

# Advancement News

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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 bi-monthly edition will be found at 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.

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# Diversity and Inclusion

## **The BSA's Diversity and Inclusion Statement**

The Boy Scouts of America promotes a culture where each youth, volunteer, and employee feels a sense of belonging and builds communities where every person feels respected and valued. Leading by example and encouraging each other to live by the values expressed by the Scout Oath and Scout Law, we welcome families of all backgrounds to help prepare young people to serve as successful members and leaders of our nation's increasingly diverse communities.

## **New Training: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Scouting**

The Boy Scouts of America recently made a new training course, entitled "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Scouting," available online. This 30-minute course is for every Scouter who wants to learn how these concepts fit into the Scouting program, at any level, but will be especially valuable to troop leaders and individuals who are considering becoming merit badge counselors for the new Citizenship in Society merit badge, which will soon become required for the rank of Eagle Scout.

The course is divided into seven sections, each ending with a knowledge check. It begins with introductions by several top BSA leaders, then defines the terms and describes ideas for examining these issues within your unit, district, or council. Building on this common framework, the course goes on to discuss ways to implement the following equation across all BSA programs: Diversity + Equity + Inclusion = Belonging.

To access the training, visit <http://my.scouting.org>. Note that, like Youth Protection Training, the person taking this course does not need to be a registered Scouter, but will need to create an account. Like other online courses, you can proceed at your own pace, and the majority of the content can be read or played audibly.

## **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)

# From the *Guide to Advancement*

## An Advancement Crystal Ball

What would you do if you had a crystal ball that would allow you to see what every Scout will be like as an adult? Of course, no such device for predicting what their futures will hold exists, but Scouting does provide us with tools that offer a glimpse into what their futures could hold: the ability to “make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes” in accordance with the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

So, just what is it that you want to see in each Scout many years from now? Do you want to see a person who knows first aid? That’s certainly a useful skill. Perhaps you’d like to see someone who knows knots; one who can sharpen a knife and use it safely; one who can plan a meal and cook it; or maybe one who can swim. Is that what you want to see? The answer is, “Yes, certainly!” You want to see all of those things and many more.

In addition, Scouting provides us with a set of tools to turn our vision of “preparing every eligible youth in America to become a responsible, participating citizen and leader who is guided by the Scout Oath and Law” into reality: Scouting’s Aims and Methods.

You will remember from your training (if not, maybe it’s time for a refresher course) that if we use all of the methods of Scouting, we will achieve Scouting’s Aims, i.e., that each Scout will achieve personal growth in the areas of character and leadership development, citizenship, and personal fitness. All eight methods must work in concert, of course, but the one we are most concerned with in this newsletter is that of Advancement.

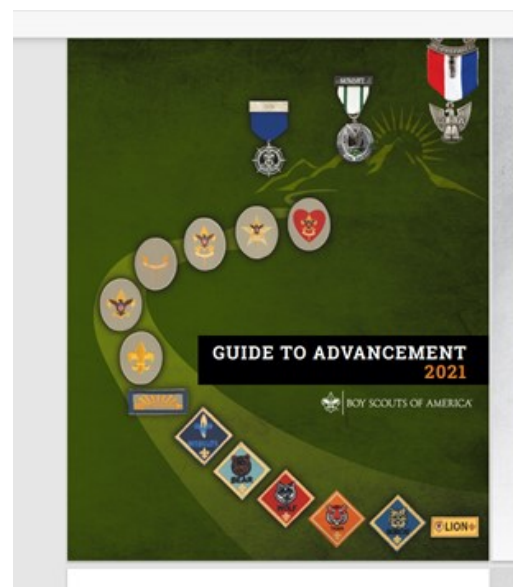
If we use that method in accordance with the processes laid out in the *Guide to Advancement*, our Scouts will achieve the personal growth we had hoped and planned for. In fact, when Scouts do the things that are required for advancement within a well-rounded unit program, they will learn that they can learn to do things they never thought they could do, and will become more confident in their ability to deal with life’s challenges, big and small. Isn’t that the stuff you really would like to see if you actually had that crystal ball—and isn’t that what we’re all about.

