

Boy Scout protects ducks with Eagle Scout project

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ALICE GERARD

Senior Contributing Writer

On a cool and sunny May 15, Charles Wright, a member of Boy Scout Troop 630, along with several assistants, went to Beaver Island State Park to install seven hen tubes and one wood duck box. The construction and installation of these structures was Charles' Eagle Scout project.

The structures, Charles said, "are nesting structures for ducks. We put them in the water to keep them safe from all the predators that try to get to their eggs or them themselves. The wood duck box is just the same thing, but for a duck that doesn't like being in the water as much, as compared to a mallard.

"We are installing seven hen tubes and one wood duck box into Beaver Island State Park. It would be going into locations that we've designated: one smaller pool, one larger marsh area, and one outer area on the other side."

Charles, 15, a freshman at St. Joseph Collegiate Institute, said he chose the nesting structure project because "I am really into conservation and I want to help out my local area as much as possible."

Charles said his interest in conservation came from his love of the outdoors.

"I like going on walks," he noted. "I love just listening to the sounds of nature. I think those things need to be protected, the natural side of life."

"I'm really excited about how much into the environment he has become through this group and how important that is to him now," said Jeri Wright, Charles' mother. "It's brought an awareness, even to my understanding of the world. He's actually opened our eyes, too."

Charles and Jeri both said the nesting box project was very time-consuming and involved.

"I think that one thing, too, you'll want to know is the self-discipline to get to where he's at," Jeri said. "It took him more than 10 years (from when he started as a Cub Scout). This Eagle Scout project alone. The amount of planning, fundraising, getting approvals, going to the state, getting approval from the state, getting permits, all the things he had to do."

"All the way from August of last year," Charles said.

"It's a big thing, the self-discipline," Jeri added. "It's just something that they're striving to teach these kids. It's very impressive."

Charles said he would encourage other young people to join Scouting America - previously called the Boy Scouts.

"I would definitely say Cub Scouts is the best time to join," Charles said. "It's the introduction to Boy Scouts. Once you cross over into Boy Scouts, you get a lot more to do on your own, a lot more on your time when you want to rank up, when you want to do projects, when you want to do whatever you want. It's a really fun time. You get a lot of merit badges. You can work toward awards. It's probably one of the best experiences any boy across the world could do."

When asked which Boy Scout activities he especially enjoyed, Charles said, "There's got to be a lot. Maybe those parades that we do on the Fourth of July or the Memorial Day services we have at DeGlopper Memorial. Oh yeah,



Above: Boy Scout Charles Wright places a hen tube onto a boat. Seven hen tubes that he built were placed in water at Beaver Island State Park. • Below: Boats containing hen tubes are paddled to places chosen by Charles Wright where they can be set under water.



Camping. Every year, we have a summer camp that goes for five days, and we work toward as many merit badges as we signed up for. This year, I'm going to be going for a national jamboree."

A national jamboree, Charles said, is "basically all sections of Boy Scouts from every area in the country and international areas. They come together at this one camp. We spend our time there for 10 days. We don't work toward as many merit badges as we do toward activities and having as much fun as possible."

"We love the Scouting America

organization," Jeri said. "It's just filled with amazing leaders who have provided such great mentorship and such great role models. The whole organization just helps these kids with life skills. Charlie has gained so much self-confidence through this and the ability to give back to the community. Every time there's something special going on, like Memorial Day, Veterans Day, cleaning the graves, anything they can do to give back is very impressive."

"Their focus on environmental conservation is something that everybody should be a part of. It's

impressive what they're teaching these kids."

Jeri said that Charles, who has one sister, has shared that knowledge with his family.

"He's been our teacher for sure," she said. "He's also taught us about ... when I watch him interact with the different walks of life. There are people with different backgrounds. There are people with different abilities. There are all different walks of life within the group, and it's been very wonderful to see all these kids interact and learn from each other. They learn compassion and they learn

understanding and even just how to get along. So, I've been enjoying watching that."

Charles said he also appreciates being part of Troop 630, which is based at the Grand Island Cultural Center (formerly the old St. Stephen Roman Catholic Church building). "It's a smaller troop, so we're definitely able to be more personal with each other. We have Mr. (Scott) Swagler. He's probably one of the longest-running scoutmasters."

"We're lucky. The leaders are amazing," Jeri said.

Writers wanted

Make a difference in your community.

Build your resume.

Get paid to be creative.

Email josh@wnypapers.com.

Dispatch Since 1944

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Dispatch subscribers:

Did you know?

You are entitled to:

FREE announcements

- Engagements (\$50 value)
- Weddings (\$50 value)
- Birth (\$50 value)
- Obituaries (\$125 value)
- (No word limit/photo restriction)
- Anniversary (\$50 value)

Plus:

You also receive

- ✓ Home delivery
- ✓ 4 free classified ads, including garage sales! (\$52 value)

Offers apply to existing Dispatch subscribers only

Take advantage of this great short term rate and watch your money grow!

24 Month CD at **3.803%** APY



Call or Visit Us Today!

Rates and terms subject to change without warning



Financial Trust
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION



2014 Grand Island Boulevard
Grand Island 773.1707
Additional Branches Located in Blasdell, Buffalo, Cheektowaga, Orchard Park & West Seneca

FTFCU.com