NOV 2026

Cornhusker Council Commissioner Corner



Scouting America CST5 Directives

During October's monthly meeting of the Council Commissioners of CST5, we were given the following directives:

- Review the Cub Scout retention numbers and identify packs with the worst retention stats to target for unit commissioner support.
- Work to get unit commissioners assigned to Cub Scout packs, including reassigning traditional scout troop commissioners if necessary.
- Communicate the focus on Cub Scout retention to district commissioners and unit commissioners.
- Use the provided program helps and resources to support new Cub Scout families and leaders during the first few pack and den meetings.

I am seeking your input on how to achieve these directives and willingness to be flexible in future unit assignments. Please give me your thoughts.

Priority: Cub Scout Retention See below the results of the Scouting America 2025 Scout Exit Survey. Using this data, district leadership will develop targeted strategies to strengthen engagement, improve retention, and ensure more youth continue their Scouting journey.

Cub Scouts Top Reasons for Leaving:

* Lost interest in the activities /meetings
* Meetings were disorganized
* My child is in too many other activities
* Poor communication from the leader(s)
* Too expensive / cost
* Youth in pack/den misbehaved
* Disagree with organizational changes
* Disagree with program/activity changes
* Took too much time / time commitment

The Bottom Line

Scouting isn't losing members at renewal time. It's losing them much earlier. Cub Scouts drives most of the attrition, disorganized meetings and unit-leader communication are the leading controllable reasons across every program, and families are telling us directly, unprompted, that better first contact and earlier check-ins could change the outcome for thousands of Scouts a year.

Top 3 Priorities:

1. Fix the Cub Scout crossover and meeting quality
2. Close the communication gap with a first-contact checkpoint
3. Build an early-warning system for disengagement

Update on October's Commissioner Priorities in Commissioner Tools

Thank you to all who focused on the priorities listed in the October newsletter!

Task 1: Logging Connections — progress was made, but we have a long way to go!
Task 2: Unit Inventory Campaign — DE's continue to contact units
Task 3: BeAScout pins — all council units have updated their pins since Aug — Great Job!
Task 4: Review training status of unit leaders — please continue to promote leader specific training



I am grateful for all the commissioners in Cornhusker Council who are committed to providing quality unit service!

Thank you for all you do!

Karen

November 2026 Priorities for Commissioners

Logging Connections:
This is how we document our unit visits for use within our districts and council. FYI. . . these are also tracked by the CST and national. Let's prove that we are helping our units!

Recruitment & Retention:

- Encourage unit leaders to promote *Invite a Friend* to activities/meetings.
- Promote the Recruiter patches

Popcorn Sales:
Thank units for participation in popcorn sales — those sales support our districts and council!

Save the Date!

College of Commissioner Science

April 10, 2027

Bryan Medical Center, Lincoln

The MAC Husker Trails College of Commissioner Science offers a Day of Learning, Leadership, and Service in Scouting!

Programs Offered: Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate, Continuing Education

We are looking for help with:

* **Instructors or co-instructors**
* **Assistance the day of the event with check-in, etc.**

Interested? Contact Karen, Bill or Mitchell
karensieber@live.com
wlang50@gmail.com
mlocken@gmail.com



WANTED * WANTED

Lead Camp Commissioner for 2027 Summer Camps

Bill Lang is retiring as the Lead Camp Commissioner, so we are seeking a replacement. If you are interested or you would like to recommend someone, please contact Karen ASAP. Also, if you would like to serve on the commissioner camp staff, please put it on your schedule now!

Commissioner Staff Contact Info
Council Commissioner: Karen Griffin Sieber *karensieber@live.com*
Ass't Council Commissioner for SYT: Mitchell Locken *mlocken@gmail.com*
ACC for Training: Pam Chandler *pkmchandler@gmail.com*
Prairie Winds District Comm. Vacant
Salt Valley District Comm. Bill Lang *wlang50@gmail.com*
Seven Feathers District Comm. Richard White *rwhite4576@gmail.com*

Dates to Remember

Nov 5: SV & PW Roundtables

Nov 7: CS Night at the Museum of American Speed

Nov 12: Seven Feathers Roundtable

Nov 14: Salt Valley Merit Badge University

Nov 15: Veterans Day Parade

Nov 26-27: Office closed

Dec 1: Scout Your Future at UNL

Dec 5: Wood Badge Alumni Dinner

Scouting Ceremonies

5 Types of Ceremonies

* Presentations for Adventures or Merit Badges
* Badges of Rank Advancement
* Other Youth recognition (Denner, Patrol Leader, etc)
* Adult Recognition
* Opening and Closing Ceremonies

