

Cornhusker Council Commissioner Corner

Recap of Joint Commissioner and District Committee Conference July 25, 2026

Thank you to all the commissioners and district committee members who attended this conference. Your time and commitment to the program is very much appreciated! Discussion topics included:

- * Scouting America Trail Map and the Commissioner Trail Map (shown below)
- * Reviewed council membership plan and available resources for recruitment of new scouts — Cub Packs are top priority!
- * Discussed how commissioners and district committee members can impact RETENTION — Retention is built on quality scouting programs. How can we help units provide FUN programs? Cub Packs are top priority!
- * Reviewed timeline of upcoming changes to unit and member renewal — see pg 2
- * Reviewed 2027 Gold Star Unit criteria with recommendations for changes—more info to come
- * Discussed America 250 and encouraging units to provide 250 service hours in 2026—more details to come
- * Leader training update provided by Mike McCollough:

After including retention data in his analysis, Mike stated “There does appear to be a general trend though that units with a higher trained leader percentage tend to hold or growing their numbers.”

With a focus on growing packs, we must find ways to encourage den leaders to complete training which should lead to quality program delivery!

Top 5 Untrained Positions- Council Wide

Position	Trained Count	Untrained Count	Trained %	Untrained %	Total
Committee Member	226	181	55.5%	44.5%	407
Assistant Scoutmaster	70	87	44.6%	55.4%	157
Den Leader	58	63	47.9%	52.1%	121
Chartered Organization Rep.	64	47	57.7%	42.3%	111
Committee Chair	71	44	61.7%	38.3%	115

Training Quartile	Avg. Retention Rate	Units
0-33%	79.00%	13
33-50%	82.30%	8
50-67%	84.50%	10
67%+	102.80%	11



August 2026 Priorities for Commissioners



Recruitment To Do List:

- Has unit scheduled / planned an Open House at local school?
- Verify flyer order submitted to DE for Joining/Sign Up Event.
- Has unit updated BeAScout info?
- Unit calendar of events completed for distribution to families.
- Has unit followed-up with contacts made at Open House?
- Encourage packs to ask troop leaders to assist with recruitment.
- Verify planning of Joining/Sign Up Event
- UC should attend Joining/Sign Up Event (help if needed)
- Encourage training of leaders

Popcorn Sale Sign-up:

Are your units ready to sell popcorn this fall? Remind them that popcorn sales benefit the scout, the unit and the council! Popcorn University is scheduled for August 15. Units must sell popcorn to be eligible for any council scholarship opportunities!

Scouting America

NATIONAL COMMISSIONER SERVICE TEAM

A PATH TO UNIT STRENGTH AND MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

OUR DESTINATION: STRONGER UNITS. BRIGHTER FUTURE.

Thriving units delivering life-changing experiences for all youth.

UNIT LEADER SUPPORT

Focus on volunteers to empower Scouting

- Equip and support unit leaders with resources
- Provide consistent unit commissioner engagement
- How Can I Help?

PROGRAM DELIVERY QUALITY

Improve the consistency and safety of program delivery.

- Strengthen commissioner training and resources
- Ensure consistent, high-quality program delivery
- Gather feedback and continuously improve

COMMISSIONER ONBOARDING & ENGAGEMENT

Focus on commissioners to strengthen unit service

- Recruit the right commissioners
- Provide onboarding and foundational training
- Engage, develop, and recognize commissioners
- Empower commissioner to strengthen unit service through meaningful partnerships

MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

Reinvest to attract and retain more youth to achieve 70% retention.

- Identify at-risk units early
- Strengthen commissioner follow-up and reengagement
- Increase retention and support sustainable growth

Be the Heart. | **Build Relationships.** | **Change Lives.**

Priority #1 — Cub Packs

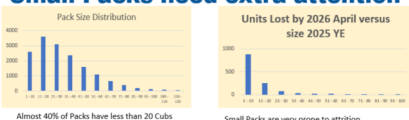
The stats below emphasize that our focus must be packs — recruitment, quality program, and trainings. How Can You Help?

