

The Trailblazer

A Newsletter for Girl Scout Alumnae and Supporters

girl scouts
of the green and
white mountains

Spring 2022

Vol. 14



Troop 58110 of Bedford, NH, sold their handmade holiday crafts at a Girl Scout craft fair and used \$100 of their proceeds to purchase toys for the Toys for Tots Drive at their school. (Courtesy Photo)

Volunteering - the heart of Girl Scouts

To all the explorers, trailblazers, change-makers, and stargazers who volunteer with us: thank you. With you, girls learn to listen to their hearts, think on their feet, and raise their voices for what they believe in. You're their hero—and ours too.

Girl Scout volunteers have the power to change girls' lives. Whether you are a current or former volunteer, you helped shape the future and honed your own leadership and organizational skills right along with your Girl Scouts. Girl Scout volunteers are community-builders, champions of fun, and role models for what it means to lead with heart. Girl Scouts of all ages are encouraged to chase their dreams and make a positive impact in their communities and across the globe.

Data shows that it is not just girls who benefit from participating in Girl Scouts: 94 percent of volunteers have made new friends, 88 percent believe their life is

There are many benefits to being a volunteer, but most people report these as being most important: providing a sense of purpose, providing a sense of community, an increase in social skills, improving self-esteem, teaching valuable skills, providing job prospects, and helping to bring fun and connection into your life.

better because they volunteer with Girl Scouts, and two-thirds believe their volunteer experience has helped them professionally. Ninety-five percent of Girl Scout volunteers are happy knowing they are making girls' lives better. We know the majority of volunteers feel their Girl Scout experience has helped them both personally and professionally. Every adult who

volunteers for Girl Scouts can help bring fun and new experiences to the girls. Imagine what that can do to shape the next generation of female leaders.

The more we give, the happier we feel. Volunteering increases self-confidence. Volunteers are doing good for others and their community, which provides a natural sense of accomplishment. The role of a volunteer can also give a sense of pride and identity. Without our volunteers, Girl Scouts wouldn't be the largest girls' leadership development organization in the world.

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Volunteering - the heart of Girl Scouts

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fun and connection into your life.

Based on data provided by the Girl Scout Research Institute, Girl Scout alums are more likely than other women to volunteer and contribute financially to causes they care about. In addition, Gold Award Girl Scouts are almost three times more likely than non-alums to volunteer for causes they care about. Girl Scout alums say volunteering connects them to something bigger than themselves, linking them to community and to a network of girls and women around the world. Alums are invested in supporting their communities by donating their time and money and in making a difference in the world through civic action. The top causes that Girl Scout alums support through volunteering and donations are girls' and women's causes, health, youth services, animal welfare, religion and education. The longer alums were in Girl Scouts, the more likely they are to volunteer regularly and to donate money to causes as adults.

This culture of making the world a better place is ingrained in our younger Girl Scouts and they take it with them as they become young adults. Our hope as an organization is that our girls never lose that desire to give back and make a difference in their communities, as Gold Award recipients, adult troop

leaders, council volunteers, and beyond.

What we are lucky enough to witness in our council is the extraordinary volunteerism of the girls in New Hampshire and Vermont, like Daisies in Merrimack participating in Wreaths Across America and helping clean up a local park or a troop in Londonderry donating cookies and goodie baskets to their local police and fire departments. An Essex Junction troop made a large donation for a toy drive. We are so proud of troops in Bedford and Tamworth, who made holiday crafts to raise funds for Toys for Tots, decorating pumpkins for a local nursing home, and decorating a tree for the Festival of Trees fundraiser. In Brattleboro, a troop participated in a community service activity at the town common, where they planted bulbs for the spring and did some general cleanup in the flower beds.

Our council was incredibly impressed this year by all of our Gold Award nominees and their focus on volunteerism and civic engagement, with one recipient working to change the law in New Hampshire to make green burials more accessible, and another recipient working to provide food and books to those hit hardest by the pandemic

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Troop 3056 of Lunenburg, VT, held a sock drive to help their community. (GSGWM photo)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To donate to Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains, visit: girlscoutsgwm.org/donate.

