

THE COMMISSIONERS' INTERNET RESOURCES WORKSHOP

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Part 1: LET'S STRENGTHEN OUR ABILITY TO SERVE UNITS AS COMMISSIONERS -- DELIVERING THE PROMISE

Section 5: What Resources Are Available to Help You: Using Information Technology to Deliver the Promise



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**THE COMMISSIONER'S INTERNET RESOURCES
WORKSHOP PART 1**

Section 5 -- Information

What Resources Are Available to Help You -- Using Technology to Deliver the Promise

Official BSA Literature & Video Tapes



- *Boy Scout Roundtable Commissioner Training*, No. 34256
- *Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*, No. 7263A
- *College of Commissioner Science*, No. 34522
- *Commissioner Administration of Unit Service*, No. 34120 (1994) (For DCs and ADCs - This is an absolute must for DCs and ADCs)
- *Commissioner Basic Training Manual*, No. 33614
- *Commissioner Conference*, No. 33616
- *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, No. 37123 (For UCs)
- *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops and Posts*, No. 33618
- *Commissioner Job Description Cards*, No. 34265
- *Continuing Education for Commissioners*, No. 33615 (1995) (*Supercedes College of Commissioner Science and Commissioner Conference*)
- *Cub Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*, No. 34249
- *Cub Scout Roundtable Staff Guide*, No. 33013
- *Highlights for District Commissioners... An Overview*, No. 37123 (For DCs and ADCs)
- *Highlights of District Operations: Helping Units Succeed and Recruiting District Volunteers*, AV-06V002 (Video Tape)
- *Highlights of District Volunteer Recruiting*, No. 37130
- *Scouting's Library of Literature*, No. 33000
- *Selecting District People*, No. 34514
- *Self-Evaluation for Unit Commissioners and Exploring Service Team Members*, No. 34424
- *The Commissioner* (Newsletter distributed quarterly to Council Commissioners and Scout Executives), No. 14-975
- *The Unit Commissioner's Orientation: Helping Units Succeed*, AV-04V001 (Video Tape)
- *Unit Commissioner Program Notebooks*, No. 26-006
- *Unit Commissioner Work Sheet (Pack)*, No. 34125
- *Unit Commissioner Work Sheet (Post)*, No. 33619
- *Unit Commissioner Work Sheet (Troop)*, No. 34126

Communications



Without good communications the extraordinary and dedicated efforts of each individual can get lost in isolation. Information not shared is simply information lost. Worse, a failure of communication can deny program opportunities to the very Scouts we seek to serve. As a DC or ADC what forms of communication should be exploiting to do our utmost to see that information flows quickly and feely from the local Council through the District to the units serviced? Consider the following array:

- E-mail - for leaving a message to be picked up at the convenience of the recipient
- E-mail Discussion Groups - Do volunteers in the local area have an e-mail net to share and exchange information on when events are going to occur, how-to wisdom, etc.?
- Faxes - passing hard copy information quickly - do you know the fax numbers for the DC, each UC, and the Council offices?
- Formal letters - thank yous, appointments, recognition, confirmations, etc.
- Internet Web Site - have volunteers set up a web site where announcements, dates and local information can be posted and found by volunteers?
- Meeting agendas - keeping things on track
- Meetings - face-to-face discussion for planning, problem resolution, etc.
- Telephone - do you have a listing of all key phone numbers within the Commissioner Service and the units being served?
- Voice-mail - automated announcements and incoming recordings

Note: Please be aware that BSA does not endorse the Internet and/or e-mail as official avenues for the distribution of Scouting information, preferring information to be disseminated via local Councils through Districts. Any information passed through these avenues should be regarded as unofficial and users should be aware that contributors are not speaking on behalf of or for BSA.



Resources You Can Use to Help Units



Where can you find resources to help your units?

- *The Official 1996 Boy Scout Catalog*
- Literature available at your local Council Scout Service Center
- *Scouting Magazine*
- Your local Council's newsletter
- Program Helps
- *Boys Life Magazine*
- BSA Publications and Literature
- Local Council publications and handouts
- Roundtable meetings
- Training events
- Community leaders and organizations
- Community libraries - lots of good reading on team building and leadership
- E-mail Bulletin Boards
- E-mail Discussion Groups
- Internet FTP Sites
- Internet World Wide Web Sites - planning a trip to Philmont? Topo maps are available for downloading at <http://www.hiwaay.net/usscouts/index> under Philmont
- Online Service Scouting Forums
- Other Scouters in your local area

Training to Improve Commissioner Service to Units



What training is available to help a Commissioner to improve his/her ability to deliver service to a unit?

Basic Cub Scout Leader Training - This can help you understand your leaders much better. You will know what they have learned from training and where you can help.

Scoutmastership Fundamentals Training - This can help you understand your leaders much better. You will know what they have learned from training and where you can help.

Basic Commissioner Training - This is essential. Make sure you take this course as soon as possible. If you have completed the course, but it was several years ago, please consider taking it again as a refresher to build on your existing knowledge.

University of Scouting, College of Commissioner Science - The College of Commissioner Science is simply an advanced training program where your local Council offers a rich variety of course designed to help you further develop leadership, communications, management, and Commissioner skills in order to improve your ability to serve youth. This program is designed to be a three part sequence. In the first year attendees complete a basic program with some elective seminars to expand on basic training and capitalize on experience. The second year program goes beyond this with additional course work leading to a Masters. Finally in the third year program, you will learn how to take all of your training and experience and apply it to a long-term project resulting in a written dissertation on a subject of interest to you. The final product often will end up being a document that other Scouters can use to improve their ability to deliver the program to Scouts at the unit level. I highly recommend these courses.

Wood Badge: Either Cub Scout Trainer Wood Badge or Boy Scout Leader Wood Badge offer Commissioners a tremendous opportunity to experience an intensive training experience unlike any other in Scouting. And the Wood Badge experience is more than just training in a Scouting program. It is also a human relations experience that will help participants return to the District as much more effective trainers/leaders. Wood Badge is highly recommended for Commissioners.

Records & Data

Almost every unit struggles with recordkeeping. So does the average Commissioner staff. In this age of expanding information technology, several types of software have been and are being developed to allow Scouters to use their home computers to automate recordkeeping and data storage. I encourage you to investigate the software packages offered in *Scouting* magazine. However, before you purchase one, you may wish to experiment with the shareware version to see whether it suits your needs or the needs of a unit you are serving. Almost all of the Scouting related software packages can be downloaded from Compuserve.



[Click here for additional information on shareware available on Compuserve.](#)

If sufficient interest exists, I will try to expand the discussion of Scouting related software in future versions of this seminar.

Future Possibilities



The national office of BSA is looking at ways to improve the delivery of service to units by developing software to automate some services. This is a relatively new development and one that may take awhile to grow to fruition. In the meantime I counsel patience. If/when BSA develops new systems using information technologies, we will add a discussion of them to this Web page after they have been tested and made public.

Likewise, as information technologies develop we may add additional information concerning cable TV interconnects to the Internet and other information resources, information on video-teleconferencing possibilities, etc.



The Commissioners' Information Resources Workshop by Michael F. Bowman, is presented by R. Gary Hendra -- [The MacScouter](#) -- WDL, Pack 92, Milpitas, California

