

## 2008 Convention Memories

### ► Ann Baker

*This was my third National Convention and it was indeed a very different one! It was VERY jammed packed with little time to breathe. There were many issues to discuss; however it would be so much better if the delegations would read over their material BEFORE they attend the convention. It was a pleasure to serve our Council and hope to do so again in 2011 in Texas.*

*Take care,  
Ann L. Baker  
Delegate*

### ► Louise Brown

*While attending the open space session on fundraising, I listing the following recognition ideas:*

*These were for Family Partnership program:*

- *Sponsor a Girl - get a yarn doll with name on it either girl name or sponsor name*
- *Recieve a Daisy Society Patch*
- *Design a Partnership Patch given to anyone who donates at a 25+ level*
- *100% troop donation of 10 per girl Leader receives a pin or gift*
- *Virtual Breakfast where donors can watch a video of girls doing doing a Girl Scout event or having breakfast and talking about Girl Scout experiences*
- *Personal card sent to a friend or coworker, relative...where the sender makes a donation to Girl Scouts in the friend's name (ie: Valentine Card You touched My Heart... Donation note.)*

*Louise Brown  
Visitor to National Convention*

### ► Kate Crowley

*This was my second national council session and the experience was just as rewarding as the first. I was particularly impressed with all the girls who attended, both those from our own council and the approximately 300 others from across the country. The girls were poised, prepared and thoughtful, and offered insightful input, whether that was during the Open Space sessions on the first day or during the proceedings of the actual GSUSA business meeting.*



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*The girls clearly want to have their own voice on issues of concern to them and those in attendance demonstrated the ability to articulate that view. During one of the open sessions that I attended, several girls shared their ideas on being part of the board of their local council. Some of the adult volunteers who participated shared their experiences with girls being on their boards, or on Girl Advisory Boards. Everyone in the group seemed to agree that there is value in this type of arrangement, both for the girls and for the adults. I would strongly recommend that we give renewed consideration to doing this in our own council.*

*On a related note, it became obvious during the business meeting, that girls also want to ensure that they have a voice in the business of the national organization. During the discussions regarding the proposal on reducing the size of the national council, the girls expressed interest in having the GSUSA constitution specify not only the total number of delegates allocated per local council, but also having a minimum number of girl delegates. While that discussion did not result in any such requirement being adopted, it did point out that if we wished to; we in GSHPA could consider modifying our bylaws to provide for this when selecting our national delegates every three years.*

*I also came away from the session with a newfound respect for the National board of directors. The officers who chaired various segments of the meeting were well prepared and skilled in their handling of the proceedings. Several board members serving as resource team members for the various proposals being discussed were, when called upon to answer questions raised by the membership, prepared, articulate and helpful. It was obvious that a lot of time was spent preparing for the meeting and that the national board had put a lot of thought into the development of the proposals and the justifications for each.*

### ► Carol Eberly

*First I would like to say, I felt it an honor to be chosen to attend the 51st National Convention in Indianapolis, in representing Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania. It was a great idea to travel, as a group, by coach. We all arrived together plus we had an opportunity to get to know each other before the convention. It was a very scenic ride even with a couple inches of snow going through the mountains of PA. The first snow fall of the year for some. By the way, the temperatures in Indianapolis were above normal for this time of the year, light jacket needed at times.*

*I thought the "Open Space" sessions were great. We chose the topic we wanted to share with others or learn from others. Example: learned how other service teams function, number of people, job descriptions, etc. In the voting sessions, it was amazing how everyone had a voice in the decision making of our constitution and used that voice. To be a part of the democratic process and witness that it does work. The guest speakers were empowering. One was seeing her accomplish her dream and winning the Special Olympic Gold Medals from her wheel chair. When in high school her school and coach would not let her participate and said that there*



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*was no place for her. Meeting the girls and women of distinction and hearing their stories of hard work and rewards. We also learned about weaving our individual Girl Scout story and what it means to us.*

*I enjoyed meeting new friends and sharing good things about our council and seeing old friends from the legacy council and catching up on happenings. I got to see a little bit of the city, only at night, all the tree lights lit up the square monument, where we saw wedding pictures taking place near a horse drawn carriage. The carriages were a way to also take a sight seeing tour of the city at night.*

