

JULY: CULTIVATING VOLUNTEERS

MUSIC FULL THEN UNDER

BRYAN: Welcome to the July ScoutCast, listeners! I'm *Bryan on Scouting* blogger, Bryan Wendell and with me, as always, is Lee Shaw, Team Lead of National Alliance. Hey Lee.

LEE: Hey, Bryan. So, do you remember the episode on Succession Planning we did back in January?

BRYAN: Of course. How could I forget?

LEE: Kathleen Daggett talked about looking within your unit for that special person who might someday take your place.

BRYAN: That's right, and this month we take it a step further by looking for volunteers that are needed right now and where you can find them outside your unit.

Music Fades

BRYAN: So, helping us in this search for volunteers is Bill Adams. Bill joins us from the Southern Shores Field Service office in Hartland, Michigan, where he has served as Troop Committee Chair, Den leader, Scoutmaster, Roundtable Commissioner, Unit Commissioner and Shooting Sports Instructor. Now, Bill, you're a ScoutCast veteran, right? You joined us back in December of 2015 to talk about back-up plans, so welcome back to the ScoutCast studio, Bill.

BILL: Nice to be here.

BRYAN: Great to see you. So, we're talking about finding those non-unit volunteers. What are some of the most common volunteer roles that districts and councils are looking for?

BILL: They're looking for a whole range of people to do different things. It could be anything from a properties committee, help on a day camp, help with a Roundtable; just a myriad of positions, and they don't have to be fulltime. It could be a one-time event - something to help out.

LEE: Hey, Bill, where are some opportunities to find volunteers to fill those roles?

BILL: You don't want to tap from a unit because hopefully the people within the unit want to help with their youth, but there's umpteen places you can find them. You can find them at your local church, you can find people at work that were either in the Scouting program or their children have aged out and still want to be part of the program because they believe in it and want to help with it. One time we were looking for commissioners and the DE went to the local retirement community – not a nursing home - just retirement community because there's old Scouters in there. I mean, they can do a unit or two. And they don't have to always be men either. They can be women as well; there's roles for both.

LEE: Service club is also a good one, right? With Kiwanis and Rotary, things along those lines?

BRYAN: A lot of employers like either require or encourage their employees to do some type of service, so this is a great opportunity for them to do that in a fun way, especially if they have any type of Scouting connection.

BILL: You're right and one of the nice things is if you have one of those employers that will count your vacation time as a donation to Scouting these people go to volunteer and they get the time off with pay not charged as vacation time. Explain this to your friends and your buddies, there can be benefits, "Yeah, just took the troop for a week camping, didn't cost me a bit of vacation time. It's a donation." They're like, "Huh? How do I get involved in this gig?"

BRYAN: So, what qualifications does someone need to have to be a non-unit volunteer?

BILL: They could be like myself - I grew up with the program but, whatever you're going to ask them to do, they (should) have some type of background; if you're gonna ask someone to do something in sales, they have a sales background. But even if they don't have a lot of experience, you could always remind them that there is training available as well.

BRYAN: Yeah, good point. We require them to at least take Youth Protection Training, we should say that, so it's not they're gonna come in knowing

nothing, but you're saying you want them to have some sort of connection to their volunteer role?

BILL: Right. There's those people that like the inside stuff and those people that like the outside stuff so, you know, make sure whatever you're going to ask them to do fits what they would be comfortable with as well.

LEE: Or have a passion about. Lots of times people really want to volunteer for something that may not be related to their work life just to get a break from that, but they could be really good at it because they're passionate about it.

BILL: Correct. They may like to do woodworking so they go to the camps because it has a nice wood shop or they like the sales part, they like talking to people so, maybe we'll put them in as a Unit Commissioner. Try to place them um, with what qualifications you think they have.

LEE: What's the best way to approach someone about being a volunteer in the program, Bill?

BILL: First off, you're gonna observe them, and you're gonna want some background on them. Maybe have coffee with them, have lunch with them, explain to them, what's needed and how they would be a good fit and where they would be the good fit, and you have to remember that when you start dealing with some of the council and district levels, you're looking for more adults to help with the adults. Whether it's chairing a committee,

whether it's helping with training, or just sharing your special skills that you have, so you basically present it to them that way because unfortunately not everybody wants to work with youth.

BRYAN: I think there's a lot of people who don't really understand that the volunteer roles don't just stop in the unit. You might not know that these opportunities exist at the district and council levels. So how do we spread the word that here are the types of jobs that that we need volunteers for?

BILL: You gotta do it carefully because you don't want to remove resources from the units. But, you may have a person within a troop that may have a son and three daughters who maybe help out at day camp one day. They may be able to help with the popcorn sales distribution or something for the day. So, you can find that one day or half a day position for them. We do get that a lot with our shooting sports program where, if we're lucky enough, we get people to do afternoon and morning and then some of us do all day. So, there's always that rotation and you can offer the shorter opportunities and then go from there if they choose to do more.