To learn more, contact the Advancement office by emailing advancement@girlscoutsgwm.org or calling 888-474-9686.

Volunteers - you're their hero and ours too



Dear friends,

If girls are the soul of Girl Scouting, then our volunteers are the beating heart. Volunteers are integral to Girl Scout programming and make this organization strong. Without volunteers, we would be unable to serve thousands of girls across New Hampshire and Vermont. Volunteers are mentors, cheerleaders, organizers, trainers, and the caring adults which every child needs to thrive.

We are fortunate to have volunteers from every region dedicated to making our world a better place. These role models inspire our girls to also give of themselves to make a positive difference in their communities. Throughout this newsletter, you will read of both girls and adults volunteering and advocating for the causes they believe in. You will also read of members of all ages donating to the causes they support and the heroes who care for us all.

We are committed to supporting our volunteers in making this important role fit within their busy lives. Improvements to on-line technology provides access to on demand training for every role. In partnership with Girl Scouts of the USA, we are continuing to build the training library with more resources needed

to support volunteers in this rapidly changing world. Providing staff support and resources for each volunteer job is essential to our strategic priority of "Improving the Volunteer Experience." We know that the importance of volunteers to Girl Scouting cannot be overstated.

Girl Scouting is also committed to supporting our girl members as they find their own voices and the causes which they believe in. Our highest awards support girls as they explore a wide variety of interests so they may identify what they are passionate about and create solutions to their identified problem. We are committed to supporting them in their advocacy and for ensuring that the voices of our girls are elevated and heard.

An adage reflects that 3 Ts are needed for an organization's success: Time, Talent and Treasure. We are fortunate that our volunteers and donors understand these needs and give so generously of all three. Thank you for your support and dedication to our Movement, our girls, and our volunteers.

Yours in Girl Scouting,

Tricia

Patricia K. Mellor
Chief Executive Officer, GSGWM
Gold Award Girl Scout

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through a library and food pantry.

Whether building composting structures, wheelchair accessible picnic tables, or writing children's books or donating their time and funds to causes they believe in, Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains exemplify the core principles of Girl Scouting and we could not be more proud of their volunteerism and community activism. Using the Girl Scout Promise as their guide, we know these girls will be future ambassadors and volunteers within their communities for many years.

In addition to celebrating Girl Scouts and all they do to change the world, every year during the month of April we celebrate our adult volunteers as being the heart of Girl Scouting. We acknowledge that every volunteer matters, from our first volunteer, Juliette Gordon Low, to today's volunteers; they are the reason our movement has grown to be over 50 million strong. It cannot be predicted what the future holds for volunteering, but everyone can acknowledge the importance of humanitarian services. Every day, thousands of people around the world commit their time to do something meaningful and give back to their communities. We are incredibly overwhelmed and grateful for those that choose Girl Scouts to share their time, talents, and treasures.



Girls Scouts love to help animals and often take on projects to donate food and other items to their local animal shelters. Here, Girl Scout Daisy Savannah makes friends with one of the kittens at the Pope Memorial SPCA in Concord, NH. (Courtesy photo)

110 years of making the world a better place

From its very beginning in 1912, Girl Scouts have blazed trails and redefined what's possible for girls everywhere as they worked to make the world a better place. Taking action to provide community service is at the heart of Girl Scouting. Juliette Gordon Low began our organization at a time when women could not yet vote and were expected to stick to strict social norms, yet her girls stepped out of those traditional roles to give back in any way they could.

Girl Scouts worked to serve their country during both world wars and the Great Depression, collecting food and clothing, operating bicycle courier services, running Farm Aide projects, collecting fat and scrap metal, growing victory gardens, and teaching women survival skills.

In the 1950s, Girl Scouts responded to the Korean War by assembling pouches of items needed by Korean citizens. During the 1960s, Girl Scouts lent their voices to fight for racial equality, and in the 1970s helped Vietnamese children adapt to their new homes in the U.S.

In the last few decades, Girl Scouts have tackled almost any cause you can think of: drug abuse, child abuse, teen pregnancy, illiteracy, racial justice, STEM inequities, legal injustices, and more.



