

DEFINING THE NEED FOR A  
COMPREHENSIVE UNIT COMMISSIONER  
HANDBOOK

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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James H. Clinkenbeard  
Assistant District Commissioner  
Trailblazer District  
Dan Beard Council, BSA

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## Preface

I began this project with the guided question, "Can the development of a comprehensive Unit Commissioner Binder that provides all existing resources available based on survey needs not only help Unit Commissioners with a new and unfamiliar responsibility, but also give them more confidence in performing their duties through time efficiency, and help to reduce their stress level in an effort to encourage their commitment to this position?"

As I spoke with our Unit Commissioners it became clear that there was a great deal of information available, but not always readily so. A survey of Unit Commissioners would be essential in ascertaining the materials and resources necessary to help them be successful, and to make those resources more user-friendly.

I greatly appreciate the assistance and input provided by our Trailblazer District Unit Commissioners in their survey responses and in our monthly dialogues along this journey.

- *Jim Clinkenbeard*  
*May 2010*

## INTRODUCTION

When I became an Assistant District Commissioner, I received, at my training, a slide-presentation handout and a copy of the Commissioner Fieldbook. As I began to do a crash-course on my responsibility, I found that there were numerous publications, handouts, schedules, maps, how-to's and weekly memoranda that I needed to have and digest. There were also forms I needed to be aware of and forms that I would use in visits. There were a number of rosters set up by specific criteria that I would need for visits, re-chartering, FOS, emailing, leader training data, merit badge counselors, and the list went on. By providing a binder with all of the tabbed sections precluding the Unit Commissioners from having to make phone calls, check the National and Council websites for, and having to copy, these materials, I believe the Unit Commissioners would be much more likely to start with a higher level of confidence in this position and be able to start performing their duties more quickly and efficiently, and continue to do so. Survey input will determine the needed content, and how much, if at all, this Unit Commissioner Binder should contain. With the addition of tutorials on internet websites, my hope is that this will be a readily-available resource to provide our Unit Commissioners with quick and timely access to much of what they need to be successful.

## Why Do People Volunteer?

Volunteering has been described as the commitment of time and energy – in an activity that involves spending time, without financial reward, doing something that aims to benefit the community, the environment or individuals outside one's immediate family.<sup>1</sup> Volunteering is the life-blood of the Boy Scouts of America.

Just why do people choose to volunteer? They volunteer for many different reasons, but always with a purpose in mind. If we know that purpose, we can feed it, and, hopefully, retain that volunteer. Many people simply want to give back. "You will hear volunteers say, 'My Mother received excellent care in this hospital and I want to repay some of that kindness.' Another volunteer will say, 'When I was growing up, there was a Boy Scout leader who made a difference in my life, and I want to be one of those who makes a difference to a young boy.' The concept of giving back is strong in most volunteers' minds."<sup>2</sup>

Making a difference is a key motive. Some people bring a set of personal values that enable them to act on their deeply-ingrained beliefs. Volunteering in Scouting helps bridge a gap between them and their community. Frequently, volunteers are impacted

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1 Volunteering explained (World Volunteer Web, 2005) <<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/resources/how-to-guides/volunteer>>

2 Why Do People Volunteer? (Elk Grove, CA: Volunteerpro Newsletter) <[http://www.volunteerpro.com/past\\_newsletter\\_001.htm](http://www.volunteerpro.com/past_newsletter_001.htm)>

by that mentor whose volunteer commitment made a substantial contribution to the volunteer's perceived success today.<sup>3</sup> Volunteering's own reward is making a difference and seeing those results.

Motivated volunteers are ones who have had life experience that have shown them the benefits of an organization.<sup>4</sup> Many of our volunteers were either Scouts themselves or their sons, nephews, or grandchildren were Scouts. The inherent goals of Scouting are known and appreciated by those volunteers. They are aware that Scouting programs can only be carried out by volunteers who choose to mentor groups of young Scouts. The goals are established and unwavering; they do not have to start their efforts from scratch. This means the focus can be directed to moving Scouts through their advancement to reach their mission – achieving life-long skills and strong moral character as together we build a generation of young men prepared to better the world.

These volunteers develop long-standing relationships with other like-minded and committed adults. Their combined efforts support and complement each other. This trust and friendship goes a long way in successfully retaining these individuals. They are able to share the “amazing feeling that comes”<sup>5</sup> from seeing the boys and the units succeed, progress, and flourish.

