

# Life to Eagle Packet



**BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA**

## **PLANNING FOR THE TRAIL**

First, you must carefully study the Eagle requirements as outlined in the most recent edition of the Boy Scout Handbook as well as all of the materials in this packet. These will help you in the months ahead. Remember, by the way, to build family and summer school vacations (particularly Scout Camp merit badge opportunities), periods of being especially busy (e.g. a school sports season) and other individual scheduling situations into your Eagle "game plan." The materials here will also help prepare the application itself.

Second, discuss your plans with your Scoutmaster and get advice on how to proceed. Find out what is expected of you in participation, Scout spirit, Troop leadership and personal growth. Each of these is a specific requirement for advancement to Eagle, which must be accomplished to your Scoutmaster's satisfaction, and each shows something about your fitness for the Eagle award.

Third, plan and organize the merit badge work and your service project so that they will be done well before your eighteenth birthday. This means that the Merit Badge Blue cards must be completely signed and registered at the Scout office and the project report (including photos) completed and turned in before that date. While the Board of Review may meet and the award presented at a Court of Honor after the birthday, everything (including merit badges, project, Scoutmaster conferences) must be completed and submitted to the District Eagle Board Chairman prior to that date.

Every leader remembers that, when one is sixteen, eighteen seems very far away. But sadly, every leader knows Scouts waited just a week or two too long, and didn't "make Eagle" even though they did virtually all the work. Please don't be one of those and, also, don't be one of the guys who inconveniences everyone involved by needing "emergency" help right up until the night before his birthday.

Another reason to be careful about timing is the possibility of having to re-do something. What if the Eagle Board finds that you've pretty well done everything, but your project was not fully completed, for instance? If you have plenty of time, you can get the "loose ends" finished up, but, if you're almost eighteen, you may be out of luck.

Exceptions to the age eighteen limit are made only (a) for handicapped Scouts and (b) by the National Scout Office in circumstances totally beyond the control of the Scout.

## **MERIT BADGES**

The required merit badges are, of course, discussed in your Boy Scout Handbook, and little needs to be said here about how to do them. Remember, however, that not every badge has a counselor readily available all the time, and finding appropriate people can be a major scheduling problem, especially for a Scout nearing the eighteenth birthday deadline.

This is a good time for another reminder about being certain you have the most recent "Eagle Scout Award Application" form and Handbook, as the required badges, alternate choices and the requirements of the merit badges themselves do change periodically over the years.

## **THE EAGLE PROJECT**

Few things you've done in life will be as much of a challenge, as much work, as much a source of pride and as much plain fun as your Eagle Project. We can't ever forget that our main objective in Scouting is learning to live by the Scout Oath and law's commandments regarding service to others. While some of the merit badges teach us skills which are enjoyable or educational and some will allow us to help others in future emergencies, the Eagle Project makes a major contribution to our community right now.

### **HERE'S THE PROJECT REQUIREMENT:**

While a Life Scout, plan, develop and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to your religious institution, school, or community. The project must be approved by your Scoutmaster, Troop Committee Chairman, and District Eagle Board Chairman before you start.

Let's break it down, step-by-step:

1. "While a Life Scout . . ."

The Eagle Project must be started after you have "made" Life Scout, and you cannot do anything on it prior to that time (although a little thinking ahead will not hurt!).

2. ". . . Plan. . . "

This requirement of a comprehensive, written advance plan taken very seriously, and the best executed project in the world is not acceptable if it is done before the careful writing and approval of that plan. The attached planning forms will help on this requirement.

3. ". . . Develop . . ."

Another important one! As you draft and redraft your written plan, you must also be "pounding the sidewalk" making the preparations, getting permission, arranging for unlocking and later locking of doors or gates, setting up transportation for your helpers and materials, borrowing needed tools, purchasing supplies. You must accomplish all of those things (not your parents, Scoutmaster or friends).

4. ". . . Give Leadership to others. . . "

This puts your years in Scouting and those leadership positions you've held to the really practical test: This is an Eagle Project, not a "Lone Wolf" one. You may not do a project, however worthy, alone or with fewer than two helpers. It's preferable to have more than two, and always plan for extras because, as you know by now, things "come up" no matter how well you plan or how sure someone is that he'll be there.

5. ". . . Helpful to your religious institution, school, or community . . . "

Were you surprised when you first heard this requirement, that your not allowed to do a project for the good ol' Scout Troop? Eagle marks a passage into the adult world and a recognition that skills which stay within the Scout or even within the Troop aren't being fully used.

