

MARCH – HOW VENTURING CAN HELP- NOT HURT – YOUR TROOP

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ANISSA: Hello, and welcome dear listeners! So, you know how at the end of every show we invite you to send your ideas for topics you'd like to discuss? We definitely read them and give each one careful consideration.

OWEN: That's right, Anissa. And several of you have asked for more discussions concerning the Venturing program.

ANISSA: So, stay tuned everyone, for *Scouting Magazine's* March 2020 ScoutCast: How Venturing Can Help, Not Hurt, Your Troop.

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ANISSA: And joining us for the discussion is David Bush. David's Scouting experience has spanned over several decades and he currently serves as the advisor for Venturing Crew 369 in Tyler, Texas, as well as the Southern Region Area 2 Venturing Advisor. David is also a member of the National Venturing Committee Program Support Team and is serving on the Operations Team for Venturing Fest 2020. Welcome to ScoutCast, David.

DAVID: Thank you so much. It's a pleasure to join you all.

ANISSA: Okay. This is an interesting topic. So why would anyone think that Venturing would hurt their Scouts BSA troop?

DAVID: Because they are perhaps not quite conversant with the Venturing program, they think that Venturing is going to compete with ScoutsBSA, - take the youth's attention away from the ScoutsBSA program, because Venturing may be seen as more attractive. That is not quite true.

OWEN: So, just for full disclosure, David and I know each other pretty well through the Venturing committee. In my role as National Venturing Director I have the opportunity to work with David and others on helping to support and promote the Venturing program. Now, David, in your words, how do you think Venturing complements ScoutsBSA units?

DAVID: Owen, you hit the nail on the head when you said it complements. It really does not compete with ScoutsBSA. The key thing to remember is, in ScoutsBSA the youth are learning and developing leadership skills. In other words, they're becoming leaders. In Venturing, they *are* leaders. The Venturing program provides much greater opportunities for the youth to demonstrate and really improve their leadership skills.

OWEN: And they serve some different ages as well.

DAVID: They do, yes. A Scout in a ScoutsBSA troop can join at roughly age ten and a half, certainly by age 11, the youth is in a ScoutsBSA troop and can remain in a ScoutsBSA troop until they turn 18. With Venturing, if the youth is 13 and finished the eighth grade or is the age of 14. The youth can join a Venturing crew and remain a youth participant in the Venturing crew until they turn 21.

OWEN: And it is possible to belong to both a troop and a crew?

DAVID: Oh, it absolutely is. And in fact, I personally know hundreds of youth that are members of a ScoutsBSA troop and a Venturing crew.

ANISSA: David, how can Venturers help a Scout leader with mentoring?

DAVID: One of the cardinal focuses of Venturing is mentoring. In fact, to earn the Summit Award, which is the highest award in Venturing, the real focus is mentoring. And here are a couple things that Venturing does with respect to mentoring. First, Venturers receive training in mentoring and practical experience. One of the recognized leadership positions in a Venturing crew is the crew mentor, and the primary responsibility is to help with new crew members. Talking about the Summit Award, one of the requirements for the Venturing Summit Award is to complete a mentoring training and also to mentor another crew member who is leading a tier-two or tier-three adventure. So, mentoring is clearly a large part of Venturing. And most Venturers, and especially now with the membership change we had back in February of 2019, many Venturers have prior experience in ScoutsBSA troops and many have served as patrol leaders or senior patrol leaders, quartermasters, other positions, and so they have a real direct understanding of the challenges of those leadership positions. And now that they're a little older with a little bit more experience and training, they can certainly help guide and assist young folks who are maybe struggling in a ScoutsBSA troop with that position and provide them some direction and advice and ideas on how to overcome particular challenges and get the job done.

OWEN: What does that look like?

DAVID: Think of it this way: a ScoutsBSA youth may go down to a Cub Scout pack and serve as a den chief and help with the Cub Scout program. By the same token, if you have a ScoutsBSA troop and it has an affiliated or a companion Venturing crew. A Scoutmaster sees a patrol leader that's really struggling and is having challenges in getting the patrol to do what the patrol needs to get done. And so, the great thing about having a companion or affiliated Venturing crew is that Scoutmaster can go to the Venturing crew and select one or two of those Venturers to come in and basically have one-on-one time with that patrol leader that's struggling and can give that struggling patrol leader some advice and guidance, some pointers and really get kind of a hands-on, almost like a coach, so that the young patrol leader can learn and better develop those leadership skills. And all that can be done under the watchful eye of the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster who's even a little further away in letting the youth lead the youth which is really what we're all trying to do. So, that would be one way that it could work and could work very well.

