

Ava Landry receives Girl Scout Gold Award



Ava Landry

By Dan Tomasello

High School student Ava Landry was awarded the Girl Scout Gold Award during a ceremony held at the Holiday Inn & Suites in Marlborough in June. The event was attended by family, friends, and Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts' CEO Ruth N. Bramson and Board President Peggy Stevens.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award a Girl Scout can receive and only about five percent of all Girl Scouts earn this award each year.

"I am really happy about it," said Landry about receiving the Gold Award. "It's a big step that I have been working towards for a little over a year, and it feels really nice getting it."

In order for a Girl Scout to receive a Gold Award, Girl

Scouts must be in ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade and must be a registered Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador. Girl Scouts are also required to complete two Journeys (Senior or Ambassador) or earn the Silver Award and complete one Senior or Ambassador Journey.

According to Landry, it takes 80 hours of community service to receive the award. She began the process in eighth grade when she received her Silver Award, which is a 60 hour community service award.

Landry's project was called "Bringing History Alive", which originated from Landry's love of history. She met with Historical Society Chairwoman Nan Hockenbury and the late Donald Harris, and they inspired her to research the historical bell located on the Common.

"They were both really interested in the history of the bell on the Common and they got me interested, which is what started this project," said Landry. "I wanted to bring information to residents because it wasn't organized."

After researching the bell's history, Landry created a pamphlet about the bell and created a short 14 minute video with the help of her friends, which discussed the bell's history and included an interview with local resident Donald Ross, who was responsible for having the bell placed on the Common in 1960.

She also created a ginger bread

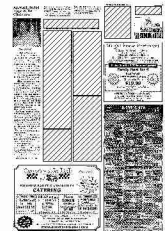
house replica of the Meeting House and bell and put it on display at the town's annual tree-lighting festival in December. During the festival, she discussed the historical bell and provided copies of the pamphlet she created. Landry later visited the children's room at the Library and revised the Lynnfield Historical walking tour map for the town to include the bell. The map is now available at both elementary schools in town. Lastly, she gave a list of sister bells to the Historical Society, so "the Historical Society had all of the information about the bell in one place."

Landry, who will be entering her senior year at LHS this fall, has been a Girl Scout since she was five years old. She has been registered as a Juliet after her troop disbanded when she was in sixth grade, and she decided against joining another troop in town. She has been through every level of Girl Scouts and has received merit badges in each level she completed.

"I think Girl Scouts teaches you a lot about communicating with others efficiently and working on your own to accomplish something and be more independent," said Landry.

Landry also strongly encouraged girls in town to join Girl Scouts.

"I would say do it," said Landry. "Not a lot of people do it, especially when you get to High School, but I think its a really valuable experience and it taught me a lot. It is definitely an interesting thing to put on college applications. I had a lot of fun doing it."



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