

Mt. Gilead senior achieves goal of earning all 134 scout merit badges

By Evelyn Long

Lewis Mesaros, 17, has achieved a goal that only 185 other Boy Scouts have reached.

A dedicated Boy Scout, he has earned every one of the 134 merit badges the BSA offers to Scouts. The journey has taken him on many adventures, learning times and travels to historic sites across the United States.

The Mount Gilead High School senior and rural Cardington youth, announced his intentions of earning those badges during a family meeting when his mother, Audrey Mesaros-Gale, read a news story to her two sons about a scout who had earned every badge. Lewis announced that he wanted to do the same thing - earn every badge.

Lewis, following his older brother, Eddie, joined the scouting program when he was six years old and a first grade student. He was a Tiger Scout with Mount Gilead's Pack 56. He never missed a den meeting during those five years as a Cub Scout and competed in the Pinewood Derby races and brought home a grand champion trophy several times. He participated in the cake auctions, and the space derby races and earned many Cub Scout Belt loops and pins and every WEBELOS activity pin offered.

Bridging over to Boy Scout Troop 30, Cardington, his outdoor activities increased and included camping. His first Summer Camp was high adventure where he attended with his troop, a tour of many places on the East coast including visits to Niagara Falls, the Harley Davidson Factory, the Baseball Hall of Fame and Hershey Park.

His youthful age restricted him from participating in most of the activities the older boys were doing but he was able to join them in other adventures such as white water rafting and panning for gold. It was during this trip that he earned his first merit badge, Geology.

He attended merit badge events in West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio

and the most difficult and costly merit badge to achieve was Scuba Diving where becoming a certified Scuba Diver was required. "That was my favorite badge," said Lewis. The easiest was scholarship where maintaining good grades in school and being a good student were most important. The last of the merit badges that he achieved was Search and Rescue where his quest to earn them all would have been complete earlier had it not been for the addition of the new merit badges which included S & R, Invent-ing, Welding and Kayaking. Also included in the 134 merit badges are the 4-Historic Merit Badges (Signaling, Tracking, Pathfinding and Car-pentry) brought back temporarily in celebration of 100 years of scouting.

During his Boy Scout career Mesaros attended the 2010 Boy Scout National Jamboree, held for the last time at Fort A. P. Hill in Virginia. He attended this event with a group of scouts from the Heart of Ohio Council. He had physically prepared for a year so he could complete one of the most difficult treks at the Philmont BSA Reservation in New Mexico, also with a group from the Heart of Ohio Council.

Earning the James Stewart award introduced him to an icon of the movies. This award has been established by the James M. Stewart Museum Foundation with the consent and cooperation of the BSA Penn Woods Council and the family of James M. Stewart.

The purpose of this award is to introduce the boy scouts to the life of a great American, James Maitland Stewart.

The Jimmy Stewart Museum, located in Indiana, Pennsylvania, offers this award to a Boy Scout who has exemplified the characteristics necessary to live the life of a good citizen. Scouts are required to complete the Jimmy Stewart Museum quiz during a tour of the museum, write an essay of not less than 500 words on being a good citizen and do a citizen-

ship project in their community in honor of Stewart.

Once the requirements have been completed, documentation is turned into the museum where the requirements are reviewed and if accepted, a medallion and certificate will be issued to the scout.

Mesaros' Eagle Project was a footbridge on one of the trails at the Headwaters Outdoor Area in Mount Gilead where he raised the money to pay for the complete cost of his project and recruited members from his troop, family and friends to help complete the job.

Other awards he has earned as a scout include God and Me, God and Family; God and Church, Leave No Trace, Centennial Recruiter, Charles in Space Award, Boys Life Pedro Reading, Junior USA Shooting Team, Master Angler, Emergency Preparedness, U S Heritage, World Conservation, Den Chief, Historic Trails, Paul Bunyan Woodsman, BSA Kayaking, Fifty Miller and BSA Scuba awards.

He has earned four complete series of Eagle Palms and will complete his fifth and final series in March. His leadership positions in scouting include Scribe, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Den Chief and Senior Patrol Leader.

Following scuba diving, his favorite badges



Photo submitted
Lewis Mesaros in his scuba diving attire - his favorite merit badge accomplishment.



