

AUGUST – BOY SCOUT E-TRAINING

Music Full then under

LEE: Bon-arn-arn-nar-nar. The music has started so that means it's time for the August ScoutCast. I'm Lee Shaw, Team Lead of National Alliance with *Bryan on Scouting* blogger, Bryan Wendell. What's up, Bryan?

BRYAN: Training is what's up, Lee, and this month's episode is all about what is probably the best advice you're ever going to get in Scouting and that is: always ask who snores before picking a tent mate. No, wait, that's actually TAKE. THE. TRAINING.

LEE: And now the training is available online so you could even take the training in your pajamas if you wanted to. Let's find out more about that ...

Music Fades

LEE: ... With Dan Maxfield. Dan is a lifelong Scouter and tireless volunteer with over 50 years of service to Scouting. Some of that includes serving on the Advancement Committee, Program Content Committee, and Commissioner Support Staff, but trust me, the list of his Scouting service could go on for days. Max also served on the taskforce that created these online training courses, and we can't wait to talk about it. Welcome to ScoutCast, Dan.

DAN: Hey, glad to be with you guys today.

LEE: Dan, let's get right to it. What are the advantages to taking training online?

DAN: You mentioned the jammy angle and that appeals to some folks, but the bigger draw would simply be that today it appears in our society that more and more people either work from home, have long commutes, sit in traffic a lot. Geographically, they're challenged from where they live to where their council office or their district to location is, and, and all the things that come with today's environment. For individuals to on a regular basis get to a facility – a church or the council office or wherever these things might take place face to face on a calendar basis – sometimes is a bit of a challenge. And so, the opportunity to take the necessary training, the things that make this program work, in a different venue does appeal to a lot of folks so, that's why these modules were created. That's why we put them online. And we want folks to be able to go get them, take them, and understand our program when it works for them.

BRYAN: Yeah, I like that; you don't necessarily have to come to us to get trained; we will go to you on your couch. So, Dan, when we're talking about the Boy Scout training who are the people that need to take this training?

DAN: It's set up for three groups of folks. Primary in that is the Scoutmaster and an Assistant Scoutmaster. but then also Troop Committee personnel. And then the third group of folks is Merit Badge Counselors.

LEE: Now, you just mentioned the three types of individuals that could take that training. What kind of training is available? Is it the same for all three types or is it different? Explain to our audience what that looks like.

DAN: Remember - in your local council or district calendars there are scheduled face-to-face trainings of this type that people can still go to. Everybody isn't necessarily inclined to sit down and take it online, so, first of all, folks should look and see what's still face-to-face available to them in their council or district office or their geographies where they can go take them, because councils can still put those on in a meaningful way. The alternative, is the online options and those modules are set up based upon what your job description is. So, for example, if you're a Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster, and you go online - the modules you need to take is already set up for you, and the same is true for committee people and the same is true for Merit Badge Counselors. It's organized to meet the need of the job that you have been designated as holding.

BRYAN: And so, for this online training, you'll see a, a lot of different names; There's e-learning, there's the BSA Learn Center, ScoutingU, but it all kind of directs you towards this online option. But, let's say someone's there with their laptop, Dan, and they're ready to take the online training, they've got the browser open. What do they do next?

DAN: The key here is you need to have a [my.scouting account](#).

BRYAN: And that's [my.scouting.org](#), right?

DAN: That's correct. So, you go there and if you already have account, you simply log in. If you don't, you set one up. And the process to do that is right there when you go to it and it tells you, "Set up an account" and it leads you right through the steps. Once you have that done and you're

then logged in, there is a place that says, “My Learning”, and you click on “My Learning” and it will automatically take you to the prescription that’s set up for you based on the job description that is entered that you hold: Scoutmaster, Committee Chair or whatever it might be.

BRYAN: So, it’s automatically customized for you.

DAN: Yes.

BRYAN: That’s cool.

LEE: And you mentioned earlier that time is always a factor. Tell me how long the course takes?

