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**Troop #5368
Parent Handbook**



Girl Scout History

Juliette "Daisy" Gordon Low assembled 18 girls from Savannah, Georgia, on March 12, 1912, for a local Girl Scout meeting. She believed that all girls should be given the opportunity to develop physically, mentally, and spiritually. Girl Scouts hiked, played basketball, went on camping trips, learned how to tell time by the stars, and studied first aid. Today, Girl Scouts of the USA has a membership of over 3.2 million girls and adults.

Girl Scout Mission & Leadership Experience

The Girl Scout Mission is a simple and powerful one: Building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

The heart of Girl Scouting falls under three main leadership principles.

- ***Girl led*** -- Girls play an active part in determining the what, when, where, how and why of their activities. At the Daisy and Brownie levels the girls will be presented with several options and they can make choices. With each year they grow and their ability to handle more responsibility will increase.
- ***Learning by doing*** -- Rather than listening to someone tell them what to do or how to do it, girls get in there and do it themselves. They explore their own questions, gain new skills, share ideas and take time to reflect.
- ***Cooperative Learning*** -- Girls will work toward shared goals in an atmosphere of respect and collaboration.

Girl Scout Grade Levels

The Girl Scout age levels are defined by grades.

Daisies - Kindergarten and 1st grade

Brownies - Grades 2-3

Juniors - Grades 4-5

Cadettes - Grades 6-8

Seniors - Grades 9-10

Ambassadors - Grades 11-12



Girl Scout Uniform and Awards

- Our troop does not require the full uniform only a sash/vest or tunic.
- Some events do require the uniform: white shirt, khaki bottoms, and sash/vest or tunic.
- Financial support available to purchase sash/vest or tunic.
- We cannot replace badges/patches/pins.

During the year girls will earn various badges, patches and awards and will be displayed on their uniform vest/sash. Some of these will be given to the girls as they earn them, but most awards may not be given until the end of the year at our ceremony/party.

Girl Scout Badges

Badges and pins are earned awards. They are officially approved by Girl Scouts USA. To earn a badge, girls must follow/complete the required steps that are outlined for each badge. Badges are centered on a certain skill. **All approved badges and pins will be displayed on the front of the uniform vest/sash.**

If your daughter chooses to complete a badge outside of our meetings and events, let the troop leader know so she can sign off on the badge. Please do not work on badges that we will complete as a troop during our Girl Scout year. If your Girl Scout participates in any kind of community service outside of the troop please let the troop leader know – there may just be a badge for that!

Girl Scout Patches

Patches are also called “fun patches” and are received by participating in an event or activity. They are not official and are not approved by the Girl Scout USA powers that be. Any business can create and issue their own fun patch and the girls display these on the back of their uniform vest/sash.

Attaching Badges/Patches

- Most badges/patches are iron on.
 - Heat up surface of vest/sash with iron for 1 minute then place badge in correct spot.
 - Place iron top of badge for 1 minute.
 - Flip sash over and place iron on back of sash where badge was placed for 1 minute.
- **Badges still need a couple hand stitches on corners.** The iron on material does not work well.

Girl Scout Registration/Membership

Girl Membership

Whether your daughter is returning or new to Girl Scouts, she will have a wonderful time in our troop. Registration is \$25 per child, and must be completed ONLINE. Girls may attend ONE meeting unregistered to try out Girl Scouts. Financial assistance is available (also online).

Adult Membership

Adults 18 years of age or older can join Girl Scouts to help in their own daughter's troop, serve as a mentor or even help at a Girl Scout event. Membership is truly what you make of it! Pitch in your expertise or build a skill you've always wanted to develop. The cost is \$25 per adult.

**Please note: Any council events that we attend will require all participants to be registered Girl Scouts this includes adults.*

Adult Background Check

Parents, guardians and girls trust that Girl Scouts is a safe place for them, and we do not take that trust lightly. We are committed to maintaining policies and procedures that create a safe environment for girls to discover, connect and take action. Criminal background checks are one of the strategies used to ensure that girls are safe with us.

Our policy is to conduct criminal background checks on all new volunteers, and to repeat them on all volunteers every three years. Volunteers include troop leaders, co-leaders and yes, even parents/guardians. If you will be attending any meetings, driving any Girl Scout (other than your own) to/from meetings or events, chaperoning our field trips or assisting us with booth sales in the community you must complete a criminal background check. This can be done online or on paper and is confidential. This is completed free of charge to you by Girl Scouts.

Meetings & Communication

Our troop meetings will be most **Fridays, from 5:30pm to 7pm**. We will hold them at **Yvonne Richardson Community Center** (unless notified otherwise).

