

Sell named Woodridge's outstanding youth of year

By Don Grigas

Staff writer

Whenever Bridget Johnson needs a volunteer to help out at the Community Resource Center in Woodridge she knows she can always count on Andrew Sell.

"Andrew is one of my most dedicated youth volunteers, a wonderful kid who is always there when you need him," said Johnson, who directs youth programs for the Woodridge Police Department and manages the Community Resource Center.

"It is a delight to work with young people like him who are willing to step forward and help out," Johnson said.

Sell, 18, a senior at Downers Grove North High School, has been volunteering for a variety of community service projects in the Woodridge area since he was a freshman, including working as an unpaid tutor at the center during the past two summers, as well as other projects such as National Make A Difference Day and Youth Service Day.

On Dec. 8, Sell was recognized by Woodridge as the Outstanding Youth Citizen of the Year at the annual recognition dinner for village employees and citizens.

"When Mayor (William) Murphy called our home to tell me I had been selected as Youth Citizen of the Year a few weeks ago, I was really surprised," said Sell.

Volunteering has become a regular part of Sell's life, and he said he enjoys the feeling of helping those that need it the most.

"It is very satisfying helping others and seeing how grateful they are, like the seniors we help by doing yard work and other tasks as part of Make A Difference Day every fall," Sell said.

On Make A Difference Day youth from the Woodridge and Downers Grove area pitch in to rake leaves, pull weeds and perform other outdoor landscaping tasks for seniors in Woodridge.

In the spring Sell participates in Youth Service Day, and in August volunteers with the annual Back to School Bash at Jefferson Junior High School in Woodridge.

Sell plans to study architecture either at the University of Illinois, or University of Illinois at Chicago after graduating from Downers Grove North.

In addition to being active as a volunteer, he also has a grade point average "slightly higher than 4.0", and has scored a 30 on his ACT test, Sell said.

Sell was selected Outstanding Youth Citizen from multiple candidates after being nominated by a resident and after a review by the award committee, said Leslie Davies, a Woodridge employee and organizer of the annual recognition dinner.

"There are a lot of outstanding youth citizens in our community, and it was a pleasure to recognize Andrew as this year's award winner for all the work he does as a volunteer," Murphy said.