Eagle Issues

Time Aspects in Completing the Eagle Scout Rank Application

Section 9 of the Guide to Advancement describes the steps needed to complete and submit an Eagle Scout Rank Application. In topic 9.0.1.1, it says: “Confirm all requirements have been completed before the 18th birthday.” Then, later, in topic 9.0.1.4, it says to “Obtain Required Signatures” (referring to those of the unit leader and committee chair). Many interpret that these signatures must be obtained prior to the Scout’s 18th birthday. This is incorrect.

The requirements that must be completed before the Scout’s 18th birthday are requirements 1 through 6, which cover merit badges, service project, active participation, Scout spirit, position of responsibility, and unit leader conference. Nothing else needs to be completed prior to the 18th birthday, including the signatures of the Scout, unit leader, and committee chair. Specifically, the Guide to Advancement, topic 9.0.1.4, states: “There is no requirement that [these] signatures ... must be dated before the Scout’s 18th birthday.” In fact, there is no BSA stipulation that the application itself must be submitted before his 18th birthday. Therefore, the same date-related “non-requirement” applies to the written responses from the Scout’s references (requirement 2). If any of these is received after his 18th birthday, there is no penalty to the Scout.

Requirement 7, the board of review, may also be fulfilled after the 18th birthday. And now, as of January 1, 2014, (see 2014 edition, Boy Scout Requirements) the statement of ambitions and life purpose that Scouts attach to the application is part of requirement 7 and, thus, may be completed after the 18th birthday.

Certainly, everyone involved in advancement realizes that the chronology of an Scout’s path to the rank of Eagle Scout must occur in the right sequence. Thus, it is important to recognize that the order of some dates—especially those around the 18th birthday—are critical, and that others are not. With more than half of all Eagle Scouts completing their requirements during the three months before turning 18, it is incumbent upon us, who serve to support their efforts, to remember that no one is permitted to add extra requirements for any rank advancement, including that of Eagle Scout.

The Venturing Perspective

The Venturing Award—What Is It?

Over the next four issues of Advancement News, we will share details about the four new Venturing awards and how the awards provide a pathway to adventure, service, leadership, and personal growth. The requirements for each award are published in the new Handbook for Venturers.

The first award is appropriately named the Venturing award. Its purpose is to introduce Venturers to the program and its values. The award encourages prospective members to become active and to participate in various crew events outside crew meetings.

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