Here, you're going to be doing something as a Scout but for the world outside Scouting.

Here, you're going to be more than a "good turn". It must have some relatively permanent importance. Washing the windows or mowing the lawn of your church, for example, are great ideas, but no where near Eagle Projects. On the other hand, landscaping an area which is just dirt, building facilities or equipment for your church or school or undertaking a major rehabilitation project (e.g. painting and scraping) may well be an Eagle Project.

Don't forget schools as possible areas for projects and, if you go to school which is in pretty good condition, how about an elementary school in a less fortunate area? Aren't there some things around there which would really make a difference? Introduce yourself to the principal and find out.

City and county institutions need help all the time, especially in our era of budget constraints. There are few public libraries which don't have plenty of needs to be filled, and exciting institutions such as the fire, police or parks department generally have projects just waiting.

Community organizations, including charities such as the Salvation Army, Red Cross, United Way, Cancer Society and many service clubs, such as Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions, as well as local hospitals, are also good bets for projects. Be certain that you are not working for a profit-making institution, however, and consult your Scoutmaster if in doubt on this subject.

Bear in mind that dollar cost is of importance to a good Eagle Project, and that some of the best cost almost nothing. When you arrange to do a project for an organization, be sure financial details (who is buying that can of paint?) are part of your plan.

Always remember that people in institutions such as these may be familiar with Scouting and even with Eagle Project requirements, so they may be better able to help think of things than you would expect.

The project must, of course, be on your own, even though you must have others help with it. Two candidates for Eagle may not share or "go in together on" a project.

It's not a requirement, but will add to your pride: Think of a project which has never been done before!

The Project idea must be approved by your Scoutmaster, Troop Committee Chairman and Eagle Board Chairman before you start. This list of approvals is important, and differs from Star and Life Projects. The best thing is, of course, to involve your Scoutmaster before you even begin filling in the "Eagle Project Planning and Approval Guide," (include in this packet) so that you know you'll have approval when you need it, and so that he can give you extra ideas and let you know if there are some bad ones in there.

After you have your Scoutmaster's approval, then make an appointment with the Troop Committee Chairman and take it to him or her for approval. Finally, check back with your Scoutmaster to see whether you or he will be going to the District Eagle Board chairman for necessary approval.

Then, all you have to do is the project itself.

## **THE EAGLE AWARD IN EXPLORING**

Exploring does not have a step-by-step advancement, except in Sea Exploring, but any Explorer who has attained the First Class rank in a Boy Scout Troop is encouraged to become an Eagle Scout. This is done in Exploring by meeting the requirements as prescribed in the Boy Scout Handbook.

Leadership position requirements for Explorers can be met by service as President, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer of a Post or, in the case of Explorers who are Mormons, by service as Quorum President, Secretary or assistant to the priests. Additional leadership roles for Explorers may be approved by the District Advancement Chairman.

### **EAGLE SCOUT AWARD APPLICATION FORMS**

This kit contains all the forms required for your application for the Eagle Scout Award. Please fill them out in this manner:

1. Prepare one original and one copy of the application itself (Form Number 58-728). It is better to type this form, but neat printing is acceptable.
2. Fill out the Eagle Resume.
3. Address the letters included in this package to those whom you have listed under "References" in the application. You must have letters from a parent, a member of the clergy or spiritual advisor, a present teacher, your employer (if any) and two neighbors. A total of six letters is required, and, if you are not employed get an extra letter from someone else, such as a neighborhood friend or another teacher.
  - a. Include a stamped envelope addressed to each reference, as you must not personally send or receive reference request or letters.
  - b. Provide six stamped envelopes addressed to your Unit Advancement Chairman to be used for the replies from your references.
  - c. Give all the letters to your Unit Advancement Chairman for mailing. He will receive the replies from your references in the envelopes you have provided.
  - d. Reference letters are confidential and their contents are not to be disclosed to any person not a member of the Eagle Board.
4. Complete the checklist as far as possible.

## GOOD LUCK ON THE TRAIL

Becoming an Eagle Scout is hard work. But try to find anyone-of any age who has done it and isn't glad he did.

While it's you that has to do the work, we're all behind you, and generations of Eagle Scouts are anxious to welcome you.

Good luck on the Eagle Trail!

