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YOUR NEIGHBORS

SCOUT'S HONOR

Local Boy Scout has earned 141 badges – the maximum possible.



Ted Autore, 15, and a member of Kettering Boy Scout Troop 236, has earned all 141 merit badges. CONTRIBUTED

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Charles 'Doc' Goodwin
Scout Master, Boy Scout Troop 236

By Pamela Dillon
Contributing Writer

Boy Scout Troop 236 in Kettering has an impressive number of members at 175, with active participation at about 100 present for weekly meetings. How does one Scout distinguish himself among so many? Ted Autore is unique in this large group.

At the young age of 15 he has earned every single merit badge there is; an astounding 141 that have been sewed onto his green sash.

"After achieving everything in Cub Scouts, it just sounded like the next fun thing to do," said Autore, a sophomore at Bellbrook High School.

His parents, Greg and Diane Autore, said their son shared his goal with fellow Scouts before letting them in on his plans. By then it was too late to discourage his lofty, and time-consuming, ambition. So, in addition to calculus at school and practicing piano at home, he set off to achieve these round badges of honor. It is believed that less than a dozen Scouts in the nation have gained this distinction.

"Ted is an extremely intelligent Scout with a real drive to be the best. In 30 years as a Scoutmaster I have only known one other Scout who earned every merit badge, and Ted is by far the youngest to accomplish this at only 15," said Charles "Doc" Goodwin, Scoutmaster Troop 236. "This is a very difficult task that requires real focus and drive from the Scout and his parents."

And it requires a supportive scoutmaster. The troop dedicates half an hour at each meeting to focus on merit badges. Four are offered during five-week sessions, with one being an Eagle-required badge. As such, Autore has acquired Eagle rank. In fact, only 21 merit badges are required, along with a community-based service project, to earn the pinnacle of Eagle status.

"Ted put in an outstanding amount of determination and effort to achieve all 141 merit badges," Greg Autore said. "We are very proud of him and very thankful for all the people who helped him to achieve it."

In addition to core competencies, such as camping, lifesaving and first aid, created back in 1911, some requirements have been updated. Computers became digital technology, and others, such as sustainability, nuclear science and animation, have joined the field. Tracking, carpentry, signaling and pathfinding were re-released in 2010 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Scouting.

His parents are quick to point out many organizations and individuals that helped Ted achieve this milestone. They estimate about 100 merit badge counselors, five different Boy Scout councils, and adults from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton Corrugated Packaging, Bigger Vet Clinic and Skate Zone 71. Also the Columbus Zoo assisted with fish and wildlife management, and the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery with environmental science.

Air Force retiree Robert Hisey said, "My son earned Eagle and many awards, but that boy [Ted] is flying with after-burners on!"