

Happy Birthday, Girl Scouts!

In honor of the Girl Scouts' 98th Anniversary and tradition of service, the Girl Scouts designated the week of March 7-13 as "Make the World a Better Place Week." The Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois will join more than 3.5 million Girl Scouts around the nation to make the world a better place and celebrate Girl Scout Week.



Locally, the Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois will celebrate Girl Scout Week by participating in a variety of activities and events ranging from flag ceremonies, special religious services, birthday celebrations, community service projects and more. Recently, many Girl Scouts have been taking part in a Take Action Community Service Project called "Sweet Tooth," during which dental care items are being collected and donated to those in need.

"Making the world a better place isn't just part of the Girl Scout mission statement...it's a real and lasting commitment to make Girl Scouting relevant for many generations to come," said Villie M. Appoo, CEO of Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois. "Girl Scouting is committed to being an integral part of our communities and during Girl Scout Week, we salute all those who continue to offer their dedication and support – not only of Girl Scouting, but the development of young people in our communities," said Appoo.

Share your Girl Scout Week experiences and be featured in an upcoming *Link to Leaders*! E-mail ejohnson@gsofsi.org with your troop's story and photos!

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The *Link to Leaders* is published monthly with important information and programmatic updates that leaders and volunteers will find helpful while providing programs, services and opportunities to girls. It is published by the Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois, a United Way supported not-for-profit organization. For more detailed program and membership information, visit our website at www.gsofsi.org. Direct comments, suggestions, story ideas, and feedback to Erin Johnson, LTL editor at 618.692.0692 or by e-mail at ejohnson@gsofsi.org.

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Proud Partner



Girl Scouts

Girl Scout Mission:

*Girl Scouting builds girls of **courage, confidence, and character**, who make the world a better place!*

Visit our website at:
www.gsofsi.org

► **Beauty Redefined...Girl Scout Research Institute Study on Girls & Body Image**

A national Girl Scout Research Institute (GSRI) survey completed in December 2009 reported that girls age 13 to 17 years old, find the body image sold by the fashion industry to be unrealistic and creates an unattainable model of beauty. This survey included more than 1,000 girls throughout the United States. Nearly 90% of the girls surveyed said the fashion industry (89 percent) and/or the media (88 percent) place a lot of pressure on them to be thin. However, despite the criticism of these industries, 3 out of 4 girls say that fashion is “really important” to them.

The Girl Scout Research Institute, formed in 2000, is a vital extension of Girl Scouts of the USA’s commitment to addressing the complex and ever-changing needs of girls. Comprised of a dedicated staff and advisors who are experts in child development, academia, government, business, and the not-for-profit sector, the institute conducts groundbreaking studies, releases critical facts and findings, and provides resources essential for the advancement of the well-being and safety of girls living in today’s world. For more info on the study, please visit the GSUSA website: www.girlscouts.org/news/news_releases/2010/nationwide_study_feelings_about_fashion.asp

TIP

Want to talk to your troop about body image, nutrition and healthy lifestyles? Check out GSUSA’s report *Weighing In: Helping Girls Be Healthy Today, Healthy Tomorrow* at www.girlscouts.org/research/pdf/weighing_in.pdf

► **GSSI Cordially Invites You to the First Annual Meeting, “Silver and Gold”**

The 2010 Annual Meeting will be held March 27 at the Fountains Conference Center, located at 319 Fountains Parkway in Fairview Heights. The Annual Meeting is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and features a continental breakfast, business meeting, silent auction, lunch and adult recognitions. The registration fee is \$10 and RSVP must be sent to the Regional Service Center: 4102 S. Water Tower Place, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864. The reservation deadline is March 19. For directions, additional information and registration form, please visit our website at www.gsofsi.org.

► **First Annual Meeting Silent Auction Baskets Needed!**

Please help make our Silent Auction a success! In the past, our generous Service Units, Troops, and Volunteers have donated items. Our goal this year is to raise \$5,000 and we can’t do it without you! Silent Auction donations can be brought the day of the event or dropped off at either our Corporate or Regional Service Centers by March 25 at 5:30 p.m. Suggested items include themed baskets, beauty products, jewelry, home décor, scrap booking materials, etc. Please note that people who will be bidding on these items will be from 41 different counties so items that are good only in specific areas (examples restaurant certificates, movie tickets, etc.) are not recommended. Please contact Katie Sheth, Development Manager, at 618.692.0692 or ksheth@gsofsi.org for more information. Thank you for your support!

