

News > Local

Scholz honored with national heroism award

[Print Page](#)

By Tracy Overstreet
tracy.overstreet@theindependent.com

Published: Tuesday, August 3, 2010 8:17 AM CDT

A national Boy Scout honor was bestowed Sunday morning on Grand Island Eagle Scout Jason Scholz.

But he'd gladly trade the honor for the event for which he was recognized.

It was July 2008.

The then 12-year-old Scholz got up for a drink of water just as the sun was announcing a brand new day. He was headed back to bed for a few more winks when he heard a thud and his mother's cries for help.

Scholz ran into the kitchen to find his 64-year-old father, Leslie, collapsed on the floor.

His father had been preparing to do chores on the farm. But something now was terribly wrong.

Scholz and his dad had long been active in Scouts. They fished together. They camped together.

Now the First Aid and Emergency Preparedness training came into action.

Scholz began administering CPR. His mother, Sue, joined in while his sister called paramedics.

The ambulance soon arrived and whisked Leslie to St. Francis Medical Center, but it was too late.

Even the most skilled doctor couldn't undo the damage from the heart attack Leslie had suffered.

Scholz didn't feel much like a hero that day.

Despite the tremendous loss he incurred with the death of his father, Scholz can know every day that he did all he could to save him.



For his Eagle Scout project, Jason Scholz created a prayer garden at the Wiegert Cemetery where his father is buried. He was presented this national Heroism Award from the Boy Scouts of America Sunday. (Independent/Tracy Overstreet)

[Click here for our photo reprints](#)



8/17/2010



8/16/2010



8/16/2010



8/14/2010



8/14/2010

"For us, the significance is a young man using his skills to save a life or try to save a life of somebody else," said Overland Trails Council Scout Executive Dave Plond. "He has the ability to react in a crisis situation and think calmly. That's what we want out of our kids."

Plond said just one other Scout in the multi-county council has received a national heroism award during at least the past 15 years. That award was a certificate only. Scholz was awarded a certificate and medal.

"First Aid and Emergency Preparedness really does help you in your life," Scholz said.

He was recognized Sunday with the National Council Boy Scouts of America Heroism Award during a special court of honor called at the Overland Trails Council Boy Scout Merit Badge University at Stuhr Museum. The award was presented by Covered Wagon District Commissioner Carol Alpsteg of Kearney.

Troop 117 Scoutmaster Rod Boehler nominated Scholz for the national award because of his actions that day, and his tremendous growth since the event.

"Jason is a really special kid," Boehler said. "He has shown tremendous trust in me and the troop."

Boehler said Scholz has joined him and his son, Alex, on scouting events. Just weeks after he lost his father, Scholz attended a Boy Scout camp at Fort Robinson State Park and in South Dakota with his uncle, Don Scholz.

And then came Scholz's Eagle Scout project -- creating a prayer garden at the Wiegert Cemetery on Gunbarrel Road where his father is buried.

He installed benches and some landscaping with financial support from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. The project was completed in October 2009.

"He's got a ton of comments," Boehler said. "He's got a lot of cards and thank-yous for the benches and his work at the cemetery."

"There's nowhere else out there to sit," Scholz said of why he wanted to create the prayer garden.

Scholz, 14, will be a sophomore at Heartland Lutheran High School this fall, but doesn't want his scouting experience to end even though he has earned the required merit badges and completed a special project to earn the top honor of Eagle Scout and now a national honor, too.

He wants to continue being active in scouting and earn Eagle Palms. The Bronze Palm signifies earning five merit badges after Eagle Scout, the Gold Palm 10 and the Silver Palm 15.

"I want to try to get as many Eagle Palms as I can," Scholz said.

Copyright © 2010 - The Independent

[x] Close Window