

The Eagle Scout Court of Honor



unit committee and the Eagle Scout's parents and senior patrol leader (provided he is not the Eagle Scout) to plan the complete program. By using the suggestions and outlines in this manual and delegating specific responsibility to specific individuals, everything should go fine. Be sure the plan is written to avoid misunderstandings.

The troop committee should establish a standard of presentation items to be provided to the Eagle Scout at the court. This standard should apply to all Eagle Scouts on a continuing basis. Establish who should pay for certain items—the troop, mother's club, Eagle Scout's parents, etc. Do not set precedents that will be an economic hardship for any family. Items to be considered might include the Eagle Scout ring, neckerchief, or belt buckle, as well as Eagle-theme cake and refreshments.

Secure early commitments from members of the court and speakers. Send them a friendly reminder or a copy of the program about a week before the court of honor ceremony.

Invitations can be purchased at the local council service center, or a simple but distinctive form can be prepared by the unit or the parents on a duplicating machine. Whichever method is selected, it should be done soon after the court date is selected for early mailings.

The planner should assist the Eagle Scout's parents in composing a list of all persons who have helped the boy earn his Eagle rank, including Cubmasters, Scoutmasters, fellow Scouts (*past and present*), post Advisors or assistants, parents' committees, sponsors, merit badge counselors, teachers, church members and leaders (*past and present*), community leaders, school pals, and the boy's relatives. No other event can win parents' support better than a good Eagle court of honor.

Representative Eagle Courts of Honor Sample Outline

Introduction	
Call to Order	Troop committee chairman
Invocation	Minister/priest/rabbi
Welcome	Scoutmaster
Introduction of Honored Guests	Committee chairman

The Eagle Scout Court of Honor

Points to Consider

It normally requires approximately 5 weeks following Eagle board of review approval to receive the Eagle badge, certificate, etc., from the national office. Therefore, the Eagle Scout court of honor should be scheduled approximately 6 weeks after board approval. If done properly, planning will require 6 weeks.

Many elected officials will send a personal letter to the Eagle Scout, if this request allows them sufficient time. These include the president, members of Congress, governors, mayors, etc. Request such letters using the proper format and address as soon after the board of review as possible. Be sure to provide the Eagle Scout's full name and the date of his court of honor.

The troop advancement chairman and/or Scoutmaster should call a meeting of two or three of the

Presentation of the Colors	Troop color guard
Pledge of Allegiance	Senior patrol leader
Opening of the Court of Honor	District/unit commissioner
Presentation of the Scout Law	Two Eagle Scouts from troop

An Eagle court of honor is always newsworthy, and newspapers usually like to have stories about the Eagle Scout recognition ceremony. Relating news items to the media is important; a slip can damage the total impact of the recognition.

The ceremony should be held in an unusual setting so the event will be memorable for the boy and those attending. Suggested places could be around a campfire, aboard a naval vessel, in a church, school auditorium, courtroom or judge's chambers, or other place of dignity. Do not select a theater, country club, etc.

Selection of participants depends upon the place, unit preferences, and the type of ceremony. Generally the boy's mother and father, Scouting coordinator, or Scoutmaster makes the presentation. It is preferable to have at least three people active in the presentation: one to give the charge, one to make the official presentation of the badge and credentials from the national office, and one to pin the badge. Other Eagle Scouts of the unit or district or the unit senior patrol leader may take active roles in the ceremony or act as ushers, Eagle badge pillow bearers, flag bearers, etc.

Printed programs add a touch of class to an Eagle court of honor. Again, these do not need to be expensive; a duplicated, typed copy will be acceptable. (Eagle program covers are available from the council service center.)

Trail of the Eagle

Review the Eagle Scout candidate's Scouting history from induction to Eagle rank, stressing his growth in the ideals of Scouting. As this is being read, the candidate walks from the back of the room to the front where he is to receive his Eagle badge. Somewhere along the "trail," it's a good idea

for the Eagle Scout candidate to rededicate himself by repeating the Scout Oath.

The Eagle Scout Award

Pledge of the Eagle	District executive or other adult who is an Eagle Scout
Presentation of the Award	Scoutmaster, parents, etc.
Challenge and Charge to the Eagle Scout	Impressive Scouter or other guest speaker holding Eagle rank
The Eagle's Response	Short speech by new Eagle Scout
Closing of the Court of Honor	Commissioner
Benediction	Minister/priest/rabbi
Retiring of the Colors	Troop color guard

Reception and Refreshments

Voice of the Eagle Ceremony 1

Voice of the Eagle (VOE) ceremonies are popular throughout the country. Each unit seems to have its own version or adaptation. Two VOE ceremonies are included here.

Senior Patrol Leader: Please stand for the presentation of colors. Advance the colors.

Color Guard Leader: (*Comes forward and lets color guard reach its position.*) Will the audience join us in the Pledge of Allegiance? Scouts, salute. (*Dip troop flag. Lead the Pledge of Allegiance.*) Two. Post the colors. Color guard retreat. (*Scouts return to seats.*) The audience may be seated. (*Leader be seated.*)

Senior Patrol Leader: I would like to welcome you to Troop _____ (*number*) Eagle Court of Honor. It is my pleasure to introduce Mr. _____, who is the chairman of this court of honor. (*Be seated.*)

Chairman: I would like to invite all Eagle Scouts, including adults, to stand at this time. (*Pause.*) Thank you, you may be seated. It is my pleasure to introduce _____ who will lead us in our invocation.

Narrator: (*VOE narrator remains out of sight, using microphone or sound system.*) Will Eagle Candidate(s) _____ please come forward? This is the voice of the Eagle, the Eagle whose heights you have struggled hard to reach. We remember well when you first came to the base of the cliff, and how you looked up with ambition and determination. Look back for a moment; look down the cliff you have climbed; look at the experiences you have encountered in your ascent. These experiences should not be forgotten. You should profit by making sure adverse experiences do not occur again. Experience is a valuable teacher, if you heed its teachings.

