

GIRL SCOUT COUNCIL OF THE NATION'S CAPITAL

ANNUAL MEETING

APRIL 9, 2011

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

DIANE TIPTON

Thank you for electing me for another term. Being the President of the Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital is an enormous joy for me. It has become an important part of my life story. And that is our theme for today, our stories. On a day-to-day basis we run from task to task. Working, volunteering, taking care of life's little details. But it is in taking time to reflect, taking time to hold the big picture – the whole story – where we find richness and reward. The history of our organization and how it has changed our lives is a story worth sharing.

I remember when I was first elected President in April 2008; I stood in front of you at my first Annual Meeting as your president-elect and...**shared my Girl Scout Story.**

**[HOLD SLIDE 1, Remarks by DT]
(Young Diane in Brownie Uniform)**

Many of you know I grew up in a small town in Georgia. I was fortunate enough to grow up in a scouting family. I earned my First Class and my brother earned his Eagle, and we made our parents proud. My parents volunteered for Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts in Georgia for their entire lives. Their values of honesty, responsibility, commitment and giving back to the community have been a guide for me and my family for as long as I can remember.

**[HOLD SLIDE 2&3, Remarks by DT]
(Montague daughter's Girl Scout pictures)**

I am pleased to say that the story has continued for a third generation with my daughter **Della**. She too has grown up in Girl Scouting and just two short years ago I had the privilege to pin the Gold Award on her at our In Your Honor ceremony. This year, we break records for a fourth year in a row, when our council again has over 200 amazing young women who will earn their Gold Award. [applause].

Anastasia Broadus of Hagerstown, Maryland earned her Gold Award last year. She did not think college would fit financially into her future, but today she is a freshman at Trinity Washington University, thanks to the \$5,000 a year scholarship that our friend, the President of the University, **Pat McGuire** makes possible to all girls accepted who have earned the Gold Award.

Our Girl Scout story is impressive!

Jan's Legacy

Last year's annual meeting was bittersweet as we said goodbye to Jan Verhage, the Executive Director of this council for 25 years. We also witnessed the unveiling of the "Jan Verhage Spirit of Leadership Award," an award to recognize our most precious resource – our troop leaders. In 11 short months – 17 adult volunteers have received this award. We have a number of those recipients here with us today. Can you please stand if you've been honored with the Jan Verhage Spirit of Leadership Award? [applause] Congratulations to all of you.

[HOLD SLIDE 4, Remarks by DT] (Camp pictures)

We also wanted to recognize Jan's commitment to our girls and camping by creating an endowment for camperships that would allow us to send girls needing financial assistance to sleep away camp in perpetuity.

We were overwhelmed with the generosity of so many in this room. Our goal was \$700,000. We raised close to \$746,000 to make this dream a reality for our girls. We know that as the pledges come in and the economy improves the endowment will grow, and our **Girl Scout Story will show that more girls are going to camp** because of our collective commitment to make this opportunity available to all girls.

Through all our efforts to make financial assistance available, we have granted 524 camperships for girls in need this coming summer alone.

The Merger

By the end of this Girl Scout year, we will have successfully completed the two-year transition of our merger with Shawnee Girl Scout Council. How time flies when you are having fun!

[HOLD SLIDE 5, Remarks by DT] (Diane and Betty Lou)

In September of last year, I had the honor of presiding over the Women of Distinction event in Martinsburg, West Virginia. It was an event that recognized three amazing women who have all been dedicated to their community. One of the women, **Betty Lou Harmison**, touched me when she accepted her Women of Distinction pin and shared that the only item she still preserves from her childhood is her Girl Scout sash. **Betty Lou** is now in her early eighties. That is the power of sharing our Girl Scout Story.

The Women of Distinction event raised \$68,200 which included a generous \$25,000 matching Gold Award scholarship gift from **Eva Woolridge and Lynn Steptoe**. We continue to be enhanced as a council by the 14 new counties.

I would like to ask all our friends (volunteers and staff) from the 14 new counties which is now our new Association 14 – to stand for a round of applause. [applause]

Fund Development

As you would expect, like many nonprofits in our region, we have braced ourselves for a difficult year because of the economic challenges facing our nation. We carefully monitored expenses on the operating side to make sure we were getting the most out of each dollar spent. We also worked in earnest to grow SHARE and to expand our Major Gifts effort that we launched last year. Here is the update.

- **SHARE**: Our SHARE goal this year is \$625,000. And we have raised **\$509,912** to date. While our annual giving program is lagging, there are bright spots.

Congratulation to Association 22, and also to the more than 16 Service Units who have already gone over goal.