Gold Award Girl Scout Kaitlin Dinndorf recycled plastic bags into mats to help those who are unhoused. (Courtesy photo)

Girl Scouts in Vermont and New Hampshire have always worked hard to make the world a better place. Looking back through scrapbooks kept by the council over the years, here are just a few of the causes Girl Scouts took on:

- **Leadership and civic involvement** – Cadette Troop 714 of Fair Haven, VT, met with U.S. Senators Patrick Leahy and James Jeffords to talk about government and leadership in 1990.
- **AIDS** – Girl Scout Cadettes of Troop 2264 in Gorham, NH, made quilts for children with AIDS in 1992.
- **The environment** – New Hampshire Girl Scouts participated in a year-long national service project called Girl Scouts Care for the Earth in 1993. They picked up litter and took on beautifying projects. Vermont Girl Scouts have long participated in Green Up Day, and in 1987 planted 1500 seedlings as well as doing general cleanup.
- **Violence by and against girls** – The council held a forum on the issue in Concord, NH, in 2000.
- **The threat to bees** – Gold Award Girl Scout Carolyn Balparda of Middlebury, VT, worked to make Addison County more hospitable to honeybees in 2016.
- **Coastal cleanup** - The Coastal Rompers, a conservation-focused group of Girl Scouts, earned the Environmental Champion Award in 2016 from the Aquarian Water Company for their work cleaning beaches for the previous two decades.
- **Child marriage** – Gold Award Girl Scout Cassandra Levesque set out to raise the age of marriage in New Hampshire from 13 for girls and 14 for boys in 2018. Not only did she change the law to raise the age to 16 for both, she continues to work to raise that age to 18 as one of the youngest state legislators, a position she was elected to after her work on this issue.



Girl Scouts collect cans in the 1940s during World War II. (GSUSA photo)

- **Health issues for LGBT youth** – Gold Award Girl Scout Katherine Goyette wanted to make health class more comfortable and effective for LGBT high school students, and in 2018 worked with officials at Phillips Exeter Academy to change their curriculum.
- **Homelessness and recycling** – Gold Award Girl Scout Kaitlyn Dinndorf of Bedford, NH, coordinated a team of people to create mats from used plastic bags, and arranged for those experiencing homelessness to have a better way to rest along with recycling the bags in 2019.
- **The COVID-19 pandemic** – Girl Scouts across our two states and the country pitched in to help people avoid the virus as soon as it was clear help was needed in March of 2020. Several girls earned the Girl Scout Silver Award by creating masks, and the council coordinated a mask-sewing project that dozens of our Girl Scouts participated in to earn the Bronze Award.

Of course, it's the caring adult volunteers who make it possible for Girl Scouts to give of themselves, helping them to understand issues and take action to make the world a better place. Thousands of volunteers give of their time, energy, skills, and hearts as troop leaders and helpers; camp counselors and aides; alums who take on special projects; professionals who offer their skills and knowledge to teach Girl Scouts; and so much more.

Advocacy encouraged through Girls Rock the Capitol

Girls with the nerve to change the world grow up and do it. One group of high school students has set their sights on making the world a better place through advocacy and they are learning how to achieve their goals through Girls Rock the Capitol, a six-month-long internship with state legislators in New Hampshire and Vermont.

The program, unique to Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains, allows participants to sit in on legislative hearings and pair up with a state representative to work on a bill close to their heart. Some were already Girl Scouts, while others joined specifically to participate in the internship. The current group's interests vary widely, including women's rights, drug addiction, climate change, the minimum wage, gender equality, adoption and foster care, the economics of education, and more.



New Hampshire Girl Scouts participating in Girls Rock the Capitol meet monthly at the State House in Concord, while Vermont Girl Scouts meet at the Vermont State House for their program. (GSGWM photo)

Jocelyn Green, 15, of Litchfield, is a Girl Scout Senior in Troop 14016. She looks forward to going into politics, and wants to fix the adoption and foster care system in the U.S.

Camille Webber, 15, of Brentwood, who is working on a clean energy bill, said

she learned an important lesson about political discord from her mentor, Rep. Fran Nutter-Upham of Nashua.

“My rep taught me that when you come at an argument with passion, it's hard to find common ground,” she said.

