

Advancement News

May-June
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Prepared. For Life.®

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

Opportunities for Advancement Administrators

Philmont Training Center: Open For Business

Last summer's fires in New Mexico are history, thank goodness, and the Philmont Training Center is ramping up for a fantastic new summer season featuring a full calendar of conferences, including three offerings for those involved in advancement:

July 14-20, Advancement Issues and Solutions. This case study-based conference is designed for unit, district, and council advancement coordinators, chairs, committee members, and staff advisors.

July 21-27, Mechanics of Advancement Conference. At this conference, advancement administrators in districts or councils will gain an in-depth understanding of the essentials of advancement and an appreciation for the rationale behind the policies and procedures governing it

OR

Scout Troop Advancement. Unit leaders and committee members will examine scoutmaster conferences,

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electronic reporting, merit badge issues, service projects, boards of review, disability issues, Eagle issues, and more.

Sign up for an advancement course at Philmont! You will learn some amazing ‘stuff.’ Better yet, bring your whole family along for a summer vacation they will never forget. There are programs for all ages, so your family members will have opportunities to ride horses, take hikes, play games, make jewelry and clay pots, paint, shoot guns, visit the Kit Carson Museum—as well as the [new home of the National Scouting Museum](#)—and other ‘way cool’ stuff that is just lots of fun!

So, what are you waiting for? Sign up right away and have a really awesome summer vacation this year!

For more information about Philmont offerings go to: www.philmontscoutranch.org/PTC and you will find links to conference dates, registration, and family programs.



On Increasing Advancement

Using Scout Uniforming in Your Scouting Program

Every Scouting activity motivates our youth toward our basic aims of character development, citizenship training, leadership, and mental and physical fitness. We achieve these aims, i.e., mission fulfillment, using eight methods: Scouting’s ideals; patrols and the patrol method; the outdoors; advancement; personal growth; adult association; leadership development; and the uniform. As important as those of us involved in advancement think that method is, we must remember that none of these methods—not even advancement—is a goal in itself. Each is merely a “tool” that we use to achieve Scouting’s basic aims. All of them work together, each reinforcing and enhancing one another.

For example, when Scouts and Scouters meet, they almost instinctively “read” each other’s uniform: “Are you in Cub Scouting or Scouts BSA? What is your council, your hometown, your unit? How long have you been in Scouts, what’s your rank, and what awards have you earned along the way?” Subconsciously, based on the other’s appearance, they even may be asking: “How’s your Scout Spirit”?

When our youth members wear the correct uniform at a Scouting function, the answer to that last question is “Strong!” They are showing others—and reminding themselves—of their commitment to the ideals of Scouting: The Oath, the Law, duty to God and loyalty to country, and promise to help others at all times. Simply stated, their uniform not only lets them show the world how they have advanced in Scouting, it dis-

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plays their Scout spirit and commitment to Scouting for all to see.

Of course, there are times when it is inappropriate to wear a full uniform with patches, merit badge sash, etc. For example, the rugged uniform designed for active outdoor activities reminds us that everyone is equal in Scouting. When everyone is dressed the same, there is no way to label individuals by the richness or style of their clothing. Nevertheless, a well kempt Scout, even without badges and patches, clearly conveys his or her commitment to the Scout Law by being "Clean."

By making sure your Scouts take pride in their appearance, whether in full uniform at a court of honor or around the campfire at summer camp, you will be encouraging their advancement, and, hopefully, will be keeping them in Scouting longer. Now isn't that what we're all about.

From the *Guide To Advancement*

When Is 18 Not 18 in Scout Rank Advancement?

Timing plays an important part in advancement at certain ranks. From Scout to First Class there aren't any specific time requirements between ranks. However, for the Star, Life, and Eagle Scout ranks it is a different story. For all three there are specific lengths of time the Scout must be active and to serve in a position of responsibility in order to be considered for advancement.

If everything goes perfectly, it is possible to go from First Class to Eagle in a minimum of 16 months. But this assumes that all requirements are completed and that a board of review is held exactly at the end of each time period. While it is possible for the Scout to be active and serve in a position of responsibility at the same time, practically speaking that doesn't always happen. This is especially true with older Scouts who have numerous other responsibilities and interests. Early completion of requirements would be advantageous to the Scout to avoid the last-minute rush or interruptions from their other responsibilities and interests.

