



Girl Scouts Western Pennsylvania Town Hall Meeting Report—Fall 2024

Board of Directors Recent Activity

Board Meeting, September 2024

- The motion to accept the 2024 United Way of Beaver County Annual Application was passed.
- The motion to accept the 2024/2025 budget was passed.
- The motion to accept the Bank Signature Resolution with Carrie Yopp, CMO signing in place of COO was passed.

Board Meeting, June 2024

- The motion to accept the United Way of Warren County Application was passed.
- The motion to accept the updated Strategic goals for 2024-2026 was passed.

Annual Meeting, April 2024

- The motion to approve the Board Slate was passed.
- Addition to Bylaw 5.3 was passed.

Referrals for Board and Girl Advisory Committee

We are open to referrals and applications for our Board of Directors, Board Development Committee, and Girl Advisory Committee positions, as well as National Delegate applications, through Thursday, Oct. 31. All position descriptions and applications can be found on the [governance page](#) of our website.

Annual Meeting

Our 2025 Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 3, at Westmoreland County Community College in Youngwood. While we encourage in-person attendance, we are continuing to have one in-person location with access for remote participation from your home.

Special National Council Session Proposals

Proposals from Special 57th National Council Session:

- The national board proposes an annual dues increase for girl members.
- The national board proposes an annual dues increase for adult members.
- The proposals are presented as fill in the blank.
- The national board recommends girl membership dues be \$85 and adult membership dues be \$45.

The national board approved three board resolutions that outline:

Financial Support to Councils

GSUSA is to provide councils with revenue support based on a percentage of annual girl membership dues.

When dues are set the councils receive the following percentages:

Dues:	Council %:
\$85 or above	32%
\$75 - \$84	30%
\$65 - \$74	25%

National Membership Dues Scholarship Fund

With dues greater than \$65, GSUSA will create a membership dues scholarship fund of up to \$5 million.

Councils may apply for funds if their incremental cost of financial assistance is more than the revenue support provided.

Phased in Dues

With girl membership dues of \$85 or more, GSUSA will implement a discount on girl membership dues in the first two years:

2026—20% discount for a cost of \$68

2027—10% discount for a cost of \$77

2028—no discount for a cost of \$85

Property Updates

The following improvements and ongoing projects across our council properties reflect our commitment to enhancing the experience for all who visit, ensuring our facilities remain safe, welcoming, and enjoyable.

Camp Conshatawba:

- A new low ropes course has been added, providing more opportunities for team-building and adventure. The Director's Lodge now features upgraded LED lighting, improving energy efficiency and lighting quality.
- The deck at Overlook Lodge has been stripped and re-stained, offering a refreshed outdoor space and a forestry management plan is currently underway.

Camp Hawthorne Ridge:

- We have completed the new Falls Run Gorge Trail, adding a scenic staff-led hike from Camp Hawthorne Ridge to Howard Falls.
- The pool house also has a brand-new roof, enhancing its durability and appearance.

Camp Redwing:

- Mary Lodge has been outfitted with a new roof.
- The Amphitheater now features new seating.
- Repairs have been made to the Swinging Bridge after it sustained flood damage this past spring.

Camp Skymeadow:

- The horse barn at Camp Skymeadow has received new siding, improving its structure and appearance.
- The trails have been updated with new color-coded trail markings, and an updated map has been provided for easier navigation.

Edinboro Office:

- The parking lot at the Edinboro office has been repaved, offering smoother access for visitors and staff.

These improvements are part of our ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance our facilities, ensuring they remain quality spaces for everyone to enjoy.