Gene Gaffney  
Council Eagle Scout Advancement Chairman  
San Gabriel Valley Council

### Eagle Application Process

1. Select your project, get your unit leader's approval, and the District Eagle Board approval before starting you project.
2. When you start your project, send out your requests for letters of recommendation.
3. When your project is completed and you have earned all the merit badges, have your Unit leader's conference.
4. Deliver all the paperwork and the 6 unopened letters of recommendation to your District Eagle Board Chairman.
5. The application will be reviewed and you will be contacted to set your board date.
6. You, your parents, and your unit leader must appear at you Eagle Board of Review!
7. After passing your Board, it will take 6-8 weeks for the completed paperwork to return from National Council. Plan for your Court accordingly.
8. Write to the people on the Honor's list for certificates, flags, etc. Give them plenty of time to respond. Have the letters ready as soon as you pass your board! These names are just a few, do not limit yourself to them.

Do not be afraid to call and ask questions! The better you do, the quicker the process.

Good Luck!

## CHECK LIST - EAGLE SCOUT AWARD

1. Requirements completed prior to your 18th birthday. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Troop or Post office held for 6 months after Life Award Board of Review \_\_\_\_\_
3. Eagle applicant statement completed: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Life purpose \_\_\_\_\_
  - Eagle Scout service project \_\_\_\_\_
  - Honors and Leadership Abilities \_\_\_\_\_
4. Letters of reference - unopened (6 required) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Parent \_\_\_\_\_
  - Religious leader \_\_\_\_\_
  - School (principal or teacher) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Employer (if applicable, optional) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Other number 1 \_\_\_\_\_
  - Other number 2 \_\_\_\_\_
  - Scoutmaster \_\_\_\_\_
5. Twenty one merit badges, including required ones.
6. Total number of Eagle Project service hours: \_\_\_\_\_ hours \_\_\_\_\_
7. Scoutmaster Conference held. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Registered leader's signature on Eagle Application. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Date of Board of Review, signatures on Eagle Application \_\_\_\_\_

## ADVANCEMENT REPORT INSTRUCTIONS

1. One Eagle per form and no other advancements on the form.
2. Board of Review signatures, District representative is chairman. Local unit leaders do NOT sign this advancement report, no signatures from the unit are needed on the advancement form.
3. Top part of the form must be filled out as usual, unit leader, address information, etc.

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Signature of Scout: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Unit Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Eagle Board Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

One copy of this check list, all copies of the advancement form, on original Eagle application (#58-728) and one copy **MUST** be turned into the Scout Service Center. All other items will be retained by the Eagle Board of review chairman.

Eagle Scout Advancement Award

**SAN GABRIEL VALLEY COUNCIL  
BOY SCOUTS of AMERICA  
EAGLE SCOUT ADVANCEMENT**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_:

Life Scout \_\_\_\_\_ is making application for advancement to the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest honor a young man can earn in the Scouting program (only 2% of those entering the Boy Scouts earn this award). Having met preliminary requirements, he must now appear before Character Review Boards in order to establish his eligibility to become and Eagle Scout.

He has given your name as character reference. We would appreciate it very much if we could receive a letter from you giving your appraisal, favorable or otherwise, of him. This information will be strictly confidential.

The Boards he will be appearing before will be interested in knowing about his attitude, accomplishments and participation in his home, church, school and community activities. Your comments in whatever areas in which you know him best and wish to comment on would be most helpful.

Some things to consider or to express your opinion on are:-is he active in church activities and does he live his religious teachings - does he project the image you feel a Scout should - is he keeping himself in good physical condition - is he doing things to build strong character - is he thoughtful of others - does he display a good image of himself not only physically but verbally - is he trying to increase his knowledge and use his abilities to the fullest and does he display a good attitude? What do you feel he is doing to be eligible to receive the rank of Eagle Scout?

The members of the Board of Review would appreciate receiving your reply as soon as it is convenient for you. I have enclosed an addressed, stamped envelope for your convenience.

Thank you for taking your time in aiding in our evaluation of this young man.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advancement Chairman, Troop #

Note: Use this as a sample for your reference letters. Using this format will get better response for you as it explains why the reference letter is needed.

**EAGLE RESUME**  
**Statement of candidate for Scouting's highest rank**  
**(for use by the Eagle Board of Review)**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Unit:(type)** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Number) \_\_\_\_\_

**Offices held in Unit:**

<u>Title</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Camping Experience:**

**Summer Camp:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Weeks:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Weeks:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Weeks:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Memorable camping trips of two nights or more (approx. dates and places):** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Total nights camping:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Total days on day**  
**hike:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other service projects:**

**Name the service projects you have participated in during the last two years, if any:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Eagle Service Project:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Briefly describe the personal benefits gained from this project:**

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**In your own words, describe what it means to attain the rank of Eagle:**

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