

## **APRIL – CULTIVATING NEW / FUTURE LEADERS**

### **Music Full then under**

AARON: Its CubCast time! So, Pat, you know how we always have topics geared toward helping and inspiring Cub Scout leaders?

PAT: Yes.....

AARON: Did you ever ask yourself, where do these leaders come from? I'm pretty sure they don't just magically appear.

PAT: Excellent question. I'm betting we have our expert guests on the phone right now.

AARON: It's true. So welcome, Everyone to the April Cubcast; Cultivating New Leaders.

### **Music Fades**

AARON: Lucia Cronin served as a Cub Scout den leader and pack committee chair for 10 years. She currently serves on the Executive Board of the Bay Lakes Council in Wisconsin and Michigan. She is also a chair of the Membership Impact Committee with the Central Region and has recently assumed leadership of the new National Cub Scout Experience Committee.

PAT: Also joining the discussion is Greg Lawless. Greg has been involved in Scouting having served as unit commissioner, staff member for the National Camping School's Cub Scout Administration program, and a den leader through all levels of Cub Scouting. He currently serves on the council's Northeast Illinois Council Executive Board and is the Assistant Scoutmaster with Troop 72. Greg and Lucia, welcome to CubCast.

LUCIA: Thank you.

PAT: So what is this topic of cultivating new and future leaders all about?

LUCIA: We've got to cultivate and recruit a new Tiger leader. We have to cultivate future leaders in that we need to replace those who've moved into a new volunteer position or maybe they've moved out of the organization. And then as a way to really promote and develop our volunteers, bring them to a new level of leadership for their own personal satisfaction and for the good of the movement.

GREG: Lucia, you're right. It's not every parent that's going to walk into a membership roundup and immediately say, "I want to be a den leader," so we really need to be looking at this as an investment process for the organization and for the movement.

AARON: Getting a new Tiger leader is interesting because it's something that comes up every year. I wonder if you have any thoughts on finding the right Tiger den leader.

LUCIA: Sure. There's a way to do it, and there are some ways not to do it. I've sometimes said that the most important person in the Boy Scouts of America is the Tiger leader because if we get the right one, our youth

have a wonderful experience. Those Tigers have a great time, and they stay in the program. If we don't get the right leader we can lose those kids and we can lose them pretty quickly and, unfortunately, we generally don't get them back. So, on the scouting.org membership website there's a YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/embed/QRSlldqbt8A?rel=0> It's titled Spring Tiger Cub Recruitment, but it's really all about recruiting a Tiger den leader. I would caution against going into a room of people and just asking who wants to be the Tiger leader. Through sources that we have, whether it be kindergarten teachers, other school teachers, maybe it's other den leaders already in our pack who have boys in their den with younger brothers, and so they know who some of those really talented, high potential parents are. Maybe if we find out from a religious leader in the community or somebody who's involved in a community sports program. We want to first identify, learn a little bit more about them, and then we want to actually pursue them.

GREG: If you think about Tigers, that parent partner is always participating in all the meetings and adventures. It's through that shared leadership that you can quickly start to identify the potential leaders, and you can start out with the small tasks to really take a hands-on approach as they get started.

LUCIA: That's a great point, Greg. When you've got all the parents there, you're really sort of looking for the natural leaders in the group to emerge.

PAT: Let's talk a little bit about generational diversity. What is that, and how can it play a role in cultivating new leaders?

GREG: This is fascinating. There's really four generations in the workplace today, and you're seeing that same influence on Scouting, so you have all four generations involved in some aspect. This presents an opportunity for us

in Cub Scouting. The opportunity is the ability to transition and transfer knowledge from more senior, longer tenured leaders as mentors and coaches, but then when you look at the younger generation leaders, they're very in-tune with the competition Scouting's facing in the communities, and they understand how does programming need to be adjusted, how does delivery need to be adjusted. They're more technology and social media savvy and how those can play a role in generating interest and enthusiasm and excitement. And there's a lot of back office roles for units, and so when you think about the opportunity to take potentially an older generation volunteer who wants to be involved but doesn't necessarily want to be a direct contact Scouter, they can fill another role and free up a parent potentially for that direct contact role.

