

Soaring News

News on advancement for the Susquehanna Council

Edition 18-6

December 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.**

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.

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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.**

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

Scoutbook

- **Scoutbook - More than Recording Advancement.** [*From Advancement News; Vol 8, No 6; November - December 2018*]

Scoutbook will be free starting January 1, 2019

In an effort to drive program consistency and deeper engagement with our youth and leaders, Boy Scouts of America is pleased to announce that effective January 1, 2019, Scoutbook will be free to all BSA units.

Scoutbook (<https://www.scoutbook.com>) is an online unit management tool that ensures that you never miss a Scouting moment—from tracking advancements to milestone achievements along the Scouting adventure. When units with a current Scoutbook account need to “renew” this fall, they will not pay any renewal fees effective September 1, 2018. When councils with Scoutbook accounts for their units need to “renew” their unit Scoutbook accounts this fall, they will not pay any renewal fees effective September 1, 2018.

Essentially, all current Scoutbook unit accounts have recently been extended--so they will not expire--at no cost to the unit or council. For units currently without a Scoutbook account, they can begin their free Scoutbook unit account on January 1, 2019.

Here are some FAQs about this announcement:

- Q. What is the new Scoutbook change?
A. Effective January 1, 2019, there will be no cost for any new Scoutbook accounts. Effective September 1, 2018, there will be no cost for any renewed Scoutbook accounts.
- Q. I recently opened and paid for a Scoutbook account. Will I be reimbursed for any time that remains after January 1, 2019?
A. No. There are no plans to reimburse anyone who has previously paid for Scoutbook accounts. This new Scoutbook change only applies to any new Scoutbook accounts created January 1, 2019 or later—and to any renewing Scoutbook accounts that would “normally” be paid between September 1, 2018 and December 31, 2018.
- Q. I recently opened a trial account to Scoutbook between August 1 and 31, 2018. So now that September is here, do I have to pay for my continued access to Scoutbook?
A. No. You started a trial Scoutbook account in August 2018 at no cost. There is no cost to renew Scoutbook on or after September 1, 2018. Your Scoutbook account has been automatically extended so that it will not expire.

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- Q: How does renewal of Council or Unit accounts expiring between September 1, 2018 and December 31, 2018 occur? Does an expiring Council or Unit need to act?
A. No. All current Scoutbook unit accounts have been extended so they will not expire. If more unit codes are required, the Council must request them as needed.
- Q: How will the family plan in Scoutbook work in the future?
A. The family plan is for families who want to share their Scout's advancement records. The family plan is also for families with more than one Scout. Parents, grandparents, and leaders can all connect to the Scout(s) records. The Scout(s) in the family can also have access to their records with their own login account. The cost for this service was \$10/year for 2 to 5 Scouts or \$20/year for 6 to 10 Scouts. All current family plans in Scoutbook have been extended so they will not expire. On or after January 1, 2019, any new family plan for Scoutbook can be created at no cost.
- Q: I need to add a few more Scouts to my family plan in Scoutbook. What is the charge?
A. There is no charge. All current family plans in Scoutbook have been increased to 10 Scouts.
- Q: As it is the fall and school is beginning, it is now "new member signup" time for my Cub Scout pack. My pack has 75 youth in Scoutbook with 15 open slots remaining. We expect to recruit well over that number next Tuesday night. Will we be able to extend our Scout numbers by that time?
A. It sounds like you have a current Scoutbook account. All current Scoutbook unit accounts have been extended so they will not expire. These unit accounts have been increased to an unlimited number of Scouts.
- Q: My unit had a trial that previously expired. Do I have to wait until January 1, 2019 to begin using Scoutbook again?
A. Yes. Scoutbook will be free to all units beginning January 1, 2019. Meantime, please watch key BSA marketing channels for the release of Scoutbook Lite for all units later in 2018. This free online tool will provide a different UX (user experience) and will help your unit track advancements for all youth members.
- Q: What about the term "renewal" for Scoutbook?
A. With Scoutbook becoming free for all users beginning January 1, 2019 and free for any current users renewing on or after September 1, 2018, you may see the term "renewal" not be used at all. In the future, we expect to just have Scoutbook users actively engaged in this online platform. The need to "renew" has become unnecessary.

