



## CHAPTER 2

# VOLUNTEER ESSENTIALS

**Girl Scouts of Citrus Council**

**2009**

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# Chapter 2: Girl Scouting 101

This chapter gives you a quick and easy introduction to Girl Scouting, including the following information:

- Who can join Girl Scouts and how girls and volunteers can participate
- What important dates are on the Girl Scout calendar
- How Girl Scouts is organized

## Who Can Join Girl Scouts—and How!

Any girl—from kindergarten through 12th grade—can join Girl Scouts. Girl Scouts is about sharing the fun, friendship, and power of girls and women together, whether that's a girl in the United States or an American girl living overseas. Volunteers are also a diverse group, and may be a college volunteer working on a community action project, a parent volunteer ready for an outdoor adventure with her daughter's group, or any responsible adult (female or male, who has passed the necessary application process) looking to make a difference in a girl's life.

What all members share, whether girls or adults, are the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Each member also agrees to follow safety guidelines and pay the annual membership dues of \$12 (or you can purchase a lifetime membership for \$300).

After they join, girls team up in the following grade levels:

- Girl Scout Daisy, grades K–1
- Girl Scout Brownie, grades 2–3
- Girl Scout Junior, grades 4–5
- Girl Scout Cadette, grades 6–8
- Girl Scout Senior, grades 9–10
- Girl Scout Ambassador, grades 11–12

Across the country, the Girl Scout community is hard at work on a whole new approach to making sure that everyone can participate in Girl Scouting in the ways they want to. Both girls and adult volunteers can choose from several flexible ways to participate—called “pathways”—that offer the freedom to tailor your level of involvement to fit your schedule and lifestyle. (You can also volunteer behind-the-scenes, working in your council office, instead of volunteering directly with girls.)

Girls can choose any one, all, or some of these pathways (camp, series, troop, travel, and virtual)\* within a single membership year, while you have the option of partnering with girls throughout a membership year or committing to an opportunity for only a few weeks or months. (\*Note that the virtual pathway is still in development.)

### ***Did You Know?***

Girl Scouts has always been committed to ensuring that all girls who want to be a Girl Scout can be. We reach out in a variety of unique ways to make sure that happens. Check with your council if you're interested in learning more!

Here are a few examples of happenings around the country:

- **Challenge and Change:** Funded in rural communities through a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, this program uses the GSLE to emphasize social entrepreneurial opportunities.
- **Girl Scouts Beyond Bars:** For more than fifteen years, Girl Scouts, in partnership with the National Institute of Justice, has provided girls with an opportunity to visit their incarcerated mothers and take part in troop meetings.
- **Girl Scouts in Detention Centers:** This program brings the GSLE to girls in juvenile detention centers.

## Girl Scout Calendar

Girl Scouts celebrate three special birthdays each year, which you're encouraged to include in your group planning.

- February 22: World Thinking Day (the birthday of both Lord Baden-Powell and Lady Olave Baden-Powell, the originators of Boy Scouts and the Scouting Movement worldwide).
- March 12: The birthday of Girl Scouting in the USA. The first troop meeting was held in Savannah, Georgia, on this date in 1912.
- April 22: Volunteer/Leader Appreciation Day—this day is set aside especially for you!
- October 31: Founder's Day (Juliette Gordon Low's birthday).

Note that Girl Scout Week begins the Sunday before March 12 (a day known as "Girl Scout Sunday") and extends through the Saturday following March 12 (a day known as "Girl Scout Sabbath").

### ***World Thinking Day***

World Thinking Day, first created in 1926, offers a special day for Girl Scouts and Girl Guides from around the world to "think" of each other and give thanks and appreciation to their sister Girl Scouts. February 22 is the mutual birthday of Lord Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scout movement, and his wife, Olave, who served as World Chief Guide.

Today, girls show their appreciation and friendship on World Thinking Day not only by extending warm wishes but also by offering a voluntary contribution to the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund, which helps offer Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting to more girls and young women worldwide.

