



PHILLIPS FURNITURE

www.phillipsfurnitureinc.com
478-922-6117
1734 Watson Boulevard, Warner Robins, GA 31093
478-923-6926
1001 Young Avenue, Warner Robins, GA 31093

Classifieds Jobs Cars Homes Apartments Place an Ad

73° Forecast

The Telegraph MIDDLE GEORGIA'S NEWS SOURCE

Subscriptions | Report News | Customer Service



HOME NEWS SPORTS LIVING & ENTERTAINMENT OPINION PHOTOS/VIDEOS OBITUARIES

FIND & SAVE

News > Local & State > Houston & Peach > The Sun News

Houston Boy Scout earns 136 merit badges

BY ALLINE KENT - SUN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

January 29, 2014



Being an Eagle Scout is the highest award that Boy Scouting has to offer.

But after earning his Eagle Scout award, Alex Swaine, a senior at Veterans High School, wanted to keep soaring.

After earning the required 21 merit badges and the rank of Eagle Scout at the age of 12, Swaine continued earning them.

Now, three months shy of his 18th birthday and the end of his days as a Boy Scout, Swaine's merit badge total stands at 136.

He is about to finish earning badges for dog care and bugling, and then he will work on the mining in America badge, which will be released in February. Then, he'll move on to the digital technology badge, which will be released in March, making a total of 140.

For each five additional merit badges and each three months of additional service past their Eagle rank date, a scout is awarded a palm.

Alex will have 22 palms by his 18th birthday.

Earning merit badges has been Swaine's goal since he was about 5 and saw his father's merit badge sash from his own scouting days.

"He had 79, and at first I just wanted to have more than him. But then it just became fun," said Swaine. "That's why I keep doing it, because it has been fun."

Originally, his goal was to have 25, then 50, then 75 and then to have all of the merit badges. If he stays on track like his family and scout leaders expect him to, Swaine will have earned every merit badge.

His first merit badge was Coin Collecting, and that merit badge counselor, Phillip Graul, remains Swaine's favorite. His favorite merit badge was Climbing. His least favorite has been Bugling.

Scouts often find lifelong hobbies or vocations through their exposure to merit badges, and Swaine is no exception. He said he expects climbing and shooting shotguns will be lifelong interests for him.

"There is just nothing like standing on top of a 60-foot tower," he said.

Magnolia Manor of Macon Retirement Living at its best with the independence you desire and the comfort knowing assistance is available when you need it. Schedule a visit today! Call Toni Hodge at (478) 741-6684. 194 Pierce Avenue ~ Macon, GA (478) 741-6684 ~ www.magnoliamanor.com



Alex Swaine became an Eagle Scout at the age of 12. He said his drive to collect merit badges began when he was 5 and saw his father's merit badge sash.

SPECIAL TO THE TELEGRAPH

While a scout promises to be truthful at all times, Swaine said many believe he is lying about his accomplishment.

"It's just the normal reaction when I am asked and I answer how many merit badges I have. People will get this shocked look on their face and say something, 'You are lying,' or, 'You are kidding.'"

That reaction comes from other scouts as well, but Swaine said he has never thought anyone was jealous of his merit badge achievement.

"The other scouts just know how tough getting merit badges can be," he said.

In addition to scouting, Swaine participates in clubs at school and is a member of the cross country and track teams.

"People are usually amazed that I do other things as well," he said.

Adding to the achievement is the fact that his father, Steve, has been deployed six times during his son's scouting career for a total of 21 months.

"Sometimes, people assume that my dad has helped me, but he hasn't even been here for a lot of it," Swaine said.

While still a member of Boy Scout Troop 566, sponsored by Trinity United Methodist Church, Swaine is also a Venture Scout at the church. In about a month, he will have completed the requirements for the Silver Award -- Venture's highest achievement. Venturing is a co-ed youth development program of the Boy Scouts.

Garrett Williams, scout executive for the Central Georgia Council, said Swaine's accomplishments are incredible.

"When you think about all that has to be put into earning the rank of Eagle, that is like the mountaintop of scouting," said Williams. "Alex accomplished everything and then went from the mountaintop to the moon."

Williams said while the number of Swaine's merit badges is outstanding, it is the educational value Swaine has received that is the real benefit.

"This is a young man that took the opportunity of scouting and got everything he could out of it. That's what we want our scouts to do, so he has set a real example," Williams said. "When you think of scouting and merit badges, you think of camping and fire safety. But he wanted to learn about oceanography, about robotics, about American business. Every merit badge we offer has an educational value, and he has picked up a little of all of them.

"To earn this many merit badges says a lot about Alex and his dedication."

Contact Alline Kent at 478-396-2467 or allinekent@cox.net.

RECENT HEADLINES

Community briefs: New gardens, nature center to open in Warner Robins Saturday

Buzzell: Learn about importance of tourism at one-day seminar

Upcoming golf tournaments

Births

Community calendar

NATIONAL VIDEOS



Order a reprint of this story

Trending Offers and Articles

ADVERTISEMENT



Fix up your home with a KeyBank home equity loan today. Great rates and a fast response.



Washington Will this stock explode? Can you turn \$1,000 into \$100,000?



Top 10 Easy-Going Dog Breeds



Moses Lake - All Washington drivers should not pay their insurance bill, until they read this.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

The Telegraph is pleased to provide this opportunity to share information, experiences and observations about what's in the news. Some of the comments may be reprinted elsewhere in the site or in the newspaper. We