Another important timing factor for Scouts approaching their 18th birthday is the scheduling of boards of review. Scheduling delays can inadvertently keep a Scout from advancing to Eagle Scout rank or negatively impact their ability to earn Eagle Palms. In some cases, even a few days delay can totally upset a very close timeline.

One area where adult leaders all too frequently misinterpret the requirements relates to the completion of the Eagle Scout rank paperwork. In too many cases, units, districts and in some cases, councils are requiring Eagle candidates to submit their Eagle Scout Rank Application and Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook before their 18th birthday which is not correct. To make matters worse, some Scouts have then been told that they cannot have a board of review or be advanced to Eagle rank because they didn't turn in their paperwork before their 18th birthday. Again, nothing could be farther from the truth.

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True, the official requirements themselves have to be completed before the Scout's 18th birthday, but any associated paperwork, including the rank application and the project workbook can be prepared, signed, and submitted after the Scout's 18th birthday. The paperwork is an administrative step necessary for the Scout to navigate the process to receive the Eagle Scout rank—after the requirements are completed. Note that in the Scout Handbook as well as on the Eagle Application, the paperwork itself is not one of the listed requirements the candidate must fulfill before his 18th birthday. See *Guide to Advancement* topics 9.0.1.3, 9.0.1.4, and 9.0.1.5 for more information.

Cub Scouts BSA

Foundations of Cub Scout Day Camp

There have been a number of Cub Scout National Camping School changes in 2019 resulting from requests to a volunteer committee that has been hard at work incorporating feedback from local councils. Specifically, a number of Scouters asked to see if there were ways to lower the cost and reduce the time away for camp directors and program directors attending National Camping School.

Key national staff and volunteers from different areas across the country gathered together to create a new plan that divided the existing course syllabus into three components:

- An online, self-guided course with 11 segments
- An in-person, local council-led course with 10 segments
- A Cub Scout National Camping School, using traditional locations and faculty with 31 segments.

Individuals will not be certified until they fully complete all three mandatory components of the course. Completion of the components and included segments will be tracked through My.Scouting, using the person's profile feature. Therefore, it is important that each local council registrar updates the My.Scouting person profile of each person working to be certified.

Hint: A good suggestion is that day camp management staff be recruited earlier than in the past to ensure they can complete each component of the course in the order intended.

Cub Scout day camp, is not designed to provide advancement specific activities. Many advancement opportunities are available at Cub Scout day camp and result from the natural outcomes based on the many activities presented during the dynamic Cub Scout camp program.

Eagle, Summit, Quartermaster Highlights

Eagle Scout Service Project Workbooks: What Is Required?



The *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook* (No. 512-927) is a tool for Scouts to use when planning, developing, and leading their service project. When used as intended, the workbook very nearly assures Scouts a successful and fulfilling experience while carrying out their service project. However, sometimes leaders misinterpret the purpose of the workbook and focus unduly on the book itself, rather than on the actual service project it documents.

Clearly stated, the workbook is not a requirement, but the service project is. Although requirement #5 says that the Scout must use the workbook, it is purposely ambiguous regarding how it is to be used. *Guide to Advancement* topic 9.0.2.8 and the instructions in the workbook explain that Scout only need to use those parts that are necessary to help them have a successful project experience. It is not required that every part or every page be fully completed.

The intent of Eagle Scout requirement #5 is to provide a service to a beneficiary and by doing so continuing to help a Scout build character, citizenship, leadership, and fitness as they become adults. The workbook simply facilitates those efforts. Consequently, leaders must be careful not to allow their focus to be on the quality of the workbook itself rather than the service project. In the end it is the project that the beneficiary, the community, and the board of review will take note of, not the workbook.

Incidentally, from time to time, minor changes are made to the workbook and a revised edition will be published on the Advancement Resources web page. Just as we don't require all parts of the workbook to be completed, we do not require a Scout who has already started using an earlier version of the workbook to convert all previously documented work to the revised edition. Most changes that occur are minor in nature, so requiring a Scout to start over in a new workbook would be a poor use of time and create undue hardship for the Scout.

