



The Mercer Island Girl Scouts held an End of the Year Celebration on June 9.

## Mercer Island Girl Scouts celebrates its members and volunteers

An End of The Year ceremony was held on June 9.

By Stephanie Quiroz

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Volunteers and family members gathered at the Mercer Island Girl Scouts' End of the Year Celebration on June 9. The ceremony was held to commemorate local Girl Scouts who were bridging to the next level of Girl Scouting, graduating from Girl Scouting, and earning their special awards such as the silver and bronze awards.

According to Mercer Island Girl Scouts service unit manager Kathy McDonald, there are 32 troops and over 300 girls in the Mercer Island (MI) scouting. This year, MI scouting had 16 graduation seniors, four volunteer awardees, 35 girls receiving bronze awards – a huge record, according to McDonald – and seven girls receiving their silver awards.

“We do a lot to try and retain the middle and high school kids,” McDonald said. “I think Mercer Island has been particularly successful at that, which is great...I am so proud of them.”

Troop 42503 was one of the troops with graduating seniors.

“We’ve been around for a long time and to see it grow has been really satisfying,” troop leader Lori Kovarik said. “These girls are doing things that inspire younger girls. To know that a lot of these girls are here because they’ve seen older girls doing things is pretty inspiring. That’s a lot about what Girls Scouts is – older girls leading younger girls.”

Both troop leaders Kovarik and Anne Hritzay said they can’t wait to see where the girls go in the future, and they look forward to connecting with them over the years for more adventures together. Most girls have been with Troop 42503 since kindergarten.

“It will be sad to leave everyone,” member Kayla Mitchell said. “These are some of the nicest girls I know.”

Member Emily Kovarik said being in the Girl Scouts program for so long has allowed her to have a different group of friends, and she said it’s nice to have these friends since starting in the program.



Stephanie Quiroz/staff photos Graduating seniors from left troop leader Anne Hritzay, Leia Saloranta, Hannah Sidney, Kyla Mitchell, Emily Kovarik, and Troop leader Lori Kovarik.



The MI scouting celebration included bridging to the next level.



Troop 42503 leader Lori Kovarik and others receive volunteer recognition.



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