



KNOX COUNTY NEWS

Eagle Scout in East Tennessee earns all 139 merit badges

by: [Don Dare](#)
Posted: Dec 19, 2023 / 04:26 PM EST
Updated: Dec 19, 2023 / 04:29 PM EST

SHARE    

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (WATE) — For an East Tennessee Eagle Scout who is really good at playing the piano, it’s another musical instrument offered as a merit badge that had him worried for a while.

In the [Boy Scout program](#), merit badges allow scouts to investigate nearly 140 different areas of knowledge and skills. The badges play a major role in the scouting advancement program and they can begin earning them as soon as a scout registers with a troop.

Zachary Gerber obtained all 139 merit badges available. It was not an easy task, taking him six years. The final badge he earned was the Bugle merit badge.

ADVERTISING

×



“I’m a classically-trained pianist. I do not know how to play the bugle. It’s a testament to my merit badge counselor because she was able to help me earn the merit badge,” said Garber.

Parents of fallen deputy Tucker Blakley honored with ‘blued out’ decorations >

He has been adding badges to his sash for six years. He’s earned every one that the Boy Scouts of America offers this year, plus another one that’s discontinued. He sewed all 139 onto his sash that way his mom didn’t have to do it. He earned the Medicine Merit Badge first, but it was discontinued and replaced by the Health Care Professions badge two years ago.

Gerber is an Eagle Scout, the highest achievement rank for scouts. Only four percent of scouts earn the rank. His Eagle project involved the planning and building, with members of his troop, of an outdoor Stations of the Cross set at his former school in Illinois.

ADVERTISEMENT

“My father has been my primary support in the Boy Scouts,” said Gerber.

Free showers offered to the Knoxville community weekend before Christmas >

For Gerber scouting has been a family affair since he was in the first grade. His dad joined as a registered scouting volunteer in Illinois. Once they moved to Tennessee, Gerber’s mom encouraged him to continue his experiences and goals.

“I love the adventure in scouting, seeing different things. It’s also in the merit badge classes I think I’ve grown as a leader. Specifically, one of my last merit badges, backpacking,” said Gerber.

At 17 years old, Gerber is goal-oriented. He keeps a hard copy record of his achievements. Earning Pope Pius the 12th religious knot from the Catholic Church he says taught him about life.

ADVERTISEMENT

READ NEXT >

Cumberland Gap community mourns high school student killed in crash



READ NEXT >

Next story in 5

Cancel

“It is that scout oath and that scout law where every day and every meeting where you give your scout sign and you say On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my Country, to obey the scout law. When you say that it is a pledge. It’s a pledge to God that you are going to be held accountable for,” said Gerber.

One dead in Fountain City house fire >

Gerber has many talents. As he said earlier learning to play classical piano pieces was easier than learning to play the bugle – for that final merit badge. But he’s achieved a lot more than just badges. He’s developed into a person of responsibility and maturity.

His goals? Not Carnegie Hall, but becoming a mechanical engineer so someday he can build roller coasters.

Gerber is the second scout from the [Great Smoky Mountain Council](#) to earn all 139 merit badges this year. In July, we told you about another scout named Zach, [Eagle Scout Zachary Witt who earned his 139th merit badge earlier this year](#). The Boy Scouts of America reports that less than 0.5 percent of scouts earn all the merit badges available.

[Suggest a Correction](#)

Copyright 2024 Nexstar Media Inc. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

SPONSORED CONTENT

[Privacy Policy](#)

Amazon's Worst Nightmare: Thousands Canceling Prime for This Clever Hack

Online Shopping Tools

7 Discounts Seniors Only Get If They Ask

TheWalletWatcher.com

MD: Building Muscle After 60 Comes Down To This 1 Thing

primenutritionsecrets.com

Seniors In Moses Lake Are Thanking Chuck Norris For This 2 Min Routine

americareadysupply

[Learn More](#)

The New Sierra 1500 Is So Cheap Now (Take A Look)

FavoriteSearches

MD: Building Muscle After 60 Comes Down To This 1 Thing

primenutritionsecrets.com

Say Goodbye to Bank Loans If You Own A Home. Borrow From Yourself (It's Simple)

[READ NEXT >](#)

Cumberland Gap community mourns high school student killed in crash



[READ NEXT >](#)

Next story in 5