



Go for the Eagle

Nancy & Dean Hoch,
142 pages

by Mark Ray

When I was a district executive, I often met men who hadn't quite made it to Eagle. It seemed that every one of them remembered exactly why he'd missed the goal: "I only needed two more merit badges," "I just couldn't pass Lifesaving," "I ran out of time before I could finish my Eagle project."

There's no doubt that becoming an Eagle Scout is a huge undertaking. In researching *The Eagle Court of Honor Book*, I calculated that a boy must complete about 325 different requirements to earn Scouting's highest rank. Completing those requirements takes not only motivation on the boy's part, but also the support of his parents and Scout leaders.

And it takes a plan.

That's where *Go for the Eagle* comes in. This 142-page book helps Scouts plan their journey to Eagle, from the day they join Scouting to the day they receive the Eagle badge and beyond. The authors, Nancy and Dean Hoch know their stuff—in fact, they wrote the book after helping their five sons become Eagle Scouts!

Some of the book's best material deals with the Eagle service project. The Hoches explain how to select a project, how to plan it, how to recruit volunteers, and how to document the project. The list of "seven easy steps" to writing the final project report is the best summary of this process that I've seen.

Other chapters detail how to prepare for the Eagle board of review, how to plan a court of honor, and some of the long-term benefits of being an Eagle Scout. The book includes several planning checklists, as well as samples of advancement records, press releases, and more.

Go for the Eagle is written specifically for Boy Scouts, but it's also a valuable resource for parents and Scoutmasters. Although the advice in the book is timeless, the new edition reflects current BSA policies and procedures.

Item #3038 *Go for the Eagle*
by Nancy and Dean Hoch \$11.95
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STOP!

You don't need to call everyone on the list for a Congratulatory Letter!

by Mark Ray

Is this a great country or what? For just the cost of a stamp, you can get almost anyone from the mayor to the President to send your new Eagle Scout a letter of congratulations. These letters make a great keepsake for the Scout, and reading them adds to the prestige of the court of honor.

Requesting these letters has become increasingly popular in recent years, partly because several Web sites (including www.SCOUTER.com) list addresses for dozens of people who will write them. Sadly, though, familiarity is breeding contempt as celebrities' mailboxes fill up with invitations to attend ceremonies for Scouts they've never heard of in places they've never been.

Congratulatory letters are a valuable resource, but they're a resource that needs to be conserved. So what can Scouters do to ensure a continuing flow of letters?

First, be stingy with your stamps. Don't write to everyone on a given list. Of course, you'll almost certainly write to local and state officials, as well as your Senators and Representatives and the President. Beyond that, though, just write to people the Scout would like to get a letter from.

You don't need to request letters from dignitaries the Scout has never heard of; save yourself a stamp. Conversely, don't leave out people who may be celebrities in the new Eagle's eyes only, such as an out-of-town grandparent who can't attend the court of honor.

Letters are a valuable resource to any Eagle ceremony, but need to be conserved.

Second, don't just send an invitation. How would you feel if you got a wedding invitation from the daughter of a co-worker at the job you left 10 years ago? Well, at least that's someone you know—imagine how celebrities (or their assistants) feel when they get an unsolicited Court Of Honor invitation from a total stranger.

It's much better to send a specific request for a congratulatory letter. In your letter, tell something about the Scout, his Eagle project, where he plans to go to col-

lege, or what career he's chosen (especially if the person you're writing to works in the same field). One Eagle Scout who's highly placed in the federal government told us that he personally reads the requests that come into his office and would like to see this kind of detail. Some people will take several weeks to reply, so send out your requests as early as possible. You don't need to wait for the invitations to come back from the printer or even for a location or time to be nailed down since you're not actually inviting the person to the ceremony.

Also, consider enclosing a self-addressed stamped envelope with your requests, especially those you send to people who may be on fixed incomes. And make sure you indicate where the letters should be sent.

Congratulatory letters can be the icing on the cake of a great court of honor. Just remember they're the icing—not the cake itself.

Mark Ray, the author of *Eagle Scout Court of Honor* book, can be reached on the internet at mark@eaglebook.com

Hundreds of Addresses, Service Project Ideas, and Ceremony Plans

by Ed Henderson

The SCOUTER Internet Compass website at <http://www.SCOUTER.com> has dramatically updated and expanded its Eagle Scout Section by adding more than 200 new links during the past few months.

Among the sections of the site are several web pages with more than 500 distinguished Americans, many of them Eagle Scouts themselves, who will be delighted to send a letter of congratulations to a new Eagle Scout

The site can be visited now at: http://compass.SCOUTER.com/Skills_and_Advancement/Advancement/Eagle_Scout

We are still looking for links. If you have additional links for Eagle Scouts, send them to us. There is an online form for adding new links.

At the front page of the Eagle Scout section are some of the best known and most comprehensive of sites like <http://www.Eaglescout.org>, that deal with all aspects of the Eagle Scout award. There are also eight broad categories of Eagle Scout Subdirectories that include:

Award Requirements

Detailed rules, which have been corrected to 1998 standards, include the requirements for Eagle Palms & Alternate Eagle Requirements for disabled Scouts.

Congratulatory Letter Sources

We have assembled links to the four largest directories of distinguished Americans who will write letters of congratulations to Eagle Scouts. Over the years, this has become one of the most popular points on the SCOUTER's Compass.

Eagle Ceremonies

Some of the best and most unique Eagle Ceremonies ever conducted can be found here. Among the 11 sites are samples of unique Scouting poetry and charges for use at Eagle ceremonies.

NESA (National Eagle Scout Association)

See how NESA chapters have formed around the country with the interesting programs and the many services they perform. Of special interest here are the NESA Chapters at the five military academies of the United States.

News Reports of Eagles and their Projects

Who said newspapers don't tell the good news of Scouting? Many papers not only print Eagle Scout Award articles, they publish them on their web sites. This is also a good place for parents and leaders to go for ideas on how they might prepare a press release for their Scout, as well as getting an idea for Eagle Projects.



Scholarships and Honors for Eagles

Once you become an Eagle Scout, a lot of doors are opened to you. An Eagle Scout gets an automatic pay grade and rank increase in the military and there are quite a few scholarships, honors & other recognitions exclusively for Eagle Scouts.

Service Project Ideas and Examples

Several Eagle Scouts have developed web sites as a part of their Eagle projects. You can also find several council collections of various Eagle Scout projects.

Troop and Council Eagle Recognitions

Over 30 examples of how troops, districts and councils pay tribute to the Eagles in their communities. This is a great place for ideas on how to recognize your top Scouts on your troop's website. Several councils are also using the web to aggressively conduct Eagle searches in their communities.