Volunteer Appreciation
2018-2019

Table of Contents

4 ........... Informal and Formal Appreciation
7 ........... Nomination Process
9 ........... Award Descriptions and Criteria

“Scouting rises within you and inspires you to put forth your best.”
~Juliette Gordon Low
We Love Our Volunteers!

Volunteers are critical to the success of Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska. Without their time and energy it would not be possible to accomplish our goals. We pride ourselves on creating a culture of appreciation where each volunteer feels respected and valued for their service and contribution.

This guide is divided into two sections.

1. **Informal Appreciation** – is an ongoing, daily process and is a way to show respect and build mutual commitment. This section gives you some ideas that you can do throughout the year.

2. **Formal Appreciation** – awards are given for outstanding contributions that have made a significant impact on girls. This section explains the formal process designed to offer tangible, visible recognition with criteria, requirements, forms, and step-by-step guidelines.

**Informal Appreciation**

The following is a collection of informal appreciation ideas – do them often and make it meaningful! This is a great way to say, “thank you” and a great way to include girls, parents, and other volunteers.

- Have an Investiture/Rededication Ceremony.
- Share stories of a volunteer’s work at service unit meetings.
- Plant a tree in honor of a volunteer.
- Give a volunteer a packet of seeds to express your “growing” appreciation.
- Create informal awards with your service unit to recognize work done by volunteers.
- Do a good deed or random act of kindness for a volunteer or their family.
- Take a group picture of the troop and present to the leader.
- Give a simple “high-five” and thank you for all you do.
- Submit a success story to Spirit of Nebraska.
- Send a story about a volunteer’s work to your local newspaper.
- Girls can create simple handmade cards with “Thank-You for All You Do.”
- Print the following Volunteer Appreciation Certificate, fill in the information and present to a volunteer.

**Remember these important dates when appreciating the volunteers around you!**

- Volunteer Appreciation Week: April 7–13, 2019
- Girl Scout Leader Appreciation Day: April 22, 2019
With deep appreciation for outstanding dedication to Girl Scouts and building girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place.
Formal Appreciation

Outlined in this section you will find easy steps to the Nomination Process, a list of Volunteer Awards and descriptions and criteria for each award. Member Support or your Troop Support Specialist can answer questions about previous awards an individual has earned and if they have met a training criteria.

Nomination Process...As Easy As 1-2-3

1. Any individual, girl, parent or Girl Scout group (troop, service team or council staff) familiar with the service performed, submits a nomination (see following forms). The nomination MUST be submitted on the council form and MUST include specific information that demonstrates the nominees’ service, scope, and impact.

2. National awards require a nomination and endorsements (see following forms) from individuals or groups familiar with the service performed. The number of required endorsements varies with the award. The endorsement forms must be from someone other than the person who submitted the nomination.

3. Submit your nomination and any required endorsement forms to your local service center (see below) by December 15, 2018

Volunteer Awards

There are various Volunteer Awards; all established to recognize and honor the contributions of our adult volunteers. Below is a list of the awards in “progressive” order:

1. Years of Volunteer Service Pin
2. Friends of Camp Award
3. Spirit of Nebraska, Community Benefactor Award
4. Helpful Adult Award
5. Volunteer of Excellence Award
6. President’s Award
7. Appreciation Pin
8. Honor Pin
9. Thanks Badge
10. Thanks Badge II
11. Carolyn Sloan Spirit of Nebraska Award

Each of our volunteers is important, and each honor we bestow upon them is equally so. As you nominate volunteers for the above awards, you will notice that as you go down the list, the requirements for the nomination and the number of endorsements will increase. As with our Girl Scout recognitions, this is an indication that the time, commitment, difficulty of task and results of the volunteer work also increase.

