

Service Projects

for Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts

Presented and compiled by Judy Brennan

Girl Scouts of Mid-Continent Council

From many, many wonderful Girl Scout Volunteers

"Service is an important element of the Girl Scout program and is performed to better the quality of life for others, without regard for personal reward."

General Tips

- Girls like service projects where they can see what a difference they are making.
- Girls like to meet the people they are helping.
- Plan for "Just Because Days" -- not necessarily only at holiday times. People need attention all year!
- When collecting goods for organizations, call first to see what they need, what they will & won't accept, and when they want it.
- Food banks usually appreciate food drives as late in the school year as possible because supplies run very low then.
- Watch out for picking up organizations to help from the internet if you have no other recommendation.
- Donations that involve shipping can run into a lot of expense.
- Many organizations -(nature center, hospital, shelters, etc) have a wish list - call and get ideas
- For more information on Service Projects: Girl Scouts USA

Animals

Humane Society

(check first to see what they want or need)

- Fund raise to sponsor an unadoptable pet at a Humane Society
- Help with the local Humane Society's Santa Paws Photos.
- Donate dog or cat food to the local Humane Society or shelter
- Make dog biscuits for an animal shelter (some soft style dog cookies and some hard crunchy ones).
- We groom and exercise the animals
- Enter animals from a shelter in a pet parade in April, hoping to find homes for them.
- Collect old blankets, dish towels, washcloths, bath towels and beach towels to put in the cages
- Small dog toys
- Cat toys: yarn pom pom balls on yarn to hang it, feather ticklers, small polyfil-stuffed pillows with a little catnip in each
- Fold and place stamps on mailings for the local Humane Society.
- Take animals from a shelter or pets to nursing homes for folks to cuddle. Note: Make sure pets are mild tempered.

Birds

- Do a bird count
- Built a bluebird trail - around our school grounds and maintain it
- String cereal into garlands and then hang on trees for the little birdies to eat.
- Make bird feeders

Zoo and wildlife refuge

- Make cookies and decorate for Christmas at the Zoo
- Adopt an endangered animal or a wild animal or bird at the zoo or your local nature center. This usually helps them feed and take care of the animal for one year.

Other Ideas

- Use cookie money to sponsor a "doggie doo station" - it's a place that has plastic bags and gloves to clean up after your pet while on walks.
- Dog Bite Clinic: This is a great project for either Cadettes or seniors. Gather information from The Humane Society or a veterinarian on how to prevent dog bites. Compile all your information and set up your format for the clinic. Some of the things that you could do during the clinic are live demonstration on the correct and incorrect ways to approach dog, how to handle the approach of a dog, and what to do when a dog looks like it is going to attack you. Cover things like eye contact, walking away slowly not running a getting a description of the dog if it bites you. You could set up booths so that the younger children could practice what you have taught them. Make up an informational flyer about Dog Bite Prevention to send home with every child.
- Remember April is Dog Bite Prevention Month.
- Organize pet care training for younger children.
- Provide educational materials on the importance of spaying and neutering pets.
- Contact the local Humane Society/ASPCA/ Animal Shelter/Animal Hospital.

Box Kits

Ideas for sources:

- Gather leftover party goods from birthday parties
- Items may be donated by grocery stores, local Wal-Marts, etc.
- Try your family physicians and dentists.
- Call the hospital, especially the Labor & Delivery ward.
- On line go to companies such as Kotex & Proctor & Gamble and call or email them and let them know of your service project.
- Call your local advertising company and ask them to point you in the right direction. They should know of who near by might be giving away some "freebies" such as bags with company logo's, T-shirts, teddy bears, etc.
- A lot of people bring home sample sized toiletry items from hotels and airplanes when they travel.

- If girls and/or families get one item per week with their weekly grocery shopping, it adds up quickly and the cost is quite minimal.
- Coloring books: collect several unused pages from coloring books, staple together; or make a few pictures on the computer or by hand
- Crayons: ask local restaurants for donations
- Pencils - get golfing type cheap at a local supply store
- Donate a few outgrown/used jigsaw puzzles

Ideas for containers:

- duffel bags, back packs and suitcases for kids. When children come to them they sometimes have all they own in a garbage bag. It's nice to send them on their way with their own bag. I was amazed how many bags girls have laying around they were willing to give up.
kcandgc@telepak.net
- small boxes
- small cloth bags
- ziploc bags
- baskets - get them at yard sales or the salvation army, spray paint them and fill them.
- Birthday Boxes: kids have a great time putting the boxes together and decorating them - works of art! Can use same theme as contents.

