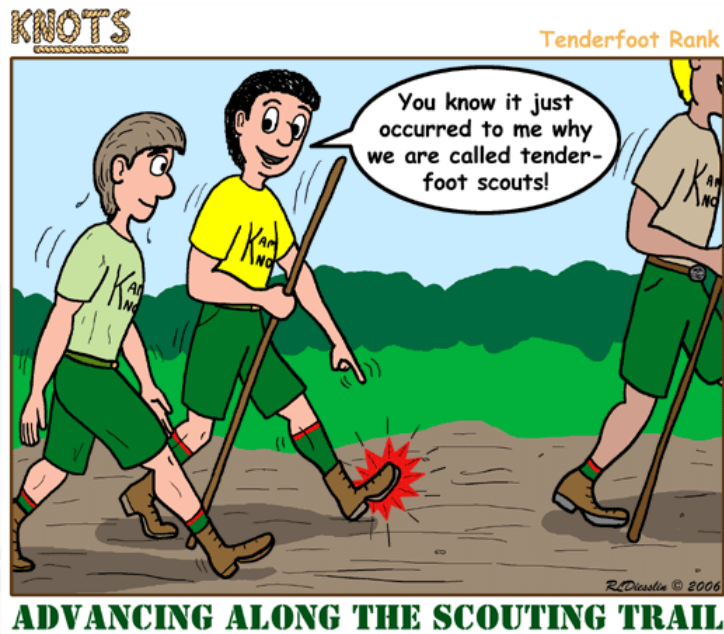


# Troop 8880

## Advancement Policy



**October 6, 2008**

Approved on October 13, 2008

# Table of Contents

- 1 – General ..... 3
  - Introduction..... 3
  - Duties and Responsibilities..... 3
- 2 – Rank Requirement Procedures..... 5
  - Step 1: The Boy Scout Learns ..... 5
  - Step 2: The Boy Scout is tested ..... 5
  - Step 3: The Boy Scout is reviewed ..... 5
    - Scoutmaster Conference ..... 5
    - Board of Review ..... 6
    - BoR Scheduling* ..... 6
  - Step 4: The Boy Scout is recognized ..... 7
- 3 – Merit Badge Requirements Procedures ..... 7
  - General Guidelines..... 7
    - MB Counselor ..... 7
    - MB Counselor List..... 8
    - Before Starting ..... 8
  - Step 1: The Boy Scout Learns ..... 8
  - Step 2: The Boy Scout is tested ..... 8
  - Step 3: The Boy Scout is reviewed ..... 9
  - Step 4: The Boy Scout is recognized ..... 9
- 4 – Advancement to Eagle ..... 9
- 5 – Additional Topics..... 9
  - Service Projects..... 10
  - Glossary: ..... 10
- Appendix A: AAC Life to Eagle Guidebook..... 11
- Appendix B: Eagle Project Workbook ..... 12

# 1 – General

## ***Introduction***

Policies and procedures for advancement in Troop 8880 are based on and consistent with guidelines set forth by the Boy Scouts of America National Council, the Atlanta Area Council and the Cherokee-Pickens District.

Standards and requirements for advancement will be based on the latest printing of the *Boy Scout Handbook* which is handed to each Scout upon joining the Troop.

There are four basic steps to advancement. These steps apply to either rank or merit badge (MB) requirements.

1. *The Boy Scout learns.*
2. *The Boy Scout is tested.*
3. *The Boy Scout is reviewed.*
4. *The Boy Scout is recognized.*

The following sections describe these steps in greater detail. Section 2 describes the steps as applicable to rank advancement, while section 3 covers merit badges. Section 4 covers advancement to Eagle Scout. The remaining portion of this section is a summary of individual responsibilities, which are more clearly described in the remaining sections of this document in the context of the four steps listed above.

## ***Duties and Responsibilities***

### **Advancement Chair or Assistant**

- Responsible for recording completion of requirements in the Troopmaster® online database and maintaining up to date records.
- Responsible for coordinating and scheduling Boards of Review, including filling out an Advancement Report form and collecting all necessary signatures.
- Along with the Scoutmaster, responsible for pairing up any Scout desiring to work on a merit badge with an appropriate Counselor.
- Responsible for maintaining a list of current merit badge counselors for the Troop. This list will be kept in the Troopmaster® database.

### **Merit Badge Counselor**

- Responsible for guiding the Scout towards completion of requirements to earn a particular merit badge.

### **Scoutmaster or Assistant**

- Responsible for testing a Scout and signing off the Scout Handbook to record fulfillment of rank requirements.
- Responsible for conducting a Scoutmaster Conference upon request by the Scout.
- Responsible for approving start of merit badge work and providing the Scout with a signed Blue Card.
- Along with the Advancement Chair, responsible for pairing up any Scout desiring to work on a merit badge with an appropriate Counselor.
- Responsible for presenting a Scout at his Board of Review.

