

## Troop 714 Merit Badge Counselor List

Scouts & Parents/Leaders:

Effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, the BSA National Advancement requirements/policies have changed. The updated Guide to Advancement 2011 is available at: <http://scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf>

Several changes in Section 7 for The Merit Badge Program are effective immediately in how Merit Badges are started and counseled:

- 1) Blue Cards (now the only allowable record for Merit Badge progress) must be signed by the unit leader (for troop, Scoutmaster) **BEFORE** the Scout may begin any work on the Merit Badge.
- 2) Online (web-based) MB Counselor Lists are clearly prohibited (See 7.0.2.2). The note says with regard to any troop/district/council lists (e.g., such as those from TroopMaster): **“Scouts should not have access. Their interaction with the Scoutmaster in obtaining approval to work on a badge, and obtaining a counselor’s name, is an important part of the merit badge plan.”**

Based on note #2 above (section 7.0.2.2), a web-based Merit Badge counselor resource is no longer available on this web site. The Scoutmaster (Mr. Moultrie, or a designated ASM if he is unavailable, e.g., at Summer Camp) will keep a current MB list and will confirm with the Scout that a properly qualified counselor has been selected before signing the Blue Card for the Scout to begin the Merit Badge.

While this will pose a change in procedure, and initially an inconvenience for many, the rationale behind the National change in policy is clear and will produce a significant benefit to the program. Clearly this creates a requirement for Scouts to think and plan ahead on their MB work, (avoiding a late-night Friday call, “I’m going to the MB clinic tomorrow and ...”) and that is consistent with our teaching of Vision, Goals, Planning as a basic leadership skill (including most importantly the skill, “leading yourself”). The guidelines also point out that this provides benefits similar to a well-done Scoutmaster conference in advising and guiding the young man.

Thanks for your understanding and support as we ensure our adherence to the principals and letter of the BSA National advancement policies and procedures. We’ll work out details and communicate more on these changes as we work through this process.

Yours in Scouting,

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