

Soaring News

News on advancement for the Susquehanna Council

Edition 18-3

August 2018

This newsletter is prepared by the Susquehanna Council Advancement committee as a resource for leaders of cub scout and boy scout units and merit badge counselors. Its purpose is to provide current information on changes regarding advancement, as well as clarifications of advancement requirements and tips, reminders, and guidelines on advancement.

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Youth Protection

- A reminder that all leaders are required to complete the new youth protection (YP) training that is now available for staff, leaders, and parents by September 30, 2018.

The new youth protection training is available online and can be accessed through My.Scouting.org. The training includes a three-module course and a test. Each module is a stand-alone activity and can be completed at different times (the individual does not have to do them all at the same sitting). It takes a total of about one and a half hours to complete all three modules and the test. The training encompasses Venturing and Exploring Youth Protection; therefore, those videos are no longer available.

Leaders who were trained in the former YP course and whose certification from that course was originally scheduled to last beyond September 30 have had their training records changed to reflect September 30 as their expiration date. In other words, **if you completed the YP training in 2017 or early in 2018, you must take this new course to remain registered after September 30.**

Leaders with expired YP training will find that they cannot re-register in Scouting until they take the new course.

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Cub Scout rank advancement

➤ **A Brief Overview of Lion Advancement.** [From Advancement News; Vol 8, No 3; July - August 2018]

Although participation with an adult partner is required for all Lion awards, recognition items are for the Scouts only. To earn the Lion badge of rank, a Cub Scout must complete the following requirements, working with an adult partner:

1. Complete the five required adventures:
 - Lion's Honor
 - Animal Kingdom
 - Fun on the Run!
 - King of the Jungle
 - Mountain Lion
2. With your parent or guardian, complete the exercises in the pamphlet How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide.

Outside of the requirements, Lions can also complete any number of seven elective adventures of their den's or family's choosing. Some of the highlights of the Lion den:

- The family packet "Lion Kit" will include Youth Protection Training parent/child guide, stickers, Lion Adventure Book, Lion, Parent and Leader Guidebook, and Youth Protection Training guide together.
- The leader for the Lion den is called "den leader" as leaders of other Cub Scout dens are called.
- Adventure loops for each adventure are awarded in the Lion den. These loops should be available in Scout shops in July.
- The Lion materials will be available via the website: www.scouting.org/lion
- This includes the Den Leader Guide, which resembles the youth handbook. Tools for families to use to keep advancement records will include rank pocket cards and advancement charts.

Packs may now include dens of girls and dens of boys. Note that the dens will consist of only one gender. Additionally, chartered organizations may elect to form an all-girl pack as well. For the best experience for the youth and families, it is suggested to make sure the dens have 6-8 youth making sure the Cub Scout receives the best Cub Scouting experience.

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Boy Scout rank advancement

➤ **Procedure for requesting alternative rank requirements.** The Council has approved the following procedures for application in the Susquehanna Council. The objective of the Council's policies and procedures are to provide clear standards and expectations to promote understanding and uniform application of the advancement program across the council and facilitate dissemination.

2.1.2 Procedure or practice.

- a. The following information and procedures supplements the policies and procedures prescribed in the Guide to Advancement to assist units in submitting a request for alternative requirements.
 - 1) Carefully read the Guide to Advancement, sections 10.2.2.0 – 10.2.2.2, and especially consider the following extracts from those sections before submitting a request.
 - a) "Requests for alternative requirements for Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks can be made ... Alternatives are not available for the Star, Life, and Eagle rank requirements. Scouts may request approval for alternative merit badges, but the other requirements for those three ranks must be fulfilled as written." [Guide to Advancement, Section 10.2.2.0]
 - b) "It is important to remember that the advancement program is meant to challenge our members; however, not all of them can achieve everything they might want to—with or without a disability. It is for this reason all Scouts are required to meet the requirements as they are written, with no exceptions." [Guide to Advancement, Section 10.2.2.0]
 - c) "A degree of modification in advancement requirements may be necessary to mainstream as many members with disabilities as possible. Thus a Scout with a permanent physical or cognitive disability, or a disability expected to last more than two years, or beyond age 18, who is unable to complete all the requirements for Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, or First Class rank may, ..., submit a request to the council advancement committee to complete alternative requirements. Unless a Scout has been approved to register beyond the age of eligibility, alternative requirements must be completed by the 18th birthday. ... This avenue is also available to youth with longer-term disabilities (such as those related to a severe injury) who want to continue advancing during recovery." [Guide to Advancement, Section 10.2.2.1]
 - d) "Before applying for alternative requirements, members must complete as many of the existing requirements as possible. Once they have done their best to the limit of their abilities and resources," [Guide to Advancement, Section 10.2.2.2] a request may be submitted.

