

# Advancement News

November-December  
2022

Vol. 12, No. 6

Prepared. For Life.®

As programs and opportunities modify over time, your friends at *Advancement News* will continue to be here to share these changes with you and offer insights. *Advancement News* will be uploaded directly to the [Advancement Resources](#) page of Scouting.org. Each bimonthly edition will be found on the [Advancement News](#) page. Since advancement evolves and occasionally changes, please note that the most current information found in *Advancement News* and the online version of [Guide to Advancement](#) supersedes previous versions.

## In This Issue

- **From the *Guide to Advancement*:** Life in the Fast Lane
- **On Increasing Advancement:** Positions of Responsibility – Junior Assistant Scoutmaster
- **Cub Scouts:** Detailed Cub Scout Adventure Report – Advancement Tracking for Retention
- **Merit Badges:** Merit Badge Interactions – Youth Protection Concerns; Hiking Merit Badge Requirements Update; Best Practices for Approving Merit Badge Counselors (Part 3)
- **Scoutbook:** Scouting Forum Resource for Scoutbook
- **Special Needs Interests:** Navigating Advancement Requirements (Toolbox Module E)
- **Sea Scouts:** Quartermaster – The Sea Scout’s Eagle Rank
- **Worth Repeating:** The Board of Review Experience: Keep It Friendly
- **Helpful Links:** General Resources

## Managing Subscriptions to *Advancement News*

*Advancement News* is designed for council and district advancement committees, advancement staff advisors, and Eagle processors. However, any Scouting volunteer or professional may subscribe. To subscribe to the *Advancement News* announcements, click here: [Subscribe](#)

# From the *Guide to Advancement*

## Life In The Fast Lane

You are living life in the fast lane! It is an exciting time to reflect on the time your family and Cub Scout have spent in Scouting so far, and the time to look forward with anticipation to their continued Scouting journey into Scouts BSA where the fun, character development, citizenship, physical fitness, and leadership skills training will continue to prepare them for life!



During this time, similar to what you experienced joining Scouting for the first time as Cub Scouts, there is a period of transition and learning. To ease this transition there are helpful resources such as the video [Webelos to Scouts BSA Transition](#), guidance from leaders, and experiences with Scouts BSA troops that will help to bridge the Cub Scouts from one program into the other seamlessly so they continue in their love of Scouting without any gaps.

Here are some things that Cub Scout leaders should do:

- Work with the Webelos den to complete the Webelos and Arrow of Light requirements. Arrow of Light is Cub Scouting's final rank before joining Scouts BSA and helps to provide experiences that give a Scout skills to prepare them for Scouts BSA (*Guide to Advancement topic 4.1.1.4*)
- Visit troops to see how a troop works, how it incorporates Scouts BSA youth as the leaders, and to see if the troop they visit might be a good fit for them.
- Take part in a "Camporee" or other traditional events, such as Webelos Woods that the district or council provides, which are designed to get Cub Scouts into Scouts BSA. Be sure the youth are invited to attend and participate. If there is no traditional event, consider starting one.
- If the den has a den chief, consider contacting that troop first, as a relationship has already been fostered with its members.
- Make the Cub Scouts to Scouts BSA "Cross over the bridge" pack meeting a big, big party to celebrate the transition and encourage younger Cub Scouts to look forward to continuing their Scouting journey. Contact a troop to provide members to help in "receiving" the new Scouts BSA youth, perhaps by sharing the troop neckerchief with each new member.

### About *Advancement News*

*Advancement News* is the official e-letter of the Boy Scouts of America National Advancement Program Team. Its intent is to provide and clarify procedures found in the *Guide to Advancement*, announce various changes and updates in advancement, and to assist advancement committees in making decisions that can help increase the rate of advancement. Therefore, districts and councils may reprint articles from this publication. Our plan is to distribute six issues of *Advancement News* annually, but special editions may go out whenever there is important information to share. Feedback, suggestions, and letters to the editor are welcome at [advancement.team@scouting.org](mailto:advancement.team@scouting.org)

*Continued from page 2*

Here are some things that Scouts BSA leaders should do

- Invite surrounding Cub Scout packs to a Troop Open House. Webelos Cub Scouts can see how the meeting is run with the patrol method and Scouts BSA youth leadership running the program. Make sure a youth leader is in charge of this activity. Parents are invited to a meeting with the adult leadership and this helps to educate the parents about Scouts BSA which is run differently than Cub Scouts.
- Make sure Webelos dens have a den chief from your troop.
- Have “Invite Webelos” camping weekends.
- Invite Webelos den leaders to become Troop leaders.

