



DANIEL BOCK/FOR THE MIAMI HERALD

JOB WELL DONE: Eagle Scout Derek McIntosh, 17, explains how he restored the plaque honoring Miami Herald columnist Larry Thompson at Larry and Penny Thompson Park on Sunday.

SOUTH MIAMI-DADE

Scout project restores a piece of local history

■ An Eagle Scout project restores a plaque – and history – at Larry and Penny Thompson Park.

Miami Herald Staff Report

Derek W. McIntosh of Boy Scout Troop 811 became an Eagle Scout by honoring history and beautifying the campground front office at the Larry and Penny Thompson Park in South Miami-Dade.

In a ceremony Sunday, Derek was honored for his help in restoring a 32-year-old bronze dedication plaque that had been stored in an office. Derek built a keystone podium to hold the plaque in front of the office.

“He is a wonderful young man,” said assistant Scout master Pablo Cianci.

“I wanted to give back to the community,” said Derek of West Kendall who is a junior at Coral Reef High.

Landscaping and a bench further enhanced the Eagle project in which Boy Scouts from Troop 811 spent 355 community service hours to complete.

The plaque not only has historical significance to the park, but also to Miami.

On Dec. 17, 1977, the park was dedicated in memory of Larry Thompson, a popular humorist and columnist with The Miami Herald for more than 25 years.

Thompson was a nature enthusiast and advocate of park beautification. He especially loved the hardy pink and white blossoms of the periwinkle plant and wrote about it in his columns.

Miami-Dade County decided to help perpetuate Thompson’s love of nature by developing 270 acres for a park on land that had housed the old Richmond air base land.

The Miami Herald presented

the plaque during the dedication ceremony.

Those attending were encouraged to bring potted periwinkles to plant at the park.

The marker, now restored to its original condition, bears a quotation from a Thompson column in 1956: “All types of parks are needed in this complex civilization of ours, and we don’t have enough of any of them. But providing a place where a person can just sit — where he can do nothing but rest and commune with God’s world — certainly is and always will be a primary requisite.”

To honor the words, Derek led his troop to construct a bench just opposite the podium to allow visitors to contemplate nature, as Thompson would have liked.

The troop also planted plum-bagos and multicolored periwinkles.

PINECREST

Girl Scouts’ pet fair entices dogs, owners

About 600 people and their dogs attended the first Pawareness Pet Fair in Pinecrest on Sunday, presented by Girl Scout Troop 317.

Because dogs are prohibited from parks in the village — which has proposed turning Wayside Veterans Park into a dog park — the fair was held on the grounds of Bet Shira Congregation, 7500 SW 120th St.

“It was bigger than we expected it to be and goes to show how many people with dogs in our community would want a place where they can take

their pets every day,” said Pinecrest Mayor Cindy Lerner.

She was master of ceremonies and has two dogs: Topo Gigio, a toy Chihuahua, and Oscar, a Dachshund.

At next month’s village council meeting, Lerner wants to recognize the three Palmetto High juniors who organized the event to earn their gold award in scouting: Carley Schleien, Brandi Applebaum and Lauren Gutlohn.

“They should be lauded for the wonderful work they did,” Lerner said. “It was a massive organizational effort.”



CHRIS CUTRO/FOR THE MIAMI HERALD

HANDS-ON TRAINING: Girl Scouts from Troop 317 – Lauren Gutlohn, Brandi Applebaum and Carley Schleien, all 16 – take care of Annie, Rex and Daniel during the Pawareness Pet Fair on Sunday.

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