### **Eagle Advisor**

- Primarily responsible for guiding the Eagle candidate through the process of achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.
- Responsible for providing the Eagle candidate with the “Life to Eagle” information packet.
- Responsible for identifying dates and locations of Council “Life to Eagle” seminars for the Eagle candidate to attend.

### **Troop Committee Member**

- Responsible for participating on Boards of Review as coordinated by the Advancement Chair.

### **Scout**

- Responsible for fulfilling requirements towards rank advancement and merit badge completion.
- Responsible for obtaining all necessary approvals before starting any work towards rank advancement, e.g., merit badges or service projects.
- Responsible for requesting Scoutmaster Conferences and Boards of Review.
- Responsible for maintaining personal advancement records, including all necessary initials and signatures in the Scout Handbook and Blue Cards.

## **2 – Rank Requirement Procedures**

### ***Step 1: The Boy Scout Learns***

The Scout shall be given plenty of opportunities to learn the skills necessary to fulfill the rank requirements. He may learn them primarily through Troop meetings, weekend outings and other activities, under the supervision and instruction of experienced Scouts and Adult Leaders. Other learning opportunities include Summer Camp and other District / Council-level events, as well as individual self-learning through the use of the Scout Handbook and other resources available to him. Once the Scout feels he has mastered the skill(s) to fulfill the requirement, he will request to be tested.

### ***Step 2: The Boy Scout is tested***

A Scout may be tested on rank requirements by the Scoutmaster (SM), an Assistant Scoutmaster (ASM), or Junior Assistant Scoutmaster (JASM). He may also be tested by an experienced Scout or a Troop Committee (TC) member designated by the SM; however,

- Only the SM or ASM may sign off the Scout Handbook to record fulfillment of the requirement; and
- The SM/ ASM may not sign off requirements for his own son.

The Advancement Chair will be responsible for recording the completion of rank requirements in the Troopmaster® online database and maintaining updated records.

### ***Step 3: The Boy Scout is reviewed***

#### **Scoutmaster Conference**

After a Scout has completed all other requirements for a rank, he can request a Scoutmaster Conference (SMC). This conference may be held by either the SM or any ASM. It is the responsibility of the SM/ ASM to review and verify that all requirements have been fulfilled and that the Scout has mastered the skills for the rank.

The SMC is also an opportunity for the SM/ASM to develop a relationship of trust with the Scout, get to know him better, and assess his level of enjoyment (or discontent) with Scouting and with the Troop.

A SMC may be conducted at any time and place mutually agreed to. Youth Protection guidelines (no isolated one-on-one contact) must be followed at all times. During Troop meetings, a SMC may be conducted during the following times (in order of preference):

- Activity time (Preferred)
- Patrol time (if authorized by PL)
- After Dismissal
- Before Opening

No SMC should be conducted during Opening, Closing or Instruction times.

## **Board of Review**

For Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, and Eagle Palms, the Scout will also need a board of review (BoR). The BoR must be requested by the Scout to the Advancement Chair after the SMC has been completed.

The BoR is conducted by no less than three members of the Troop Committee. The Scout must wear his full Class A uniform and bring his Handbook. The SM or an ASM will present the Scout to the Board. The purpose of the BoR is not to re-test the Scout, but to assess his attitude and acceptance of the Scouting ideals.

### **BoR Scheduling**

To ensure the availability of participating Committee members, BoRs will be held only twice a month (2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month), if a request has been made in advance by the Scout.

BoRs will typically be conducted during regular Troop meeting times, unless other arrangements have been made in advance. The preferred time for BoRs will be during Activity time or Patrol time.

The Advancement Chair will be responsible for coordinating and scheduling the BoRs, including filling out an Advancement Report form and collecting all necessary signatures.

### ***Step 4: The Boy Scout is recognized***

When the BoR has certified a Scout's advancement, he should receive recognition as soon as possible. The Advancement Chair or designee will submit a completed Advancement Report Form and will procure the rank insignia, certificate card and parent pin at the Scout Shop. The Advancement Chair will update the Troopmaster® records.

The SM or SPL will present the Scout with his new rank insignia at the next Troop Meeting. The certificate card and parent pin for his new rank will be presented later at the next Court of Honor (CoH).

## **3 – Merit Badge Requirements Procedures**

### ***General Guidelines***

The Scout may fulfill requirements for a MB in a number of different ways:

- Attending resident Summer Camp;
- Attending a District or Troop-level MB Clinic;
- Through instruction during regular Troop meetings; or
- Individual work

Common to all these approaches is the principle that the Scout will work under the supervision of a qualified MB Counselor (MBC).