Photo submitted
Lewis Mesaros backpacking at Philmont Scout Ranch in the Boy Scouts of America's largest national High Adventure Base. Its 34 staffed camps and 55 trail camps provide an unforgettable adventure in the high country. Hiking the trails at Philmont located in New Mexico was the final requirements to earn his backpacking merit badge. Learning how to properly carry the weight/load of your backpack is a necessity when trekking through the miles of ragged rocky trails in order to continue with this adventure. Pictured with Lewis, on the left, is Dylan Morris, right



Photo submitted
Lewis Mesaros worked with Architect Tom Shifer of Jester, Jones, Shifer Architects, Marion, to earn the Architecture Merit Badge. He liked this project so well he is checking out colleges who offer architecture.

earned were Climbing and Architecture. He studied welding under the tutelage of Tim Weiler. "The Philmont trip was also a favorite," said Lewis, the son of Ed Mesaros of Mount Gilead.

Lewis is active with the music program at Mount Gilead High School where he plays trumpet in the jazz, marching and concert bands. He is a member of Simon Kenton Council, Ashley Troop 94 of the Boy Scouts. He is also eligible to continue his affiliation with the scouts by joining the Venturing Crew until the age of 21.

"I loved every minute of it," said Lewis, in reference to his quest to earn all the merit badges. "I'd do it all over again."

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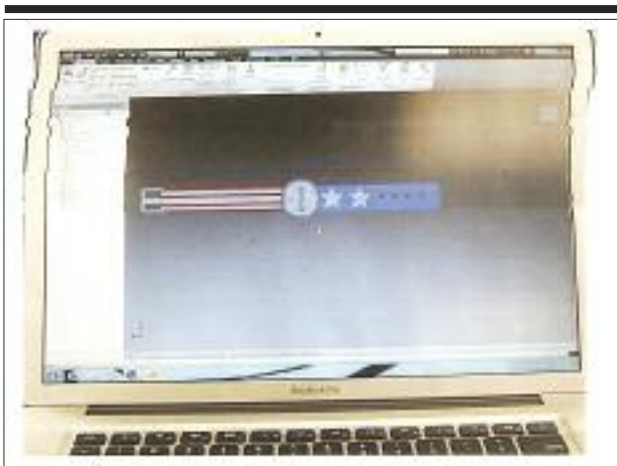


Photo Submitted
This fully assembled watch on Inventor was created by Cardington-Lincoln Junior high school students Mason Schmid, Daniel Kill and Courtney Chaney as part of the Gateway to Technology program. The students had to create individual parts, which must be dimensioned correctly then assemble those parts into a finished product.

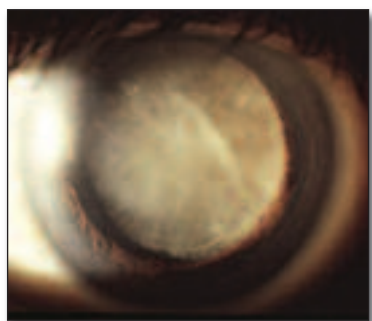
Hospice thanks Valentine donations



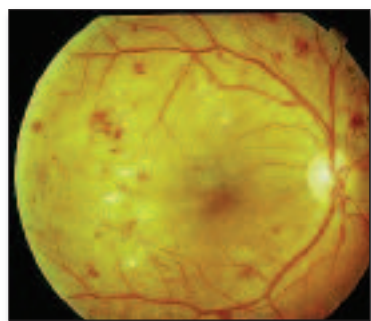
Submitted Photo
"Hospice of Morrow County thanks all the shoppers who donated Valentine balloons at Kroger. We delivered them to our patients and families," said Karen Veronica, Executive Director of the local hospice. With her are Chaplain Dave Matos and Director of Finance, Tina Kelly. Hospice aides, nurses and volunteers brought the balloons to people in private homes and nursing facilities. One caregiver cried because the gift of the red Valentine balloon touched her so deeply.

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Dr. Matthew S. Piper was born and raised in Lexington, Ohio. He graduated from Lexington High School in 1998. Next, he attended Alma College where he received his B.S. in biochemistry in 2002. During his undergraduate career, he was a four-year letter winner on the Men's tennis team.

Dr. Piper received his Doctor of Optometry degree from The Ohio State University College of Optometry in 2006. During his time at Ohio State, he was involved in the school's Student Volunteers for Optometric Service to Humanity (SVOSH) chapter. With SVOSH, he served on mission trips to the Dominican Republic and to Nicaragua.

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