



Lafayette
Girl Scouts
Resource Guide
2010-2011
Revised August 2010

The Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:
To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

The Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,
and to
respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scout.

Dear New and Returning Leaders,

Welcome to the wonderful world of Girl Scouting! You are reading this guide because you have volunteered to work in a leadership role of a Girl Scout Troop. Thank you and congratulations on having the interest in today's girls - the leaders of tomorrow! Girl Scouting has the wonderful tradition of encouraging all girls of different abilities, backgrounds, and interests to learn to grow into the adults that they were meant to be. Girl Scout programs offer girls the opportunity to learn many new skills as diverse as kayaking and knitting, as well as opportunities to become active members of our community. Community service projects have included making bag lunches for homeless school children, sewing blankets for newborn infants at Children's Hospital, and organizing fun events for other Girl Scouts.

We know that sounds like a daunting task - What Me? I'm supposed to take these little girls and do all that?! Don't worry. You are not alone: Your School Organizer, Lafayette Coordinating Team, Girl Scouts of Northern California Council (GSNC), Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA), and even the world-wide Girl Scouts Organization (WAGGGS) are ready and willing to help you! There are literally thousands of people, books, training sessions, and websites that are created expressly for you! Please read the information in this resource guide, take all the free training that is required/offered, and most importantly, meet and work with other leaders at your school. The Lafayette Leader Meetings are the best opportunity to get together with the rest of the leaders in Lafayette. And, please remember...your talents, endless efforts, and love will make a real difference in the life of a child. We don't know of a Girl Scout leader that has ever regretted taking on this job.

This resource guide has been developed to assist new and existing leaders and is intended to be your guide throughout the coming Girl Scout year. For us to be effective, we need good communication. To succeed as a Girl Scout volunteer, you need to know where to turn for assistance. This guide is intended to be your index ... to direct you toward the best resource to answer your questions and give you some basic information about the Girl Scout organization and how it all fits together!

In this guide you will find procedural information for leaders in Lafayette. References will be made to Council resources and our website where appropriate. It is not our intent to duplicate information from other sources but, rather to compile a comprehensive list of resources as well as document those things specific to our city. Please feel free to call any Lafayette Coordinating Team member if you have any questions!

Welcome!

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OVERVIEW OF ORGANIZATION - HOW IT FITS TOGETHER

Reference: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials

Our Organization

Confused by the jargon and acronyms bandied about at leader meetings and in the newsletter? Brand new to Girl Scouting? Here's a brief overview of our organization and how it fits into the big picture of Girl Scouts.

Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA) is the national organization and is divided into over 100 councils nationwide. Our Council is the Girl Scouts of Northern California or (GSNC). This council covers areas in: San Francisco Bay Area, Napa/Solano, Konocti, Sierra Cascade and Santa Clara - and is divided into Service Units.

All Girl Scout troops in Lafayette are considered part of the Lafayette Service Unit (#326). Our Service Unit consists of over 60 Daisy, Brownie, Junior, Cadette, Senior and Ambassador level troops, as well as individual Girl Scouts (Juliette's).

The governing body of the Lafayette Service Unit (LSU) is called the Lafayette Coordinating Team (LCT). It consists of volunteers and one Council employee. The LCT is the group that keeps the Lafayette Service Unit running. The team meets monthly to determine appropriate local program/events for girls, ensure accurate and timely paperwork, manage the budget, plan leader meetings, disseminate information and communicate with Council.

The LCT is divided by functions.

- The Membership Coordinator, appointed by Council staff, directs the work of the service unit in organizing troops and supporting leaders within Lafayette.
- The Service Unit Director, appointed by Council staff, oversees the day-to-day running of the service unit and handles operational issues. In Lafayette, we sometimes have two SUDs, one to focus on Program and one to focus on Communications.

Each Service Unit in our Council has a Council employee called a Community Development Director (CDD). She acts as our liaison between the Lafayette Service Unit and the Council office and is present at all LCT meetings.

All members of our LCT can be wonderful resources. Feel free to contact any of them with questions or concerns you may have. Look on our website for job descriptions and for a current LCT roster.

Our Purpose

GSUSA Mission

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

GSNC Vision, Strategic Goals (adopted 2008)

Vision: We create opportunities girls want and experiences that change lives

Goals:

See page 2 of the Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials (CRG: VE) for a listing of the Strategic Goals for Girl Scouts of Northern California.

Lafayette Service Unit Purpose

The Lafayette Girl Scout Service Unit helps nurture and grow the local Girl Scout movement, and supports local Girl Scout leaders in their efforts to provide leadership and personal development opportunities for girls.

Lafayette Service Unit Goals and Objectives

In order to fulfill our purpose Lafayette has developed three primary goals and a number of objectives to meet those goals. The goals and objectives are reviewed and modified annually (usually at the August meeting). Our current goals and objectives include the following:

- Recruit and retain girls
 - ❖ Recruit new girls to Girl Scouts

- ❖ Retain girls that we have recruited
- Recruit, retain, and support leaders and volunteers
 - ❖ Proactively recruit leaders and volunteers
 - ❖ Welcome new leaders and volunteers
 - ❖ Provide on-going training
 - ❖ Provide clear communication
 - ❖ Provide resources to leaders
 - ❖ Recognize leaders' and volunteers' achievements
- Develop a presence in the community
 - ❖ Involve parents and families of Girl Scouts
 - ❖ Create community partnerships
 - ❖ Be visible in the community

Additionally, at our September meeting, the Lafayette Coordinating Team develops an action plan to meet our goals and objectives and throughout the year we review our progress monthly. You can find the current action plan on our website.

Our Operations

Calendar

The Lafayette Coordinating Team produces a calendar at the beginning of the year. It lists all LCT and Leader meetings as well as other Lafayette and Council events. It is available on our website.

