

The Dulaney District Advancement Committee News

15 July 2018

Troop Leaders, Advancement Chairs and Eagle Coaches of Dulaney District;

Most of these items are reprinted from the National Advancement Newsletters of Mar-Aug 2018

A. SUMMER CAMP:

This summer Broad Creek will be tracking individual Scout's daily attendance and progress on a spreadsheet. At the end of the week each troop will be issued a signed copy of the spreadsheet showing the individual Scout's completed work. They will not be collecting or signing blue merit badge cards. If a unit wants blue cards the camp will print out electronic blue cards.



B. EAGLE ISSUES:

1. Troop Involvement of Eagle Scouts:

As the Romans used to say, "*Quid nunc* (what now)? (They spoke Latin, you know.) What do you do with a Scout who has passed his Eagle board of review? What can you do to keep this Scout, and all your Scouts, in Scouting?

Well, you can start by having a "pull-out-all-the stops, invite-the-whole-world, make-his-Mother-cry-tears-of-joy" Eagle Scout Court of Honor with the whole troop in attendance. Many a newly-joined Scout has looked on in awe as an older Scout had the Eagle badge pinned to his chest and has resolved then and there to become an Eagle Scout someday. That's the easy part.

How do you keep your new Eagle Scout around to help those boys keep their resolutions? First, make sure the new Eagle Scout gets credit at the COH for his earned merit badges in the form of Eagle Palms ([Guide to Advancement 9.0.3.0](#)), and then challenge him to earn more. To keep him in Scouting, do what you always do to keep up every older Scout's interest: make sure they have some-thing important to do.

For younger Eagle Scouts, keep them involved in troop positions of responsibility. Eagle Scouts are a natural resource as instructors for all Scouting skills, and a 13-year-old Eagle Scout senior patrol leader can be a shining example for all. Older boys who are at least 16 years old may be appointed junior assistant Scoutmasters. These young men under the guidance of the Scoutmaster can be an immense help in promoting advancement in the Troop. Finally, Eagle Scouts, young and old, also could be encouraged to participate actively in the Order of the Arrow, and possibly, to join the summer camp staff.

Once that Eagle Scout turns 18, invite him to remain active in the troop as an Assistant Scoutmaster, where his experience will be especially valuable in encouraging the advancement of Scouts through the ranks, and eventually, mentoring Life Scouts working on their own Eagle rank.

Do all these things and you will improve advancement in your troop and keep your Scouts in Scouting. Now isn't that what we're all about?

2. Life to Eagle, It's Not That Hard—Really!

Over time, the Life Scout to Eagle Scout advancement process has earned a reputation for difficulty that is not warranted. Life-to-Eagle is just another step on a Scout's journey to becoming a positive contributor to our American society. To be sure, it is a somewhat larger step than previous ones, but nonetheless, it is similar to all of those that preceded it. While there are some aspects of the Life-to-Eagle rank process that are different, most of the steps that a Scout must take are ones that have been taken before.

Let's consider each of the requirements individually:

1. **Active participation** - the Scout has faced this same requirement when advancing from First Class to Star and from Star to Life. The requirement is actually very flexible, which helps meet a busy Scout's needs. Participation does not need to be continuous or even recent to fully qualify.

2. **Scout Spirit** - by the time a Scout has earned Life rank, demonstrating Scout spirit by living the Scout Oath and Scout Law should be a normal part of their life, in and out of Scouting. Making Eagle Scout should not require extra effort or additional commitments of time.

3. **Earning merit badges** – yes, there could be as many as 10 more the Scout needs to earn; but they have earned merit badges before and there is nothing intrinsically different about earning these additional merit badges than those the Scout has previously earned. Sure, many Scouts will leave certain merit badges that may involve some additional work until later in their journeys, but the time management challenge is something they have dealt with before as well.

4. **Serve actively in a position of responsibility** - A Scout has been actively preparing for, and assuming, responsibility since joining. The level may be greater, but the skill set should be in place by the time they make Life Scout.

5. **The Eagle Scout service project** - Scouts are involved with service projects from the day they join. However, while an Eagle Scout candidate must be more involved with the planning and development of the project, this doesn't need to become a daunting task so long as leaders understand that the intent of the project is to provide a service to others, and not to make a "project engineer" or "construction manager" out of the Scout.

6. **Scoutmaster's conference** - This has been required for all previous ranks, so what's one more?

7. **Board of Review** - again, been there, done that. The Eagle Scout board of review is essentially like any other in which the Scout has participated in that it is not a test or reexamination of the Scout's knowledge and experience. Scouts should be encouraged to look forward to the board of review, not fearing it. It should be a confirmation and celebration, not an inquisition.

