

OCTOBER – SCOUTING ALUMNI / COUNCIL ALUMUS of YEAR

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LEE: Hello. It's time for October's ScoutCast. I'm Lee Shaw, Team Lead of National Alliance.

BRYAN: I'm Bryan on Scouting Blogger, Bryan Wendell. Listeners, have you heard of the Scouting Alumni Association? The Scouting Alumni Association is a call to all who have been positively impacted by the BSA. That includes family members of Scouts past and present, volunteers, Scouters, and community leaders.

LEE: Now, the mission for the SAA is to rekindle enthusiasm for Scouting. There's even an award for Council Alumnus of the Year.

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LEE: So here to explain to us what all that means is Mike Movius. Mike serves as committee member of the National SAA as well as chairman of the Pacific Harbors Council NESA and Scouting Alumni Association Committee. Welcome to ScoutCast, Mike!

MIKE: Hey, thank you.

LEE: So, let's get right to it, Mike. Can you give me a brief overview of who is a Council Alum?

MIKE: The alumni are any people who have been positive and personally impacted by the Boy Scouts of America. We're talking about former Scouts, family members of Scouts past and present, community leaders and millions of Americans who benefit from Scouting in their communities every day.

BRYAN: This episode we're talking about something that's new to me, at least, which is the Council Alumnus of the Year Award. So what can you tell us about that; what are the requirements on it?

MIKE: The Council Alumnus of the Year Award is the most significant award that is given by the Scouting Alumni Association. And essentially what we're after is to highlight the skills and values that the recipient has learned and shown through their career, their community service and their Boy Scout Alumni program.

BRYAN: So, Mike, the Council Alumnus of the Year Award is different from the Silver Beaver Award which is also awarded at the council level. Can you explain some of those critical differences?

MIKE: The big difference here is that the council is going to be giving out the Council Alumnus of the Year Award one time every year. This is not one of those Man of the Year or Woman of the Year Awards. This is for alumni activities and perpetuating the recruitment of alumni.

BRYAN: So there's a lot of people who help grow the Council Alumni Network and we really want to recognize those people with this huge award.

MIKE: Precisely.

BRYAN: Cool. So are there any specific requirements? I know there are some awards where you have to be an Eagle Scout, you have to be this, but are there any requirements for who is eligible to be a Council Alumnus of the Year Award?

MIKE: Essentially this is an award that is given for a sustained period of time, and their skills and their values that they have shown through their career and their community service and their Scouting Alumni Program service. And essentially, we're very interested in what they have demonstrated through their activities for specific accomplishments and the alumni program.

LEE: So, Mike, who nominates someone for the award and how can they go about soliciting nominations?

MIKE: The best way to solicit nominations is to make a public announcement. We're advocating using the BSA channels: the newsletters, the council and the district websites, social media, bulletin boards and roundtables.

BRYAN: So, Mike, what's the selection process? I assume it happens at the council level, given that this is the Council Alumnus of the Year Award but who's responsible for that? Kind of walk us through the steps that a council would want to go through.

MIKE: The Council Alumni Committee that is convened to do the rating and selection. It starts out by passing out the nomination forms to the committee members and having them read them and reflect on the requirements. Then each member is asked to talk about the nomination in comparative terms. And a discussion is going to ensue. Now, if there is no one who actually qualifies in the nomination, then the process is concluded. But, if it's determined that one or more are meeting the requirements, then a vote is taken. The criteria is really how they demonstrated BSA alumni activities including event participation leadership and specific accomplishments or impact on behalf of the BSA Alumni.

LEE: Oh, okay, that's great information. So, once the selection process has taken place, who is responsible for and what's the notifying or announcing process?

MIKE: Most often, this is the responsibility of the Alumni Committee Chairman or the Awards and Recognition vice chair to telephone the recipient and advise them of the honor that they are going to be receiving and the date and time and location of the award ceremony. We also ask that they develop a public service announcement for the local papers, radio stations and through BSA channels. And we recommend that they develop a flyer that can be posted online or passed along to Scouters and their families and colleagues.

BRYAN: Yeah, definitely spread the word. That makes sense. So let's talk about that ceremony because you want to make a big deal out of it, right? So,

what have some councils done that has really made this award special when they're presenting it?

MIKE: Well, my council has actually presented this award three times, and the first time was a former teacher and administrator. And interestingly enough, we held it in the school that was named after him.

BRYAN: Oh, nice.

MIKE: This gentleman has been involved in Scouting for over 50 years with this same troop. And so, we were able to invite the troop, all of his school colleagues, his community service colleagues, and also his church people. So, we had a very large turnout; a really neat program. We served coffee and cake and punch, and it was a great event.

We, also, held one at a Scout camp and we had a more restricted group of Scouts and Scouters and family members. We had a speaker from the National Office and it was a very moving ceremony. And then we had Dutch oven and that went over really well.