Finances

In order to meet the goals and objectives stated above, Lafayette requires an operating budget. The budget covers the costs of expenses such as:

- copying and mailing
- communication expenses (website, Constant Contact)
- donations to the organizations whose space we use during the year
- leader recognition items such as service pins and materials for the leader/volunteer appreciation
- gold award plaque
- financial support for girls attending Destinations
- financial assistance for girls needing books, uniforms, etc

Lafayette Girl Scouts also has a program budget. This is the budget for all of our events. Each event is budgeted separately and expected to break even. If an event goes over budget, Lafayette Girl Scouts may be asked to supplement the event's budget and if there is money leftover at the conclusion of an event, the overage will remain in our budget.

Lafayette Girl Scouts receives income from a few sources each year:

- a bonus from the Council when we exceed our Family Partnership campaign goal
- a bonus from the Council when our cookie sales increase
- donations from the community
- troop contributions (collected at registration)
- Lafayette Girl Scouts fundraisers (recent fundraisers were purchases at candy store or pottery decorating or dinners at local restaurants where we earned a percentage of the purchase/meal).

All of the income we receive funds our operating budget, with the exception of the cookie bonus. The cookie bonus is used for programs and events for girls.

A copy of the current year budget is available on our website.

GIRLS – WHY WE ARE HERE!

All About Girl Scouting

The Girl Scout program is girl-driven, reflecting the ever-changing needs and interests of participating girls. It provides girls with a wide variety of opportunities, increases skill building, and responsibility; and promotes development of decision-making skills.

Girl Scouting at All Levels

Daisy Girl Scouts

Daisy Girl Scouts, grades K-1, learn and have fun in small-group activities that expand their world.

Brownie Girl Scouts

Brownie Girl Scouts, grades 2-3, enjoy a program that appeals to their wide-ranging curiosity and desire to be helpful. They may earn Try-It badges for participation in special activities.

Junior Girl Scouts

Junior Girl Scouts, grades 4-5, focus on five areas: well-being, people, today and tomorrow, arts and out-of-doors. They may earn badges to indicate growth and progress and earn the Girl Scout Bronze Award.

Cadette Girl Scouts

Cadette Girl Scouts, grades 6-8, prepare for their adult roles and may participate in national and international Girl Scout events. They may do intensive work on interest projects, explore careers, pursue community service, and earn the Girl Scout Silver Award.

Senior Girl Scouts

Senior Girl Scouts, grades 9-10, can explore group activities in arts, community action and career exploration. They also may work with adults and younger Girl Scouts, participate in national and international Girl Scout events and earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, Girl Scouting's highest national honor.

Ambassador Girl Scouts

Ambassador Girl Scouts, grades 11-12, is a newly defined level of girl scouting. Similar to Senior Girl Scouts, ambassadors work with adults and younger Girl Scouts, participate in national and international Girl Scout events and earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, Girl Scouting's highest national honor.

School Organizers – A critical role

School Organizers work with the Membership Coordinator and Community Development Director to put girls, troops, and leaders together to provide a successful Girl Scout program. They help form new troops at all levels and work with existing troops to problem solve, blend troops, place girls during mid-year with ongoing troops, etc.

There are currently School Organizers at Burton Valley, Happy Valley, Lafayette, Springhill, Stanley, and St. Perpetua, in addition to an organizer who works with all Senior and Ambassador troops. We also have an Organizer focusing on Juliettes.

Recruiting – How we do it

Each School Organizer recruits at her assigned school(s). Tables at back-to-school days, flyers, and announcements in the school newsletter are all ways School Organizers get the word out about Girl Scouts.

A waiting list will be created and maintained by the School Organizer when a girl is interested in joining and there is not a spot for her in a troop.

When a leader is approached to add a new girl to her troop she must go through the School Organizer. Girls on the waiting list have the highest priority to join a troop when a spot is made available.

Size of Troops

Troops should be large enough to provide experience in self-government and small enough to allow for the development of the individual girl. Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials – Chapter 4: Safety Wise defines these numbers by age group.

LEADERS – HOW TO GET INFORMATION?

Leader Meetings

Leader meetings are held a three times each year for all troop leaders or their representatives to receive information and discuss issues, events, and activities. All troops should plan to have **at least one** adult representative (leader/co-leader/registered adult) at **every** meeting. This is the primary way for the Lafayette Coordinating Team to get information to troop leaders and feedback on current programs. It is also a great way for leaders to interact and share information with other leaders. See the calendar for meeting dates.

School Organizer

The School Organizer is there to help you! Along with recruiting and placing girls into troops, part of their job is to provide some guidance for new leaders and troops. If they don't have the answer, at least they can steer you in the right direction.

Lafayette Coordinating Team Meetings

The Lafayette Coordinating Team meets monthly. This is the time during which the team does its work – planning leader meetings, getting updates on events, finding out what is going on at schools and in troops from the school organizers, etc. – basically the general running of Lafayette girl scouts. These meetings are open to all interested adult members. Please feel free to join us – just call the Service Unit Director.

Resource Guide

The LCT has produced a resource guide. In this guide you will find procedure information for Girl Scout leaders in Lafayette. References will be made to Council resources and our website where appropriate. It is not our intent to duplicate information from other sources but, rather to compile a comprehensive list of resources as well as document those things specific to Lafayette. It is updated each fall. It is distributed to new leaders and is available on our website for returning leaders to download the newest version. Please forward any comments or corrections to the Service Unit Director.

Website (www.lafayettegirlscouts.org)

Our website is a great source of the most current information. Check our website for information on Lafayette news and events. Find ideas for field trips and troop projects. You can print the calendar, troop and leader roster, LCT roster as well as the Resource Guide and forms. New information is added regularly; check the Current News page for the latest news.

Please note that some web pages or forms may require a password. The password will be distributed at the Fall Leader Meeting. Your School Organizer can give you the password if you need it. The password is intended for leaders only and is not meant to be given to all parents.

Calendar

The LCT calendar lists all LCT and Leader meetings as well as all other Lafayette and Council events. It is available on our website. Please forward any calendar updates to the Service Unit Director.