Birthday boxes

- Everything needed for a birthday! People who frequent the food bank have birthdays too!!! Some of our girls had heard from kids at school that they never get to have a birthday party. It was great for those families who can't afford the party supplies! -- headcookie@aol.com
- Items for kid boxes: invitations, goodies, goodie bags, cake mix, disposable cake pan, canned frosting, juice boxes or soda, candles, table cloth, napkins, plastic silverware, plates, cups, hats, noise makers, balloons, confetti, and a small gift or gift certificate for the birthday child.
- Items for adult boxes: cake mix, cake pan, frosting, candles, plasticware, etc.
- We decorated the boxes with the theme inside (Batman, Barbie, Disney, etc.) and put the age appropriateness on them

Kid fun kits

- For children in hospitals (wards, emergency rooms, waiting areas) and in shelters, homeless or battered women's centers.
- Busy Bags: stickers, crayons and coloring book pages, markers, small toys (e.g. McDonalds prizes), puppets, books, puzzles and puzzle books, deck of cards, home-made joke book, home-made journal, pencils, paper, stamps, stickers, lotion, envelopes, small books, special note from the giver. Make up labels for the bags that say "We hope you feel better, from Brownie Troop #___".
- Craft Kits: easy, non-messy projects, like pony beads & gimp or seed bead pins

- Sibling Packs: small toy and things for the kids to do while visiting hospitalized children

Adult fun kits

- For VA hospital, shut-ins, etc. adult type word search, paper, pens, pencils, writing paper, crossword puzzles, comics
- Make packages - to mail to servicemen overseas (contact the Red Cross on how to distribute). Include items such as books, videos, hot chocolate and hot cider packets, microwave popcorn, hard candy, greeting cards that they can use to send home, small games, magazines, etc.
- College students care packages

Outdoor activities boxes

- Fun kits: bubbles, yo-yo, paddleball, sidewalk chalk, jump rope, jacks, Frisbee, soccer ball, kick ball, bouncing ball, whiffle bat/ball, football, scoop/toss game, plastic horseshoe game

Rainy day boxes

- crayons, markers, paper, glue stick, scissors, watercolors, glitter, stickers, Play-Doh, Silly Putty, puzzle books, deck of cards

Book bags

- I had all the girls bring in school supplies and new or like new book bags we put them in a box and donated them to our teachers for any children that might need them. Tip: Need to start in summer to have ready for first day of school.

Crisis comfort kits

- For children who are removed from their homes and placed in foster care. So many times this is done on an emergency basis and the child has no time to gather belongings; and often there is nothing suitable to bring. So the kits provide necessities depending on the gender and age group you select to make a kit for. Anything to make them feel more at home in the new surroundings. Shershe699@aol.com Age Level.
- Suggestions for Kids' Crisis Comfort Kits: Use duffel bags, back packs or suitcases as containers
 - Infants/toddlers - baby powder, disposable diapers, used infant car seat, baby wipes, blankets, socks, bottles, toiletries, baby board books and home-made fabric touch & feel books. This set can be useful for mothers and babies at local Crisis Pregnancy Centers.
 - Preschoolers -
 - Grades K-2 -
 - Grades 3-5 -
 - Middle school - brush, deodorant, toothpaste and brush, shampoo, personal hygiene items, and even a small stuffed animal
 - High school - lip gloss, nail polish, emery boards, hair brush, comb, scrunches, hair clips, butterfly clips, a journal & pen, deck of cards, teen magazines, puzzle books, chapter books.

