

# Advancement News

July-August  
2018

Vol. 8, No. 3

Prepared. For Life.®

Previous issues are available at <https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/advancement-and-awards/advancement-news/>

## Opportunities for Advancement Administrators

### Advancement Opportunities Abound

It is not too late to get yourself or others enrolled in the Issues and Solutions Course that will be held August 5-11 at Philmont Training Center. In this course participants will delve deeply into problem scenarios that can and do actually happen in councils. The solutions are not always easy or pretty, but necessary, and you will discover how to implement them most effectively.

This conference will present additional opportunities to learn from other Scouters and make new friends from all over the United States. While you are in class, your family will have a fabulous opportunity to see the legendary Philmont Scout Ranch and take part in some amazing Scouting activities and camaraderie. There will be programs for spouses and boys and girls of all ages that will make memories never to be forgotten.



After the recent close-call experience with the Ute Park fire, this is a precious opportunity to be sure to experience the very special vacation and training experience that is Philmont and its surroundings. Philmont is

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If Philmont is out of the question for you this summer, then perhaps you should look ahead to the January opportunity at the Florida Sea Base in the Keys. The Conference on Education for Advancement Educators (CEAA) is an opportunity for those who believe that they are fairly well grounded in advancement but would like a new challenge. More will be available about this in later editions of the *Advancement News*, but for now, put the dates of January 20-26, 2019, onto your long-range calendar.

Finally, there are exciting changes happening in the BSA during the coming year, the continuing need for advancement education will remain constant. Let's support our units and youth with quality leaders and programs that result in advancement opportunities that lead to achieving the Aims of Scouting!

**Find more information and  
registration at**

[www.philmonttrainingcenter.org](http://www.philmonttrainingcenter.org).

<http://ScoutingU.kintera.org/FSB2019>

## On Increasing Advancement

### District Advancement Report Update

There have been a number of concerns expressed regarding the District Advancement Reports (DAR). The Scout and Lion ranks not being included in the report was a major concern because it did not accurately reflect unit advancement. There also were questions regarding how advancement was reported in the DAR versus the Journey to Excellence (JTE) reports.

**The report carries the message that the unit statistics in this report are current as of the day prior to the day created.**

Added to the report are Lion Badge and Scout Rank. In addition, unit statistics was updated to include advancement approved through Scoutbook. Please note that DAR totals ranks (and merit badges) based on the month/year earned. No change was made in this method. Journey to Excellence does not use this method and the different methods have different results. The totals will not match.

#### Contact for Issues

Please contact Member Care at (972) 580-2489 if you have any questions.



# From the *Guide To Advancement*

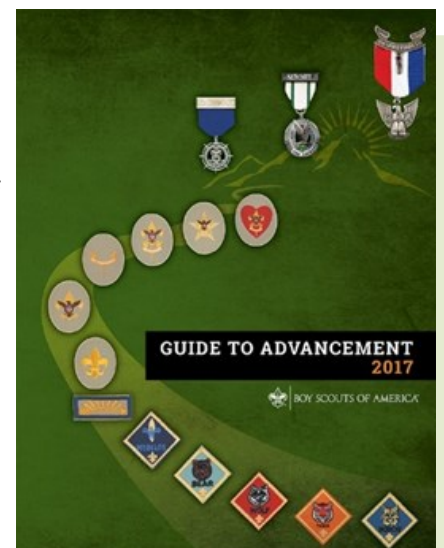
## Suspending Troop Operations for Summer?

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. (See "Guardian of the Gate," *Advancement News*, February 2012.) A final note is to remember we are NOT allowed to change the advancement program in any way.



# The Cub Scout Angle

## A Brief Overview of Lion Advancement



Kindergarten-Age Youth

Lions work toward their Lion badges. Although participation with an adult partner is required for all Lion awards, recognition items are for the Scouts only. To earn the Lion badge of rank, a Cub Scout must complete the following requirements, working with an adult partner:

1. Complete the five required adventures:

- Lion's Honor
- Animal Kingdom
- Fun on the Run!
- King of the Jungle
- Mountain Lion

2. With your parent or guardian, complete the exercises in the pamphlet *How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide*.

