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Recent New Trier Grad Collects All Boy Scout Merit Badges

Kenilworth resident Nick Pellar is one of about 200 nationwide and 8 in Illinois to have earned all 140 badges.

By **TIM MORAN** (Patch Staff) (</users/tim.moran>)

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It takes a remarkable kind of boy scout to become an Eagle Scout and an even more remarkable amount of motivation to accumulate every single merit badge in the system.

But that's exactly what some 200 across the nation have done, including Kenilworth resident and recent New Trier graduate Nick Pellar. Pellar, who has been accumulating badges since 2008, recently earned his 140th out of a total of 134. That's right, he has so many that some are no longer active.

"I started collecting in sixth grade, just trying to get enough to become an Eagle Scout, but by my sophomore year, I saw I already had 54 and figured I wanted to get them all," said Pellar, who first became an Eagle Scout in 2011 when he helped raise money to build a fence for the Maryville Crisis Center in Chicago.

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Of all the badges he has received, Pellar - who plans on double majoring in Physics and the Classics at Denison University in the fall - says he is most proud of the 'Composite Materials' one because that's what first introduced him to chemicals.

"That's the first time I really began to enjoy science and appreciate it," he said.

To become an Eagle Scout, Pellar had to earn 21 badges; 13 required from the more difficult Eagle-merit group and at least nine other non-Eagle merit badges.

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"The Eagle ones are much more difficult," he explains. "The Personal Fitness badge took three months of workouts every single day."

In 2010, four badges that were originated during the 1950s were discontinued by the scouts, but Pellar still has them. He is one of eight in Illinois with a collection of 140 total.

Somehow in between finding time to achieve the entire set of badges, Pellar has excelled at one of the area's best schools.

During his time at New Trier, he is proud of his involvement in Latin, having served as a teacher's assistant his senior year and the in the music department, where he played Tuba and Base Trombone in both Concert Band and Pep Band.

He expects the latter to continue at Denison, in "smaller groups."

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The Scouts will not be left out of his future plans, however, as Pellar has decided to join a small troop near Denison as an assistant scoutmaster.

Because it was his scoutmasters who have shaped him the right way.

"I want to thank them all," he said. "Tom Edson, Wayne Edson, Rick Gordon, John Hart, Chip Anderson, Rick Boerke, Andrew Stoll, Bob Dold, Colin Kochman, Peter Higgins, Alex Hertel, Chris Gezon, Stephen Matic and Brad Wettersten."

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Photos: Nick Pellar shows his sashes and all 140 merit badges. In one photo he is with Scoutmaster Tom Edson and in the other with U.S. Congressman Robert Dold, who asked for a minute on the floor of the House of Representatives to talk about Pellar's accomplishment.

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