

# Soaring News

News on advancement for the Susquehanna Council

Edition 19-1

January 2019

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.

## Headlines

New Council website – [new and expanded Advancement pages](#)  
**[Scoutbook](#) is now free for Scouts and Scout units**

### Cub Scout rank advancement

None this month. Please check our next newsletter for new information specific to Cub Scouts.

### Boy Scout rank advancement

**[Scouts BSA – temporary transition rules](#)** {Important info repeated from content in Edition 18-5 and 18-6}

**[Scouts BSA – completing requirements for Eagle Scout](#)** {Important info repeated from content in Edition 18-5 and 18-6}

**[Eagle Scout Proposal Approval – What Is Expected?](#)**

**[Timely submission of Eagle packets](#)** {Important info repeated from content in Edition 18-6}

### Merit Badges

**[Meeting MB requirements - meaning of terms](#)** {Important info repeated from content in Edition 18-6}

**[Scouting Heritage Merit Badge Update](#)**

## New Council website – new and expanded Advancement pages

The Susquehanna Council created a new website in September 2018 to improve the council's capability to provide information to everyone in the council. Check it out at this [link](#). The Advancement pages can be accessed from the "MORE" drop-down menu. The council continues to make improvements to the site.

**The Council Advancement Committee is very excited to announce that this month we completed a complete overhaul of the advancement pages on the Council's website. We think that you will find it organized to more intuitively find information and provide access to a significant amount of current information and forms.**

Here is a link directly to the council's Advancement pages {[click here](#)}.

We are continuing to update and add content so keep checking the site to find answers to your advancement questions and access current information on advancement. Suggestions are welcome (such as adding information) – send to Steve Guthrie [his contact info is on the website].

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**We highly encourage Scouts, adult leaders, MB counselors, and parents in the council to make it their go-to source to find and obtain information regarding advancement in the Scouting program.**

## Scoutbook

*[Article from Bryan on Scouting, January 1, 2019, Bryan Wendell]*

Fellow Scouters, 2019 is off to a great start.

Scoutbook, the Boy Scouts of America's online tool for managing and tracking Scouting advancement, is now completely, totally, 100 percent free. The change became official on — January 1, 2019.

Longtime users know how Scoutbook makes it easy (and fun!) for Scouts, parents and leaders to track advancement and milestone achievements along the Scouting trail.

Before 2019, individuals, units or councils paid a small annual fee — up to \$1 per Scout per year — to access Scoutbook's suite of unit-management features.

In 2019 and beyond, those same great features are available for the best possible price: \$0.

Now everyone can learn what more than 1 million users already know: Scoutbook can improve your Scouting experience.

Here's what else you need to know:

### **How will my unit be affected?**

- Units with a current Scoutbook account will continue to use Scoutbook as before.
- Councils that provide Scoutbook accounts for their units will no longer need to manage a subscription process for units starting a new account.
- Units without a current Scoutbook account will be able to access Scoutbook free on Scoutbook.com and elsewhere.

### **How will subscriptions/renewals work in 2019 and beyond?**

- The need to subscribe or renew annually will become unnecessary.
- Once your unit is on Scoutbook, you'll be set for as long as your unit would like to continue using this free tool.

### **How will making Scoutbook free affect its performance?**

- Scoutbook will only continue to improve.
- 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 regularly over the years, and its performance is continually monitored. That will continue.

### **What's new in this release of Scoutbook?**

- Scoutbook has a new Single Sign On (SSO) process that will allow users to easily create accounts with the same properties as my.scouting accounts.
- You'll use the same account credentials (username and password) for both platforms. This makes things much easier for users by streamlining the login process.

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- For details, consult the list of Frequently Asked Questions [PDF], which includes a step-by-step guide for use of SSO {[click here](#)}.

## **Where can I get more information about this change in Scoutbook?**

- Keep an eye on Scoutbook.com for all the latest updates.
- If you still have questions, you can always contact the friendly and helpful folks at Scoutbook support. Their email: [Scoutbook.support@scouting.org](mailto:Scoutbook.support@scouting.org).