### Advancement for real personal growth

First Class Rank Requirement 2d: Demonstrate the procedures to follow in the safe handling and storage of fresh meats....

Star Rank Requirement 4: Participate in six hours of service through one or more service projects approved by your Scoutmaster

Life Rank Requirement 2: As a Star Scout, demonstrate Scout spirit by living the Scout Oath and Scout Law.



# On Increasing Advancement

## Where to Get Advancement Help in the New National Service Territories Structure

With the restructuring of BSA's four Regions into 16 National Service Territories (NST), many advancement administrators are wondering where to turn for help with advancement issues. As always, the first place to look should be the *Guide to Advancement*, which can be viewed/downloaded at [www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards/resources/](http://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards/resources/). Most of the time you will find the answer in the *GTA*, but if you are not sure of how to interpret or apply the answer you did find, your next step depends on your service role in Scouting.

Unit Advancement Chairs should always contact their District or Council Advancement Chair, first. Likewise, District Advancement Chairs should always contact their Council Advancement Chair, first.

If Council Advancement Chairs need further assistance, their next stop is the National Service Territory Program Lead, who is responsible for finding knowledgeable folks in other councils within the NST who can share their insights. These inquiries will be handled on an as-needed basis, as there are no standing advancement committees within the NSTs.

Finally, if the Program Lead cannot resolve the issue, the NST Program Lead and/or the Council Advancement Chair will contact the National Advancement Team for advice. Please note that members of the National Advancement Team are volunteers at the national level, so this process might entail some delays in securing a response. It is important to note that currently there is not a national professional dedicated to helping with advancement questions.

Meanwhile, don't forget that there are plenty of folks at the local Council and NST level with years of experience and a willingness to help. Just ask your District or Council Executive to help point you in the right direction.

## Cub Scouts

### Cub Scouts Outings: Be Sure to "Take Advancement Along"



Adapted from the *Trail to Adventure*

As the leaves in most of the country start to turn colors, can Fall be very far behind? Your pack should have an annual plan framed, including Blue and Gold Dinners, Raingutter Regattas, Pinewood Derbies, Holiday parties, carnivals, and fun Pack outings. Don't forget to include a couple of Pack Overnights!

**Pack overnights can be an exciting way to engage new families in our Cub Scout program! The chance to go camping continues to be the number one reason why youth join Cub Scouts!**

But we also need to consider that Pack Overnights will often be a Cub Scout family's first introduction to camping outdoors, and it's very important that your Pack does it right! The first step on that path is to have

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several of your Pack leadership team, and a couple of parents, attend BALOO training in your Council or District.

BALOO (Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation) training is itself an overnight experience that will teach you all the skills you need to help your scouts feel at home in the outdoors. It will also provide you with an outdoor learning experience, as you will be participating in meal prep, campsite prep, and sleeping in the outdoors. What better way to learn about camping than to actually go camping?

BALOO is the Cub Scout leader training required for any Cub Scout den or pack outdoor event, including pack camping overnights and Webelos den overnights. This training should be presented by council or district level training teams as needed. Councils may decide to require periodic refreshers based on local situations.

BALOO training is comprised of two components—an online component and a practical, hands-on component. Both components must be completed to qualify as a “TRAINED” Cub Scout outdoor leader. The online component must be completed prior to the practical component. The online training contains introductory and basic information that will be built upon during the practical training.

The Outdoors are integral to Cub Scouting! And by participating in BALOO training, adult leaders will know how to conduct an outdoor event that will be fun for Cub Scouts and their families. BALOO will provide you with all that information, plus a great learning experience at a camp near you!

