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Saranac Troop # 35  
Eagle Scout Final Project Write-up  
April, 2002

My Eagle Scout Project, the beautification of the spring on top of Dannemora Mountain, is complete. It has been a long process that has involved careful planning, thought and execution.

### Project Idea

I came to decide on the project because I saw a real need in my community for the area surrounding the spring to be cleaned and made more pleasant for the public. The area itself was filthy with trash, unattractive in the appearance of the cracked concrete surrounding the spigot and was difficult to approach because of the mud surrounding the spring. Also, there were no attractive plantings and nowhere to rest for the many people who walk, jog, and bike to the top of the mountain.

### Project Approval

Once my project was chosen, it was only then that I would discover how difficult it would be to get approval. It only seemed logical that I should contact the Town Supervisor. However, when I contacted the supervisor's office I reached the Town Clerk who said that I needed to contact the Department of Transportation. Acting upon her advice, I called the Department of Transportation and was told to call Tom or Scott who are resident engineers. After many attempts I finally reached Scott who told me that for the spring to be within their jurisdiction, it would have to be within 50 feet of the state highway midline (median divider) and was told that since the spring is slightly outside that guideline that it would not be within their jurisdiction and that I should call the Department of Environmental Conservation in Ray Brook. I dialed the Department of Environmental Conservation and was told to

get in touch with Ken Kogat. Ken Kogat told me that he didn't believe that the Department of Environmental Conservation had jurisdiction of the spring and that I should contact Bill Amberman at the New York State Health Department. When I reached Bill, he advised me to check the ownership of the spring at the Real Property Office but was sure it was within the jurisdiction of the Clinton County Health Department and that I should call Rita Mitchell or Jim Cayea. I called the Clinton County Health Department and asked for Rita or Jim. Rita advised me to contact the Dannemora Town Supervisor. After coming full circle, my long and difficult quest finally came to a successful conclusion. Shirley Durnin, Dannemora Town Supervisor gladly gave her approval for my project Hallelujah!! Now I was off and running.

### Procuring Supplies

Remembering the benches that are on the trails at the Visitors Interpretive Center in Paul Smith's, I made a trip there armed with a camera, tape measure and pencils. I took pictures of a bench and drew a blue print in order to reproduce the bench to place by the spring. Then I contacted Walter "Pete" Light in order to ask his permission for help in constructing the bench. Pete is an excellent carpenter and is well known in our area. We collaborated in order to come up with a materials list. I decided to send a letter asking Ward Lumber Co. to donate the materials for the bench. Jay Ward asked me to contact Scott Wilfore who is the manager of the Plattsburgh Store. Mr. Wilfore told me that I could have all the supplies I needed to build my bench and asked me to display their sign at the project site which I thought was more than fair.

In order to complete the beautification part of my project I needed paint and crack filler for the spring backing. I also needed bushes to plant in the area and grass seed to replace sod lost to winter plowing. For these materials I decided to contact Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse. There I was told to contact David Phelps who is the manager. Mr. Phelps proved to be quite generous and an avid supporter of the scouting program. He was more than happy to help out.

The last piece of the puzzle was to secure a load of crushed stone to spread throughout the area, especially around the water run off. For that I contacted Jeff King, Town of Dannemora Road Supervisor. He made several calls to procure the stone which was delivered the very next day.

At this point in time approximately 41 hours had already been spent on planning my project, writing my project description for the council and, upon receiving approval, procuring my supplies.

### Project Implementation

The central part of my project was the building of the Visitors Interpretive center bench. In order to accomplish this I made an appointment with Walter Peter Light to meet him at his workshop. I had already picked up the supplies at Ward Lumber in my truck and brought them with me.

We began by examining my blueprint and proceeded from there. Before we started to work, Pete and I put on protective eyewear. In order to cut the lumber, power tools were necessary. Therefore, Pete did the actual cutting while I stabilized the ends of the boards. I learned to use a framing square to make sure the corners and edges were straight. The power tools that were employed for this project were a circular saw, radial arm saw and an electric drill. The other tools that were used included a tape measure, protractor square, clamp, hammer, ratchet wrench, carpenter's square and a level. Nine hours of manpower were spent building the bench.

I had passed out flyers at the scout meeting two weeks in advance asking for help on Saturday, April 20 at 11:00 A.M.. The week before the project began I reminded the scouts of the date of my project. I also explained what I planned to do and also about achieving the rank of Eagle.

In order to prepare the site for my project to begin. I went to the spring with my cousin, Fred Grosskreuz in order to prepare the concrete around the spring for painting. We filled in the many cracks with

Bondex cement crack filler and then afterwards gave the backing a primer coat of Glidden latex primer.