For example, the revised workbook which was published in January 2019 was made gender neutral, removed references to the previously required Tour and Activity Plan, and added dates to the cover page of each section. These were all minor changes, none of which impacted project development, execution, or reporting.

To ensure that this national policy is well understood a note has been added on the Advancement Resources web page that states: "Scouts who have already downloaded the previous October 2015 workbook may continue to use it." Naturally, Scouts who have not yet started on their project will need to use the January 2019 edition of the workbook.

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References - They May Not Be What You Expect

Eagle Scout requirement #2 on the Eagle Scout Application form asks the Scout to "List on your Eagle Scout Rank Application the names of individuals who know you personally and would be willing to provide a recommendation on your behalf." While the references are organized into several categories, there are no specific requirements or restrictions on who can—or cannot—be listed as a reference:

Parent/guardian - Generally this is self-explanatory; however, there might be cases where a Scout's parent or guardian isn't available. Under such circumstances it might make sense to use a relative or other adult who is fulfilling the parental responsibility as the reference. One example might be an older Scout who is living with family friends while a parent is on military deployment.

Religious - This doesn't necessarily have to be a specific leader of the Scout's religious organization, but could be another individual such as a deacon or religious instructor.

Educational - This could be anyone who has personal knowledge about the Scout in their educational environment, e.g., the school principal, a school administrator, a teacher, a coach for a sports team, an advisor for a school club, or representative for another educational activity or organization.

Employer – If the Scout is employed, this could be a business owner or the Scout's immediate supervisor in a larger organization. There are no restrictions on who the employer might be, or a requirement that he or she be of or over a certain age.

Two other references - There are no restrictions, age or otherwise, on who these two references may be. The Scout may choose to list other youth from his troop or friends from outside the troop. Scouts may list their Scoutmaster, other unit leaders, a parent other than the one listed above, other family members or relatives—essentially anyone he or she chooses who is willing and able to provide a reference. Individuals, councils, districts, and/or units that impose any restrictions to the contrary are not in compliance with national policies.

Once Scouts have provided the names and adequate contact information for their references, they have completed the requirement. Common sense should prevail on how much information is needed in order for the council's representative to contact the reference. For example, if the Scout provides the reference's mailing address or phone number, he or she should not be further required to obtain an email address that they don't have or know. See *Guide to Advancement* topic 9.0.1.7 for additional information.

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.

Special Needs Interests

Assisting Scouts with Special Needs at Camp

Summer camp is a great place for all Scouts to earn merit badges and advance in rank, but sometimes it takes a little more planning for Scouts with Special Needs and Disabilities. Here are some helpful tips to help them achieve success:

- Be sure to celebrate partial merit badges and individual rank requirements; especially when they can't be completed in full. Remember that success is measured differently for everyone!
- Depending on the Scout's abilities, you might need to break down badge requirements into smaller tasks. This can help prevent Scouts from feeling too overwhelmed at any point in the advancement process.
- Remember that these requirements need to be completed as written as modifying or changing requirements is not allowed.
- Accommodations are possible for rank requirements, and an accommodation is providing assistance to help the Scout complete the task **without** changing the requirement. For instance, Second Class requirement 3b states "sleep in a tent that you pitched." A Scout with physical disabilities unable to move his limbs could instruct another Scout through the proper steps to pitch the tent for him, thus completing the requirement.

There are many resources available to help leaders provide a meaningful advancement experience for Scouts with Special Needs and Disabilities, and they include the [Guide to Advancement](#) as well as the [Guide to Working with Scouts with Special Needs and Disabilities](#).

Most importantly, remember that attending summer camp provides many opportunities for new and memorable experiences. It's more than advancement. It's more than merit badges. Providing a safe, meaningful, and FUN experience is what Scouts will remember!

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, with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. Indicate your name, email address, and council in the message text.

Unsubscribing. To decline future issues please reply and enter "REMOVE" in the subject line. We will remove the subscription within the next two weeks.

