

Kaysville Boy Scout earns all 133 merit badges by age of 15

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KAYSVILLE — Isaac Loveland has learned a little bit about everything the Boy Scouts of America has to offer.

Loveland, 15, recently completed the requirements for all 133 merit badges offered by the organization.

“I’ve been on the national committee for 20 to 25 years, so I see a lot of this across the country,” said Brandon Kelly, Loveland’s Order of the Arrow adviser.

“To explain the magnitude of what he has done, records show he has the highest (number of merit badges) in the country, and as close as (the national office) can tell, he is also the youngest (to earn all 133).”

Loveland completed his last merit badge Aug. 18 at the age of 14 — the day before his 15th birthday — and was awarded the key to Kaysville city by Mayor Steve Hiatt on Tuesday.

Loveland said the Boy Scouts offered 121 merit badges when he set this goal as an 11-year-old. They have since added several merit badges, resulting in 133.

Kelly emphasized the magnitude of Loveland’s work by stating that only 70 to 100 people nationwide have earned more than 100 merit badges in the past 30 years.

Isaac’s mother, Alacia Loveland, said Isaac also earned all the requirements for the Webelos award in Cub Scouting at the age of 10.

When he saw a newspaper article about a couple of boys who had earned all the Boy Scout merit badges, he was inspired to do the same.

“Even as an 11-year-old, he was very independent in this,” said Alacia Loveland. “We would go visit with merit badge counselors with him, and the counselors would ask us questions. My husband and I were clueless. We didn’t do the work, our son did.”

Loveland would dedicate one to two hours each evening to Scouts, Kelly said.

This was in addition to his advanced placement school work and the many hours of daily music practice as a member of Davis High School’s marching band.

The goal also became more complicated when Isaac was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes while working on his cycling merit badge.

He had completed several of the 10- and 15-mile bike rides when he became very ill, Alacia said. He was hospitalized and diagnosed with the disease.

“As the doctors and nurses talked about the accommodations he now needed with physical activity, it seemed overwhelming. We wondered, ‘Is this goal something he can achieve, or is it no longer an option?’ ” Alacia said.

Isaac said the merit badges requiring physical exertion became more difficult, because he had to pay more attention to how he was feeling in relation to his diabetes. However, it did not stop him from

completing his goal.

“We did the (final) 50-mile bike ride a month or two after his diagnosis,” Alacia said. “We realized, yes, there are accommodations and extra steps, but he is still able to do anything that any other kid can do.”

Isaac earned his Eagle Scout at age 13 after completing a project to increase awareness about multiple sclerosis — an autoimmune nerve disease that his mother, aunt, and uncle have.

Isaac said that of the many merit badges he earned, scuba diving is one that stands out most to him.

While it was one of his favorites, it was also one of the most difficult and was compounded by his diabetes.

Alacia said it was difficult to find a scuba school that would work with someone who is diabetic, but with the support of his doctor they were able to find one.

Isaac said he participated in several dives locally — both in swimming pools and in a lake — to earn the badge. As a result, he was able to scuba dive in Hawaii during the summer. Without the merit badge, it would not have been possible.

Isaac also mentioned merit badges in nuclear science, animal science, plumbing, welding, pulp and paper, electronics, woodworking, metal work, leatherwork, and hiking.

“I’ve learned that stuff and can do it myself now,” he said. “(I can) save myself a couple dollars someday.”

“He knows a little bit about everything and anything you can think of,” said Alacia. “He has developed his interpersonal skills, and is able to articulate very well. He deals with adults very well. His counselors forget he is 14. There is a maturity and a confidence that he has gained from this.”