

Service Unit News

This newsletter gets you the “inside scoop” on updates & details to help you as the Community Coordinator (CC) and your Service Unit (SU) be effective.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Membership Stats	2
Jump Start Patch	2
2009-10 Fall Recruitment	2
Start Your GS Year Off Right	3
Support for Leaders	3
What Does It Mean to be a Self Sustaining Troop	4
Safety-Wise Updates	5
MN Child Safety Seats Law	5
Teen Action Board	5
SU Monthly Check list	6
Agenda Items for SU Meetings	6

Celebrate Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday

October 31st is the birthday of the founder of Girl Scouts – Juliette Gordon Low. “Daisy” as she was called by her friends, was born on October 31, 1860, in Savannah, Georgia. Growing up, Daisy dealt with a severe hearing impairment, but that did not stop her from doing great things. Inspired by Lord Baden Powell’s work with Boy Scouts, Daisy decided to start a similar program for girls. In 1911, she created the first Girl Guide group in Scotland. The following year she began the first Girl Scout troop in the United States. Since then, the organization has been a positive influence in the lives of many girls. Juliette died in 1927 at the age of 66.

Celebrate Juliette’s remarkable life with your girls. Throw a party in her honor and talk about the history of Girl Scouts and the remarkable women that have made it happen. You may also want to do the GSMWLP patch program called “Juliette Heritage Patch,” form #6032. For a copy of this patch, please contact a council shop or visit our website and browse under volunteer/forms.

Fall Product Sale

The **Fall Sale** is quickly approaching with a **start date of October 14th**. Everyone is on their honor to not sell prior to this date. If girls will be participating in the online magazine portion of the sale, they are encouraged to start sending emails on October 12th to allow enough time for sales to count towards their recognitions.

Our Fall Sale distributor, Ashdon Farms has created a new website at www.ashdonfarmsgsi.com where girls can log in and engage in cool interactive activities relating to GSI (Girl Scout Investigator) and teamwork. These are age level activities, and help girls to become a full-fledged GSI. Of course, it is never too early to start making plans an goal setting with the girls for activities they want to participate in.

All service units should have received materials for the Fall Sale by now. As a troop, please contact your Fall SU Manager to receive the materials needed for your troop to participate. There are no troop forms, receipts books, or Community Fall Managers guide this year. If you would like a copy of the troop form, it is available on the council website at www.gslakesandpines.org. Troops will find a T-2 Report (one for product and one for incentives) on the Ashdon website. We ask all troops to print two copies of each – one to turn in to your Fall SU Manager and one to keep for the troop’s records. Troops will be held responsible for product and incentives ordered. No returns or exchanges will be accepted.



Shop Hours*

September - November, March – May

Monday, Wednesday,
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Tuesday, Thursday,
8 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Closed Friday

June - August, December - February

Monday-Thursday,
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Closed Friday

**These are also the office hours for Waite Park and Duluth. Please contact other offices to ensure staff are available to serve you. All Lakes and Pines offices are closed to the public on Fridays as a cost-saving measure..*



Membership Stats

We ended our **2008-09 Membership Year** with the following:

9,422 girls
2,711 adults
(338 lifetime adults included in adult total)

Total Members 12,133

2009-10 Jump Start Membership is the following:

3,516 girls
948 adults
338 lifetime adults

Total Members 4,802

2009-10 Membership Goal is a 2% increase in girls from the end of the year (2008-09).

That would equal 9,614 girls. We are 1/3 of the way!

2009-10 Jump Start Patch Distribution

The 2009-10 Jump Start patches were mailed to all 01 troop leaders around the middle of September. Included in each troop's envelope is a listing of the names we have in our membership system that participated in Jump Start Spring Re-registration. This list will help identify who should receive the Jump Start patch and also who has re-registered with the troop so far. The troop leader could also use this list to help follow up on lapsed members.



2009-10 Fall Recruitment

By now most troops and girls should be registered for the new membership year. Are there troops missing in your Service Unit? If a leader has decided not to continue, are there girls in the troop who may want to transfer to another troop? We need to keep these girls from falling through the cracks . . . they need to know we value their participation and that they are missed. Be sure to be following up with leaders from last year who know the ropes but may not have gotten around to turning in their registrations yet. Remember girls are not register members for the current year until their forms are turned in.

Note: registration forms should not be held for more than two weeks as checks and cash should be processed in a timely manner. So if you are holding forms, make it a priority to get them in ASAP!

Thank you to all the service units who worked so hard in getting their girls registered and recruiting new ones. Keep up the good work you do for girls and your communities!

Start Your Girl Scout Year Off Right

As new troops are forming and existing troops are getting back into the swing of things, here are three Girl Scout policies worth repeating:

1. Make sure that you have two unrelated adults present at every meeting or group activity.

Safety-Wise, pages 69-70, tells us “Each group has at least one adult leader **and** one or more assistant leaders... During all group meetings and related activities, the leader **and** assistant leader or other responsible adult designated by the leader or by the council is present, and at least one of these is female not related to the other adults.” Keep in mind that the size of your troop or outings planned may increase the number of adults needed to fulfill *Safety-Wise* requirements.

