

Membership 2019-2020 Numbers and 2020-2021 Goal

This year, the Membership team was restructured to create a more concentrated recruitment strategy. While supporting efforts to bring more girls and adults to Girl Scouts, the new structure ensures that our newest members feel supported in their first year. The alignment of the team enhances the customer service experience through the recruitment and registration process.

COVID-19 brought uncertainty to us and our members, but one thing that remained constant was our delivery of programs to girls and our ongoing support of our volunteers.

Efforts to keep Girl Scouts relevant and growing is a responsibility we share with our entire membership. Our organization's success relies on our volunteers and Girl Scout community actively engaging in recruitment by recommending Girl Scouts to others.

We will continue to share our plans with you, and you are always welcome to reach out to us for assistance getting the word out about Girl Scouts in your area.

Your dedication is valued and thank you for joining us as we embark on a new membership year. Your commitment and passion for Girl Scouts in western Pennsylvania are indispensable. This year is very different for us all due to the restrictions COVID-19 has presented. The traditional way of recruiting is in the past, and now we need each and every one of our volunteers, members, parents, and girls to help us share out why a girl needs Girl Scouts in her life. Every year we make a difference by bringing Girl Scouts to girls in our area, and this year will be no different.

Product Program

Fall Product Sale (MagNut)

GSWPA's fall product sale, the MagNut Program, returns Oct. 1-Nov. 29. In addition to traditional order card sales, customers can purchase magazines and order nuts and candy online through girls' secure websites. Online customers can opt to have their nut and candy orders shipped or girl-delivered. To help families limit contact with customers, printable order cards and door hangers are available, and a short video will provide additional ideas on how to have a safe and successful MagNut Program season. This year, we expanded training to include troop leaders. Online training for service unit MagNut managers took place in August, and troop leader trainings were held in September.

Girl Scout Cookie Program

The iconic Girl Scout Cookie Program kicks off Friday, Jan. 8, 2021.

New this year: Girl Scouts, volunteers, and families can attend a virtual cookie rally on Thursday, Jan. 7. The virtual rally videos and resources will also be available for service units and troops who wish to hold their own events. In addition to training for service unit cookie managers, troop leader training is available Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. and Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2020, at 10 a.m. For 2021 booth sales season, Friday, Feb. 26-Sunday, March 21, Little Brownie Bakers is developing a toolkit for traditional and virtual booths. Digital Cookie will include a new troop cookie link to help support virtual booths. These resources are still under development, so check gswpa.org closer to the beginning of the program for more information. Troop leaders can text leader2021 to 56525 to receive important cookie program updates delivered right to their smart phones.

COVID-19 Related Updates

Summer Camp Cancellation

While our camps have remained closed for summer camp, GSWPA has had a very successful summer with our family camp options at Camp Conshatawba, Camp Hawthorne Ridge, Camp Redwing, and Camp Skymeadow. Family camp has been incredibly well attended with Camp Hawthorne Ridge and Camp Redwing being completely booked during the summer. Due to this high attendance, we have extended family camp reservations until Dec. 31. For more information on family camp, please visit the gswpa.org.

All of our camps will continue to be closed for troop and service unit camping, events, and volunteer-led day camps through Dec. 31, 2020.

Retail Updates

Our retail shops opened for in-person business on Sept. 12. We are very excited to see our customers back and be able to connect with you again. We have implemented safety procedures to keep both customers and staff safe while shopping. Curbside pickup and free shipping also remain options for accessing our retail stores.

For more information regarding the re-opening of our retail shops and the safety guidelines they now have, please visit gswpa.org.

Office Closures

GSWPA offices remain closed to the public until further notice. Our staff will continue to work at home until Oct. 31. We will continue to monitor the situation and extend or change the remote working option accordingly.

Racial Justice Pledge

GSUSA recently issued a racial justice pledge for all Girl Scouts to sign. This pledge committed to using our collective power to dismantle systematic racism and to become an anti-racist organization.

As a council and in unity with the entire Girl Scout movement, we are committed to make the world a more equitable place. This commitment is demonstrated in our 2021-2023 Strategic Plan, which includes a priority to elevate diversity, equity, and inclusion.