We remember when you took your first step upon the trail that leads upward. With that first step you began to grow physically, mentally, and morally. You started living the Scout Oath and Law.

All the while you were on the trail, we watched you study and we saw you learn by doing. First, you were only a Scout. (*A Scout steps out and takes designated place on stage.*) At that time your brother Scouts called you a Tenderfoot . . . and they were right. You were indeed a Tenderfoot Scout. (*Tenderfoot steps out and takes place.*)

Soon, you reached the first ledge, and there you were greeted by a large group of Second Class Scouts. (*Second Class Scout steps out and joins Scout and Tenderfoot Scout.*)

Some, like you, were stopping to catch their breath before continuing along the trail. You began to study more, you worked harder, and almost before you knew it you came to another ledge—the ledge where the First Class Scouts dwell. (*First Class Scout steps out and takes his place.*)

There you found a tempting green meadow by a crystal-clear stream bathed in the sun. Here you were tempted to remain. Yes, you could have remained there to live the First Class glory, but your ambition stirred you on. We remember your advancement to Star Scout. (*Star Scout steps out and takes his place.*)

The trail from First Class to Star rank was not as difficult as it had seemed. This spurred you on,

and again you climbed farther. The trail was steeper and less worn. Fewer Scouts seemed to be headed in your direction. You looked down and saw the crowds below you. You looked up and saw a few above you and, with the same determination with which you started your climb, you continued up the trail. Soon, you earned the badge of Life rank. (*Life Scout steps out and takes his place.*)

The heart badge was then placed on your uniform. You will never forget your thoughts at that moment. This feeling has been experienced by all Scouts on reaching the ledge of Life Scout: "Now I am close to the Eagle, I will carry on." The trail became tougher, but more interesting. The original principles, the Scout Oath and Law, now had a fuller meaning. Your understanding of them was greater.

Yes, we have watched your character unfold and become more manly. We have watched your leadership expand into a valuable asset. We have watched your mind develop and your wisdom increase. We have watched all these things in you and now that you are on the threshold of your goal we welcome you, for you have done your climbing in a true Scoutlike manner.

This is the voice of the Eagle. (*Chairman steps forward. Scouts be seated.*)

Chairman: The awarding of the Eagle badge is an important and serious occasion, the climax and the goal for which a Scout works many years, an occasion for pride and joy, a time for serious contemplation. It is the culmination of efforts of the various leaders of this (these) Scout(s). The Eagle Award is the highest and most coveted rank in Scouting; the last major step in the advancement program. Fewer than 2 percent of all Scouts in the United States reach the Eagle rank. At this point, we trust you have achieved our purpose in the building of character, training of leadership, and the practice of service.

The requirements for the Eagle rank are as follows:

- a. Earn 21 merit badges, including 11 which are required (specify).
- b. Serve actively in a troop position for a period of 6 months after becoming a Life Scout.
- c. Plan, develop, and carry out a service project worthy of an Eagle Scout.

- d. Appear before a board of review of prominent persons and satisfy them that you have done your best to understand and live up to the Scout Oath and Law and, in all ways, qualify for the Eagle Scout Award.

Careful examination has been made by the court as to the qualifications of this (these) applicant(s) for the Eagle Scout Award.

Mr. _____, proficiency in the various crafts and skills prescribed for Eagle rank has been checked, and the records of merit badges earned by the Scout(s) have been approved and certified by the counselors appointed by the court. The Scout(s) has (have) qualified on the basis of merit badge achievement. Eagle candidate _____ has earned _____²² merit badges.

Mr. _____, the applicant(s) has (have) demonstrated his (their) capacity and willingness to exert leadership in activities that are constructive and worthwhile in this community. The record has been checked in troop leadership, school affairs, and in other fields of work and service. He (they) has (have) demonstrated loyalty and duty to God and country. We believe him (them) qualified to receive the rank of Eagle Scout.

Mr. _____, the following is a resume of _____'s personal and Scouting history (*Read resume.*)

Narrator: This is the voice of the Eagle. I speak for the Eagle Scouts of this council. We challenge the Scout to accept the responsibilities as well as the honor of the Eagle Scout Award. These responsibilities are as follows: An Eagle Scout is to live with honor. His honor is sacred; it is the foundation of all character. An Eagle Scout will live so that he reflects credit upon his home, church, school, friends, and self. May the white of your badge remind you to live with honor.

An Eagle Scout is to be loyal. "To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man." Neither pain nor profit, pride nor personal loss shall sway his loyalty. The blue on your badge is the emblem of loyalty.

An Eagle Scout is to be courageous. Courage gives all character force and strength. With trust in God and faith in his fellow man, he faces each day unafraid and seeks his share of the world's

work to do. Let the red of your badge remind you of courage.

Finally, an Eagle Scout is service-oriented. Extend a helping hand to those who toil along the Scouting trail you have completed, just as the others have aided you. The daily Good Turn must take on a new meaning and better the life pattern of service. Protect and defend the weak and helpless; comfort the unfortunate and oppressed. Uphold the rights of others as well as your own. Remember, real leadership is founded upon real service.

Chairman: In recognition of these obligations, I ask you to reaffirm the Scout Oath or Promise. (*Applicants give Scout Oath.*) Will Mr. _____ come forward as a representative of the National Council, Boy Scouts of America, and administer the Eagle pledge? (*Read National Council letter.*)

Chairman: Will the Eagle applicant(s) escort his (their) parents to the front? Fellow Eagle Scout(s), we now proclaim to all the world your accomplishments. The symbol of your success is the Eagle badge and neckerchief, which will now be presented to your parents by _____. Your parents will, in turn, pin the badge over your heart and place the neckerchief around your neck. (*Presentation of badge.*) Eagle Scout _____, in recognition of the wisdom and guidance given to you by your father, will you present to him this Eagle tie bar, which he will be proud to wear in your honor? (*Pause.*) And now, also in recognition of the many hours of patient guidance given by her in your efforts, will you pin the Eagle mother's pin over your mother's heart? (*Scout gives his mother a kiss.*) Eagle Scout(s), will you now escort your parents back to their seats, and return to the front?

