



Swan Creek District Advancement Committee

Rich Iott, Chairman
5245 Keener Road
Monclova, Ohio 43542
419.878.2244

09 Sep 06
Revised 25 Jan 07

TO: Scout Leaders and Life Scouts

RE: Eagle Project Planning Expectations

Having been involved in Eagle Boards of Review for a couple of years, and having been serving in my present position since June of 2006, it has become obvious to me that many Scouts – and many Scouters – do not really know what is expected when a Scout begins planning an Eagle project for approval by the District. And even the BSA Eagle Project Workbook is a little vague on this.

Unfortunately, there has been very little other guidance available. As a result, some projects may have been approved which probably should not have been. But in the absence of a clear definition of the standards, I didn't feel I could turn them down. One of my goals was been to rectify that situation. As I began to assemble materials and information, a fellow Scouter provided me with a website link that was exactly what I was planning to do. Apparently this same situation exists in other Scouting districts as well! The link at the end of this memo will take you to a site posted and maintained by Mr. Randall Smith of Troop 389 in Arlington, Texas. I could not improve on Mr. Smith's Project Planning Guide. So with the gracious approval of Mr. Smith, the Swan Creek District Advancement Committee is adopting Mr. Smith's guide as its policy.

The pre-printed Eagle Project Booklet is no longer available. Scouts may continue to use booklets that may be on hand provided they are the "current" version which is dated 2003 on the back cover. Earlier version books will not be accepted. There are several downloadable versions of the Booklet available online and not all are up to date. To simplify matters for you, we have created links to the current authorized versions on the Advancement page of our District web site:

- a. This 2006 dated version can be downloaded to your computer, saved, and completed with Microsoft Word. This makes for a very neat and professional looking project booklet and the preferred method.
- b. If you simply cannot get access to a computer with MS Word, this 2003 dated Adobe version can be printed and completed by hand.

To utilize the computerized 2006 version, complete the plan and print pages 1 thru 10, then obtain the required signatures. Store these pages in a safe place. After completing the project, complete the remaining pages, print them out and obtain the required signatures. The two sets of pages, when combined in a single report cover, will make a nice, complete Eagle Project Booklet for the Board of Review.

Likewise, the pre-printed Eagle Rank Application is no longer available. And, likewise, it is also available on the District website. Please note that the application *must* be printed in color. Black-and-white versions will not be accepted.

Remember the following key points while preparing your project plan:

- What is presented for approval by District is expected to be a complete plan, *not* an idea or concept. The idea or concept was approved by your Scoutmaster. Anyone should be able to pick up that plan and execute the project with no input from the Scout who planned it. That is how complete it must be. “Ideas” are not acceptable, only “plans”.

- No work, other than planning, may have been completed on the project before it is approved. This includes securing donations, etc. It must be a “plan”. That is a BSA requirement.

- Troops are *strongly* encouraged to form informal Eagle Project Plan Review committees. Experience has shown that troops which vet their Scout’s project plans through several revisions before submission generate much better project plans and suffer fewer rejections.

There is one last point. I have heard comments that it is not fair to expect the same level of planning and execution from a 14-year-old as from a 17-year-old. My response is this: completing the requirements for Eagle has nothing to do with age or experience. It is about meeting the expectations and standards. Period. Think about that before you encourage young Life Scouts to “go for” their Eagle. Some will say that if those young Life Scouts are not permitted to pursue and earn their Eagle right away, they will lose interest and fall by the wayside. If that is the case, then do they deserve to earn what is generally accepted as the highest award a young man can earn in any capacity? Being an Eagle is all about being mature enough to be an Eagle and understanding what that means; it has nothing to do with age.

The link to Mr. Smith’s Eagle Project Planning Guide is <http://home.flash.net/~smithrc/eagleprj.htm> .

Yours in Scouting,

Rich Iott