

Troop 957 Advancement Chair Desk Instructions

Position Theory:

Advancement accommodates the three (3) aims in Scouting which are:

- participating citizenship
- growth in moral strength and character
- mental and physical development.

The four (4) steps to advancement in Scouting are:

- The Boy Scout learns by DOING.
- The Scout is tested. (Troop Policies and Procedures)
- The Scout is reviewed. (Board of Review)
- The Scout is recognized. (Court of Honor)

According to the Troop Committee Guidebook, the duties of the Advancement Chair are to:

- Encourage scouts to advance in rank
- Work with the troop scribe to maintain all scout advancement records
- Arrange quarterly boards of review and courts of honor
- Develop and maintain a merit badge counselor list
- Make a prompt report on the correct form to the council service center when a troop board of review is held. Secure badges and certificates
- Work with the troop librarian to build and maintain a troop library of merit badge pamphlets and other advancement literature
- Report to the troop committee each meeting.

So much for the theory. As you might expect with this troop, the reality is different.

Position Duties As Practiced:

The primary duty of the Advancements Chair in this troop is to arrange and conduct each board of review, and then to brief the Scoutmaster of its outcome. These boards are held on the Tuesday immediately following a troop campout, as these usually provide ample opportunities for Scoutmaster conferences, the last step in rank advancement prior to the board of review. Reference the cheat sheets for each rank and the separate Purpose of a Board of Review document for how to conduct them.

There are several differences from the expected setup such as the splitting off of the merit badge coordinator and the hospitality coordinator as separate committee positions, which means the Advancements Chair does not deal with either the courts of honor or have anything to do with merit badges. Also, as we are still a relatively young troop, the troop scribe position is not fully functional. Scribes have nothing to do with advancement records. Nor is there as yet a troop librarian, either among the boys or on the committee. Finally, since the troop is only in its third year of operation, the Scoutmaster is still choosing to be very hands-on and is handling all record-keeping within Troop Master ME and with the council, as well as the purchasing and completion of the rank badge cards on his own.

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Taking all of the above into account, here are the detailed procedures, such as they are:

1. Obtain the Advancement Report forms from the Clear Lake Scout Shop in the United Way building on the corner of Saturn and Bay Area Blvd. Keep several on hand.
2. Find out from the Scoutmaster after each monthly campout which boys have had their Scoutmaster conferences and are therefore ready for a board of review.
3. From the TroopMaster ME Reports menu, select Awards/Advancements and run the Board of Review Report. You may do this for individual scouts or by clicking the second radio button get the names for all who are ready for a board highlighted. If all the names are greyed out, then that means that none of the boys are ready (or that the records for those who are have not been updated by the Scoutmaster).
4. For each board of review, fill out the form and enter the names of the boys in the order in which they receive their reviews. Each form includes spaces for up to 32 boys, which is more than we have in the entire troop.
5. Upon completion of the BOR, sign as the BOR Chair and make sure that all board members sign before they leave signifying their participation. Do this even if all members do not participate in the reviews of all the scouts whose names appear on the form. It is understood that a parent cannot participate in the board of his or her son.
6. Attach the Advancement Reports for the boys who passed their boards to the form and turn in to the Scoutmaster.
7. From here the form is turned over to Earl Hughes, the unit commissioner.
8. Eventually it will be time for a court of honor. Run the Court of Honor report from the Awards/Advancements Reports menu. (Up until now the Scoutmaster has chosen to handle this part of advancement duties).
9. From this report you should be able to determine how many rank badges and cards, and merit badges and cards of the various types are needed.
10. These may then be purchased from the scout shop. Having a couple of the lower rank badges on hand would not be a bad idea, especially since the rank badges are presented as soon as they are earned. The cards must then be saved for the next court of honor.
11. Fill out a troop reimbursement request and turn it into the treasurer.
12. Each card for the rank badges and merit badges must be filled out with the scouts name, badge name etc. and then signed.
13. The cards/badges should then be ordered neatly (plastic bags and rubber bands are good) and handed over to the Scoutmaster for presentation at the Court of Honor.
14. Mistakes will happen. When they do, apologize as needed to the boy or his parent and fix it as fast as possible.
15. There are several other reports that are useful within TroopMaster. Run them as needed to answer questions or identify trends. An example would be the report for boys who have NOT advanced within a certain time period.