

# *San Gabriel Valley Council's Guide to* **THE TRAIL FROM LIFE TO EAGLE**

(Largely excerpted from *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures*, 2009; #33088)  
Revised 10/22/2010

The following steps have been outlined to ensure a smooth procedure for the Scout, the unit leadership, the local council, and the volunteers who are to conduct the board of review. We want to share these steps with each Eagle candidate so that he can fully understand the procedure that must be followed by the Scout, the district, and the council.

- 1. Plan to meet the requirements.** In order to advance to the rank of Eagle, while a Life Scout, a candidate must complete all the Eagle requirements before his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. This will take some careful planning – don't put it off! Each Life Scout should meet regularly with his unit's Eagle Advisor to review the status of his current requirements and map out what is required. The Scout should be made aware of the resources available to him, including any current Eagle Scouts he might know in the unit, Life-to-Eagle orientation sessions, and materials provided by the district and council advancement volunteers.
- 2. The workbook.** Using the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*, No. 512-927, the candidate must select his Eagle service project and have the project concept approved by his unit leader, his unit committee, and the benefactor of the project, and reviewed and approved by the council or district advancement committee. The *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook* must be used in meeting this requirement. In SGVC, you should get in touch with your District Advancement Chair for project approval. Copies of the workbook are available on the council web site (in fillable PDF format) and at the council service center (Smiser). Additional pages should be attached as necessary to completely describe the projects with the phrase "see attached pages" entered into the appropriate spaces in the workbook. All required signatures must be recorded on the workbook!
- 3. The deadline.** It is imperative that all requirements for the Eagle Scout rank except the board of review be completed prior to the candidate's 18th birthday. When all requirements except the board of review for the rank of Eagle, including the service project and Scoutmaster conference, have been completed, an Eagle Scout Rank Application (No. 512-728) must be filled out and sent to the council service center promptly. Copies of the Eagle Scout Rank Application are available on the council web site (in fillable PDF format) and at the council service center. Scouts who have completed all requirements for the Eagle Scout rank award prior to their 18th birthday may be reviewed and recognized within three months after that date. For Boards of Review conducted between three and six months after the candidate's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, a special statement explaining the reason for the delay must be attached to the application and forwarded to the council advancement committee. Contact your District Advancement Chair if you have questions about special requirements for youth

members with disabilities.

4. **Unit endorsement.** The unit committee reviews and approves the record of the Eagle candidate before the application is submitted to the District. This approval is indicated by the committee chair's signature on the Eagle application. The Scout should collect the unit leaders' signatures on the completed application in the proper places. If a unit leader or unit committee declines to sign or otherwise approve an application, the Eagle candidate may still be granted a board of review, but this may be considered by the board of review in determining the qualification of the Eagle candidate.
5. **Submit the application.** The *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*, properly filled out, must be submitted with the application. The candidate should turn in the complete application to the District Advancement Chair or his or her designee. Your district may request that the Scout also include a completed Eagle Checklist, a handy tool to help ensure the application is complete. SGVC requests the Scout include a copy of the completed Eagle Resume, so the council can learn more about each candidate's experience in the program (the form is available on the Council web site).
6. **Verification and reference letters.** When the District Advancement Chair or his or her designee receives the completed application, its contents will be verified. SGVC conducts the required reference checks in Eagle Scout Requirement 2 using reference letters. The candidate should contact individuals listed as references before including their names on the application, then provide them with envelopes addressed to the District Advancement Chair or his or her designee. The Scout needs to list six references (five if the Scout has no employer, and an additional letter from a parent or spiritual advisor if the Scout has no organized religious association). The candidates should not be involved personally in transmitting any correspondence between people listed as references and the advancement committee. Reference letters are confidential, and their contents will not to be disclosed to any person who is not a member of the board of review. Make sure you understand how this works before you request letters from your recommenders.
7. **Scheduling the Board of Review.** After the contents of an application have been verified as complete and correct, a board of review may be scheduled. Under no circumstances should a board of review be scheduled until this verification is complete.
8. **Members of the Board of Review.** The board of review for an Eagle candidate is composed of a minimum of three members and a maximum of six members, 21 years of age or older. The Scout may have no input into the selection of the board of review members. A Scout's unit leaders, assistant unit leaders, relatives, or guardians may not serve as members of his board of review. The board members do not have to be registered in Scouting, but they must have an understanding of the importance and purpose of the Eagle board of review. At least one district or council advancement representative shall be a member of the Eagle board of review. The board of review

members should convene at least 30 minutes before the candidate appears in order to review the application, reference checks, and service project report. The board of review should take approximately 30 minutes. Because of the importance of the Eagle Scout Award, a unanimous decision in favor of awarding the Eagle badge must be reached. In SGVC, some districts have a tradition of requesting to interview the candidate's parents, as well. This is an opportunity for them to offer additional insight into their son's Scouting career and their unit's program.

9. **The Board of Review.** The candidate's unit leader introduces him to the members of the board of review. The unit leader may remain in the room, but does not participate in the board of review. The unit leader may be called on to clarify a point in question. In no case should a relative or guardian of the candidate attend the review, even as a unit leader. There is no set of questions that an Eagle candidate should be asked. However, the board should be assured of the candidate's participation in the program. This is the highest award that a boy may achieve and, consequently, a thorough discussion of his successes and experiences in Scouting should be considered. After the review, the candidate and his unit leader leave the room while the board members discuss the acceptability of the candidate as an Eagle Scout. The decision must be unanimous. If a positive, unanimous decision is reached, he is asked to return and is informed that he will receive the board's recommendation for the Eagle Scout rank. If a positive, unanimous decision is not reached, then two possibilities exist:

1. If the Scout's 18th birthday is not imminent and the board of review feels the Scout needs to improve in certain areas within a defined time frame, the board of review may adjourn and then reconvene at a later date and continue the review of the Scout. A discussion should be held with him as to how he may meet the requirements within a given period.

2. If the vote was final, the Scout may choose to appeal the decision.

Should the applicant disagree with the decision in either case, the appeal procedures should be explained to him, as outlined in *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures*. A follow-up letter must be sent to the Scout confirming the agreements reached on the action(s) necessary for the advancement. If the Scout chooses to appeal, the name and address of the person he is to contact will be provided.

10. **The paperwork.** Immediately after the board of review and after the application has been appropriately signed, the application and a properly completed Advancement Report are returned to the council service center. The *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook* may be returned to the Scout after council approval. The district or council representative will destroy the recommendation letters.

11. **One more signature.** When the application arrives at the council service center, the Scout executive signs it to certify that the proper procedure has been followed and that the board of review has recommended the candidate for the Eagle Scout rank.

12. **Making it official, and the next step...** The Eagle Scout Service screens the

application to ascertain information such as proper signature, positions of responsibility, tenure between ranks, and age of the candidate. Any item not meeting national standards will cause the application to be returned for more information. If the application is in order, the Scout is then certified as an Eagle Scout by the Eagle Scout Service on behalf of the National Council. Notice of approval is given by sending the Eagle Scout certificate to the local council. The date used on the certificate will be the date of the board of review. The Eagle Award must not be sold or given to any unit until after the certificate is received by the council service center. The Eagle Scout court of honor should not be scheduled until the local council receives the Eagle Scout rank credentials. After earning the Eagle Scout Award, a Scout may work to earn Eagle Palms. All Palms must be earned before the Scout's 18th birthday.