

Remarks from Jennifer Smith Turner, CEO about attending the National Convention

November 20, 2008

Our delegation returned from the National Convention in the beginning of November – energized and excited about the future of Girl Scouting around the world. The convention was a time of sharing, meeting sister Girl Scouts, and bonding with one another as National Delegates representing GSOFACT.

The business conducted at the meeting resulted in the National Council 1) electing the Board of Directors and Board Development Committee 2) decreasing the size of the National Council and 3) increasing annual dues. The Delegates deliberated over the impact of raising the dues, and in the end the decision was made to increase the annual dues from \$10 to \$12. This increase will take effect for the 2009-2010 troop year. The winning statement in support of the dues increase was that the value of Girl Scouting – the impact of the program and our volunteers on the future of our girls – is priceless.

When I joined GSOFACT some eighteen months ago, I knew I was becoming a part of something large and important – Girl Scouts. As I reflect on the experience at the National Convention, I have a greater appreciation for the magnitude and power of Girl Scouting for all girls around this country and around the world. We are fortunate to be partners in the movement; created by our founder Juliette Gordon Low; as we approach the 100th anniversary of Girl Scouting and witness dramatic changes in our organization, as well as our nation's political landscape.

I am particularly proud of our twelve girl delegates – Bree Currier, Ariel Ekblaw, Megan Fitzgerald, Marcelle Gosteli, Amber Kountz, Kate Larkin, Laura Linder, Leann Misencik, Jessie Morotto, Aubrie Nelson, Allison Santi and Amanda Valaitis. GSOFACT had the largest delegation of girls; this is a testament to our commitment that we will be “girl led.” They were outstanding representatives with their poise, positive attitude and engaging behavior. Many CEO's and volunteers from other councils complimented me for the presence of our girl delegates. **Thank You** to all of our girl delegates – you made us very proud!

Our entire delegation represented a true cross-section of our council's jurisdiction – the state of Connecticut. As diverse as our state is, so too are our delegates. The convention provided us a unique opportunity to

become friends and colleagues; to come to know one another as only traveling and living together can do. We shared stories, learned from our girls and participated in the democratic process as members of the National Council. **Thank You** to all of our National Delegates for giving your time, passion and dedication to Girl Scouting.

Our staff team, lead by Margaret Tantillo and Deidre DiCara, deserve a big thank you and a round of applause. Margaret and Deidre; along with Hannah Granfield, Carmen Richtarich, Kathy Meyer, Jane Bielefield, Deborah Braun and Althea Henderson; worked tirelessly to plan, organize, manage and handle all aspects of the convention on behalf of our delegates. They did an outstanding job. They exemplified teamwork and set the standard for how all of us need to (and can) come together as a team to successfully realize a shared mission and vision. In this group, six different operational areas of the council and three service centers were represented – and they collaborated and worked as one cohesive team with no boundaries. They brought the values of the Girl Scout Promise and Law to life. This is my vision for all of us. I believe we are turning the corner and becoming a cohesive organization with a shared mission. The National Convention staff team was a shining example of how successful a high-performing team can be – and they had lots of fun!

It made me proud and humble to watch you in action. My personal thank you to each of you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jennifer".

