

COVID-19 Message 3.20.20

Dear Members of Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania -

Our world and our communities continue to change in response to COVID-19. With schools now closed through March 27th, and non-essential businesses closed throughout Pennsylvania, lifestyles are changing in so many ways. For those who have been impacted by the virus, our thoughts and prayers go out to each of you and your families. If you or your family has been touched by COVID-19 and we can offer any additional support to you, please let me know personally.

For our Girl Scouts—volunteers, girls, and families—GSHPA is focused on how we can continue to provide a Girl Scout experience to each of you. This unprecedented situation may seem overwhelming but Girl Scouts have always stood taller and been stronger in difficult times in history. As far back as the Great Depression, Girl Scouts stepped up to the plate, collecting clothing and canned goods for the impoverished, making quilts, providing meals for at-risk children and volunteering at hospitals. Later, during World War II, Girl Scouts sold war bonds, participated in scrap drives and even provided medical assistance to the Red Cross and local hospitals. Fast forward to the 1960's when Girl Scouts lent their voices to the fight for racial equality, and launched the "ACTION 70" project to help overcome prejudice. From then through every decade we have faced challenges with solutions, and we will do so now.

We know that you have many questions about programming, the cookie program, fund development, membership, summer camp, and a multitude of other areas. Our staff is all working full-time supporting our membership remotely. Due to the quickly changing environment and guidelines of the CDC and Pennsylvania, we continue to pivot, reinvent, and communicate those changes to you via the website or through our Volunteer Support Coordinators and Retail and Product Program team. We are doing our best to communicate changes in real time; but please reach out to

MemberServices@gshpa.org with questions or concerns at any time.

To date, here are the events and activities that are being cancelled or postponed: GSHPA Girl Scout Troop meetings and Cookie Booths have been suspended through March 27th.

Programs scheduled for GSHPA properties through April 30th have been cancelled, and *may* be rescheduled for a later date. In accordance with CDC guidelines regarding group gatherings during the next eight weeks, additional programs in May will also be cancelled and *may* be rescheduled.

The Gold Award Girl Scouts Awards Ceremony originally scheduled for May 16th is cancelled. It may be rescheduled but this remains uncertain.

Although staff are working remotely, all GSHPA offices and camp properties are closed to the public.

Regarding Girl Scout Cookies , GSHPA is committed to working with our troop leaders and families to keep the Cookie Entrepreneur Program positive for all. We have extended the sale until April 30. Service unit cookie leads are in constant communication with our staff to ensure up-to-date information is being provided. Online sales through Digital Cookie offers expanded options for greater flexibility and savings to the public, and more fun activities just for girls are rolling out later today! Keep checking GSHPA's [website landing page](#) for ongoing updates.

We will reach out to the public and media asking them to contact GSHPA and get connected to an individual Girl Scout to purchase cookies RIGHT NOW, ONLINE! Consider sharing some happiness with someone else by purchasing and sharing cookies or donating cookies to local first responders.

Regarding Girl Scout Programs, we are going to empower our girls to bring Girl Scouts home. Our new At Home Activities web page will soon feature more program activities and videos for girls on GS traditions, fun experiments and scavenger hunts, just to name a few. Visit the [page](#) now to attend Cookie U! Badge and journey activities will follow very soon. These activities will not be password protected or restricted in any way, so we encourage you to do these virtually with a friend – Girl Scout or non-Girl Scout – it matters not.

Regarding Fund Development, these are difficult financial times. One way we can continue to financially support GSHPA is through **Amazon Smile**, by asking the public and our membership to choose **Amazon Smile** when making essential purchases and designate GSHPA as their charity of choice. Donations will come to GSHPA as a result of those purchases and our girls will benefit. Very soon, we will share detailed information on how to choose GSHPA on **Amazon Smile**.

For more than 100 years, our mission has been and continues to be “Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.” Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania is here for our volunteers and communities to ensure that even during this difficult time, girls are supported.

Thank you for *your* support and your commitment and dedication to Girl Scouting.



Janet Donovan
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President and Chief Executive Officer
Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania