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Scout Earns All Merit Badges Available!

Andrew Duncan is a member of Troop 377 chartered in Lone Oak, Texas by the Lone Oak Public Library and he is a member of Venturing Crew 22 chartered in Greenville, Texas by the Greenville Elk's Lodge 703. Andrew joined the Boy Scouts when he was 12 years old and now at age 17 has accomplished a feat that only 230 other Scouts in the history of Boy Scouts has done; to earn all the available merit badges. He has earned not only the 135 merit badges available now but also the four merit badges that we're only available to earn during 2010, the 100th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America. Those badges were Tracking, Carpentry, Pathfinding, and Signaling.

When Andrew joined the Boy Scouts, there were only 121 merit badges. The BSA just keeps adding more and more of them, trying to keep the interest of the modern age Scout and introduce them to the many different occupations and hobbies. Andrew in addition to earning 139 merit badges has also earned the rank of Eagle Scout, nine Eagle palms, Ad Altare Dei Religious Award, William T. Hornaday Award, James M. Stewart Good Citizenship Award, Paul Bunyan Axeman Award, World Conservation Award, Mile Swim, Snorkeling BSA, Scuba BSA, and Kayaking BSA.

When asked what was his favorite merit badge was, Andrew replied, "Backpacking was my favorite because of where we went. My crew, led by Mr. Chris Schuster, went to Colorado, and we climbed and camped on a 14,000 ft. mountain near the Great Sand Dunes National Monument. Another time over New Years, we backpacked down into the West Grand Canyon and camped by Havasu Falls on the Havasupai Reservation. Even though you have to eat freeze-dried food and there usually aren't any facilities, you get to go where very few people have ever been. My dad and I have been to many places and hiked, canoed, scuba and biked. I have gotten to do so many things and learn so much on this adventure called Scouting. It is a great way for a son and dad to be together in God's country and a program that teaches leadership by just having fun. As far as categories of merit badges; most difficult - bugling, most fun- Watersports, most expensive- scuba, easiest- fingerprinting, and most helpful- cooking.

Andrew's parents, Greg and Mary Duncan, are both dentists in Greenville. Greg is also a leader in the Troop and the Crew. Both Drs. Greg and Mary Duncan said, "We are so proud of him. What a goal, and he did it! The number of hours it took to complete these merit badges is crazy, yet he found time. We went from Kansas to San Antonio finding counselors and events to earn the different merit badges." Andrew and his parents want to thank all the counselors in the Greenville area that helped him achieve his goal, especially his Scoutmaster Bill Rial and his Crew Advisor Chris Schuster. Andrew also wants to thank his mom, Dr. Mary Duncan, for all her support. She is extremely happy for Andrew. However, she is grateful that he is done, because sewing on the merit badges to his sash was not easy and sometimes painful. She says that the smile on his face made all the time and painful fingers worth the effort!