GSWPA will promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in our staff, volunteer resources, and girl programming.

If you would like to learn more about the Racial Justice Pledge, you can go to girlscouts.org. We invite you to sign it and join us in GSUSA's commitment to becoming an antiracist organization and specifically supporting black girls, their families, and communities.

National Convention

This year, the National Council Session will be held virtually the weekend of Oct. 23. GSWPA will be represented by six adult member delegates and three girl member delegates. To learn more about the 55th National Council Session, please visit girlscouts.org.

Volunteer Engagement

During the 2020 membership year, we made significant advances in our ability to offer training to our volunteers with the launch of gsLearn. gsLearn is an online learning system for volunteers and contains both GSUSA and GSWPA developed courses. Volunteers can now access trainings at a time that meets their schedule and they can go back and review parts or the entire training.

At the end of August, we held our first ever Leadership Summit. This event was a new volunteer event that took all the amazing resources from our annual Fall Kick Off and combined them with the Outdoor Training Summit to offer an exciting day of learning guided by our expert staff.

Starting in October, we are kicking off the new year with a webinar for our service teams so that they can partner with us as we roll-out these resources, as well as virtual troops. The LeadHER Learning Series launches in October with a session that specifically addresses planning the next three months of troop meetings using a new tool we have developed for leaders. Additional sessions are in development to be released in November and December.

Board of Directors Recent Activity

There were no business actions at the June 2020 board meeting.

Annual Meeting, April 2020

The following changes proposed to the Bylaws were approved.

- A change to **section 4.1-Composition**, which increased the Board of Directors from sixteen (16) directors-at-large to being seventeen (17) directors-at-large.
- A change to **section 5.2 A-Term of Office**, which changed the mandated term for an Elected Officer from being three (3) year term for Elected Officers to allowing Elected Officers to serve up to three (3) years.
- A change to **section 6.1-Membership**, which mandated the Board Development Committee (BDC) be composed of nine (9) members, at least one third (1/3) of whom shall be members of the Board of Directors and at least two thirds (2/3) of whom will be non-board members. The bylaw change changed the composition of the Board Development Committee to at least three (3) of the BDC members be board members and at least five (5) be non-board members.
- A change to **section 6.2-Election, Term and Vacancies C**, which read that “No individual shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms as a member of the committee.” The bylaw changed “member of the committee” to “member at large of the committee.”
- A change to **section 6.3 C-Election, Term and Vacancy of Committee Chair**, which formally allowed committee chairs to only serve a one (1) year term. The bylaw increased committee chairs term to three (3) years.

The motion to approve the Board Slate and National Delegate Slate was passed.

Referrals for Board and Girl Advisory Board

We are open to referrals and applications for our Board of Directors, Board Development Committee, and Girl Advisory Board positions. We will have one Girl Advisory position open in April 2020. The Board Development Committee is looking for nominations and applications now, especially focusing on regions 1 and 2. Please encourage girls who you believe would be interested and would benefit from this leadership experience, which is focused on governance.

Property Update

- Camp Elliott is scheduled to close Nov. 30, 2020.
- Camp Resting Waters remains under the option agreement with Casella Waste Management.
- Camp Hawthorne Ridge has had renovations completed at Thompson Dining Hall. We have fully replaced the flooring and the supports below it. The ceiling and lighting have been replaced. New doors have also been hung.
- Camp Conshatawba will have construction at Memory Lodge beginning in October. The updates being made to the dining hall will include increasing the capacity of the dining hall and creating a dedicated entry from the dining hall to the restrooms.
- Camp Skymeadow will have construction at Evergreen Lodge, hopefully beginning in October. There will be many exciting updates made to the dining hall, including increasing the capacity of the dining hall.
- The engineer recently completed the study of Camp Redwing regarding the flooding from the Connoquenessing Creek and our sewage system. We will be working with the Property Committee of the Board and the Camp Planning Committee to formulate a plan to address both of these areas. We are also working with a group of volunteers in preparation to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Camp Redwing in 2023.
- A new roof is being installed at the Edinboro office.
- The Kittanning office remains on the market for sale.