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Badge of honor: Belfair brothers get 262 Scout awards combined

Archery badge: check. First aid badge: check. Coin collecting badge: check. ...

ZACH SMITH; STAFF WRITER

Published: July 13, 2012 at 7:56 p.m. PDT — Updated: July 13, 2012 at 7:57 p.m. PDT

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Courtesy photo

Elisha Gentry, left, stands with his brother, David. Both are prolific Scout badge earners.

Archery badge: check. First aid badge: check. Coin collecting badge: check. ...

And the list goes on for 18-year-old Elisha Gentry of Belfair, who last month accomplished one of the rarest feats in Scouting, even rarer than attaining Eagle Scout.

He earned all 133 merit badges offered by the Boy Scouts of America.

Even more extraordinary, he's one of two siblings to have run the table on merit badges. There's nothing like a little brotherly competition and mentorship to spur a young man toward a goal.

"When I got my Eagle, I decided it would be a good goal to get," said Elisha, who just finished high school as a home-schooler and will go to college in Arizona in the fall. "(Scouting), in general, has pretty much turned me into who I am today."

Elisha's journey began in 2005 as a member of Troop 1532 in Port Orchard, when he earned his first merit badge, for reading. Seven years and 132 badges later, he finally completed his goal.

He learned different skills while earning these badges, but he also learned quite a bit about himself.

Earning the scuba-diving badge forced him to overcome his fear of water. The rifle-shooting badge revealed his natural talent for firing guns. He learned he wants to become a civil engineer someday and that he has no future as a welder.

After so many experiences, Elisha said the one thing that stands out is the people who helped him along the way. They include college professors and foresters – and especially his brother, David.

In 2010, David earned the last of the 129 merit badges that were available during his time in the Scouts. Elisha took full advantage of his older brother’s guidance.

“For the past year, he was essentially a counselor for me,” Elisha said. “He was always there when I needed him.”

Whether it was a healthy dose of brotherly competition or helping Elisha earn his badges in kayaking and bugling, David’s guidance was instrumental.

“It was a worthy goal that both of us wanted to accomplish together,” said David Gentry, 19, who is home this summer after his freshman year at the University of Hawaii.

Elisha said that a year ago, with the deadline of his 18th birthday looming, his goal appeared out of reach and he considered giving up. Then he began earning merit badges at a feverish pace, including seven in his final month of scouting eligibility.

After earning his final merit badge, in bugling, with just a week to spare, Elisha could join his brother in rare company.

The four new badges that his brother didn’t have a chance to earn are in welding, robotics, kayaking and chess.

While Boy Scouts of America does not keep an official tally of people who’ve accomplished this feat, Troy Pugh has attempted to document it at meritbadgeknot.com. Pugh, from the central Washington city of Ephrata, has been able to confirm only 171 Scouts who have earned every merit badge.

To show how rare it is, he points out that fewer than 5 percent of scouts earn the highest rank of Eagle, which requires 21 merit badges. Pugh said fewer than 1 percent of Eagle Scouts earn every merit badge – which, by his estimation, is about 24 a year.

“If anything, Eli and his brother’s accomplishments means they set a goal far beyond any Scouting requirement,” Pugh said. “He isn’t in Scouting to just do things; he’s in scouting to learn and to explore.”

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[Boy Scouts recognize Kennewick businessman Bill Lampson](#)

It wasn't Bill Lampson's six-month career as a Cub Scout that earned him an award from the local Boy Scouts of America council Thursday in Pasco.

The award was for the way Lampson embodies the Scouts' values and spirit of community service as an adult.

"If you look in the dictionary under community spirit, you're likely to see a picture of Bill Lampson as part of the definition," said Scott Stovall, master of ceremonies at the leadership breakfast where Lampson's award was presented.

[Kids' Corner: Troop 220 welcomes newest Eagle Scout](#)

The Key Peninsula Civic Center hosted a Court of Honor last month for Boy Scout Troop 220's newest Eagle Scout, Jordon Martinez.

[From Puyallup to Omaha and Warren Buffett](#)

For some, the road to Omaha, Berkshire Hathaway and Warren Buffett costs a fortune. For two Puyallup brothers, all it cost was an idea. Anthony and Justin Lundberg, 12 and 9 respectively, met with Buffett a few weeks ago. They chatted. They dined. They came away richer for the experience both in their outlooks and their portfolios.

[Seahawks' duo leaves legacy after graduation](#)

Most people at Peninsula High School think of Nick Borg and Curtis King as good friends and training partners for the Seahawks' cross country and track squads, but it wasn't always that way.

[Gig Harbor High senior awarded National Merit Scholarship](#)

A letter from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation lay among the jumbled pile of college acceptance letters awaiting Gig Harbor High School senior Jasper Vaughn last month.

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Patti Kleist

The fact that both brothers earned their badges is exciting, but what I believe to be even more exceptional is that both brothers have spent countless hours helping in their community.

For many years they have helped Faith in Action help our seniors in countless ways. As has their mom Julie - a true role model for them both/

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davew

Wow, talk about setting and achieving goals!! Way to go guys!!

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royr20410

Congratulations, great job! Hats off to the parents that raise people like this!

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Sagebrush6

I was never i the scouts, but it sounds impressive. Congratulations anyway.

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rudy1

Awesome achievement:)

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