Personal care kits

- Include: Toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, sample bottles of mouthwash, brush/comb, soap, shampoo, deodorant, shave cream & razor, wash cloth, sanitary pads and small mirror, skin creams, shower caps and a sweet treat nonperishable food & water, etc.
- Hand them out to the homeless men and women on our street corners or to local missions. This can be done towards Christmas and the boxes wrapped festively (it might be an idea to make a list of what is included in the box on a small piece of paper on the outside so that mission staff know what is inside.) Neilsavage@aol.com
- Use in Red Cross toiletries & friendship boxes

Health care kits

- for the women's shelter . ddcaymann@cnw.com
- Baby bundles
 - For newborn girls at hospital on Juliette Low's birthday. gburrell@worldnet.att.net
 - For children who are removed from their homes and placed in foster care. Gather up items such as T-shirts, newborn outfits, bottles, disposable diapers, baby powder, bibs, diaper rash ointment, rattles or other items needed for a new baby. You can make these as fancy or plain as you like. A good suggestion is to get baby bathtubs and place all items into it. Cover with colored clear plastic wrap tied with a bow. Make your bundles gender specific.
- Many stores will donate items to help with your project. These can be donated to your local Planned Parenthood or any other organization who deals with expectant mothers.
- Breakfast or snack-in-a-box
- Many shelters serve a basic breakfast - cereal and milk. But the kids get really excited with something different and special. Round up: poptarts, cereal bars, juice boxes, things for an after school snack for the kids to get when they get "home" from school.

Women's clothing boxes

- Complete outfits packaged in gift boxes donated by a local store and give to a women's shelter. – mathisgreat@aol.com

Holidays

- Halloween treat bags: candy, small toys, small decoration. Use for children of single parents at Job Corp
- Thanksgiving baskets: canned and boxed goods for a Thanksgiving dinner, home-made Thanksgiving cards
- Christmas stockings - a group of leaders sewed them up....Joann Fabrics donated 50 yards of red, green and white felt....we decorated with sequins, buttons, floss, charms, etc.....these were donated to our County's Spirit of Christmas drive (kind of like a Christmas Angel project for underprivileged

kids).....we decorated 75 stockings---the stockings also had small toys and items donated by local shops, kids who were tired of their happy meal toys. We also purchased by the Service Unit toothbrushes, toothpaste, and combs to include in the stockings. mevans@esc11.net

- Valentine Kits: unopened box of Valentine cards, a fun pen or pencil, stickers, candy
- Easter Baskets: candy, small toys, stuffed bunny, small decoration
- May Day baskets

Earth Day bags

- The girls passed the bags out at school and collected them at the end of the day. The girls were also required to visit the individual classrooms and explain what was happening and why. Visit <http://www.earthdaybags.org>

Childcare

- Baby-sitting Service: This is a great project for older girls. Contact your local PTA and make arrangements to watch the children while the parents are in the meeting. Make sure that you take some small craft project, books, games and other things to amuse the children in your care. You could also set up a date during the Winter Holiday season, find a place to hold a day of free baby-sitting so parents can go shopping without the children. Make sure you plan activities that will be fun for all age levels.
- Offer baby-sitting services on Sundays for the church that sponsors your troop (if you meet at a church). You can have two girls do it together each week (with an adult) and rotate the girls so that each girl only does it once a month or so. -- da_wolff@hotmail.com
- Organize and run after school activities for latchkey children.
- Organize a baby sitting service for leaders attending Girl Scout training events, service unit meetings.
- Organize and run a baby sitter training program.
- Help in a day care for a day.
- Design and make puppets for a day care center.

Clean-Up, Repair and Beautification

Litter

- Clean up a park: This is a good project for Brownies and up. You clean up all the papers, bottles, cans any type of debris that is laying around. If there are flower beds there weed them. You could also paint fences or equipment (check first). If there is a picnic area at the park when everything is done you can celebrate by having a picnic.
- This is something that I have done with my Guides (girls aged 10 to 15 years) here in the UK. We held a sponsored litter collection around "the Heath " here in Petersfield . This is a local beauty spot popular with all people in our town. Family and friends of the girls sponsored them a certain amount for each bag of litter that they picked up. Obviously they wore gloves. This in itself was an act of service, but then

we used the money that we raised to sponsor a dog that was unsuitable for rehoming at the local National Canine Defense League Kennels. -- Jane@32princesroad.freeserve.co.uk

- Adopt A Highway gina-davidson@mediaone.net
- Use some cookie money to sponsor what we call a doggie doo station - it's a place that has plastic bags and gloves used to clean up after your pet while on walks. ddcaiman@cnw.com
- Organize a clean up for all the school playgrounds in your area.
- Clean up empty lots around town. We have a lot of weeds in our town that collect trash and get unsightly. POOF1967@aol.com
- Organize a community clean up day. ddcaiman@cnw.com
- Litter chase of local ball park/church grounds/meeting place/school grounds. that)- hkosmat0@alan.coastal.edu

