

Young scout soars to Eagle

Project at therapeutic horse farm showcases his dedication, work ethic

By Lee McCracken | Photos by Richard Rudsill

Danny Ryan is a rising sophomore at Hickory Grove Christian School and a Boy Scout with Troop 13. While most boys achieve Eagle status around age 17 or 18, Danny earned his Eagle Scout just before his 15th birthday in June.

"I really wanted to be the youngest Eagle in our troop, and I wasn't sure who the youngest one was before me," he said. "So I got my Eagle at 14 years and 363 days."

The teen's Eagle Court of Honor was held June 14 at Hinds' Feet Farm in Huntersville. Danny built a horse feeding station at the farm in November, raising more than \$1,300 to pay for the project. The planning and execution involved about 30 volunteers working more than 210 hours.

Danny, a Davis Lake resident and son of Mike and Mary Ann Ryan, has been a Cub Scout and Boy Scout for nine years. "Danny is very organized and recruited some very competent adults to help him (with his project). He used his fellow scouts very effectively," said Dan Schulte, scoutmaster with BSA Troop 13, which is chartered by University City United Methodist Church. "Danny was determined from the start to finish on his time schedule, and he was a very productive project manager."

Danny said he learned a lot about basic construction and how to build a building. "I

had never built anything of this magnitude before," he added.

"The feeding station at Hinds' Feet Farm will allow the therapy horses to be fed over the winter in two pastures from the same shelter," said Marty Foll, executive director of the farm, a 36-acre facility dedicated to helping people who are living with traumatic brain injury. "The staff (and horses!) of Hinds' Feet Farm are very grateful to Danny, his family and Troop 13 for their contribution."

Schulte said that by earning his Eagle at such a young age and now staying active in scouting in a leadership role, Danny will be able to earn Eagle palms to enhance his accomplishment. There are three levels of Eagle palms: Bronze, Silver and Gold. Danny already has earned the Bronze Palm.

In addition, Danny is the vice chief of the Sewahutu Chapter of the Order of the Arrow (Boy Scouting's national honor society). This summer, he participated in ArrowCorps5 at George Washington and Thomas Jefferson National Forests, a Boy Scouts of America



Order of the Arrow conservation project.

"Danny certainly stands out as a good role model for other scouts and is very modest about his accomplishment," said Schulte. "He has a very disciplined work ethic, he is very dependable, and he really enjoys all the different activities that scouting offers." | uem