



Policy on Merit Badge Opportunities

November 3, 2013

Dear Golden Eagle Scouters:

The 2013 Guide to Advancement, which is a National BSA document, addresses all advancement-related matters at all levels of the Scouting program. Specifically, Section 7 of that document addresses the Merit Badge program.

All merit badge opportunities must be held to the standards set forth by the National Boy Scouts of America. In regards to outside Merit Badge Opportunities, sometimes referred to as Merit Badge Fairs or Merit Badge Days (or any other equivalent terminology), the District Advancement Committee must ensure that all requirements are met to the exacting standards set by National BSA.

Items of particular interest to the District are the proper registration of all adults that are involved, registered as Merit Badge Counselors for the Merit Badges of interest (Section 7.0.1.4 and 7.0.1.5) as well as having completed Youth Protection Training within the most recent 2 years (Section 7.0.1.1).

In addition, National BSA requires that Merit Badge Opportunities not be conducted as fundraisers (Section 7.0.4.10). The District Advancement Committee encourages any unit that wishes to provide such events as a service to the Scouting youth of the District.

In order to ensure that all requirements are met, the District Advancement Committee must approve all Merit Badge Opportunities conducted by third parties, i.e. any unit conducting a Merit Badge event that is open to Scouts outside their own unit.

In that vain, effective immediately, the following policy will be implemented.

ORGANIZING GROUP

When a unit or organization is planning to conduct a Merit Badge Opportunity event, they should contact the District Advancement Chair, very early in the planning process. The unit must present the following items to the Advancement Chair:

- List of all adults that will be present, in any capacity, at the event. For all adults in attendance, proof of current Youth Protection Training (within the last 2 years of the event) must be presented.
- For those that will serve as counselors, proof of Proper Registration as a Merit Badge Counselor for the merit badge(s) in question. The Advancement Committee will happily assist in the registration process, as needed.
- A fairly accurate budget, to demonstrate that any fees will be used to cover expenses only.

The above information must be presented before any promotional material has been prepared and/or distributed.





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If the Advancement Committee can be reasonably assured that the requirements will be met, then it will grant approval for the event.

Once approval is granted, the organization will be asked to mark their promotional material with the verbiage "This event has been approved by the Golden Eagle District Advancement Committee". The Advancement committee will then publish the event on the Golden Eagle District website, under [Merit Badge Opportunities](#).

PROSPECTIVE ATTENDEE OF A MERIT BADGE OPPORTUNITY

The Guide to Advancement warns that any merit badge work at an unauthorized event *may* invalidate the advancement completion, i.e. the entire merit badge work is invalid and will not be recorded. If such a case were to arise, and if any fees were paid, the Golden Eagle District is not responsible for any refunds that may be required. That will have to be coordinated between the Scout and/or family with the event organizers.

Therefore great care must be taken whenever presented with any material for a Merit Badge Opportunity to ensure that it is an approved event. Material containing the verbiage of the form "This event has been approved by the Golden Eagle District Advancement Committee" (or any variation), does not, by itself, indicate an approved activity. **If the activity is an approved event, it will be listed on the Golden Eagle District website, under [Merit Badge Opportunities](#).**

Any merit badge event that does not appear to have approval should be reported to the Advancement Chair. If the organizing group can provide the necessary documentation required of all events, and if the Advancement Committee is reasonably assured that National requirements will be met, the event may yet be approved.

Any questions and/or concerns should be directed to the District Advancement Chair.

We appreciate your continued cooperation and assistance in ensuring that the high standards and integrity of the Merit Badge program are always met.

Yours in Scouting,

Martin Cardenas
Golden Eagle District Advancement Chair

