Year of the Girl Scout Cookie!

Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council

2014 Annual Report
Everything is bigger in Texas, and the Girl Scout Cookie Program is no exception. In 2014, Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council had the largest sale in the country – approximately 4.6 million packages of cookies were sold by GSSJC Girl Scouts right here in southeast Texas. That’s a lot of Thin Mints, Shortbread and Peanut Butter Sandwiches!

The 28,547 girls who participated in the 2014 Cookie Program demonstrated stellar money management, as well as people and business skills to help achieve this impressive accomplishment. One thing is for sure: San Jacinto is a council full of cookie bosses who know how to run a business like, well, nobody’s business!
Leadership Message

Tell a person you volunteer or work for Girl Scouts, and they’ll tell you their favorite cookie (probably Thin Mint or Caramel deLites). Without a doubt, Girl Scout Cookie season is our most popular time of the year. This is when our community sees Girl Scouts wearing their sashes and vests outside local stores and businesses selling America’s favorite sweet treat. What many don’t know, however, is that the Girl Scout Cookie Program is more about the girl than the cookie. Every box of cookies sold translates into a valuable life lesson for a girl. That’s why – as you can imagine - we were thrilled to be the largest cookie program in the country in 2014!

For us and the thousands of volunteers and families that supported the program, cookie season meant 4.6 million packages sold by more than 28,000 girls who were learning to manage their own cookie businesses and were developing business plans, sales charts and marketing campaigns, which you’ll learn more about in the following pages.

You’ll hear about the impact of the program on the girls, our local Council and our community. It’s amazing to see what a girl can do with the support of caring volunteers, an organization like Girl Scouts and neighbors like you.

But Girl Scouting is about so much more than cookies, and we want to share other successes as well.

We love showcasing different facets of Girl Scouting and how we impact girls from all walks of life and from different corners of the world...and we hope you’ll enjoy reading about it!

Thank you for your support, for believing in our work and for trusting us with the next generation of women leaders who will make the world a better place for all.
**Our Membership**
This year, 18,000 volunteers and adults helped bring the Girl Scout mission to life for approximately 61,000 girls who made new friends, found a place to feel accepted and learned something new. Of these, nearly 40,000 girls joined troops where volunteer troop leaders guided their journey through the Girl Scout program (the Girl Scout Leadership Experience). And in collaboration with local schools and community groups, we helped 21,000 girls develop important life skills and values – like bullying prevention, self-esteem and business ethics - through our community outreach program.

**Going Gold**
The Girl Scout Gold Award represents the highest achievement a girl can earn in Girl Scouting. This prestigious award challenges girls in high school to make the world a better place by identifying a community problem and then devising and implementing a sustainable solution through a seven-step project. Less than five percent of girls who join Girl Scouts achieve this national recognition, an act that indelibly marks them as accomplished members of their communities and the world. This year, 152 Girl Scouts in San Jacinto Council earned the honor.

**Giving & Financial Support**
There are many organizations worthy of support, but when it comes to supporting girls, none compare to Girl Scouts. Thanks to financial support by families and individuals, the business community, foundations and staff, we raised $3.87 million to ensure Girl Scouting is made available to all girls locally, to maintain camps and facilities, and to continue delivering quality programs for girls and training and support to volunteers.

Did you know? While Girl Scout membership dues are only $15 a year, the actual cost to make Girl Scouting a reality is $259 per girl.

**The Great Outdoors**
With diminishing camp opportunities available to youth, GSSJC offers girls access to a unique network of camp properties that serve as sanctuaries and provide unrivaled outdoor and leadership experiences. This year, there were more than 60,000 excursions to our camps! And 2,336 girls attended one of our three resident camp programs at Camps Agnes Arnold, Misty Meadows and Casa Mare. Here girls explored everything nature has to offer through traditional camp activities like hiking, swimming and making s’mores around a campfire. They also gained confidence and independence as they learned to navigate the world around them away from home in a safe and nurturing setting.
GSSJC was number 1 in cookie sales nation-wide, selling 4.6 million packages of Girl Scout cookies!

