

## NEIC – Potawatomi District – Troop 2, Wilmette

# Life to Eagle Guide

This guide has been prepared by the Troop 2 Advancement Committee, and will serve as our Troop's interpretation of the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook and Guide to Advancement. The purpose of this document is to assist the scout candidate in achieving a positive and successful experience along the trail to the rank of Eagle Scout.

In order to start work on the Eagle Project, Eagle Application, or a position of responsibility qualifying for the rank of Eagle, a scout must have first successfully completed a Life Scout board of review.

### Requirements for the rank of Eagle Scout

1. Be active in your troop for a period of at least six months after you have achieved the rank of Life Scout.
2. Demonstrate that you live by the principles of the Scout Oath and Scout Law in your daily life. List on your Eagle Scout Rank Application the names of individuals who know you personally and would be willing to provide a recommendation on your behalf, including parents/guardians, and religious, educational, and employer references.
3. Earn a total of 22 merit badges (11 more than you already have), including the following:

*First Aid, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World, Citizenship in Society, Communications, Cooking, Personal Fitness, Emergency Preparedness OR Lifesaving, Environmental Science OR Sustainability, Personal Management, Swimming OR Hiking OR Cycling, Camping, Family Life*

When a choice is noted in the list above, you may choose only one merit badge to be the required merit badge. If you have earned more than one of the merit badges that are listed with 'OR' (for example, Lifesaving OR Emergency Preparedness), choose one merit badge for the required list and choose the other merit badge for the elective list as part of your total of 22 merit badges.

4. While a Life Scout, serve actively in your unit for a period of six months in one or more of the following positions of responsibility (list only those positions served after the date of your Life Scout board of review):

Scouts BSA Troop: Patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader, senior patrol leader, Venture patrol leader, troop guide, Order of the Arrow troop representative, den chief, scribe, librarian, historian, quartermaster, junior assistant Scoutmaster, chaplain aide, instructor, webmaster, or Leave No Trace trainer.

5. While a Life Scout, plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to any religious institution, any school, or your community (the project must benefit an organization other than Scouts BSA). A project proposal must be approved by the organization benefiting from the effort, your Unit Leader and unit committee, and the council or district before you start the project. You must use the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*, BSA publication 2021C-V2 (available on the Troop 2 website at [troop2wilmette.org](http://troop2wilmette.org)) in meeting this requirement.
6. Take part in a Unit Leader conference.
7. Successfully complete an Eagle Scout board of review. In preparation for your board of review, prepare and attach to your Eagle Scout Rank Application, a statement of your ambitions and life purpose. You will also need to request letters of recommendation from four people who know you well, excluding your parents and Unit Leader.

Notes:

**AGE REQUIREMENT ELIGIBILITY:** Merit badges, badges of rank, and Eagle Palms may be earned by a registered Scouts BSA Scout, Varsity Scout, or Venturer. The scout may earn these awards until their 18th birthday. Any Venturer who achieved the First Class rank as a Scouts BSA Scout in a troop or as a Varsity Scout in a team may continue working up to his/her 18th birthday toward the Star, Life, and Eagle Scout ranks and Eagle Palms. An Eagle Scout board of review may occur, without special approval, within three months after the 18th birthday. Local councils must pre-approve a board of review held three to six months after the 18th birthday. To initiate approval, the candidate, his/her parent or guardian, and the Unit Leader (or a unit committee member) must include with the application a statement explaining the delay. Consult the *Guide to Advancement* in the case where a board of review is to be conducted more than six months after a candidate's 18th birthday.

If you have a permanent physical or mental disability, or a disability expected to last more than two years, or beyond age 18, you may become an Eagle Scout by qualifying for as many required merit badges as you can and qualifying for alternative merit badges for the rest. If you seek to become an Eagle Scout under this procedure, you must submit a special application to your local council service center. Your application must be approved by your council advancement committee before you can work on alternative merit badges.

