

Soaring News

News on advancement for the Susquehanna Council

Edition 19-5

August 2019

This newsletter is prepared by the Susquehanna Council Advancement committee as a resource for leaders of cub scout and Scouts BSA 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

Internet Advancement: “These upgrades to Internet Advancement make your life as a Scout leader easier” {Important info repeated from content in Edition 19-4}

Cub Scout rank advancement

Scoutbook - June 1 is significant {Important info repeated from content in Edition 19-3 and 19-4}

National Summertime Awards {Important info updated from content in Edition 19-3 and 19-4}

Scouts BSA rank advancement

Reporting advancement {Important info updated from content in Edition 19-3 and 19-4}

References on application for Eagle rank – They may not be what you expect {Important info repeated from content in Edition 19-4}

Reminder: Eagle Scout Service Project – must use the most current workbook {Important info repeated from content in Edition 19-4}

Merit Badges

Annual Re-registration of merit badge counselors {Important info updated from content in Edition 19-3}

Use of Merit Badge pamphlets {Important info repeated from content in Edition 19-4}

Applying to serve as a merit badge counselor – very important to provide qualifications for each merit badge.

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Internet Advancement

These upgrades to Internet Advancement make your life as a Scout leader easier [Article from Bryan on Scouting, May 29, 2019, Bryan Wendell]

Good news for unit leaders who use Internet Advancement to track their Scouts' progress along the Scouting trail.

The BSA has introduced an array of upgrades designed to make your life easier. The improvements make inputting advancement updates faster, allow leaders to search advancement history in a snap and give Scouters more control over printable reports — like the kind used to make purchases at the Scout Shop.

And because sometimes those rare pockets of free time happen when you're away from your desktop or laptop, the BSA has optimized Internet Advancement for all devices: desktop, tablet or smartphone.

These enhancements to Internet Advancement are only the beginning. More improvements are coming later in 2019.

Who uses Internet Advancement?

Unit Key 3 users, unit Key 3 delegate users and unit advancement chairs can access Internet Advancement.

Internet Advancement is primarily used by unit leaders who have decided they aren't yet ready to switch over to [Scoutbook](#). If you're already using Scoutbook's robust and user-friendly features, you can stop reading now. You already have these new features baked into the unit-management platform you love.

(By the way, now that [Scoutbook is free](#), most units — including all new units — will want to use Scoutbook to manage and track their Scouts' advancement.)

The previous version of Internet Advancement will be retired for all programs except Exploring on June 10, 2019.

Non-Exploring units — that means Cub Scout packs, Scouts BSA troops, Venturing crews and Sea Scout ships — will have until June 10 to download any advancement forms they need from the previous version of Internet Advancement.

What's different about Internet Advancement now?

New features include:

- The ability for unit leaders to quickly select multiple youth before recording one or more advancements, speeding up data entry.
- A notification for unit leaders when youth have completed advancements. All pending items can be approved at once.
- The ability for unit leaders to quickly search the full advancement history for all youth in their unit using the activity tab. Search criteria may include youth name, rank, advancement type or advancement status.
- A choice of three reports — all of which can be run for one or more selected youth in the roster or for everyone in the roster if no one is selected. These reports are: Advancement History, Unit Roster and the Advancement Report, which is used to make purchases at the local Scout Shop.
- A Private Unit Forum, where unit leaders can hold private discussions within their unit. Go to discussions.scouting.org to give it a try.
- A unit roster that's fully searchable by youth name, member ID or rank.

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- The ability for unit leaders with multiple units to quickly switch between units by clicking on their unit icon in the upper right corner.
- The ability for unit leaders with multiple units to save a default unit in their settings page so their device remembers which unit to load by default.
- Instant feedback if the unit leader attempts to record a rank out of order or after the youth has aged out of a program.
- The ability to provide a partially completed Eagle application for youth who have completed the Life rank. Unit leaders can find this by attempting to record the Eagle Rank for a youth.

How can someone access Internet Advancement?

End users will access Internet Advancement via one of the following locations using their my.Scouting credentials:

- At scoutbook.scouting.org.
- From the Legacy Tools menu in my.Scouting.org.
- Through A link in Scoutbook.com.
- From the current Internet Advancement Platform.

Link to a login page for Internet Advancement [here](#).

What do Internet Advancement users need to know about the new version?