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- Q. In the future, what is the renewal process for Scoutbook?
A. Scoutbook will be free effective January 1, 2019. Units with a current account can renew or add more youth at no cost—effective September 1, 2018. If a unit in Scoutbook is in sync, we expect that the unit in the future will not need to “act” to renew, as there is no reason to end an account—due to a payment that is no longer needed. If your unit has a current Scoutbook account and is in Sync, you do not need to take any action. Your Scoutbook unit account will stay live on and after the current end date.
- Q. How does this affect the development and roll-out of Scoutbook Lite?
A. This Scoutbook announcement does not affect Scoutbook Lite, which will be rolled out later in 2018 and feature a new UX (user experience). Scoutbook Lite in its initial rollout will feature only advancement reporting.
- Q. Will Scoutbook performance be negatively affected?
A. No. The performance of Scoutbook is not affected by this change. The BSA IT and Member Care teams will continue to support Scoutbook with their timely service and quality resources. Scoutbook performance enhancements have been implemented and performance is continually monitored. The platform that Scoutbook is built upon is very adjustable. If adjustments are needed in the future, they will be brought to bear as needed.
- Q. Are you not accepting any new Scoutbook accounts between September 1, 2018 and December 31, 2018?
A. That is correct. We have chosen to remove the “signup” button off the home page of Scoutbook. This will allow us to improve the Scoutbook online tool, which will come back as a free product effective January 1, 2019.
- Q. So, I just started a new Cub Scout pack this fall. What are my options for tracking advancement in a digital way?
A. You have several options now. You can use the online free tool—Internet Advancement to track your advancement at the unit level. Parents and families can download and use the free online “Scouting” app (available in the App Store and Google Play) to track their child’s advancement—essentially a digital handbook. When Scoutbook Lite is released later this year, you can use that free online tool to track advancements at the unit level. When Scoutbook returns in the New Year, you can use that free online tool to track your advancements—and much more to include tracking campouts, hikes, service projects and more.
- Q. I let my previous Scoutbook account expire. I now want to reactivate my expired paid Scoutbook account. What should I do?
A. Please contact BSA Member Care to get the help you need. They can be reached at 972-580-2489 or myscouting@scouting.org.

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- Q. I'm a parent of a youth member registered in a unit. So how does the "Scouting" app work? I thought you needed a Scoutbook account to activate this "Scouting" app.
A. For all families that are seeking a digital solution for their child's advancement tracking, they can download and use the free online "Scouting" app (available in the App Store and Google Play). Once the app is downloaded, it will redirect you to a Scoutbook.com webpage where you will click on the "FREE Advancement Tracking" banner to create a login and password. Your unit does not need a Scoutbook account--for you to use this free family app to track your child's advancements. Please note that you must have a parent or guardian connection to a BSA youth member to login to this "Scouting" app.
- Q. I have heard about a SSO (Single Sign On) option that will be available in the future for Scoutbook. Can you tell me more?
A. We are working on the SSO now and will announce that update when this feature is available. We anticipate in the future that Scouters will be able to sign onto Scoutbook using their my.Scouting credentials. We expect that this change will make the online user experience easier, as there will only be one login and password to remember for my.Scouting and Scoutbook.
- Q. What is the difference between Scoutbook, Scouting app, and Scoutbook Lite?
A. See the chart in *Advancement News; Vol 8, No 6; November - December 2018* {link on last page}.
- Q. Where can I get more information about these changes in Scoutbook?
A. For more info, please contact Scoutbook.support@scouting.org.

Cub Scout rank advancement

- **Lions Officially Part of Cub Scouting.** [*From Advancement News; Vol 8, No 6; November - December 2018*]

Now that Lions are officially part of Cub Scouting what should I know?

Lions is the new program in Cub Scouting for boys and girls in Kindergarten, the year prior to 1st grade. There are some states that do not require children to attend Kindergarten which explains the need to clarify that it is for youth prior to their 1st grade year.