Here are some things that parents can do:

- Find out about the troops in your area and visit. Each troop has a unique personality. Find one that fits best for your family. Some packs will have a traditional troop they have a good relationship with, but each Webelos Scout does not have to go into the same troop.
- Attend the troop parent meeting with the adult troop leadership to get to know them better, get your questions answered, and understand whom to contact with questions about outings and other matters.
- Visit troops, again, to see how a troop works using the Scouts BSA youth as the leaders, and to see if the troop they visit might be a good fit for your Scout.

Here are some things that the volunteer district staff, such as Commissioner staff, District Committees, and Membership chairs can do:

- Provide a contact sheet of all the packs with contact information of the Committee Chair and Webelos den leaders to share with the Scouts BSA troops.
- Provide a contact sheet of all the Scout BSA troops and Committee Chairs to be given to the Cub Scout packs.
- Plan and conduct District activities for the “Cub Scouts to Scouts BSA” transition.

Cub Scout leaders, Scouts BSA leaders, Commissioners, other district volunteer staff, and parents working together will make the Cub Scouts to Scouts BSA transition a smooth one. Keeping youth engaged as long as we can in Scouting helps us to increase character development, citizenship, physical fitness, and leadership. This training will continue to prepare them for life! Now, isn't that what we're all about?

# On Increasing Advancement

## Positions of Responsibility –Junior Assistant Scoutmaster

In this series of articles, we have been sharing the linkage between the Scouting Aim of **leadership development** and the Scouting method of advancement via youth positions of responsibility.

For decades now, the average age of an Eagle Scout applicant has been over 17. Sometimes a youth has left the troop and is coming back to try to earn Eagle. Sometimes they have been in the troop all along but other things in life or opportunities have delayed their advancement efforts.

There is also the Scout who has earned their Eagle a little earlier than the average Scout and the troop wants to keep them engaged. Or the Scout who is not going to make it to Eagle, but for whom the Scouting Aim of leadership development is no less important.

In most cases, these 16- and 17-year-old youth have a skill set, experience, and maturity that can be an asset to the troop and the Scoutmaster. In most cases, they have also already served in most of, if not all of, the other positions of responsibility in the troop.

One of the positions of responsibility listed in the requirements for Star, Life, and Eagle fits these situations - junior assistant Scoutmaster.

As we find in “Troop Leader Resources” on Scouting.org and in the *Scouts BSA Handbook*, a junior assistant Scoutmaster is a Scout who is at least 16 years of age and has shown outstanding leadership skills. They are appointed by the Scoutmaster to serve in this role. The junior assistant Scoutmaster functions just like an assistant Scoutmaster, except for leadership responsibilities reserved for adults 18 years of age or older. In this capacity, junior assistant Scoutmasters (a troop may have more than one) follow the guidance of the Scoutmaster in providing support and supervision to other youth leaders in the troop. Upon their 18th birthday, a junior assistant Scoutmaster will be eligible to become an assistant Scoutmaster.

Their responsibilities are to:

- perform duties as assigned by the Scoutmaster
- set a good example
- wear the Scout uniform correctly
- live by the Scout Oath and Law
- show Scout spirit

Keep in mind that while the junior assistant Scoutmaster is a member of the Scoutmaster team, they are still a youth and all youth protection standards must be maintained!

A few years ago in *Scouting* magazine, some troop leaders gave a few examples of how they used a junior assistant Scoutmaster (sometimes referred to as a JASM) in their troop. They mentioned assigning them the role of teachers of such advanced skills as backpacking and rock climbing, being special advisers to the

*Continued on page 5*

Continued from page 4



patrol leaders' council, leading special programs at camp, aiding in the patrol leaders council annual program planning conference by sharing their experiences, serving as a liaison with a Cub Scout pack, managing the Webelos-to-Scout transition by overseeing Webelos den chiefs, maintaining communication with the pack's adult leaders, including Webelos Scouts in some troop activities, and coordinating troop service projects.

One assistant Scoutmaster noted, "Besides being a resource person, the JASM's greatest value is as an example for both older and younger Scouts."

Take a look at <https://troopleader.scouting.org/junior-assistant-scoutmaster/> for a brief orientation on the role.

