

DECEMBER – RELIGIOUS EMBLEMS

Music Full then Under

GINA: Welcome, everyone, to *Scouting Magazine's* December CubCast. I'm Gina Circelli along with my friend, Aaron Derr. We've covered a lot of ground this year, haven't we, buddy?

AARON: We have, Gina. We've talked about training, summer activities, Scouts with special needs, the new preview adventures...

GINA: And I think we've got a pretty good one to end the year on; religious emblems. Let's go ahead and start the discussion.

Music Fades

GINA: With CubCast favorite Dennis Kampa. Dennis has been on the show many times discussing a variety of topics from camping to shooting sports because, well, he really knows the Cub Scout program. Dennis currently serves on the Executive Board of the Rocky Mountain Council in Pueblo, Colorado, where he also serves on the Religious Emblems team. Dennis, welcome back to CubCast.

DENNIS: Thank you. It's nice to be back. How have you guys been?

GINA: Great, but better now that you're here. Okay. Let's just go right to the main question. What are religious emblems and why are they important?

DENNIS: The Religious Emblem program is unique in the Boy Scouts in that an outside agency actually determines what the requirements will be. So, for each faith's religious emblem, that faith determines what the Scouts will be doing to earn their award. The Boy Scouts' role is to certify that the emblem is legal on a Scout uniform and that it's part of our program.

AARON: How are religious emblems different from regular advancement?

DENNIS: They sort of are and they aren't. The current set of Cub Scout requirements for each rank, there is an adventure that has an option that reads, "Earn the religious emblem of your faith that is appropriate for your age or grade." So, that's an option. They don't have to be earned at all, but it's a nice way to add something to that adventure and make it a little bit more meaningful for the Scouts. The program should always be presented to the youth members and their families as an optional program. Any religious education really should be coming through either the religion or from the parents themselves. The only option to that might be if your unit is sponsored by a church and all the members of your unit are actually members of that church as well then it might be more appropriate to do as a unit. Generally, it'll be a parent and a Scout activity.

GINA: I have honestly learned about faiths by just reading the Religious Emblem section of *Boys' Life*. I've always wondered how many different faiths have religious emblems.

DENNIS: That's a good question. There is a Duty to God brochure that the BSA puts out. And there are over 40 faiths listed in that one, so I would bet on 40 or more would be a good number.

GINA: Okay, and if you don't find a religious emblem of your specific faith on that packet, what can you do?

DENNIS: Yeah. That's a frequent problem in that people sometimes have trouble finding requirements for their rank. So, the quickest thing to do would just to be to Google "Baptist Boy Scout Religious Award" and see what you get back. The other thing to do is there's an organization called Pray Pub. their website is Praypub.org and they have a non-denominational Protestant Christian program as well that can be used. People with multiple faiths have been known to use that program.

AARON: So, you mentioned earlier that the religious emblems aspect of the Cub Scout program should come from the family members or maybe the family members' religious leaders, unless the pack is chartered by a religious organization and every member of that pack is a member of that church. So, for the most part then, what role do the Cub Scout leaders play with regards to religious emblems?

DENNIS: There is a community position called the Religious Emblem Coordinator that may exist in a unit in the district or on a council, or all three of them.

That person would be the clearinghouse for referring Scouts to their faith award that they're looking for.

GINA: Now, what resources and promotional materials are available to leaders who may not know?

DENNIS: The BSA resources at DutytoGodBSA.org. That's the primary website for that information. There is also information at Scouting.org/awards/religious-awards and, as I mentioned, the Praypub.org website and there is also a Duty to God brochure that is 512-879. Units, districts or councils can order that from the BSA and that'll give them a full-color eight-page document on all the awards that are available and what the resources would be for those awards.

GINA: Okay, we'll be right back with more on Religious Emblems, right after this.

COMMERICAL: (Thorolo)

AARON: All right. So, let's say a Cub Scout has decided that he or she wants to pursue this religious emblem with their family. How do they actually earn that recognition?

DENNIS: That's great. So, the first thing they want to do is find out which award they're working on. There is typically a workbook either online or a paper copy available through your local council. That has the requirements listed in it. There will also be information in there regarding the faith-based organization that sponsors this award. That will become important later on when they try to get the award. And then the final step is find a mentor for the award. That might be a member of the clergy, it could be a lay person,

it could be their Sunday School teacher or their parents, anyone, that has the ability, the knowledge, and the desire to help out there. This may be a time to get a chartered organization involved if the unit is sponsored by a given faith.

GINA: How do you get the actual physical medal and then how do you present it?

DENNIS: The award is not available through the BSA, so you can't order it through your local Scout office. The awards generally come from the faith organization. As I said, there's a workbook for the requirements, and typically the last page in that will be "Send this to," whatever address they use as their clearinghouse, or there may be a local contact, so it might be a local Baptist organization or a Catholic organization in the council that handles that. So, provided by the faith group and not the BSA.

AARON: And there are adult related awards for this, right? How do those differ from the youth awards?

DENNIS: It's different from the youth awards in that you're nominated for the award. The only way to get it is to be nominated by someone else. You don't just apply like a lot of our adults do for the other Scouting awards, the recognition is presented to worthy adults for their outstanding service to youth both through their religious organization and one of the national agencies. So, typically these folks don't know they're getting it until they're presented the award at a suitable setting, either a religious award service

or a council dinner or something like that. So, again, you have to be nominated for it. You don't do the paperwork yourself.

GINA: Dennis, is there anything else our listeners should know about the Religious Emblems program?

DENNIS: The thing to keep in mind is that religious activity has been part of the Boy Scout program forever. Someone asked Baden Powell once when religion came into Scouting and his response was, "It does not come in at all. It's already there." It's a fundamental factor underlying Scouting and Guiding. So, if you start with the Scout Oath and Law, it's "On my honor I will do my duty to God," and we end with "a Scout is reverent" from the beginning to the end, God is part of the Scouting program.

GINA: Wonderful point. I guess I was right. This was a lovely way to end the CubCast year. Dennis, thank you so much for joining us.

DENNIS: Glad to be here. Thank you.

AARON: After this brief Safety Moment, we'll be back with Reminders and Tips.

Safety Moment - Frostbite

AARON: Okay, everybody, it's time for a pop quiz! Do you know who your local Scouting professional is, also known as your District Executive or Youth Serving Executive? If not, contact your council to find out.

GINA: If you don't know your council name, head to Scouting.org and type "local council locator" in the search field. Your professional is a great resource in helping deliver a quality program. It might also help to download the October 2013 ScoutCast entitled – you will not forget this – Who's Who in the Zoo.

AARON: And even though you're probably thinking more about the holidays right now than next summer, now is the time to start planning for summer camp. That includes Cub Scout Day Camp, Resident Camp and Family Camp. Since you already planned for camp and put it in your budget at the end of the last summer, it's now time for signups. The February 2018 CubCast on the Cub Scout Outdoor Program will help you with planning and promotion.

GINA: And finally, the Blue and Gold Banquet is right around the corner. February will be here before you know it, so be sure the details are coming together.

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GINA: Thanks for listening, everybody. We hope you've enjoyed this past year and you'll help us out and spread the word about CubCast to your fellow volunteers next year.

AARON: A special thanks goes to our guest, Dennis Kampa. Hope you'll be listening in 2020 as we've got some really interesting topics coming up. As we've got some really interesting topics coming up. Until then, I'm Aaron Derr.

GINA: And I'm Gina Circelli. Happy holidays, everyone!

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