

Success Stories

Making the World a Better Place:

The girls of Girl Scout Junior Troop 564 of Rossford, Ohio, are no strangers to lending a hand. Through their many service projects they have learned a lot about the community and discovered a passion for service. So, when the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina unfolded, the girls decided they needed to help. They contacted Girl Scouts of the USA to see what they could do and soon adopted Troop 1058 from Chalmette, Louisiana, in St. Bernard Parish, one of the hardest hit communities. They began sending care packages to the 19 girls in Troop 1058 and were soon exchanging letters and learning more about the situation in Louisiana. They learned how 14 schools in the district had been destroyed and that all the students of St. Bernard Parish were all attending one school until Andrew Jackson Elementary school opened.

When it came time for the troop to plan activities for the year they couldn't stop thinking about their new friends in Louisiana. When the 15 girls in the troop learned that the school was being re-built, it rekindled their giving nature. Amanda Richards, a Girl Scout in Troop 564 said, "We decided to collect books and take them down there and build shelves to put them on. I feel really good about it because we're helping a lot of people with books because a lot of the school lost a lot of their supplies." The girls then decided to work even harder and host countless money earning projects so that they could travel to Louisiana to visit their sister troop and as well as the hundreds of children their project helped out.

Over spring break 2008, they personally delivered 8,500 books, built seven bookshelves for the school and spent time visiting their sister troop in Louisiana. Betsy Reitz the troop leader said, "The thing that affected us the most was when we drove around St. Bernard Parish...some businesses have been replaced but many student are still living in their FEMA trailers."

The troop has been greatly impacted by their experiences and will continue to take action. They are currently planning new ways they can help their friends in Louisiana.

Girl Scout Daisies Helping Haiti:

When the 11 girls in Girl Scout Daisy Troop 10184 from Oregon, Ohio heard about the earthquake in Haiti, they decided they had to help. They did not know much about Haiti, the people or the culture but they knew that they could make a difference. The girls set out to learn as much as they could by examining the effects of the earthquake and talking about how an earthquake would affect them here at home. They invited guest speakers Mr. and Mrs. Frisch to come to their troop meeting and talk. Mr. and Mrs. Frisch, recently featured on Extreme Home Makeover, have adopted five children from the country of Haiti, and brought their son Charlie, whom they adopted from an orphanage in Haiti, to meet with the girls. The Frisch family shared information on Haiti's geography and population. They also talked about how the dense population of Haiti was effected by the earthquake.

The girls who are usually very talkative and energetic were attentive and absorbed as they learned about how houses were built out of any material that could be found because of the poverty level, how water

was collected, and how food was made to stretch by mixing dirt or mud in it. After listening to Mrs. Frisch speak and seeing pictures of what took place, the girls worked to collect supplies to help the people of Haiti. In just a week, the girls collected 513 items to be donated. The girls collected food, water, baby supplies, tarps, and medical supplies. All the donations were brought to their meeting and put on the table for everyone to see. Then they gave the items to an organization in Waterville to ensure the supplies made it to Haiti.

The evaluation and reflection step of service learning was just as important as the investigation, preparation and action steps of the project. The girls spent time reflecting on their experience and how their donations would help. Some girls wished that they could go to Haiti and help more, but all the girls were in agreement that they wanted to keep helping and collecting items. Under the guidance of their leaders, the girls talked about places they could help here in their own communities.

In order to not lose the passion for helping others, the troop focused on Thinking Day activities, and also began planting and caring for tomato plants at home, which they plan to donate to a local shelter later this spring. The girls completed their "It's Your World - Change It" patch, earned their first red hand, and look forward to earning many more. Their leader, Melissa Sullivan, said that the biggest thing girls learned is that no matter where a disaster or tragedy happens, we need to help everyone.

Sharing their Story to Support the Soldiers:

Girl Scout Brownie Troop 11229 from Fire Trails Service Unit in Port Clinton, Ohio, decided their theme for the troop year would be, "We will remember". As they discussed what service projects they wanted to work on, their troop theme made doing a service project for the soldiers an easy decision.

They walked in a local parade and carried a banner reading, "We Remember". Then, these Girl Scouts Brownies adopted one of the local soldiers as their pen pal. Sergeant Lindsay Miller, was in the Army, stationed in Iraq and appreciated the letters of support and the care packages to let her know that she was in their thoughts. The encouragement the Girl Scout Brownie troop provided meant a lot. As the holiday season approached, Sergeant Miller shared that the Holiday season was a difficult time for all of the soldiers in her platoon. The girls got together again to discuss what they could do, and agreed to adopt Sergeant Miller's entire platoon.

The girls brainstormed and developed ideas on how they could best provide support. They set a goal to collect items the soldiers could not get in their military store and identified the groups they wanted to reach out to in the community. They began to tell their story to family members, schools, stores, and senior centers in their community. It did not take long before the community knew of their idea and goals and jumped in to participate. Magazines, local newspapers, toiletries, candy, Christmas ornaments, and a Christmas tree were donated to their cause. A local dentist even joined in the collection by donating toothbrushes and floss.

When the collection period ended, the troop was overwhelmed by the response from the community. As the Girl Scout Brownies packaged the items and prepared to send them overseas, they realized the cost of postage was going to be more than they had planned. So again they met to decide what to do. For the last year they had saved and planned a trip to a local water park, but unanimously they agreed to use the money instead toward the postage for sending the goods. Their gifts were a success with Sergeant Miller's platoon.

At the end of the year Court of Awards ceremony, the girls were surprised by a visit from Sergeant Lindsay Miller, the soldier they had adopted at the beginning of the year. She presented the troop with a plaque from the platoon and a flag which had been flown in Iraq. She shared with the Girl Scout Brownies and their families what the gifts had meant to the soldiers, many of whom were still stationed in Iraq. The girls were so inspired by Sergeant Miller's story and success of their project, they decided to carry their project into this year as a Girl Scout Junior troop.

2010 Resident Camp Quotes

Parents have told us that Girl Scout summer camp is a great experience for their daughters. The following are quotes from parents about the changes they have seen in their daughters, as a result of their resident camp experience:

- “She gained confidence and independence”
- “They pushed themselves to do what they thought they couldn't.”
- “She gained independence and is more responsible for herself and her belongings.”
- “At camp, she was comfortable being who she is.”
- She gained responsibility for herself and learned to work together with others.”
- “She made new friends, handled things independently, and had fun.”

Meredith's mom said that her daughter told her, “I'll never forget rock climbing. I got braver as I went. I almost made it to the top. Camp was awesome and fun!”

Isabella's mom said, “My daughter has been going to GS camp for 4 years now and no other camp has she had this much fun and growth! She came home so happy! She tried scary new things and loved it! I love you gals at Girl Scout camp and what you do for my daughter!”

Corrine's mother stated “Corrine figured out who she was on the inside because of camp. Before she thought she was different, but now has become very in tune with herself and comfortable with who she is. No one will be able to change her opinion of who she is now. Her self esteem is through the roof.”