

The Board of Review

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THE BOARD OF REVIEW

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Dedicated

In Memory
of
Joseph D. Zedan

In Honor
of
Willadene M. Zedan
and
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PREFACE

REASON FOR WRITING THIS THESIS

This paper impresses upon adult leaders the importance of giving careful attention to all aspects of the board of review. Persons conducting a board of review can find information concerning boards of review in published Boy Scouts of America materials. The information given in the several publications is either the same or sufficiently similar which, sometimes, leaves adult leaders believing they do not have the resources, skills, or experience necessary to either sit on the board or ask questions of the Scout being reviewed. This thesis is written to provide information which will enable any board member to understand and feel comfortable with the review process and to conduct an effective board of review.

GROUPS THAT WILL BENEFIT FROM READING THIS THESIS

All adult leaders from the unit--particularly troop committees--to national levels will benefit from reading this thesis. The boys will benefit from their adult leader's knowledge and confidence.

SCOPE OF THIS THESIS

This thesis covers information needed in order to conduct a board of review which will provide the Scout a positive, rewarding, and productive experience. It states the purpose and objectives of a board of review, it goes into detail about how to prepare for and how to conduct a board of review, and it addresses the areas of Scouts' differing abilities. Additional information is given about Eagle Scout boards of review and Venturing Gold Award and Silver Award committee reviews.

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

An important function of the troop committee is to hold boards of review for all Scout advancement. A regular part of the committee's time will be spent conducting these boards.

OBJECTIVES

The function of the board of review is the periodic review of a Scout's accomplishment and progress or lack of accomplishment and progress. A board of review is not intended as a retesting of skills. Rather, the board wants to determine that the advancement standards have been met by the Scout and that learning has occurred. The board of review should be a positive experience for both the Scout and the board members.

1. The board wants to discover the underlying values, attitudes and philosophy of the Scout and his acceptance of Scouting's ideals.
2. The board wants to determine to what extent the Scout is having an effective and positive experience in his troop, patrol and the Scouting program.
3. The board wants to discuss with the Scout his future plans and goals and to encourage him to continue his personal growth and advancement, both in his Scouting and in his other activities, and to foster his self esteem.

4. The board wants to help the Scout become comfortable with the interview process beginning with his first board of review. As each rank has progressively greater expectations, the Scout will be relaxed with the review process by the time he comes to his Eagle board of review.
5. The board has the opportunity to give guidance when there has been no progress. This show of concern and care could motivate a Scout to further achievement.
6. The board reviews only one Scout at a time.

The periodic review of a Scout's progress is not only necessary for rank advancement, it is also vital in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the troop's program. On one hand, the Scout is given an opportunity to "feed back" to the troop committee what he does and does not like about the troop's program, changes that might be made, and what he can do personally to improve the program. On the other hand, the committee has a way to gauge the troop's program, discuss what corrections and/or improvements can be made, and decide how to implement the changes.

Chapter I

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A BOARD OF REVIEW

SELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

“After a Scout has completed all requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, and Life ranks, or an Eagle Palm, he appears before a board of review. This board of review is made up of at least three and not more than six members of the troop committee. One member serves as chairman, usually the committee member responsible for advancement.” (Advancement Policies, 16)

An adult does not have to have a college degree in order to be a member of the board of review. S/he does not need to have completed an adult Scouting training event. Neither does s/he need to have served previously as a board of review member. The only requirement for being a member of a board of review is that one must be a troop committee member. This means youth, unit leaders, and assistant unit leaders can not serve as members of a board of review. According to Boy Scouts of America policy, as stated in their publication *Advancement Policies and Procedures Committee Guide*, relatives or guardians may also not serve as members of a Scout’s board of review.

CHOOSING TIME AND LOCATION

“The review should be conducted at a convenient time and location such as a meeting, summer camp, or the home of a member of the troop committee.”

(Advancement Policies, 16) The meeting place should have a dignified atmosphere and be free of possible interruption.

Some units have a regularly scheduled place, day, and time to hold boards of review. Boards of review may coincide with the troop committee’s regular monthly meeting or with the patrol leader’s council (PLC). This makes it easier for the troop committee to have enough members present to hold a board of review. Some units schedule boards of review to be held during the unit’s regular meeting time and at the unit’s meeting place. Scouts are already in attendance and often so are several committee members. The troop committee only needs to make certain that enough committee members are present and that the boy(s) know they need to be there as well.

Following the Scoutmaster’s conference, some units ask the Scout to “sign up” for a board of review to be held the following week. If the troop committee has a regular schedule for boards of review the Scout may request to be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting time. The intent here is to enable the committee to schedule its work and to foster a sense of responsibility in the boy.

