



Boy Scouts of America

JPL Troop 509

Est. 1952

La Cañada Flintridge, CA

jpltroop509.org



Letter from Your Scoutmaster

Dear New Life Scout,

Congratulations on earning the Life rank. You have made great progress on the Scouting trail, while facing many challenges and mastering them with confidence. Now you are ready for the challenges and opportunities to master the skills required for becoming an Eagle Scout. The last part of the Trail to Eagle will give you the chance to use all that you have learned in Scouting and more.

The troop's website has all the information you need, under the Life to Eagle tab. Read everything there, and sit down with a parent to discuss what you need to do and how you will do it.

Although you may have advanced to Life with less than your best effort and only met minimal requirements, advancement to Eagle requires that you do well in every area. Think about your record so far: your leadership in the troop and how many Scouts you have helped learn scouting skills and earn rank requirements or merit badges; your summer camp and camping history (including backpacking trips, or other “special” camping experiences); your participation and leadership in troop activities, outings, and camporees; your scoutmaster approved service project hours; your support of other scouts’ service projects; your attendance at scout meetings - participation and proper uniform; and your Eagle-required merit badges. Are you “weak” in any area? Work out a plan with your parent and Scoutmaster to enrich areas where you are lacking. Map out a strategy to achieve Eagle rank – keeping in mind that school, sports, and extracurricular activities are also important and need to be factored into your overall plan.

A significant part of becoming an Eagle Scout is demonstrating your leadership skills. One of the ways you do this is by planning and carrying out an Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project. “Leadership” means you will lead other people that do the project work. “Service” means you will be giving back something to your community. And “Project” means you will plan and carry out an activity to achieve specific outcomes within certain constraints.

1. REVIEW YOUR MERIT BADGE RECORD

You do not have to earn all your Eagle-required merit badges prior to beginning your Eagle Project. However, you will want to give yourself enough time to complete your required merit badges before submitting your Eagle application. Request a copy of your official Troop Advancement transcript from the adult Rank Advancement coordinator to make sure the troop's records are complete and accurate.

2. PROVIDE LEADERSHIP TO THE TROOP

A Life scout must provide leadership in the troop. You have already held positions of responsibility or provided leadership to earn your Star and Life ranks. Younger scouts look for Life scouts to set an example. This alone means you are expected to conduct yourself as a leader.

“Giving back” to the troop is an important requirement for a Life scout. Talk with the Scoutmaster about holding a position of responsibility in the Troop Leadership Corps to fulfill this requirement. Your position(s) of responsibility are required to span at least six months.

3. REQUEST LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Another Eagle requirement is to obtain six letters of recommendation. You can request these at any time, even before you start your project. It can take several months to obtain these letters so requesting them early is recommended. Carefully consider whom you ask to write these letters, how well the person knows you, and their commitment to write the letter. Ask the person in advance if they could take the time to write a letter if you provide them with a “brag sheet” that lists your activities, awards, leadership experience, sports, etc. You type up all request letters for signature by the troop's Eagle Advancement coordinator. You can use the letter template on the website. The letter should have the Eagle Advancement coordinator's name at the bottom with space above it for the coordinator to sign. You will need to address and stamp two envelopes for each letter of recommendation. Templates are on the website. One envelope is addressed to the person making your recommendation, and the return address in the upper left corner should be to the person who is the troop's Eagle Advancement coordinator. The other envelope is for the person to send their letter of recommendation back to the coordinator. It should be addressed to the coordinator and the return address in the upper left corner should be the person who is giving the letter of recommendation. Put your name on the lower left hand corner of this envelope so when the coordinator receives it they will know it is for you. Later if there are letters missing the coordinator can tell you who has sent letters back. ALL letters, mailing envelopes and return envelopes must be delivered directly to the coordinator (they will sign and mail them). The coordinator will assist you if any step is unclear. Read all your Eagle-related materials first. If after reading you don't understand something, ask the coordinator.

4. PLAN AND CARRY OUT AN EAGLE SCOUT LEADERSHIP SERVICE PROJECT

The hardest part of your Eagle Leadership Service Project is getting started. Refer to the website for guidelines for doing an Eagle Project. The choices of what to do and how to do it are up to you, but the bottom line is it has to be something that you are committed to completing. The period of time from when you start thinking about your project to the time it is finished, is typically 6 to 12 months. Your project has to be approved in advance by the scoutmaster, the Troop Committee, and Council, so take into account how long this could take.

5. REPORT PROJECT COMPLETION TO YOUR SCOUTMASTER

When you complete your Eagle project, obtain a signed and dated letter from the project sponsor indicating that you have finished. Show it to your Scoutmaster and let your Eagle Advancement coordinator know that you have obtained it.

