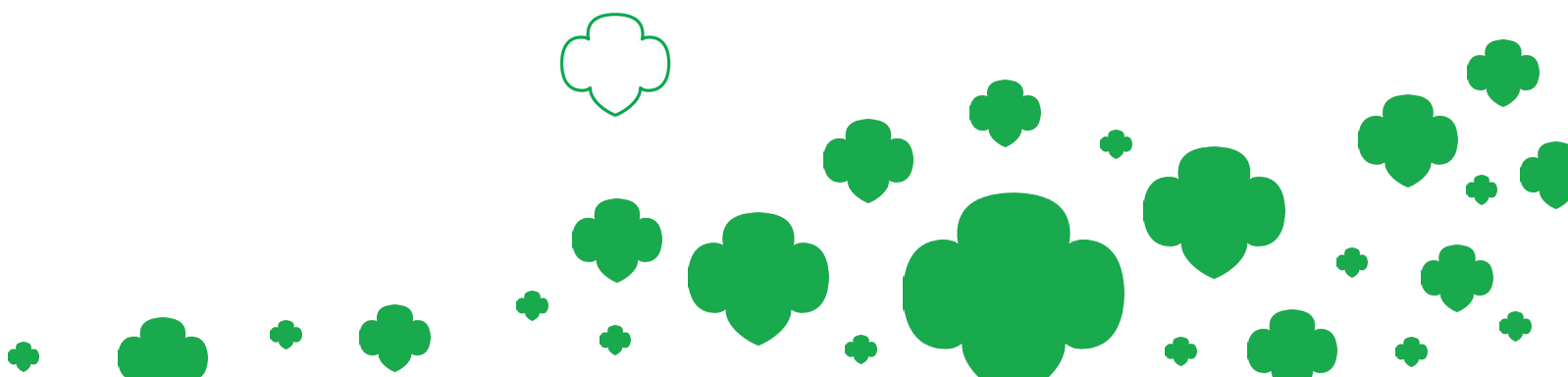




**I can't  
wait to  
be a  
Girl Scout.**



***A Parent's Guide***  
**To Girl Scouts**  
**of Western Ohio**



## CEO Message



Roni Luckenbill

Dear Parent,

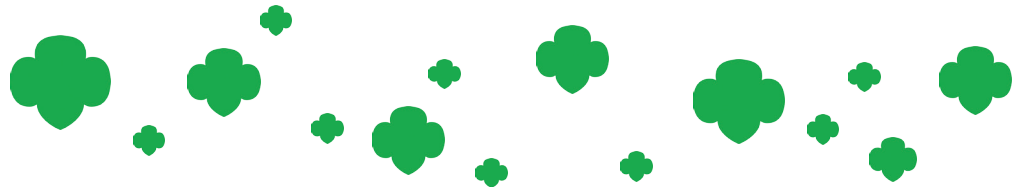
Being a Girl Scout has never been so much fun and it is a place that will capture your daughter's imagination. Whether it's trying new things, exploring nature, creating a painting, taking a trip, learning a new skill or conducting a science experiment, together with friends, girls grow into resourceful, capable and innovative young women. Girl Scouts don't just watch the world go by. They discover themselves, connect with others and take action to create positive change in their communities. They may be young, but they make big impact and there is greatness in every girl.



As a Girl Scout, your daughter will fit right in, with friends who play fair, girls who collaborate and adults who listen and support. Well-trained adult volunteers will give your daughter the supportive, all-girl environment she needs to find her voice and be confident. We'll introduce your daughter to inspiring role models and offer unique skill-building opportunities in a safe environment. Research finds that our 59 million alumnae are more successful in school, developed a stronger sense of self and report greater satisfaction with life than their peers.

We appreciate your support of Girl Scouts and are honored to have the privilege of helping your daughter blossom into her full potential.

Sincerely,



## Girl Scout Leadership Experience



Girl Scouts provides, as it always has, the best opportunities for girls to get the experiences and tools they need to be successful leaders now and throughout their lives. The Girl Scout Leadership Experience engages girls in:

- **Discovering** themselves
- **Connecting** with others
- **Taking action** to make the world a better place.

