

Girl Scouts honor Bangor Savings executive for community service

BY JULIE HARRIS
OF THE NEWS STAFF

Carol Colson of Veazie, senior vice president and director of marketing and community relations for Bangor Savings Bank, was named Girl Scouts of Maine's 2015 Juliette Award honoree during the annual Pearls of Wisdom breakfast held Thursday at the Hilton Garden Inn.

The Juliette Award is named for Girl Scouts founder Juliette Gordon Low and honors a woman who "exhibits a heightened sense of service to community and the courage, confidence and character to make the world a better place," according to the Girl Scouts of Maine's description in Thursday's program.

Girl Scouts of Maine CEO Joanne Crepeau introduced board members and others attending, and WABI TV5 anchor Caitlin Burchill was emcee.

Mikayla Carr, an ambassador Girl Scout with 12 years in Scouts, a member of Girl Scouts of Maine Board of Directors, an accomplished athlete and a student at Maine Central Institute in Pittsfield, spoke about the opportunities she has had in Scouting, including par-

ticipating in national and international events, that have helped to shape her courage, confidence and character.

Colson brought her audience to their feet twice for ovations: the first time in honor of her award as she approached the podium; the second time after she spoke about her road to volunteerism and the 2015 Juliette Award.

With obvious emotion in her voice, Colson talked about fleeing domestic violence with her mother and family at age 15 with the clothes on their backs and \$50 in their pocket, and how that kind of adversity can either bring you down or make you stronger.

Colson shared the top five lessons she has learned in the process of becoming stronger: you are not insignificant; it's OK to be flawed and perfection is an illusion; shared laughter creates powerful bonds; not everyone is going to like you; and God gives you opportunities in life to help others, which are really gifts to you.

Colson poked some fun at herself for being a "self-made extrovert" who had to work at interacting with people and for being "directionally chal-

lenged," but stressed the importance of reaching out a hand to truly help other people directly.

She lives what she encourages. Besides giving directly to individuals, Colson has served numerous nonprofits including Eastern Maine Medical Center Auxiliary Board, Jobs for Maine Graduates, Bangor Rotary, Bangor Region Leadership Institute, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Bangor Area Homeless Shelter, American Heart Association, March of Dimes, Bangor Y, United Way of Eastern Maine, MS Society, Eastern Maine Healthcare M.S. Center, My Place Teen Center and Maine New Leadership. Representatives from many of these groups attended Thursday's event.

Colson also has received the G. Clifton Eames Leadership Award and recognition from the Maine Legislature for her volunteer efforts.

A door prize of a strand of pearls donated by Quality Jewelers was awarded to Lori Sinclair of Bangor Savings Bank. The significance of the pearls dates to Girl Scouts founder Juliette Gordon Low, who sold hers in 1912 for \$8,000 to finance her Girl Scout programs.

B&L Auto Parts celebrates 40 years

BY EMILY BURNHAM
OF THE NEWS STAFF

After 40 years, the folks at B&L Auto Parts & Paint in Bangor have seen it all -- from three different locations over the years, to changes in the industry, to countless employees over the years.

As the company celebrates its 40th anniversary this month, however, owner Gerald Doane reflects on those changes -- and on the fact that it's been a team effort all along.

"Even though I have owned this business for over 30 years and have worked there since pretty much the beginning, it has evolved into something a lot more than me," said Doane. "More of a summation of the great combined qualities of many individuals."

B&L opened in 1975 in Brewer, at an Elm Street location where the store operated for more than 20 years. Original owners Bob Brooks (the B) and Larry Largay (the

L) met Doane when he was a young teenager mowing lawns in Brewer; he began working at B&L in 1977, cleaning the store, pumping gas and selling auto parts. By 1985, Largay sold Doane his 50 percent share in the business, and in 1991, Brooks sold Doane his remaining share.

After outgrowing the original space, in 1997 B&L moved operations to 95 South Main St. in Brewer, next door to what is now Save-a-Lot, in a building that was more than three times the size of the first place. After 12 more years, B&L once again grew out its space, and in Sept. 2009, Doane moved operations to Bangor, to the former ADCO building at 1292 Outer Hammond Street, in a modern space where B&L continues to thrive to this day.

Today, B&L uses 18 trucks -- up from 10 in 2010 -- and delivers as far as the Belfast region and Deer Isle/Stonington. They employ 33 people and are constantly sourcing new products for its many

devoted customers. They also continue to offer special discounts to members of the military, government, senior citizens, students, pilots, and many employees of local companies like GE.

Doane in particular singles out one individual that has made a huge contribution to the success of B&L over the years -- Michael Carter, who has been with the company as long as Doane has.

"He has been a huge influence to the great reputation this company has built. He is a person who truly goes out of way to help customers. He has a unique ability to keep the other individuals in the company working together and making it a great place to work. He truly cares about his family, customers, and employees as well as the company too," said Doane.

For more information, like B&L Auto Parts & Paint on Facebook or call 989-6515.

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