

University of Scouting

Graduate School of Cub Scouting

Crossroads of America Council

THESIS

FOR

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THESIS PROJECT AND RESULTS

I. OVERVIEW

Approved Thesis: Identify through a survey, the profile of a Crossroads of America Commissioner and compare the results with an identical survey taken in the DuPage Area Council in 1989. From the results, be able to identify characteristics of a Commissioner to identify potential or retain current Commissioners.

Scope of the Project: In 1989, I conducted a survey of Commissioners in the DuPage Area Council (DuPage County, a far-western suburb of Chicago, Illinois) to determine the profile of a typical Commissioner. This was done to allow easier identification and recruiting of Commissioners. The collected information was found to be very valuable and was widely distributed.

I felt that after 10 years it would be an interesting project to once again do a Commissioner profile and then to compare the two surveys. The project survey results would be analyzed to see if there was a difference in the basic tenure, experience and training of Commissioners between the two surveys and Councils.

The outcome of the survey will allow the Crossroads of America to identify a typical Commissioner through the demographic and statistical information. In addition, the results would then be compared with the 1989 survey to identify shifts in demographics, tenure, experience and training.

II. Methodology:

Survey: A Commissioner's Survey was developed to determine the following information:

- How long has the person been in Scouting as an adult,
- Age of the person,
- Sex of the person,
- Number of years in the Cub Scout program,
- Number of years in the Boy Scout program,
- Number of years as a Commissioner,
- What their Commissioning position is,
- Amount of Scout training as an adult,

- Uniforming,
- Commissioner meeting attendance,
- Report processing and
- Expected behaviors of a Commissioner.

A copy of the questionnaire is attached (Attachment A) and is complete with the numerical results. There was no attempt made to track the questionnaires and who returned them.

Distribution of the Survey: The Council office provided 190 labels of all the registered Commissioners in the council. From these labels, I selected 25 male and 25 female names, insuring they were spread throughout the council. All other labels were destroyed.

A cover letter explaining the need of the survey to complete my University of Scouting Doctoral was included as well as a stamped, self addressed envelope to allow the survey to be returned to me at no expense to the survey participant.

Return of the survey: Surveys were returned over a period of three months starting in March 1998, and I waited for an additional 30 days before compiling results of the surveys. A total of 29 surveys were returned.

Statistical viability: There was a great response in returning the survey. Normal results would have been ten (10) percent or 5 surveys. Fifty-eight percent (58) returned their survey giving a very high reliability factor. This compared with fifty-one (51) percent returning my 1989 survey.

III. Question by Question Results: (All question results are averaged)

1. **Question:** "How long have you been in Scouting as an adult?" *The people gave an average time as an adult leader in Scouting as 13.6 years.*
2. **Question:** "I will be _____ years old this year." *The response was 45.6 years old.*
3. **Question:** "I have been an adult Cub Scout leader for _____ years." *The response was 5.4 years.*

4. Question: "I have been an adult Boy Scout leader for _____ years."
*The response was **6.7** years.*

5. Question: "How many years have you been a Commissioner?"
*Response was **5.6** years.*

6. Question: "What is your Commissioning position?" Response was:

- **4** on Roundtable Staff,
- **13** Unit Commissioners,
- **6** Assistant District Commissioners,
- **1** District Commissioner and
- **5** people who didn't know or could not define their Commissioning position.

7. Question: "Please indicate the training you have completed":

- Cub Scout Leader Training: **23** indicated they had this training.
- Boy Scout Leader Training: **22** indicated they had this training.
- Commissioner Basic Training: **23** indicated they had this training.
- Boy Scout Wood Badge Training: **15** indicated they had this training.
- Cub Scout Wood Badge Training: **8** indicated they had this training.
- Roundtable Training: **13** indicated they had this training.
- Exploring Leader Training: **3** indicated they had this training.
- Varsity Leader Training: **2** indicated they had this training.

8. Question: "Do you always wear correct uniforming? Yes ___ No ___"
*Response was Yes **23** and No **6**.*

9. Question: "Are you male ___ or female ___?" Response was
*Male **21** and Female **6**.*

10. Question: "Do you always attend required meetings? Yes ___ No ___."
*Response was Yes **21** and No **8**.*

11. Question: "I turn in all my reports in writing and on time. Yes ___ No ___."
*Response was Yes **17** and No **12**.*

12. Question: "I respect the following behaviors from Commissioners:
_____."
• Seven comments: **Understanding**,

- Seven comments: **Leadership/Example,**
- Five comments: **Communications,**
- Two Comments: **Knowledge.**

The survey questions were answered with few exceptions.

