



Girl Scouts®

Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons

Southeast District

Volume 1, Issue 1

Happy Holidays to Everyone!

It has been a busy, dizzying, exhilarating and sometimes frustrating five months since we became Dakota Horizons council. I want to thank all the volunteers, parents and Girl Scouts. Membership Specialists, Program and Learning Specialists, Customer Service people, shop personnel and directors work at Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons because of **you**. We plan programs and events, hold registrations, go to camp, make snacks and seek adventure because of Girl Scouts. I have to say that I have never met a more dedi-

cated group of women than the SE district staff. Every week at our staff meetings as we hear about the great things you are doing, we get excited. Your strong commitment energizes us. Then my entire staff gets even more excited about planning new trips or seeking out ways to build girls of courage, confidence and character.

We have had a terrific response in Early Bird and Fall registrations. The Membership Specialists tell me they have been successful because of all the help they received from

parents, schools and volunteers. You, the SE District Girl Scout volunteers need to pat yourselves on the back. You recruited girls and adults. You made the system work even when it was different. You made girls and parents feel welcome and you are making the difference in the lives of young girls. Thank you for all that you do.

Have a Happy Holiday! Remember, we are closed to the public from December 24th – January 4th, 2008.

--Paige Carda,
District Director

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Cookie Sales...1 MILLION Boxes

This year's cookie sale is set for February 22-March 14, 2008. We are very excited about it! Our goal for Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons is to sell ONE MILLION boxes of cookies! Help us make this goal a reality. There will be prizes for high cookie sellers, so watch future newsletters for more details.

The Southeast District Cookie Rally will be held February 16 in Sioux Falls.

We encourage you to attend.

Mini-Cookie Rallies will also be held in Mitchell, Yankton, Aberdeen, Watertown, Brookings and Pierre. Rally dates and times are tentative, so please check our temporary website at www.gsdakotahorizons.org under the product sales link for further information. Personal invitations will be sent to all Girl Scouts once the details are finalized.

What is a Dakota Certificate?

Girls earn Dakota Certificates through Cookie Sales. They can be used to offset the cost of any Dakota Horizon sponsored event, national membership dues or merchandise purchase in the Council shops. Dakota Horizons certificates expire October 31, 2009. Dakota Horizon certificates cannot be converted to cash.



Cookie Fun Facts

- All proceeds from our council's cookie sale stay in our council to support local Girl Scouts like you.
- The number one reason people buy Girl Scout Cookies is to support Girl Scouting.
- Our Dakota Horizons Board of Directors determined the cost of a box of cookies after gathering information from the Product Sales Committee and considering the financial support needed for our girl programming.
- Girl Scout Cookie Sale activities

support the democratic process in Girl Scouting and give girls the opportunity to decide how some of their troop/group proceeds will be spent.



- ABC Bakers has been making Girl Scout Cookies since 1938, making it the oldest and most

experienced of the three cookie suppliers licensed by Girl Scouts of the USA.

- Here's a sample grocery list for ABC: 16.5 million pounds of flour, 11 million pounds of sugar, 2.8 million pounds of peanuts, 1.3 million pounds of coconut!
- Thin Mints make up more than 25% of Girl Scout Cookies sold. The second most popular cookie is the coconut, caramel, and chocolate confection ABC calls Caramel deLites.

Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons Internet Statement

Within the Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons Council we are aware of at least two internet websites that appear to be similar to our Girl Scouts www.gogirlsonly.org, but are inappropriate for girls. These sites are very misleading and attract girls under the guise of the proud Girl Scout image. However, these sites are not supported by Girls Scouts—Dakota Horizons or endorsed by GSUSA. The two inappropriate websites are gogirls.com and gogirls.org.

Several parents have brought these two sites to our attention. We appreciate their concern and attention to this matter. We are concerned about the experiences girls

have with the Internet.

As with every Girl Scout activity, we are committed to the safety and security of our girl members, and the Internet is no exception. However, we are not responsible for the content that others post up. Because we are a well-recognized and respected organization, we are an easy target for those who want extra publicity by exploiting our name or logo.

With that in mind, GSUSA created some guidelines for Online Safety that Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons encourages girls and their parents to use. The basic online principles are listed below. You can find more de-

tailed information on the GSUSA website under the Internet Safety Pledge.

Online Safety Tips:

Girl Scouts actively encourages girls to follow some important safety guidelines whenever they go online:

1. Get permission from a parent or guardian before going online.
2. Do not post or share any personal information, including last name, birthday or contact information.
3. Use the safety features and tools available on these sites, including settings that limit access to friends and family.