So, all things considered, the Life-to-Eagle process is challenging—and is meant to be, but adult leaders should not make it harder than it is.

3. What documentation is required for submitting an Eagle Application to the Council Service Center?

In addition to submitting the Scout's completed eagle Application one of the three following the following information packets should be submitted:

- a. An internet advancement report with all ranks and merit badges included.
- b. A Troop Master report with all ranks and merit badges included.
- c. Copies of the Scout's Rank pages from his handbook and copies of all of the blue cards for the merit badges listed on the front of the Eagle Application.

4. Eagle Palms:

There has been some confusion as to how to apply for Eagle Palms for merit badges earned prior to a Scout's Eagle Board of Review. If a Scout has earned up to two palms (10 merit badges in addition to the 21 required for Eagle) at the time of his Eagle Board of review, the troop may enter the palms in Internet Advancement or Scoutbook once the Eagle Award has been entered into his record by National Council, BSA. You know that the Eagle has been entered when it appears in the Scout's record in Internet Advancement or Scoutbook, or when you receive a card from BAC indicating that the paperwork packet is ready for pick-up.

For Palms for more than two palms, i.e.: Silver Palm (15 additional merit badges beyond Eagle), or more, the troop must submit an advancement report to Denise Shoemaker at the Shapiro Scout Service Center, and she will submit it to National Council where it will be recorded, and paperwork will be issued.

C. OTHER ADVANCEMENT ISSUES:

1. Revised Training for Den Chief Leadership Position:

How long and how effectively a den chief will serve depends upon how seriously the position is valued and by whom, particularly the adults in the pack they serve as well as those within their home unit. Youth value the opinion of adults, so if a den chief sees that adults ask for and value their input, they will take their responsibilities more seriously.

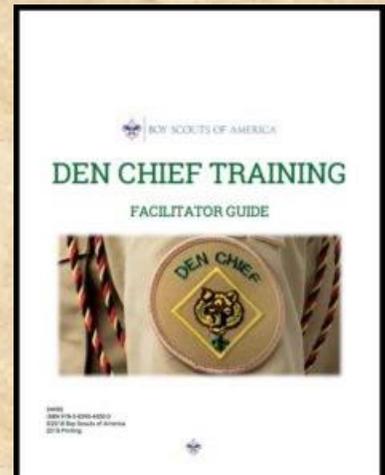
Like most things in Scouting, this process begins with training. Den Chief Training is intended to build enthusiasm, develop higher morale among den chiefs, and provide the tools a new den chief will need to be successful. This training can be delivered in approximately two hours. The time should, however, match the needs of the young people to be trained as well as the availability of the trainers. An evening session, for example, might work better for a Cubmaster training a couple of den chiefs, or a weekend session might work better for a district training for den chiefs of multiple packs.

The training should be offered in a facility that provides suitable space and access, perhaps council camping or training facilities, or a local pack meeting location. A session held early in the program year is likely to prove more useful to beginning den chiefs and their "adult partners", those new den leaders, or den leaders who have not previously had a den chief. Thus, all adult leaders who recruit or work with den chiefs are encouraged to attend with the Scout being trained.

At the end of the course all participants should be awarded a certificate of completion.

The Scout troop should then recognize the newly trained Scout with a *Trained* badge for his sleeve next to his den chief position badge of office.

Although den chief training currently is only available through face-to-face sessions, online modules are being developed that will mirror the content of these in-person materials. When ready and approved for use, there will be announcements in Bryan's Blog, *Scouting* magazine and other sources of BSA information. Meanwhile, everyone is encouraged to review the current course's Facilitators Guide at: www.scouting.org/training/youth/den-chief-training.



2. Merit Badges:

A. Scoutbook vs. Blue Cards:

Technology is a great thing but sometimes what we think it will do for us is not exactly the way things turn out. Take for example the wonderful world of **Scoutbook** (the BSA-owned, record-keeping program). This extremely useful software tool was developed to help units, parents, and Scouts to monitor advancement progress.

Scoutbook offers numerous applications, however there are limitations and restrictions to what Scoutbook can and should do. Most importantly, Scoutbook is not an official advancement document nor is it a replacement for the “Application for Merit Badge”, aka- the “**Blue Card**” (No. 34124).

The Blue Card is the Scout’s official record for keeping track of merit badge advancement. Blue Cards provide information beyond the data stored on Scoutbook. Blue Cards show when the Scout met with their unit leader to discuss the badge and received acknowledgement to pursue the merit badge. Blue Cards list when various requirements have been completed as verified by the counselor’s initials as well as provide helpful information for the merit badge counselor.

