



Edwardsville's Lea Hein earns Girl Scout Award, the highest honor

by Erin Johnson

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GLEN CARBON – Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois announced today that Leatrice “Lea” Hein from Edwardsville has earned the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award a Girl Scout can receive. For her Girl Scout Gold Award project, she published an illustrated book, “A,B,C of Things Kids Would Want to Know About Dogs” to help teach children about the responsibilities of owning a dog.

She was inspired by her experience working at area animal shelters for her Girl Scout Silver Award project in her early teens, which led her to realize that lack of knowledge can lead to pets being abandoned or neglected. She presented her book at local libraries with a discussion session to help children learn more about having a healthy long-term relationship with pets.

“Animal abuse and neglect are local and global issues that can be prevented by education,” Hein said. “The big picture of my book is to educate younger generations on animal neglect and the responsibilities of owning a dog.”

She added that her Girl Scout Gold Award project helped her develop her skills and interests, as well.

“I gained confidence and leadership,” she said. “Because of this project, I am more interested in using my public speaking skills to address social issues, promote positive ideas and bring the community together on a greater cause such as animal rights and education.” Her book is for sale now on Amazon.com. Proceeds will be donated to the American Kennel Club and Metro East Humane Society.

Hein is the daughter of Michael W. Hein, AIA and Dr. Yoko Mogi-Hein. She is currently enrolled in online courses at Columbia College, where she is majoring in Art History with a minor in Communications. She has recently signed a professional contract with L.A. Model Management and moved to Los Angeles to work as a runway and catalog model.

The Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award a Girl Scout can earn, recognizes a Girl Scout's commitment to excellence as she develops skills and values to meet present and future challenges in her life. To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, a Girl Scout Senior or Girl Scout Ambassador must design and carry out a project that fulfills a need within a girl's community, creates change, and is sustainable. The project must be completed with a suggested minimum of 80 hours of work. Only about 5 percent of eligible girls earn the prestigious Gold Award.

Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois (GSSI) is a high-capacity Girl Scout council serving approximately 11,300 girls and engaging 4,550 adult volunteers in 40 ½ counties in Southern Illinois. GSSI Mission: Girl Scouts builds girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. The Girl Scouts organization is the world's largest leadership development organization for girls.

In partnership with committed adults, girls develop qualities that will serve them all their lives – such as strong values, social conscience, and conviction about their own potential and self-worth. Today's Girl Scouts not only enjoy camping and crafts; they

also explore math and science and learn about diversity, good citizenship, leadership and teamwork. Girl Scouting is the place where girls experience the fun, friendship and power of girls together. Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois is a not-for-profit organization supported by various United Ways throughout the region. Girl Scouts is a Proud Partner of United Way.

Please visit the GSSI website www.gsofsi.org and follow GSSI on Facebook