

November 2021 Town Hall FAQ

General

What is the Camp Network?

The Camp Network is an email list. You will receive emails about camp-related events, philanthropic opportunities, and volunteer opportunities if you sign up. You can join the Camp Network [HERE](#).

What is the name of the Facebook page?

There are many GSWW camp-associated Facebook pages. We encourage everyone to join our primary GSWW Summer Camps Council Facebook group: [Summer camps of Western Washington](#). Below are some of the key Facebook groups associated with our GSWW camps. We will be working with the Camp Lyle McCleod community to set up a Facebook group specific to Lyle McCleod.

[Friends of St. Albans \(FOSA\)](#)

[Friends of Camp River Ranch](#)

[Camp Robbinswold Stewards](#)

[Camp Klahanee](#)

[Friends of Camp Evergreen](#)

[Girl Scouts of Western Washington Day & Twilight Camps](#)

Are there ways for the girls/troops to get involved?

You can reach out to Site Managers directly if there is a specific project that your Girl Scout, troop, or group is interested in. We also encourage participation in Girl Scout programs and tell their friends about the exciting opportunities we offer! Yes, we are always eager to have our Girl Scout youth involved in work parties. Youth do not have to be part of a troop to participate in camp programs.

Will you share with us what each person should give monthly to meet a specific goal and a cost for the entire camping program?

The camp campaign is to safeguard our properties because they do not have a revenue source that can support the current deficits that exist year after year. The cost of the entire camping program is easy to share, but the campaign will specifically fund camp operations at the property level. We could give examples of what an average gift could look like, but it's hard to provide a single number as everyone has different giving capacities. Instead, we hope that people will look at a meaningful gift that they can

make month after month or year after year in an ongoing way. That amount will be different from person to person.

Are there thoughts of a patch or other recognition piece?

We do plan to have different giving levels or societies with benefits and perks. There may be patches or other recognition items, but we don't want that to take away what people are giving to camp.

What is the GSWW Fiscal year?

The GSWW fiscal Year is Oct 1- Sep 30.

Can you speak more about building membership? Do you mean troops, summer camp campers, and/or others? Where is membership low?

We have had a decline of almost 30% of our members since the beginning of the pandemic. Youth membership drives our council. We are excited to see new engagement as we can gather again and use the best practices gained throughout the pandemic.

Will the camp network be used more often to let people know about work party events?

This is an objective of the vacant property director position. Still, GSWW would like to utilize the network to support work party recruitment, advertising, and organization for large events. GSWW would like to use the e-newsletter to share upcoming volunteer and giving opportunities and showcase what is happening at the various camps. This is in the works, but we do need the staffing to support these efforts.

Programming

Is the Girl Scout council ever planning on opening St. Albans for resident camping in the future?

Our goal in this year's reopening plan is to provide access to as many camps as possible with a blend of site use and resident camp programming. As we resume camp programs, we will need to monitor and evaluate the successes and challenges of Spring & Summer 2022; these outcomes will help inform the 2023 camp program plans. We plan to work closely with our Camp St Albans community to determine Summer 2023 program plan options.

What is your rationale for not holding summer resident camp at St. Albans?

Our organization has experienced significant changes due to the pandemic. Our

membership is significantly reduced from pre-pandemic levels. We have deferred maintenance costs accumulated at our camp properties. We are rebuilding our camp staff teams, our equine program has been put on hold, and we are navigating ongoing challenges related to the pandemic (seasonal staff hiring, COVID-19 guidelines, supply cost increases, etc.). We are moving forward with various camp program opportunities intended to maximize the use of our camps and youth engagement in camp experiences while being mindful of the risks and challenges that we continue to navigate. This past summer, we saw tremendous interest and success in offering family, troop, and group camping opportunities at camps River Ranch and Lyle McLeod. We are excited to provide site reservation opportunities at Camp St. Albans during summer 2022.

What is your plan to bring back Equine programming?

We intend to resume camp equine programming in 2023. We are exploring options for leasing horses and/or establishing partnerships to provide equine programming. We are also interested in developing partnership opportunities for year-round programming at partner facilities. Currently, Lang's Horse and Pony Farm in Mt. Vernon offers Girl Scout programming. If you know of a vendor providing a horse program that we should connect with, please email us at partners@girlscoutsww.org.