How to Submit Nominations

Mail nominations to your Troop Support Specialist at the nearest Spirit of Nebraska Service Center:

Ogallala Service Center
302 West D Street
Ogallala, NE 69153

Grand Island Service Center
820 N. Webb Road, Ste. 104
Grand Island, NE 68803

Lincoln Service Center
8230 Beechwood Drive
Lincoln, NE 68510

Kearney Service Center
2412 Hwy. 30 East, Ste. 1
Kearney, NE 68847

Columbus Service Center
1570 33rd Avenue
Columbus, NE 68601

Omaha Service Center
2121 S. 44th Street
Omaha, NE 68105

Or use our NEW online submission forms found on GirlScoutsNebraska.org under Volunteer Resources > Volunteer Appreciation > Volunteer Awards.
Approval Process

All awards will be reviewed and approved based on the criteria established for each award by the Regional Awards Committee for that area. An Executive Committee of Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska staff will compile the awards for the state. Certain awards, as listed in the Award Descriptions and Criteria section to follow, will be reviewed by the Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska Board of Directors for final approval.

How Do I Know If My Nomination Has Been Approved?

The Regional Awards Committee will send a letter notifying the nominator of the approval status. If the recognition is not approved, the committee will provide an explanation and/or alternative recommendation. Notification letters will be sent in February 2019.

Tips For Filling Out Nomination And Endorsement Forms

Help ensure your candidate receives the recognition deserved!

1. The nomination and endorsement forms follow this information. Here are the ways to submit forms to the council:
   - Download the online PDF forms to your computer, complete and save them, and send as an email attachment to MemberSupport@girlscoutsnebraska.org.
   - Use our new mobile-friendly digital forms under Volunteer Resources > Volunteer Appreciation > Volunteer Awards.
   - Print the online PDF forms. Legibly write all information using ballpoint pen with black or blue ink. Mail to your local service center, or scan a copy and email to MemberSupport@girlscoutsnebraska.org.

2. The Awards Committee makes decisions based upon your information about the nominee. Some Volunteer Awards require endorsements along with the nomination form. Examples of people who may be able to clarify nominees’ accomplishments include: service team members, family, friends, Girl Scout staff and co-workers.

3. Tell us all you can. Include personal insights or anecdotes; give clear examples of the nominee’s outstanding accomplishments.

4. Growth is one of the things the committees like to see. Tell how you feel the person has shown growth in her/his contributions to Girl Scouting.

5. Be results-oriented. Please do not just describe the candidate as “responsible, friendly, etc.” Elaborate by telling us what they’ve achieved.

6. Remember that details are important.

7. If you need additional information on your nominee, be sure to ask your Service Unit Manager, Service Team, or Troop Support Specialist for assistance.
Award Descriptions and Criteria

Years of Volunteer Service Pin

**DESCRIPTION**
Years of Volunteer Service Pins are given to adult volunteers for their years of service to Girl Scouts.

**CRITERIA**
- The candidate is a registered adult Girl Scout.
- Has five years of active adult membership.
- Given every five years thereafter.

**NOMINATION**
A Years of Volunteer Service Pin Application is completed by the volunteer and submitted, reviewed, and approved by the Regional Awards Committee.

**EXAMPLE OF CANDIDATE**
Karen was a leader for her daughter's troop from the Daisy level in 1995 through their graduation from high school in 2008. Karen was not a registered adult Girl Scout again until 2012 when she became the Service Unit Manager for her Service Unit and continues to serve in that position. Karen's combined years of adult membership as of September 30, 2014 are a total of 15 years. Karen receives a 15 Years of Volunteer Service Pin.

Friends of Camp Award

**DESCRIPTION**
The Friends of Camp Award recognizes organizations or individuals who provide outstanding assistance and support to Girl Scout camp properties.

**CRITERIA**
- Organizations or individuals may or may not be official Girl Scout members.
- Supports Girl Scouts through the donation of services and personal/professional skills at one of the following properties: Lakeview Cabin, Hidden Oaks Cabin, Camp Cosmopolitan, Camp Crossed Arrows, Catron Camp and Retreat Center, Camp Maha, or Hilltop House.
- Expertise was provided through either ongoing support of camp properties or individual camp property projects.

**NOMINATION**
- A Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form is completed and submitted to the Regional Awards Committee.
- The committee reviews the nomination documentation, then approves or denies.
- The committee sends notification of the decision to the Council’s Board of Directors for confirmation.

