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TOP STORY

EDITOR'S PICK

## Two Things: Scout pulls off the unfathomable with merit badge feat; Greensboro Council faces decision time

Scott Sexton

Jan 24, 2025

**H**appy Friday. The thaw is on.

Though she certainly fits the criteria, Reagan Poindexter doesn't think of herself as a trailblazer.

Sure she was among the first waves of girls who joined Scouting America — né Boy Scouts of America — after the scouts went co-ed.

Tagalong, sure. But trailblazer?

“Um, no. Not really,” the 18-year-old said. “When I was little, I went camping with my brother and his troop a lot so I was always asking if I could join.”



Reagan Poindexter, an Eagle Scout with Troop 529 in Dobson, has earned all 138 merit badges offered by Scouting America.

Walt Unks, Journal

Her dad was a troop leader in Surry County and her older brother joined Cub Scouts when he was in elementary school, so when the gender barrier in Scouting was removed in 2018, signing up seemed natural. And her older sister had broken that ground already.

Besides, there were bigger things — achievements earned through sweat and hard work — ahead. Reagan Poindexter earned every one of the 138 merit badges offered by the Scouts.

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“That was pretty cool,” she said in a very understated way.

Breaking a glass ceiling or becoming something of a gender pioneer, while an interesting side note, was never front of mind for the Poindexter family.

All three siblings — Nolan, the oldest, Audrey and then Reagan — made it to Eagle, scouting’s top rank achieved by maybe 2-3% of the 130 million Americans who’ve joined. (The Boy Scouts were formed in 1912 so exact figures are hard to come by.)

“Right after (Nolan) made Eagle, maybe a few months later, they let girls in,” said proud mom DeeAnn Poindexter. “When girls could join, they both did.”

Once that happened, earning every badge was never a goal. Making friends, being outside and spending time with family was more important.

Matching brother Nolan and sister Audrey in becoming Eagle Scouts seemed attainable.

But earning every merit badge from American Business to Woodworking? It takes 21 badges — 14 are required of every candidate, seven are elective — a lot of community service and proven leadership to make Eagle. All 138 didn't seem realistic.

Until it did.



Reagan Poindexter, an Eagle Scout with Troop 529 in Dobson, has earned all 138 merit badges offered by Scouting America. She is pictured with a few of the items she has made and collected along the way.

Walt Unks, Journal

“She didn’t set out to do that,” said DeeAnn Poindexter. “It just kind of evolved. One day it was like ‘Gosh, Reagan has a lot of badges. ... She just kept plugging away.’”

That’s exactly how Reagan sees it, too.

Finishing 80 seemed like a big milestone, but the more she earned, the less daunting the climb became.

“Once I got to 100 and then 110, I wanted to see how close I could get,” she said.

As she struck new ones from the list, troop mates and Scout leaders alike began to pull for her because more than most, they knew just how difficult it would be to pull off.

“Achieving every merit badge is no small feat, and we couldn’t be prouder of Reagan’s dedication and tenacity,” said J. David Gilbert, the director of field services of Old Hickory Council, an umbrella organization for the region. “This accomplishment reflects not only her individual determination but also the unwavering support of her family, friends, and Scouting community.”

Still, it wasn’t easy. Some badges were more difficult to earn than others. “Communications ... I didn’t like that one too much,” Reagan Poindexter said.

DeeAnn Poindexter, with a front row seat to each, had a different idea on which one was hardest.

“I think it was bugling. The very last badge,” she said. “She had to learn how to play songs. Well. Well enough to earn the badge. Basically she had to learn how to play an instrument.”

(Reagan Poindexter, in case you were wondering, shrugged that one off. “I liked it OK from time to time,” she said.)

With one massive achievement under her Scout sash — it took two to display all 138 merit badges — what’s next?

Reagan Poindexter isn’t quite sure. She is, after all, just 18 years old.

“I don’t know,” she said.

The bet here is that whatever she decides, Reagan Poindexter is well equipped to take it on.

## **Big shoes to fill**

GREENSBORO — At first blush — second and third for that matter — having 44 residents go to all the trouble of filling out an application to serve out the remainder of Mayor Pro Tem Yvonne Johnson’s term seems a tad excessive for a job that might only last until December.

Johnson, recall, served admirably on City Council for 30 years — two as the city’s first Black Mayor before her death late last year. A tough act to follow, to say the least.

“I don’t know if anybody can sit in that seat,” said Councilwoman Sharon Hightower at a Dec. 17 meeting, the first following Johnson’s passing.