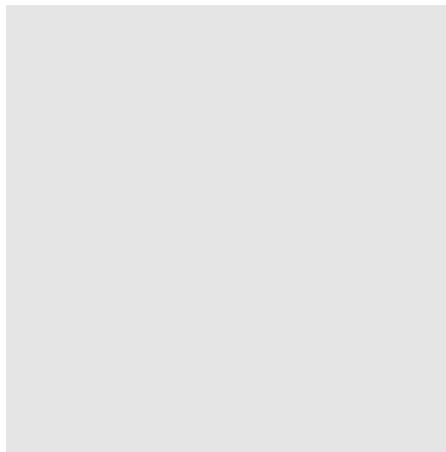


[http://tucson.com/news/local/tucson-teen-accomplishes-scouting-feat-earning-all-merit-badges/article\\_2b6f378e-143d-5534-ad4c-e5b353b01a2e.html](http://tucson.com/news/local/tucson-teen-accomplishes-scouting-feat-earning-all-merit-badges/article_2b6f378e-143d-5534-ad4c-e5b353b01a2e.html)

## Tucson teen accomplishes Scouting feat, earning all 137 merit badges

By Elena Gonzalez For the Arizona Daily Star May 16, 2018 Updated May 16, 2018



One of Eagle Scout  
Ray Langlais' last  
badges was for scuba diving. It also  
became one of his favorites.

[BUY NOW](#)

Ron Medvescek / Arizona Daily Star



Eagle Scout Ray Langlais, who has earned all 137 of the possible Boy Scout merit badges, watches as Scoutmaster Robert Raposo presents him with the last of them at their Spring Court of Honor at Tanque Verde Lutheran Church on Monday.

[BUY NOW](#)

Ron Medvescek / Arizona Daily Star

Since the Boy Scouts took root in Southern Arizona nearly a century ago, the club of scouts who have earned every merit badge has been said to be a party of one. On Monday, Tucson teen Ray Langlais joined that exclusive club.

Troop 141 of the Catalina Council of the Boy Scouts of America honored 18-year-old Langlais, who began chasing the goal of earning all 137 badges at 11 years old, after getting a glimpse at another Scout's badge-filled sash.

"Everyone referred to him as Mr. Merit Badge," Langlais said.

The fellow Scout only had 60 badges at the time, but Langlais was determined to go beyond that and fill a sash — or two.

To become an Eagle Scout, the highest rank a Boy Scout can achieve, Langlais needed to complete 21 merit badges.

After his first year as a Boy Scout, Langlais had completed 20 merit badges, and was determined to keep that pace until he turned 18 and his time as a Boy Scout came to an end.

“I didn’t want to have a missing badge,” Langlais said.

The first Scout to earn all the merit badges in Southern Arizona was Erik Fagergren in 2000. He is from Patagonia and he earned 119 badges — as many as were available at that time.

Merit badges have taught Langlais and other scouts skills that help prepare them for real-world situations and potentially lead them to discover new passions and interests they may not have otherwise found.

“You never know what these boys will gain from these badges,” said Richard Benner, field director of Catalina Council Boy Scouts.

As a kid who didn’t grow up shooting baskets or kicking soccer balls, the pursuit of his athletics badge led Langlais to join Sabino High School’s cross country team — a sport he came to love.

Langlais qualified for two state championships in cross-country and qualified for the Boston marathon. Langlais runs six days a week.

Langlais has grown into a leader in his troop. He has led up to 40 Scouts on camping trips and has inspired other boys in his troop to go beyond the required 21 badges.

“I think one of the mottos for one of the Boy Scout trips was ‘what would Ray do?’” said Robert Raposo, scout leader of Langlais’ troop.

Raposo sees Langlais as a determined leader who will not only accomplish his goals, but also accomplish them to the highest standards.

To ensure he completed all badges by the time he turned 18, Langlais honed his time management and multitasking skills, working on up to 20 badges at a time.

On average, each badge takes about 10 hours of committed time, but some could take more, such as the camping badge, which requires a total of 25 days camping in different climates, including snow.

“You have to plan your meals and set up tents,” said Langlais, whose longest camping stretch was 12 consecutive nights.

Some badges pushed Langlais to learn trades not many people get to do such as welding.

“It got me out of my comfort zone,” Langlais said.

Scouting has also gotten Langlais out of his backyard, backpacking in New Mexico and to the bottom of Grand Canyon, and traveling to California, Nevada, Utah and Texas, where he completed one of his last, and one of his favorite, badges — scuba diving.

The scuba badge has six requirements, one being earning an open water diver certification.

To complete it, Langlais took classes at a scuba shop and learned about topics ranging from water safety to aquatic ecosystems.

“We had to do basic skills with the snorkel, get used to the tanks, learn different rescues and swimming requirements,” Langlais said.

After earning his scuba certification, Langlais had to apply what he learned in an actual open water experience, so he traveled to Balmorhea State Park in Texas to scuba-dive in a natural spring.

Eventually, Langlais hopes to take the skills he’s learned through Boy Scouts and continue traveling the country and, eventually, the world.

On his bucket list is scuba-diving in the Great Barrier Reef off Australia.

“But I haven’t gotten around to that yet,” Langlais said.

In the immediate future, Langlais is preparing to head off to Northern Arizona University after graduating from Sabino next week.

While his time as a Scout has come to an end, Langlais hopes to return at some

point to become a leader to younger Scouts.

“The Boy Scouts teaches you skills that aren’t offered in school,” Langlais said. “You learn the leadership skills, personal management and how to take care of yourself.”

---

Elena Gonzalez is a University of Arizona journalism student who is an apprentice at the Star. Contact her at [starapprentice@tucson.com](mailto:starapprentice@tucson.com).

## MORE INFORMATION



Japanese 'eatertainment' venue opening in Sears space at Tucson's Park Place

- Diversifying Arizona's nursing workforce is focus of new UA program
- Program helps new Tucson homeowners roll repairs into mortgage
- Meat bars created by Tucsonan make their way into Sprouts markets
- Poke has moseyed into Tucson
- New mobile bike repair venture brings shop services to Tucsonans' front doors
- Tucson's first 'augmented reality' mural used to encourage young people to vote
- Smash bottles, furniture and frustrations away in Tucson's new 'rage room'

- Arizona woman sentenced in \$852,000 embezzlement scheme
- June hearing set for Arizona man who provided ammo to Vegas shooter
- County supervisors approve renaming of paved bike system The Loop
- There's science behind the 'yanny or laurel' debate
- A new water playground is coming to Tucson this summer
- Arizona 83 north of Sonoita partially reopens after Barrel Fire
- Arizona-grown romaine lettuce outbreak update: 172 sick in 32 states