**EXAMPLE OF CANDIDATE**
For the past three years, local volunteers have provided skilled craftsman assistance for the yurt and covered shelter construction projects at Camp Crossed Arrows. These projects took place over several weekends and included the donation of time, equipment and expertise. The work often took place on weekends and in the heat. Volunteers often brought their own tools and equipment so that the council did not have to absorb the additional project costs of purchasing such items. Without these skilled volunteers’ efforts the yurt projects would have been physically and monetarily difficult to complete.
Spirit of Girl Scouting, Community Benefactor Award

DESCRIPTION
The Community Benefactor Award recognizes organizations or individuals who are not Girl Scout members and provide outstanding assistance and support to Girl Scout programming.

CRITERIA
- Organizations or individuals who are not Girl Scout members.
- Supports Girl Scouts through the donation of services, personal skills, facilities, or meeting rooms.
- The expertise (or space/facility) was provided on either an ongoing basis or for special events, and shows a commitment to Girl Scouts above and beyond expectations.

NOMINATION
- A Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form is completed and submitted to the Regional Awards Committee.
- The committee reviews the nomination documentation, then approves or denies.
- The committee sends notification of the decision to the Council’s Board of Directors for confirmation.

EXAMPLE OF CANDIDATE
For the past five years the local Habitat for Humanity has provided their warehouse for the local cookie drop. The Product Sale Coordinator and troop leaders are appreciative for the day that they are able to use this nice facility. The local Habitat volunteers clean and ready the warehouse for cookie delivery and several of the Habitat volunteers also volunteer to help with the cookie sorting.

Helpful Adult Award

DESCRIPTION
The Helpful Adult Award recognizes volunteers who have contributed outstanding service while partnering directly with girls in a troop pathway. This could include volunteers serving in any role other than troop leader or co-leader.

CRITERIA
- The candidate is a registered adult member and has an approved screening on file with council.
- The candidate has demonstrated outstanding ability/skills for the position.
- The candidate actively recognizes, understands, and practices the value of inclusive behavior.
- Examples of roles include, but are not limited to: Troop Treasurer, Troop Product Manager, Troop Cookie Manager, Certified Camper, Troop Trip Organizer, Driver, Troop Meeting Assistant, or Troop First Aider.

NOMINATION
- A Volunteer Recognition Form is completed and submitted to the Regional Awards Committee.
- The committee reviews the nomination documentation, then approves or denies.
- The committee sends notification of the decision to the Council’s Board of Directors for confirmation.

EXAMPLE OF CANDIDATE
Margie is the grandmother of a girl in the troop and attends almost every meeting. The troop has nominated her for the contributions she has made to the troop for 2 years. Margie taught the girls to knit and helped them make scarves to donate to the homeless shelter. She assisted with several cookie booths and helped them get a booth at her church. She has attended several times when the troop needed another adult for girl/adult ratio. She even went camping with the troop and shared stories about her Girl Scout camping experiences in the 1960’s.
Volunteer of Excellence Award

DESCRIPTION
The Volunteer of Excellence award recognizes those volunteers who have contributed outstanding service while partnering directly with girls in any pathway to implement the Girl Scout Leadership Experience through use of the national program portfolio or who contributed outstanding service in support of the council’s mission delivery to girl and adult members.

CRITERIA
- The candidate is a registered adult Girl Scout and has an approved volunteer screening application on file with the council.
- The candidate has demonstrated outstanding ability/skills for the position.
- The candidate has completed training required for their volunteer role.
- The candidate has performed beyond expectations for the position to deliver the Girl Scout Leadership Experience to girls using the national program portfolio.
- The candidate’s performance has gone beyond the expectations of the position and has supported council’s mission-delivery goals in one or more of the following areas: Membership Development/Community Cultivation, Volunteer Relations and Support, Program, Leadership and Governance, Fund Development, Outreach, Product Program, and Council Support Service (such as IT, Customer Service or Merchandising).
- The candidate actively recognizes, understands, and practices the values of inclusive behavior.

NOMINATION
- A Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form is completed for each volunteer and submitted to the Regional Awards Committee.
- The committee reviews the nomination documentation, then approves or denies.
- The committee sends notification of the decision to the Council’s Board of Directors for confirmation.