IV. Detailed review and comparison of each question: (All question results are averaged.)

Question 1: "How long have you been in Scouting as an adult?"

- 1998 Survey: the tenure of the respondents was 13.6 years.
- 1989 Survey: the tenure was just over 10 years.
- *Review: The length of time Commissioners stay in the program is lengthening. This in itself is good, but for long-term results is not healthy as the age of Commissioners is rising with few young people becoming Commissioners.*

Question 2: "I will be ___ years old this year."

- 1998 Survey: answer was just over 45 ½ years of age.
- 1989 Survey: answer was just over 41 years of age.
- *Review: The Commissioning group is growing older demographically. I would have expected age to remain constant.*

Question 3: "I have been an adult Cub Scout leader for ___ years."

- 1998 Survey: the tenure of the respondents was 5.4 years.
- 1989 Survey: the tenure of the respondents was 3.7 years.
- *Review: the people in 1998 are more experienced in this program. Interestingly, 6 people, or 29% of the total respondents had no experience in the Cub Scout program.*

Question 4: "I have been an adult Boy Scout leader for ___ years."

- 1998 Survey: the tenure of the respondents was 6.7 years.
- 1989 Survey: the tenure of the respondents was 5.7 years.
- *Review: the people in the 1998 survey have more Boy Scout experience than Cub Scout experience by a slight margin. As with the Cub Scout program, there were 5 of the respondents, or 17%, who did not have any Boy Scout experience.*

Question 5: "How many years have you been a Commissioner?"

- 1998 Survey: the tenure of the respondents was 5.6 years.
- 1989 Survey: the tenure of the respondents was 3.8 years.

- *Review: The tenure would suggest these Commissioners are also still active in a unit. Also, it is possible they may have moved through the Cub and Boy Scout program before becoming a Commissioner. This is doubtful however, in as much as there are many respondents who have never been an adult leader in one of the boy programs.*

Question 6: "What is your Commissioning Position?"

- This question was only asked on the 1998 Survey. There was a good balance of responses from all aspect of the Commissioning Corp, with about half being Unit Commissioners.
- Five of the respondents did not know what their position was. This is 17% of the respondents.

Question 7: "Please indicate the training you have received."

RESULTS

Type of training	1998 Survey/Percentage	1989 Survey/Percentage
Cub Scout	23 trained, 79% trained	31 trained, 100% trained
Boy Scout	22 trained, 76% trained	19 trained, 100% trained
Commissioner	23 trained, 79% trained	50 trained, 100% trained
Cub Wood Badge	8 trained, 28% trained	Question not asked
Boy Scout Wood Badge	15 trained, 52% trained	Question not asked
Roundtable	13 trained, 45% trained	Question not asked
Exploring	3 trained, 10% trained	10 trained, 20 % trained
Varsity	2 trained, 7% trained	3 trained, 6% trained

*Review: There seems to be a concern on my part about the results in this question area. The Commissioners in the 1998 Survey have a large gap in their overall training. With the number of years of Commissioning experience, I would not expect such a large gap in their training. For example, **over 20 % of Commissioners in the 1998 Survey are untrained in Commissioning.** This in my opinion, is an issue that should be addressed on a council wide basis. In the 1989 Survey, a person could not become a Commissioner (in that Council) without receiving Commissioner training. Before being assigned any Packs or troops, the person had to also be trained in that program area. This was true for Exploring and Varsity Commissioners too.*

Question 8: "Do you always wear correct uniforming?"

- 1998 Survey: **23** said Yes and **6** said No.
- 1989 Survey: **47** said Yes and **3** said No.
- *Review: Twenty percent do not wear proper uniforming at all times. Correlates with the lack of training shown in question 7. Commissioners are seen as examples due to the nature of their position. Uniforming as recently explained in the latest leader magazine, is a must for the boys and adult leaders. Commissioners set the example for other leaders and their boys. That should include uniforming.*

Question 9: "Are you male ____ or female ____?"

- 1998 Survey: **21** male and **8** female.
- 1989 Survey: **27** male and **23** female.
- *Review: Very hard to find significant information from this comparison. It does appear males are more active, at least in answering this Survey. The 1989 Survey had a much more desirable ratio between men and women. I have no explanation as to why women did not respond to the Survey in larger numbers. Had I known this would be an issue, I would have counted the total number of males vs. females on the original 190 labels. There may be high numbers of males doing Commissioning in the Crossroads Council.*

Question 10: "Do you always attend required meetings?"