[HOLD SLIDE 6, Remarks by DT] (President's Circle)

Just a few weeks ago at our President's Circle Dinner, Lidia and I made a plea to help close the SHARE gap. We explained that it costs approximately **\$221** to give a girl a full year's experience in Girl Scouting. Even though those in attendance had already contributed at the \$750 level and above, we asked if they could **commit \$221 or better yet \$1,105** or more to support **five** girls in Girl Scouting. The response was unprecedented. That evening alone, we raised an additional **\$58,000** for our SHARE campaign! This amount will ensure that 262 more girls will benefit from the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. [applause].

And, as has become our tradition at the President's Circle Dinner, we presented the Officers' Award to two outstanding women, **Artis Hampshire-Cowan**, Senior Vice President and Secretary of Howard University and **Kathleen Matthews**, Executive Vice President, Global Communications and Public Affairs for Marriott International, Inc. They each shared their story – crediting Girl Scouts for helping to make them the phenomenal and generous women they are today.

- **Major Gifts**: Our Major Gifts effort representing individual gifts of \$5,000 or more has raised \$128,550 to date. When we add this total to dollars raised through SHARE, our new total from individual giving is \$638,462 – not quite at the level we want it to be, but... we still have time to close the gap.

We are transitioning Major Gifts to the **100th Anniversary Fund Development Committee** to capitalize on all the activities and excitement planned for our 100th anniversary year. Just elected First Vice President **Faye Fields**, President and CEO of Integrated Resources Technology (IRT) will help lead this effort.

- **Corporate and Foundation Gifts**: We have been fortunate that our friends in the corporate and foundation world continue to see our girls as an important investment. Here are just a few of the gifts that we have received this year:

- **The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation:** \$100,000 for our outreach day camps and the executive search.
- **GSUSA and the Coca-Cola Foundation:** \$75,000 for healthy living programs for local Girl Scouts.
- **Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation:** \$112,000 for Girl Scout outreach to girls with disabilities and the National Inclusion conference, which GSCNC hosted in March.
- **The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation:** \$30,000 for the Young Leaders Program serving girls in the District of Columbia through college students.
- **Kraft:** \$30,000 for our Healthy Living Town Hall with Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebeilius. Tied to the **Let's Move** Town Hall, Kraft Foods featured the Girl Scout healthy recipe on their website and we received \$1 for everyone who viewed the recipe online. This generated an additional \$12,000 from Kraft Foods to our SHARE campaign! Thank you to our members and friends who made this happen.

I am thrilled to report that we have just officially gone over our Fiscal Year 2011 corporation and foundation goal by \$35,000, three months ahead of schedule for a grand total of **\$1,175,596!** [applause]

Property

We opened the Fall with a great celebration of the completion of our two troop lodges at Camp Brighton Woods in Montgomery County, Maryland. What a festive day it was! [applause]. With the merger in 2009 our portfolio of property expanded from seven camps to eight with the addition of Camp White Rock. We also have 500 undeveloped acres in Gore, Virginia. As we have watched many of our sister councils sell their camps, the Board wanted to make certain that we were positioned to continue this council's strong commitment to our camps. During the business meeting you heard from Board Member Cal Bowie about the Property Task Force's work to develop decision-making tools that balance the interests of our membership and our financial health to guide our capital investments in the years ahead. We don't have answers yet, but we are asking all the right questions that will get at the heart of what is most important for us to consider as a council as we move forward with our properties.

Product Sales

The **Fall Product Sales** of nuts, candy and magazines went council-wide this past fall and was a success. Overall we had more than 7,000 girls participate and troops earned more than \$100,000. The council received close to \$380,000 in revenue to support council programs for all Girl Scouts. For a "first-time," we are pleased with the results. The buzz now is that more troops are ready to take advantage of this money-earning opportunity in the fall. And the chocolate covered pretzels are not to be missed.

We have completed the **Cookie sale** and the news is GREAT. As you recall last year, we announced that after six years of holding the cookie price at \$3.50, it would be

increased to \$4.00. We knew that the increase in price would mean a drop in our volume, but we are happy to report that we sold more than 4,350,000 boxes of Girl Scout cookies, which is 100,000 boxes more than the budget for 2011. [applause]

Given that many councils across the country saw a decrease in their orders, we are fortunate that our sale is strong.