These discoveries happen through the Girl Scout program, which is intentionally designed to be:

- **Girl-Led**—By the girls, for the girls.
- **Experiential**—Learning by doing.
- **Cooperative**—Working in small groups and teams.

## What Girl Scouts Do

With their Girl Scout leaders, girls team with one another to implement their own troop activities, based on their interests. In addition to helping girls take ownership of their experience, Girl Scout leaders ensure all activities are grade-appropriate and based on the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, as well as on the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Girl Scouts earn badges, hike and camp, participate in the cookie program and much more. They improve neighborhoods, protect the planet, design robots and participate in STEM activities. The Girl Scout Leadership Experience—or Girl Scout program—starts girls off on a Journey of their choice from the leadership Journeys series (see page 4). They'll earn awards, have fun and take on projects that change the world.

Girls then add *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* to their program portfolio. *The Girl's Guide* (also see page 4) offers girls national proficiency badges, traditions and history, an awards log, as well as other activities. Girls can participate from kindergarten through high school and beyond. The different program grade levels can be found on the back of this document.

# Information You'll Want to Know

## Cost

- The Girl Scout membership fee is \$15 per year. This fee, paid to Girl Scouts of the USA, links local Girl Scouts to the national organization and provides benefits such as program resources and supplemental accident insurance for members.
- Most troops also collect dues or program activity fees to support their activities. Participation in Girl Scouting should not be expensive for girls and their families, since Girl Scout troops have the opportunity to earn funds through the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Sale, and through other money-earning projects.

## Troop Leaders

- Leaders are appointed on a yearly basis. They have all passed a background check and are required to follow Girl Scout guidelines governing safety/program activities. Girl Scout leaders undergo comprehensive training to enable them to help girls explore a wide variety of activities in a safe, caring environment.

## Troop Support

- There are many ways that adult family members can be involved in your daughter's troop and make an impact on your daughter's Girl Scout experience. You can support your daughter's experience by:
  - Providing transportation for trips (must be a registered Girl Scout member).
  - Keeping troop records.
  - Sharing skills, songs and time.
  - Making phone calls or emailing.
  - Creating a troop newsletter or social media site.
- You can also take on a broader troop role, such as volunteering to be a leader, assistant leader, troop treasurer, cookie manager or series volunteer (six to eight sessions). For more information about any of these roles, please contact your daughter's troop/group leader.
- There are just a few easy steps to becoming a Girl Scout volunteer:
  - Complete a volunteer application, which includes references and a background check by going to [www.girlscoutsofwesternohio.org](http://www.girlscoutsofwesternohio.org) and clicking "Get Involved" and then "Volunteer Today."
  - Register as a member on eBiz, our online registration process.
  - Connect with other Girl Scout volunteers in your community.
  - Prepare for your role through trainings (online or in person).
  - Join in the fun!
- Girl Scout troops are organized into specific geographic regions called service units. Volunteers from service units provide support to troop leaders and help girls organize larger events.



## Online Registration

The eBiz online registration enables you to purchase new Girl Scout memberships, annual membership renewals or lifetime memberships, and program opportunities, including camp. Benefits of using online registration include immediate registration confirmation, access to program opportunities and secure processing of credit card information. You also have the ability to manage your whole family's records with a single login, and can see registration status and activities.

Paper registration forms must still be submitted with cash, Cookie Dough or Juliette Credits.

Registering for all program opportunities on eBiz is much easier! All opportunities open at 12:01 a.m. on the registration day. Opportunities for donating through eBiz are also available using the Donate Now buttons.

For more information about eBiz, visit our website, contact your regional Girl Scout Center or email [customerservice@girlscoutsofwesternohio.org](mailto:customerservice@girlscoutsofwesternohio.org).

## Girl Scout Journeys

Girls now have three series of National Leadership Journeys to choose from!

**It's Your World—Change It!**

**It's Your Planet—Love It!**

**It's Your Story—Tell It!**

On every Leadership Journey, everything girls do—whether it's performing science experiments, creating art projects, cooking simple meals, or learning to protect the planet's water supply—is aimed at giving them the benefits of the Girl Scout "Keys to Leadership": Discover, Connect and Take Action.

