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Frisco Boy Scout earns every merit badge

Sharisa Lewis Star Local Media contributor Nov 27, 2017



Courtesy of Sharisa Lewis

A Frisco teen has achieved a rare accomplishment in Scouting, earning all of the 138 merit badges currently offered by the Boy Scout of America,

Jeffrey Nebeker, 17, a senior at Liberty High School and student body president, completed all the badges offered in less than six years and across eight states.

Only 352 Boy Scouts have ever accomplished this goal since records were first kept in the 1940s, according to the Merit Badge Knot website.

“Earning merit badges gives Scouts the opportunity to participate in activities and study subjects that prepare them for life,” according to the Boy Scouts of America website.

Nebeker, who completed his Eagle project at age 13, started thinking then about what it would be like to finish all the badges. As a member of troop 187, sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he kept setting a goal to reach the next level in Scouts.

His goal exposed him to valuable life skills for merit badges across eight states: Wyoming for snow sports, Georgia for white water rafting, Oklahoma for sculpturing and engineering, Florida for exploration, Arkansas for surveying and theater, Minnesota for cycling, Illinois for graphic arts and Texas for welding and leadership conferences.

“With all these merit badges, I’ve learned what I do and do not want to do for a career,” Nebeker says. “The badges encompass such a big range of skills that it helps you narrow things down.”

His favorite merit badge to earn was Exploration. He went to the Florida Keys for scuba diving with his father. To prepare for the trip, he had to take a Scuba diving certification course at a local Boy Scout certified facility.

Nebeker says the hardest merit badge for him was learning to play the bugle. For the bugling badge, he had to work hard on his lessons for 3-4 months in order to play all 15 songs required.

The most surprising merit badge to him was cycling. “I didn’t realize how long 50 miles

actually was until I biked it," Nebeker said.

Why would he recommend Boy Scouts?

"Most people think of scouts as something for little boys to learn to go camping and tie knots," Nebeker said. "It's actually preparing you for stuff for the rest of your life."

His mother, Marisa Nebeker, said he has learned valuable life skills in Scouts that have already served him well. He was able to help his grandparents change their car battery. At home, he's been able to use his Scouts skills for home repairs, such as plumbing or changing out hardware.

Nebeker joined Order of Arrow, the National Honor Society of the Boy Scouts of America, and was chapter chief over 200 people. He organized events for the 200-person chapter and went to leadership training in Houston.

"Scouts has taught him how to be a leader," father Ryan Nebeker said. "He's learned to lead the troop, help others get along, plus directing others at campouts and attending leadership seminars."

"He wasn't learning to be president as student body president, Scouts already prepared him for that," Ryan Nebeker said.

Service is a big part of the Boy Scout program. For his Eagle project, Nebeker cleaned and preserve gravestones at Young Cemetery, a historical landmark in Plano.

Nebeker hopes to attend Brigham Young University and major in mechanical engineering. He also plans to serve a 2-year full-time mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.