## Girl Scouts' Organizational Structure

Girl Scouts is the world's largest organization of and for girls, and it currently encompasses 2.6 million girl members and nearly one million volunteers! Two core structures support all these members: local councils and the national headquarters.

### Local Councils

Local Girl Scout councils are chartered by the national office to establish local responsibility for leadership, administration, and supervision of the program, and to develop, manage, and maintain Girl Scouting in a geographic area. As a volunteer, it is through your Girl Scout council that you will have the most contact. However, the national office also provides resources, especially those you can find online at [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org). In addition, councils are provided with program and other support resources by the national office to ensure that what is delivered through the councils is nationally consistent for all girls across the country.

### Weather Updates

Florida often has severe weather that causes meetings and activities to be cancelled. During hurricane season and at other times Girl Scouts of Citrus Council official updates will be on the GSCC website [www.citrus-gs.org](http://www.citrus-gs.org) and WKMG-TV <http://www.local6.com/index.html> or (407) 992-2021 and WDBO-AM Radio <http://wdb.com/> or (407) 297-6397.

### Communication

Communication is a two-way exchange of information, and effective, open communication is the key to the successful delivery of the Girl Scout program.

As an adult volunteer, you'll be talking with and listening to the girls in your troop, their parents, families, other volunteers, members of the community, members of your Service Unit, troop organizer, program consultant, Membership Marketing Manager, and other members of the Council staff. You can ask them for opinions, guidance and/or advice.

In addition to the support system Girl Scouting offers you, there are many other resources to help you in your role as a troop leader. They include:

- Girl Scout Leader Magazine is a quarterly publication from the Girl Scouts of the USA. It is full of terrific program resource tips and ideas.
- Citrus Council Chatter (formerly E-Views) is Citrus Council's newsletter. It is published bi-monthly for the community and adult members. If you are not receiving it or know someone that would like to receive this electronic newsletter, email your name and email address to [smcmaster@citrus-gs.org](mailto:smcmaster@citrus-gs.org).
- Camp Brochure is published in late winter and provides detailed information about summer day and resident camp opportunities for girls of all ages.
- Council Website is a multi-faceted resource that continues to grow and expand as enhancements are made to this powerful tool. All the forms are currently available on the website in PDF format and many are in writable PDF format. Citrus Council Chatter is also available on the website in PDF format. Upcoming Council events are listed on the Home page. Visit our Council's Website at [www.citrus-gs.org](http://www.citrus-gs.org) today!

## *Quick Facts About Citrus Council*

### **Jurisdiction**

Girl Scouts of Citrus Council, Inc. is one of more than 100 councils chartered by the Girl Scouts of the USA. Citrus Council is responsible for administering Girl Scouting in these central Florida counties:

⇒ Brevard    ⇒ Lake    ⇒ Orange    ⇒ Osceola    ⇒ Seminole    ⇒ Volusia

### **How We Function**

Girl Scouts of Citrus Council is governed by a policy-making volunteer Board of Directors who represent all aspects of the communities served. More than 8,000 adults volunteer their time and talents as leaders, service unit personnel, troop committee members, resource consultants, trainers, and task force members.

The Council has a staff of more than 50 employees responsible for directing the day-to-day operations of the organization.

### **Facilities**

The Council Service Center is located in downtown Orlando. The Mah-Kah-Wee Program Center, which has over 200 acres located in Chuluota, and the Riverpoint Program Center located directly on the Banana River in Merritt Island.

The Council also operates five other facilities: The Celia Lane Little House, the Eustis Girl Scout House, the Volusia Girl Scout House and the Melbourne Girl Scout House.

### **Funding**

Citrus Council is a participating member of the United Way in each of the six counties it serves.

Other funding sources include product programs, program fees, property rental fees, foundations and trusts, corporations, and individual contributions. An Annual Report is published each year and available upon request.

