

Soaring News

News on advancement for the Susquehanna Council

Edition 19-6

October 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

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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	Boardsailing BSA
Second Class	Eagle Palm Pin #2 (Gold)
Star Scout	Eagle Palm Pin #4 (Bronze)
	Eagle Palm Pin #5 (Silver)
	Eagle Palm Pin #6 (Silver)
	Eagle Palm Pin #8 (Silver)
	Eagle Palm Pin #10 (Bronze)
	Eagle Palm Pin #12 (Silver)
	Scouts BSA Nova Award - Whoosh!

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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Internet Advancement 2.0 Arrives [Article from Advancement News, July-August 2019]

A new tool to quickly input advancement data, Internet Advancement 2.0 (previously known as Scoutbook Lite), is now live. This free solution replaces the previous Internet Advancement platform, which was retired (for all programs except Exploring) on June 10, 2019.

Internet Advancement 2.0 features a clean, new user interface for all of the functions found in the previous Internet Advancement platform and is optimized to whatever device you use: desktop, tablet, or smartphone.

It can be accessed by unit Key 3 users, unit Key 3 delegate users, and unit advancement chairs. End users will access Internet Advancement 2.0 via one of the following locations using their my.Scouting credentials:

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

After initial release, the BSA IT team will continue to add additional features on a regular basis. Updates and new features will be communicated with the field as they are delivered.

For more information and answers to commonly asked questions, visit:

<http://help.scoutbook.com>.

Founder's Bar – An award for members of new units

A reminder that all youths and adults whose names are on a new-unit charter or who join the new unit before it recharter for the first time are eligible for this award. However, the unit must request this award for all eligible members before the unit recharter for the first time. For information on the award click [here](#).

Cub Scout rank advancement

- **Cub Scout Advancement 2019: A Useful Primer/Refresher** [Article from Advancement News, September-October 2019]

As the new program year begins, packs everywhere will be welcoming brand-new families into Scouting. It is always good to review how the advancement process works so we can help our families and volunteers to build a successful program.

All Cub Scouts complete several adventures to earn their advancement. With the exception of Lions, the Advancement Trail includes a combination of required and elective adventures. Cub Scouts complete the minimum number of required and elective adventures to earn their badge of rank. In addition, they may also choose to complete any number of elective adventures, for which there is no limit!

- The Lion program serves our kindergarten youth. Lions work with an adult partner to complete five adventures. Current resources for the Lion program are found [here](#).

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- The Tiger program serves youth in the first grade. Tigers work with an adult partner to complete seven Adventures. Six are required and one is chosen from the available electives in the handbook or from the Preview Adventures. Current resources for Tigers are found [here](#).
- Second graders work toward the Wolf rank. Wolves earn their rank by completing seven Adventures with six required and one elective. The elective Adventure is chosen from the those available in the handbook or from the Preview Adventures. Current resources for Wolves can be found [here](#).
- Third graders work toward the Bear rank. Bears earn their rank by completing seven Adventures. Six are required and one is an elective. The elective Adventure is chosen from those available in the handbook or from the Preview Adventures. Current resources for Bears can be found [here](#).
- Webelos are in the fourth grade. Their rank is earned by completing six adventures with five required and one elective. The elective adventure is chosen from those available in the handbook or from the Preview Adventures. There is also an “active member” component. Resources can be found [here](#).
- Arrow of Light is the final rank in the Cub Scout program and is designed for youth in fifth grade. Rank is earned by completing four required Adventures and one elective. The elective Adventure is chosen from those available in the handbook or from the Preview Adventures. In addition, there is an “active member” requirement. Resources can be found [here](#).

Every Cub Scout, except for Lions, earn their Bobcat award in their first year. First graders who began their journey as Lions will earn their Bobcat as Tigers. Additionally, all Cub Scouts will spend time with their parent or guardian to complete the exercises found in the How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent’s Guide. Cub Scouts in ranks other than Lion may choose to earn their Cyber Chip or complete the Protect Yourself Rules Preview Adventure.

➤ **Den Leader Scoutbook Aid For Planning Available** [*Article from Advancement News, September-October 2019*]

As mentioned in the last edition of Advancement News, a valuable tool for support of Cub Scout den leaders is now available In Scoutbook. Available only on Scoutbook for registered den leaders, the new feature will provide everything those leaders need to start delivering the Cub Scout program.

The first version of this new feature provides den leaders a predetermined order of den meetings that when completed will advance their den to their rank. These resources include photos, videos, and direct den leaders to other resources to ensure a quality program. Use of the den meeting plans will help den leaders conduct their meetings more easily. The goal is to make delivering the Cub Scout program easier for new and experienced den leaders alike as well as ease record keeping chores. When meetings are completed, the den leader takes attendance which then automatically updates completed requirements in Scoutbook. Other time-saving features include connection with parents on their child’s progress at the meeting, as well as notification of what was missed if they were unable to attend.