Legislators on Capitol Hill support Girl Scouts

While local Girl Scout troops work to solve problems in their own communities, there's a very special Girl Scout troop working in Washington, D.C.

Troop Capitol Hill is an honorary Girl Scout troop made up of female members of the United States Congress. Members of Troop Capitol Hill have made a commitment to champion issues important to girls and Girl Scouting on a national level. All members are inspiring role models for millions of youth and adult members of Girl Scouts nationwide—and help promise national visibility on girls' issues.

Each year, Troop Capitol Hill elevates the achievements of Gold Award Girl Scouts, celebrates Girl Scout Day on March 12, and lifts up International Day of the Girl on October 11. Members of Troop Capitol Hill are also in-



Girl Scouts of the USA staff deliver cookies to members of Congress, including Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). (GSUSA photos)

involved with Girl Scout councils in their home states and districts and develop policy ideas in civic education, financial literacy, STEM education, outdoor exploration, and supporting a strong nonprofit community. Troop Capitol

Hill has eight co-chairs, one of whom is New Hampshire Sen. Jeanne Shaheen. Rep. Ann McLean Kuster of New Hampshire is also a member.

In March, our Girl Scout champions in Congress introduced resolutions in both the Senate and the House of Representatives to recognize our 110th anniversary and celebrate our legacy of providing girls with a safe, inclusive space that supports the next generation of women leaders.

If you have any questions about Girl Scouts, Girls Rock the Capitol, or Troop Capitol Hill, please contact GSGWM at customer care@girlscoutsgwm.org or 888-474-9686.

Girl Scout Cookies deliver care and appreciation

The Girl Scout Cookie Program is a powerful tool – not only does it teach Girl Scouts vital business and life skills, and along with that fund much of what we do, Girl Scout Cookies are an important way we show our hometown heroes, frontline workers, and the military appreciation for all they do.

And who doesn't love to have some free cookies?

"The Product Sales team is proud of the 32,000 boxes of cookies our girls brought to heroes in the local communities across New Hampshire and Vermont," said Lauren McFarland, Product and Marketing Specialist for the council.

While the council distributes those donations, over 8,000 more packages were donated that troops chose to deliver on their own.

For various reasons, some of our customers don't want to buy cookies for themselves or have a limited need. With our Gift of Caring program, they can give to others while supporting Girl Scouts at the same time. And that's great, because allowing people to buy cookies for others helps us spread joy.

There are several ways Girl Scouts carry out the donations. Some troops may choose a specific organization to support.



Daisy Troop 61222 of Merrimack, NH, donated 34 packages of Girl Scout Cookies as a sweet thank you to the Merrimack Police Department for being great first responders and letting them use their community room for meetings. (Courtesy photo)

For example, Troop 10639 of Tilton, NH, committed to making the world a better place by bringing cookies, Valentines, and goodwill to the veterans of the New Hampshire Veterans Home in Tilton and to the military overseas. They worked with the American Legion Post 49 family in Tilton to purchase 130 packages of Girl Scout Cookies from the troop. The cookies were shared with the veterans at the home in Tilton and with troops overseas.

Troop leader Ami Davidson said, "The residents look forward to our donation of

cookies every year!"

Additional cookies were donated through Troop 10639's cookie orders and at cookie booths.

Girl Scouts may also decide to recognize their own local hometown heroes – the women and men working to support their community as firefighters, EMTs, police officers, health workers, and more. Troop 30228 of Waterbury, VT, donated five cases of cookies to the nurses at Central Vermont Medical Center.

"At each of their cookie booths there was a donation box for people to purchase and donate cookies to our pandemic heroes," said troop Leader Heather Friedman. "The girls thought all the nurses needed a special treat after the past couple of years they've endured."

Cookies need not even be purchased in person. Through the virtual Gift of Caring, a troop may decide to combine their donations with other troops throughout the council and contribute to our Hometown Heroes initiative, which includes those in the military, Red Cross, community groups and frontline workers.



Troop 30228 of Waterbury, VT, donated cookies to health care workers. (Courtesy photo)

Hometown Heroes donors

Thank you to the following donors for their contributions to this year's Hometown Heroes campaign.

