

Planning the Troop 890 Eagle Court of Honor

Your son has finally completed his Eagle Project and has set a time with the Scoutmaster to do his Scoutmaster conference and the sit for his Eagle Board of Review. It's time to start planning the celebration – the Eagle Court of Honor (“COH”) ceremony.

The single greatest aid (beyond this outline, of course) is The Eagle Court of Honor Book, The Complete Guide to Scouting's Greatest Moment, 2nd ed., by Mark Ray. This book can be found at any of the Scout Shops, located at:

- 8605 Harry Hines, Dallas 75235 (Dallas County Service Center), 214.902.2001
- 1329 W. Walnut Lane, Irving 75015 (National Scouting Museum), 972.580.2484
- 816 W. McDermott, Suite 336, Allen 75013 (Collin County Service Center), 214.495.0306

This book provides a back-dater checklist, a suggested invitation list, ceremony outline, several ceremony scripts, a facility needs worksheet, equipment and awards checklist, media release worksheet, and sample media releases, decorating ideas, a reception shopping list, sample programs, sample request for congratulatory letters to send to the scoutmaster and public officials, support summaries, samples of: charges, poems, props, quotes, etc. I will refer to this book throughout this paper.

I encourage you and your son to attend other Eagle COHs and get ideas to incorporate into your son's COH.

Troop Leadership, 2012-2013

Scoutmaster	David Ochoa
Troop Committee Chairman	Bryan Urban
Eagle Coordinator	Brad Knowlton
Merit Badge Coordinator	Rick Berry
Advancement Co-Chairman	Stan Wilson, Robert Nieporte
Mother's Club Chairman	Melissa Hood

Contact information can be found on <http://troop890.org> under “Troop Information”

Condensed Action-Item Calendar

The Eagle COH can take place either before or after the Scout is recognized at a Troop COH (held in January, May and August). Recognition at the Troop COH is not intended to act as a substitute for the Eagle COH.

The following summarizes the key events in the planning process:

8 weeks out Eagle Board of Review conducted

7 weeks out Set a date and time for the COH, coordinating with (1) the location, (2) the Eagle Coordinator, and (3) the participants you choose for the ceremony
Send a letter of confirmation to the person in charge of the location

- 7 weeks out (continued) Order invitations
Begin preparing the Eagle scrapbook (optional)
- 6 weeks out Develop an invitation list
- 5 weeks out Order needed supplies (program covers, etc.)
Order plaques and recognition items
Solicit congratulatory letters from public officials and VIPs
Develop the COH program and select/plan script
Order NESAs membership
- The troop supplies the Eagle pins (one each for the Eagle, Mentor, Mother and Father), neckerchief and slide. BSA will provide the Eagle Scout certificate.
- 4 weeks out Mail invitations
Recruit for support functions (MC, adult and scout participants)
Distribute scripts to participants
- 3 weeks out Order refreshments
Visit location of COH to check facilities
- 2 weeks out Have programs printed
Mail press releases
Call troop families to promote
- 1 week out Gather all necessary materials, props, etc.
Eagle Coordinator will provide the Eagle package (badge, pin, neckerchief)
- 3 days out Reconfirm access to the location
- Day of COH Set up and decorate room and reception area (with refreshments) and check thermostat
Check all Audio/Video Equipment (microphones, projectors, etc.)
Insure all awards and props are in place
Reserve seats for participants, honoree, and family
Dry Run
Position greeters
ENJOY THE CEREMONY!
- Day after COH Send thank you notes
- 3 days after Send write up (with photos) to newspapers (the Eagle packet your son will receive from Circle Ten Council has a form for the Dallas Morning News).

Costs

All costs associated with the Eagle COH (facilities, program, invitations, cake, decorations, etc.) are the responsibility of the Eagle Scout and his family. The Troop will provide the certificate and Eagle insignias.

Facility Use of Lake Highlands United Methodist Church

If you would like to use the sanctuary at our chartering organization, Lake Highlands United Methodist Church (“LHUMC”), please contact Vicki Shepard at 214.348.6600, extension 102. Have several dates in mind in case the church is booked for another function. Most Eagle COHs are held on Sunday afternoon at 2:00 p.m., but other times may be available.

Please discuss with the Eagle Coordinator and with the church representative:

1. how to access the facility (opening and closing it),
2. your audio/visual needs to insure someone is available and qualified to operate the equipment, and
3. use of folding tables and/or use of the kitchen.

