

## Kindness is Legacy

Do a Good Turn Daily

A brief overview of the history of Girl Scout community service through the decades

### 1912-20

When the USA entered World War I, Girl Scouting was still a new organization. The Girl Scouts were eager to do their part in the service to the war effort. A special pledge was created by the US Food Administration and the National Girl Scouts organization, where Girl Scouts pledged to go without candy two days a week, and go wheat-less one meal a day. Girls helped to conserve and preserve food, sold war bonds, worked in hospitals, and collected peach pits for use in gas mask filters. "Do Your Best - Not Your Bit" was the slogan of the times. Girl Scouts help at polls when women win right to vote.

### 1930's

Girl Scouts led community relief efforts during the Great Depression by collecting clothing, making quilts, carving wood toys, gathering food for the poor, assisting in hospitals, participating in food drives and canning programs, and providing meals to undernourished children.

### 1940's

During WWII, Girl Scouts operated bicycle courier services, invested more than 48,000 hours in Farm Aid projects, collected fat and scrap metal, and grew Victory Gardens. A publication, *Senior Girl Scouting in Wartime*, was created to encourage older girls to perform war-related service projects, like Hospital, Child Care, and Emergency Outdoor Aid. Girl Scouts sponsored Defense Institutes, which taught 10,000 women survival skills and techniques for comforting children during blackouts and air raids. Girls collected 1.5 million articles of clothing that were then shipped overseas to children and adult victims of war. A painful memory to World War II is the internment of Americans of Japanese, German and Italian descent in to relocation camps for the duration of the war. Girl Scouts were there helping to keep life as normal as possible. Girl Scouts in full uniform, who were already interned, greeted and assisted new arrivals at Internment camps.

### 1950's

Girl Scouting reaches out to include physically challenged girls as well as the daughters of migrant agricultural workers, military personnel, Native Americans and Eskimos. The March 1952 issue of Ebony magazine reports: "Girl Scouts in the South are making steady progress toward breaking down racial taboos." Martin Luther King, Jr. describes Girl Scouts as "a force for desegregation".

### 1960's

During the 1960s, the Girl Scouts National Board issued statements in support of civil rights. To fight racism, Girl Scout Speak out conferences were held throughout the country.

### 1970's

Girl Scouts helped Vietnamese refugee children adapt to their new homes.  
In response to the growing environmental awareness, a program called Eco-Action was born

### 1980's

In the 1980s, the *Contemporary Issues* publications began, helping girls confront serious issues such as suicide, drugs, and child abuse.

## 1990's

Nearly four million Girl Scouts, girls and adult leaders, tackled illiteracy alongside First Lady Barbara Bush in the *Right to Read* service project. Girl Scouts began a health and fitness national service project, *Be Your Best*, to promote different ways of being healthy, keeping fit, and eating right. This came along with the new food pyramid, which happened to be drastically different from the previous ones.

## 2000's

Encouraged by President George W. Bush, Girl Scouts donated a personal gift of \$1 each to help support the children of Afghanistan. When soldiers actually began going over to Afghanistan and Iraq, Girl Scouts started collecting food, clothing, and money to send to both the soldiers and the natives. There continues to be a drive with every cookie sale that sends cases over to the soldiers.

After the tragic events of 9/11, Girls Scouts held remembrance ceremonies and performed a variety of community services. Girl Scouts everywhere banded together to help and hundreds of boxes of Girl Scout cookies were sent to the volunteers working at Ground Zero

Girl Scouts continue to give girls the opportunity to change the world around them

### Ideas for brainstorming with your troop girls

Pinterest <http://www.pinterest.com/gslakemom/girl-scout-community-service/>

#### Service Projects you could do:

- Collect clothing/hygiene supplies for families
- Have a canned food drive
- Write letters to the Troops
- Collect toys, art or school supplies for children
- Make sack lunches for the homeless
- Put together holiday meal packages
- Decorate a nursing home for the holidays
- Plant a garden where there isn't one
- Help cook food and/or serve food at a homeless shelter
- Adopt a family- gifts/meals for holidays, anonymous help or just be friends
- Plant, water, weed or take care of part of a community park
- Put together birthday boxes for children in group homes
- Make boo-boo bunnies for children's hospitals
- Organize a game night for nursing home or hospital
- Make pillows or blankets for children or teens
- Write letters to sick children
- Organize a stuffed animal drive
- Collect books for a library or hospital
- Wrap presents or fill stockings for the holidays
- Help collect supplies for an animal shelter
- Sing or perform for residents at a nursing home