



## *The Dulaney District Advancement Committee* *Venturing News*

2 February 2021

### Venture Crew Leaders of Dulaney District:

The information contained herein has been taken from the National Advancement Newsletters of March-April, May-June, and December 2020, and January-February 2021.

### A. KEEPING SCOUTING ALIVE:

During this time of COVID-19, unit meetings, and advancement in particular, have not been easy! Zoom style conferences are a reasonable replacement under the circumstances, but certainly does not fulfill the normal role of personal meetings and the interactions that result. So, how do units respond and keep their youth involved?



Well, the BSA has made lots of adaptations to assist during this pandemic! Check out the BSA national website under the heading [National Statement on COVID-19](#).

Here, you will also find a number of great ideas about how to [continue Scouting at home](#) and how to keep your youth engaged. There are 30-day challenges that units can use to help the youth keep engaged and advancing. Also, you will find an area called [BSA COVID-19 FAQ](#).

When you click on that link you will find very clear descriptions and definitions of advancement requirements that have been RELAXED during this pandemic period. Be sure to check these out very carefully as they are designed to make completing requirements doable in a virtual setting while face-to-face meetings are not available.

What about training during this COVID-19 period? Well, for the troops and crews, check under the Scouts BSA and Venturing headings on the National website and you will find that there is now a virtual Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops (ILST) and Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews (ILSC) which cover the same material, but in an online format. While these online courses do not replace the preferred face-to-face equivalents, they temporarily make available some needed training opportunities during a difficult time!

Also, be sure to check with your local council to find out what opportunities for unit activities, advancement, and training they have available. Many councils have built, or worked with other councils, to make available merit badge opportunities and virtual campout and campfire activities to assist units in promoting Scouting activities to

our youth. And don't forget your local Order of the Arrow Lodges as many of them have designed small group and virtual service projects, conclaves, and induction activities.

Leaders are doing their best to find ways to keep Scouting alive and vital for our youth. Be sure you are looking for these opportunities, taking advantage of them, and sharing them with others! All of us will get through this and at some point, the lights will come back on and we will return to more normal Scouting activities! Hang in there, everyone!

## B. VENTURING:

### 1. QUEST AWARD:

The Venturing Quest Award is a specialty award that focuses on sports and physical fitness. This award is designed to challenge and educate Venturers about having a healthy lifestyle and promoting fitness for life. Along the way, a Venturer can experience a variety of sports and activities that develop several skills they can use for the rest of their life. This is a great award for Venturers who like sports.

The Quest Award can be earned by completing **five** main focus area requirements:

1. Quest Essentials
2. First Aid
3. Fitness for Life
4. Fitness Assessment
5. Sport Discipline

And also complete **one** elective focus area requirement:

- History and Heritage of Sports
- Sports Nutrition
- Drug Free Sports
- Communications
- History and Heritage of the Disabled Sports Movement

More information and requirements can be found online at [www.scouting.org/venturing](http://www.scouting.org/venturing)

### 2. A CLOSER LOOK AT EAGLE SCOUT (SUMMIT & QUARTERMASTER) SERVICE PROJECT BENEFICIARIES:

A prime place to start looking for an answer to a question about beneficiaries is the *Guide to Advancement*. **GTA Section 9.0.2.5** describes the breadth of BSA's definition of "helpful to any religious institution, any school, or your community." While most Scouts look close to home, BSA recognizes that in a world of instant communications and speedy travel, Scouts may look globally to help. Exploring a few completed projects will provide some insight to demonstrate some of the many possible beneficiaries.

Some Scouts benefit their unit sponsor. One Scout chose to landscape the area around a religious statue outside his house of worship that also was the chartered organization for his unit. He turned the area from an overgrown, bedraggled eyesore to a peaceful place of reflection. Elsewhere, another researched a possible Civil War site on the grounds of his unit's sponsor, an American Legion post, and led a restoration of the area.

Because they are a part of their daily lives, Scouts love helping their schools. A Scout turned an overgrown interior courtyard at his former elementary school into an outdoor classroom by building benches and tables. In





another case, a Scout's project led to a theatrical set for the school, including lighting and holders for multiple scenes.

