**Name: Matthew Ballance Wood Badge Ticket Goal:**  1R of 5

**MY Scouting Position: Unit Commissioner**

**Team That Will Benefit From My Leadership: Wachovia District Scouts and Scouters**

**SMART Goal** *(Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely):*

* **Specific**
* **Measurable**
* **Attainable**
* **Relevant**
* **Timely**

**WHO** (*Person/s or group/s who will be affected by this goal)***:**

* Scout leaders, Scouts and their families

**WHAT** (*A brief description of the action you plan to take to help make your vision a reality)***:**

* Offer to develop and restart the distribution of a district online newsletter to keep district scouts and scouters informed and up to date on events from Wachovia district, Old Hickory Council, and other events of interest to the scouting family.

**WHERE** (*Setting or locations for the action item work)***:**

* The newsletter will initially be crafted online and submitted to the District Key3 for approval before being sent to the membership.

**WHEN** (*Time-frame for the action item work)***:**

First edition to be sent following the District Roundtable for November, 2017

**HOW** (*Describe the steps you will take to complete this action item. Details and descriptions should reflect the SMART guideline)*: Topics discussed at the Commissioner’s Staff meeting, district committee meeting, and District roundtable will be edited into short discussion-style stories and included in the “above the fold” section of the newsletter. The running district/council calendar will be update to remove past events and add newer events as they come up.

**WHY (***Tell why this action item is important to you and how it relates to your vision for your group)***:**

Many scouters in the district, due to previous work and family obligations are not able to attend the roundtables or committee meetings. As a result, the quality of the information they have for use in planning and that they can then distribute to the members of their respective units can suffer. By providing the summaries of news that affects our district and council to the members, in a format that they can read and process on their schedule, as well as keep as a reference, will help to make sure that our district stays informed on upcoming events that affect them, as well as program changes (requirements for advancement, policy changes, etc..) that they may or may not be able to receive. Also, by using email to push the information to the end-user vs using social media and requiring the end-user to pull the information, we have a better chance of actually getting their attention and converting them from a passive “I think I remember someone mentioning that” consumer to an active “I’ve got the email right here” user of the programming information.

The newsletter is not intended to be a full-on replacement for attendance at these meetings, but more as a bridge to cross the gaps that can occur as we lead ever busier lives with more and more demands on our time.

**HOW VERIFIED** (*Describe how you and your troop guide will know when this action item is completed)***:**

Review and inspection of the following items by my ticket counselor:

* The troop guide/ticket councilor will be added (with permission) to the distribution list and sent each copy of the newsletter that is produced.

**Ticket Counselor Approval:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

On returning from the Wood Badge field course, the offer to produce and distribute an online newsletter was made to Chris Dyer (District Chairman for Wachovia District) at the District Meeting on October 12th, 2017. Approvals were obtained and the process to institute the newsletter were begun. During the development process, the project has taken a life of its own, resulting in my taking on the district’s publicity committee and being officially nominated as District Publicity Chairman for 2018. While preparing the first issue of the newsletter, several deficiencies were discovered in the communications plan (or lack thereof) that caused a delay and actually producing the newsletter. After discussions with the Mr. Dyer, it was determined that we needed to take a step back from producing the actual newsletter and assume a more holistic approach to the communications difficulties the district was facing.

The first steps in cleaning up the process was to assess the state of communications within the district. This analysis revealed a mashup of methods being used ranging from one-on-one emails being sent to individuals with the assumption that everyone knows everyone, to an over-reliance on social media as the only means to communicate which introduces the issues of control over the message as well as loss of visibility. Distribution lists were verified and recompiled, and a basic social media and communications plan were developed.

After the plans were provisionally developed, it was discovered that we really don’t know how our district and unit volunteers prefer to communicate. A basic survey (<https://goo.gl/forms/hr9WUtVMZKanzTD43>) was developed to poll the district about how they prefer to receive communications from the district. Data resulting from that poll will be used to further refine and develop the plans for communication, social media, and publicity within the district. These results will also help shape the final incarnation of the district’s newsletter, whether it be sent via email, social media, or some other method.

In summary, the offer to produce this resource (as listed in the ticket item) was made and accepted by the district chairman, and delivery of the actual work product will be made following the conclusion of the communications survey period and analysis of the results and the impact those responses have on the district communications and publicity plans.