

Whitehall girl scouts brighten Granville seniors' lives

By EJ Conzola II

The residents of the Slate Valley Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing in Granville are finding their surroundings a little brighter and their bingo games a bit more interesting, thanks to the members of Whitehall Scout Troop 3086G and the Isaac C. Griswold Library in Whitehall.

The girls of Troop 3086G, working with library volunteer Louise Lane, have been crafting a variety of decorations, holiday ornaments, jewelry and tchotchkes for donation to the nursing home. Some of the crafted items will be given to individual residents to decorate their rooms; others will be used as prizes during the center's regular bingo games, said Trooper Leader Angela Benson.

Earlier this year, the Scouts had also made lap blankets for the seniors, she said.

The Scouts do their work in conjunction with a crafts program offered by Lane at the library. The program is open to anyone in the community, said Lane, an experienced crafter.

The work the Scouts and others can do range from crochets and woven items, beaded jewelry and tin punch decorations, Lane said.

Lane said she has long been a crafter and decided several years ago to "pass my passion on to others ... and get rid of some of my stuff."

"My kids keep saying I have too much craft stuff," she said with a laugh.

Benson said she got her Scouts involved in part to help them satisfy a community service Scouting requirement and in part

because of her own interest in crafting.

"This was a little bit closer to my heart," she said.

Benson's daughter Sage, who was working on a pumpkin decoration for Halloween, initially said she got involved in order to satisfy the requirement but later acknowledged she enjoyed the opportunity to stretch her creative muscles.

"It wasn't just 'Mom made me do it,'" Benson said.

On a recent Tuesday afternoon, Sage was the only Scout at the program, but she said it was not because her fellow Scouts were uninterested. The other members of the small troop are all involved in scholastic athletics, which creates a conflict with the crafts program, she said. When the fall sports programs are over, the others will return, she said.

Benson said the program also gives her Scouts an opportunity to make some individual contribution, as opposed to the group projects the girls usually take on. The crafts project is "a good opportunity for kids in town to learn this stuff," she said.

The Scouts were set to help their Cub Scout counterparts with the latter's food concession at the Sasquatch Festival and have in the past helped the same group with their annual Halloween haunted house, she said.

The group projects are an important part of the Scouting experience, Benson said.

"The whole point of Scouts is working together," she said. "I'm always looking for something for them to do like that."

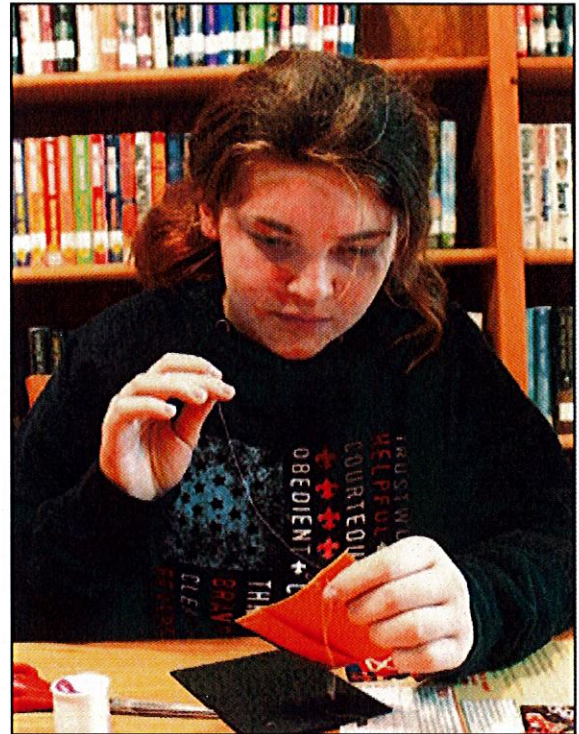


Photo by EJ Conzola II

Sage Benson, a member of Whitehall Scout Troop 3086G, puts together a pumpkin ornament during a crafting class at the Isaac C. Griswold Library in Whitehall on Sept. 26.

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