Troop and Leader Roster

One of the best ways to find out information about Girl Scouts is to talk to another leader. The Troop and Leader Roster is available on our website. The roster is only as good as the information on it so please inform the Registrar of any changes. Please remember that this list is for Girl Scout use only.

Lafayette Coordinating Team (LCT) Roster

The LCT is here to help you and the roster contains a list of all positions and the volunteers filling the positions in the current year. The LCT Roster is available on our website. The roster is only as good as the information on it so please inform the Service Unit Director of any changes. Please remember that this list is for Girl Scout use only.

Email Announcements & Newsletters

From time to time the LCT will send email announcements (reminders of leader meetings, information about events, updates on procedures, etc.). These announcements may be sent to all leaders, specific levels of leaders or all adults.

The Lafayette Service Unit (like many of the Lafayette schools) uses the web-based service Constant Contact to facilitate maintenance of our email list and delivery of our newsletter and email announcements.

Registered adults, parents, and other interested parties may sign-up by going to our website. At any time a recipient may change their email address or remove themselves from the email list by following the instructions at the bottom of any newsletter or email.

The LCT will add all parents in a new troop to the electronic email list. Once the troop has been added it is up to the leaders and the parents to maintain their information. They may do it themselves as described above, or contact the Subscription Manager.

GSNC Resources

The Council has many ways to get information. Be sure to sign up for Council's Monday Mailing (sign up on the GSNC website) in order to receive council's electronic newsletter. Refer to the **Available Resources Section** for more information.

TROOP MANAGEMENT

Where do I Start?

Thinking of starting a troop? Be sure to talk your School Organizer!

Then, go to the website for the 10 easy steps and you'll be on your way to providing opportunities that girls want and experiences that change lives!

www.GirlScoutsNorCal.org/newleader

Training

Reference: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials – Chapter 1: Sharing Your Unique Gifts.

Each Girl Scout troop must have at least one registered and trained adult who assumes primary responsibility for that troop. Please note that co-op troops require more trained adults as one “leader” present must always have the required training. See the **Training – It’s Critical to Your Success Section** in this guide for more information. Note that most trainings are available online or for home study.

Troop Meeting Places

Girl Scout meetings may be held in any safe, convenient location. Lafayette troops use schools (note: policies vary by school), churches, and homes. If held in an approved public place (such as a school or community center), the Girl Scout insurance will cover all registered members. If a meeting is held in a private home, the homeowner’s policy would be the primary coverage, and Girl Scout insurance would be secondary in the event of an accident. Be sure to review Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials – Chapter 3: Engaging Girls at All Grade Levels.

If your troop has a meeting away from your regular troop meeting place or at a different time than your regular troop meeting time, it is considered a trip and must follow the trip planning procedures found in the **Troop Program – Trip Planning Section** of this guide.

Uniforms

Reference: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials –Chapter 1: Sharing your Unique Gifts

The Girl Scout uniform says “I belong.” A uniform, however, is not required for participation in Girl Scout activities. The Girl Scout pin is all that is technically needed to be “in uniform.” But, if a troop is participating in a public ceremony, we strongly encourage that, at a minimum, the girls wear a vest or sash to readily identify them as members of the Girl Scout organization. Uniform and insignia location information is available at the GSUSA website (www.girlscouts.org).

A list of local retailers that carry Girl Scout uniforms, books and supplies is available in the Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials.

Troop Finances

Reference: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials – Chapter 5: Managing Group Finances

All Girl Scout troops in Lafayette should have a troop checking account. A bank account is required when troop funds exceed \$100. Council has very specific procedures for setting up a bank account. See the Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials for information on how to set up an account.

Each troop develops and administers its own budget. The budget is based on the troop’s plans for the year. Girls should be part of the troop planning and budget process. Accurate, ongoing records of a troop’s financial operations, including all receipts, must be kept.

The troop treasurer is accountable to the troop members, the troop parents, the Lafayette Service Unit and GSNC. A Troop Financial Report must be completed at the end of the Girl Scout year and turned in, along with a copy of the troop’s most recent bank statement, to the Lafayette Treasurer.

It is important to remember that the troop treasury is maintained in the name of Girl Scouts to provide service to girls; it does not belong to individual girls. A final accounting must be made so that everyone knows how the money was spent and what is to be done with any unused money. Troops are encouraged to use money in the current year, but excess funds may be used as “seed money” for the following year. Funds can be accumulated for two or three years to pay for an expensive activity or trip as long as the girls and their parents are kept informed of the funds and the long-term plans.

If a troop disbands (or splits) for any reason, the Council has clear guidelines regarding what is to be done with the troop treasury. See the Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials for more information.

Parent Volunteers

Reference: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials

Registration

Encourage all adults who want to be involved and work with the girls in any way to register as adult Girl Scouts. Registration ensures that they are covered by accident insurance. If they are not registered you will need to purchase additional insurance any time they wish to attend troop meetings and functions. It is the responsibility of the troop leader to ensure that girls are always supervised by an adequate number of registered and screened adults.

Volunteer Paperwork

All adults who work with your troop must file volunteer paperwork, including volunteer application and fingerprinting or criminal background check. They must also be registered girl scouts.

The paperwork must be on file at the Council before any volunteer can work with the girls in your troop. If you have questions contact the Adult Screening Specialist at adultscreening@girlscoutsnorcal.org.

Drivers

Volunteers who want to transport girls must provide license and insurance information in addition to the volunteer paperwork above. Again, you must obtain this information before they drive any girls in your troop.

Note: driver information must be updated annually and kept within the troop.

Tell the world – Recognize your girls’ efforts and accomplishments!

Your girls deserve to be recognized for their efforts and accomplishments, even if it is only by their families.

The Lafayette Coordinating Team encourages you to take it a step further and tell your school, other troops, the community, the Council, and even GSUSA. Refer to the **Community – Telling the Girl Scout Story Section** for contacts and resources.