Camps

- Spend a weekend at camp cleaning up the grounds
- Helped fill in a trench at one of our council camps that was dug to run water out to the ropes/challenge course. -- krwilton@worldnet.att.net
- Participate in a camp winterizing weekend -- stack and cover wood, clean buildings, remove mouse nests, wash windows, inventory supplies, close up buildings, etc.
- Camp rehabilitation, e.g. rake and clean the local day camp before it opens. CraftyCat1@aol.com
- Clean and clear camp trails; build trails.
- Work at camp to improve an area... such as a ropes course... under the auspices of the camp's or council's ropes specialist/facilitator. (that one can be part of the High Adventure IPP) - hkosmat0@alan.coastal.edu
- An Eagle Scout project I saw was fixing up a trail and installing a bench.

Planting

- Make sure that you contact whoever controls the property before you do any planting of flowers or trees.
- Do landscaping and yard work at a school in appreciation for being able to hold Girl Scout meetings there. SU27GSPPC@aol.com
- School Planting - plant mums in the planters in front of the school. They will come back every year and are low maintenance. The girls really enjoy going to school in the fall and seeing their flowers there.
- Foster beautification in a public place: plant a or tree or seasonal flowers. You might have to find a spring date to avoid frost dangers for this. In the fall, do bulbs. Neilsavage@aol.com
- We take care of a flower garden in one of our parks
- Plant a garden at a local Library - make a lasting impression by planting perrinels rather than annuals. -- da_wolff@hotmail.com

- We joined the Arbor Day Society and the girls will be getting trees of their own to plant. mist829430@mindspring.com
- Maintain a memorial garden... lots of times memorial gardens are planted... and then ignored. It's an ongoing-type project. Get flowers (donations, lots of places will give you flowers at the end of the planting-season, when they'll be unsaleable) in the spring, rake leaves in the fall... It is a LOT of fun, though, and can contain badge-work.- hkosmat0@alan.coastal.edu
- Designing - and planting a butterfly garden at GS camp or in an area where others can enjoy the flowers and butterflies.
- Windshield washing: We went to a local shopping center (Mall will work) after getting permission from the center and cleaned windshields (actually all windows) after the cars were parked.
- Each girl brought a roll of paper towels and a bottle of window cleaner. We even cleaned one gentleman's glasses for him (he asked). Some of the people were so glad to have their windshields cleaned that they gave us donations. We did make little tags that we place on the side window that said the windows had been cleaned by Cadette Troop XXXX as a service project. gscouts@frognet.net
- Clean graffiti in neighborhoods or at schools. gina-davidson@mediaone.net
- We have to wash the windows and blinds as a service to the hall in order for us to stay in our meeting place. The girls actually loved it last year, as long as they got the bottle of Windex.
- Clean the service center and the vans inside and out.
- We were asked by our local American Legion to put out the American Flags in the cemetery for Memorial Day. We put them out about a week before Memorial Day and take them back down after July 4. My father happens to be the town historian and he has printed maps where the flags need to go and we use the maps to find the correct placements. -- dvosburg@wycol.com
- Improve wetlands, natural animal habitats, hiking trails, water ways.
- Repair/maintain outdoor facilities: benches, trails, a strip of beach, a playground.
- Other public-service-type signs (on trails etc.) could be made and installed... blazes repainted or reinstalled (esp. if trees are growing around old nailed-on-blazes).
- My favorite that I did as a girl member was gravelling a trail, building small bridges over the stream, and building stairs up the side of a waterfall. We did this in a park in Nova Scotia and the trail is now dedicated to us! We had one day to work on our service project, different groups went out each day. The park people were there to show us what to do. I have great pictures of us busily working. We even broke the hammer in half!
- Girls in a troop lived in a neighborhood where a creek ran through the back of several homes. The erosion problems were so bad that the city wanted to

just fill the creek up. With the help of the Army Corp of Engineers, the girls received a grant and a donation from the local homeowner's assoc. to organize a clean up day using volunteers from the neighborhood, the neighborhood middle school, etc to come in make a lovely path with railroad ties, gravel, etc., and generally cleaned up the area and helped to prevent further erosion. They saved a greenbelt in the city.