## Cub Scout rank advancement

**None**

## 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.

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).

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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.
- 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.

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- **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.

- **Eagle Scout Proposal Approval – What is Expected?**

[Article from January-February 2019 Advancement News]

After a Life Scout chooses an idea for an Eagle Scout service project the next important step is to prepare a project proposal, and have it approved. Approvals are required from the unit leader, a unit committee representative, the project beneficiary, and a council or district representative. The criteria that individuals approving project proposals must consider for determining if the project is acceptable are specified in topic 9.0.2.7 of the Guide to Advancement.

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Keep in mind that the proposal is an overview, but also the beginning of planning. It shows the approvers that the following five tests can be met.

1. The project provides sufficient opportunity to meet the requirement.

To meet this test there must be opportunity for planning and developing the project, for giving leadership to others, and determining the project will be "helpful" to the beneficiary. Planning and development require forethought from the candidate to organize a successful project effort rather than just following directions prepared by someone else. The leadership component is met by organizing and directing others who help carry out the project. Finally, by having a project that is "helpful," we show that we intend for the project to have a positive impact for the beneficiary, although that does not mean that the project must have lasting value.

2. The project appears to be feasible.

Is it a project the Scout is capable of planning and developing and also managing to a successful conclusion? Is it reasonable to believe that the Scout will be able to obtain the necessary resources (material, supplies, and people) to properly carry out the project? Note that the second test says, "appears to be feasible."

3. Safety issues will be addressed.

The Scout is aware of potential safety issues and hazards and will address them in the project plan. The safety issues do not need to be addressed or solved in the proposal. Assurance needs to be given that the Scout is aware of the issues and that those issues will be addressed in the project plan. Since an Eagle Scout project is a unit activity, unit adult leadership has the same responsibility to assure safety while conducting a project as with any other unit activity.

4. Action steps for further detailed planning are included.

Does the proposal include some action steps for preparing the project plan? Those steps don't need to be very detailed, but they should provide a simple "road map" that the Scout can follow when developing the project plan. These action steps are critical to the final test.

5. The Scout is on the right track with a reasonable chance for a positive experience.

Does the Scout's proposal demonstrate a good understanding of what is to be accomplished? Is it reasonable to believe that the proposed project has a good chance of providing the Scout a successful outcome that will contribute to personal growth and development? It doesn't have to guarantee success.

The detail required for a proposal depends on the project's complexity. Details provided must be enough to provide a level of confidence for a council or district reviewer that the above five tests can be met, but not so much detail that—based on the possibility that a proposal can be rejected—it does not respect the time it takes to prepare the proposal.

For further information and insight see Guide to Advancement topics 9.0.2.3 - 9.0.2.5 and 9.0.2.14.

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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.

## Merit Badges

- **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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## ➤ Scouting Heritage Merit Badge Update

[Article from January-February 2019 Advancement News]

Scouting history reached a new milestone this past year as the National Scouting Museum opened at Philmont Scout Ranch. This grand opening has an effect on one of the requirements to earn this merit badge (Requirement 4b). This may now be accomplished by visiting the new museum at Philmont Scout Ranch in person. The alternate for requirement 4b, as before, is to write to the museum via e-mail or traditional mail to accomplish 4b. Note that there are two additional options to complete requirement #4 which may be to attend a BSA national jamboree, other similar event (4a), or to visit a local display of Scouting memorabilia (4c).

National Scouting Museum contact information:

- e-mail: [Philmont.Museums@scouting.org](mailto:Philmont.Museums@scouting.org) (include "Scouting Heritage Merit Badge" in the subject line)
- US mail:  
National Scouting Museum – Philmont Scout Ranch  
Attention: Scouting Heritage Merit Badge  
17 Deer Run Road  
Cimarron, NM 87714

## Links

- Guide to Advancement: <https://www.scouting.org/resources/guide-to-advancement/>
- Advancement News from the National Advancement Program Team, Previous issues are available at: <https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/advancement-and-awards/advancement-news/>
- 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: <https://susquehannabsa.org/advancement/boy-scouts/information-and-resources-for-life-to-eagle-advancement/>