EXAMPLE OF CANDIDATE
Sarah is an active volunteer in her Service Unit and serves as the Event Coordinator. She is nominated by her Service Unit’s nomination committee chairman for her work in organizing and executing four area events in the past year. One of those events registered 120 girls of which 8% were new to Girl Scouting.
President’s Award

DESCRIPTION
The President’s Award recognizes the efforts of a Service Unit whose exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience surpassed team goals and resulted in significant, measurable impact toward reaching the council’s overall goals.

CRITERIA
• All service team members are registered adult Girl Scouts and have approved volunteer screening applications on file with the council.
• Service Unit girl membership has increased over the previous membership year.
• The completed Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska required training sessions are evident in each troop.
• A minimum of three events are held throughout the year which are open to all area girls.
• The Service Unit continues to show improvement in pathway participation by offering more opportunities for involvement of girls (over the previous year).
• Has significantly contributed to the community improvement of the geographic area they serve through a Girl Scout Leadership Experience “Take Action” project.

NOMINATION
• A Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form is completed and submitted to the Regional Awards Committee.
• The committee reviews the nomination documentation, then approves or denies.
• The committee sends notification of the decision to the Council’s Board of Directors for confirmation.

EXAMPLE OF CANDIDATE
Service Unit XYZ has increased girl membership by 3.8% over last year. A coat drive was held last winter with drop boxes at 80% of the elementary schools in the area with over 3000 coats collected and distributed to those in need. The Event Coordinator spearheaded a book club series pathway at a junior high school with 28 girls participating, 12 of which were new to Girl Scouts. Last summer three Brownie Troops consisting of 34 girls visited camp and camped overnight for the first time.
**Appreciation Pin**

**DESCRIPTION**

The Appreciation Pin recognizes an individual’s exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. This service, which has had measurable impact on at least one geographic area of service, helps reach and surpass the mission-delivery goals of the area.

**CRITERIA**

- The candidate is a registered adult Girl Scout and has an approved volunteer screening application on file with the council.
- The service performed by the candidate is above and beyond the expectations for the position held, and made an impact on a geographic area within the council’s jurisdiction.
- The candidate actively recognizes, understands, and practices the values of inclusive behavior.

**NOMINATION**

- A Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form and TWO Volunteer Recognition Endorsement Forms are completed and submitted to the Regional Awards Committee.
- The committee reviews the nomination documentation, then approves or denies.
- The committee sends notification of the decision to the Council’s Board of Directors for confirmation.

**EXAMPLE OF CANDIDATE**

Mary is a troop leader and because of the great experiences and fun that her troop has she is continually adding more girls to her troop. Mary created, designed, organized and implemented a new program for the girls in her community. She has been instrumental in contributing to the area’s 12% increase in membership.
**Honor Pin**

**DESCRIPTION**
The Honor Pin recognizes an individual’s exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, which has had measurable impact on two or more geographic areas of service, allowing the council to reach and surpass it’s mission-delivery goals.

**CRITERIA**
- The candidate is an active, registered adult Girl Scout and has an approved volunteer screening application on file with the council.
- The service performed by the candidate is above and beyond the expectations for the position held and made an impact on two or more geographic areas within the council jurisdiction.
- The candidate actively recognizes, understands, and practices the values of inclusive behavior.

**NOMINATION**
- A Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form and TWO Volunteer Recognition Endorsement Forms are completed and submitted to the Regional Awards Committee.
- The committee reviews the documentation, then approves or denies.
- The committee sends notification of the decision to the Council’s Board of Directors for confirmation.

**EXAMPLE OF CANDIDATE**
Elizabeth has been a registered adult member for 8 years, 6 of those years as a troop leader and 2 as a co-leader. Her contributions as a troop leader have significantly contributed to meeting council goals in membership retention as well as increased community visibility. Eighty percent of her scouts are Program Aides and 2 just completed Camp Aide training. In addition to earning their Silver Award, her group of scouts completed over 150 hours of community service this year. Not only are these scouts engaged in their leadership experience, they mentor their school group of 80 younger scouts, acting in leadership roles whenever the larger group gets together for activities. In her position as Event Coordinator for her Service Unit, Elizabeth organized, invited two neighboring Service Units, and executed an overnight at the local YWCA for area Girl Scouts. Over 300 girls attended representing three different Service Units.
Thanks Badge

DESCRIPTION
The Thanks Badge honors an individual whose ongoing commitment, leadership, and service have had an exceptional, measurable impact on meeting the mission-delivery goals and priorities of the entire council or the entire Girl Scout Movement.

