



Left to right Noah Donovan, Jacob Cowan, and Owen Silsby–Belknap.

Eagle Scouts Court of Honor

Karen Donovan and Steve Soreff, MD

On a perfect, warm but pleasant Sunday afternoon, July 31, 2022, outdoors at the Community Center four local Scouts were awarded the Boy Scout's highest rank advancement at the Court of Honor ceremony. They were Noah Donovan 18, Jacob Cowan 18, Owen Silsby–Belknap, 18, all of Nottingham, and Seth Quinney 18, of Northwood. However, Seth Quinney elected to participate in another Eagle ceremony in the Fall, when his family could attend. All four boys are members of Troop 167. And at this ceremony, they joined the elite ranks of the 4 percent of all Boy Scouts who attain the Eagle rank.

Here are the [requirements for the Eagle rank](#). Each Scout must earn at least 21 merit badges, must demonstrate Scout Spirit (an ideal attitude based upon the Scout Oath and Law, service, and leadership), and must complete an extensive service project that the Scout plans, organizes, leads, and manages. The Boy Scouts of America is one of the Nation's largest and most prominent values-based youth development organizations. The BSA provides a program for young people that builds character, teaches responsible citizenship, and fosters personal growth. For over a century, the BSA has helped build the future leaders of this country by combining educational activities and lifelong values with fun.

Scoutmaster Dan DeButts proudly conducted the ceremony. He has been with Nottingham's Boy Scout Troop 167 for over 15 years and its Scoutmaster for over a decade. He attributes the four's success and achievement to their being a "tight-knit group". He laments that COVID has reduced New Hampshire Cub and Boy Scouting by 47%. It is a great point of pride that his Troop is installing 4 Eagle Scouts with a fifth one in the earning process.



Scoutmaster Daniel DeButts leading the Pledge of Allegiance

The ceremony commenced with a Color Guard of Scouts marching in with the American and Troop Flags. This was followed by Pastor Kevin McBride of the Raymond Baptist Church offering the invocation. Next Scoutmaster Daniel DeButts led the Pledge of Allegiance and the recitation of the Scout Oath. DeButts declared that the Eagle Court was now open. Members of Troop 167 lit 3 candles representing Duty to God and Country, Duty to Others, and Duties to Self. Then Scouts lit 12 candles for the 12 Points of the Boy Scout Law. “A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent”. The Scouts also explained one of the 12 points.

Then the Scoutmaster traced the 10 to the 12-year journey of each Eagle Scout. It began with their being Cub Scouts into Boy Scouts. Each went through the ranks from Tenderfoot, 2nd Class, and First Class Scouts, on to Star and Life Scouts. He cited the Scout Review Board that each must pass in order to move on to the next rank. He noted that 21 Merit Badges were the minimum requirement for Eagle rank. But each of the 3 assembled there had earned over 30. He also added that there the many challenges the Scouts encountered during COVID.

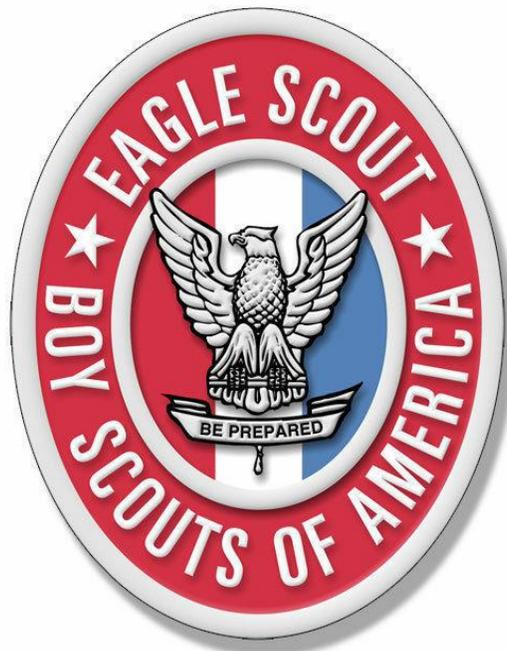
Next, three people spoke about how each of the Eagle Scout’s projects had benefited their organizations. Pictures of the individual project will appear later in this article. First, Caryn Anderson, head of Track and Field at [Nottingham School](#), talked about the 2 Eagle Projects at her school. She praised Jacob Cowan’s construction of a long jump pit. It facilitated new records in that event. She cited Seth Quinney’s creation of the shot-put ring and noted that improved performances in that event because of the new ring. Next Dan Bunker of the Blaisdell Memorial Library said how important Owen Silsby–Belknap’s [Book Walk](#) was. It was a joint venture by the Nottingham Library and Nottingham Recreation Department. It was tale on a trail along the North River, which right behind where the Eagle ceremony was being held. Finally, Karen Donovan spoke about the value of Noah Donovan’s [GaGa ball pit](#) at the [Learning Skills Academy](#) in Rye.

