

NOAC 2024

CU Boulder



SEEK NEW HEIGHTS

# **Commissioning: Cheerful Service after 21**

Expanding Cheerful Service to Unit Service

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# What Would You Do?

A Cubmaster calls in a panic: this year, she can't recruit at her local school.

Almost all thirty of her kids were recruited at that school.

Her pack's Membership Coordinator wants to quit.

**What should she do? How can you help?**



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# 1. What do Commissioners Do?

The Role of Unit Service in Scouting



# A Commissioner is a...

...District-level volunteer who **serves** unit leaders.

...Consultant who **listens** and **problem-solves**.

...**Single-best resource** who links units to district-, council-, and national-level resources.



# Commissioners vs. Unit Leaders

## Unit Leaders...

...attend every meeting.

...work directly with youth.

## Commissioners...

...attend some meetings,  
usually parent/committee  
meetings.

...work with unit leaders and  
parents.



# But What Do Commissioners Do?

Basically, commissioners **connect** with unit leaders.

They build **relationships** and **partnerships**.

They help unit leaders **achieve their own goals**.

Commissioners **review basic data** about a unit (membership, advancement) and **have conversations** about it.

There are even “cheat sheets” (“**Connection Guides**”):





# CONNECTION GUIDE

## MEMBERSHIP GROWTH & UNIT SIZE

### PURPOSE OF A CONNECTION GUIDE

To aid in facilitating conversations between commissioners and unit scouters, fostering a deeper understanding of unit dynamics and operations, enabling commissioners to better serve and support the unit. This involves identifying and leveraging successes, supporting the unit as they identify areas of improvement, collaborating with the unit on their goals, and providing necessary resources in support of those goals.

### WHY IS THIS UNIT METRIC IMPORTANT?

Growing units increases the likelihood of attracting new members and retaining existing youth participants, while also facilitating the recruitment of additional adult volunteers. This growth fosters a more vibrant and safe program environment, offering enhanced opportunities for engagement and safety.

### STEP 1: COMMISSIONERS REVIEW UNIT KEY METRICS

#### Objective Unit Data for Year-over-Year Membership Growth & Unit Size

**Membership Growth** – Is the unit currently meeting the metric for year-over-year (YOY) membership growth?

1. Did the unit show year-over-year membership growth?  
OR
2. Is the unit a pack with 50+ youth, a troop or post with 30+ youth, or a crew or ship with 15+ youth?

**Unit Size** – Does the unit exceed the small unit threshold?

- Packs: 20 or more Cubs
- Troops: 12 or more Scouts
- Crews / Ships / Posts: 7 or more members

### STEP 2: UNIT CONVERSATIONS

#### Celebrate Success for Achievement or Improvement:

- Effective recognition is essential to effective unit service.
- Just say it. A straightforward, face-to-face "well done" is a simple but effective way to celebrate achievement.

#### Things to Consider:

- Has growth (or lack thereof) shown a multiyear trend?
- What actions has the unit taken to recruit new youth and adults?
- Does the unit have an active outdoor program? How well do they communicate with families?
- What recruitment tools and materials does your council's membership team provide?
- Does the unit have a calendar or information to share with potential scouts/parents?

**Questions to Facilitate Conversation:** (example questions to help the commissioner engage with unit leaders as each unit is unique and the conversation should be tailored to the unit)

- Did the unit have a recent recruitment event, was it successful?
- How did they market the event, was it successful?

Connection Guide: Year-over-Year Membership Growth & Unit Size (Draft Updated 4/18/24)

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- Does the unit follow up with all prospective families?
- Does the unit utilize social media and online recruitment tools?
- Is the BeAScout pin active and is the information current?
- Does the unit respond to Leads and Applications in a timely manner?
- Does the unit utilize the tools offered by the council?  
Examples are Geofencing, Facebook, Peer-to-Peer, Customized Videos (in place of youth talks), etc.
- Ask whether the New Member Coordinator (NMC) is trained and has been given clear direction regarding new audiences and how to engage new members and their families.
- How many scouts are crossing over or aging out this year?
- Does the unit involve its youth in the recruiting events?

### Resources to Provide:

- District and Council Membership Growth Tools
- Contact Information for District/Council Membership
- School talks, BeAScout, Peer to Peer Recruitment, etc.
- Scouting Wire Marketing
- Membership Hub [Website](#)
- [Brand Center for Recruitment Materials](#)
- [Past Marketing and Recruitment Webinars](#)
- New Member Coordinator [Resources](#)
- Sign-up Night [Playbook](#)
- Does the unit have scouts serving as den chiefs with local packs?
- Are the youth involved in helping with recruiting?
- For crews and ships: Is the unit interfacing with any nearby troops?
- Does the post have the support of career services at the local high school or community?

### STEP 3: HELPING THE UNIT SET GOALS

- Develop a recruitment plan.

Work with the charter organization to help boost recruitment.