## Steps on the Scout Trail from Life to Eagle

### **Step 1: Requirements 1, 2, and 4**

As soon as you have completed the Board of Review for the rank of Life Scout, you may start working on Eagle Scout requirements 1, 2 and 4. These requirements are recommended to be worked on at the same time:

- Req. 1: You must be a Life Scout for six months.
- Req. 2: You should always demonstrate the Scout Oath and Scout Law in your daily life so requirement 2 should be easy.
- Req. 4: You must have a qualifying position of responsibility for at least six months while a Life Scout.

### **Step 2: Merit Badges**

Earn the remaining 11 merit badges that you need to complete the rank of Eagle Scout. You can/should start working on these as soon as you have attained the rank of Life Scout.

### **Step 3: Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Proposal**

This step is for requirement 5, the planning and proposal process for your Eagle project. This step also can be started as soon as you attain the rank of Life Scout. There will be many tasks for this step, so check them off as you complete them. The tasks are listed below in the order that they should be completed.

Note: You may not start the actual project until you have approval from the District advancement committee (after all tasks have been completed).

- Time Log:** Start a time log to track all of your time and the time of any others that are involved in the planning process. Keep track of your hours separately from those who are helping in the planning phase.
- Select a Coach:** Work with your Unit Leader to choose a registered and trained Eagle Scout Project Coach (“Coach”) to advise you through your entire project. Remember, the Coach cannot be a parent, relative, or your Unit Leader (for example, your Scoutmaster). The Troop’s advancement coordinator is a good place to start.
- Attend a Life to Eagle Unit Leader Conference** with your guardian and Coach to obtain the necessary information to get started on the planning and proposal process. A unit committee member may also attend this seminar.
- Read and review** the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, No. 2021C-V2 dated January 2021.

*Note: There are multiple versions of the Workbook. If you are just starting the process, you must use the workbook listed above. If you have already had your proposal approved using another workbook, you can continue using that version. The questions have stayed the same, but the format for entering information was improved in the latest version. Also, the page numbers were changed.*

- **Develop several ideas for your service project** that will give you an opportunity for planning, development, and leadership. Your project can benefit any religious institution, school, or your community. Refer to pages 2-4 of the Workbook for additional guidelines on “Choosing a Project”.
- **Communicate project limitations to the Project Beneficiary Representative.** In order to meet the requirements of Scouts BSA, there are some types of projects that are not allowed. The project cannot be routine labor or a job or service normally rendered, such as maintenance. The service project may not be performed for a business or an individual, be of a commercial nature, or be a fundraiser. Normally this means that the project should be for a government entity, religious organization, or a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization. However, there can be exemptions to this – contact your Eagle Board of Review Committee Chairman for clarifications if necessary for your project idea.
- **Review and discuss** your service project ideas with your guardian and Coach.
- **Share your ideas** for a service project with your Unit Leader.
- **With your Coach, select the Service Project** that you would like to develop.
- **Complete the Eagle Scout Candidate Information** portion of The Project Beneficiary’s Guide to an Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project.
- **Meet with the Project Beneficiary Representative** to discuss your project idea, and give them the Eagle Scout Candidate Information listing your contact information.
- **Complete the “Eagle Scout Service Project Proposal” portion of the Workbook** (pages A – H and provide as much detail as you can for this phase of the project. Pictures of the existing conditions and rough plans/drawings/diagrams, etc. of the proposed project should also be included. As you add more information and detail to the document, you will become more knowledgeable about your project. Also, as people review your proposal, more details will give them a better understanding of the project and allow them to confirm that it meets the criteria for an Eagle project.

Page B is the **Contact Information** page – fill this page out completely. The District Project Approval Representative is the current Eagle Board Chairman for the Potawatomi District.

*Note: This original document is your master copy and once you start getting signatures, keep this document safe and make copies when letting people review your workbook.*

- **Fundraising Application:** Per the Northeast Illinois Council, the Fundraising Application (pages A of the Eagle Service Project Plan) is also part of the Proposal phase. This form must be completed whether you are fundraising or not – it will be part of the District Project Proposal review. If you are not doing any formal fundraising, and only seeking donations from family and friends, troop members, or businesses for materials, state that on the Fundraising Application. When the application is complete, ask your Unit Leader and the Project Beneficiary Representative to sign and date the Fundraising Application.
- **Present the completed Project Proposal to your Coach:** Make any modifications to the proposal that are needed from the review with the Coach.
- **Set up an appointment** to meet with the Project Beneficiary Representative.