► **2010 Family Partnership Campaign:**

Give the Gift of Girl Scouting, Watch Her Change the World!



Family Partnership donations are an essential part of the success of GSSI. We rely on your gifts to help us provide girls with experiences, memories and connections they will carry with them throughout their lives. A Family Partnership donation is an investment in your daughter, your troop, your Council, and your community. Watch your mailboxes, as well as our website, www.gsofsi.org, for participation forms!

With your donation of \$25 or more each registered Girl Scout in your family will receive the 2010 Family Partnership Patch pictured at left.

Thank you for your help, we couldn’t do it without you!

► **Girl Scouts Making a Difference:**

Metropolis Troop #909 Helps Haitian Relief Effort

Girl Scout Daisy Troop #909 of Metropolis widened their horizons by opening their hearts during their most recent community service project. The girls organized a drive for everything from diapers to food supplies to donate to a local non-profit agency that was arranging to ship relief items to Haiti. Troop leader Lindsey Conkle explained that, while community service is nothing new to her young troop, the girls did gain some global perspective. "Our troop is composed of 6 and 7 year old first graders. We have done several small community service projects in our area ranging from singing Christmas carols at the nursing home to collecting items for our local Humane Society. This activity, however allowed the girls to see that they can be a part of helping not only our community, but other communities as well, no matter how far away they are."

Thank you to all of those Girl Scout troops who are reaching out to our world neighbors in need, now and always.

How is your troop making a difference?

Let us know and be featured in an upcoming *Link to Leaders!* Contact ejohnson@gsofsi.org with your story!

► **What's Happening Around the Council**

Marion Troop #8067 cheered overseas troops for Valentine's Day, in a project they named "Operation Heartdrop." They sent 141 care packages containing a box of Girl Scout cookies, a Happy Valentine's Day note and candy.

Trenton/Lebanon/New Baden/Mascoutah SU 202 held a Thinking Day party in which girls explored the dress, culture and food of several different nations. All participants brought a canned good to donate. One particular crowd pleaser was Troop #225's rendition of "Everyone Loves Saturday Night," an African song performed by Girl Guides in Madagascar.

Washington County SU 81 held their first International Thinking Day Dance. They learned and shared knowledge about different cultures, with special attention to dances and songs. In connection, they also held a food drive.

Carterville/Herrin Troop #8355 explored Chinese culture to honor Thinking Day, and learned some Mandarin Chinese, ate traditional food and made paper lanterns. The girls' favorite activity, however, was learning about Chinese jumprope!

Belleville Troop #1107's Thinking Day celebration included a visit to the local food pantry, where they donated items and learned more about how a food pantry works. In addition, they held a Winter Campout at Camp Torqua over the weekend as part of the Thinking Day festivities.

Crab Orchard Troop #8087 was visited by US Army Lt. Dale Reamy on Veteran's Day. Lieutenant Reamy is one of the soldiers the troop mailed a care package to during the Christmas season.

Shawnee SU 66 recently restocked the 4C's Food Pantry in Harrisburg. Forty Girl Scouts collected 501 food items.

Jefferson County SU 30 hosted a Father/Daughter Masquerade Ball in which nearly 200 fathers and daughters participated. Read the story here: http://www.register-news.com/local/local_story_052161818.html

Girl Scout Brownie Baleigh Mayes, of Troop #8448 in Carlyle campaigned to provide Girl Scout cookies for sick children. She worked with St. Louis Children's Hospital and local businesses to arrange for cookie "sponsorships" for children who were hospitalized.

We are receiving many great photos and stories about the "Sweet Tooth" TAKE ACTION Service Project -- keep an eye on the website and in our publications to see Girl Scouts in action! Submit a photo of your troop today!

Make Sure Your Area is Represented!

Contact ejohnson@gsofsi.org with a brief message about what your troop is up to! While not every submission can be published, we will make an effort to reflect the diverse interests, activities and areas that make GSSI so great.