*Swapping with many Girl Scouts was a treat for me and a tradition, it gave me the opportunity to visit with them and find out where they were from. Thanks to all my Girl Scout angels who made that possible for me.*

*The Exhibit Hall, with many booths, was very informative with new and old ideas for programs for the girls and adults alike.*

*We had the best service in town. Our meals and snacks were easy accessible, getting our tickets for the sessions, receiving a newsletter every day with the day's schedule and important things that we needed to know to make our stay in Indianapolis a smooth and organized one.*

*Thanks for the opportunity to represent GSHPA at the 51st National Convention in Indianapolis, IN.*

*Carol Eberly*

### ► Peggy Frantz

*My participation began by attending the Open Space sessions on Thursday. Those present suggested many different topics we could talk about. Since I am a Gold Award Advisor, I joined two groups discussing the Gold Award. The first group was about the prerequisites and requirements of the Gold Award. It was interesting to hear how other Councils handle the process. One Council has the Scouts present their proposal to a review board. Ours does not, but I feel that due to the size of our Council, this would place a burden on the girl to attend our meetings. Many other Councils do not have workshops or a booklet for girls to use when preparing their proposals. In this respect, we in GSHPA are doing it right. The second group discussed publicity of completed projects and the need to educate the public of the importance of a girl earning the Gold Award. It seems the general public has an understanding of the Eagle Award, but they don't fully grasp what is required for the Gold Award, or its significance. Some Councils recognize their recipients with a listing on their "Hall of Fame" wall in the Council Headquarters. My personal feeling is that with the size of our Council, which office would we use if our Council chose to do this?*

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*Notes these two groups recorded are as follows:*

- *Changes in requirements cause confusion/frustration.*
- *More consistent Gold Award procedures.*
- *Use former Girl Scouts to help Gold Award advisors.*
- *Invite high schools to recognize Gold Award recipients at graduation ceremony.*
- *Where are award winners? Their field of work, successes, etc.*
- *Gold Award scholarships at local colleges.*
- *Publicize Gold Award.*
- *Connect Girl Scouts with Gold Award instead of just cookies.*
- *Standards and mentors.*
- *More community recognition and better "advertising" about the awards.*

*Participating in Open Space is always a personal highlight of the Council Session because it's a great opportunity to interact with others and share ideas.*

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

*Total number present - 9,342 from 169 Councils. 32 females for every man*

*Delegates - 1,856 with about 240 girls*

## **KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

*Geena Davis - founder of Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media*

*Marie Wilson - founder/president of The White House Project and co-creator of "Take our Son/Daughter to Work Day"*

*Tatyana McFadden - a paralympic athlete who sued to be allowed the right to compete equally with other athletes at track meets*

## **NEW THIS SESSION**

*Discussions on all proposals with visitors also being allowed to participate. I think it was important that non-delegates be allowed a chance to voice their opinion.*

## **EVENTS**

*Juliette Low Birthday Party and history of GS in Indiana*

*Power of Children Exhibit at Children's Museum*

## **NEXT COUNCIL SESSION**

*Houston - 11/10-11/11*



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*GIRL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE - No participants from our Council this year. This needs to be promoted earlier and better before the next Council Session so that we have participants.*

*Plans are in early stages for 100th anniversary of Girl Scouting.*

### **2008 NATIONAL COUNCIL SESSION PROPOSAL OUTCOMES**

*1. Membership dues will be increased to \$12 annually, effective with 2010 membership year, beginning 10/1/09. Much discussion on this, but GSUSA is running at a deficit this year and depleting reserves. Assistance for outreach will still be available to local Councils.*

*2. Amendment to increase dues without vote from National Council NOT approved. Constitution will be amended to state ..... "Decision on annual membership dues shall require a majority of votes cast."*

*3. National Council size. Proposal was to decrease size to 1,000. NOT approved. Amendment was passed to lower to 1,500 with each Council allowed 2 delegates, and 1 additional delegate for every 3500 girls (changed from 5000), and 1 additional delegate for every additional 3500 girls. LOTS of discussion on this. Girl delegates were concerned fewer girls would be able to attend, and wanted a mandate from GSUSA that local Councils MUST have girl representation. GSUSA would NOT do this. In some states, it is illegal for girls to vote. Also, my personal opinion is that if overall delegate numbers are decreased, there will be less adults as well as girls, and hopefully, ratios of adult to girl delegates will remain the same.*