## *The History of Citrus Council*

On October 16, 1953, a meeting was held in Orlando by representatives from the Field Department of the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. to explain the "Council Coverage Plan" which had been adopted by the National Boards in 1946. The purpose of this plan was "to offer Girl Scouting to all girls in the U.S.A. only through chartered councils that were strong and effective enough to provide a program of quality". Representatives from the various areas providing Girl Scouting in Central Florida were invited to attend. At this meeting it was determined that two representatives from each community would be appointed to serve on a Study Committee together with a representative from the National Staff.

As of December 1953 there were within Orange, Brevard, Seminole and Osceola counties approximately 2,300 Girl Scouts registered in two councils and 20 lone troops. An increasing number of requests for assistance were being received from lone troop communities by the Orlando and Winter Park councils. Realizing that there would be many additional requests due to the accelerating population growth throughout Central Florida and the East Coast this

study group felt the time was right to consider extending council coverage. A name was needed for this proposed new council. At the April 26, 1955 meeting, many names such as Orange Blossom, Sun and Sand, Citrus, etc. were suggested.

One year later at a meeting held April 3, 1956, it was determined that the new council should be called "Citrus Council of Girl Scouts". This decision was reached as a result of prior meetings held in each community represented under this study. It was concluded at this same meeting that the headquarters of the proposed Area Council should be located in Orlando, due to its central location. All properties, such as the Girl Scout Little House on Celia Lane, Orlando; Camp Ticochee at Barberville, Florida (which had recently been acquired) and office and camping equipment owned by Orlando Girl Scout Council were to be part of the assets of this newly proposed council. After two more meetings all plans were finalized and the charter date was set for June 18, 1956. The president of the Orlando Girl Scout Council, Mrs. Dean Thompson, was made Chair of the Committee to select a place, time of meeting and see that notices were sent throughout the entire areas to be incorporated for the day when Citrus Council of Girl Scouts would become a reality after nearly three years of study. The registration report of December 31, 1956, showed 197 troops and 4,006 members.

Training of leaders and organization of troops were to be the main emphasis in 1957 and by May there were 244 troops and 5,022 members. In January 1958, Winter Park Girl Scout Council officially merged with Citrus Council, bringing with it such assets as Tignabruich (the site of the Council Service Center until 1994) and the Winter Park Little House.

## National Organization and Worldwide Sisterhood

The national office of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA), located in New York City, employs roughly 400 employees. (To visit GSUSA online, direct your browser to [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org), where you'll find a wealth of resources for both girls and volunteers.) This 97-year-old organization is now affiliated with a worldwide family of 10 million girls and adults in 145 countries through the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS).

As girls engage in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (see Chapter 3), Global Girl Scouting ensures that they have increased awareness about the world, cross-cultural learning opportunities, and education on relevant global issues that may inspire them to take action to make the world a better place. Visit [www.girlscouts.org/who\\_we\\_are/global](http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/global) for additional information.

### ***Juliette Low World Friendship Fund***

To honor Juliette Gordon Low's love of travel, of experiencing different cultures, and of making friends, Girl Scouts created the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund in 1927. Today, this fund supports girls' international travel, participation in adult learning, and attendance at other international events—any event that fosters global friendships that connect Girl Scouts and Girl Guides from 145 nations. Visit [www.girlscouts.org/juliette\\_low\\_fund.asp](http://www.girlscouts.org/juliette_low_fund.asp) to find out more or donate to the fund! See Chapter 6 for more on traveling with Girl Scouts.

Since 1925, USA Girl Scouts Overseas (USAGSO; a division of Global Girl Scouting) has helped ease the transition for American families relocating overseas by offering the familiar traditions and exciting opportunities of Girl Scouting to girls. USAGSO now serves thousands of American girls living overseas, as well as girls attending American or international schools.

Through Global Girl Scouting, members participate in World Thinking Day on February 22, visit the four WAGGGS world centers (see Chapter 5), participate in international travel, help promote global friendship and understanding by supporting the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund, and take action on global issues.

## The World Association of Girl Scouts & Girl Guides

Just as Juliette Low brought the Girl Scout program to the U.S. from England, women in other countries soon began to translate Baden-Powell's Handbook for boys into their own languages, making the program available in many parts of the world. In Oxford, England, in July 1920, the first international conference of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts was held with representatives from 19 countries. International conferences were held every two years until 1938.

