

# » Utah

Enter Keyword

Utah Page Two U.S. World Sports Weather Traffic Biz Entertainment Shows More

Classifieds Cars Homes Jobs Local Deals

Local Stories KSL 5 News Investigations Tough Times Survival Bank Staying Safe Statecraft: Government & Politics Sunday Edition



Shocking Discovery by Cambridge Researchers for Amazing Joint Relief... [Click here](#)



How to Relieve your Joints? Relieve your Joint Discomfort, Improve Mobility, and Support Joint health... [Click here](#)

Instaflex.com  
About this ad

## 18-year-old Boy Scout holds every current merit badge

By Hunter Schwarz

January 6th, 2012 @ 6:23pm


This archived news story is available only for your personal, non-commercial use. Information in the story may be outdated or superseded by additional information. Reading or replaying the story in its archived form does not constitute a re-publication of the story.



25 Comments  
[Post or read comments](#)

**Related Stories**  
Utah Scout earns every available merit badge

**Photo Gallery »**



18 pics »

CENTERVILLE — Not every Boy Scout puts in the work to earn their Eagle Scout award, but even fewer can say they earned every merit badge.

John Bills, 18, of Centerville, is one of the few. He comes from a family of Eagle Scouts, and his collection of merit badges — 129 — is larger than the combined total of his father, grandfather and five uncles.

"This wasn't the goal in the first place," he said.

Bills earned his Eagle Scout badge when he was 13 years old, an achievement that requires only 21 merit badges. Because he was eligible to participate in Scouting until he was 18, however, he decided to continue earning and learning.

"I had so much fun that I kept going," he said.

Although the Boy Scouts of America does not keep a record of Scouts who earn every current merit badge, the organization said it is a very small

percentage.

"Approximately 200 Scouts earn in excess of 100 merit badges annually," said Renée Fairrer, public relations manager for the Boy Scouts of America.

Journalism was Bills' first merit badge, which he earned when he began Scouting. He earned his final one on the day before his birthday.

Bills credits his father, Scout leaders and the many merit badge counselors for his achievement.

**"None of this was even possible without my dad. You need someone who can support you. I had a ton of great leaders."**

— John Bills

print email share more

Tweet 6 Like 67 1

**ebay dailydeals**  
Great deals for Jan.9 | Free shipping, always!

50% OFF



Black & Decker Cordless Flex Vac w/

\$45.99  
MSRP \$94.99  
SAVE \$46

SHOP NOW

Share this deal: [email](#) [twitter](#)






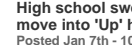
About this ad

### Most Popular

Read Video Commented Deseret News

1. Alaska town tries to dig out from huge ...
2. Beezow Doo-Doo Zopittybop-Bop-Bop ...
3. Explosive materials found in shooting ...
4. Students calculate beatings of slaves; ...
5. Model LDS temples — Lego and wooden — ...

### Latest Videos

-  Explosive materials found in shooting suspect's home  
Posted Jan 9th - 1:09pm  
[Tweet/Share](#)
-  Gunman robs pizza shop  
Posted Jan 9th - 7:50am  
[Tweet/Share](#)
-  Romney attacked on all fronts in final NH debate  
Posted Jan 8th - 10:14pm  
[Tweet/Share](#)
-  Ogden officers given Sunday off to rest  
Posted Jan 8th - 3:56pm  
[Tweet/Share](#)
-  Ping pong tournament takes sport to next level  
Posted Jan 7th - 10:33pm  
[Tweet/Share](#)
-  High school sweethearts move into 'Up' house  
Posted Jan 7th - 10:19pm

"None of this was even possible without my dad," Bills said. "You need someone who can support you. I had a ton of great leaders."

La Mar Bangerter, Bills' scoutmaster when he was 13, remembered how self-motivated the young Scout was.

"He would go out and do it on his own," he said. "He was very much a leader among the other boys."

Some merit badges were easier than others, Bills said. The nature and forestry merit badges, for example, didn't require as much effort as personal management and personal fitness, merit badges that take three months to track progress. Others gave Bills the chance to learn new skills like bugling and Morse code.

Bills' goal became more challenging when the Boy Scouts of America added four "historic" merit badges — pathfinding, tracking, signalling and carpentry — to celebrate its 100th anniversary. These merit badges were only available for a year.

"We already had a cramped schedule," he said. "It was a really hectic last year."

His pursuits took him on more than 200 miles of hiking, the set of a Hollywood movie and to a federal court.

