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BOY SCOUTS

Georgetown Scout completes rare badge feat

Eagle Scout Connor Crowe has earned all 142 badges available.

By **Claire Osborn**
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Connor Crowe earned his final merit badge last month after his mother taught him to play the bugle. That made him only the second Boy Scout in more than 100 years in the Central Texas area to earn all the merit badges available, Scouting officials said. Crowe earned 142 badge-

es, which are awarded when Scouts gain new skills.

Through his Boy Scout training, Crowe now knows how to backpack, sail, run a small business, communicate in Morse code, perform first aid, shoot a gun, write a one-act play, fly-fish and even weave a basket if absolutely necessary.

He's also learned tracking, signaling, personal finance and received his merit badge for invention by attaching magnets to a net that people can stretch over their car windows if they want to camp in their vehicles.

Earning all the badges wasn't his goal when he joined Boy Scout Troop 405 in Georgetown at age 11, the 18-year-old Westwood High School senior said.

"It was just a process: I started showing up to all the events and would earn eight or nine badges at a time, and then I thought I could try to get them all," he said.

His parents helped him by driving him to merit badge fairs and other Boy Scout events all over the state, said his mother, Kathleen Crowe. His family, including his sis-

ter, all were certified in scuba diving at the same time he was, his mother said.

Connor Crowe, who is also an Eagle Scout, said there was plenty of suffering and sweat involved in earning the badges, but that he enjoyed the process.

"I kind of enjoy being miserable a little bit," he said.

Even on 8- to 10-mile backpack trips, he said, "just being on the trail with your friends and surrounded by nature is an experience you really can't

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Connor Crowe displays some of the badges he has earned. The last time a Boy Scout in a troop in the Capitol Area Council — which covers 15 Central Texas counties — earned all the merit badges available was in 2007, when Adrian DeLeon of Austin earned 121 badges, said Charles Mead, a Boy Scout spokesman. RALPH BARRERA / AMERICAN-STATESMAN

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get many other places.”

He’s shivered in freezing weather on canoe trips and suffered in the heat while building trails, but it’s all been a “huge adventure,” he said. “I really do love all that Boy Scouting teaches,” he said. “It’s helped me become more confident as a leader and a person in general.”

The last time a Boy Scout in a troop in the Capitol Area Council —

which covers 15 Central Texas counties — earned all the merit badges available was in 2007, when Adrian DeLeon of Austin earned 121 badges, said Charles Mead, a Boy Scout spokesman.

The 142 badges Crowe earned are the most merit badges ever offered by the Boy Scouts, Mead said.

The number of merit badges a Scout can earn varies, he said, because some have been added over time and some removed.

“Connor is a terrific young man who very

clearly is going to be successful in whatever he chooses to do going forward,” Mead said.

“Earning 142 badges takes a great amount of interest in learning,” Mead added.

His former Scout Master, Calvin Gray, said Crowe is such a good leader that he was able to take 36 Boy Scouts he didn’t know from other troops to a national Scouting event in West Virginia.

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