



PHOTO PROVIDED

Cory Stengel, left is now an Eagle Scout, a rare and exceptional accomplishment in Scouting.

Stengel earns Eagle Scout rank

Andrew Stengel, a student at Sisters High School, has achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank in Boy Scouts. This accomplishment represents almost five years of adventure, fun, work and dedication to the Boy Scout program for Stengel, a member of Sisters Troop 139, Crater Lake Council.

During the process of satisfying the requirements for the Eagle rank, Stengel has performed community service, provided service and leadership for his Troop, and hiked over 100 miles in the Rocky Mountains of New Mexico, at Philmont Scout Ranch.

In addition to the traditional outdoor skills learned in Boy Scouts, Stengel has a

host of merit badges, including those from citizenship of the world to cooking.

Stengel's Eagle project was to organize, coordinate and remodel a retired metal Conex shipping container to be used as a storage unit for the Cloverdale Rural Fire Protection District. This storage container was sorely needed at the fire district, says Fire Chief Thad Olsen. "Before we received this container, the district was losing property due to rodent and water damage. We now have a secure dry location to store our supplies, thanks to Andrew."

Stengel was formally presented the Eagle Scout award at a Court of Honor ceremony at the Aspen Lakes Lodge on March 15.

Sisters climber travels to Cuba

By Sianna Flowers
Correspondent

Learning something in school is helpful, but learning it in life is quite another thing. Students can conjugate verbs all they want, but it isn't until they visit Mexico that they will truly learn Spanish. They can analyze the communist government structure, but not until they see it will they truly realize what it is.

Brandon Ermatinger was given many of these out-of-the-classroom experiences this winter.

January 22 through February 3, Ermatinger, a sophomore at Sisters High School (SHS), was away on a climbing/mission trip in Cuba and Mexico. Brandon went with his dad, Adam Ermatinger, and members of an organization known as Solid Rock Climbers for Christ. They landed in Mexico and then traveled to Cuba. Their goal was to supply local climbers with gear they can't get due to the restrictions of living under the communist regime.

They hosted a climbing competition, toured the rocks, and spread the Christian gospel. Ermatinger plans on going back in two more years.

The trip taught Ermatinger several important lessons. Time and time again he realized that material goods do not mean happiness.

"They were always so generous and grateful even though they didn't really have anything," he recalled. "(I

took away) how little the people have in material, but how great of character they have. They live their lives to the fullest even though they don't have much."

Ermatinger was also struck by the negative effect communism had on the country.

"The average Cuban makes about \$15-20 dollars a month," he said.

"If you ask for a sandwich in Cuba you get two very large pieces of bread, a small slice of ham, and one piece of cheese."

Ermatinger's one regret is that he wasn't able to spend more time exploring the life of local Cubans.

"Because of the embargo there's all of these old American model cars," he noted.

Going to Cuba is exciting enough, but climbing there is even better because the island is composed of 60 percent limestone rock. Cuba is covered in fantastic walls and unique climbs, and things get even more interesting when you have to avoid authority to get your workout in. Guards patrol climbing areas to keep climbers off the rocks. Local climbers have figured out the guard schedules and plan their climbing day around it.

Ermatinger was in Cuba with professional climber Matt Fultz, who has conquered some of the world's most difficult bouldering routes.

Some of Ermatinger's fondest memories are of climbing a multi-pitch route from which he could see across the entire



PHOTO BY BRANDON ERMATINGER

Cuba has many rock climbing opportunities.

Ermatinger isn't too bad of a climber himself, having landed in the top 20 at a national climbing competition that consisted of 60 adult men.

All of these memories and lessons would have been nearly impossible without the flexibility of the school and support of the community. Due to the SHS online program, Ermatinger was able to be gone for two weeks but stay almost entirely caught up on his academics.

Biology teacher Rima Givot gave him an alternate assignment that consisted of journal entries and an extensive report on Cuban flora and fauna.

Ermatinger is very grateful to the anonymous community member that helped him pay for his ticket.

The only downside, he says, is that he will be shoveling horse poop through his entire spring break to pay his debt.

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