Tips for Presentations and Ceremonies

- **Instant Recognition** – Presentations and Ceremonies reinforce positive behavior with instant recognition. The Cub Scout advancement program works best when instant recognition is used. When the reward, like an Adventure loop or pin, the connection between the reward and the behavior is strongest when the reward is present instantly. Although Scouts BSA units use courts of honor to celebrate achievements, Scouts should still receive their merit badges and rank advancements as soon as possible after they are earned.
- **Scripts** – Write or print out the script for the presentation or ceremony. Commit key parts to memory so you are not just reading it and make sure to add tone, diction, and inflection. Print out the script and use a large font to make it easy to read.
- **Length** – Keep presentations and ceremonies short. Long presentations and ceremonies lose their impact on younger Cub Scouts.
- **Props** – Props such as den doodles, den flags, and special props used to display Adventure loops and pins can elevate any presentation or ceremony. When using props make sure that those using them have time to practice with them.
- **Audio Visual** – When using audio-visual tools such as laptops, projectors, sound systems, lights, and other technology give enough time to set up and test everything.
- **Keep it simple.** Avoid symbolism and metaphors since most Cub Scout-age youth are unlikely to understand them.
- **Adapt** – As long as you follow the guidelines in Scouting you can add your creativity to a presentation or ceremony If you choose to create your own presentation or ceremony make sure to keep the following in mind:
  * Write it down and have other leaders and parents review it, have it reviewed for grammar and the appropriateness of the content.
  * Only use the values found in the Scout Oath, the Scout Law, the Cub Scout motto, the Outdoor Code, and the Leave No Trace Principles for Kids. Use the same words to describe these values as found in official Scouting publications such as handbooks and leader resources.

Be the Heart
Build Relationships
Change Lives

Safety Moment: Respect Wildlife



Keep your distance
The best way to watch a wild animal is from far enough away that it doesn't know you're there. Watch the animal, not your camera. If it stops what it's doing, becomes nervous, or moves away, you're too close. That's especially important to remember when you're taking pictures or video.

Never, ever touch wild animals
Even if an animal looks friendly, remember: It's wild. Kids might not know whether a snake is venomous, for example. And even animals that aren't dangerous can bite or scratch when they feel threatened. Handling wildlife also can stress the animal or cause an injury.
If you find an injured animal, don't try to become its veterinarian. Instead, tell an adult and contact a wildlife rehabilitator who knows how to help.
In some instances — with help from adults — wildlife can be helped. For example, carrying a box turtle across a road could save its life. Let animals rest Most likely, if an animal isn't doing anything, it's resting to gather energy for survival behavior like hunting or mating. So leave them alone.

Stay on the trail
Trails help protect the plants, soil and animals living around them. So don't leave the trail to get closer to an animal, find an interesting plant or take a shortcut. Obey signs and park rules, especially when sensitive areas are closed for restoration or to protect wildlife.

Keep it quiet
Wild animals don't know that kids are just excited to see them. Sudden loud noises can frighten wildlife and cause animals to hide or flee. Keep voices low when you're hiking through an area where animals might be nearby.

Don't feed wildlife by hand
Feeding a wild animal might seem like a fun way to get close, but it can teach animals to associate people with food. That can create problems. Animals might start relying on people instead of their hunting or foraging skills, or they could become aggressive when they expect another meal. People food can also make animals sick, which is why you should always pack out scraps and leftovers instead of leaving them.

Keep pets under control
Dogs and other pets can chase wildlife, disturb nests and scare animals away from food or resting areas. Keep dogs on a leash when required, and don't let pets run loose around wildlife (including squirrels). Cats also can be a major threat to wild animals, so it's best to keep them inside.

Help wildlife where you live
You don't need to live next to a national park to help wildlife.
A backyard, patio or balcony can become a small wildlife haven. Plant flowers or native plants that provide food for birds, butterflies and other creatures. Birdbaths, birdhouses and feeders can help too. Avoiding unnecessary pesticides and fertilizers is another way to make your space more wildlife-friendly.
If you don't have outdoor space, you can still become a wildlife watcher. Grab some binoculars, visit a park or take a walk around your neighborhood.

Source: https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/safety-moments/campout-safety-checklist/