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3 Terrance S. McGill, Why Do People Volunteer? – Key to Motivating Volunteers (Ezine articles, 2009)

4 Don D'Armond, Why Do I Volunteer? (Chapel Hill, NC: The Prism, 1997)

5 D'Armond 2.

## Volunteering in 2010

Volunteering is a key to community and community organizations' success. In 2008, twenty-six point four percent of all adults contributed eight billion hours of volunteer service worth over 162 billion dollars.<sup>6</sup> The percentage of volunteers is remaining steady in spite of a difficult economy. Equally important to the time provided is the seventy-eight point two percent of volunteers who contribute 25 dollars or more to these groups compared to only thirty-eight point five percent of non-volunteers.<sup>7</sup>

Data shows that the Midwest (Ohio) has the highest volunteer rate while the South (Kentucky) leads in the largest number of volunteers.<sup>8</sup> However, a closer look shows that the competition between religious, educational, social services, health, civic, and sports / arts consumes ninety-three to ninety-four percent of the existing volunteer pool leaving the Boy Scouts of America and others to divide up the remaining six to seven percent.<sup>9</sup>

VolunteeringinAmerica.gov data from 2006 to 2008 shows Kentucky ranked thirty-first out of fifty states in the percentage of volunteers and fortieth in hours per resident. Ohio ranks twenty-first and thirty-first in those categories. The closest demographic data for the Dan Beard Council area are the Cincinnati figures which show a position of twentieth out of the largest fifty-one cities and forty-second in hours per

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6 Volunteering in America Research Highlights (Washington, D. C.: The Corporation for National and Community Service, 2009) 1.

7 Ibid. 1.

8 Ibid. 3.

9 <[3](http://www.VolunteeringinAmerica.gov (/OH, /KY, /OH/Cincinnati)></a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

resident. Cincinnati's value of this volunteer service over this period is 842.3 million dollars.<sup>10</sup>

### What Stops People from Volunteering?

First, people who do not volunteer presume that virtually all volunteers are retired, have an abundance of free time and are not bound by child-rearing. They fear the time commitment and are worried they will be bound to service indefinitely. Potential volunteers feel that if they can put to use skills they have then it may be worth a try. Also, if they are contacted by someone they know and trust they are more likely to offer their services.<sup>11</sup>

"Over 27 million volunteers in 2008 started serving because someone asked them to serve."<sup>12</sup> And, other factors increase volunteer rate such as: homeownership, higher education levels, and lower levels of poverty.<sup>13</sup> Yet, even still, thirty-five point five percent of national volunteers stop serving their organizations the following year. Therefore, many new volunteers are merely replacing existing ones. This turnover stymies continuity and productivity.<sup>14</sup> Older volunteers, particularly those with great and meaningful experience, such as senior Scouters, stay on more often when they have

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10 Ibid.

11 Volunteering in America . . . 3.

12 Pathways to Service: Learning from the potential volunteer's perspectives (Washington, D. C.: The Corporation for National and Community Service, 2009) 3.

13 Volunteering in America . . . 5.

14 Pathways to Service . . . 1.



begun service prior to retirement. The duration and intensity, or stress associated with volunteering, plays a large part in their terminating their service.<sup>15</sup>

Specifically, there are a number of reasons why volunteers decide to leave their organizations. They most often complain and categorize the following as negative experiences: disorganization, unprepared and untrained leaders, a lack of proper training, and, prominently, insufficient materials to assist them in effectively carrying out their duties.<sup>16</sup> Poor management, which impacts all of the above, contributes the highest level of dissatisfaction for volunteers<sup>17</sup>, and there can be no worse poor management than turning our commissioners loose to do their job “flying by the seat of their pants”.

### Retaining our Volunteers

Volunteers must be empowered.<sup>18</sup> We must use the data to help provide them with outstanding and relevant resources. Research shows the importance of setting goals together, defining responsibilities, support through current knowledge, information, and plans, and being delegated complete assignments.<sup>19</sup>

District Commissioners and Assistant District Commissioners must offer new skills training and help their Unit Commissioners to fully “understand the meaning of

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15 Barbara Butrica, Richard W. Johnson, Sheila R. Zedlewski, Volunteer Transitions among Older Americans (Washington, D. C., 2007).

16 Pathways to Service . . . 5.

17 Ibid. 4.

18 How to Recruit, Retain, and Reward Volunteers (Elk Grove, CA: Volunteerpro Newsletter) <[http://www.volunteerpro.com/seminars\\_care.htm](http://www.volunteerpro.com/seminars_care.htm)>

19 Supervising volunteers (World Volunteer Web, 2005) <<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/resources/how-to-guides/manage-volunteers>>

their work and the connection to the . . . mission”<sup>20</sup> of the Boy Scouts of America.

