



Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways, Inc.

September 20, 2009

## **Responses to Frequently Asked Questions**

**August 2009**

### **Membership Kickoff Meetings for Service Unit Leadership Teams**

Horseheads, Auburn, Sidney, New Hartford, Watertown

Attendance: over 250 Adult Volunteers

#### **Volunteers**

The Single Entry System (SES) is the new process that will support all Girl Scout volunteers while entering the Movement in a timely and respectful way. Adults have a variety of options for volunteering within Girl Scouting and we want to make sure that requests and passions are honored.

The Single Entry System is explained in more detail on the website. It is critical to ensure that the process is not cumbersome or delayed. Prospective volunteers are expected to accurately complete the application in its entirety, including: signatures and all reference information. Once completed, it should be sent promptly to the designated Adult Learning Manager.

Lindsey Tupia: Watertown Service Center

Arika Dufore: Cicero and Phelps Service Centers

Christina Verratti: New Hartford Service Center, Norwich and Oneonta

Eileen Andrews: Binghamton and Horseheads Service Centers

All volunteers who are responsible for the safety, program and ratio requirements, and who work directly with girls, will participate in the Single Entry System. Those who are not required to participate are those who support the Movement through a membership registration only or who are donors, or registered under registration code 14.

At this time, legacy council volunteers who were previously appointed, do not need to fill out a new volunteer application for Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways. Legacy volunteers will be required to complete a background check.

#### Background checks

Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways will be following GSUSA recommendations for background checks in order to support the safety and wellbeing of the girls in our care. New volunteers as of

July 2009 will complete an application for a background check as part of the new Single Entry System process.

Volunteers from the five legacy councils will need to complete the paperwork for a background check prior to December 23, 2009.

- Current legacy volunteers will receive a letter, application, and self evaluation at the September/October Service Unit meetings.
- Current legacy volunteers must complete the process by December 23, 2009 in order to continue to work with girls during the 2010 membership year.

Legacy council volunteers who wish to assist the adult learning team staff are welcome! Volunteers are being recruited as adult learning facilitators and to assist with prospective volunteer “conversations” (interviews).

For more information contact Lindsey Tupia, Director of Volunteers Services at 315-782-1890.

Volunteer Essentials is a new resource for and about volunteering with Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) and Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways. It is available on our website. Each of our 8,000 volunteers will receive a print copy during September/October Service Unit Meetings.

The schedule for adult learning opportunities (formerly known as training) is on the website at [www.gsny penn.org](http://www.gsny penn.org) - click on calendar- Adult Learning. Check often as it is updated frequently. If you would like a paper copy, contact your Membership Manager

Volunteers desire t-shirts and other merchandise. The Retail staff is currently identifying adult items that will be available in Service Center stores soon.

Legacy volunteers who possess current training/certification—these are valid and will be honored by Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways. Please recertify for CPR and First Aid as required.

There are so many questions, why aren't there as many answers?

Five legacy councils merged on July 8, 2009. We are working together to form staff and volunteer teams not only to honor legacy council policies and practices, but to form the “best practices” for NYPENN Pathways. By focusing on our mission and values as Girl Scouts we will develop the best processes and practices. Please be patient!

Sue Stewart, VP of Operations, is recruiting adult volunteers to be part of the solution! Join the volunteer advisory team. This group of dedicated volunteers will participate as readers for new policies and forms, share ideas at regional forums (spring 2010) and be a part of the pulse of NYPENN Pathways. If interested contact Sue at [ssewart@gsny penn.org](mailto:ssewart@gsny penn.org).

## **Girls/Membership**

Procedures for financial assistance for girl membership registrations (\$12) for Membership Year 2009-2010 have been established. Financial assistance for girls is available thanks to the many generous gifts from donors, sponsors, grants and foundations.

Financial Assistance for adults for Membership Year 2009-2010 is not available. Funding from Service Units and troop accounts (for troop leaders/co leaders) are options for support. Please contact your Membership Manager for additional resources.

Financial assistance policies and procedures for girls for other programs (such as Camperships, destinations, etc) are being established.

Financial Assistance Request for Girl Membership 2009-2010 is posted on the website. It can be found under Girls- Financial Aid.

