



Girl Scouts®

Girl Scouts In the Heart of Pennsylvania

Discover.

Be nnected.

Take Action!

November 2009

From the C.E.O. and Board Chair

Last month, we shared with you the results of the various girl and volunteer surveys and focus groups that were conducted throughout our Council. The information we have collected from both you and the girls has definitely proven to be an invaluable contribution to the entire business planning process.

We believe we can all agree that this process has challenged us to think a little differently about today's Girl Scout experience, the girls we serve, the programming we offer and what we want our Council to be moving forward. As we enter into the next phase of the process - the implementation phase - the following focus areas have emerged and will serve as our guiding principles as we decide on our next steps:

- Excellent Customer Service – creating a customer service culture for all of our constituents, with particular emphasis on streamlining and consistency in support of volunteers.
- Signature Programs – concentrating on excellent, fun and affordable programming that girls can only get through Girl Scouting.
- Great Camps – taking the outdoor programming experience from good to great by investing in the right mix of facilities and expertise at key camps.
- Higher Visibility – raising the visibility of Girl Scouting within the various communities we serve through strategic marketing and public relations campaigns.

These same focus areas were shared at the October Delegate meetings in Lewisburg, York, Harrisburg, Scranton, State College and via a webinar. We were happy to find general support of the direction we are taking and to be able to factor their feedback into our planning going forward. Our next step is to translate these four focus areas into fiscally responsible ways of doing business, providing services, managing properties, sharing information and most importantly, serving the girls in our council.

As has been the case throughout this process, we will do our best to keep you updated on our next steps. We also continue to be very interested in your thoughts and encourage you to submit your feedback via the following link:

<http://www.gshpa.org/feedback.html>

Thank you again for your continued participation in this process and, more importantly, for everything you have done and continue to do for the girls.

Sincerely,
Jane B. Ransom
President/CEO

Kate Crowley
Board Chair

Gold Award Spotlight

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest achievement in Girl Scouting, and for many girls the award changes their life. But earning the Gold Award takes hard work, dedication and lots of time. Deciding to go for the gold is a tough choice and then choosing what project can even be more difficult.



Hannah Harris is a 16-year old junior at St. John Neumann Regional Academy in Williamsport. The Girl Scout Ambassador is starting her Gold Award journey and we will follow her process of going for the Gold in the next few issues of Be Connected.

Hannah didn't realize it, but the idea behind her Gold Award project was formed nearly 10 years ago while on summer vacation at her family's cottage in Canada. Hannah befriended a girl from Belarus, Vika, who was living with a neighbor. Vika came to Canada because of medical problems she had suffered after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. While Hannah helped Vika learn English, Vika sparked an interest in Hannah to help others.

Since she first met Vika, Hannah has spent a lot of time researching the human effect the Chernobyl disaster had on people in Belarus and the Ukraine, especially children. When it came time to start her Gold Award project, Hannah couldn't think of a better way to make a difference in the world around her.

Hannah's passion for the subject is a great start to earning her Gold Award. "I think it's really important to have passion for your subject because that's what motivates you. Even if you have a really good idea, you have to have the drive to reach that goal. It just makes you more dedicated. You are not just doing it to earn the award you are doing it to help people," said Hannah.

But the Gold Award is much more than just a great idea. Many girls need help narrowing down a

project that can be accomplished in a short-time frame. That's the challenging part for Hannah right now.

"One of the big things I have to look at exactly what I want to do. I have a lot of ideas and am keeping a notebook that I jot down all the ideas that I have. There are a lot of different things that I can do. Book drives, clothing drives, etc.," said Hannah.

But Girl Scouts aren't alone in their decision making. Each girl who decides to earn the award is assigned a Girl Scout Gold Award Advisor. That advisor is there to help the girls focus their projects and help them through the entire process. Troop leaders and even other Gold Award recipients are always available for advice. Even though Hannah's project has an overseas focus, she is making connections in her local community, as well to help get her project off the ground.

Hannah says the process of getting started does seem a little daunting, but she knows in the end it will be worth all the work. "I think it would be really exciting and interesting to test my limits and see how far I can go. It's the highest honor in Girl Scouts and it would be really exciting for me to earn this because Girl Scouts has been great."

Gold/Silver/Bronze Award Guideline Updates

Beginning with the 2009-2010 Girl Scout year, there are new guidelines for the Girl Scouts' highest honors - Gold, Silver, and Bronze Awards. If you have already started working toward earning any of these, you may continue using the previous year's guidelines. If you haven't started yet, please download the new guidelines and use those. You can find the new updates on our Web site.

www.gshpa.org

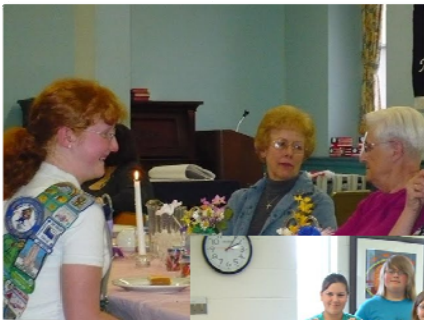
Send Us Your Gold/Silver/Bronze Award Stories and Pictures

We are always looking for stories and pictures about Gold, Silver, or Bronze award projects. Please send the information to communications@gshpa.org.