Lions, like Tigers, are required to have an adult partner with them at all events and activities. Adult partner is not a registered leadership position so adult partners do not count towards meeting required leadership for youth protection. In the pilot program Lion dens had a Lion Coach, to keep things simple when the program was fully adopted that term was dropped and Lions, like all other dens have a den leader.

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Lions do not earn the Bobcat badge. The Lion program is designed to be simple and to welcome new families into Cub Scouting without overwhelming them. Lions have five required adventures;

- Lion's Honor
- Animal Kingdom
- Fun on the Run!
- King of the Jungle
- Mountain Lion

In addition to the five required adventures, Lions complete the Protecting Your Child from Child Abuse; A Parent's guide with their parent or legal guardian in order to earn their Lion badge of rank.

There are seven elective adventures, however Lions are not required to earn any elective adventures to earn the Lion badge of rank.

The Lion badge of rank is a rectangular badge, similar to the size and shape of the Arrow of Light. The design was chosen to keep the look and feel of the Cub Scout badges of rank on a blue uniform. With the move to all Webelos wearing a tan shirt the need for a diamond shaped Webelos badge of rank was eliminated. A child who is in Cub Scouting from Lion through Bear will have their left shirt pocket full and ready to move up to a tan shirt.

Boy Scout rank advancement

- **Scouts BSA – temporary transition rules.** [from Implementation Details for Females Entering Scouts BSA prepared by BSA National]

On February 1, 2019, the Boy Scouts of America will begin admitting girls into Scouts BSA (formerly the Boy Scout program). One of the characteristics of Scouting—for over a hundred years—is that no matter when you join, however long you stay, or the rank you attain, the Scouting experience prepares you for life. And for some, the pinnacle of their Scouting experience is achieving the highest rank of Eagle Scout.

The policies of the BSA indicate that, except in extraordinary circumstances, a youth desiring to achieve the rank of Eagle must do so before the youth's 18th birthday. This will continue to be our policy.

It is in the interests of the entire BSA, and in fact our nation, that all girls who join the BSA in 2019 should have an opportunity to earn their Eagle badge should they diligently and promptly complete all requirements. Accordingly, after carefully considering recommendations from stakeholders, including feedback from volunteers and professionals at the 2018 Top Hands Meeting, the National Executive Committee of the Boy Scouts of America has approved the following temporary transition rules regarding extensions for youth over 16 but not yet 18 years of age on February 1, 2019 to complete the requirements for the Eagle Scout award.

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To preserve the integrity of the Eagle Scout Award, no exceptions to or waivers of any of the requirements for the Eagle Scout Award are permitted under this limited exception, and all requirements must be completed while the individual is a registered member of Scouts BSA, or after achieving the First-Class Rank in Scouts BSA (as specified in the BSA Guide to Advancement).

Since the BSA has determined that the minimum period of elapsed time to complete the requirements of the Eagle Scout rank is approximately 19-20 months, the extension is not available to any youth who is under 16 years of age on February 1, 2019 (as they will have adequate time to earn their Eagle before turning 18) nor to any youth who has already turned 18 years of age on February 1, 2019 (as they will be ineligible to join Scouts BSA).

1. Youth 16 years of age or older, but not yet 18, on February 1, 2019 who register as members of Scouts BSA on or before December 31, 2019, may request extensions to complete the Eagle Scout Award requirements after they turn 18 years of age.
2. Requests for extensions must be received no later than thirty (30) days after turning 18 years of age. Extensions must be in writing by submitting the designated form to the National Service Center and the form must be received no later than January 7, 2020. Only the National Council may grant extensions. The actual extension will be based upon the individual's registration date and age at the time of the request and will provide not more than twenty-four months from the date of initial registration to complete all requirements.
3. In the interest of fairness, these temporary transition rules apply to all youth joining Scouts BSA during 2019 – both girls and first-time joining boys.

Recognition

In keeping with established policy, the Eagle Scout rank is earned when the candidate's award has been approved by the National Council.

The BSA will not recognize a first female Eagle Scout to avoid potentially introducing incentives for leaders, troops or Scouts to prioritize expediency or engage in behavior counter to Scouting's values.

