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## **Culver tops off his Eagle rank and then some**

Joshua Culver has accomplished something rare.

The Park Hall resident, who turned 18 on Saturday, became an Eagle Scout when he was just shy of 13. Most Scouts don't make Eagle, according to Steve McDanal of Mechanicsville, Troop 793's Scoutmaster and Culver's Scoutmaster for his last four years, and those who do are generally between 16 and 18 years old.

But Culver has accomplished something far more unusual than becoming an Eagle Scout at a young age.

A Boy Scout needs to earn at least 21 merit badges to be considered for the Eagle rank. But when Culver was just 5 years old and started his Scouting career, the first-grader set a goal to earn all the merit badges there were, which as of now, is 137. In addition, Culver has earned 20 Palms, honors that are awarded after attaining the Eagle rank by earning additional merit badges and serving in leadership roles.

Culver's accomplishments are as rare as the likelihood of "being struck by lightning," McDanal said Monday morning.

"I don't know of any other Scout who has earned 137 [merit badges] ... You don't get boys who earn 20 [Palms]."

Only 209 other Scouts in the history of Boy Scouts of America have been confirmed to have completed all the possible merit badges, according to [www.meritbadgeknot.com](http://www.meritbadgeknot.com). And only about 20 of them went on to earn 20 Palms. Culver's name will be submitted to the organization this week for inclusion in this listing.

"It was my goal to complete all the merit badges before I even joined a troop," Culver wrote in an email. "They kept adding new merit badges to the 121 available when I became a Boy Scout, until there were a total of 137 available when I turned 18. The two most recently added merit badges were just added in July."

Culver said that the welding badge was particularly difficult to earn. He traveled to Fredericksburg, Va., to work with someone to learn how to master that skill. He also remembers the cycling and backpacking badges required a lot of planning and effort, but "were fun."

"Game design was my favorite," he said. "But they were all fun, and I learned so much. It was great being able to interact with so many different people that were into the various badges."

McDanal, who is an Eagle Scout himself, noted that Culver accomplished all that while being very busy with schoolwork and other activities like marching band and wrestling while attending Great Mills High School. Culver has also been on staff five times for National Youth Leadership Training, a program run by the Boy Scouts of America, and will be a youth course director next June. He was also his Jamboree troop's senior patrol leader.

And McDanal added that Culver was also the first to offer to help others also accomplish their goals.

"He's phenomenally driven and humble," McDanal said. "He's just a good kid ... When I think of an Eagle Scout, Joshua Culver is what I think of."

Culver is the son of Donna and Jack Culver of Park Hall and the older brother of Sarah. Culver graduated in 2013 from Great Mills High School, in the school's STEM Academy. He is in his first year in the honor's program at the University of Delaware, where he is studying chemical engineering.

Culver's goal is to become an astronaut. "I do," McDanal said emphatically, when asked if he thought Culver would achieve that goal. "If Josh said he wanted to be president of the United States, I would fully expect to see news of his candidacy. When Josh sets a goal, he gets it done."

Troop 793 was chartered by the St. Maries Optimist Club and meets at the Wildewood Community Center 1.

Race set to support special education conference

Fabulous with 47, a local support and advocacy group for individuals with Down syndrome, is hosting its third annual race on Sunday, Nov. 3, at 11 a.m. at Woodlawn in Ridge. This year's events will include a 4.7K run/walk and a kids' 1K fun run. Entrance to both races is free.

Following the race, Adrian Forsythe will speak about his experiences as a young man with Down syndrome. Lotus Kitchen will be there with food to complement Slack Winery's wine selection. Live music will follow Forsythe's speech.

All proceeds from the event will go toward a future special education conference in Southern Maryland in 2014. Registration for the event is available at [www.fabulouswith47.com](http://www.fabulouswith47.com).

See the stars

A free public star party will be held, weather permitting, on Saturday, Nov. 9, at 7 p.m. at Myrtle Point Park, located at 24050 Patuxent Blvd. in California. Hosted by the Friends of Myrtle Point Park and using equipment

provided by the Southern Maryland Astronomical Society, participants can observe the moon, planets and stars through a variety of astronomical equipment. Everyone is welcome, including groups. For more information, see [www.myrtlepoint.org](http://www.myrtlepoint.org) or [www.smas.us](http://www.smas.us) or call 301-743-7003.

#### New group to meet

Weekly meetings of Emotions Anonymous, a mutual-aid, 12-step program for those desiring emotional wellness, will start meeting next month at Beacon of Hope Recovery and Wellness Center. EA meetings are open to anyone who has the desire to be emotionally well.