### Here's how they work:

A girl **Discovers** her special skills and talents, finds the confidence to set challenging goals for herself and strives

to live by her values. This includes being proud of where she came from as well as where she's going.

A girl **Connects** with others, which means she learns how to team up, solve conflicts and have healthy relationships. These skills help her in school right now and prepare her for any career she chooses in the future.

A girl **Takes Action** and makes the world a better place, learning a lot about her community and the world along the way.

For all three leadership Journey series, the adult guide and the girl book have everything a volunteer needs to help inspire the girls and to assist them as they go. It's all there for you!



## The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting

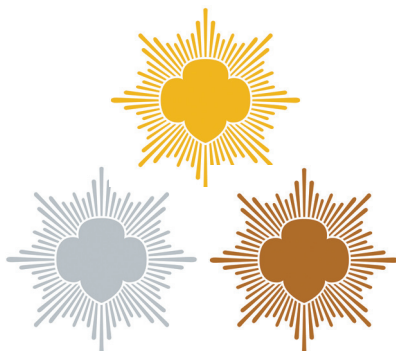
In addition to the resources created for the leadership Journeys, girls also have the option of gaining additional skill-building opportunities through *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*. Girls at every grade level have the option of purchasing their own *Girl's Guide*. Through fun activities, girls can earn a variety of badges to build the skills and gain the confidence they'll use to change the world. *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* includes a variety of badge offerings, handbook sections covering traditions and history, cookie badges, an awards log and much more.



## Girl Scout Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards

The Girl Scout Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards play an important role in recognizing girls' accomplishments as they journey through the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. By earning these awards, girls experience long-term benefits such as resume building skills and scholarship opportunities.

- The Bronze Award is a leadership quest for Girl Scout Juniors (girls in 4–5 grades).
- The Silver Award is a leadership exploration for Girl Scout Cadettes (girls in 6–8 grades).
- The Gold Award is a leadership adventure for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors (girls in 9–12 grades). The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest and most prestigious award in Girl Scouting.



## My Promise, My Faith

Girls of all grade levels can now earn the My Promise, My Faith pin developed by Girl Scouts of the USA. This pin, which girls can earn once a year, complements existing religious recognitions that can be earned by Girl Scouts and allows all girls to further strengthen the connection between their faith and Girl Scouts. A girl earns the My Promise, My Faith pin by carefully examining the Girl Scout Law and directly tying it to tenets of her faith. Requirements for this pin are included in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* for all levels.



# Fall Product Sale and Girl Scout Cookie Program

Twice a year, Girl Scouts have the opportunity to learn life skills and earn money for troop activities through the Fall Product Sale and Girl Scout Cookie Program.

All Girl Scout troops, groups and independent Girl Scouts can participate in the sales.

The Girl Scout Fall Product Sale is a “family and friends” sale, where girls sell nuts, candy and magazines primarily to family and friends. It is a great way for troops to earn start-up funds while giving girls practice in goal setting, customer service and financial literacy.

Through the Fall Product Sale and Girl Scout Cookie Program, girls learn:

- Goal setting
- Decision making
- Money management
- People skills
- Business ethics

These skills and activities support the Girl Scout Leadership Experience by providing girls a way to Discover, Connect and Take Action.