OBTAINING APPROPRIATE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Both Scout and troop committee have preparations to make prior to a board of review. One advantage to making appointments for boards of review is that the board members and the Scout have time to prepare for the review.

A variety of resources will be needed by the board for any Scout's review. These materials include a *Scout Handbook*, a *Troop Committee Guidebook*, and an *Advancement Policies and Procedures Committee Guide*. Some unit committees have available to them "question lists" which are keyed to the various ranks and Scouts' ages; these resources are often the results of committee experience, training programs, or contributed by commissioners. These question lists should be made available to the board members both prior to and during the review.

In addition to the printed material listed above, it is also helpful for the board to have the Scouts' handbooks and copies of the Scouts' advancement reports in hand for each Scout being reviewed. The unit's advancement chairperson should be able to supply this information to the board of review's members--preferably in advance.

The Scout may be told to review the requirements for his rank advancement in order to refresh his memory of what he has done, accomplished, and learned. He should be told that he needs to bring his Scout Handbook to the board of review. The Scout also needs to know that he should be "neat in his appearance and his uniform should be as correct as possible with the badges worn properly." (Advancement Policies, 16)

If board members do not know the Scout or what his troop activities have been they should find out prior to the board of review. The board needs to know what rank the Scout is being reviewed for, what his current leadership position is (if he has one), and any special circumstances, problems, or accomplishments. This information can be obtained from the unit leaders and the unit's advancement chairperson. All information and materials should be reviewed by board members prior to the beginning of the

interview. By obtaining appropriate background information ahead of time and being familiar with that information, board members will be able to ask questions relevant to a particular Scout's advancement and appropriate guidance may be given.

Chapter II

HOW TO CONDUCT A BOARD OF REVIEW

CONDUCT OF BOARD MEMBERS

The Unit Commissioner, upon entering a unit for the first time, overheard an older Scout say to a younger Scout, “Don’t worry about it, we don’t have boards of review; they just pass you.” The unit commissioner immediately had a conversation with the committee chair. The Unit Commissioner expressed concern over the - soon to be Eagle - Scout’s comments. The committee chair stated, “Oh, we do have boards of review but they are informal conversations with the boys; they might not have realized what was happening but it is a board of review.”

The meeting place should have a dignified atmosphere and be free of possible interruption. It is of primary importance that the Scout know he is having a board of review and the purpose for the review. It is also important that board members conduct themselves in a manner which demonstrates to the Scout the significance of the review. The board members – like the Scout – should be neat in appearance and in uniform. Uniforms should be as correct as possible.

“The Board of Review members should feel free to refer to the *Boy Scout Handbook*, *Scoutmaster Handbook*, or any other reference during the review” (Troop Committee Guidebook, 54).

“Because many boys are ill at ease when talking to adults, it is important that the board be held in a relaxed atmosphere” (Advancement Policies, 16). Only one Scout at a time is reviewed. Put him at ease. Be sure he knows that you are not trying to trick him. Tell the Scout, “This is not a test!”

The review may begin by having the Scout give the Scout sign and salute. Ask him to repeat the Scout slogan, motto, oath, and/or law. If he has difficulty – as a young Scout might – the board can say the oath and law with him. Board members can greet the Scout by giving him the Scout handclasp while introducing themselves.

The board may wish to open with some icebreaker comments:

- ◆ Open your handbook for us to the page which shows the requirements for (rank).
- ◆ It says here that you completed the (name of merit badge) merit badge for (rank).
- ◆ We see here that you’ve been troop (leadership position) for some time now.

Avoid comments that “put him down” such as:

- ◆ You were not a very good patrol leader.
- ◆ If you feel that way, have you considered leaving Scouting?

Never compare a Scout to his brother – older or younger – or to another Scout.

Also, a Scout’s non-Scouting activities should not be devalued in relation to his Scouting activities. It is best if the board helps the Scout put all of his activities into perspective in order to help him balance his activities.

AREAS TO COVER AND QUESTIONS TO ASK

There is no single set of questions that are to be asked of any Scout who is being reviewed.

Icebreakers

Icebreaker questions are designed to be easy, noncommittal questions to help the Scout settle down and get comfortable.

- ◆ What do you like most in troop outdoor activities?
- ◆ Did you go on the last campout? What new things did you do?
- ◆ What do you find to be fun about Scouting?

Scout Spirit, Oath, and Law

“Scout Spirit is defined as living the Scout Oath (Promise) and Scout law in a Scout’s every day life. The board should make sure that good standards have been met in all phases of the Scout’s life” (Advancement Policies, 16).

