



How to tie knots and being prepared, those are the first things that come to mind with Scouting. Never underestimate how important they are! The Lintner brothers learned their knots, but were also prepared for life in unexpected ways when their Eagle Scout projects metamorphosed into their Sage Creek Genius projects and landed as a permanent part of the Discovery Center at Agua Hedionda Lagoon.

An Eagle Scout—the highest rank in Scouts BSA—demonstrates achievement through earning merit badges in the lower ranks, then develops leadership and life skills culminating in the Eagle Scout service project. This project is planned and executed by the scout and must serve the community. Sage Creek High School’s Genius Project is similar to an Eagle Scout project, focusing students on “passion, challenge, impact.” It is a year-long pursuit and is celebrated at the end of the year in the Genius Project Symposium. That is a TED-esque platform for students to present their learnings to their community.



Bees

Branden Lintner always liked to tool around in the garage growing up. His Eagle/Genius project got his hands on tools he never imagined. His mom made Branden and his brother think beyond the usual workbench for their projects. He picked bees. Bees are an integral part of our chaparralled habitat and vital pollinators for our gardens and agriculture. And they’re in trouble in California and across the country. So the challenge was to build a Beequarium, a place where bees could hive in a safe environment and people could safely watch in wonder. Brandon sought out beekeeper James MacDonald as a mentor to teach him the ins and outs of bees.

“I learned a lot about bees,” Branden says. And tools. He learned CAD, a software builders use to create digital models. He learned how to use augers and then had to learn how to custom water cut aluminum and acrylic glass. “Good things don’t come easy,” Branden says of a key lesson from his project. “Sometimes you have to work hard.” A 2021 Sage Creek High School grad, Branden now works as an estimator for California Fire Stop, a local internal construction company.



Butterflies

When Josh Lintner was at Calavera Middle School, there was a fundraiser selling milkweed. Building a greenhouse to grow the milkweed was his Eagle Scout project in eighth grade. His Genius project as an upperclassman at Sage Creek was to upgrade his Calavera greenhouse for installation at the Discovery Center.

Milkweed is the larval host plant of the Monarch butterfly. If you have milkweed, you’ll have butterflies. Right away he had to learn leadership skills like collaboration and adaptation. And that was just working with school teachers and administrators.

He also learned about being flexible and “being gracious to people.” Part of the project was not just to teach Calavera middle schoolers about butterflies and milkweed, but to get them involved in the project, helping to build and paint. “Some kids were excited, others were ambivalent.” Josh had to learn as a leader how to “get all the volunteers in the right spot to be successful.”

He also learned “how to overcome failure.” When he showed up on Earth Day to work with a sixth-grade class and the pre-cut wood was wrong, the drop-back-and-punt to wire shelving “made the project even better.” Josh graduated from Sage Creek in 2022 and is now at Pepperdine University, where he says the work ethic, self-discipline and learning to do the hard thing first has helped as a college student.

Discovery

Josh said that an Eagle Scout project must “create a physical object of value that goes through time.” And the Lintner brothers’ projects are doing just that at the Agua Hedionda Lagoon Discovery Center. Branden’s Beequarium is teaching the community about the important work bees do for us. Josh’s greenhouse is still producing milkweed and became an art project as well. He says, “I created something that’s still here that people really appreciate.” And the projects fastened a bent toward life-long learning that will never leave the Lintner brothers.

To see their projects, visit aguahedionda.org.

Of Bees and Butterflies

The Lintner brothers learn the eagle genius of discovery.

Written by Wendy Hinman



a) The Beequarium is a safe haven for bees at the Agua Hedionda Lagoon Discovery Center. b) Josh Lintner presents the milkweed green house to students at Calavera Middle School. c) Celebrating the day the queen bee and her bee family were installed in the Beequarium, making it officially open for bees-ness. d) Josh Lintner teaching students at Calavera Middle School to build along with him. e) Branden Lintner learning the ways of acrylic glass for his Beequarium (photos courtesy of the Lintner family).