

**A Message from Girl Scouts of Central Maryland CEO, Traci Barnett...
Fall 2010 Cookie Program –“Every Cookie Has a Mission!”**

As plans are well underway for our fall Cookie Program in central Maryland, I am taking this opportunity to encourage your daughter's participation and to share with you information regarding the upcoming Cookie season. As we all know, the Girl Scouts' Cookie Program is the nation's largest entrepreneurial program for girls, teaching them how to run their own cookie business, honing their marketing and presentation skills, developing their sales techniques, fostering their growth as a leader and encouraging their entrepreneurial spirit. The Girl Scout Cookie Program is a time honored tradition that women look back on fondly as part of their Girl Scout experience.

We have again renewed our contract with Little Brownie Bakers—a division of the Kellogg Company. In addition to providing the delicious cookies that we all love, Little Brownie Bakers also provides Cookie Program materials and incentives for our girls and our volunteers. Age-specific cookie curriculums are available that assist adults in delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience during the cookie program season and throughout the entire year. Additionally, Little Brownie Bakers' provides user-friendly technology tools like eBUDDE, to streamline the reporting process and support troops and service units by offering a 24-hour help desk for volunteers. Many volunteers have indicated that these tools have been valuable as they support girls in developing their “cookie businesses.”

As we all know, inflation affects every segment of our society and that includes the food industry and the Girl Scout Cookie Program. Due to the ever-rising cost of ingredients, packaging and transportation, Girl Scouts of Central Maryland has made the decision to increase the price of cookies to \$4.00 per box for the upcoming cookie sale beginning in September 2010. Our Council has not raised the price of cookies in seven years and we do not make this decision lightly. Prior to making this decision we engaged the GSCM Delegates in a thoughtful discussion at the Spring Association Meeting, had discussions with Little Brownie Bakers and researched other Councils. We learned that Girl Scouts of the Nation's Capital, which serves the southern and western regions of Maryland, has made the decision to increase their cookie prices to \$4.00 per box, as well. The GSCM Board of Directors took all of these findings into consideration when they discussed this action at the April board meeting.

It is important to recognize that Girl Scout Cookies are more than a delicious treat...remember that *Every Cookie has a Mission!* All proceeds – every penny – remain in our region to ensure a positive Girl Scout experience for our girls. In 2009 nearly one million dollars of cookie proceeds were maintained by Girl Scout troops in central Maryland, which they used to take trips, attend events, and help their community. Proceeds from the sale of cookies also enabled GSCM to reduce program and camping costs to the girls, maintain four fabulous camp properties, provide support to thousands of volunteers and ensure a safe environment for our 28,000 girls.

It costs Girl Scouts of Central Maryland \$194 per girl to provide one year of the Girl Scout experience to each of our girls. The \$12 fee that each member pays goes directly to our national organization to cover their costs. Any troop fees that are paid by families stay within the troop. Therefore, revenue from the cookie sale is crucial to GSCM to help cover a portion of the \$194 per girl cost, so that we can continue to offer an experiential learning program that is built around the Girl Scout Leadership Journey and outdoor adventures for the 28,000 Girl Scouts in central Maryland.

I also ask that you keep in mind how important the Girl Scout Cookie Program is to our girls. Those of you who participate in it understand and see the great benefits it affords our girls. My hope for this year is that every Girl Scout—Daisies through Ambassadors—will participate and reap the rewards that come with it. It really is the best entrepreneurial education program for youth in the United States—helping girls develop essential life skills. I welcome any further comments or questions you may have about the 2010 Cookie Sale Program.

Yours in Girl Scouting,
Traci A. Barnett, CEO
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Watch for more information about the 2010 cookie program
on our Web site at www.gscm.org!