2. Make sure that Health History Records are present at every troop meeting or any time the girls are meeting, traveling or at various events.

In an emergency, the Health History Record may be a leader’s only way to immediately access important medical and contact information. Parents/guardians must review the girl’s form each year for accuracy and initial in the upper right hand corner. Since the Girl Scout year is just beginning, now is an excellent time to get those records updated. This form can be found at www.gslakesandpines.org.

When you travel with your girls, make sure that each vehicle has copies of the health records.

Tip: Make several copies and keep them handy in a binder or folder so that you have them to pass out to the other drivers or in case they should be left behind during an event or trip.

3. Use those Parent Permission Folders!

It is Girl Scout policy for you to get parent permission anytime the girls participate in Girl Scout activities away from their usual meeting place. See *Safety-Wise*, pages 67-68 for a more detailed description of the policy. The Parent Permission Folders are designed for you to use for multiple trips or events. Just keep one per girl and fill in the appropriate information for each trip or activity and have the parent/guardian read and sign. It’s that easy! This form can be found at www.gslakesandpines.org.

Support for Leaders

Once the busy work of getting troops registered slows down, it will be time to focus on providing the support leaders need in order to bring a great Girl Scout program to girls. Here are some things to think of:

1. Make sure all new volunteers have completed an Adult Volunteer Application and have had a volunteer interview. Completed volunteer applications are to be submitted to the Duluth Regional Center. No one should start volunteering until the application and background check has cleared.
2. Check with new leaders to make sure they’ve completed Leadership Essentials. This can be done on-line or by attending a scheduled learning session. Council Basics for the Troop Module is also a required learning session. Please direct them to www.gslakesandpines.org for more information.
3. Make sure troop consultants/Under My Wing Mentors are working with new troops and consider checking in with them yourself to see how it is going. Remember new troop leaders often feel overwhelmed by the whole process and need lots of mentoring.
4. Make sure existing troops have started meeting for the new membership year.
5. Ask troops what their needs are and help them find a way to meet their needs.

Helping troops get off to a good start at the beginning of the year will help you avoid leader fatigue and burn out and will also help ensure a great Girl Scout program!

What does It Mean to be a Self Sustaining Troop?

A self sustaining troop plans the activities for their year and future events and is able to pay for all of their activities with the proceeds they earn from the council sponsored Fall Product Sale and Cookie Sale, as well as other approved money earning activities the troop may want to do to meet their set goals.

It means the girls in your troop are “Learning to Earn” by:

Goal Setting - Working together to determine their wants and needs - the first step in troop planning...

- Where are their Girl Scout experiences going to take them; this year, next and the year after?
- Is the troop participating in the many council sponsored programs? Is a troop trip being planed for this year or following years?
- How are they going to get there, and who will attend? (girls and adults) Decision Making.
- Don't forget service and philanthropic goals. *Will troops donate to the Juliette Gordon Low World Fund or maybe donate to the food shelf and spend a day volunteering?*
- Each girl sets her own personal growth goals for the year as well.

Prioritizing, Budgeting and Evaluating - How is the troop going to pay for their planned activities?

Participation in the product sale programs offers each girl a first hand experience in running their own business.

The Girl Scout Cookie Program is the 'largest girl-led business in the country'! With adult guidance and encouragement, troops will participate in four steps to successfully becoming self-sustaining:

- They will work as a team to set troop goals, as well as individual goals
- Create a business/marketing plan and troop budget to meet their goals
- Money management; decide how to spend their proceeds as a troop.
- Evaluate their successes - Will the troop be able to participate in all of the activities planed? Does the troop need to reevaluate priorities?

Benefits for girls to become a Self Sustaining Troop:

- Learning how to manage their troops own real money
- Learning to save and becoming independent and confident about money management
- Feeling the sense of accomplishment when goals are met
- Learning to handle disappointment if goals are not met
- Dealing with this disappointment positively and adapting plans accordingly – not giving up.
- Learning to be self sufficient

Benefits for families to become a Self Sustaining Troop:

- Their girls learn all of the above
- The cost to the families for their girl to belong to Girl Scouts is minimal. If planning and budgeting are done well, families may only have to provide for their girl's first year's membership fee, as the troop incorporates renewal of membership and all troop activities into the troop's yearly budget.

Troop Sponsorship – Don't forget - each troop can be sponsored up to \$125.00 per year – see your Volunteer Essentials Resource Guide – page 45 and 63 or visit www.gslakesandpines.org for troop sponsorship guidelines. Recognizing the troop sponsor's generosity is always encouraged.



Whether a troop is new or has existed for several years, every troop is encouraged to participate in the council sponsored product sale programs. Every troop can be self-sustaining! All it takes is some planning, realistic goals, good work habits and TEAMWORK! And everyone in the troop benefits! Money earning activities can pay for EVERYTHING ... events, trips, materials, ceremonies, awards, membership registrations (girls and adults), etc. Once troops become self-sustaining, the possibilities of what they can do are endless, and the skills learned will carry them through their lifetime.