*4. Removal of the word "local" from the Constitution. NOT passed. This caused problems with many additional proposals, and bogged things down as the word needed to be reinserted in most of the remaining proposals.*

*5. Remaining proposals dealt with language changes and were passed.*

*FYI - Some items were removed from the agenda before the sessions began. These had to do with removal of "geographic representation" in some sections of the Constitution.*

*Also removed was the proposal on flexible membership options. Many present felt GSUSA knew there would be MUCH discussion about removal of geographic representation. In fact, the slate of candidates for the board was changed to be more geographically diverse. As to the flexible membership options, many questions had been raised during the teleconferences, so GSUSA is aware this needs to be well thought out before being presented.*

*Attending these sessions is a real education in the democratic process and "Robert's Rules of Order." The process can be cumbersome when it is abused, and delegates ask questions that were previously answered, or arrive unprepared about the*



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*proposals. Being a delegate is an honor, yet has a big responsibility to represent your Council, your area, and yourself.*

*I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to be a delegate from this Council. I have already shared some of the Gold Award topics discussed with those present at the most recent Gold Award advisory team. I also gave a short report at two Service Unit meetings in hopes of encouraging teen troops to attend the Girl Leadership Institute, and adults to attend as a delegate or a visitor. I don't have much to share with our Council on ways to improve, because most things we do are headed in a good direction. I would like to see us try to use the Open Space technique to generate discussions on how to further improve our Council. Finally, a big thank you to those who did the behind the scenes planning to make sure things went smoothly for the delegates. I had been a delegate from Penn Laurel at the last Council Session, and was not used to the high level of amenities this Council provided with the Hospitality Suite offering meals and snacks. We were made to feel special, and it really added to the experience.*

### ► Cindy Garren

*Girl Scouts is so much more than earning badges or going to camp. Attending a national convention puts Girl Scouting into a much larger perspective. Girl Scouts lights up the leader inside a girl. WE ARE ABOUT THE GIRLS; being, doing, discovering, adventuring, challenging. How inspiring to learn about the incredible projects completed by the Young Women of Distinction! How encouraging to watch girls in action (debating national proposals, engaging in discussions at Open Space strategy, analyzing issues in Girl Scouts today).*

*We have incredible volunteers! Women have dedicated 40, 50, 60 years and more to this organization and they are passionate about our mission and values. They are the backbone of our movement and have a voice that must be heard. Our movement is undergoing tremendous change; from council boundaries to new program models. Change is irritating, but remember: when an irritant invades an oyster, after a long process, a priceless pearl emerges. We are in the midst of becoming rare jewels.*

*We cannot support the girls without the funding. It's going to take a lot more than cookies to fund traditional and innovative initiatives. As adults, we must provide the leadership to find the money. Juliette Low sold her pearls and many women throughout the years have stepped up to buy land for camps, to purchase buildings or to support Girl Scout projects. We've got to think BIG and roll up our sleeves, so that we can deliver an exciting and inviting Girl Scout program to all girls.*

*Cindy Garren  
Girl Scouts in the Heart of PA*



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### ► Eulah "Cookie" Grugan

*Off we started on a bus early in the morning of Wednesday, October 29. We had decided that a bus might meet our needs better than a flight because of the time we would spend waiting for, debarking from, and again waiting for an airplane. Since the bus was not full, we all had double seats, which made it more comfortable.*

*We stopped in Cambridge, OH for lunch and picked up the trip again, arriving in Indianapolis about 5:00 – 5:30 p.m. After getting checked into the Marriott Hotel, we all went to a local restaurant, the Spaghetti House. They gave us a separate area in the back and we all ordered well. The food was delicious! Mostly we turned in for the night, as we were all tired.*

