

Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois holds 6th Annual Meeting

April 2 2015 9:02 AM

Board of Directors and CEO recognize exceptional volunteers



Dr. Sandra Magnus, Belleville astronaut is keynote speaker

GLEN CARBON – Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois (GSSI) held its 5th Annual Meeting on April 5 at the Hilton Garden Inn in O’Fallon. During the meeting, approximately 300 Girl Scout members (adults and girls) from throughout southern Illinois elected Board of Director members and received a “State of the Council” report from Dixie Travelstead, GSSI Board of Director Chair, and Villie M. Appoo, GSSI Chief Executive Officer.

In addition, Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois recognized top Girl Scout volunteers which are the heart of Girl Scouting. GSSI’s 4,500 Girl Scout volunteers play an instrumental role in providing leadership programming and opportunities for more than 14,000 girls in southern Illinois.

Keynote speaker for GSSI’s annual meeting was Dr. Sandra Magnus who was an astronaut from Belleville. During her speech, Dr. Magnus encouraged girls to study hard, be dedicated to reaching their goals and to follow their passions. Dr. Magnus also stressed the importance of Girl Scouting and earning badges as a way for girls to try new things and discover what their interests are. Currently, Dr. Magnus is the Executive Director of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, which is the world’s largest technical society dedicated to the global aerospace profession, with more than 35,000 members in 79 countries.

As a girl, Dr. Magnus was a Girl Scout in GSSI’s legacy council River Bluffs. In 2009, she talked with 100 local Girl Scouts from the International Space Station via a satellite downlink provided by the Boeing Company. Not only did the girls get to ask Dr. Magnus questions, but they got to see her working on the ISS and see a Girl Scout flag floating behind her...a truly amazing and inspiring moment for local Girl Scouts.

“Girl Scouting in southern Illinois would not be what it is today without the dedication, passion and leadership of all of our volunteers,” said Appoo. “We are honored to present these awards to our exceptional volunteers as they are the driving force behind carrying out GSSI’s mission of building leaders for America. I Can’t Wait To continue working with these amazing volunteers to ensure all girls in southern Illinois can benefit from a premier Girl Scout Leadership Experience,” Appoo added.



Following are awards presented at GSSI's 6th Annual Meeting:

Thanks Badge II

The Thanks Badge II is the top award that an adult member can earn. This award recognizes an adult member who has already received the Thanks Badge and who has continued to contribute in extraordinary ways that benefit the total council or the entire Girl Scout movement. The Thanks Badge II was presented to:

Gretel Pierpoint, Service Unit #42, East Williamson

“I help build future leaders by encouraging girls to find their voice and have the courage and confidence to use it.”

Thanks Badge

The Thanks Badge recognizes an adult member whose performance is truly outstanding and benefits the total council or the entire Girl Scout movement. The Thanks Badge was presented to:

Lois Green, a Service Unit #108, Edwardsville/Glen Carbon

“Girl Scouting is a place where girls can try new adventures and make lasting memories.”

Mary Alice Sims, a Service Unit #51, North Franklin

“I love Girl Scouting because it has been my life.”

Honor Pin

The Honor Pin recognizes an individual’s exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE), which has had measurable impact on two or more geographic areas of service, allowing the council to reach and surpass its mission-delivery goals.

Connie Fair, Service Unit #109, Troy, St. Jacob, Marine

“I love Girl Scouting because it provides opportunities for girls to learn about themselves through new experiences.”

President’s Award

The President’s Award recognizes the efforts of a service-delivery team or committee whose exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience surpassed team goals and resulted in significant, measureable impact toward reaching the council’s overall goals.

Service Unit Team of SU 7 – Bond County

Service Unit Team of SU 12 – Clay County

Service Unit Team of SU 15 – Clinton County

Service Unit Team of SU 21 – East Marion

Service Unit Team of SU 30 – Jefferson County

Service Unit Team of SU 54 – Perry County

Service Unit Team of SU 57 – North Randolph County

Service Unit Team of SU 108 – Edwardsville/Glen Carbon

Service Unit Team of SU 110 – Highland

Service Unit Team of SU 201 – O’Fallon/Shiloh

Service Unit Team of SU 202 – Trenton/Lebanon/Mascoutah/New Baden

Appreciation Pin

The Appreciation Pin recognizes an individual’s exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE). This service, which has had measurable impact on at least one geographic area of service, helps the council reach and surpass its mission-delivery goals for that area.

