

# Community-minded student lauded by Challenge Program



THE CHALLENGE PROGRAM

**Kayla Washko**

**R**onald Lincoski is proud to live in Daisytown, Washington County, and he wants other residents to be proud of it, too.

That's why he refurbished a World War I, World War II, Korean and Vietnam War Memorial in his hometown as his Eagle Scout project for Boy Scouts.

The 500-hour project involved rebuilding the memorial's wall, pressure-washing the original stone, installing French drains and sealing the monument to prevent water damage.

Prior to Lincoski's work, the memorial had not been maintained in more than 60 years.

Lincoski, a senior at California Area High School, said he chose the project because he believes that small towns all too often become secondary to the attractions associated with city life.

"Rural communities need attention too," Lincoski said. "I'd (personally) rather live in a small town than in a city, but small towns are (often) ignored."

After Lincoski completed his work on the monument, he organized a rededication service for Daisytown residents.

The rededication service was partially funded by an award Lincoski received from The Challenge Program for performing the most community service hours in his class at California Area High School.

Lincoski was especially pleased that representatives from Rolling Thunder Inc., a nonprofit organization committed to war veterans and prisoners of war, attended the ceremony.

"I spoke with several members (of Rolling Thunder)," Lincoski said.

"It was nice to see them come down,

because I don't think anyone from Daisytown had experienced anything like that before."

Lincoski won The Challenge Program's Most Community Service for a second time in the 2007-2008 school year, and said he plans to use that money for his next community project at Deems Park in Washington County, and he wants other residents to be proud of it, too.

He explained that the park has been neglected for several years, and that he will use the money to refurbish an old cannon there.

"I'd like to think I was raised by this community," Lincoski said. "That's why I give back to it."

Ron Messick, owner of Redstone Pharmacy and one of the business ambassadors to California Area High School, agreed

with Lincoski's philanthropic philosophy.

"(Giving back) is something I'm doing now through The Challenge Program," Messick said. "It's something that helps to make you a better citizen to the community and a more well-rounded person in general. I think Ron's work is great for our community."

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*This article is part of a human interest series that features recipients of The Challenge Program's four award categories: Most Improved, Best G.P.A., Most Community Service, and Best Attendance. The Challenge Program is a nonprofit organization located in Johnstown that provides financial incentives to students for successes they achieve while in high school. The program also aims to provide a bridge between high-school students and the local business community.*