- ◆ What does Scout Spirit mean to you?
- ◆ How do you show Scout Spirit when you are not “doing” Scouting?
- ◆ Why is it important to wear the Scout uniform?
- ◆ Of the twelve points of the Scout law, which three are most important to you?
- ◆ Which point of the Scout Law is the hardest for you to live up to?

Leadership

“The board reviews candidates for Star, Life, and Eagle about the required months of leadership. It should coach First Class candidates on the expectations for future ranks and get some commitments” (Board of Review, 2)

- ◆ What is one quality of a leader? Why is that important?
- ◆ Do you consider yourself to be a leader in the troop? Why or why not?
- ◆ What troop leadership position(s) would you like to hold?

Service

“At least six hours of service to church, school, or community are required for Star or Life rank. At least one hour of service is required for Second Class” (Board of Review, 3).

- ◆ What service did you do/perform?
- ◆ Why do you think service projects are part of the rank requirements for Scouting?

Merit badges

Merit badges are not required for Tenderfoot, Second Class, or First Class but are required for Star (6 total, 4 from the “Eagle list”), Life (11 total, 7 from the “Eagle list”), and Eagle (21 total, 11 from the “Eagle list”).

- ◆ What merit badges did you complete to make you eligible for this advancement?
- ◆ What merit badge was the biggest challenge?
- ◆ What merit badge will you earn next?
- ◆ What merit badge do you believe will be of most service to you as an adult?

Scout Skills

In general, this applies to work required for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class.

- ◆ What new skills have you learned?
- ◆ Why do you think (pick a skill for the rank’s requirements) is required?

Rank

Questions asked in relation to the rank for which the Scout has come before the board of review assist the board in determining the boy's understanding of that rank.

- ◆ What do the five points of the Star badge represent?
- ◆ Why is the Life badge heart-shaped?
- ◆ What obligations do you have to live up to as a (rank) Scout?

Scout Activities

A discussion about the boy's Scout Activities help board members learn where the Scout's interests lie and what his understanding is of the Scout program..

- ◆ Do you attend meetings regularly? Why or why not?
- ◆ What does teamwork mean to you?
- ◆ What good examples have you shown in the past week?

God and Country

“When a boy joins the Boy Scouts, he pledges, ‘On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my Country ...’ He signs that pledge on his application.

Furthermore, the twelfth point of the Scout Law, ‘A Scout is Reverent’ says: ‘A Scout is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties. He respects the beliefs of others.’” (Position Statement, National Eagle Scout Association).

- ◆ Has Scouting helped you understand your rights and responsibilities as a US citizen? How?
- ◆ How do you practice conservation?

- ◆ Has duty to God become more meaningful to you since becoming a Scout? In what way?
- ◆ What does reverence mean?
- ◆ How do you personally show duty to God?

Setting New Goals

A time at the end of the review for feedback provides the Scout an opportunity to express his plans and set new goals in Scouting. This time also provides him the opportunity to express his opinions about the Scouting program, his troop, and his patrol.

- ◆ What things do you wish your patrol or troop did differently? What suggestions can you make to achieve this?
- ◆ Do you have any questions for this board of review?
- ◆ What are your plans for your future in Scouting?
- ◆ How might the troop committee be of help to you as you work toward (rank)?

The purpose here is to guide the Scout in goal setting, self motivation, and personal growth.

Some units prepare a list of areas to cover and sample questions in each area to aid board members in conducting the review. The list does not contain the only questions to be asked; neither do any of the questions on these lists need to be asked. A list of suggested areas and questions – given to each board member ahead of time if possible – helps board members (especially first timers) feel confident in conducting the board of review.

TELLING THE SCOUT THE OUTCOME

“The review should take approximately fifteen minutes. At the conclusion of the review the board should know whether a boy is qualified for the rank or Palm”

(Advancement Policies, 16).

After reviewing, the Scout is to be excused from the room. After the Scout has left, the board discusses his achievements and arrives at a decision. The decision of the board must be unanimous.

If the board members are satisfied that the Scout is ready to advance, he is brought back into the room, has the decision reviewed with him, and is congratulated. The Scout is then informed “as to when he will receive his recognition and encouraged to continue his advancement or earn the next palm” (Troop Committee Guidebook, 54). Sometimes it is useful to ask the Scout how he feels about the review.

“Qualified Scouts are obvious in the way they come to the board of review and how they conduct themselves during the review. The real problem is properly handling the less than prepared Scout. A boy who is really not prepared knows it. Always remember that approval of inadequate performance encourages inadequate performance” (Boards of Review, 1).

