



“On the Same Page”

The NB Council Commissioner’s Newsletter

3st edition – August 30, 2012

To Area Commissioners, Group Commissioners and Members of Council

At the Beginning of the 2012-13 Scouting Year

Let me start by thanking you all and by congratulating the New Brunswick Council. According to our membership data on August 25, our membership is currently standing at 100.7% of last year’s membership, so we have increased our membership for the fifth year in a row. New Brunswick Scouting is indeed in good shape!! And we have until August 31, 2012, to get all our registrations in for the 2011-12 year so, if you still have a Cub or a Venturer to register for last year, please do it now so we can count the extra bodies!

We are now entering a new Scouting year when all adult volunteers are still expected to have been properly screened with reference checks, interviews and Police Record Checks for working with the vulnerable sector. In addition to this screening, we have new requirements, connected with Scouts Canada’s new emphasis on Child and Youth Safety, which ALL adult volunteers must meet before they may work with our youth or wear our uniform. In case anybody needs to be reminded, these new requirements are:

- a) Complete the first module of Wood Badge (WB1) Training with emphasis on Risk Management Information for leaders. Continuing Scouters who hold either Part I or Part II Gilwells do not have to repeat this.
- b) Complete the new training unit on Child and Youth Safety
- c) Complete the new training unit on Accessibility
- d) Sign the new Code of Conduct (either electronically or on paper)

These new requirements are the core of Scouts Canada’s new commitment to ensuring the safety of all children and youth who participate in our programs. Before any of us can act as leaders in Scouting, we now not only have to be compliant with these new regulations, but we also have to be seen to be compliant. From this fall, only Scouters who are compliant with these regulations are to be allowed to work with youth and to wear the Scout uniform, and it is up to all of us to

ensure that this policy is put into effect and to ensure that the parents are aware just how seriously we take this commitment to the safety of the youth in our programs.

The question now is how we are going to ensure this compliance in the New Brunswick Council. I would like us to implement the following steps this fall in New Brunswick, effective immediately:

1. Group Commissioners will be responsible for encouraging their continuing and their new volunteers to complete the requirements under Child and Youth Safety. Some volunteers without ready access to a computer will need special treatment through face-to-face instruction or by watching the DVD on Child and Youth Safety. Such face-to-face instruction can be provided by the Group or by the Area.
2. Because there is some question about how accurately MyScouts.Ca keeps track of completed requirements at this time, Group Commissioners should keep their own records about who has completed the requirements.
3. No Group is to allow a section (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Venturers or Rovers) to begin meetings this fall until an adequate number of volunteers are compliant with the new regulations. An adequate number will be determined by the required ratio of volunteers to youth in each of the sections.
4. Once a Group Commissioner has sufficient compliant volunteers to open a section, she or he will contact the Area Commissioner to obtain permission to open the section or sections. Sections will not be opened before the Area Commissioner has given her or his approval. Area Commissioners will keep a record of which sections have been authorized to open.
5. In some cases, it may be necessary to delay the first section meetings until the leaders are compliant with the new regulations. Groups and sections could use the first regular meeting nights to enable those who have not completed their training to do so. When this happens, please explain to parents that we have to delay to ensure we are compliant with the new policy of Scouts Canada.
6. Once a section has started its programs, adult volunteers who have not completed their training in connection with the Child and Youth Safety policy may not assist with the section meetings until this training is completed.

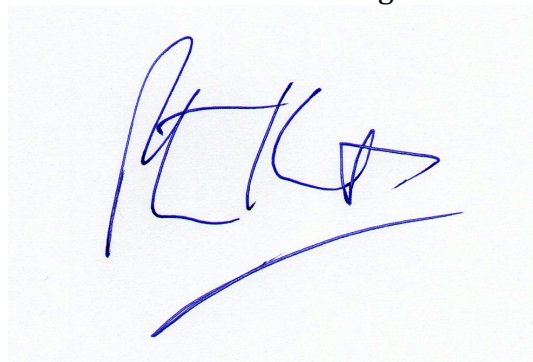
7. It goes without saying that volunteers who are not fully screened (including the Police Record Check) should also not be participating in section meetings until their screening is complete.
8. Group Commissioners should work closely with the Area Commissioners in this area. Group Commissioners should keep their own records of who has completed the necessary requirements for reporting to Area Commissioners. Area Commissioners, in turn, should use their good judgment in ambiguous cases to resolve difficult situations. Area Commissioners can always consult with the Council Commissioner or the Council Executive Director.

We are venturing into a new phase of the history of Scouts Canada with this emphasis on the importance of Child and Youth Safety. This emphasis is intended to do nothing less than change the culture of Scouting to make it truly an organization which cares seriously about the safety of its youth membership.

That being the case, we must all do much more than give lip service to these good intentions. We must ensure that all volunteers in Scouts Canada are compliant with these new regulations and we must not operate any of our program sections until this is the case.

I am counting on all of you to help with the implementation of this policy this September, so we can all move on to creating those exciting programs which attract an increasing number of New Brunswick youth to Scouting. Thanks for your continuing commitment to Scouting.

Yours in Scouting

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Kent', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Peter Kent
New Brunswick Council Commissioner