*The Convention began the next morning (Thursday) with Open Space. This lasted from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and was an OUTSTANDING experience. I'm so glad that I got to take part in this, as it was restricted to Delegates at the last convention in Atlanta. The time was well spent, I heard a lot of interesting dialogue about things that interest me, and I facilitated a session on "How to we convince adults to allow girls to run their own program experience?" While it was not a HUGE crowd, there were enough people to make it lively and to contribute meaningful ideas. We all agreed that the new program does exactly what it should – enable girls to manage their own experience. Lunch was very good and the plastic trays came with plastic tableware that just needed to be snapped off. Something new and different!*

*From Open Space we were expected to attend a gathering by the National Board of Directors. This has been a convention that has had lots of attention to detail – more than usual. We listened to the changes in the planned program, heard a nominee, and prepared ourselves to continue.*

*I had signed up for a meeting with the Historians e-group, but it was in another hotel, and I was due at the Online Buddies Gathering at 3 p.m., so I simply stayed there and helped the committee put the "goodie bags" together. As usual, it was fun to put names and faces together and meet old friends. We had a grand old time getting together from 3 to 5 p.m. Almost everyone brought at least one door prize, and a new system was developed this year. Those who had registered for \$5.00 received a patch, a goodie bag, and a chance for a door prize. Those who had not registered had an opportunity to do so. Numbers were drawn continuously, and the committee simply put them on the gifts. Instead of trying to hear numbers, people were called up in groups of numbers to claim what they had one. There were enough prizes to provide everyone with one, with enough to go for a second round for some. What fun! Thanks to Jan McKinney, of Savannah, GA, who has been heading this up since Kansas City.*

*By this time, we needed to grab a bite to eat. My roomie and I chose to go to the Exhibit Hall, where we enjoyed "Philly Cheese Steaks." We had a little time to hit the*



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*exhibits, but not a lot. However, as a delegate, I felt that my role was to be sitting in the convention room, taking it all in.*

*At 7 p.m., it all began! The young girls who were in the aisles were adorable. We had a youngster near us who couldn't have been more than six years old, but she really knew her routine, and didn't miss a beat. When the flags came as a group, I thought they were being borne by people and were being done that way to save time. I can't say it was my favorite type of flag ceremony, but the job got done. At any rate, it was different. We all know in Girl Scouting that it is imperative that we be FLEXIBLE. This certainly was a time to be flexible. At any rate, the participants had a good time, they were very excited to welcome us all there, and the deed was done.*

*On Friday, the work began in earnest. At least, that's what I thought it would be. I have to compare this convention to the first one I attended in Miami in 1990. There were oodles of proposals put forward by councils for a vote at the national meeting. All voting was done by paper ballot (and that includes voting on amendments and amendments to the amendments.) It seemed like we would never get done. Here again, people crawled out of their homes, and brought their problems to the convention. Unfortunately, many of them had obviously not done any reading of the material or discussed it with anyone. This was one of the times that I thought a MUCH smaller convention body would have been appropriate. If their council did not provide them with information from GSUSA or from their own people, shame on them! We had opportunities in the morning at our in-house breakfast and at lunch at our in-house lunch to talk about some of these things and receive more information. Unfortunately, since so much came to Microphone 8 that should not have, we wasted lots and lots of time, forcing the staff to eliminate some of the "nice things" that had been planned. I was afraid that we wouldn't make it to the Birthday Party, but we did. It was fun! The volunteers really put themselves out providing entertaining things for the girls and adults to do. Good event!*

*Saturday, we still had more work to do. The dues increase really went through easily. Patricia Diaz Dennis' speech was warm, friendly, and inspiring. To see her parents there was wonderful. I wish I had gotten to meet her. That evening I went with a group to the Special Event at the Children's Museum. Noraleen and her group of historians from Indiana put together a wonderful exhibit of Girl Scout uniforms and paraphernalia over the years. Ask me - I took pictures of everything. The dinner was good and there was plenty of food. The 4-story tall glass sculpture was unforgettable!!*

*Sunday we were up early to get our suitcases onto the bus, so that we could leave shortly after the Closing Ceremony. I thought that Geena Davis had some important things to say about girls being included in comic books and the like. While she was not a particularly dynamic speaker, she did have an important message and carries enough clout in the arts community to get it done. I found Marie Wilson absolutely inspiring! She has brought the cause of women and young girls so far in such a*



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*short time. She is exactly the type of woman we need to hold up as a good example for young girls.*