Now Eagle Scout(s) _____, will you advance your name on our board to Eagle rank? (*Pause until return.*) As you see (*display plaque*), your name(s) has (have) been placed on our permanent Eagle plaque for all time.

Chairman: I would like to read the following letters. (*Read any congratulatory letters, etc.*) I now have the honor to present to you this gift (*if any*) from Troop _____ in recognition of your outstanding service to this troop and of becoming an Eagle Scout. I would like to introduce _____, who will now give the Eagle charge.

Speaker: Mr. _____, I have the honor of giving you the Eagle Scout charge on the occasion of your elevation to the highest rank in Scouting.

Eagle Charge (*speaker may use own text if desired*): The Boy Scouts of all nations constitute one of the most meaningful and significant movements in the world's history, and you have been counted worthy of high rank in its membership. All who know you rejoice in your achievement. Your position, as you well know, is one of honor and responsibility. You are (a) marked men (man). As (an) Eagle Scout(s), you have assumed a solemn obligation to do your duty to God, to country, to fellow Scouts, and to humanity. This is a great undertaking. As you live up to your obligations, you bring honor to yourself (yourselves) and your brother Scouts. When you fail, you bring down by so much the good name of all true and worthy Scouts.

Your responsibility goes beyond your fellow Scouts, to your country and God. America has many good things to give you and your children after you, but these good things depend, for the most part, on the character and leadership abilities of her citizens. You are to help her in all that she needs most. She has a great past. You are here to help make her future greater.

I charge you to undertake your citizenship with a solemn dedication. Be a leader, but lead only toward the best. Lift up every task you do and every office you hold, to the highest level of service to God and your fellow men. So live and serve, that those who know you will be inspired to the finest living. We have too many who use their strength and their brains to exploit others and to gain selfish ends. I charge you to be among those who dedicate their skills and abilities to the common good.

Build America on the solid foundation of clean living, honest work, unselfish citizenship, and reverence for God, and whatever others may do, you will leave behind a record of which every Scout may be proud.

Chairman (*closing remarks as desired, followed by benediction*): You are invited to remain for the reception for Eagle Scout(s) _____ following our benediction by _____. (*Benediction.*) This Eagle court stands adjourned.

Voice of the Eagle Ceremony 2

The candle-lighting Scout Oath and Law ceremony is done by the Scoutmaster and 12 Scouts.

The candidates move along the "Eagle Trail" as the voice of the Eagle explains each rank. This ceremony also includes the Scout Oath spoken by the new Eagle Scouts.

This court begins with a welcome, invocation, introduction of honored guests, and flag ceremony/Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a Scout Oath and Law ceremony.

(Twelve Scouts, each having an assigned point of the Law to present, proceed onto the stage and line up directly behind the candle log, in the order that they are to speak. They should be at least 2 feet behind the log. The Scoutmaster lights the Spirit of Scouting candle.)

Scoutmaster: Before you stands a single, lighted candle. It represents the spirit of Scouting. The law of this troop is the Scout Law. Scouts also live by another code, which is the Scout Oath or Promise. The Scout Oath describes three duties that every Scout must accept—duty to God and country, duty to others, and duty to self. Repeat with me this Oath as I light the three candles representing these duties. (*The Scoutmaster uses the Spirit of Scouting candle to light the three Oath candles as the Oath is spoken. The Scout reciting the first point of the Law moves up to the log, lights his candle, gives the Scout sign, and says the "trustworthy" text loudly and clearly. See The Official Boy Scout Handbook. The other 11 Scouts follow the same procedure, in order. Each Scout uses the Spirit of Scouting candle to light his candle. After the twelfth point of the Law, the Scoutmaster and Scouts return to their seats.*)

The court is now officially opened, and the "Trail of the Eagle" begins. (*The voice of the Eagle can be taped before the court of honor.*)

Master of Ceremonies: At this time we wish to present Eagle candidates _____ and _____, who will be taken to the foot of the Eagle ladder by their honor guard escort. (*As the Eagle candidates reach the back of the room, the lights dim—selected spots stay on.*)

Voice of the Eagle: This is the voice of the Eagle, the Eagle whose heights you have struggled hard to reach. We remember well when you first came to the base of the cliff, and how you looked up

with ambition and determination. Look back for a moment; look down the cliff you have climbed; look at the experiences you have encountered in your ascent.

These experiences should not be forgotten. You should profit by making sure adverse experiences do not occur again. Experience is a valuable teacher, if you heed its teachings.

We remember when you took your first step upon the trail that leads upward. With that first step you began to build yourself physically, mentally, and morally. You started living the Scout Oath and Law. All the while you were on the trail, we watched you study and we saw you learn by doing. First, you were only a Scout. Then your brother Scouts called you a Tenderfoot . . . and they were right, you were indeed a Tenderfoot Scout. (*Honor guard and candidates walk slowly to Tenderfoot sign.*)

Soon, you reached the second ledge, and there you were greeted by a large group of Second Class Scouts. To reach the rank of Second Class, a Scout learns to work with members of his patrol and he begins to develop patrol spirit. (*Honor guard and candidates walk slowly to Second Class sign.*)

Some, like you, were stopping to catch their breath before continuing along the trail. You began to study more, you worked harder, and almost before you knew it you came to another ledge where the First Class Scouts dwell. When a Scout reaches the rank of First Class in Troop _____, he is really first class. He is an expert in the outdoor skills of camping, cooking, hiking, and first aid. (*Honor guard and candidates walk slowly to First Class sign.*)