Resources and updates must be planned on a regular basis. With these strategies in place, communication is on-going and supportive.<sup>21</sup>

### “Become a Scout Volunteer!”<sup>22</sup>

The Official BSA volunteer pamphlet is a blue-background tri-fold, front and back informational brochure. The lettering is a complementary light blue contrast which in combination is cool and inviting. Four photographs are positioned to show adult volunteers (in uniform) assisting Scouts of various ages. The inner photo is of adult volunteers doing an obviously fun outdoor activity together.

The pamphlet presents a variety of statistics (2004). “1.2 million adult volunteers assist the Boy Scouts of America, 96% would encourage those they know to volunteer as well. Ninety percent feel their effort makes them a better citizen, 88% a better parent, and 65% more open to new ideas.”<sup>23</sup>

Although the pamphlet is directed more closely to volunteers assisting on the Pack, Troop, and Crew levels, it does briefly address the issue of training citing specific leader training and “more in depth training”<sup>24</sup> provided throughout each year.

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20 Pathways to Service . . . 5.

21 Supervising volunteers . . . 2.

22 Build a Better Future for Yourself and Your Community’s Youth . . . Become a Scout Volunteer (Boy Scouts of America, 2004).

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

We provide much more in-depth training for these leaders both on-line and through Roundtables and planning guides. Where is the comprehensive data presented to Unit Commissioners after their initial face-to-face training from experienced veteran Scouters? Unit Commissioners need to be able to provide specific answers, up-to-date information, and source information for all three groups – Packs, Troops, and Crews.

These local unit volunteers want this information now. It has been my experience to find that much of the distrust between district units and Council lies in past efforts to receive information which was needed timely. Many times the anticipated return phone calls or emails never came. Much time was wasted, plans were altered, and trust was lost. I spent much of my “get acquainted time” with unit leaders emphasizing that I was there to help get them information and to be their liaison with Council when needed. I received great skepticism, however, when put to the task by several of my leaders, after I had said they would receive twenty-four hour turn-around from me, things began to change. I answered emails, and even took phone calls at work (with my boss’s permission). Several people even came to my office for assistance. I provided the service they needed and deserved to receive. I learned quickly that I needed to develop a Commissioner Binder where I could maintain constant materials, and materials that would be updated weekly or monthly. It became invaluable.

## Survey of Unit Commissioners

I developed a five-page, five-part "Unit Commissioner Survey" that could be completed in approximately three to five minutes. (There was no place for identification of the respondent on the survey, however, all participants signed a "Participation Sign-In" sheet to record for follow-up mailing purposes for those not attending that monthly Commissioners Meeting.) The first section listed twenty materials for possible inclusion in a comprehensive Unit Commissioner Binder. The second section concentrated on three specifics of the National BSA website. The third section listed six sections of the Dan Beard Council website. The fourth section included five areas of the U. S. Scouting Service Project (USSSP), [netcommish.com](http://netcommish.com) – Scouting Website by Scouters for Scouters, and the fifth, and final section was the Official BSA Store ([scoutstuff.org/bsasupply/](http://scoutstuff.org/bsasupply/)).

All items were to be marked on a scale of 1 to 5 using the following justification:

5 – extremely important

4 – very important

3 – important

2 – not very important

1 – not important

The survey was rolled out at the January 14, 2010 Trailblazer District Commissioners Meeting held at Lakeside Christian Church in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky. The survey was completed by fifteen Commissioners present (out of twenty-two total). Eight surveys were mailed out on January 16, 2010, to those Commissioners not

present. Enclosed were SASEs to encourage participation. Two additional surveys were received January 20, 2010, one was received on January 26, 2010, and one was received on February 12, 2010 for a total of four out of the seven that did not attend the Commissioners Meeting on January 14, 2010. The final count was nineteen out of twenty-two Commissioners which was a percentage of eighty-six point four. The needed confidence level of surveys of this type is forty percent to fifty percent. There is a ninety-five plus percent confidence level that the results have less than a +1 / -1 variance due to the high percentage return of the total population. Demographic breakdown showed responses from seventeen males and two females. Eleven of the twenty-two participants were between the ages of thirty and forty-nine and eight were between the ages of fifty and seventy-five.

Scouter experience showed eight with one to five years experience, two with six to ten years, four with eleven to nineteen years, and five with twenty and more years.

Results are reported as the sample mean of the population (Trailblazer District Commissioners).

## Tables

Table 1. Unit Commissioner Survey – 2010 – 1, Part 1. (Resource materials listed in descending order by Mean Score. Raw Score calculated by comparing the number of responses by the percentage of 5 and 4 scores to the percentage of 5 – 4 – 3 scores per population.

