer paydays tucked away in his or her memories. Scouting is a remarkable movement, and you make it possible.

It has been my honor to serve with each and every one of you. Thanks for all you do for Scouting.

Scott Sorrels
National Commissioner Service Chair