Occasionally the board will be faced with a boy who, for whatever reason, is not ready to advance. A boy never “fails” a board of review, however, the board sometimes tells a boy that the board of review will reserve their judgment until a later date which the boy can schedule when he feels he is ready. The Scout is told what he has done very well and where he has been lacking. (The Scout is told the specific reasons for the

board's reservation.) The board should suggest some corrective action and if necessary assign a specific adult leader to work with the Scout in the coming month so that he will be ready for the board the following month.

Chapter III

DEALING WITH SCOUTS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

Many Scout units adapt their programs in order to address the needs of individual boys. When it comes to the board of review, however, board members are uncertain as to how or even whether differences should be taken into consideration.

AGE AND RANK

The Boy Scouts of America has a good video entitled *Ages and Stages* which describes a boy's abilities as he grows – given that he is not physically, emotionally or mentally impaired. Two boys of the same age ready to come before a board of review may not have the same abilities when it comes to being able to articulate their experiences and what they have learned. A question such as “What is Scout Spirit?” may elicit a barrage of answers from Scout A but Scout B may simply say “wearing my uniform.” This does not mean that Scout B has a lessor understanding and should “fail” the board of review, it means the board may need to ask a few more questions to help the boy articulate his thoughts:

- ◆ Is Scout Spirit simply or only wearing a uniform?
- ◆ Can you show Scout Spirit when you are not at Scout activities? How?

At the same time, two boys achieving the same rank advancement may also be at different levels. A thirteen-year old Life Scout may not have responses or thought

patterns as “complete” as a seventeen-year old Life Scout. On the other hand, a thirteen-year old Life Scout because of his experiences and knowledge may be better able to share that knowledge with the review board than an older boy who is First Class or Star.

Questions asked may be the same for each Scout being reviewed, but quality and quantity of response may differ. Each boy is reviewed on his own merits, abilities, and capabilities, not on someone else’s.

OVERACHIEVERS AND UNDERACHIEVERS

It is difficult to know how to deal with overachievers and underachievers. Many units have at least one boy who is determined to be an Eagle Scout by the age of thirteen and at least one boy who, if properly motivated, may just make the age deadline for Eagle.

Overachievers

When the board of review involves a boy who is moving quickly through Scouting’s ranks, the board may wish to try and help the boy refocus; to either broaden his activities in and out of Scouting or to take the time to become involved with a specific project. The board will need to discuss with him his interests, hobbies, activities outside of the Scouting program, and organizations he belongs to in order to help him and give him guidance.

The board of review may ask a Scout who is a member of the Order of the Arrow if there is something he can do for the lodge? A boy who has not earned the Religious emblem and is active in a church or synagogue can be encouraged to do so. If he is in a Venturing Crew the board can encourage him to earn one of the Venturing Awards.

Some boys work really well with other boys or a Scout may need the additional leadership experience that being a Den Chief can provide. Being a Den Chief can help the Scout fine tune some of his leadership skills or discover new skills he did not know he possessed; this leadership position will also be a great asset to a den and a pack.

A boy who really likes water activities can be encouraged to work towards becoming a B.S.A. Lifeguard. Once he has accomplished this, he has a skill and a “card” that is accepted as the necessary credential not only for a Boy Scout Summer Camp waterfront staff position, but at many community swimming pools for a lifeguard position as well.

The Hornaday Award is often overlooked. A boy who loves the outdoors and has an interest in nature, can be encouraged to earn this conservation award. For a boy who is moving through rank advancement quickly, this may be the ideal project for him to focus on. The Hornaday Award takes at least eighteen months to accomplish.

The goal here is not to halt his progress toward the rank of Eagle Scout. The goal is to help him move at a pace which will better ensure that he has not only the skill but the maturity to understand what it truly means to be an Eagle Scout and the responsibilities that come with holding the Eagle rank.

Underachievers

Some boys are involved with so many activities, clubs, or groups that everything is left half done or unfinished; while other boys become so focused in one area that they never move beyond it. Some boys are so in love with being a Scout, attending meetings and going on campouts makes them happy; while other boys believe they have no skills

and nothing of value to offer the program so they don't even try to earn more than the "easiest" of merit badges. These boys, often, do not advance past First Class or Star. All of these boys, for different reasons, are underachievers.

The board of review has the responsibility to give guidance to boys who are not advancing and to assist them in whatever way they can. In order to discover the reasons for the lack of advancement and help the boy find ways to move forward, board members need to spend some time getting to know the boy. A discussion of his hobbies, interests, activities, and the reasons he is in the Boy Scouts will provide the information necessary for the board to give him proper guidance.

