

**TROOP 33  
ADVANCEMENT PROCEDURES  
Presented by  
Troop 33  
Advancement Committee**

**September 2008**

**Scouts are responsible for keeping track of their own progress, setting their advancement goals, and designing their own course and pace. The adult leaders are here to encourage them, but success or failure is theirs to control. A Scout can check with his advancement status by consulting with the Advancement Chair (Mr. Montgomery).**

**Parents should familiarize themselves with the Advancement Program, but it is essential that parents step back and allow their son to experience and learn from the safe failures, recoveries, and success of the Advancement Program.**

(Thanks to Troop 85, Williamsville United Methodist Church, Williamsville NY for providing the basis for this booklet)

Welcome to Troop 33 Advancement Procedures. This booklet is designed to assist the Boy Scout in his advancements and provide a better understanding of how the Advancement Program works. Education and having fun are part of the Scouting program, and they are the basis of the Advancement Program.

Ranks and merit badges are simply a means to an end, not an end in themselves. Everything you do to advance and earn these ranks, from the day you joined Troop 33 until you leave the program, is designed to help you have an exciting and meaningful Scout experience.

Though it is the responsibility of each Scout to keep track of his activities and advancement status, it is also our responsibility to ensure that each Scout understands the advancement process and what is involved. We will also track the Scout's advancement in TroopMaster® (a software Troop record system), ensure they are advancing, and receiving their proper merit and rank badges in a timely manner.

The Advancement Committee looks forward to working with each of you and supporting you, to help you develop confidence, skills, character and mental fitness, that will help you to develop quality leadership skills.

If you have any questions regarding your advancement, or you do not understand something, please do not hesitate to contact:

Mr. Montgomery  
[mmontgomery@parkviewscouting.org](mailto:mmontgomery@parkviewscouting.org)  
279-9480

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## The Boy Scout Advancement Program

The Boy Scout Advancement Program is designed to provide the Boy Scout with a chance to achieve the aims of Scouting. As a Scout advances, he is measured and grows in confidence (in himself, his peers and leaders) and self-reliance. These aims are:

1. Growth in moral strength and character (your personal qualities, values, and outlook)
2. Participating in citizenship (your relationship to others; your obligations to other people, to the society you live in, and to the United States)
3. Development in physical, mental, and emotional fitness (fitness includes the body, well-tuned & healthy), the mind (able to think & solve problems), and the emotions (self-control, courage, & self-respect)

The methods of Boy Scouting are designed to accomplish and reach these aims. The methods include:

- Advancement - self-reliance, ability to help others, challenge
- Ideals - Oath, Law, Motto, Slogan
- Patrols - Peer groups, elected representation, activities
- Outdoors - all outdoor programs
- Adult Association - image, role model, example
- Personal Growth - Good Turn, service projects, religious emblems
- Leadership Development - leadership skills, practice citizenship
- Uniform - commitment to aims, identity

Scouting's Advancement Program is a self-paced program of early ranks (basic Scouting skills like first aid, camping and hiking) merit badges (specialized skills like canoeing, fishing and archery ) and advancement ranks. The Scout plans his advancement and progresses at his own pace. The Scout is responsible for keeping his own personal advancement record in his handbook (service hours, campouts, troop activities, leadership positions in the troop, etc.)

## All scouts are responsible for the following:

- Keeping track of their own progress
- Setting their own advancement goals
- Designing their own course and pace

## Lower rank requirements (scouts working on Tenderfoot, 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, or 1<sup>st</sup> Class)

- Requirements should be completed with the help of their patrol leader and/or other senior scouts (1<sup>st</sup> class and above).
- Work on should be completed with other scouts whenever possible.
- Work should be completed in conjunction with scouting activities whenever possible (troop meetings, campouts, patrol outings, etc.)
- Successful completion of a skill requires the following:
  - Demonstration of the skill to a senior scout (1<sup>st</sup> class or above)
  - Approval of the senior scout that the skill has been completed
  - Senior scout sign off in the scout's handbook that the skill is complete with a **legible date and initials**
  - Presentation of the signed handbook to the advancement chairman.

## Senior scouts (1<sup>st</sup> class and above)

- It is part of the leadership responsibility of each and every troop member to work with newer scouts on basic skills.
- The senior scouts are also responsible for confirming and signing off that lower rank skills have been completed.
- If a senior scout signs off that a skill is complete, they are stating, on their honor that the scout:
  - Successfully demonstrated the skill
  - Truly understands all aspects of the skill
  - Is ready to proceed in their advancement

## Adult Leaders (and parents)

- Adult leaders are responsible for facilitating and assisting scouts in completing their goals. Assistance should focus on guidance to resources... Don't just provide an answer or solve the problem, help the scout to find the answer or to solve the problem themselves. If possible, encourage the scout to share their findings with other scouts, or teach what they have learned to a peer, their patrol, or the troop.