December Newsletter

The holiday season is quickly approaching and many troops and girls decide to do community service projects during this time of year. We are focusing on your community service for the next issue of the Be Connected Newsletter. Let us know what your plans are or tell us about any community service projects your troop has taken on in the past troop year. If you have pictures, please send those along as well. Send submissions to

csmith@gshpa.org. Please include as much detail about the project as possible and don't forget to



service project could be featured in the next issue of Be Connected for all troops in the Council to see.

leave contact information if we have further questions. Your troop's community



Family Partnership Update

The 2010 Family Partnership Campaign is coming in April 2010. Planning is already underway for this campaign. If you would like to help finalize the details of the plan, please contact Ann Goropoulos at agoropoulos@gshpa.org.

Save the Date! 2010 Cookie College

Girls in grades 7-12 should save the date for the 2010 Cookie College. It will be held at Penn State Harrisburg on January 9, 2010. More details about this exciting program will be coming. Look for your invitations in the mail in the next few weeks.

Program

Where is the 2009-2010 Fall P.A.L.?

Leaders you hold in your hands the most current edition of GSHPA's 2009-2010 Fall P.A.L. and it is "green". All troops have received a CD containing the 2009-2010 Fall P.A.L. and V.R.G. On the CD you will be able to see ALL the programs and adult learning opportunities GSHPA has to offer from October 2009 through February 2010.

The "Programs at a Glance" section on pages 19-32 is your quick reference to finding the best program for your troop. Grab'n'Go Resources can be found on page 113, GSHPA Patch programs can be found on page 125, and those all important Adult Learning Opportunities can be found starting on page 141.

Use this CD as your quick reference to what is being offered. When you find the program you want to attend, print out a registration form, found on page 17-18, and send it along with payment to our Harrisburg office OR go to www.gshpa.org to E-Council online registration in the lower right hand corner. Use your troop debit card to register for that perfect program or adult learning opportunity. Don't forget about those deadlines. Please take into consideration the rate of "snail mail". We would hate for you to miss out because the deadline passed.

Can't wait to see you at all the great events we have planned for your troop!

STAR Center

The STAR (Science, Technology, and Adventure Researchers) Center is a unique facility at Camp Small Valley. At the council's own hands-on science facility, girls can discover new skills and learn about science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) as they take on the role of scientists by observing, problem-solving, and hypothesizing.

Check out the programs being offered each month at STAR Center to STAR Center programming was designed to help girls learn, and foster a higher self-confidence, particularly in the ability to master science in today's technological world. For more information or to get involved as a STAR Center Facilitator, please contact Susan Neville at 1-800-692-7816, ext. 1035 or sneville@gshpa.org.

Woodloch Women's Conference

PAYMENT OPTIONS NOW AVAILABLE!

In response to troops we have created payment options for the Woodloch Women's Conference. You can choose which fits best with your troop's budget.

Choices are;

Full payment at time of registration

5 payments of \$40.00 per person Oct – Feb

Deposit of 20% due at time of registration and remaining balance due Feb. 5.

Financial aid is available to girls but cannot exceed \$50.00 per year for all programs. NOTE* This can be used in conjunction with any of the other payment options above.

Registration form is posted on the website home page.

Any questions please call Kristen Battle at 800-692-7816, ext. 1332.

Hope to see you all there.

For more information go here:

http://www.gshpa.org/newsletter/detailed_activities.pdf

For the registration form go here:

http://www.gshpa.org/newsletter/woodloch_registration_form.docx

Our Girls are soaring to new heights!

The final step of the Backyard Astronomer program will be completed with the "Space Shuttle Lift-off" program on Nov. 12. This program is a take home program leaders can have mailed to them and complete as you have time throughout the year. Registration deadline is Nov. 1, 2009 to allow for mailing in time to view the shuttle launch. Return the evaluation form to Kristen Battle in the Olyphant office for your patches. If you have completed all four steps of the Backyard Astronomer GSHPA Patch you will also receive the First Edition "Backyard Astronomer Patch".

We invite all to watch the Shuttle launch on Nov. 12, 2009 as signatures of our very own girl scouts go into space aboard the payload of the shuttle. You can follow the launch on NASATV.com.

Program Change

"All About Me" – B and "Healthy U!" – J – programs have been changed to:

"My Body & Eat Right Stay Healthy" – B and

"Highway to Health & Fun and Fit" – J

Nov. 14 join the students at Keystone College for fun, fitness & food.

Times, dates, and deadlines are all the same. The students just wanted to eat that day!

Check out the PAL or e-council for all information about these Great programs: DON'T FORGET TO CHECK THE REGISTRATION DEADLINE.

The link for upcoming programs is:

http://www.gshpa.org/newsletter/upcoming_programs.html



Archives Task Group Wish List

The Archives Task Group is in need of several items. To see a list of items, please click <http://www.gshpa.org/newsletter/archives.htm>. Please deliver any donations to your local service center to the attention of Kris Gross, York Service Center. If you have questions about any of these items please contact Kris at 1-800-692-7816 x1231 or kgross@gshpa.org. Thank you for your support!