- When units make the transition to the new version, they should fully transition. Users may experience unexpected problems if they continue to use the old version after they have transitioned to the new one.
- Unlike before, advancement approvals are immediately stored in the BSA database with the new version. There is no longer a “Submit to Council” step after users have approved all desired items.
- In addition to the FAQs on help.scoutbook.com, a thread has been created on the BSA forums platform to assist users with any questions they may have.
- The report Unit Leaders will use to purchase items at the Scout Shop is called the “Advancement Report” and can be run from the reports menu just above the roster. The report will include all items that have been approved since the report was last run.
- The “Advancement Report” looks a little different from the report in the previous version. But don’t worry. The BSA has informed Scout Shops about the new format, so they’ll recognize it right away.

What’s next for Internet Advancement?

After the initial release, the BSA’s tech team will continue to add additional features on a regular basis.

Visit help.scoutbook.com for answers to commonly asked questions.

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Screenshots: Old vs. New

Longhorn Council: Troop 0497

Internet Advancement

1. Load Roster | **2. Update Member** | 3. Submit Report

Record Youth Ranks

Cancel | Reset | Save

| Rank | Date Earned mm/dd/yyyy |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Scout | 03/19/2012 |
| Tenderfoot | 11/05/2012 |
| Second Class | 06/03/2013 |
| First Class | 07/01/2013 |
| Star | 07/07/2014 |
| Life | 10/26/2015 |
| Eagle | 08/16/2018 |
| Bronze Palm | 08/16/2018 |
| Gold Palm | 08/16/2018 |
| Silver Palm | |
| Eagle + 20 Merit Badges | |
| Eagle + 25 Merit Badges | |
| Eagle + 30 Merit Badges | |
| Eagle + 35 Merit Badges | |
| Eagle + 40 Merit Badges | |
| Eagle + 45 Merit Badges | |
| Eagle + 50 Merit Badges | |

Cancel | Reset | Save

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Internet Advancement Youth Profile

Welcome, Donovan

Alex [Redacted] Life Scout

Started | Pending | **Approved**

Approved & Awarded

| Ranks | Awards |
|-------------------------|--|
| Scout # 20120319 | Boardsailing BSA # 20190312 |
| Tenderfoot # 20121105 | Eagle Palm Pin #1 (Bronze) # 20180816 |
| Second Class # 20130603 | Eagle Palm Pin #2 (Gold) # 20180816 |
| First Class # 20130701 | Eagle Palm Pin #3 (Silver) # 20190301 |
| Star Scout # 20140707 | Eagle Palm Pin #4 (Bronze) # 20190301 |
| Life Scout # 20151026 | Eagle Palm Pin #5 (Gold) # 20190301 |
| | Eagle Palm Pin #6 (Silver) # 20190301 |
| | Eagle Palm Pin #7 (Bronze) # 20190301 |
| | Eagle Palm Pin #8 (Silver) # 20190301 |
| | Eagle Palm Pin #9 (Silver) # 20190301 |
| | Eagle Palm Pin #10 (Bronze) # 20190301 |
| | Eagle Palm Pin #11 (Gold) # 20190301 |
| | Eagle Palm Pin #12 (Silver) # 20190301 |
| | Scouts BSA Nova Award - Whoosh! # 20190312 |

Ranks: Star Scout Previous, Life Scout Last Approved, Eagle Scout Next

Approved Ranks: Life Scout Last Approved, Star Scout Previous, First Class, Second Class, Tenderfoot, Scout

Not Approved Ranks: Eagle Scout Next

Advancement Report

Boy Scouts of America

Unit: Troop 0497 Unit Designation: BT
 Chartered Organization: [Redacted]
 District: Indian Nations
 Council: Longhorn Council
 Unit Expire Date: 12/31/2019

Processor: Scott [Redacted]

Date Submitted: _____
 Date Awards Needed: _____

DRAFT VERSION: This is a draft report only and cannot be used for unit advancement. You must Submit this file to obtain the final version of your unit Advancement Report.

No new achievements were recorded for this unit during this session.

Total different youth 0 Qualified for 0 Rank(s)
 Total different youth 0 Qualified for 0 Adventure Loop(s)
 Total different youth 0 Qualified for 0 Adventure Pin(s)
 Total different youth 0 Qualified for 0 Award(s)
 Total different youth 0 Qualified for 0 Merit Badge(s)
 Total different youth 0 Qualified for 0 Belt Loop(s)

Unit Awards Summary

Boy Scouts of America

Date Submitted: _____
 Date Awards Needed: _____

DRAFT VERSION: This is a draft report only and cannot be used for unit advancement. You must Submit this file to obtain the final version of your unit Advancement Report.

