

Some Words From the Advancement Chairman

By Mr. Epestine

Guys! For the most part, things are going as they should be. You are coming to us for Merit Badge cards and you're turning them in when they're complete. You're asking for Scoutmaster conferences and then schedule a Board of Review. You come prepared to both meetings dressed in correct full Class A uniform and with your Scout Handbook (properly signed off).

There are just a couple of areas that we need everyone to get straight. First, there's a procedure we use at summer camp to insure that any miscommunication between Scouts, camp Staff, or Troop leadership is corrected BEFORE we leave camp.

If I recall correctly we had sixty-some odd Scouts working 90-some odd merit badges at Medicine Mountain. We reminded you all SEVERAL TIMES during that week to come and tell us when you thought you'd completed a merit badge. Also, you were told to come tell us when you thought you had finished work but had a partial (a good example is Fishing MB. No one taking this one could compete it because no one caught enough fish). Many of you did not do this for **all** the merit badges you worked on. I can see where this might happen to a first year Scout... things are so new and there's so much going on, you might forget. But you Scouts who've been to a summer camp before, and especially the older more experienced Scouts in the LC... you should not have a problem with this, and in fact, you should be helping to remind the younger Scouts to get this done.

Here's the reason reporting your complete or partial merit badges is so important. Camp staff is not perfect, and like all of us they make mistakes (Some of them even need to work on the "handwriting & spelling" merit badge very badly, but that's another story). Some times a merit badge card gets lost or even not reported. Or, it was done in such a hurry, a Scout's attendance or requirement progress is incorrectly reported. These types of problems can be fixed while we're at camp. After we

return home, and some time has passed, it becomes very difficult if not impossible to get these errors corrected.

This year, we had three or four errors like this which we were able to correct at summer camp before we left. But there were also three or so that we didn't know about until around the time of Court of Honor. Now, at the very least, we will have to wait until our next CoH in November before everything can be sorted out and corrected. Then, there's also the possibility that the error can't be corrected, and a Scout will not get credit for the work done. That would be a shame.

In the case of a Partial Merit Badge, it's not too bad. Some Scouts can actually complete these when they return home, but the vast majority do not. In the case of a mix-up for a completed merit badge, at the very least, the Scout will have to wait probably until the next Court of Honor before he can receive credit for his work. Some times he might even have to repeat some work.

So, I'd like to see you all do a better job of reporting your progress. It will make the Advancement chairman's job a bit easier, and you will receive prompt credit for the hard work you have done.

And Now, some stuff for the Adults...

Troop 824 Wants YOU (as a Merit Badge Counselor)

We've already put out the call several times for adult leaders to come forward and sign-up as counselors for one or more merit badges (you can sign up for as many as four at one time). We've had a good response, but we can always use more.

The question, "What counselors do you need?" is often heard. The short answer would be any Eagle merit badge that isn't offered in the typical Summer Camp setting. **Some examples:** Citizenship in the Community, Nation, or World; Communications; Family Life; Emergency Preparedness; Environmental Science; Personal Fitness; Personal Management; and First Aid. Or, any Merit Badge that you would enjoy counseling.

The long answer is the reason for this article. I've asked several of you new counselors (or veterans that have added on or changed) to check the Troop's list of

in-the-troop counselors and let me know if they need to be added, removed, or changed. Then we'll have a correct and up-to-date list for the Scouts to use when Advancement Cabin Campout rolls around near the end of January. Your advancement chairman has kept a mental note of those who turned in MB Counselor Applications, but to be totally accurate, I need for you all to let me know (probably again) what you are a counselor for and maybe it would be a good idea for you to let us know your counselor number (you only get one, no matter how many MB's you counsel for). So, what I'll do is print out a list of current counselors in the troop and bring it to Troop meetings between now and the Advancement Cabin Campout. If you could come by and check on it, that would be appreciated. At the same time, you might jot down your Counselor number on the list. I'd like to be certain that number appears on every Eagle merit badge you sign off. I will also provide the list in an upcoming newsletter so that those that can't always attend meetings can check it. If you can't remember your number or perhaps have forgotten what you signed up for (lost the letter and packet Council sent to you many weeks after you signed up), you can call Council and ask them to check their list for your name. They should be able to tell you. Call either of these offices:

MacArthur Service Center

4568 West Pine Blvd.; St. Louis, Mo. 63108-2179
Phone: (314) 361-0600 or (800) 392-0895; FAX: (314) 361-5165
Hours: September through May: Monday: 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday through Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
June through August: Monday through Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

West County Service Center

11481 Page Service Dr.; St. Louis, Mo. 63146-3529
Phone: (314) 994-9469; FAX: (314) 994-9623
Hours: September through May: Monday through Friday: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
June through August: Monday through Friday: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Your role as a Merit Badge Counselor is very important to Scouting. Every Scout's Eagle application packet should contain ALL 12 Eagle required Merit Badges, and these will be checked by Council for little things like the counselor's number and if the date earned tracks properly with rank earned dates. You can also help by reminding Scouts that if they hope to attain the rank of Eagle Scout, they should safeguard their Merit Badge cards, and it's up to them to be sure they're correct and valid. A good time to do this is as you earn the merit badge, not 5 years later when it might be impossible to find a certain counselor.