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Duplicate Copies. If you receive more than one copy of *Advancement News* at the same email address, please reply to all but one of them with "DUPLICATE" in the subject line.

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Venturing BSA



Venturing Leadership Award

Each year there are countless unsung Venturers who work to help further the Venturing program and make the program a meaningful and worthwhile experience for everyone. Did you know that these individuals can be recognized?

Venturers and Advisors can be awarded the Venturing Leadership Award, or VLA, for showing outstanding leadership and service to Venturing and fellow Venturers. This is an award that is given out at four different levels: Council, Area, Region, and National.

Candidates can be nominated on an annual basis by fellow Venturers and Advisors at the level at which the Venturer has contributed. Then, a group of former VLA recipients at that level will be formed to create a selection committee that will review all the nominations and determine the best recipient(s) for the award.

Recently, the National Venturing Committee has announced eight outstanding Venturers who will be receiving the National Venturing Leadership Award later this year. More details about the recipients can be found at <https://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2019/04/04/2019-national-venturing-leadership-award/>.

Finally, all selected candidates should be publicly recognized and honored with the award.

If you know someone who is extremely hard working in Venturing, make sure that this person gets the recognition that they truly deserve. The nomination form, list of qualifications, nomination deadlines, and all additional information about the Venturing Leadership Award can be found at <http://www.venturing.org/vla.html>.

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. 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.

Did You Receive This Tweet?

- April 16, 2019

Add to your advancement experience with a course where you will mingle with other advancement administrators and have a faculty of Scouters with extensive experience in advancement. Philmont registration for 2019 advancement courses is available at <http://www.philmontscoutranch.org/PTC/conferencesO.aspx>

Scoutbook

June 1 is significant

Traditionally, June 1 of each year served as the date for Cub Scouts to begin the next rank in their advancement. With the widespread use of ScoutBook, leaders are an integral part of the process. Answers to a few questions that advancement administrators and others in a typical pack may be asking:

How do we move the Cub Scouts forward to the next rank?

The leader/advancement chair/ administrators will need to mark the ranks for all the Scouts as “approved.” Once they are approved, they will show up on the “need purchasing report.” Once the adventure is awarded, that notation is made. Then the administrator will go in and update the records one-on-one or do a multi-update and update all the Scouts in the den at the same time.

Visit the FAQ on Scoutbook.com for further information and clarification.

When can the Scout start work on the next rank advancements?

As the Scout’s progress is updated, they will then be able to begin working on the next adventure/rank.

If a Scout starts the next rank before approval, what is the consequence?

If they start before June 1st, they can show progress – but things will not be “official” until leaders “approve” advancement

How is Cub Scout recording linked to the current rank for that Cub Scout?

A Cub Scout is only able to work on the den details for which the membership in Scoutbook is active. For example, if the Scout is a lion, they will see “lion.” The leadership will need to move the Scouts into the next den in order to see the next advancements

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.

Topics Planned for July–August

- **Opportunities for Advancement Administrators:** Educational Presentations available
- **From the *Guide To Advancement*:** Boards of Review—conducted in Scouts BSA or unit that is supervising Scouts BSA advancement
- **Scouts BSA:** Plan to Build advancement after summer camp

Worth Repeating

From On Increasing Advancement

(May-June, 2016)

Summer Camp Merit Badge Choices = The Youth's Decision

[“Scouts BSA summer camp presents many opportunities for our youth, including how to live outdoors, how to manage money, how to make and stick to a schedule, and how to live and work with a group. Camp also presents Scouts with choices in merit badges—most notably, which and how many to take.](#)

“So, who decides what merit badge(s) a youth will take at camp?

“The answer is simple: the decision is the youth’s. But that doesn’t mean that adult leaders and parents should not be involved. Some camps might require a minimum age to participate and some badges may have prerequisites. Many camps identify merit badges that they consider appropriate for younger campers. While some of these recommendations are health and safety related, they might also take into account skill sets or progression on ranks or other merit badges.