- One girl ran the Earth Matters patch program for Junior Girl Scouts (8-12 yrs) in our SU -- she secured a place (the National Wildlife Center), found consultants, trained helpers, purchased supplies, kept registration and health and safety information on each girl, etc.
- Painting signs on ground "DUMP NO WASTE, DRAINS TO LAKE" to remind people not to dump chemicals down storm sewers. I dunno if other communities do that, but at home (by Lake Erie) they do it to try to reduce pollutions... obviously there are safety issues and stuff w/ that, but at home they get elementary or middle-school kids doing it during classtime.
- We are going to the Civil War Cemetery to do some renovating & cleaning up. The place has been neglected for many years & needs a bit of work. Most people around here aren't even aware of it's existence. Of course we are going to cut the grass & do some weed eating. We are also going to plant flowers around EACH headstone & wash them & fix the ones broken. The fence needs a bit of work, holes in the driveway filled in....such as that. Pick up trash-naturally...get up tree limbs...rake leaves....I was thinking of maybe building a big sign w/ the name of the cemetery on it & let each scout sign it . The girl scouts are going to prepare lunch for the day--we are having a picnic...The greatest part is that the parents are coming to help, too. So, we'll have Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts <of all ages> AND family members. terfam@midsouth.com
- Organize an historical restoration.
- cleaning up shorelines at our Girl Scout Camp--all that trash could not have come from Scouts
- Painted park poles and tables as a service for having camp there
- Help paint [inside a nearby city facility such as] a gym. kcandgc@telepak.net>
- Check with Habitat for Humanity or a similar organization to help fix up or paint a home for someone who needs it. -- Kamleht@aol.com
- Help rake leaves for the elderly.

Clothing

- Instead of just gathering up old clothes and throwing them in a bag, we asked the girls to donate one complete outfit. Their outfit needed to include at least two articles of clothing (matching sizes) that had been laundered and ironed and one accessory -- barrette, scarf, bottle of nail polish, belt, etc. The girls took a lot more time putting their outfit together than when you ask them to just donate any old

clothes. We stressed that the outfit had to be in great condition (just too small for them). The outfits were packaged (labeled with size) in gift boxes donated by a local store and given to a women's shelter. -- mathisgreat@aol.com

- Winter Clothing Drives: hats & mittens; socks & underwear; coats & jackets (--- these are not exciting items but really needed and appreciated!)
- Father-Daughter Sock Hop - bring new socks for a school district year round needy families assistance program.-- krwilton@worldnet.att.net
- Collect clothing and non-perishables for disaster relief.-- krwilton@worldnet.att.net
- We learned to knit and made scarves for the local coats for kids program
- Collect clothes hangers to distribute to nursing homes, homeless shelters, shelters for runaways, and our hospital.
- Collect used outgrown clothes from home and donate to Goodwill/Salvation Army. Older girls could be in charge of washing/ironing/sewing on buttons, mending holes.

Education

Book drives

- For needy children, e.g., children's hospital/pediatric ward/shelters, sometimes school libraries. Neilsavage@aol.com & troll@MULTIPRO.COM
- Collected books for Domestic Violence Center and Salvation Army
- Book Exchange Days at school: tonerjck@earthlink.net
- Have the girls collect children's books, and read them (recording them on a cassette tape). They could then package up the books, along with the tape, perhaps 3 books per tape - to give to all kinds of programs serving children: hospitals, nursery schools, Dr.'s offices, etc. There are so many groups that could use these book & tape packets. -- Neilsavage@aol.com and
- CraftyCat1@aol.com

Picture books could be sent overseas

- Collect new or slightly used adult-level books (and magazines) to donate to different places (VA hospitals, Urban Ministry Centers, Homeless Centers, [prisons], etc.). Neilsavage@aol.com
- My troop (4 girls in all) were all top students and had all earned the Reading IPP (badge). Our Service Unit (SU) had "adopted" a local charity's efforts at providing a "safe place" for children after school and on weekends in some of our worst neighborhoods. They were getting old HUD (government agency for housing) type houses and fixing them up for educational and fun places for kids to go. My troop decided to build a library for one of the new centers. We solicited book donations from all of the troops in our SU as well as anyone we knew and our own personal collections of children's books. Each book was sorted and catalogued according to our old

friend, the Dewey Decimal system. With the proceeds of a garage sale they purchased a build-it-yourself cabinet specifically designed for this project to hold many of the books. They built the cabinet (all by themselves-it's not like I could help) and shelved the over 800 books that they collected. They collected posters, etc for decoration of the room. They made several sit-upons (waterproof)pads for sitting on the ground) for use in the room and developed a simple check out system that required little maintenance for the volunteers running the center. They donated rubber stamps that stated "property of safe house" and stamped it in each book.