DAN: Let’s say you sat down just one afternoon or morning and you decided, “I’m going to do all of these and get it done.” Well, it would take you right about three hours which, by the way, is essentially the same amount of time the non-online, face-to-face training at a council or district office would take. So, they take essentially the same amount of time, it’s just the venue that you do it in and where you’re sitting to get it done. So, it’s about a three-hour program from front to end if you did all the modules.

LEE: Okay. Well, if you don’t have to drive then that’s gonna cut down with some time, right?

DAN: You betcha.

LEE And you probably won't break for lunch because you can have your coffee in your pajamas when you take the training, right? So, I guess, just depending on how far your trip is in terms of getting to that council training face-to-face could determine the length of time you invest in training.

DAN: That's correct. So, if you went to a facility and you had a 30-minute drive to get there, and there is introduction and announcements and then you had close-out and drive-home time, there's another hour and a half. The face-to-face is probably four and a half to five hours whereas if you simply sat down and did it online from front to back you could probably be done in three hours or maybe a little more depending on how many stops and starts you took.

LEE: So, how much time is the module itself?

DAN: The modules vary in length depending on the title that they are, but the average for the modules is; I think the shortest is four and a half minutes and I think the longest is 14 and a half minutes. So, you're talking essentially, five to 15 minutes depending on the module you're sitting there looking at.

BRYAN: So conceivably you could do one module one day and then a second module on day two. We talked about the three hours all at once but you also can spread them out. Is that right?

DAN: Sure. You could sit down in the morning when you get up early with a cup of coffee and do a couple get these done in four or five, six days.

BRYAN: Earlier I used the example of someone sitting on their couch with a laptop, but this isn't just for a PC laptop, right? This is a multiplatform training?

DAN: Sure, it is. Some people like to use their iPad. There are different venues by which you can do that. Probably most people will use a PC of some sort or a laptop, but the iPad type of thing works as well.

BRYAN: Yeah, I've tested it on my iPad. It works great.

DAN: You did! Oh, good, excellent. That's a perfect piece of information right there.

BRYAN: So I have to say that there might be someone listening to this that says, "Okay, I give a lot of time to Scouting already, so why do I need to get trained?" And this is more of a fundamental question that doesn't just relate to the online training network that we're discussing today but just training in general, like what's in it for me getting trained?

DAN: You're right. That's an extremely fundamental question and, look - I travel quite a bit and I fly pretty often. When I do that, I climb on that plane with an assumption that the captain, the copilot, the servers have some certification, some training. They have my best interest at heart and

they're gonna be able to take care of me. That's an understood factor. Clearly, we have expectations that when we go places and we engage with people there are some certification that happened there that makes them the expert.

BRYAN: Right.

DAN: Okay, in Boy Scouts we're pretty much all volunteers, those of us that are the leaders with our troops and the committee members. We're volunteers but you know what? We're also parents and so, in many cases, those are our kids or the kids of our neighbors and our friends, and whether we're volunteers or whether we're professionals, we are concerned about and interested in the welfare of our children. So, there has to be an expectation of some sort, somewhere that we need to know what we're doing, otherwise we are not going to provide the program that our children need and expect and so, it's about what our children are gonna get, and if we want them to get the best programming they can so they learn the most skills they can learn, they get the most values from the program we can give them, the leaders of those programs need to know what they're doing, and, by the way, we have a lot of data to back up the common sense, that when you have leaders that know what they're doing and put on a good program, then your children get what you expected, they're comfortable, they like it, they learn a lot, and they stay in the program because they like what they're doing and they're learning, and that makes us as parents happy.

BRYAN: All because you spend a few hours getting trained.

DAN: Exactly, all because you spent a few hours taking the training so you knew what you were doing; that's just vital.

LEE: And the online training itself just makes it that much more convenient in order for us to meet those expectations and for everyone involved to get trained. I mean, the face-to-face is still available. So, whatever works best for the individual is what they ought to do and I appreciate the work you've done with the taskforce to make this a reality - the ability to be trained in their own time, in their own fashion.

