

Candle-lighting Ceremony #1

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CHAIRMAN: To earn the higher progress awards in Scouting, a young man has to spend a great deal of time and effort. Therefore, the occasion which recognizes his accomplishments should be something special. Today, we shall follow a pattern which I am going to call "Lighting the Eagle Trail." *Lights are turned out except for a single candle in a holder.*

When a boy becomes a Scout there should be instilled within him something that we will call the Spirit of Scouting. This lighted candle represents that Spirit. Because the Spirit of Scouting embodies the fine principles of the Scout Oath and Law, it becomes a shining beacon of inspiration. Alone, this light may be feeble, but when multiplied by the more than three and a half million boys in Scouting, it can become very powerful indeed.

After a boy has entered Scouting, the Scout Law that he has promised to obey is put into effect as the occasion demands. And so, one by one, using the flame from this Spirit of Scouting, we light the symbols that stand for the parts of the Scout Law. There are twelve points - all important and meaningful. Each is an important foundation stone in the building of strong character. A Scout is trustworthy, . . . , reverent. *Candles are lit as each point is said by troop Scouts.*

And finally, in the three points of the Scout Oath, he promises upon his honor to do his best to do his duty, first, to God and his country (*light appropriate candle*); second, to other people, by helping them at all times (*light appropriate candle*); and third, to himself, by keeping himself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight (*light last candle*). You see how the light from this Spirit of Scouting is now beginning to grow and become brighter.

Now, far away, loom the hazy outlines of the Eagle summit flanked by the lesser peaks that represent Star and Life. Yes, to the newcomer they're a long way ahead, but they'll come a lot closer as the light of the Spirit of Scouting continues to spread.

One begins by becoming a Scout, and so I light the Scout symbol that stands at the foot of the Eagle trail. *Light Scout candle.* Once inspired by the Spirit of Scouting, he won't stay a Scout long. By putting a few simple skills behind him, he very shortly climbs to tenderfoot. *Light Tenderfoot candle.* At that point the trail becomes harder and he must prove himself a hiker and know how to take care of himself if he is injured. I'll now light the Second Class candle which proves he is a hiker. *Light Second Class candle.* And then, even though the requirements are a bit stiffer, he keeps climbing until finally along the trail he receives his First Class Award. Thus we light the milestone that represents

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the First Class Scout. *Light First Class candle.* But he must not stop here because beyond this first summit the trail to Eagle still leads on.

A broad field of merit badges awaits him. He needs six to advance above First Class. Probably a lot sooner than he thought possible, he finds himself standing on the Star ridge. Thus through leadership and achievement, he conquers the first of the three peaks along the Eagle Trail.

Usually about this time a change takes place. The young Scout has grown into a young man, and he decided to trade his regular patrol patch for that of the Leadership Corps. From here on, we're going to light the Eagle trail from our own Leadership Corps members. In their honor, I shall now light the symbol that designates Star Scout. *Lights Star candle.*

Life & Eagle sections need to be added.