

## JANUARY – THE ROLE OF THE COR

### **Music Full then Under**

OWEN: Happy New Year, everyone! Welcome to *Scouting Magazine's* special CubCast / ScoutCast crossover episode! I'm ScoutCast host, Owen McCullough, along with CubCast host, Gina Circelli.

GINA: Hey, Owen! I am so glad to be here. Okay. We're going to be starting off podcast 2020 talking about everything you need to know about your chartered organization representative.

OWEN: Now, before we begin, let's start off by explaining that the chartered organization representative is known in Scoutspeak as the COR. And that's the term we'll be using during the discussion...

### **Music Fades**

OWEN: With Wadene Bloms and Dennis Kampa. Wadene has been with the BSA for 17 years, serving as a Den Leader, Pack Committee Chair, Troop Committee Chair, Troop ASM, and District and Council Activities Chair. Dennis, who has been on both CubCast and ScoutCast many times, is the COR for Wadene's chartered organization, St. Pius the 10<sup>th</sup> Catholic Church, in Pueblo, Colorado. So, Wadene, Dennis, welcome to this special CubCast / ScoutCast show.

WADENE: Good morning.

DENNIS: Thank you. It's nice to be here.

OWEN: So, Dennis, I'm going to start off with you. Can you give us in a sentence or two what is the chartered organization representative? What is the COR?

DENNIS: The chartered organization representative is just that. He or she is the liaison between the charter partner and the units that the organization sponsors. The COR has several responsibilities, probably the most important of which is to approve all adult leader applications.

GINA: Okay, Dennis. Why does the BSA actually require a COR?

DENNIS: Well, the BSA basic structure is for all units to have a chartered partner, usually a church, organization, school, PTA, or some other community institution, but kind of think of it as a franchise type setup where the organization uses the Scouting program to support the youth in their group. The organization provides a safe meeting place, approves all adult leadership, and works with the units to further the needs of their organization and the youth themselves. Each chartered organization is structured differently, so the term "institution head", the IH, is used to describe the person who leads that chartered organization. In a place of worship, the IH may be a pastor it may be the president of that community group. The institution enters into an annual agreement to provide Scouting in the community and to the youth they serve. The institution had to appoint someone to oversee the Scouting program. That person is the chartered organization rep.

OWEN: Wadene, I've got a question for you, since you're at the unit level, really the most important level where Scouting really happens, why is the COR important to you at the unit level?

WADENE: Our chartered organizational rep is very important to me because he serves as our line of communication. For example, if our troop needs certain amenities of the church, such as the parking lot for our troop rummage sale, I just contact Dennis and he gets everything approved and set up. In return, if the church needs us to assist in any of their events or help them in any way, then they contact Dennis and he'll contact me to get everything arranged with our troop. The COR also communicates any concerns we might have, or the organization might have for us. Dennis will stop in to our troop meetings and check in to make sure everything is going okay and if we need anything. The COR is just a great connection between us and our charter organization. What's super great about Dennis being our COR is that the Scouting program is so important to him that he makes sure to do whatever it takes to make our troop successful and achieve our goal.

GINA: Very interesting perspective from the unit side, so let's flip it. Dennis, what's the COR's relationship to a unit?

DENNIS: Basically, it's to serve as that communication conduit that Wadene mentioned. It's important that the units and the organization talk regularly, you have a good relationship, relaying needs and wants, sometimes acting as the mediator and even a teacher. The chartered organizations don't always have a background on the Scouting program, so a good COR can do some training and explaining to deepen that relationship. The COR is a direct contact between the unit and the chartered organization. That

individual is also the organization's contact with the district committee and the local council.

OWEN: So, Dennis, it sounds like the charter organization is a great outreach program and in a full family of Scouting, the chartered organization might have a pack, a troop, maybe a linked troop, a girl troop and a boy troop. They might have a crew and a ship. Is there a COR for each unit or is there one COR for all of them?

DENNIS: There can be only one, Owen.

GINA: I'm kind of interested in this position. I'm curious, Wadene, can you point me in the direction how do I become a COR? Is it an elected position, an appointed position? Can I just volunteer?

WADENE: You can volunteer. If you're just wanting to work with youth and are interested in Scouting and you're active in your organization, you could be the appointed person for the representative.

GINA: Cool.

OWEN: We'll be back with more on the relationship between unit leader and the COR right after this.

### **Commercial: Champ Camp**

OWEN: Well, Dennis, can you give an idea to Gina and others what are the responsibilities that a COR has?