The night before the project I gathered all the supplies and materials that would be needed and loaded them into my truck and my mother's van. Then I helped her bake eight dozen cupcakes and brownies as refreshments for whoever would show up. Now we were ready for the big day.

### Eagle Project Day

My alarm was set to go off at 7:00 A.M. but I awoke earlier to the shake, rattle and roll of my bed at 6:40 A.M. due to the earthquake that struck that day. I was off to an early start.

I reviewed the project in my mind and jotted down the many jobs that needed to be accomplished in order to complete the project. They were:

1. pick up the trash
2. put all garbage into garbage bags
3. remove large rocks
4. straighten out the sod that the snowplow pushed up in the winter
5. rake the area
6. sweep the area
7. put a final coat on the cement backing
8. spread crushed stone in the immediate area of the spring
9. spread crushed stone throughout the runoff area
10. dig four (two foot deep) holes for bench
11. plant rhododendrons
12. spread mulch
13. plant grass seed
14. set the bench and level it
15. pour crushed stone around bench legs and fill in with dirt
16. set Ward Lumber sign near bench

By ten o'clock I had delivered the bench and all the necessary supplies on site. At eleven o'clock scouts, their parents, my scoutmaster and friends started to arrive.

When everyone arrived I informed the group of the scope of the project and the jobs that needed to be done and found that the younger scouts needed more supervision and guidance to complete their jobs while the adults grabbed tools and began to work where needed. They asked me questions periodically about their tasks which left me available to oversee the younger scouts.

By 11:10 the work began and the first seven jobs were finished by 1:00 P.M.. At that time we had a break and enjoyed the refreshments that were made the night before. At that time Jim Aierle, my scoutmaster, saw that the one wheelbarrow that I had brought would be sadly inefficient in spreading the large amount of crushed stone that had been brought on site. He went home and brought back two more wheelbarrows.

His insightful wisdom was very much appreciated as we started spreading all of the stone. It took us two hours using three wheelbarrows to spread all of the material. Had we only had the one wheelbarrow the job would have taken much, much longer to complete.

The last nine jobs took three and ½ hours to complete. By 4:30 P.M. we drove in the Ward Lumber sign and called it a day. As you can see in the before and after pictures, a great deal was accomplished that day.

The support and reception of my project has been much more than I could have expected. As we worked, people stopped by to ask what we were doing to praise us and to appreciate our efforts. The Town Supervisor, Shirley Durnin, was extremely happy with the outcome. She informed me that people have called her asking who was responsible for "fixing up" the spring. She also received calls from people wishing to express their pleasure at seeing the spring site area so improved.

## Conclusion

As a result of this project I have learned many things. In order to carry out a project of this size it was imperative to reach out and seek help from many people. I came to realize the importance of scouting to not only myself and my peers but also to others who have a high regard for the principles that scouts live by.

I found that to see a project through from its inception to completion can be an extremely rewarding experience. I have learned to work with tools that were unfamiliar to me. I learned the importance of motivating people in order to get the job done. When it became difficult to get approval for my project I “dug in” instead of giving up. I found resources in myself that I didn’t know I had. In all honesty, I felt a little disappointed when the project came to conclusion because I missed all the excitement and anticipation in planning and seeing it completed. I feel that my Eagle Project was a very valuable learning tool and growth experience. I believe the nature of this experience will prepare me for the future in dealing with people, deadlines, projects, team work, in other words, SUCCESS.

## Kudos

At this time I would like to thank the following people who supported my goals and helped me complete my Eagle Scout project. These people are my parents, Roy and Catherine LaHart, Michael Layn and Jim Aierle, my scoutmasters; Walter Peter Light, town historian and carpenter; Shirley Durnin, Dannemora Town Supervisor; Jeff King, Dannemora Town Road Supervisor; Mary Rankin, assistant at Ward Lumber Co; Jay Ward, President of Ward Lumber Co.; Scott Wilfore, Manager of Ward Lumber Co. Plattsburgh store; David Phelps, Manager of Lowe’s Home Improvement Warehouse; Jeremy Miner, Nick LaCroix, Jeremiah Trevail and Casey Gould, scouts of Troop 35; Mrs. Trevail and Mrs. Gould, scout parent helpers; Bruce Boissey, painted spring back; Fred Grosskreuz; helped prepare the spring back

for the project, and, finally, members of the Scout Council, George Stiefel, Dick Ward and other members for their support and their dedication to scouting. And also, I thanks my merit badge counselors for their help in launching me on the road to Eagle.

### Dedication

I would like to dedicate my Eagle Scout project in memory of Chris Gardiner, my first Boy Scout Leader who inspired me to always reach for the highest rank of Eagle, who passed away one year ago and whose entire troop became Eagle Scouts because of his tireless support, outstanding leadership and love of scouting.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Adam LaHart