

Region



Submitted photo

Grayson Schoenbine designed and built a 30-foot flagpole near the entranceway to St. Mary Cemetery as his Eagle Scout project.

A flagpole intended to honor veterans serves dual purpose of a sign of hardwork and dedication

By PAUL LOCHER
Staff Writer

WOOSTER — A patriotic addition to the St. Mary Cemetery, located just south of the Wooster Cemetery on Madison Hill, is the result of efforts made by a Scout working toward attaining his Eagle rank.

Triway High School sophomore Grayson Schoenbine has been working for most of the year on designing and building a 30-foot flagpole near the entranceway to the cemetery in honor of the hundreds of veterans from numerous conflicts who are buried there.

The 15-year-old member of Scout Troop 63 said he came up with concept for the illuminated flagpole in January, when he began planning what it should look like. He said he moved into the construction phase in late May, not realizing what a complex project it would turn out to be, requiring the careful coordination of numerous entities.

Schoenbine is the son of Rod and Theresa Schoenbine of Wooster, and has been involved with Scouting since early grade school. Having recently served as assistant junior patrol leader, he currently is his troop's Guide, helping mentor those just coming into scouting.

He also has earned the prestigious Fifth-Year Pipestone award for efforts at the Seven Ranges Summer Camp.

Schoenbine, who attends St. Mary Catholic Church, said he became interested in working on the project honoring veterans after troopmate Christian Anderson did an Eagle Scout project undertaking research that turned up more than 100 veterans graves in the cemetery than were previously

known, and restored the military markers placed on those graves long ago.

Schoenbine said Bogner Construction donated the stainless steel flagpole for the project, and he worked with the Deco-Crete Co. in getting the 12-foot diameter circular pad stamped to resemble stone.

Other organizations that helped with or provided in-kind donations to the project were Orrville Trucking and Grading, the Olen Corp., Knights of Columbus and the American Legion. In all, Schoenbine said, he raised \$1,400 in donations.

Asked if he encountered any unusual problems, Schoenbine quipped, "Well, we didn't run into any bodies."

What he did run into, he said, was hot and wet weather, and plenty of it. He said he and as many as 15 fellow troop members spent weeks digging the deep hole that was required for the pole, working through some very hot weather, during which he could never remember to pack a water bottle.

As for the best part of the project? Schoenbine said he came away with the great "sense of accomplishment" when the flag was dedicated in a ceremony held Nov. 5. The Scout said he takes seriously the clause regarding "duty to God and country" in the Scout-ing pledge and was determined to complete the project honoring the local veterans.

Rod Schoenbine said he is proud of what his son accomplished, and he stuck to his objective despite numerous obstacles posed by adverse weather conditions.

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Flagpole

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He characterized Grayson as a "good student" and "self-starter," adding, "he's always been a real good student and we're proud of him. It was impressive to watch the planning and commitment he brought to this project. It's something they don't teach you in school."

Rod said he feels his son learned a great deal by going

to various organizations to "pitch his ideas" to raise funds for the project.

While Grayson said he still has a lot of paperwork from the project to finish up, he is hoping to be able to go through his Eagle Scout ceremony before the end of the year.

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