

working toward a high honor

Area student working to become an Eagle Scout

By Marquita Griffin

They worked hard that Saturday.

Instead of simply enjoying a day away from the responsibilities of school and work, Ryan Hadfield and at least 30 students and adults from Boy Scout Troop 1656 improved the streets in Pecan Grove.

They scrubbed cement with wire brushes. They handled heavy duty adhesive. They sweated. They took water breaks.

But more importantly, they made sure the 300 plus "No Dumping" placards they were placing over area sewer drains would be clearly visible to residents.

This hard work, it seems, was a two-fold effort.

Not only were the scouts helping the Pecan Grove Municipal Utility District increase environmental

awareness within the district, they were also helping fellow scout Ryan Hadfield achieve Eagle Scout status.

Plans, the public and projects

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality enacted a regulated five-year plan, which will allow the Pecan Grove MUD (and other MUDs) to discharge storm water into lakes and streams.

However, in order to do so, districts must meet a set of requirements, with one such stipulation being educating the public about this TCEQ plan.

Part of that education that TCEQ requires is placing "No Dumping" inlet markers on storm drains.

One member of the public wanted to be

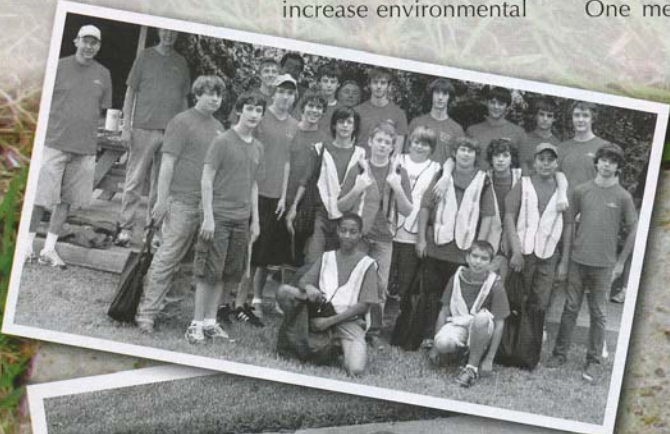
more than educated about this plan, though. Hadfield wanted to be involved.

Supporting the Pecan Grove MUD's environmental and conservation goals, Hadfield decided to develop a project that would earn him an Eagle Scout status and help his community as well.

A worthy cause

Placing the placards was the perfect way to contribute to the MUD's effort, Hadfield said. So on Sept. 26, Hadfield and other Troop 1656 placed nearly 350 placards on drains from Plantation Road through the north side of Pecan Grove.

These "no-dumping" placards, Hadfield hopes, will discourage residents from ridding lawn clippings and trash into the district's



water drainage system.

Dumping things in the drainage system causes more than flooding problems, Hadfield said. It has a significant impact on the local waterways and ecosystems, like the Brazos River, too.

"I know it seems much easier to just blow your grass clippings into the drainage opening, and (you think) your small amount won't hurt," Hadfield said. "But it all adds up and congests our system."

When a hard rain hits a congested drain, it can't clear the streets the way it's designed to causing water to back up and flood the streets.

Another reason Hadfield wanted this particular Eagle Scout Project was because chemicals are sometimes dumped into sewer drains as well.

Those dumped chemicals, Hadfield said, "make their way to our river and its tributaries and eventually into the Gulf of Mexico. This creates a biohazard for our fish and wildlife."

