

# Northern New Jersey Eagle Scout Soars with the Historic U.S. Army's Picatinny Arsenal Civil Air Patrol Squadron

## Ned Caffarra of Livingston's Troop 16 is Awarded His Eagle Rank with Military Honors



Col. Russell Hrdy, U.S. Army. Picatinny, USMA'81, Eagle Scout '76

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, Ned Caffarra became an Eagle Scout with bronze palm in a Court-of-Honor featuring Congressman Rodney P. Frelinghuysen (NJ 11<sup>th</sup> District) and Colonel Russell J. Hrdy (U.S. Army) as the keynote speakers. The unique Eagle ceremony was attended by over 160 uniformed and civilian personnel who came to honor the scout's leadership and community-based accomplishments. Ned's consistent record of volunteer service in both the Boy Scouts of America and in the United States Air Force Auxiliary was soundly recognized.

Ned Caffarra has been immersed in the BSA's National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) team at the Northern New Jersey Council's Camp Turrell for the past three years, and has been repeatedly recognized for advanced scouting and leadership skills throughout his career. This sixteen year old scouter has completed 38 merit badges, 17 beyond his Eagle requirement, and has been awarded his Troop's highest commendations. Caffarra has won the Robert Henry Carl Award for leadership skills, and has twice been awarded the Robert Winthrop Kean Award for "superiority in scouting". In his Eagle project he led over 30 scouts in a significant VFW Hall landscape redesign and renovation at Livingston's Post #2856. Ned is a Brotherhood member of the Order of the Arrow, the honor society of the BSA, and is currently the Junior Assistant Scoutmaster of Livingston's Troop 16 at St. Philomena's Catholic Church.

As a veteran of well over a hundred nights of camping, including eight summer camps, outdoor meal planning and cooking are this scout's favorite skills. He has led teams in winning top awards for campfire cooking in district-wide Klondike Derby competitions, and in "Bake-offs" at Rhode Island's Camp Yawgoog summer camp. Ned is highly regarded by his fellow scouts for his outdoor skills, and especially for his huge heart and fun-loving approach to the entire program.

NORTHERN NEW JERSEY – July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009 – Attaining the rank of Eagle is a daunting achievement in itself, but this New Jersey teenager has soared past his Eagle requirements while also rising in command as a Cadet officer in one of the most prestigious U.S. Civil Air Patrol squadrons in the country. Picatinny Arsenal is the U.S. Army's premier Armament Research & Development center, and its legendary CAP unit has served the base's families, soldiers, and surrounding civilian community for over 36 years. This new Eagle leads the way by example and hard work.

Cadet Caffarra's leadership in the Picatinny Arsenal community as Executive Officer of his U.S. Civil Air Patrol Squadron is well known. He has led the unit in several annual community service events, including traffic control and crowd management missions, and formal "Honor Guard" duties as escorts for families of fallen soldiers at memorial ceremonies. In April, Ned received the VFW Civil Air Patrol Squadron Cadet-of-the-Year award at Picatinny, and he will soon be receiving his Amelia Earhart award upon promotion to Cadet Captain, a rank achieved by less than 2% of all cadets. Ned has served as Squadron Commander at the New



Jersey Wing encampment at U.S. Military Academy at West Point, and as a member of the "Honor Flight" at the McGuire Air Force Base basic encampment. He also represents the Picatinny unit on the New Jersey Wing Cadet Advisory Council.

The Eagle Scout Court of Honor proved to be an overwhelming event for this young cadet. Honors and commendations presented included Rep. Frelinghuysen's Congressional recognition, a personal "Two-Star" note and commander's coin from Major General Paul Izzo of the Aberdeen



**Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, U. S. Congressman, (R) NJ 11<sup>th</sup> CD**

Proving Grounds, a "One Star" note and commander's coin from Brigadier General Larry Wyche of the Army's Joint Munitions Command, Colonel Russell Hrdy's commendation plaque, and the Picatinny Arsenal Garrison commendation from Lt. Col. John Stack (Special Forces). Major Jack Soldano of the USAF Auxiliary presented the New Jersey Wing commander's coin and commendation letter from the Civil Air Patrol's Colonel Robert McCabe. Lt. Col. John Collins presented for the American Legion, and Mr. Brian Boyle of VFW Post #2856 recounted the extensive Eagle project.

Caffarra believes his greatest privilege in scouting is serving on the leadership staff of NYLT, and regards his selection for this role as the highest form of peer review in scouting, carrying a huge responsibility to mentor young scouts. "National Youth Leadership is really my focal point in scouting for the next few years. Scouting events and activities have been huge fun in the past years, but everything really comes together when we can demonstrate real leadership to the next wave of scouters."

Entering his junior year at Seton Hall Preparatory School in West Orange, Ned manages a challenging honors curriculum, while maintaining a Varsity letter on the SHP Swim team. He is working toward an appointment to the United States Merchant Marine Academy at King's Point,

where he hopes to earn his B.S. in transportation engineering and logistics. He currently works as a lifeguard and swimming instructor at the West Essex YMCA, and at the Livingston township pools. He is a certified Open-Water scuba diver through PADI, and a first degree Black Belt with the International Tae Kwon Do Federation. Ned also attends Calvary Church in Essex Fells and serves with their very active youth group. Scouting has prepared this Eagle for much greater challenges in his life. As a Picatinny cadet, Ned has been selected for the 2009 National Cadet Officer School at the USAF Air University, one of only a hundred cadets appointed annually. He has already completed his orientation this summer at the 47th Fighter Training Wing undergraduate pilot course at Laughlin Air Force Base in Texas.



As he carries forward, Ned wants to stay true to the simple ideals of scouting. “As an Eagle Scout and as a Cadet Officer, I just need to continue on with what I’ve learned through experience to try to lead effectively. You can only do that by setting the example. I hope I can hold up to my convictions, and serve my community and my country in every way I can. I will do my best.”

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