Like the overachievers, the board can help the underachiever focus. The focus: obtaining the next rank advancement one step at a time. The board, along with the Scout, devise a step by step plan which states merit badges to be earned, (and perhaps in what order they will be earned), leadership position(s) he would like to hold in order to fulfill the rank's leadership requirement, how service hours will get completed, and a time line by which all of this can be accomplished.

It may be necessary, in some cases, to assign a specific adult leader to work with the Scout. This adult leader will encourage and guide the Scout. S/he will also help him "stick" to the plan so he will complete the requirements for the next rank and be ready for his next board of review.

Many boys want and need limits and goals. It gives them a secure feeling that they cannot get too out of control because an adult will set them straight and keep them safe. They learn that they can achieve any goal set for them. In turn, this supports the

program's goals of confidence building, self-esteem, and self-reliance. It is through advancement – learning new skills, conquering challenges, achieving goals – that the boy gains confidence in himself and is motivated to set and reach higher goals.

DIFFERENT ABILITIES

“The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) provides the following definition of an individual with a disability: ‘An individual is considered to have a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (e.g., ... seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, learning, caring for oneself, and working), has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. An individual with epilepsy, paralysis, HIV infection, AIDS, a substantial hearing or visual impairment, mental retardation, or a specific learning disability, is covered’”
(Advancement Policies, 20).

All current requirements for an advancement award (ranks, merit badges, or Eagle Palms) must actually be met by the candidate. However, the Eagle rank may be achieved by a Boy Scout “who has a physical or mental disability by qualifying for alternate merit badges ... the candidate must earn as many of the required merit badges as his ability permits ... and must complete as many of the requirements of the required merit badges as his ability permits” (Advancement Policies, 21).

Each Scout must meet certain criteria in order to advance to the next rank. The unit leaders and the troop program help a boy achieve those requirements and conquer the

challenges. The board of review may ask the same questions of each Scout, but the board needs to treat each boy as an individual. It is essential that board members have a good understanding of each Scout's abilities, capabilities, and limits. It is only then they are able to help, encourage, and guide the boy in his development as he develops himself to the limit of his resources and to the fullest of his potential.

Chapter IV

FOLLOW UP

PAPERWORK

A follow-up letter should be sent by the troop committee to the Scout not approved for advancement. Contained in this letter is a description of those things the committee and Scout agreed needed to be accomplished before another board of review can be scheduled. Once the agreed upon items are completed, a new board of review is scheduled.

After a Scout satisfactorily completes a board of review, he cannot be recognized until the board's action is reported to the council office. "At the conclusion of every board of review, it is the committee's responsibility to prepare and turn in to the local council office a copy of the Advancement Report, and ensure that the badges earned by the boys are obtained and awarded in a timely fashion" (Troop Committee Guidebook, 56).

NON-ADVANCING SCOUTS

It is important to review those Scouts who are not advancing, therefore, Scouts who have not advanced in rank come before a board of review. The board needs to show interest in these boys' rank progress. Ask the kind of questions that may reveal why they are not advancing.

- ◆ Do you enjoy the outings (or troop meetings)?
- ◆ Which of the (rank) requirements are most difficult for you?
- ◆ Do you find that school activities are taking more of your time?

“Let the Scout know that he has the support of the board of review members and that there is no doubt that he can achieve the next rank. The board’s concern and supportive manner will both help the Scout’s confidence and impress upon him the importance of advancement in his Scouting experience” (Troop Committee Guidebook, 56).

Chapter V

OTHER REVIEWS

EAGLE SCOUT

All boards of review are conducted by the troop committee with the exception of the board of review for the rank of Eagle. The Eagle board of review requires a district or council representative—if conducted by the troop, crew, team, or ship committee—or may be conducted on the district or council level. The local council will determine whether the Eagle board of review will be conducted by the troop committee or the district or council advancement committee.

The Eagle board of review members do not have to be registered Scouters, however, they must understand the importance of the Eagle rank and the Eagle board of review. The board is composed of not less than three members and not more than six members twenty-one years of age or older. If the board of review is conducted at the unit level, the district or council representative may serve as chairperson if so requested by the unit. The review should take approximately thirty minutes.

The board of review members may wish to meet thirty minutes prior to the candidate appearing before them. This gives the board an opportunity to review his Scouting record of advancement, leadership, Scouting activities, Eagle candidate application, and service project report. The candidate is then introduced to the board of

review by his unit leader. The unit leader may remain in the room, but s/he does not participate in the board of review.

