

Saugahatchee District Eagle Scout – Court of Honor Checklist



Biography: When you pass your Eagle Board of Review, start writing your own biographical sketch. This will be needed for newspaper coverage and your Eagle Court of Honor Program. Include activities that you participate in outside of scouting from school, sports, church or other community activities. Make sure your biography includes an explanation of your Eagle Project. Have your Scoutmaster or troop Advancement Chairman review what you write.

Newspaper Coverage: The Saugahatchee District is currently working with the *Opelika-Auburn News* to honor the previous year's Eagle Scouts as part of a weekly series. As a District Scout, you can expect to be contacted by the District public relations chair at the end of the year in which you passed your board of review for the purpose of getting your notice in the newspaper. This does not preclude you from contacting the *Opelika-Auburn News* or the *Auburn Villager* yourself for coverage of your Eagle Project or Court of Honor. If you wish, contact the *Opelika-Auburn News* at 334-749-6271 and/or the *Auburn Villager* at 334-501-0600. Arrangements should be made at least a month in advance of when you wish the story or photo to appear.

Date of your Court of Honor: Select the date, time and place for your Eagle Court of Honor well in advance. In selecting the date, make sure that your Eagle Scout presentation materials will arrive from the BSA National Office before this date. They generally take about three weeks from the time your Eagle Advancement Report is turned in to the council office in Columbus. It is always a good idea to pick alternate dates just in case. Check with your Scoutmaster and family to consult your family calendar, school calendar and the troop calendar to make sure there are no conflicts (if you live in Auburn, it is always useful to check the fall football schedule to avoid home games). If you decide to have your Court of Honor at a church, your Scoutmaster can assist you in getting approval from church officials.

Invitations: Secure a troop roster from your Scoutmaster with the addresses of all scouts and leaders. You may wish to purchase Eagle Scout invitations from the Scout Shop in Columbus or at www.scoutstuff.org (The stock number for an Eagle Invitation Card is #615320). Write the wording and select the font and style for your printing. Make sure that your wording includes "National Eagle Scout Court of Honor." You might check samples of other Eagle Scout programs from your troop. Before having the invitations printed, have your Scoutmaster proofread your rough draft. You might consider sending invitations to all

of your troop's Eagles and the Scoutmaster (who might like one to put in his file). You will probably want to send invitations to the members of your extended family, personal friends, and friends of your family. If you choose not to send an invitation to each scout family in your troop, bring an invitation to a troop meeting, announce the date and time of your court, and prominently post it at the troop meeting room. Invitations should be sent out at least three weeks in advance to ensure good attendance, especially from those that have busy schedules and need time to plan for the event.

Guest List: After you have sent out your invitations and know who is going to attend your Court of Honor, make a list of special people who will attend but are not scheduled to participate in your ceremony. These people (relatives, mentors, teachers, church family members, other adult leaders) can be publicly recognized during your ceremony for their assistance or inspiration in helping you to achieve this goal.

Programs: You may also purchase embossed 5.5 in. by 8.5 in. Eagle Scout Court of Honor program covers (stock #615321) from the Scout Shop or online. You and your parents should organize your Court of Honor the way you want it but be sure to ask your Scoutmaster for suggestions. Tradition usually requires that you include a **Flag Ceremony**, **Invocation** (given by your pastor or other religious representative with whom you are acquainted), **The Eagle Charge**, **The Eagle Promise**, and **Presentation of the Eagle Badge**; followed by **The Eagle's Response** (a short speech given by the Eagle Scout to explain his feelings on this important day in his life and to specifically thank the people responsible for helping him reach his goal). Your Scoutmaster may have samples of Eagle ceremonies from previous Eagle Scouts of the troop. After you have completed the program format, ask your Scoutmaster or another adult leader to proofread it. Before getting the programs printed, make sure that all of your selected participants have agreed to attend. Remember that "A Scout is Courteous," so after your Court of Honor it would be nice to send a thank you note to all of the adult participants.

Rehearsal: Select a date and a time for a rehearsal. If your troop meets at the location where the ceremony is to be held, then perhaps the rehearsal can take place during a regular troop meeting. Check with your scoutmaster, your parents and also check the troop calendar. It is very important that each of your participants (especially the youth participants) be present at this rehearsal. Remember that practice makes perfect. You should try to rehearse the whole ceremony, ensuring that everyone knows what he or she is supposed to do. Scouts with speaking parts should be told to speak slowly and project their voices. If a microphone is to be used in the ceremony, it should also be used for the rehearsal.