► Photo Tips from GSSI Director of Communication and Marketing Department

The Communications and Marketing Department is always looking for good, high-quality photos of girls participating in the many wonderful programs that GSSI offers. The chances of your photo being used for either the LTL, for the web site or in any of our other publications depends on QUALITY. The best photos are those that show 2-3 girls up close and captures what they are doing. Too often, we get group photos of girls staring into the camera or photos where we can't see the girls' faces. Also, many of the photos we receive are out of focus or are too light or too dark...all of these are unusable. Be sure that girls are in the center of the photos and that no objects (tables, arms, etc) are obstructing a clear shot. Finally, practice makes perfect and with today's digital cameras, if the photo isn't a good one, simply delete it and shoot another. We look forward to receiving your photos and using them to share the great Girl Scout story.

Also, be sure to submit your photos and stories promptly, especially if they are of a seasonal nature. Don't forget that special events aren't the only time to capture unique Girl Scout memories -- doing a craft at a troop meeting, earning a new badge, taking a day trip -- all of these are wonderful opportunities to take pictures of Girl Scouts having fun and trying new things!

► One Match Club Recipients

Congratulations are extended to the following girls who earned the One Match Club patch. This patch is for girls who started a campfire and kept it going for at least 5 minutes with only one match and without the use of fire starters earned this patch. Good job, girls!

Troop #4241, Leader: Tricia Braun: Samantha Braun, Jessica Gaul • Troop #451, Leader: Chris McGlasson: Megan O'Brien, Jilian Garbett, Marissa Shorage, Olivia Holt, Elizabeth Meadows, Lexis Hormann, Johannah Cormish, Sierra Curren, Katie McGlasson • Troop #366, Leader Michelle Sparks: Tera Sparks, Amber Acquaye, Jordan Massey, Bridget Ray, Madison Wilcox, Rachel Patterson • Troop #432, Leader Barb Carrico: Allison Shovlin, Grace Carrico

► Raise Environmental Awareness During Earth Hour 2010

Earth Hour was conceived by the World Wildlife Fund, and represents the global call to action on climate change. The more people that pledge to turn off their lights for Earth Hour, the more influence we will have. Nearly one billion people around the world turned off their lights for Earth Hour 2009 and we can help make the next one even bigger. Through the flick of a light switch on March 27 at 8:30 p.m. local time, we'll be casting our vote for action on one of the most pressing issues facing our planet, sending a message to our local, national, and global leaders that the time to act is now. Visit www.myearthhour.org to join or to learn more!

In 2009, Troop #2426 from Charleston designed a service project around Earth Hour. The troop campaigned to encourage family, friends, classmates and local businesses to participate along with them. They also contacted area media to spread the word throughout the community to join them for Earth Hour.

TIP

Even if your troop does not devote an entire service project to Earth Hour, there are many ways to make a lasting impression. For example, have your troop share ways to entertain themselves without electronic devices such as television, radios, video games, etc. Girls just might find a new favorite "low tech" hobby!

► 21st Annual Girl Scout Golf Tournament

The 21st Annual Girl Scout Golf Tournament, presented by The Korte Company & Lucco Financial Partners, will be held May 17 at Gateway National Golf Links in Madison, Illinois. GSSI is looking for corporate sponsors and teams. Please ask the companies in your communities for support! Please contact Katie Sheth, Development Manager, at 618.692.0692 x 143 or e-mail ksheth@gsofsi.org

► **Please Recognize Katharin Dalaviras & Alyssa Lohmann as Girl Scout Bronze Award Recipients**

Girl Scouts Katharin Dalaviras and Alyssa Lohmann were inadvertently omitted from the recognition of Girl Scout Bronze Award recipients in the 2010 Girl Scout Chronicle Magazine. Congratulations on receiving this prestigious award!

► **GSSI Council Shop News**

GSSI Shop Return Policy: No item may be returned 90 Days after purchase. Any returned item must have a receipt & tags attached. Any item with tag, but no receipt will be given a gift card for current value of item. Cash refund will be given for returns that are less than \$10 with a receipt. Discontinued item may not be returned or exchanged. No Refunds will be issued on current Insignia (exchanges only).

Upcoming Shop Sales!

March 8-12: It's Girl Scout Week!! To show our appreciation, everyone visiting their local store will get to draw a coupon for a special discount on their purchases.

April: Take 15% off select leader appreciation gifts

May: Check out our clearance sale for some end of year deals!!.

GSSI Council Shop Will Be at the Annual Meeting!