*During the course of the convention, several young women took part as an adjunct to their roles as recording artists, paralympics athlete, and high school students. The National Young Women of Distinction, as usual, was excellent. I just have one question – how did one girl collect nearly \$12,000 in monetary and supply donations to purchase supplies for a Mexican village? Our Gold Award girls cannot collect any money. They can collect supplies only by jumping through hoops?*

*Theresa, as usual, was outstanding! I bought both of her newer CD's – I bought the other ones last time at Atlanta. And I was able to talk to her at our Bloomsburg event. She is fun and sold on being a Girl Scout.*

*Yes, the chairs were a bit uncomfortable – pulling them apart did help with that. However, I guess I am taller than what they usually expect for women. The leg room wasn't too great, either. However, I am still here and when I talk about the convention, this will be one of the last things I think about. It just isn't as important as the friendships, the meeting of other people, the sharing of the Girl Scout movement. The one day, a young woman from Eastern Pennsylvania found herself in our midst – don't know what happened to her seat or "counter," but people in our group just stepped up and made her welcome. We were able to get her everything she needed to be a voting delegate. That's what Girl Scouting is all about!*

*We made the trip home in one day, getting us home in time to be ready to cast our votes in the Presidential Election. Karen had a wonderful telephone that had all sorts of information about restaurants near where we were. We wound up at a Cracker Barrel in West Virginia near the Pennsylvania line. A good trip – thanks to the bus driver and Jonathan, who was our shepherd throughout the trip.*

*Thanks for the opportunity to represent Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania! I did my best to represent our council well!*

*Eulah "Cookie" Grugan*

### ► Joy Grunden

*The National Council Session, 51st Convention, was an unbelievably exciting experience. In years past I had attended State Conventions for the Veterans of Foreign Wars, but we (the Ladies Auxiliary) were never involved in the constitution and bylaws.*

*I was very impressed with the Open Space: Sharing and Learning program. It gave me the opportunity to share experiences and ideas with people from all over the country. I've participated in brainstorming sessions before...but this was the biggest and best! The concept of Open Space can be utilized by everyone.*



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*The Hall of Exhibits reminded me of a carnival for adults! We were like kids flitting from one booth to another! There were educational materials, program ideas, product samples and catalogs, science experiments...and, yes, the giveaways! I was really excited to receive a pack of 50 booklets developed by a Sorority to help children deal with bullies.*

*The opening ceremony was spectacular. I found Patricia Diaz-Dennis to be a delightful, dedicated, and strong leader. Then when Kathy Cloninger appeared, well you could have knocked me over with a feather. I hung on every word she said, even taking notes so I wouldn't forget the wonderful things she talked about. She spoke about the brand position: Girl Scouts is a magnetic irresistible place that is an essential part of girl culture and of being a girl today. Isn't that great!*

*There are no words to adequately explain the Delegate Meetings! Some people had warned me that they would be boring. I feel sorry for them because I found the meetings to be far from boring. The proposals before us were quite serious in nature and some items were heavily debated. The meetings were active and very exciting. I carefully considered all the pros and cons and cast my votes in the best interest of the organization. I took my job very seriously.*

*On the lighter side, as a "local" Council, we considered banning another specific "local" Council from future sessions, and were carefully calculating an electrical malfunction at microphone #8.*

*Geena Davis was spectacular; Marie Wilson was dynamic and energetic; Tatyana McFadden is such an inspiration, not only to those with disabilities, but to everyone – her strength and character is phenomenal; the accomplishments of the National Women of Distinction were astonishing.*

*Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as a National Delegate. This experience has given me the foundation and knowledge necessary to represent GSHPA. I learned a great deal at the convention and now feel more prepared to explain the proposals and their implications to others. I look forward to this triennium. I promise to bring enthusiasm and dedication!*

*Joy Grunden, National Delegate  
Antietam Service Unit*

### ► Karen Rowe

*Everyone has a story. Our story can be short and precise or long and all encompassing. Our story can be told with words, pictures, textiles, or sticks. Our story can be told by talking, drawing, or weaving. Our story can be shared by video, print, on a loom, or by texting. At the 2008 National Council all of these means were utilized to gather stories - Our Stories.*



