



A Troop 512 How-to Guide

HOW TO PLAN AN EAGLE COURT OF HONOR IN 10 EASY STEPS

VERSION 1.0

A Time to Celebrate

Eagle Scout Courts of Honor are truly special occasions. This is not only the culmination of the Eagle Scout's career in Scouting, it is also an opportunity to provide a real and tangible example to young Scouts that earning the rank of Eagle Scout is possible. It can also serve as motivation for those long term Life Scouts to get their own advancement in gear.

Overview

A typical Eagle Court of Honor usually runs 45 minutes. Most are followed with either light refreshments or a lunch/dinner, which is provided by the family. Each Eagle Court of Honor is unique and very personal to the Eagle Scout. Some are more serious and some are more humorous. All are memorable events that leave a lasting impression on those who attend.

Those invited to attend an Eagle Court of Honor are not expected to give the Eagle Scout a gift. Usually if the Eagle Scout receives gifts they are from family members.

Here is what you will do to plan for an Eagle Court of Honor:

1. Select a Date

Start by looking ahead for a good date for the event. You'll want to coordinate with the Scoutmaster on this so that there are no conflicts with Scout activities. Check with important guests to ensure their attendance.

2. Select a Venue

There are many places at which a Court of Honor can be held: your home church, Covenant United Methodist, country clubs, rental halls, hotel facilities, parks or gardens, or even your own home. Pick one that accommodates your needs and falls within your price range. Book it.

3. Select Participants

You'll need to know the approximate number that you want to attend when you select a venue. Do you want to open this up to the whole Troop? Do you prefer that attendance is by invitation only? Or would you rather have a smaller gathering, perhaps for family only?

4. Decide What Type of Food to Have

This decision is tied into your venue. Would you like to have a sit down meal? Perhaps a buffet? Food stations can be a fun way to go, especially if they serve your Scout's favorite foods. But your budget may only allow for light refreshments (such as hors d'oeuvres or an antipasto spread) and that's perfectly acceptable.

Some venues will have their own associated food services while others will require that you hire your own caterer. In addition to decisions about the menu, consider having a special cake made to celebrate the occasion.

5. Pick the Program

The ceremony can be a real formal one. Or it can be a fun one. Of course a Court of Honor can also be a little of both. Decide the tone of ceremony and discuss this with the person you choose to be the officiant of the event. Often the Scoutmaster and a Trail-to-Eagle advisor within the Troop will each have a role in the ceremony, with one being the Master of Ceremonies. But a clergy member or local government official often participate as well. So too, current and former Scouts, all close friends of your son, may tell stories and share remembrances if asked to do so.

6. Send out Invitations

You'll need to get the word out, whether through formal invitations, announcements at a Troop meeting, or an article in the Troop's newsletter. Provide enough notice so that people are able to make it.

7. Get Recognitions Together

After a Scout completes his Eagle Board of Review, he's officially an Eagle Scout. But most Scouts don't have their Eagle Court of Honor until weeks or months later, so that's your window for requesting and receiving letters of congratulations. You'll find [this excellent resource](#) from the U.S. Scouting Service Project useful in requesting letters.

Some entities, such as NASA or the U.S. Army, allow you to submit request online. Many of those links are at the U.S. Scouting Service Project as well.

Go for quality over quantity. Think about it: Would your Eagle Scout prefer four or five letters from people that are important to him or three dozen mainly from people he's never heard of?

8. Rehearse

The ceremony officiant should prepare a meeting plan based upon your wishes. From this, an agenda will be developed and shared. Those with roles in the ceremony will need to prepare their presentations. A special rehearsal may be called, or this may take place the day of the event, with the officiant giving everyone their instructions.

9. Set up for the Event

You can purchase an assortment of Eagle Scout decorations at the Scout shop. These can be used along with balloons and bunting to create a festive atmosphere in the reception/dining area.

The Troop has a table runner used for ceremonies. U.S. and Troop flags, and the rank advancement display will also be needed. The Troop will provide these items for your son's Eagle Court of Honor.

You may wish to prepare a memory table that displays Scout mementos, awards and recognitions, and pictures taken over the years. Your son and his guests will enjoy looking at these items which physically display his Trail-to-Eagle.

10. Enjoy the Ceremony

It's your son's day. You've done all the planning and preparing. Now turn the event over to others, it's their job now. Relax and watch your son enjoy himself. Swell with pride over his achievements. Accept the congratulations of impressed guests.