

Service Unit Directors

Happy New Year! Vaccines are on the way, and we are ready to start 2021 with optimism. We can't help but be proud of all of you and your leaders who stepped up during this pandemic and made Girl Scouts happen. You exemplify the word go-getter! Now on to the cookie sale – COVID-style!!

1. Virtual Cookie Rallies

If your Service Unit is not putting on a cookie rally, don't forget to let your leaders know about the [Virtual Cookie Rallies](#) that the council program team is hosting on January 16, 2021. Daisies, Brownies, and Juniors are off to the races in a Kentucky Derby style program to learn the important skills of the sale. Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors will earn the entrepreneur badges for their program level and learn from experts about marketing their cookie businesses, putting together a sales pitch, and adding cookie experience to resumes.

2. Summer Camp

As we prepare for summer camp in 2021, our team will be ready with the necessary safety procedures to keep all of our campers safe and having fun. Camp will look different this year, with changes in how we check-in, eat meals, and gather; however, what makes camp special will not change. Girls will try new things, make new friends, and practice leadership! The summer camp guide will be emailed to all Girl Scout families in mid-January and registration will open at 6:00 a.m. on February 1, 2021. Spaces are limited this year so we recommend you sign up as soon as the registration system opens.

To have as many available spots as possible, we have re-imagined family camp as well! We are adding "You and Me" camps to Camp L-Kee-Ta, near Burlington, and Camp Little Cloud, near Dubuque. These sessions welcome girls and a favorite family member, or family friend, to enjoy the outdoors together.

3. Service Unit Training Opportunities

We would like to offer you some Service Unit training opportunities designed by GSUSA for our Service Unit Directors and their teams.

Designed by GSUSA, Service Unit Directors have new training resources. Right now, a series of four videos are available with quick sessions about leading effective virtual meetings, Service Unit goals, leading effective meetings, and growing your Service Unit team.

In January, we are taking a deeper look at leading effective virtual meetings. This training covers understanding the key differences between digital and in-person meetings, building skills, leading an efficient meeting, understanding best practices for engaging volunteers, and learning about various platforms available. Watch the first training video on the [GSEIWI YouTube Channel!](#)

4. Cookie Program Reminders

In-Person Cookie Booth Sign Ups

Troops can schedule their own booth sales at local businesses, or your troop can sign up for council-sponsored Cookie Booths. Sign up on eBudde for council-sponsored sites.

- January 9 at 7:00 a.m. sign up for one spot
- January 10 at 7:00 a.m. sign up for two more spots
- January 11 at 7:00 a.m. sign up for unlimited spots

Troops need to wear masks and follow social distancing guidelines. Review the in-person Cookie Booth [guide](#) to keep girls safe. And don't forget to try a [drive-thru booth](#) OR a [virtual booth](#)!

Initial Cookie Order

The initial cookie order is due in eBudde on January 13, 2021. Be sure to check the "Help Center" tab in eBudde for a quick video and tips on how to place your order. Find information about your initial order on page 12 of [Cookie Connections](#).

Tips for a Socially Distant Cookie Program

You can find tips for managing a contactless cookie season on the troop resources and cookie sellers pages on our website, as well as the "Help Center" tab in eBudde. All volunteers are invited to the [Online Resources and Safety Tips webinar](#) on January 20 at 6:00 p.m.

Digital Cookie

This online tool is a great way for girls to sell cookies safely and have fun! New this year, troops can set up their own troop link and then be included on the Cookie Finder for customers that opens up on February 1, 2021. Also, new this year, beginning January 15, 2021, contactless payment technology will be available in the Digital Cookie mobile app for both troops and girls.

5. World Thinking Day

The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) and the other WAGGGS member organizations have celebrated World Thinking Day since 1926. On the first World Thinking Day, delegates from around the globe met at Camp Edith Macy—now called Edith Macy Conference Center—in New York and agreed World Thinking Day would now be known as a special day for Girl Guides and Girl Scouts worldwide. Observed by 10 million Girl Guides and Girl Scouts worldwide, World Thinking Day 2021 celebrates what it means to be a peacebuilder, an important component of our global Movement.

On February 23, 2021, join your friends from Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois for our World Thinking Day Virtual Celebrations! Find out more and register at www.GirlScoutsToday.org/events.