28,547 girls participated in the cookie program

229 – girls who sold more than 1,000 packages and joined the 1,000+ Club

The essential skills girls learn by participating in the Cookie Program, lessons that will benefit them well beyond their Girl Scouting years:
- goal setting
- decision making
- money management
- people skills
- business ethics

54,000 packages donated in the Virtual Cookie Share program

10,800 packages of gluten free cookies sold. GSSJC was one of 20 Councils that piloted the sale of a gluten free cookie

Money raised through the Girl Scout Cookie Program supports the troop, as well as local Girl Scouting and helps maintain low program costs and updated facilities and camps

GSSJC was the only Council to pilot ABC Bakers COCOdirect app, which allowed customers to place an order, pay by credit card and have the packages shipped directly to them from the baker

2014 Cookie Program Stats
Girl Scouts can take you amazing places – something Senior Lindsey Donaldson knows well. Last summer, Girl Scouts took Lindsey all the way to Japan where she hiked to the top of Mount Fuji, visited with Girl Guides and went shopping on Harajuku Street.

She never would have gotten to Japan, however, without participating in the Girl Scout Cookie Program. By running her cookie business, Lindsey learned how to be confident when speaking to adults and strangers – a must-have skill when you’re traveling halfway around the world.

With that kind of boost from being a star cookie seller, who knows where Lindsey will travel next!

“I think the best skill I have learned in the Cookie Program is the ability to speak confidently and clearly to adults and strangers and to accept rejection. I have been able to speak in front of large groups, but I have also lost out on opportunities due to rejection, accepted it and moved on. Girl Scouts has helped me learn all of this.”

Trips designed for individual Girl Scouts from across the nation and globe. Girl Scout Destinations fall into five categories: international, outdoors, science, people and getaways.

Facilitated by Girl Scouts of the USA and hosted by individual Girl Scout councils, GSUSA, and contracted organizations, Girl Scout Destinations events or trips open up girls to whole new worlds and ideas.
All star archer Mireille Murphy got her start in GSSJC’s Archers in Motion program. Since joining the group, she’s gone on to earn a number of accolades, including placing in the top three at JOAD (Junior Olympic Archery Development) indoor and outdoor championships.

At 12 years old, she’s already shot side-by-side with world renowned Olympic archers.

Mireille takes time out of her busy archery schedule each year to participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program. The funds she earns with her fellow Girl Scout archers go right back to the group so they can update equipment and continue perfecting their craft.

“I’ve learned how to interact with people, improved my cookie sales goals and learned how to decide where to use the funds earned. It is important to participate in the Cookie Program because selling lots of cookies helps girls earn funds for fun activities, camp trips, field trips and more.”

GSSJC has an archery interest group called AIM (Archers In Motion) that follows a program from USA Archery. It has an individual program called JOAD (Junior Olympic Archery Development). The club meets once a month at camp so that members may shoot 36 arrows to try to attain specific JOAD and GSSJC shooting levels. These are based on age and distance.

GSSJC also offers six to ten archery sessions a month at several camp properties.
Nine years ago, Senior Samira Traore didn’t speak any English or have any friends. Her family had just moved to the United States from the Ivory Coast, and she describes herself as being awkward, reserved and an outcast.

All that changed when she joined a Girl Scout troop. In just three years, Samira spoke English fluently, had friends and was thriving, and she credits the change to her involvement in Girl Scouts.

Participating in the Cookie Program was just a small piece of Samira’s journey, but it taught her time management and organization skills, which she says will help her in all aspects of her life for years to come.

“The Cookie Program is one of the must unifying aspects of the Girl Scout experience. Girl Scouts instills values in its members that I have greatly benefitted from. No matter who you are, where you are or what you face, courage, confidence and character go a long way.”
Welcome To
The Arc Of Katy Day Program
Helping campers while having FUN!
Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.
(7:45 earliest drop off)
(3:00 latest pick up)
When she began her journey to earning the Girl Scout Gold Award, Joanne Nguyen already had many of the skills she needed thanks to participating in the Girl Scout Cookie Program.

