

January 3, 2007

Attention T11 Scouts and Parents

With the help and support of our older scout leadership team for this past fall, we have agreed to implement at least one very basic and clear participation requirement for rank advancement to Star, Life, and Eagle ranks, as well as a guideline that we expect every scout to follow in order to be eligible to participate in the various Scout program activities offered over the summer.

Requirement for Advancing to Star, Life, and Eagle rank:

- A scout must have attended **at least two regular season camping overnights** (ski trip and OA events excluded) between the prior rank and getting Star, Life, or Eagle Rank.
- The scout Patrol Leaders Committee also decided that it should be stated that a scout must also attend **at least 4 regular meetings** in order to advance in rank. I personally agree with the "at least" part of that statement, but frankly cannot envision how a scout could be considered "active and serving in a position of leadership in his troop for 6 months" while having attended only 4 meetings! I would prefer not to give the impression that "four meetings is good enough!"

Expectation for Eligibility to Participate in Summer Program (Summer Camp, Philmont, Jamborees, OA Conclave, 50-miler, etc...)

- A scout who starts the fall school-year season as a member of the troop should have attended **at least two regular season camping overnights** (ski trip and OA events excluded) if they expect to participate in summer activities.
- The "attend **at least four regular troop meetings**" metric was also requested by the PLC.

The Scoutmaster can consider extenuating circumstances, like significant personal issues or illness. The Scoutmaster can also waive the requirement, based on personal judgment and discretion if there is adequate space in the activity (prior scout record and service taken into consideration, for example). The 2 outings per regular season requirement is waived for 5th graders who join the troop in the Spring, and effectively "pro-rated" for any scout who joins the troop mid-season.

The summer scouting program is considered an extension of the regular scout season, and to some extent, these programs are a "reward" for being an active member of your troop. The point of this requirement/expectation is to help scouts and their families realize that our troop needs them to help us be a boy-run troop and we need that most during the school year!

General Commentary from the Scoutmaster regarding these requirements

The most fundamental aspect of Boy Scouts is to teach leadership and to do this by implementing a "boy run" program. This requires that each and every scout serve his troop in a significant and quantifiable way as a requirement for his own scouting advancement and achievements. A Scoutmaster generally is given a lot of leeway and responsibility to apply "personal judgment," but this is difficult to manage for a large troop without providing lots of individual feedback and attention and/or providing specific requirements that everyone is well aware of. What I think we all agree on (and certainly the scouts in the PLC and other adult leaders who discussed this with me), is that STAR, LIFE, and EAGLE rank should not be achievable by attending only summer camps, jamborees, etc. - without participating in a significant manner within the troop during the regular troop season.

I hope it is clear to every older scout, that while allowing dormancy periods for sports and other seasonal activities is one of the signatures of T11 (I think we are very supportive of that!), you really do need to be a part of the troop. This is especially important when you are approaching EAGLE and need the support of so many of the leaders and other troop members to get your project completed. I am not aware of any individual scout who will be placed in an unduly difficult or unfair situation trying to meet these requirements "mid-stream" within their progression towards their next rank - but if anyone feels that they have been unfairly caught by the timing of this rule implementation, we can discuss that with you (and try to be fair about it) as well.

These requirements are motivated more by a desire to help manage a large troop going forward than reacting to or targeting any individual situation. We have a great group of older scouts who in general do an excellent job of serving their troop - as good as if not better than any other troop in Piedmont. THANKS and KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!

Thanks
Mr. Wietelmann