Girl Membership 2023-2024 Numbers and 2024-2025 Goal

MY24 (as of 9/30/24)

Type	As of 9/30/24	As of 9/22/24	MY24 Overall Goals	Difference of MY24 Goals
New	4,096	4,095	4,323	-227
Renewed	10,345	10,343	11,691	-1,346
Outreach (new & renewed)	185 (90 renewed/ 95 new)	186 (90 renewed/ 96 new)	N/A	N/A
Overall	14,626	14,624	16,014	-1,388

MY25 (as of 10/1/24)

Type	As of 10/1/24	As of 9/22/24	Goal for MY25	Difference of MY25 Goals
New	1,525	1,167	4,566	-3,014
Renewed	8,586	7,902	10,657	-2,071
Outreach (new & renewed)	64 (64 renewed/ 0 new)	64 (64 renewed/ 0 new)	N/A	N/A
Overall	10,175	9,133	15,223	-5,031

Volunteer Membership

Total Adult and Lifetime Membership for MY24 as of 9/28/2024: 8,950

Total Adult and Lifetime Membership MY24 goal: 9,441

Total Adult and Lifetime Membership MY25 as of 9/28/24: 6,835

Volunteer Engagement

Our Adult Development Team continues to enhance and expand the courses available on our learning platform, gsLearn. New additions this year include:

- **Continued Learning Path:** A series of four seasonal courses designed for newer volunteers
- **Highest Award Overview:** An introduction to Girl Scouts' highest honors
- **Silver Award Training:** Tailored for Cadettes and volunteers

We've also made major updates to the Let's Go Camping 1 learning path to improve its functionality and streamline the training process. With this update, Let's Go Camping training now has a 5-year expiration date. Volunteer records for Outdoor Skills and Let's Go Camping 1 & 2 have been updated and can be found in MyGS under the 263-GSWPA Certifications section found under My Troops. More information on expiration dates is available on the [Outdoor Training webpage](#).

Additionally, the [Volunteer Training webpage](#) on gswpa.org has been redesigned to offer clearer information on required trainings and direct access to both in-person and online gsLearn courses.

Looking ahead to this fall, we plan to launch:

- An on-demand Gold Award training
- A Girl Scout Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention course
- Bundled program-level trainings for easier access in gsLearn.

In 2023, we launched our Troop Mentor Network—a dedicated group of volunteers who serve as a valuable resource for both our council and fellow volunteers. They meet monthly to collaborate on resource development, training, and support. You can find the [Troop Mentor Network](#) featured on our website!

Looking ahead to 2025, we'll continue enhancing service unit resources, updating role descriptions, and prioritizing service unit training to better support our volunteers.

Delegate Season is Here!

Every year, service units all over the council elect volunteers to represent their areas at the annual meeting held in May. Delegates are a critical part of our organization's democratic process. They represent their area in decision-making and in providing input into council policies that impact their experience and the Girl Scout movement.

If you're interested in serving as a delegate in 2025, here are the requirements:

- Potential delegates may be registered girls 14 or older, or registered and approved volunteers.
- Delegates must be elected by the service unit and have their name submitted to staff by Nov. 15. The delegate submission form can be found on the forms page of our website or may be requested from our customer care team or your membership engagement specialist.
- Delegates must plan to attend the annual meeting, in-person or virtually, in 2025—this will be held on May 3.
- Elected delegates must complete the delegate training course provided in gsLearn 30 days prior to the annual meeting (this course does not need to be retaken if reelected).
- Each delegate must have a unique email and mobile device from which to send and receive information.

This year, we are asking that all names be submitted by Nov. 15, 2024. Membership engagement specialists will let each service unit know how many delegates and alternates to elect based on the girl member population as of Sept. 30, 2024.

Summer Camp

The outdoor team successfully planned and implemented summer camps, working diligently to run safe and fun events for the girls. The team was able to recruit staff both domestically and internationally.

In addition to the eight weeks of overnight camp at Camp Conshatawba and Camp Skymeadow, our camps hosted six weekend/troop programs this summer. We also ran five weeks of day camp at Camp Redwing and one week of day camp at Camp Hawthorne Ridge.

The outdoor team hosted 65 overnight camp sessions in 2024 serving approximately 1,100 girls and their families/caregivers.

Program highlights included:

- **Pony Pals:** Multiple sessions of this popular program sold out!
- **Johnstown Adventure:** Campers explored Johnstown, learning about local history and art.
- **Culinary Cadettes:** Girls learned cooking techniques and were challenged to create a dessert from scratch. They were judged on teamwork, taste, and presentation by camp staff, and their enthusiasm, creativity, and teamwork were incredible to witness.
- **Dynamic Drama Sessions:** Girls created and performed a play for an audience of over 100 parents, friends, and relatives at Camp Conshatawba.
- **Horse Programs:** Girls developed riding, grooming, and horse-care skills while learning about horses.

