

Eagle Scout Heneghan earns 142 badges

RILEY SIMPSON, Editor

The Boy Scouts of America organization currently offers 136 badges. Glenbrook South senior Brian Heneghan has 142 emblazoned on his uniform.

He exceeded the normal number thanks to his dedi-

cation, but there was some luck, too. The organization recently discontinued two badges (Computers and Cinematography) that Heneghan already earned.

As for the other four beyond the standard 136, he achieved them in 2010 at the National Scout Jamboree in

Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia. It was the centennial of the organization, and four old badges (discontinued for about 40-50 years) were being offered: Signaling, Tracking, Pathfinding and Carpentry.

"In my early years, [earning badges] wasn't a big thing," Heneghan said. "When I was

younger, it was like, 'This was a fun experience, and I'm glad I did it.' The first one I felt accomplished after was Engineering."

Heneghan also earned the Engineering badge at the Jamboree in 2010, and it inspired the GBS senior's interest in aerospace and mechanical engineering as he readies for college.

"I was always a math and science kid, but not surprisingly through Boy Scouts, I wanted to become an engineer," Heneghan said.

To get his Engineering badge at the Jamboree, Heneghan waited in a 2 1/2-hour-long line. He also built a cozy for soda cans using reflectix, a highly reflective sheet much like aluminum foil that insulates.

"The fact that one solution applies to multiple problems is one of the things (I learned)," Heneghan said. "I've always liked math and science, but I also like building things. I like doing things with my hands."

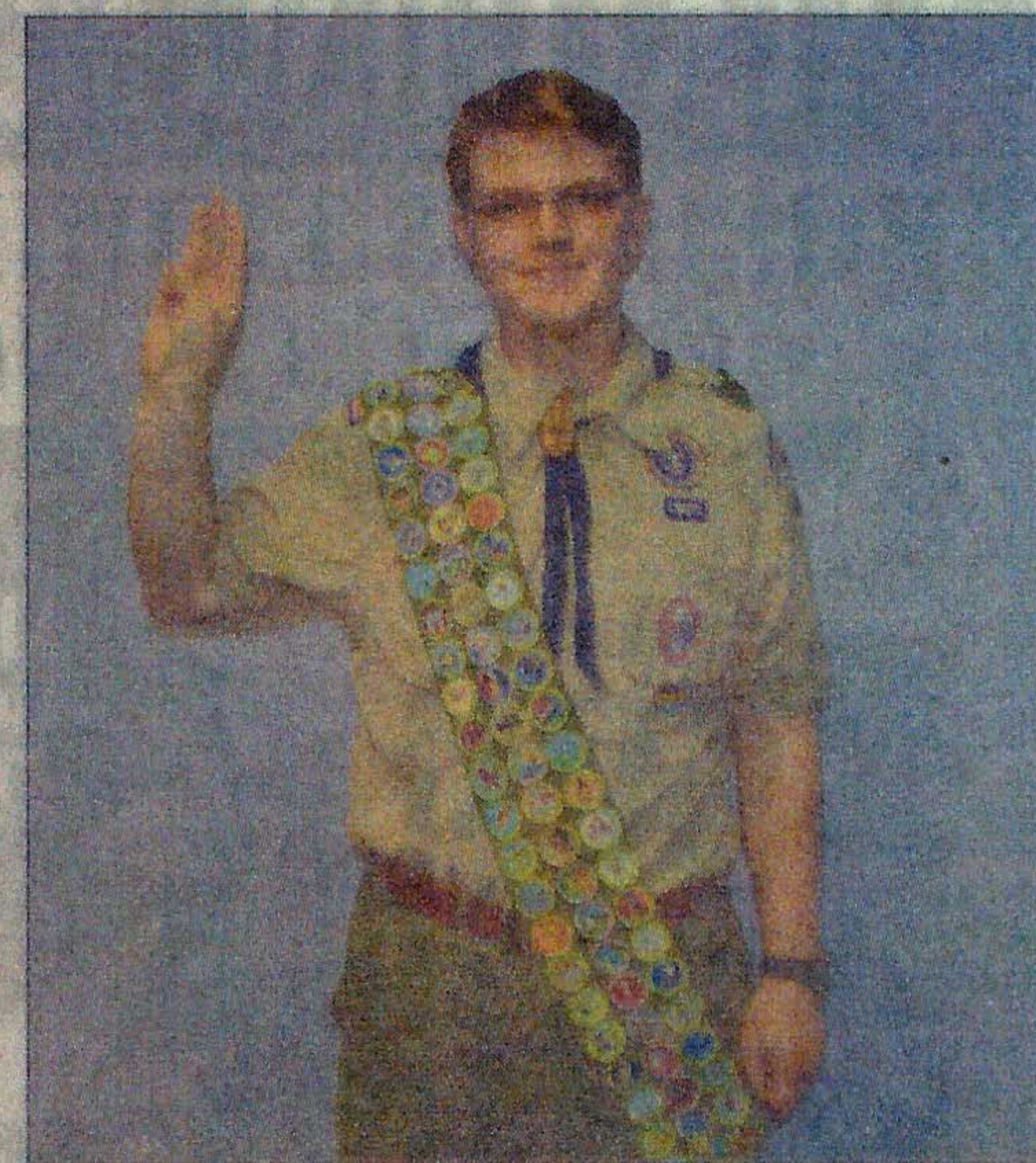
Heneghan put those skills to work for his Eagle Scout project: He built six wood duck-nesting boxes in The Grove, 1421 Milwaukee Ave., in the spring and summer of 2011.

"I didn't really know what wood duck boxes were, but I thought, 'Why not? It'll be fun,'" Heneghan said.

He and his dad made the boxes look and feel like the tree holes the birds naturally live in, so they made ridges on the inside so the ducks could climb out. Then came the galvanized-steel poles for the large boxes to rest on.

"They were heavy," Heneghan said laughing.

The project helped encouraged wood ducks live at The Grove and lay eggs there. The fruits of Heneghan's



Glenbrook South senior and Eagle Scout Brian Heneghan does the Boy Scout salute. RILEY SIMPSON/22ND CENTURY MEDIA

labor were the wood duck calls he heard at The Grove about six months ago.

"It might not have been because of the boxes, but I like to think that it was," he said.

Heneghan said the hardest badge for him to add to his uniform was Bugling. He had only ever played the piano, oboe and violin, so the brass instrument was a new challenge.

"I wasn't bad at the end of it, but I wasn't really a master," he said.

Part of earning the badge was playing bugle calls such as "Taps" and "To the Colors" in front of his troupe.

The first time he ever played at a meeting, his hands were shaking. Halfway through, he broke out laughing — "I realized I sounded bad, but I kept going," he said — but then his fellow Scouts started laughing, which made Heneghan crack up more.

He paused, took the trumpet away from his mouth and finished his song.

"I got a lot more comfortable later," he said.

Only later, like at his summer camp, Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan, he bugled in front of 220 people, not a small troupe.

Even though he's an Eagle Scout and has many achievements through the Boy Scouts organization, Heneghan said he can still be fallible.

One time, when camping in New Mexico, he forgot his camp utensils, so he whittled a fork and spoon with his pocket knife each night to eat.

And even though improvisation isn't a merit badge, Heneghan showed that he has the gumption to conquer any badge obstacle.

"I still have trouble starting fires," he said laughing. "A good part of leading is knowing when it's not your turn to lead."