Instead, the BSA will officially recognize our Inaugural Class of Female Eagle Scouts in the fall of 2020, providing young women who join Scouts BSA the needed time to complete all requirements. This Inaugural Class will be celebrated nationally and collectively commemorated.

It is our hope and expectation that local units will ensure substantial individual recognition of their first female Eagle Scouts in a manner befitting their great accomplishments.

FAQ

- Q: Will this extension always be available for all youth that enter Scouts BSA?
No. These are temporary transition rules and will not be available to any youth who is under 16 years of age on February 1, 2019 as they will have adequate time to earn their Eagle before turning 18.

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- Q: Can the first female Eagle Scout be identified based on the earliest Board of Review date?
No. The Eagle Scout rank is earned when it is approved by the National Council; that date will be noted to recognize this inaugural class.

- **Scouts BSA – completing requirements for Eagle Scout.** [from Implementation Details for Females Entering Scouts BSA prepared by BSA National]

FAQ

- Q: Is the BSA changing the Eagle Scout requirements for girls joining Scouts BSA in 2019?
No – the Eagle Scout rank requirements are not changing.
- Q: Can troops, districts or councils amend or adjust the requirements/process?
No. Eagle Scout requirements are set by the National Council and cannot be adjusted by a troop, district or council. In fact, the Eagle Scout rank is earned when it is approved by the National Council.
- Q: Will work completed while girls participated unofficially before the introduction of Scouts BSA count towards Eagle requirements?
No. To preserve the integrity of the Eagle Scout Award, all requirements must be completed while the individual is a registered member of Scouts BSA, or after achieving the First-Class Rank in Scouts BSA (as specified in the BSA Guide to Advancement, an individual after earning First Class Rank in Scouts BSA may transfer primary membership to Venturing or Sea Scouts and continue to work on Eagle Scout requirements).
- Q: Will work that female Venturers or Sea Scouts completed count toward Eagle Scout requirements?
To preserve the integrity of the Eagle Scout Award, all requirements must be completed while the individual is a registered member of Scouts BSA, or after achieving the First Class Rank in Scouts BSA (as specified in the BSA Advancement Guide, an individual after earning First Class Rank in Scouts BSA may transfer primary membership to Venturing or Sea Scouts and continue to work on Eagle Scout requirements).
- Q: Will camping nights from current Venturing and Sea Scouts that count for requirements for the Order of the Arrow, also count for the Eagle Scout rank?
No.

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➤ **All-Girl Troops: Ask Yourselves, Have We Done Everything to Be Prepared?**

[From *Advancement News*; Vol 8, No 6; November - December 2018]

February 1, 2019 will be a red-letter day for the Boy Scouts of America as 11 to 17-year-old girls will be joining Scouts BSA within an all-girl troop. They will be known as Scouts and will complete advancement and activities on the trail to their Eagle Scout rank (See **Scouts BSA – temporary transition rules** earlier in this newsletter.)

Prior to the launch in February, districts and councils will be organizing all-girl troops. The troop will need an official chartered organization and a designated troop committee. The chartered organization may serve both all-boy and all-girl troops with “linked troops,” which means that the troop committee may be a shared committee for each of the separate all-girl and all-boy troops. Troops that are “linked” under a single chartered organization may share troop numbers.

Regardless of the charter organization and committee arrangements, here are some preparations that every new unit needs to make:

- Meeting Place – Secure an appropriate meeting place for the all-girl troop and verify its availability.
- Recruiting – Plan and publicize one or more “joining events” at that meeting place and bring plenty of youth applications.
- “Calendaring” – Prepare a preliminary calendar or a few ideas of activities to share with the girls and their parents.
- Volunteers – Review the types of activities you will plan to include and offer opportunities for parent involvement in the leadership/support of those activities and bring plenty of adult applications.

Here are a few other considerations to ensure that your council’s and district’s units are ready:

- Training – Are your key committee members trained (Youth Protection and position specific training) – contact your district committee for information on upcoming opportunities. There will also be a special opportunity in January at the Florida Sea Base to prepare new leaders. Come join the fun! <http://www.bsaseabase.org/filestore/seabase/pdf/2019/2019FSBConfFlyer.pdf>
- Leadership – Does the unit have registered, trained female leadership available for all activities for the all-girl troop? Check with the district to ensure that plans are in place for training opportunities and especially outdoor training.
- Advancement – The Scouts BSA Handbook will be the appropriate youth reference book, one for girls and one for boys, will be available early 2019. All advancement information will be identical in both publications.