LEE: And oftentimes that can lead to more, right?

BILL: Yes, yes it does.

LEE: Sort of expose them to some of the things that they're available to do and then they learn that, hey, this is not so bad after all.

BILL: You can be involved in the program in different ways and you don't have to worry about taking a patrol of six or eight boys out and doing something. You could help train the other adult leaders at a Roundtable. Roundtables would be a good example. It's a once-a-month thing, runs anywhere from an hour and a half to two hours. And usually if you got a good group running the Roundtable, they might get together one time the month before and set their schedule. So now you are talking three hours tops a month. So, yeah, there are positions that that's all it takes.

BRYAN: Yeah. They could be as simple as I still want to be involved but I don't like going camping maybe.

BILL: I know some adults that still enjoy the little ones on the Cub level, so even though their older one is in Boy Scouts, that's not their cup of tea. They like doing the crafts and the stuff so they're day camp staff. They work with council or the district on Cub Scouting activities and whatnot.

LEE: You didn't say it quite this way but many hands make light work. When we stop to think about that, how many opportunities exist in so many ways of allowing volunteers to just help out when they can and do what they can. Okay. Hey, Bill, are there resources available for learning techniques, I mean, other than how to win friends and influence people by Dale Carnegie? *(Laughter)* When it comes to approaching someone to volunteer, are there some techniques that you found very helpful or effective?

BILL: Just observing the people you'll start noticing. Like I do shorting sports. The same dads are coming out, so hey, I always see you out here, how would you like to help? We're having range master training for Cub Scouts. These people will stand out in the crowd and after a while you will learn to see who's what.

LEE: So that keen focus of observation in terms of what's going on at all times is very important.

BILL: Oh, yeah.

BRYAN: So, Bill, I'd like to know a little bit more about your story because you are a non-unit volunteer now but you used to be unit-level volunteer, right? So, what inspired you to stick around even now that your son is no longer of Scout age?

BILL: I've always loved the outdoors. I've got three other brothers, we're all Eagle Scouts. My dad became involved in the program and it was a great bonding time with him and I. When I got older I helped him when he was a Unit Commissioner and it was just a thing for me to do.

BRYAN: And now you're kind of paying it forward, right? Now, is there any risk of burnout or being stretched too thin? Because there are some non-unit volunteers, some district and council-level volunteers who also have a role in the unit. It's not an either/or a lot of times. So how do we make sure that we don't overwork these volunteers?

BILL: Learn to say no, which it's taken me a lot of years to do, *(laughter)* but I've done it. For a while I limited myself to three different hats. *(Laughter)* Now it's just basically two, but if you don't start saying no and they don't start bringing in more, the program will not continue.

LEE: Good point.

BRYAN: That's great. Okay, Bill, so now that we know where we're looking and who we're looking for, let's get some more folks into the Scouting program, how about that? So, I want to thank you for joining us on ScoutCast. We appreciate all your time that've devoted to Scouting, all those different hats.

BILL: My pleasure being here.

LEE: Now, let's take a short break with a Safety Moment, then we'll be back with Reminders and Tips.

(July Safety Moment– Incident Reporting)

LEE: Okay, listeners, it's time for July Reminders and Tips. It's that time of year when you want to get your chartered organization representative – also known in Scout speak as the COR – involved in your annual program planning.

BRYAN: That's right. This actually allows the COR to see what activities the unit is planning for the year and how it can relate to the yearly plan and the objectives that the chartered organization may have.

LEE In this month's *Boys' Life* Magazine, a Boy Scout troop from Michigan experienced the high-adventure trip of a lifetime in the wilderness of Alaska, where they kayaked, camped and backpacked in areas so remote that there were no other humans to be seen.

BRYAN: There's no July or August *Scouting* Magazine, but the stories don't stop. So, get all the latest Scouting news all summer long by visiting the Bryan on Scouting blog. We try to post every weekday, with advancement news, inspiring stories, and insight into topics affecting Scouters, so head to blog.scoutingmagazine.org and make it your home page.

Begin Music Under

BRYAN: In fact, you can do that right about now because we are at the end of this July ScoutCast. We want to thank our guest, Bill Adams, for joining us on this episode.

LEE: And thanks to you for listening. Be sure to tune in next month for everything you need to know about online training. Believe me when I tell you, you'll need to know about this. Until next time, I'm Lee Shaw.

BRYAN: And I'm Bryan Wendell. Have you got an idea for a discussion on a future ScoutCast? Just send us an email to Scoutcast@scouting.org or you can

tweet us. We're @BSA ScoutCast. We really look forward to hearing from you.

MUSIC FULL TO FINISH