Girls should wear their vest/sash/tunic to every meeting and event (unless instructed otherwise). Girl Scout guide books and Journey books will be provided by the troop and used at meetings, but you are welcome to purchase your own copies.

Meeting Attendance

Meetings are for registered Girl Scouts only.

It is preferred that you drop your Girl Scout off and pick her back up when the meeting is over. Take advantage of the alone time! As previously stated, if you stay in the troop meeting, you must clear a criminal background check. It is helpful if you could leave siblings at home. If that's not possible please bring a quiet activity for them to do in the back of the room because they will not be allowed to participate in meetings, crafts or activities.

Don't be too upset! These rules sound harsh but they are in place with the girls' safety and best interest in mind.

Communication

Please pay close attention to our Band group and text messages. The Band app (<http://band.us/@gs5368>) has a calendar, which you can add to your device or export to a family calendar, photo albums, and more.

We use the app “Remind” to send out group messages (text 81010 “@gs5368” to join).

Safety

Girl Scouts emphasize fun with safety. All activities will be assessed to make sure that they are safe and age appropriate. In the rare case that your Girl Scout should get hurt during an activity, a copy of an incident report will come home. If the accident would be severe enough to seek medical treatment, you will be notified immediately, and more extensive paperwork will be filed. Our Girl Scout council will also be notified.

Snacks

Occasionally our badge earning activities will include some sort of food preparation or taste testing. All food allergies/restrictions will be considered, and we will make this an environment where all girls can participate. We do provide a small snack at meetings.

Girls are not to bring in food/snacks to eat (unless the troop leader grants permission prior to the meeting). Girls may, however, bring in a water bottle.

Fundraisers

Girl Scouts have two major fundraisers each year: the fall product sale and cookie sale.

Fall Product Sale

Every year, registered Girl Scouts take orders from friends and family for delicious nuts and candies and magazine subscriptions as part of the Fall Product Sale. Items can be purchased online in addition to in person. The troop keeps a minimum of 20% of all sales.

We are the 2016 and 2017 Top Fall Product Sellers in South Washington County!!

Cookie Program

For many people, Girl Scout cookies are an iconic product with a sentimental value that transcends many other food products. Girl Scouts dominate the cookie industry during the first quarter of each year, then completely disappear from it in March. Girl Scouts of the USA sells more than 200 million boxes each year.

Does my Girl Scout have to participate in the Fundraisers?

Participation in the Fall Product Sale or Cookie Program activity is voluntary. What is the money used for? **Everything**.

That means every single pencil, pen, marker, box of crayons, pair of scissors, bottle of glue, craft and activity must be purchased. Even the badges that your child wears on her uniform must be purchased!

We are supposed to be self-sufficient meaning that we should very rarely ask for parents to pay out of pocket for our field trips and activities. But to accomplish that, each child needs to participate in our fundraisers and really give it a good honest effort.

Along with earning money, girls are building a lifetime of skills and confidence. Our fundraisers are designed so she learns goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills and business ethics – aspects essential to leadership, success and life.

Troop Dues

Our troop does not require or collect troop dues from members. Many Girl Scout troops collect dues, and that money covers the cost of awards, badges, program supplies or snacks. These costs vary with each troop but can range from \$5-\$20 per month. We rely heavily on fundraisers and money donations so that we do not have to collect dues from members.

Refundable Deposits for Activities

To be due free and protect the money the girls earn we require refundable deposits for activities outside the troop meeting that cost money. This deposit is half the event fee for events \$5 or more or \$5 for camping trips. When your Girl Scout arrives at the event we return the money. If she does not come to the event it then gets deposited as a donation to the troop. The troop covers the cost of several events including camping trips, sleepovers, thinking day, and some Fayetteville Service Unit events.

Ready to Join?

Parents/guardians must complete the following forms:

- ◆ Girl Membership (Annual fee is \$25; sign up online; scholarships available for first 3 years)
 - ◆ Health History Form
 - This form should be updated every year and is always with the troop leader and/or chaperones on field trips
 - Adult volunteers also need to fill this out.
 - ◆ Annual Permission Form
 - ◆ Conduct Form
 - ◆ Activity Permission Slips (distributed throughout the year)
 - A permission slip is needed any time we meet outside of our normal meeting location.
- Just remember: “no slip, no trip!” No exceptions.

Volunteers are the Lifblood of Girl Scouting

The strength of Girl Scouting rests on the shoulders of adult volunteers who are committed to helping all girls develop into strong, confident, capable women. Remember that your daughter’s troop leaders are volunteers. They spend a great deal of time attending trainings and preparing for and leading her meetings. Please support your Girl Scout’s troop and encourage her participation in activities, to enable her to enjoy her Girl Scout experience.