DENNIS: It depends on what the situation is, but generally if it's a brand new unit, which this time of year there's probably a lot of you out there, the COR will be involved in locating adults to serve as leaders in the unit or units. Once those units are set up, then the COR job mainly becomes adult leadership review and approval. The next part of it is being a liaison to the organization, as we've discussed, looking for ways to deepen that relationship between the organization and Scouting. Also, annually, the local council enters into an agreement with that chartered organization granting them a charter again. This charter enables the organization or groups to use the Scouting program under adult leadership in order to accomplish their objectives and to serve their youth and families.

GINA: Wadene, as a unit leader, how often are you meeting with the COR and what should you be meeting about when you do meet?

WADENE: We should meet quarterly or more often as needed. They need to be checking for service opportunities for the units, passing along any concerns from the organization. Usually recruiting time is a, a busy time with new leaders needing to be approved and going through that process.

OWEN: When you're meeting with the COR, is it by phone, by email, by text, is it roundtables, is it formal or is it just a pick-up the phone and call them?

WADENE: It's a little bit of everything. It's been on the phone to let me know something might be going on that evening and we have to change our meeting night or asking if the heat's been warm enough in the building. Like I said, Dennis drops by at our troop meetings often and asks what do we need from him, and, lets us know if there's any issues that the

organization might be having with maybe, moving chairs and tables back to where we had them before, something like that. But, it's an open line of communication no matter how it is. Texting even, is a good way to communicate.

GINA: Okay. I'm sure it never happens with Dennis, but life does happen. Sometimes things don't go according to plan. If a COR isn't living up to his or her responsibilities, Wadene, what should a unit leader do?

WADENE: There's two options, really. If you're comfortable with speaking to the IH directly, then talk to them about the issue. But if you don't feel comfortable speaking with the IH, then you can always contact district leadership for assistance, like troop commissioner, DE, council executive; they'll get everything worked out.

OWEN: Wadene, are there any other resources that are available for a unit leader that they can learn more about a relationship with a COR?

WADENE: There are some trainings, definitely, but it needs to be a good open line of communication and really show interest in the organization.

GINA: Before we let you both go, Dennis, I wanted to ask you first, is there anything else we haven't discussed that you think should be shared with our listeners?

DENNIS: Oh, a couple things just to amplify on, as far as training goes. BSA has a chartered organization training online with My Scouting. And some charter

organization groups also have their own training. I know the National Catholic Committee on Scouting has its own available on their website. So be sure to look around and see what kind of training you can find. Another thing is that ideally, that COR is a member of both groups or has familiarity with both groups, either sitting on the leadership role in at the church or PTA and possibly a former Scouter, maybe a retired Cubmaster or Scoutmaster or committee chair, something like along those lines. That really works out best when you can sort of represent both groups at the same time and be a real conduit.

GINA: Awesome. And Wadene, have we missed anything?

WADENE: Just to make sure that you have that open line of communication with your chartered organization rep and you will have a successful relationship.

OWEN: Well, it sounds like the COR is such an important part of a unit's success and so, Wadene, Dennis, thanks for coming on this special CubCast / ScoutCast crossover episode so that all of our unit leaders can get the most out that relationship.

DENNIS: Thank you and have a great year of Scouting.

WADENE: Thank you and happy new year.

GINA: We'll be right back with Reminders and Tips right after this brief Safety Moment.

### **(Safety Moment – Propane Stoves)**

GINA: Okay, so it's time for Reminders and Tips. Family Friends of Scouting, also known as F-O-S, is an annual, council-wide presentation conducted in every pack, troop, crew, or ship. The Family FOS Campaign asks parents, families, and alumni to consider financially supporting the Scouting program.

OWEN: This effort offsets the cost of providing Scouting to youth members, so if you haven't already done so, contact your District FOS Chair for more details. Your support and participation in the Family FOS Campaign in your unit is critical for its success.

GINA: We have an exciting January-February issue *Boys' Life* Magazine. You can read about Blizzard Camp at Kingsley Scout Reservation in upstate New York, where Scouts earn merit badges and learn how to handle, handle the cold, cold, cold, cold, cold.

OWEN: *(Laughs)* Ooh! The November 2019 ScoutCast on cold-weather camping might be a good companion piece for that. Meanwhile, in the January-February 2020 edition of *Scouting* Magazine, read about the Philmont Family Adventure program and what it has to offer for people of all ages.

### **BEGIN MUSIC UNDER**

OWEN: So that's it for the January CubCast / ScoutCast crossover show. We want to thank our guests Wadene Bloms and Dennis Kampa for joining us.

GINA: And thank you for listening. Be sure to come back next month for CubCast as we talk to you about why you should be using ScoutBook to give you all

the tools you need that will make being a unit leader just a little bit easier for you. And with that, I'm Gina Circelli.

OWEN: And I'm Owen McCullough. February's ScoutCast will be how you can help cultivate new leaders. We hope you'll join us for all the CubCasts and ScoutCasts in 2020. Happy new year, everyone!

**Music full to finish**