

## Bird is the word for Eagle Scout project, Covington, KY

Undeterred by an early snow in 2013, Colin Cummings of Fort Mitchell, KY and his father pounded in the stakes and attached bright red cords. They would make many more trips to this hillside spot before completing Colin's Eagle Scout project in summer 2014, a bird blind for the St. Joseph Heights Educational Trail at the Sisters of Notre Dame in Covington, KY.



Colin Cummings, a 2014 graduate of Covington Catholic High School and member of Boy Scouts of America Troop 820, pursued his Eagle Scout rank by leading the construction of a bird blind on the Sisters of Notre Dame nature trail, just yards away from his alma mater. The bird blind and neighboring bird feeders that Cummings constructed allow trail visitors to view feeding birds at close range, camouflaged by a wooden barrier.



As most Eagle Scouts can attest, the capstone project demanded more than simple assemblage. Cummings oversaw the demolition of an unused shed, whose wood he salvaged and ridded of bent, rusted nails for the six-foot tall blind. He honed his leadership skills acting as site foreman throughout the project, and navigated the art of negotiation when visiting local merchants to obtain bird feeders and a large donation of feed.

Cummings explained, "In addition to the learning experience and knowing I had a lot of responsibility, doing something good for the community and the Sisters is a great feeling to have."

The completed bird blind consists of a wall twenty-five feet wide and six feet tall, a wooden viewing platform, tree stumps for elevating visitors to the viewing chinks at varying heights, and feeders to attract feathered friends.

Sr. Ann Marie Pflum, who coordinates group visits to the trail, expressed her gratitude and excitement at the completion of the blind and the enhancement it will provide for field trips. "This will give the children an opportunity to observe different birds at close range. They may never have seen a white-breasted nuthatch or a downy woodpecker, which frequent our suet feeders."

On August 19, Colin and his father, Dr. Michael Cummings, were honored at a festive lunch at the Sisters of Notre Dame Provincial Center, after which Fr. Robert Rosing blessed the structure in a simple ceremony.

As a symbol of the Sisters of Notre Dame gratitude for Colin's contribution to the nature trail, a bronze plaque is set to be placed



at the bird blind, reminding future visitors of his hard work, his service to the Sisters of Notre Dame, and his contribution to spreading an appreciation of nature to generations to come.

