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Eagle Scout earns all 122 merit badges

Determined teen aims high, earns all 122 merit badges

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By BRIDGET BARRY THIAS / Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

When 18-year-old Cameron Barber sets his mind on a goal, he achieves it. He earned Eagle Scout status at age 12. This January, he finished his goal of earning all 122 merit badges. The average age for earning Eagle Scout is 17.

"The national council doesn't keep statistics on how many Boy Scouts have earned all 122 merit badges, but they tell me it is very rare," said Michael Ramsey, marketing director of Boys Scouts of America Circle Ten Council.

Harold Sickler, Cameron's Scoutmaster, said: "A month after Cameron joined the troop, I asked him a question I ask all new Scouts, which is: 'What goals do you want to set for yourself in Scouts?' Cameron replied that he wanted to earn his Eagle by 12 and a half because his dad did it at 13 and he would like to top his dad's record."

Cameron's father, Dr. Alan Barber, an orthopedic surgeon in Plano, has been active as a Boy Scout leader for a number of years.

Cameron lives in Frisco and is a junior in high school. He is a member of Boy Scout Troop 714 that meets at Bent Tree Bible Fellowship in Carrollton. The troop is part of the Great Plains District.

"I felt that earning all 122 merit badges would be a unique opportunity to learn about career opportunities and hobbies and get a taste for the adventures they provide," he said.

Additionally, for every five merit badges over what is required for an Eagle, Boy Scouts can earn a palm. Cameron has 20 palms.

Cameron earned his Eagle status by building a concrete walkway at his church. He designed it, recruited a team of workers and led the project.

In the pursuit of his merit badges, Cameron had outdoor adventures varying from white-water rafting to hiking, rappelling and rock climbing. He has traveled to the Philmont Scout ranch in New Mexico and Camp Alexander in Colorado.

"I have learned a lot about nature and how to avoid dangerous situations. The Boy Scout motto is always

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LAWRENCE JENKINS/Special Contributor
Cameron Barber, 18, showed great desire to succeed from the time he joined his Boy Scout troop, his Scoutmaster says. This summer, Cameron, who earned Eagle Scout status at age 12, will attend the World Jamboree in London.

be prepared," Cameron said.

Earning merit badges also gave him experience at shotgun shooting, gardening and archery.

"I've been able to dabble in careers such as atomic energy and nuclear science, to farming, where you work with plants and animals," Cameron said.

This summer, Cameron will join the adult leaders in accompanying his troop as they attend the World Jamboree in London. He attended a previous World Jamboree in Thailand.

"It was exciting to meet Scouts from all over the world," he said.

Once again setting his sights high, Cameron said his career goal is to be a cardiovascular surgeon. He had a chance to talk to some fathers in his troop who are surgeons by participating in the medicine Scout badge.

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