

Court of Honor Ceremony

Some court of honor ideas can enhance the central theme (recognizing Scout advancement) and some detract from it.

Ideas that Enhance:

- Recognition of Scout achievement in Scouting and outside of Scouting (If we know about a special accomplishment or award a Scout has received outside of Scouting we'll mention it at the court of honor)
- Ceremony and decorum.
- Parents and families witnessing the entire troop in action.
- Encouragement to wear the uniform properly

Ideas that Detract:

- Lengthy Announcements.
- Administrative business.
- Council or District fundraising.
- Adults up front running things.

A court of honor is great opportunity for the Scouts to show their parents who runs the troop, they do the talking and presenting and adults are seated. Committee chair members get a couple of minutes occasionally to hand out special recognition (usually to an adult volunteer). Sometimes there can be Scoutmaster minute. Keep things that belong at a parent's meeting and things that belong at a court of honor separate. If volunteers are needed or want to talk administrative business (scheduling, unit fundraising, etc.) call a separate parent's meeting. While Councils and districts may protest – keep the focus on the boys accomplishments.

How Often?

Current Journey to Excellence standards set the gold level at four courts of honor each year. Below are three suggested months.

1. August-This is a post summer camp Court of Honor. Scouts can take advantage of the timing of the court of honor in a summer schedule to finish up a rank or a partial merit badges after camp. A *lot* of merit badges should be presented at this court of honor!
2. December- Court of honor at selected time followed by refreshments.
3. Late April or early May
Court of honor at selected time followed by refreshments.

This schedule follows the course of advancement in most troops – lots of merit badges and some ranks in August after summer camp.

Dinner and refreshments are nice to serve but not necessary. Occasionally the December or April court of honor can be held around a fire circle. Scouts should be expected to attend in full uniform and maintain appropriate behavior.

A Court of Honor should last no more than about 45 minutes. If your courts of honor runs much longer than 45 minutes you ought to think about shortening them by doing them more frequently or changing the program.

Sample Court of Honor

Date of Court of Honor:

Location:

Master(s) of Ceremonies:

Refreshments:

Notes to MC:

1. *Candle Lighting Option - As each rank is announced, the Scoutmaster or another person may light a candle.*

2. *Ranks - Option 1- Announce Every Rank or Option 2 – Announce only the ranks being awarded today.*

Presentation of the Colors

MC: Would _____ please present the colors.

Color Guard: (Present colors)

(Lead Pledge of Allegiance)

(still standing...)

MC: _____ will lead us in the Scout Oath & Law.

MC: Scouts two. Please be seated.

Opening

MC: Welcome to Troop _____'s Court of honor.

I am _____, your master of ceremonies.

If two MC's

I am _____, and I am _____, your masters of ceremonies.

_____, would you please lead us in our opening prayer?

(prayer)

Introductions

MC: We ask our Troop Committee Chair, _____, to introduce yourself and the members of the Troop Committee.

MC: Next we ask our Scoutmaster, _____, to introduce yourself and your Assistant Scoutmasters.

MC: Finally, we ask our Senior Patrol Leader, _____, to introduce yourself, your Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders, and the Patrol Leaders.

Awarding of Merit Badges

MC: Boy Scouts can earn any of 121 different Merit Badges in areas ranging from Art to Whitewater and from Camping to Space Exploration. To earn a Merit Badge, a Scout picks a subject and reads the Merit Badge Book. A Scout develops his skills and knowledge. When he is ready, his Merit Badge Counselor tests him.

Today we are awarding a total of _____ Merit Badges.

MC: Would our Senior Patrol Leader, _____, join me in presenting these awards?

MC Notes: Call up each Scout individually. Announce their merit badges. Presenter and SPL shake the Scout's left hand. Ask each to tell a little about what they did. Lead applause for each Scout.

Awarding of Rank Advancements

Next, we will recognize those Scouts who have earned Rank Advancements.

In recognition of the support that each family provides to their son, our troop also presents rank pins to the Scout's mother. Her pin is worn on her ribbon during special Scout occasions. We would also like to ask our Advancement Chair, _____, to give rank pins to the Scouts for them to present to their mothers.

The Boy Scouts of America recognizes your achievements by awarding badges of rank. The first 3 are Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. Next come Star and Life. The highest rank is Eagle.

Our Scout Handbook tells us that, "Though you can advance at your own pace, active Scouts will usually earn First Class within a year..." National policy adds that older Scouts should advance at least one rank each year.

Scout

MC Note: Option - Light the first candle for Scout.

The first award is "Scout." To earn this award, a new Scout must agree to live by the Scout Oath and Law and complete a number of other assignments.

MC Notes: Call each new Scout (if there are any) and their parents come forward.

Present the awards and pins.

Shake the Scout's left hand and the parent's right hand.

Please join me in welcoming _____! Lead applause.

Tenderfoot

MC Note: Option - Light the second candle, for the Tenderfoot Rank.

Tenderfoot requirements offer a taste of the great adventures awaiting you in Scouting and can give you the basic skills you'll need to begin taking part in those adventures. You met many challenges in earning the Tenderfoot badge and are to be congratulated.

