



Boy Scouts of America
Troop 24
St. James White Oak



March 17, 1999

Dear Life Scout and Future Eagle (let's be optimistic):

Among the materials you will receive as you approach Eagle, I hope that you will read this **FIRST**. As an Eagle Scout, I have some insight into how you are feeling right now and how you can complete Eagle, as I did. This letter and the information I will pass on to you are **in addition** to the letter from the Council office.

I hope that you take this information for what it is, advice from someone who has been there and not as an attempt to tell you what to do or to do everything my way. You have come this far using your mind, spirit, and the resources of our community and Troop. You can make it the rest of the way on the Eagle trail with these resources. This information is designed to help guide you down the route *you* decide to travel.

The first thing I would recommend is that you gather all the Eagle materials...this letter, along with everything else you've received, and place them in one of those binders with pockets inside and the three-hole "clips". Treat this like a term paper: Everything in it must be clear, clean and understandable. Neatly print or type entries when possible, but don't go out of your way in getting everything printed and typed up. Remember that this workbook and everything in it are yours. You need to be able to erase and add entries as time passes. Make sure that you have plenty of regular paper in this workbook so from time to time you can make notes, illustrations, or even doodles.

After you have collected the Eagle materials, **read them**. Also read the requirements for Eagle in your Boy Scout Handbook. If you have any questions, bring them to me and I will help *you* find the answers.

Along with the merit badges, you must do a service project for Eagle. You may work on this project any time after you pass your Life Scout Board of Review: before, after, or while you are finishing the merit badges. Keep in mind that all work for Eagle **HAS TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE YOUR 18th BIRTHDAY**.

For your project, seek those in our Troop who *you* think would help *your* project. Non-scouts may work on your project as well, so remember your friends from school and others. Ask them early, because you may need them many times during the process. You know how *you* are, with many other activities outside of Scouting. Imagine the reaction someone will have when you ask them for help with the planning or the actual project at the last minute.

Now, sit down and think about what you can do for your Eagle Project. This is the hardest requirement for many of us. Be creative but don't feel that you have to do something "spectacular". I have a listing of projects that have been done in the past and plenty of fresh ideas of my own. Just ask!

Ask the leaders of your church, school, city, and your parents for ideas. Read the Enquirer and the Northwest Press for a couple of weeks or so and track down what main issues affect your community. Talk to the people you listed as potential helpers after you put together your notebook. Don't settle for a routine labor job like picking up trash around the school or recycling cans found around town. Those are great Star and Life projects. The Eagle project should be something that requires a significant amount of time on your part to plan, organize, direct, execute and evaluate. For example if a local park board tells you to fill in this ditch and trim those trees you haven't done any planning. If they tell you they have a trail that needs some work and want to know if you can take a look at it and see what you can do then you have done the planning. Better yet, come up with the idea first then approach the group you want to help and offer to do a project for them. This looks much more impressive than being "given" a project. It should be **YOUR BEST EFFORT**. That's how the local Council and the National Board of Review looks at the project, and that's how you should look at the project, too.

The key to a successful project is to be its **leader**. That is what the people on your Board of Review are looking for from you. Since that's what they are looking for you need to be able to convey the message that you demonstrated **leadership** on your project both in your final written report and in your responses to the questions asked at your Board of Review.

After you choose a project, you **MUST** have it approved. Discuss it with your Scoutmaster first. If he likes the idea, write it up in the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook provided by the council. Have your Scoutmaster review the plan. If he approves it, he should sign and date the workbook. If there are suggestions about how to improve the plan, consider adding them before you go to the Troop Committee. Present your project plans to the Troop Committee and get their approval. Again, if ideas are presented to improve your project consider adding them to the plan. Last, you need to get the approval of the District Advancement Chairman (you can get the name and address of the current chairman from me). Be sure to make backup copies of all your records.

The Advancement chairman is **NOT** looking to see if you know **EVERYTHING** about getting the project done. He or she is looking at the concept of the project and if it conforms to the BSA's policies on Eagle projects. Those guidelines are in the *Life to Eagle* workbook in your folder. If you follow those guidelines when coming up with a project idea, you stand a better chance of getting it approved the first time. If the Advancement Committee accepts your project the Chairman will sign and return the workbook to you. Don't feel bad about not getting it approved the first time. The Advancement Chairman is not in the position of "liking or not liking" you as an Eagle candidate. He *is* in the position of seeing that your project approval proceeds **WITH NO COMPLICATIONS** by the BSA.

After you get approval from the District Advancement Chairman, you may begin work on your Eagle Scout Service Project. Other than planning, do not start work on your project until you have this approval.

Once you have completed your project, write it up. Finish any merit badges you still need to complete. Then check and be sure you have at least six months in one or more of the troop leadership approved positions for Eagle (see your Scout Handbook).

After you complete the project and all the merit badges, collect all your records. This should be easy since everything should be in your notebook! Complete the Eagle Scout application form, making sure to cross out alternate choices to required merit badges that you did not earn. Enter all dates carefully, being sure they are correct. If dates are not correct, this may cause delays when you submit your application. The National office checks dates carefully. **INCONSISTENCIES WILL CAUSE THEM TO RETURN THE APPLICATION WITHOUT APPROVAL.** Rank advancement dates are the dates of your boards of review. Check your Boy Scout Handbook. It should have been signed and dated at all your boards of review. Then check and be sure these dates are the same dates that were entered on the Troop Advancement sheets. The troop advancement sheets are used by the Council office to verify your advancement. If there are any discrepancies, Please let me know as soon as you find them. I can then give you advice on how to clear these up.

Personal references are required on the Eagle Scout Application. **You are NOT to get a letter of recommendation from them anymore.** You should ask these people if it's OK to list them as a reference but it is the responsibility of the District Advancement Committee to check your references.

Once the paper work is complete, contact me to find out what you need to do to schedule your Board of Review. This is the last step in becoming an Eagle Scout. To insure National standards are met, members of the District Advancement Committee sit on this Board of Review along with one representative from the Unit.

Make sure to notify your Scoutmaster of the Board of Review date as soon as you know it. Ask him to attend. The District Advancement Committee will take care of contacting someone to represent the Troop. Remember to wear your **full** uniform including merit badge sash. Double check that all blank lines requiring signatures have them and that all copies made of the application are made after any necessary changes have been made.

Keep this in mind...the more you use the resources available to you, the shorter the time it will take before you earn your Eagle!!

At any time if you have questions, please come to me. I will NOT do the work you need to do for you. I, am, however, full of advice and am very willing to give it!

Yours in Scouting,

Joseph G. C.
Eagle Class of 1990
Assistant Scoutmaster/Eagle Advisor
Troop 24

P.S. Share this information with your parents!!