



Blogs

Houston-Area Eagle Scout Earns Every Merit Badge

October 31, 2014 | by Patrice Eulin

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Samuel Kralowetz proudly displays his merit badges. (Credits: JC Penney Portrait Studio in Cypress, TX)

Samuel Kralowetz, an Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America's **Sam Houston Area Council** Troop 939, sponsored by St. John's Lutheran Church in Cypress, Texas, has earned every merit badge currently offered by the BSA.

Seventeen-year-old Kralowetz joined Scouting when he was 11. After his first camping trip, he decided that Scouting was a good fit for him. "I realized I loved outdoor living, and I was in this for the long haul," said Kralowetz.

Shortly thereafter, he read an inspiring story of a Scout who had earned all the merit badges. He decided it was a good goal to set for himself. Approximately seven years later, he has attained that goal.

Of the 139 merit badges (which includes some discontinued badges) Kralowetz has earned, his favorites are Backpacking, Hiking, Lifesaving, Whitewater, Scuba Diving, and Aviation.

Kralowetz's Scouting journey has allowed him to complete a 12-day backpacking trek at [Philmont Scout Ranch](#), the BSA's premier high-adventure base in northern New Mexico, and a four-day backpacking trek at [Montana High Adventure Base](#), the [Montana Council](#)'s high-adventure base west of Dupuyer.

For his Eagle Scout project, Kralowetz organized a team of volunteers to build picnic tables for [Reach Unlimited](#), a nonprofit organization that provides support to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. "I really wanted the perfect project, not something I was personally interested in, but that would benefit my community," Kralowetz told the *Houston Chronicle* in an interview.

In order to become an Eagle Scout, the highest rank a Scout can earn, a Scout must earn 21 merit badges, 13 of which are required, and perform an Eagle Scout project. A Scout can earn more merit badges to receive Eagle Palms—Bronze, Gold, and Silver. However, Palms are not considered ranks, so a Scout's decision to earn badges beyond the number required for the Eagle Scout rank is his choice. Earning all merit badges, though commendable, is not a requirement.

"He went well above and beyond the requirements," said Wayne Beaumier, Scoutmaster of Troop 939. "It's nice to see a young man who's committed to his family, committed to his school, and is committed to his troop," he said.

Kralowetz is a member of the Order of the Arrow, Scouting's national honor society, and is a senior at Cy-Fair High School in Cypress, where he is a member of the drum line.

Tags [Boy Scouts of America](#) [Cy-Fair High School](#) [Eagle Scout](#) [Merit Badges](#) [Sam Houston Area Council](#)



Newsroom Blog

This blog is managed and written by staff of the Communications Department of the Boy Scouts of America.

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By Flori Meeks | October 28, 2014

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Eagle Scout Sam Kralowetz wears the badge-heavy sash displaying the 139 honors he earned in the Boy Scouts of America. Kralowetz earned all the badges possible in the program.

Shortly after Samuel Kralowetz became a Boy Scout, he read an article about a Scout who earned each of the 125 merit badges available at the time.

"I thought it was a cool goal," said Kralowetz, 17.

Now, 5 ½ years later, Kralowetz can say he has earned every single merit badge.

The **Boy Scouts of America** does not keep statistics on the numbers of Scouts who've done the same, but the organization has acknowledged it's a rare accomplishment.

Kralowetz' parents, who've read reports of other Scouts who've met the goal, estimate it's just more 200 boys.

Kralowetz' total merit badges reached 139. They included some that have since been discontinued and four that only were available during BSA's centennial year.

"It was worth it," said Kralowetz, who was honored by the troop Oct. 12 for earning his Eagle. That rank, the highest a Boy Scout can achieve, requires 21 merit badges.

"He went well above and beyond the requirements," said **Wayne**

Beaumier, Scoutmaster of Troop 939, which meets at St. John's **Lutheran Church** in Cypress.

Beaumier has known Kralowetz since he joined the troop about seven years ago and said he thinks highly of him.

"It's nice to see a young man who's committed to his family, committed to his school and is committed to his troop," Beaumier said.

Troops typically present Scouts with the merit badges they've earned during Court of Honor ceremonies. Most Scouts receive one to three merit badges at a time, possibly more after summer or winter camp.

Once Kralowetz started working toward his goal, he received 15 to 16 merit badges at a time, Beaumier said.

"I was impressed as a Scout master that his family took that on. Some of those merit badges take nine months to complete. You really have to want to do it."

What makes Beaumier proudest was the work that Kralowetz, a senior and percussionist for the **Cy-Fair High School** band, did to earn the bugling merit badge. The requirements include serving as troop bugler for three months.

"It's hard to play the bugle; there are no valves," Beaumier said. "Every troop meeting, he did everything I asked with a smile on his face, even though he knew he wouldn't always blow sweet notes. I told him, (the requirement list) doesn't say you have to play it well. You just have to play it."

Kralowetz was 11 when he joined Scouting.

He was encouraged to join by a friend who'd been involved since Cub Scouts and a cousin, who said Scouting would tie in with Kralowetz' interest in serving in the military.

After his first camping trip, Kralowetz knew he had made the right choice.

"I learned how to clean dishes with dirt and got to sleep outside," he recalled. "I realized I loved outdoor living, and I was in this for the long haul."

During the eighth grade, Kralowetz and his family relocated to Calgary, Canada, for his father's job in the oil industry. There, he joined a troop for **American Scouts**.

"The weather there was the big difference," said Kralowetz, who remembers making "snow caves" with his troop members to sleep in during a camping trip in the **Canadian Rockies**. By then, Kralowetz already was working toward his goal of earning every merit badge available, some of which give Scouts exposure to potential careers.

"It was interesting to see all of the jobs I could have," he said. "I also saw what I didn't want to do."

His favorite merit badges, he said, involved being outdoors and adventure: Backpacking, Hiking, Lifesaving, Whitewater, Scuba Diving and Aviation.

During the period when the Boy Scouts of America celebrated its centennial, from Sept. 1, 2009 through Dec. 31, 2010, Scouts had to opportunity to earn some of the organization's original merit badges including Tracking, Pathfinding, Signaling and Carpentry.

"I learned Morse code," Kralowetz said. "I signaled with flags. I tracked animals. These were requirements in 1912."

In addition to his experiences working on his merit badges, Kralowetz held leadership positions in his troop, and he was able to go on a backpacking trek at Philmont Scout Ranch in northern New Mexico.

As part of his Eagle requirements, Kralowetz planned and led a community service project.

He and his team of volunteers built picnic tables for Reach Unlimited, a nonprofit organization that serves adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"I really wanted the perfect project, not something I was personally interested in, but that would benefit my community."

Kralowetz also has been inducted into the Order of the **Arrow Scouting National Honor Society**.

He said Scouting has given him more compassion and patience for others and also strengthened his relationship with his mother, a regular source of support while he worked on his merit badges.

Cathy and Jeffrey Kralowetz have praised their son, who also wrestles, is active at his church and works part time as a gymnastics coach.

"If you join Scouts you don't have to limit yourself to one thing," Kralowetz said. "It takes work, but it's definitely worth it."