

## A mother's Page

# The tortuous trail to Eagle Scout

By Barbara A. Page.

The twins have been in Boy Scouts since they were seven. They crossed over from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts when they were 11 years old.

Once they were in Boy Scouts, the speculation started as to whether or not they would achieve the top rank in scouting called an Eagle. They could start what is termed in the scouting world as "the trail to Eagle" after they achieved the life badge.

The twins got their life badges when they were 13. Eagle badge requirements have to be completed before the Scout's 18th birthday.

The twins told their father and myself in April of their 17th year that they were going to try to get Eagle Scout. Their 18th birthday is in July.

They had three months to complete five merit badges. They also had to do an Eagle Scout project.

I commented for the first time but certainly not the last that they had had five years to do this and they were cutting it a little close. Their father and twins both told me that they would get it done. No problem.

The Eagle Scout process is sort of like graduating from Boy Scouts. So they were graduating from high school and from Boy Scouts at the same time.

The process of graduating from high school takes place in a building. High school classes meet at certain times and places.

The Eagle process has no classrooms. The teachers are volunteer merit-badge counselors. These volunteers have to sign off on blue merit-badge cards, indicating that the boys have met the requirements for each of the badges. They don't have offices where the Scout can go, waving his blue card.

The twins began their search for counselors. They also had to meet with the people for which they were doing their Eagle Scout project.

This was the hardest part of the project. Merit badge counselors are hard to find. They were about to send out smoke signals or set up a booth at Crossgates Mall for merit badge counselors when five people came forward.

The twins needed merit badges in Hiking, Personal Fitness, Family Life, Communications, and Citizenship in the World. The boys then had to start earning the requirements for the badges.

They looked at the require-

ments and asked what counted toward the badges. The requirements are all spelled out in the merit-badge books.

Hiking required a whole bunch of walking. They suggested, hopefully, walking around the basement a whole bunch of times. No, I told them, you have to walk outside for the required 70 miles of hiking.

Every time they prepared to hike, the skies darkened. I handed them rain ponchos to hike in the rain.

They pleaded for mercy when there was thunder and lightning. They managed to survive the storm and we all ate lunch soaking wet at Friday's.

Family Life required talking about drugs and sex. Sitting on the porch one Sunday morning, we simply told them both not to

picnic tables and Adirondack chairs. They supervised people building map boxes and planting posts.

When it was down to the wire, I saw sawdust mixed in their rapidly graying hair. They father's gray hair turned white with saw dust. Their younger brother and myself bathed ourselves in gray paint while we painted picnic tables.

The twins watched the graying process of their family members and asked when lunch would be served. We all participated in pizza and hotdogs after shaking the sawdust out of our hair and scraping gray paint off our skin.

The merit badges all got done. The project got done and the people who let us donate our time and energy are satisfied.

### No, talking on-line about your plans for summer vacation does not count as communication.

do either one. We told them you don't have time for sex or drugs; you have to get your Eagle.

One of the requirements for physical fitness was exercise. No, walking up the stairs to get a snack doesn't count as cardiovascular activity. So they went to play tennis.

No, talking on-line about your plans for summer vacation does not count as communication. They wrote a letter to *The Enterprise* (thank you for printing them) about community action.

Once the merit badges were signed, it was time for the Eagle Project. The criteria for this is too long to print here. Suffice to say it involved a lot of wood and kind-hearted people willing to do everything imaginable to said piece of wood.

The criteria said that the boys couldn't actually participate in their projects because they had to supervise people doing the projects. This part of the Eagle Scout project they did well.

They watched their father, their uncle, and another adult leader saw and put together

My husband tells me we'll laugh about the pressure of it all later in life. I'm amazed they actually did all of the requirements.

But they deserve the honor of Eagle Scout. They are indeed trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent. They are not only Eagle Scouts but young men who make me proud every hour and every day of my life.

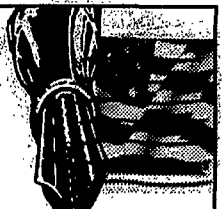
You will fly high but remember you can always land in my house. This is not something that you achieve or earn, it's simply the way it is.

Peace, Love, and Rock and Roll — Mom.

Oh yeah, happy 18th birthday to James on July 16 and to Tommy on July 17. We didn't need the extra day but, during this process, I thought maybe that's why Tommy was born two hours after his brother on his own birthday.

*Editor's note: Barbara A. Page is an Altamont mother.*

The *Enterprise* opinion pages are an open forum for our community. We encourage readers to express their thoughts about issues that appear in this newspaper or affect the community. Letters should be brief (with an outside limit of 1,000 words) and must include the writer's address, name, and phone number for verification. The editors may reject letters that have been printed elsewhere. Letters concerning elections will be cut off one issue before the election at the editor's discretion. No unsigned letters. Deadline for letters is Tuesday at noon.



To the editor

## Vietnam vets' reunion a resounding success

To the Editor:

The Northeast USA Vietnam Veterans' Reunion Association would like to thank all the supporters who helped make Reunion 2005 such a success. We were very concerned that this reunion would be a letdown after the excitement of hosting The Traveling Wall in 2004, and were thrilled to hear so many people comment that it was "the best reunion ever."

Veterans enjoyed a resounding "welcome home." Stories of friends reuniting after more than 35 years were plentiful. The food, the music, and the ambiance were terrific, and our speakers were exceptional.

The committee deeply appreciates the support of our community. This is what makes the reunion possible. The generous backing of local businesses, veterans and civic organizations, and numerous individuals was overwhelming, and we are

grateful to them all.

There were so many who helped that we are reluctant to single out any one. From the cooks to the color guards, from the banks to the candy stores, thank you!

After the success of this event, we are eagerly planning Reunion 2006. Beginning Oct. 1, at 12:30 p.m. we will hold monthly planning meetings at the library on Route 32 in Greenville. Anyone who would like to join us is welcome. Reunion updates will also be posted on our website [www.nevietvets.us](http://www.nevietvets.us).

Veterans and your families, please mark your calendars. The Seventh Annual Northeast USA Vietnam Veterans Reunion will take place July 28 to 30, on beautiful Doman Road in Freehold. We look forward to seeing you!

**John J. Kellegher, Secretary**  
Northeast USA Vietnam Veterans Reunion Association

## Car sensors can give skewed view

To the Editor:

Loose gas cap — pay \$50.

Yes, that's right, a simple little thing like a loose gas cap can cost you a diagnostic fee of \$50 or more.

Since 1996, all cars now have On Board Diagnostic, version 2 (OBDII). Its purpose is to monitor all of the sensors in your car, and report their status back to the computer. If those sensor readings don't match the pre-programmed operating range of the sensors being monitored, it turns on the dreaded "check engine" light.

This is New York State's new way of cutting down on emissions, because if that "check engine" light (money light) is on, it could mean that your car is not running properly and polluting

our atmosphere.

The fuel system in all cars now is sealed (no longer vented to the atmosphere), and one of the tests that the OBDII does, is apply a 2 to 3 pounds per square inch (or vacuum) to your fuel tank to see if it is in fact sealed. If the system detects a leak — you guessed it — the money light comes on, so be sure to tighten your gas cap until you hear a few clicks to make sure it is tight.

As of Dec. 1, 2004 your car will not pass New York State inspection if your "check engine" light is on.

So, don't wait until the last minute or the end of the month to get your car inspected.

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