Transitional Board Members

Starting a new Girl Scout Council is not easy. Governance in every area needs to be created. The individuals listed below have been leading the new Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons Council as transitional board members.

President

Cheryl Chapman, SW

First Vice President

Christina Starks, NW

Second Vice President

Mike Bassingthwaite, NE

Secretary

Carole Barrett, NW

Treasurer

Catherine Heinemann, SE

CEO

Tami Haug-Davis

Southwest District

Crystal Jordan

Linda Stahl

Alan Solano (nominee)

Southeast District

Robin Aden

Shawn Oligmueller

Linda Salmonson

Northwest District

Sarah Henderson

Eloise Leggate

Holly Pope

Joan Severin

Northeast District

Nancy Israelson

Monica Millette

Fancy Nancy Daisy Program

The Fancy Nancy, a Daisy program, was held on Saturday, November 10th. The girls looked great in their dresses, tiaras, bows, and more! The event started with excitement when the girls got to meet Fancy Nancy herself!

She read them her story of being fancy and taught them some new words in French. The girls also had a blast decorating cupcakes, and better yet getting to eat them! After their snack they worked on a no-sew

pocketbook craft. The girls were all smiles as they left the program in style with their new purses. Thanks to all that attended!

Photo at right: Girls show off their "fancy" attire.



Haunted Camps a Spooktacular Time

B O O !
Over 320 girls and their families became mummified Girl Scouts.



Haunted camps were held on October 13 at Camp Nyteepeota in Watertown, and October 27 at Wall Lake Girl Scout Camp in Sioux Falls.

To become mummified, girls participated in a variety of activities

including fun games, spooky crafts, face painting, and fortune telling. For those who dared, spider dogs were a real treat!

A big **THANK YOU** to JoAnn's Crafts in Sioux Falls for their generous donation of materials and supplies. Also, a HUGE thank you to all those who volunteered their time and expertise.

Fall Fun Event

Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons held a Fall Fun event on October 21, 2007 at a farm outside of Aberdeen SD. Seventy-two girls, 17 adults, and numerous volunteers enjoyed a fun filled afternoon. The girls had a blast in the corn and hay mazes, painting their own pumpkins, playing carnival games, trying their hand at human foos-ball, and celebrating Juliette Gordon Low's birthday! Girls who attended the event also received a fall fun patch.

Southeast South Dakota Troops are Having Fun!

Over the last couple months, troops in the southeast part of South Dakota have been busy with different activities. For Juliette Low's birthday, the troops in the Mitchell Service Unit (and surrounding towns) came dressed in costumes and spent the day decorating pumpkins while having a lot of fun!

On November 3rd, girls in the Dakota Territory Service Unit (Yankton and surrounding areas) participated in a Brownie Potpourri where they spent the afternoon completing the Stitch-it Together and Eco-Explorer Try-it badges.

Girls in the ABC/Hills Service

Unit delivered homemade cookie trays to the elderly in the Canton and Viborg communities on November 14th. They received many thank you notes in the local paper.



Outer Limits Service Group caroling event.

On December 1, the ABC/Hills Service Unit (Canton, Beresford, Viborg, Alcester and Centerville) participated in a holiday parade. The Outer Limits Service Unit (Tea, Har-

risburg, Lennox, Parker and Marion) went caroling on December 2 at nursing homes in Lincoln County and then had a Holiday party where

the girls exchanged gifts. The girls and the leaders had a great time! On December 9th, the Mitchell Service Unit held a Holiday Happenings party where girls made crafts, played BINGO and much more.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why haven't we heard a lot from council directly?

When Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons Council was created on July 1, 2007, it was the **beginning** of the realignment process. We have worked hard to hire staff to serve all of the girls of our area and to preserve the best policies and practices from each council. Merging databases, hiring staff, developing policies, completing inventories and audits were occurring simultaneously. Volunteers were never forgotten, just called upon for patience.

Why hasn't there been a council newsletter put out since the change over in July?

The priority was put on developing a temporary website and trying to meet the immediate needs of girls including registration and recruitment materials, forms and creation of product information. The Council is planning to print a quarterly newsletter, beginning in January 2008. District newsletters will be released through email monthly.

Why wasn't the website up and running sooner?

A website request for proposals was written and sent to potential website providers after the council was realigned. Once the providers responded there were interviews and negotiations to determine what company might be the best match for Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons. Then a company was hired and a temporary website was created. A permanent website is in the development stages.

Who are the members of the board? See page 2

Are board meetings open to leaders?

The Transition Board of Directors is reviewing this process.

Why did it take so long to get the new Dakota Horizon forms out to the leaders this fall?