Safety Wise – Now Part of Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials and web Safety Activity Checkpoints (New for 2010-2011)

Resource: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials – Chapter 4: Safety-Wise

You’ll hear people mention that “you need to follow Safety-Wise”. Content from the first six chapters from that book is included in the Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials and guidelines for specific activities are found in the Safety Activity Checkpoints on the Council website.

Reference the Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials for any additional requirements GSNC has for activities.

Insurance

Resource: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials

All registered members of Girl Scouts, both girls and adults, are covered by accident insurance.

Events in which non-registered people are attending (parent, siblings, etc.) or activities lasting 3 nights or more require the purchase of special insurance. It is inexpensive! Contact the Council office, at least two weeks prior to the event. Mutual of Omaha now has a website where insurance for events may be ordered: www.mutualofomaha.com/gsusu.

Claims forms are available from Council and are included in your new troop packet. Keep a claim form with you at all troop functions. A good place to store a claim form is in your first aid kit. Submit claims forms to the Council office (NOT the insurance company).

Privacy of Health Information

The privacy of health information is very important and recent federal legislation has focused on how this information is handled. Both the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and HIPAA (Health Information Privacy Protection Act) mandate that medical information and personal information are kept in a secure place and only disclosed to those that have a legitimate need to know. This applies to information about minors as well as about adults.

Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials – Chapter 4: Safety Wise requires leaders to collect health information for girls, adults, and volunteers participating in various activities like sports, trips, and camping. In April of 2003, the Council adopted health information privacy procedures for staff and volunteers, as required by law.

Definition of Personal Information: This includes all information such as names, addresses, social security numbers, lists of prescription medication, doctor's notes, health records, immunization records, etc.

Maintenance of Records: Leaders/first aiders should keep all health forms in a private, secure location where they cannot be accessed by others. One inexpensive way to do this is to keep medical forms in a confidential envelope, tape it shut, and write your name over the tape and envelope to ensure no one has access. If you have access to more sophisticated methods, like locked cabinets or a locking briefcase, please use those to store this very sensitive information.

Confidentiality: Information about anyone's health, medications, or health history should not be shared with anyone who does not have a legitimate need to know. This includes friends, family, parents, troop leaders, and other children. For example, if a parent asks a leader/first aider which children are on anti-depressants, the leader/first aider should not share this information. A leader/first aider or anyone else with medical knowledge about a child or adult should not discuss the condition with his or her friends or family, unless there is a legitimate informational need.

When you can share information: A legitimate need might be sharing that one of the girls contracted bacterial meningitis or some other communicable disease. In this case, it would be vital for the information to be communicated to anyone who had contact with the person. If an adult appeared to be suffering from shock during an event and someone knew of a medical condition they had, it would be important to share that with a first aid trained person or emergency medical technician. Sharing medical information with appropriate authorities in cases involving abuse or neglect would also be appropriate.

Privacy of Membership Information

The release and distribution of Girl Scout membership information (including troop and Lafayette rosters) is prohibited except upon approval of GSUSA as stated in the Blue Book of Basic Documents.

Conflict Resolution & Grievance

Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials – Welcome to Girl Scouts of Northern California

The Lafayette Service Unit and Council recognize the importance of providing a prompt and efficient procedure for the resolution of conflicts and grievances. Listed below are a series of steps to help in conflict resolution. See the Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials for more information on the grievance procedure.

- The first place to start solving problems is at the troop level. Parents and leaders working together can often resolve disputes quickly and directly.
- If the problem cannot be resolved at the troop level, or it is not appropriate for the situation, the School Organizer should be contacted for assistance.
- The Membership Coordinator is the next resource in the problem resolution process.
- The Service Unit Director provides another avenue for resolving conflicts when the previous steps prove ineffective or inappropriate.
- The Community Development Director should be contacted when all other attempts at resolving the conflict have failed.

In ALL steps, notify the person you are accountable to of the situation as it develops. This will help your advisor/supervisor understand the situation if/when the person with the conflict contacts them directly.

Crisis Plan

Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials –Chapter 4: Safety-Wise

Per the Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials a crisis is defined as: an incident of a serious nature that occurs during a Girl Scout activity. For example:

- fatality
- serious injury
- allegation of tampering with products sold
- threat of legal action
- bus or car accident involving Girl Scouts during Girl Scout activities
- allegation of child molestation or rape
- lost participant
- kidnapping
- other occurrences that may have adverse media or legal implications.

The Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials has a list of specific actions to take in event of a crisis. Familiarize yourself with these steps and be sure to carry a Crisis Card with you at all times. The Crisis Card is updated each year with current contact numbers and is distributed at the fall Leader Meeting. It is also available on our website.

Be sure that you and your parent chaperones are familiar with the Council and Lafayette Crisis Plans. We require that you provide a copy of the Crisis Card to all drivers when taking a trip, along with a copy of each girl's permission slip and health form.

Remember that, under no circumstances do you ever talk to the press – refer them to Council.

Rosters, Forms and Publications

Below is a sampling of rosters, forms and publications that may be downloaded from our website:

ROSTERS

- Lafayette Coordinating Team (LCT) Roster
- Troop and Leader Roster

FORMS

- Financial Reimbursement Form
- Interest/Event Application
- Service Patch Order Form
- Trip or High Risk Activity Form
- Annual Permission Form

Additionally, you will find a link to the Council website for other Council forms.

PUBLICATIONS

- Resource Guide
- Action Plan
- Budget
- Calendar
- Organization Chart
- Job Descriptions

To access some of these documents you will need a password, provided at the Fall Leader Meeting or from your School Organizer. You will also need Adobe Reader, available for free, from www.adobe.com.

TRAINING – IT’S CRITICAL TO YOUR SUCCESS!

Resources: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essential-- Chapter 1: Sharing your Unique Gifts

Every leader must have basic training from GSNC. The best reason to go to training is networking with other leaders! Great ideas come from the trainers and from the other leaders. As your troop becomes more adventurous, the leader or troop helpers will be required to take additional training classes. This is a great chance to learn from the experiences of other troops and expert trainers. However, you also have the option of doing most of the classes online.