“The *Guide to Advancement* topic 7.0.0.3 explains the process. Before a Scout begins working with a merit badge counselor they need to have a discussion with their unit leader. This discussion is meant to be a growth oriented and positive conversation. The unit leader should bring forth any concerns related to working on the merit badge and provide appropriate counseling. It is then the Scout’s decision whether or not to proceed with the merit badge.

“For a good example, shooting sports merit badges are very popular at summer camp, but often difficult to complete. So if an 11-year-old wants to take Archery merit badge, what should you do? Could you have an 11-year-old expert archer? Of course. Does every 11-year-old have the upper body strength, aim, or skill required for Archery merit badge? Probably not.

“First, find out what the youth intends to achieve. If he just “wants to shoot,” enrolling in Archery merit badge may not be the only option. Open program periods might also be available for youth to shoot.

“Second, explain to the Scout (and the parents, if appropriate) that while they may be receiving archery instruction and practice time, Archery is a skilled merit badge requiring a minimum score to pass. Attending every class and doing any supplemental work does not guarantee completion of the badge.

“Third, always let the youth know the decision is theirs, and you will support them whatever they choose.”

New Scouts BSA members, in particular, will be preparing for their first visit to a BSA summer camp. They will evaluate which offerings and possible merit badges to pursue. It will be an important decision for these youth. This article addressed such merit badge selection. It was written before girls were introduced into the Scouts BSA program. Therefore, minor modifications to the original 2016 article have been made to reflect gender references.



2019

ADVANCEMENT ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS—Week 6: July 14-20

If you are an experienced volunteer Advancement Administrator, consider taking your game to the next level. This case study based conference is designed for Unit, District, and Council Advancement Coordinators, Chairs, Committee Members, and Staff Advisors. If that's you, start making plans now to take advantage of this opportunity to share ideas with other committed Advancement Administrators at Scouting's premier destination. Conference participants will not only learn about the latest updates on advancement issues, but more important, they will analyze, discuss, and solve case studies similar to those regularly dealt with by the National Advancement Team and the Eagle Issues Task Force. The result will be a better understanding of the effective use of the Guide to Advancement and also the confidence to handle difficult issues at the Council level.

MECHANICS OF ADVANCEMENT—Week 7: July 21-27

This course is a MUST for Advancement Administrators in Districts or Councils, whether they be volunteers or professionals just in need of a refresher or new to advancement procedures. Conference attendees will gain an in-depth understanding of the essentials of advancement and an appreciation for the rationale behind the policies and procedures governing it. Group discussions will focus on effective ways to resolve the related issues and challenges that arise on a regular basis. Staff members are very well founded in advancement issues and have a full understanding of the Guide to Advancement.

SCOUT TROOP ADVANCEMENT—Week 7: July 21-27

Are you a Troop Leader, Committee Member, or Unit Advancement Coordinator needing to increase your knowledge of how advancement drives the Scouting program and is effectively administered? Perhaps you have just finished or are in the process of starting a new troop. If so, this is the course for you. All aspects of advancement will be addressed as it relates to the troop and the success of our youth. Topics covered will include Scoutmaster Conferences, electronic reporting, merit badge issues, service projects, boards of review, disability issues, Eagle issues, and more. See how program planning leads to strong advancement. Meet like-minded volunteers and share in building the capacity to strengthen your unit and its youth!

Registration available at

<http://www.philmontscoutranch.org/PTC/conferencesO.aspx>

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.

General Resources

- Guide to Advancement 2019, No. 33088
- Advancement Educational Presentations (see list below)
- Advancement News
- 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. 512-940
- Guide to Awards and Insignia, No. 33066
- Venturing Board of Review Guide, No. 512-940

Advancement Educational Presentations:

- Introduction to the *Guide to Advancement*
- 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 in Serving Scouts with Disabilities
- The Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling
- The Merit Badge program
- Getting the most from Internet Advancement
- Including Scouts with Disabilities

Videos

- Guardian of the Gate

Additional resources include

Rank Advancement Information

(including the new 2019 Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, 2019 Scouts BSA Rank Requirements, and various applications)

Merit Badge Counselor information

(including A Guide for Merit Badge Counseling, Merit Badge Group Instruction Guide and Merit Badge List)