

SCOUT POST MOUNT OLIVE

Scout cleans up on merit badges

The sash to Eagle Scout Shane Jones' uniform hangs down to his knees, and with good reason; it has to be long enough to hold the 139 Merit Badges he has earned, 137 that the Boy Scouts of America currently offers plus two that have been retired.

So few Scouts have earned all of the available merit badges that there isn't a Boy Scout sash long enough to hold all of Jones' badges, so he improvised by asking his grandmother to add an extension to the sash that he had.

According to Jones, it took him an average of one week to earn a Merit Badge, but there were some that took a month or more.

"My first Merit Badge was Fingerprinting that was conducted at the New Jersey State Police/National Guard Camporee in 2011," said Jones, "and my last Merit Badge was Signs, Signals and Codes which I completed at the recent 2017 National Jamboree," which was held last month at the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve in Mount Hope, West Virginia.

"I can gladly say I am the 344th Scout since 1912 to earn all of the Merit Badges and am the first in Patriot's Path Council under the current Scout Executive, Dennis Kohl," said Jones. Kohl has been a council executive for 39 years.

Jones said, "Throughout all 139 Merit Badges the most fun one, hands down, is the photography Merit Badge since that is what I want to become my career. And, the hardest would have to be the scuba diving Merit Badge because I had to get over the mental barriers of trusting a tank of



Eagle Scout Shane Jones has earned every Merit Badge offered by the Boy Scouts, which he wears on his sash.

air to keep me breathing at the bottom of a murky lake."

Jones is a member of Boy Scout Troop 156 in Flanders. He started as a Cub Scout 11 years ago and earned his Eagle Award, the Boy Scouts' highest honor, when he was 14. He will be a senior at Mount Olive High School this fall.

To submit school news send an email to morris@starledger.com.