Getting ready for school

- Put together packets for the beginning of school. ddcayman@cnw.com
- Book bag - I had all the girls bring in school supplies and new or like new book bags we put them in a box and donated them to our teachers for any children that might need them.
- Just before school starts, collect or donate school supplies. Turn them over either to the local elementary school or the local food pantry. Neilsavage@aol.com and troll@MULTIPRO.COM

Reading

- Read to younger children. troll@MULTIPRO.COM
- Organize a group of girls to run a story hour at the local library or mall.
- Set up a poetry reading series at the local library or mall.
- A Library Day!!! - Reading to little ones in town at library making story related crafts and games!
- Provide information-on-tape for visually impaired or other scouts who have difficulty reading standard handbooks/pamphlets/other written material. I have a friend who did that for his Eagle Scout for the BS merit badge books. I'm not sure how much GS material is available on take from GSUSA.- hkosmat0@alan.coastal.edu

Head Start (this is a program for disadvantaged preschoolers)

- Sponsor a child at a Local Head Start for Christmas. troll@MULTIPRO.COM
- Make ABC Books - for the children's hospital or Head Start: Get a photo album and put an upper and lower case letter on each page. Have each girl cut out pictures to represent the letters and put them in the photo album.
- We're making play dough for the Head Start program
- Make Easter baskets for a privately held children's home, or your local Headstart centers.

Other Ideas

- Distribute reading materials at Target (or other similar store) for National Reading Day
- Donate Girl Scout & Juliette Low books to the public library. gburrell@worldnet.att.net

- Make bookmarks for the children's library or for the reading literacy program
- After-school homework helpers - for younger kids.
- Mentoring for HS-aged girls, e.g. GS bridging activities that involve mentoring w/ an older girl and younger girl. - hkosmat0@alan.coastal.edu
- Work with a local school to organize a group or peer tutors.
- Volunteered -help for the 'Friends of the Library' with their book sale
- Contact the local kindergarten and first grade teachers and made name tags for field trips.
- Educational displays -for the general public on a local matter (environmental, etc) or
- Lead an environmental awareness campaign in your community.
- Work with a community group to organize a workshop to teach homesteading skills (churning butter, weaving cloth, etc) -there are reenactors of the "War between the States" in your area that could possibly help with information)
- Girls collaborated on a training video for troops to use in Outdoor Skills (cooking, cleanup, firebuilding mainly). Each girl had a specific part (director, props, script, soundtrack, all were actors, etc.). We 'filmed' it in slide format. The local cable station worked with us to transfer it to videotape (using 1/2" master tape) as well as to do the voiceovers in their sound studio. A grant from Chevron allowed us to make about 80 copies which we distributed all over the Council (San Francisco Bay). Made the tape 6 years ago and it's still in use and I still get the occasional compliment.
- Compile a book on the accomplishments of women in your community that may be used in a women's history seminar.
- Set up and run an exploratorium in science
- Host an Astronomy night - contact your local astronomy clubs (if you have one) and get them to help - most will.

Elderly

Adopt-a-Grandparent:

- Older people are a wonderful source of information and both the girls and grandparent will benefit by this experience.
- Adopting one senior: This can be done by contacting your local nursing homes or by adopting a senior citizen in your area that has no family and very few visitors. You should at least visit with them once a week, remember their birthday and holidays. If they are able to travel invite them to your ceremonies. If you have a large troop set up a rotating schedule for visits.
- Adopting a group of seniors: If you have your group of girl scouts visit a group of elderly people you avoid the problems of the elderly person whose girl scout didn't show up that day feeling left out, and the girl whose elderly person passes away feeling sad. You might incorporate a service project of making cards at your meetings for those that are in the nursing

homes or assisted living facilities from the church. Then maybe on one or two holidays during the year (not Christmas since everyone does that) take the girls to one of the facilities to hold a tea or party for the residents. That way you are not committed to a continual trip to the facility but are remembering those that are lonely and ill monthly.

