

OPTIONS

Girl Scout Leaders today are usually juggling some combination of family, career, volunteer commitments and leisure activities. Finding the time for all of these could, at best, be described as difficult. Planning time is even more precious. Here, then, to help get you get started, are OPTIONS for the busy Girl Scout Leader.

Each OPTIONS guide will offer meeting ideas for the beginning of the year as well as presenting a collection of openings and closings to be mixed and matched at meetings throughout the year. To implement OPTIONS, certain resources are necessary. Each OPTIONS identifies those resources considered primary (used at nearly every meeting) and secondary (used at certain specific meetings). Resources listed on pages 5 -7 are supportive to leaders and girls and are available for purchase at the G.S. Shop or check out at the Emerson or Hannibal Resource Centers at the St. Louis and Hannibal Girl Scout Service Centers.

OPTIONS is here to help you – do not think your troop meetings should be planned around what is written here. The girl/adult partnership always has been a fundamental concept in Girl Scouting; it is one of our unique strengths and values. In Girl Scouting, a girl can learn to make decisions, accept the consequences of those decisions, and help plan activities for her troop. Through your efforts, girls will Discover (themselves and their values) Connect (with others) and Take Action (to improve their communities and the world).

So feel free to use OPTIONS in helping to get you started in planning your troop year. You are encouraged to use the Girl Scout Journey Publications and resources, which invite girls to “Take Action” on an issue they care about. The books contain stories, inspirational material, Girl Scout History, traditions and values, facts and games, and open spaces for girls to fill in their own ideas and memories. There are currently three different Leadership Journey’s available to the Cadette Girl Scout. Each Leadership Journey Set includes a girl book and a how to guide for the troop leader/facilitator. The *Cadette Girls Guide to Girl Scouting* (available in the fall of 2011) will include a handbook section and an awards section featuring 7 different Legacy Badges, financial literacy badges, cookie business badges and religious awards as well as a newly updated Program Aide Award. Two Community Service Bars are also available.

Additional Ideas and options for troop meetings and activities can be found online at www.girlscoutsem.org, the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Centers, *Pep Session Packets* and in each issue of *Inspire: Leader Program Bulletin*. Your Neighborhood Chair will also serve as a resource in finding out about Neighborhood, District and Council sponsored events offered to Cadette Girl Scouts in your area.

Training is the most important tip we can offer to first time and returning Girl Scout Leaders. Cadette Leaders responded that Introduction to Girl Scouting (ITGS) and Cadette Essentials courses gave them a great start. The GSUSA Online Volunteer Orientation (<http://training.girlscouts.org/>, password: Discover) is required and provides an introduction to the organization. GSEM’s ITGS is required and provides essential troop start up information for new Leaders. Leadership Essentials and Cadette Essentials offer additional ideas and information for working with a troop. Check www.girlscoutsem.org for a link to online ITGS and the current issue of the *GSEM Course Catalog*, which lists course dates, times, and locations. Additionally the *Adult How to Guide for Cadette Amaze!, Breathe and Media Journeys* offers Leaders information regarding meeting ideas, ceremonies and Girl Scout traditions. *The Cadette Girls Guide to Girl Scouting* will be available in the fall of 2011 and will also offer new and updated information for working with girls.

Girl Scout programs change and update to keep girls interested and involved. Check www.girlscoutsem.org for a link to online courses and the current issue of the *GSEM Course Catalog*, also available online, which lists course dates, times, and locations.

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Girl Scout Cadettes are in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades. The Girl Scout Cadette troop offers girls an opportunity to experience decision making and different forms of troop government (Patrol System, Executive Board or Town Meeting).

Your role as an advisor will grow, while your role as a Leader will diminish. You will learn how to suggest, but not take over. You will mentor the girls and foster their independence as they plan how they will discover, connect and take action to make their world a better place. And you will be proud of these girls as they uncover their true leadership potential.

Some things to take into consideration when working with the Girl Scout Cadette are:

- ✓ Ask the girls how often they want to meet, and let them know your availability.
- ✓ Ask the girls what kinds of things they think would be meaningful and fun to do.
- ✓ The girls will want to decide for themselves what they would like to do, but you will play an important role by sharing suggestions and options for guest speakers, activities, and earning awards.
- ✓ Look for opportunities to include families in activities. Family members can be troop helpers or resource people.
- ✓ The meeting plan used for younger girls may not meet the needs of Girl Scout Cadettes. A flexible schedule and the ability to “think outside of the box” in planning activities are vital to helping girls continue in Girl Scouting.
- ✓ Consider holding the meeting at a favorite hang out like Starbucks or McDonalds, or a pizza place.
- ✓ Let the girls plan. Encouraging girls to select activities is the key to well attended meetings. Your role is to ask: What about cost, transportation, time involved, materials needed, safety checkpoints, GSUSA and GSEM policies, standards and practices.
- ✓ Girls enter Cadette Girl Scouting at varying levels of ability to plan activities. Leaders should identify girls who have the skills, experience and readiness to make a particular activity run more smoothly, and encourage those girls to take a leadership role for that activity. Choosing a variety of activities gives more girls this opportunity.
- ✓ Allowing girls to make and learn from mistakes is essential for girls to build skill, responsibility and self confidence.