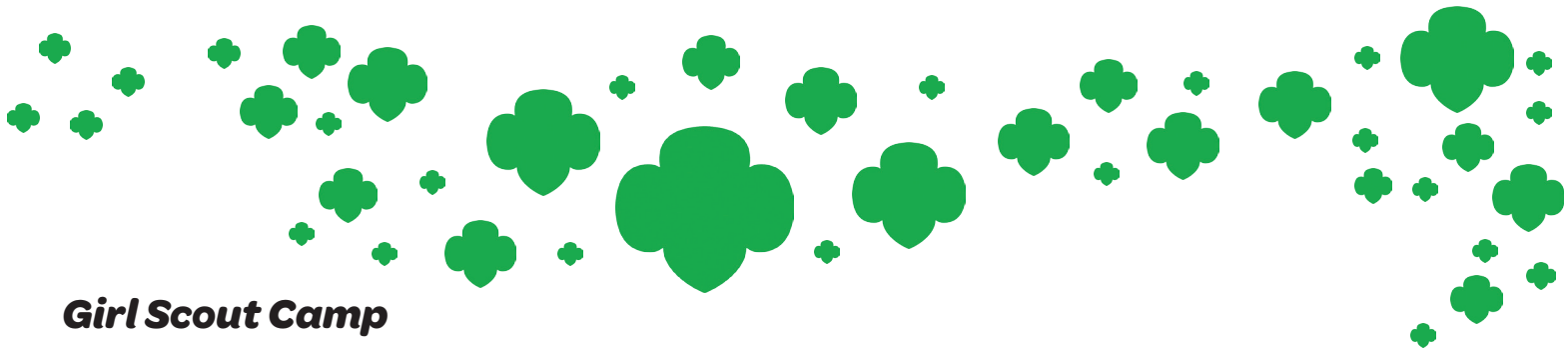
By participating in both product sales you are supporting your daughter’s Girl Scout troop, your community or service unit

and the council. All monies from product sales stay with Girl Scouts of Western Ohio and are used to provide support to volunteers and girls, including:

- Troop earnings from council sponsored product sales exceed \$2.3 million. This money is vital to the troop to pay for events, programs and supplies.
- More than \$341,000 is used to subsidize the cost of membership, program opportunities and camp for girls whose families are experiencing financial concerns. Without this support many girls would not have the opportunity to have a Girl Scout experience.

Parents play an important role in both sales. Whether it’s mentoring your daughter or transporting Girl Scout cookies, you can help your daughter’s troop be successful. Just ask your daughter’s troop leader how you can help.

For more information about Girl Scout Product Sales, visit these websites: [www.girlscoutsofwesternohio.org](http://www.girlscoutsofwesternohio.org), [www.littlebrownie.com](http://www.littlebrownie.com) (Little Brownie Bakers, our Girl Scout Cookie baker), or [www.Nutsforknowledge.com](http://www.Nutsforknowledge.com) (Trophy Nut, our Girl Scout Fall Product vendor).



## Girl Scout Camp

### The Benefits of a Camp Experience

Camp is a long-standing Girl Scout tradition and can be a powerful experience for a girl. Whether it is for the day or overnight, getting away from home, out in nature with others teaches invaluable lessons. Girls learn to work together, make choices, take responsibility, build independence and self-reliance and gain confidence.

All girls in grades kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> can participate in a Girl Scout camping opportunity. As girls progress through Girl Scouts, there are various different camping experiences we offer. For more information about the upcoming camping season, please visit our website in January and click on the summer camp opportunities link.



### Camping Opportunities

- **Day Camp**—A three to five day camp (usually themed) for girls to attend just during the day.
- **Me and My Gal**—One or two nights for girls and their favorite female adult.
- **Troop Adventure Camp (TAC)**—Overnight troop camping for two or three nights, with activities led by camp staff.
- **Resident Camp**—Overnight camping for three nights or a week at one of our camp facilities.
- **One-two week Adventure/Travel Camp**—Overnight camping for one or two weeks, beginning at one of our camps, proceeding to an adventure location and ending back at one of our camps (for experienced campers).
- **Camp Leadership Opportunities**—For girls who are ready to give others the camp experience, these are opportunities such as counselor-in-training.

## Family Partnership

### What is Family Partnership

The Family Partnership Campaign provides financial support that enables girls and adults to achieve the mission and goals of the Girl Scout program.

Family Partnership Campaign donations provide:

- Membership subsidies for girls and adults.
- Adult training including Orientation to the Organization, Grade-Level training, CPR/First Aid and Basic Camping certification at free or reduced costs.
- Free program and resource materials such as the *Volunteer Essentials* and *Program Opportunities for Girls and Adults*.
- Subsidies for resident camp, day camps and troop camping.
- Girl and adult council and national recognitions, such as the Girl Scout Gold Award and volunteer Appreciation Pin.

