

scouting the neighborhood

Harrison receives Eagle & Celebrates Court of Honor

Russell Harrison, Eagle Scout of Troop 1656, was recently recognized as an Eagle Scout in the Tomahawk District of the Sam Houston Area Council (SHAC) with a very special Eagle Scout Court of Honor (ECOH).

The celebration was held at the Pecan Grove Baptist Church in Richmond.

The program began with a welcome from Paul Faseler Youth Pastor for the Pecan Grove Baptist Church and Charter Organization Representative for the Troop. The opening and closing flag ceremony was conducted by Michael Hackmack with the troop scouts posting the colors.

David Harris SHAC's Executive Committee VC of Field Operations served as the Master of Ceremonies.

Gus Evans, Committee chair, spoke about the troop committee and her role, and Richard Meserole talked about the responsibilities the Scoutmasters play in the organization.

Jonathon Evans, assistant Senior Patrol leader, explained the scout activities.

Curt Johnson, former Troop Scoutmaster, conducted a special portion of the program on the flag retirement ceremonies the troop has conducted over the past few years.

Following the Eagle Alumni presentation, the focus was on Russell Harrison. The ECOH is a very personal event in both the life of the Eagle Scout and the lives of his family and friends. The Eagle Rank is the highest achievement in Boy Scouts and highly regarded.

To achieve the rank, Harrison worked by earning the ranks of Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle. The first few ranks focused on first aid and life skills as well as service to the community. The later ranks reinforced these skills and added leadership and additional service with a major Eagle Scout Project to complete at the Life rank.

Harrison was required to earn 21 merit badges. His leadership positions have included, Patrol Leader, Librarian, Den Chief and Order of the Arrow Representative and Troop Guide.

Harrison was also elected by his peers to the Order of the Arrow (OA), Scouts Honor Society committed to service, and earned his OA Brotherhood 10 months later.

Harrison has also taken the National Youth Leader Training and has over 70 nights of camping which include a variety of Scout Camps; Camp Geronimo in Arizona, Camp Buffalo Trail Scout Ranch in West Texas, Camp Davy Crockett in Tennessee, El Rancho Cima in Central Texas, Camp Mauritz in Edna, Camp Karankawa in Sweezy, Camp Bovay in Navasota, Camp Brosig in Sealy, Camp Strake in the Woodlands and Sea Base in Florida.

His Eagle Project was refurbishing and donating his youth swing set which included dismantling, refurbishing and reassembling it at the new location.

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Harrison had the help of scouts and scouters to complete the project in a little over 320 hours.

Harrison's community service since joining scouts is constantly increasing. He was awarded a certificate of appreciation from Foster High School for earning the most service hours for the 10th grade for the 2008-2009 school year. Recently he was featured on the "National Order of the Arrow" website in the "Power of One" section. This section features the scouts showing how one person can make such a difference in the lives of others.

Before and after the ceremony letters of congratulations that had been sent to Russell from dignitaries were there to read.

Displays and mementos of patches and photos of Russell's scouting years were on hand to view and a slide show of his scouting years was shown.

Diane Orosz, Brazos District training chairman, and Michael Hackmack, Troop 1656 Eagle Scout and Assistant Scoutmaster, both spoke about knowing Harrison and special times they have shared.

The Rev. David Luckert, Senior Pastor of St. John's United Methodist Church, led the candle ceremony with the help of Scouts Andrew Walquist and Brandon Walquist.

Curt Johnson, Harrison's first scoutmaster, led the Eagle Charge and Obligation.

Johnson had Harrison's dad, Rich, and uncle, Rob, come up and both told the story of their Eagle Courts of Honor being done by General Underwood.

Johnson presented the Eagle Challenge and announced Harrison as an Eagle Scout.

He also presented Harrison with his Eagle Certificate and Medal along with National Eagle Scout Association membership certificate and neckerchief, the Ben Carter Memorial Silver Dollar Coin, given in honor of Ben Carter Jr., Eagle Ring paperweight given to him from the Tomahawk District, the Texas Flag that was flown over the Capital for him on his parents' 25th wedding Anniversary and the US Flag that was flown over the Capital for him on his Grandparents' 59th Anniversary.

Harrison pinned on the pins for his mom Susan and Dad Rich. His Dad then tied on his neckerchief. Harrison spoke to the audience to thank them and gave everyone there an Eagle bookmark. He then gave a special mentor pin to Michael Hackmack for being such an inspiration.

Harrison had many friends and relatives that traveled great distances to attend. Relatives included Bob & Wanda Harrison, his Grandma & Grandpa from Miami Florida, his Uncle Rob Harrison from Beaverton Oregon, his Grandmother Georgie Drastata Duyka from Wharton Texas, his Aunt Peggy Duyka from Wharton, his Aunt Natalie Duyka from Oklahoma City, his Aunt Lanette and Uncle Tommy and cousin Morgan from Wharton Texas and his Great Aunt of 91½ years old Betty Drastata McPherson from Houston.

David Harris officially closed the court of Honor after leading the Sea Base Grace and adjourning for refreshments.