Should we plan camps as if there will be no Covid-19 participation restrictions? Will Covid-19 Guidelines, including group size, food distribution, and sanitation, be updated soon?

It's impossible to predict what COVID-19 impacts and guidelines we may need to navigate throughout the coming year. GSWW continues to monitor the ongoing conditions and regulations of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our Camp Program team will provide support and guidance to our volunteer-led camp leadership teams and Service Unit Encamporee Directors to navigate any restrictions on best practices. Our Member Safety Guidelines mirror CDC and Washington State guidelines, and any GSWW camps in operation will be expected to follow these guidelines.

Why were other camps able to stay open and we were not?

Many organizations have targeted camp-specific fundraising campaigns, which we did not have going into the pandemic. Many camps struggled to be open last summer—staffing their camps, keeping campers safe, and not operating at a loss. Our approach was to balance camp properties available, keep campers safe, and minimize financial risks. We also operate each of our seven camp properties at a financial loss. Each camp we opened within the COVID-19 guidelines increased our expenses without fully

offsetting these increases with revenue. GSWW's priority is to increase philanthropic support of our camp properties to provide a more sustainable future for our camps.

Are you doing anything to learn from other camps?

The GSWW camp team participates in the American Camp Association and attends workshops and seminars hosted by our local Evergreen ACA chapter and National ACA. We also actively participate in the Washington State Camp Coalition and GSUSA camp community calls. In all these settings, we have opportunities to learn from other camps and camp professionals.

Do we have any day events for Daisies at our camps in the summers?

We will be offering Family Camps at both River Ranch and Robbinswold. Some service units may be doing Encamporee programs that include Daisies. Due to limited staff capacity as we rebuild our team and programs, the Camp Program team does not have plans to offer any day events for Daisies at camps this year.

Do you have a place for camp scholarships for the coming year?

Through the generous support of our community, we have a Financial Assistance Program that will provide grants of up to \$750 per camper to cover the cost of one week of camp. However, there is a cap on what we can fund this year. We have also received donations to support two scholarships outside of our Financial Assistance program, one for daughters of disabled Veterans and another for people of color. We are working on an application form for these scholarships and will share that as we prepare to open camp registration in the coming months.

In previous summers, Camp River Ranch allowed some staff from prior years to work for just a week or two during the summer. Is this something River Ranch would be open to this summer?

Yes. Seasonal camp staffing is an anticipated challenge this summer, and we will be exploring several options. Having staff committed to the entire summer is ideal; however, if we cannot fill roles for the duration of the summer, we will explore partial season employment options and volunteer opportunities. We also will be offering an intern program for Girl Scouts who are 17. Please help make camp possible by spreading the word about summer employment opportunities! Working at camp is not only fun, but it's a great way to build life and work skills no matter what someone's career path might be! Our staff alumni cherish the memories and lifelong friendships forged from their summers working at camp.

Budget/ Finances

What portion of site reservation fees supports camp property maintenance expenses?

Revenue for site reservations first supports expenses related to Council staff and system costs associated with facilitation and management of Site Reservations. Any net revenue beyond this supports property maintenance expenses.

What do the Women's Own funds support?

Women's Own is managed as a program by the Camp Program Team. Registration fees for Women's Own first supports related program expenses, including staff support, supplies, and camp use. Net revenue from registration fees then supports property maintenance expenses. Women's Own also conducts fundraising activities to support a designated and agreed-upon project or need at camp.

What is included in the camp program & campsite fees?

Our camp program and site reservation fees include the cost of direct program supplies, technology systems used to support registration and reservations, and direct staff support expenses. The prices do not have direct property support and maintenance-related expenses. It became cost-prohibitive to our campers to include maintenance-related property expenses in these fees. We want to ensure participation is affordable to our membership. As we rebuild our membership and programs and work to increase the use of our camp properties, we anticipate that a portion of our site use revenue will support maintenance-related property expenses in the future.

Why are there no maintenance projects for camp Klahanee?

Camp Klahanee is closed for FY 22.

Why are there no maintenance projects for camp Towhee?