Compromise and redesigning take time. For each form we gathered six former council forms and worked to combine them into one comprehensive form. People were very emotionally and passionately attached to their forms. We worked diligently to ensure that each form included all the information needed and had a consistent look. Because we incorporated all of the former council forms into this process, it took longer than expected. Each form was reviewed and edited numerous times. Some forms were dependent on policies being considered by the Board. We held all forms until they were completed and released them at the same time. Some forms have already undergone additional corrections. Input is continuously noted. Next year some forms will be professionally printed in duplicate or triplicate. If you have any suggestions on forms, please contact Connie Ochocki so together we can continue to develop the perfect form.

Why did it take 3 months for us to be notified about the bank account changes?

Troop policy was passed by the Board of Directors on September 8th.

What will be the process for delegates at the Annual Meeting?

This process is being reviewed for approval by the Board of Directors on December 20th.

When will formal council trainings be scheduled?

Trainings have occurred throughout the council in a variety of formats at the district level. Some districts have held training days offering a variety of trainings in one location on the same day. Some have provided one-on-one training with leaders, some prior to, during, or after Service Unit Leader Meetings. Silver, Gold,

and PA trainings have also been held. Membership Specialists and Program and Learning Specialist were provided an Orientation Training, A Safety-Wise Training and the Program Age Level Homestudy Courses for their use in getting troop leaders up and running this fall. Program and Learning Specialists will assist in developing additional trainings. Look for additional training dates to follow. Volunteers can request specific trainings based on needs in their area.

The Council has also invested in the training of two staff members to become certified Red Cross Instructors so we can provide CPR/First Aid training to our volunteers at cost.

Do we need to fill out a council permission form for a field trip with the troop?

Follow these guidelines for permission slips and field trips.

Scenario 1 - Your troop is planning a day field trip to the zoo. All girls and adults are registered. You do not need to purchase insurance and you do not need to get permission from council. Just make sure parents are aware of where you are going.

Scenario 2 - Your troop is planning a field trip and you will be driving two hours to a regional zoo. All girls and adults are registered. You will not be staying overnight. You should complete a permission form for council. This form will help us if there are any questions or in case of an emergency. You do not need to purchase additional insurance since everyone is a registered Girl Scout and the trip will take no longer than 2 days or 1 overnight.

Scenario 3 - Your troop is planning a trip to New York in the summer of 2008. You need to complete a permission form for council, as well as a budget and itinerary. You will also need to purchase additional insurance for your trip even if everyone attending is a registered Girl Scout.

Outreach Programs

Connections

We currently have eight troops involved in the Sioux Falls area Connections program. This program is geared toward low income areas within our community to target girls unable to traditionally participate in our programming due to lack of funds and/or resources. Business sponsors, primarily United Way, provide funding for the girls involved in the Outreach program. This funding supports girls' access to programs, council events, troop activities, uniforms, and snacks at each meeting. Providing bi-weekly meetings shows the

girls that no matter what their home life is like, there are people willing to support their interests and listen to their needs.

Studio 2B

Studio 2B meetings are just getting started in the Sioux Falls Middle Schools. These meetings provide opportunities for girls to connect with women role models who listen to the girls and provide a place for them to just be themselves. Funding through United Way provides programming, council events, activity supplies, snacks, and the Focus Books. Studio

2B continues to inspire girls of all ages to be themselves and be proud of who they are.

Programming Ideas

If you'd like to get your troop involved in our community and earning service learning hours, supporting the Outreach programs within our district is a great place to start! The girls involved in the Outreach program would love to spend time with your troop. Your girls will serve as peer-mentors. Please contact your District Membership Outreach Specialist: Miranda Millner at 1-800-666-2141 Ext 42 for more information.

Upcoming Programs

January Events:

Friday, 1/11/08 – Music and People From Around the World (Sioux Falls)

Level: Brownie program at Sioux Falls District Office from 7:00pm-9:00am

Registration : Closes on **December 31, 2007!**

Friday, 1/11/08 – Night at the Museum (Sioux Falls)

Level: Junior program at Old Courthouse Museum from 7:00pm-8:00am

Registration: Closes on **December 31, 2007!**

Saturday, 1/12/08-Bee Healthy Badge Bonanza (Pierre)

Level: Junior program at St. Joseph's School from 10:00am-3:30pm

Registration: Closes on **December 31, 2007!**

Monday, 1/14/08 & 1/21/08-Ceramics & Clay (Aberdeen)

Level: Junior program at the

Aberdeen Recreation & Cultural Center from 6:30pm-7:30pm

Registration: Closes **December 31, 2007!**

Friday, 1/18/08 – Murder Mystery Dinner (Sioux Falls)