6. WRITE A REPORT ON YOUR COMPLETED EAGLE PROJECT

Organize your Eagle project materials in a three-ring binder, your Eagle Project Binder. It should contain all three sections of your “Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook,” your presentation to the Troop Committee, a tally of all the hours put in by everyone (you can include your sign-in sheets), pictures of your project before and after, and the sponsors' letter of completion. Some Scouts prefer to just neatly write the information into the booklet. This is your book to keep so

you want it to be presentable as evidence of the pride and hard work that you have put into your project.

7. WRITE A REPORT ON YOUR EAGLE RANK ADVANCEMENT

In a second separate three ring binder assemble all of your advancement information other than your project. This is your Eagle Scout Application binder. The first page is the sheet from the packet that says “This Eagle Application Packet belongs to.” The binder will include your Eagle Rank Application and several other written items. The application should be completed including your signature on the back. The scoutmaster will sign it when you complete your Scoutmaster conference. You will then need to get the Troop Committee chair to sign the back of your application as well. The application binder also has your Eagle Scout resume in it and the Eagle Scout Checklist. Include a page that lists your honors and leadership positions. You will also need to compose a statement of your life’s purpose. Talk about your future plans and what you want to do with your life. In addition you will need to write a two-page critique of your Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project. This is different from the statement about the project in the workbook in your other binder, and the part of the Eagle Resume that talks about your project. It should discuss the ways you demonstrated leadership of others in the project. Give examples of how you directed the project rather than doing the work yourself. How well did the project follow the plan? Discuss what went right and what went wrong and anything you might have done differently.

8. CHECK THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED ALL OF YOUR EAGLE REQUIREMENTS

Make sure you have fulfilled all of the Eagle rank requirements:

- 21 Merit Badges including 13 Eagle-required
- letters of recommendation received by the Eagle Advancement coordinator
- troop leadership position(s) of responsibility requirements fulfilled
- Eagle Project binder neat, complete, and all forms ready for final signatures
- Eagle Scout Application binder complete, ready for final signatures.

9. ARRANGE FOR A SCOUTMASTER CONFERENCE

After the Eagle Advancement coordinator has reviewed and approved your binders, schedule your scoutmaster conference. Bring to the scoutmaster conference the two binders and your Boy Scout Handbook to show you have completed all requirements.

10. REQUEST AN EAGLE BOARD OF REVIEW

After the scoutmaster conference, you'll take your binders to Smiser Scout Center for Council to review and approve (before dropping off, make a copy of everything in the binders, and get a receipt from Smiser). Once the binders have been approved, and the Eagle Advancement coordinator has received all your letters of recommendation, then the coordinator will arrange an Eagle Board of Review. Your parents will be asked to attend this Board, so consult with them as to their availability. Anticipate at least a one-month time frame to organize the board. Do not ask, or expect to “rush” your Eagle Board of Review or final Application. Not only is it inconsiderate to ask – the process at the Council and National Level does not allow it.

11. HAVE YOUR EAGLE BOARD OF REVIEW

You will attend your Eagle Board of Review with your parent(s). Bring your binders and your Boy Scout Handbook, so it can be signed. Wear your full uniform. Look neat, like an Eagle Scout candidate. Be prepared to talk with the Eagle Board members about your Scouting experiences, accomplishments and lessons learned. They want to get to know you better. They will speak to your parent(s) separately. Relax. Your Eagle Board of Review can take up to two hours.

12. PICK UP YOUR EAGLE SCOUT CERTIFICATE

After you've passed a Board of Review, the Eagle Advancement Coordinator will submit the paperwork to Council. A Scout executive will review and sign it to certify that the proper procedure has been followed and that your board of review has recommended you for the Eagle rank. If your application is in order, it is forwarded to the National Eagle Scout Service which, on behalf of the National Council, then certifies you as an Eagle Scout. It takes about 3-4 weeks for approval to come back from National once your application is submitted. Smiser Scout Center will notify you when your Eagle Scout certificate and awards are ready to be picked up. They will give you information on getting your Eagle portrait taken. You can buy your award kit, neckerchief and slide in the Smiser Scout Store.

12. PLAN YOUR EAGLE COURT OF HONOR

Once certified as an Eagle Scout, you can have your Eagle Court of Honor. The troop does Eagle Courts of Honor with troop courts of honor, generally in September, January and May. You'll want to check on the availability of family and friends when picking the date of your court of honor. If you have any special requests, be sure to advise the Eagle Advancement coordinator well in advance. If more than one scout will be honored for the Eagle rank, you will work together on the details of the ceremony.

If you think it takes a lot to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout ... well you're right. That is why only 5% of all scouts ever earn Eagle rank. It takes dedication and determination to get to the top, but just as in mountain climbing, the view (of life) from the summit to distant horizons (your future) will help you chart a life course to even greater achievements.

Yours in Scouting,

Your Scoutmaster