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- 2) The unit is encouraged to discuss a possible request with the chairman of the district's advancement committee for counsel and advice before submitting a request.
- 3) A request must come from the unit and include all of the following:
 - a) "the unit leader or a troop committee member submits to the council advancement committee a written request for alternative requirements ... It must show what has been completed, and suggest the alternatives for those requirements the Scout cannot do."
 - b) supporting letters from:
 - i. the unit leader,
 - ii. a parent or guardian, and
 - iii. the Scout (if possible)
 - c) "a written statement from a qualified health professional related to the nature of the disability. ... or when appropriate, an educational administrator in special education. Statements must describe the disability; cover the Scout's capabilities, limitations, and prognosis; and outline what requirements cannot be completed."
 - d) Other information may be included with the request to help in making an informed decision, such as Individualized Education Plans provided to parents by schools, and various treatment summaries and reports, but are not required.
- 4) The unit must submit the request, including all documentation, to the Council registrar.

{Approved by CAC, 8/13/18}

¹ CAC stands for Susquehanna Council Advancement Committee

- **Cyber-Chip.** A reminder that the Cyber Chip program is a critical tool in the protection of our youth and a requirement for rank advancement in many ranks. This tool addresses the issues of cyberbullying, cellphone use, texting, blogging, gaming, and identity theft. The Cyber Chip can be used as a tool to show skill and a commitment to do what's right in the cyber world. A few important reminders for unit leaders:
1. It is one of the requirements for rank advancement in Cub Scouts (the ranks of Tiger through Arrow of Light for their age at each rank) and Boy Scouts (the Scout rank and Star rank).
 2. It is now a requirement for a few merit badges to have a current, up-to-date Cyber Chip (such as Digital Technology and Programming merit badges).
 3. Units can decide to require scouts to earn the Cyber Chip before allowing any electronic use on outings—this is a decision each unit can make on its own, much like the Totin' Chip is used today.
 4. All Cyber Chips will expire after one year so scouts will need to "recharge" their chip annually to keep it current and up-to-date.

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Visit www.scouting.org/cyberchip to learn more about how units can incorporate this imaginative Youth Protection resource and help Scouts earn a Cyber Chip patch. Along with information on how each Scout can earn a pocket card certificate and patch appropriate to different grade levels, the website provides links to grade-appropriate videos and support materials that can be integrated into scouting programs.

Merit Badges

➤ Training for merit badge counselors.

All merit badge counselors are strongly encouraged to take the on-line training "Merit Badge Counselor Position Specific Training". It is important that each counselor has a full understanding of their responsibilities and the recommended practices for quality counseling. A foundational aspect of the scouting program is having trained leaders.

If it has been more than two years since you have taken this training or never done the training, please complete the training. The training is available on my.scouting.org under the "BSA Learn Center". The training includes the following:

- a) A module entitled "Merit Badge Counselor – Before the First Meeting". This module has five lessons with a quiz at the end of each. Each lesson is a stand-alone lesson and can be completed at different times (the individual does not have to do them all at the same sitting). It takes a total of about one hour to complete all five modules.
- b) A module entitled "Merit Badge Counselor – Position Trained". This module has one lesson with a quiz at the end. It takes a total of about 15 minutes to complete the module.

➤ Girls earning merit badges. The Council advancement committee recently received a question on whether girls currently registered in Venturing could begin working on merit badges. The response to the question from the national advancement committee is as follows:

"Girls are not eligible to work on Boy Scout [rank] requirements or merit badges until they become registered members of Scouts BSA and this program is not effective until February 1, 2019."

Thus, completion of any requirements prior to becoming registered in Scouts BSA will not count.

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Links

Guide to Advancement: <https://www.scouting.org/resources/guide-to-advancement/>

Advancement News from the National Advancement Program Team,

Jan-Feb 2018: https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/advancement_news/2018_Jan-Feb.pdf

Mar-Jun 2018: <http://files.constantcontact.com/137c2ed6201/a12ace4f-01d3-41b7-a8fb-6abd6cfcb6b3.pdf>

Jul-Aug 2018: <http://files.constantcontact.com/137c2ed6201/0fe935df-74b5-4d5d-8d88-6a2dfa196110.pdf>

Merit badge requirements: <https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/advancement-and-awards/merit-badges/>

Advancement and awards: <https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/advancement-and-awards/>

Information for Life Scouts in the Susquehanna Council to help in attaining the rank of Eagle:

<http://councils.scouting.org/Council533/Advancement/For%20Eagle%20Scout%20Candidates>