

Advancement News

January-February
2015

Vol. 5, No. 1

Prepared. For Life.®

Previous issues are available at http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/advancement_news.aspx

Opportunities for Advancement Administrators

Philmont Training Center Registration Open

Have you heard other Scouters speak of the PTC? It is the Philmont Training Center, a family Scouting paradise nestled in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of northeastern New Mexico near Cimarron. Each conference held there features the latest tools, audiovisuals, and techniques and is led by a faculty of experienced Scouters. This is your opportunity to have a one-of-a-kind experience with your family and Scouters from across the country, one you'll never forget. Of particular interest to volunteers involved with advancement administration in their unit, district, and council, are two conferences led by members of the National Advancement Committee and members of its advisory panel.



Conference on Education for Advancement Administrators (CEAA): June 7-13, 2015 First to Be Conducted at PTC

The CEAA is a learning experience for council and district advancement committee members, chairs, and staff advisors. Conference participants not only learn about the latest updates on advancement issues, but preview and evaluate volunteer designed and developed materials addressing topics from *Guide to Advance-*

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ment. Participants are organized into teams to discuss and initiate the development or updating of advancement educational or informational materials that will help Scouting leaders present the advancement program as it is intended. Traditionally held at Florida Sea Base in January, this is the first CEAA to be conducted at Philmont Training Center.

Advancement Issues and Solutions: August 2-8, 2014

If you are an experienced volunteer advancement administrator, consider taking your game to the next level at this exciting conference. It is a case study-based experience designed for unit, district, and council advancement coordinators, chairs, committee members, and staff advisors. Conference participants not only learn about the latest updates on advancement issues, but more importantly, they analyze, discuss, and solve case studies similar to those regularly dealt with by the National Advancement Committee. As a result of this experience, attendees will have a better understanding of the effective use of the *Guide to Advancement* and the confidence to handle difficult issues in their home councils.

See the full brochure for all conferences available and family program information at:
<http://www.philmontscoutranch.org/filestore/philmont/pdf/PTC8PGO.pdf>.

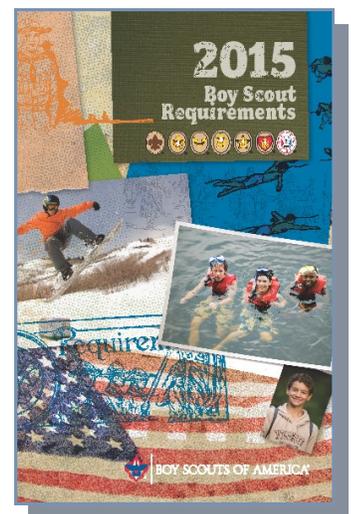
On Increasing Advancement

2015 Boy Scouts Requirements Coming in February

The 2015 *Boy Scouts Requirements* book, the authoritative resource for the most current rank, merit badges, and special awards requirements, will be available for purchase in Scout shops in February.

As usual, the important updates will be summarized on the inside front cover for quick reference. Along with a few changes to requirements, this year's book features a number of minor clarifying adjustments to language and added footnotes providing additional information. The approach to positions of responsibility for Lone Scouts has also been expanded to Star and Life Ranks.

Two new merit badges are featured as well: Animation; and Signs, Signals, and Codes. There are minor updates to 16 merit badges, and more significant changes to Canoeing, Swimming, and Whitewater.

