

WANTED: UNIT COMMISSIONERS

Imagine that you're a teacher in a public school. It's your first year and while most of your classes are going well, you find that one of them is causing you to be less confident about your abilities. To whom do you turn for advice?

Now imagine that you are an LPN (Licensed Practicing Nurse). You have been working in this position for over a year and would like to move forward with your career, but are having difficulty with a particular patient. Where do you go to get help?

In each of the cases above, there is someone or some resource that the individual can refer to for assistance. In the case of the teacher, it might be another more tenured colleague, a curriculum specialist, or assistant principal. The LPN can always call upon his or her supervising registered nurse (RN) or doctor.

As a volunteer leader in a Cub Pack or Boy Scout Troop, who can you turn to when you think an issue or problem exists within your unit? Who can help identify where your unit's strengths and weaknesses are? If you're not certain about how to complete re-charter paperwork successfully, what resource do you have at hand?

Unfortunately, the questions in the previous paragraph may not be readily answered because your unit may not have a Unit Commissioner assigned to it. And a Unit Commissioner is the best resource a Pack or Troop can have.

Unit Commissioners inspect each unit's meeting place once a year to ascertain its safety. They are responsible for making regular contact with unit leaders to make sure that a strong program exists that will help retain youth membership. When situations arise that a Pack or Troop committee or adult leader has difficulty dealing with, a Unit Commissioner may rise to the challenge and offer advice that will provide first aid toward resolving the problem.

Like many other councils and districts, Manatee does not have enough Unit Commissioners to assign to each unit. While it would be nice to have a 2:1 ratio (commissioners:units), ours is closer to 4:1.

Unit Commissioners have good 'people' skills. They are not 'Unit Police' or 'spies'. UC's should have a depth of knowledge about the scouting program. The ability to recognize strengths and weaknesses within units without being critical is important. They should not simultaneously hold UC positions along with Cubmaster or Scoutmaster positions.

If you or someone you know (even those who have scouting backgrounds, but are currently inactive) has an interest in becoming a Unit Commissioner, Manatee District would most certainly welcome you.

For more information about how to become a Unit Commissioner, contact District Commissioner Rob Cuthbert at robc_troop89@msn.com or (941)742-5860.