

Girl Scouts of Genesee Valley 2007 Spring Assembly Report

The 2007 Spring Assemblies were the source of lively conversations, great suggestions for the future, and lots of questions. There are two sections to this report, the first is questions and answers, the second is a compilation of recommendations, suggestions and questions from the small group sessions that were held at each meeting.

Q&A – Spring Assembly – 2007

Comments and Questions	Actions and Answers
Can we make sure that the realignment subcommittee information sheet and enrollment doc are posted to our web site in the realignment section?	Yes, they will be posted
For the Program/Service Delivery Subcommittee, is this where camping will be discussed?	This subcommittee will discuss camping programs as well as other program items including troop travel, fundraising, leader training and other everyday leader issues.
Is there any age limit for participating in the realignment?	There is no age limit.
Is national working on a standardized volunteer training model?	Yes, national (GSUSA) is developing an adult volunteer model with key components and standards including easy access to training/learning.
Any idea of the time commitment for working on a subcommittee?	Yes/No. Time commitments will vary by subcommittee with regard to meeting and travel time; however there is a one year deadline for completion of all work. Some subcommittees will need to complete their work prior to the one year deadline. Please see Helene if you are considering a possible commitment to possibly obtain some more information on this.
Have chairs been selected for the subcommittees?	Yes, they have been chosen and will be confirmed on 5/19.
Who comprises the CRC?	12 persons. Each CEO and Board president of the 4 merging councils and 4 other individuals (1 selected from each council). Darby Knox has been selected from our council for her communication skills.
What are the logistics for making programs available despite geographic spread of the new council?	Goal is to improve delivery of services not make it more difficult – the Delivery of Services sub-committee is responsible for assuring easy access to Girl Scouting throughout the entire new region.
Which counties are included in the merger?	Niagara, Erie, Orleans, Genesee, Monroe, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Wyoming, and Livingston
Why does GSUSA have the final decision in naming the new council?	So the name meets the defined criteria; and so there are no duplicate council names.
Is there a deadline for Sub-committee Applications?	It is best to get the bios to Helene by May 16th so they can be copied for distribution at the May 19th CRC meeting.
Where will the new council HQ be?	The Property Subcommittee will make a recommendation to the CRC for the location of the new headquarters of the merged council.
Will sub-committee members need to travel?	Sub-committee members will need to travel (either rotating between current council meeting areas or to a central location), although remote conferencing capabilities are being researched.
Will there be / could there be a sub-subcommittee focused on working with girls with disabilities?	This is a question for the new council.
What is the rollout schedule of the new Leadership Development Program?	The timeline is dictated by GSUSA not GSGV (not a CRC or new council decision). GSUSA has announced it will begin the rollout in the fall of 2008 with time allotted for transition.
Could we republish the new Leadership Development Program decisions (re: uniform, age levels, etc.) -- the things we know are certain for 2008?	Yes, we can publish this as a delegate bulletin.

The results of the small group discussions held at each Spring Assembly are listed by table number below. After each table is a Small Group Discussion

Small Group Table Talk

Comments and Questions	Actions and Answers
<p>GSGV is not following through on GSUSA programs. "Destinations", a GSUSA older girl travel program, is being ignored within our council and according to these leaders when they called in September for information no one knew what they were talking about. They actually went to 7 Lakes for information and training which our council didn't have. There was no communication, meeting, no nothing. They feel that their girls have been shortchanged and are very concerned about next year's service in this area.</p>	<p>While we currently include an overview of "<i>Destinations</i>" in older girl leader training, we do not train girls and parents.</p> <p>We will contact Seven Lakes and talk to them about their <i>Destinations</i> focused training for girls, parents and their leaders as well as the best options for delivery. Thank you for the suggestion.</p>
<p>Older girl program needs staff support. Leaders feel they are being denied access to GSUSA program because everything in GSGV is concentrated on realignment. Badly needed are Career Exploration programs. These leaders have traveled from Webster to Buffalo to take advantage of this program since it hasn't been offered here.</p>	<p>This request has been forwarded to the program team for their consideration. Support to older girls will also be part of the service delivery subcommittee review.</p>
<p>Communication is urgently needed for non-computerized delegates and members.</p>	<p>We are still publishing a regular newsletter; however the gap in communication is due to rapid improvements in our ability to communicate via electronic means. When the national realignment and transformation process began, we made a commitment to post all of the GSUSA communications relating to the process on our website. We've kept that commitment, but do not have the financial or personnel resources to print and mail all of the data we are receiving. Even the Delegate Bulletins are now going out weekly, potentially adding a massive cost if they were mailed. Further, because delegates are working more electronically, their communications have become much more immediate and much more interactive. Much of what non-computer people are missing is that back-and-forth nature of the conversation that is continuously evolving. Perhaps service units may want to consider access to e-mail and the internet as part of their criteria for electing delegates. Troop leaders who don't have access may wish to poll the parents of girls in the troop, and ask that any who have computers sign up for the council's e-mail blast. Clearly, there are two standards for communicating with our membership – the print standard is high quality, but slower, less frequent, more expensive and less interactive.</p>
<p>Green people must be used in the realignment process. They felt green people haven't a chance to become members if the committees because of the "extreme" requirements.</p>	<p>Your recommendation will be passed to the Council Realignment Committee and to the chairs of the subcommittees. Everyone with the time and interest is encouraged to enter the selection process.</p>
<p>Concern about the new program materials going to be put in a Studio 2B format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are not user friendly • Too expensive • Not easy to write in • Information too scattered • Troops buy one book and make copies • Asked that the requirements (for patches and awards) be more static and general as the books are outdated and some programs/pieces have been dropped when leaders used them for guidance. • They DID like the format of short and flashy for the girls 	<p>This recommendation will be passed on to the program team at Girl Scouts of the USA.</p>