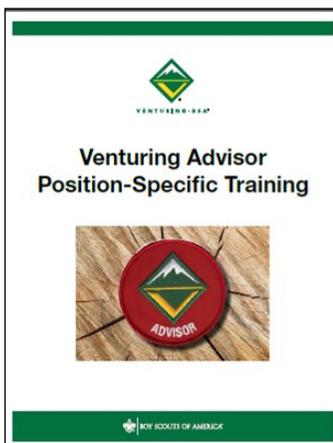


Advancement Committee Mechanics

Venturing Specific Training: Advisors and Committee Members



With the release of the new Venturing program model in 2014, updated training was introduced last June to help Advisors and committee members continue to meet the needs of Venturers. Unlike in previous training, the different responsibilities of Advisors and committee members were recognized by developing two separate courses:

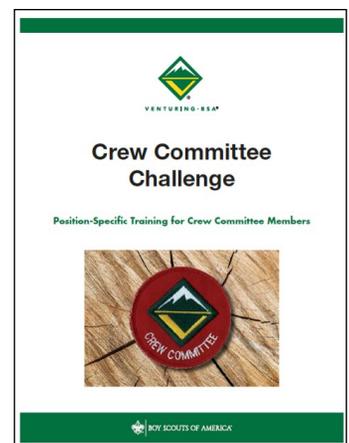


[Venturing Advisor Position-Specific Training](#), No. 511-904, provides an introduction to the responsibilities, opportunities, and resources that will ensure a successful Venturing crew experience for both Venturers and Advisors.

The focus of this course is on the relationship between crew officers and Advisors, identifying the challenges of working with youth and young adults, explaining Venturing's recognition opportunities and how to support Venturers in their annual program planning process.

[The Crew Committee Challenge—Crew Committee Position-Specific Training](#), No. 511-902, provides guidance to committee members on how to give the support needed by Advisors and Venturers to deliver a high-quality program experience.

This course covers some of the same material as the first, but is directed more toward helping committee members understand *their* role. It also identifies desired qualities in an Advisor, cites helpful resources, and explains the relationship between the crew committee and the chartered organization.



Both courses are available online at www.scouting.org/Training/adult.aspx, and may be facilitated by unit, district, or council trainers. They are designed to be conducted in small groups of 6-8 participants—similar to a crew committee meeting. The setting for each course may be as informal as sitting around a picnic table during a crew outing.

The Cub Scout Angle

Cub Scout Advancement: New Methods, New Materials

The new adventure-based Cub Scout program will soon be here! Youth handbooks and *Den Leader Guides* will be available for purchase in Scout shops and online starting May 1, and the new program begins June 1.

The basic unit of advancement in the new materials is an “adventure.” The name was deliberately chosen to emphasize the nature of the advancement process and the delivery of the program as active, fun-filled, and boy-centered. There are more than 80 adventures awaiting the current and future generations of Cub Scouts: fun adventures designed to provide what a boy wants and needs. They cover a wide range of topics that encourage growth in fields such as duty to God, STEM, personal fitness and sports, and opportunities in the outdoors.

Seven adventures are required for advancement at each rank from Tiger through Arrow of Light. As these are completed, Cub Scouts are recognized with an award specific to the each adventure. The chart below shows how the seven required adventures break down between those that are elective, and those that must be earned.

Rank	Required Adventures	Elective Adventures	Adventure Recognition Device
Tiger	6	1	Adventure Loops
Wolf	6	1	Adventure Loops
Bear	6	1	Adventure Loops
Webelos	5	2	Adventure Pins
Arrow of Light	4	3	Adventure Pins

There are 19 adventures available for boys earning the Tiger, Wolf, and Bear ranks. Each takes approximately one month to earn, so boys will be recognized regularly for their advancement. Multi-colored belt loops are used to represent required adventures and monochrome loops represent elective adventures. The new program provides more than enough material for an entire year of fun, energetic, and Cub Scout-centered adventure.



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Boys earning Webelos and Arrow of Light ranks are recognized with adventure pins that may be worn on the Webelos colors or on the front of the Webelos cap. Different shapes—diamonds for required Webelos adventures, arrowheads for required Arrow of Light adventures, and ovals for electives—add interest and help the boys chart their progress.



For a closer look at the background of the program changes, as well as brief descriptions, rationales, and requirements, visit www.scouting.org/programupdates.

