Lighting the Eagle Trail

**Introduction:**

The following ceremony is written for a stage and is best done in a room that can be dimmed.

Optionally, slides of the Eagle candidate in action can be shown and/or presentations by government officials can be made. An optional Benediction can be done right after this ceremony.

**Required People:**

Four Cub Scouts (one of each rank), Six candle lighter Scouts (one of each rank), an Honor Guard (we used four scouts), an adult to read the "Voice of the Eagle" script from behind the stage, and appropriate adults to make the presentations.

**Printed Program:**

The Eagle Candidate selects the people for each section shown below.

| **Section** | **Typically** | **Name:** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Introduction | Master of Ceremonies (M.C.) |  |
| [Voice of the Eagle](http://www.troop849.org/ceremoniesTrailVoice.html) (Note 1) | Adult |  |
| Candle Lighters | Scouts of each rank | 6 Boy and 4 Cub Scouts |
| [Eagle Honor Guard](http://www.troop849.org/ceremoniesTrailGuard.html) | Prior Eagle Award Recipients (optional) | 1 Eagle and 3 Life Scouts |
| [Eagle Charge](http://www.troop849.org/ceremoniesTrailCharge.html) | District Representative |  |
| [Eagle Promise](http://www.troop849.org/ceremoniesTrailPromise.html) | Adult Eagle Award Recipient |  |
| Eagle Award Presentation | Scoutmaster |  |
| Remarks from Eagle Recipient (optional) | Eagle Recipient |  |

Notes: 1) The Voice of the Eagle is NOT mentioned by name in the program.

### Main Ceremony

[*Light the candle in the arched/Arrow of light candle holder on the small table.* ]

*M.C.*  Scouts attention, audience please rise for the presentation of the colors.

[*Continue with Presentation of the Colors*]

Please remain standing for an invocation from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

[Invocation]

Please be seated

*M.C.* Today we have the rare honor and pleasure of recognizing (eagle candidate first name) for the award of Eagle Scout.

In full awareness of the challenge of the times, the parents and Scout leaders of this young man have labored long and faithfully to help him develop to be an alert and participating citizen.

Since joining the Scout movement in (year), this young man has shown this development by successively serving in most of the ranks available to them:

* (List job positions held while in scouts)

Please turn your attention to the screen to view the slideshows of (name’s) scouting career.

[*Kill all lights.*]

[*After slideshows finish*]

*M.C.* Today we present a ceremony which we call "Lighting the Eagle Trail." It is symbolic of the climb each boy faces when they enter Scouting. Only two percent of these millions of youth ever reach the top.

[*Pause* ]

*M.C.* The next voice you hear will be the voice of the Eagle.

[*Candle lighter Scouts ready for entry on cue.*]

[*Voice of the Eagle*]

Before the dawn of light of day, when our creator made earth and man, there was darkness. As light was given, man could see and advance along his way.

Throughout history, mankind's progress can be measured in units of little bits of light - a spark of faith - of ingenuity - philosophy - art. All these have added to the light on our path through life. So, too, is the Scouting trail lit by little bits of light. Little bits left by the millions of boys who have started up the Eagle Trail.

I, as the voice of the Eagle, am the embodiment of the boys who have started up the Eagle Trail. I have watched each of them as they made the climb.

(Name), yourclimb really began with a decision - a most significant decision. Your decision was not based on any lofty idealistic reasons. Instead, you had the reasons most young boys would have - you wanted fun and companionship.

[*Cub scouts come up the aisle in order of Tiger, Wolf, Bear, Webelos. They stand in a circle around the candle and all lean their candles in to light them at the same time. They place their candles in the holder and return to their seats.*]

[*Voice of Eagle continues to read while Cub Scouts are walking up and lighting candles.*]

You had a blast racing pinewood derby cars, regatta boats, riding bicycle rodeos but at the same time you did not realize you were building character, improving physical fitness, learning practical skills, and developing a spirit of community service, all these things setting the foundation for your climb later. As you traveled up the long advancement trail leading to the base of the mountain, you achieved many goals as you attained the ranks of Tiger, Wolf, Bear and Webelos, and then the highest honor in Cub Scouting, the Arrow of Light.