The Scoutmaster, Troop Committee Chairman, and the First Year Scoutmaster have keys to the building, and a few Assistant Scoutmasters can run the A/V board. The church can also provide A/V services for a nominal fee.

The church has requested that the receptions following a COH be held in the narthex (the common area immediately adjacent to the sanctuary).

Once you’ve settled on a date and all the particulars, make sure to send a confirming email to Ms. Shepard (vshepard@lhumc.com), and also copy the church’s administrative assistant, Marci Potts (mpotts@lhumc.com). This will insure your event is on the church calendar and the appropriate support is in place to make sure it runs smoothly.

Planning the COH Ceremony

You will need several adult scouters and scouts to be in the COH ceremony. This includes a Master of Ceremonies and a Color Guard. Sample ceremonies can be found at <http://usscouts.org/usscouts/eagle/ecoh.asp>. Once you’ve secured a commitment to participate in the ceremony confirm it (by email), forward the script to them, and then follow up with phone calls as the ceremony date gets closer.

Scouts and Scouters participating in an Eagle ceremony must wear their Class A uniform, including appropriate neckerchief, socks, belt, etc. Eagle Scouts in the ceremony may wear their Eagle neckerchiefs. The ceremony for one scout should take roughly 45 minutes; several scouts can jointly hold an Eagle COH.

Eagle Candidate Speech

The Eagle Scout Candidate should prepare a speech discussing what his road to Eagle has taught him. The subject and length are up to him and his family, but he should be encouraged to prepare something that comes from the heart.

Program

Write a biography of your son's scouting accomplishments and brief description of his accomplishments outside of scouting to include in the program (or in a printed handout if you do not go the program route). Most families include a color photograph.

Many families from Troop 890 have used Pam Schmidt at Ahlwright Printing, Park Central I, 7616 LBJ Freeway, Suite 130, 972.233.5992 to prepare the invitations and programs. You will need to allow for at least one week for printing, and will need the names of all of the participants in the ceremony.

Supplies

Supplies for the COH and reception (invitations, program covers, greet cards, belt buckles), can be purchased at the Scout Shops or online at <http://scoutstuff.org/bsasupply>. It is recommended you call before going to a Scout Shop to insure they have sufficient quantities in stock.

Program covers are just the outside covers. You will need to take these to a printer to insert your program. Again, it is helpful to see how others have done their programs.

Eagle Cake

Troop 890 has used the services of Norma Newman, 10119 Woodlake Dr., 972.231.3974, to bake the Eagle COH cake. One cake is approximately 11.5" x 15.5" and will serve around 40 people. It can be chocolate, vanilla, or marbled.

It should be topped with "Congratulations" and the name of the Eagle Candidate. Ms. Newman requests two weeks advance notice. The cake needs to be picked up from her home.

Dress Rehearsal on the Day of the COH

Have all of the participants arrive at least 30 minutes early for a dry run though of the ceremony. Make sure everyone is in full Class A uniform. Moms should wear their Mother's Ribbon.

Reception

Have some friends "volunteer" to come early and help set up the reception table and with any decorations. If at LHUMC, the church kitchen has an icemaker available for your use, as well as folding tables. Please clear all trash (the dumpsters are on the Plano Road side) and return tables to the storage area in the Great Hall. Again, include your requests for tables and access when you book the facility!

Gifts

Attendees to a COH often wonder if they're supposed to bring a gift, and it's the troop's opinion they not feel obligated to do so. Relatives and close friends usually send a gift.

A life membership in the National Eagle Scout Association ("NESA") is a very nice gift (a one-time payment of \$180 versus a renewable five-year membership for \$25). The NESA application form will be in the Eagle packet provided by Circle 10 Council. For more information please go to www.nesa.org.

The family of the Eagle Candidate often will have the NESA and Eagle Scout certificates framed before the COH and display them in the reception area.

It is customary for the Eagle Candidate to send letters thanking participants for being a part of the COH ceremony and/or providing each with a small token to commemorate the event.

Photos

Designate at least one person to take photos before, during and after the COH ceremony. You won't have time to take them yourself, and you'll be in a number of them!

Final Thoughts

If you have questions, please ask. Troop 890 has been fortunate to have over 400 young men attain the rank of Eagle Scout, and we want your Scout and your family to celebrate and enjoy this achievement. We congratulate the newest 890 Eagle!

Yours In Scouting,

DAVID OCHOA, Scoutmaster

BRYAN URBAN, Troop Committee Chairman

BRAD KNOWLTON, Eagle Coordinator