- **Present the completed Project Proposal and the Fundraising Application to the Project Beneficiary Representative.** If the proposal and application meet their approval, ask the representative to sign both documents. If the proposal (or application) needs changes to meet the needs of the representative, update the document and meet with them again to get the document approved and signed. Please note that the representative who signs the proposal will be the person who signs the final approval. The same person should be responsible for seeing the Project through to completion with you.
- **Present and review** the completed Project Proposal with your Unit Leader. Make any modifications to the proposal that are needed from this review. Once you have the Unit Leader's approval, acquire a signature.
- **Copy and prepare your proposal** for presentation. Find a binder system that keeps the documents neat and organized for presentation. Three-ring binders work well and can be used for your final documentation and presentation.
- **Photos:** If you are bringing "before" photos of the project, The pictures should be placed in an album or picture organizer.
- **Present the completed Project Proposal to your Unit Committee.** Once the proposal meets their approval, ask the Committee Chair to sign it. This usually takes place at the same time as the Unit Leader review listed above.
- **PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE** and BE PREPARED! It is YOUR project – you should know the details of the project inside and out.

#### **Step 4: Getting Your Project Proposal Approved by the District**

- **Call or email the District Advancement Committee Chairman** (Tom Handler [neort200@aol.com](mailto:neort200@aol.com)) to set up an appointment to sit before the District Advancement Committee for your Project Proposal Review. Currently these meetings are either over the phone or by Zoom. After sending a polite email requesting this, an appointment and coordinating instructions will be sent to you. In Mr. Handler's absence, you may also contact Mike Schaeffer [mike.schaeffer@cushwake.com](mailto:mike.schaeffer@cushwake.com) or Mike Hogan [mhogan3995@aol.com](mailto:mhogan3995@aol.com)

All approval signatures must be entered into the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook. The project cannot start until all approval signatures have been secured – these approvals include:

1. A representative of the institution, school, community group, etc. benefiting from the project
2. Scoutmaster, Varsity Coach or Crew Advisor
3. The Chairman of the Unit Committee
4. The District Advancement Committee. NOTE: The District Advancement Committee will not review a project proposal unless all of the approval signatures listed in 1-3 above appear in the Project Workbook.

□ **Attend your Potawatomi District Advancement Committee appointment.** Your Coach should attend with you. Arrive a little early for your appointed time so that you can be checked in for your review. You must be dressed in full Class A uniform (Class A shirt, scout pants, scout socks, scout belt, neckerchief). Note: Currently appointments are via Zoom or over the phone. When they are again in-person, they will occur at the St. Joseph School in Wilmette.

Make sure to bring the following:

1. Your original, completed Project Proposal with all appropriate signatures
2. Completed and signed Project Beneficiary's Information and Agreement Form
3. Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising Application with all appropriate signatures
4. Any supporting documents including photos, rough plans/drawings/diagrams, etc.

□ **Present your Project Proposal and Fundraising Application** to a District Eagle Board review team. Make any modifications to the proposal that are needed from the review with the team. Take notes during the presentation so you can easily remember what was discussed and agreed upon.

□ **Project Proposal Approval:** If the Project Proposal is approved, make sure the Eagle Board review team signs your original Workbook and the Fundraising Application before leaving the review.

### **Step 5: Planning your Project**

(Note: Before your start your project, complete this section.)

□ **Complete the Eagle Scout Service Project Final Plan** section of the workbook. In this section you will document (in great detail) the plan of how you will actually carry out your project. Use help from your Coach, suggestions from the Eagle Board and notes from anyone that is a subject matter expert for the type of project you may be doing.

□ **Planning your project's phases:** In the final plan section of the workbook there are many sections, complete them with as much detail as you can. These sections will help you plan the steps and people needed to carry out the tasks for each phase of the project. Make sure you know these steps and their order so that you can confidently direct everyone on how you want the work to be completed. Each phase will likely have multiple tasks and milestones.

