

Scout troop opens the door to girls

By Scott Williams

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Rachel Strong has joined a small but mighty group that is helping to break down a barrier.

And she is only in second grade.

The 7-year-old town of Geneva girl is among the first girls in the Lake Geneva region to enlist in the previously all-boy Cubs Scouts.

No, Rachel is not joining Girl Scouts or the younger Brownies. She is a Cub Scout. She can go camping, hiking and pinewood derby-racing right alongside the boys.

Under a new inclusive policy of the Boys Scouts of America, Strong and a handful of other girls are the newest members of Lake Geneva's Cub Scout Pack 239.

"We're all very excited about it," said Rachel's mother, Cassandra Kordecki. "I'm proud of the scout organization — they're allowing to happen."

The older Boy Scout troops will do likewise next year and welcome the first-ever girl members into their ranks.

Although girls are lining up in Lake Geneva and elsewhere to get into scouting, the new co-ed arrangement is not being implemented without some controversy.

Andrew Olsen, district director of scouting in Walworth County, said he has experienced some push-back from critics outside the organization who think the all-boy tradition should be preserved.

"It's a change. It's a shift of
PLEASE SEE GIRLS ON 7A



Rachel Strong, 7, left, and her cousin, Lily Hafferkamp, also 7, are among the first girls in the Lake Geneva region to join Cub Scouts. (Contributed photo/Regional News)