2025 Camp Plans:

Camp Hawthorne Ridge is excited to offer three weeks of overnight camp, day camp, and increased opportunities for troop and service unit camping in summer 2025!

Girl Scouts Western Pennsylvania service units and troops can book their reservations through our online system. Remember, service units can reserve 12 months in advance, troops can reserve 11 months in advance, and outside groups can book nine months in advance.

As part of our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion goals, we're renaming "resident camp" to overnight camp. This change is in name only—the programs remain the same! We will continue to offer overnight camps, staff-led day camps, and family and troop weekends at our camps next year.

Girl Program

We had a fantastic year celebrating higher awards! In April, we honored 85 Silver Award Girl Scouts at the Carnegie Science Center, and in May, 41 Gold Award Girl Scouts received their highest recognition at a new venue, The Atrium in Prospect.

A special shoutout to Gold Award Girl Scout Madelyn Sheffel, who was awarded a \$5,000 scholarship for her project, "Stop Cancer: Attention to Prevention Education."

Additional Highlights:

- 235 girls and 84 adults participated in higher award trainings.
- Our council travel programs offered a range of experiences, from one-day trips to international adventures, including Niagara Falls, Washington DC, Greece/Italy, and New York City.
- 125 travelers took part in council-wide travel programs.
- Upcoming trips for 2024-2025 include Savannah, Baltimore, Niagara Falls, Cleveland, London, and Paris
- We offered 179 events in 2023-2024, with nearly 4,200 girls in attendance.
- 256 troops and service units organized their own trips and high-adventure activities that required approval.
- 15 volunteer-led day camps were held across the council.

In Community Engagement, we had a re-visioning year, hiring a new Community Engagement lead in May. We launched a new model troop with MYDC and continued programming at Lemoyne, Propel Homestead, and Johnstown, while programming in Erie County and the City of Pittsburgh paused for evaluation and partnership reviews.

Product Program

Fall Product Program (MagNut)

MagNut, Girl Scout Western Pennsylvania's fall product program, began Tuesday, Oct. 1. Over the summer, Girl Scouts participated in an online contest to name the MagNut mascot, an Asian Elephant. After more than 500 name suggestions and voting, the MagNut mascot's name is Daisy! In addition to traditional order card sales, customers can purchase magazines and order nuts and candy through girls' secure websites for shipping or girl delivery.

New this year, customers can purchase Vanilla Honey Roasted Pecans and personalized items like stationery from girls' websites. Two additional Bark Boxes are available online, too, and the popular Tervis Tumblers return for 2024. Bark Boxes, tumblers, and personalized items count toward girls' magazine rewards. If your troop isn't participating in MagNut, there's still time to get in on the fun! Visit gswpa.org/magnut to get started.

Girl Scout Cookie Program

Girl Scouts are gearing up for the 2024-2025 cookie program! Nine varieties are available this season at \$6 per package. This is the last year to enjoy Girl Scout S'mores cookies, so be sure to encourage customers to stock up.

In 2023, troops who participated in booths during election week gave the experience a thumbs-up, so we're bringing it back for 2024!

Girl Scout troops can hold booth sales in their community the week of the general election. Polling locations make great booth spots however, troops are welcome to set up booth sales at other locations throughout their communities. Booths may only be set up at local businesses and not large box retail stores. Walmart, for instance, is a partnership with Girl Scouts of the USA and is not part of this program. Since election week booths don't count toward rewards, troops will earn \$1 per package sold.

Mark your calendars for these key dates for the 2024-2025 cookie program:

- Election week booths: Nov. 2- 11, 2024
- Order card and Digital Cookie sales begin: Jan. 7, 2025
- Booths are back: Feb. 28, 2025
- Last day of the cookie program: March 23, 2025
- Operation: Sweet Appreciation online donations end: May 31, 2025

For more information, visit gswpa.org/cookies.