



Scouts BSA

JPL Troop 509

Est. 1952

La Cañada Flintridge, CA

jpltroop509.org



Eagle Court of Honor Preparation

Once you have passed your Eagle Board of Review you need to start preparing for your Eagle Court of Honor. The troop traditionally holds courts of honor three times a year – in September, January and May – on Fridays at 7 pm at JPL von Karman auditorium. Take an early look at your availability and that of your family, to assist the Troop Committee in setting the date. At any court of honor there may be between one and four scouts being recognized for the Eagle rank.

1. Portrait. Immediately after your board of review, call Belle n' Beau Photography at (626) 446-6000 to make an appointment for your Eagle portrait. They are in Arcadia at 201 S. First Ave., and are open Tue.-Fri. 9 am to 6 pm, and Sat. 9 am to noon. There is no sitting fee, you get a free black & white .jpg of the portrait, and they loan you a framed 11"x14" color portrait for your court of honor. You have the option of purchasing that 11"x14" color portrait for \$115. Other options include light retouching for \$20, heavier retouching for \$35, and a color .jpg for \$50 and up depending on resolution. Belle n' Beau provides an Eagle badge and neckerchief as props to wear in your portrait. You'll be making several trips to Arcadia. One for the sitting, a second to pick up the portrait for the court of honor, and a third to return the portrait after the court of honor. Once the portrait is returned, it gets hung at Smiser Scout Center for a period, and when it comes back from Smiser, if you purchased the portrait you go back to Arcadia a fourth time to pick it up to keep.
2. Eagle award kit, neckerchief & slide. Your Eagle Application with the board's signatures was sent to BSA national headquarters in Irving, Texas. It usually takes about a month for Smiser to receive your official Eagle certificate, so mark your calendar for six weeks after your board and if you haven't heard from Smiser by then, call them to see if it is in yet. You'll then go to Smiser to pick up the certificate, and take the certificate to the Smiser Scout Shop to buy an Eagle award kit (\$30), an Eagle neckerchief (\$15) and an Eagle slide (\$12). You cannot buy these without the Eagle certificate. (Note that you are an Eagle as of the date of the board of review, not the date you receive the certificate.)
3. Invitations. Once the date, time and location of your court of honor are set by the Troop Committee, you might want to send invitations to your relatives and friends, including the people who wrote references for you, and the people who helped on your Eagle project with money or labor. Smiser Scout Shop has invitations for sale, or you can create your own invitations through a photo card service. The troop's website has a sample custom invitation, which is a Word document that can be modified and then converted to a .jpg (search for free conversion websites), and it then is used as one side of a 5"x7" custom greeting card at costco.com, with the other side your Belle n' Beau Eagle portrait, at a cost of \$18 per set of 25 invitations.
4. Biography. Write a brief biography for the court of honor program and give it to the person creating the program at least a week before the court of honor. The biography should include:

- a paragraph with your age, parents, siblings, schools, sports, extra-curricular activities, and academic and sports honors
 - a paragraph about your Scouting experiences, including Cub Scouts, when you joined the troop, your troop leadership positions and your favorite outings
 - a paragraph about your Eagle project
 - an optional concluding paragraph describing how Scouting has influenced you and thanking specific people
 - a separate list of Scouting awards earned
 - the black & white .jpg of your Eagle portrait from Belle n' Beau Photography (or if you purchased it, the color .jpg)
5. Slide Show. Our Eagles traditionally present at the court of honor a slide show of their scouting experiences, about 5 minutes long, usually with musical in the background. Start with a baby photo and add some preschool, sports and Halloween photos, but most of the photos should be of you as a scout on outings and doing your Eagle project. Don't put this slide show together at the last minute, but give yourself enough time to collect and select the photos. Ideally your slides will include captions identifying the outing and year. Get outing photos from the troop's Flickr account. Put your slide show on a flash drive and give it to the troop's JPL liaison at least four days before the court of honor. The liaison will test it on the von Karman auditorium audio visual equipment, and let you know if there are any problems. On the date of your court of honor, bring a back-up flash drive with your slide show, just in case.
 6. Introducer. You need a parent or someone else to introduce you at the court of honor. Your introducer should speak about five minutes and give the audience a sense of who you are, not just biographical facts, but include a story or two about you that enlightens the audience about your character. Give this person's name to the person putting together the court of honor program.
 7. Voice of the Eagle. An Eagle Scout, whether from our troop or not, will be needed to read the Voice of the Eagle from the back of the auditorium. Give this Eagle's name to the person putting together the court of honor program. If there are multiple Eagles being awarded at your court of honor, they have to agree on who this Eagle will be.
 8. Invocation & Benediction. A religious leader of your choice, or the troop's chaplain, will deliver the invocation and benediction. Give this person's name to the person putting together the court of honor program. If there are multiple Eagles being awarded at your court of honor, they have to agree on who this will be.
 9. Speech. You will give a short speech from one and five minutes long. Speeches are better if not read, so just jot names and major points on a note card and let the words come out naturally. The three things you should say in your speech are:
 - thank the audience for coming, and thank by name those who have most helped you during your years in scouting. (If you want to recognize one person in particular as your mentor, the Eagle badge kit you got from the scout shop has a mentor pin and you can ask that person to come on stage and you pin it on him or her.)
 - tell what your favorite experiences were as a scout and why
 - give some advice to the younger scouts

A good way to conclude your speech is to simply say "thank you." Remember, at the podium all you need to remember is 1) thank yous, 2) favorite outings, and 3) advice.

10. Refreshments. The troop spends about \$450 for refreshments at Eagle courts of honor, typically pizza and cake, and each Eagle is asked to donate \$150 toward those costs.
11. Portrait, Binder, Patches & Memorabilia. There will be a table at the court of honor for you to display your Eagle portrait, your Eagle binder, and any scouting patches and memorabilia you would like to share. Bring these to the court of honor.

When you come to your Eagle Court of Honor make sure to:

- Wear your full Class A uniform with merit badge sash and Eagle neckerchief and Eagle slide (and if applicable, your Order of the Arrow sash on your belt)
- Bring the Eagle award kit you purchased at Smiser Scout Shop
- Bring an index card with your speech prompts
- Bring your Eagle portrait and your Eagle binder, and any patches and memorabilia
- Bring a camera

Congratulations, Eagle Scout!