## **A Scout should follow these procedures for advancing in rank:**

1. Meet the requirements for the advancement or award. You should have all required spaces in your Scout Handbook signed except Scout Spirit, Scoutmaster Conference, and Board of Review.
2. Make an appointment with the Scoutmaster for a Scoutmaster Conference. A Scoutmaster Conference is a chance for the Scout to meet with the Scoutmaster, discuss his activity in the troop, his understanding of scouting, and to discuss his accomplishments.
3. The Scout then tells the Advancement Chair that he is ready for a Board of Review (BOR). The Advancement Chair will ask additional leaders to participate in the BOR (a minimum of 3 adults) and schedule it for the earliest Troop meeting available. The purpose of a BOR is to ensure that the Scout has completed all of the requirements, his quality of experience in the Troop, to encourage advancement towards the next rank, and to learn of his goals in Scouting. The scout is also encouraged to share both positive and negative comments about the troop program with the BOR members.

The Scout should make the Scoutmaster Conference **one week in advance and at that time inform the Advancement Chair that he has scheduled the conference and will need a BOR.** The Scout is to come in his **full uniform** with his signed handbook.

After the Scoutmaster Conference and Board of Review are successfully completed, the Scout will be awarded his rank badge at the next Troop meeting and he will also be recognized at the next Court of Honor.

A Scout can check on his advancement status by consulting with the Advancement Chairman (Mr. Montgomery).

## Introduction to Merit Badges

You can learn about sports, crafts, science, trades, business, and future careers as you earn merit badges. There are more than 100 merit badges. Any Boy Scout may earn any merit badge at any time. You don't need to have had rank advancement to be eligible.

Each Boy Scout rank above First Class requires that a Scout earn a minimum number of merit badges, including a specified minimum number of Eagle required badges, in order to earn the rank. Merit Badges can be earned through Troop organized merit badges, Council merit badge days, summer camp, and are encouraged to earn them on an individual basis from BSA merit badge counselors.

**Pick a Subject.** Read the requirements of the merit badges you think might interest you. Pick one that you find interesting and would like to learn about. Get a signed blue card from your Scoutmaster. A blue card is the application to begin working on a merit badge. It has 3 parts to it: the Counselor's Record, which he/she will keep when you complete the requirements; the Advancement Unit Leader will retain one part with the troop's records; and your copy, the Applicant's Record, which you are to keep in a safe place. If possible, get some baseball card holder pages to keep your portion of the blue card in. These records are important for you to keep in a safe place for when you are reaching Eagle rank. Each merit badge has a merit badge pamphlet to go along with it. Our Troop's library has updated pamphlets for each of the merit badges. You may borrow the pamphlet from the Troop's library - see the Troop Librarian to borrow this pamphlet while you are earning the merit badge.

**Get the name of a counselor.** After your Scoutmaster has signed the blue card, go and see the Advancement Chair (Mr. Montgomery) and get the name of a registered merit badge counselor. You call the counselor and tell him/her that you want to begin working on the merit badge and ask if they are available to be your counselor. Sometimes the counselor may ask to see you before you start the merit badge, or he/she might say work on it, call them with any questions, and when you are completed with the badge. If there is something you don't understand about the requirements or need

some help with completing it, call the counselor; he/she is there to help you and give guidance. You should read the merit badge pamphlet that goes along with the merit badge.

You are expected to meet the requirements, as they are stated - no more, no less. If it says, 'show or demonstrate', that is what you must do. The same holds true for such words as 'make', 'list', 'in the field', 'collect' or 'identify'.

There are worksheets on the web to fill out as you work on the merit badge. You can go to either [www.usscouts.org](http://www.usscouts.org) or [www.MeritBadge.org](http://www.MeritBadge.org) to get these worksheets.

**Show What You Have Learned / Scout Buddy System.** When you are ready and have completed all of the requirements, call the counselor again to make an appointment to meet him/her. When you go to meet the counselor, take along the things you have made/written to meet the requirements. If they are too big to move/carry, take some pictures. You must have another person with you at each meeting with the counselor. This person can be your parents or guardian, another Scout, a brother or sister, a relative, or a friend.

**Get the Badge.** When the counselor is satisfied that you have met the requirements, he/she will sign the blue card. The counselor will keep one part of the blue card and will return the other two portions to you. You then take the remaining blue card and you show this to your Scoutmaster who then signs it again and he will give it back to you. You then are to give this blue card to Mr. Montgomery, who will log it into TroopMaster®. He will keep the portion of the blue card that says Advancement and will return the third portion to you for your permanent records. You will receive your merit badge at the next Court of Honor.