The form is to be completed and signed by a parent/guardian and submitted along with the 2009-2010 Girl Registration Form. Final signoff and approval will be completed by the Membership Manager.

The new Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways strip is available at no cost for:

- Girls who were registered during 08-09, and
- Girls who are remaining with the same grade level and not bridging (i.e.- Girl Scouts whose uniform does not change), and
- Girls whose registrations are received at a Service Center on or before October 1, 2009

New Council strips will be distributed to troops in October based on registrations received.

Online membership registration will be available through GSUSA and is anticipated for Fall 2010.

## **Troops/ Service Unit**

Troop and Service Unit numbers will remain as they were with legacy councils until sometime after January 2010. We are working with GSUSA on a process to get new numbers set for when we begin using a new membership software "Personify", during the spring of 2010.

Certificate of Insurance for troop meeting location or for a trip?

Any one of the three registrars can assist with Certificates of Insurance:

- Kuyana Tyson, Cicero Service Center, ktyson@gsnypenn.org
- Juanita Porter, Horseheads Service Center, jporter@gsnypenn.org
- Tamara Cruz, New Hartford Service Center, tcruz@gsnypenn.org

## Troop/ Group Bank Accounts

All troop and service unit bank accounts will need to be established as “new” to support the new council name and federal tax ID number. Our goal is to help volunteers minimize disruption and cost.

Policy: Volunteers will be authorized to open new accounts and will receive a letter from their Membership Manager that supports opening of the account.

Banks are requiring additional information due to new banking industry standards. As a leadership organization and in our effort to “Go Green” additional paperwork (required by some banks) will be posted on the website under Adults- Volunteers- Information for Banks.

Please encourage your bank manager to visit the website to view additional documents as we will not be printing them. If the bank does not want to honor this request, please consider another banking institution.

### Bank Account Procedure Summary:

1. Membership Managers will generate letters of authorization for troops and service units to open new bank accounts.
2. Banks may require additional paperwork to substantiate the not for profit status of Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways, Inc. These forms are posted on the website
  - a. Board Resolution
  - b. Certificate of Incorporation
  - c. Certificate of Merger

Debit cards: As of September 21, 2009 the policy for Troop/Group Accounts is being amended (Volunteer Essentials page 62) to allow the use of debit cards. Please obtain receipts for use of all debit cards and attach debit card receipts to all financial records.

Volunteers may not obtain credit cards for troop use.

## **General**

### Are Journeys really replacing Badge Books?

Badges and Try-Its can be used to supplement the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, a complementary piece to the journey. Support girls and provide them an opportunity to experience the journey series and to participate in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience in a variety of pathways.

See pages 19-22 of the Volunteer Essentials.

The Girl Scout program—that is, what girls do in Girl Scouting—offers incredible opportunities for girls to grow in their leadership skills, develop lifelong friendships, and earn awards along each step of their leadership journeys, no matter what their grade levels, experiences with Girl Scouting, or background.

The Girl Scout program is centered around the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE), and the best way to deliver the GSLE to girls is through journeys—powerful, exciting books and awards that are the core of the Girl Scout program offering.

Each journey offers opportunities to earn prestigious awards, and at the Junior grade level and above, girls then have a chance to go on and earn the highest awards in Girl Scouting: the Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards. Of course, earning and collecting a variety of badges, patches, and pins is also an important Girl Scout tradition that lives on, because doing so encourages girls to learn and demonstrate important skills.

A variety of badge activities allow girls to focus on particular interest areas, like financial literacy, healthy living, science and technology, and outdoors and the environment. And Girl Scout ceremonies and songs continue to link girls with not only Girl Scouts peers today but also the lineage of Girl Scouts past.

The core component of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is the leadership journeys, which are a coordinated series of activities grouped around a theme, each with a clear starting point (an invitation to explore and take action) and an ending point (an opportunity to reflect, reward, and celebrate).

Each journey includes fun, challenging, and purposeful experiences spread over a series of sessions (which you can expand over several group meetings), and each is tied to some or all of the fifteen national outcomes/benefits for girls.

In other words, the GSLE is sewn right into the journeys for you!