Level: 11-17 program at the Sioux Falls District Office from 6:00pm-10:00pm

Registration: Closes on **January 7, 2008!**

Saturday 1/19/08-Sunday, 1/20/08-Don't Stress (Aberdeen)

Level: 11-17 program at the Aberdeen YMCA from 6:00pm-7:00am

Registration: Closes on **January 7, 2008!**

Saturday, 1/26/08 – Daisy Days of Winter (Sioux Falls)

Level: Daisy program at the Sioux Falls District Office from 1:00pm-2:30pm

Registration: Closes on **January 14, 2008!**

Saturday, 1/26/08-Sunday, 1/27/08-Don't Stress (Pierre)

Level: 11-17 program at the Pierre YMCA from 6:00pm-7:00am!

Registration: Closes on **January 14, 2008!**

February Events:

Saturday, 2/2/08 – Math Wizardry (Aberdeen)

Level: Brownie, Junior, 11-17 program at TDAF at Richmond Lake from 1:00pm-4:00pm

Registration: Closes on **January 21, 2008!**

Saturday, 2/9/08 – Bee Healthy Badge Bonanza (Aberdeen)

Level: Junior program at Schriver's Community Center from 10:15am-3:30pm

Registration: Closes on **January 28, 2008!**

Headquarters Corner

In the Beginning

By Tami Haug-Davis

Overview

The merger of six Girl Scout councils into the Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons Council is part of Girl Scouts of the USA's national realignment to strengthen the Girl Scout Movement by creating high capacity councils capable of providing more opportunities for girls, enhanced services for adult volunteers, enhanced outreach to underserved populations and stronger community partnerships.

In 2006, the board of directors of each existing council appointed a representative to serve on the Council Realignment Committee (known as the CRC). The CRC developed a merger plan and a governance structure for the new council. It also established the council's initial budget, product sales guidelines, staffing structure, technology needs, and every other area of the council.

Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons was born on July 1, 2007—the beginning of the realignment process. Since it's inception we've been working diligently to combine all of the forms, programs, policies, procedures, and staff of six autonomous councils into one comprehensive council.

The most commonly asked questions we have gotten are: Why did it take so long to complete certain tasks such as developing the website, completing forms, or getting the program guide out? From the beginning and throughout this process it is essential to seek input and get information from all six of the previous areas to build all of these things. Even though it takes a great deal of time, it is the right thing to do. We are committed to continue creating and making changes as we go along. Here's a timeline to give an idea of what's been happening:

June 15-July 15

- Hiring of essential staff. All current employees of each of the six

merging councils were given the opportunity to apply for a position with Dakota Horizons and to interview.

July 1

- Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons was officially created!
- Official employee start date for Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons employees. A council wide total of 46 staff members were interviewed; 32 accepted offers; 5 declined; 2 offers were rescinded; 7 were not offered positions.
- All databases from the six previous councils (membership and donor) were sent to GSUSA for merging.
- First meeting of the Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons Transitional Board of Directors was held July

July 1, 2007 was the beginning of the realignment process.
—Tami Haug-Davis

10 to begin review and approval of governance policies.

- Review of ALL forms from six councils was started with a goal of creating one comprehensive set of forms.
- Comprehensive review of programs in all six councils was conducted to determine council and district level programs.
- Planning for fall membership recruitment was started.
- Product sales planning was started utilizing the product sales committee recommendations.
- All six former council websites were reviewed so a website request for proposal (RFP) could be developed and sent to website developers throughout the entire council.

August

- Program review and program guide creation continued.
- Finalized forms set out to all districts for volunteer use.
- Interviews with website development contractors were conducted to identify the company that could help develop the Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons website.
- Product sales planning, ordering and training schedules were developed.
- Analysis of troop finance issues and gift acceptance policies was started.

September

- Nut sales trainings were held in each district.
- Negotiations for a temporary website contract were completed.
- Merged data came back from GSUSA on Sept 6th, providing our first opportunity to connect with membership, volunteers or donors via e-mail or regular mail. Prior to this time the contact information was not available to us.
- Transitional Board met in person for the first time September 7th & 8th creating a draft strategic plan for the new council and establishing a goal of December 31st to approve the board governance policies. The CRC recommended council-wide budget was adopted.
- Program booklet was sent to the printer.
- Additional staff members were hired at the headquarters and district levels.

October

- The temporary website was launched.
- Program booklet was distributed.
- Staff communiqué was developed to enhance internal communications.
- Additional staff members were hired at district levels.

