

June 09, 2008

OUTSTANDING YOUNG WOMEN HONORED

(Elgin) At its annual recognition banquet on June 4, 2008, at the Randall Oaks Golf Course in

Dundee, Illinois. Girl Scouts - Sybaquay Council honored Girl Scouts earning the Girl Scout Gold Award, Girl Scouts receiving the Ten-year Award and graduating seniors.



The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award a girl can earn in Girl Scouting And is earned by Girl Scouts ages 14 to 17. It is a national award recognizing a young woman's time, leadership, creativity and effort she contributed to making her community better. It is earned when girls are committed to working towards the goals they have set for themselves. Only about 6% of all Girl Scouts earn the Gold Award. The requirements involve skill development, leadership experience, career exploration and service to the community. Additionally, life skills of goal setting, documentation and planning for action are also developed during the completion of their project.

Ashley Hatfield, Miss Illinois 2007, was the keynote speaker at this year's event and shared an inspiring message, encouraging young girls to develop their talents and become community service orientated.

2008 Girl Scout Gold Award recipients included Andrea Andrada of Elgin; Alysha Balog, Lake Zurich; Rebecca Barone, Kirkland; Kristen Behof, Lake Zurich; Kelsey Flood, Spring Grove; Rebecca Hastings, Spring Grove; Patty Herrman, McHenry; Teresa Huemann, Johnsburg; Erin Keegan, Huntely; Krista Lackey; Huntley; Anna Mangano, Marengo; Jennifer Piggot, Spring Grove; Candice Quinn, Huntley, Amber Reich, Crystal Lake and Stephanie Wood, Algonquin.

Andrea Andrada, Elgin, saw her subdivision becoming dirty and unhealthy. She felt the neighborhood children needed to understand the gravity of this problem. She increased their awareness by organizing and hosting a "Save the Planet Day". Through

visuals and many hands on activities, the children learned about recycling, water conservation, endangered animals and more. Each child received a workbook of the activities and certificate of achievement.

Alysha Balog, Lake Zurich, saw a need for a safe, nonjudgmental place for teens to hang out, demonstrate their talents, eat and just talk. She decided to organize a “Real Life Coffee House”. Originally planned as a one- time event, it was held several more times due to its popularity.

Rebecca Barone, Kirkland, values family life and enjoys working with children. She felt children in the hospital needed something of their own. So she decided to give children in the hospital a blanket to call their own. She collected material and made fleece blankets and delivered them for the children at Shriner’s Hospital in Chicago.

Kristen Behof, Lake Zurich, created project Operation R.O.S.E. (Remember Our Soldiers Everyday) She wanted our soldiers to know the people back home were thinking about them. She organized a drive to collect personal items to be sent to the soldiers in Iraq. After approximately one month, she collected over 3,600 items that were sent to the soldiers stationed in Iraq.

Kelsey Flood, Spring Grove, enjoys drama and wanted to share her love of acting with children. She accomplished this by developing a drama camp that taught the fundamental basics of drama through exercises and games. She conducted her drama camp, consisting of five sessions, for the children at the Home of the Sparrow.

Rebecca Hastings, Spring Grove, saw a need for additional benches along the trails of McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD) parks. With the help of volunteers, she constructed 10 benches using wood and nails salvaged from old fence lines at MCCD sites. She also organized a group to assist her with the laying of mulch on one of their trails.

Patty Herrmann, McHenry, organized volunteers to assist her with the scrapping, washing and repainting of the Stations of the Cross in the St. John's Cemetery. Through her efforts the community has their beautiful Stations of the Cross back.

Teresa Huemann, Johnsburg, had wanted to install a flag pole in Sunnyside Park. By working with the Village of Johnsburg, it was decided to erect three flag poles, one for the American Flag, State Flag and Village of Johnsburg Flag. Teresa organized volunteers and village employees to excavate the area, pour the cement, set the poles, and landscape the area around the three flag poles.

Erin Keegan, Huntley, Erin organized a drive to collect necessities for women and children who turn to Turning Point for support. Turning Point is a center that assists women and children who are victims of domestic violence. She also collected donations of fabric and along with her partner, they sewed 60 bags and filled them with the items they collected. In addition to providing the bags to Turning Point, they assisted with a radio-thon benefiting Turning Point.

Krista Lackey, Huntley, believes art and color influences people and she felt the walls of Conley and Mackeben elementary schools in Huntley were bare and uninviting. She decided to put her artistic talents to work by designing and painting two murals depicting the school name and mascot. Once completed, her murals were featured at the schools' open houses.

Anna Mangano, Marengo, saw the need for transportation for the elderly in the Marengo area. She learned of an organization called Faith In Action which provides this service to the seniors. Anna spoke at several area churches and organizations to raise their awareness of Faith In Action. Not only did she educate seniors about the services available to them, she was able to recruit seven new volunteers and set up a volunteer training session for them.

Jennifer Piggot, Spring Grove, wanted to make a difference in the lives of children who have been affected by domestic violence. She wanted them to feel safe at

night, so she organized a drive to collect stuffed animals and books. She also organized a Girl Scout troop to help her make fleece blankets. These items were placed in tote bags and donated to the WINGS Safe House in Palatine. She collected enough items to fill 20 tote bags.

Candice Quinn, Huntley, and her partner organized a drive in their neighborhood to collect small toys, school supplies, cereal and toiletries. They then sewed over 60 bags from material they collected, and filled them with the items they collected. Half of the bags contained items for children and the other half contained items for women. These bags were donated to the Turning Point Shelter. In addition to providing the bags to Turning Point, Candice assisted with a radio-thon benefiting Turning Point.

Amber Reich, Crystal Lake, in her senior year in high school, realized many of her classmates did not know what type of career interested them. She organized a career day for elementary-aged children to learn from various professionals about their careers. These volunteers talked about the education required for their field, a typical work day, the pros and cons of their job and the salary range. The participants also had the opportunity to ask the presenters questions on an individual basis.

Stephanie Wood, Algonquin, acknowledged the soldiers in Iraq and remembered the men and women from past wars in her project. She collected silly string, to be used to help find trip wires for bombs, Girl Scout Cookies and letters to be sent to Iraq. She also made lap blankets and organized other Girl Scouts to write letters and make tray favors for the veterans at Hines V.A. Hospital.

Last year, approximately 5,500 girls throughout the U.S. earned their Girl Scout Gold Award. For many girls, the leadership skills, organizational skills, and sense of community and commitment that come from “going for the Gold” set the foundation for a lifetime of active citizenship. Girl Scouts - Sybaquay Council serves over 10,500 girls throughout McHenry County and in parts of Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Kane, Lake and LaSalle counties.

###