### How can I make a Family Partnership Campaign donation?

- **Register**—When you or your troop are paying annual membership dues online through eBiz, include a donation to Family Partnership by clicking on the Donate Now tab.
- **Attend**—Support your service unit Family Partnership events or activities where the proceeds are donated to Family Partnership.
- **Donate**—Online, with a credit or debit card. Visit our website at [www.girlscoutsofwesternohio.org](http://www.girlscoutsofwesternohio.org), then click on the Donate Now tab, or mail your check to your regional Girl Scout Center and be sure to put “Family Partnership Campaign” in the memo line of your check.

## Financial Facts

### Girl Scouts of Western Ohio

#### What does it cost to keep a girl in Girl Scouts?

We estimate that \$300–400 is spent per individual Girl Scout every year. This amount includes dollars spent at the council level to supplement program opportunities, financial aid and other related expenses, money contributed by parents toward activities and money earned by the troop to help defray costs for each girl.

Girl Scouts of Western Ohio provides approximately a 50 percent subsidy for all council-sponsored program activities. In addition to these direct service expenses, Girl Scouts of Western Ohio incurs many other costs, such as:

- Financial assistance to girls and troops in need
- Training of volunteers
- Volunteer screening/background checks
- Communication resources including e-newsletters, the council website and Facebook page, and the summer opportunities brochure
- Maintenance of camp properties and regional Girl Scout Centers

#### What makes up the council's funding?

Many people think the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Sale provide all the funding the council needs. This is by no means the case. United Way contributions, program fees, investment income, grants and contributions, sales of supplies and other miscellaneous revenue are also important to the budget. The continued support of those who believe in the Girl Scout mission, Promise and Law, including volunteers and parents of our girl members, is vital.

#### Troop/Group Finances

In Girl Scouts, there are financial policies and standards that govern all troop/group monies. Troops generally pay for troop program-related items, such as:

- Recognition items like badges and awards
- Troop meeting activities, field trips and troop camping

Financial management is one of the many areas of experiential learning that Girl Scouting provides for girls. By working as a team to plan their activities and develop budgets, girls will gain an understanding of money management, a skill that can be carried into their adult lives. The Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Sale also provide girls with the opportunity to budget, to set goals and to gain the leadership skills to become the entrepreneurs of tomorrow.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Tell me about Girl Scouts of Western Ohio.**

Girl Scouts of Western Ohio serves nearly 50,000 girls in a 32 county area throughout western Ohio and southeastern Indiana. Fourteen thousand trained volunteers work to provide services and deliver the Girl Scout program to girls. Four regional Girl Scout Centers are located in Toledo, Lima, Dayton and Cincinnati (see back cover for contact information).

### **Why should my daughter join Girl Scouts?**

At Girl Scouts, girls are always counting down to the next adventure we'll go on together. Maybe it's artistic. Maybe it's an experiment. Maybe it's getting outside and helping the community. With Girl Scouts, girls will make new friends and have a ton of new experiences that will show them how exciting the world is, and how awesome they are, over and over again.

### **How can my daughter get involved?**

Girls can become involved in Girl Scouting in a variety of ways; these are referred to as the Girl Scout pathways. Pathways include the following:

- **Troops:** Series of program activities with the same group of girls.
- **Camp:** Day and resident camps.
- **Series:** Girls participate in a series of program activities with the same group of girls relating to a specific theme or purpose.
- **Events:** Girls participate in local or councilwide events.
- **Travel:** Girls plan, earn money, prepare and participate in regional, national and international trips.

### **Are uniforms required in Girl Scouts?**

Uniforms are not required for participation in Girl Scouting. Girls are encouraged to wear a uniform for visibility and to demonstrate their Girl Scout spirit. Basic Girl Scout sashes with insignia are priced at \$17 and up. Additional uniform pieces are available. Some troops choose to purchase uniforms, others make group T-shirts, still others allow each girl to decide for herself what her uniform will be. A girl is always welcome to participate in Girl Scouting whether or not she chooses to wear a uniform.

### **How often should I expect my daughter's troop or group to meet?**

How often a troop or group meets depends on a variety of factors, including the availability of the meeting place and the schedules of the leaders and girls. Usually groups meet for an hour or two, from once a week to once a month. Many troops meet every other week. Occasional activities may involve longer time commitments, such as field trips and camp outs. If your daughter is in a series or participates in Girl Scout During the School Day activities, her group will meet for six to eight weeks.

