

## New volunteer conference calls

Sept. 25 – How to finance your troop

### **When do I discuss the troop start up fees and how much does a troop need?**

(Sabrina)- You need to discuss troop fees and the first meeting or what is called the parents meeting. You will collect registration fee, annual fund, and troop start up fee. The troop start up fee is different from the annual registration fee of \$10. The membership fee of \$10 covers the registration of a member and is sent to the national headquarters in New York. The start up fee can be collected for supplies needed as a new troop begins. The start up fee is asked of parents one time and is generally \$10 per girl.

**If my parents or I have business contacts can we ask them for money to start our troop?** (Brenda)- Before soliciting businesses for financial support it is important to come up with a troop budget. Most troops are able to finance their troop programs with troop dues and proceeds from product sales (cookies, candy, nuts or calendars). However, it is important to have a basic idea of what the troop's financial needs are for the year. Generally, local (family owned) businesses are OK to ask for troop support. If you are thinking about asking other types of businesses it is best to contact [fund development](#) first to avoid any type of conflict with council solicitations.

**What if a business or church wants to be a sponsor of our troop and give us \$250 dollars, may we accept this?** (Sabrina & Brenda)- Yes, a business or church may sponsor your troop. For tax receipt purposes gifts of \$250 or more should be sent to the Atlanta Service Center with a letter stating that the funds are to be designated as a troop donation. Troops should send documentation of how the check should be made out and where the check should be mailed.

**Can people or business get a tax write-off for supporting our troop?** (Brenda)- The council is a 501c3 organization, individual troops are not. In order for a business or individual to be able to claim the donation as a tax deduction the donation should be made out to the council. The donation would then be treated as a troop donation. The council is required by IRS guidelines to send an acknowledgement letter for tax purposes to donors who donate at a \$250 or more.

**Can businesses donate items to my troop like craft supplies or snacks?** (Brenda)- Again, it is best to only ask local or family owned businesses for these types of items. Remember that in your area there may be 30 or 40 troops, many of which may be thinking about asking the same company to make a donation to their troop. Your service unit director will have a good idea of businesses in the area that have traditionally been supportive of Girl Scouts. Sabrina-You may find it just as beneficial to ask parents or grandparents to donate these items to the troop. It is again a great way to have parents and families get involved with troop support.

**Where do we keep troop funds?** (Sabrina)- Troop funds should be maintained in a troop bank account. The guidelines for opening a bank account are being revised and will be presented to volunteers shortly. Your area service unit director will assist you in

obtaining the form to open the account. The council requires two signatures of each troop account. Again the treasurer for the troop should be one and this is an excellent volunteer position for a parent. The treasurer should provide a financial report to the parents of the troop three times a year. A volunteer can choose any bank they feel comfortable using. It is always best to check fees assessed to the account in making a determination.

**What council sponsored money earning activities does the council offer?** (Sabrina)- Troops can participate in council sponsored calendar sale for former GSNWGA members, candies and nuts for former Pine Valley and both get to take part in the ever popular Girl Scout Cookie Sale Program.

**How does my troop participate in the Girl Scout Calendar sale?** (Sabrina)- The service unit provides order packets or you can obtain them from the Girl Scout Badge & Sash Store. Candy and nut sale? (Shirley)- The volunteers of the former Pine Valley GS council only have the option to partake in the candy and nut sale. Information and training was given by the service units in this region of our council.

**How does my troop participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Sale Program?** (Anita)- Each troop should identify a volunteer to act as the troop cookie manager. All troop cookie managers are required to attend training with the cookie manager for the service unit. At the training, the troop cookie manager (TCM) will receive all the materials and resource information for your troop to participate in the cookie program.

**I am a Girl Scout Daisy troop leader and my friend used to be in the Girl Scouts. She told me Girl Scout Daisies cannot sale cookies. Is this true?** (Anita)- This is the first year that Girl Scout Daisies will be allowed to participate in the cookie program. Check with your service unit cookie manager or service unit director for more information.

**How much money can my troop earn from the cookie sale?** (Anita)- The amount that troops can earn is based on the number of cases sold. Your troop will get more information on troop proceeds as well as the recognitions that girls earn through participating.

**Can my troop do additional fundraisers?** (Sabrina & Anita)- Yes, according to the council policies as long as your troop participates in the cookie sale and submits a Money Earning application for approval. The Troop Money Earning form is located on the Web site under the [forms button](#). But remember whenever you are soliciting businesses, to contact the fund development department first.

**So if we don't participate in the cookie sale we can't do additional fundraisers?** (Sabrina & Anita)- This is correct. Funds from our annual cookie program helps us continue to provide quality service to our volunteers and girl members, as well as maintain our camp properties and facilities, program events and volunteer training. Sabrina- Doing a lot of fundraisers is not where the focus should be for the girls either.

**How do I decide what to do with troop funds?** (Sabrina)- Troop budget should be discussed with the girls early on in the year. The leaders of the troop may want to look at the council's [event guide](#) and inquire about service unit events before presenting possible options to the girls to help decide. Remember these are troop funds and do not belong to any one girl, however the girls should be part of the planning process. Be realistic when planning and help girls understand why some options may not be possible. The council also offers a money management class that may be taken on-line to help clarify these troop money matters.

**What kind of financial reports does my troop need to keep and who needs to see them?** (Sabrina) – The troop treasurer should provide a financial report to the parents three times a year. The council requires a troop to complete an end of the year report to submit to the service unit director. The form is located on the Web site under the [forms button](#).

### **Questions from volunteers participating in the call:**

**If a troop disbands and the girls transfer to new troops, can the troop funds go with them to the new troops?**

Yes, this is a good procedure. Troop funds do not belong to one girl for individual use, but can be given to the new troop she is joining to add to that troop's bank account.

**Where can I find affordable activities to plan with my girls?** The council publishes an event guide of programs divided by grade level. The council sponsors these programs and most have nominal fees. The service unit also offers local events for girls in the area that have low fee. Visiting the service unit meetings and speaking with other leaders is also a great way to locate low cost activities.

**How do I receive the bank account form?** Once you have turned in the registrations for a troop, you will be given a troop number, usually within a week. You may then let the service unit director know once you are ready to open the account.

**How much money does it take to open the account?** This varies between banks, usually ranging from \$50 to \$100.

**Is the annual fund a donation made 1 per family?** Yes, we ask \$40 from each Girl Scout family, but are appreciative of any donation a family is able to make.

**Can people be reimbursed for items they purchase for the troop?** Yes, the treasurer or leader can receive and track the receipts form a purchase.

**Can a troop have multiple troop cookie chairs?** Yes, however there will only be one set of materials and this should definitely be communicated to the service unit cookie manager. Parents can also assist on cookie delivery day.

**Do parents wishing to be the troop cookie chair have to complete a volunteer application?** Yes and they must attend the troop cookie chair training provided by the service unit.

**I have received the list of girls to contact for my troop, but I am not sure what fees were paid, what could I do?** Contact the troop organizer or service unit director. They will be able to tell you what each girl has paid.

**Is the \$40 annual fund required?** No it is a donation, but we encourage participation at some level from all families.

**Next new volunteer conference call is Thursday, Oct. 23** – A great Girl Scout Cookie Sale – use your imagination!