There you found a tempting green meadow by a crystal-clear stream bathed in the sun. Here you were tempted to remain. Yes, you could have remained there to live in First Class glory, but your ambition stirred you on. We remember your advancement to Star Scout. A Star Scout learns to work with the younger boys in the troop, passing along the knowledge he has gained. (*Honor guard and candidates walk slowly to Star sign.*)

The trail from First Class to Star was not as difficult as it had seemed. This spurred you on, and again you climbed farther. The trail was steeper, and was less worn. Fewer Scouts seemed to be headed in your direction. You looked down and saw the crowds below you. You looked up and saw a few

above you and, with the same determination with which you started your climb, you continued up the trail. A Life Scout demonstrates leadership in the troop, and takes part in community service projects. (*Honor guard and candidates walk slowly to Life sign.*)

Soon, the Life Scout badge—the heart badge—was placed on your uniform. You will never forget your thoughts at that moment—the feeling that has been experienced by most Scouts on reaching the ledge of Life: “Now I am close to the Eagle; I will carry on.” The trail became tougher, but more interesting. The original principles, the Scout Oath and Law, now had a fuller meaning. Your understanding of them was greater. The rank of Eagle is Scouting’s highest award. The Eagle Scout must earn the specified number of merit badges and must plan, develop, and carry out an extensive service project, giving leadership to others. He must also serve as a troop officer for a specified time. (*Honor guard and candidates walk slowly to Eagle sign.*)

Yes, we have watched your character unfold and become mature; we have seen your understanding of citizenship expand; we have watched your mind develop and your wisdom increase; and we have observed your leadership ability growing into a valuable asset. We have seen all these things in you, and now that you are at the threshold of your goal we welcome you, for you have done your climbing in a true Scoutlike nature. (*Stage lights on full; house lights on half.*)

Will the escorts for the Eagle candidates please escort them to the stage? (*Escorts then return to their seats.*) Scoutmaster _____, have Eagle Candidates _____ and _____ conducted themselves in a manner that exemplifies Scouting?

Scoutmaster: They have.

Voice of the Eagle: Eagle candidates, you will rededicate yourself by repeating the Scout Oath. Repeat it slowly as you stand beside the three lighted candles. Each one represents a part of the Oath. Resolve to uphold forever its principles with the same ambition and perseverance that has brought you this far. (*Candidates repeat Oath.*)

The law of the Eagle is the Scout Law. Your fellow Scouts have told you the Law, which you know so well. Take heed of this advice and wisdom. Your

conduct along the trail has been excellent. You have rededicated yourselves to the principles of Scouting. You have heard again the call of the Eagle. But, one more thing is important—your future. As an Eagle, you become a guide to other Scouts. You become an example in your community. Remember, your actions are then a little more conspicuous, and people will expect more of you. To falter in your duties would reflect not only upon you, but also on your fellow Eagles. The torch you carry is not yours only, but ours as well.

Now, my fellow Eagles, let this not be the end of your Scouting, but go on to greater heights and give other boys the benefit of your experiences.

(The Eagle candidates are given the pledge of the Eagle, their parents are escorted to the stage, and the Eagle badges and parents' recognitions are presented. A guest speaker gives the Eagle challenge and charge, and the court of honor closes with a benediction and the retiring of the colors. Reception and refreshments follow.)

Trail to Eagle Ceremony

The voice of the Eagle challenges the candidate and informs him of his responsibilities after he and his parents are on stage. The candidate accepts the challenge.

The Eagle charge is made before the badge is presented. *(The court of honor begins with a flag ceremony, invocation, welcome, and introduction of honored guests. All Eagle Scouts in the audience are asked to stand and introduce themselves.)*

Master of Ceremonies: Our theme tonight is "The Trail to Eagle." The pathway to Eagle can be described as a steep trail leading up to three peaks, the highest being that of Eagle Scout. Officially, the trail starts with the Scout and Tenderfoot ranks and continues through Second and First Class ranks. Then, the mountain climbing begins. The path is marked with merit badges, leadership responsibilities, service projects, and the practice of Scouting skills. The first peak reached is that of Star Scout, the second is Life Scout and, finally, Eagle Scout.

(The troop members are asked to rededicate themselves to the Scout Law so they may be reminded of the guiding principles of Scouting. The master of ceremonies asks the Eagle candidate to escort his parents to the stage, they are introduced, and his

mother is presented with flowers. The master of ceremonies or other special guest reads the candidate's Scouting biography and asks the candidate to stand.)

Master of Ceremonies: This candidate for Eagle Scout has passed all requirement for the rank of Eagle. A total of _____ merit badges have been earned. He has completed a service project and has served the troop as a leader. He sat before the Eagle board of review, and his records have been reviewed and approved by the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America. He stands before us, ready to receive the highest award in Scouting. I see no reason why the Eagle Award should not be presented to this applicant. If anyone knows of any reason why this Scout should not be awarded the rank of Eagle Scout, let him speak now.

First Voice of the Eagle: Gentlemen of the court, I represent all Scouts who have received the Eagle Award in the _____ Council. We do not object to the awarding of this badge, but we do believe that this applicant should understand that the Eagle rank is a responsibility as well as an honor. We respectfully ask that this applicant be informed of the responsibilities of an Eagle Scout before the badge is awarded.

Master of Ceremonies: I concur. Please state the responsibilities of an Eagle Scout for this applicant.

First Voice: The white section of the Eagle badge stands for honor. The first responsibility of an Eagle Scout is to live with honor. An Eagle's honor is sacred. Honor is the foundation of all character. Character is what one really is; not what one thinks he is. An Eagle's life should influence his family, church, school, and friends in a positive manner. May the white of your badge remind you to live with honor always.

Second Voice: The second obligation of an Eagle Scout is loyalty. It is designated by the blue in the badge. Without loyalty, all character lacks direction. "To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man." Neither pain nor profit, pride nor personal loss shall change him in his loyalty. The blue is an emblem of loyalty.