Eagle Presentation Materials: After the Eagle Presentation Kit is received from the BSA National Office, have your Scoutmaster or parents check the materials for the correct

spelling of your name, correct dates and other information. Check the Eagle medal and other presentation materials. You don't want to find out about a misspelling or broken medal on the day of the ceremony. Check with your Scoutmaster about having the Eagle Scout certificate framed prior to the Court of Honor. The presentation kit comes with one Mentor Pin. If you would like to honor more than one mentor at your Court of Honor, check with your Scoutmaster about obtaining extras from the Scout Shop.

Photos: You might want to arrange for someone to take photographs or video during your ceremony. However, make sure that this person is not already involved as a participant. Unless your photographer is a member of your family (not your mom and dad since they will be part of the ceremony), you might consider providing the camera.

Eagle Presenter: Choose someone who has been important in your life or someone who has helped you to reach your goal of becoming an Eagle Scout. It can be your Scoutmaster, your mom or dad, or an Eagle Scout relative. Presenting the Eagle Scout badge is a special honor for someone that you wish to honor on your special day.

National Eagle Scout Association (NESA): Many Eagle Scouts become members of the NESA, and as a new Eagle Scout, you may want to join. A special membership is available for \$20 that is valid through age 23. NESA's online membership portal is found at <http://www.nesa.org/membership.html>. Your parents may pay the membership fee but some troops pay for your initial membership as a way of honoring your achievement. Check with your Scoutmaster to see if this is part of your troop's tradition. A NESA application will be among the Eagle Scout documentation that you receive at your Court of Honor. The white NESA Neckerchief (stock #64080) can be purchased at the Scout Shop or online. Information about the NESA may be found at <http://www.nesa.org>.

Eagle Recognition Items: Various recognition items are also available from the Scout Shop or online to honor the new Eagle Scout at the Court of Honor. These include Eagle neckerchiefs (stock #64079 or 64076) and Eagle neckerchief slides (stock #2541, 2505, and 14019). Various gifts are also available such as the Trail to Eagle plaque (stock #17586) to display all of a Scout's rank patches.

Reception: Your family should consider having a reception after the Court of Honor. A reception allows you and your family to relax a little and informally chat with your guests. Moms are very good at deciding what should be served to your guests, but it is always nice to have at least an Eagle cake and punch. Eagle Scout cakes of various flavors can be purchased at different supermarket bakeries in the area. They can reproduce photos and/or clip art onto a cake with edible icing. If you wish to use official BSA Eagle Scout logos on a cake, commercial bakeries are required to obtain permission to use BSA trademarked logos. Contact the BSA licensing office at licensing@scouting.org or at 800-323-0732 for the necessary form and instructions.

If your family does not own a punch bowl or a large coffee pot, the families of other scouts in your troop might be willing to loan them to you for this occasion. A church where you hold the reception may also allow the use of their punch bowl or coffee pot. Eagle Scout napkins, cups and paper plates, as well as other decorations are available from the Scout Shop or online. Check the links under "Gifts" for cards and party goods on www.scoutstuff.org.

Memorabilia Table: Utilizing a separate table at your reception, you should display Scouting memorabilia items you have collected over the years as both a Cub Scout and as a Boy Scout. You may want to display plaques, rank insignia patches, other scout patches, merit badge cards, certificates, etc. If you have put together an Eagle notebook (3-ring binder) showing your Eagle Scout paperwork, including the details and photos of your Eagle project, you can prominently display that notebook at the reception.

Letters of Recognition: You parents or troop may want to notify by letter the various civic and/or governmental leaders from the city, state and nation about your Court of Honor. These leaders will respond with letters of commendation or congratulations. However, it can take 6-8 weeks for that to happen, so allow for the extra time. When these letters come in, they can be placed in your Eagle notebook/album and a selection of them can be read as part of your Eagle ceremony. As with other parts of your ceremony, the reading of those letters should be practiced to make sure that there are no mistakes. A good source for the names and addresses of national figures who will send letters of congratulations is: <http://www.usscouts.org/eagle/eaglecongrats.asp>

U.S. Flag Requests: As a special recognition, your congressman or senators can arrange for an American flag to be flown over the U.S. Capitol on a day of your choosing. Of course, this requires advance planning and payment for the flag. All members of Congress and Senate have links for this purpose on their congressional websites. Use the links at www.house.gov or www.senate.gov to find your representative or senator.

REMEMBER --THIS IS YOUR DAY. PLAN IT WELL AND ENJOY IT!

