

Court of Honor

TERRI SZABO -

Good afternoon, my name is Terri Szabo, the Committee Chair for North Ridgeville Boy Scout Troop 175. By the authority vested in me as a representative of the Heart of Ohio Council and the Boy Scouts of America, I declare this Eagle Court of Honor for Gabe Vega to be open.

TERRI: As we begin, I would like to ask Pastor Tom Joyce, the pastor of Fields United Methodist Church to come forward and give an invocation.

PASTOR TOM - *Invocation*

TERRI: I would now like to ask our Senior Patrol Leader Nolan Larsick to lead us in the opening Flag Ceremony.

NOLAN: Please rise for the presentation of the colors.

Scouts, Atten-SHUN!

Color Guard, present the colors! Scout Salute!

The flags are brought up and the Color Guard waits by the flag holders.

Color Guard, post the colors!

Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

I Pledge Allegiance to the flag
Of the United States of America
And to the republic for which it stands,
One nation, under God, indivisible,
With liberty and justice for all.

Two!

Please be seated.

NOLAN: Would BEN PYCRAFT please come forward to show us the meaning of our flag's colors.

BEN:

[Light the red candle.]

The red of my flag is the lifeblood of brave men ready to die or worthily live for this, our country.

[Light the white candle.]

The white of my flag is for purity, cleanliness of purpose, thought, word, and deed.

[Light the blue candle.]

The blue of my flag is for faith and loyalty, like the eternal blue of the star-filled heavens.

Would RYAN ROBINSON and KAMERON AKDOGAN come forward to tell us about John Wayne's interpretation of the Scout Law?

RYAN - "A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent." Nice words. Trouble is, we learn them so young we sometimes don't get all the understanding that goes with them. I take care of that in my family. As each boy reaches Scout age, I make sure he learns the Scout Law. Then I break it down for him with a few things I've picked up in the more than half a century since I learned it.

KAMERON - A Scout is trustworthy

RYAN - The badge of honesty. Having it lets you look any man straight in the eye. Lacking it, he won't look back. Keep it at the top of your list.

KAMERON - A Scout is Loyal

RYAN - The very word is life itself, for without loyalty we have no love of person or country.

KAMERON - A Scout is Helpful

RYAN - Part sharing, part caring. By helping each other, we help ourselves, not to mention mankind. Be always full of help--the dying man's last word.

KAMERON - A Scout is Friendly

RYAN - Brotherhood is part of that word. You can take it in a lot of directions -- and do -- but make sure and start with brotherhood.

KAMERON - A Scout is Courteous

RYAN - Allow each person his human dignity, which means a lot more than saying "Yes, ma'am" and "Thank you, sir." It reflects an attitude that later in life you "wish you honored more earlier in life." Save yourself that problem. Do it now.

KAMERON - A Scout is Kind

RYAN - This one word would stop wars and erase hatreds. But it's like your bicycle. It's just no good unless you get out and use it.

KAMERON - A Scout is Obedient

RYAN - Start at home, practice it on your family, enlarge it to your friends, share it with humanity.

KAMERON - A Scout is Cheerful

RYAN - Anyone can put on a happy face when the going's good. The secret is to wear it as a mask for your problems. It might surprise you how many others do the same thing.

KAMERON - A Scout is Thrifty

RYAN - Means a lot more than putting pennies away, and it's the opposite of cheap. Common sense covers it just about as well as anything.

KAMERON - A Scout is Brave

RYAN - You don't have to fight to be brave. Millions of good, fine, decent folks show more bravery than heavyweight champs just by getting out of bed every morning, going out to do a good day's work, and living the best life they know how against a lot of odds. Brave. Keep the word handy every day of your life.

KAMERON - A Scout is Clean

RYAN - Soap and water help a lot on the outside. But it's the inside that counts, and don't you ever forget it.

KAMERON - A Scout is Reverent

RYAN - Believe in anything you want to believe in, but keep God at the top of it. With Him, life can be a beautiful experience. Without Him, you're just biding time.