Council Training

Required Classes

At a minimum, the leader responsible for the troop must complete these classes:

- *GSUSA Orientation (online or home study – must be completed before meeting with girls)*
- *Getting Started (online or home study– must be completed before meeting with girls)*
- *Staying Safe (online or home study– must be completed before meeting with girls)*
- *Leadership Essentials (in person, online or home study – must be completed within 4 months of appointment as GS volunteer)*

It is also highly recommended that leaders take *Leadership Training for Levels* (Daisy, Brownie, Junior, or Teen Advisor).

Additional Training

As troops move to do activities beyond the meeting place, additional training may be required. First Aid/ CPR training is required for certain activities per Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials. Other adults in the troop besides the leader may be trained for specific activities, i.e. camping trips.

Lafayette Training

Training at Leader Meetings

Throughout the year the LCT will include training during leader meetings. The topics can range from procedures, Girl Scout program to Girl Scout traditions, and more. Contact the Service Unit Director if you have a topic to suggest or would like to provide training.

Product Sales Training

All troop Fall Products and Cookie Sales Chairs are expected to attend training so that they can clearly communicate to their troops the procedures and deadlines that must be followed.

Event Planning Training

If you, your troop, or girls in your troop are going to plan a Lafayette event you must attend the Council Event Director Training (in person, online or home study). You also must follow the Lafayette Event Guide. Contact the Event Coordinator for Lafayette for details.

Discoveree

The Council offers a full day of training to adults and Senior Girl Scouts each year. Classes are offered in crafts, games, songs, outdoor skills, planning skills, program ideas, personal enrichment, and many, many more areas. You do not have to be a leader to attend Discoveree. Invite your troop’s parents to attend and come back with ideas for the coming year.

TROOP PROGRAM

Girl-Adult Partnership

The Girl Scout program is a progressive girl-adult partnership. At the beginning, when the girls are Daisys, the adults are making the majority of the decisions, planning, and preparing for the activities. However, by the time the girls are Seniors and Ambassadors, they should be leading their troop while the adults are there to ensure they are safe.

Troop Activities and Ideas

Troop Meetings

The place to start – there is so much to do: talk, play games, sing, work on Try-Its, badges, and interest projects, plan, create, and just have fun.

Need more ideas? Check out the Council program resource material. These materials are intended to supplement the programs and handbooks provided by GSUSA. A complete listing is available on the Council website.

Out & About

Looking to do something beyond your meeting place?

Check our website for a list of places to go in the local area and beyond.

The Council offers special activities and events. For information regarding a Council event, see the Choices publication mailed to all leaders in the fall and is on the council website. These events are open to the entire Council and fill up quickly! If there is an event you would like to attend, it is advisable to register early.

Lafayette also offers special activities and events. See the **Events Section** in this guide for more information and participation guidelines.

Make sure you review the **Trip Planning Section** in this guide before you venture away from your meeting place.

Outdoor Experiences

One of the best sources for outdoor adventures in our area is the East Bay Regional Parks District. They publish a catalog of activities bi-monthly which is bundled with the local newspaper. If you miss it in the paper, you can order a copy by calling 510-562-PARK or visiting their website at www.ebparks.org.

Also approved for Girl Scout outings are National Parks, State Parks, and members of the ACA (American Camping Association). Our Council also operates several campgrounds in the Bay Area. The Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials has an inventory of camp and property locations as well as site descriptions and reservation details.

Girl Scouting Special Days

- October 31st is Juliette Low's Birthday. She was the founder of Girl Scouts in the United States.
- February 22nd is the birthday of both Lord and Lady Baden Powell, the founders of the worldwide Scouting movement, and is celebrated by Girl Scouts as "Thinking Day." It is a day set aside to reflect on Girl Scouts and Girl Guides throughout the world.
- March 12 is considered the Girl Scout Birthday, as it marks the date the first troop meeting was held in 1912.
- April 22 is Leader Appreciation Day.

Stuff for Older Girls

Destinations

Destinations are experiences for "older girls" (older Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors) that occur outside the usual program activities. Destinations may be Council-wide, regional, national or international. GSUSA coordinates a national program that provides unique experiences for girls' ages 11-17. This program places girls in events sponsored by councils throughout the United States, as well as special projects and encampments around the world. Information meetings are held in early fall.

Applications are submitted to the Council office. All applicants are interviewed and screened by the Destinations Committee at Council. If recommended, the applications are forwarded to the selection committees for the individual events.

Community Service

Reference: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials – What Girl Scouts Do!

Service is an important element of the Girl Scout program. All troops are encouraged to seek out opportunities for service within our community. Service projects may be a troop, Lafayette-wide, or part of a Council-wide effort. The Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials has a link to their website that lists many different types of service projects in which girls can become involved.

The Service Unit Director will keep leaders informed of service projects and events taking place throughout our local community and Council areas via the leader meetings, website and newsletter. On the What's New page of the website you will also find a link to a listing of current community needs.

Lafayette Community Service Patch

The beautiful, triangular Lafayette Service Patches and dated annual rockers are available to all troops who have completed service projects during the year: benefitting the community, the environment or Girl Scouts. Not only do they signify each girl's service accomplishments, but they are also a great way to show affiliation with other troops in Lafayette. Orders are generally due in mid March. The [Lafayette Patch Order Form](#) and [Service Rocker Patch Order Form](#) are available on our website. Contact the Service Patch Coordinator with any questions.

Money Earning Projects

Reference: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials –Chapter 5: Managing Group Finances

Council Product Sales

GSNC sponsors two annual product sales, The Fall Sale and the Girl Scout Cookie Sale, during the year. These girl programs provide financial resources to the participating troops and Council. The majority of troops rely on this money to fund most of their program for the year.

Troop Money Earning Projects

Troops must participate in **both** Council sales in order to participate in any additional money earning projects. There ARE additional requirements and troops must file an application, satisfy a number of pre-requisites and complete an evaluation. See the Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials for more information.