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<p>New program age delineation thoughts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern about lack of co-mingling of age groups; it is good for the younger girls to have contact with the older girls to learn and be inspired. Will they do away with service teams? Need a forum for multi age levels to gather regularly 	<p>The first and third bullets will be forwarded to Girl Scouts of the USA.</p> <p>The second bullet will be part of the service delivery subcommittee deliberations.</p>
<p>Product Sales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern about Daisies being too young to sell product Not enough encouragement for the young girls to sell – need to sell a certain number to get a patch – is there another recognition to help the younger girls get started? GS has too much emphasis on product sales (they understand the financial consideration, but feel it is a lot to ask leaders, parents and troops to be constantly selling something). 	<p>Your first bullet point will be forwarded to GSUSA for their consideration. Product sales will be considered as part of the service delivery subcommittee's work, and the second and third bullet points will be forwarded to them for their review.</p>
<p>Will there be a recruitment night in the City schools? (This question was asked by a city leader who is concerned about declining enrollment due to the current procedure of only recruiting during the school day.)</p>	<p>We do not do one large centralized recruitment night in the city as we do not have enough staff and volunteers to be in all the schools.</p> <p>We are more successful when we recruit school by school. Last year we partnered with the Boy Scouts and recruited during open houses in the majority of city schools.</p> <p>The few schools where we were not physically present were provided <i>Join the Fun</i> fliers for distribution. We are looking for additional volunteers so we can be in every middle and elementary school this fall.</p> <p>We also recruited in churches, neighborhoods and during kid-focused city events.</p>
<p>Don't make all communication computer-driven. Some leaders do not have or extensively use computers.</p>	<p>Please see the answer above concerning communications with non-computer members.</p>
<p>Will there be summer resident camp?</p>	<p>The property subcommittee will be developing recommendations concerning outdoor programs in the newly realigned council.</p>
<p>Will there be transportation options for summer camp?</p>	<p>That has not yet been determined.</p>
<p>Who will Service Units go to with questions?</p>	<p>Just as there is now, there will be staff members assigned to support volunteer systems and structures, including service units.</p>
<p>Will August Kickoff with Service Managers still happen?</p>	<p>The kickoff is scheduled for Thursday, August 16th in 2007. No decision has been made about future kickoffs.</p>
<p>Will there be another level between Service Units and Council?</p>	<p>Establishing a structure for effective delivery of council services will be part of the service delivery subcommittee work.</p>
<p>Will response time for questions be as good as it is now? (between 1-24 hours)</p>	<p>Thanks you for the compliment! Our council has worked hard to shorten the response time for questions, and it will be one of the "best practices" we share with our merger partners. We do not know what systems the new council will use to respond to questions.</p>
<p>Will all current staff have jobs?</p>	<p>The new CEO will determine who will be hired as staff of the new council.</p>
<p>Will Program Center still be here?</p>	<p>The property subcommittee will make facility recommendations to the CRC – we will not know the results of their work for several months.</p>
<p>Celebration Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day 1 – Council wide event sounds like a great idea. Location – Rich Stadium might be needed if single site is proposed and ideal attendance is expected. Format might be like New Year's Eve celebrations – 	<p>Thanks very much – great ideas!</p>

