

ONE SCOUT'S VISION, A COMMUNITY'S GAIN

Riley Bishop completes Eagle Scout project

By: Addy Bishop

Earning the Eagle Scout award is a highly sought-after accomplishment, as it's the highest rank that a scout can achieve in the Boy Scouts. Senior Riley Bishop achieved this goal after 13 years in the program. His final project involved building a sign to help inform the public about the Ogallala Aquifer.

Bishop states, "I chose my Eagle Scout project because natural resources are very important to me, and the more we get people interested, the better place the world will be."

The Ogallala aquifer provides drinking water for a significant number of Nebraska residents and is the lifeblood of Nebraska's agricultural economy. According to Bishop, most Nebraskans don't know much about the Aquifer or the local natural resource districts that help maintain this natural resource, a problem Bishop was hoping to remedy.

Since the Nebraska state fair draws 334,000 visitors annually, Bishop worked with the staff at Central Plate Natural Resources District (NRD) to

develop content for a sign highlighting the aquifer and the NRD's role in the management of the resource. The sign was installed ahead of the 2025 state fair, and Bishop organized a team of younger scouts to engage with visitors about the aquifer. Bishop and his group spent time at the fair educating visitors about the Aquifer.

"Leading more people to be informed about natural resources leads to a more productive and beneficial society," said Bishop. "This was a great opportunity to highlight how local Natural resource staff support management of our Aquifer, so we all have drinking water and irrigation water for our crops."

In order to get to the Eagle Scout rank, scouts have to pass through 6 ranks: Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class,

First Class, Star, and Life. Throughout the years in the program, scouts are expected to develop teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, critical thinking, public speaking, and communication skills. The final Eagle Scout project is meant to be a representation of these skills and demonstrate a scout's commitment to their community.

"The main skill that I developed was leadership. Scouts pushed me into a leadership role very early by teaching me to take charge," said Bishop.

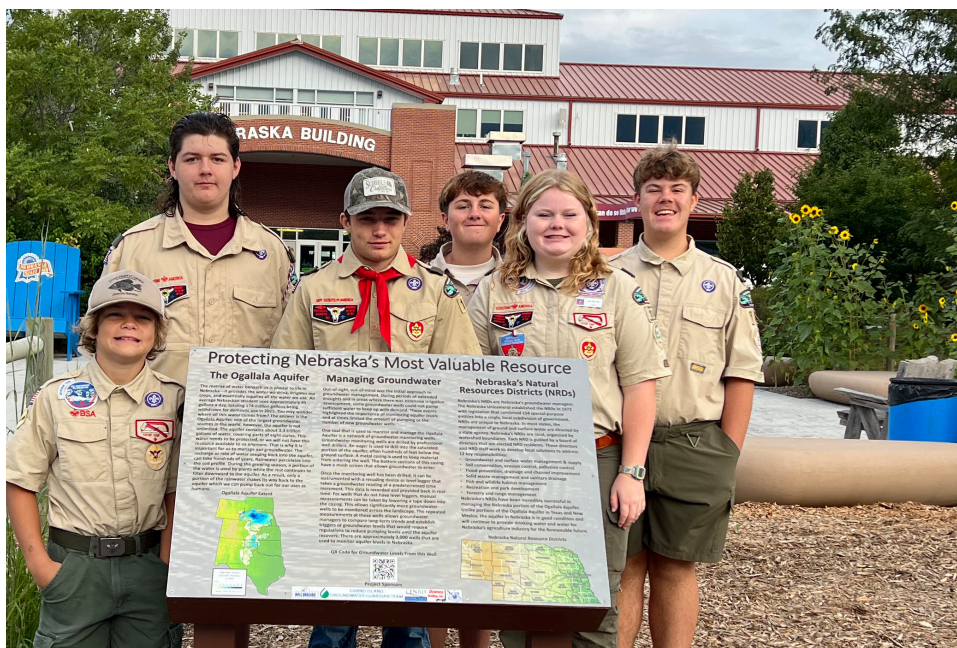
He started his scouting journey in kindergarten and worked diligently to progress through the levels. Even at a young age, Bishop was working towards this goal.

"When I first joined Boy Scouts, I saw the older boys and decided I wanted to do that for myself. They worked hard, and

the time paid off for them after

completing their Eagle Scout," said Bishop. "I feel accomplished that I was able to complete this achievement for myself"

Bishop, who plans on attending college for Agricultural Engineering with the hope of joining the NRD or NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) after graduation, chose this passion project to complete his scouting career and hopes he will be able to use what he learned and the connections he made to propel him into his next adventure.



Bishop and his group of Scouts posing for a picture at the State Fair by the informational sign he created.

