



CLICK HERE FOR WEEKLY SPECIALS

555 S. Hwy. 49 • Jackson

**STORE HOURS: 7AM-10PM DAILY
CERES: 6AM-11PM**

As a public service, this article has unlimited access. To support public service journalism, call (209) 223-8761 to subscribe.

http://www.ledger.news/roots/hometown-heroes-milestones-and-an-eagle-scout/article_406ada3a-a39b-11eb-9d5d-c795fad83a1b.html

FEATURED

Hometown Heroes: Milestones and an Eagle Scout

Sarah Spinetta

Apr 26, 2021



Seeing a need, the Amador High School sophomore, Declan Morgan, coordinated a cleanup and improvement effort at Pine Grove Elementary's newly-named Bear Corner and completed his Eagle Scout project.

COURTESY PHOTO/Scoutmaster Dennis Morgan

Recently-revived upcountry Scout Troop 888 is moving quickly towards hitting multiple milestones highlighting their growth and accomplishments - announcing their first Eagle Scout since starting back up, with more earning merit badge after merit badge, working their way to the top.

As their Scoutmaster explained, Troop 888 dissolved sometime in the 1990's-2000's, but as the upcountry population and interest in Scouting grew, the group was dusted off and re-established in 2015. "Troop 888 was non-existent 6 years ago," Dennis Morgan, Scoutmaster of Pine Grove Troop 888, said. "The troop was reconstituted in 2015 as a bridge from Pack 89, and we have been back up and running since then, taking off and accomplishing many milestones in the six years since."



Recently-revived upcountry Scout Troop 888 is moving quickly towards hitting multiple milestones highlighting their growth and accomplishments - announcing their first Eagle Scout since starting back up, Declan Morgan.

COURTESY PHOTO/Scoutmaster Dennis Morgan



Bear Corner sign.

COURTESY PHOTO/Scoutmaster Dennis Morgan

One of their most recent feats is the first successful graduation of a Life Scout up to an Eagle Scout in 16-year-old Declan Morgan, who chose the project of refurbishing an outdoor area at Pine Grove Elementary. "I passed my Eagle Board of Review on February 17th with my 'Bear Corner' project, cleaning up and improving an often-used outdoor area at the school I went to, Pine Grove Elementary," he commented. Declan explained that this project and location were specially selected to pay-it-forward to the school, its staff and students which he holds dear.



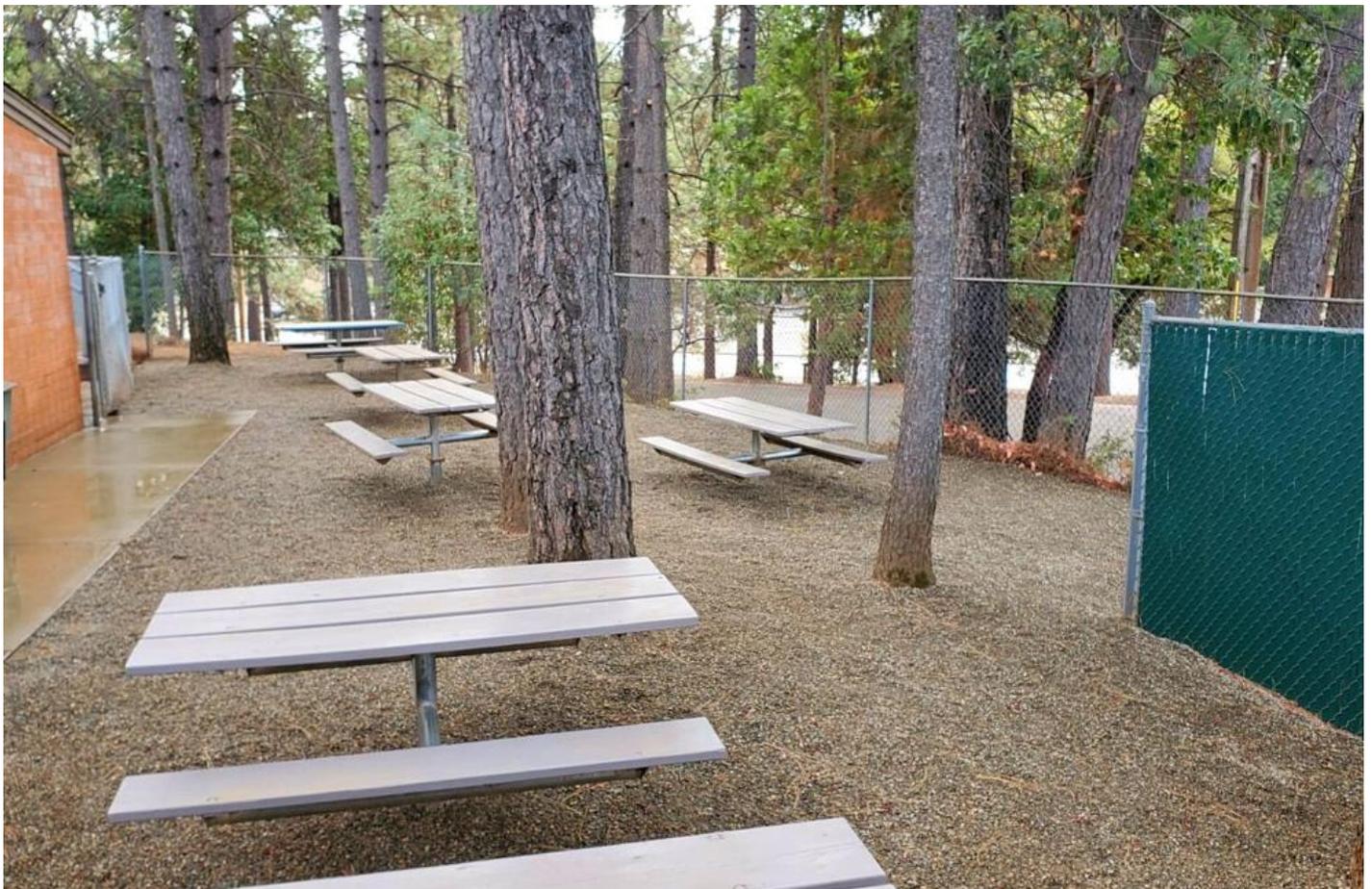
Declan pressure washing the tables before the group sanded and painted them.