ANDREW KUBIT is up next to tell us about One Hundred Scouts

ANDREW:

Of any 100 boys who become Scouts, it must be confessed that 30 will drop out in their first year. Perhaps this may be regarded as a failure, but in later life all of these will remember that they had been Scouts and will speak well of the program.

Of the 100, only rarely will one ever appear before a juvenile court judge. Twelve of the 100 will be from families that belong to no church. Through Scouting, these 12 and many of their families will be brought into contact with a church and will continue to be active all their lives. Six of the 100 will become pastors.

Each of the 100 will learn something from Scouting. Almost all will develop hobbies that will add interest throughout the rest of their lives. Approximately one half will serve in the military and in varying degrees profit from the Scout training. At least one will use it to save another person's life, and many will credit it with saving their own.

Two of the 100 will reach the rank of Eagle, and at least one will later say that he values his Eagle badge above his college degree. Many will find their future vocation through merit-badge work and Scouting contacts. Seventeen of the 100 boys will later become Scout leaders and will give leadership to thousands of additional boys.

Only one in four boys in America will become Scouts, but it is interesting to know that of the leaders of this nation in business, religion, and politics, three out of four were Scouts.

Tonight we honor one Scout in a hundred. We know the things he has done in the past, imagine what he will do in the future.

Next, MIGUEL VEGA will present The Eagle Mountain, as JAVY VEGA lights the candles.

MIGUEL:

Early one morning a young boy stood at a trailhead. Before him rose a mighty mountain, which seemed all the mightier when compared with his smallness.

A trail led to the mountain and then up it to incredible heights before vanishing in the clouds. On this trail the boy could see other boys and young men, some of whom turned and beckoned him to follow. (**light Scout**)

The boy began to climb, refusing perhaps to believe that he could ever reach the top. At first the trail rose gently, and the boy had many companions. (**light Tenderfoot**) But soon he began to sweat and breathe heavily, and many of his companions turned away. And still the boy climbed. (**light Second Class**)

At times he climbed quickly. At times he climbed slowly. (**light First Class**) At times he had to go down a little way to find another path or stop a while to catch his breath. But still he climbed. (**light Star**) The trail became steeper, the air thinner, but the climber scarcely noticed for he had, along the way, become stronger of body and hardier of spirit. And still he climbed. (**light Life**)

And finally, in the cool peace of evening time, he stood alone at the top of the world and looked around him. To the left, he saw a fiery golden sunset. To the right, he saw a diamond-studded, silky-black night sky. Behind him, he saw the trail that he had followed and the hikers who were following in his footsteps. (**light Eagle**)

And in front of him, he saw another mountain. And another. And another. And a whole procession of mountains marching off to the horizon. But the young man (for he was a man) knew that none of these other mountains was insurmountable, that all could and would be climbed. For he had learned many skills in the climbing of the first mountain, and he would carry those skills with him long after this mountain was forgotten.

And besides, he could begin climbing the next mountain tomorrow. Tonight he would rest and celebrate and ponder the journey that he had completed. And so tonight, we pause to rest and celebrate and honor this fine young man, this Eagle Scout, as he stands at the top of the world and looks around him.

[pause]

Would Greg Coghlan please come forward to lead the Eagle Charge and Promise?

GREG: This afternoon we have the honor and pleasure of recognizing Gabe for the award of Eagle Scout.

The parents and Scout leaders of the Eagle candidate whom we honor today have labored long and faithfully to develop him toward alert and participating citizenship through the Boy Scout program. Their efforts culminate this afternoon in the presentation of the Eagle Award. The success of these efforts, however, will only be manifest in the way this Eagle Scout himself sets a social pattern for those whose lives he touches.

Eagle candidate Gabe Vega, I charge you to live with honor. An Eagle's honor is sacred, for it is the foundation of all character. Character is what you really are deep down inside, not what you think you are. May the white on your badge remind you to live with honor.