This was followed by the actual pinning ceremony of the Eagle medal on each Scout. . This was a moving, and time-honored ritual. To begin the sequence, the Scoutmaster passes the medal to the Eagle Scout's father. With Owen, it first went to his grandfather then to his father. The father passes it to the mother. The mother then pins it on the Scout uniform where the heart is underneath.



The pinning ceremony.

Later each Eagle received a blue neckerchief. Each of the three then Eagles spoke. They thanked their families for their support. They cited the Scouting and camping tradition in their families. One noted his uncle was an Eagle Scout. They noted the help from Nottingham Fire & Rescue. They praised the dedication and the leadership of the Scoutmaster and the troop leader past and present. And they presented Scoutmaster Daniel DeButts with an engraved Swiss Army knife.





The now Eagle Scout left to right Noah Donovan, Owen Silsby–Belknap., and Jacob Cowan
The Court was closed and folks then ate.



Here is a look at each of the 4 Eagle Scout and their projects.



Noah Donovan

Noah Donovan is the son of Shawn and Karen Donovan of Nottingham. He is a recent graduate of Portsmouth High School where he became a member of the National Technical Honor Society, a New Hampshire Scholar, a trained welder, and founded the school's first eSports club – the Seacoast eSports Team. Noah participated in activities including band, percussion ensemble, and track and field where he placed 6th in the State for discus in 2022. Noah will begin attending Southern New Hampshire University this fall where he will be pursuing a degree in Business Administration. Noah has been active in Scouting since grade school, was inducted into the Order of the Arrow (the Honor Society of the Boy Scouts) in 2016, and after being thwarted twice by pandemic issues, was finally able to complete his service project. He built a GaGaball pit for Learning Skills Academy in Hampton, NH in August of 2021, thereby earning his Eagle Scout Award.



Noah Donovan, project a GaGaball pit for Learning Skills Academy



Jacob Cowan

Jacob Cowan is the son of Gary and Deb Cowan of Nottingham, NH. Jacob is a recent graduate of Coe-Brown Northwood Academy High School where he graduated as a New Hampshire Scholar. Jacob participated in cross country, winter and spring track and field for all 4 years. Jacob enjoyed the triple jump even the most where he placed third in state and moved on to the New England meet in Connecticut. He also broke the school record in triple jump with a jump of 42.1 ½ feet. Jacob will be attending the University of New Hampshire (UNH) this fall where he will be studying Homeland Security with an interest in cyber security. Jacob has been active in Boy Scouts since his younger grade school years. He was inducted into the Order of the Arrow (the Honor Society of the Boy Scouts) in 2015. After the challenges of the Covid pandemic, Jacob completed his service project a long jump pit for the Nottingham School and earned his Eagle Scout status on November 17, 2021.



Jacob Cowan's service project is a long jump pit for the Nottingham School



Owen Silsby-Belknap

Owen Silsby-Belknap is the son of James and Pamela Belknap of Nottingham, NH. Owen is a recent graduate of Coe-Brown Northwood Academy (CBNA) High School. Owen participated in cross country all 4 years, track, and bowling for CBNA. Owen also volunteered for Raymond Baptist Church(RBC) working the Tech System, Monday night dinners, and with the children during Sunday School. Owen will be attending Christopher Newport University (CNU) in Newport News, VA, this fall where he will be pursuing a degree in Management and Photography. He was selected to be part of the President Leadership Program (PLP) at CNU. Owen has been active in Scouts since 2009. He was inducted into the Order of the Arrow (the Honor Society of the Boy Scouts) in 2015. After the challenges of the Covid pandemic, Owen completed his Eagle Scout project; a Book Walk for Nottingham Rec Center and Library. Owen earned Eagle Scout status on July 20, 2022.



Owen Silsby-Belknap's project; a Book Walk for Nottingham Rec Department and Library



Seth Quinney

Seth Quinney is the son of James and Elisha Quinney of Northwood, NH. Seth is a recent graduate of Coe-Brown Northwood Academy High School where he graduated as a New Hampshire Scholar. Seth participated on the bass fishing team as well as winter and spring track for his four years of high school. Seth often volunteered at TL Storer in Barnstead NH where he also worked as a counselor in training and then became camp staff. Seth will be attending Saint Joseph's College of Maine in the Fall to study Environmental Science and to participate in the winter and spring track and field teams. He plans on competing in discus and hammer throwing. Seth has been heavily involved in scouting from a very young age. He was inducted into the Order of the Arrow (the Honor Society of the Boy Scouts) in 2018. Seth was delayed completing his Eagle project because of the Covid Pandemic but was able to provide the Nottingham Middle school with a Shot put ring for their Track and Field program earning his Eagle scout status on May 18th of 2022.



The Nottingham School's Shot put ring for its Track and Field program

Congratulations to the 4 Eagle Scouts, their families, to Troop 167 and its leadership, to the Boy Scouts of America. And to Nottingham, what way to celebrate its 300th anniversary.