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➤ **Preview Adventures and Den Meeting Plans** [Article from Advancement News, July-August 2019]

Attendees at the National Annual Meeting in Denver in May 2019 saw some exciting new announcements in the world of Cub Scouting unveiled. Here are two of the most exciting. In Cub Scouting, adventures are the activity path to advancement. Some are required for each Cub Scout rank – Tiger through Arrow of Light — and some are elective at each rank. All of them are currently contained in the Cub Scout Handbooks. At the national meeting, new ways for adventures to be introduced was unveiled. These preview adventures can be tried by our youth as well as introducing ways for them and their leaders to gauge the effectiveness, interest, and appropriateness of each adventure. All of these are online at <https://www.scouting.org/programs/>.

The first of these new preview adventures pertain to youth protection and are called the Protect Yourself Rules Adventures, designed for Lion, Tiger, Wolf, Bear, Webelos and Arrow of Light. BSA has partnered with the Barbara Sinatra Foundation on the content and delivery of this adventure. The others are titled Yo-Yo Adventures (described in more detail in the next article). The development of this adventure set was sponsored by Duncan Yo-Yo. If these are successful during the preview time period, they will be considered for inclusion in the next edition of the Cub Scout Handbooks.

Another major update is for Cub Scout leaders. A number of den meeting plans which have been in development, testing, and limited use for many years have been adapted for the current editions of the Cub Scout Handbooks. Available [online](#), these plans enable the tracking of adventure completion and Cub Scout advancement, and also give parents access to see their child's progress, as well as giving them suggestions for enrichment activities at home. Use of the den meeting plans will help den leaders plan and conduct their den meetings more easily. The goal is to increase membership retention by making the den meeting experience consistent across the country, well-organized, and aligning with the full content of the Cub Scout program.

➤ **Yo-Yo Preview Adventure: Check It Out!** [Article from Advancement News, July-August 2019]

One of the first Preview Adventures is available online now, for a limited time. Cub Scouts can try them to see how they like it. This is the [Yo-Yo Preview Adventure](#). Feedback is requested — just use the feedback button found at the bottom of the webpage.

The Duncan Yo-Yo company is proud to sponsor this activity, which is an elective adventure that can be accomplished in a single den meeting for Wolves, Bears, Webelos, and Arrow of Light Cub Scouts. All the resources to accomplish the fun can be found on site. This includes the adventure requirements, den meeting plans, videos with examples (so the den leader does not need to be a yo-yo aficionado), as well as information to order adventure belt loops and activity pins.

Click on the link to review this new elective – available ONLY ONLINE – for a limited time.

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Scouts BSA rank advancement

➤ **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

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2019. When a Scout begins their planning, a unit leader should check to ensure the 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.

➤ **Scouts BSA Advancement and Boards of Review for Venturers and Sea Scouts** [*Article from Advancement News, July-August 2019*]

Two significant changes in the 2019 Guide to Advancement, covered in topics 4.3.1.4 and 4.4.0.1, involve Scouts BSA advancement in Venturing crews and Sea Scout ships. Both were made to clarify responsibility for conducting Scouts BSA advancement boards of review.

Venturers and Sea Scouts who earned First Class rank when registered in Scouts BSA will remain qualified to continue with Scouts BSA advancement until their 18th birthday. A Scout may maintain multiple (dual) registration if they choose to do so, and work on advancement in either or both units simultaneously. However, once they have earned First Class rank, Scouts need not remain registered in Scouts BSA in order to continue earning Scouts BSA advancement.

If a youth chooses to register in both Scouts BSA as well as in either a crew or a ship, they may receive credit for work performed in either unit. However, unit leaders, along with the Scout, must decide which leader will oversee the Scout's BSA advancement. It is important to do this so that completed advancement requirements are properly reported in a timely manner through the BSA's Internet portal for advancement. The intent is not to limit advancement opportunities but to centralize reporting to avoid discrepancies.

If the qualified Venturer or Sea Scout is not registered in Scouts BSA, then the crew Advisor or ship Skipper will oversee the youth's Scouts BSA advancement. However, it is important for the Advisor or Skipper to understand that Scouts BSA advancement procedures must be followed, even though the youth may not be separately registered in Scouts BSA troop. For example, advancement boards of review for Star and Life ranks that are held by either the crew or ship committee must be conducted in accordance with Scouts BSA procedures. Eagle Scout boards of review involving Venturers and Sea Scouts will be held according to the local council's established procedures.

Regardless of whether they are held by a troop, crew, or ship, the procedures for organizing and conducting boards of review for Scouts BSA advancement can be found in Section 8 of the Guide to Advancement. In particular, refer to topics 8.0.0.1 through 8.0.1.5.

Merit Badges

➤ **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.

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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.

➤ **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.

➤ **Merit Badge College 2020.** Save the date – the Merit Badge College in 2020 is scheduled for **February 15, 2020**. The event will offer an opportunity to earn up to three of over 20 merit badge offerings. Most of the merit badge offerings are related to a STEM area of interest. The website will be open for registration no later than December 6, 2019. A prerequisite for every Scout that attends the Merit Badge College is to have a current (up-to-date) Cyber Chip; so, in the meantime, make sure each Scout has recently completed the annual requirement for completion of the Cyber Chip requirements for their age group. For updates, check "[Advancement Headlines](#)" on the Council's website.

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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/>