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Raw Score</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>
Listing of your Unit Contact Information	100 / 100	4.74
Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service	95 / 100	4.58
Charter Renewal	89 / 100	4.58
Commissioner (Unit) Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews	95 / 100	4.53
Monthly Calendar of Events / Trainings	89 / 94	4.53
Internet Rechartering	84 / 100	4.42
Commissioner Service Guidelines	89 / 100	4.32
Unit Commissioner Worksheets (for visits)	89 / 100	4.32
Commissioner Training Handouts	84 / 100	4.32
Quality Unit Award / Goals paperwork	95 / 100	4.26
Unit Visit Tracking System (re. Adam Clinkenbeard's presentation)	72 / 100	4.22
Select Quality Leaders handout (recruiting leaders)	68 / 100	4.11

Table 1. (continued)

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Raw Score</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>
Commissioner Newsletter	68 / 89	4.05
Council Camps – information and maps	79 / 90	3.95
Friends of Scouting (FOS) materials	69 / 90	3.95
Scout Recruiting Data (District Membership Reports / School Night info)	74 / 85	3.89
Meeting Agendas / Minutes	63 / 89	3.74
Philmont Training Center materials	58 / 84	3.63
Scouting News Flashes	58 / 74	3.58
Delivering the Promise – Council Quarterly to friends / investors of Scouting	53 / 85	3.53

Table 2. Unit Commissioner Survey – 2010 – 1, Part 2. A. National BSA website ([www.myscouting.org/](http://www.myscouting.org/)) (Internet step-by-step outline value to Unit Commissioners in descending order by Mean Score. Raw Score calculated by comparing the number of responses by the percentage of 5 and 4 scores to the 5 – 4 – 3 scores per sample population.)

<u>Website area</u>	<u>Raw Score</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>
Volunteer (log in) – My Profile, Training, Unit Tools, District Tools, Events, Community	79 / 95	4.16
About the BSA – Facts About Scouting, How Scouting is Funded, 100 Years of Scouting	69 / 95	3.95
100 Reasons to Join Scouting – Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Venture Scout, Volunteer video	53 / 85	3.53

**Table 3. Unit Commissioner Survey – 2010 – 1, Part 2. B. Dan Beard Council website ([www.danbeard.org/](http://www.danbeard.org/)) (Internet step-by-step outline value to Unit Commissioners in descending order by Mean Score. Raw Score calculated by comparing the number of responses by the percentages of 5 and 4 scores to the 5 – 4 – 3 scores per sample population.)**

<u>Website area</u>	<u>Raw Score</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>
Council info, Activities, Advancement, Camping, Training, Duty to God, Support Scouting, Popcorn, links, Newsletters, Site Search, Forms	95 / 95	4.47
Internet Rechartering	79 / 100	4.37
Volunteer Support, Calendar, Events	90 / 100	4.26
“Log on to Doubleknot”	77 / 88	4.06
Council News	73 / 95	3.95
Internet Advancement	69 / 95	3.95

**Table 4. Unit Commissioner Survey – 2010 – 1, Part 2. C. U. S. Scouting Service Project, Inc. (USSSP) – ([netcommish.com](http://netcommish.com) – Scouting Website by Scouters for Scouters) (Internet step-by-step outline value to Unit Commissioners in descending order by Mean Score. Raw Score calculated by comparing the number of responses by the percentages of 5 and 4 scores to the 5 – 4 – 3 scores per sample population.)**

<u>Website area</u>	<u>Raw Score</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>
Adult Leader Section	83 / 88	4.11



Table 4. (continued)

<u>Website area</u>	<u>Raw Score</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>
Activities, Awards, Advancement for all levels	78 / 95	3.94
Answers and Info	59 / 87	3.83
Digital Library	61 / 89	3.72
More USSSP websites	47 / 94	3.47

Table 5. Unit Commissioner Survey – 2010 – 1, Part 2. D. Official BSA Store  
(scoutstuff.org/bsasupply/) (Internet step-by-step outline value to Unit  
Commissioners.)

<u>Website area</u>	<u>Raw Score</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>
Camping, Collecting	63 / 79	3.79

Observing data in Table 1 shows that of the twenty listed resource materials that thirteen were rated above 4.0 (very important). The remaining six were rated between 3.53 and 3.95 which would be rated between important and very important. We can conclude that all twenty listed resource materials would be of importance to Unit Commissioners as part of their binders.

The highest scoring resource materials dealt with items that would be of use in carrying out the main duties of a Unit Commissioner. It is interesting to note, however, that monthly accountability items such as "Meeting Agenda / Minutes" and "Scouting News Flashes" rated among the lowest scores (60% average scores on combined "extremely important" plus "very important").

Table 2 data indicates all three National BSA website areas were viewed as between “very important” and “important” (3.88 mean score).

In Table 3, Dan Beard Council website information rated above the “very important” category with a 4.18 mean score with “Council information” and “Internet rechartering” leading the tally.