Third Voice: The final obligation of an Eagle Scout is courage, symbolized by the red in the badge. Courage gives character, force, and

strength. Trusting in God and with faith in his fellow men, he faces each day unafraid and seeks his share of the world's work to do. Let red remind you always of courage.

Fourth Voice: The final obligation of an Eagle Scout is service. He extends a helping hand to those who still toil along the Scouting trail, just as others helped him in his achievement of Eagle rank. The habit of the daily Good Turn must take on a new meaning through a life of service to all those who need him. He protects and defends the weak and helpless. He aids and comforts the unfortunate and oppressed. He upholds the rights of others while defending his own. He knows well and will always be prepared to put forth his best.

First Voice: Are you willing and eager to accept the responsibilities as well as the honor of the badge of an Eagle Scout?

Candidate: I am.

First Voice: Because of your reply, the Eagle Scouts of the _____ Council welcome you as a new member of the highest order among Scouts. *(The master of ceremonies asks the candidate to be seated and introduces the guest speaker. Following the speaker, an appropriate poem is read and the candidate and entire troop are asked to stand. The presenter of the Eagle badge is introduced.)*

Presenter: By virtue of the authority vested in this court by the National Council, Boy Scouts of America, upon recommendation of responsible persons and after thorough investigation of the applicant, I now award the rank of Eagle Scout to _____. I have the honor to give the Eagle Scout charge on this occasion of your elevation to the highest rank in Scouting.

The Boy Scouts of all nations constitute one of the most meaningful and significant movements in the world's history, and you have been found worthy of the highest rank in its membership. All who know you rejoice in your achievement. Your position, as you well know, is one of honor and responsibility. You are a marked man. As an Eagle Scout, you have assumed a solemn obligation to do your duty to God, to country, to your fellow Scouts, and others. This is a great undertaking. You will live up to these obligations and bring honor to yourself and your brother Scouts. You cannot fail and bring down the standard of all others. Your responsibility goes beyond your fellow Scouts, to God and

your country. America has many good things to give to you and those who follow you, but these good things depend, for the most part, on the character and leadership abilities of her citizens. You come to help her in all that she needs most. You are here to help make her future greater.

I charge you to undertake your citizenship with a solemn dedication. Be a leader, but lead only toward the best. Lift up every task you do and every office you hold to the highest level of service. By doing so, all may live better.

(Following the charge, the candidate's parents are asked to stand and the Eagle badge and mother's recognition are presented. The new Eagle Scout and his parents are congratulated and the guest speaker is thanked. The benediction is given, and the colors are retired while "Taps" is played.)

Portrait of an Eagle Ceremony

(Use desired opening and invocation. Then the chairman formally begins the court of honor.)

Chairman: Tonight I am going to paint a portrait. The central figure in this portrait is to be the candidate for the Eagle Award. *(The candidate is escorted to the stage. He takes his place front and center on the stage. Escorts return to their seats.)*

Chairman: The first step in painting the portrait is to fill in the background. For this purpose, several persons are being asked to help with the presentation of the Eagle badge. *(Whenever possible, use each of the following members. Introduce them properly, and have them take their place on the stage, forming a semicircle behind the Eagle Scout. If not available, improvise.)*

Chairman: Each local council in the United States is represented on the National Council by one person for each 1,000 boy members. This council has _____ (number) people who are National Council representatives. The Eagle badge is issued by the National Council *(all others are issued by the local council)* and sent to the local council service center.

The council officers include the president, vice-president, district chairman who represent their districts on the council's executive board, executive board members, and committee chairmen appointed by the council president. Because the National Council forwards the Eagle badge to the

local council to be awarded, we will ask _____ (name), who is the _____ (title), to be the first to start the Eagle badge on its journey to the candidate. (*Pause while taking place in portrait.*)

The district officers of the _____ District are the district chairman, vice-chairmen, district committee members at large, and members of the district committee appointed by the district chairman. Just as the National Council forwards the badge to the council to be awarded, the council forwards the badge to the district. We will ask Mr. _____, who is the district _____, to represent the _____ District this evening.

The one institution that helps all of us most is the church. From the cradle to the grave we are reminded of her teachings. We are proud that Scouting is privileged to help in her work. We have asked the Eagle candidate's pastor to be with us for the awarding of this badge. Reverend _____ of the _____ Church, we ask that you take your place next to the district officer.

The institution that helps us most, second only to the church, is the school. While many teachers and schools have helped in the development of our candidate, we have asked one educator to speak for them all. Mr. _____, will you please take your place next to the clergyman in our portrait?

The troop committee chairman is the person who received the Eagle badge from the district for this presentation. Tonight we are honored to have this person with us. Mr. _____, will you please come and take your place in our portrait next to the school representative?

The addition of the next two men will almost complete our portrait. These men are the Eagle candidate's Scoutmaster and assistant Scoutmaster, Mr. _____ and Mr. _____ of Troop _____. You must indeed be proud of the achievement of the Eagle candidate and, in some degree, feel recompensed for the many hours you have given voluntarily and cheerfully to the boys in your troop. Will you please take your places in our portrait next to the troop chairman.

The next person to become a part of the background of our Eagle portrait represents the many

merit badge counselors who have assisted our candidate in earning the _____ merit badges required for this high rank. The assistance these counselors give is greatly appreciated. Mr. _____, please join the group on stage. (*The presenter explains that our portrait is now complete, except for the one person who has done the most for the Eagle candidate, his mother.*) I now call _____ to the stage. (*Escorted by two Eagle Scouts, she stands on the right side of her son, the Eagle candidate.*)

(*Addressing the candidate, the chairman informs him that it has been a pleasure to have had a part in the ceremony and that he is happy to give the badge to the council representative for presentation to the candidate. The council representative addresses the candidate and, after a few remarks of a personal nature, he ends by passing the award to the candidate's pastor. The school representative, troop committee chairman, Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmaster, merit badge counselor, each, in turn, passes the badge to the next man after a few remarks to the candidate. The merit badge counselor presents the badge to the candidate's mother, who pins it over the heart of the candidate.*)

The new Eagle gets a miniature Eagle pin from the chairman and presents it to his mother. Flowers and a kiss are appropriate. He may present his father with the Eagle tie bar, if he desires.