Local parks and community associations benefit from Eagle projects. One Scout installed a new welcome sign and upgraded landscaping at the town's main entrance, while another helped a local nature center revive their caterpillar population by replacing a milkweed garden. A neglected cemetery benefitted from a Scout who removed overgrown brush, cleaned the gravestones and installed fencing. Scouts with an interest in STEM and conservation have led a project that meets the requirements of both, choosing to replace invasive species with native plants or leading erosion control in a local watershed.

Non-profits get help too. A Life Scout recently led volunteers in recruiting donations of animal supplies for a local animal shelter. Another organized escorts for World War II veterans visiting a nearby memorial, recording interviews with the veterans about their experiences during the war for the association maintaining the memorial.

Under the proper conditions, a Scout may conduct a project at a for-profit facility. A "for profit" organization cannot use a Scout's project to make money (i.e., charging for tickets, fees to access the playground). One Scout organized a variety show for the residents of a for-profit senior living center. The no-cost show was for the residents who were the beneficiaries and really enjoyed the entertainment!

Some Scouts take a broader view of the world. One Scout visited a Romanian orphanage during a mission trip with his family. Noticing the lack of a library, after returning home he recruited volunteers to collect books and went back the following year to build shelves. Another Scout led a team that collected, cleaned, and sorted eyeglasses for distribution in third-world countries. With international projects, Safe Scouting still applies and assessing risk overseas can be a challenge, but one a determined Scout can often overcome.

### **3. VENTURING YOUTH TRAININGS AVAILABLE:**

Venturing offers a variety of training options available to youth. During these times of COVID-19, some additional measures have been taken to ensure that training options are still made available to those who need them. (For example, in October 2020, the National Council released an online version of the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews course, which is available in your training profile on [www.myscouting.org](http://www.myscouting.org).)

The first training that a Venturer can take is the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews (ILSC) which is similar to Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops (ILST). This training replaces the former Venturing Leadership Skills Course. ILSC helps Venturers in leadership positions understand their responsibilities and will equip them with organization and leadership skills. Completing ILSC is a requirement for the Discovery Award.

Venturers completing this training, are then eligible to advance their training by attending National Youth Leadership Training or NYLT within their council. After this, they can attend National Advanced Youth Leader Experience at Philmont or The Summit. ILSC is also a prerequisite to attend Kodiak, which is a week-long or two weekend long, outdoor trek-based training course where Venturers are given five commissions. After this, the Venturer can attend Kodiak X where the commissions from Kodiak are further explored and they learn about two additional commissions. Kodiak X is also an outdoor trek-based training course.

Here is more information on these two training programs:

- National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) is conducted at the council level. Some councils may have this course "on hold" while other councils have developed safe practices to allow completion amidst the pandemic. When you check with your local council, they can advise you as to the status of this training within your council. Many councils are planning to conduct the training in 2021. However, being able to

complete ILSC now online, will make youth prime candidates to be able to attend soon. Hopefully, this can occur within your home council. Attending NYLT in another council is always an option, too! National Youth Leader courses are currently scheduled for the summer of 2021 at both Philmont and The Summit. Additional details and registration can be found on [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org). Rest assured, safe practices relating to COVID-19 will be followed during the events to ensure the safety of all.

- Kodiak and Kodiak X are both outdoor courses and designed to be done locally among a crew. It is very possible to complete these training sessions during the pandemic. They can be an excellent adventure to take during the times of COVID-19. The course is mostly outdoors, and COVID-19 safe practices can easily be injected during the trainings including social distancing and sanitization. Kodiak and Kodiak X can help to supplement a general crew weekend campout and will help to bring a crew together in Venturing as well as the valuable commissions the program instills in Venturers. These two courses can also be a great way to bring a crew together and reconnect in person, outdoors, in a safe environment especially for a crew which might have been strictly meeting virtually.

It is important to continue to complete training, but it is also important to keep everyone safe and healthy during the times of COVID-19. Being cautious and taking additional steps to ensure health and safety while still completing the training syllabus are important steps to take. Certain modifications might need to be taken to continue the goals and spirit of the training while also keeping everyone safe.

## C. SEA SCOUTS BSA

### 1. **ACADEMY IN TEXAS HELPS SEA SCOUTS ADVANCE IN RANK:**

When Scouts BSA members need to work on advancement toward the trail of the Eagle, they always have summer camp. Many are the Scouts who were able to advance to Eagle because of merit badges and other requirements achieved at summer camp. In Sea Scouts, the same thing happens at Sea Scout Academy.