Transition to Cub Scout Adventure Program

Transition to the new program will be a simple matter. At the end of the current program year, which for most dens is the close of the school year, boys will begin using the new materials. For example, a boy who earns his Tiger rank in the current program will begin using the new Wolf requirements on June 1, 2015.

Boys who earn their Webelos rank prior to June 1, 2015 will have two options to earn the Arrow of Light rank:

- Continue to use the current program materials and complete the requirements for the Arrow of Light as described in their current handbook. If desired, they also may also earn any of the new required or elective Webelos and Arrow of Light adventures *in addition* to the current offering of activity badges.
- Elect to use the new adventure program to earn the Arrow of Light rank. They must earn the four required adventures, but there are some options for the three elective adventures: They may use any activity badges that were not used to fulfill the Webelos badge requirements, or they may choose from any of the remaining adventures available—including those required for the Webelos rank.

About *Advancement News*

Follow the National Advancement Team on Twitter! BSA Advancement Team, @AdvBSA

Advancement News is the official e-letter of the Boy Scouts of America National Advancement Team and the National Advancement Committee. Its intent is to provide and clarify procedures found in the *Guide to Advancement*, announce various changes and updates in advancement, and to assist advancement committees in making decisions that can help increase the rate of advancement. Therefore, districts and councils may reprint articles from this publication. Our plan is to distribute six issues of *Advancement News* annually, but special editions may go out whenever there is important information to share. Feedback, suggestions, and letters to the editor are welcome at advancement.team@scouting.org.

Additional Transition Support

In addition to the new program materials such as the youth handbooks and comprehensive den leader guides, there are a number of transition support resources and opportunities available to leaders:

- The BSA Program Updates website, www.scouting.org/programupdates, has updates and links to program and transition resources. A new addition is the ability to register at this website to receive email updates regarding program changes.
- Your monthly roundtable should offer additional helpful hints for getting ready for the new adventures. Supplemental roundtable helps are available at the Program Updates website.
- The revised Fast Start and Position-Specific training will be released along with a "what's new" training that targets existing trained leaders.
- Webcasts that were recorded on January 17 have been posted at www.scouting.org/programupdates. The content was geared to Cubmasters and den leaders with another video devoted to Cub Scouting in the LDS Church, but anyone with an interest in learning about the new Cub Scouting program will benefit.
- For those who would like a more in-depth exploration of the materials, four Philmont Training Center Conference sessions entitled "Leading the Cub Scout Adventure" will be offered this summer. Register at www.philmonttrainingcenter.org for one of the following weeks: June 21-27; July 12-18; July 26-August 1; or August 2-8.



Program Updates – 2014 and Beyond

Stay on top of the latest changes to Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing by visiting www.scouting.org/programupdates

- Venturing award requirements and program overview
- Updated Venturing Frequently Asked Questions
- Updates from the National Annual Meeting
- Cub Scout youth handbook sampler
- Den leader meeting plans for youth handbook sampler adventures
- Cub Scout webcasts



Merit Badges: Enhancing Our Youth's Competitive Edge

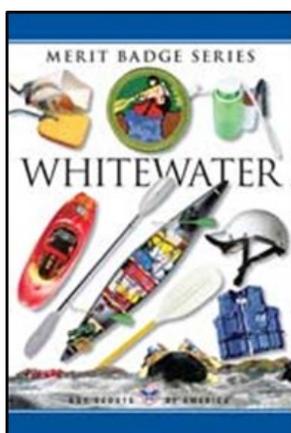
Whitewater Merit Badge Updated

Data from the Outdoor Foundation¹ shows that each year roughly 20 million Americans participate in canoeing and kayaking activities. And in 2013, nearly 70,000 Scouts earned the Canoeing or Kayaking merit badges, placing these among the most popular badges not on the required list for Eagle Scout.² Many more Scouts are being exposed to canoeing and kayaking as part of summer camp, troop activities, or high adventure programs.