At this point some cub scouts call this the end of their journey, but for whatever the reason, you all made the simple decision to continue on to the Boy Scouts of America. Your sight was set on the lofty goal of reaching my nest at the peak of the mountain. The light of your decision was dim indeed but the spark had been lit. The way was marked.

[*Voice of Eagle check with person in back for a thumbs up to make sure we are ready for Boy Scouts*]

[*Scout Rank comes up the aisle, lights his candle from the main candle then goes to his plaque on stage.*]

We remember well when you first came to the base of the cliff and how you looked up in eager anticipation of the fun of camping and fellowship. And soon, after learning our flag's history, a few knots, and so forth, you made this promise: "On my honor I will do my best: to do my duty to God and my country, and to obey the Scout Law: to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight."

[*Pause*]

"A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent."

[*Pause*]

Dwell on those words for a moment. Roll them around in your mind. Few phrases outline so fine a set of precepts. As an Eagle, you are expected to live up to them all your life.

Many boys such as you, (name), have passed this way before and, in passing, have left a light. This light is the spirit of Scouting. It embodies the fine principles of the Scout Oath and Law, and is a shining beacon of inspiration.

[*Tenderfoot rank comes up the aisle, lights his candle and stands by his plaque.*]

The light that each boy leaves may be feeble indeed, but when multiplied by the millions of boys in Scouting, it is very powerful.

Your paths ahead were dimly lit by the light of your resolution. With that first step up the trail, you began to build yourself, physically, mentally, and morally. You started living the promise you had made. All the while you were on the trail, we saw you learn by doing. You learned to care for yourself, if lost, if injured, or if hungry. More importantly, you began to put into practice the precepts of Scouting - Scout spirit and service to others.

You were truly a Tenderfoot at first. But not for long.

[*Second Class rank comes up the aisle, lights his candle and stands by his plaque.*]

For soon you all reached the first ledge and there you were greeted by a large group of Second Class Scouts.

Most Scouts reach this ledge. Some, like yourselves, were stopping to catch their breath before continuing along the trail. The others were content and went no further. Your paths were lit more brightly, but the trail was becoming steeper.

[*First Class rank comes up the aisle, lights his candle and stands by his plaque.*]

Ahead of you lay the first real summit of your climbs - the First Class peak. Up until now, you had been learning the rudiments of Scouting and how to care for yourselves. You now began to learn leadership principles and how to care for others. You found you must become proficient in many skills related to the survival of yourselves and others under difficult conditions.

Yes, you learned these new skills but, most importantly, your Scout spirit was growing with you, until almost before you knew it, you all had reached the First Class peak.

Here you were greeted by an even smaller group than before, and you were tempted to remain on this ledge and bask in First Class glory, just as many of the others were doing, but the light of your Scout spirit had grown bright indeed. Your past accomplishments and the growth of your character spurred you on.

[*Star Scout rank comes up the aisle, lights his candle and stands by his plaque.*]

The rank of Star Scout, which had seemed so unattainable such a short time before, now seemed within your reach. But to grasp it, you found you must not only become adept in many new skills, but again, the most important factor was the continued growth of your Scout spirit which you demonstrated by your citizenship, scholarship, community service and the help and leadership you extended to your fellow Scouts - particularly those below you on the trail.

Again you proved yourselves worthy. You all were awarded the rank of Star Scout by your Scoutmaster.

The path behind you was bright with your accomplishments. The rank of Eagle was becoming dimly lit in the distance. But before you could reach my nest, you found a third major summit blocking your way - the Life Scout rank.

[*Life Scout rank comes up the aisle, lights his candle and stands by his plaque.*]

Now the trail was steeper, and much less worn. The paths were becoming lonely. You looked back and saw the crowds below you; you looked up but saw few above you. With renewed determination, you continued your climb up the trail, but now you found it harder to demonstrate continued growth of your character and your Scout spirit because you were growing out of the boyhood stage. You now had to show that you had an understanding of your responsibilities as citizens and members of our society and a willingness to accept those responsibilities.

In learning the new skills demanded of this rank, you found that your school homework was becoming a serious and conflicting problem - yet both Scout work and homework must be done well. You solved this problem by learning one of the more important lessons of Scouting - the need to ration and utilize your time efficiently and effectively. It is a lesson all must learn.

And thus you all were awarded the rank of Life Scout.