DAN: Absolutely. We hope that this helps some folks out there and provides another resource that just gets them to take the training and make this a fabulous program for every kid.

BRYAN: So, we know, Dan, to go to My.scouting.org to get started on this. Are there other resources or places that you want to send listeners to learn more about all the BSA's robust training offerings?

DAN: Let's start with your local council office. Every trading post that exists has all the books and the resources that a leader would need and every council and district office or facility has professionals that are there with information. They have training chair, camping chair, advancement chair, they have commissioners, they have all these personnel with all these resources to provide information. And then, there is the BSA website which newly reorganized and looking real nice right now. Everything that's Boy Scouts is right there for you to go find at your fingertips.

LEE: Dan. I can't tell you how much we certainly appreciate this conversation, and with it coming up on fall program kickoffs that will be taking place all across the country, there certainly will be that opportunity to find out what that calendar looks like for training, and so no one has any excuse not to know exactly when the face-to-face trainings are but now they have the ability to go online and do it as well. Dan, thank you so much for joining us and helping our listeners understand that this will make their Scouting experience so much easier and a lot more fun, not to mention of benefit it will be for the Scouts themselves. Thanks, Dan.

DAN: Thank you, guys. It's been a pleasure for me to chat with you today.

BRYAN: And ScoutCast listeners, don't go anywhere. We're going to be right back with Reminders and Tips right after a brief Safety Moment.

(August Safety Moment – Nap On Safely!)

BRYAN: Okay, here we go with Reminders and Tips for August. What do we have for the listeners this month, Lee?

LEE: So, you know how we just talked about online training? Well, guess what? I'm thrilled to share with you that new Scouts and leaders can now register online as well. How 'bout that?

BRYAN: That's awesome.

LEE: That is awesome. There's a playbook and resources to assist you through the process at [Scouting.org/onlineregistration](https://www.scouting.org/onlineregistration).

BRYAN: It's also about time for you to begin cultivating a relationship with your local Cub Scout Pack. A good way to start that is to provide the pack with a Den Chief from your troop. Not only will the pack appreciate the help, but the Den Chief will be a great asset for the Webelos-to-Scout transition in the spring, plus they get to wear that Den Chief Cord which was always my favorite part about being a Den Chief.

LEE: In this month issue of *Boys' Life Magazine*, read about a California Scout troop who built their own kayaks, then took them out on the Colorado River for a 50-mile excursion. Also, check out the article on the most unusual hall of fame this country has to offer. Hey, Bryan, by the way, did you know there was an International Clown Museum?

BRYAN: *(Laughs)* That sounds terrifying.

LEE: But it's true.

BRYAN: Now, there's no new *Scouting Magazine* this month so nothing to promote there, but you can take an entire century of *Scouting Magazine* with you everywhere you go with the *Scouting Magazine* app. For less than five bucks you get the entire *Scouting Magazine* archives – that's 1913 to today – on your favorite device. So, you'll want to search "*Scouting*

Magazine” in the App Store on iOS or on Google Play and download that app today.

LEE: That’s pretty cool. I love looking at old articles and the advertisements from the 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s just to see what Scouting was like in previous generations. And with the baseball pennant races heating up, I even ran across an article from last year when we had an Eagle Scout bike his way to all 30 Major League Baseball stadiums.

BRYAN: Oh, yeah, I read that.

LEE: That was pretty cool.

Begin Music Under

LEE: So that’s a wrap for the August ScoutCast. Thanks to our guest, Dan Maxfield, for joining us, and thanks to you for listening.

BRYAN: Is there any other topic you think we should talk about on a future episode? We want to hear from you. ScoutCast@scouting.org is the email address. Find us on Twitter @BSAScoutCast. With that, I’m Bryan Wendell.

LEE: And I’m Lee Shaw. We’d love to hear from ya.

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