Cyndi Addison, SU 21 – East Marion County

Patti Bardle, SU 54 – Perry County

Christina Boyce, SU 108 – Edwardsville/Glen Carbon

Steve Bushong, SU 211 – Waterloo

Jennifer Choma, SU 111 – Collinsville

Crystal Clement, SU 201 – O’Fallon/Shiloh

Miranda Groh, SU 42 – East Williamson County

Virginia Hall, SU 30 – Jefferson County

Deb Hibdon, SU 30 – Jefferson County

Loretta Hilmes, SU 202 – Trenton/Lebanon/Mascoutah/New Baden

Nikki Labbee, SU 202 – Trenton/Lebanon/Mascoutah/New Baden

Debbie McAuliffe, SU 201 – O’Fallon/Shiloh

Amy Parr, SU 85 – Wayne/Hamilton/White Counties

Linda Pennington, SU 24 – Fayette County

Karen Reed, SU 201 – O’Fallon/Shiloh

Jean Schad, SU 201 – O’Fallon/Shiloh

Karen Schmitz, SU 201 – O’Fallon/Shiloh

Marsha Shirley, SU 202 – Trenton/Lebanon/Mascoutah/New Baden

Jennie Smith, SU 66 – Shawnee

Ann Taylor, SU 108 – Edwardsville/Glen Carbon

Nichole Williams, SU 30 – Jefferson County

Volunteer of Excellence Award

The Volunteer of Excellence Award recognizes those volunteers who have contributed outstanding service while partnering directly with girls in any pathway to implement the Girl Scout Leadership Experience through use of the National Program Portfolio or who have contributed outstanding service in support of the council’s mission delivery to girl and adult members.

Heather Barclay, SU 51 – North Franklin County

Shelly Blaies, SU 111 – Collinsville

Kristine Bohn, SU 7 – Bond County

Nicki Brown, SU 207 – Belleville/Swansea

Shannon Buchanan, SU 201 – O’Fallon/Shiloh

Janice Clevenger, SU 85 – Wayne/Hamilton/White Counties

Carla Crooker, SU 511 – Effingham County

Brandy Dodel, SU 211 – Waterloo

Amanda Doll, SU 7 – Bond County

Tara Godier, SU 7 – Bond County

Barbara James, SU 72 – Union/Pulaski/Alexander Counties (UPAC)

Debbie Kamp, SU 105 – Jersey/Calhoun Counties

Cindy Kinder, SU 106 – Bethalto

Susan Knapp, SU 15 – Clinton County

Lori Libby, SU 207 – Belleville/Swansea

Lynn Miener, SU 109 – Troy/St. Jacob/Marine

Leanne Montgomery, SU 111 – Collinsville

Melissa Oberlender, SU 110 – Highland

Christina Parr, SU 85 – Wayne/Hamilton/White Counties

Lisa Reed, SU 201 – O’Fallon/Shiloh

Nancy Robeen, SU 105 – Jersey/Calhoun Counties

Connie Schott, SU 105 – Jersey/Calhoun Counties

Stacy Schroeder, SU 15 – Clinton County

Allison Smith, SU 7 – Bond County

Kristi Smith, SU 201 – O’Fallon/Shiloh

Kathy Stachowski, SU 9 – Centralia

Jill Thomas, SU 15 – Clinton County

Andrea Weatherford, SU 209 – Columbia/Millstadt/Dupo/Smithton

Gail Webb, SU 72 – Union/Pulaski/Alexander Counties (UPAC)

Diana Williams, SU 106 – Bethalto

Amy Zajac, SU 108 – Edwardsville/Glen Carbon



Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois is a high-capacity Girl Scout council serving approximately 14,000 girls and 4,500 adult volunteers in 40 ½ counties in southern Illinois.

The mission of Girl Scouting states: ***Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.*** Girl Scouts is the world's pre-eminent organization dedicated solely to girls - all girls - where, in an accepting and nurturing environment, girls build character and skills for success in the real world. In partnership with committed adults, girls develop qualities that will serve them all their lives - like strong values, social conscience, and conviction about their own potential and self-worth.

Today's Girl Scouts not only enjoy camping and crafts, but 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 Scouting has inspired more than 50 million girls and women since its founding in 1912.

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.

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