As the heart badge was placed on your uniforms, I am sure you will never forget the thought in your hearts: it has been experienced by most Scouts on Life's peak. You thought, "Now I am close to the Eagle's nest. I must and I *will* carry on." The path toward Eagle Rank was now clear and well lit but still far above you.

Many boys start up the Scouting trail from the foot of the mountain. Most reach Second Class. Many reach First Class. But as the path steepens, fewer and fewer boys have the perseverance and sense of selfless service to others to reach the higher ranks. At the summit of Life Scout you had but few comrades. On your further climbs toward Eagle, the trail was lonelier yet.

The path becomes precipitous. The physical requirements were strenuous and the mental standards were high. But along the way, you were gaining in stature - physically, mentally, and morally. And this growth was necessary because the most important requirement for Eagle is the personal character of a Scout as reflected in the ideals of Scouting. These were demonstrated by your cooperation and service to others, in the home, at school, in the community - as well as within the troop.

Yes, (name), we have watched your character unfold and become more mature. We have watched your leadership expand into a valuable asset, and we have watched your mind develop and your wisdom increase. We have watched all these things in you and approve. And now that you are at the threshold of your goal, we welcome you, for you all have done your climbing in a true Scout-like manner.

[*Pause*]

Will the Honor Guard escort (name) to their place in the light of their spirit.

[*Turn on lights as the Honor guard march forward. They stop on the stage, two on the top level and two on the lower level and face each other keeping enough space in between them for (name) to walk. (Name) gets up and walks to the aisle center then turns to the stage and walks through the Honor Guard to the top level of the stage.]*

[*As he assumes his place, all other Scouts blow out their candles and follow the Honor guard back down the aisle. Leave in order of Life and Star, then 2nd class and 1st class, then Tenderfoot and Scout last.*]

(Name), to symbolize your climb from the day you made that little but important decision until this day when you will achieve your goal, will you now repeat the Scout Oath and Law - thus reaffirming your beliefs in those ideals.

[*Wait while he says it.* ]

There before you stands a young man who long ago said, "On my honor I will do my best," and their best was good enough. One can ask no more of any man. Look upon him, fellow Scouts; you too can become an Eagle. The path is difficult, but the goal is worthy. Are you man enough to climb the path and stand beside them and the others who have reached the crest? Resolve now that you are!

District Representative \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will now give the Eagle Charge to him. Will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ please come forward to the stage?

[*(Name) turn toward the District representative as he gives the Eagle Charge*]

[*The Eagle Charge*]

I have the honor to give you the Eagle Scout charge on the occasion of your elevation to the highest rank in Scouting. The Boy Scouts of all nations constitute one of the most wholesome and significant movements in the world's history.

You have been counted worthy of this high rank in the Boy Scouts of America. All who know you rejoice in your achievement. Your position, as you well know, is one of honor and responsibility. You are a marked man. As an Eagle Scout you have assumed a solemn obligation to do your duty to God to country, to your fellow Scouts and to mankind in general.

This is a great undertaking. As you live up to your obligations you bring honor to yourself and to your brother Scouts. Your responsibility goes beyond your fellow Scouts; it extends to your country and your God. America has many good things to give you and to give to your children after you; but these things depend for the most part on the quality of her citizens. Our country has had a great past. You can help make the future still greater.

I charge you to undertake your citizenship with a solemn dedication. Be a leader, but lead only towards the best. Lift up every task you do and every office you hold to the high level of service to God and to your fellow man. So live and serve that those who know you, will be inspired to the finest living. We have too many who use their strength and their brains to exploit others and to gain selfish ends.

I charge you to be among those who dedicate their skills and ability to the common good. Build America on the solid foundations of clean living, honest work, unselfish citizenship and reverence for God. Then, whatever others may do, you will leave behind a record you may be justly proud.

[*Back to Voice of Eagle*]

Up through the rank of Life Scout, the troop can authorize and give the awards. The rank of Eagle, however, is awarded only by the National Council upon the carefully considered recommendation of the District Eagle Board of Review and the local council. You have been previously interrogated and investigated by a select board of review composed not of members of your troop, but by a group of recognized leaders of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ District. Their investigation has been thorough and their recommendation has been accepted by the National Council.