If the Eagle ring, buckle, or neckerchief is to be presented, now is the time to do so.

The chairman invites the audience to the reception following the ceremony. Following the closing, he formally closes the Eagle court of honor.

Hall of Fame Eagle Ceremony

The ceremony depicts the trail to Eagle. It recognizes Eagles from the troop's past as well as the new ones, and it incorporates the use of "still life" or pantomime scenes portrayed within two or three life-size "picture frames" on stage by members and adults of the troop. The center picture frame is used to highlight each new Eagle Scout as he receives his badge. For maximum effectiveness, several spotlights are needed and their use should be carefully rehearsed.

Setup: Stage curtains are closed; large Eagle emblem is mounted above the stage. At right and left stage front there is a lectern with a light and microphone. Three people-sized picture frames are

set upon the stage, behind curtain; spotlights are preset. Aisle seats, except in the first two rows, are saved for the troop. The front two rows are saved for honored guests, minister, Scoutmaster, committee chairmen and their spouses, new Eagle Scouts and escorts, and new Eagle Scouts' families. Two rows in the rear area are also saved for Scouts.

The houselights are dimmed. The new Eagle Scouts and escorts enter and seat themselves in the front row. House lights are turned off, except blue spot on stage curtains. From the rear of the auditorium the troop comes down the center aisle in pairs, with the first pair stopping at the third row of seats. Each boy has a penlight, held as a candle. They turn and face each other.

The color guard comes down the center aisle. Each Scout turns off his penlight as the flag passes. The color guard turns and faces the audience to present colors; the Pledge of Allegiance and invocation follow. Then the court is officially opened.

(Master of ceremonies goes to the lectern at audience's left; lectern light on; spotlight on Eagle emblem mounted above the stage.)

Master of Ceremonies: This is the Troop _____ Eagle Scout Honor Roll. Tonight, _____ (number) new Eagle Scouts will be honored and their names will be entered in this gallery. They will join _____ (number) other fine young men from our troop who have achieved this distinction; in the troop's _____ (number)-year history, including . . . *(Give names of earlier troop Eagle Scouts, voice fading out.)*

Today's requirements are *(read required list of merit badges.)*

Eagle Candidate _____ has advanced through the ranks of Scouting—Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, and Life. The skills learned along the way will help him throughout his life. Contained within these formal requirements is the general outline for the picture of an Eagle Scout.

To complete the picture, there are some less tangible but equally important qualities these young men have developed with the aid of Scouting—ambition, determination, and knowledge. When did each Scout first decide he might become an Eagle? Who encouraged him when his interest lagged? What has he gained from the merit badge program beyond the listed skills?

Let us consider the experiences and associations that helped form the character of our Scout as we create in our minds the portraits of those entering Troop _____ (number)'s gallery of Eagle Scouts. From these experiences, these challenges, these relationships, traits of character are molded and shaped to complete the picture of the Eagle Scout. They add another dimension to a boy—the difference between completing a list of requirements, and being an Eagle Scout. *(Curtains open, spotlight on frame at stage right. Scene: Small boy, age 11, studying The Official Boy Scout Handbook.)*

Master of Ceremonies: A young boy wants to be a Scout. He memorizes the Scout Oath and the Scout Law, perhaps scarcely knowing the meaning of the words he says. But he commits them to memory—the meaning will come later as he lives the Scout Oath and Law . . . "On my honor, I will do my best . . ."

(Spotlight shifts to frame at stage left. Scene: Pantomime, with older Scout instructing a young Scout who is dressed in summer camp uniform with backpack.)

Master of Ceremonies: Our future Eagle Scout comes under the influence of older Scouts in the patrol. He learns to follow and respect authority here and in his home, school, and community. He feels good about working as a team member and doing a job well. He has enjoyable weekends—camping, water skiing, beachcombing, learning new skills, and developing friendships. He competes with his patrol in the district camporee. He finds that the year's highlight is the summer backpacking trip. From year to year, the Scout's role changes and his responsibilities and enjoyment increase. With them, so does his self-confidence. He usually singles out one or two older boys as models—boys he can admire and emulate—and, about this time, he sees his first Eagle Scout court of honor. He begins to understand what sets an Eagle Scout apart from others.

(Spotlight shifts to frame at stage left. Scene: Medium-size Scout with parents.)

Master of Ceremonies: In the requirements it is not specified that the boy's parents must be participating, and Scouting is for boys, but Eagle Scouts who cannot recall the encouragement, counsel, or just the look of a proud mother or father are rare. The troop's program depends in many ways on the parents—the practice trips for camporee and for

the summer backpacking and other outings, dinners, parties, and money-earning projects, all of these events depend on the mothers and dads and the participation of all.

(Spotlight to frame at stage left. Scene: Scoutmaster facing a Scout.)

Master of Ceremonies: Week after week, from the Scoutmaster's study and experience, comes an understanding of a boy's mind, spirit, humor, and needs. And from this understanding the Scoutmaster challenges the boy and provides an opportunity and lots of encouragement. Leadership training is offered at the right time for that boy. Now, when he hears the words "trustworthy" and "loyal," he truly knows their meaning.

(Spotlight to frame at stage right. Scene: Scout in uniform with a man in business suit—pantomime.)

Master of Ceremonies: Our Scout encounters new adult friends in the merit badge program. He learns from them the required material and, in addition, something of what it means to give back to youth the wisdom acquired with age. The Scout Law becomes more meaningful as the boy recognizes "helpful" and "friendly." He learns to work with persons of varied personalities and backgrounds, and to respect each—occasionally forming lasting friendships with these truly helpful men and women. The image of the Eagle Scout develops further still, as he works on community service projects and finally develops his own initiative in planning, leading, and completing his Eagle project. This part of Scouting offers boys the opportunity to help those less fortunate than themselves.

