

IN **PERSON**

# SCOUT'S HONOR

Peters Township's Anthony Luisi earns the rank of Eagle Scout and a place in Scouting's National Honor Society.

BY NICOLE TAFE



**P**eters Township's Anthony Luisi has been a Boy Scout for nearly his entire life. "I started Scouts at the earliest level you can join—as a Bobcat in Cub Scouts when I was in first grade," he says. Anthony, 17, earned the rank of Eagle Scout this year as a junior at Peters Township High School.

Anthony is arguably one of the most involved and well-rounded kids at PTHS and throughout the community. He's a member of the wrestling team, track team and National Honor Society. He's found his niche in music and theater—playing baritone sax for the PT Marching Band, singing tenor in Room 100 and Symphonic Choir, playing and singing with the jazz band, and is an active member of the PTHS Thespian Troupe 185. Outside of PTHS, he's very involved in theater in the surrounding communities and downtown Pittsburgh, having recently made his debut with Prime Stage Theater, and can often be seen in various roles at Little Lake Theatre. He is the son of Carl and Judy Luisi.

As a Boy Scout, Anthony has volunteered in a multitude of ways including cleaning and beautifying the community, replacing fences and helping with the annual fish fry at St. John the XXIII Parish.

Anthony's Eagle Scout project involved creating an outdoor classroom, complete with a chalkboard, benches and a table. It is located right outside of the cafeteria area of PTHS. "I always knew I wanted my project to be close to home, and I figured—where better than my high school!" he says.

Scott Orelli, one of the science teachers at PTHS, sparked the idea. "He sent out an email blast to anyone interested in building a structure. I jumped at the opportunity and set to work on designing the classroom," explains Anthony. "With the help of my dad and Mr. Orelli, we decided where to put it, and how it would look and stand structurally."

Anthony's project benefits approximately 1,400 students each year—giving them the opportunity to work on projects they are unable to do in the classroom and gives students a break from the traditional classroom setting, which research shows fosters learning.

"I would like to thank Mr. Orelli for all of his hard work and help, as well as my dad, my grandfather, my Scout mentor Anthony Lingis, my fellow Scouts and anyone who contributed in any way—it truly means the world to me," he adds.

Anthony has also completed the ordeal to obtain the Order of the Arrow—Scouting's National Honor Society. He had to be voted on to be considered, and it recognizes Scouts who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives. "This is quite an honor, and I am extremely grateful to have been chosen for this," says Anthony.

"My time as a Scout has greatly changed my life for the better," he continues. "It's taught me so much more than camping and tying knots. It's taught me how to solve problems, manage my time and finances and how to lead and teach others—just to name a few things. It has shaped all aspects of my life and I will forever be grateful for the program and for the friends that I've shared it with."

One of Anthony's favorite memories was his troop's high adventure trip to Philmont, New Mexico. With its vast mountain ranges, pine forests and open pastures, it was not an easy backpacking trip. One of the 12 days he and his troop members were there, they climbed the tallest mountain on the property—Baldy Mountain—which stands 12,441 feet above sea level. "We had to hike and climb six hours to get to the top before they closed the mountain and stopped allowing people up there because of the potential afternoon storms," he recalls. "Needless to say, we made it but with a lot of perseverance and will to keep moving forward. I would go back in a heartbeat."

"Scouts has prepared me for all aspects of my life," Anthony adds. "It has trained me to learn to plan projects and events, foster teamwork, and manage other people as well. Scouting is a huge part of my life—it has really shaped my character through its code of honor and taught me how to conduct myself around others. It is unique in that it gives you such a variety of opportunities."

Anthony's future plans are to pursue acting, music and possibly education, but he also intends to remain active in Scouting throughout his adult life. ■