□ **Planning Safety in your project:** Make sure that you are aware of the age requirements for using different tools and transporting of your project and/or its materials. Also, if using any chemicals, paint, stains, paint removers, or cleaning solvents, be sure that you know the proper precautions and what to do in case of an accident. Have a clear plan for preventing the risks you identify.

□ **Meet with the Project Beneficiary Representative** to review your final plan before you start the project. It is best to communicate with them as the Project progresses to ensure approval/signature upon completion.

### **Step 6: Do your Project**

- **Use your Coach for guidance**, and your guardian and adult leaders for support!
- **Schedule the dates** you will be working on your project. Make sure that you can gain access to the location if doing a project onsite. Double check to make sure that your troop does not have a schedule conflict, so that you can get as much help from the troop as possible.
- **Gather your materials.** Enlist the help of scouts or other volunteers to gather materials to carry out the project. (Example: have them go to the lumber store with you to pick up the materials.)
- **When people arrive** to the work day(s) for your project, make sure that you have assignments for them. Also, make sure that they understand what you want them to do, especially younger scouts who may need additional instruction.
- **Time Log:** Maintain a time log at each work day – all volunteers must sign in and out. This log will be helpful at the end of the project when you need to calculate the total hours that you and the volunteers worked.
- **Keep a notebook** with you at all times while completing the project. Fill it with project details as you go and these will make your Eagle Scout Service Project Report write-up easier. *Pictures should be taken as the project progresses (a good guardian or scout leader job) and these will be used in your final report.*
- **Have the Project Beneficiary Representative review the completed project:** Have the person who signed for the approval of the project, review the project now that it is completed. If it meets with their approval, then you have completed the project. If there are outstanding issues, you must correct them in order to gain approval. In the next section you will need to obtain their approval of the completed project.
- **Surplus funds:** Any remaining funds from your fundraising belong to the beneficiary. You must return these funds. It is advisable that you photo copy the check and amount and put the photo copy in your report. You can give the check to the beneficiary representative when you have them sign the approval of your finished project.

### **Step 7: Complete the Eagle Scout Service Project Report**

- **Filling out the Service Project Report:** Complete (in great detail) all parts of the Project Report section of the workbook, especially the Observation and Changes sections. If you had to make a change to plan or a procedure during the project, indicate why the change was needed, how you determined the required change and how you carried out that change to complete the project.
- **Entering Service Project Data:** Using your time log, total the hours for the different groups and phases of the project. Enter the requested information in the Entering Service Project Data section on the Project Report. Keep the numbers handy, as they will also be needed on your Eagle Scout Application.
- **Candidate's Promise:** There is a section called Candidate's Promise – read it and then sign and date where requested.

- **Thank You Notes:** Send/email thank you notes to all volunteers that helped, worked and/or donated time, money or materials. If you thank anyone in-person, wear your full Class A uniform and bring project pictures with you to show.
  
- **Presenting the Project Report to the Benefiting organization:** Take your completed Project Report and present it to the Project Beneficiary Representative. This should be the person who signed the Project Proposal section of the workbook. If they approve the completed project and the report, ask them to sign the Project Report section of the workbook.
  
- **Present Final Plan and Project Report to unit leadership:** Present the Final Plan and Project Report to your Unit Leader and committee chair. Upon approval of the completed workbook, ask the Unit Leader and committee chair to sign the Project Report section. If there are suggestions for changes, complete these changes and re-present the final version to the Unit Leader for approval/signature. This step may take several weeks.

### **Step 8: Preparing all paperwork to be submitted to the Council**

- **Eagle Scout Requirements 1, 2 and 4:** You must have requirements 1, 2 and 4 completed prior to submitting your application and supporting documentation.
  
- **Merit Badges:** You must have all of the required and elective merit badges completed prior to submitting your application. Gather all of your merit badge cards for the merit badges that you will be submitting with your application. Make a copy of them for safe keeping.
  