The U. S. Scouting Service Project, Inc. (USSSP) was a resource that had not been well-known to our Scouters. They discovered that it contains a wealth of useful information for all Scout leaders and is written and updated by veteran Scouters themselves. This site rated a 3.81 mean score in spite of a lack of familiarity in Table 4.

In the final reference, Table 5, the Official BSA Store, Unit Commissioners can purchase uniform items, resource materials, camping accessories, and commissioner-specific items, revealing a 3.79 mean score which was anticipated.

In total, the thirty-two queried items ranged from a high of 4.74 to a low of 3.47. Therefore, all items ranged from a significantly high “very important” to a moderate “important” rating. Nineteen of the thirty-two items (59%) were rated above 4.0 (very important) at 4.34. The remaining sixteen items averaged 3.78 or a significantly high “important” rating. Therefore, it is believed that all of the queried items are of importance to a Unit Commissioner Binder.

The following section will provide tutorials on accessing the queried websites.

## National BSA website

Enter address – <http://myscouting.org>

You are now in the “**Sign in to Scouting**” page.

Click on “**create an account**”.

You are on the “**registration**” page.

Type in your user name using 6-25 characters (make it simple).

Click “**Check User Name Availability**”.

Once it is ok'd, click “**Next**”.

You are on “**Get Member ID**”.

Click on “**I am a Member**”.

You are on “**Enter Your Profile Information**” (all asterisk items **MUST** be filled out).

Click on “**Email Opt-In**” if you desire.

Click on “**I accept these terms & conditions**”.

Enter the “**Verification Image**” **EXACTLY** as it appears on “**Verify**” line.

Click “**Create User**”.

Follow any instructions, then when you re-enter the site, you will enter your “**User Name**” and “**Password**” and click “**Sign In**”.

Click on “**My Profile**” on the left.

You may enter any changes or preferences.

Click on “**Save Profile**”.

Click on “**Training**”.

You are on the “**E-Learning Course Management System**”

Read the “**NOTE**” in case you need to download a free copy of Flash Player to read the courses. If so, click the blue-lined message.

There are four areas you may select.

They are "**General**", "**Cub Scout**", "**Boy Scout**", and "**Venturing**".

All available courses have a circle just to the left of the title.

"**Yellow**" – not started, "**Blue**" – in progress, "**Green**" – completed

Click on the "**Take Course**" next to the appropriate course you wish to take.

Follow the individual instructions to move through the course. Most courses are approximately 30 minutes. (Remember – Youth Protection Training is good for 2 years. You **MUST** print the certificate to record your completion with Dan Beard Council.)

You are not limited to courses you may take. Commissioners may gain better insight by taking multiple courses.

Click on "**Unit Tools**".

Here you will find information on the following: "**Internet Rechartering**", "**Internet Advancement**", "**ScoutParents**", and "**Tour Permits**".

(We follow our system of Internet Rechartering each Fall.)

Click on "**District Tools**".

Here you will find "**Unit Visit Tracking**".

(Trailblazer District may use the tutorial presented by Unit Commissioner Adam Clinkenbeard, however, the system is repeatedly "down" or does not recognize entered data from one log-in to the next. Our district is currently recording visits by pen and paper.)

Click on "**Events**".

Current "**Event Registrations**" will be listed. Examples are: National Scout Jamboree, 2010 National Annual Meeting, Philmont Training Center, and World Scout Jamboree. Click on the event you are interested in and read and follow the instructions to attend.

Click on "**Community**".

Here you will find networking opportunities. You may choose to set up and participate in any or all of the following: **Blogs** – where you can post commentary or questions, **Forums** – where you can be involved in discussions, **Your Friends** – a listing of people you can regularly communicate with, **Your Files** – where you can keep data, and News from National among others.

Click on "**Home**" at the top of screen, or go to <http://www.scouting.org/Default.aspx>.

Here the main upper window will alternate photography of current or timely reporting or messages. Simply click on the photo itself to read about the full story.

At the bottom left, click on the "**BSA 2010**" logo to receive all of the news, activities, and information associated with the 100 Years of Scouting celebration.

Click on the "**About BSA**" heading at the bottom center.

Here you will find the **Annual Report**, **Research** and **Fact Sheets** sections. Click on any item on the left to receive specific information on training areas, financial statements, how scouting is funded, and the strategic plan, among others.

Click on "**Scouts in the News**" to read about local Scout news across the country.

From the "**Home**" page, click on "**Volunteers**" to read the "**Volunteer**" and "**Benefits**" messages. Quicklinks topics can be clicked on the right.