**[HOLD SLIDE 7, Remarks by DT]
(Kate York Cookie Pictures)**

Not only do our customers love the cookies, they support our important work. I want to share my favorite “cookie sale” story. I met Kate York at the cookie kickoff event in October. Kate is in the seventh grade and a Girl Scout Junior from Reston, Virginia. She actually just paraded with the flag for Association 51. Kate’s uncle was stationed in Iraq and when she asked what she could do to help; he said that his friends would love to get Girl Scout cookies. For the last four years, together with her team of family and friends, Kate developed “An All-American Care Package” project for US troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Each care package includes a box of Girl Scout cookies, baseball cards, Bazooka bubblegum, an “apple pie” cereal bar and a thank you note.

The first year, when Kate was just nine, they sent 300 packages; and then decided to double the packages to 600, which they have done for the past three years. She has gotten great notes back from the soldiers, including this one from Sergeant First Class Seymour who wrote: “I wanted to write to thank you for thinking of us here in Iraq. Your uncle is right -- it does mean a lot to receive encouragement, goodies, and well wishes from folks back home! The cookies reminded me of my two girls back home in Alaska and the baseball cards reminded me of my favorite team, the Cleveland Indians. Thank you!” Thank you Kate for letting me share your story.

This is the power of the Girl Scout Story.

Additionally, we are so pleased with the new Smart Phone Cookie app that helped Girl Scout cookie lovers locate the exact places where cookies were being sold. *The Washington Post* ran a Kids Post Story on Tuesday, March 8th that had everyone downloading the app to find cookies. At one point it was the most downloaded app in the region. Thank you to all who support this important work, if you sold a box, if you bought a box or if, like me, you ate many boxes, we are grateful. A big hand to all who helped make this year’s sale a huge success! Thank you. [applause]

100th Anniversary Year - Here we Come!

Here we stand today, on the threshold of a historic year. The 100th Anniversary of Girl Scouting is a momentous occasion for us all. For 100 years, our movement has changed lives, changed communities, truly – has changed the world. We are inspired to be a part of it today and I believe we will marvel at the stories it creates for men, women, and girls in the future.

**[HOLD SLIDE 8, Remarks by DT]
(Bobby Lerch)**

Speaking of 100 amazing years...

We are fortunate to have with us today, our esteemed past president, Bobby Lerch, who just recently celebrated her one-hundred and first birthday! Bobby, can you come up here and join me on stage? I'd like to take a moment to share a little bit about Bobby.

Bobby Lerch's story is one of exploring new frontiers.

- Born in San Francisco on March 10, 1910, to German immigrant parents, she and her family lived for a short time in a small town in Wyoming. (Which was truly the 'Wild West' back then, like you see in the movies – she even remembered covered wagons).
- While living in New York as a young teen girl, she helped out at a local library – beginning her life long career as a community volunteer.
- In 1924 Bobby became a Girl Scout, persuading their principal's wife to be their leader. Thus began Bobby's 80 year relationship with Girl Scouts.
- Bobby has shared the story that there was much commotion at her camp because Juliette Gordon Low was coming to "review the troops." Bobby says she had no idea at the time that it was a big deal.
- In 1927, when very few girls chose to attend college, Bobby went to Mount Holyoke College.
- Graduating during the Great Depression, when jobs were hard to come by, Bobby enrolled in a master's program. (A Woman...in the 1930's...in a master's program...in chemistry no less! Talk about exploring new frontiers!)
- Volunteering through most of her adult life with the Girl Scouts, she lived happily with her three sons and husband, Hank, in Washington, DC.
- In 1963, Bobby became the President of our council, and courageously shepherded the organization through the process of integration.
- When it was time for five neighboring councils to merge, Bobby was on the forefront, resulting in the borders of the Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital that existed until 2009 and the merger with Shawnee Council.
- Her life has been spent exploring new territory and pushing the envelope of society – as a President of non-profits, a scholar, and a strong woman leader.

Bobby, we are honored by your presence here today and we are grateful to be a part of your story. As a token of our appreciation we want to present to you this 100th Anniversary Bloom Brooch.

As you know, this Girl Scout council has a long tradition of holding a Sing-Along on the National Mall to celebrate our anniversaries. We gathered for the 85th, the 90th and the 95th. Over 200,000 Girl Scouts have joined together on the National Mall to demonstrate the strength of the Girl Scout movement through song. You heard earlier from Board Member Broadine Brown who is spearheading this effort that it is going to be a great event. Just a few weeks back we created a fan page on FaceBook for the Girl Scout Rock the Mall event and we already have close to 2,000 fans.

This coming year is really the beginning of a new chapter of the Girl Scout story and in many ways a new beginning for us as a Council. To lead us into the next century of Girl Scouting, it is indeed my pleasure to welcome my friend, my partner and our new CEO Lidia Soto-Harmon to give her first Annual Meeting address. Lidia?