

Ways to Come Up with an Eagle Project

- If you don't already, take out a subscription to the local newspapers -- both the regional one and the local "free one" -- for a two week period of time. Read for content and then go back and circle all of the issues affecting youth or people in your town or city.
- Set up an interview with the head of your chartered partner organization. Ask him or her to give you some ideas on meaningful service projects which YOU can take the lead on. Keep in mind that he or she will probably give you a whole list of things that he or she thinks you can do...write them ALL down -- don't discount any of them. Not yet.
- Ask a couple of friends if "they had all of the time in the world and lots of money, what would they do to better the community?" Again, write down ALL of their suggestions -- even the ones you feel are "lame" ones. You'll have a chance to "X them out" later.
- Take a walk around your community (or arrange to have a parent to drive you around town). Notice the things which are broken, which need to be painted or restored, or which looks interesting. Write them down as well.

Now, you have four lists of possible projects. Spend an afternoon or evening matching these projects up. For instance, you may have read in the newspaper that there is going to be a meeting about repairs to the city park, which your friends said "needed to be fixed up years ago", which your chartered partner person suggested you take a look at, which you've walked or drove by and saw the condition of the park. There's a *possible* service project. After you've "matched up" the project candidates with the "highest visibility" or "awareness", you're ready to "line out" those projects which:

- would take too much time (more than three months -- more than a month if you're 17+) to complete (Keep in mind that the average Eagle service project takes between four and seven months to complete -- from brainstorming (what you're doing now) to final completion.)
- would take too much resources (there's a limit to what a young man can motivate adults to do; depending on the project, it may be something you will definitely need more adults to assist with than youth -- suggest those projects as Troop or Team service projects to get everyone associated with the unit to participate and encourage others to do the same)
- are "too lame" (Really -- painting the curbs outside the church? Okay, I can see painting to determine handicapped parking or prohibited parking or special parking...but just painting the curbs? Really? *smiling* Remember that Eagle projects need not be "such high degree level things", but something at the same time which fits a need and something that requires you to *exercise leadership and management* from start to finish).

Choose TWO of the remaining projects and meet with your Scoutmaster or Coach. Explain to him or her what you want to do and how would you start out doing it. Don't let him or her "decide" which one -- but rather seek their knowledge in helping YOU figure out if this is something *you want to do* and *would like doing* from start to finish.

(Two? You're going to write one of them up using the Eagle Scout Service Project booklet for approval. The other you're going to set aside so when the folks approving your project say "can't do it", you've got an equally interesting or challenging project to "fall back upon."

And when you finish your project, you now have a suggestion for a fellow Scout to perform complete with some of the research you did to come to the decision).