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*GSUSA convened the 2008 National Council Session of the 51st Convention from October 30 through November 2 in Indianapolis Indiana. Over 9,000 people filled the convention floor and exhibit hall of which 1,856 were voting delegates and 292 of them were girls!*

*On Wednesday, the GSHPA delegation took a bus from Harrisburg. Later that evening we enjoyed a delightful dinner together.*

*On Thursday morning over 600 scouts participated in Open Space. Open Space – lots of circles, chairs in circles, circles in circles. This poem was co-created by an amazing group of young women – Girl Scouts who model true leadership. Their words kicked off our Open Space session, reminding us – always – for whom we are working. (By Jacqueline, Ally, Kathryn, Najha, Shelbi, Christine, Arlynn, Amber, Allie, Kamarie, Samantha, Kristen, Kyla, Monique, Donna, Lauren, and Annika)*

*Girls face the challenges of everyday life...and that in its self is the hardest thing of all.*

*Where are our leaders? Parents - college - friends - acceptance?*

*Lack of self. The pressures to change who they are because they don't feel good enough.*

*Who am I? What am I supposed to do for the world? Will 'they' accept me for who I am?*

*Do not judge. Look at inside beauty before what you see on the outside.*

*We face new things and some hard things...but we always get something out of it.*

*Rather than "change", better yourself – with the help of the Girl Scout movement.*

*As part of Girl Scouting girls can be anyone they want to be.*

*The future is in our hands and Girl Scouts is there to guide and help us grow.*

*The people who care about you don't see your clothes or the way you style your hair or your braces*

*They see you for who you are.*

*Follow your dreams. Travel where your heart desires.*

*Be who you want to be.*

*Be yourself... who you are; what you become; what you don't become.*

*You are what is and has been - within yourself.*

*Girl Scouts is a way you can find that which has already been, waiting.*

*Believe in yourself. Believe and be yourself.*

*We are sisters who shall stand together.*

*The question, "As we approach our 100th Anniversary, what are your ideas that will help us bring the Girl Scout Leadership Experience to more girls?" generated close to 70 subtopics for small groups to discuss. What followed were many lively, thought provoking conversations that solved all the problems of all troops, councils, GSUSA and the World!! A Book of Proceedings with the text from all the discussions will be posted at [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org) on the convention Web site.*



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*My discussions were about what does the real leadership look like and council own badges. GSUSA offers a lot of resources and books on Leadership, but what does it look like in troops and in councils. When we are dealing with the girls, outcomes and diagrams don't cut it – what does? It seems some councils charge more or requires permission to earn their council own badges. This doesn't seem fair or equitable.*

*The Exhibit Hall was officially opened with black and white checkered flags waving! Hundreds of exhibitors offered information on any and everything related to Girl Scouts: programs (educational, environmental, fun); travel (local, American, world); cookies and nuts, and GSUSA merchandise! There was lots of free stuff to fill lots of bags to take home! I'm glad we were on a bus!*

*The Opening Ceremonies were delightful and showcased the talent of a bright 16-year-old scout. She was articulate and confident. A Scout Choir and local marching band entertained and delighted us as they sang, danced and played. Flags from all of the WAGGGS nations were on display.*

*Bright and early Friday morning, our delegation met in our hospitality suite. This was a wonderful cost-saving idea that allowed us to eat breakfast and lunch together, eat quickly, and more economically. Jonathan Crouch, GSHPA Administrative Assistant, arranged the food, provided nightly newsletters, and kept us on time and organized!*

*The National Council Meeting began by introducing special guests (international, past Presidents, and local dignitaries). During the WAGGGS address, we learned that there are 10 million girls from 145 countries and that "Girls worldwide say... together we can change our world." The credentials report indicated 1855 voting delegates. We tested a new electronic form of voting and adopted the standing rules and the official agenda.*

*Kathy Cloninger, CEO of GSUSA, gave the Stewardship Report of the Board of Directors. She talked freely and told us of the recent history and background before telling us where we are and where we hope to go. Troops have been declining for ten years. Recent membership drives raised the numbers substantially, but didn't offer a means to sustain them. Membership has grown in non-traditional pathways.*