We encourage you to use this important position of responsibility to give your older Scouts more leadership experience, to keep them engaged in the troop, to help them advance, and to strengthen your troop.

## Cub Scouts

### Detailed Cub Scout Adventure Report – Advancement Tracking for Retention

During this exciting time of Cub Scout growth this year, council and district advancement chairs have a *new and improved* tool to track Cub Scout Advancement. In my.scouting under "ROSTERS" and then under "REPORTS" is the Cub Scout Adventure Report. This report gives you the number of adventures that a pack has submitted in either ScoutBook or Internet Advancement 2.0.

On average, an active Cub Scout will earn at least one adventure a month. Reviewing the Cub Scout Adventure Report along with the pack's membership report will help you identify packs that are using the advancement program and/or properly reporting adventures when they are earned. Packs that have a low ratio of adventures earned compared to the number of Cub Scouts in the pack may either not be advancing or are not properly reporting. Either way, it is cause for conversation with the pack leadership to assist.

The previous method of tracking advancement was to use the Cub Scout Advancement report that only shows those who "achieved rank." The problem with this previous method is that Cub Scouts earn their rank towards the end of the program year and if the pack had low advancement it is too late to provide any assistance. But by knowing what is going on each month, a council or district can provide support and help to those packs as quickly as possible. An adventure per month will keep the Scouts on track to complete everything by the end of the program year and provide some breathing room. Note that Cub Scouts do not have to complete rank by February for the blue and gold celebration, as may be a goal and tradition for many packs. Cub Scouts **will**, however, benefit from consistent monthly delivery.



# Merit Badges

## Merit Badge Interactions – Youth Protection Concerns

Merit Badges are one of the lynchpins of the Scouting movement. Without merit badges, Scouting might simply be a series of campouts and meetings without advancement and thus with minimal goals or aims in mind. The rank of Eagle Scout would not exist in its current form, and the millions of service project hours that go along with it would never have happened. While we do not need to explain why merit badges are so important to Scouting, there appears to be some confusion as to how the actual merit badge counseling sessions should be handled as per the *Guide To Advancement*. The topic of Youth Protection Guidelines and counseling sessions needs to be stressed to merit badge counselors. Those counselors should have the information continuously reinforced regularly. Thus, this information needs to be emphasized by those involved in training and orienting merit badge counselors.

Youth Protection Guidelines, in particular, must be reinforced to counselors who may be either unaware or untrained in how to protect our Scout youth. Volunteers who serve as counselors are well-intentioned and truly care about the safety of our Scouts. They may be unsure about how Youth Protection Guidelines affect them, thus the need for continuous training.

Especially in our new world of Zoom and online counseling, it's important to strictly follow these guidelines so our youth continue to be protected and parents can feel that their children are safely earning merit badges in the Scouting program. The question becomes, what is the foundation of Youth Protection in merit badge counseling? Well, it is **Two Deep Leadership**, which means that there should be a second registered leader or parent in the room or on the phone or computer any time a merit badge counseling session is occurring. See the *Guide to Advancement*, Section 7.0.3.1.

### THE GUIDE TO ADVANCEMENT, SECTION 7.0.3.1

“A youth member must not meet one-on-one with an adult. Sessions with counselors must take place in accordance with the *Guide to Safe Scouting*. Notwithstanding the minimum leader requirement, age- and program-appropriate supervision must always be provided. Youth should be encouraged to bring a buddy, such as a friend, parent, brother, sister, or other relative. Better yet, another Scout working on the same badge ensures the two will receive equal merit badge opportunities. If merit badge counseling includes any web-based interaction, it must be conducted by BSA’s social media guidelines.”

The Buddy System is also a key tenet of the merit badge program which means two Scouts or more are participating in the merit badge counseling session. This starts with a series of **verbal** “upfront contracts, between the counselor, the Scout, and a parent before any counseling session commences.” It is important that all participants follow the Youth Protection Guidelines, intentions, and expectations before any Scout begins their merit badge.

*Continued on page 7*

These Youth Protection items apply to any merit badge class at camp, troop meetings, a merit badge college, or merit badge expo where many Scouts are working at earning merit badges at the same time. Councils will benefit when they make merit badge training available throughout the year, including new as well as experienced counselors - all can take advantage of such training.

Roundtables are a great place to share these reminders about Youth Protection. Merit badge counselors, scoutmasters, and advancement chairs will benefit from an update on Youth Protection for merit badge counseling, particularly with the increased use of electronic interfacing with youth.