People attend EA meetings for various reasons, among them feelings related to depression, anxiety, relationship problems and other difficulties. The only requirement for membership is a desire for serenity and peace of mind. More than 900 meetings are held weekly in 26 different countries. EA meetings are mutual aid/self-help meetings and are not counseling groups.

Meetings will be held each Monday at 6 p.m. starting Nov. 4. Beacon of Hope Recovery and Wellness Center of Walden is located at 21800 N. Shangri-La Drive in Lexington Park, in Millison Plaza. For more information, contact Laura at 301-997-1300, ext. 804, or at [beacon@waldensierra.org](mailto:beacon@waldensierra.org). For more about EA, visit [www.emotionsanonymous.org](http://www.emotionsanonymous.org).

#### Share your holiday recipes

It is only four weeks until Thanksgiving, a holiday that is centered on a spectacular meal. While that meal will probably feature roast turkey or perhaps stuffed ham, family cooks have far more latitude in what they choose to serve as side dishes.

For a story just before Thanksgiving, The Enterprise plans to focus on those side dishes — side dishes that have become as expected at your family's holiday meal as that turkey.

St. Mary's County residents who are willing to share a recipe are asked to submit it to The Enterprise for possible inclusion in the story. In addition to the recipe, we are also interested in why the dish is important to your holiday meal. Perhaps it was passed down from a great-grandmother, or it the only thing a child will eat. Email the recipe and related information, along with your name and town of residence and a daytime phone number (in case there are any questions, not for publication) to [scraton@somdnews.com](mailto:scraton@somdnews.com).

#### Schwan's fundraiser to benefit rescue squad

The Hollywood Volunteer Rescue Squad Schwan's fundraiser has started and runs for one year. Beginning now through Nov. 13, the squad will receive 20 percent of a purchase amount. After Nov. 13, the squad will receive 5 percent of a purchase amount for one year. To participate, visit [www.Schwans-Cares.com](http://www.Schwans-Cares.com); click on "Find a Campaign" on the home page; enter campaign ID 1547 into the search box; click on the "Fundraisers"

tab at the top; find the name "HVRS Co 79;" click the "Support Now" button; and shop. Participants can also call 855-870-7208 and provide campaign ID 1547 and fundraising ID 2500.

Want some free computer help?

Southern Maryland GiveCamp is looking for nonprofit organizations to participate in its fifth annual give camp. GiveCamps were created so computer professionals could give back to the community. In the past, GiveCamp has helped organizations create websites, track volunteers for an event and developed a donor database. If an organization could benefit from any of these creations, it is encouraged to go to [www.somdgc.org](http://www.somdgc.org) and click on the "GiveCamps" menu option before Dec. 31 to submit an application or call 301-752-3189 for more information.

Trinity Lutheran announces new pastor

Trinity Lutheran Church in Lexington Park has announced that the Rev. Jonathan Blanke accepted a call to be the church's next pastor. Blanke will be the eighth called pastor since Trinity was founded in 1954.

Blanke most recently served as professor at the Japan Lutheran College and Seminary of Tokyo. He began his ministry in Japan as a Lutheran missionary and pastor of Okinawa Lutheran Church. He received his master of divinity from Concordia University in St. Louis in 1992 and his doctorate in exegetical theology from the Concordia Seminary Graduate School in St. Louis in 2007.

Trinity Lutheran Church is a member of the Southeastern District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Area residents are invited to join the members of Trinity for services on Sunday mornings at 8 and 11 a.m. and for Sunday school offerings for all ages at 9:30 a.m.

Preorders taken for sandwich sale

The Ridge Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary will be selling stuffed ham sandwiches for \$5 each on Nov. 12 at the Ridge firehouse, located at 13820 Point Lookout Road. Preorders are recommended and are now being accepted until Nov. 5. Preorder sandwiches by sending an email to [auxiliary@ridgevfd.org](mailto:auxiliary@ridgevfd.org), including your name, phone number, pickup day and time and the number of sandwiches you would like or call 301-872-5671 and leaving a message with the same information. Email orders will receive an electronic confirmation. All preorders can be picked up on Tuesday, Nov. 12, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. or on Monday evening, Nov. 11, from 6 to 8 p.m. Baked goods will also be available for sale.

Poster contest set to mark acting troupe's anniversary

To commemorate its 10th anniversary season, The Newtowne Players is sponsoring a poster contest to encourage young people in Southern Maryland to express their vision of the performing arts and specifically community theater. The theme of the contest is "What Community Theatre Means to Me." Students kindergarten through grade 12 in Southern Maryland are eligible to participate.

