

Scouting Opportunities

A program available to all Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts

7th to 12th grade

SCOOP is a self-supporting, combination Troop-group made up of all interested Pittsford 7th grade Cadette through Senior age-level Girl Scouts.

SCOOP is a home for older displaced Girl Scout members and a pooled resource for healthy troops. **SCOOP** provides a safety-net to **SCOOP** up those adults and girls interested in remaining in Girl Scouting.

The purpose is:

- To provide smaller troops with a big reason not to disband!
- To offer an older girl program in which the time and talents of Advisors are pooled and utilized in the most efficient and effective way possible.

The goals are:

- To retain both girl and adult membership while maintaining separate troop identity.
- To increase the membership of the older age-level by presenting fun, well-rounded programs of their choice.

The vision is:

- For SCOOP to become a standard multi-tasking older girl support program within the Service Unit.

SCOOP fills a need. The participation level ebbs and flows with that need. Some troops like to be on their own, some troops enjoy combination events... some troops dwindle to only three girls and one leader... often that is a death-knell for many troops.... but it doesn't have to be that way...

SCOOP provides our girls an opportunity to choose from a greater variety of activities than the smaller troop can usually offer. The girls have the freedom to pick and choose at their own participation level. Our girls are busy! Having a larger base of girls from which to draw increases the chance of having a well attended program.

SCOOP also gives our adult Advisors the opportunity to specialize — to contribute in the areas that truly interest them - specialized leadership! A larger adult/interest base enables our Advisors to share the tasks and to inspire the girls and the other adults as well. Being-all-things-to-all-girls can often bum the leaders out.

At **SCOOP** girls get to meet girls from other troops in their Service Unit. They also get to experience interacting with Advisors other than their own! It is a win-win situation — both adults and girls get to make new friends!

MOST ASKED QUESTIONS...

How is **SCOOP** funded?

This group is self-supporting. Each girl brings a \$1 to each meeting to be used for activities (copies, snack, supplies, lodge rental). Not one penny is left at the end of the year. The decision to subsidize the larger LOOP activity fees using troop funds is decided by each individual troop on a per activity basis.

How do you fit this in with regular troop meetings?

Scoop may end up being your only organized Girl Scout meeting or Scoop can supplement an existing troop meeting schedule. This program was not designed to make more work for the Advisors but to offer more options.

Who hears about **SCOOP**?

- ALL SCOOP meetings and LOOP events are advertised to ALL older girl troops in the service unit.
- We may see a troop of girls only once during any given year... it depends on their interest.

Girls may choose to participate in any combination of SOUP or LOOP meetings.

How are Soup and Loop Activities chosen?

Very much like a regular troop - The first and the last meetings of the year are organization meetings. The girls review the **SCOOP** Idea List created by them in the fall — what have we accomplished? A new list is created — anything to carry over? New ideas are generated and added to the list, the frame work for the year is planned out. We break into troops to brainstorm the activity they would like to sponsor for next year; this is brought back to the group to be penciled in. Having each troop sponsor an activity of their choice insures the program will have the variety necessary to please each age-level.

Often what we cover is created as we go For instance, this past year two girls —one Cadette and one Senior (from different troops) had so much fun together on the **SCOOP** winter lodge camp-out working on an IP of their choice that a **SCOOP** activity developed.., they brought this to us — “can we do this badge with the **SCOOP** group?” Wow — multi-age level, girl generated program! You can imagine seeing the two advisors doing a high-five with the girls!

OR: A girl may wish to share her IP requirements (i.e. the Pets IP, a girl had a police officer and his K-9 come visit **SCOOP**) and turn it into a **SCOOP** event —consequently giving girls in attendance a start on an IP!

Do the Advisors need to stay at the meetings?

An adult from each troop should remain with her girls during every **SCOOP** event. We wish to combine forces with you and help lighten your work-load — we also hope that you will help to lighten ours!

Do we need health forms and permission slips?

- Visiting Scoop? Like any field trip — follow safety-wise guidelines
- If an advisor believes her troop will participate in **SCOOP** on any level — a copy of all health forms must be given to the Scoop Coordinator who will insure they are brought to every **SCOOP** event.
- A blanket permission slip explaining how to contact the parent or guardian during each **SCOOP** SOUP meeting must be on file with the health form. LOOP specific permission slips are necessary for each additional activity.

Who coordinates **SCOOP**?

In our Service Unit it is the Older Girl Consultant. This would be a wonderful job for an adult who no longer has a troop or even a girl in scouting anymore.

THE ORIGINAL PREDESIGNED FRAMEWORK

SCOOP SOUP

We do have a pre-designed structure in which both girls and adults can count on. As said previously, we often plug in the activities as we sail along — so this SOUP framework is certainly NOT set in stone....All of the program ideas for this framework are pulled from the **SCOOP** Idea List generated by the girls.

