

Woodridge woman a winner for orderly ways

By Don Grigas

Staff writer

Well-organized DG North grad wins national contest

Kim Ashley of Woodridge does not want to be labeled as obsessive-compulsive just because her use of printed labels helps her organize her closets and dressers, right down to the clothes in her bedroom dresser according to color.

"I don't want people to think something is wrong with me. I just like to have things in order," said Ashley, 34, a Woodridge resident since 1973 and a 1990 graduate of Downers Grove North High School.

Ashley's organizational skills resulted in her recently being named the winner of a national contest sponsored by DYMO, a global manufacturer of labeling products.

The designation earned her \$5,000 in products from DYMO, which was purchased by Newell Rubbermaid in 2005.

"I was very surprised when they called me in early November to inform me I was the grand prize winner," Ashley said.

Ashley said she has used labelers for many years, and became aware of the contest when she went onto a Web site searching for products to buy.

"They were promoting a new label maker, and I had to submit a photo of my dresser and an essay detailing my organizational skills," Ashley said.

The contest also recognized a "Type O-No!" opposite, won by a man in Texas, according to DYMO officials.

Ashley said her bedroom dresser system is a testament to clothing organization, and she painstakingly folds the clothes in her top drawer so every article in every row is visible, according to colors.

"From left to right I organize my tops by colors -- blues, blacks, red/purples, and pajamas -- and the next drawer is similar, but with longer sleeve articles," Ashley said.

On top of her desk is a white display board that displays a calendar that highlights important dates with a label, as well as other areas coded by task.

A photograph submitted to DYMO showing the dresser and labeled display board caught the attention of judges.

"The contest was to recognize those who were exceptionally organized, or

the most organizationally challenged," said Kim Goedeker, contest spokeswoman.

"Kim's essay and photos clearly demonstrated her passion for organizing," Goedeker said.

Ashley, who has a degree in art design from Northern Illinois University, said she has always tried to be organized.

"Growing up I was a bit of a procrastinator, but I have always wanted to have things in order," she said. "I've worked at removing clutter and staying organized."

One of her favorite hobbies is to shop online or in person at local stores looking for new ways to keep her room and closet organized.

"I cannot wait to see the package they send me," Ashley said.

Included in the prize package awarded by DYMO is a variety of storage totes, a canvas storage box, collapsible cubes and other products, Goedeker said.

Ashley will receive the package within the next month, Goedeker said.

"I can't wait. I'll put them all to good use," said Ashley.