Here’s a list of some of the information covered during BALOO: GPS; Aquatics; Gear Selection; Nature; Outdoor Ethics; Cooking; First Aid; Knife Safety; Campsite Selection; Meal Planning; Duty to God; Stoves & Lanterns; Knots; Program Planning; and much, much, more

Check your council or district calendars or ask your local district executive when the next BALOO training is scheduled, and then get your pack’s leaders registered!! You won’t regret it!!

The Cub Scout Adventure Program is very easily adapted to the outdoors. In addition to the Cub Scout Outdoor Activity Award, Cub Scouts can also earn several Outdoor-oriented adventures.

- Lion—Lion Adventure.
- Tiger—My Tiger Jungle; Tigers in the Wild; Floats & Boats.
- Wolf—Call of the Wild; Paws on the Path; Spirit of the Water.
- Bear—Bear Claws; Bear Necessities; Furs, Feathers & Ferns; A Bear Goes Fishing; Salmon Run.
- Webelos/AOL—Cast Iron Chef; Webelos Walkabout; Outdoor Adventurer.

Boy Scouts of America *Trail to Adventure* is available online. Click here to visit the latest information.  
[Trail to Adventure](#)





## Scoutmaster Conferences with Your Own Child?

By Christopher Hunt, National Director of Advancement, Ret.

I recently received a question about Scoutmasters conducting conferences with their own sons or daughters. This one hit home! For half the time I was a Scout, my dad was my Scoutmaster. Having those conferences with him helped cement a strong bond that lasted throughout our time together.

The questioner voiced concern that in Scoutmaster conferences with their own kids, the parent-child relationship could override that between Scoutmaster and Scout. Meaningful discussion might not take place. Parents might have unfair expectations—higher or lower—for their own kids. Therefore, wouldn't it be best for an assistant Scoutmaster to conduct the conference?

### The opinion I offered went along these lines:

If in any given troop, it actually *matters* whether Scoutmasters are too hard or too soft, then the conferences are not being conducted as intended. SM conferences are *not* pass-fail events. Whether “hard” or “soft,” they are opportunities for adult-youth association. They are *not* opportunities to bar the gate. They are two-sided learning experiences established to contribute to our mission—nothing more, yet nothing less. The only outcome that counts, is that they took place. Period.

Consider this: The best conference—the one most meaningful, most memorable—might be the spontaneous one, the one that just “happened,” sitting on a log talking about what has been or might be. Such a conference could count toward the next rank. In fact, if push came to shove, it *would* count. We make too much of formal conferences as a last step before a board of review. It is more effective to catch Scouts here and there, unawares and unprepared, and have conversations free of canned questions and prepped responses.

Scoutmasters fortunate enough to confer with their own sons or daughters should take full advantage of that wonderful opportunity to build the same kind of bond my dad built with me. Why not? Hard or soft, the goal is to maximize personal development!

**Now, that said, the *Guide to Advancement* includes a clause that allows ASMs to conduct conferences.**

**Here's the applicable wording (topic 4.2.3.5):**

*“While it is intended that the conference be conducted between the unit leader and the Scout, it may sometimes be necessary for the unit leader to designate an assistant unit leader to conduct the conference. For example, if the Scoutmaster is unavailable for an extended period of time or in larger troops where a Scout's advancement would be delayed unnecessarily, then it would be appropriate for an assistant Scoutmaster (21 years old or older) to be designated to conduct the conference.”*

While the language offers two examples where an ASM could conduct the conference, it does not preclude other instances. When I wrote the clause, I could have included the Scoutmaster-child conference as a third example. This, however, would run the risk of putting the practice forth as a recommendation, even when it is not advised.

# Eagle, Summit, & Quartermaster Highlights



## Fundraising and Eagle Scout Service Projects

Eagle Scout requirement #5 states, in part, “while a Life Scout, plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to any religious institution, any school, or your community.” GTA topics 9.0.2.0 through 9.0.2.15 outline the procedures to be used in planning and conducting Eagle Scout service projects.