Troop meetings can consist of opening and closing ceremonies. The business portion of the meeting should involve new and old business. A democratic system of governance will allow all members to express their interests and feelings. Girls will partner with Leaders and other adults to facilitate, act as a sounding board and ask and answer questions. Girls gain confidence and leadership skills when given the opportunity to lead their activities, learn cooperatively as a group, and learn by doing instead of by observing. Use of self-government allows girls to learn from their mistakes and take on more responsibility when they are ready.

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Girls at the Cadette level often use one of the three types of governance below. Leadership Journeys and the new Cadette Girls Guide to Girl Scouting offer additional examples of team decision making. Groups may change systems if one system is not working.

- ❖ **Patrol System:** Girls are divided into smaller groups in which every girl has a role. Girls in the group will elect a Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol leader who will be representing the patrol to the larger group. Positions of responsibility for other girls might include: Secretary, Treasurer, Crafts Manager, Activity Manager or Equipment Manager. Girls may wish to come up with a patrol name.
- ❖ **Executive Board:** One Leadership Team makes decisions for the entire troop. The Leadership Team usually includes a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.
- ❖ **Town Meeting:** Business is discussed and decisions are made at meetings attended by all girls in the troop. Leader serves as a moderator, ensuring everyone gets a chance to talk and all ideas are considered.

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Girl Scout Cadette Troop Finances

- **While there is always the temptation to do so, DO NOT SUBSIDIZE TROOP ACTIVITIES YOURSELF!!** Check the GSEM Troop Money Earning Monograph for planning troop budget, troop checking account, and other troop money related topics. This publication is available from your Neighborhood Chair or council resource centers. Additionally, refer to the *Volunteer Essentials* (available online from the GSEM website) and the newly updated *GSEM Essentials* also available from your Neighborhood Chair for information regarding specific issues relating to troop funds for Cadettes.
- After girls have chosen their activities, they will need to determine how best to finance them. Girl Scout Cadettes have several opportunities to earn money to support troop activities.
- When budgeting for the year, it is important that girls know the total cost of recognitions for the entire year. Please take inflation into consideration when determining the amount your troop will need to set aside for recognitions. Be sure to include the Girl Scout Pin and World Association pins (if not already acquired as Junior Girl Scouts), new badges offered in the new *Cadette Girls Guide to Girl Scouting* (available fall, 2011), Journey Awards, membership star and white disk, fun or participation patches, general activity supplies, etc. and for girls bridging to Girl Scout Seniors, Bridge to Girl Scout Senior patch. Current prices of these items can be found in the Girl Scout Shop in St. Louis and Hannibal and online at www.girlscoutsem.org.
- The Girl Scout Cadette/Senior/Ambassador sash or vest (including the insignia tab, USA flag, council ID set, and troop numbers), the *Cadette Girls Guide to Girl Scouting*, available in the fall of 2011 and the Cadette level Leadership Journey books are all optional purchases and are the responsibility of each girl's family. Refer to the *Cadette Girls Guide to Girl Scouting* or online for uniform insignia placement guides.
- Troop Dues may be charged yearly, monthly, or at each meeting. Some troops choose to "charge by the event," collecting money to cover whatever activity they are doing. Girl Scout Cadettes have many troop money earning opportunities available to them, including Fall Product and Cookie Sale Activities and cookie booths. Consult the *Troop Money Earning Monograph* available online for additional troop money earning activity ideas as well as guidelines to be followed for each project.
- Have a parent meeting early in the year to review plans and costs. The meeting will afford you the opportunity to organize the troop committee (i.e. assistant leaders, cookie manager, fall sale manager, etc.) and to get acquainted with the parents/guardians and other family members. It will give you the opportunity to find out what the parents/guardians expect for their daughters and what interests they may have regarding the Girl Scout program. You will be able to tell the parents/guardians about the troop's plans and let them know how they can help. This is your opportunity to collect registration money and gather information.
- Go to your Neighborhood meetings. You'll get great ideas, meet experienced leaders, and learn about exciting neighborhood events and council wide opportunities to enhance your troop activities.