### **MB Counselor**

The MBC is a BSA-registered adult (must be 18 years or older) that is proficient in the MB subject by vocation (work experience), avocation (hobby), or special training.

Meetings between the MBC and the Scout will follow Youth Protection guidelines at all times. A MBC may counsel his or her own son; however, to the extent possible, MB work should be conducted in a group setting, in order to avoid the perception of preferential treatment.

Experienced Scouts or Venturers under 18 years old may not serve as MBC; however, they may serve as MB instructors under the direct supervision of a MBC.

## **MB Counselor List**

The Troop Advancement Chair will maintain a list in the Troopmaster® database of the unit's MB Counselors and the subjects they are willing and able to teach. Any registered adult leader who feels qualified to serve as Counselor may do so by notifying the Advancement Chair and being added to the list. This list does not constitute a limitation on the ability of any given adult to serve as MBC; i.e., being on the list is not a prerequisite; however, every effort will be made to capture all MBC work on this list. Updates to the list will be made as often as needed.

## **Before Starting**

Before starting any work, the Scout must talk to the SM, ASM or Advancement Chair, for the following two purposes:

1. Identify the MB Counselor and obtain his/her agreement to work with the Scout; and
2. Obtain written approval (signed Blue Card).

For Summer Camp, the two steps above do not apply. For the case of a MB clinic, step 1 above does not apply.

Once these steps have been completed, the procedures for earning a MB follow the same 4 steps outlined in section 1.

## ***Step 1: The Boy Scout Learns***

The Scout will work with the MBC towards fulfilling the requirements. The Scout is responsible for ensuring that the MBC initials the completed requirements in the Blue Card.

## ***Step 2: The Boy Scout is tested***

As the Scout completes the requirements, he should be tested by the MBC. Although instruction may be provided as a group, testing should be individual. The manner and extent in which the testing is conducted (verbal, written, etc.) is up to the judgment of the MBC, as the goal is for the MBC to be satisfied that the Scout has mastered the required skills.

### ***Step 3: The Boy Scout is reviewed***

When all requirements have been completed, the Scout is responsible for having the MBC sign the Blue Card. The Scout must then bring the signed Card to the SM.

The SM reviews, signs and returns the “Applicant’s Record” portion to the Scout. At the discretion of the SM, he may quiz the Scout on the material he learned before signing, as a form of “Quality Assurance”.

The “Application for Merit Badge” portion of the Blue Card will be kept in the Troop paper records. The Advancement Chair will update the Troopmaster® records.

### ***Step 4: The Boy Scout is recognized***

The Advancement Chair or designee will submit a completed Advancement Report Form and will procure the badge and card at Scout Shop. Finally, the SM or SPL will present the MB to the Scout at the next CoH.

## **4 – Advancement to Eagle**

Troop policies for advancement to Eagle Scout will be consistent with the guidelines set forth by the Atlanta Area Council. The Troop will help the Eagle candidate follow the procedures described in the latest printing of the following two documents, which are included as appendixes to this policy document:

- “Atlanta Area Council Life to Eagle Guidebook” ( Appendix A )
- “Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook” ( Appendix B )

The Eagle Advisor for the Troop will be primarily responsible for guiding the Eagle candidate through the process. Upon earning the rank of Life, the Scout will receive a copy of the two documents above, along with other supporting material. He will also be strongly encouraged to attend a “Life to Eagle” seminar offered by the Council. The Eagle Advisor will help identify the dates and locations for these events.

## **5 – Additional Topics**

## **Service Projects**

Service Projects shall be meaningful service not normally expected of a Scout as part of his school, religious, or community activities. These projects must be approved in advance by the Scoutmaster. They may be performed as an individual project or as a member of a patrol or troop project.

The service project should benefit the community at large. It may not be performed for the direct benefit of a BSA unit, the Scout's family, or any for-profit institution. It may, however, benefit the Scout's school, church, or any non-profit organization the Scout may be affiliated with.

For the Second Class rank, a Scout must participate in a service project with a minimum time of service of one hour. For Star and Life ranks, a Scout must perform 6 hours of service.

### **Glossary:**

ASM: Assistant Scoutmaster

BoR: Board of Review

CoH: Court of Honor

JASM: Junior Assistant Scoutmaster

MB: Merit Badge

MBC: Merit Badge Counselor

SM: Scoutmaster

SMC: Scoutmaster Conference

SPL: Senior Patrol Leader

TC: Troop Committee

## **Appendix A: AAC Life to Eagle Guidebook**

## **Appendix B: Eagle Project Workbook**