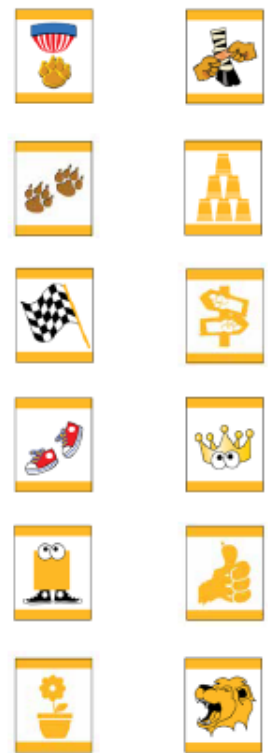
Outside of the requirements, Lions can also complete any number of seven elective adventures of their den's or family's choosing. Some of the highlights of the Lion den:

- The family packet "Lion Kit" will include Youth Protection Training parent/child guide, stickers, Lion Adventure Book, Lion, Parent and Leader Guidebook, and Youth Protection Training guide together.
- The leader for the Lion den is called "den leader" as leaders of other Cub Scout dens are called.
- Adventure loops for each adventure are awarded in the Lion den. These loops should be available in Scout shops in July.
- The Lion materials will be available via the website [www.scouting.org/lion](http://www.scouting.org/lion)
- This includes the *Den Leader Guide*, which resembles the youth handbook. Tools for families to use to keep advancement records will include rank pocket cards and advancement charts.

### STICKERS



### ADVENTURE LOOPS



Packs may now include dens of girls and dens of boys. Note that the dens will consist of only one gender. Additionally, chartered organizations may elect to form an all-girl pack as well. For the best experience for the youth and families, it is suggested to make sure the dens have 6-8 youth making sure the Cub Scout receives the best Cub Scouting experience.



# Merit Badges

## Keeping Merit Badges Current

The task of overseeing the current merit badge library of 137 subjects is the responsibility of the merit badge subcommittee (formerly called the merit badge maintenance task force). The merit badge subcommittee is one of the program support subcommittees of the National Boy Scout Committee.

The responsibility of the merit badge subcommittee is to review all merit badges and their respective requirements and supporting merit badge pamphlets on a regular basis. All merit badges which are up for review are assigned to subject matter experts (SMEs) for editing and updating suggestions. The approximate timetable for this SME editing cycle is for each merit badge and merit badge pamphlet to be reviewed on a two-year cycle. Cases involving health and safety issues, significant changes/updates for Eagle-required MBs, or significant changes in subject matter may require faster turnaround times. Although there may be changes identified in an existing merit badge pamphlet, reprinting may not occur until it is ordered by BSA National Supply Division. However, changes/revisions to merit badge requirements will be published every year in the *Boy Scout Requirements Book*.

Boy Scout merit badges are routinely maintained. This is done to ensure that they are kept up to date and relevant in today's fast-moving and ever-changing world.

Another role of the merit badge subcommittee is the oversight and evaluation of new merit badge ideas that may originate from the field. A task force of the merit badge subcommittee reviews and evaluates all submissions for new merit badges. A specific form (meritbadge\_proposalform\_512-130(16).pdf) is available online for making such proposal submissions. This form may be downloaded from the Advancement Resources web site located at [www.scouting.org/advancement.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/advancement.aspx). Although only a very few proposals may result in a "new" merit badge, often portions of a proposal may find their way into an existing merit badge or the requirements.

## About Advancement News

**Follow the National Advancement Program Team on Twitter!**

**(BSA Advancement Team, @AdvBSA)**

*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).

# Eagle Issues

## 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.

# Special Necessities

## Advancement Committees Need Special Needs Representation

The *Guide to Advancement* addresses council advancement committee responsibilities in Section 3.0.0.1, and it is always wise to ensure that the committee has someone well versed in special needs awareness issues so that other committee members can properly address them when they arise. Better still, the committee can “be prepared” by having a plan in place that will enable it to address things in a proactive instead of a reactive way.

A member of the advancement committee who has experience with special needs Scouting can lead short committee sessions—or even presentations at roundtables or Universities of Scouting—to help everyone understand important tasks, e.g., how to register a Scout with a disability beyond the age of eligibility, how to request alternative merit badges, and, most importantly, to be sure that those charged with leading units that have special needs Scouts registered completely understand the requirements for advancement.

This representative can also be the “go to” person when the local council service center receives calls or requests on the topic. Having a single person (or an actual committee, if you are lucky enough) to help answer questions properly the first time, in conjunction with a designated member of the council staff, can ensure that we provide accurate information to ensure advancement can proceed properly for each Scout.