Both the Canoeing and Kayaking merit badges are conducted on calm, protected waters where winds, waves, and currents are seldom an issue. Some Scouts are happy to stay on those waters, but others are looking for more challenging conditions. The Whitewater merit badge is designed for them.

Scouts pursuing the Whitewater badge move out of calm waters into an environment where currents and waves are major factors. Here, Scouts learn and apply paddling skills in rapids rated up to Class II, which require maneuvering in waves of up to one or two feet.



In 2014, members of the BSA Aquatics Task Force worked with a wide range of highly experienced paddling instructors from the American Canoe Association to update requirements for the Whitewater merit badge. The work group included several professional paddling instructors who also had strong ties to Scouting as Scoutmasters, Eagle Scouts, or BSA summer camp staff members.

The task force and work group recommended several procedural changes. For example, the Scout Gate test was replaced by demonstrating the skills previously learned to earn the prerequisite Canoeing or Kayaking merit badge. Similarly, the required first aid skills were revised to bring the Whitewater merit badge in line with other outdoor skill badges.

Other changes include the addition of new strokes commonly used in whitewater paddling, and additional focus on individual rescue skills, both as a rescuer and a victim. The updated requirements also include changes in terminology to that currently used by the American Canoe Association (ACA) and in the American Whitewater Safety Code.³ The result is a merit badge that more closely matches programs taught by top-rated whitewater instructors from the ACA and leading whitewater schools.

References

Note 1. American Canoe Association's Paddlesport Statistics

www.americancanoe.org/?page=Statistics

www.americancanoe.org/resource/resmgr/spp-documents/theoutdoorfoundationtopline2.pdf

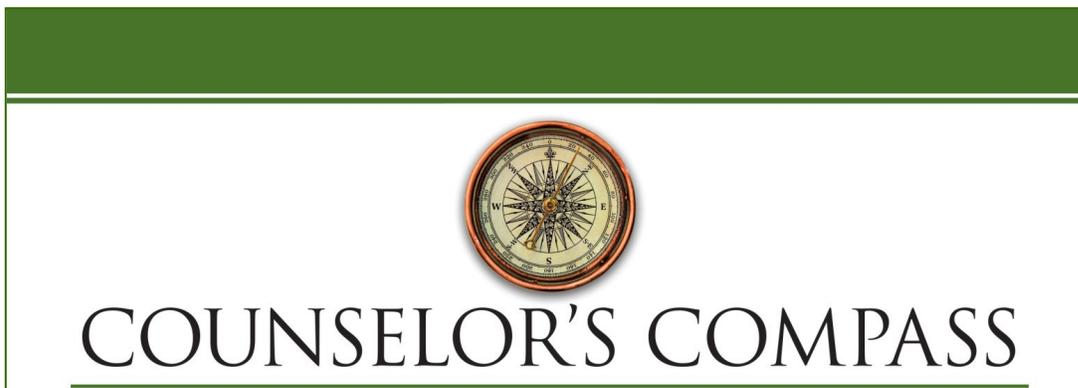
Note 2: *Scouting Magazine*

blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2014/03/04/here-are-the-most-and-least-popular-merit-badges-of-2013-and-of-all-time

Note 3. American Whitewater

www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Wiki/safety:start

***Counselor's Compass* Now Available**



The Boy Scouts of America announces a new informational resource entitled “Counselor’s Compass.” This publication, to be issued as an e-newsletter, will support merit badge counselors in four ways:

- **Things to do.** What new counselors should do prior to counseling a merit badge, such as become familiar with *Guide to Advancement* and the educational presentation, *Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling*, available under “Advancement Educational Presentations” at www.scouting.org/advancement.
- **Steps for Success.** Helpful tips for both new and experienced counselors as they work with Scouts, such as the importance of using the latest pamphlet and requirements.
- **Glad You Asked.** Articles that address commonly asked questions sent to merit.badge@scouting.org.
- **News You Can Use.** Merit badge fun facts and information on new badges.