## Hiking Merit Badge Requirements Update

Several requirement changes have been approved to the Hiking merit badge. These will become effective on January 1, 2023.

### Requirement 2

Requirement 2 has been expanded into three parts, to allow Scouts to thoroughly demonstrate an understanding of the importance of good hiking practices and etiquette. It now includes more emphasis on Leave No Trace and the Outdoor Code, which are core principles of Scouting and should be introduced and reviewed when beginning to work on this merit badge:

#### *2. Do the following:*

- a. Explain and, where possible, show the points of good hiking practices including proper outdoor ethics, hiking safety in the daytime and at night, courtesy to others, choice of footwear, and proper care of feet and footwear.*
- b. Read aloud or recite the Leave No Trace guidelines, and discuss why each is important while hiking.*
- c. Read aloud or recite the Outdoor Code, and give examples of how to follow it on a hike.*

#### **Outdoor Code**

As an American, I will do my best to  
Be clean in my outdoor manners  
Be careful with fire  
Be considerate in the outdoors  
Be conservation-minded

#### **Leave No Trace Seven Principles**

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be considerate of Other Visitors



#### **Requirement 4**

After reviewing feedback from the field and discussions from both merit badge counselors and professional organization representatives, requirements 4 and 5 were merged and updated. The new requirement has Scouts complete four 10-mile hikes and one 20-mile hike, as opposed to the previous one 5-mile, three 10-mile, and one 15-mile hike. It has also been written for clarity.

*4. Take four 10-mile hikes and one 20-mile hike, each on a different day, and each of continuous miles. Prepare a written hike plan before each hike and share it with your merit badge counselor or a designee for approval before starting the hike. Include map routes, a clothing and equipment list, and a list of items for a trail lunch. You may stop for as many short rest periods as needed, as well as one meal, during each hike, but not for an extended period such as overnight.*

#### **Requirement 5**

Requirement 6 became requirement 5 and replaced the word “reflection” with “report” as some Scouts may be unclear about what is meant by a “reflection”, but are more likely to know what is expected in a report. Additionally, it clarifies what should be included for each hike, not just a final report of all.

*5. After each of the hikes (or during each hike if on one continuous “trek”) in requirement 4, write a short report on your hike. For each hike, give the date and description (or map) of the route covered, the weather, any interesting things you saw, and any challenges you had and how you overcame them. It may include something you learned about yourself, about the outdoors, or about others you were hiking with. Share this with your merit badge counselor.*

### **Best Practices for Approving Merit Badge Counselors (Part 3 of 3)**

*This is the third of a 3-part serialization that will appear in Advancement News. Part 1 was printed in the July-August edition, Part 2 was printed in the September-October edition.*

#### **BSA RESOURCES ON APPROVING MERIT BADGE COUNSELORS**

- **[A Guide for Merit Badge Counseling](#)**, No. 512-065
- **[Merit Badge Counselor Information](#)**, No. 34405
- **[Merit Badge Group Instruction Guide](#)**, No. 512-066
- **[Merit Badge List](#)**
- **[Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns](#)**, No. 512-800

*Continued on page 9*



## **GUIDE TO ADVANCEMENT REFERENCES**

### **7.0.0.3 The Scout, the Unit Leader, and the Merit Badge Counselor**

Universal to all the merit badges, however, are the methods of advancement, personal growth, and adult association.

The National Council does not limit the number of merit badges a youth may earn from one counselor, though a unit leader is permitted to do so as long as the same limit applies to all Scouts in the unit. Ideally, Scouts should work with a variety of adults. In so doing, they may gain insight and learn from examples offered by a variety of perspectives and approaches to life.

Counselors may work with and pass any member, including their own children, wards, or relatives. Nevertheless, we often teach young people the importance of broadening their horizons. Scouts meeting with counselors beyond their families and beyond even their own units are doing that. They will benefit from the perspectives of many “teachers” and will learn more as a result. They should be encouraged to reach out.

### **7.0.1.1 Supervisory Qualifications and Certifications**

Several badges involve activities for which the Boy Scouts of America has implemented strategies to improve safety, enhance the Scouts’ experiences, and manage risk. These activities often require supervision with specialized qualifications and certifications. Merit badge counselors who do not meet the specific requirements may use the services of helpers who do. Additional details can be found in the presentation listed below, and also in the *Guide to Safe Scouting* and the merit badge pamphlets.