CRITERIA
- The candidate is an active, registered adult Girl Scout and has an approved volunteer screening application on file with the council.
- The outstanding service performed by the candidate resulted in outcomes that benefitted the total council or the entire Girl Scout organization, and is so significantly above and beyond the call of duty that no other award would be appropriate.
- The candidate actively recognizes, understands, and practices the values of inclusive behavior.

NOMINATION
- A Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form and THREE Volunteer Recognition Endorsement Forms are completed and submitted to the Regional Awards Committee.
- The committee reviews the documentation, then approves or denies.
- The committee sends notification of the decision to the Council’s Board of Directors for confirmation.

EXAMPLE OF CANDIDATE
Maggie served as one of three members on a committee that helped develop outdoor learning opportunities for the council. She was nominated by the council’s training specialist. Maggie is also acknowledged for her work as a volunteer trainer. She has received the appropriate training that allows her to provide in-person trainings to volunteers in five different areas of expertise. Because of her willingness to offer trainings, in the last year alone, she was responsible for the training of 83 volunteers.
**Thanks Badge II**

**DESCRIPTION**
The Thanks Badge II honors a previous Thanks Badge award recipient who has continued to provide exemplary service in a leadership role, resulting in a measurable impact that benefits the total council or entire Girl Scout Movement.

**CRITERIA**
- The candidate is an active, registered adult Girl Scout.
- The candidate has received the Thanks Badge.
- The outstanding service performed by the candidate resulted in outcome(s) that benefitted the entire Girl Scout organization, and is so significantly above and beyond the call of duty that no other award would be appropriate.
- The candidate actively recognizes, understands, and practices the values of inclusive behavior.

**NOMINATION**
- A Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form and THREE Volunteer Recognition Endorsement Forms are completed and submitted to the Regional Awards Committee.
- The committee reviews the documentation, then approves or denies.
- The committee sends notification of the decision to the Council’s Board of Directors for confirmation.

**EXAMPLE OF CANDIDATE**
After receiving the Thanks Badge, the volunteer from the Thanks Badge example was asked to present her council’s outdoor training at a GSUSA training conference. She then served for two years on a national task group to help support other councils in developing new outdoor training outlines.
Carolyn Sloan Spirit of Nebraska Award

DESCRIPTION
The Carolyn Sloan Spirit of Nebraska Award was established in 1980 by the Board of Directors of the then Guiding Star Council to honor the memory of Carolyn, who had been a revered staff member until her untimely death in 1979. Carolyn was totally committed to the council, its volunteers and girls. In 2010, we expanded the scope of the award to include the entire state and honored our first recipient with the renamed “Carolyn Sloan Spirit of Nebraska Award.” This award honors Carolyn’s spirit of love and devotion to all girls.

CRITERIA
• The candidate is an active, registered adult Girl Scout.
• Caring for girls is shown—especially to those in the Girl Scout program.
• The candidate serves the council in such a way that her/his love of the Girl Scout program is evident.
• The candidate demonstrates a willingness to give of oneself so that others benefit and shows a concern for and dedication to the Spirit of Nebraska Council to the benefit of all.
• The candidate actively recognizes, understands, and practices the values of inclusive behavior.

NOMINATION
• A Volunteer Recognition Nomination Form and TWO Volunteer Recognition Endorsement Forms are completed and submitted to the Regional Awards Committee.
• The committee reviews the documentation, then approves or denies.
• The committee sends notification of the decision to the Council’s Board of Directors for confirmation.

EXAMPLE OF CANDIDATE
Lisa is the leader of four troops in her community. She leads these troops with such an outstanding level of enthusiasm and includes every girl so that no one feels left out. Her guidance transforms girls and inspires leadership. On the State level Lisa serves as a facilitator of Camp Out (Basic) and Program Aide Learning Opportunities. She serves as a council delegate and also served on the council’s Strategic Learning Committee and GAP team spending hours and hours on this council work. Her work with and for Girl Scouts is truly inspiring.
Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place.