The Scout motto can be used in many different ways, and by having a special needs Scouting representative on your council advancement committee you can be sure that those individuals are prepared to properly guide Scouts, unit leaders, and family members towards a positive experience in Scouting.

## From the Archives

### From the Guide To Advancement

(March, 2014)

#### Adult Association: More than Just Supervision

The *Guide to Advancement 2013*, topic 2.0.0.4, provides a convenient table showing the methods of Scouting from program to program, pointing out that “obvious similarities exist.” Perhaps one of the most overlooked methods on the table is that of “adult association.”

Adult Scouters may often assume that the youth think adults are only there for “health and safety.” Truth is, like it or not, every Scouter is a role model—and most Scouts prefer this. For that reason, one of the best strategies leaders can use to achieve the aims of Scouting is simply to provide the opportunity for Scouts to interact with caring adults. As a Scout seeks to express his growing independence from his parents or guardians, especially as he enters his teen years, the role of the adults often grows in importance. Recognizing this, leaders can play a key role in each young man’s development by serving as strong examples and influencers for good.



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For example, we are familiar with the need for merit badge counselors for Boy Scouts, or consultants for Venturers, but often we think of these individuals as mere subject matter experts, providing expertise that the Scoutmaster or Advisor may not possess. In reality, their role and their possible impact is much greater than that, as they become an extension of the unit's adult role-modeling effort. The most significant benefits will come to an individual Scout when the merit badge process is tailored just for him, starting with the recommendation of a merit badge counselor, who should be selected as carefully as any other leader of youth, depending on the young man in question.

## Hear It First on Twitter

If you want the news first, follow the National Advancement Program Team on Twitter. Topics cover the FAQs received at the national office, clarifications on policies and procedures, news on changes and new releases, and best practices in advancement.

If you already have a Twitter account, follow us at **@AdvBSA** or **"BSA Advancement Team."** If you don't have an account, it is a quick and easy process to set up an account at [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com). To limit incoming emails ('tweets'), you can select to have BSA National Advancement Team as the only account you want to follow.

**Note:** Advancement questions should be directed to [advancement.team@scouting.org](mailto:advancement.team@scouting.org).

## A Peek Ahead

Here is a glimpse at what we are working on for the next issue of *Advancement News*. As always, actual content may vary somewhat based on a number of considerations, and especially to accommodate "late-breaking" news of immediate importance to our subscribers.

### September-October Highlights

**The Cub Scout Angle:** Lions—Using the Lion advancement opportunities

**The Boy Scout Angle:** Preparing for female troops

## 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.

**Subscribing.** Send a message to [advancement.team@scouting.org](mailto:advancement.team@scouting.org), with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. Indicate your name, email address, and council in the message text.

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## Helpful Links

Here are some links to the most current materials of interest for Scouters who are involved in the administration of advancement. These and many more resources are available via the **Advancement Resources** web page at [www.scouting.org/advancement](http://www.scouting.org/advancement).

[Merit Badge Group Instruction Guide](#)

[Advancement Educational Presentations:](#)

- Today's Advancement
- Cub Scout Advancement: Delivering Adventure
- Developing Council and District Advancement Committees
- The Eagle Scout Service Project Coach
- The Eagle Scout Service Project
- Effective Troop Advancement
- Essentials of Serving Scouts with Disabilities
- The Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling
- The Merit Badge Program
- Getting the Most From Internet Advancement
- Including Scouts With Disabilities
- Videocasts on *Guide to Advancement*, selected topics
  - ◊ Introduction to the Guide to Advancement
  - ◊ Judgment Calls
  - ◊ Boards of Review
  - ◊ Boards of Review Under Disputed Circumstances
  - ◊ Boards of Review Appeals
  - ◊ The Eagle Scout Application Process
  - ◊ Eagle Scout Boards of Review
- Videos
  - ◊ On Increasing Advancement
  - ◊ Why Advancement?
  - ◊ Guardian of the Gate



[Guide to Advancement 2017](#)

[Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook](#)

[Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project: Information for Project Beneficiaries](#)

[Eagle Scout Service Project Coach Application](#)

[Eagle Scout Rank Application](#)

[Merit Badge Counselor Information](#)

[Reporting Merit Badge Concerns](#)

[Quartermaster Rank Application](#)

[Quartermaster Leadership Service Project Workbook](#)

[Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook](#)

[Venturing Board of Review Guide](#)

[Individual Scout Achievement Plan](#)

[Lone Scout Friend and Counselor Guidebook](#)