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Gold and Silver Awards – Orinda Moraga Service Unit

Submitted by Thama Brentano, Service Unit Director

On Sunday, May 22 over 100 people gathered at Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church in Orinda to recognize Silver and Gold Award recipients, as well as graduating Girl Scouts from the Orinda Moraga Service Unit. There were 15 scouts who earned their Silver award, 16 Gold Award recipients, and 30 graduating scouts. Mayor

Victoria Smith of Orinda and Mayor Karen Mendonca of Moraga were assisted by Council members Amy Worth of Orinda and Howard Harpham of Moraga in presenting each Gold Award recipient with either a letter (from the Town of Moraga) recognizing her accomplishments, or a proclamation (from the City of Orinda) listing her

accomplishments and declaring a certain day to be that scout's "day" in the city. All of the graduating scouts were presented with a yellow rose in honor of their years in scouting and best wishes for their future.

Silver Awards:

Troop 30040: Linden Brentano, Elizabeth Chenok, Jane Fessenden, Colleen McCullough, Anya Niedzwiedz, Margot Odell, Emma Patton, Ariel Ramirez, and Tori Wong earned their Silver Award by hosting an elementary to middle school transition summit for all 5th grade girls in Orinda. This event, titled "Teenage Dream," covered the topics of academics, self esteem, peer pressure, growing up, and relationships. Participating in small group discussions, playing games, watching videos, listening to a guest speaker and having a Q & A session helped calm many concerns of the elementary school girls before moving on to middle school next year.

Troop 33859: Anna Finnell, Katherine Friedman, Amrita Newton, Michelle Prezkop, and Julia Young earned their Silver Award by working with St. Anthony's Foundation in San Francisco. After volunteering at the center in San Francisco, they ran a clothing drive and collected 4 car loads of clothing to donate to St. Anthony's. In addition they held a Homelessness and Poverty Seminar for local elementary school children to help them learn more about the issue of homelessness and what they can do to help.

Juliette Scout: Eliane Holmlund organized a quartet to play two concerts in Pacific Grove. They played at Canterbury Woods, an elderly medical hospital and a senior living center where her grandmother, Helen Holmlund formerly of Orinda, now resides. Her goal was to share her passion of music and bring some joy others.

The following 16 scouts earned their Gold Award:

Sonia Abraham has been a member of troop 30316 and Girl Scouts for 12 years and is graduating from Miramonte. She earned the Gold Award with her project called The Wagner Chronicle. Sonia created an after school newspaper class at Wagner Ranch Elementary school last spring. She went in once a week to help kids work on drawings and articles. At the end of each month Sonia collected the kids' different works that were left in a designated box and typed up the writings and scanned the pictures to make a newspaper, which was distributed the following week. Sonia will be attending Sarah Lawrence College.

Margaux Attard is a founding member of Orinda Girl Scout troop 30316 and has been active for 13 years. She is graduating from Miramonte and earned the Gold Award for a joint project with Neris Newton. Margaux managed and co-produced a musical production of Annie Jr. at Longfellow Middle School in Berkeley. She will be attending UC San Diego.

Nina Berger has been a Girl Scout for 12 years, 8 years in troop 30316. She is graduating from Miramonte. Nina earned the Gold Award with a project called Youthful Art: She taught an 8 week art class at Wagner Ranch Elementary School that went over the artistic styles of Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, and Dadaism. Then, Nina showcased all of the art projects in the Orinda Children's Library. She is attending Willamette University in the fall.

Gabriela Blum is a junior at Miramonte. She led a cooking and sports summer camp for young children at

Shelter, Inc. in Antioch. She taught them how to cook basic meals and helped them make their own recipe books as well as teach the children the fundamentals of soccer. The children ranged in age from 6 to 10 years old. For many of them, this was the first time they had cooked their own meals or been on a sports team. They also learned how to write in some cases or practice their writing as they wrote out the recipes for the snacks and meals they made at camp.

Katie Evans has been a member of troop 30316 and Girl Scouts for 11 years and is graduating from Miramonte. She earned the Gold Award for a joint project with Alyssa Wendt called St. Stephen's Garden Project. They built two planter boxes and planted an apple tree at St. Stephen's Church and Nursery School. They also worked with the kids in the class room to teach them about garden management, and helped them grow and plant fruits and vegetables. Katie will be attending the University of Vermont in the fall.

Eva Healy is graduating from Campolindo. Her project addressed the issue of homelessness and was designed to allow homeless children, who are often overlooked during this stressful time, the opportunity to be creative. She collected art supplies to donate to local shelters that specialize in art as therapy, wrote and illustrated a children's book, titled Her Quilted World, and visited elementary schools in her community to give presentations to the students about homelessness. Eva will be attending UC Santa Barbara.

Annika Bourcier Holmlund organized the Senegal Summer Reading Camp with assistance from her sister Eliane, a Girl Scout Ambassador. In July 2010 they traveled to a remote Pulaar speaking village in Eastern Senegal. The girls spent 40 hours each teaching literacy skills and reading French with local students, aged 5 to 14. Annika will be attending Middlebury College.