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Resources

Please always refer to the current versions of both primary and secondary resources.

Primary:

Girl Scout Leadership Journey resources and publications:

aMAZE: The Twists and Turns of Getting Along: Life is a maze of relationships and this journey has Girl Scout Cadettes maneuvering through all its twists and turns to find true friendship, plenty of confidence and maybe even peace. The adult guide offers tips for talking about relationship issues with girls, and pointers for understanding Cadettes' development and creating a safe, welcoming space.

Breathe: Cadettes engage all five senses as they clear the air- their own and Earth's. Girls learn to assess air quality inside and out, getting an aerial view of everything from cigarette smoking to noise in the air to deforestation. Along the way, they try some scientific experiments. As they enjoy creating some "breathing room" in their lives, Cadettes may also find a new flair, think about "hair", and perhaps even try making an éclair.

Media: Cadettes put the "me" in media as this journey encourages them to explore the great big multimedia world around them and then remake media to better match the reality they know. Along the way, Cadettes become aware of the value of media, its limitations and effect, and the power they have to lead and inspire others.

The Cadette Girls Guide to Girl Scouting (available fall, 2011)

Inspire: Leader Program Bulletin (online at www.girlscoutsem.org)

Volunteer Essentials (online at www.girlscoutsem.org): Contains content that impacts the entire volunteer membership of the GSUSA, with current GSEM specific information. Online only

GSEM Essentials (available from your Neighborhood Chair): Minimizes content from *Volunteer Essentials* and current GSEM specific information. Printed Document

Safety Checkpoint: Guidelines and checkpoints regarding safety issues by specific activity (<http://www.girlscoutsem.org/content/822/safety-activity-checkpoints.aspx>)

Secondary:

Perfectly Effortless Program (PEP Session Packets) – activities to enhance troop program (Topics include *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting; Celebrate!; Fun in the Out-of-Doors; Helping Others; People Near and Far; Do-Re-Mi and Swaps and Bridging*) available at the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Centers or online at www.girlscoutsem.org.

Trips and Tours – A resource designed for Girl Scout Leaders to explore the many outstanding venues in and around our community. *Trips and Tours* is available online at www.girlscoutsem.org. Note: for troops taking overnight trips, leaders must get Neighborhood Chair and council approval by completing a Troop Trip Application (P-10) available online at www.girlscoutsem.org.

Troop Money Earning Monograph – Information about troop checking accounts, planning budgets, etc. available from your Neighborhood Chair, council resource centers or online at www.girlscoutsem.org.

It's Your Journey – Customize It! – GSUSA Publication. This publication is available for purchase at the Girl Scout Shop or to borrow from the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Centers.

Melinda Carroll Girl Scouts Greatest Hits – Pocket Songbook of Vols. 1 & 2 and CD's Vols. 1-11 (GSPSB): available to borrow from the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Centers.

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The Girl Scout Silver Award Adult Volunteer Guide and Girl Guide: Available online at www.girlscoutsem.org
>Programs and Events>Awards.

Destinations: GSUSA Publication offering travel experiences ranging from two days to three weeks for Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors. Destinations are facilitated by GSUSA and hosted by individual Girl Scout Councils, GSUSA, and contracted organizations. All the latest information on destinations including the application form can be found on the GSUSA web page – www.girlscouts.org/forgirls/travel/destinations.

LIA (Leader in Action): Journey Leadership awards earned by Cadettes who assist their Brownie Girl Scout sisters along their journeys. The LIA Brownie Quest Award requirements can be found in the *Adult How to Guide for the Brownie Leadership Journey, Quest*. The LIA Award for the *WOW! Wonders of Water* Brownie Leadership Journey requirements can be found in the *Adult How to Guide for the Cadette Leadership Journey, Breathe*. The LIA Award for *A World of Girls* Brownie Leadership journey requirements can be found in the *Adult How to Guide for Cadette Leadership Journey, Media*.

Silver Award Preview Kit: Pack containing all the information needed to work on the Girl Scout Silver Award including all three Cadette Leadership Journeys and the Girl and Adult Guides for the Silver Award. This kit is available to borrow from the Emerson Resource Center.

On-Line:

www.girlscoutsem.org – GSEM news source, online courses, workshops, council program activities, Neighborhood Announcements and other council publications.

www.girlscouts.org – GSUSA’s national organization Web site, go to Girl Scout Central section for awards, ceremonies and other information.