"Progress" Continued on page 7

Shop News

Promotional Cookie Sale Items

If you are interested in purchasing promotional items for your cookie sales like car magnets, flags, or yard signs, you need to purchase them by Monday, January 14th. Please contact your local Girl Scout shop for the Cookie Promotional Items Order

Form. Orders and payments must be received by January 14th, 2008.

Cookie Credit Deadline.

Girl Scout Cookie Dough, Cookie Certificates, Cookie Coupons, Cookie Money or any other type of cookie credit certificates are **valid** and can

be redeemed until **October 30, 2008**. After **October 30, 2008**, all cookie credit from former Girl Scout councils will be null and void **regardless of its original expiration date**. Some exceptions apply. If you have questions, please contact your Dakota Horizons District Director.

Community Service Projects

Troop 446 from the Brookings/Volga area preformed Community Service for the First Lutheran Preschool and the Dakota Sun Nursing Home in Volga. They made ornaments for and decorated three Christmas Trees as well as the entire nursing home. They also sang Christmas carols.



Progress (continued from page 6)

November

- Work continued on the permanent website.
- Cookie Sales trainings were held in each district.
- First resource development mailing was created and sent to more than 6,000 current and former Girl Scout supporters within our council.
- Internal policies and procedures continue to be developed in all areas utilizing best practices from all previous council input.
- Additional staff members (open positions) were hired at the headquarters and district level.
- Transitional Board achieved the goal of review and approval of council governance policies.

December 13

- Program and Learning Specialists Retreat held to plan summer camps.
- Transitional Board meets. As part of its agenda it will review and approve the Delegate Election Process.

Transition continues

July 1, 2007 was only the **beginning** of the realignment process, not the end. When Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons was created on July 1, the real work began. Since then we've been working hard, and we will continue the hard work of becoming one comprehensive, unified council. As you know, the first time you create something new, it takes time, usually more time than can be anticipated. We've been told by GSUSA that merger transitions and an undertaking such as ours can take 1-2+ years.

As we go through the first year of membership, program and product cycles we know there will be challenges. We are confident as we go forward, we will get better, stronger, and things will go more smoothly. This is our reality as we create the new Girl Scout—Dakota Horizons Council.

We are one of the first councils in the nation to go through the realignment process which means there are very few other examples to follow; so

Safety-Wise Information

Safety-Wise will be coming out in an online format only in Spring 2008. There will be NO printed version produced by GSUSA though anything on the OCN can be printed by council. On-line orientation (45 minutes to complete) should be available 24/7 in Spring 2008 to volunteers. Age level training will be available at the end of 2008-09. Exciting times ahead!!

we are leading and paving the way for others.

The future looks bright

We continue to search for best practices and programming from each of the past councils to create our new high-quality, high capacity council. The work before us is not easy. It will continue to require communication, compromise and most of all patience! In the end, we are producing new policies, new procedures, new forms, new programs and most importantly better services for girls.

We are changing the way girls will experience Girl Scouts today and for years to come. We are the future of Girl Scouts. As we across the horizons of North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota, we can see Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons as a shining light.

Southeast District

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Girl Scouts is the world's preeminent organization dedicated solely to girls – all girls – where, in an accepting and nurturing environment, girls build character and skills for success in the real world. The Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons Council serves more than 15,500 girls and 5,000 adults in North and South Dakota, 13 counties in Minnesota and one Iowa county.

World Thinking Day 2008

Each year on February 22, girls participate in activities, games and projects with global themes to honor their sister Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in other countries.

“Think globally, act locally” is the mantra for encouraging girls to design activities that increase cultural awareness and emphasize the positive connections between Girl Scouts in the United States and their sisters throughout the world.

Water is the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) World Thinking Day theme for 2008. This year girls voted and selected Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Italy and Madagascar to represent the five regions of WAGGGS— which

are Asia/Pacific, Western Hemisphere, Arab region, Europe and Africa. World Thinking Day not only gives girls a chance to celebrate international friendships, but it is also a reminder that Girl Scouts of the USA is part of a global community—one of 144 countries with Girl Guides and Girl Scouts organizations.

WAGGGS is an educational organization based on spiritual values and is open to all girls, without distinction of creed, race, nationality or any other circumstance. Members of WAGGGS adhere to the fundamental principles of the original Promise and Law, although the wording may be adapted.

See the Resources Section of the

2008 World Thinking Day Guide for information about each country. You can also visit www.girlscouts.org/world_thinking_day/ for additional information.

World Thinking Day patches are available in all Dakota Horizons Council shops. The cost is \$1.00. Please plan ahead.



2008
Thinking Day Patch