In 1926, the international conference was held at Camp Edith Macy in New York. World Chief Guide Olave Baden-Powell, Robert's wife, and representatives from 29 countries attended. It was then that February 22, the shared birthday of both Lord and Lady Baden-Powell, was set aside as the annual World Thinking Day.

At this conference, the idea of the World Association was first proposed. This was Juliette Low's dream, and the conference at Macy was the culmination of her many hopes and plans for her Girl Scouts.

After an extended illness, Juliette Low passed away on January 17, 1927, in Savannah, Georgia.

In 1928, 28 founder countries attended an international conference in Hungary, and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, or WAGGGS, was formed and a constitution was written.

Today, 140 member nations from around the world are linked together in a spirit of international friendship and understanding through WAGGGS.

## Trefoil Pin

The World Trefoil Pin symbolizes our membership in an international organization, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). Each part of the world pin has a meaning:

- Blue stands for the sky
- Gold represents the sun shining over all the children in the world
- The three leaves represent the threefold Promise
- The base of the stalk represents the flame of the love of humankind
- The two stars represent the Promise and the Law



## Council Governance — Corporate Planning in Girl Scouting

Girl Scouts of Citrus Council operates under a corporate planning management system. Under this system, the Board of Directors sets the direction that becomes the planning foundation for our Council.

*Ends: The results toward which a person or organization's efforts are directed—the mission or purpose.*

*Objectives: The translation of ends and purposes into definite measurable steps, with standards of performance and achievement for both individuals and the organization.*

## Who Governs the Council?

According to our current Bylaws, the governing members of the Council are:

- The Delegates elected by each Service Unit
- Association Chairs
- The members of the Board of Directors
- The members of the Council Nominating Committee

### *The Board of Directors*

Members who represent a cross-section of our six counties, the Board:

- Governs through Policy and Executive Limitations
- Sets the Council's strategic direction with input from the membership and the community at large
- Consists of 22 volunteers and the Chief Executive Officer

### *The Council President*

- Leads the Board in the policy development process
- Reports the Corporate Ends to the corporate body and to the total membership
- Assures that all policy-influencing groups, such as the Board, Associations, and task forces have the opportunity for input into policy determinations
- Includes the policy-influencing groups in the review and evaluation of policy

### *The Chief Executive Officer*

- Organizes and directs staff
- Assigns paid staff and volunteers to goals and objectives of the Council's corporate plan
- Assures that plans are written to ensure that goals and objectives and a budget are developed
- Directs the corporate planning process
- Provides management reports to assist the Board in measuring the accomplishment of objectives

### *Board Committee*

The Policy Influencing Committee is the only standing committee of the Board. It represents the membership and is comprised of the appointed Chair and three Association Chairs. These Chairs represent and facilitate the election of delegates and alternates from each of the Service Units. Delegates and alternates are elected, based on the number of adult members in each Service Unit.

### *Council Associations*

Provide a method for membership's input to the Board on policy decisions and direction of the Council.

## *Council Service Units*

- Service Units consist of employed staff and operational volunteers within a geographic area
- Ensure continued health and vitality of the Council through continuous volunteer input
- Develop and implement ideas and plans of work designed to achieve Council goals
- Develop innovative solutions

## *Delegates*

- Elect the Officers of the Council, the Board of Directors of the Council, Delegates to the National Council, and the members of the Nominating Committee of the Council
- Determine the general direction of Girl Scouting locally by:
  - Receiving reports of the Board of Directors
  - Giving input to the Board of Directors
  - Amending the Articles of incorporation and bylaws of the Council
  - Voting at the Annual Meeting

## *Voting Procedures*

The Nominating Committee presents a single slate of nominations for Officers of the Council, other Board members, and members of the succeeding Nominating Committee.

Nominations may be made from the floor if the individuals nominated are eligible for election and have already given their written consent. All other matters shall be decided by the majority vote of the Council members present and voting, unless otherwise provided by the Bylaws.