

## Lone Scout earns Eagle and 137 merit badges



You might ask, “How is that possible?” There are only 133 merit badges available to earn! And, what is a Lone Scout? While you may not be able to earn 137 merit badges, since four of them were only available during the 100th anniversary of BSA in 2010, you might find yourself in the position of being a Lone Scout - which is what happened to Jake Sindelar.

He started his trail to Eagle as a Scout in Troop 444 chartered with Beveridge Middle School in Soaring Eagle District. After completing 8<sup>th</sup> grade, his parents offered him the choice of homeschooling or boarding school to continue his high school education. Jake chose a preparatory boarding school in California. Because he spends weekends with fellow students and their families in different areas near his school, it became clear he would not be able to join one troop and attend weekly meetings, activities and campouts.

Kiely Sindelar, Jake’s father, discovered the Lone Scout program would best suit Jake’s situation. Lone Scouting provides a way for boys 8 to 10 years old to be Cub Scouts and those 11 to 17 to be Boy Scouts, with the help and guidance of an adult Lone Scout friend and counselor, usually a parent.

Lone Scouts include boys in boarding school, children of American citizens who live abroad, exchange students away from the United States for a year or more, boys with disabilities that might prevent them from attending regular meetings of packs or troops, boys in rural communities who live far from a Scouting unit, and boys who alternate living arrangements with parents who live in different communities. The Lone Scouts of America was organized in 1915 by William D. Boyce, who also helped organize the Boy Scouts of America in 1910.

“I thought I’d have to just work extra hard when I came home for visits,” Jake explained. “I got most of the merit badges before I left for high school. When I was in the troop, we worked on merit badges in meetings – every month a leader would teach one, and I’d take it. And, I went to workshops and summer camp and got five or six. Whenever I saw someone was offering one, I’d take that. Over time, I got 137. There are 133, and four were only offered during 2010. Signaling was offered in 2010. It was difficult – but I got it!”

When asked which ones were his favorite merit badges, Jake replied, “Cinematography was my first one. The most fun one was Aviation merit badge at Camp Cedars, because at the end of the class you get to fly a plane! The one that took the longest for me was Shotgun. One requirement I had a hard time with was to improve skill.”

As a Lone Scout, Jake’s father served as his Lone Scout friend and counselor, and his boarding school principal took him to merit badge workshops available through different troops.

“My principal took me to double merit badge workshops – Sustainability and Programming. Programming was my least favorite – it didn’t interest me and was kind of confusing. In Sustainability, I liked the part about recycling, and we talked about how it can save energy,” Jake shared. “It’s important to try to get as many done as possible in middle school, because high school gets so busy.”



Jake's preparatory boarding school has 67 students – all boys – and requires shirts and ties, including blazers for mass. Studies include math, science, English, history, religion, and Latin. The boys participate in football, basketball, cross-country and surf club – the ocean is only an hour away! The Sindelar family comes to visit Jake, or he comes home for a visit every couple of months.

While at home, Jake completed his Eagle project with the help of Troop 319, chartered to the Catholic Homeschool Association in Wagon Wheel District guided by Scoutmaster Chaun Heywood and Assistant Scoutmaster Mike Terneus. His project involved landscaping the grounds of the Immaculate Conception Church at 24<sup>th</sup> & Bancroft in Omaha, removing a ton of rock and replacing it with fresh mulch and soil. Jake passed his Eagle Board of Review, Tuesday, November 26, 2013. There will be no Court of Honor. Jake explains, "Because I am a Lone Scout, we're just doing a celebration with family."



The Mid-America Council is honored to recognize Lone Eagle Scout Jake Sindelar, and Kiely Sindelar, his father and Lone Scout friend and counselor. Only four out of 100 Boy Scouts become Eagle, and only about 400 boys are registered as Lone Scouts in the BSA program world-wide. Jake Sindelar is the only Lone Eagle Scout in the Mid-America Council. Congratulations, Jake!

Find more information about the [BSA Lone Scout program](#), and [Lone Scout resources](#) for homeschooled Scouts. Read an indepth article, "[Scouting Alone](#)," by Robert Peterson from Scouting Magazine archives.

*Kiely and Lone Eagle Scout Jake Sindelar*

Resources:

<http://www.scouting.org/About/FactSheets/LoneScout.aspx>.

[http://www.homeschooledscouts.org/lone\\_scouts.html](http://www.homeschooledscouts.org/lone_scouts.html)

<http://scoutingmagazine.org/issues/0110/a-lone.html>

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