As with other boards of review, there is no single set of questions to be asked or areas to be covered. The board should be assured of the candidate's participation in and understanding of the Scouting program. The discussion of his experiences and successes in Scouting should be thorough. Areas covered and questions asked in early boards of review are relevant here as well. Additional questions should be asked and there should be a thorough discussion of the service project and the Eagle rank .

- ◆ Tell us about your project?
- ◆ Did your project go as expected? Why or why not?
- ◆ What does being an Eagle Scout mean to you?
- ◆ Does the rank of Eagle carry any particular responsibilities? Explain?

The board of review also makes inquiries as to the Scout's future plans in Scouting, school, work, and home; this will help him to realize that new goals are always being set once old ones have been accomplished.

- ◆ What are your future plans in Scouting as a youth/adult?
- ◆ What have you thought of doing after high school graduation?
- ◆ What can we do to be of assistance to you?

After the review the candidate and his unit leader leave the room. The board of review must come to a unanimous decision as to whether or not the candidate has met all the requirements. The boy is brought back into the room and informed of the decision.

If a unanimous decision is not reached, the board of review tells the candidate the reasons for his failure and discuss with him how he may meet the requirements within a given time period. A follow-up letter must be sent to the Scout confirming the actions needed for advancement. "A new review may be convened at the request of the applicant, the Scoutmaster, or the troop committee. If the applicant is again turned down, the decision can be appealed to the National Boy Scout Committee" (Troop Committee Guidebook, 56).

If the Scout meets the requirements for the Eagle rank he is told that he will receive the board's recommendation for the Eagle Scout rank. The board of review immediately signs the application. The application, service project report, references, and a completed Advancement Report are returned to the council service center. Notice of approval will be sent by the national council to the local council. The Eagle Scout Court of Honor is then scheduled.

GOLD AWARD AND SILVER AWARDS

Venturing, a youth development program of the Boy Scouts of America for young men and women who are 14 through 20 years of age, will be implemented August 1998. Both men and women will have the opportunity to earn the Ranger Award, Bronze Award, Gold Award, and Silver Award. (The Ranger and Bronze Awards do not require a committee review.)

The Venturing Gold Award replaces the Exploring G.O.L.D. Award. All Venturers who have been active for at least twelve months may work and qualify for the award. The purpose of the Venturing Gold Award program is to:

- ◆ Recognize significant accomplishment by young men and young women.
- ◆ Offer challenging and stimulating opportunities to develop and achieve personal goals in the areas of character development, personal fitness, and leadership.
- ◆ Provide a positive image of Venturing among, communities, schools, parents, and youth.

Once all requirements have been completed by the candidate, s/he must make an oral presentation to a crew review committee.

The Venturing Silver Award is Venturing's highest achievement award and is available to all Venturing youth members of the Boy Scouts of America. The purpose of the Venturing Silver Award program is to:

- ◆ Recognize the high level of achievement of Venturers who acquire Venturing skills.
- ◆ Encourage learning, growth, and service.
- ◆ Provide a pathway for personal development.

After completion of all requirements, the Silver candidate will go through a formal review with youth and adults from the crew.

The review committee for both the Gold Award and Silver Award should plan to meet about thirty minutes prior to the review in order to look over and become familiar with the candidate's Venturing activities, letters of recommendation, and other Venturing awards earned. Once the candidate is before the committee, questions should be asked that will enable the candidate to demonstrate growth in six areas: leadership, citizenship, service, outdoor, fitness, and social.

The committee reviews the candidate to determine whether that person grew as a result of the pursuit of the Gold Award or Silver Award. The Venturing Gold Award and Silver Award are recognized nationally; however, the programs are administered and approved, and recognition is made, at the local council level.

CONCLUSION

Boards of review should be scheduled on a regular basis so troop committee members, Scouts, and leaders can plan for them well in advance. Scheduling boards of review in advance enables the board to review Scouts who are advancing as well as those who are not. It is better to have to “squeeze” in an additional boy at the last minute than to have a boy lose interest in the program because he is unable to have a board of review when he is ready for one.

A Scout appears before a board of review once he has completed all the requirements for a rank or an Eagle Palm. Each boy coming before the board should be treated as an individual and reviewed on his own merits.

The board of review is not an examination. “The Scout has learned his skill and has been examined. This is a review. The Scout should be asked where he learned his skill, who taught him, and the value he gained from passing this requirement. The Scout reviews what he did for his rank. From this review, it can be determined whether he did what he was supposed to do” (Advancement Policies, 16).

