

NEWS

Longmont Eagle Scout bugles his way to earning all 141 merit badges



Lewis Geyer / Staff Photographer

Eagle Scout Patrick Gibbs, 17, of Longmont, has to earn one more merit badge — bugling — to have earned all of the 141 merit badges available.

By **AMELIA ARVESEN** |

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Now, the 17-year-old is fine-tuning bugling, which is the final mastery he needs to have attained all 141 merit badges as an Eagle Scout. It's a feat only a small percentage of Boy Scouts — [including another from Longmont](#) — have earned since the organization was incorporated in 1910.

"When I came into Scouting, I started earning merit badges pretty quickly," Gibbs said. "I decided I wanted to try to earn them all by the time I age out (at 18) and so I've just been working hard."

At a rate of three merit badges every two months, it has taken Gibbs several years to collect a sash full of patches with the colorful, embroidered symbols of a campfire, bow and arrow, kayak and many others representing both indoor and outdoor activities.

Troy Sheffer, Troop 548 scout master, said he's seen Gibbs grow up since he met him as an 11-year-old and learn leadership and maturity, among other skills in the process.

"One thing that boys and other people have never seemed to master is time management and he's been able to do all the other things as well as achieving something that most boys never will," Sheffer said.

By dedicating time to refining skills and completing the necessary paperwork, Gibbs said he opted to sacrifice weekend soccer games or karate practices. But prioritizing has prepared him for adulthood.

"It takes a lot of hard work and dedication and planning and communicating, which are all skills you need in college once you graduate and get a job," Gibbs said. "It teaches boys a lot of skills that they will use later on in life and I think that's been the most important part. It's really been helping me prepare for what's next in life."

Gibbs will attend the University of Colorado Boulder in the fall and part of his decision was dependent upon the Merit Badge University program offered through the Alpha Phi Omega fraternity.

It's where he received his first merit badge six years ago.

"It's kind of neat to see how I kind of was through how I am now," Gibbs said. "You have these kids and they're wild and crazy and you think, I wasn't like that, but then you realize you were really like that."

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As for the less academic specialties, Gibbs' father, Grey, said together they experienced outings they would have never sought out on their own, including caving the first year, backpacking 10 days in New Mexico and white-water rafting on a recent weekend.

Grey Gibbs said he's proud of his son's transformation from a young boy who clung to his father's leg at a birthday party, to in 2014 being a distinguished Boy Scout delivering a 20-minute presentation to a room full of Longmont business people.

"After that, you realize there's a lot of things in life you can do with the right attitude the right mentality. It's been wonderful to see him grow up," Grey Gibbs said.

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