During the annual meeting we will have items from our council shop that may be purchased at the event. Make sure to stop by and see us!

► **Step Into Spring in Style With Girl Scouts Spring Fashion Collection**

"It is New, it's Fresh, and it's really Fun!" The latest Girl Scout fashion collection is all about bold patterns, wild animal prints and trendy plaid. Get 'em while they're hot -- these spring styles will hit GSSI Council Shops in mid March. See the "News and Recent Events" section of our website, www.gsofsi.org, to take a peek. Contact your local GSSI Shop Manager for more details: Corporate Service Center: Dawn Noland, 618.692.0692 or dnoland@gsofsi.org • Regional Service Center: Jessica Stanley: 618.242.5079 or jrstanley@gsofsi.org

► **New Hours for GSSI Service Centers and Council Shops Starting March 22**

The GSSI Board of Directors recently approved new hours of operation for the Corporate and Regional Service Centers and Council Shops. Starting March 22, both Service Centers will be open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Council Shops will be open Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

► **Never Be the Last to Know! Sign up for GSSI E-Blasts Today!**

With nearly 400 subscribers in the first month of operation, its likely that someone you know is taking advantage of GSSI's newest communication resource, Constant Contact. Constant Contact is a communication tool that allows the council to spread important information in easy-to-use, visually appealing e-mail alerts, or "e-blasts." Get monthly updates, Council shop news, Girl Scout program opportunities, training dates and much more! To sign up, visit our website at www.gsofsi.org. In the "Contact Us" section, there will be a box that says "Get GSSI E-Blasts." Simply type in your information, choose the GSSI news you need and we will deliver it right to your inbox!

Privacy is important to us; therefore, we will not sell, rent, or give your name or address to anyone. At any point, you can select the link at the bottom of every e-mail to unsubscribe, or to receive less or more information.

Program Updates

► Key of Life Service Learning Project for Girl Scout Cadettes through Ambassadors

Join teen Girl Scouts throughout GSSI in a large-scale service learning project called “Key of Life.” This program was designed to promote breast cancer awareness. Once troops have registered for the event, they will be given a tool kit by the American Cancer Society (ACS), which includes materials to make breast cancer awareness key chains, as well as information about breast cancer, preventative lifestyles and early detection tips.

The tool kit includes four sections: Description: explains required and optional activities, as well as helpful methods for making the project beneficial to the girls. • Resources: ACS brochures, Frequently Asked Questions, and information on where to get a free or low cost mammogram. • Materials: all materials to make the key chains. Each troop that participates is required to make 50 key chains. Troops may keep up to 25 key chains for themselves, while the other 25 key chains will need to be donated back to the ACS for use at breast cancer education events. • Evaluation: An evaluation form to be completed by leaders and returned to ACS with donated key chains.

The registration deadline is May 14. Please contact the ACS office to register. Leaders may contact Becky Gehling or Jennifer Monken at 618.288.2320 or e-mail the ACS at Becky.Gehling@cancer.org. Tool kits will be available for pick-up at your local American Cancer Society office. The donated key chains should be returned back to the ACS office by June 18, 2010, along with extra material and evaluation forms.

If you have questions about the content of this program, please contact Angela Suhre, Program Manager, at 618.692.0692 x 112, or asuhre@gssofsi.org.

► Have a Dazzling Daisy/Brownie Blast on April 24

Visit Camp Cedar Point in Makanda on April 24 for the Dazzling Daisy/Brownie Blast. The program will run from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. and will celebrate spring with songs, games, crafts and snacks the camp way! We will also include activities that will align with the *It's Your Planet Love It! Journey*. Don't miss the fun!! The registration deadline is April 24 and the cost is \$5 per girl. For more information, please contact Carolyn Miener, Program Manager, at 618.692.0692 or cmiener@gssofsi.org

► Girl Scout Cadette - Ambassador Troops Needed for Dazzling Daisy/Brownie Blast

Girl Scouts Cadette - Ambassador troops, we need your help with Dazzling Daisy Brownie Blast, a Daisy-Brownie event at Camp Cedar Point, Makanda, IL from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

On April 24th, Daisies & Brownies will explore camp and journey activities. Older girl troops will help with set up, running of activity stations, and clean up. Please complete form and send to the address below by April 1.