### **7.0.1.4 Approving Badges To Be Counseled**

Council advancement committees have the responsibility to implement an approval procedure that assures merit badge counselors have the necessary skills and education to offer quality experiences in the badges they counsel. The intent is for Scouts to learn from those with an appropriate level of expertise.

## **DOWNLOADABLE ADVANCEMENT EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

### **The Merit Badge Program**

This presentation, for unit leaders, merit badge counselors, advancement administrators, and parents, addresses the merit badge program and its benefits to Scouting. It includes the procedures for earning merit badges, merit badge counselor qualifications, the process of counseling, necessary counselor certifications, and limitations, and administration of the merit badge counselor program. It is intended as an instructor-led presentation to counselors of any experience level and takes 45 to 60 minutes; up to an hour and a half with questions and answers. [Download PowerPoint Presentation](#)

### **The Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling**

This PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes covers the required procedures for merit badge counseling, clarifies the role of counselors in the BSA advancement program, and discusses the appropriate approaches to use in working with Scouts. It is intended as an instructor-led presentation to counselors of any experience level and takes 60 to 90 minutes to complete. [Download PowerPoint Presentation](#)

# Scoutbook

## Scouting Forum Resource for Scoutbook

Have you checked out the Scouting Forums (<https://discussions.scouting.org/>) lately? It is the “go-to” resource to find help with questions related to BSA IT software. This includes Scoutbook and Internet Advancement. (Please note: program or health and safety questions are not covered on this forum. So, for those questions, Scouters will need to reach out to your local council.)

If you have a question, odds are there is someone that has asked the same question, too. You can find their answer on the forums, which are available to search and view. In the unlikely event that you have a question that hasn't been asked, yet, the Scouting Forum is regularly monitored by experienced volunteers and VERY quick to respond and help connect you to the right answer.

## Special Needs

### Toolbox Module E – Navigating Advancement Requirements

As Scouting becomes more inclusive, leaders are looking for help making the program a successful experience for Scouts with special needs. The National Special Needs Committee has developed an “Inclusion Toolbox” with numerous ideas to help leaders provide a great Scouting experience for ALL Scouts. Look for it on the National Special Needs Committee’s website: [www.ablescouts.org](http://www.ablescouts.org). Module E is about advancement issues and is quoted in the callout box below. Advancement is a system of ranks, badges, and awards that recognize what a Scout has accomplished and creates incentives to strive and grow as a person. The system is intended to provide a structured sequence of tasks that provide experiences to learn, grow, and succeed.

This module is directed at parents, guardians, and unit leaders who want to help a Scout with a special need or disability succeed in advancement. Module V looks at advancement from the perspective of the district and council leaders entrusted to make approval decisions for alternative rank requirements and badges. This module does not replace the rules for advancement found in the [Guide to Advancement](#) (BSA 33088), **which is the authoritative document**. Rather this module provides commentary and advice to assist you in using the *Guide to Advancement*. Since requirements change from time to time, you will need to look at the handbook for your program level to find the requirements that apply to your Scout(s). Some classes of disabilities have their own nuances and challenges related to advancement and you will find more specific “how to” information in Modules H to S of the Inclusion Toolbox.

#### KEEPING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

Before we talk about details and forms and processes, we want to make some philosophical points.

**“Advancement is a Method of Scouting, Not the Mission—**The mission of the BSA is to prepare young people to make ethical choices throughout their lifetime. Advancement is one of several methods for promoting the mission. Handled well, advancement creates healthy peer pressure that benefits all the Scouts in a unit.

*Continued on page 11*

*Continued from page 10*

There is a danger that we may set expectations too high and expect Scouts with special needs to go to extremes to advance. There is also a risk that we try to bend advancement requirements too far and take away the sense of accomplishment just to check off the boxes.”

“There are many wonderful Scouts who never become Eagle Scouts. When we laud and honor Eagle Scouts there is a danger that we diminish the accomplishments of other Scouts and fail to appreciate the good people they are becoming. When we look at Scouts with disabilities and try to create advancement opportunities for them, let’s not lose sight of the possibility that they are already good enough, just like they are. Advancement needs to serve the Scout, not the other way around.”

