

Cornhusker Council Commissioner Corner

Tackling Membership Loss: Turning Joining into Belonging Recap of the February 2026 National Membership Mixer



Share these ACTION STEPS with unit leaders:

1. **BE PREPARED** – develop welcome plan in advance
 - a. Having well trained leaders is key to growth - ensure direct contact leaders are trained
 - b. Outline roles of specific adults and older youth (including New Member Coordinators)
 - c. Prepare an inviting long-range calendar of events (presented in person and online)
 - d. Develop a communication plan (who, what, when, how)
 - e. For packs, consider having an experienced den leader ready to lead the first few meetings for Lions (or Tigers if that's the entry level den)
2. **Engage everyone in a great program right away**
 - a. Start the fun immediately – have at least one fun outing or event scheduled for within the first 2-3 weeks of joining - no one should have to wait to experience the FUN
 - b. Make everything FUN – be creative
 - c. Plan a Great Adventure event each month
 - d. Hold multiple Cub Fun Days
 - e. Den leaders should get Cub Scouts outside, not rely on indoor crafts (Packs could host outdoor activities to encourage dens to have more outdoor program)
 - f. In troops, be sure patrols are active and have identity
3. **Engage parents**
 - a. Have a welcoming attitude - greet parents individually and show they are valued
 - b. Invite them to help right away – give them a small job to do so they feel involved
 - c. Get to know parents so you can use their interests to make unit stronger and strengthen family's Scouting connection
 - d. Keep parents involved and knowledgeable about what's happening (even as we help them understand how their role in supporting youth changes as Scouts get older)
 - e. Transition from a "drop-off" unit to a "parent participation" unit
4. **Good communication is key**
 - a. Be sure parents have contact info for unit leader and/or "mentor parent" (might be New Member Coordinator) immediately
 - b. Have online and in-person handouts to give parents as soon as youth joins
 - c. Explain "Scouting language" to new parents (and try to limit use)
 - d. Host a short, welcoming, to-the-point parent orientation to discuss expectations, answer questions, and make everyone feel comfortable (within 2 months of joining)
 - e. Appoint and support New Member Coordinators to welcome new families and assist parents new to the unit
 - f. Use buddy pairs - for youth, might assign a mentor or an initial buddy in the correct age range; for parents, try to find some connecting point between adults
5. **Keep unit activities fresh and exciting all year round**
 - a. Do not shut down Cub Scout packs during the summer – kills spring recruitment and retention – remember that a meeting a month will earn Summertime Pack Award
 - b. Scout troops need to have great outdoor programs every time of year
 - c. Show how outdoor fun can be tailored to different weather and locations
6. **Talk with volunteers from other units to share ideas**
 - a. Attend Roundtable each month and suggest retention as a topic for discussion
 - b. Unit volunteers learn a lot and enjoy Scouting more if they collaborate with volunteers from other units
7. **Promote, promote, promote**
 - α. Encourage unit adults to "sell" Scouting constantly – online: post pics of the fun Scouts are having – in person: be "a walking billboard"

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College of Commissioner Science April 11, 2026 Bellevue University



- Increase your commissioner knowledge and skills to provide better unit service.
- **Every unit deserves a trained unit commissioner!**
- **Registration is now open:**
<https://scoutingevent.com/324-109340>
 Questions? Contact:
 Karen: karensieber@live.com
 or Bill: wlang50@gmail.com.



Gold Star Unit Visits

To achieve Gold Star, a unit must complete a detailed coaching meeting with a commissioner.
We need every commissioner to assist with these meetings. Please be willing to help!

Commissioner Week at Philmont Training Center June 7 – 13, 2026



Join a community of passionate commissioners at the Philmont Training Center the week of June 7 – 13. Expand your skills, explore new ideas, and connect with like-minded leaders while experiencing the magic of Philmont.

Karen will not be able to attend this year due to work commitments. It would be great if Cornhusker could be represented by someone else — can you attend?

Use this link to register:
<https://www.philmontscoutranch.org/ptc/ptc-conferences/>

b. Consider having a website to show what the local unit is doing – how they're having fun and serving the community (without identifying individual youth)

8. Build relationships between troops and packs

- a. Troop leaders should attend pack events to establish relationships
- b. Troops can assist packs in camping and outings as well as recruitment

9. Build a strong connection with local schools, especially school superintendents or principals, to strengthen recruitment and retention.