- Work with the district membership chair and district executive to identify new pools of both youth and adults within the community and ways to access them.
- Conduct at least one recruitment event that includes prospective families.
- Start at least one new den of Lions (Kindergarten) or Tigers (1<sup>st</sup> grade) within a calendar year.
- Hold two joint activities with a pack or a Webelos den during a calendar year.
- Hold a recruitment event that utilizes Peer-to-Peer or a personalized invitation method.
- Hold a recruitment event that utilizes Peer-to-Peer or a personalized invitation method that reaches out to the Troops along with the friends of the unit's registered Scouts.
- Hold a "Normal Friends Activity" recruitment event.

### STEP 4: COMMISSIONERS PROVIDING UNIT SUPPORT

- Follow up with the unit regularly to check in on the status of their goals and provide them with upcoming opportunities within the district, council, or nation to learn more about growing youth membership.
- Connect unit Scouters with the district membership chair or a volunteer who is experienced in improving youth membership to discuss best practices.
- Meet with the District/Council Membership Chair or District Executive (DE) to discuss unit recruiting or membership growth opportunities.

Connection Guide: Year-over-Year Membership Growth & Unit Size (Draft Updated 4/18/24)

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# But can I be a commissioner? Really?

Any registered Scouter who is at least **21 years of age** can be a commissioner.

The biggest qualifications are **skills** and **demeanor**.

Scouting experience is a plus, but...

...how much do you need?



# Who are Commissioners? Perception vs. Reality

## Perception

Veteran Scouters who **know everything** about the program.

Scouters in the **twilight** of their “careers.”

## Reality

A Scouter who is willing to find answers, **especially as answers change.**

Scouters who want to serve, but who have less time – maybe “**twilight,**” but maybe “**dawn!**”



# Frequently Asked Question #1

I'm only 21 years old. I can't really help Cubmasters and Scoutmasters (over) twice my age, can I?

*Consider:*

*Who is a **typical** Cubmaster?*

*Do you know...  
that you don't know?*



# Frequently Asked Question #2

What about “fit?” I can’t imagine helping a veteran Scoutmaster.

*This isn’t a concern. Commissioners are assigned to units based on strengths and needs. You’ll be assigned to the right unit, just like all commissioners are.*

*(If you’re considering this, then you’re already thinking like a commissioner.)*



# Learning Objectives

1. Describe the role of commissioners and unit service **in the Scouting movement.**
2. Describe how unit service is a **continuation** of cheerful service.
3. Explain how to **get involved** in unit service.





# 2. A Continuation of Cheerful Service

Serving Scouting beyond the OA



# Traits of a Commissioner

Commissioners have a servant's heart.



You might have a servant's head. That helps, but...



# Who Should Become a Commissioner?

## Better Fit: Someone Who...

...listens first. And second.

...acts without prompting.

...helps behind the scenes,  
and stays there.

## Poorer Fit: Someone who...

...listens first, acts second.

...waits until the last minute –  
more than most, anyway.

...prefers center stage.



# Arrowmen make good commissioners.

Members of the Order of the Arrow **understand** Servant Leadership.

More important, they've **practiced** Servant Leadership.

Unit Service is a different breed of volunteering: it doesn't have a lot of the iconic moments with youth baked in.

Commissioners, especially, are fueled by principle – they serve almost for its own sake, not for “fun”...



...but it's fun, too.



# Meet Your Trainer

- Ka’Niss Ma’Ingan Lodge
- Duluth, MN
- Fun Fact:  
Seriously, my biggest regret in Scouting is not becoming a commissioner sooner!

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# 3. Become a Commissioner

A Unit Leader can use your help.



# It's Simple, Really...

If unit service **sounds like a challenge...**

and

If you're **ready to serve Scouting** outside of the OA...

then

You should **start a conversation** about being a commissioner.



# Conversation, not Conversion

You don't need to commit to being a commissioner today.

In fact, maybe you shouldn't.

The next step is a **conversation** – that's it.

Start that conversation with any commissioner, district executive – anyone in the council office, really. They'll help.



# A Pledge for You

Sure, dipping your toe into district- and council-level volunteering can be intimidating.

First, it's **easier** than you think.

That said, **I will personally contact** the right commissioner in your council **for you**, just to start a conversation.

Just email me: [philjensen424@hotmail.com](mailto:philjensen424@hotmail.com)  
with your name, council, and city/state.



# Now, a Servant's View:

This **isn't about you**, or us.

Every council has **at least one unit** without a commissioner.

That's a parent – a group of parents – who **need someone**.

That's dozens of kids, in neckerchiefs, who **need someone**.

Can you **help those families** have a great Scouting experience?



# As an Arrowman, How Can You Serve?



# Takeaway Challenge

- For the final three minutes, think about your **future roles** in the OA, in Scouting, and in life.
- Write down **three ways** that you will Seek New Heights in those roles. For example, will you extend Cheerful Service to Unit Service?
- Later today, feel free to **share these key ideas** with others in your chapter or lodge.



# Thank you!

Please take a moment to fill out the **4-question** feedback form.

(After selecting the time slot, **select the course**: “Commissioning: Cheerful Service after 21”.)

One question is about **content**, another is about **instruction**.

