

# Young ambassador Laura Slater's smile lights up entire Halloween Parade

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
November 1 2016 3:27 PM



**EDWARDSVILLE - Laura Slater**, a fourth-grader at **Woodland School in Edwardsville**, had a Halloween night she will never forget on Monday.

Laura accompanied **Edwardsville Police Major Jeff Mills** in the grand parade marshal car for the **Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Halloween Parade**.

Laura smiled, waved and tossed candy to other children during the entire parade. Her mother, **Nancy**, said her daughter was definitely “on Cloud Nine” during and after the parade.

Laura was previously honored as “Police Chief for a Day” last year after raising the most funds for Edwardsville School District 7 students in a fundraiser for **Edwardsville’s “A Better Place to Play”** campaign. Laura’s project was to collect funds in exchange for reading 30 minutes a day.

The Woodland student did a presentation for her school mates about her experience with the police department as a part of her Halloween experience.

She told the students that **Edwardsville Police Department Officer Dietz**, one of Woodland’s DARE officers, came to her house to start her day as “Police Chief for a Day” in the D.A.R.E. Car. He presented her with a D.A.R.E. Lion, a coin for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D.A.R.E. Car Show and a model police car.

Once she arrived at the EPD, she said she spent time with **Chief Jay Keeven**.

“It was fun to ride in to the police station in the D.A.R.E. Car,” she said. “I rode in the front seat as it was easier and he was bringing the chief into the station.” She also said she enjoyed her time shadowing the chief.

Laura has some interesting ideas for the **Edwardsville Police Department**. She told them she thought more officers should be using electric police cars in the future rather than gas powered. She also there should be a “Girls Day” at the police department so area girls could come and learn more about the officers and what they do.

She spent some time with **Edwardsville mayor’s secretary Cheryl Wilson** and shared her ideas with her for the mayor. Maj. Jeff Mills informed her he had never taken a Halloween off in more than two decades, and it was recommended by Laura that he be off for Halloween. What came of it is Mills was selected by the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce officials with Mayor Patton’s urging to have him be the Halloween Parade grand marshal and have Laura ride with him.

Laura said she learned a lot from her experience with the police.

“I came home wanting to be a Police Chief when I grow up,” she said.

Maj. Mills agreed with Laura’s mother that Monday night will be an experience she will never forget.

“When she becomes a mother herself and comes to the parade, it will always be there in her memory,” Mills said. “She had a good time there. I talked to her about getting into law enforcement and told her what an honorable profession it is.”

Laura’s mother said she was so proud of her daughter as she drove through slowly in the grand marshal car.

“She was excited,” her mom said. “She is a very giving child. When Woodland did orientation and tours, she stayed longer and wanted to be an ambassador. She was the same in the parade, and enjoyed her role wishing everybody a Happy Halloween. She came home with very little candy in her car at the end.”

Her mom said: “I think it was just awesome allowing her to do that and it capped off the whole feeling of community. She saw friends and classmates from Woodland all along the route and waved to them. It definitely is something she will never forget.”