I charge you to be loyal. Without loyalty, all character lacks direction. An Eagle is loyal to his ideals. As Shakespeare said, "To thine own self be true." The blue on your badge is a reminder to be loyal.

I charge you to be courageous. Courage gives all character force and strength. Trust in God, and have faith in your fellow man. Face each day unafraid and seek your share of the world's work to do. Let the red on your badge remind you always to have courage.

I charge you to give service. Make the habit of the daily Good Turn come forth in a life of service.

At this time I would like to invite all Eagle Scouts present, to come forward and rededicate themselves to the ideals of Scouting.

[PAUSE...]

GREG: I will now ask you to make the scout sign and repeat after me:

I reaffirm my allegiance
to the three promises of the Scout Oath

I thoughtfully recognize
and take upon myself
the obligations and responsibilities
of an Eagle Scout.

On my honor, I will do my best
to make my training an example
and my status and my influence
count strongly for better Scouting
and for better citizenship
in my troop,
in my community,
and in my contacts with other people.
To this I pledge my sacred honor.

By the authority vested in me by the National Court of Honor of the Boy Scouts of America, it is my privilege and pleasure to pronounce you an Eagle Scout. May the oath you have taken remain graven on your heart forever.

Before we move forward, I am sure you will agree that some special persons should be accorded the privilege of standing with you and in some measure sharing these high honors.

If the parents of Gabe would come forward?

In recognition of the motherly care and encouragement throughout Gabe's Scouting career, we ask his mother Michelle, to pin the Eagle Badge over his heart.

In recognition of fatherly advice and guidance along the trail to Eagle, I ask Gabe, now to present his son with the Eagle Scout certificate and personal letter from the Chief Scout Executive, Boy Scouts of America.

No one will ever know the unnumbered acts of self-sacrifice and helpfulness from the mother of this Eagle Scout which have led us to this night. As the symbol of what this mother has made possible, the court now asks Gabe to present to his mother a miniature Eagle pin. Gabe, it is customary that you also give your mother an Eagle kiss.

Your father has stood by you over the years and has offered his encouragement and assistance. As the symbol of what he has contributed to your attainment of this award, the court now asks you to present him a miniature Eagle Dad pin.

Now I would ask fellow Troop 175 Eagle Scout _____ to come forward for some more presentations.

EAGLE:

Gabe, on behalf of the Scouts, adult leaders, and other Eagle Scouts of Troop 175, I now present you with our Troop's Eagle Scout Honor Roll Plaque. This, along with our original plaques, contain the names of all the Eagle Scouts from our Troop. I should note that Gabe is the 41st Eagle in our Troop's 38 year existence. Unfortunately, you don't get to keep this plaque – it will be prominently displayed in the back of our meeting hall at the VFW.

(He presents him with the plaque and shakes his hand)

However, we felt bad about presenting you with a plaque that you can't keep. So, the Troop has arranged for something that you can keep, and wear as part of your uniform.

(Present him with the Eagle Neckerchief)

The Troop has also purchased a small gift for you.....

(Present him with other gift)

Gabe's parents can now return to their seats.

Will Harry Larsick please come forward to share some Letters of Congratulations?

HARRY:

Read a few selected letters.

Our Scoutmaster, Greg Coghlan will now come forward to give a few remarks.

GREG – SCOUTMASTER'S REMARKS

And now I present Eagle Scout Gabe Vega, who has a few words to say.

GABE – ADDRESS BY NEW EAGLE

Gives a short speech thanking all who helped him get to this stage, or anything else he wishes to say.

Also presents Mentor's pin(s)

NOLAN:

Please rise for the retiring of the Colors. Color Guard, front and center !

(Wait for them to assemble)

Scouts, Atten-SHUN! Color Guard, retire the Colors! Scout Salute!

(The flags are removed from the flag holders and taken to the back)

TWO!

TERRI SZABO –

I now declare this Eagle Court of Honor closed. Please join us for cake to celebrate and congratulate Gabe Vega, Scouting's newest Eagle Scout.