The 20th regional academy took place January 18-20, 2020 at Sea Star Base in Galveston, Texas. More than 170 youth and 80 adults attended, with hundreds of requirements checked off for the youth.



#### **Quartermaster Award**



Quartermaster rank is the highest rank in Sea Scouting; it is a prestigious and challenging rank, reflected by the 40 Sea Scouts who received the Quartermaster rank in 2019. Sea Scouts have until age 21 to earn the Quartermaster.

“Quartermasters are rare,” said T.W. Cook of Austin, Texas, the National Commodore for Sea Scouts in the USA, who also attended the Academy. “One of the requirements of a Quartermaster is teaching, and we have a place here for them to do that. There’s really a lot of goodness in that model where youth learn from older, more experienced youth.”

There are other Sea Scout gatherings similar to the Academy in Galveston – including those in Mobile, Alabama; Fort Monroe, Virginia., and in the Northeast Region, Cook said. But the event in Texas is by far the largest.

One adult Scouter from the Oregon Trail Council in Eugene, Oregon, attended his third Sea Scout Academy in Texas, and marvels at what can be accomplished at the event. He found out about the Galveston academy after



he attended Seabadge in Dallas in 2017. Seabadge is an adult leadership training class that is similar to Wood Badge. This Scouter who led one of the advancement tracks in Galveston said "I got to see what was the tip of the spear for leaders in Sea Scouts. It enlightened me as to what Sea Scouts offer to adult education. The program was 2,000 miles away from me, but it did not matter. I was involved with the top Sea Scout leaders in the country. I knew I wanted to be involved in Sea Scouting after that."

The mojo that is in Texas Sea Scouting is not lost on the youth, as there were participants from Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Virginia, and California. The Californians were from Long Beach, where there is a strong Sea Scout presence. One Scout, attending for the second year in a row is a Western Regional boatswain for Sea Scouts (the youth national officer who represents Sea Scouting for the Western Region). This Sea Scout is with Ship 550 in Long Beach, California.

"This event helps me complete many of the requirements I need that I cannot do at home because my ship doesn't have the time or resources," she said. "I have 15 months before I turn 21 (and age out of Sea Scouts). I can get the rank in the 10 months because I got about a third of the rank knocked out here. All I need is my Quartermaster project and a lifesaving merit badge. If I had not come, it would have taken me to up my 21st birthday to get everything done."

Putting youth in a leadership position is not lost on younger participants. Another Sea Scout who is 15 and is in Ship 681 in Austin, Texas, said he should finish his advancement for the Ordinary Rank soon because of his participation in the Galveston event.

"Sea Scout Academy provided me a structured way to learn," he said. "Outside of the academy, you have to plan it out by yourself. Here, you can make sure that you get the achievements that you need."

Part of the planning is done by Brian Ehrler (pronounced Airlar), who is an adult leader from the Longhorn Council in Fort Worth. Sea Scouts grew on him. And even though he also is a district chair in the Fort Worth area, he makes time for Sea Scouts because of what it gives him personally.

"I started coming here with my Scouts and helped them to get organized," Ehrler said "It's great for them to come here because our unit is inland near Dallas. It's the first time some of our kids have seen the ocean. They get exposed to larger ships, from the Point Glass (former U.S. Coast Guard cutter) to Sonar sailboats to other things. The kids advance, and I also get to learn."

## **2. "LANDSHIP" USED BY SEA SCOUTS FOR BRIDGE OF HONOR:**

In Scouts BSA, youth are awarded their ranks in a court of honor. It's the same concept in Sea Scouts, but it is called a bridge of honor. The ceremony is similar to a court of honor, in that leaders talk about accomplishments, Sea Scouts talk about accomplishments and goals, and there is a Skipper's Minute at the end.

The reason is that most Sea Scout customs are patterned after the U.S. Navy. The Navy sailors live in a dorm called a ship. Sea Scouts meet in a unit called a ship. The boatswain is an important part of making the Navy's ships run efficiently; the boatswain is an officer in Sea Scouts, just like the senior patrol leader in Scouts BSA.