- **Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook:** After you have completed your project, completed the workbook and have obtained all of the required signatures, make a copy to submit to the Council.
  
- **Take part in a Unit Leader Conference:** Ask your Unit Leader for a conference. Once that is complete, ask the Unit Leader to sign and date the Eagle Scout Application.

*Note: You must have completed requirements 1, 2 and 4, completed all of your merit badges for the Eagle Scout rank, completed your Eagle Scout Service Project and have all of the required signatures, taken part in a Unit Leader Conference before your 18th birthday.*

- **Secure at least four (4) letters of recommendation:** Provide a pre-addressed postage-paid envelope to each person. The letter writers will return the sealed letters directly to the NEIC council service center. (See address below)

**What should a letter of recommendation say?** When you ask someone to write a letter of recommendation, provide them with a copy of the Troop 2 Request for a Letter of Recommendation (see the last page of this Guide). This request letter will help the writer identify "qualifications of the Scout that would make him a successful candidate".



***To whom should the reference letter be sent?***

Note: Please make sure that your troop number and name are on the bottom left corner of the envelope. Explain that the letter of recommendation must be mailed in the pre-addressed postage-paid envelope directly to the address on the envelope:

Scouts BSA  
Northeast Illinois Council No. 129  
850 Forest Edge Drive  
Vernon Hills, IL 60061  
CONFIDENTIAL

- **Obtain your advancement report:** From the Troop Advancement Chairman, obtain your advancement report that shows all of your merit badges, ranks, positions of leadership and corresponding dates. You can also generate this through Scoutbook.
- **Eagle Scout Application:** You should already have an Eagle Scout Application with a couple of signatures and dates. Use your advancement report to fill out the Eagle Scout Application. Troop 2 generally does not submit applications that are completed by hand writing. There is a fillable PDF version available online on the Troop 2 website. Your application should be completed on the front and down to the line that says BSA Local Council Verification. You may also use Scoutbook to complete the application using the report function from Scoutbook. Scoutbook will automatically populate most of the required areas of the application improving accuracy and saving time.
- **Statement of Ambitions and Life Purpose:** Write a document describing your ambitions in the future, such as school(s) that you want to attend, job/career goals, where you see yourself in 5 or 10 years, etc. Include your plans for involvement in Scouting. Touch on how you have personally grown through your experiences with Scouting. You may also explore how you integrated the values and skills developed in Scouting with other activities in which you have been participating. Ask your Coach or Unit Leader for help on what information to include. This document should be several paragraphs (at minimum) in length.

**Step 9: Submitting Eagle Scout paperwork to the Council**

- **Gather the following documents** for submission to the Eagle Board of Review for verification:
  1. Your completed Eagle Scout Application. (Make a copy for safe keeping)
  2. All of your merit badges cards that you have listed on your Eagle Scout Application. (You should already have copies for safe keeping). This information should be present in Scoutbook.
  3. A copy of your completed Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook (if you want to include physical photos, make a paper copy of a couple and attach it to your workbook.) You can work with your Coach or Unit Leader on the format for this report.
  4. Statement of Ambitions and Life Purpose

□ **After you collect the required documents:**

- You will be asked for all of these documents by the Potawatomi District Eagle Board Chairman. You will need these for the final Unit Leader Conference.
- After your final Unit Leader Conference, the Unit Leader will sign the application and you or he/she will send it to the NEIC council service center. You will want to have positive verification that the council service center has received your application.
- After the NEIC council registrar completes the verification of all the information on the application and at least two of your four letters of recommendation are received by the Council, the Potawatomi District Eagle Board Chairman will be notified.
- The Eagle Board chairman will contact you to set a date for your final Eagle Scout Final Board of Review. He will ask for all of your products to be dropped at his house or provided electronically.

**Step 10: Attending your final Eagle Scout Board of Review**

□ **The Eagle Board Chairman** ([George Sullivan](#)) will contact you to set up an appointment to sit before the District Eagle Board for your Eagle Scout Final Board of Review. He will only do this once your application is approved by the NEIC Registrar and at least two letters of recommendation has arrived at the council service center.