Trip Planning

Reference: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials – Chapter 4: Safety-Wise

Many Girl Scout troops take trips as part of their program activities. A trip is defined as any time a group has an activity at a location other than the regularly scheduled meeting place. Check Safety Wise before planning any trip, it can help you determine if your troop is ready to participate in Troop Travel. Safety Wise also outlines activities that are considered High Risk. The Council Resource Guide describes the training, trip approval forms, and insurance required.

The Annual Permission Form is a useful form to have your parents complete. It provides emergency contact information and permission information that can be used throughout the year. If you use this form, additional permission slips are not required for Council events, Lafayette events, or any six hour or less field trip within one-hour's driving time of your meeting place.

The Trip or High-Risk Activity Form is a useful planning tool and are also required for some trips. See below for approval requirements. Remember that the Lafayette Coordinating Team needs to be notified about ANY trip. A simple email notification about a field trip is fine if you are using annual permission forms, otherwise forward the permission slip or Trip or High-Risk Activity Form. All trip notifications should go to the Service Unit Director.

Field Trip

Annual Permission Form or Permission Slips must be used, send notification to the Service Unit Director

Trip or High-Risk Activity Form NOT required for:

Lafayette sponsored events (skating party, songfest, workshops)

Council sponsored events (from Choices publication)

Field trips within one hour's driving time from meeting place and not exceeding six hours

But, an email notification must be sent to the Service Unit Director that the troop is participating in this activity

Trip or High-Risk Activity Form REQUIRED for:

High risk activities (swimming, boating, horseback riding - see Safety Wise)

Field trips longer than six hours or farther than one hour's driving time

Submit to Service Unit Director **two weeks** before trip (allow **four weeks** for High Risk)

Overnight

Permission Slips must be used, send notification to the Service Unit Director

Trip or High-Risk Activity Form NOT required for:

Lafayette sponsored events (camporees)

Council sponsored events (from Choices publication)

But, an email notification must be sent to the Service Unit Director that the troop is participating in this activity

Trip or High-Risk Activity Form REQUIRED for all other overnights

Submit to Service Unit Director **four weeks** before trip (will forward to Council for High Risk, trips outside Northern California and for trips longer than two nights)

International trip

Trip or High-Risk Activity Form REQUIRED

Submit to Service Unit Director one year before trip (will forward to Council)

Summer Camp

Resource: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials

Diablo Day Camp

Diablo Day Camp is a collaboration of 10 local areas. Ten weeks of sessions are run by volunteers at Twin Canyons, right here in Lafayette. One week is also held at Little Hills in San Ramon. See www.diablodaycamp.com for more information.

Two Sentinels Resident Camp

Two Sentinels Resident Camp is a volunteer run camp high in the Sierras. See www.twosentinels.org for more information.

GSNC Council Camps

The Council runs both day camps and resident camps during the summer. The Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials contains a list of our local camps.

LAFAYETTE EVENTS

Make It Happen

If you have an idea for an event for troops in Lafayette, you are welcome and encouraged to make it happen! Planning an event is a great way for older girls to get volunteer hours or for troops to meet other girls in their school or city. Please refer to the **Procedures for Event Planning Section** in this guide for more information on planning an event.

Annual Events

Girl Scout Birthday Skating Party

In March, the Lafayette Girl Scouts celebrate the Girl Scout birthday at an afternoon skating party.

Daisy/Brownie Play Day

Generally held in the spring, this event takes place after school and alternates between a Songfest and a Health Fair.

3rd Grade Brownie Brownoree

This overnight camping experience is usually held at Twin Canyons (a Council property in Lafayette!). Girls who do not wish to spend the night are encouraged to stay through the evening campfire program.

4th/5th Grade Camporee

4th /5th Grade Camporee is a one- to two-night camping event for Juniors in 4th and 5th grade. Troops camp and prepare meals together, then participate in activities with other troops during the day and a campfire at night.

Cadette Camporee

Cadette Camporee is a one- to two-night camping event for Cadettes in grades 6, 7 and 8. Troops camp and prepare meals together, then participate in activities with other troops during the day and a campfire at night.

Brownie Try-It and Junior Badge Workshops

Periodically during the year workshops may be held for Brownies and Juniors.

Older Girl Workshops

Periodically during the year workshops may be held for Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors.

Thinking Day

Open to all Girl Scouts around Feb 22, Thinking Day is a celebration of scouting around the world. Troops select a country to represent and there are games and activities for all girls.

Father/Adult Male Daughter Dance

This fun event is a new tradition for Daisy, Brownie and Junior Girl Scouts and their fathers/date.

Participation Guidelines

- Advance registration and payment is required for all events. This allows us to plan more efficiency and ensure adequate supplies for all attending. There are no refunds.
- Late registrations may or may not be accepted at the door. It is at the discretion of the event coordinators. There is NO guarantee of admission and/or receiving patches. Watch the registration deadlines to ensure participation in an event.
- Only program level Girl Scouts may attend these events. No additional children or adults are allowed to attend the event unless specified on the event flyer.
- Patches are only given to troops that attend the event.
- Any troop that has a check returned due to insufficient funds will be responsible for immediate payment in full, along with any charges incurred. If a troop has more than one check returned unpaid, the troop must pay for future Lafayette events with a money order or cashier's check.

RECOGNITION

Girls

Gold Award Plaque of Honor

Girls who have earned their Gold Award are recognized with their name engraved on the Gold Award Plaque of Honor displayed in the Lafayette Library. Submit a list of honorees (triple check spelling - names will be engraved as submitted!) to the Older Girl Coordinator. Gold Award pins are purchased by Council and can be picked up at the Girl Scout Shop in Oakland. No special forms are required and the Shop has a list on file of all Gold Award Recipients.

Silver and Bronze Award Pins

Silver Award pins (both rhodium and sterling) and Bronze Award pins are available from the council store. Troops are responsible for the cost of these pins.

