

Girl Scout to celebrate 95 years

The 95th anniversary year of girl scouting kicks off on March 12, when Girl Scouts of the Black Hills Council launches some events highlighting the celebration.

The Black Hills Council will join with councils across the country in showcasing the Girl Scout movement's tradition of building leadership through action that makes the world a better place.

Anniversary events at the national and local level include:

- * "Girl Scouts Make the World a Better Place Week," March 12-19, featuring good deeds by 3.6 million Girl Scout members around the country;

- * A tree-planting initiative shared by 309 Girl Scout councils in which 95 trees are planted as a part of the launch of "Trees for the 21st Century" program, a collaboration with The Future of Life, Inc.;

- * Girl Scouts of the Black Hills Council Annual Meeting on April 14 at Camp Kinship, formerly Camp Paha Sapa. All current Girl Scouts and alumnae from the region are invited to attend; and

- * A sing-along for more than 100,000 Girl Scouts on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. on June 9.

Juliette Gordon Low founded Girl Scouting in 1912 in Savannah, Ga., with one troop of 18 girls. Since that time, more than 50 million girls have built leadership skills through Girl Scouting.

Research shows that Girl Scout alumnae now represent 70 percent of women serving in Congress; 64 percent of women listed in "Who's Who in America;" and 53 percent of women business owners.

Illustrious alumnae include Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman to sit on the Supreme Court of the United States; Madeleine Albright, the first female Secretary of State; Eileen Collins, the first woman space shuttle commander; Dr. Drew Gilpin Faust, the first female president of Harvard University; and Katie Couric, the first woman to anchor a network evening newscast.

"The success of Girl Scouting is no accident. When Juliette Gordon Low founded Girl Scouts in 1912, she understood that girls need leadership skills to develop their full potential," says Girl Scouts of the Black Hills Council CEO/Executive Director Pat Quyle. "We all have Juliette Gordon Low to thank for much of the advancement that has been achieved by girls and women in the past century, and today 3,011 local Girl Scout members are proud to take part in the world's best leadership experience for girls."

While many people associate Girl Scouting with the fun of camping, Low wanted girls to experience the beauty and the challenges of the outdoors so they might develop self-reliance and resourcefulness.

She encouraged girls to prepare not only for traditional homemaking, but also for future roles as professional women in the arts, sciences, and business, and for active citizenship. One of America's first female aviators, she introduced a Girl Scout aviation badge back in 1916, four years before women won the right to vote.

Today, Girl Scouts of the USA has 3.6 million girl and adult members and is the preeminent organization for and leading authority on girls.

Girl Scouts travel the world, learn 21st-century business skills, and prepare for a high-tech future.

The Girl Scout Leadership Development Program now reaches girls in every zip code, including locations in public housing, homeless shelters, juvenile detention centers, women's prisons, immigrant communities, and isolated rural areas.

Girl Scouts of the USA is the world's preeminent organization for girls, with a membership of more than 3.6 million girls and adults. Today, as when founded in 1912, Girl Scouts helps cultivate values, social conscience, and self-esteem in young girls, while also teaching them critical life skills that will enable them to succeed as adults.

In Girl Scouting and its special girl-only environment, girls discover the fun, friendship, and power of girls together. Girl Scouting has helped more than 50 million girls grow up into confident and strong women.

Since 1959, Girl Scouts of the Black Hills Council has served western South Dakota with fun, developmental, and innovative programs for girls ages 5-17.

Current membership is 3,011 girls with 571 adult volunteers.

You may reach Girl Scouts of the Black Hills Council by e-mailing ginfo@girlscoutsblackhills.org, calling (605) 343-6355, or 1-800-658-3391, or go to www.girlscouts-blackhills.org

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