*Three years ago, the National Council adopted the Core Business Strategy identifying Leadership as the core and Diverse Volunteers, Brand, Funding, Program Experience, and Governance Structure as the five strategic priorities. Since then, the Board has focused on Program (developing and showcasing the first series of journeys in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience), Diverse Volunteers (piloting the Single-Entry System [SES], an online-supported, comprehensive 10-step approach that helps councils administer the entire volunteer management process from recruitment to reassignment), and Governance Structure (realigning 312 councils into 109 by December of 2009). Kathy was enthusiastic and optimistic as she delineated five national pathways for girls to join Girl Scouts: troops, camps, travel, events, and*



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*virtual. GSUSA will continue to work diligently on the Core Business Strategy during the new triennium.*

*Board Treasurer, Gwen Wong, gave the Financial Report, which covered the fiscal years of 2006 and 2007. But GSUSA has not escaped the ramifications of the financial fiasco the Nation faces. Our investments lost a lot and we have had to dip into the reserves.*

*After lunch, the National Council reconvened and we began the long arduous process of democracy – discussing and debating the proposals. One hour was given to allow delegates and VISITORS an opportunity to discuss or ask questions regarding the Consent Agenda, Proposals 2 and 5. By the time for the Young Women and Adult Woman of Distinction Ceremony and Awards, the body had gotten through the Consent Agenda and half of Proposal 2. Consent Agenda #1 -- "LOCAL" will remain in all parts of the Constitution where the Board had removed them. The other portions of the Consent Agenda passed. Proposal 2a – After a long repetitive discussion on part A, the body elected to consider part B before voting on part A. This proposal dealt with changing the National Council Size and the formula. Finally after much debate, part B (the formula) was adopted as follows: each council based on the number of girls will be allowed A: two (2) delegates, B: one (1) additional delegate for up to 3,500 girls, and C. one (1) additional delegate for every 3,500 girls thereafter. The formula can be adjusted when necessary to keep the total membership of the National Council no larger than 1,500.*

*Because of the late hour and the planned Birthday party for Juliette Gordon Low at the Indiana State Museum, the body adjourned and agreed to meet earlier on Saturday morning. I believe the SLOW democratic progress was because of three reasons: 1. Women will talk if given the opportunity, 2. The girls had just come from a two-day Leadership Institute where they were encouraged and empowered to find their voice and use it (and they did!), and 3. Realignment had stripped local councils of their "localness" and now GSUSA was taking "local" from them as well.*

*The Birthday Party was a lot of fun and the museum had an incredible display entitled "On My Honor." Dinner was late due to the long exhausting day.*

*We agreed to reconvene at 8:30 am but couldn't start the meeting because a marathon was being run in the streets of Indy and the busses couldn't get through to bring in the delegates! Around 9, we began a marathon of our own. We were encouraged by the tenacity of Paralympic Athlete Tatyana McFadden who faced horrible discrimination at her High School because of her wheelchair. Despite the fact she had won Olympic Gold medals and set records, her track coach wouldn't let her be on the team or practice on the track. She sued the school and then the state of Maryland and got the law changed for future young ladies who want to run track regardless of their "legs" or "wheels".*



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*Starting where we left off, Proposal 2a and 2c passed and we began discussion of Proposal 5 – National Board Development Committee. Yesterday in the time consuming debate, a motion was made and passed to limit debate to a TOTAL of 15 minutes per proposal including amendments. Proposal 5a was 13 paragraphs long and was being deliberated one paragraph at a time. After the required time, someone called the question for all the questions and we voted on and passed Proposal 5a and b. By the scheduled time for the Girl Scout Leadership Report, we had finally finished the work that was supposed to have been done the day before.*

*After a shortened lunch (thank goodness for Jonathan and the GSHPA suite), we were one-half a day behind and could begin consideration of Proposal 3 (dues increase) and Proposal 4 (ballot means). Roberts Rules of Order were utilized and parliamentary procedure was expertly executed. After much debate, questions for the lawyer, numerous points of order, parliamentary inquiry, and personal preference, Proposal 3 and 4 passed. Dues will be \$12 and electronic means may be used in balloting. Proposal 4 was amended to reinstate "decision on annual membership dues shall require a majority of votes cast." This is referring to each member present at the National Council. During the debate, a Board resource person stated that the Board would not bring any more dues increases to the body for consideration. The implication is that they will do it during the triennium, but no one knows for sure.*