Caety Klingman shot and produced a video in the summer of 2009 at Diablo Day Camp. One cut of the video was designed to recruit adult staff, the other was to recruit not only staff but campers. The DVD was distributed to all of the associations that feed into Diablo Day Camp. Caety has attended DDC since she was 3, first as a tag, then as a camper, and finishes this year as a 5th-year elf. Caety will be attending the University of Chicago.

Neris Newton has been a member of troop 30316 and Girl Scouts for 10 years and is graduating from Miramonte. She earned the Gold Award by working on a joint project with Margaux Attard. Neris directed and co-produced a musical production of Annie Jr. at Longfellow Middle School in Berkeley, where the drama program had been cut. She is attending New York University in London in the fall.

Hannah Reed is a senior at Miramonte and has been in scouting for 12 years. She did a joint project with Jamie Riley, both of Troop 30997. Their project was a Richmond After School Program. They taught academic enrichment classes in art, music, cooking, dance and drama for K to 8th graders at a Richmond school called at St. Cornelius. Hannah will be attending Carlton College.

Jamie Riley is a senior at Miramonte High School and has been in scouting for 12 years. She did a joint project with Hannah Reed, both of Troop 30997. Their project

was a Richmond After School Program. They taught academic enrichment classes in art, music, cooking, dance and drama for K to 8th graders at a Richmond school called at St. Cornelius. Jamie will be attending the University of Puget Sound.

Julie Sanders is a senior at Campolindo. For her project, Books on Tape for Afghanistan, Julie got money donated to purchase new books, tapes, and cassette players. Then volunteers (Lafayette girl scout troops and church groups) and Julie recorded the children's books onto cassette tapes so that the children in Afghanistan could learn English. She worked with an organization called Trust in Education and ended up recording and packaging up the 73 books and recorded tapes and donating an extra \$500 donation from the left over money. Julie will be attending the University of Oregon.

Andrea Say has been a member of troop 30316 and Girl Scouts for 12 years. She is graduating from Miramonte. Andrea earned the Gold Award with her project called Kids Camp which was a one week multiple activities camp for kids ages 3 to 12 at the Shelter Inc. apartment complex in Antioch. She will be attending Boston University in the fall.

Alyssa Wendt has been a member of troop 30316 and Girl Scouts for 12 years and is graduating from Miramonte. She earned the Gold Award for a joint project with Katie Evans. She spent 101 hours building and taking care of a garden at St. Stephen's Nursery School. Alyssa also built four benches out of recycled wood and tree stumps. They took an 11 hour work day and constructed a planter box and helped fix a water fountain along with setting up an irrigation system. Alyssa will be attending the University of Redlands.

Leanne Woehleke is a senior at Campolindo. Her project, "Project Night Night" was her Gold Award theme. Leanne gave more than 50 tote bags filled with comfort items to homeless children at the Bay Area Rescue Mission and the Contra Costa Crisis nursery. She collected gently used or new books and stuffed animals. Girl scout troops and church groups helped her sew fleece blankets from fleece donated or purchased with the funds that she raised from cookie and bake sales. Leanne also taught other girl scout troops to knit and provided hand knit baby blankets in the tote bags. Leanne will be attending Gettysburg College.

Cheyenne Ziermann is a senior at Campolindo. Cheyenne's project involved the Peninsula Humane Society and her love of animals. She collected over 250 used blankets/towels as well as used newspapers and other gifts as dog food/toys/leashes and beds for the animals in the shelter. Cheyenne then prepared a presentation about spaying/neutering and pet care (using display boards), which she took to share with other girl scout troops in Lamorinda. Cheyenne will be attending UC Santa Barbara.

The Orinda Moraga Service Unit also recognized the following girls for their years in scouting as they prepare to graduate from high school:

Danielle Albo, Marina Allen, Evelyn Alper, Cynthia Brzezinski, Taylor Greenthal, Alyssa Johanson, Lindsey Loeper, Emily McPhee, Elyana Schwartz, Annie Singsank, Emma Smith, Devon Van Hoy, and Tessa Whitley.



Troop 33859

Photo provided



Troop 30316, back row: Andrea Say, Margaux Attard and Neris Newton; front row: Sonia Abraham, Katie Evans, Alyssa Wendt and Nina Berger



Annika Holmlund (Gold Award), Jeanine Holmlund (Advisor), Eliane Holmlund (Silver Award)



Troop 30977, from left: Emma Smith, Danie Albo, Jamie Riley, Hannah Reed, Annie Singsank, Katrina Kovalik (not shown: Evelyn Alper, Cynthia Brzezinski)



Troop 31997, from left: Elyana Schwartz, Leanne Woehleke, Eva Healy, Julie Sanders, Tessa Whitley, Cheyenne Ziermann