

Advancement Guidelines on Eagle Scout Service Projects/approvals and recognition

Reference: Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures # 33088

From Council Advancement Chairman Fred Justice- fcjustice@sbcglobal.net

Personal Growth is the prime consideration in the Advancement Program. With this in mind I would like to review the essential elements of the Eagle Service Project and the Eagle Scout review process.

Quoting from the Advancement Guidebook: "The Eagle Scout service project provides the opportunity for the Eagle Scout Candidate to demonstrate the leadership skills he has learned in Scouting... As a demonstration of leadership, the Scout must plan the work, organize the personnel needed, and direct the project to its completion."

Planning the work requires an understanding of the steps to take and the order the steps should fall in. The project approval starts with the Unit Leader (Current Scoutmaster). The Unit Leader is in the best position to measure the candidate's current level of personal growth to see that the Eagle Scout service project continues to contribute to that growth. The Scoutmaster conference is an ideal opportunity for this. While some delegation of the conference to volunteers other than the unit leader may be necessary because of specific circumstances, the Guidebook says "...this is unfortunate, because most Scoutmasters feel this is truly the best opportunity to get to know the scout and help him chart his course in life."

The Guidebook then mentions needed approvals by the unit committee and the intended benefactor. After these steps are completed the project is reviewed by District Advancement volunteers.

LHAC make the most current version of the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook available at its web site. Old paper forms are being discontinued. This Workbook should be accessed by the candidate early in their project thinking to assure important steps are taken in the correct order.

<http://www.lhacbsa.org/Resources/Forms/AdvancementForms>

Most of the Eagle Scout service project guidelines define inappropriate projects e.g. Not For BSA or the Council, not for a business, not commercial, not simply a fund raiser. I would like to promote a positive criterion. Our community our State and our Nation have many more folks in dire circumstances these days than in my memory. I would urge Unit Leaders to keep these community needs up front encouraging candidates to find projects that may help ease the tough economic circumstances that individuals and community groups that support these individuals find themselves currently.

Once the project is completed and the merit badge and tenure requirements are met, an Eagle Scout Board of Review is scheduled. That review is "...In the hands of the Troop Team Crew or Ship committee or the district committee responsible for advancement."

Once the review is successfully completed the youth is an Eagle Scout even if the paperwork still needs to be processed. The Scout can wear his Eagle Scout patch, neckerchief etc. At our Council website the most recent edition of the Eagle Scout Application is posted, <http://www.lhacbsa.org/Resources/Forms/AdvancementForms> . Using this form the LHAC staff electronically sends the application to BSA national saving a lot of time. The program has controls that check and flag for correction any inconsistencies so the electronic process is self correcting thus saving more time. It takes about 3 weeks (sometimes less sometimes a little longer for the BSA National Advancement Committee to give final approval. They then send the certificate (Dated with the Board of Review date) and congratulation letter to the local council. Units can then pick-up to present at a formal ceremony.

From the standpoint of recognition and tenure (to earn Palms) the date of rank is the date of the review. The advancement guidebook further advises "Each time a Scout advances in rank, he should be recognized on two occasions. The first should occur as soon as possible after a scout has been approved by the board of review...preferably at the next unit meeting... presenting the new badge of rank. The second occasion is a court of honor, a public ceremony to recognize the Scout for his achievement."