- Sign-in — Studio2B page for start-up
- Opening — girls are asked to share something important to them
- Town Meeting - announcements, time for IP presentations,
- SOUP ACTIVITY for at least an hour.
- We try to give the troops at least 15 minutes to meet separately at the end of the evening. (8:00ish)
- Often have a simple friendship circle closing — they still love to do the squeeze I don't care how old they are....
- Food somehow always shows up, the girls have tried various ways to organize this. Offered to the girls at various times, decided on a per meeting basis.
- Clean-up is a group effort started at 8:20 ish, no one leaves until the vacuuming and garbage is done

SCOOP LOOP

As Girl Scout Advisors, we wish to guide girls into experiencing the traditional Girl Scout program — service projects, camping, earning interest projects, awards and now we can add Studio2B to the list.

Historically, when we ask the girls to tell us what they want to do we can simply plug their ideas into a program framework. By this age-level, the girls understand the concept of Girl Scouting. For an example: Most of the girls understand to “just go shopping” is not an appropriate **SCOOP** activity. However, shopping for kids in need is.

Keeping their own troop identity gives the girls freedom to continue to make their own TROOP decisions separately from the **SCOOP** program (i.e. “to just go shopping”). More options! Branch out, but keep that 'ole cardigan sweater around!

On the Advisor level - offering this LOOP framework relieves a lot of pressure and guilt. Advisors struggle when they personally are not comfortable participating in an activity that her girls really want to do. She feels she is letting her girls down. Having someone else take over this activity — someone the girls have become comfortable with is another win-win situation. Specialized Leadership helps to retain our adults as well as the girls.

The framework for SCOOP LOOP is...

- at least one adventurous SCOOP LOOP event per year
 - camping twice a year — tent and winter lodge
 - a lock-in
 - two service projects that takes them outside our meeting place
 - troop sponsored events*
- ❖ Each troop (or an individual girl) can sponsor one event or more per year — girl generated, marketed, and implemented. The sponsored activity can fulfill one of the above framework goals — or something totally different. I am sure most Advisors would agree that pooling the activities in this manner makes for a full year of choices and less work per troop.

Pitfalls....OK, no program is perfect. Are there any “less than positive” aspects of **SCOOP**?

The **SCOOP** Coordinator must be patient. Due to the fact that this is a need-based concept you never TRULY know exactly HOW many girls will show up any given night. As much as you DEMAND to be given an RSVP by the girls, and their leaders....in a perfect world.. .ah, I am sure you understand. “Turn on a dime and redesign” is the name of the game.

Consequently, unless a girl has signed up to lead an activity, general participation is... how do you say in America... a crap-shoot? Even though we are offering their ideas, their lives are still full. We can lead a horse to water...

AGE OLD QUESTION — Is a program’s success measured by the numbers or in the experience? If you can just make a difference in one girl’s life..., is she worth your time?

In our Service Unit we begin to educate our Junior leaders about **SCOOP** during the 5th and 6th grades — however, this program as it stands now, is geared for the 7th to 12th grades.

SCOOP SOUP & LOOP Activities 2004-2005

October

Amazing Corn Maze

Began our ongoing Soldiers in Iraq Donation program — collected 38 lbs of toiletries, 31 lbs of coffee & cards

An afternoon at Pittsford High School Theatre — Pygmalion

ZooBoo

November

Overnight Lock-In at the church

Girl Led — Pet IP, guest visit from a Monroe County Sheriff and his K-9

Welcomed two St. John Fisher Campus Girl Scouts to our group

Made Christmas holiday table decorations for Sojourner House'

Soldier Donation — 19 lbs of Halloween Candy

December

Planned and implemented Tree Decorating Party at Sojourner House

Sent 26lbs of crossword & word puzzle books & magazines to Iraq

January

Cut & sewed Dolls for Golisano Children's Hospital

Planned Winter Lodge Camping at Pinewood

February

Weekend at Pinewood - Red Pine Lodge Camping

(One IP and one Studio2B completed Silver and Gold mentoring too!)

Participated in Camporee Songfest and Patch Voting Contest

March

Girl Scout Birthday at Eastview Mall — chose craft for entire service unit

Girl Led — Paper Works Interest Project (2 meetings)

Helped with Grade Event Silver Project

Planned the Grade Event

April

6th Grade Event - "Get the **SCOOP** on Cadettes Cream Social Guest Speaker — Female Sergeant

Major in the Army headed back to Iraq came to talk to us (Patriotism IP)

May

Camporee Training Meeting

Pittsford Service Unit 2005 'Fairplay' Camporee — Tent Camping

White Water Rafting at Letchworth State Park

Make plans for next year...there is a trip in our future....