PAT: Greg, do you see any differences in how I should approach a parent from gen-X or the millennial generation to ask them to be a leader?

GREG: The younger generations, those gen-X, those gen-Y/millennial, their time and how they value their time is differently. And so you've got to parse it and approach them with smaller asks initially to let them see the greater good and the benefit of the organization and the movement overall. It's as simple as at an initial pack meeting, ask someone, "Can you help out with this ceremony? Do you mind being at the check-in table?" And from that you can build their understanding and engagement with it. And you've got to leverage technology with them, make it easy. How are your calendars published? How are you communicating what's going on, and also make it fun in how can you leverage social media so that they can share their child's experience in Cub Scouts with the rest of the family. The younger generations - they're looking for those photo moments, those social media moments that they can Facebook or Twitter or Snapchat or Instagram out to the family to say, 'Look at Johnny getting his Bobcat badge.'

AARON: Thank you for referring to generation X as younger.

(Everyone laughs)

AARON: I want to talk about future leaders. Now, at my Cub Scout pack, we are all set. Our den leadership is all accounted for, Cubmaster's in good position, we're all good to go. I don't need to worry at all about any recruiting, any sort of future leaders, right?

GREG: That couldn't be the farthest from the truth.

AARON: What do I need to do about it?

GREG: We have four-and-a-half years. That's the maximum duration that a boy is in Cub Scouts in a traditional program when they run from Tigers to Arrow of Light. So you have a time-bound participation where that youth is involved in that direct access to the parent, so you have to have a constant eye out for how do you refresh the unit's talent, how do you grow and develop leaders. It's really no different if you think about how professional baseball has the minor leagues to prep players for the majors.

LUCIA: Some specifics of how we can apply what Greg has just shared with us might be in a den setting. Maybe there's a parent who in their first year they're sort of a helper but they become a full co-leader in the second year. Another example might be a Pinewood Derby for your Cub Scout pack. That's a big event to conduct, and it takes a lot of work. So you've had a great Pinewood Derby chair. Always try to bring a new parent or two onto the committee for the Pinewood Derby. And, as Greg said, give them a small task, ask them if they can come and set up the track or help

check in the cars and the kids during the event itself; and then the next year they'll be familiar with that. They can take on another role or an additional role. Eventually you move them into the position where they're the chair. You're succession planning - cultivating them for the next step - and preparing someone to be a future Cubmaster.

GREG Lucia, it's interesting when you use the term "chair," and this gets back to the discussion on generational diversity. Sometimes being a chair can be very intimidating, so I've actually worked with a unit that switched to coordinators because as a coordinator, that had a connotation for the parents that there's other people involved and it didn't feel as burdensome. So that little change in language can also have a difference as you make "the ask" and you're approaching people to be involved.

PAT: Lucia and Greg, this started me thinking about some of the units that I see that are such machines, and they have the same people doing everything, and it runs really smoothly for those units. What would you say to those packs that are doing that type of work?

GREG: You have a risk because it's time-bound, so if that one person that is your go-to cog in the machine has a change in life, they take a job transfer, there's a family situation that arises, they get tired all of a sudden - you have a big gap and no one knows what did they do and that becomes a challenge. You also need to make sure that you're bringing in those fresh ideas that in order to retain the boys for that four-and-a-half year period, it can't always be the same thing. It's got to feel different. As they get older, more challenging adventures that they participate in, and by bringing in fresh leaders continuously - that helps you provide that.

LUCIA: And it leads to good succession, too, if you're thinking about what roles are the parents of the fourth or the fifth grade boys filling because those are the committees or coordination efforts that you want to bring new Tiger parents into so that they can begin to learn it, and develop, and work their way into it.

