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Eagle Scout Austin Henao of Troop 777 The Woodlands earns all 142 BSA merit badges

By J. Werner | Published 02/09/2016

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THE WOODLANDS, Texas - What better way to celebrate Boy Scout Day on Monday, February 8, than to honor one of your own who has reached the pinnacle of achievement established by the organization. Austin Henao, an Eagle Scout from The Woodlands Troop 777, completed the requirements for his final merit badges, and was awarded the badges certificates, and other accolades in a special Court of Honor ceremony at Trinity Episcopa Church in The Woodlands, where the troop is based.

Austin has earned every merit badge offered by BSA, including three retro badges that were reestablished, and four centennial badges outlined with a gold rim, that were only offered in 2010 during the 100th anniversary of The Boy Scouts of

“Court of Honor ceremony awarded the last merit badges in

America. In total, Austin has 142 badges that require three sashes to display them all. (See [Video](#))

addition to other numerous accolades."

The epitome of a multi-tasker, Austin accumulated the badges in what is considered record time—approximately six and a half years. He worked on many of the merit badge requirements simultaneously, receiving as many as a dozen or more badges at every Court of Honor ceremony.

“My objective wasn’t just to get the merit badges. I was also working on other certifications and attending camps to become a better leader and a better scout, to lead my country one day,” said Austin.

Austin also has the distinction of achieving Eagle Scout at the young age of 13 in 2012. The national average of Eagle Scouts is 15, although Austin’s father said many troops prefer that scouts reach 16 or 17 before becoming Eagle Scouts to ensure they reach a certain level of maturity.

"There is a list of requirements, and as long as the scouts meet those requirements, why hold them back," said Austin's father, Kevin Henao. "Once the Eagle Scout rank has been achieved, they can start working on doing projects and service hours. Austin is probably more actively involved now, then when he was working on his Eagle Scout."

To achieve the Eagle Scout rank, Austin was required to perform a community service project. He initiated and organized a pet food drive to benefit the Montgomery County Animal Shelter. He distributed flyers, and a week later coordinated the pickup and delivery of three quarters of a ton of pet food alone.

“People donated a lot of other items too. There were pet carriers, kitty litter, clothing,” said Austin. “The stuff just kept coming. We delivered eight truckloads to the shelter.”

From the Tall Timbers District of the Sam Houston Area Council to participate in the ceremony was Jeff Neuman; District Chairman, Stuart Schroeder, a resident of The Woodlands, was also on hand, in addition to Vice-chairman Jon Howard, and District Commissioner Doug Sivula. Presenting numerous awards and certificates were Troop 777 Scoutmaster Jeffrey Greer, and Assistant Scoutmaster William Atteridge.

Austin is the son of Kevin and Anita Henao of The Woodlands. The Henao family was recently honored as the 2015 Scouting Family of the Year by the Tall Timbers District, Sam Houston Area Council.

In addition to family members, Troop 777, friends, and Woodlands area dignitaries were present at the Court of Honor. Representing The Woodland Township was board member

Ann Snyder, who will also receive Austin at a Township board meeting next meeting to be honored as well.

Austin's other distinguished awards in Boy Scouts include:

- Webelos "Super Achiever" and Arrow of Light recipient as a Cub Scout in February 2009
- National Medal for Outdoor Achievement
- 9 National Honor Patrol 'Stars' while in Raven Patrol
- National Youth Leadership Training & staffed two NYLT courses
- National Advance Youth Leadership Experience (NAYLE)

He was also voted a member of the "Order of the Arrow" by his peers, with Brotherhood status.

Austin earned 16 Eagle Palms which required active involvement in your troop and patrol three months after becoming an Eagle Scout (or after award of last Palm), demonstrate leadership ability, earn five additional merit badges, participate in a Scoutmaster conference, successfully complete your board review and demonstrate Scout spirit by living the Scout Oath and Scout Law in everyday life.

In his spare time, Austin also became both BSA & Red Cross Lifeguard Certified and Certified EMR (Emergency Medical Responder) through his Boy Scout training and became a Leave No Trace Trainer, a scout 14 years of age or older, who helps minimize the impact on land by training other scouts outdoor ethics decision-making skills.

In addition to the 142-merit badge completion, two of Austin's most outstanding achievements are the President's Volunteer Service Award and the BSA "Grand Slam" Award. Austin received the President's Volunteer Service Award gold medal two years consecutively by meeting a 250-plus hour requirement for volunteerism. He was also one of only fifty scouts to achieve the "Grand Slam of National High Adventure Award" which recognizes scouts who participate in all four qualifying high-adventure programs at four BSA national adventure bases (Northern Tier, Philmont, Sea Base, and the Summit Bechtel Reserve).

A senior at College Park High School, Austin will enter an engineering program at Kansas State University after graduation. In the meantime, he will continue to serve as a Junior Assistant Scoutmaster for Troop 777, and the Vice President for First Aid Crew 9-1-1.

Troop 777 meets Monday nights from 7:00 to 8:15 p.m. in the Butler Fellowship Hall of Tri Episcopal Church located at 3901 S. Panther Creek Drive in The Woodlands, across from McCullough Junior High School. For more information visit the [Troop 777 website](#), or contact either Scoutmaster Jeffrey Greer at email, Greer30@gmail.com, or Committee Chair Jani Atteridge at email. trinitytroop777@gmail.com.

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