

Troop 479 – First Class to Eagle

These are my thoughts on advancements after reaching First Class.

So no one is surprised at what I expect from scouts advancing through the Star, Life, and Eagle ranks, I have made a list of Eagle Characteristics. These are qualities of character that I believe indicate a scout is closing in on the Eagle rank:

- Aware of self
- Aware of others
- Aware of surroundings
- Recognizes what is needed
- Seeks to help
- Leads through example
- Supports younger scouts, does not reprimand
- Teaches, does not tease
- Guides, does not direct
- Instructs, does not insult
- Demonstrates Enthusiasm
- Puts Group goals ahead of personal requirements
- Has mastered extensive breadth of skills and knowledge
- Has earned respect of others
- Is self-directed and motivated

Advancing from Star to Life to Eagle ranks is not as simple as completing some merit badges, tracking a few hours at a service project, and holding a troop leadership position.

The written requirements for these ranks are purposefully vague in your Scout Handbook. For example, 'Be active', 'Demonstrate Scout spirit', and 'Serve actively' are difficult to quantify, as opposed to 'Earn 6 merit badges' which is obviously completed or not.

As Scoutmaster, I need to evaluate your growth towards the ideals of scouting. I look at how you have grown in your years with the troop and mostly how you have demonstrated scout spirit in the troop. In your scoutmaster conference, I let you know if you have demonstrated what I feel are the required characteristics of a scout your rank or if you need to demonstrate more growth in specific areas. When I sign off for your scoutmaster conference in your handbook, you then need to go through the same thing again with your Board of Review. Those adults involved in the troop are also monitoring your progress and considering your readiness to advance.

We do not want to surprise any scout that expects to advance in rank. That is why I have constantly requested that all scouts talk with me **at least every 6 months** – that is at least, which means more often is even better. I want you to know where you stand at all times.

If you are not involved in many troop activities and you do not chat with me, then my efforts are spent on those scouts that are obviously active and involved. You choose how much effort you want to put into scouting and advancement and you receive back a proportionate share.

How do you demonstrate trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent?

Paul Kautz – Scoutmaster 2011