We need to complete a total Master Camp Program Plan and develop a long-term strategy around Towhee program opportunities. The focus for this next year is rebuilding our camp program team and maintaining the infrastructure we currently have at each of our properties.

Property Assessment-do we have the correct number of camps? Will the data from the Camp Property Assessment be shared?

The data from the property assessment showed that we need to invest in our camp properties. The focus for this next year is building up a strong foundation of support for our camp properties so that generations of Girl Scouts can continue to experience the magic of camp. Camp Property Assessment meeting minutes and updates are on our

website. These are under Camp Property Assessment resources mid-way down the page: <https://www.girlscoutsww.org/en/Our-Council/council-updates.html>

Will GSWW be pursuing grant money for camp programs or camp properties?

Yes, we have some grants in the works, one for Camp Evergreen for roof replacements, one for Lyle McLeod for septic upgrades, and one for maintenance staffing costs, but it will be spring before we know about the status of these grants. GSWW is looking to raise about \$200,000 from foundations this year. Corporate partners usually like to fund programming, but we continue to work on grants that will support camp properties to support the unique opportunities that happen on our properties, as camp can't occur without properties.

Cookies

2020 Top Cookie Sellers who earned the Cookie Dough Camp Match or Camp Discount and did not utilize the reward in 2021 will be able to apply their reward in 2022 to any Staff or Volunteer-led GSWW camp program. The Product Program team will be contacting eligible 2020 earners directly in January with details. Over 500 girls are eligible

Property

Will there be a format that GSWW can track and tabulate volunteer hours given to camp maintenance, and will it be valued with a monetary value?

This task will be on the work plan of our currently vacant property director position. The goal will be to support volunteers in the best way possible. We do value every contribution that our volunteers make to support camp. We need a better way to tabulate hours but are currently using Microsoft Standard \$25.00/hour to match hours.

When will the camps reopen?

Camp Lyle McLeod is currently open for site reservations and will close in mid-December. Camps River Ranch, Robbinswold, Lyle McLeod & St. Albans will reopen at the beginning of March. Camps Evergreen and Towhee are expected to open in April. Due to significant maintenance needs, Klahanee will remain closed for this membership year.

There are only so many weekends that we can use Camp Towhee due to the permits, what is the status of this?

We have staffing capacity issues, and we are working through a master plan for the use of all our camp properties. Our focus this year has been on reopening camps. We understand that the permits are limiting program enhancements, but we'll need to investigate all the restrictions of the permits to see how we could increase the time that we are using camp. Our priority is getting our camps open and addressing critical maintenance needs. Then we will begin to evaluate program enhancements.

Are there any plans to expand facilities at camp Towhee? Could Towhee have a shed to provide equipment for programming?

We are in the process of developing a long-term strategy around council-wide camp programming opportunities. The focus for this year is rebuilding our camp program and property teams while maintaining the infrastructure we currently have at each of our properties.

Are there any plans to add program facilities like archery at other camps that don't have this, for example, at Camp Robbinswold?

We are in the process of developing a long-term strategy around council-wide camp programming opportunities. The focus for this year is rebuilding our camp program and property teams while maintaining the infrastructure we currently have at each of our properties.

I would expect that you would be able to pay for your operational costs. Why do you need donations for camp operations costs now?

Camps have always shown a deficit and have not generated enough revenue to balance costs. Revenues offset some of our costs, but we have continuously operated with a deficit. Camp Program fees only cover program personnel and program supplies, not the cost of maintaining the camps, so we need funding to cover a portion of the upkeep. We no longer have the membership numbers and cookie revenue to offset camp at their current operational costs. This means our camp properties are susceptible to economic and natural disasters. Through sustained giving, we create a safety net to protect our properties.

Do we know what percentage of site use fees will cover property costs?

We expect this year, none.

Why are you asking for monthly or multi-year annual gifts/pledges?

To best sustain our camps and plan for their future needs, we need to have reliable income streams. When you donate monthly or make a multi-year pledge, we can estimate the revenues coming in and align our expenses more accurately. Your support will allow us to create a plan to sustain our camps now and into the future allowing us to support our mission and share the magic of camps with as many girls as possible.