Senior 10-year Membership Pins

In January, all girls who have been in scouting for 10 years receive their 10-year pin in a special ceremony performed during the January Leader Meeting. The Senior Troop Leaders plan the ceremony. Each troop provides the 10-year pins for their own troop members.

Adults

Reference: Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials

New Volunteers (Lafayette Coordinating Team)

At the fall Leader Meeting, Lafayette Girl Scouts acknowledges all of the new volunteers to the LCT.

New Leaders

At the fall Leader Meeting, Lafayette Girl Scouts introduces all of the new leaders.

Years of Membership (increments of 5 years)

At the spring Leader Meeting, all leaders and volunteers are recognized for their years of service (in increments of five years).

Leader Appreciation Day (April 22)

Lafayette Girl Scouts celebrates Leader/Volunteer Appreciation Day with a public thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers.

Leaders and Volunteers

Annually, Lafayette Girl Scouts acknowledges adult volunteers for exceptional service. In January, information regarding nominations is mailed to all leaders and volunteers as well as to the parents of all registered girls.

Outstanding Leader: Any leader may be nominated for this award for outstanding performance working with girls.

Outstanding Volunteer: Any volunteer may be nominated for this award for service to a geographic area, unit or program that is beyond the expectations for the position.

We are looking for new ways to recognize our adult volunteers. Contact the Service Unit Director with your suggestions.

Council

Additionally, GSUSA and the Council acknowledge adult volunteers who have gone above and beyond. Details about the national and Council awards and nomination forms are available on the Council website.

COMMUNITY

Involving the Parents and Families of Girl Scouts

Registration

Lafayette Girl Scouts encourages all parents and/or guardians of scouts to register and become involved!

Family Partnership

Annually, the Council asks the families of Girl Scouts to support the Council through its Family Partnership campaign. The campaign supports a number of GSNC programs.

- Membership Assistance – Every year we subsidize the \$12 membership fee for more than 1,000 girls who cannot afford it, ensuring that every girl, everywhere can experience Girl Scouting.
- Special Events – From sleepovers at the Lawrence Hall of Science to Teen Media training for our next ad campaign, we offer diverse experiences to meet the needs and interests of today's girls.
- Outreach Programs – In our target urban areas of San Francisco, Oakland, and Richmond, we bring the Girl Scout program to more than 1,500 girls.
- Empowering Volunteers – Leaders training leaders! Last year, we offered more than 350 different trainings for volunteers and taught by volunteers.

This is only a partial list. You will find a Family Partnership information sheet attached to registration forms.

Telling the Girl Scout Story

Lafayette Girl Scouts Website at www.lafayettegirlscouts.org/

The Lafayette Girl Scouts website has room for troop stories and pictures – simply forward an article and any pictures electronically (in a word document or email) to the Webmistress and she will put it on the website. You must document that all parents have provided permission for their daughter's picture to be on the website. There will be no names listed with the pictures on the website.

Lafayette Girl Scouts Facebook

The Lafayette Girl Scouts has a group on Facebook where Leaders (and other registered adults) can share stories, experiences and successes.

Local Newspapers

Local stories are always encouraged and it's great for us to tell the Girl Scout story. Forward your photo and article to the Service Unit Director for inclusion in a local paper (Contra Costa Sun, Lamorinda Weekly or Lafayette Today).

Troop Website

A great way to tell your troop's story and your girls accomplishments is through a website. GSNC has guidelines and a procedure manual – request the manual from Council before you begin.

PROCEDURES FOR REGISTRATION

Spring Registration

Spring registration is the preferred method of registering in Lafayette. Registration materials are distributed at the spring Leader Meeting. Registration for returning girls and adults is now via online registration at www.girlscoutsnorcal.org/ebiz. Registration for new troops forming is currently via a paper system.

Fall Registration

Fall registration is available for troops that did not do early spring registration. Returning troops should have received their registration materials at the previous spring Leader Meeting. You must register before September 30 to use the online registration at www.girlscoutsnorcal.org/ebiz. Registration for new troops forming is currently via a paper system. Registration expires on October 1 so your troop may not meet after September 30, if you have not registered for the new year.

Fall registration is available for new troops. New troops will receive a New Troop Packet, which includes registration materials. Registration for new troops forming is currently via a paper system. When you receive your packet from your School Organizer she will let you know the deadline (generally mid-September). You must turn your packet in **prior** to holding meetings.

Troop Financial Report

Your Troop Financial Report must be received by the Lafayette Treasurer by June 30 of each year (who will then forward it to Council).

Adding a Girl or Adult During the Year

To add a girl to your troop you must first talk with your School Organizer. If there is a waiting list, priority will be given to the girls on this list before any additional placements are made. The School Organizer will help you complete the registration paperwork and submit it to the Registrar.

The girl may attend a troop meeting once the girl's registration documents and payment are in the hands of the Lafayette Registrar. (The parent's paperwork may follow later).

Transferring a Girl or Adult During the Year

There is a simple Council form used to transfer membership from one troop to another. Contact the Lafayette Registrar.

Disbanding a Troop

If a troop disbands for any reason, the Council has clear guidelines on what is to be done with the troop treasury. See the Council Resource Guide for more information.

12th grade Troop Disbanding after membership year ends September 30

For girls that are graduating from girl scouts to adults and have planned activities, such as their Gold Award party after they graduate and during the next GS membership year should:

Put in their troop minutes that they are choosing to use their remaining funds in December and will complete the final disband process in December. These minutes should then be emailed to the SUD and CDD.

The girls should all register for the next membership year as adults. Since they are using Girl Scout funds for the ceremony, they need to be registered as Girl Scouts. If the girls elect, they can use the remaining troop funds to pay for their GS registration.

The troop should do a troop financial report (TFR) in June and then another final one in December with their disband notice attached.

PROCEDURES FOR COUNCIL PRODUCT SALES

Troop Product Sales Training

All troop Fall Products and Cookie Sales Chairs are expected to attend training so that they can clearly communicate to their troops the procedures and deadlines that must be followed. This training is provided by the Coordinating Team and is announced early in the fall.