Click on the photo "**100 Reasons to Join Scouting**". A Scouting 30-second public announcement video will start. Click on each of the following: "**Cub Scouting**", "**Boy Scouting**", "**Venturing**", and "**Volunteers**" to see the other four 30-second public announcement videos. Then click on all of the corresponding blue headings at the top to view short briefs on all four participant categories.

Dan Beard Council website

Enter address – <http://www.danbeard.org/>

You are now on the "**Home**" page.

Your main site links on the left are: "**Council Info**", "**Activities**", "**Advancement**", "**Camping**", "**Training**", "**Duty to God**", "**Support Scouting**", "**Popcorn**", "**Links**", "**Newsletters**", "**Site Search**", and "**Forms**".

Click on "**Council Info**" and you will find:

"**Service Center**" – click to get hours of operation

"**Strategic Plan**" – click to read with Adobe Reader or Flash Player

"**History**" – click to view the history of the Council

"**Video Library**" – click to view items you may check out by topic

"**Unit Account**" – click to see the recommended Unit Budget Plan

"**Districts**" – click to view a district map with leader information

"**Contact Us**" – click to see and contact staff by email and phone number

Click on "**Activities**" to find all current seasonal and on-going activities.

Click on "**Advancement**" to find specific tabs for Scout advancement in rank.

Click on "**Camping**" and you will find:

"**Facilities**" – click to see all 4 campsites, information and maps

Individual specifics for **Cub Scout**, **Boy Scout**, and **High Adventure**

"**Volunteer**" opportunities to help in various programs

"**Camp Staff**" – information on volunteering for camp duty

Click on "**Training**" and you will find the "**Dan Beard Training Home**".

There you can view a "**monthly training calendar**". You will also find specific training links under "**Basic Leader Training**", "**Supplemental Training**", "**Advanced Training**", and "**Youth Leader Training**."

Click on "**Duty to God**" and you will be directed immediately to the Protestant Committee web page and the Catholic Committee web page.

Click on "**Support Scouting**" to find a brief explanation on Friends of Scouting and an On-line donation form for easy giving.

Click on "**Popcorn**" to learn all information on how-to-sell, orders and payments, delivery and distribution, calendar, incentives, policies and guidelines, and selling on-line.

Click on "**Links**" to find two categories of resources: "**BSA Scouting Resources**" – 14 national BSA websites, and "**Non BSA Scouting Resources**" which lists "**Scouting Resources**" (10 websites), "**Program Support Sites**" (3 websites), "**Cyber Safety Resources**" (6 websites), and "**International Scouting Related Resources**" (5 websites).

Click on "**Newsletters**" to view current and archived "**Fireside Chats**".

Click on "**Site Search**" to look for specific information by either "all words", "any words" or "phrase".

Click on "**Forms**" to find a large array of forms by the following categories: "**General Forms**", "**Re-Charter Forms**", "**Cub Scout Forms**", "**Boy Scout Forms**", "**Venturing Forms**", and "**Camping Forms**". (Ex. Click on "Uniform Inspection Sheet – Male Leader" – and view the 2-page checklist.)

Click on "**Internet Rechartering**" on right under "**Links**" after Fall starting date as directed by the District Commissioner or District Executive. Follow the on-line steps using the information in your Unit Rechartering Packet with Unit code number.

Click on "**Volunteer Support**" on top line.

Under the headings "**Cub Scouts**", "**Boy Scouts**", and "**Venturing**" you will find Planning Guides and Meeting Guides.

Click on "**Calendar**" on top line.

You will find a **monthly calendar of events** for the Dan Beard Council. Use the left gold arrow next to the month to go back one month. Use the right gold arrow to move ahead one month. To view a specific district calendar, click on the scroll arrow next to "**Dan Beard Council**" and select your district from the drop-down box.

Click on "**Events**" on top line.

You will find a chronological listing of events by month. You can adjust the timeframe at the top by entering a beginning and an ending date. Click on each individual event for specific information. Some events show a "**Register On-line!**" green notation symbol to the right where you can directly sign-up.

Click on "**Logon to Doubleknot**" at bottom center.

Each district has a single user id and password. See your District Commissioner or District Executive for those items. Once in to this area, you have access to district "**Upcoming Events**", "**Newsletters**", "**Library Documents**", and "**Merit Badge Counselors**".

Click on individual items under "**Council News**" on left center. These will change or be updated as needed.

Click on "**Internet Advancement**" on right. Units must have an adult trained as its advancement processor at a September Roundtable. It will be that person who will upload all Unit information.

### U. S. Scouting Service Project

Enter address – <http://netcommish.com/>

You are now on the "**Home**" page of "**The Net Commish – Commissioner Resources**".

(This website was selected by Scouting Magazine as one of ten "Quality Scouting Web Sites". The site has also earned the Lord Baden-Powell Award for Scouting Excellence on the World Wide Web.)