(Spotlight off last scene in frame at stage left and put on Eagle emblem.)

Master of Ceremonies: Scouting offers a boy everything we have mentioned and more. Some boys reach out for more than others, and only a few, one in 80 to 90 Scouts, attain the Eagle rank. We are proud of Troop _____ (number)'s program. In recent years, _____ (number) of every 10 boys joining the troop have progressed to Eagle rank. From play to work, fun to frustration, following to leading, the beginning until now, _____ (number) boys in Troop _____ (number) have become Eagle Scouts. None developed alike, but all have met the Eagle standard.

Tonight, _____ (number) new portraits are being placed among those of other outstanding young men of Troop _____ (number)'s Hall of Fame. They are joining those from the past (*repeat seven to eight names of earlier Eagle Scouts, voice gradually fades*). Now, this year . . .

(Spotlight drops to center frame where first new Eagle Scout is standing. Second speaker steps up to lectern at audience's right. Second speaker gives first new Eagle Scout's full name. Scout stands a moment longer in frame, then steps out, meeting the Scoutmaster who pins the Eagle badge on him. As second speaker begins to read biographical material, first new Eagle Scout steps back into frame for a moment, then advances forward and down the steps from stage to waiting parents. He shakes his father's hand, places pin on mother, and slowly escorts both to the rear of the auditorium as second speaker continues to read biographical material. As Eagle Scout and parents begin to walk slowly toward the rear, Scouts seated on aisle rise and come to attention. They salute, in turn, as Eagle Scout and his parents pass. The second speaker finishes biographical material as Eagle Scout and parents reach the back of the room and are seated. The spotlight follows them to the rear of the auditorium.)

Master of Ceremonies (*repeats seven to eight names of earlier Eagle Scouts, voice gradually fading out*): Now, this year . . . (*Spotlight goes back to center frame where second new Eagle Scout stands. Repeat procedure with Scoutmaster, second speaker, and troop saluting for as many new Eagle Scouts as are being honored.*)

(Spotlight to master of ceremonies; curtain closes.)

Master of Ceremonies: We have placed the portraits of _____ (number) new Eagle Scouts in our hall of fame. These young men have excelled in what Scouting professes to teach, and we are here tonight to recognize this achievement.

The Eagle rank, however, is not an end in itself. Eagle Scouts, we charge you to build on what you have accomplished. We admonish you to remember always that your position is one of honor and responsibility. You are marked men. As Eagle Scouts you have assumed a solemn responsibility to do your duty to God, to your country, to your fellow Scouts, and to all people.

As you live up to your obligations, you bring honor to yourselves and your brother Scouts.

(Master of ceremonies pauses, then states slowly and clearly the date and full names of the new Eagle Scouts. The house lights come on. The court is officially closed and the master of ceremonies thanks the guests for attending and invites audience to reception.)

Scout Oath Eagle Ceremony

This ceremony is based on the Scout Oath and relates each phrase to the ranks required to reach Eagle rank. It can be used with the sample outline provided at the front of this section, with the exception that the Scout Law ceremony has been incorporated into the “trail” rather than occurring separately.

The ceremony can be taped ahead of time, with background music added where appropriate. For most troops it is simpler to do it “live” with the speakers hidden from the audience but where they can be heard well (use a microphone if necessary). All speakers should be boy or adult Eagle Scouts. If few are available, speakers can double up on parts, though some effectiveness is lost. As given here, the script requires two adult and three older boy Eagle Scouts.

Use a patrol as a guard of honor for each Eagle candidate (in addition to the Eagle Scout’s escort) at the end of the “trail” ceremony, with the patrol leader reading the Eagle Scout’s biography. (The purpose of this is to allow more troop participation in the Eagle court.)

Master of Ceremonies: Now, we are proud to present our Eagle candidates, _____ (names), who will be guided by their escorts to the base of the Eagle Trail. *(The candidates and escorts who have been seated in the front row on either side of the center aisle walk slowly to the rear of the auditorium, turn, and face stage with escorts on right side.)*

Adult 1: We who speak to you now are Eagles. We have earned the Eagle badge. Now, back to the time when you first became Scouts.

Youth 1: The first thing we learned as new members of our troop was the Oath by which Scouts do their best to live. Although we easily learned to repeat the words, we soon found that to live by the meaning presented us with a real challenge. To be a good citizen, to do the right thing not for fear of

punishment but because we felt the obligation to live up to the best within ourselves, to keep our minds and bodies healthy—in all these things we have tried to do our best. So has each of you—and this is why you stand here tonight.

(Eagle candidates and escorts move to Tenderfoot sign.)

Youth 2: On my honor, I will do my best . . . *(First escort lights Tenderfoot candle at top of sign.)*

Adult 2: Let us look at the phrase, “Scout’s Honor.” When a Scout stands before his fellow Scouts and pledges “On my honor, I will do my best,” he should not take the words lightly. That phrase should help him to focus upon his personal integrity, so that his earnest desire to do his best is strengthened and reinforced.

Youth 3: As Tenderfoot Scouts we said to ourselves, “These are my rules. I believe in them and accept them.” We became Scouts on the Eagle trail, taking a bearing on our future and moving toward honor. Behind us, on that same trail, came each of you. *(Eagle candidates and escorts move to Second Class sign.)*

Youth 2: . . . to do my duty to God and my country . . . *(First escort lights Second Class candle on top of sign.)*

Adult 1: And your duty to your country? There is an old Chinese saying that each generation builds a road for the next. The road has been well built for you. It is incumbent upon you to build your road even better for the next generation. We hope you will never be called upon to die for your country, but you will be expected, and America has every right to expect, that you live for it.