GREG: The skills inventory's a great way to help with this because as you get an idea for what your parents' occupations, hobbies, avocations are, you can start to help direct them and engage them in something that appeals to them. It can be the accountant to be the treasurer. It could be the photo enthusiast for capturing the moments and putting it on the web in a particular photo stream or putting it on social media. It could be the firefighter who you can now tap into easily for station visits, and this way it doesn't have to be that one-person's show all the time.

AARON: I'm curious to know if you guys have any recommendations or if you could advise us on any resources that are available that would help these units become experts at this kind of thing.

LUCIA: Yes. It's the scouting.org membership site. There a lot of resources there. But in addition to that, tap the brains of the people who are in your own communities. The people either in your own pack or in a neighboring pack will have a lot of good ideas.

GREG: It's not just people in the community but its other parents in the pack. Are there human resource professionals who do succession planning? Are there business owners who develop talent for their own organizations or even fundraising professionals who have experience in cultivating donors? These are all skills that apply to cultivating new leaders and leveraging them is part of this process. It gets them engaged as leaders. You're

tapping into their background, but you're also pulling them into the leadership equation for your unit.

And, take a friend to roundtable. It's a great way to share ideas, engage with your fellow Cub Scout leaders and give people a really good sense about the movement because there are great leaders and great resources within Scouting.

**PAT:** Is there anything else about cultivating new leaders that we haven't talked about that you think we need to share with our listeners?

**GREG:** I have one that jumps out at me. The introduction of the new Cub Scout Adventure program is a great springboard for getting parents to engage. Here's an opportunity to bring them to training, to conduct parent orientations on the change, and really use this as an opportunity to engage new parents or re-engage parents and get them excited about the changes to the program. Through that and the great hands-on approach that the new Cub Scout Adventure program has, that'll help bring in leaders and really strengthen our movement long-term.

**AARON:** You know, sometimes we talk in the Reminders and Tips section of CubCast about having backup leaders in place, and now we know how to go about doing that. We really appreciate you guys taking the time to help our listeners understand how to cultivate new leaders.

**GREG:** Thank you very much.

**PAT:** Let's see what's happening next door at ScoutCast; then we'll be back with Reminders and Tips.

## (SC – How Venturing Can Help Your Troop)

PAT: Now it's time for April Reminders and Tips. Don't be shy, Aaron. Tell us everything.

AARON: If you didn't already know, April is Youth Protection Month and the Boy Scouts of America takes that very seriously. Be sure that your Youth Protection Training is up-to-date. It's also a good time for you to review with your unit the four rules of personal safety.

PAT: To help you with this sensitive subject, you may want to give each member a copy of the *Power Pack Pals* comic book to open the discussion. You can order them from [www.scouting.org/training/youthprotection](http://www.scouting.org/training/youthprotection)  
You could also have a family meeting to watch the DVD, "It Happened to Me." A prior viewing with just parents is recommended.

AARON: On a lighter note, April is the special fishing issue of *Boys' Life* magazine. The BSA's own pro fisherman, Tom Reddington, shares his tips on catching fish in freshwater at the Northern Tier High Adventure Base and in saltwater at Florida Sea Base.

PAT: Finally, have you signed up for the research panel? In order to provide the best youth program, the testing and evaluation team surveys Scout members to learn their opinions on a variety of topics related to Scouting programs. Youth members, volunteers, Cub Scout parents and Boy Scout parents are invited to join our research panel. Just go to [scouting.org/about/research/research panel](http://scouting.org/about/research/research%20panel).

**BEGIN MUSIC UNDER**

PAT: The April CubCast has come to an end, but we can't leave without a special thank-you to our guests, Lucia Cronin and Greg Lawless. Are there any other topics you'd like us to talk about? Just send us an e-mail to [cubcast@scouting.org](mailto:cubcast@scouting.org) or tweet to @CubCast. So that's it. I'm Pat Wellen...

AARON: And I'm Aaron Derr asking the question, If money doesn't grow on trees why do they call the bank's branches?

PAT: Is that because we're talking about cultivation?

AARON: Yup. It's a Think and Grin joke from *Boys' Life* magazine.

PAT: Well done.

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