Internet Advancement Reports

Welcome

Purchase History

Search by Report Name

| Report Name | Created On | Recorded By |
|-------------|------------|--------------------|
| PO# 232310 | 05/15/2019 | Donovan [Redacted] |
| PO# 232301 | 05/12/2019 | Donovan [Redacted] |
| PO# 232300 | 05/11/2019 | Donovan [Redacted] |
| PO# 232295 | 05/10/2019 | Donovan [Redacted] |
| PO# 232294 | 05/10/2019 | Donovan [Redacted] |
| PO# 232293 | 05/10/2019 | Donovan [Redacted] |
| PO# 232287 | 05/08/2019 | Donovan [Redacted] |
| PO# 232286 | 05/07/2019 | Donovan [Redacted] |
| PO# 232285 | 05/07/2019 | Donovan [Redacted] |
| PO# 232284 | 05/07/2019 | Donovan [Redacted] |

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Cub Scout rank advancement

- **Scoutbook - June 1 is significant** [Article from Advancement News, May-June 2019]

Traditionally, June 1 of each year served as the date for Cub Scouts to begin the next rank in their advancement. With the widespread use of ScoutBook, leaders are an integral part of the process. Answers to a few questions that advancement administrators and others in a typical pack may be asking:

How do we move the Cub Scouts forward to the next rank?

The leader/advancement chair/ administrators will need to mark the ranks for all the Scouts as “approved.” Once they are approved, they will show up on the “need purchasing report.” Once the adventure is awarded, that notation is made. Then the administrator will go in and update the records one-on-one or do a multi-update and update all the Scouts in the den at the same time.

When can the Scout start work on the next rank advancements?

As the Scout’s progress is updated, they will then be able to begin working on the next adventure/rank.

If a Scout starts the next rank before approval, what is the consequence?

If they start before June 1st, they can show progress – but things will not be “official” until leaders “approve” advancement.

How is Cub Scout recording linked to the current rank for that Cub Scout?

A Cub Scout is only able to work on the den details for which the membership in Scoutbook is active. For example, if the Scout is a lion, they will see “lion.” The leadership will need to move the Scouts into the next den in order to see the next advancements.

- **National Summertime Pack Award.** A reminder for packs to turn in their applications for these awards for their activities this summer. The Council encourages all packs that planned and conducted activities to follow through to earn these awards! These awards provide recognition for the pack, den, and individuals. Individuals must have participated in an activity in all three months to earn the pins. If earned, the Council will provide the pack certificate and pack streamer for the pack at no cost to the unit. The pack will be responsible for the purchase of den ribbons and individual pins, if earned, which are available in the council’s Scout store. Units must complete and submit all of the forms to the council service center to receive the awards. Please note the information and data that must be provided for each activity to complete the application for the award. Find an application for the National Summertime Pack Award [here](#).

Scouts BSA rank advancement

- **Reporting advancement.** Units are strongly encouraged to regularly submit reports of rank advancement earned by Scouts in the unit. A further encouragement is to submit those reports at least on a monthly basis. Units that participated in summer camp this summer are especially encouraged to report all advancement completed by their scouts.

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➤ **References on application for Eagle rank – They may not be what you expect.**

[Article from *Advancement News*, May-June 2019]

Eagle Scout requirement #2 on the Eagle Scout Application form asks the Scout to "List on your Eagle Scout Rank Application the names of individuals who know you personally and would be willing to provide a recommendation on your behalf." While the references are organized into several categories, there are no specific requirements or restrictions on who can—or cannot—be listed as a reference:

Parent/guardian - Generally this is self-explanatory; however, there might be cases where a Scout's parent or guardian isn't available. Under such circumstances it might make sense to use a relative or other adult who is fulfilling the parental responsibility as the reference. One example might be an older Scout who is living with family friends while a parent is on military deployment.

Religious - This doesn't necessarily have to be a specific leader of the Scout's religious organization, but could be another individual such as a deacon or religious instructor.

Educational - This could be anyone who has personal knowledge about the Scout in their educational environment, e.g., the school principal, a school administrator, a teacher, a coach for a sports team, an advisor for a school club, or representative for another educational activity or organization.

