

Features



Girl Scouts Celebrate 100 Years; Issue New Books

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By Annabeth Miller, SMT Editor

As Girl Scouts begin to celebrate 100 years since Juliette Gordon Low founded the organization, they are also celebrating the roll-out of an all-new collection for girls of all ages.

Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) has developed and updated badges aimed at giving girls the skills they need to succeed.

Girls can still earn popular long-time badges such as Cook, Naturalist, and Athlete ? topics as relevant today as they were in 1912 ? but now they also have badges such as Product Designer, Digital Movie Maker, Customer Loyalty, and even the Science of Happiness. And new “Make Your Own” badges at every level give girls the opportunity to explore any interest they choose.

“Girls told us they want more challenge, and we’ve responded with substantive, focused, fun new badge offerings that will prepare girls for lifelong success,” said Kathy Cloninger, Chief Executive Officer, Girl Scouts of the USA. “What we need today are more adult volunteers to help girls bring these leadership experiences to life.”

Badges now come in categories:

- Legacy
- Financial Literacy
- Cookie Business
- Skill-Building
- Make Your Own.

There are also awards such as a new pin called *My Promise, My Faith*, which helps a girl celebrate what her faith and the Girl Scout Law have in common.

The new badge portfolio, called *The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting*, also complements GSUSA’s National Leadership Journeys, which help girls explore how to be leaders in their own lives and in the world around them as they take on projects to prevent bullying, protect the environment, and more.

The Girl Scout organization has transformed itself in recent years to focus on leadership development for girls in the 21st century, and the new badge offerings reflect that transformation.

“*The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting* builds the critical thinking, creativity, and entrepreneurship that the next generation of leaders will need to make the world a better place,” said Cloninger.

The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting has found immediate, widespread acceptance in the Girl Scouting community. The initial press run of 850,000 copies has all but sold out.

Local Response

Girl Scouts of the Missouri Heartland is the local Girl Scout council for the southeast Missouri area, serving a total membership of approximately 16,000 girls in grades K-12. The council was created from the merger of five legacy councils, including the Cotton Boll Council which served girls in seven Southeast Missouri counties.

The new council includes a geographic area that goes from the Mississippi River to include a handful of counties in Kansas and Oklahoma, and from the Missouri-Arkansas line north to Columbia, Jefferson City, and Moberly.

Pre-orders for *The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting* resulted in a near sell-out of the first shipment of books received to local Girl Scout shops.

“We are very excited to see such a positive response about these books,” said Jennifer M. Orban, CEO of Girl Scouts of the Missouri Heartland, “Volunteers have told us that *The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting* is better than they could have imagined, and girls have declared them ‘cool and fun’.”

This article: [Girl Scouts Celebrate 100 Years; Issue New Books](https://showmetimes.com) was first published on <https://showmetimes.com>.

Written by Unknown
Date: October 15th 2011



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