Earning a Merit Badge

By David Bender, your SPL

Many scouts, old and new, have questions about earning a merit badge. The first step in earning the merit badge is to select it. Mr. Epeptine is an excellent source for merit badges. The next step is to get a merit badge counselor and a merit badge card from Mr. Epeptine. Fill out the card with your name, troop 824, the merit badge name and that's it. DO NOT fill out any dates or other names. Next you need to have Mr. Fitzgibbons sign on the Scoutmaster's line. He is most likely going to ask you who your counselor is. Just tell him. After Mr. Fitzgibbons signs the card, read the book. Books can be checked out of the library or can be purchased at the scout shop. Call your counselor after you have read the book and have your calendar ready. He or she is going to want to set up a preliminary meeting. They may also give you some work to do. Continue to work on the merit badge. When finished, the counselor should sign it on all of the Counselor's lines. Make sure they include their number and that they take the side panel that says "Counselor's Record". Then have Mr. Fitzgibbons sign the card, again. After he signs it, give it to Mr. Epeptine. After that you will receive the main stub and the patch at the next court of honor. Keep the stubs, as they will be important for filling out Eagle applications. You will also need the dates for the ranks of Star and Life. If you have any questions about earning merit badges, just ask. Anyone will gladly help you. If you can't decide on what to work on, you can go through the troop library or go through a requirements book. That is all I can say to help you other than Good Luck!

Another Aviation Tour

By Mr. Rapp

Mr. Kinmartin treated a few Scouts to yet another great "hanger tour" at an American Airlines maintenance hanger. Without repeating what we reported last time, here are a few pictures of the event.





These airplanes generally fly in this direction



Looks like LOTS of parts



Looks like airplane techs like to use lots of platforms and ladders



Quick, without asking, how many blades are on this prop?



Here's a few pictures of one of the Caving expeditions at Summer Camp. Looks like Bryan Rapp, Eric Schrenker, Aaron Chambers and Greg Lehn were in the cave. Don't know who's feet those are. It would be nice if someone would write a little description or story about the caving adventures.



Troop 824 Upcoming Events

(You might consider printing out this page and taping it to the fridge or other appropriate spot)

- Oct 7th** Troop Meeting at WMS
Oct 14th Troop Meeting at WMS
Oct 17th Parent's Committee Meeting at WMS Art room
Oct 18-20 Fall PACAO at Fort de Chartres Mr. Dempsey & Mr. Rhodes Coordinating. **Note to Adults:** They will be offering Pressurized Fuel Training (Toasted Chit) at PACAO
Oct 21st PLC meeting at WMS
Oct 28th Troop Meeting at WMS
- Nov 4th** Troop Meeting at WMS
Nov 11th Troop Meeting Court of Honor (full Class A/sash) An M.C. is needed
Nov 16/Nov 23 Scouting for Food Drop off/Pick up; Mr. Chambers/Wohlschlaeger
Nov 18th PLC Meeting at WMS
Nov 21st Parent's Committee Meeting at WMS Art Room
Nov 24th Hi-Lo Ropes Course, Beaumont; Mr. Chambers/Schrenker coordinating
Nov 25th Troop Meeting at WMS
Nov 28th Thanksgiving Day
- Dec 2nd** Troop Meeting at WMS
Dec 9th Troop Meeting at WMS
Dec 16th PLC meeting at WMS
Dec 19th Parent's Committee Meeting at WMS Art room
Dec 23rd Troop Meeting at WMS
Dec 25th Christmas Day
Dec 30th Troop Meeting at WMS
- Jan 3-5th** Webelos Cabin Campout, Beaumont, Coordinators: John Dundon, Frank Efthim
Jan 24-26th Advancement Cabin Campout, Swift Explorer Post (at S-F)

Please Note: Parents of younger Scouts should volunteer to shadow our veteran event coordinators so the "know how" for putting on events isn't lost.

Unless otherwise noted Troop meetings are held every Monday (3rd Mondays are PLC only) at 7 PM in the Washington Middle School (WMS) cafeteria or at Suson Park during Summer when school isn't in session.

*Parents' meetings are now THIRD Thursday of the month at **WMS Art Room** (upstairs, through the gym to the far left corner) unless otherwise noted (Also at Suson Park in Summer).*