

ForsythLife

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EDUCATION

CREATIVITY through com



Photos by

Riverwatch Middle students, from left, Sadhana Durbha, Hannah Kim, S. Chang work on labeling the sections of a comic book page that teaches them during a recent Comic Book Club meeting at the school.

Club unlocks



Autumn McBride Forsyth County News

Nick Davis, an Eagle Scout, holds up a sash that features some of the 129 merit badges he has earned.

Scout earns all 129 badges

Feat puts him in select group

By Alyssa LaRenzie

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At age 18, Nick Davis has a background in dentistry, bugling and scuba diving, along with more than 100 other skills ranging from the useful to the obscure.

The Forsyth County Eagle Scout has earned all 129 Boy Scout merit badges available to him, one of only a handful of young men to achieve the feat.

Davis, a senior at Forsyth Central High School, estimated he spent more than 1,000 hours working toward the criteria for the badges.

"It was definitely worth it. I enjoyed every moment," he said. "I got to do a lot of stuff that I wouldn't normally get to do."

After obtaining all the activity pins as a Cub Scout, Davis set his sights on the Boy Scout badges during his first day in the new troop.

His Scoutmaster at the time chuckled thinking of how much work it would involve, said Davis' father, Fred, who added the leader "didn't know Nick that well then."

Davis started at age 12 with his radio badge and finished by earning the inventing badge about two weeks before his 18th birthday, when he would no longer be eligible for badges.

For his final badge, he invented a mat for the bathroom floor that lights up when stepped on. He designed the item for his grandfather.

Finishing all the badges puts Davis in a select group of Scouts.

While no official count has been taken, the

Club unlocks imagination at Riverwatch

By Alyssa LaRenzie

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Studying language arts isn't just about the works of famous authors.

In the case of one campus club, it's about language and art coming together in graphic novels, or comic books.

Riverwatch Middle School students in the Comic Book Creators' Club meet once or twice a month after class to learn about the comic process, share ideas and work toward creating their own books.

The group is led by sixth-grade language arts teacher Adam Collins, who wore a Green Lantern shirt underneath a sweater, during a December meeting of the club.

The walls of the room are equally decorated in proclamations of students' classwork and a testimony to a love of comics.

During his days as a fifth-grade teacher, Collins combined the two during a young author's project. But



Teacher Adam Collins, left, points out parts of during a recent Comic Book Club meeting at R. Top right, Joey Flynn works on his creations. E thumbs through a comic book during the meetin

when he moved to middle school, he had too many students to take on the task.

He formed the club three years ago to allow middle schoolers that opportunity rather than making it a requirement.

The group, which started with five or six members, has more than tripled in size. The split is nearly half girls and half boys.

The main purpose of the club is to bring together the interests and



Photos by **Autumn McBride**
Forsyth County News

Fred Davis, above, flips through a book of congratulatory letters sent to his son, Nick, after he earned 129 merit badges. Left, Nick talks about his experiences.



Nick Davis points to his radio merit badge, the first of the 129 he earned and the one he said was the most difficult.

FROM 1C Scout

number is a "mere fraction" of the estimated 5 percent of Scouts who earn the top rank of Eagle, said Troy Pugh, who operates a Web site highlighting those who have all the badges.

The site, www.MeritBadgeKnot.com, has confirmed 131 scouts have accomplished it to date. Another 17 are awaiting confirmation.

While only 21 badges are required as part of achieving the Eagle Scout rank, Pugh said most Eagles probably finish scouting with a number in the high 20s or low 30s.

"Nick, in his achievement, definitely did a lot more than the average Scout," Pugh said. "He probably throughout his life will be rewarded for it ... in terms of being able to be more independent."

Along with each of those badges earned and skills learned, Pugh said, comes a lot

of good stories.

Davis has at least 129.

Some of the most difficult for him included skating, which Davis said is one of the least popular badges; bugling, which involved mastering 11 songs; and radio, his first badge.

The radio badge required him to take a ham radio class, which involved eight continuous hours of information in a classroom filled mostly with adults interested in the process.

At 12, Davis wasn't too enthusiastic, but he walked away with not only the badge but ham radio certification.

"This one was fantastic," he said on a recent afternoon, pointing to his scuba diving badge. "We got to go up to Lake Jocassee [in South Carolina]. I was 90 feet below the surface like four days after we started learning."

Davis and a friend traveled to South Carolina for a camp to take the first scouting scuba class offered in the Southeast.

The merit badge was one of the nine added to the original 120 in total when Davis became a Boy Scout.

He also went the extra mile — or miles — for several badges, including traveling to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico to earn the hiking and backpacking badge on a special trek.

Each year, Davis went to about two camps, which is where he said he earned the majority of his badges.

He also received many by taking individual weekend classes, like those offered at North Forsyth High School.

All the while, Davis kept busy by staying at the top of his classes in school and playing sousaphone in Central's marching band.

He plans to attend college and study something math-related, though he hasn't made any final decisions.

If his achievement in Scouts is any indication, Davis will have a wealth of experience to draw from.