Subscribing to *Counselor’s Compass* is similar to subscribing to *Advancement News*: Send a message to merit.badge@scouting.org, with “SUBSCRIBE” in the subject line. Indicate your name, email address, and council in the message text. The *Compass* may also be accessed online at: www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-937_Dec2014.pdf

Managing Subscriptions to Advancement News

Advancement News is designed for council and district advancement committees, advancement staff advisors, and Eagle processors. However, any Scouting volunteer or professional may subscribe.

Subscribing. Send a message to advancement.team@scouting.org, with “SUBSCRIBE” in the subject line. Indicate your name, email address, and council in the message text.

Unsubscribing. To decline future issues please reply and enter “REMOVE” in the subject line. We will remove the subscription within the next two weeks.

Receiving Multiple Copies. If you receive *Advancement News* at more than one email address, choose the one to be removed and reply with “REMOVE” in the subject line. Include a message requesting that we remove only that email address.

Duplicate Copies. If you receive more than one copy of *Advancement News* at the same email address, please reply to all but one of them with “DUPLICATE” in the subject line.

Address Change. If you want *Advancement News* sent to a different address, reply and enter “ADDRESS CHANGE” in the subject line. In your message, enter your council name and the email address you prefer.

The Venturing Perspective:

Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook Released

Requirement 8 for the new Venturing Summit Award instructs candidates to plan and conduct a service project as described in the *Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook*, No. 512-938. The workbook, posted at www.scouting.org/advancement, is ready for use, and provides the additional detail candidates must understand to fulfill the requirement.

Before work on a project begins, a project proposal must be approved by the project beneficiary, the Venturer's crew Advisor, and another Venturer designated by crew leadership. The proposal is one of three sections or "forms" in the workbook. The others include a fundraising application and a project report. The proposal and the report are important to every Summit Award project. The fundraising application is required under certain circumstances.



The workbook also includes a message from Chief Scout Executive Wayne Brock, instructions for preparing the proposal and planning the project, an explanation of when the fundraising application must be completed, and a list of project restrictions and other considerations, such as ensuring safety.

A Venturing Summit Award service project must provide a valuable service that meets a need, and it must represent a significant personal growth experience through some combination of its scope and complexity, leadership of others, or a connection to a future personal goal related to the Venturer's education, career, or other interest. However, the *impact* of the service involved in a project—the extent to which a project makes a meaningful difference—is the most important consideration.

In determining if a project is acceptable; the following four focus areas are considered:

- **Service**—A valuable action, deed, or effort carried out to meet a need
- **Scope and complexity**—The scale of the project; the level of effort and planning involved
- **Leadership**—Leading others toward a shared vision
- **Personal goal connection**—Making the most of the experience, including what is important to the Venturer.

All four focus areas are considered together. Every Summit Award project must provide a service, but no particular level of scope or complexity is required. The crew Advisor and a designated crew member must agree that your project fulfills what the workbook describes as required. The other two focus areas, leadership and personal goal connection, are not absolutely required, but will add great value and depth to a project. While they are optional, one or the other, or both, may help to compensate for a project that requires little in terms of planning and execution. Leadership of others and a personal goal connection may also be important to Venturers who wish to provide a project report to a prospective employer or college admissions board.



Special Necessities

Two Planning Forms Now Available Online

The National Disabilities Awareness Committee has developed two forms to assist in serving Scouts who have disabilities:

Request for Registration Beyond the Age of Eligibility, No. 512-935

www.scouting.org/filestore/doc/512-935.doc

Youth members with severe physical disabilities or youth and adults with developmental or cognitive challenges may be able to “register beyond the age of eligibility” in the BSA. This allows them to work through the advancement program at a pace appropriate to their needs. The steps to do this are relatively easy and outlined in Topic 10.1.0.0 in *Guide to Advancement*.