- 1998 Survey: **21** said Yes and **8** No.
- 1989 Survey: **42** said Yes and **8** No.
- *Review: Forty two percent of the 1998 respondents indicate they do not go to required meetings. My definition of required meetings are unit meetings to check on their health/needs and required Commissioner meetings. This may be a major red flag in showing Commissioning in the Crossroads of America Council is targeted at re-chartering and not at securing the long term health of the unit. That is fine with me to just do re-chartering, but this is a major blow, in my opinion, to insuring the boys are receiving quality program through strong units.*

Question 11: "I turn in my reports in writing and on time. Yes or No."

- 1998 Survey: **17** said Yes and **12** No.
- 1989 Survey: **38** said Yes and **10** No.
- *Review: **Fifty nine percent (59%) of the people in the 1998 Survey indicated they do not complete their required***

information. *Conversely, the 1989 Survey had a 71% level of people turning in their required reports. I believe without written reports the resources of any district can not be brought to the forefront to help units that need the district's help. How are consistent histories of units kept? Word of mouth information is lost quickly. This is a major area that needs to have a much more in-depth review at the council level.*

Question 12: "I respect the following behaviors from Commissioners ___."

- 1998 Survey: **the responses included understanding, knowledge, leadership and communication.**
- 1989 Survey: **the responses included being a role model, communication, understanding, training, leadership and being a people person.**
- *Review: very little difference in this area. The bottom line is that Commissioners are role models in any of the perceived areas.*

V. Summary

From the data collected in the 1998 Survey it is reasonable to expect people with the following characteristics (from the averages of the Survey) to be targeted for Commissioning:

- **Age:** mid 40's,
- **Tenure:** more than 13 years in Scouting,
- **Training:** some basic training with those from a Wood Badge background being prime targets,
- **Sex:** unfortunately, from the 1998 Survey, look to males.

When the above 1998 Survey data is compared to the 1989 Survey data, it is interesting the profiles are similar except for the fact of an aging Commissioner population. Commissioners are still the ones who stick with the delivery of the program. Expect to recruit any familiar face and begin the process to mentor others for future recruiting. Roundtables are a key recruiting pool that seems to be shallow in person power.

There are areas exposed in this Survey analysis that require attention, in my opinion. These include 1. Having a known and properly structured Commissioning program. 2. Much higher standards for Commissioner and program training and 3. A significant effort implemented to identify and mentor younger adult leaders to allow them to become Commissioners earlier in their Scouting careers and stay for a long, long

time. 4. Develop and implement a council wide process to identify adult leaders who meet the characteristics outlined in this summary, recruit and train them, and get them out to help make the program the best it can be for the boys in this council.

Respectively Submitted in the Scouting Spirit,

William Mearns

Approved: Robert M Saywell Jr.
Dean of the Graduate School
10/26/98

Dean of the Graduate School of
Cub Scouting

University of Scouting Chancellor

COMMISSIONER'S SURVEY

Please take a few moments and complete the following questions.

Your response is being used to complete a Doctoral thesis. The returned data will be compared with a survey taken 10 years ago to see if the Commissioner's background has changed in the last ten years. The results will be published to help identify characteristics of potential commissioners to help recruiting results.

1. How long have you been in Scouting as an adult? 13.6 years.
2. I will be 45.6 years old this year.
3. I have been an adult Cub Scout Leader for 5.4 years.
4. I have been an adult Boy Scout leader for 6.7 years.
5. How many years have you been a Commissioner 5.6 ?
6. What is your Commissioning position (SEE THESIS) ?
7. Please indicate the training you have completed:

Cub Scout Leader Training <u>23</u>	Boy Scout Leader Training <u>22</u>
Boy Scout Wood Badge <u>15</u>	Cub Scout Wood Badge <u>8</u>
Commissioner's Basic Training <u>23</u>	Roundtable Training <u>13</u>
Exploring Leaders Training <u>3</u>	Varsity Leaders Training <u>2</u>
Other <u>POW WOW, "TTT"</u>	
8. Do you always wear correct uniforming? YES 23 NO 6.
9. Are you male 21 or female 8 ?
10. Do you always attend required meetings? YES 21 NO 8.
11. I turn in all my reports in writing and on time. YES 17 NO 12.
12. I respect the following behaviors from Commissioners _____
7 = UNDERSTANDING; 2 = KNOWLEDGE; 7 = LEADERSHIP AND
5 = COMMUNICATIONS.

Please return to: **BILL MUNSON**
 3256 McFarland Place
 Indianapolis, IN 46227
 OR CALL (317) 885-1719 to phone in your answers.