6. VS 2.0 Update

Our refreshed Girl Scout member account management system is LIVE, and we're so excited! Over the last couple of weeks, Girl Scouts has been busy making updates to My GS to make it easier than ever to manage your household's Girl Scout memberships and keep track of your Girl Scout experiences – from troop participation, activity and event registrations and more! To get started, you'll need to reset your account password.

To help, **Girl Scouts has sent a special email to members and household account managers containing a link to reset your Girl Scout account password.** Can't find the email? From our www.GirlScoutsToday.org, click on My GS, and follow the system-provided prompts and guidance. Of course, if you have any trouble, be sure to reach out, and we'll be happy to support and welcome you to our refreshed Girl Scout member platform!

The **Finance tab in the Volunteer Toolkit** is active and accessible to troops! This troop tool gives a place to record troop income and expenses throughout the troop year. Troops can start using the finance tab and update the information as the year progresses. All troops should submit their finance report by August 31, 2021.

We now have **new and improved event registration!** Check out www.GirlScoutsToday.org/events and find the upgrades. One new quirk that we are working with GSUSA to fix is that the search radius for events only goes as far as 90-miles. Because we have a large council region, we will be making two events (one from the Waterloo office and one from the Bettendorf office) to ensure that all members searching from our calendar will find all open events. So if you see two versions of an event, sign up for one. It doesn't matter which event – we will combine the rosters for both. If you are searching from My GS, you will likely only see one event. Hopefully, soon, this bug will be corrected!

7. Your Blueprint for an Amazing Troop Year

Have you had a chance to check out the information on our website called [Your Blueprint for an Amazing Troop Year](#)? You can keep your troop going strong with these specially adapted badges, Journeys, and activities for virtual and safe in-person meetings, as well as current COVID-19 guidelines and resources. It is broken down by the six age levels and multilevel as well. Every quarter, GSUSA designs more badge activities that have been adapted to help you. Check out all the latest information to help you as a leader.

8. Recognitions

Don't forget! The deadline for getting your Service Unit nominations in for volunteer recognitions is February 1, 2021. Your Service Unit Plan of Work has a check-off if the Service Unit nominates at least two volunteers for an award. That is not just for the higher awards like Appreciation, Honor and Thanks Badge. Think of all the leaders that finished up cookie sales during COVID, who started hosting Zoom meetings for their troops during COVID, those that stepped up to take on additional girls or start a troop so girls would have the opportunity to be a part of Girl Scouts during COVID. These leaders deserve the Volunteer of Excellence pin! Beyond Troop Leaders, what has your Service Unit team done during this time like hosting drive-thrus or virtual events or even virtual camp. Any way a volunteer stepped up during COVID is deserving of the Appreciation pin. If you are considering nominating someone and unsure what level of an award it should be, do not hesitate to contact Claudia by emailing Info@GirlScoutsToday.org.

9. Virtual Troops

If you missed our recent webinar on Zoom Virtual Troop Meetings, Tips and Tricks, check out this [recording](#) of the session. Our volunteers Michele VanderHorn and Shelley Kamp did a great job explaining all the dos and don'ts to succeed in the virtual troop world. Meeting virtually does work and a great way to connect with your families and run Service Unit events.

10. Zomm Licenses

We are still offering Zoom licenses for troops to meet virtually through July 31, 2021. If your troop is interested, visit www.girlscoutstoday.org/events or contact us at info@girlscoutstoday.org. We will need your name, phone number, email, and the email you want to use on your zoom account. You cannot use the same email on two zoom accounts.

P.S. Don't Forget the Gift of Girl Scouts!

Troop Leaders, it is not too late to support your Girl Scout sisters and make a troop donation to the Gift of Girl Scouts. Remember, when a troop donates, every girl will receive the Gift of Girl Scouts patch. Please remember the Gift of Girl Scouts when doing your goal setting for selling cookies. Your donations will be appreciated throughout the year.

Upcoming Events

[Virtual Cookie Rallies](#) | January 16, 2021

[New Leader Webinar](#) | January 12, 2021

Troop Initial Order | January 13, 2021

[gsLive](#) | January 19, 2021

[Summer Camp Sign Up](#) | February 1, 2021

[Recognition Nominations Due](#) | February 1, 2021

Cookie Booths (all options!) | February 5, 2021

Keep Updated

Website – www.girlscoutstoday.org

Email – info@girlscoutstoday.org

Phone – 800-798-0833

Facebook – www.Facebook.com/gseiwi

Instagram – www.Instagram.com/gseiwi

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