



# The Queen Scout Award Ceremony



A Planning Guide for the Queen's Scout Recipient

## Introduction

The District Commissioner will receive your Queen's Scout badge and Record Book from Branch, and might like to hold up your achievements to the local community in a grand Queen Scout Presentation Ceremony. While this is to be commended, the ceremony belongs to you, the recipient.

Accordingly, it is up to you to decide on the type, timing and location of the ceremony. If you wish to have a ceremony by a campfire with your Unit, then that is what you should have. If you want just your Group there, then so be it. If you want a formal ceremony, then you need to think about who you want to attend and take part in the proceedings.

This document provides a guide as to how you might organize a formal ceremony.

## Formal Ceremony - Who should be invited?

At a formal ceremony, the Chief Commissioner will expect an invitation. S/he states this in her/his letter of congratulations to you. If you decide not to invite the Chief, it is recommended you send a letter explaining why. Once you decide on inviting the Chief, then protocol requires you to also invite the Branch Commissioner Venturer Scouts, the Area / Regional Commissioner and the AAC/ARC Venturer Scouts.

The District Commissioner, along with the entire District, should also be invited. If you don't invite the DC, don't expect to have a badge available to present (because, as you may recall from the Introduction, the DC has your badge and record book.) This is a family celebration, so don't just invite the Venturer Scout section! The entire Scouting family should be there. Who knows, you might inspire one more Scout to join Venturer Scouts and continue achieving!

So that's the Scouting family taken care of, but what about the rest of the world? Your family and friends should be invited, along with examiners and other support people. Don't forget that your achievement is recognized community wide, so community leaders (Council, Government etc.) and media should be considered.

Don't forget to have ceremony details (time, date, location) and RSVP details on the invitation. The Group Committee will need to know how many are expected.

## How many hours notice?

Regardless of who is being invited, they deserve notice. If you can't organize at least 4- 6 weeks notice, don't be disappointed by the roll up. So, in terms of hours, around 700-1000!

## Coping with VIPs

VIPs also deserve the opportunity to speak. Why would you invite an Area Commissioner, the Scouting Leader of the whole Area, or a Local Council Member, the local community leader, and not want them to speak at a ceremony that celebrates leadership development?

If you're worried about them droning on, then set them parameters. If they accept the offer to speak, tell them what they are to speak on, for how long, and who else will be speaking. Scouting VIPs will usually reply in writing, and will supply a protocol form asking for details such as arrival time, who will meet them, and whether they are expected to speak.

## Who organizes it?

The Group Committee should find out what you want, and organize invitations, venue, catering, seating, programs and so on to suit. Wet weather arrangements and lighting and sound should also be considered. If the Group has an Honour Board, this should be updated prior to the ceremony. Don't forget, though, that this is not a production, but a Ceremony honouring your achievements. Don't get lost in the ceremony.

You should nominate the master of ceremonies (MC) and the speakers. It would be reasonable for you to approach these people first hand and ask them to participate. The Unit may also be asked to assist by organizing the parade, handing out programs, seating, greeting VIPs etc.

## The Big Day

So the big day has arrived, and everything is planned, organized, and runs like clockwork.....not! Don't panic! This is a big day for a lot of people, especially the VIP for the day, YOU!!!!!! So slow down, relax, and enjoy it!

## A Typical Queen Scout Ceremony

The following is a typical Queen Scout Presentation Ceremony. Keep in mind, though, that the ceremony is owned by YOU and should be designed to meet your wishes.

### Preplanning

Before the start of the Ceremony, several details need to be finalised. The VIPs list and speaker list needs to be drafted so that a programme can be set. If the programme includes a supper or similar, the Group Committee will need to know approximate numbers.

Seating will need to be organized, and a reasonable layout set for both wet and dry weather considerations. Things like the midday sun in summer, and westerly winds in winter, can ruin a Presentation.

If you decide to use a sound system, make sure it's an advantage to do so. While it is essential that all guests are able to clearly hear the proceedings, what often happens is that a large empty space is left around the speaker's area which immediately formalizes the proceedings and makes it remote from its surroundings. Instead of being active participants in a Ceremony, the invited guests become an audience to a production. By using this space to seat people, the sound system may not be required.