From people skills to time management, Joanne had a solid foundation to make sure her project went off smoothly. A girl earning the Gold Award strives to make a lasting impact on her community – something Joanne did by establishing a day camp program and designated area for individuals with autism at Arc of Katy, a previously underserved group. Her program will enable people with autism in the Katy community to participate in Arc activities for many years to come.

“The skills I learned through the Cookie Program really helped me reach out and go beyond my horizons to seek out the organization I worked with for my Gold Award. It taught me to set goals for myself and form a plan of action. It also helped me budget my time, prioritize, realize the importance of money management and how to be a team player.”

Service

noun: help, use, benefit, contributes to the welfare of others

Service is the cornerstone of Girl Scouting, starting from Daisies through girls working on their Gold Award project.

The Gold Award represents the highest achievement in Girl Scouting. This prestigious award challenges you to change the world—or at least your corner of it.

The Gold Award project is just one step of the process. Girls develop a project that will solve a community problem not only in the short term, but for years into the future.
Camp Myra S. Pryor

Every girl deserves the opportunity to explore the wonders of nature in a safe environment.

Modern day life makes this increasingly difficult for today’s girls. GSSJC manages a network of 10 camp properties that span diverse geographies and ecosystems, including Camp Myra S. Pryor located off the banks of the Colorado River in Nada, Texas.

At the start of 2014, GSSJC unveiled the new Ranch Site at Camp Myra S. Pryor which included updated cabins and kitchen facilities and a new town square, activity center, a gathering pavilion and welcome center, all made possible through generous donations.

The next set of improvements, raising money for a six-acre lake and additional cabins, is underway.

As girls frequent the camp, funds earned by the Council through the Cookie Program will be put right back into maintaining these stunning updates to ensure all girls have the opportunity to escape modern life and explore the great outdoors today and in the future.

Camp Expansion

camp, \textit{\textbackslash'kamp}\n
noun: a place usually away from urban areas with tents or cabins

GSSJC has a variety of ways girls can go camping! In addition to resident camp and day/twilight camp opportunities during the summer months, girls can camp with their troops during the school year, attend special weekend events designed just for their level or even go camping with their family at a Girl Scout camp property.
When a girl knows how to set a goal, create a budget and work hard to succeed – all skills learned in the Girl Scout Cookie Program – all it takes is a little finessing to become a skilled backpacker.

GSSJC’s backpacking groups are made up of girls who learned life skills, like goal setting and time management, through the Cookie Program and have translated those skills into the self-reliance, work ethic and personal responsibility needed to be a successful backpacker.

Those fine-tuned skills led to GSSJC’s backpacking group creating immersion backpacking, a new pathway for girls in 2013-2014 where experienced older girls taught and led new backpacking participants in a weekend trip with little guidance from adult volunteers. It’s amazing what a package of cookies can do for a girl.

“Because you have to go door to door when selling cookies, you have to familiarize yourself with talking to different people you don’t know. Since I joined backpacking without my troop, I had to meet new people and get to know them really well before you go on the trail. The Cooke Program helped me because I already had practice talking to new people.” – Katherine Willcockson
Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council (GSSJC) expresses its deepest appreciation to the donors listed on the following pages for their generous contributions in support of Girl Scout programs between September 1, 2013 and August 31, 2014. More information on opportunities to support GSSJC is available by contacting Beth Shea at bshea@sjgs.org or 713-292-0321.

Great care has been taken to ensure the proper recognition of our donors. If an error or omission does occur, we sincerely apologize and hope you will bring it to our attention. Please address all corrections to Suzanne Boak at 713-292-0273 or sboak@sjgs.org. Thank you for your continued support.

Leadership for a Lifetime
Your gift to this annual fund provides quality services to approximately 61,000 girls in 26 counties, assists 18,000 Girl Scout volunteers, supplies innovative and relevant program opportunities for all girls, and ensures that the best possible training, resources and support are available.

Numbers in ( ) represent years supporting GSSJC, according to our records.