More importantly, Blue Cards are the documented record needed for any historical proof that a merit badge was earned. Thus, if it ever became necessary, the Blue Card is the source of proof that a merit badge was indeed earned. Should a dispute arise such as a rank appeal, including for the rank of Eagle Scout, the Blue Card could decide the issue.

Though some might suggest Scoutbook can do the same, note that digital platforms change over time, occasionally get corrupted and cannot provide proof that all the steps in earning a merit badge (Unit Leader discussions and signature, Merit badge counselor final signature) have been completed.

In essence, though it is useful to use the Scoutbook platform for entering information, it does not replace the required signed Blue Card which must be retained by the Scout, the Scoutmaster, and the Merit Badge counselor.

B. Helpful Resources for Merit Badge Counselors:

There are many resources available to assist a Merit Badge Counselor. These resources can be found both online and in print.

In many merit badge pamphlets, especially those for badges that have a higher degree of risk involved, there will be an introductory section entitled “Note to the Counselor.” Some of these notes address safety considerations, training, or special qualifications needed for presenting merit badge activities specific to the particular badge, but many pamphlet notes also provide suggestions on what, when, and how to counsel Scouts in subject matter important to BSA’s risk management plan.

Publications in print and materials posted on www.Scouting.org or available at your local Scouting store, include—but are not limited to the following:

Boy Scout Handbook (No. 34554)

Boy Scout Requirements (No. 33216)

A Guide for Merit Badge Counseling (No. 512-065)

Application for Merit Badge (No. 34124)

Guide to Safe Scouting (www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34416.pdf)

Guide to Advancement (No. 33088 www.scouting.org/advancement)

Merit Badge Counselor Information (No. 34405: www.scouting.org/advancement)

Merit Badge Requirements (<https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/advancement-and-awards/merit-badges/>) and pamphlets

The Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling (<https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/resources/advancement-presentations/>)

C. Scouting Heritage Merit Badge:

One of the optional requirements (4B) for the Scouting Heritage merit badge is to visit the National Scouting Museum. Currently, that museum is in Texas, but that location will soon be changing. The new site will be at the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

To accommodate boys who wish to complete this requirement while the move is in progress, as of April 1, 2017 Scouts may use new requirement 4C, instead. In this option, Scouts are instructed to discover Scouting heritage within their local community to give them a sense of the history of Scouting in their area. If they meet with a Scouting historian or memorabilia collector, they'll benefit from that personal interaction, too.

Here's how the new requirement is stated:

Scouting Heritage merit badge requirement 4

Requirement 4 is a fun and hands-on way for Scouts to learn about the BSA's rich history. A Scout has three options, each involving keeping a journal or writing a report.

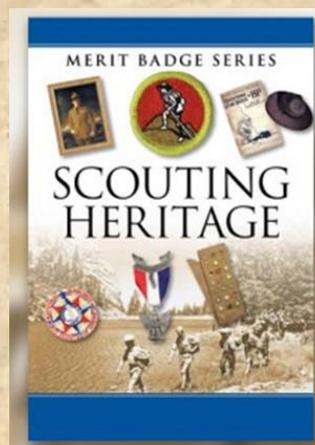
- A. Attend a BSA national jamboree, world Scout jamboree OR a national BSA high-adventure base.
- B. Write or visit the National Scouting Museum.
- C. Visit an exhibit of Scouting memorabilia or a local museum with a Scouting history gallery or visit with someone in your council who is recognized as a dedicated Scouting historian or memorabilia collector.

Meanwhile, Scouts and Scouters seeking information about the new museum location may write to Philmont Museums, 17 Deer Run Road, Cimarron, NM 87714.

3. Suspending Troop Operations for the Summer?

It would be REALLY disappointing if your troop decided to suspend its program for any period, however long, this summer. To who? To your Scouts, that's who. Any break will bring programs that are vital to their advancement plans to a halt, which must be restarted when you reconvene, and it is not a given that this can be done smoothly. Scouting is a year-round activity and summer is an especially fun time of year. Consider the following:

- There's summer camp. Please don't tell us you skipped summer camp.
- You could have had a campout for the troop youth leaders to plan the next year's activities.
- You could have had a "mystery campout" planned by the adults. Scouts can be given a list of things to bring so that they're prepared, but not told where they are going or what they will be doing until they get there.
- You could have had a campout to teach camping activities to new Scouts.
- You could have had a troop family picnic.
- You could have taken a Saturday to clean and store the troop equipment. Soda and donuts will make this go more smoothly.
- You could have had a car wash to earn money for troop equipment. For many reasons, it is more fun to do this in summer than winter.
- You could have had a lake or beach campout (Don't forget Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat).
- You could have had a troop service project.
- You could have had a court-of-honor. Summer camp is a good time for this.