Fall Products Sale

During the Fall Products Sale, troops sell assorted nut and chocolate products and magazine subscriptions. The Fall Products Sale takes place during October and November. Items are sold during a pre-order period, then during booth sales. Troops participating in the Fall Products Sale can generate income early in the year to support their troop's program expenses. Fall Products Sale information is distributed at a special training meeting in September. Booth sales are arranged through the Fall Products Sales Manager.

Girl Scout Cookie Sale

Girl Scout cookies were first sold to the public in the 1920s. Today, the Girl Scout Cookie Sale is the most recognized program-related product sale in the United States. The sale generates over 55 percent of the revenue needed to fund the Girl Scout program. The sale also generates the majority of income for most troops. The Cookie Sale takes place in January through March. Cookie Sale information is distributed at a special training meeting during the first couple weeks of December. Booth sign-ups and cookie distribution pick-up times are assigned during the training meeting.

Important Notes on Booth Sales (See Council Research Guide: Volunteer Essentials)

- Train girls ahead of time on how to approach customers and how to be courteous at all times.
- Please ask customers to buy products only when they are exiting the store.
- Do not block the exits.
- No more than four girls at a time should be working the booth.
- Two adults should be present at all times.
- Have a table to display your products.
- Adults should wear a fanny-pack to hold the money. This is much safer than a box. The girls can still figure out the amount of the sale and the amount of change for the customer.
- Girls should wear something that identifies them as Girl Scouts (uniform, troop t-shirts, and/or membership pins).
- Encourage your troop to make a poster of their troop goals to display or to tell their customers about the troop goals.
- You should also have a supply of GSNC Girl Scout brochures. Contact the Community Development Director to request a supply.
- Only registered Troop members may be present at booth sales.

PROCEDURES FOR EVENT PLANNING

Event

An Lafayette Girl Scout event is an event, camporee, service project, outing, etc. that is open to all girls within an age level (i.e., 3rd grade Brownies), all girls within a program level (i.e., Juniors), or all girls within Lafayette Girl Scouts. Additionally any event held at an individual school for multiple troops (more than 2 troops) should also follow these procedures.

Application

The Lafayette Event Interest Application must be used by any troop or girl wishing to plan any type of event for Lafayette Girl Scouts. The application is due April 1st for the following year.

This procedure allows the LCT:

- to be aware of all events that are being planned
- manage the Lafayette Girl Scout calendar
- ensure that all troops\girls have a chance to plan the events that they would like to
- ensure that the troops\girls receive support and guidance from the LCT

Assignment of Events

Based on the applications received, the LCT will select which troops and girls will plan events for the following year. This happens at the April LCT meeting.

Training

One adult in the troop must attend the Count Event Director Training (online, home study or in person) in order for the troop or a girl in the troop to plan an event in Lafayette.

Money Matters

All money (income and expenses) must go through the Lafayette Girl Scout treasury. This provides troops with less immediate out of pocket expenses for leaders reserving sites and better record keeping for Lafayette Girl Scouts. Events are generally planned to “break even” costing a “modest” fee. The Girl Scout of Northern California Event Director and Lafayette Service Unit Event Packet must be followed for events.

Archives

The archives contain various binders and training materials for Lafayette events. The troop putting on the event can use these resources to assist with planning their event. Contact the Event Coordinator.

Participation Guidelines

See the **Lafayette Events Section** for guidelines that troops that wish to participate in the event must follow.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

National Resources

Reference: Council Resource Guide – Council Operations

GSUSA Website (www.girlscouts.org)

This website provides general information about membership, program, history, and publications. The alphabetical index serves as a quick reference to valuable information for all Girl Scout members interested in finding out more. From badges to the World Association, you'll find all the answers at www.girlscouts.org!

Safety Wise (no longer being published and has been replaced)

The content from the first six chapters from the Safety Wise book is now included in the Council Research Guide: Volunteer Essentials. The Safety Wise Activity Checkpoints are now found on the council website at www.girlscoutsnorcal.org/safety. This information is designed to establish a safe and sound program experience that will protect and maintain the well-being of every Girl Scout. It provides basic safety and security guidelines, Girl Scout Program Standards, Activity Checkpoints, and information about planning trips with Girl Scouts.

Publications:

Annual Girl Scout Catalog: Mailed to all registered adults. This catalog contains information about Girl Scout products to order. Most products are also available online at www.girlscouts.org

Council Resources

GSNC Website (www.girlscoutsnorcal.org)

This website provides general information about membership, upcoming council events, volunteering, donations, the Girl Scout Shop, Girl Scout History, and Girl Scout Alumnae. You will also find current information on training classes, registering for council events, and links to other Girl Scout recommended sites.

Leader resources are found at:

http://www.girlscoutsnorcal.org/pages/for_volunteers/leader_resources.html

Council Resource Guide: Volunteer Essentials

This book is designed as a resource guide for all Girl Scout Leaders. It outlines the philosophies, policies and procedures of GSNC. It is distributed in the fall.

Program Resources

To supplement the programs and handbooks provided by GSUSA our Council produces a wide variety of program resource materials. The complete listing is available in the Council Resource Guide under Index.

Fall Packet

This packet is a compilation of various publications and resources provided to each troop in the fall. It is generally distributed at the Fall Leader Meeting (now on CD) and it is critical that every troop receive one to ensure that they have the most up-to-date information.

Lafayette Resources

In addition to the resources discussed in the **Leaders – How to get Information Section** Lafayette Girl Scouts has the following:

Equipment

Lafayette Girl Scouts owns a lot of equipment that may be borrowed by troops. There is camping equipment, including tents, backpacking stoves, kitchen gear, and more; flag sets and color guard sashes for ceremonies; items for activities, including a large parachute for games, compasses, and a megaphone. This is just a partial list - see the website for a complete list of what is available to borrow. Contact the appropriate Equipment keeper.