OWEN: David, that sounds ideal. Sometimes also being an adult leader in a ScoutsBSA troop, the adult leader words don't come through as clearly as a 17-year-old mentor. How do you see Venturers helping out with a Scout's service project?

DAVID: Really almost at the inception of a youth involving Venturing, is goal setting and time management which helps with service projects. And then, building on that foundation, Venturing also offers a training program called Project Management, and so it really does teach our youth in Venturing how to manage a project, which can include a service project. And so, the younger Scouts or the ones that don't have the opportunity to have that training. They seem to struggle more. I've seen from firsthand experience that it works and it works very well.

OWEN: We'll be back with more on Venturing and Your Troop right after this.

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ANISSA: How does Venturing fit in with the summer camp program?

DAVID: The great thing about Venturing, it's for older youth. The age range for Venturing fits in very well with the age range for summer camp staff. The one good thing about a council that really promotes Venturing and has active and viable Venturing crews that are out there leading the adventure. What a great source for summer camp staff. Even if they're not on summer camp staff, they can come and help with the staff training, because many Venturers have been there, they're a little older, they've received the training themselves, and so they're also a good resource to come in and help train the staff.

OWEN: David, are there other resources available to help Scout leaders or Venturing advisors with how these two programs can work together?

DAVID: First of all, the Venturing Advisor Guidebook. You can get it at your nearest Scout Shop or online, provides a great overview with sufficient detail to get a really good understanding of what the Venturing program is. In addition, the Venturing program has a very good website, www.venturing.org, which is just chockful of great information. The National Venturing Officers Association, NVOA, have podcasts that provide even more information about Venturing and what Venturing can do for a ScoutsBSA troop. All of those resources are great for a Scout. And then the way Venturing is structured, most councils that have a viable Venturing program have a Council Venturing Officers Association. And even if a council does not, then most often, the area that that council is

situated in has an Area Venturing Officers Association, and one or both would be very happy to come in and help with a ScoutsBSA troop to maybe develop a plan to at least collaboratively integrate Venturing into a ScoutsBSA troop's program.

ANISSA: Well, you've definitely shared a great deal of information on this topic. Is there anything else about how Venturing can help your troop and not hurt your troop that we haven't talked about that you think should be shared with our listeners?

DAVID: There are a couple of things. One is, we, we all know that a young person, when they turn 18, they're no longer a youth member of a ScoutsBSA troop. We've also seen over the years, not uncommon for a young person, maybe they're 15 or 16, they've completed Eagle, their involvement in the Scout troop wanes if not just completely diminishes. The wonderful thing about Venturing is it's still Scouting fundamentals but, it's a different program that provides a lot of flexibility, and it is a great way to keep a youth involved in the Scouting program who might not otherwise remain involved and keep them kind of close by essentially to use as a resource to support the troop.

OWEN: David, I can relate to a lot of what we discussed today, so I'm sure our listeners did as well, certainly knowing that Venturing serves the right age, the right program at the right stage and keeps kids in longer. So, David, thank you for coming on the show to share your vision of how ScoutsBSA troops and Venturing crews can be of benefit to each other.

DAVID: My pleasure. Thank you so much for having me.

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

Safety Moment – AHMR

OWEN: Let's start our Reminders and Tips with succession plans. Having a succession plan means being prepared to replace volunteers in key roles, and now is a good time to put one in place. The Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster may have committed that to their responsibilities, but he or she may not be able to keep that commitment.

ANISSA: Since our motto is Be Prepared, a successor needs to be identified for the role should something unexpected happen. With a succession plan in place, your troop won't be scrambling around trying to fill a vacated role and your troop or crew can maintain its tradition of 100% trained leaders. Tune into the February 2020 ScoutCast for more details.

OWEN: In the March-April issue of *Scouting Magazine*, see how a troop from Virginia plans its own unique 100-mile-plus adventure that includes hiking, camping, canoeing, biking, and touring Washington, D.C.

ANISSA: In the March issue of *Boys' Life Magazine*, follow along as Scout BSA and Venturing crews from Maryland spend a weekend spelunking in Pennsylvania at Laurel Caverns Geological Park.

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OWEN: And so, the March ScoutCast has come to an end, but we can't leave without special thanks to our guest, David Bush.

ANISSA: What other topics should we be discussing? Send us an email and at ScoutCast@scouting.org, or tweet @bsascoutcast. With that, I'm Anissa Hicks.

OWEN And I'm Owen McCulloch. Thanks for listening.

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