Each girls' book immerses Girl Scouts in the topics that make up the journey, while the adult guide features enriching activities for a group of girls, coaching tips, and sample session outlines that you can customize to fit the needs of your group, whether you facilitate a troop, volunteer at a Girl Scout camp, mentor girls on a travel adventure, or engage with girls in a series or event. Together, the girls' books and adult guides ensure that every Girl Scout in every pathway receives a consistent, high quality experience that ties to the GSLE and engages girls in realizing specific leadership outcomes/benefits.

Each girl is encouraged to have her own copy of the Journey book.

#### Service Unit Fund Raising (see Blue Book)

Service Units may not engage in money earning activities or accept donations. Service Unit members will not solicit contributions or supplies to underwrite or subsidize the cost of program events. Service Units may engage in approved activities for which a fee is charged to cover the costs of an activity. Service units may retain any unanticipated/unplanned revenue from Service Unit activities for girls and use it for future girl activities.

During the coming year, we will be looking at the role of the Service Unit and the role/responsibility of council/service unit partnerships.

Essential forms will be available on the website (with print samples at each Service Center) soon. We have identified the most important forms that volunteers need. Until notified, please use legacy council forms.

Updated information about the new requirements for Girl Awards is being established. The program team is working on the information and training, and the roll out from the current to the future practices.

Email vs. snail mail?

We are supporting a “green initiative” to reduce paper copies. We also understand that there are areas of our new council that do not have internet access or have dial-up service. If you would like to receive paper copies of newsletters or information posted for volunteers, please contact your membership manager.

Council properties will be listed on the website. The program team is currently working on special events and activities to show off all the NYPENN properties.

Emergency/crisis cards with who to call & numbers will be printed as part of the cover of Volunteer Essentials. It can be found in Volunteer Essentials and on the website (under Contacts and as part of Volunteer Essentials online). An emergency card will be given to each new volunteer as part of the appointment process.

**In the Event of a Serious Accident or Emergency:  
VOLUNTEERS will immediately notify a Girl Scout Crisis Team Leader of any serious accident or major emergency.**

**During Business Hours:**

- |  |                |                                |
|--|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Vice President of Brand and Program | Cindy Martin   | Work: (607) 724-6572 ext. 107  |
| 2. Vice President of Operations        | Sue Stewart    | Work: (315) 698-9400 ext. 311  |
| 3. Director of Program                 | Jen Ferner     | Work: (315) 539-5085 ext. 2128 |
| 4. Director of Communications          | Judy Gallagher | Work: (315) 539-5085 ext. 2121 |

**After Business Hours:** 1-(800) 943-4414, Listen to instructions- Press 4

**In response to suggestions at the fall Kickoff events....**

Cookie coupons will be available for a variety of uses and sites. Details coming

Always bring a solution when you have a question or comment.

Be sure that all girls are represented in print materials.

Support child care at meetings- work with your local Red Cross or other groups to deliver Babysitter Training Courses so that older girls can watch children at meetings.

Recruitment fliers will be posted on the website. Membership Managers have samples.

Membership Managers will have "Recruitment Table" supplies for school and community signups and there will be extras at each service center for volunteers to sign out.

Coming on the website- Staff will be listed by name, title, function and Service Center location.

### **Don't know the answer yet**

Will there be nametags for volunteers? The budget will go to the Board at the end of September.

### **Coming in 09-10**

- **Adult Development opportunities in a variety of convenient locations and times. More adult development opportunities online.**
- **For Service Unit leadership teams: Fall Kick off, Winter Gathering, Spring Celebration and Recognitions.**
- **Consistent messaging and agendas for Service Unit meetings across the council to ensure the success of the service units in delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.**
- **Surveys for girls and volunteers to give immediate and real time feedback. "Listening tours" with the CEO and Board, and opportunities for two way feedback.**
- **Planning for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Girl Scouting. It is once in a lifetime.**
- **Participation at the "neighborhood level" to support all girls as members of the premier personal leadership experience.**

**Any additional questions? Contact Meaghan Washington, Senior Administrative Assistant for the Operations team. 315-698-9400 x 318. [mwashington@gsnypenn.org](mailto:mwashington@gsnypenn.org)**