Once the board of review has certified a Scout as having completed all the requirements, his new badge of rank should be awarded as soon as possible. The Scout who advances should also be recognized again at a formal ceremony—the court of honor. This public recognition gives the Scout a feeling of accomplishment and pride, and perhaps, the motivation necessary to complete the trail to Eagle.

APPENDIX

Boy Scouts of America Boards of Review

Thomas H. Richardson

BACKGROUND

An important function of the Troop Committee is to hold boards of review for all Scout advancement. This is a change from the procedures before 1990 when the Committee was responsible only for Star, Life and Eagle Boards of Review only. Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class Boards were conducted by the youth leadership. Now a regular part of the Committee's time will be spent conducting these Boards. These can be done during the regular monthly committee meetings.

OBJECTIVES

A Board of Review is not intended as a retesting of skills. Rather, the Board wants to determine that the advancement standards have been met by the candidate and that learning has occurred. A starting premise is that the Scoutmaster and Troop leadership are satisfied with the work which the Scout has done since his last advancement.

1. The Board wants to discover the underlying values, attitudes and philosophy of the Scout.
2. The Board wants to determine the extent to which the Scout is having an effective experience in the Troop.
3. The Board wants to encourage the Scout to continue in his personal growth, advancement, both in Scouting and in his other activities, and to foster his self esteem.
4. Each rank has progressively greater expectations: Tenderfoot is virtually a "given" if the Scout has the proper attitude and Scout Spirit while Second and First Class candidates must have acquired an array of Scout skills. Higher ranks will have added leadership and service to this mix.
5. Always remember: approval of inadequate performance encourages continued inadequate performance. A boy who is really not prepared to advance knows it. If an advancement is declined, we must tell the Scout where he failed.
6. The qualified Scouts are obvious in the way in which they come to the Board and how they conduct themselves during the review. The real problem is properly handling the less than prepared Scout or the unqualified Scout.
7. There is no single set of questions that are to be asked of any Scout who is being reviewed. The nature of the review will be different for every Scout. It will be different each time he comes back to the Committee as he progresses up the trail to Eagle.
8. Only one Scout at a time should be interviewed. Put him at ease. Be sure he knows that you are not trying to "trick" him. After reviewing, the Scout is to be excused from the room and the Board arrives at a decision. The Scout is then brought back and has the decision reviewed with him. Sometimes it is useful to ask him how he feels about the review.
9. The following questions are only a *guide* to what *might* be asked. It is essential that the board have the Scout's Handbook and advancement record as a guide to what the Scout has accomplished.

SCOUT SPIRIT

1. What does Scout Spirit mean to you? To others?
2. Can you be a Scout without having Scout Spirit? Why?
3. What can you do to improve Scout Spirit within your patrol and troop?
4. How do you show Scout Spirit when you are not “doing” Scouting?
5. How is Scout Spirit different from “School Spirit?”
6. What do you find to be fun about Scouts? Why?
7. What are the parts of the Scout badge? What do they represent?
8. What do the five points of the Star badge represent? (Duty to God, Duty to others, Duty to self, Daily good turn, Being prepared)
9. Why is the life badge heart shaped? (To remind the scout to keep physically prepared)
10. What are the four qualities expected of a LIFE Scout? (**L**eadership, **I**nstruction, **F**riendship, **E**xample)
11. Why is it important to wear the Scout uniform? What does it represent?

OATH and LAW, MOTTO and SLOGAN

1. Of the twelve points of the Scout Law, which three are the most important to you? Why?
2. Which point of the Scout Law is the hardest for you to live up to?
3. What does the phrase (Board selected phrase) from the Scout Oath mean to you?
4. Do you believe you have lived up to the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life? How?
5. How much importance do you attach to “setting the example?” Why?
6. Realizing that the Scout Oath opens with a reference to “Duty to God” and that the last point of the Scout Law is “Reverent,” how do you fulfill these expectations?
7. Recite the Scout Motto and Slogan. What does this mean to you? Why is it important? What did you do today to fulfill them?
8. Recite the Scout Oath/Law. (Stand at attention and give Scout Sign!)
9. What are the three points of the Scout Oath? (Duty to God and country, duty to others, duty to self)

LEADERSHIP

The Board reviews candidates for Star, Life and Eagle about the required months of leadership. It should coach First Class candidates on the expectations for future ranks and get some commitments.

1. What is one outstanding quality of a leader? Why is that important?
2. Do you consider yourself to be a leader in the troop? Why or why not? Can you be a leader without holding office?
3. Do you feel any obligations toward anyone if you become a (Rank) Scout? What are they?
4. What does it mean to you to be a (Rank) Scout?
5. Can a leader be a leader without attending meetings and activities regularly? Why?
6. What qualities do you consider important in being a good leader?
7. Should any First Class or higher rank Scout be considered a leader? Why?