Youth 1: By the time we became Second Class Scouts, we began to develop an increasing awareness of the meaning of this part of the Scout Oath. We began to learn the importance of good citizenship, its privileges and, more importantly, its responsibilities. The time we spent hiking and camping with the troop made us more appreciative of the beautiful world God created for us. We began to see that doing our best to live as God and our country expected us to live not only made each of us a better person, but helped our fellow Scouts. As this awareness grew in each of us, it developed in each of you. *(Eagle candidates and escorts move to First Class sign.)*

Youth 2: . . . to obey the Scout Law . . . (*First escort lights First Class candle on top of sign.*)

Adult 1: Many times since you first became Scouts you have repeated the 12 points of the Scout Law. When you were inducted as the newest members of the troop, you found these points impressive. Later, as you advanced in Scouting, you probably repeated them at various ceremonies without always giving thought to the implications behind the words. Now, as you relive with us your progress in Scouting and in personal maturity, we would like you to hear them again. (*Scout Law ceremony, done by two Eagle Scouts or older boy leaders, on stage. Eagle candidates and escorts remain in place.*)

Youth 3: As First Class Scouts, we tried to demonstrate the points of the Scout Law by the way we lived. We gained some understanding of these 12 goals of personal conduct and we found that as we moved farther up the Eagle trail, living up to these goals became increasingly demanding and rewarding. Just as we were challenged, so were you. (*Eagle candidates and escorts move to Star sign.*)

Youth 2: . . . to help other people at all times . . . (*First escort lights Star candles on top of sign.*)

Adult 2: This should remind you of the Scout slogan, "Do a Good Turn Daily." If we do something regularly, it becomes a habit. That is the aim of this part of the Scout Oath. Doing personal Good Turns and community service is an important part of Scouting.

Youth 2: To become Star Scouts and earn the next rank, the heart badge of Life, we are required to do community service work. Sometimes we worked under the leadership of an older Scout whose immediate goal was Eagle rank, but we also planned and carried out projects of our own. We became increasingly aware of the value of the work we were doing and the personal satisfaction to be gained from making that work succeed.

Youth 3: As we served our community and assisted fellow Scouts, we also discovered something else—the importance of the example we were setting to those who watched us, who would later be more likely to accept such responsibilities in their turn because of our attitude and actions.

As we did our best to set the example, so has each of you. (*Eagle candidates and escorts move to Life sign.*)

Adult 1: When a Scout makes a pledge to keep himself physically strong, he's not thinking of bulging muscles. He's speaking of physical fitness in its most complete sense . . . fitness to be able to enjoy life at the fullest . . . fitness so that he can fulfill his finest possible role in life with confidence in his own abilities.

Adult 2: The phrase "to keep myself mentally awake" sets a goal of mental health and vitality, initiative, and keenness of mind—an expanding concept that grows as a boy matures. The mentally awake person finds many pathways to growth. He thinks the people who stimulate him are curious, alert, and creative. He uses all the available resources to help him understand the world in which he lives and to which he hopes to contribute his share.

Adult 1: "To keep morally straight" means to keep clean in mind and body, whether you are alone or in a crowd. Many times you will be alone, the decision for right or wrong will rest solely with you, and it may test your honor and your strength. Such battles may be the most gallant of your life, for in them you will win without praise and lose without blame.

Youth 1: In many ways we found this part of the Scout Oath to be the most challenging of all. As Life Scouts in the leadership roles to which we were appointed or elected, we found that more was expected of us than ever before. It was now assumed that as troop leaders we would accept responsibilities and see them through . . . and that we would set an example of physical, mental, and moral fitness for our fellow Scouts. We did our best to meet the challenge, and so has each of you.

Adult 1: Have you done—and been—all that you could have? Only you can answer that question, but because you stand here tonight we know that you have tried. (*Pause.*) "On my honor I will do my best . . ."

Adult 2: You have nearly completed your journey and there is one final thought we would like to share with you. (*Pause.*) The word "leadership" does not appear in the Scout Oath but is implied in every phrase. Give thought now to your responsibility as leaders. A leader is a person who is going somewhere, but not along . . . he takes others with him as he goes. Where will you lead those who follow you?

We challenge you to take pride in what you have learned so that through your leadership, as you move with purpose toward your goals, the principles of the Scout Oath become a living thing for those who follow.

Adult 1: Will you now, with those who have served as escorts on your journey, turn and face your fellow Scouts. (*Eagle candidates and escorts turn and face audience. Scoutmaster or assistant Scoutmaster rises, stands behind candle log.*) Join in spirit with the thousands of young men who have attained the goal you have now achieved. Pledge yourselves once again to citizenship and service by repeating the Scout Oath. (*Eagle candidates and escorts give Scout sign, all repeat Oath. Scoutmaster or assistant Scoutmaster lights three candles at appropriate time.*)

Adult 2: Those around you—your Scoutmaster, parents, and friends—have watched your character mature, your mind develop, and your leadership abilities expand into a valuable asset. This is a proud moment for each of you, but remember that the badge you are about to receive is not only yours, but ours. For what you do in the future reflects not only upon yourselves, but also upon your fellow Eagle Scouts. (*Pause.*) You have walked the Eagle trail with honor, and we welcome you. (*House lights up. Master of ceremonies stands by podium to continue court of honor.*)

Summary of Eagle Court of Honor

- Plan well in advance.
- Involve the Eagle Scout and his parents.
- Request letters from prominent people (President of the United States, senator, state representative, governor, others).
- Make sure the Eagle court of honor is a special event.
- Send invitations to friends and all parents in the troop.
- Invite community, church, and school leaders.
- Print programs.
- Obtain local newspaper coverage.
- Consider presenting a special Eagle neckerchief, ring, or belt buckle, or a special plaque.

- Conduct a good court of honor:

Use a printed agenda.

Ensure that speakers know what to say.

Ensure that presenters know when to do it.

Practice (walk through).

Include all elements.

Be professional.

- Have a reception with refreshments—an Eagle cake is appropriate.

1.00