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Scout earns all of the merit badges



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By Paula Evans Neuman

Andrew Schigelone of Lincoln Park has earned all 121 Boy Scout merit badges.

It's a rare accomplishment, and this may be the first time any Scout in the area has achieved it.

“They think he’s the first one in the Detroit area, but they’re not sure,” said Barry Schigelone, Andrew’s dad.

The Eagle Scout’s last badge — archaeology — was gained one month before his 18th birthday. A member of Troop 816 in Taylor, he received his Eagle award on Jan. 11.

Schigelone’s archaeology badge was earned through work at Historic Fort Wayne in Detroit.

According to the Web site meritbadgeknot.com, only 66 other Scouts nationwide have earned all 121 badges.

Schigelone joined the Cub Scouts when he was in first grade, and progressed through the ranks.

“One early inspiration for me was the nature center director at D-A Scout Camp in Metamora,” he said.

“She took a special interest in the Cub Scouts, and we learned many things that helped us later in our Boy Scout skills.”

His first merit badge was pulp and paper. The one he found hardest to earn was personal management. He learned the most from his work on merit badges in surveying and pioneering, Schigelone said.

He’s had many mentors along the way, including Scout leaders Dennis Ross, Joe Gregoire, Jacques Ledent, David Booth, Ed Basar, Escha Brown, Jeff Lang, Rick Mousseau and Mike Zrnich.

During a Three Rivers District “Merit Badge Mania” event a few years ago, Schigelone met David Oakley.

“He soon became my biggest cheerleader for my goal of obtaining all 121 of the merit badges,” Schigelone said.

When he completed his archaeology work, Oakley “rushed” to Fort Wayne from his home in Lincoln Park “to witness this event,” Schigelone said.

For his Eagle project, the Scout spent 256 hours rebuilding a trail of steps that leads to the Rouge River from the Henry Ford Estate in Dearborn.

He’s a senior at Gabriel Richard High School in Riverview, and hopes to attend the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor next fall to study engineering.

Schigelone enjoys outdoor activities, and Scouting has given him a chance to pursue his interests as well as his goals, he said.

“Scouting is an adventure and a commitment to service toward others,” he said.

His years in Scouting have allowed him to learn skills that will help him for the rest of his life, and to have fun, as well, Schigelone said.

Scouting offers “a chance to motivate and challenge yourself to do whatever you set your goals and dreams to be,” Schigelone said.

His goals have been ambitious, and so far, he’s attained them all — and he has 121 merit badges to prove it.

Comments

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scoutmom wrote on Jan 26, 2009 1:15 PM:

" That is great. Congrats to him and whoever sewed all those badges on! "

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