COURTESY PHOTO/Scoutmaster Dennis Morgan

"I went to school there, and so did my sister, and I knew that there was this area next to the cafeteria that just needed some help," Declan continued. "There were some trees which were dangerously close, leaning over the cafeteria building, and one was dead and had been hollowed out by woodpeckers, making me worry that if there was a bad storm or strong winds, it could have broken off and toppled during a storm. The ground also was bare, so when it rained, it got muddy, and the tables were in need of cleaning and re-painting." Knowing that this area was used on the daily during lunchtime and utilized even more since physical distancing was being practiced after schools re-opened, the Amador High School sophomore

coordinated a cleanup and improvement effort. "The kids should be outside more to be safer, and I felt like I could repay the school for what they did for me, helping the students and the community."

The improvement project was made possible by the generous donation of funds via the PAWS PTA parent group at Pine Grove Elementary, family members and donation of a truckful of gravel delivered by Campbell Construction. "With our first few work days, we cleaned up the dead and problematic trees, cleared out the ground to bare dirt and put down a layer of weed screen so no weeds will grow up from the gravel. As I called around, looking for a quote for the gravel and its delivery, Campbell Construction heard what I was doing the project for and said they would just donate it and bring it to us with no charge- it was really sweet and generous, and with those funds saved, we were able to install privacy slats around some propane and gas tanks to make the aesthetic more appealing than just a fence. After that, the tables were pressure-washed and repainted the school colors."



Seeing a need, the Amador High School sophomore coordinated a cleanup and improvement effort at Pine Grove Elementary's newly-named Bear Corner.

COURTESY PHOTOS/Scoutmaster Dennis Morgan

Declan revealed that he joined the Cub Scouts in 2nd grade, moving on to Boy Scouts in 5th grade not just to spend time with friends and have fun, but to better himself. "Honestly, I joined the Scouts because I was kind of a troublemaker as a kid and I wanted to better myself as a person," he laughed. "I knew that becoming a Scout would be really good for me, and it was, plus I got to hang out with my friends from school and go on fun adventures with them. We have worked on local service projects and cleanups to better our community, worked with the Upcountry Rotary, participated in the Veterans' Day Parade, going on backpacking trips and also attending summer camps and the local Scout-O-Rama every year. Since Covid, these activities have been stopped, but we hope to be able to hold them again when it's safe."

In addition to teaching young Scouts about vital skills like teamwork, problem-solving, and community service, Dennis oversees the group's many patch-earning experiences and participation in annual community events, trips, summer camps and more. Pre-Covid-19, Troop 888 had ballooned up into about 25 boys, covering the towns of Pine Grove, Pioneer and Volcano carrying upcountry Cub Scouts to the more advanced levels. "I took over as Scoutmaster in 2016, and we grew fast as more youth were becoming involved in all of the fun Scouting offers," Dennis continued. "I am truly proud of Declan and all of our scouts for the work they put in and stepping up; being an Eagle Scout is really the culmination of the Scouting experiences and builds leaders. And it completely blew us away seeing our strong focused community stepping up and making this project happen. It has become more challenging in the past year, with the lockdown changing how we continued on, switching to online virtual meetings and the Scouts working more independently...we did lose some members as the best parts of Scouting like going out and participating in events, going out and hiking in the woods and experiencing the wilderness had to stop. We still have about 16 Scouts who are active right now, just picked up a couple more, and are always recruiting. Amador County is a part of the Three Rivers District of Scouts BSA; and you don't need to be a Cub Scout first to join- you can join Troop 888 directly."

Troop 888's Scouts are continuing on towards earning more patches and higher levels, with more on the way towards graduating to the Eagle rank- under Morgan's guidance, a continuous advancement in ranking keeps everyone working hard, busy and focused. "We now have our first Eagle Scout since the troop was revived, my son Declan. Over the next couple of months I have more scouts that will get their Eagle Board of Reviews, all of which are working on local projects of benefit to the local community," he finished. "This Scout is the first, I hope of many."

To find a local Scout Troop or Cub Pack, including information to contact Scoutmasters, visit [BeAScout.Scouting.org](https://www.beascout.org) and enter your zip code. To keep up with Pine Grove Troop 888, visit their Facebook Page at [Boy Scout Troop 888, Amador County, California](#).