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Juliette Gordon Low Society

For more than a century, Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council has inspired and enriched the lives of girls in our community. Preserving and building upon positive outcomes for future generations of girls is the mission of the Juliette Gordon Low Society, whose members have included GSSJC in their estate plans. We are proud to recognize those who have already made commitments to our legacy society and invite others to join them as we build a sound future for GSSJC. For more information on creating a legacy for the benefit of GSSJC, contact Diane Pavey at 713-292-0277 or dpavey@sjgs.org.

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Members of the Promise Society have donated $1,000 or more for at least five consecutive years.

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The Emerald Circle awards merit scholarships to graduating seniors who have earned the highest award in Girl Scouting, the Gold Award. Funds are derived from membership dues and donors, as well as The Emerald Circle Gold Award Merit Scholarship Endowment Fund. Since 1996, The Emerald Circle has granted 328 scholarships totaling $468,500. For information on how to join or to give to the scholarship fund, contact Beth Shea at 713-292-0321 or bshea@sjgs.org.

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Product Sales is the largest source of revenue for GSSJC, totaling $11,658,000 in net revenue. Product Sales includes the Girl Scout Cookie Program and the Fall Product Program. In addition to being the premier financial literacy program for girls, the Cookie Program generated gross revenue of $18,822,000. Costs included cost of cookies sold of $4,955,000 and bonuses for troops of $2,888,000. The Fall Product Program is a friends and family sale that provides funding for troops around the beginning of the school year. This program generated gross revenues of $1,878,000, cost of sales of $741,000 and troop bonuses of $458,000.

Non-Capital Contributions and Capital Contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations totaled $1,123,000 and $1,214,000 respectively. Allocations from United Way agencies totaled $1,491,000.
Eighty-four percent of total expenses are used for program directly benefiting members of GSSJC. Management & General costs as a percentage of total expenses are 9% and fundraising expenses are at 7% of total expenses. In 2014, approximately $2.1 million was spent on capital improvements to our camps and service centers.
Net assets for GSSJC reflect a large investment in land, buildings and equipment. Our fiscal year begins on September 1 and ends on August 31. The Girl Scout Cookie Program is the largest source of revenue. This program concludes in May, and the funds raised are gradually depleted from then until the following April. With the fiscal year end of August 31, our general operations’ net assets reflects our position at the end of our largest fundraising effort. These net assets are used for our operations in the next fiscal year.

Net Assets as of August 31, 2014

- **Land, Buildings & Equipment, net**: 51%, $19.5 M
- **General Operations**: 29%, $11.3 M
- **Permanently Restricted**: 10%, $4 M
- **Temporarily Restricted**: 10%, $3.7 M
Monies contributed to the Endowment funds are intended to ensure the future of Girl Scouting for girls over the next century. By making gifts to the endowment fund with direct cash gifts or through various charitable vehicles including wills and charitable trust, you are ensuring the legacy of Girl Scouts in San Jacinto Council.
It costs $259 per girl to make Girl Scouting a reality at GSSJC

$129 Provides Council-wide programs and activities at all levels that enhance troop participation and allow girls the opportunity to build new skills. It also provides the opportunity for girls to participate in activities beyond the traditional troop setting, such as Girl Scouting in the School Day and Girl Scouts Beyond Bars, a program that enables girls to meet with their incarcerated mothers in a troop setting.

$47 Develops and imparts the very best training, materials and curriculum for adult volunteers, ensuring the needs of each Girl Scout are met.

$36 Maintains, updates and expands the use of all 10 camp properties, eight service centers, GSSJC headquarters and the Program Place for Girls.

$36 Supports membership development, including recruitment and registration of girls and volunteers, staff support to volunteers and financial assistance available to all members.

$11 Enhances the visibility and affirms the successes of Girl Scouting as the premier organization for girls through press releases, media coverage, The Golden Link, online Resources site and www.gssjc.org.
2013-2014
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Mary Vitek, CEO

Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council
3110 Southwest Freeway
Houston, TX 77098-4508
713-292-0300  www.gssjc.org