Questions frequently arise regarding the raising of money to conduct Eagle Scout service projects. GTA topic 9.0.2.10 Fundraising Issues, specifically states that “Projects may not be fundraisers. In other words, the candidate must not stage an effort that primarily collects money, even if it is for a worthy charity.” The topic further states that “the BSA prefers, in fact, that Scouts choose projects that can be done at little or no cost.”

However, it is understood that projects often require the purchase of material or other expenditures to be successful. While the primary purpose of the project cannot be to raise funds, the leadership provided by the Eagle Scout candidate during fundraising, if any, can be considered when evaluating whether the Scout gave leadership to others. In no event should the Scout be required to raise funds to complete the project, and the source of the funding of the project should not be a criterion for evaluating whether the Scout successfully completed the requirement.

It is important to remember that all fundraising efforts require council approval, except when the contributors are the beneficiary of the project, or members of the Scout’s family or unit. When seeking approval, Scouts should utilize the *Eagle Scout Fundraising Application*, found in the *Eagle Scout Project Workbook*. This application includes a section entitled “Procedures and Limitations on Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising.” It is important to remember that the *Eagle Scout Fundraising Application* is not required when the Scout is seeking approval to conduct the project.

The local council determines who has the authority to approve these applications, usually either council or district volunteers, or professional Scouters. Furthermore, the council has the authority to issue guidelines regarding when approval is or is not required. These guidelines might include specific dollar thresholds or types of fundraising activities that are pre-approved. For example, the council may indicate that a bake sale to raise funds does not require approval, but could place limitations on the use of “crowdfunding” or other Internet-based activities.

Finally, it is important that all donors be made aware that any funds contributed are on behalf of the beneficiary of the project, not the Boy Scouts of America. The funds raised may be held by the Scout’s unit, or the beneficiary of the project, but should not be held by the Scout. Any excess funds should be retained by the project beneficiary or donated to a charity identified by the beneficiary.

# Merit Badges

## Citizenship in Society Merit Badge



Beginning on November 1, 2021, the Citizenship in Society merit badge will be available for Scouts to earn on an optional basis. The badge will become required for the rank of Eagle Scout on July 1, 2022, allowing Life Scouts to continue working on current requirements until June 30, 2022. Starting July 1, 2022, Eagle Scout candidates must earn the new Citizenship in Society merit badge. That will be 21 merit badges in total - 14 required and 7 electives. The requirements and the Notes to the Counselor will be posted on <https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards/merit-badges/> there will be no pamphlet for this badge.

### Goal of the Merit Badge

The goal of the Citizenship in Society merit badge is to help educate Scouts on what diversity, equity, and inclusion are; why they are important; and how to lead ethically and inclusively to contribute to the cultivation of an environment of belonging for all Scouts. This merit badge is one of the educational and awareness initiatives the BSA is implementing to ensure every youth feels welcomed and wholly included, to achieve a sense of belonging with the Scouts, and to prepare them for success in our ever-evolving world.

### Expectations of the Scout

- Learning key terminology.
- Understanding how diversity, equity, and inclusion relate to the Scout Oath and Scout Law.
- Evaluating scenarios to understand how they make others feel and how each person can serve as a supportive and inclusive leader who values others' thoughts and opinions.
- Collaborating with a Scout or youth from a different background to exchange information and experiences.
- Brainstorming how to optimize the welcoming environment of their Scouting units and actions they personally commit to taking.
- Documenting key recommendations to share with their counselor.

### Expectations of the Merit Badge Counselor

- This merit badge does not include a pamphlet. It will require a Scout to do their own research and to dig as deeply and as detailed as the Scout desires.
- The counselor is to serve as a facilitator who draws out from the Scout what they have discovered and learned, and how they plan to put it into action. The counselor is not to interject their own opinions and beliefs but instead should consider the Scout's experience and journey into these topics. The role of the counselor is that of a

*This merit badge does not include a pamphlet. It will require a Scout to do their own research and to dig as deeply and as detailed as the Scout desires.*

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skilled listener and discussion leader, as well as someone informed on key concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion through BSA-provided training and self-guided exploration.

