

Many Faces of Girl Scouts

Girl Scouts have always taken the lead, transforming communities, lives and the world with the power of the G.I.R.L. (Go-Getter, Innovator, Risk-Taker, Leader)™. This year, Girl Scouts is exploring what it looks like to be a member of our Movement with the Many Faces of Girl Scouts. So look closer! Each individual is a unique peak into our organization and the incredible people who make us who we are.

Ansuya Hesse - Backyard Beekeeper Turned Volunteer:

A volunteer is defined as a person who willingly undertakes a service. They have no expectation of compensation, be it monetary or a gesture of gratitude. Instead, they express only a desire to help or give back to their community freely. Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council (GSSJC) has some of the best volunteers, like Ansuya Hesse – a realtor, backyard beekeeper and Girl Scout volunteer. By day, Ansuya helps families find houses that could become dream homes for their loved ones. But in her free time, she nurtures a home to a much different type of resident: bees.



“My husband and I were watching ‘60 Minutes’, and they had a segment on how bees are disappearing at an alarming rate in the world. We thought, ‘What could we do to save the bees?’ We joined our local beekeeper’s association and got a beehive in our backyard,” said Ansuya.

What began as a hobby has now evolved into a passion. Ansuya has become quite an expert on bees, excitedly touting facts about their habitat, forms of communication and the contributing factors to their rapid decline in numbers. Seeking to share her knowledge, Ansuya pursued an opportunity to speak with a Girl Scout troop.

“My yoga instructor has a Girl Scout troop, and I asked her if I could educate and talk to her Girl Scouts about it,” said Ansuya. “It was so much fun. I think the girls get excited because all the worker bees are girls, so they love to hear about the girl power and what girls can do.”

Ansuya’s yoga instructor was very impressed by the presentation to her Girl Scout troop.

“She put me in touch with the San Jacinto Council, and she said ‘You need to talk to them! I think it would be wonderful for more girls to get this message’, so that’s where it started,” said Ansuya.

Ansuya positively recalls the process of joining GSSJC’s volunteer program.

“It was very quick and easy,” said Ansuya. “I went over and gave them my presentation, and we designed a patch together. Liz [Atton] told me it’s just been overwhelming, the interest in the subject.”

Ansuya’s workshop, titled “Bee Smart,” was held from March to May of 2017, with sessions for younger girls and sessions for older girls. The workshop was full of interesting facts, fun activities and take-home treats including individual jars of honey. Despite being highly informative, Ansuya insists she is not an educator.



“Well, I’m not a teacher. It sometimes overwhelms me, but it’s just wonderful – the curiosity. When you watch them, the faces of the kids so engrossed in certain facts. It really moves them,” said Ansuya. “Another parent told me her daughter called her up one evening and told her she could hear them spraying. ‘Call the beekeeper! Let her know to hide the bees,’ because she now understood that we’re not just killing mosquitoes. We’re killing everything in its path. And that was good. I was very happy to know a little 5-year-old [had] become sensitive to

her neighborhood being sprayed.”

Ansuya hopes her workshop will help spread awareness on the critical state of bees.

“If the girls can build [a bug hotel] in their neighborhood, it’d start conversation and dialogue. People will start asking questions and that’s a good way to educate a whole society – through the little girls,” said Ansuya.

In addition to promoting the welfare of bees, Ansuya also encourages the act of volunteering. Whether saving endangered species, coaching robotics teams or offering first aid classes, Ansuya believes volunteering is a vital part of strengthening communities.

“I think, what’s the point, when we know something and we don’t share our knowledge? By teaching, I learn more as well, and I think by giving back to our society, especially for kids, it’s so rewarding to see,” said Ansuya.

GSSJC provides many volunteering opportunities in unique capacities, and we bet you know a friend or two who might be interested in lending their talents. Encourage them to visit makeadifference.gssjc.org to begin the volunteer process! To meet more of the Many Faces of Girl Scouts, visit <http://www.manyfacesofgirlscouts.com>.



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