Employer - If the Scout is employed, this could be a business owner or the Scout's immediate supervisor in a larger organization. There are no restrictions on who the employer might be, or a requirement that he or she be of or over a certain age.

Two other references - There are no restrictions, age or otherwise, on who these two references may be. The Scout may choose to list other youth from his troop or friends from outside the troop. Scouts may list their Scoutmaster, other unit leaders, a parent other than the one listed above, other family members or relatives - essentially anyone he or she chooses who is willing and able to provide a reference. Individuals, councils, districts, and/or units that impose any restrictions to the contrary are not in compliance with national policies.

Once Scouts have provided the names and adequate contact information for their references, they have completed the requirement. Common sense should prevail on how much information is needed in order for the council's representative to contact the reference. For example, if the Scout provides the reference's mailing address or phone number, he or she should not be further required to obtain an email address that they don't have or know. See *Guide to Advancement* topic 9.0.1.7 for additional information.

➤ **Reminder: Eagle Scout Service Project – must use the most current workbook.**

Scouts and adult leaders are reminded that when a Scout begins the planning for the Eagle Scout Service Project, starting with preparation of their proposal, they must use the most current version available of the workbook. The most current version is always accessible on the Advancement section of the Council's website (see links at end of newsletter). The most current version available is dated January 2019. When a Scout begins their planning, a unit leader should check to ensure the

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Scout is utilizing the most current version. The use of an older version is not acceptable. However, if a new version is published after a Scout has started a project, they may continue to use the version that was current at the time they started the planning for the project.

Merit Badges

➤ **Annual Re-registration of merit badge counselors**

The annual re-registration of counselors with the Council for 2019-2020 is complete. The Council will distribute by early September to selected unit leaders a current list of individuals in the Susquehanna Council that are approved by the Council to serve as a counselor for specified merit badges. The list will be sent to the key three of every troop. The effective date of the list is August 12, 2019. Thus, this list will not include the results of any requests received after that date for approval of a new counselor or changes to the approved merit badges for previously approved counselors.

If an individual was an approved counselor last year (18-19) and the Council did not receive a re-registration request, the individual must now reapply for approval as a merit badge counselor through submission of a new application (utilizing the Merit Badge Counselor Information form).

➤ **Use of Merit Badge pamphlets – strongly encouraged**

Scouts should be strongly encouraged to read and use the BSA's merit badge pamphlet as part of their preparation to complete a merit badge. Thus, unit leaders and merit badge counselors are asked to promote the value of the pamphlets and their use as the Scout starts to work on each merit badge.

WHY? Merit badge pamphlets introduce Scouts to new subjects in a fun, accessible way. They're a critical part of a young man's journey toward earning one of the BSA's more than 135 different merit badges. Any Scout who cracks open a merit badge pamphlet will find an easy-to-ready book that provides the information and/or resources they need to meet every requirement for the merit badge. The pamphlets are truly packed with useful information that can be a valuable reference after completing the merit badge or even for someone just wanting to learn about the subject matter of the merit badge. All too often, this key resource is not utilized by Scouts in preparing to earn a merit badge – let's re-establish these pamphlets as a "go to" resource for our Scouts during their journey in Scouting!

A caution: Unless a Scout knows they are using the most current version of the merit badge pamphlet when starting to pursue a specific merit badge, they should get the most current requirements for the merit badge from BSA's website (see link below). Older versions of the pamphlet still provide information to help the Scout prepare for the merit badge, even though the requirements may have been modified or changed.

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➤ **Applying to serve as a merit badge counselor – very important to provide qualifications for each merit badge.**

“In order for a request to be complete, the merit badge counselor must provide a list of qualifications for each merit badge for which the counselor requests approval.

The list must provide specific information that demonstrates the individual’s qualifications in the subject of the merit badge, such as training or education completed, certifications received, and experience (work or personal activity). The counselor should use as much space as necessary to provide their qualifications (such as using additional lines on the form or attach an extra page). The counselor must provide copies of appropriate certificates with the Information form.” {Extracted from 3.1.1.f., Susquehanna Council Advancement Policies and Procedures}

Providing specific qualifications for each merit badge to serve as a counselor is essential to the approval process and will greatly contribute to a more rapid review and approval.

Links

- Susquehanna Council’s Advancement pages {[click here](#)}.
- 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/>