- A safe environment must be provided for the Scout to discuss these topics and their observations without judgment. The Scout Oath and Scout Law are the appropriate boundaries to use in these discussions, and your skills as the counselor should demonstrate inclusive leadership and how to value everyone's thoughts and opinions. In addition, review the Boy Scouts of America Scouter Code of Conduct (including Youth Protection Guidelines, with which all in-person and virtual interactions must comply): <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/bsa-scouters-code-of-conduct/>
- Due to the maturity and skill needed to serve as the counselor of this merit badge, it is recommended that this merit badge not be offered in a summer-camp setting. It is not intended to be added onto the existing duties of summer-camp staff members or included in a class setting like a merit badge college. The intent is for the true learning to be experienced through the Scout's own research. It will work most effectively in the Scout's discussions with their merit badge counselor or in a small group setting. The goal is to have openness and depth of conversation. (This can be offered in a small group setting following Youth Protection requirements).

## Special Needs Interests

### Special Needs and Disabilities Roundtable to Highlight Advancement

On December 14, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. (Central Standard Time), the National Special Needs and Disabilities Committee will host a virtual Roundtable that will address Advancement **for Scouts with Special Needs and Disabilities**. The main presentation will cover the provisions of the *Guide to Advancement*, Section 10, with specifics as they apply to Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Sea Scout programs.

Click [here](#) or paste this link ( <https://scouting-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZckc-Cqrj4jH9fQcQwEPe5HOblNpj8pvmju> ) in your browser to register for the roundtable.



## Strategic Planning With the ISAP

*Reprinted from Abilities Digest, Summer 2021*

The BSA has a planning form for families and leaders to use to jointly map out the future for a Scout with a disability. It is called the Individual Scout Advancement Plan (ISAP), and you can find it by searching for BSA Form 512-936. It is modeled on the individual education programs (IEPs) and 504 plans used in public schools for students with special needs. Unlike an IEP or 504 plan, the ISAP does not create legal rights or legal status. The ISAP can be updated as a Scout matures and moves through the Scouting program.

An earlier *Abilities Digest* article discussed [joining conferences](#) for new unit members. Creating an ISAP will take more detailed discussion than is appropriate for a joining conference. In general, before preparing an ISAP the family will need some time to learn more about the Scouting program and the unit will need some time to understand the Scout.

### Cub Scouting

If a Cub Scout has a known special need or disability, it is wise for the parent/guardian and den leader to meet at the beginning of the program or school year and review all of the rank requirements for that year: Lion, Tiger, Wolf, Bear, Webelos, or Arrow of Light. This is the time to identify requirements that pose exceptional challenges for the Cub. Remember, a Cub fulfills a requirement by doing his or her best. If the Cub can-not even begin to try a requirement, the parent and den leader can work together to come up with alternatives. The pack committee must approve alternative requirements.

### Scouts BSA, Venturing, etc.

At the Scouts BSA level and older, **the first planning step is to figure out how to support what the Scout wants to do.** While few Scouts advance without family and leader encouragement, we don't want advancement to be driven by the parents, guardians, or leaders. Realistically, the Scout with a special need should set the goals and the rest of the adult team should help spot opportunities to make progress on those goals. It is perfectly fine if a Scout just wants to have fun, make friends, and go on outings instead of making effort to advance in rank. Scouts often fulfill rank requirements just by being present as the opportunities occur. Some Scouters call this *stealth advancement* since others may keep track of these achievements even if the individual Scout fails to do so.

The **second planning step is figuring out which Scouts need an ISAP.** Some Scouts arrive at a unit with an obvious disability, where some advancement requirements are very difficult or impossible, and you can start on an ISAP soon. However, many Scouts have an *invisible disability* that does not draw any immediate attention. An invisible disability or special need is a difference that doesn't change the way the person looks or moves, but does make learning, organizing, or demonstrating knowledge for requirements extra hard.

