

Girls in Scout Troop 2367 earn Silver Awards

by Danielle Cook

Hospitals are undoubtedly one of the most serious places a person can be in, but over the summer, Taylor Mueller and Ashley Shup of Girl Scout Troop 2367, based in Holland, worked to make two of Philadelphia's hospitals a little bit brighter.

Taylor and Ashley each recruited, trained and led a group of volunteers to help them complete projects that benefitted St. Christopher's Hospital and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

In the early fall of 2017, both girls earned their Silver Award, the highest service award a Girl Scout their age can receive.

Taylor's project was extremely personal to her — she donated no-sew fleece blankets to St. Christopher's Hospital, inspired by the blanket she received as a child after the loss of her grandfather.

"I chose the oncology department because my grandfather lost his own battle [with] cancer," Taylor said. "I wanted to stay towards pediatrics because I wanted the kids to know that someone their age or close to their age was thinking about them."

Over the summer, Taylor collected donations from passersby at the community library which, combined with some money of her own, was enough to buy the fabric needed to make the blankets.

By using the sentimental no-sew design for her project, she was able to save time, as she did not have to find, transport or troubleshoot sewing machines, nor did she have to teach her team how to use them.

The results were undeniable; at the end of

five work sessions with her team, Taylor had 61 blankets to donate to St. Christopher's Hospital.

"When I delivered the blankets to the hospital there was a lady waiting for us with a cart," Taylor said. "Little did she know really how many blankets I was donating that day. She ended up having to have another woman find something bigger to transport them all in the boxes."

Ashley's project didn't have the same personal tie as Taylor's, but it was no less important to her.

She donated special two-case pillows to patients staying at CHOP, using a design she came up with herself.

"I decided on doing the pillow sham idea because it would help increase the pillow's use and the outer case could be washed to stop the spread of germs," Ashley said.

Once she had her pillow design, Ashley spent her summer making them with her team of family and friend volunteers. Between their donations of sewing machines and other supplies, they were able to split the work and help her stuff the pillows and sew the cases.

By the fall, she had 53 pillows to donate to CHOP, each with a handwritten note of encouragement for the patients receiving the gifts.

Completing any service project that requires a minimum of 50 hours is always an incredible feat, but for Girl Scouts, serving a community is a much more personal matter, as the troop



Ashley Shup with pillows she donated to The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

members have spent years learning all the different ways they can aid those in need.

These lessons are an intrinsic part of almost all Girl Scout activities.

Selling cookies teaches the girls basic business skills and how to use money wisely.

Camping trips teach them survival skills, trust-building exercises and how to step outside their comfort zones.

Badge workshops teach them about all the work others do in the world, from web design

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Troop 2367 Awards

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to water conservation to bread making.

And one of the biggest prerequisites for the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards is completing the Journey workbook, which guides the girls through scenarios and workshops so they learn their leadership style on a smaller scale and be ready for the bigger projects.

Both Taylor and Ashley credit their Girl Scout training as one of the most useful skills in their arsenal when tackling their work.

Not only that, but being brave enough to create, work through and finish projects of this caliber also helped them grow, both as Scouts and as people.

"I think that my Girl Scout training helped me do this project because it gave me the ability to be a leader during all of the sessions I scheduled to make the blankets," Taylor said. "This project gave me an opportunity



Taylor Mueller delivers blankets to St. Christopher's Hospital in Philadelphia

Phil Witmer to speak in Doylestown

Many birders are aware that one-third of our land birds are threatened or in decline, but they might not be aware of what they can do to help.

The factors in avian decline are numerous, complicated and interconnected.

Solutions often seem beyond the abilities of mere mortals to overcome. Habitat loss, climate change, pollution and more will

be discussed as a complex system working against our birds.

This month's Advocacy for a Cleaner Earth series will take place on Wednesday, March 21st at 6:30pm, in Delaware Valley University's Life Science Building.

Phil Witmer, a local birder, conservationist, and President of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club, will present "Saving Our Birds: What's Killing Our Birds and What You Can do about it."

Participants will leave with concrete actions to help reduce the decline of birds in our region.

The program is provided free of charge, but donations are welcome. Donations support the mission of high-quality environmental education for all ages.

Parking is provided off of the New Britain Road entrance.

For more information, contact Bucks County Audubon Society at 215-297-5880 or bcas@bcas.org.

Also, visit www.BCAS.org.

to help out my community in a greater way than I could have ever done if I were not a Girl Scout. Being a Girl Scout gave me the confidence and willpower to do this."


"Having Girl Scout experience reminded me on multiple occasions that a big project needs a lot of hands and help," Ashley said. "It has shown me that 'teamwork makes the dream work.' As a Girl Scout it is important to step out of your comfort zone and lead people in doing something that can benefit others. This project has helped me to better understand how to do just that."

Since the fall, both girls have graduated to Senior Girl Scouts and are now eligible to complete the Gold Award, the most prestigious of all Girl Scout service awards.



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