First-, second- and third-place winners in four grade categories (K-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12) will be chosen by a panel of judges made up of Newtowne Players members and local artists. Prizes include T-shirts, a display of winners' artwork in the Three Notch Theatre lobby in Lexington Park and publication in a show program in 2013-2014. For poster contest rules, guidelines and entry form, visit [www.newtowneplayers.org](http://www.newtowneplayers.org) and click on the "10th Anniversary" tab at the top of the home page. Posters must be postmarked by Dec. 31 or dropped off at the theater on 21744 South Coral Drive in Lexington Park. For more information visit [www.newtowneplayers.org](http://www.newtowneplayers.org).

Reservations being accepted for colonial madrigal dinners

Historic St. Mary's City will host the 42nd annual series of colonial madrigal dinners in the State House of 1667 during the first two weekends of December. Saturday dates are sold out, but seating is still available on Fridays and Sundays — Dec. 6, 8, 13 and 15.

Holiday revelers have feasted through the ages. In the Maryland colony, delicacies arrived with the tobacco fleet toward the end of the year and cool weather signaled time for butchering animals and decanting beverages that had fermented since the harvest. The notion of adding music to the meal was introduced to England from Italy, and the 16th-century lords and ladies of the land enjoyed great madrigal feasts.

Today's madrigal dinners feature other customs that were probably familiar to the colonists. The burning of a yule log, a common practice by the Middle Ages, was thought to bring good luck in the new year. Plants that remained green through the bleakest times have held a special significance since ancient Rome. In 15th- and 16th-century England, musicians sang carols to introduce the Christmas story to those who were unable to read.

All of these traditions are part of HSMC's madrigal dinners. Following wassail and appetizers, the meal by Expressions of St. Mary's will feature Cornish game hen, pork tenderloin, oysters and, for vegetarians, stuffed acorn squash. Holiday decorations designed and installed by the Mistress Brent Garden Club will set the stage for harmonies by St. Maries Musica. Join the colonial hosts in the Great Hall at 6 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays; Sunday dinners will commence at 3 p.m.

Admission is \$85 for the general public (\$80 for current Friends of Historic St. Mary's City members). Reservations are required by calling 240-895-4991 or emailing [events@stmaryscity.org](mailto:events@stmaryscity.org).

Digital magazines available from library

The public libraries in Southern Maryland are now offering Zinio for Libraries for library users in Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties. Zinio is a digital newsstand, offering multi-user access to publications in downloadable formats.

More than 50 magazines are available for customers to download free, including Food Magazine, Elle, ESPN, Popular Mechanics, Forbes and Good Housekeeping. Zinio users can have access to complete digital magazines, which can be viewed on most Internet-enabled devices inside or outside of the library.

Zinio magazines are viewed through a free Zinio Reader app, available from any mobile device app store. Magazines can be downloaded for off-line reading, as well. There are unlimited checkouts of Zinio magazines, and no late fees or check-in times.

The Southern Maryland Regional Library Association is funding the Zinio technical platform and service, while the three county libraries are choosing and purchasing the online magazines that are in the Zinio library.

Zinio magazines can be accessed from any of the three county library websites, or directly from the “downloadable materials” tab on COSMOS ([cosmos.somd.lib.md.us](http://cosmos.somd.lib.md.us)). First-time Zinio users will be required to set up a Zinio.com account and password, as well as a Zinio library collection account. Library users can find help setting up Zinio on the COSMOS website, or talk to a librarian in person at their local branch.

Time for that flu shot

The first cases of seasonal influenza for the year have been confirmed in St. Mary’s County and other parts of Maryland. The St. Mary’s County Health Department reminds residents that the best line of defense against the flu is annual vaccination.

Influenza vaccine is particularly important for individuals who are at risk of influenza-related complications, including children 6 months to 18 years of age, people 50 and older, pregnant women, people with chronic medical conditions and those with weakened immune systems.

People who care for someone in these groups or for infants too young to be vaccinated should also be diligent about getting vaccinated in order to avoid spreading the flu. This includes family members, health-care workers, child care providers and school workers.

The St. Mary’s County Health Department is working jointly with St. Mary’s County public schools to vaccinate children, with parental consent, through scheduled flu vaccine clinics in the public elementary and middle schools. The invitation for private school students to participate in these clinics was also extended to principals at private elementary and middle schools in the county.

The vaccine typically takes up to two weeks to begin working, so the health department encourages residents to get vaccinated as soon as possible. For more information about seasonal influenza and flu vaccination, visit [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).

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