Scroll down and see “**Ask Andy**” in the center.

Here you will find a listing of Commissioner Helps answering real questions from the most current date back to Fall 2001 (more than 200 entries).

On the upper left you will find:

“**Boy Scouting Program**” – you will find 28 alphabetized listings and all are in great detail with resources

“**Cub Scouting Program**” – you will find 19 alphabetized listings

“**Varsity, Venturing, Adults**” – you will find 6 alphabetized listings

“**Other Scouting Topics**” – you will find 18 alphabetized listings

“**Scouting Resources & Info**” – you will find 28 alphabetized listings

“**USSSP**” – you will find 34 alphabetized listings

At the top of the site in small print, you will find **20 quick links** to the most popular areas on the website. (Ex. Click on “Clipart” to find a range of illustrations that can be used for all purposes.)

On the right, you will find “**Commish News**” which shares presentations and documents created by Commissioners for your reference and use.

On the left below the “**Search**” button, you will see 3 website addresses (you are currently on the 3<sup>rd</sup> one). Click on the 2<sup>nd</sup> one, “**USSSP / MacScouter.com Home**”, and you will go to their site which is primarily devoted to the area of camping. (Ex. Click on “Cooking for Scouts and Scouters” and you can download cookbooks for all types of camp cooking.)

Click on the 1<sup>st</sup> website and you will be at the “**U. S. Scouting Service Project @ usscouts.org**” which is the organization’s main website.

Similarities you will see are the 20 topics at the top of the page and the topic listing at the upper left. Going down the left side, you can click on all of the sub-topics from that topic list above. Either access will get you where you are going. You will also find the “**Digital Library**” which directs you to supplementary websites.

On the center of the page, you will find “**News and Communications**” where you can click on and participate in: “**USSSP News Blog**”, “**Scouts-L Email Discussion List**”, “**Forums**”, “**More USSSP Email Discussion Lists**”, as well as a “**donation**” connection.

Some of the popular “**Features**” are listed next: “**Ask Andy**”, “**Baloo’s Bugle**”, “**Cartoons**”, “**Activities Search**”, “**Scout Camp Search**”, “**Scout Site Search**”, “**Advancement**”, “**Merit Badges**”, “**Awards**”, “**Baden-Powell Outlook**”, “**U. S. Flag Info**”, “**Internet Scout Patch**”, “**Stories**”, “**Leader Minutes**”, “**Ceremonies**”, “**Chow Call**”, “**Critter Clipart**”, “**Knots and Ropework**” and “**Fact or Fiction**”.

In the “**Get Official Information**” area you can access previews of Boys Life Magazine and Scouting Magazine as well as other websites.

There are so many resources on these 3 USSSP websites that it is recommended that Commissioners take an extended amount of time to explore all that it has to offer. When you become familiar enough with the offerings you can direct your unit leaders to areas that will help them provide better programs for their Packs, Troops, and Crews. And – it is fun as well!

#### Official BSA Store

Enter address – <http://scoutstuff.org/bsasupply/>

You are now on the scoutstuff.org “**Home**” page.

The **top bar** lists the areas the site offers.

You may enter your email address below the bar to receive special notices on new merchandise and special sales.

The most used are:

“**Uniforms & Insignia**” – here you will find a listing on the left of all official BSA clothing and accessory categories.

“**Apparel**” – here you will find some specialized items not listed in the “Uniforms & Insignia” area. (NOTE: Both “Uniforms & Insignia” and “Apparel” have a section titled “Bandanas & Neckerchiefs”. They list totally different items in each.)

**“Literature”** – here you will find activity books and manuals.

**“Camping”** – here you will find a listing of 19 different areas devoted to camping equipment.

**“Collector’s Corner”** – this listing will change as required. Specially developed objects, symbols, equipment and keepsakes will appear here. (Currently there is a number of 100 Anniversary items.)

### Conclusion

I field-tested the Unit Commissioner Binder on my Unit Commissioners (Bill Hill, John Hay, and Adam Clinkenbeard). Each was given a complete binder as they began working with me. Each month they received updated inserts to put in their binders. They have carried them to our monthly Commissioner Meetings where they have been able to include new handouts from the meeting in their binders. They have told me (and I have seen it on joint unit visits) that they frequently take them to unit visits.

We have met and dialogued monthly, as well as had phone and email correspondence discussing the binder since May of 2009. They have appreciated having one ready source, organized and available, to assist them in carrying out their duties. They received the new website tutorial section this May.

Our Trailblazer District Commissioner, Ron Spjut, thought enough of the Unit Commissioner Binder to have me make a separate sample binder for him so that he could give our new Unit Commissioners a copy upon completion of their training.