During a trip to the Utah Humane Society, Bills and his father decided to take a dog, Jake, home. A few days later, Jake's barking woke them up in the night, leading them to discover that Bills' grandfather had locked himself out on a cold February night. Bills credits his new dog for saving his grandfather's life.

Experiences like that became common as Bills completed the more than 2,250 requirements to earn all his merit badges. His father, Chris Bills, said opportunities would appear conveniently and strangers were often excited to help like a semitruck driver who helped with the truck transportation merit badge.

"It was miraculous at first, but then it became the norm," his father said.

Discipline, patience and goal setting are among the skills Bills gained from Scouting, and he said he will cherish the memories he made.

"It's the experiences I'll take with me," Bills said. "We've had so many once-in-a-lifetime experiences."

Email: [hschwarz@desnews.com](mailto:hschwarz@desnews.com)



Tweet/Share

<< 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >>

**Free Catheter Samples**

Get up to 200 Catheters Per Month. Little or NO Out-of-Pocket Costs!

[www.LiberatorMedical.com/Catheters](http://www.LiberatorMedical.com/Catheters)

**Free Wild Hog Hunting**

Texas is over-run with hogs Help! 3 day/2night with meals and lodging

[www.HogHuntingHogHunting.com](http://www.HogHuntingHogHunting.com)

**Family Dental Plans**

Save 10% - 60% at the dentist. It's easy. Just enter your ZIP code

[DentalPlans.com](http://DentalPlans.com)

**Earn 0.90% APY**

With A High Yield Savings Account From American Express. Learn More.

[americanexpress.com/PersonalSavings](http://americanexpress.com/PersonalSavings)

AdChoices About this ad

**Related:**



**Boy Scout earns 132 merit badges despite disability**

A Boy Scout from South Jordan has achieved a goal only a few can claim, and he didn't let his disability deter him.

**Site Index**

**Advertisement**

Advertisement



Homeowners in Washington may be eligible for 3% refinance rate with any credit type.



Washington - If you have car insurance and you drive 25 mi/day or less you better read this...



Ephrata - This new trick allows Washington residents to get car insurance at half-price.



Washington Teachers are in demand. Gain the skills and degree to become a teacher.

About this ad

print email share more Tweet 6 Like 67 1

**News**

- Local
News
Politics
Investigations
Tough Times Survival Bank
National
World
Showbiz
Biz/Finance
Personal Finance Center
Consumer
Sci/Tech
Health
Odds & Ends

**Weather**

- Forecasts
Current Conditions
VORTEX
Microcast
Water Watch
Snowpack totals
Ramp reports
Lawn Watering guide
Flood/Water Flow
Photo Galleries
Weather Planner
Weather Lab
Ask the Meteorologist
Ski Report

**TV**

- Bios
Schedule
Contests
More on the Web
Studio 5

**Sports**

- BYU
Cougar Tracks
U of U
USU
Jazz/NBA
RSL
Prep

**Radio**

- Listen LIVE
Podcasts
Lineup
Bios
Staff Blog
Shows
Utah's Morning News
Doug Wright Show
The Browser
Utah's Afternoon News
Nightside Project
KSL Movie Show
KSL Outdoors
KSL Greenhouse Show

**Classifieds**

- General
Place an Ad
Homes
Place an Ad
Cars
Place a Car ad
Utah Jobs
Place a Job ad
Help

**Announcements**

- Place an Announcement

**Advertise with KSL**

**Other Resources**

- Contact Us / Phone Numbers
Careers with KSL
Careers with DDM
Web Resources
Charity Account Form

**Wireless**

- ksl.com mobile
text alerts

**Legal**

- Terms of Use

Religion  
General Conference  
Mission Guide  
Education  
KSL Schools

Weather on 5.3  
**Traffic**  
Traffic Cams

NFL  
Golf Utah  
Stats/Scores  
**Opinion**  
Editorials  
Sunday Edition

Matt Townsend Show  
KSL Travel Show  
Features  
Speaking on Biz  
Teacher Feature  
Metro Business Reports  
Contests  
Events

**Movies**  
Movie/Theater Listings

Privacy Statement  
DMCA Notice  
EEO Public File Report  
DTV Quarterly Activity  
Closed Captioning Assistance

**Sister Sites**  
FM100 / Arrow 103.5  
Deseret News / Mormon Times  
Deseret Book

KSL's public inspection files, including the Children's Television Programming Reports and the DTV Quarterly Activity Station Report, are available for viewing during regular office hours at the KSL Broadcast House.

© 2012 ksl.com | KSL Broadcasting Salt Lake City UT | Site hosted & managed by Deseret Digital Media - a Deseret Media Company m30