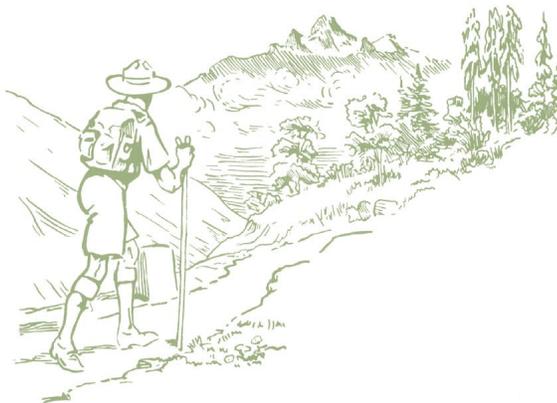
A collaboration of parents, Scout leaders, and qualified health professionals can complete the information that must be submitted to the local council for approval. This team should have a good understanding of the Scout’s abilities and disabilities, and how these will affect his ability to complete requirements for advancement.

Once approval is granted, the Scout executive or a designee sends a letter to the Scout’s parent or guardian and the unit leader or committee chair. A copy of the letter is retained in the unit’s registration file for as long as the Scout remains registered.

Individual Scout Advancement Plan, No. 512-936

www.scouting.org/filestore/doc/512-936.doc

An Individual Scout Advancement Plan is similar to individual education plans, used in schools to establish a student’s special education eligibility. The Scouting plan is specific to each Scout and is prepared in a cooperative effort with parents, Scout leaders, and a health care professional. The objective is to chart a course through the advancement program that helps a Cub Scout, Scout, Venturer, or Sea Scout who has disabilities, to achieve as much as any limitations will allow. The form may also be useful in facilitating applications for alternative requirements and merit badges as outlined in Topic 10.2.2.0 of *Guide to Advancement*.



Hear it First on Twitter

If you want the news first, follow the National Advancement Team on Twitter. Topics cover the FAQs received at the national office, clarifications on policies and procedures, news on changes and new releases, and best practices in advancement.

If you already have a Twitter account, follow us at '@AdvBSA' or 'BSA Advancement Team.' If you don't have an account, it is time to take the plunge. It is a quick and easy process to set up an account at www.twitter.com. To limit incoming emails ('tweets'), you can select BSA National Advancement Team as the only account you want to follow.

Did You Receive these Tweets?

January 23: Links to recordings of the Jan 17 webcasts on upcoming changes to the Cub Scout program are posted at www.scouting.org/programupdates.

January 23: Venturing Board of Review Guide is now available under General Resources at www.scouting.org/advancement.

January 14: "Mentoring for Venturing Crews" training, required for Summit Award, is now available: www.scouting.org/filestore/training/youth/Mentoring_Venturing_Crews_FG.pdf

January 8: The new Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook is now available at www.scouting.org/advancement.

December 29: To subscribe to "Counselor's Compass," send message to mer-it.badge@scouting.org with SUBSCRIBE in subject + name/email/council in message.

December 29: First edition of "Counselor's Compass," new quarterly newsletter for MB counselors, is posted under MB section at www.scouting.org/advancement.

December 9: Webcasts on the new Cub Scout program will be held on January 17. Find out more at <http://www.livestream.com/bsanationalcouncil>.

December 3: Effective 1/1/15: Scouts starting Cooking MB must use new requirements. If started with old reqs before Jan 1, can finish MB using old reqs.

From the Archives

The Pack Committee, Advancement, and the Journey to Excellence (May 2013)

[Ed. Note: Advancement requirement details referenced are 2013 requirements. Though the JTE approach to advancement has changed somewhat, the actions describe in the article still apply.]

Item 1 on a Cub Scout pack's 2013 Journey to Excellence scorecard points out this objective: "Advancement: Increase the percentage of Cub Scouts earning rank advancements." While delivering a quality program is the overall objective of JTE, tracking the advancement rate is a key metric in measuring the success of a pack's program, and the pack committee plays a critical role in this process by handling advancement administration. (See *Guide to Advancement*, topics 3.0.0.3 and 4.1.0.2.)

