

## **Merit Badge Procedure:**

1. The Scout selects a merit badge of interest. The Scout should make sure that the requirements of the merit badge are within his capabilities. For example, it may be for the Scout that the Chemistry merit badge is best obtained after taking high school chemistry.
2. The Scout identifies a buddy. A Scout must have a buddy with him at each meeting with a merit badge counselor. A counselor cannot, by Boy Scout regulations, meet with a Scout (other than his/her own son) without another person present. The Scout's buddy can be another Scout interested in earning the merit badge with the Scout, a parent or guardian, a brother or sister, or a relative or friend.
3. The Scout obtains a **blue card (Application for Merit Badge)** and meets with the Scoutmaster (Mr Janda) or the Advancement Chair (Mr Whitaker). The Scout is expected to have the name of the buddy identified as well as have the front **part of the Application for Merit Badge section completed** (exclusive of the date and signature of unit leader).
4. After discussing the merit badge with the Scout and approving work on the badge, the Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair either fills out the reverse side of the **Application for Merit Badge section** with the name, address, and phone number of the counselor **or** supplies a list of approved merit badge counselors with contact information from which the Scout may select a counselor, in which case the Scout completes that section after contacting the counselor.
5. **The Scoutmaster (Mr Janda) or the Advancement Chair (Mr Whitaker) must sign the blue card before any work can begin, no blue cards will be accepted that were not signed before the work was started.** This is to ensure that Youth Protection is followed and that the counselor is qualified to instruct the badge, **this includes Merit Badge Clinics.** The merit badge counselor signs at the completion of the merit badge requirements.
6. The Scout and his buddy then meet with the merit badge counselor to go over the merit badge requirements and the projects needed to complete the requirements. When the Scout meets with the counselor, he is expected to be prepared, polite, and dressed in a Class A uniform.
7. The merit badge counselor will sign off on completed requirements. When the final requirement is completed, the merit badge counselor fills in the rest of the blanks and signs and dates the blue card. The date of completion is the date it is considered earned. This is the date recorded on all Scout records, including the advancement order form and the final Merit Badge Card. The merit badge counselor will then keep the **Counselor's Record** portion, and give the other 2 portions to the Scout.
8. The Scout turns in the remaining blue card sections to the Advancement Committee/Person (Mr. Whitaker) who will record the Merit Badge completion in the

Troop Records (Troop Master), order the merit badge and Merit Badge card for the next Court of Honor

9. The Scout updates their Scout's Handbook and keeps the remaining **Applicants Record** portion for their records. When the Scout receives the next Individual History Report from the Troop, he needs to verify the data is correct. If there are discrepancies, the Scout needs to meet with the Advancement Chair at the next Troop meeting and bring the appropriate records.

10. The Scout receives his Merit Badge at the next Court of Honor.

**Throughout the process, until the completed & signed off blue card is turned in, the Scout is fully responsible for the card (though the counselor may choose to retain the card until completion).** Once merit badges are awarded, Scouts should keep the **Applicant's record** of the blue cards separate from the Merit Badge cards. That way if one is lost, the other can replace it. If anything should ever happen to the official records of the Scout, the blue cards or Merit Badge cards will serve as proof of earning the merit badge towards the Eagle rank. The Merit Badge Card and each portion of the blue card and should be retained until the Scout turns 18 or is awarded the rank of Eagle.

#### **Completion Time frame**

There is **NO DEADLINE for earning Merit Badges, except the Scout's 18th Birthday.** Once a Scout has started working on a Merit Badge (i.e. obtained a signed Blue Card Application for Merit Badge from the Scoutmaster, had an initial discussion with a merit badge Counselor, and started working on the requirements), he may continue using those requirements until he completes the badge or turns 18. If the requirements change while a Scout is working on the badge, he may continue to use the **OLD** requirements until he completes the work, or he may use the new requirements if he wishes. It is **HIS** choice, and his alone.

**THERE IS NO TIME LIMIT ON SO-CALLED "PARTIALS"** See discussion on Summer Camp.

#### **Discontinued Merit Badges**

If a Merit Badge is discontinued, Scouts working on the badge when it is removed from the Boy Scout Requirements booklet may continue to work toward completing the badge, and get credit for earning the badge, until they turn 18. However, it may not be possible to obtain an actual merit badge patch, once the local council's supply is exhausted. If a discontinued Merit Badge is replaced with one or more other Merit Badges covering the same or similar topics (such as Rifle and Shotgun Shooting MB which was replaced by Rifle Shooting MB and Shotgun Shooting MB), a Scout that has earned the discontinued badge may also earn the new badge or badges. If the badge is simply renamed (such as Firemanship MB which was changed to Fire Safety MB), Scouts may **NOT** earn the badge again. If the badge number in BSA's numbering system is the same before and after the change, it is a renaming. If a new number is assigned, it is a replacement.

## **Merit Badge Advancement at Summer Camp**

Many Boy Scout advancement opportunities take place during 'long term' camps (Summer Camp). Troop 625 participates in camps that offer merit badge classes. These camps may be sponsored by The Atlanta Area Council or other BSA councils across the country. In either case, the procedures for advancement in summer camp are established by the local council advancement committee for the council that sponsors the camp in cooperation with the committee responsible for summer camp, the camp director, and the program director for the summer camp in question. These procedures are typically given to the troop as part of pre-camp orientation.

Troop 625 will modify its merit badge procedure for summer camps based on camp procedures. However, the spirit and intent of the standard merit badge procedure will be maintained. The general idea is:

- 1.) Before a Scout leaves for camp, he has been approved by the Scout Master to attend the merit badge and has followed the appropriate registration rules
- 2.) The Scout has reviewed the Merit Badge requirements and completes the necessary prerequisite work specified by the camp.
- 3.) The Scout attends the classes as scheduled by the camp and insures his name is on the 'roll call' for class attendance.
- 4.) Before the Scout leaves camp, he should meet with the Merit Badge Counselor and understand his completion status for all of the merit badges started during the camp.
- 5.) The troop will receive a 'troop report' (for all participating scouts and their MB status) as they leave the camp. This information will be updated into Troopmaster and distributed to the scouts as soon as possible. Sometimes, there are requirements that must be completed in advance unless the Scout does this, he will leave camp with a "partial".

To maximize the number of badges completed at summer camp, Scouts should look carefully at the requirements and complete as much in advance as possible (at least any stated "prerequisite requirements). The camp will have access to a wide range of counselors to sign off on badges once all requirements have been met. Leaving even one requirement incomplete means the Scout will need to find a counselor approved by the Scoutmaster when the Scout gets home to sign off that last requirement. It is far better to walk away from camp with a completed Merit Badge.