

TRAIL OF THE EAGLE EAGLE SCOUT COURT OF HONOR

MC: We come now to that part of our court of honor where we are to give recognition to our candidate for the rank of Eagle Scout.

[This has become traditional at most of the Eagle ceremonies in our district. It is led by the Scoutmaster and requires seven Scouts holding posters of the ranks from Scout to Eagle. This can be made more meaningful by adding actual details of humorous or meaningful events that helped shape the boy on each step of his path. When a boy has had several Scoutmasters, each may lead the portion he was responsible for.]

SM: Will Eagle Candidate(s) *(Eagle Scout(s) Name)* please come forward?

Now, far away, loom the hazy outline of the Eagle Summit, flanked by the lesser ranks that represent Star and Life. To the newcomer, they are a long way off, but they will come a lot closer as the light from the spirit of Scouting continues to spread.

Do you remember when you were the new Scout and the thought of becoming an Eagle seemed a long way off or even an impossible goal to achieve.

Look back at the experience you have encountered in your striving to reach this high achievement. These experiences should not be forgotten. You should profit by making sure the adverse ones do not occur again. Experience is a valuable teacher if you will heed its lessons.

All the while you were on the trail, we watched you study and we saw you learn by doing. First, you were only a Scout.

[A Scout steps out holding poster of the Scout badge and reads this message taped to the back:]

Young Scout: I am the Scout. My badge represents the international brotherhood of Scouting which I have joined.

Do you remember when you took your first step upon the trail to become an Eagle. With that first step you began to grow physically, mentally, and morally. You started living the Scout Oath and Law. Soon you had attained the Tenderfoot Rank.

[Tenderfoot steps out holding poster of the Tenderfoot badge and reads this message taped to the back:]

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Scout Tenderfoot: I am the Tenderfoot. My three points stand for the three points of the Scout Oath: Duty to God and to country, duty to other people, and duty to yourself. You will find me on the mariner's compass, forever pointing the way to the North Star and a safe journey in life. On my face are two stars representing truth and knowledge. The shield is an emblem of a nation molded together in justice, and an eagle guards the freedom of my land.

Once inspired by the Spirit of Scouting, you will not stay a Tenderfoot for long. Putting a simple achievements behind you, you quickly climb to the rank of Second Class Scout.

[Second Class Scout steps out and joins Tenderfoot Scout and reads:]

Scout Second Class: I am the Second Class. The ends of my scroll are turned up in the willing smile of a Scout. On my face is the motto, "Be Prepared," and suspended from me is the knot, tied to remind you of the slogan of the Boy Scouts of America, "Do a good turn daily."

Some, like you, were stopping to catch their breath before continuing along the trail. You began to study more, you worked harder, and almost before you knew it you topped the first summit on the Trail to Eagle when you receive the First Class Badge.

[First Class Scout steps out and takes his place:]

Scout First Class: I am the First Class. I was a Tenderfoot and laid my course by the stars of truth and knowledge, and girded myself with the righteousness of justice and freedom. I added a smile that I might be a friend to all and bound myself together with the knot of duty to others.

There you found a tempting green meadow by a crystal-clear stream bathed in the sun. Here you were tempted to remain. Yes, you could have remained there to live the First Class glory, but your ambition stirred you on. We remember your advancement to Star Scout.

[Star Scout steps out and takes his place:]

Scout Star: I am the Star. Now that I can stand alone, I have the right to improve on my own. To me goes the honor of choosing my field. Before me lies a horizon of endless opportunities.

The trail from First Class to Star rank was not as difficult as it had seemed. This spurred you on, and again you climbed farther. The trail was steeper and less worn. Fewer Scouts seemed to be headed in your direction. You looked down and saw the crowds

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below you. You looked up and saw a few above you and, with the same determination with which you started your climb, you continued up the trail. Gaining the next summit was not easy. Much leadership, service and hard work had to be done. Soon, you earned the badge of Life rank.

[Life Scout steps out and takes his place:]

Scout Life: I am the Life. I have shown the whole world that scouting is in my heart. I have mastered the knowledge of subjects that will benefit my country and my fellow man. I am ready to reach for my wings to fly.

While the Life Scout is a much-coveted position and deserves much credit, the Eagle Trail does not stop there. It still leads on to the summit. Its pathway narrows and steepens considerably as it winds its way along the narrow ledge. It becomes tougher and more trying. Many things have to be done in order to conquer these last miles. Additional merit badges were earned. Your leadership and service to others were tested through your Eagle Service Project. Only those with the greatest amount of persistence and courage are able to gain this thrill of victory. You were on your way to Eagle.

[Eagle Scout steps out and takes his place:]

Scout Eagle: I am the Eagle . . . Since the beginning of time, man has used my brothers and me as a symbol of Royalty, Power, Victory and Valor. My strength and courage has inspired men throughout the ages.

Yes, we have watched your character unfold and become manlier. We have watched your leadership expand into a valuable asset. We have watched your mind develop and your wisdom increase. We have watched all these things in you and now that you are on the threshold of your goal we welcome you, for you have done your climbing in a true Scoutlike manner.

To be an eagle scout you take on responsibilities that are the essence of rank and the qualities that are expected of you from fellow eagle scouts.

The first responsibility of an Eagle Scout is to live with honor, which to an Eagle is sacred. Honor is the foundation of character. Character is what a person really is down inside, not what someone may think they are. An Eagle will live so as to reflect credit upon their home, their place of worship, their school, their friends, upon Scouting, and upon themselves. May the white of your Eagle badge always remind you to live with honor.

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The second obligation of an Eagle Scout is loyalty, without loyalty, all character lacks direction. An Eagle is loyal to their ideals. May the blue of your Eagle badge always remind you to be loyal.

The third obligation of an Eagle Scout is courage. Courage gives all character force and strength. Trusting in God and with faith in their fellowman, the Eagle faces each day unafraid, and seeks their share of the world's work to do. May the red of your Eagle badge always remind you of courage.

The final obligation of an Eagle Scout is service. They extend a helping hand to those who toil up the Scouting trail they have completed, just as others helped them in their achievement of the Eagle rank. The habit of the daily Good Turn must take on new meaning and blossom forth into a life of service. The Eagle protects and defends the weak and the helpless. They aid and comfort the oppressed and the unfortunate. They uphold the rights of others while defending their own. Their code of honor is based upon the belief that real leadership must be founded upon real service.

SM: *(to candidate)* Are you ready and willing to accept these responsibilities, adopt the sacred words of the scout oath and the scout law into your life?

Candidate: I am.

SM: Raise your hand in the Scout sign and repeat after me The Eagle pledge. *(Repeats the Eagle pledge, line by line)*

SM: Now, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America, I hereby award the rank of Eagle Scout to you. Since the parents of this Scout have been so instrumental in their attaining the Eagle rank, I will ask that they come to the platform. *(Proceed with presentation of award, certificate, and parents pins.)*