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The pack committee should appoint a pack advancement coordinator who—perhaps with assistance from other parents—will be responsible for handling advancement-oriented tasks. The duties involved could include collecting den advancement reports, compiling and maintaining pack advancement records, reporting advancement to the local council using the BSA’s Internet Advancement, purchasing awards, and ensuring timely presentation of recognition to the Cub Scouts in appropriate and memorable ceremonies.

The advancement coordinator contributes to the pack’s JTE effort by using Internet Advancement on a regular basis. This helps ensure that Cub Scouts are on track to advance in rank annually by the end of the program year. If members of a den are seen to be advancing too slowly, the pack committee could help the Cubmaster and den leader focus more programming around advancement opportunities. The committee might even recommend a special pack activity that would lead to greater levels of achievement. For example, some packs hold “belt loop clinics” to complete parts of the Academics and Sports program while also working toward rank requirements.

To make sure everyone gets the word about progress on the Journey to Excellence, packs should make recognition a key part of every pack meeting. Present patches, belt loops, and beads as soon as possible after they are earned. Otherwise, boys may lose interest if they have to wait too long to receive recognition, and even a month is a long time for a Cub Scout. It may be valuable, for example, for the pack advancement coordinator to support den leaders in presenting immediate recognition items—e.g., beads for the Tiger Cub Immediate Recognition emblem (Tiger paw) or the Cub Scout Immediate Recognition emblem (Progress Toward Ranks)—at den meetings as soon as they are earned. The Cub Scouts should then be recognized again at the next pack meeting.

To learn more about how the pack committee can educate parents, guardians, unit leadership, and committee members in ways to stimulate and encourage advancement, consult the *Cub Scout Leader Book*, No. 33221.



A Peek Ahead

Here is a glimpse of what we are working on for the next issue of *Advancement News*. As always, actual content may vary somewhat based on a number of considerations, especially to accommodate “late-breaking news” of immediate importance to our subscribers.

Topics Planned for March/April

On Increasing Advancement: Philmont Training Center opportunities

The Cub Scout Angle: Transition Updates

Survey Says: Feedback from Eagle Palms Survey

Helpful Links

Here are some links to the most current materials of interest for Scouters who are involved in the administration of advancement. These and many more resources are available via the Advancement Resources page at www.scouting.org/Advancement.

[Guide to Advancement](#)

Advancement Educational Presentations:

- On Increasing Advancement
- Why Advancement?
- Guardian of the Gate
- Getting the Most From Internet Advancement
- The Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling (English and Spanish)
- The Eagle Scout Service Project Coach (English and Spanish)
- Effective Troop Advancement (English and Spanish)
- Including Scouts With Disabilities
- Introduction to the Guide to Advancement
- Judgment Calls
- Boards of Review
- Boards of Review Under Disputed Circumstances
- Boards of Review Appeals
- The Eagle Scout Application Process
- Eagle Scout Boards of Review

[Eagle Scout Rank Application](#)

[Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook](#)

[Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project; Information for Project Beneficiaries](#)

[Merit Badge Counselor Information](#)

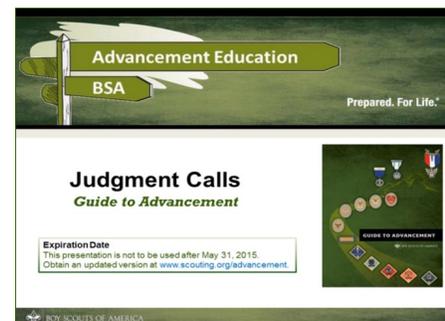
[Reporting Merit Badge Concerns](#)

[Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook](#)

[Venturing Board of Review Guide](#)

[On Increasing Advancement](#) ([video link](#))

[Individual Scout Achievement Plan](#)



“Advancement is one of the eight methods used by Scout leaders to help boys fulfill the aims of the BSA.”

—Scoutmaster Handbook