SERVICE

At least six hours of service to church, school, or community are required for Star or Life rank. At least one hour of service is required for Second Class. The Eagle rank has a special service requirement – the service project. These details are generally reviewed by the district's Board of Review. These questions are good preparation for that review.

1. What service did you do? When? Where? How?
2. How was it helpful? Who benefitted?
3. What did you learn? In what way did it improve you as a Scout?
4. Why do you think service projects are part of the requirements for Scouting?

MERIT BADGES

Merit badges are not required for Tenderfoot, Second Class, or First Class. Review the requirements for the total number and the count of required merit badges needed for Star (6 total, 4 required), Life (11 total, 7 required), and Eagle (21 total, 11 required).

1. What merit badges did you complete to make you eligible for this advancement?
2. What merit badge was most enjoyable to you? Why?
3. What merit badge was the hardest? Why?
4. What merit badge was the easiest? Why?
5. Why are required merit badges important?
6. How did you select your non-required merit badges?
7. Have any of the merit badges helped you to be a better Scout?
8. In what ways does the merit badge program help you to be a better Scout?
9. What merit badge do you feel will be of most service to you as an adult?
10. Of what value is the merit badge counselor to Scouting?
11. What did you gain personally from your meetings with your merit badge counselor?
12. Why are the citizenship merit badges required for Eagle rank?
13. What merit badge will you work on next? How many merit badges do you need for your next rank?

SCOUT SKILLS

In general, this applies to the work required for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. It might be worth a quick review for the higher ranks. Review the requirements for the rank being reviewed.

1. What skills have you learned in the course of this advancement?
2. Why will (pick a skill from the rank's requirements) be useful to you in the future?
3. Why do you think (pick a skill from the rank's requirements) is required?
4. Would you like to teach someone (pick a skill from the rank's requirements)? Why?
5. How have you put (pick a skill from the rank's requirements) to use?

SCOUT ACTIVITIES

A series of activities are required for Second Class and First Class advancement; these are in addition to regular troop and patrol meetings. It might be well worth the effort to see how many of these the Scout remembers, what he did, what he learned, etc. Hopefully, the Scout will come to the board of review with a list! Good practice is to record these in the handbook!

1. Do you attend Scout meetings regularly? Why or why not? What about troop activities? Why or why not?
2. What office do (did) you hold in the troop? Your patrol?
3. What office would you like to hold? Why?
4. Of what value are patrol meetings to a patrol?
5. What do you feel is the role of a patrol within the troop?
6. How can you make your patrol work more effectively within your troop?
7. What suggestions can you give that would improve your troop's overall program?
8. What does teamwork mean to you?
9. Is teamwork necessary in Scouting? Why or why not?
10. What do you think other Scouts will expect of you if you earn your rank? Why?
11. Do you think a "good example" is expected of a Scout of your rank? Why?
12. What good examples have you shown in the past week?
13. Do you feel you owe something to Scouting? What?

CONSERVATION

1. What is your definition of conservation?
2. Why does Scouting place so much importance on conservation?
3. Does conservation involve more than concern with natural resources? Explain.
4. As a Scout, what activities have you taken part in that pertain to conservation?
5. What are some examples of how you have conserved our natural resources?
6. Have you learned to use resources wisely? Explain.
7. How do you practice conservation in everyday life? Explain.
8. How does Scouting help you in learning to care for yours and other's property?
9. Why should all citizens be vitally concerned about conservation?

GENERAL SCOUTING QUESTIONS

1. What does teamwork mean? Is it necessary in Scouting? Why?
2. In what ways do you think your patrol and troop could be improved? How can you work to achieve this?
3. What things do you wish your troop and patrol did differently? What suggestions can you make to achieve this?
4. Has Duty to God and Country become more meaningful to you since becoming a Scout? How?
5. What is the most important thing in your life at this time? Why?
6. What is the importance of attitude in Scouting? In life?
7. What things have you learned in Scouting that you think will be valuable to you later in life?
8. Who helped you on your climb to (Rank) Scout?
9. What obligations do you have to live up to as a (Rank) Scout?
10. If you receive this rank tonight, in what way will this benefit your troop and your patrol?

11. Do you believe you will uphold the high traditions of a (Rank) Scout? How?
12. How do you plan to share your knowledge and skills with younger Scouts?
13. How do you handle problems or difficulties of daily existence?
14. For a while now, you have been answering our questions. Do you have any questions for this Board of Review?

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