Additional Resources and Program Ideas:

Girl Scout Virtual Catalogs: Online at www.girlscoutsem.org : Girl Scout Shop

Girl Scout Promise and Law: Online at www.girlscoutsem.org

Girl Scout Fun Patches: Girl Scouts offers various patches for sale in the G.S. Shop or online at www.girlscoutsem.org. The variety of these patches is constantly changing. You can view the updated available patches on a virtual catalog through the Girl Scout Shop link on our website. Fun patches and participation patches may include: Manners, First Aid, Pet Care as well as Fire Station Visit, Ice Cream Party, Roller and Ice Skating etc. There are no requirements specifically for these patches. Girls may earn or be given them at your discretion.

Living the Girl Scout Law: Individual level ideas for working with the girls about living the law are available online under the Resource Centers – Links section at www.girlscoutsem.org.

Religious Awards: Contact your religious organization directly to see if there is a program available for your level of girls to earn awards.

Resources for Volunteers: A listing of all resources available to borrow from the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Centers is available online at www.girlscoutsem.org; Resource Center; Links

The following Patch Programs are available at www.girlscoutsem.org: Programs and Events: Patch Programs or in the Emerson or Hannibal Resource Centers:

Juliette Low World Friendship Fund Patch Program (JLWFF)

Making CENTS in the City Patch Program - Girl Scouts of Missouri financial literacy program. Age level traveling trunks may be borrowed from the Emerson or Hannibal Resource Center.

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Economize Energy (ECO-EN) Patch Program: Help girls learn to use resources wisely and to protect and improve the world around them.

Disability Awareness Award Programs: Our own council program promoting disability awareness for all levels of girls.

Meet Me in St. Louis Interest Project Program: Our own council patch program promoting local history.

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Getting Started.....Meeting Ideas

Opening and Closing Ceremonies may be as brief as a single sentence or may be used by girls who need a time to present requirements for awards.

Opening Ceremony:

- Opening One: Have a flag ceremony (PEP Session Packet- *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting and Celebrate!*).
- Opening Two: Create a “conversation starters” jar in which girl’s place slips of paper on which they’ve written words or phrases that capture various relationship topics (such as cliques, peer pressure, being yourself) and the leadership qualities or skill that go along with them. Each week, one girl chooses a slip of paper and then starts a short group talk about what’s written on it.
- Opening Three: Remake/Retake: Gather the girls in a circle and say: Let’s each share one thing in our day that was so joyful we’d like to do it again. Then let’s share one thing we would “retake” and “remake” – or do differently if we could get a “do over.”

Closing Ceremony:

- Closing One: Form a friendship circle and sing “Taps” (GSPSB). Friendship Circle: In a friendship circle, you stand in a circle with other girls. Place your right arm over your left arm. Hold hands with the girls next to you. The friendship squeeze begins when you hold hands in a friendship circle. One girl or the Troop Leader should start. With her right hand she squeezes her neighbor’s hand. Then that girl squeezes with her right hand. One by one, each girl passes on the squeeze until it travels all around the circle.
- Closing Two: Texas Hug: Everyone stands in a circle, arms over each other’s shoulders. Leader says: “Take one giant step forward. That’s the Texas Hug. Goodnight, Girl Scouts.”

Meeting 1: Have a Rededication and Investiture Ceremony. The Investiture Ceremony may be very simple. The new member repeats the Promise, is given her Girl Scout pin, and welcomed into the troop and the organization. Refer to the PEP Session – *Ceremonies and Celebrate!* for other ideas for holding a Rededication/Investiture Ceremony. (Participation patches for Investiture and Rededication are available for purchase through the Girl Scout Shop).

Meeting 2: Check out a Silver Award Kit from the Emerson Resource Center. The kit includes all three current Leadership Journeys as well as information regarding earning the Girl Scout Silver Award. Share the kit’s contents with your girls. Remind the girls that if they will be earning their Silver Award, they must choose one of the three Journey books to complete as a prerequisite to earning the award. Girls may choose one of the Journeys and begin to work on the requirements for earning it.

Meeting 3: Girls may choose to work on the *Disability Awareness Badge* (see additional resources and program ideas). Activity #6 provides ideas for learning about specific disabilities and how to problem solve. These simulation activities provide a “hands on” approach to making daily tasks easier. (The *disability awareness badge* is available for purchase through the Girl Scout Shop.)

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Meeting 4: Our own council's badge "Meet Me In St. Louis" provides girls with an opportunity for in depth exploration of the heritage and culture of the Greater St. Louis area. To begin work on the completion of this badge, consider a field trip to the History Museum in St. Louis to learn about the 1904 World's Fair. Find three foods that were first introduced at the fair and enjoy one for a snack. Activities 3 and 4 (see additional resources and program ideas).