A Scout leader should not try to diagnose any Scout, but a wise leader takes a long look at the performance of each new Scout after the first year. It is important to **figure out if a Scout is not performing well despite trying hard or because he or she is not really trying.** If a Scout has the will to succeed but is not

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being effective, it is time to start developing an ISAP.

Even though the ranks of Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class are presented in sequence, most Scouts work on requirements for all of these levels at the same time. Scout leaders often refer to this group of ranks as the “Trail to First Class”. The first round of planning is to go over these requirements and determine which ones need alternatives and which ones need accommodations. If the adult team can tell up front which are which, you can go ahead and apply for alternative requirements while the Scout works on what he or she can do.

**Most of the time, you will not know all of the obstacles until the Scout makes an attempt on a requirement.** If there is doubt about whether a Scout can complete a task, he or she should be given a chance to complete the requirement as it is written. **Be careful that you do not force the Scout to fail.** Once the adult team knows what alternatives are needed, they develop them and submit them for approval. The actual process will be discussed a little later.

Scouts that need alternative requirements and merit badges often need to be efficient with their time and effort. This is very important with merit badges because **you cannot request alternative requirements for merit badge requirements. They are an all or nothing proposition.** The Scout and his or her supporting adults need to look at all of the requirements for a merit badge before starting work on it. If the Scout cannot complete all of them with reasonable flexibility and accommodations, the Scout will not be able to earn the badge even though the Scout may enjoy the activities of the badge and benefit from the socialization and participation.

There is a risk of creating hard feelings when merit badge work is done in a group setting. If a Scout is encouraged to participate alongside other Scouts in a group setting, it can create an expectation that the Scout can complete the badge, even if there are requirements that are impossible for that particular Scout. When the rest of the group is presented with badges, but he or she is not, it can seem unfair to the Scout and the family. It is vital that the leaders and family are on the same page about whether or not the Scout is encouraged to participate and important that the family manage the expectations of the Scout.

Currently (2021), an Eagle Scout must earn 13 merit badges out of an “Eagle-required” list of 17 merit badges, and an additional 8 badges of the Scout’s choosing, for a total of 21. Ten of the 13 badges are specific badges and the other three allow a choice between two or three related badges. These badge alternatives are built into the regular advancement requirements and don’t require special permission. **As the Scout fin-**

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**ABILITIES DIGEST** is designed for council and district disabilities awareness committees, related staff advisors, and any leader who would offer a Scouting program to youth who have special needs. Any Scouting volunteer or professional may subscribe.

To Subscribe: Send a message to [disabilities.awareness@scouting.org](mailto:disabilities.awareness@scouting.org) with “SUBSCRIBE” in the subject line. Indicate your name, email address, and council in the message text.

ishes the First Class rank, it is time to make a plan for these “Eagle-required” badges. A good target is to try to have all of the achievable Eagle-required badges completed by the time the Scout turns 16 years old. This leaves time to get alternative badges approved and to finish them before age 18.

When planning for the Eagle-required badges, we want to avoid false starts and wasted effort for the Scout while giving the Scout a chance to strive, succeed, and surprise the adults. Like before, the planning review needs to look at all of the requirements for all of the Eagle-required badges and determine which badges can -not be completed due to the Scout’s disabilities. Some borderline requirements may have to be attempted in order to be sure. **Alternative merit badges need to be selected to provide similar challenge and learning experiences** to the originals. There is a special form (BSA 512-730) for requesting alternative merit badges for the Eagle rank. This form includes lists of possible alternative badges to consider for some of the badges. The exact badge to pick will depend on the individual and the details of his or her disabilities.

