

Planning an Eagle Court of Honor

By Patti Aus, Mary Kenyon and Tim Kenyon

Updated 10-2-2008

A note to Eagle Candidate Parents-----You can read this NOW but don't do anything until your son has his Eagle Board of Review. When in doubt, ask the Scoutmaster.

Step 1-Choosing the Date - Most of the Court of Honor celebrations are held on Sunday afternoons at Trinity Lutheran Church in the Fellowship Hall. Pick a day and call the Secretary at Trinity and ask her to check the calendar to see if that date is open. Then email or call the Scoutmaster and see if he is free that day. If he is available then you should reserve that day. If you plan for your Court of Honor to start at 2PM you should reserve the Fellowship Hall from 1pm to 4pm.

Step 2-Finding a ceremony (your ceremony should be no longer than about ½ hour)

Resources:

- 1) Mary Kenyon has a book with several options and examples of Programs.
- 2) Websites
 - a) www.eaglescout.org
scroll down to *the finale*, click on Planning a World Class Court of Honor
 - b) www.blackhawkscouting.org/forms/eagle_scout/eagle_hb.pdf

You do not need to follow the sample ceremony word for word. You can incorporate parts from as many as you would like. There are certain parts that need to be in the ceremony. The Scoutmaster will insert those parts. Make sure that the Scoutmaster has had ample time to review the Ceremony and provide guidance. You will probably go back and forth with him a couple of times to get the Ceremony finalized.

Things to keep in mind...what will be needed for props, can you make them? Do you know someone else that can? Check in the Scout Room to see what is available for you to borrow.

Step 3-Invitation list-Start this early, you will revise it several times! Sending invitations is optional but for summer Court of Honor, it is a good idea since there are no meetings to announce the details of your son's Court of Honor.

Ask the Scoutmaster to add the invitation to his list of Announcements that is read at the beginning of every Troop meeting.

Contact the webmaster for www.troop5bsa.org and ask them to add it to the Upcoming Events and the Calendar.

Invite all Scouts and leaders. For the families of Scouts that you are familiar with you can address to Scout & Family

The Scoutmaster can provide you with a mailing list.

Invite anyone that you used as a reference

Invite anyone who donated time, materials or money to your project

Invite Family, Friends, and Relatives

Invite anyone you want to share with special occasion with.

****Remember, the Court of Honor will be in the paper as an open house, so if you forgot someone, hopefully they will see the article. WHO IS GOING TO PUT THE ARTICLE IN THE PAPER AND WHAT IS THAT PROCEDURE?**

Invitations should be sent 3 weeks before the ceremony. You can purchase the blank official Eagle invitations at the Premier Scout Shop located in the Scout Office in Sioux Falls or you can make or purchase other invitations.

Step 4- You can send letters to the President, Vice-President, Senators, Representatives, Governor, anyone you wish. I found the addresses on the internet by going to www.state.sd.us/state/fed/contact.htm for the SD Congressional Delegation. The President and Vice-President address are also available on the internet. A sample letter is enclosed. Send the letters immediately after the Board of Review to allow ample mailing and handling time.

Step 5-What to buy for your ceremony:

Eagle Invitations

Eagle Program covers

Eagle tablecloth

Napkins

Cups

Forks

Balloons?

Where to buy these things---

Buying invitations, plates, cups etc.

The Scout office has a great store that carries everything you could need.

The prices are the same as they are in the Scouting books, and you don't have to pay shipping! If you don't see what you want on the shelf, just ask, they have more supplies in back.

Their hours are posted on their website. www.siouxbsa.org (they are open most Saturdays)

Programs:-If possible, wait until the Friday before to have printed in case someone was not able to participate. See attached sample.

Step 6-Food to serve- keep it simple.

*Cake-if you want a picture put on your cake, you need to have a release form or a letter stating it is ok to use the picture, unless of course it is a picture the store already has on hand. Trust me- get a letter or a form for the copyright holder to sign! (Copy enclosed) A sheet cake serves 96 2 x 2 pieces. Scouts love CAKE! When we have ordered cakes from Sunshine they don't ask for the release form.

