

## REALIGNMENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Why are Girl Scout Councils merging?

All across the nation Girl Scout councils are reorganizing to create the infrastructure that will ensure a strong future for the Girl Scout program. The new councils will have higher capacity to effectively use their resources, gain increased community support and offer an expanded array of program activities for girls.

### Why is Girl Scouts making this change now?

We need to maintain our relevancy and effectiveness in a changing world so that we can provide high-quality leadership experiences for the largest number of girls possible and can increase the number of volunteers participating in Girl Scouting. By combining the strengths of all four Girl Scout Councils in Oregon the result will bring improvements and enhancement to existing program activities and add even more exciting and rewarding opportunities for more girls. Volunteers are asking for flexible time commitments and more ways to participate in the Girl Scout program. Girls are asking for unique experiences that reflect their needs and interests.

On a national level, change may be the oldest tradition in Girl Scouting! Ever since Juliette Gordon Low returned from England in 1912 and changed “Guide” to “Scout” in response to the preference of American girls, Girl Scouts have prided themselves on their ability to make adjustments from time to time in order to meet the needs of girls.

### How will this change affect girls?

Your daughter will remain in the same troop she is in, or as always, may choose to join a new troop at the end of the membership year. The current troop number may change, as there may be a duplication of troop numbers. In this case an additional number will be added to some troops (i.e. Troop 501 may become 1501). The most immediate impact will be an increase in the variety and number of program events available to girls as the councils pool their volunteer and staff resources. The practice of offering training and program events in different areas will continue. We expect to offer more events in more locations throughout Oregon.

### Is the restructuring due to a lack of funding?

While Girl Scouting needs to increase funding as do all non-profits, our realignment is about joining all our local resources to create a premium, revitalized council with which to serve Girl Scouts in our area. Many youth-serving organizations and other non-profits are merging their regional areas to build stronger organizations also.

### Have the Girl Scouts considered joining forces with other youth groups like the Boy Scouts or Girls Clubs?

No. Girl Scouts is celebrating 95 years of success and our efforts are focused on revitalizing the Girl Scouts to serve even more girls with the classic, relevant and unique program experiences we offer.

### What is the timeframe for realignment in Oregon?

Presidents and CEOs from all four councils attended training in Dallas, Texas September 28-30, along with teams from other councils across the country that start realigning this fall. Each Oregon council has appointed 4 members to serve on the Council Realignment Committee (CRC). Girl Scouts of Western Rivers Council will be represented by: Lorraine Thomas, Council President, Kerry Rasmusson, First Vice President, Mark Allen, Past Council President, and Pat Shaw, Interim CEO. The CRC is meeting monthly—at least—through September.

The CRC has a number of Sub-Committees whose members will include both volunteers and staff with expertise in various subject areas. Sub-Committees include Data and Technology, Human Resources, Program, Service Delivery, CEO Search, Finances, Nominating (for the new board of directors and new nominating committee), Communications and Governance. Some of these may need to create more task-groups for specific topics and will include additional volunteers and staff.

Realignment of the Oregon councils will officially be completed by October 1, 2008. This will provide the frame work and structure for the new council. Services will continue to be provided to girls and volunteers throughout the process. Then, over the next year or two, additional details will be worked out in the integration period as systems are merged, redesigned and fine-tuned, building a cohesive new organization capable of providing optimal services for girls and volunteers.

We expect to have draft bylaws available for review and comment by the dates for council annual meetings this spring.

### Where will the new council headquarters be? Where will local offices be?

The greater Portland area has been selected as the site for the new council headquarters. The CRC, with input from a demographer's reports and other sources, will recommend other locations for service centers and out-based offices to support volunteers. Population, travel patterns and other factors will be considered.

### How will this affect staff in councils?

When our Girl Scout councils combine and are able to maximize our efficiencies, we are likely to need as many, if not more, staff to serve the girls and volunteers. Future growth will necessitate a strong group of volunteers and staff to continue providing the quality Leadership Development Program for girls. There are apt to be changes and additions in job names or categories and position descriptions.

### What will the new council name be?

Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington was selected by the CRC and GSUSA from among the names submitted by members throughout our region. This was the name they feel best meets the criteria established requiring an appropriate geographic reference for easy identification.