several locations with same activities	
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<p>Ways to Celebrate the Combined Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a new council badge that requires the scout to get to know the various other parts of the combined council (i.e. scavenger hunt). • Conduct a week long resident camp and have participants move around the combined council geographic territory earning patches • Use technology to celebrate so all can participate and get comfortable with how technology will be used. Make sure technology is of the generation that appeals to teens 	<p>These ideas would also encourage girls to get to know each other – creating their own networks of Girl Scout sisters across our entire region.</p>
<p>Other Suggestions on Delegate Meetings/Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make delegate meetings more teenage appropriate via use of more visuals and geared more to youth. Much of information is disseminated for adults and is difficult for the youth to understand. • Even after the realignment, make sure girl participation continues at the council level for all council wide meetings 	<p>Thanks for the reminder to keep this process girl focused!</p>
<p>Other Suggestions with regard to the Realignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage satellite locations for: shop, programs, training • Have a fun casual “uniform” or piece of clothing (like vests/sashes that girls have) to display pins, etc. 	<p>In addition to satellite locations, we are exploring ways of offering more on line services, and already have our shop on line.</p>
<p>Outreach troops are not part of the service units. Lack of communication between service units and GLOW office. The outreach troop in Cobblestone Service Unit (SU) apparently disbanded after a year. The leader of the troop was discouraged. In the meantime, the SU did not know that the troop was in existence. Per the SU the GLOW staff member told the leader that she did not need to participate in SU activities.</p>	<p>The specific situation you describe was resolved well over a year ago.</p>
<p>Communicate fall recruitment dates for the GLOW area in the Penny Saver with a full-page ad, including all locations with dates, time and locations.</p>	<p>We piloted this last year in Wyoming County at a cost of over \$1000 – no new girls were recruited as a result and we will not do it again.</p>
<p>Disconnect between “Service Units” and “Council.” Need to engage SU about recruitment activities.</p>	<p>Most service units are fully engaged in recruitment activities.</p>
<p>Lawn signs need to have local numbers. Currently the lawn signs have the council number.</p>	<p>Lawn signs will continue to have only the council number – it is too expensive to print more than one phone number, and if we use only the council number we can guarantee a call back within one business day.</p>
<p>Newsletter format is key to disseminating information -- lists were too hard to wade through, but the chunked information is much easier to handle.</p>	<p>This is good feedback, thank you.</p>
<p>What will be the uniform colors in 2008 - will we all have one color like Boy Scouts or be multi-colored as now? If multi-colored, will the Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors all share a color so upper-level vests/sashes don't need to be bought as often (or once the girls slow their growth).</p>	<p>For Juniors and older, the Girl Scout uniform will be a white shirt or blouse and a khaki skirt or slacks. There will also be a vest or sash. GSUSA will determine the colors – your suggestion will be forwarded to the National Equipment Service.</p>
<p>Could we please have a visual representation (list or map) of the GSGV Service Unit names and what areas (school districts or towns) they cover? Could we also have the same for the 4 Councils in the merger and the counties they cover (maybe with larger towns or county seats listed)?</p>	<p>The GSGV list is on the GSGV web site – check the Forms Library. We do not have a listing for the other three councils.</p>
<p>Will GSUSA be redoing the books to have more up-to-date information (and correct information as far as the older girl handbook is concerned)?</p>	<p>Program materials are being revised to implement the new program model.</p>
<p>Could we please have more council-sponsored “big” trips (like the trip to NYC)? It is much easier as a smaller troop to</p>	<p>This suggestion will be forwarded to the service delivery subcommittee.</p>

hook into one of these than to try to go on our own.	
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Safety-Wise question: Could the money-earning rules be re-examined so that extra money-earning activities that are able to be approved don't take so much extra planning and outset cost (and so that the Brownie Penny Power Try-It doesn't encourage breaking the Safety-Wise guideline)?	This suggestion will be forwarded to GSUSA immediately, as <i>Safety Wise</i> is currently being reviewed and revised.
When we change in 2008, will next year's Daisies, 2nd-grade Brownies, 5th-grade Juniors, etc., be "grandmothered" to complete their levels in the 3 years as currently planned (or 1 year as the Daisy plan currently stands) or will they be 1st-grade Daisies, 3rd-grade Juniors, 6th-grade Cadettes, etc.? This is actually important for planning this year so that the girls who might be moving know whether they need to anticipate that or not (well before the April-May-June planning time for Bridging & Spring Registration).	Girl Scouts of the USA has announced that the fall of 2008 will <u>begin</u> the rollout of the new program model. No further details have been announced. We will forward your question to the program unit at GSUSA, and will continue to post updates on our website as soon as they are announced.