(These have been duplicated by staff.) The late veteran ADC, Bill Kerl, worked with me to make binders for his Unit Commissioners.

The survey results at the end of the "Tables" section shows the data that justifies the items needed and included, and, coupled with the new Website Tutorials complete the binder to date. Naturally, the binder will go through periodic updates to keep up with both new and revised information and policies, but also with appropriate internet references. The Unit Commissioner Binder has shown its value in our district by helping our commissioners provide timely information and answers to our unit leaders. I believe it has helped us to create a better climate of understanding and cooperation with our fellow Scouters. I look forward to providing updates to our Unit Commissioners for a long time.

## APPENDIX

### UNIT COMMISSIONER SURVEY - 2010-1

Thank you for your assistance! This survey will gauge your perceptions as to the importance or lack of importance of certain commissioner specific materials in helping you to perform your duties at a high level. (This data would be compiled to assist in developing a comprehensive Unit Commissioner Binder.)

Please rate the following materials as to their importance, if you had them, in helping you perform your duties as a Unit Commissioner, on a scale of 1 to 5 using the following justification:

- 5 - extremely important
- 4 - very important
- 3 - important
- 2 - not very important
- 1 - not important

1. Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service  
5    4    3    2    1
2. Commissioner (Unit) Helps for Pack, Troops, and Crews  
5    4    3    2    1
3. Commissioner Service Guidelines  
5    4    3    2    1
4. Selecting Quality Leaders handout (recruiting leaders)  
5    4    3    2    1
5. Commissioner Training handouts  
5    4    3    2    1
6. Commissioner Newsletter  
5    4    3    2    1

7. Scouting News Flashes  
5 4 3 2 1
8. Listing of your Unit Contact Information  
5 4 3 2 1
9. Unit Commissioner Worksheets (for visits)  
5 4 3 2 1
10. Unit Visit Tracking System Tutorial (Adam Clinkenbeard's presentation)  
5 4 3 2 1
11. Meeting Agendas / Minutes  
5 4 3 2 1
12. Monthly Calendars of Events / Trainings  
5 4 3 2 1
13. Quality Unit Award / Goals paperwork  
5 4 3 2 1
14. Charter Renewal  
5 4 3 2 1
15. Internet Rechartering  
5 4 3 2 1
16. Friends of Scouting (FOS) Materials  
5 4 3 2 1
17. Scout Recruiting Data (District Membership Reports / School Night Info)  
5 4 3 2 1

18. Council Camps - information and maps

5 4 3 2 1

19. Delivering the Promise - Council quarterly to friends/investors of Scouting

5 4 3 2 1

20. Philmont Training Center materials

5 4 3 2 1

Virtually all Scouting information is provided on the World Wide Web (internet). Please rate the following internet searches (BSA, Dan Beard Council, others) as to their importance or lack of importance in helping you perform your duties as a Unit Commissioner on a scale of 1 to 5 using the following justification:

- 5 - extremely important
- 4 - very important
- 3 - important
- 2 - not very important
- 1 - not important

(Each of these searches would be written up for you in a step-by-step outline and be included in the binder for the purpose of updating sections to keep you current.)

A. **National BSA website** ([www.myscouting.org/](http://www.myscouting.org/))

1. **Volunteer (log in)**

*My Profile, Training, Unit Tools, District Tools, Events, Community*

5 4 3 2 1

2. **100 Reasons to Join Scouting**

*Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Venture Scout, Volunteer video clips*

5 4 3 2 1

3. **About the BSA**

*Facts About Scouting, How Scouting is Funded, 100 Years of Scouting*

5 4 3 2 1

**B. Dan Beard Council website (www.danbeard.org/)**

1. Council info, Activities, Advancement, Camping, Training, Duty to God, Support Scouting, Popcorn, Links, Newsletters, Site Search, Forms

5 4 3 2 1

2. Volunteer Support, Calendar, Events

5 4 3 2 1

3. Council News

5 4 3 2 1

4. "log on to Doubleknot"

5 4 3 2 1

5. Internet Rechartering

5 4 3 2 1

6. Internet Advancement

5 4 3 2 1

**C. U. S. Scouting Service Project, Inc. (USSSP) - (netcommish.com - Scouting Website by Scouters for Scouters)**

1. Activities, Awards, Advancement for all levels

5 4 3 2 1

2. Adult Leader Section

5 4 3 2 1



3. Digital Library

5 4 3 2 1

4. Answers & Info

5 4 3 2 1

5. More USSSP websites

5 4 3 2 1

D. **Official BSA Store** ([scoutstuff.org/bsasupply/](http://scoutstuff.org/bsasupply/))

*Uniforms and Insignia, Apparel, Literature, Camping, Collecting*

5 4 3 2 1

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