**Troop 8 Rank Advancement Process**

**Scout Master Conferences**

1. When a Scout has completed all the requirements for a rank, the Scout will request a Scoutmaster Conference to determine if he is ready to advance. The Scoutmaster will evaluate the Scout’s requirements for Rank Advancement and determine if the Scout has completed the requirements to the satisfaction of the Scoutmaster. If the conference is successful, the Scoutmaster will recommend the Scout to the Board of Review (BOR). If, in the Scoutmaster’s opinion, the Scout is not ready to advance, he will make suggestions on what the Scout needs to do in order to earn the recommendation to the Board of Review. A scoutmaster conference is not a re-testing of skills.

2. Scoutmaster Conferences for ranks Scout through First Class can be conducted by the Scoutmaster or the patrol Assistant Scoutmaster.

3. Scoutmaster conferences for ranks Star through Eagle are conducted by the Scoutmaster only. In certain circumstances, the Scoutmaster can delegate the scoutmaster conference to one of the Assistant Scoutmasters.

4. It is the preference that Scoutmaster conferences be done during the monthly campout.

**Board of Reviews**

1. A Board of Review is the final step to a Scout earning a rank advancement. The BOR is comprised of three to six adults from within the Troop who meet formally with the Scout, usually during a Troop Meeting. Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters are not permitted to sit on a BOR, nor are members of the Scout’s family. A Full Class A uniform is expected to be worn by Scouts attending a BOR. A BOR is not a re-testing of skills.

2. After the Scoutmaster conference has been completed, the scout will need to talk to Board of Review Coordinator to request a Board of Review.

3. The BOR coordinator will get back to the scout to inform him of the Board of Review date.

4. Regular boards of review are utilized for Tenderfoot through Life Ranks. These BOR’s can occur at troop outing (provided there are enough committee members present) or at a regular troop meeting.

6. For Eagle Scout, an Eagle Board of Review is conducted after the Eagle packet is turned in at the council office. A member of the Eagle advancement team will pick up the packet to review. He will in turn contact the Scoutmaster to schedule an Eagle Board of Review at St. Matthew.

**Troop 8 Merit Badge Process**

Merit badges may be earned by a Scout at any time. They are required for the ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle.

Earn a total of 21 merit badges (10 more than required for the Life rank), including these 13 merit badges: (a) First Aid, (b) Citizenship in the Community, (c) Citizenship in the Nation, (d) Citizenship in the World, (e) Communication, (f) Cooking, (g) Personal Fitness, (h) Emergency Preparedness OR Lifesaving, (i) Environmental Science OR Sustainability, (j) Personal Management, (k) Swimming OR Hiking OR Cycling, (l) Camping, and (m) Family Life.

You must choose only one of the merit badges listed in categories h, i, and k. Any additional merit badge(s) earned in those categories may be counted as one of your eight optional merit badges used to make your total of 21.

There are four typical ways for a Scout to earn merit badges: (1) summer camp, (2) troop-run classes, (3) classes offered by groups outside of Troop 8, and (4) on his own.

For Scouts earning merit badges through summer camp (every June), or through troop-run classes (Merit Badge University), there are no additional steps required to begin work on the merit badge. Just ensure that you are registered for the class and show up.

For Scouts earning merit badges **on your own or through groups outside of Troop 8** (e.g. events run by our council or organizations such as Discovery Place), the following initial steps should be taken:

1. Contact the Scoutmaster/Advancement coordinator to discuss the merit badge you want to pursue.

2. After a conversation, the Scoutmaster or Advancement Coordinator will provide the Scout with a blue card and, if the he is pursuing the merit badge on his own, the name and contact information of a merit badge counselor. DO NOT attend a merit badge event outside of Troop 8 and DO NOT contact a merit badge counselor until after you have obtained a blue card from the Scoutmaster or Advancement Coordinator.

3. The Scout is responsible for attending the outside classes and/or contacting the assigned merit badge counselor to set up meetings for completing the merit badge requirements. **A Scout should NEVER begin completing requirements before meeting with the assigned merit badge counselor as the counselor is not obligated to count requirements done outside of his or her supervision. Also, the scoutmaster or advancement coordinator will start the merit badge in Scoutbook and assign a merit badge counselor.**

Upon completion of all of the merit badge requirements, the following steps should be taken:

1. The Scout should have the merit badge counselor sign off each requirement on the blue card.

2. The Scout should contact the Advancement Coordinator to show him the signed blue card. For merit badges earned at summer camp, the blue cards will automatically be sent to the Advancement Coordinator by the camp. The merit badge will be signed off in Scoutbook by a leader and not the scout.

3. The Advancement Coordinator will have the blue card stamped at the council office and will purchase the merit badge.

4. The Scout will be recognized and be presented with his badge at the next Court of Honor.

5. Remember, keep your blue card safe! Don’t lose it!

**Partial Merit Badges**

Unfinished merit badges are considered “partial merit badges”. For example, you signed up for the Camping merit badge at Summer Camp but haven’t camped for 20 nights. You will be issued a “partial” and you will be assigned to work with a merit badge counselor at the troop to complete it.