Eagle Scout \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has been authorized by the National Council to give you the Eagle Scout Promise. Will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ please come forward to the stage.

[*(Name) turn toward \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as he gives the Eagle Promise*]

[*The Eagle Promise*]

Eagle Scout Candidate (name), I charge you to enter the Eagle Scout Brotherhood, holding without reservation ever before you, the ideals of honor and service.

By repetition of the Eagle Scout Promise before your fellow Scouts, you will become an Eagle Scout. Though the words you use may be similar to those by which you joined Scouting, today they will mean more than they could have meant at any time in the past.

When you pledge yourself on your sacred honor, you will be sealing your eternal loyalty to the code of the Eagle Scout, with the words which closed the Declaration of Independence.

Scouts attention! Audience please stand.

Candidate, Scout sign! Repeat after me:

I reaffirm my allegiance ....

to the three promises of the Scout Oath ....

I thoughtfully recognize ....

and take upon myself ....

the obligations and responsibilities ....

of an Eagle Scout. ....

On my honor, I will do my best ....

to make my training and example ....

and my status and my influence ....

count strongly for better Scouting ....

and for better citizenship ....

in my troop, ....

in my community, ....

and in my contacts with other people. ....

To this I pledge my sacred honor.

Two! Audience please be seated.

By the authority vested in me by the National Court of Honor of the Boy Scouts of America, it is my privilege and pleasure to pronounce you an Eagle Scout. May the Oath you have taken remain graven in your heart always.

[*Back to Voice of Eagle*]

Many persons have contributed to the achievements of this young man: their adult Scout leaders, of course, but even more importantly, their parents. Few boys can climb this arduous path without their help and encouragement.

Will (parent’s names) come forward to stand with their son.

During their climb, (name) learned from and was encouraged by many adult Scout leaders, and particularly their Scoutmaster. It is, therefore, only fitting and proper that Troop \_\_\_\_\_ Scoutmaster \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ be with him during this moment of glory and aid in the presentation of the Eagle Award. Will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ please come forward to the stage.

[*Scoutmaster can say few words recounting stories of (name)*]

*S.M.*  Eagle Scout (name), you are to be congratulated for reaching the highest peak of the Eagle Trail; your diligence and hard work have paid off. You have made Troop \_\_\_\_ very proud. May the qualities that inspired you to this achievement continue to lead you on to even greater success in your life.

[*Eagle Medal is presented to the mothers to pin on the candidate's uniform*.]

*S.M.* Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, pin this Eagle Medal on your son’s chest so that the world may know that he is an Eagle Scout.

[*Miniature Eagle badge is given to Eagle Scout to pin on his mother*.]

*S.M.* Eagle Scout (name), pin this miniature badge over your mother's heart in recognition of her love, encouragement, faith, and trust in your future. As an Eagle Scout, may you never disappoint her.

*S.M.* Mr. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, will you please take the Eagle neckerchief and place it around your son's neck to tell the world you will continue to support him as he grows into a man.

[*Fathers place eagle neckerchief around the neck of his son*.]

[*Lapel pin is given to the Eagle Scout to present to his father*.]

*S.M.* Eagle Scout (name), would you also present your Dad with the lapel pin.

[*Scoutmaster informs parents to return to their seats*.]

*S.M.* Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you Eagle Scout (Full name).

[*Wait for Applause, Scoutmaster returns to seat*]

[*M.C. comes to podium during applause*]

*M.C.* Outside of the great help that parents give to their scout, there are other people that also offer mentorship. To honor these people, an Eagle Scout can award a mentor pin to someone who they feel has offered additional help and guidance while on the path to earn their Eagle rank.

*M.C.* I now call on Eagle Scout (name) to award his mentor pin.

[*(Name) announces who he is giving his mentor pin to, invites them to the stage and hands it out. (Name) then asks his mentor to return to their seat.*]

[*Pause for applause, then Eagle scout walks to seat*]

*M.C.* Would \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ please come forward to give the benediction? Scouts attention, audience please rise for the benediction followed by the retiring of the colors.

 *[Continue with retiring of the colors]*

*M.C.* This concludes our Eagle Court of Honor. Anyone wishing to congratulate Troop \_\_\_\_\_\_ newest Eagle Scout and his proud parents are invited to stay for the reception starting now.