**“What is Expected of Scouts With and Without Disabilities** –It is easy to lose track of what is expected from others when you are an advocate for someone with a disability. A Scout rank is a multi-faceted array of challenges, and any youth will find some tasks easier than others. If a Scout with a special need finds that a few requirements are really hard to complete, many requirements are doable but take an effort, and a few requirements are really easy; he or she is effectively “typical”. At the other extreme, a more reasonable alternative is needed for a requirement that a Scout could not possibly complete. We want it to be somewhat difficult for a Scout with a disability to earn a rank, like it is for everyone, but not unfairly difficult. It is important to remember that advancement is not meant to be easy for any Scout, and that is why only a very small percentage of Scouts achieve the rank of Eagle. There are no guarantees that every individual will be able to become an Eagle Scout.”

**“Achievable Challenge** –Alternative advancement requirements bring the challenge within the capability of the Scout, but the Scout must still have the will to meet the challenge. No Scout is asked to attempt an advancement challenge beyond his or her capability if that capability can be objectively determined. A Scout is never set up for failure, but a Scout should expect to be challenged. Families and leaders should prepare Scouts to be challenged and encourage them to overcome.”

**“All in Good Time** –Think about what your Scout will be able to do later that he or she cannot do today? After Cub Scouting, advancement challenges are expected to be met over a period of years. Not everything is within the capability of an 11-year-old Scout nor should it be. The process for approving alternatives requires the Scout to attempt to complete all the requirements he or she can before an alternative can be approved. The Scout does not have to attempt the impossible, but the Scout should attempt the requirements that might be possible. This may sound harsh to a parent of a child with a disability, but there is a sound reason for this. As parents, our protective instincts make us wary of pushing our children too hard, but at the same time, we are continuously surprised when our children demonstrate new capabilities, especially when they have a disability. In Scouting, this means that we all have a bias to sell kids short. Having a rule that asks the Scout to try a requirement first, before we decide it cannot be done, counteracts the bias and allows the Scout to achieve more than the adults initially thought possible.”

**“Comparable Challenge** –We want all Scouts that earn a rank to have been challenged in a way that is fair to everyone who earns that rank; past, present, and future. The honor that goes with the rank needs to be de-

*Continued on page 12*

*Continued from page 11*

served, and it needs to mean the same thing over time. The challenge of advancement for Scouts with special needs is to be fair. As all parents know “fair” is not always “the same as for everyone else”. Even “challenge” is difficult to measure because it could mean different things in different circumstances, such as required strength/skill, level of effort, amount of time needed, or the quality of the product made. So if we assume the objective of alternative requirements is to make a rank about as hard for a Scout with a disability to earn as it is for a typical Scout, there will always be a devil in the details. That is why we entrust the responsibility for developing alternatives to responsible people rather than to a rulebook. It is also why the advocates for a Scout with a disability and those who must approve alternatives need to be considerate and treat each other according to the Scout Law.”

**“Having Fun –...**A lot of the things we do in Scouting should be fun or exhilarating, whether or not they check boxes for advancement. In short, the “game” is important. A parent or guardian of a Scout with a disability may be afraid that their kid will be left behind or left out of something, and be biased in the “not fun” direction. While we want our kids to live up to their potential, we also want them to experience joy, excitement, adventure, and fun. Without fun in the mix, it is hard to stay motivated to do things that aren’t fun. That is true whether you have a disability or not. The journey of Scouting will include plenty of opportunities to learn something and grow up a little, but let’s never lose track of the fact that these are kids and they need to have fun too.”

## **Sea Scouts**

### **Quartermaster – the Sea Scout’s Eagle Rank**

The top rank for Scouts BSA, as everyone knows, is Eagle. There are some perks about earning the award, such as a way to help youth get jobs, because of what the Eagle means. The award may also help the Scout get into college as well as other ways that are unique to an individual’s situation.

Employers remember the Eagle rank.

In the military, an Eagle Scout who completes Boot Camp can be advanced by two ranks if they are an Eagle Scout. For example, one young man, a Sea Scout and an Eagle Scout from Houston called his father (the author) from Boot Camp in Chicago and started the conversation off with: “Dad, you were right. The Eagle rank was important. I am leaving Boot Camp as an E-3 (enlisted-three, or two ranks up from the bottom of E-1) because I am an Eagle.”

It is a repeated situation that the Eagle Scout rank on one’s resume can open doors. Did you know that Sea Scouts can earn Eagle as well as Quartermaster – Sea Scouting’s top honor. Both are the highest ranks available in each program.