*Patricia Diaz Dennis, Board President, gave a moving, funny, thought provoking farewell address, How to Lead a Cowgirl Life. Nominations for the National Board of Directors and Board Development Committee were announced and elections ensued. One nomination "from the floor" was submitted for the First Vice President position. The results would be announced in the morning. By 6:30 pm, we were finished.*

*Tonight's special event was a dinner at the Power of Children exhibit at the Indianapolis Children's Museum. Anne Frank, Ruby Bridges, and Ryan White were featured. I soon realized why there were boxes of tissues all around the room. It was a moving homage to their lives, their struggles, and their victories.*

*The extra hour of sleep on Sunday morning was a welcome treat! The third and final portion of the National Council Meeting was called to order and the elections were announced. The officers of the National Board of Directors for the next triennium will be President: Connie L. Lindsey, First Vice President: Davia B. Temin, Second Vice President: Linda P. Foreman, Secretary: Angel L. Rodriguez, and Treasurer: Joan Wagnon.*

*Genna Davis and Marie Wilson were the keynote speakers and delighted the body with their heartfelt messages. Marie challenged everyone to take your daughters to the polls and shared this "to do list" in order to get more women at the table:*

- 1. Invite people to lead – just ask!*
- 2. Start where people are – Wilma Mankiller is really Wilma Whitemankiller!!*



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3. *Come together and work together – put aside differences for the common good.*

*Marie also unveiled her new idea for collaboration with the Girl Scouts. Her proposition is to establish a Commission for Women in Democracy to discover ways to get women in leadership and to get parity in the world. We must petition for a Commission! Marie also kept suggesting that Geena run for President! And she asked her to be the spokesperson for the Commission. What a wonderful idea, I'll help!!*

*We were invited to Houston Texas where the next National Council Meeting will be held from November 10-14, 2011. Rockets were flying across the room and smoke filled the stage as a Junior astronaut waved flags behind a banner announcing the dates.*

*Prior to Board President Connie L. Lindsey giving her inaugural address, I went to the Exhibit Hall. I had a few more questions for the representatives from the World Centers and was running out of time as we were leaving directly after the meeting at 12 noon. During the nine hours on the bus, I thought about my adventure. I hope my experiences and new knowledge can benefit our Council, but I **KNOW** I got some incredible information and opportunities for my Junior girls!*

*Thank you for this opportunity and with respect I remain  
Karen Rowe  
National Delegate*

### ► Sue Snell

*First, I want to thank our council for sending us. It was truly an amazing experience! Although the large numbers do tend to slow down the process sometimes I do think that the fact that so many people see the "process" in action and know that their voices are heard is important to the membership at large. We will be able to go back to our local meetings and tell them that their concerns were voiced at a national level before a vote took place on an issue. Some of the proposals had been removed due to early feedback from the field which I found interesting as well.*

*It was also interesting to see parliamentary procedure in action. Most of us use it in an abbreviated form at meetings, but I had never witnessed it being followed so precisely. Another comment I want to make is that I think our council made sure we were well prepared to attend. I feel I had a good understanding of the issues beforehand - this was obviously not true of some of the delegates from some of the other councils. Regarding the elections, there was a nomination from the floor - which I don't think happens very often and it necessitated the need for paper ballots. Most of the other votes were done electronically or by acclamation.*

*Probably the best part of the convention for me was the Open Space segment. It was enlightening to share ideas with adults and girls from all over the country and learn*



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*what we did the same and what we did differently. I wish I could have spent much more time on this - there were so many more topics that I would have liked to have talked with others about. (I would like to help start some Women's Advisory Boards to assist our older girls in our council.) The opening and closing ceremonies were impressive. But most impressive were the girls! They were truly amazing! And I do believe if the world is in their care we are all in good hands. They are confident, creative, thoughtful - I could go on and on. I think the messages from Geena Davis and Marie Wilson need to be passed on - we do need more positive female role models in the media and in government.*

*The Hall of Exhibits was just plain fun. I did get some information on youth hostels to pass on. I'm sure there's more that I'm forgetting, but those were some of the highlights for me. Thank you again for allowing me represent our council.*

*Sue Snell*