Sea Scouts generally receive their ranks and awards on land – there seldom being room for families and guests aboard their craft. Sea Scouts try to make the ceremony as nautical as possible. One such way is to form a "landship."

Most Sea Scout ships have rope and mini-poles in storage for their bridge of honor. The rope comes to a point in the front, or bow, of the landship. Then the rope forms sides that look like a sea vessel, and come to a flat end on the back, or stern.

Participants enter the landship by saluting the landship's mast and then saluting the flag at the stern. This is the reverse of how a U.S. Naval vessel is formally boarded. In Sea Scouts we salute the mast first to represent our duty to God, and then the flag as our duty to country. Participants do the opposite when leaving the land-ship after the ceremony is over – leave the area by saluting the flag and then saluting the mast.

During the ceremony, youth, leaders, parents, and friends can sit in seating however it is set up. (Even ashore, not everyone may be able to fit on board the "landship".)

Hopefully, you may be invited to attend a bridge of honor in your area one day. When you do, even if it is your first, you should now "know the ropes" well enough to enjoy and just do what the person in front of you does, until you get the hang of it.

### **3. CONTACTS FOR SEABADGE VIRTUAL TRAINING:**

In Section C.1. above, we reviewed the recent addition of virtual Seabadge training courses. For those who are excited to be a part of this opportunity, here is the listing of contacts for currently scheduled events during the first few months of 2021.

Feb. 27-28 and Mar. 6-7, contact Curtis Letson, [curtis.letson@gmail.com](mailto:curtis.letson@gmail.com)  
June 5-6 and 12-13, contact Emily Newell, [emily99newell@gmail.com](mailto:emily99newell@gmail.com)

### **D. FOR ADULT LEADERS:**

#### **District Award of Merit:**

The management of awards and recognitions for youth and adult members is an important function of all districts. Awards and recognitions are not part of the advancement plan, although members of the district's advancement committee may be called upon, along with others, to assist from time to time.

One of the more frequently presented recognitions in this category is the District Award of Merit, or D-A-M. This is a council recognition presented by districts in the same manner that, for instance, the Silver Beaver Award is a national recognition presented by councils. Each of a council's districts is permitted, per prescribed allocation formula, to annually present this recognition to one or more registered adult volunteers.

Basic guidelines for the D-A-M are found in the [Guide to Awards And Insignia \(SKU 648215\)](#), Guidelines for District and Council Committees. Information is also available at <http://www.scouting.org/awards/awards-central/district-merit/> although the language there may be misleading in that it describes "earning" and "getting" this award. This is distinctly not the case. There are neither "requirements" nor a "score card" for this award.

In fact, the District Award of Merit is by nomination only. All nominations are evaluated on the basis of each nominee's noteworthy service, beyond normal expectations, at the district level. A confidential nomination form is available (see [filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33720.pdf](http://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33720.pdf)). To avoid possible disappointment on the part of a nominee, all nominations are confidential. Also, this is not a posthumous award, nor is it appropriate for a formerly registered adult volunteer.

In each district the district chair will annually appoint an ad hoc selection committee of no more than five (5) to evaluate all nominees for that year. Past recipients often make excellent selection committee members. Members of the district advancement committee may be specially tapped for this as well. The district chair is an ex officio member as well.



Because nominations from the field are required for this award, the selection committee may be charged with responsibility for promoting nominations, providing forms and deadline dates, and—with the district’s committee that manages special events—selecting the presentation event, location, and date.

The selection committee may meet confidentially as often as needed, based on the number of nominations. Since the nomination forms request training courses completed, positions held, etc., it is reasonable that the committee confirm such information with the council registrar, training chair, and any others as needed. Once the committee has made its final selections, it will present these recommendations to the council committee through the Scout executive, who will subsequently inform the district chair of the nominations approved by the council committee. Throughout this process, none of the nominees will be informed that they have been nominated or recommended or approved.

All District Award of Merit presentations will follow the procedure advised on the second page of the nomination form, including district- and council-wide publication and promotion.

To assist in the evaluation and selection of this and other awards, the District has requested that the District Advancement Chair (Rick Shaw) maintain a file of Scouters resumes. If you haven’t submitted yours yet, or if you need to up-date one already submitted, please send them to Rick at [ricncork@erols.com](mailto:ricncork@erols.com)

Yours in Scouting;

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