MC Notes: Call each Tenderfoot recipient (if there are any) and their parents come forward.

Present the awards and pins.

Shake the Scout's left hand and the parent's right hand.

Lead applause for each Scout.

Second Class Rank

MC Note: Option - Light the third candle, for the Second Class Rank.

To earn Second Class, a Scout must learn how to use a map and compass, how and when to build a campfire, and to safely use pocketknives and wood tools. Second Class Scouts have proven their abilities in camping, first aid, and swimming, and other Scout skills.

MC Notes: Call each Second Class recipient (if there are any) and their parents come forward.

Present the awards and pins.

Shake the Scout's left hand and the parent's right hand.

Lead applause for each Scout.

First Class Rank

MC Note: Option - Would all current First Class Scouts please rise?

Light the fourth candle, for the First Class Rank.

The founder of Scouting, Lord Baden Powell, said that all Scouts should earn First Class. Now you have tested yourself even more. You have tried greater adventures and practiced your Scout skills many times. With your confidence and knowledge you now have, people will expect more of you, and you will expect more of yourself. You are prepared to be more of a leader in your patrol, your troop, and your community.

MC Notes: Call each First Class recipient (if there are any) and their parents come forward.

Present the awards and pins.

Shake the Scout's left hand and the parent's right hand.

Lead applause for each Scout.

If you have no higher ranks to award or are not lighting candles, you can skip to Senior Patrol Leader's Moment

Star Rank

MC Note: Option - Would all current Star Scouts please rise?

Light the fifth candle, for the Star Rank.

As you earn your Star Rank, you have more freedom to choose the directions that interest you. The focus shifts from basic Scout skills to earning the first six merit badges you will need for Eagle. Requirements now include service to others. The Star Rank also requires the Scout to be active in his troop for at least four months. Of course, you may take longer if you wish.⁴ In addition, the Star Scout must serve his troop in a position of leadership for at least four months and take part in at least one service project.

MC Notes: Call each Star recipient (if there are any) and their parents come forward.

Present the awards and pins.

Shake the Scout's left hand and the parent's right hand.

Lead applause for each Scout.

If you have no higher ranks to award or are not lighting candles, you can skip to Senior Patrol Leader's Moment

Life Rank

MC Note: Option - Would all current Life Scouts please rise?

Light the sixth candle, for the Life Rank.

The Life Rank is one of the rarest ranks. This is the last rank before Eagle. You could complete your Eagle Rank now in as few as 6 months. We congratulate you and encourage you to reach for that next step. You have earned more than half of the merit badges required for Eagle. The Life Rank also requires the Scout to be active in his troop for at least six months, serve his troop in a position of leadership for at least six months, and take part in at least one service project.

MC Notes: Call each Life recipient (if there are any) and their parents come forward.

Present the awards and pins.

Shake the Scout's left hand and the parent's right hand.

Lead applause for each Scout.

If you have no higher ranks to award or are not lighting candles, you can skip to Senior Patrol Leader's Moment

Eagle Rank

MC Note: Option - Would all current Eagle Scouts please rise?

Light the seventh candle, for the Eagle Rank.

The Eagle Rank is Scouting's highest award. Only a small percentage of Scouts have ever reached this lofty goal. The Eagle Rank is presented in a special Eagle Scout Court of Honor.

MC Notes: Call each Life recipient (if there are any) and their parents come forward.

Present the awards and pins.

Shake the Scout's left hand and the parent's right hand.

Lead applause for each Scout.

If you have no higher ranks to award or are not lighting candles, you can skip to Senior Patrol Leader's Moment

Eagle Palms

As rare as the Eagle Rank is, Eagle Palms are much more rare. Only one in ten of Eagle Scouts earn an Eagle Palm.

MC Notes: Call each Palm recipient (if there are any) and their parents come forward.

Present the Eagle Palms and pins.

Shake the Scout's left hand and the parent's right hand.

Lead applause for each Scout.

Announcements

MC: Before we conclude this Court of Honor, we want to draw your attention to a couple of key upcoming events:

On _____, we have our _____.

Please sign up if you have not already.

On _____, we have our _____.

Please sign up if you have not already.

On _____, we have our _____.

Please sign up if you have not already.

Closing Comments

MC: Here is _____ to offer the Senior Patrol Leader's Moment.

MC: Here is _____ to offer the Scoutmaster's Moment.

MC: Would _____ please lead us in our benediction?

Please join us in the Philmont Grace.

For food, for raiment, for life, for opportunity,
for friendship and fellowship, we thank thee O Lord.

Retiring of Colors

MC: Please retire the colors. (Exchange salutes.)

Color Guard: Color Guard, retrieve the colors.

(To audience). Please rise for the retirement of the colors.

Scouts salute. Color Guard, forward, march!

MC: Scouts, two.

If Taps is not to be played...

MC: Please join us for refreshments.

If Taps is to be played...

MC: After taps is played let us all join in refreshments.