



Rekindling Our Commitment to the Outdoor Experience:

GSHPA Board Approves 5-Year Plan to Improve Programmatic Components and Facilities

On October 14, 2011, the Board of Directors of Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania approved a camp development plan that will strategically invest in all seven camps over the course of the next five years. **During a time when many throughout our membership are buzzing about the quickly approaching 100th anniversary of our founding, our Board's plan will surely prove to be a milestone in our own council's history.**

Since announcing plans in March 2010 to discontinue using five camps, reinvent the outdoor experience offered at the remaining seven and devote 100% of the proceeds of the sale of discontinued camps into doing just that, our Board has been determined to develop a plan that will best invest in the outdoor experience offered by Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania.

Far from satisfied with our current efforts and undaunted by the overwhelming opportunity that lay before us, internal analysis of our current outdoor experience reconfirmed for the Board the need for our council to do something differently. As a result, **our Board is pleased to announce their endorsement and approval of a five year, mission-driven, progressive camp development plan that strategically incorporates new ideas, lessons learned and direction from a variety of best practices in and outside of Girl Scouts.** Scheduled to begin this fiscal year and wrap-up in late September of 2016, the Board-endorsed plan will:

- ❖ **Transition two camps into multi-function camps that offer more staff-led outdoor programming activities in year-round facilities that are clean, well-maintained and well-suited to support today's outdoor programming and future growth.** The Board agreed to do so at Camp Archbald in Kingsley and Camp Small Valley in Halifax. Both locations will serve as future summer sleep away camp locations. Improvements at both locations will be completed in accordance with Girl Scouts of the USA and American Camp Association standards/guidelines and will include increasing the number of winterized units, adding ropes courses complete with climbing towers and zip lines, enhancing their current dining hall facilities and increasing our on-site staff-led programming.
- ❖ **Designate five camps as troop camping and service unit event destinations and prioritize improvements at all five locations in support of this clearer, more defined purpose.** The Board agreed to do so at Camp Echo Trail in Felton, Camp Furnace Hills in Denver, Camp Golden Pond in Petersburg, Camp Happy Valley in Fairfield and Camp Louise in Shickshinny. In addition to on-going health and safety related capital improvements, all five camps will undergo improvements that will complement a traditional troop or service unit's use of the property in addition to continuing to serve as premier locations for additional staff/volunteer-led Troop Adventure Camps. Some of the improvements already on the docket include opening an Archives museum at Camp Happy Valley, refurbishing the Foxfire House at Camp Furnace Hills, relocating the teepees

at Camp Echo Trail, addressing immediate septic concerns at Camp Louise and adding cross country skiing at Camp Golden Pond.

- ❖ **Include facility and operational enhancements at all seven locations that will purposefully exemplify a more perfect marriage between available facilities, staffing and the experiences that last a lifetime.**

Some of the scheduled enhancements include cosmetic improvements like painting, improved lighting and new flooring, adding outdoor programming components, like indoor traverse climbing walls and Gaga courts, that can play host to girl activities facilitated by either volunteers or staff and adding more outdoor program and property-based staff.

The detailed 43-page plan outlines a clear roadmap to investing an estimated \$4 million in a variety of facility and programmatic improvements at all seven camps. In addition to their previous pledge to invest 100% of proceeds from the sale of discontinued camps into the remaining seven, our **Board of Directors agreed to make up the difference between funds secured from the sale of discontinued camps with funds secured through an aggressive fundraising campaign and other revenue sources.** They further confirmed that the other revenue sources would not include passing along the direct costs associated with implementation of the plan to our girl membership. The Board's approval also requires that the plan be revisited and approved again prior to the start of each fiscal year to ensure that each step continues to align with our organizational needs, progress and financial status.

Approval of the camp development plan is a very exciting next step in our council's efforts to continue to offer experiences that help today's girls become tomorrow's leaders. To receive a hard copy of the full plan, registered adult members of Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania are encouraged to request a copy by submitting your request at <https://www2.e-council.net/code/onlinereg?council=258&JumpTo=Step3&Eventid=3488&type=AT>.

We will continue to keep you updated via our website at www.gshpa.org as the implementation of the camp development plan progresses. **As always, your opinion continues to be important to us and we encourage you to share your feedback at <http://www.gshpa.org/feedback.html>**