### **Does my daughter have to earn badges?**

A Girl Scout is not required to earn badges, but most girls enjoy it! Badges are one way a girl can demonstrate the progression of skills she has attained in Girl Scouting.

### **Where can I purchase Girl Scout apparel, badges and other Girl Scouting items?**

All Girl Scout merchandise can be purchased at the Girl Scout Shops located in each of our Girl Scout Centers, or online through our website.

### **My daughter has a disability. Will she be allowed to join Girl Scouts?**

Girl Scouting does not discriminate on any basis, including disability. Girls of varying abilities enjoy participating in Girl Scouting and we have a long history of adapting activities for girls who have special needs, including those who have physical or mental disabilities and those who are chronically ill.

### **Does Girl Scouts have a particular religious affiliation?**

Girl Scouts does not endorse or promote any particular philosophy or religious belief. Our movement is secular and is founded on American democratic principles, one of which is freedom of religion. We welcome Girl Scouts from diverse backgrounds.

### **I have questions about my daughter's troop. Who do I ask?**

Your first step is to communicate with the troop or group leader. Ask her to share the goals of the troop and how these goals fit into the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Ask her to explain how policies and procedures are put into place. The leader is a great resource for you—she is volunteering her time to ensure that your daughter and the rest of the troop or group members have the opportunity to participate in Girl Scouting.

If you have concerns that the troop or group leader cannot address, please contact your regional Girl Scout Center.

### **How can I get financial assistance?**

To request financial assistance, please speak with your daughter's leader or contact your regional Girl Scout Center. Financial assistance is available to ensure that every girl is able to participate. No girl is denied membership because of inability to pay.





## Program Grade Levels

There is one Girl Scout program—the Girl Scout Leadership Experience—that meets the developmental, educational, emotional and social needs and interests of girls as they grow. Below are the Girl Scout grade levels:

**Daisies (Grades K-1):** Through simple, fun activities, girls discover that they are special and that the world offers exciting challenges and opportunities.

**Brownies (Grades 2-3):** By making friends and exploring new horizons, girls begin to explore the world around them during troop trips and other program opportunities.

**Juniors (Grades 4-5):** Through planning, carrying out and evaluating activities, girls develop skills in decision making, leadership and responsibility.

**Cadettes (Grades 6-8):** By further developing life skills and their individual values, girls begin exploring career choices and receive reassurance that the physiological and emotional changes they're experiencing are characteristics for their age group.

**Seniors (Grades 9-10):** By working with younger Girl Scouts in troops or in the community, girls refine their leadership skills. They also learn to take responsibility for their futures and begin to realize that they are well on their way to becoming responsible adults.

**Ambassadors (Grades 11-12):** Using their growing independence, girls go out in the world to raise their voices and create positive changes in their community and beyond. Despite their independence, they still rely on adults to listen and provide reassurance.

## The Girl Scout Mission

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

## The Council Goals

Girls will understand themselves and their values.

Girls will use their knowledge and skills to explore the world.

Girls will care about, inspire, and team with others locally and globally.

Girls will act to make the world a better place.

## The Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:  
To serve God and my country,  
To help people at all times,  
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

## The Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and do, and to respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

## Regional Centers

### Toledo

2244 Collingwood Blvd.  
Toledo, Ohio 43620  
T: (419) 243-8216  
(800) 860-4516  
F: (419) 245-5357

### Dayton

450 Shoup Mill Road  
Dayton, Ohio 45415  
T: (937) 275-7601  
(800) 233-4845  
F: (937) 275-1147

### Lima

1870 W. Robb Ave.  
Lima, Ohio 45805  
T: (419) 225-4085  
(800) 962-7753  
F: (419) 229-7570

### Cincinnati

4930 Cornell Road  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45242  
T: (513) 489-1025  
(800) 537-6241  
F: (513) 489-1417

[www.girlscoutsofwesternohio.org](http://www.girlscoutsofwesternohio.org)