Both the Quartermaster and Eagle award service projects have to be Okayed at the District level. In other words, the same person who OKs an Eagle service project can also approve the Quartermaster project.



*Continued on page 13*

Continued from page 12

Both have workbooks to assist the youth in their quest. The workbooks ask questions like: Who will benefit from the project? How much will it cost? Did you show leadership and direct the project rather than do all the work on it? What are the details? (Perhaps this is the most important part of the project, as you don't want to fly by the seat of your pants on something this important.)

Both workbooks look similar.

Both have areas for before and after photos, both have areas for tallying up service hours of people who assisted in the project, and both have a series of questions to help the Scout to decide how to do a project. There are thousands of Eagle projects a year, and only about 60 Quartermaster projects, nationally. There are many similarities for both.

## Worth Repeating

### The Board of Review Experience: Keep It Friendly

(November-December 2015)



“If the thought of a performance review at work scares you, imagine how an 11-year-old Scout must feel as they approach a panel of adults sitting as a “board of review.” As Scouters, we must do everything we can to make these boards rewarding experiences for our Scouts.”

“A Scout is friendly, so when sitting on a board of review, think of it as a friendly, yet serious chat. To make the experience more comfortable, the *Guide to Advancement* (topic 8.0.0.3) limits the number of adults (21 or older) to no more than six, with at least three. Although other adults may be permitted to observe a board, that number should be limited to ensure the Scout remains at ease. “

“**The unit leader and assistants shall not serve on board for Scouts in their own unit**, but might be on hand to introduce a Scout to board members. He or she may remain as an observer—if agreed to by the board—but can participate only if called upon. Boards should be cautious, however, as the presence of the unit leader could influence a Scout’s responses about troop experiences. Similarly, **parents, guardians, or relatives should not sit on a board of review for their own youth**, but must be allowed to observe if they insist (GTA, 8.0.1.0). They should be counseled, however, that their presence could change the dynamics of the conversation and the way their child addresses questions. Simply put, it is just not fair to ask a Scout to have to consider if an answer to the board’s question would please the parents or the unit leader. “

Continued on page 14

### Editor’s Note

- This article was written before the inclusion of girls in the Scouting program. General references have been modified as appropriate to include references such as “Scout”, “Scouts” or “youth”.
- Citations of the *Guide to Advancement*, Section 8, are also found in the 2021 current version available online which may be found here [Guide to Advancement](#)

*Continued from page 13*

“Here are some further recommendations for ensuring friendly boards of review: “

" A board for Tenderfoot through Life ranks should take about 15 minutes, but no longer than 30 minutes (GTA, Topic 8.0.2.0. An Eagle board of review might take a little longer, but rarely should be longer than 45 minutes (GTA, 8.0.3.0)."

"While boards are generally conducted to determine if the Scout has met the requirements to advance, none are to be a retest of his knowledge (GTA, 8.0.1.1). Thus, in most cases, a board of review will be a celebration of the Scout's accomplishments. Board members should ask: Did the Scout have fun while they were doing it? Did it contribute to their personal growth? “

“If we keep these thoughts in mind when planning and conducting boards of review, the positive experiences that result will encourage every Scout to remain in Scouting and achieve further advancement—giving us a chance to influence their character. Isn't that what we're all about?"

## **Helpful Links**

The most current materials of interest for Scouters who are involved in the administration of advancement are located in one handy place. Many resources are available via the Advancement Resources page at [www.scouting.org/Advancement](http://www.scouting.org/Advancement). The list of general resources will provide Scouters with valuable sources of knowledge and inspiration.

### **General Resources**

[Guide to Advancement, No. 33088 \(PDF\)](#)

[Advancement News](#)

[Advancement Educational Presentations](#)

[Abilities Digest](#)

[Advancement Report, No. 34403](#)

[Building Effective Advancement Committees, No. 510-756](#)

[Eagle Scout Challenge, No. 542-900](#)

[Friendstorming on Tour, No. 510-003](#)

[Lone Scout Friend and Counselor Guidebook, No. 511-420](#)

[On Increasing Advancement, No. 512-047](#)

[Recommendations for Regional and Area Volunteers Supporting the Advancement Program, No. 512-048](#)

[Troop Resource Survey, No. 512-116](#)

[Guide to Awards and Insignia, No. 33066](#)

[Venturing Board of Review Guide, No. 512-940](#)

[Guardians at the Gate](#)