□ **Return call or email from the Eagle Board Chairman:** When the Eagle Board Chairman calls or emails you, he will verify that you have all of the following documentation and signatures:

1. Your Eagle Scout Application with the signature from the Council
2. Your Statement of Ambitions and Life Purpose
3. A one-page executive summary of your project report
4. The original copy of the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook. Make two copies (Three Total) and put them in presentation binders for the Eagle Board to use during the review. Make copies of items 1, 2 and 3 and include them in the binders as well.
  - a. If the board is via Zoom you will only need one digital copy of these products
  - b. \*Currently all documentation is kept in a google drive folder and you will be asked to provide digital copies. \*Subject to change
5. Photos, story board, diagrams – whichever you wish to use to present your project to the Board of Review.

□ **Attending your Eagle Board of Review:** Your Unit Leader, a troop representative or your Coach should attend your Eagle Board of Review with you. Your guardian cannot be present at the actual board of review (but can wait outside). Arrive early for your appointed time so that you can be checked-in before your review. You must be dressed in full Class A uniform (Class A shirt, scout pants, scout socks, scout belt, neckerchief and sash with the merit badges that you have earned). If this meeting is via Zoom, you will be given the information to access the Zoom meeting and a specified time. Be on the Zoom call at least 5 minutes early.

After successful completion of the Eagle Board of Review (EBOR), you are an Eagle Scout. This important day will be your date of rank achievement.

**Step 11: The Final Steps**

- **Getting your Eagle Scout Presentation kit:** About a month after your EBOR, your Unit Leader will receive a notification that your Eagle Scout package is at the NEIC council service center. This will be presented at your Eagle Scout Court of Honor.
  
- **Plan and attend your Eagle Scout Court of Honor:** The Unit Leader will work with your guardian and possibly the guardians of other Eagle Scouts to plan your court of honor. It is your day to celebrate your achievement of obtaining the highest rank in Scouts BSA. Troop 2 usually recognizes multiple Eagle Scouts at the same court of honor. If your family wants to host an individual COH, you can coordinate that with the Unit Leader.
  
- **Thank You:** Make sure that you thank everyone that has helped you along your scouting path that helped you to get to the rank of Eagle Scout.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Congratulations from all of Troop 2 on completing and receiving your Eagle Scout rank.**

## Request for a Letter of Recommendation



Troop 2 Wilmette, IL

Dear Sir/Madam:

The scout who gave you this letter has nearly reached the pinnacle of his or her scouting trail. The rank of Eagle Scout is an accomplishment that less than five percent of scouts achieve. This scout will soon stand before an Eagle Scout Board of Review consisting of three registered adult leaders. This scout must provide letters of recommendation illustrating a more comprehensive view of his or her activities and personal character outside of Scouting.

For reference, an Eagle Scout candidate must have completed at least 22 merit badges, served in multiple troop leadership roles, and demonstrated the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law in their daily life. The scout will have completed well over 300 scouting requirements by this time.

The contents of your letter will not be shown to, nor discussed with, the scout or anyone who is not a member of the Eagle Scout Board of Review. Your letter will be destroyed after the board of review. Please submit your letter of reference using the attached pre-addressed envelope by the date of \_\_\_\_\_.

As you may be aware, Scouts BSA is a values-driven organization that emphasizes leadership, integrity, service to the community, and other elements of good character that are described in the [Scout Oath and Scout Law](#) (see below). Your letter of recommendation will help the scouters evaluate the Eagle Scout candidate and should include:

- An explanation of how you know the scout
- Personal accounts that illustrate the scout's character
- Examples of the scout's good citizenship or service to others

When possible, please give specific examples related to the Scout Oath and Scout Law, so that the scouters on the board of review can connect your letter to these fundamental values of Scouting. Please include any observations that might be relevant from your unique perspective.

Thank you for your time and support of this scout.

All the best,

Advancement Committee, Troop 2 Wilmette, IL

**Scout Oath:** *“On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.”*

**Scout Law:** *“A Scout is: Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.”*