Scouts BSA Membership Webinar
March 8, 6:30 pm

“Empowering the Patrol Leaders Council and Youth Leadership in Membership Growth”

Register here: https://scouting-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5yHcE74rT1KcqDsMxUnKZQ#/registration

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Dates to Remember

- Mar 5: SV & PW Roundtables
- Mar 7: 7F Merit Badge University
- Mar 12: 7F Roundtable
- Mar 14: ROHVA Training
- Mar 18: Life to Eagle Seminar
- Mar 20-21: Outdoor Preparedness
- Mar 21: Wildfire Management MB Test Lab

Five Secrets to Planning a Cub Scout Campout



A great camping experience builds confidence and strengthens new friendships in ways a good pack meeting can't always do. Campouts also fortify the pack. Parents build relationships, leaders teach outdoor skills and all the adults see their Scouts grow in real time

Secret #1: Be Prepared = be trained

At least one adult in attendance must complete Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation (BALOO) training before a pack campout. Position-specific training, safeguarding youth training and hazardous weather training are essential.

Secret 2: Keep it simple

Start with the basics: a place to set up camp. Reserve campsites early and make sure they're approved by your council.

Secret 3: Delegate

Form a planning team with roles like food coordinator, activities lead, camping equipment coordinator, and health and safety point person. Hold a weekly check-in with your planning team, and provide oversight to make sure everything's being handled.

Secret 4: Don't sweat the small stuff

Balance structured activities with free time. But possibly even more important is flexibility. Rain, burned pancakes, dirt in the tent? It happens when you're leading young Scouts. Stay focused on connection and safety. And trust that some of the imperfections will make for Scouts' best memories.

Secret 5: Use your resources!

Don't start from scratch. Scouting America's latest leader resources can help simplify your planning process. And don't forget to explore the slide deck from #CubChatlive for more inspiration as we all prepare for an awesome camping season.

Source: <https://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2026/02/23/5-secrets-to-planning-a-must-attend-cub-scout-campout/>

*Scouts Trash the Trash Day
May 2, 2026*

<https://scoutstrashthetrashday.org/>

AMERICA 250 How can we assist units in achieving the goal of 250 hours?
 * Suggest incorporating a service project in existing activities
 * Encourage units to log their service hours appropriately



America250—In celebration of our nation's 250th anniversary, national is asking every unit to provide 250 hours of community service throughout 2026.



Camp Commissioners

What better way to spend a week during the 70th Anniversary of Camp Cornhusker than as a camp commissioner!

Help is needed to assist scouts and leaders have an awesome camp experience during these Scout BSA camps:

- June 7-13, 2026
- June 14-20, 2026



Room and board provided!
Contact Bill if you are interested.

Safety Moment:

Safety moments are a crucial component of Scouting America's Culture of Safety, underscoring our commitment to identifying, preventing, or mitigating hazards and risks in all Scouting activities. As with other safety-conscious organizations, we initiate meetings and events with a brief pause to discuss potential dangers and how to avert them, focusing the group's attention on safety protocols.

Types of Safety Moments:

- **Scouting Safely Resources:** Utilize the extensive library of ready-to-use safety moments on Scouting Safely, covering a myriad of topics. These are regularly updated and expanded by Scouting America.
- **On-the-Spot Safety Moments:** Scouts and Scouters can create ad-hoc safety moments tailored to specific situations or activities. These "just in time" reminders can precede an activity, providing concise information or notifying participants of safety essentials like fire extinguisher locations and exits.
- **Localized Safety Moments:** Develop safety moments at the local level for units, districts, councils, or camps. These can align with local procedures or conditions, offering reminders during pre-activity assessments. Camp leaders may plan a series of Safety Moments for each day, reinforcing important safety topics during camper orientation.
- **External Resources Caution:** While other organizations and companies may share safety moments online, exercise caution. Ensure that these align with Scouting values and adhere to Scouting America safety guidelines.

Source: <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/safety-moments/>