

www.macon.com
Friday, May. 14, 2010
By JOE KOVAC JR.

Five ladies honored by local Girl Scouts group as Women of Distinction

At the Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia's annual Women of Distinction luncheon Thursday, which came complete with Thin Mints in the dessert dish, former Georgia Secretary of State Cathy Cox spoke of the leadership strides American women have made in the past century. "Boy, have things changed, and thank goodness," Cox said. "We have come a long, long way in these past 100 years, but a lot of battlefields remain for women."



WOODY MARSHALL/THE TELEGRAPH Hazel Hamilton and other attendees say the Pledge of Allegiance at a luncheon held Thursday by the Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia Inc. The organization honored five Women of Distinction at the event held at The Armory Ballroom in Macon.

Gallery: Girl Scouts honor women of distinction

Cox, who was the state's first female secretary of state, serving much of the past decade, is now president of Young Harris College. She was in Macon as keynote speaker for the Women of Distinction awards, which honored five local women — Nancy Briska Anderson, Sara Beth Hertwig, Terry Kennedy, Beverly Olson and Joan Walton — for their lifetime contributions to their communities. "The women we recognize today and over the past four years have used their unique interests and perspectives to lead and support local museums, art programs, charitable organizations ... a wide variety of programs that, perhaps, might not have been served if only men were out raising the money and trying to make the decisions about how we would support these organizations," Cox said. The award recipients received handcrafted bowls. Walton, a retired educator who, among other benevolent and volunteering endeavors, founded an annual picnic for the homeless, called Thursday's event a chance for women, especially the uniformed Girl Scouts in attendance, to see some of the fruitful paths their lives might take. "It's to showcase the women that have made a substantial contribution," Walton said. "I mean, I am humbled to be compared with these ladies. I mean, with Nancy Anderson and Beverly Olson, I think it's a wonderful occasion. I was very surprised to be nominated." Speaking of one of the luncheon's themes, Anderson, a past executive director of the Museum of Arts and Sciences who, in 1979, published "Macon: A Pictorial History," said, "I think it's great for girls to have role models. ... We do usually think of plenty of role models for little boys. There are not quite as many for little girls, but there are more and

more.”Cox, in her speech, cited how women still earn just 77 cents on the dollar compared with their male counterparts in the workplace. She said that of the more than 1,000 publicly held large companies in Georgia, just 7.6 percent have women on their corporate boards. She noted “the healthy perspective that women bring to all leadership roles. Leadership in business, in schools, in every kind of circle. In my view, they are softening things, not in a case of weakness, but in what I see as a very positive sense.”