Dazzling Daisy Brownie Blast – April 24, 2010

Leader's/Advisor's Name _____
Address _____ City _____ Zip _____
Phone (D) _____ (E) _____ E-Mail Address _____
Number of Girls _____ Number of Adults _____ Grade level _____ Troop # _____

Mail to: Dazzling Daisy Brownie Blast Volunteers: GSSI, #4 Ginger Creek Parkway, Glen Carbon, IL 62034.

Program Updates

► Earn the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge Badge at Junior Refuge Adventure

Girl Scout Juniors! Visit Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge and learn about the habitats and animals it protects as you earn the Refuge's very own Girl Scout Junior badge! There will be a scavenger hunt for spring wildflowers, a short service project and learn all about bird nests. Bring your lunch and come dressed to spend time outdoors. The cost is \$5 per Girl Scout, which includes badge. The registration deadline is April 2 by 5 p.m.

► NEW! Program Aide Weekend Training Added

Good News! We have scheduled a PA Weekend Training on June 5-6 at Camp Wassatoga in Effingham. In this training, girls learn how to be a Program Aide, how to work with different grade levels, how to work with adults, how to resolve conflict, how to work with diversity and much more. They will also learn how to teach specializations such as songs, games & sports, crafts, and outdoor skills. The program is open to all Girl Scouts who have completed sixth grade at the time of the training. It will run from 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 5 until 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 6. The program cost is \$30, which includes all supplies, meals and a PA pin. The registration deadline is May 6. Please note: This is an individual girl or troop event. Due to space, adults will be asked not to stay for the event. For questions, please call Emily Stanley, Program Manager, at 618.692.0692 x 106 or e-mail estanley@gsfsi.org

► Don't Forget! Easter Basket Service Project Drop-Off Dates Are March 26 & 27

Service projects are a great way for the girls to "give back" -- an integral part of being a Girl Scout. For the Easter Basket Service Project, girls will collect and donate individually wrapped candy, books, stuffed animals, and/or small toys to fill Easter baskets for children in need. Have girls arrange and wrap the Easter baskets, and then bring to the Salvation Army, 20 Glory Place, Belleville (**NOTE CORRECTED ADDRESS**) on Friday March 26 between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. or on Saturday, March 27 between 8 and 10 a.m. These baskets will then be distributed to 14 agencies throughout the area. This year's goal is to donate 3,000 baskets from the Girl Scouts. Questions? Please call Dina (Not Salvation Army) at 618.206.8565 (home), 618.304.5433 (cell), or e-mail dinacrewe62@charter.net

► Water Fun at Touch of Nature Environmental Center

Water Wonders for Girl Scout Brownies will be held May 15 from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. (raindate May 16). Girls will earn the "Water Everywhere" Try-It and learn how to canoe! Explore the water to see what lives there, build a "water snooper" and learn how to be a water saver! The cost is \$15 per Girl Scout and the registration deadline is May 4.

Water Adventures for Girl Scout Juniors will be held May 22 from 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. (raindate May 23) Come on out to Touch of Nature for an exciting day of canoeing, learning all about water and the creatures that live in it, playing water games and practicing water safety. You will earn your small craft badge! The cost is \$20 per Girl Scout and the registration deadline is May 11.

Touch of Nature Environmental Center is maintained by Southern Illinois University for outdoor, environmental, and experiential learning and is located eight miles southeast of Carbondale. For more information, please visit Touch of Nature's website at www.ton.siu.edu/. For program information please contact: Jennifer Randolph, Outdoor Program Manager, at 888.317.6353 or at jrandolph@gsfsi.org.

Around the Council in Photos

Due to popular demand, GSSI will feature photos submitted by our membership in each edition of the *Link to Leaders*. Please e-mail photos to Erin Johnson, editor, at ejohnson@gsofsi.org or mail to: GSSI, #4 Ginger Creek Parkway, Glen Carbon, IL 62034 ATTN: Communications and Marketing Dept. When e-mailing, please do not submit more than 2-3 pictures at a time, or your e-mail may be undeliverable. You may also send photos through your Membership Development Manager. Photos cannot be returned and may be used by GSSI for future publications, including on the website. Be sure to include your troop/Service Unit information with submissions.

While not every submission can be published, we will make an effort to reflect the diverse interests, activities and areas that make GSSI so great. Please remember that we have many areas to support, so be sure to select only your best 2-3 pictures per submission.

