

The following information will tell you what you as a scout (**not your parents**) needs to keep track of and do to earn rank advancements and merit badges. If you have any questions, feel free to ask.

Volunteer Hours – Keep track of how many service hours you have done. You will need service hours for Rank Advancements. Write down the date, activity, and the number of hour's work you did. These include Scouting for Food (in the fall), service projects at camps or for Eagle Scout projects, and any previously approved (by Mr. Hess) volunteer projects you can find. Be sure these service hours are recorded with the Advancements Chair.

Camping Nights – Write down all your camping dates, location, and how many nights you slept out in a tent versus cabin camping. You will need this for your Camping MB and for possible election into the Order of the Arrow. Be sure these camping nights are recorded with the Advancements Chair.

Merit Badges – You can earn Merit Badges (MB) at any time. You don't have to be a certain rank to start one. But you cannot start **any** MB without Mr. Hess's approval.

Blue Cards: You have to get the approval of a registered counselor before you start a MB. Then you have to get it signed by Mr. Hess approving the start of that MB. As you complete the requirements present that Blue Card to the approved counselor to sign off on. The counselor will keep the Counselor Copy of the Blue Card upon completion. The Counselor will give you the remaining two pieces of the Blue Card. You take these two pieces to Mr. Hess who signs off on it again as completed. Then you give it to the Advancements Chair so the information can be put in the computer. He will keep one part of the Blue Card for the troop records. The other he will hold onto until the next Court of Honor where it is presented to you with the MB. **Keep your Blue Cards some place safe** as proof of completion unless you want to do it over again.

Patches: Patches are nice, but not the important part. The Blue Card proves you have completed the MB. In our troop the Patch is presented at the next court of honor. No matter who knows you completed the MB, you **will not** receive it if you haven't turned in your signed blue card. The only exception to this is MB's completed at summer camp.

Rank Advancements – Rank advancements come quickly at first and much slower later on. A boy of star rank or higher can sign off on advancement requirements. Your parents do NOT sign off on these.

Patches: In our troop the rank patch is presented at the next convenient troop meeting.

Cards: The Rank Cards cannot be presented until the next Court of Honor. The Scout Council will not give these out until Troop gives them a CoH report (from the Troop Computer). They only give out as many cards for each rank as is on the report. They are very particular about this. These cards (not the patch) prove you have advanced in rank.

Courts of Honor – Our troop holds three CoH each year (Sept, Dec, & April). In order to allow sufficient time to prepare for the CoH, the Tuesday evening meeting before that CoH is the cutoff date for Scout Master Conferences (SMC), Boards of Review (BOR), and turning in Blue Cards.

Scout Master Conferences: Mr. Hess must do a SMC at the completion of each rank's requirements. (Make sure each requirement has a date and initials.) You can flunk a SMC, although it isn't common. Mr. Hess just wants to make sure you know the information required of that rank. You (the scout, not your parents) must sign up to schedule each SMC.

Boards of Review: You must be dressed properly (full class A's) and have your scout book for a BoR. The board members (outside the chain of command) would like to know what you think of the troop, likes, dislikes, most fun, least fun, etc . . . Answers are confidential. After your BoR take your book to the Advancements Chairperson so he can enter your new rank in the computer.

If you have any questions about the above information, please feel free to ask any scout or leader. If we don't know the answer, we will instruct you who to go to for an answer.