Safety-Wise Updates

Everyone bears responsibility for safety: our council, the group leadership, the parents/guardians of the girls and the girls themselves. The point of all safety resources produced by Girl Scouts of the USA is to establish a sound program experience that will protect and maintain the well-being of every Girl Scout.

Safety-Wise is a chronological document with a comprehensive list of all applicable changes from Girl Scouts of the USA. In August 2009 changes to *Safety-Wise* were made in regards to Girl Scout Product Activities and Checkpoints related to Girl Scout Product Sales, Money-Earning and Internet Use. Please visit our website for these updates (*listed under Volunteers → Forms → Safety-Wise updates*). Please print these out and put them with your troop's *Safety-Wise* copy.

New MN Law - Child Safety Seats

Minnesota's law now coincides with Wisconsin's that was put into effect in 2006. This will impact group transportation for the Daisy and Brownie troops. The law states there are no exceptions beyond those stated. It will need to be the responsibility of the parents to ensure that safety seats are provided when traveling, but it will be the driver who will be held responsible if a child under the height and weight restrictions is not in a proper safety seat.

Wisconsin child safety seat law

Went into effect June 1st, 2006

[Wisconsin Statute 347.48\(4\)](#) [New child safety seat law fact sheet](#) 

What Does Minnesota Law Say?

[Minnesota's law](#) [Exceptions to the law](#) [Best practices](#) [Spanish](#)

Minnesota's Child Passenger Restraint Law

Effective July 1, 2009

[Minnesota Statute 169.685](#) [Child Safety Seat Guidelines](#) (brochure)

Source: Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety

Teen Action Board

Attention: Cadette, Senior & Ambassador Leaders. The Teen Action Board is looking for new members to fill positions on the Teen Action Board. We have openings from all areas of the council. We are looking for girls that are interested in leadership roles within the Council. Girls selected for the Board will be active in planning events for TEEN girls, establishing programs of current interest to TEENS, and they will participate in the on-going council effort to make Girl Scouting more relevant to the TEENS of today. Each of our 11 membership areas is allowed two board members. Girls selected will serve until the fall after their high school graduation, unless they choose to give up their seat on the board sooner. All registered Girl Scouts in 8th grade or older can apply.

You will be asked to attend three meetings a year, plus participate in a conference call each month. There may be additional activities that you may choose to help with as well. We do much of our business with e-mail, general mailings and phone conversations. Please be sure to include your e-mail address on your resume.

The application requires three things:

- A current resume. You may use any generally accepted format.
- A one page (printed, double-spaced) essay on why you think you should be selected for the board, and what you have to contribute.
- A letter of reference from a Girl Scout Leader. It can be your current leader, a previous leader, or a leader of younger girls that you have helped.

Applications are now being accepted. Please send the three (3) requested documents to Tricia Andrews, Leadership Program Manager, Bemidji Service Center, 750 Paul Bunyan Drive NW – Bemidji, MN 56601

GSMWLP OFFICES

Waite Park Regional Office
320.252.2952 or 800.955.6032

Duluth Regional Office
218.726.4710 or 877.476.8748

Alexandria Girl Scout Office
320.759.1196 or 800.339.4687

Bemidji Girl Scout Office
218.751.4886 or 800.955.6031

Brainerd Girl Scout Office
218.828.3515 or 800.955.6029

Greater WI Home-based staff
218.969.4030

Hibbing Girl Scout Office
800.862.0875

Greater MN Home-based staff
320.241.7571

Willmar Girl Scout Office
320.235.2125 or 866.323.1750

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.gslakesandpines.org



Service Unit Monthly Checklist

(taken from form #3604)



NOVEMBER

Service team:

- ___ Make sure all of your new leaders have taken, Council Basics for the Troop Module and Leadership Essentials learning sessions.
- ___ Set up mini-trainings for your service unit's leaders meetings.
- ___ Community Cookie Manager is in place.
- ___ You, your Community Cookie Manager (CCM), Troop Cookie Managers (TCM), and troop leaders are registered for cookie training.

Leader meeting items:

- ___ Service team and other committees report to the leaders.
- ___ All girls registered, including those who joined recently – registration forms sent to the WPRC.
- ___ Investiture/Rededication ceremony held this month.
- ___ Consider organizing a holiday activity and/or service project.
- ___ Cookie pep fest committee is in place.
- ___ Thinking Day committee set up; plans roughed out; leaders share ideas. Will troops and/or families participate?
- ___ Delegate elections are held at the October or November service unit meeting, and delegate names are sent to the Board of Director's Third Vice-President through the Waite Park Regional Center.
- ___ Fall Product Sale is completed and all paperwork is turned in.

Agenda Items for SU Meetings

- Review the SU Monthly Checklist. How is your SU doing?
 - Remind troop leaders every month to review the *Program Guide* or *E-weekly* for current programs or learning sessions.
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- October 31st Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday
 - November 5-6 All GSMWLP Offices are closed for a staff meeting
 - November 26th Thanksgiving – All offices closed

Due Dates