Alpha Preceptor Chapter, Beta Sigma Phi
 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 14
 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 27
 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 31
 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 63
 American Legion Post 22
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 Elizabeth Schmieder
 Lauraine Sheehan
 St. Andrew's Lodge No. 56
 St. John's Lodge #1
 Fern Teichman-Hill
 VFW Post 6689
 Wolfeboro Lions Club
 Women of the Moose Chapter #967



Employees of the United Way spent a day painting picnic tables and cleaning up Camp Kettleford. (GSGWM photo)

Alums and civic groups give back through Girl Scouts

It is not just Girl Scouts who volunteer and give of themselves – alums and other groups give back to us! Each year our camp properties benefit from the generosity and muscle power of the people who visit to clean up after a long winter, prepare buildings for camp, raise tents, and generally spruce things up.

Last fall, the United Way hosted a work day at Camp Kettleford and put in 75 hours painting picnic tables, benches, wood sheds, the gaga pit, the lodge kitchen, the lodge shelves, the inside of CTS1, the inside of the boathouse, and the outside of the lodge where repairs had been made. They also cleaned up the garden, put benches back in the units, cleaned fire pits, and cleaned the boathouse.

Dr. Karyn L. Martin, Director, Program and Properties for the council, said, “Highlights of the day included hearing parents and aunts of Kettleford campers talking about the great camping experience their Girl Scouts had!”

This spring, alums and others volunteered to prepare our properties for our campers. Projects included stacking

wood, cleaning up Adirondacks and fire pits, and laying stone dust and gravel in the Kettleford lot; cleaning, raising tents, and more at Camp Farnsworth; and creating a hiking trail and backpacking site as well as building a bridge over a swampy area at Camp Seawood.

We are grateful for the help!



Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Fidelity Investments employees spent a day building benches and a garden at Camp Kettleford. (GSGWM photo)

Why is volunteering important to you?



"I volunteer in order to assist young women in my community to become great leaders, informed citizens and caring individuals."

Sarah Howard, Fairfax, VT
Teacher and leader of Troop 51776,
a multi-level troop of 10 girls in grades 3-5.



"I definitely gained a lot of networking skills and built my confidence up, talking to people who were older than me."

Emma Hansen, 19, Salem, NH
Gold Award Girl Scout,
who worked to boost civic awareness and
worked on a political campaign



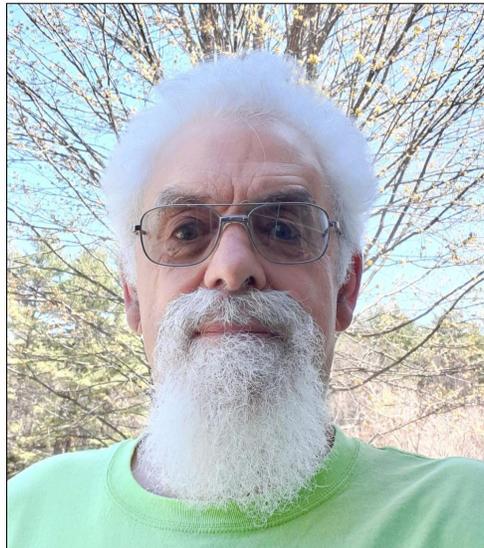
"For me, volunteering is all about connecting to my community, with my personal values and what I can offer to create a positive future for others."

Melissa Jurkoic, Newmarket, NH
GSGWM board member, ChickTech,
Everwise, WITI, NH Tech Alliance,
Microsoft DigiGirlz, wiseHer and AnitaB.org



"I volunteer to become connected with my community. It is important to me to help others and be a part of something that makes a difference."

Peggy Piette, Littleton, NH
GSGWM Board member, NH Nurse
Practitioner Association, PTO, ski chaperone



"I have felt a need to give back to a community that has done so much... Volunteering my hard-earned skills just feels good."

Craig Dickstein, Peterborough, NH
Council volunteer



"We all have something valuable to give. We often underestimate the impact we can have. With Girl Scouts, I never doubt the value of my contributions."

Julie Taylor, Milton, VT
Leader of Troop 61489, a group of
33 Girl Scouts in kindergarten - Grade 5.