Major Focus: Cub Packs

- Retention for Troops
 - 84% (consistent for last 4 years)
- Retention for Packs
 - 52% in 2025 (declining for last 4 years)



Small Packs need extra attention



- Call to Action**
- Assign commissioners, preferentially, to smaller packs.
 - Give new Packs extra attention until they have truly fledged
 - Prioritize recruitment resources to help these Packs achieve critical mass
 - Ensure Commissioners know the current program well
 - Know the ecosystem of resources available to the Pack leaders

Scouting America

Commissioner Staff Contact Info

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Dates to Remember

Aug 6: Prairie Winds Roundtable
Aug 7: Twilight Camp—Reverence
Aug 13: Seven Feathers Roundtable
Aug 15: Popcorn University
Aug 22: Youth Mental Health First Aid
Aug 28: Outdoor Preparedness training
Aug 29: Outdoor Adventures training
Sept 3: PW/SV Roundtables
Sept 4: Fall Popcorn Sale begins
Sept 10: Seven Feathers Roundtable
Sept 11-19: Scout Spirit Week

Pack/Troop Partnerships



Strategies That Promote Pack/Troop Partnerships

- Cubmaster(CM)/Scoutmaster(SM) serve on each committee OR Delegate a Pack/Troop adult to be the liaison between units
- CS/SM play a small role at Pack Meetings and Court of Honors
- Utilize Den Chief Program
- Troop assist with Fall Sign-up events
- Troop assist with teaching scout skills in den meetings, etc

Source: Scouts BSA Recruitment Webinar, July 22, 2026

Most Scouts BSA members are from crossovers, so build and foster the relationship between a pack and troop!

Consistent Service =

Scouting Success in Schools



School districts are crucial to every recruiting strategy. But the strategy shouldn't be about simply distributing flyers or hosting sign-up nights at your local school. Instead, it's all about the relationships. And a great way to start building those relationships? Be kind.

A year-round commitment to serving the schools that serve your community can be the key to growth and collaboration — and a much stronger recruiting tactic than a flyer, social media post or open house. More importantly, it positions Scouting as a trusted partner in the community rather than simply another organization seeking attention.

One idea is organizing service projects that directly benefit a school. Scouts might clean up a campus garden or conduct a school supply drive before the academic year begins. Teacher appreciation efforts can be particularly effective. A pack might provide snacks during teacher workdays, deliver thank-you notes from Scouts or assist with special events.

Those activities provide service opportunities for youth, but they also demonstrate that Scouting is committed to helping schools succeed.

Source:
<https://onscouting.org/2026/07/16/recruitment-ready-schools/>

ScoutConnect Platform

Scouting America Technology Update - What is changing this fall?



Join for an update on the change to the technology tools available to Scouters in Scouting America. We will review the current changes to BeAScout and Online Registration that will be seen this fall, and also review Scoutconnect, the future changes to My.Scouting and Scoutbook+. Register at <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/eb61f82c-f9eb-4d33-b991-30e1a261728e@fd9008a0-7846-4989-a4c5-77cfad3f7e4e>

Or watch the demo video here:
<https://vimeo.com/1194524500/a373cf9d7b?fl=tl&fe=ec>

Safety Moments:



Laser tag is permitted only at indoor commercial facilities with proper supervision and facility-provided equipment. Find the Laser Tag SAFE Checklist at: <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/safety-moments/laser-tag-safe-checklist/>

Squirt gun activities must be held outdoors using approved non-pressurized water guns, with eye protection required and no aiming at the face or head. Find the Squirt Gun SAFE Checklist at:



<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/safety-moments/squirt-gun-and-squirt-guns-safe-checklist/>

2026-2028 Membership Transition:

The Move to February —

Unit Charter and Membership Cycle

Beginning in September 2026, Scouting America is shifting all unit renewals to February. Starting in 2027, member (adult and youth) renewals will also shift to February. This strategic shift will create a true "renewal season," improve retention, better capture those who join in peak recruiting season, and puts leaders in control of the renewal process. In addition, these shifts lower the initial fee to join, eliminates the 2-month lapse period and align safeguarding training to renewal dates. These changes directly support membership AND retention.

Highlights:

Sept 2026: All new units starting 10/1/2026 or later will be on a February renewal cycle.

Jan 2027: New members begin to register through Feb 2028 using a prorated monthly fee schedule.

Mar 2027: Renewing members begin transitioning on monthly prorated fee schedule.

Sept 2027: All existing units will have transitioned to a Feb renewal month.

New Merit Badges



The **Competitive Gaming** merit badge introduces Scouts to one of the fastest-growing industries in the world—esports and modern gaming—while reinforcing the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law in digital spaces. This badge blends fun, education, personal growth, and real-world career exploration, empowering Scouts to become responsible digital citizens and informed participants in today's gaming culture.

Wildland Fire Management:

Wildfires cause significant destruction across the U.S. each year, with smoke affecting public health nationwide. Yet fire also plays a beneficial role in many ecosystems, supporting habitats and forest regeneration. Managing this balance between preventing harmful fires and promoting beneficial ones is a growing national challenge. As Scouts, we can help make our homes, camps, and communities more fire-resilient, understand fire's natural role in wildlands, and even explore careers in wildland fire management.



Source: <https://www.scouting.org/skills/merit-badges/all/>