

## **The Coach's Quick Start to Using the Life to Eagle Guide**

The Life to Eagle Guide is a document to aid the prospective Eagle Scout and his parents towards completing the Eagle Scout Rank Advancement. Because each Scout is an individual, every trail to advancement will differ. The Guide is an attempt to cover all the highpoints so that nothing critical is missed. The Guide should be given to the Scout for his reference, but he should also have a resource leader to help him through the process. This is the Troop Eagle Coach. This is you!

This Guide has been successfully used to bring many Scouts to their Eagle rank. It has taken about fourteen years of refinement to bring it to this point, and continues to get improvements every year.

The Guide is very much a self-help document. This Quick Start introduces a few details that the Coach can benefit from, but are not part of the Guide. The main one is the Parent Conference.

### **The Parent Conference and Orientation:**

In the Life to Eagle Guide, the first item listed is a meeting between the Scout and the Coach. It is advisable to have at least one of the parents involved in this meeting. There are four goals for this meeting.

1. Making the Scout aware of the steps involved on the trail.

To do this you can package several items in a large (10 x 13) manila envelope with a coversheet checklist of some of the major steps in the process.

- The Life to Eagle Guide
- Eagle Service Project Workbook \*
- Eagle Scout Rank Application \*

A brief overview of these documents is done, with the advice to read them in detail and refer to them when questions arise.

2. Helping him understand how he obtains help in the process.

When the Scout runs into questions not answered in the package, there are many resources available and he should know to whom he should turn. The Coach is first on the list, but Scoutmaster, other unit leaders, parents, and project specific experts are also useful.

3. Giving the parents enough information to have them 'buy-in' to the process.

For those of us in Scouting for years, we sometimes don't realize that not everyone knows every step on the advancement trail. Parents are especially in need of the full story in order to help and not hinder the Scout.

4. Relieving the parents of the need to nag the Scout.

The Coach should take the responsibility for keeping the Scout on track. Many Scouts will dig in their heels when the parent(s) put on pressure. Each situation requires individual handling as appropriate for the family. The parents are not relieved of all responsibility, but should not need to be the primary driving force in the encouragement of the Scout.

The Parent conference is by far the most important improvement to the Life to Eagle Guide system. With the parents 'on board' and understanding the requirements, the chances improve dramatically that the Scout will make it to the Eagle rank.

The '**Eagle Scout Advancement Worksheet**' is kept by the Coach in a folder or binder and is used to track the progress of the Scout. Begin the worksheet when the Scout earns Life rank.

The information is pretty much self-explanatory. Fill in the name and other pertinent information and use the form to maintain a record of milestones accomplished and contacts made. A second sheet may be needed for the really long-term cases. This sheet is important to the Coach to keep that commitment to be the primary driving force in the Scout's advancement. Be sure to make regular contact and record it to help you recall details. There is not much room here for notes. Use additional sheets of lined notebook paper and use reference numbers to tie notes to dates.

The amount of contacts can vary greatly, depending on the age of the Scout when earning Life. A 14-year-old Life Scout requires much less pressure than the 17 year old with only 6 months before turning 18. Try to use an appropriate level of pressure. Every Scout will have a different level of appropriate pressure. Watch for reactions and body language, and use your experience to increase or decrease the frequency and urgency of your contacts.

At the parent's conference, show this worksheet to the Scout and parents to illustrate how you will track the advancement progress. Letting them know that you are keeping a record helps to show your commitment to the Scout's Eagle advancement.

The last page of this introduction is the cover sheet for the **Eagle Scout Advancement Kit**. This is printed, and taped or pasted to the front of the envelope containing the Life to Eagle guide. At the parents' conference, fill in the name and other appropriate blanks, and show the Scout how he can track his milestones. Also point out that the Scout alone is responsible for his advancement. It is his choice to do the work, or watch the time waste away. For all the previous discussion of 'driving force' and 'pressure', no one can earn the Eagle rank for the Scout. He must do the work.

It is important for the Coach to be enthusiastic, encouraging and supportive of the Scout seeking to earn the Eagle rank. But, do not lose sight of the fact that boys learn and grow through the process, not because of the goal. The goal of Eagle rank is one of the methods that Scouting uses to encourage participation. Just remember that every Scout that participates will experience growth in character, citizenship, and fitness. We want every Scout to have the opportunity to earn Eagle. But a boy that does not aspire to be an Eagle Scout should not be harassed by a leader with the attitude that Eagle is the only reason to be in Boy Scouts. The Coach should give every Scout the opportunity, but be content to accept the Scout's decisions and choices. After all, if they stay in Scouting, they can re-evaluate their decision and may yet choose the Eagle goal if they are not chased away.

Disclaimer:

The Life to Eagle Guide and this introduction are not 'official' Scouting documents. They fairly represent the author's experience of Eagle advancement in two councils and districts. However, differences in process will be apparent in each council and district, and the process will change and evolve as time goes on. Check with your District Advancement committee for details and comments on the process in your area.

Suggestions are always sought. Email your comments, corrections and recommendations to:

[bobfries@verizon.net](mailto:bobfries@verizon.net)

Bob Fries GFGS (Great Fun, Great Scouting (-))

Eagle Scout Advancement Worksheet

Scout Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Date of Life Award: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (Board of Review Date)

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Parent Conference & Orientation, receive Eagle Advancement Kit

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Earned all Merit Badges \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Leadership Position \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Project Proposal Review (first draft)

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Project Proposal Review (second draft)

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Project Proposal Review (third draft)

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Project Proposal Approved by Benefiting Organization

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Project Proposal Approved by Scoutmaster/Coach

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Project Proposal Approved by Committee

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Project Proposal Approved by District Advancement Committee

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Project Completed \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Project Report done

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Periodic Checkup \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Periodic Checkup

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\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Letters of Recommendation \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Rank Application

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Scoutmaster's Conference \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Eagle Notebook complete

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : Board of Review \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

## Eagle Scout Advancement Kit:

Scout Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

### Advancement Record

Date of Life Award: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (*Board of Review Date*)

Leadership Positions held since earning Life:

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ From: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ From: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Scout earned all Merit Badges on: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

### Eagle Service Project

Proposal approved: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (*all signatures obtained*)

Project Started: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Work Finished: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Approved by Scoutmaster/Coach: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Letter of Acceptance from Organization: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Project Report Completed: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

### Eagle Application

References to Coach: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (*5-6 weeks before SM Conference*)

Application completed: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Other items needed:  Ambitions and Life Purpose Statement  
 Scouting Achievements  
 Personal Achievements (*Out-of-Scouting*)  
 Religious Reference or Statement of Faith

Scoutmaster's Conference: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (*Must be before 18<sup>th</sup> birthday*)

Board of Review: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_