*Drinks- Punch, water, coffee (it's up to you)

*Nuts, mints, or candies. (totally up to you)

*Some families have had cut-up fruit or the Candidate's favorite candy.

****Ask some of the women Leaders or the mom's of other Scouts to help in the kitchen. They will be thrilled to be asked and will free you to enjoy your son's special day.*

Things you may have questions about:

Does the scout wear his green merit badge sash or his Order of the Arrow Sash?

It is the Scout's choice, but he can only wear one.

What do the parent's wear?

If you are a leader, it is appropriate to wear your Scout Uniform. Whatever you decide to wear, keep in mind that your son will be pinning a Mother's/Father's pin over your heart.

Who purchases the Eagle Ceremony kit?

Since it is an Award, the Scoutmaster will take care of it. He will also take care of the neckerchief. If you want a slide, you will need to purchase it.

Who puts the article and picture in the paper?

You do! Be sure to have it to the Leader office at least 1 week before you want it in the paper. You can write your own article, or contact them and I am sure they would find someone to interview the candidate.

Who sets up the church for the ceremony?

You do! Be sure to enlist family to help. Make sure you have contacted the church to let them know when you plan on setting up. This will prevent any conflicts that may arise. Allow 60 to 90 minutes for set up, depending on how many you have helping you.

What time should we have the participants arrive at the church?

Anywhere from a ½ hour to an hour before the ceremony is to begin. This will allow enough time for them to practice their parts. Remember, your guests will start arriving anywhere from ½ hour to 15 minutes before the ceremony so you want to be done practicing before then.

Should we call to remind the Scouts what time to be there?

Yes, contact them either by phone or postcard. By sending a postcard, most adults will see it.

Who serves the cake and punch/juice?

Anyone but you! Be sure to ask either family or leaders to take care of this for you. You will be busy visiting.

Do I need to say anything at the Court of Honor?

While it is not a requirement, it is an opportunity to show your appreciation to Leaders and fellow Scouts. Emotions run high at this stage of the ceremony so you may want to type your comments so you can read them if your mind goes blank. Each parent may say something or just one, totally up to you.

Some final thoughts....

The Scoutmaster has done many Courts of Honor and can give you direction on things you might be missing. The secret is to work closely with him from the very beginning.

Plan to have a couple of Scouts greet. They can also tell the guests to go down the stairs where you have your guest table set up. Be sure to have a sign up sheet for guests.

If your ceremony includes the lighting of candles, be sure to have 2 or 3 working lighters there. The Aus family has several wooden candle holders (for tapers) available for use. There are some props in the Scout closet, take a look before you buy anything.

If you are displaying pictures on boards, contact the Aus family. They made several easels and you are welcome to use them. They also have flags and flag holders.

Be sure to bring copies of the ceremony for the Scouts to use. Even if you have given them a copy of their part earlier, most will not bring it with them the day of the ceremony. Each Scout's part in the ceremony should be marked or highlighted so they know what they are supposed to say. Some of them get fairly nervous.

Enlist someone to take pictures. Make a list ahead of time what pictures you would like to have taken

It is appropriate to set up a table display of your son's Scout awards, photos, patches and other memories. You should have the photos from his Eagle Project on display or in a photo album. You can include things from his Cub Scout years, too. This is a great conversation starter for all the people who are important to your son but may not know each other.

June 8, 2007

The President
The White House
Attn: Greetings Office
Washington, D.C. 20502-0039

Mr. President:

The Scouts, Leaders and Members of the Committee Boy Scout Troop 5, take great pleasure in announcing that:

Having completed the requirements for, and having been examined by an
Eagle Board of Review

Jacob Alan Aus

Was found worthy of the rank of Eagle Scout

In honor of this achievement, we have scheduled an Eagle Court of Honor for July 15th, 2007, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Madison, SD 57042.

We would appreciate a letter or certificate acknowledging his achievement. We will compile it with other acknowledgements and place it in a memory book commemorating this special occasion. Letters can be sent to:

Jacob Alan Aus

423 North Lee Avenue

Madison, SD 57042

Thank you for taking time from your extremely busy schedule to help us recognize the achievements and service of Eagle Scout Jacob Aus.

Sincerely,

Patti Aus
Troop 5
Committee Member/Institutional Rep