

## Eagle Scout candidate makes benches for Durham Fair shuttle stops

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DURHAM >> Andrew Van Steenbergen always wanted to do something special for the Durham Fair while serving as a member of the Boy Scouts.

When it came time to complete his Eagle Scout project to achieve the national organization's highest ranking, it was only fitting for the 16-year-old of Troop 27 to jump at the opportunity to give back to his community and the town's annual showcase.

Van Steenbergen recently completed his project, which consists of 12 benches stationed at six shuttle stops for people to be brought up or down a hill toward the fairgrounds in golf carts. Two benches per stop will serve those who wait for the shuttle.

Van Steenbergen said he posed the question on what was needed around the fairgrounds to a maintenance worker there, who then suggested the idea of the benches. After taking a walk along the grounds and noticing that there weren't any designated areas for the elderly, Van Steenbergen felt the project would be a perfect fit for an event that's expected to draw thousands from around the community and New England next week.

"I'm glad to be a part of it," said Van Steenbergen. "I think I made these benches pretty good, so I can go by there and see them for years to come."

Van Steenbergen started on the project last month and gained support from local hardware and lumber stores, such as Lowe's, that supplied him with the tools and equipment needed to complete the task, he said.

He assembled the benches at the fairgrounds last weekend as the town gears up for the [94th edition of the event](#), which runs from Sept. 26 to 29.

Van Steenbergen said the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from his fellow Scout members, friends and family. His mother, Rita, recently posted pictures on his Facebook page showing off the benches.

To attain the Eagle Scout Award, candidates must earn 21 merit badges while demonstrating knowledge of the Boy Scout Oath and Law, service and leadership. An extensive service project that the Scout plans, organizes, leads and manages must be completed, according to the [National Eagle Scout Association's website](#). Eagle Scouts are then presented with a medal and a badge that recognizes their accomplishments.