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### Arrival

If parking is expected to be a problem, then manage it. Ensure parking attendants direct guests in a safe and efficient manner. Reserve parking spaces for your VIP guests, especially the Chief, local council member, and government member.

As VIPs arrive, it is appropriate that they are met by a member of the Unit and are shown to their seat, or introduced around. They should also be given a copy of the program so they can get their bearings. The Venturer Scout/s on duty should know who they are looking for and what they should be calling them.

The MC should be made aware of the final tally of VIPs so that the formal greeting at the start of the ceremony can go smoothly. This is a great opportunity to showcase the Group to the community. Make the most of it!

### Starting the Ball Rolling

If the starting time of the ceremony is set for 7:30 pm, it should start at 7:30 pm. By stating "7:20pm for 7:30 parade" on the invitation, you are indicating that you really will be starting on time. Often, guests have other commitments after the ceremony, and to have it start 30-45 minutes late is not acceptable.

If starting time has arrived and a VIP (e.g. Queen Scout Recipient, Chief Commissioner, Mayor) hasn't, then make a decision to start regardless, or wait a set time. Often, someone can contact the VIP and find out their location. Why not put a mobile number on the invitation so that when the BC Venturer Scouts gets geographically embarrassed, he can phone for help!

### Opening

When the MC opens the ceremony, welcome everyone (including VIPs) and remember that not all attendees are Scouts. Accordingly, let them in on the game plan. Explain what a parade is, and ask them to stand, sit and so on throughout.

Don't stand the parade in front of the invited guests. Encircle them with the parade so that are made part of it. Make sure the parade is snappy, and the opening prayer is religious not Christian. After the opening prayer, break the parade off, or at least let them be seated. Don't make them stand in formation for the entire Ceremony. You may consider formally escorting the recipient onto parade to a seat of honour.

### Who speaks?

This will be laid out in the programme, but the topics can be split into personal and general. Typical personal topics include:

- Scouting history
- Venturer Scout history
- the Badgework that was completed to achieve the Queen Scout Award,
- involvement in major activities (Revues, school councils etc.), and
- some sort of character statement.

These areas should be covered by the relevant people who know you and have worked with you. This can be a time of fun, as stories are told and character traits exposed. While most recipients can enjoy a laugh at their own expense, ensure speakers finish on a positive note. Also, ensure they know what

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is expected of them. To have a Venturer Scout Leader stand up and read the passport from cover to cover is not always scintillating stuff. Go more for an overview of how many badges and the range of topics, then hone in on a few stories. Everyone loves a good story, but set a time frame!

Other topics might include:

- the significance of the Queen Scout Award
- the role of the Queen Scout in the community
- leadership
- congratulations, and so on.

These are good topics for VIPs, because they can be very effectively delivered without the speaker having a personal knowledge of you.

If one speaker is known to be very talented, put them on towards the end. It helps the normal speakers who are nervous enough feel that they have contributed to the occasion rather than present an anticlimax.

## The presentation

After the speeches, the presentation can commence. The recipient should be called or escorted forward, and the record book presented back. This can be done by a range of people from the VSL to the Chief. It's a good way of involving a VIP.

One thing I have seen occur before the badge presentation is a re-affirmation of the Venturer Scout Promise. This is worth considering, and can involve the entire parade, and / or all past and present Queen Scouts. Try both, and while you're at it, use another VIP to run it!

The DC usually presents the badge, but can hand it to the parents or someone else (as requested by you) to pin on. This is also a good time to give the DC a few minutes to speak.

Other presentations at this stage might be a plaque or gift from the Group, Unit etc.

One effective time to have programmed is an open time of congratulations. This can be done on parade now, or after the ceremony during supper. Either way, let people know that it is coming.

## The response

At last, the Queen Scout (remember, that's YOU, the person everyone came to congratulate!) has the opportunity to speak. This is your chance to thank those who supported you, and to explain what it means to you to have achieved the Queen Scout Award. Usually, your parent/s have been very supportive, and a gesture such as flowers is a nice touch. Put some thought into your response. You are a Queen's Scout and are capable of delivering a memorable message. When you finish, make sure you are escorted back to your seat so you can relax, at last!

The ceremony can now close with an invitation to supper and final parade.

One thing that does sometimes happen is a post-presentation party. This can be a fun for all; but be wary! It will be seen as a Scouting activity by parents, so ensure it is conducted as one.

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