The more we prepare in advance, the quicker everyone will be ready for the great experience the girls will have in their new all-girl troop.

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➤ **Timely submission of Eagle packets.**

A reminder to Scouts and unit leaders that the timely submission of a complete Eagle packet to the Council Service Center is critical, especially if a Scout is approaching or has already turned 18. The timely submission for a Scout turning 18 is critical to allow time for review of the packet, including resolution of any discrepancies, and scheduling and conduct of the board of review within the normal limitations established for the conduct of an Eagle board of review after a Scout has turned 18. An Eagle board of review must be conducted within three months after a Scout's 18th birthday without an approved exception. In order for the Scout to finish well in the last step on the trail to Eagle and to demonstrate our motto, Be Prepared, Scouts and units are strongly encouraged to ensure they finalize and submit a complete packet to the Council Service Center before the Scout turns 18.

A point of clarification regarding letters of recommendation: The Council highly encourages Scouts to plan ahead to obtain written letters of recommendation from their references before submission of the packet, so the letters can be included in the Scout's Eagle packet. However, if the scout has turned 18, the complete packet should be submitted immediately after his birthday, regardless whether any letters of recommendation have been received or not.

➤ **Contact info in each District for preparation and submission of Eagle project proposals, completed project work books, and applications.** If a leader, parent, or scout has a question or needs guidance on the preparation or submission of an Eagle project proposal, project work book, and/or application, contact one of the district advancement committee members listed below.

Bald Eagle District

Chuck Mertes	cmertes1@verizon.net	570-971-1312
Don Cohick	scoutpatches@hotmail.com	570-419-0181

Seven Bridges District

Dennis Slaybaugh	dls65@ptd.net	570-847-4556
Larry Conrad	legaleagle@ptd.net	570-286-5473

Merit Badges

- **Re-registration as a merit badge counselor.** After August 31, any individual that was registered as a counselor with the council last year and the council did not receive their re-registration letter prior to that date must now reapply to serve as a counselor. In order to reapply, the individual must submit a complete [Merit Badge Counselor Application](#) {click for link to the form}.

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➤ **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 and current 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.

➤ **Meeting MB requirements - meaning of terms.** Many of the requirements for the completion of a merit badge use the terms: "discuss", "describe", and "explain". However, the intended means (verbal and/or written) to complete requirements that use those terms is often misunderstood. The following is clarification of the intent for those terms from BSA’s Advancement Team.

Discuss: *To investigate by reasoning or argument; to present in detail for examination or consideration; to talk about.*

The intent here is to verbally discuss.

Describe: *To represent or give an account of in words; to represent by a figure, model, or picture; to trace or traverse the outline.*

The intent here is to verbally describe.

Explain: *To make known; to make plain or understandable; to give the reason for or cause of; to show the logical development or relationships of.*

The intent here is to verbally explain.

Typically, a requirement will state ‘discuss with your counselor’; ‘explain in your own words’; or ‘describe to other’.

If the intent was to put it in writing, we would have stated “discuss”, “describe”, or “explain”... ‘in writing’.

Therefore, the intent is for verbal interaction with the counselor unless specifically stated “in writing”.

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- **Merit Badge College.** Registration is open for the Merit Badge College to take place at the Pennsylvania College of Technology campus in Williamsport on February 16, 2019. At present, the Merit Badge College is offering the opportunity to choose from 21 merit badge offerings. **Participants are strongly encouraged to read the section on prerequisites to Be Prepared for the participation in the event.**

Here is the link to the site for information on the Merit Badge College and registration: <http://bsa.pct.edu/>.

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>

Sep-Oct 2018: <http://files.constantcontact.com/137c2ed6201/29674875-4bb1-4d12-8eee-ee809f5a3f42.pdf>

Nov-Dec 2018: <http://files.constantcontact.com/137c2ed6201/566b71e8-fd5e-4178-a85a-106817534e37.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>