BRYAN: So you're tailoring it to the individual, it sounds like; it's not just some cookie-cutter ceremony.

MIKE: That's right. The third one that we held, we held it with the Council Awards Event. And my caveat with that one is that you want to make sure that since this is such a prestigious award that you do the presentation at the

end of the ceremony rather than at the beginning. This event was a dinner. We held it at a zoo. It was pretty cool.

LEE: That does sound cool. Who makes the presentation?

MIKE: We generally ask the recipient how he or she wants to receive the award. Sometimes it's a brother, sometimes it's a wife or a husband, and at other times, it's a child who has been in Scouting that inspired them to continue.

BRYAN: So it goes back to making it really special for that recipient. Now, is there a limit on how many of these awards councils can present in a year?

MIKE: The Council Alumnus of the Year Award is given once a year.

BRYAN: Wow, so it is prestigious. And what are there, like 280 councils so very few men and women who are even going to earn this award every year? That's makes it pretty special.

MIKE: That's right. In fact, this year, we awarded the first female to receive the award.

BRYAN: Are there resources where people can go online and find this? I know they can go to scoutingalumni.org for information about the association in general but what about this award?

MIKE: That's a great place to start. To get the nomination form you look under 'Awards.'

BRYAN: Makes sense.

MIKE: The other thing is the folks at the National Office at the Scouting Alumni Association are great. Those are the ones that can answer any of the minutiae that someone may have a question about.

BRYAN: I did have one more question. The actual award itself - is it a medal, is it a patch, what are these individuals receiving?

MIKE: They actually receive a variety of things. One is a certificate, and we suggest that it be framed, a lapel pin, an Alumni Award Knot, a device for the knot and a medallion and ribbon.

BRYAN: Wow, that's awesome.

LEE: That is awesome.

MIKE: Some councils have actually developed perpetual plaques to record the recipient's name and the year of the award.

BRYAN: That's cool.

LEE: This has been a great interview. I just want to be sure that our listeners have all the information necessary, so, is there anything else about the Council Alumnus of the Year Award that we haven't talked about that you think should be shared with our listeners?

MIKE: There are a couple of things. One of those is that most councils are going to receive a number of nominations every year and for those folks that did not receive the award, we're encouraging councils to retain those nominations as a part of the process for the following year. Another thing is to plan ahead. When we send in the nomination forms to the National Office, it's going to take a period of time so we suggest at least six weeks before the awards ceremony to make sure that the certificate is printed and that their name and information is properly recorded.

BRYAN: So that's an important point, that the council is the one who selects the individual but it still needs to be sent to the National Office for verification and processing; am I understanding that right?

MIKE: Exactly. They're the ones that are going to send out the certificate.

LEE: Well, I know a lot about the SAA, or at least I thought I did, because I had no idea about this award, which I guess that's exactly why we're having this discussion. So, Mike, I want to say thanks for coming on the ScoutCast. We certainly appreciate your insight and information you shared.

MIKE: My pleasure.

BRYAN: Stay tuned. We'll be right back with some Reminders and Tips right after this.

(ExploringCast)

BRYAN: Now for Reminders and Tips. Let's start with Council Roundtables. Check with your local Scouting professional, the Service Center or website or the Scout calendar to locate meeting sites and times. There's really no better way to help deliver a quality program than to experience the idea-sharing that goes on at those meetings.

LEE: Here's a question you should be asking yourself: Are all your committee positions filled? Check out the September ScoutCast for everything you need to know about the Troop Committee.

BRYAN: Let's review those: It's the committee chair, secretary/treasurer, advancement chair, outdoor chair, membership chair, and a finance/fundraising chair. The committee chair is responsible for filling all of those slots, but leaders can help out by remaining on the lookout for good candidates at their places like their work, church, neighborhood...

LEE: Bryan, you can even say the gym! Also, make sure all new leaders complete their Boy Scout Leader Specific Training and Youth Protection Training.

BRYAN: Those are critical. Now, be sure to check out this month's *Boys' Life* magazine to read about Troop 109 from Phoenix, Arizona. They spent a weekend hiking and camping in Arizona's Painted Desert. They call it their "Mission to Mars" because the area has this unique, Mars-like landscape: no water, no wood for campfires, no vegetation. That's no problem for a bunch of Scouts, right, Lee?

LEE: If you say so. In the September-October issue of *Scouting* magazine you'll learn how to plan and maximize your recruiting event with tips and tools for success.

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LEE: So that's it for October ScoutCast. Thanks to our guest, Mike Movius.

BRYAN: And thank you for listening. Now, are there other topics we should be discussing here on ScoutCast? Don't be shy. Just send us an email. We're Scoutcast@scouting.org, or you can tweet us @BSAScoutcast. We do read those emails and tweets, I promise. With that, I am Bryan Wendell.

LEE: And I'm Lee Shaw. We look forward to hearing from you.

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