## **Worth Repeating**

### **On Increasing Advancement**

### **Inspirational Ceremonies—Recognition and Inspiration**

**(April, 2012)**

A lack of advancement in some units may be due to a lack of inspiration. It might be because unit leadership is not making the big fuss over their achievements that the Scouts would like to see. Ceremonies and courts of honor give units an opportunity to recognize the achievers and at the same time inspire even more accomplishment from the others.

Mike Huneke, a Baltimore Area Council Eagle Scout, sings a beautiful ballad, “The Eagle on His Chest.” In the first part, he tells of a Scout receiving the Eagle Scout Award. In the second part, he tells of the younger Scouts inspired by watching the older Scout’s court of honor.

*“His plans are already made.  
Someday he will stand upon a stage.  
And with his mother and father by his side,  
He’ll take an oath with pride,  
Say the words just like the rest,  
And then they’ll pin an Eagle on his chest.*

*“And all the boys will watch them call his name,  
And to them, he will never be the same.  
His words will inspire;  
Fill them with desire.  
A hero stands before the rest  
Because he wears an Eagle on his chest.”*

*Michael J. Huneke, Broad Creek Memories, 2003; Produced by Blue Jay Productions Inc. Quoted with permission, 2012*

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This song poetically illustrates the dual value of courts of honor and ceremonies in our advancement program. The Scout who is advancing is recognized for the achievements and receives the positive reinforcement that can increase their Scouting activity and help retain them in the troop. Then units can build traditions around these ceremonies so they serve as antecedents to further advancement by the youth who witness them. Awards ceremonies and courts of honor are also opportunities for presenters to challenge all the others to advance. Leaders need to be explicit when this is done. It isn't a time for subtlety.

Furthermore, the myth that awards can be presented only once is simply unfounded. For instance, in Cub Scouting, the den chief can review everyone's advancement and mark it on a wall chart as a part of each den meeting. The award then can be presented in a ceremony that is part of each pack meeting. The Scout may be recognized once again at the annual blue and gold banquet.

In Scouts BSA, achievement in a rank advancement or merit badge can be recognized at the meeting where the Scout submits the approved blue card or passes the board of review. The next meeting should have a ceremony where they receive the badge. At the quarterly court of honor the accomplishments are recognized again with an inspirational ceremony. Recognitions also can be made at parents' night at camp, at religious services during Scouting Anniversary week, and so forth.

Advancement recognition in Venturing and Sea Scouts should be handled in the same way, with members recognized at the meeting where they earn an award or pass a crew review, for example. Then they can be recognized more formally at a special gathering or at a bridge of honor in Sea Scouts.

Courts of honor and ceremonies show how we value youth achievements. They inspire everyone to actively advance. They help bind our youth members to active participation in the programs. The positive reinforcement, thus delivered, increases their tenure and provides us with a greater opportunity to develop their character and boost their confidence. Isn't this what we're all about?

### **Editor's Note**

This article and the poem it includes were written before girls were introduced into Scouting programs. **No changes or modifications to the copyrighted poem were made,** but minor modifications to the text of the original article have been made to update gender references. In addition, the term Scouts BSA has been substituted for all references to Boy Scouts.





# 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)

## Merit Badge List

Are you aware that there is an easily accessible list of merit badges that Scouts BSA members can review to explore different hobbies, interests, professions and just plain fun information? Located at the [Advancement and Awards](http://www.scouting.org/Advancement-and-Awards) web site, this is a great tool for sharing with Scouts during Scoutmaster conferences as youth are planning their next steps in advancement.

[Merit Badges | Boy Scouts of America \(scouting.org\)](http://www.scouting.org/Advancement-and-Awards)

All of the current merit badges are listed, along with a reminder that the requirements posted online are the most current, accurate, and official. Of special note, is that the 2021 updates of the requirements are found on the very first page.

So, when a youth expresses boredom with Scouting (like, how could that be possible?) a great idea would be to review the many merit badges, choose one on a subject in which they have an interest, briefly review the requirements, and verify the contact information for an approved counselor.

Then let them go and watch the magic of Scouting happen.

