

WHAT IS A GIRL SCOUT CEREMONY?

Girl Scouting is filled with special memories and special times. Ceremonies will heighten the significance of special times, allowing girls to share these moments with others in a memorable way. Ceremonies are an integral part of Girl Scouting. They help to reinforce values, pass on traditions, recognize accomplishments, strengthen friendships, and give life to the beliefs set down in the Promise and Law.

Whatever the purpose or origin, ceremonies provide opportunities for girls to share their feelings and reflect on what they have accomplished individually or together. Like much of Girl Scouting, there are few hard and fast rules for planning and carrying out ceremonies; what really counts is that the occasion has special meaning for the participants.

TYPES OF GIRL SCOUT CEREMONIES

Several kinds of ceremonies have become part of the Girl Scout tradition. These include:

- **Investiture** - to welcome new members into Girl Scouting
- **Rededication** - members renew their commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- **Court of Awards** - Girls receive recognition for special accomplishments
- **Bridging** - Girls celebrate passage from one level of scouting to the next
- **Patrol Leader Installation** - signifies acceptance of responsibility to the patrol and the troop

Other types of ceremonies that sometimes take less planning, or may even happen spontaneously:

- **Flag Ceremony** - to honor the Flag of our Country
- **Opening/Closing** - the beginning or end of a meeting
- **Scouts Own** - a quiet ceremony with a theme expressing feelings or ideas
- **Campfires** - for fun, friendship, or to celebrate a happy experience

Girls may want to celebrate special Girl Scout days with a ceremony. These special times include:

- **Juliette Low's Birthday** - October 31
- **Thinking Day** - February 22nd
- **Girl Scout Birthday** - March 12th
- **Girl Scout Week** - the week including March 12th
- **Leader Appreciation Day** - April 22

Girls may also want to celebrate other religious, cultural or national holidays. The possibilities are endless.

PLANNING CEREMONIES

Girl Scouting operates on the principal that girls grow, learn and have fun by making decisions, doing and discovering for themselves. That is why it is important that the girls do as much of the planning for ceremonies as possible. Ceremonies are opportunities for the girls, not the adults, to express themselves. Girls should have a part in making their own memories.

Planning should include the girls' ideas and input. As the girls get older, their responsibility for planning should expand. Keep in mind that different levels and/or groups will have different abilities. Be flexible, let the girls make mistakes and learn from them. It is your function to guide the group and provide an environment for creativity.

Here are some questions to ask the girls and also some ways girls at each age level can be involved in ceremony planning:

1. What is the purpose? (recognition? celebration?)
2. What type of ceremony do we want? (Investiture? Scouts Own?)
3. Where will the ceremony take place?
4. What date will it be on?
5. How long will it last?
6. Who will attend? Do we want to make or buy invitations?
7. Will we have refreshments? What will we have?)
8. What will be the theme? How will we express the theme? (songs? skits? presentations?)
9. What will the sequence of the ceremony be?
10. Who will do each part?
11. What will we do for an opening?
12. Do we memorize or use cue cards?
13. What equipment, props, etc. do we need? Who will bring the equipment, props, etc.?
14. How will we set up the room/area?
15. What will we do for the closing?
16. Who will clean up?
17. Have we forgotten anything?

DAISY	BROWNIE	JUNIOR	CADETTE	SENIOR
Choose a favorite song to sing	Choose songs and poems related to the theme	Decide on a theme	Decide theme	Plan and put on an area ceremony
Decide who they want to invite	Decide who they want to invite and make invitations	Decide when they want the ceremony	Find songs and readings	Select site and make arrangements
	Set up before ceremony	Find songs and poems	Work with Junior sister troop to plan bridging	Contact participants
	Serve refreshments	Make and serve refreshments	Make own props	Choose what to put in ceremony
	Help clean up	Clean Up	Clean Up	Conduct ceremony

Please remember, these are only guidelines, you know the maturity level of your girls better than anyone!

Ceremony Planner

Purpose:

Theme:

When:

Where:

Guests:

Refreshments:

	Activities	Props	Who's Responsible
Before Ceremony:			
Opening:			
Main:			
Closing:			
Evaluate:			