- You could have had a catch-up on advancement to First Class weekend.
- And the list goes on. Summer is a fun time of year. B-P told us that it is the fun that keeps youth in Scouting.

Establish a year-round program in the troop and work to find ways to keep Scouts in Scouting. This will increase the likelihood that the youth will stay around, and we will have an opportunity to influence their character, promote their fitness, and to teach them citizenship. Now isn't that what we're all about?

Please note that a Scout must be given credit for active participation time, even if a unit takes time off during the summer or any other time of the year. (*Guide to Advancement 4.2.3.1*). Also remember that the Scout must be given credit for time served in a position of responsibility, even if a unit takes time off during the summer or any other time of the year. (*Guide to Advancement 4.2.3.4.3*). The reason for this is that advancement program should be used in such a way to find ways that Scouts can legitimately advance. We should not be looking for ways to prevent Scouts from advancing. A final note is to remember we are NOT allowed to change the advancement program in any way.

4. Lessons Learned for Inclusion of Girls in Other Boy Scouts of America Programs:

Venturing has been a co-ed program since it was created 20 years ago. We are now entering a time when other Boy Scouts of America programs are going to be including girls into their respective programs. So far, this inclusion has proven to provide many more opportunities for the youth of America. As leaders of the Scouting program, it might be helpful to review some best practices relating to boys and girls working together.

As we move forward, here are a few key points to keep in mind:

- Advancement requirements are meant to challenge an individual and help the youth to learn and grow. They are set the same for both boys and girls to complete. Having the same expectations is essential for the development of the youth.
- Consider the growth and development stages of both boys and girls individually and what they go through mentally and physically. Understand your role as an adult leader as it relates to this topic and remember that everyone will be at different developmental stages.
- Do not discount one gender over the other. Each gender does develop differently but it is important to remember that each person in the Scouting program wants to learn and grow. Each youth member is here for different reasons. Provide challenges and growth opportunities that are appropriate to the individual. Play to the strengths of each person to help lead the unit forward.
- As a unit, set policies to help provide guidelines and rules of behavior as they relate to mixed gender programs. Allow the youth to share their opinions and help develop those policies themselves.
- Remember youth protection rules always apply. Many sleeping quarters at camp may not be setup to accommodate youth/adult male/female – so get creative! Perhaps bring a tent for extra space or bring an extra cot to setup in a cabin if there are not enough beds for that gender/age group. You may setup tarps to provide the separation of a room into two sides.

As the Scouting program grows with additional members, our goal is to keep all youth safe, secure and reaping the benefits Scouting offers all members.

5. Registering Qualified Members Beyond the Age of Eligibility:

The 2017 *Guide to Advancement* is a great resource for answering many questions, especially those regarding areas not routinely encountered, such as advancement for members with special needs. The advancement program offers some flexibility to assist members with special needs to advance in rank via alternative requirements and merit badge options. Often this flexibility enables Scouts to meet needed requirements to advance in rank within the age requirements—and sometimes beyond the age of eligibility for most youth.

Section 10 (topic 10.1.0.0) in the *GTA* discusses registering *qualified* members beyond the age of eligibility, but exactly what does that word “*qualified*” mean? The *GTA* states that qualifying for registration beyond the age of eligibility can only be granted when “the disability is permanent and so severe that it precludes advancement even at a rate significantly slower than considered normal.” It goes on to further state that “registration beyond the age of eligibility is intended as a permanent arrangement to allow ongoing participation as a youth member in the Scouting program.”

Topic 10.1.0.1 of the *GTA* provides examples of conditions that *could* qualify, and topic 10.1.0.2 will help you understand how to register a member beyond the age of eligibility.

Here are a few other tips to keep in mind:

- Read the *GTA* and ask questions if you are unsure. Many councils have committees that can address these for you.
- Communicate and work together. Parents and Scout leaders should work together to discuss advancement and options available to help a Scout advance, if and when possible.
- Once a Scout is approved to continue to advance beyond the age of eligibility, please be sure their registration in the system has the proper disability code.

"The Request for Registration Beyond the Age of Eligibility, No. 512-935, found in the appendix (of the *Guide to Advancement*) and at www.scouting.org/advancement , should be used in this process."

The important thing to remember about this registration beyond the age of eligibility [RBAE] process is that waiting until a Scout is nearly “aged out” should seldom, if ever, happen. The only types of disabilities that permit Scouts to be registered beyond the age of eligibility are permanent, so don’t wait until the Scout is approaching the end of his eligibility to apply and submit the paperwork that is required. Registering as early as the qualifying nature of the disability is known documents the qualifying disability, which is the first step for requesting all accommodations/modifications/alternative requirements for advancement. Having this qualification in place early will benefit the Scout in the long term.

Yours in Scouting;

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