Adult Learning Opportunities

Chat Happy! Why participate in Grade-Level Chats?

So you might think to yourself, “Why should I participate in a Grade-Level Chat?” Chats are gaining popularity in GSHPA and for good reason—they are great tools for new and experienced leaders, alike! Chats address the topics that are most important to you. They are informal and allow participants to rank topics according to what interests them, including age-level characteristics, specific grade-level program, journey books and other grade-level resources, the GSLE, awards and insignia, group planning, finances, and program ideas. Best of all, it provides a comfortable atmosphere for networking and questions!

Still not convinced? Look at what actual participants had to say:

“While I have attended hours of mandatory training, it was really the chat session that helped me most as a new leader. Because it was a small group, which included a veteran leader, they helped me organize the nuts and bolts of a meeting and included some great and easy activities to include. The Daisy Chat meeting made me feel confident and comfortable--and I would happily attend another.”

--Kelly Paraskevagos, Troop 21192, York

“It helped me as a fairly new troop leader, to get lots of new ideas from some of the other leaders, many of whom were not from our local neighborhood. Ideas on activities, meeting agendas--and has gotten me in touch with others for try-it ideas and cool local things to do with the girls.”

--Tim Flaharty, Troop 20187, Windsor.

Now is the time to get those burning questions answered, or check out what is in store for you at the next grade level! Visit your P.A.L. or the website today for upcoming opportunities. Happy Chatting!

Membership

Financial Assistance

Please note that the financial aid forms for the 2009-2010 Girl Scout year can be found on our web site under the Forms link. All financial aid should be submitted on one of these three updated forms- Financial Assistance Request for Adults/Girls, Financial Assistance Request for National Membership Dues (indicating the current \$12 dues) and the Financial Assistance Request for Publications. Using these forms will help in processing financial aid requests in a timelier manner.

Tax Exempt Number

The Pennsylvania Tax Exempt number for Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania was listed incorrectly on page 26 of the Volunteer Resource Guide. The correct number should be 75-03981-5. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Why a 5-digit Troop Number?

After the realignment, troop numbers were changed to 5-digit numbers in an attempt to bring the four legacy councils' troop numbering system in line with each other. We have received much feedback on the use of 5-digit troop numbers. We have highlighted a few of the issues related to use of the 5-digit troop numbers.

Uniforms - Troops were initially informed that they did not need to worry about using the 5 digits on their uniforms because we realized that some troops already had the 3 or 4 digits sewn on their uniform components. However, we highly recommend that when girls move up to a new grade level or change vests or sashes that they begin to use the 5 digit troop number. New troops are to use the 5 digits on their uniforms.

Processing of Paperwork - When a troop uses less than 5 digits, the result is multiple troops with the same troop number. It adds time to every internal and external process when a leader, parent, or Service Unit submits anything with less than 5 digits. This leads to frustration for the troop leaders

and parents when the information is not processed in a timely manner.

Program Registration – When a troop uses less than 5 digits, their payment is immediately processed, but the processing of the program registration is slowed and rosters must be resubmitted. Check in on the day of the program may take longer. Information is given to the program provider using the 5 digits.

Product Sales – Use of less than 5 digits may cause problems tracking the troop proceeds, ordering and delivery of product and delivery of incentives for both Fall Product and Cookie Sales.

Banking – Please remember to change your troop number with the bank when re-ordering checks. GSHPA receives troop bank statements or phone calls from banks council-wide. Processing is slowed due to having to research the duplication of troop numbers less than 5 digits.

The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board has announced its 2009-2010 Alcohol Awareness Poster Contest

Details about the poster contest can be found by clicking http://www.gshpa.org/newsletter/poster_contest.htm

Product Sales Program

Fall Product has officially ended! Thank you to all of the SU Fall Product Managers, Troop leaders and especially the girls! The Program was a huge success!

We are still collecting Missing Link Puzzle Pieces, so if your troop has participated in a community service project – get your puzzle pieces and information sheets in by 11/6! In the New Year, we will be displaying the local troops puzzle pieces all connected in the Regional office lobbies – so stop by and see how awesome our girls are!

Fall Product delivery is on its way! Be on the lookout in the middle of November. Troops also have

one last chance to do any catch-up orders. To place a catch-up order click here:

<http://fs3.formsite.com/productsales/form809158145/index.html>

Cookie is approaching fast! Training kicks off November 2nd in State College and will last 2 weeks!

We are very excited about this year's program! We have the SU Cookie Kick-off Rally, Cookie Walkabouts, Cookie Booths and Project Cookie Jar! Stop by our Cookie page on the Web site and get a taste of the theme this year and a sneak peek at the new cookie – Thank You Berry Munch!

And the Cookie Locator is back this year...just type in your zip code to help you find a Cookie Booth near you!

Council Shops

November Hours

Monday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Thursday 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Friday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday CLOSED

Sunday CLOSED