

SUMTER COUNTY TIMES

Girl Scout scaring up glasses

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Look out for Marissa Sanborn and her friends – she may just be knocking on your door for a spectacular Halloween night.

Don't be afraid, Sanborn and other members of Girl Scout Troop 456 are trick-or-treating for eyeglasses.

They've teamed up with the Lions Club International, Lens Crafters and other organizations to take part in a community project called "Sight Night."

Sanborn coordinated the Sumter County effort. She and her group members will "scare up" used eyeglasses that can be cleaned and repaired before being hand-delivered to people who couldn't otherwise afford glasses at all.

They're collecting prescription and non-prescription glasses.

Sanborn said one of their local sponsors was a perfect host – she had been the recipient of a pair of Lions Club glasses when she was a youth and her family was unable to afford prescrip-

tion glasses for her.

Every year troop members have to come up with their own project. This year Sanborn found the eyeglass project and felt it was a great option. She has boxes in various locations and has hung door knockers at homes. The knockers will let residents know that she and other troop members will be back on Halloween to collect glasses they may have.

Their group has already done everything from hosting events for Osprey Point seniors to creating cards for soldiers.

They plan to hit the same places she grew up trick-or-treating.

Sanborn rarely got the candy she was given on her youthful Halloween nights – she was diagnosed with diabetes in September of 2002.

But she does recall one of her favorite treats – Sponge Bob Krabby Patties.

Sanborn said her mom's co-workers learned that she had been diagnosed and convinced her to let Marissa go trick-or-treating anyway.

They traded the sugary stuff for sugar-free treats,

once she was done.

After that first year, she simply gave the candy away to friends.

Just like regular trick-or-treaters, the girls plan to dress in costume, but they have special buttons to wear, designating the collection.

They plan to come knocking between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. This is the tenth annual Sight Night and since the program began in 1999, more than a million pairs of glasses have been collected, helping an estimated 30,000 people on 30 different missions trips.

Other community service projects they've done include planting flowers at the church that hosts their meetings, serving church members refreshments and making hangers that can be used at the Girl Scout Camp in Wildwood.

In recent weeks, they participated in car care learning, doing everything from rotating tires to changing oil, checking the air and buying a car.

For more information on Sight Night, see the Web site at www.sightnight.org.



BRENDA LOCKLEAR/Sumter County Times

Marissa Sanborn shows off one of the boxes she set out at local businesses to collect eyeglasses. She and other members of her Girl Scout troop will be collecting used eyewear for Lions Club International. The glasses will be cleaned, repaired and then distributed to people who could not otherwise afford them.