

# MERIT BADGE COUNSELORS



**Signal Hill District**

**REVISED: September 1, 2006**

## Merit Badges

The merit badge program is one of Boy Scouting's basic measurement tools. Earning merit badges gives a boy the kind of self-confidence that comes from overcoming obstacles to achieve a goal. Through the merit badge program, a boy also learns career skills, develops social skills (such as talking to adults he does not know) and may develop physical strengths and hobbies that give a lifetime of healthful recreation.

How a Scout earns a Merit Badge has been outlined on the other side of this form.

### The Scoutmaster's Role

1. Interview the scout to determine interest, enthusiasm and preparedness for the MB selected.
2. Approves the MB Application card the scout has filled out.
3. Help the Scout find a MB Counselor, preferably outside the scout's comfort zone.
4. Remind the scout about the buddy system.
5. Remind the scout to wear his uniform when visiting the counselor.
6. Follow up with the scout on his progress.
7. Recognize the scout and then present the MB earned at the next Court of Honor.

### Troop Advancement Chairman's Role

1. Has available a copy of the available MB Counselors.
2. Collects completed MB cards and records the earned MBs in the Troop records.
3. Completes the Advancement Report and turns it into Council for purchase of Merit Badges. All reports to

Council must have the Troop copy of the MB application card attached.

4. Helps recruit MB Counselors that are qualified for their subjects of interest.

### Merit Badge Counselor's Role

1. Has experience and knowledge in subjects chosen to counsel.
2. Registers and responds to the re-registration letters sent out by Council.
3. Uses the buddy system when scouts come to visit. Never meet with a scout alone in your home, or at an agreed upon location.
4. Counsels scouts who call them or if not possible at that time, has the name & number of another counselor who can.
5. Sets all dates and times with the scout to meet for consultation and approval of the MB.
6. Is helpful and encourages the Scouts.
7. Teaches the Scout and lets them practice under his/her guidance the skills necessary to complete the badge.
8. Has the most current MB Books and requires only what the MB Books ask, and keeps a record of what scouts have completed (their portion of the MB card form.)

- ✓ **\*\*\* Every year in December a letter or post card is sent to all existing counselors. To continue as a merit badge counselor for NWSC, a response to the Council is mandatory, or you will be removed from the list of approved MB counselors.**

## **THE MERIT BADGE PROGRAM**

The Merit Badge program is part of the advancement plan of the BSA. It has guided the interests and energies of Boy Scouts for over 90 years and is one of the most unusual educational programs ever devised. A merit badge is an award presented to a Scout when he has completed the requirements for one of more than 115 subjects in a wide variety of areas.

This program cannot happen without the services of merit badge counselors, who are experts in a particular subject and interested in helping Scouts grow into men of character, ready to take their place in the world of work as participating citizens.

Your job is to satisfy yourself that each Scout who comes to you meets all the requirements for that merit badge. In a way, you are the examiner. Your larger role is in coaching/teaching and helping the Scout over the difficult hurdles of the requirements and making him aware of the deeper aspects of the subjects from your knowledge and experience.

The following are the steps that a Boy Scout takes to earn a merit badge, as outlined in the Official Boy Scout Handbook.

1. Get the merit badge book on his chosen subject. His troop may have one that he can borrow, and he can check the local library. He may choose to purchase one at the Northwest Suburban Scout Shop.
2. Learn and do the things that the pamphlet describes as being required for the badge.
3. Get a merit badge card signed by his Scoutmaster to give to his Merit Badge Counselor.
4. When the Scout is ready, he obtains the name and phone number of a merit badge counselor. He calls the counselor and makes an appointment. He brings all the things needed to meet the requirements of the badge, or proof of what was accomplished. Be sure to have another Scout, Sibling, or parent go with you.
5. Arrive at your appointment on time with your buddy. Satisfy the counselor that all requirements are met.
6. If all requirements are not met, DON'T GIVE UP. Make another appointment and complete the badge.
7. Obtain the counselor's signature on the card. Be sure the counselor signs and checks the card for completeness. The counselor should keep his/her 1/3 of the card.
8. Give the signed 2/3 of the merit badge card to the advancement chairman or the scoutmaster, who will record and purchase the badge and present it to you in front of your troop.

### **HOW MERIT BADGE COUNSELORS UPDATE THEIR INFORMATION OR BECOME A MERIT BADGE COUNSELOR.**

New Merit Badge Counselors Applicants may apply at any time by filling out the MB Application form. If not registered with a Troop or Crew or Pack, the counselor must also fill out an Adult Leader Application. The form/s is then submitted to Council who will forward them to the District Advancement Chairman for approval. At that point a letter is sent to the Counselor telling him/her of what Merit Badges he/she was approved for.

To add to or take away Merit Badges from a counselor's list the counselor must fill out a MB Application form and submit it with his/her renewal *in January*. This may be done only one time during the year and that is at the January renewal time.

**MAIL BACK TO:** Northwest Suburban Council  
 600 N Wheeling Rd  
 Mt. Prospect, IL 60056

**MERIT BADGE COUNSELOR APPLICATION**  
 For Northwest Suburban Council

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIPCODE \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_

UNIT AFFILIATION \_\_\_\_\_ DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_

**To qualify as a merit badge counselor you must:**

- \* Be 18 years old or older
- \* Be proficient in the merit badge subject by vocation or avocation
- \* Be able to work with Scout age boys
- \* Be registered with the Boy Scouts of America

**As a merit badge counselor you must agree to:**

1. Follow the requirements of the merit badge, no deletions, no additions.
2. Counsel one to six, but no more than 6, Merit Badges, and of those MBs only 3 may be Eagle Required
3. Have two or more scouts present at all instruction sessions
4. Renew your registration yearly if you wish to continue as a counselor.
5. You may change or add to the Merit Badges you counsel for once each year at re-registration time in January.

| MERIT BADGE | JOB, BUSINESS, PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS RELATED TO BADGE<br>PLEASE LIST AND COMMENT | HOBBY, EDUCATION COURSES RELATED TO BADGE<br>PLEASE LIST AND COMMENT | OTHER QUALIFICATIONS<br>PLEASE COMMENT |
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| 6.          |  |  |  |

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APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DISTRICT ADVANCEMENT CHAIR'S APPROVAL \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

POSTED TO PERSONAL RECORDS \_\_\_\_\_ LETTER SENT \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_