Meeting 5: Start a Seasons of Giving project. Check with your Neighborhood Seasons of Giving Coordinator for a list of agencies to serve. Visit www.girlscoutsem.org or check PEP Packet-*Helping Others* for additional service project ideas and craft suggestions. Report your troop service through the Seasons of Giving Troop Report (SOG-1) online at www.girlscoutsem.org. Your troop may wish to do an activity for Seasons of Giving in addition to or instead of "making something" (i.e. caroling, packages for a homeless shelter, food pantry baskets, volunteering at a food bank, etc.)

Other Special Girl Scout Days and Activities Ideas:

October 31 – Juliette Low's Birthday. Consider helping a Daisy Troop with their Investiture. Start earning the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund (JLWFF) patch. Design and develop your own celebration. Visit the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Center or online at www.girlscoutsem.org for patch requirements and other ideas to celebrate Juliette's birthday.

October is the time for registered adults in your troop to look into certifications and trainings required to take your troop camping. Check the current issue of GSEM Course Catalog at www.girlscoutsem.org. Application deadlines may seem far away but by starting the process now your troop will be prepared for a great outdoor experience.

Fall Product Sales: If you choose to participate in this Council Fall Product Sale event, refer to the *Inspire: Leader Program Bulletin* and Fall Product Training materials for more information about this sale.

January: **Don't Forget!** Check for Troop Cookie Training dates in your Neighborhood! Refer to the current issues of *Inspire: Leader Program Bulletin* and Troop Cookie Training materials for more information about the sale.

January: Look at the exciting council sponsored events being held this spring (see the current issue of *Inspire: Leader Program Bulletin* online at www.girlscoutsem.org for details and registration information). If part or all of your troop is planning to bridge to Girl Scout Seniors this year, you may want to participate in a Girl Scout Senior activity as part of Bridging to Girl Scout Seniors. (See the PEP Session – *Bridging*)

February: A Girl Scout Summer is usually published and distributed to each registered Girl Scout in late January or early February. Discuss the opportunities available for Girl Scout Cadettes such as LARKS, Day Camp or Resident Camp. Some opportunities will be individual girl and some will be troop. Cadettes have the opportunity to earn Program Aide Training and Day Camp Aide Training. Many of the camp registration deadlines are at the beginning of March, so be sure to have girls start thinking NOW about what they would like to sign up for.

February 22 – World Thinking Day: Visit www.girlscoutsem.org for theme and program ideas. On this day, the birthday of both Lord and Lady Baden-Powell, Girl Scouts and Girl Guides everywhere "think about" each other and their union through the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. Invite an international *Destinations* participant to tell about her experiences and serve refreshments typical of the country she visited. There are new Girl Scout Thinking Day patches available every year as well. Contact the GS Shop for purchase of the patches.

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March 12 – Girl Scout Birthday. Celebration of the first Girl Scout troop meeting ever held. How about some cake? There is always a Girl Scout Patch available yearly for this event. Contact the GS Shop.

March: Tally up overall troop cookie sales. Decide through troop government system how to use the proceeds.

April – April Showers: Plan to participate in this council wide collection of personal care items. Discuss how April Showers benefits our community and spreads Girl Scout values throughout the area. Think about more service opportunities that your troop can participate in. This may spark some interest in earning the *Girls Scout Silver Award*. April Showers main patches and year segments are available to purchase through the Girl Scout Shop.

May: Finish plans and projects for the Bridging Ceremony/Court of Awards Ceremony.

May: Court of Awards and Bridging Ceremony: If there is no neighborhood bridging ceremony, check the PEP Session Packet – *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting, Celebrate! Or Bridging Packet* for ideas and tips for conducting ceremonies. Each girl should receive a membership star with a white disk and if earned, the Bridge to Senior Girl Scouts. Journey awards, participation or fun patches or other earned awards that have not already been presented during the year should be awarded at this time.

Additional Program Opportunities for Cadettes include:

- Reflections: Annual ceremony to recognize girls who have earned the Girl Scout Silver or Gold Award.
- Cadette Camp-a-Rama: Annual weekend at Camp Tuckaho with a variety of planned activities.
- STEPS (Science, Technology and Engineering Preview) Summer Day Camp
- Outdoor Adventure Course
- Overnights
- Cadette Senior and Ambassador Task Force

Additional information is available through the *Inspire: Leader Program Bulletin*, on line at www.girlscoutsem.org, or the resource centers in St. Louis and Hannibal.