Make a craft with local nursing home residents.

- Door hangers <crafts sticks glued together & painted & decorated--each has the residents' name on it>
- Halloween wreaths <like Christmas wreaths but w/ Halloween figures instead>
- Hearts w/ tails <construction paper & tails made from tissue paper> greeting cards
- Christmas Angels <satin material w/ gold ribbon folded for wings & gold pipe cleaner for a halo>
- sunshine suncatchers to hang in their windows

Other

- Make Christmas ornaments for local nursing homes. troll@MULTIPRO.COM
- Christmas caroling. Help with Christmas party.
- Make chocolate candies to be used for Valentine's Day at a local Senior Citizen's Center (regular & dietetic). gscouts@frognet.net
- Easter baskets
- We went "caroling" to a nursing home on Memorial Day and sang all patriotic songs. The residents loved it and sang along quite a bit. But practice first - - you'd be surprised what the girls don't know (that we all did at their age). Sing the old songs that the residents will know. One guy was so happy when we sang the Marine's Hymn, he showed us his Marines tattoo! - mathisgreat@aol.com
- Take animals from a shelter or pets to nursing homes for folks to cuddle. Note: Make sure pets are mild tempered. -- da_wolff@hotmail.com and ddcayman@cnw.com
- Help rake leaves or shovel snow for the elderly. troll@MULTIPRO.COM
- Cook dinner for a Senior Citizen outreach at a local church. The girls cook, serve, clean up, decorate the tables and play bingo with the seniors. campi@prodigy.net
- Each 4th & 5th grade girls girl adopt a resident at a local nursing home for the school year. The number of residents matched exactly the number of girls in the troop. The girls make the residents crafts for decorations each holiday and make them cards. Then we deliver them and the girls hand the craft to their resident. The girls decided this project on their own after we went caroling there last Christmas. Both residents and girls get enjoyment from this project. dddr@penn.com>
- Knitted/Crocheted Baby Caps for Newborns (Again we had a pattern and directions. This was neat because we found some senior citizens whom really knew how to crochet and knit so it was really an intergenerational project). Ariel4008sf@aol.com

- Make floral centerpieces for elderly housing (paper flowers, silk flowers) Ariel4008sf@aol.com
- Monthly or holiday favors, placemats, decorations for Seniors
- Perform flag ceremonies
- Play bingo or other games with nursing home residents
- Bake them goodies -- they LOVE food! -- da_wolff@hotmail.com
- Plant a garden (flower or vegetable) for them. Try to get them involved also. It might be good for them to have something to care for. -- da_wolff@hotmail.com
- Come in and do silly campfire skits for them. Remember some are hard of hearing - speak loudly and clearly. da_wolff@hotmail.com
- Contact the Senior Center and find senior's that are shut-ins. Send them monthly letters, pictures etc.
- Provide piano music
- Organize self-defense classes for senior citizens.
- Work with residents of the local Veterans Administration hospital.
- Make Goodie Bags /"care kits" for seniors in assisted living, nursing homes or Senior Citizen Center: stationary, envelopes, stamps, nail clippers, comb, brush, lotions, any skin softening products and make up small baskets. We also have put small bags of candy in them for the Seniors to give to guests who visit them.
- Organize a Seniors Prom (formal dance for the elderly based on the formal dances held each year in the spring for the oldest High School students).
- Record an oral history of your community as seen through the eyes of senior citizens....(we are doing this one at a workshop for the leaders)
- Decorate the Senior Center with snowflakes for winter, leaves for fall, flowers for spring.
- Joke Book - make a kids and one for the adults of all clean jokes, comics and put them in photo albums and send to the Ronald McDonald House or Children's Hospital, Nursing homes etc.
- Decorate cookies with residents
- Make valentines for Senior Citizens
- Dye eggs at a senior care center.
- We made Easter baskets out of milk jugs and put candy in them. With the assistance of the director, we gave them to rest home residents.
- The Brownies sang and gave lots of hugs to lonely seniors in a retirement home. It was really special because some of the seniors were immigrants and so were some of the girls; they were lonely for their grandchildren and their grandparents respectively.

Events for Kids

Help at the local Special Olympics

- In between organized events, the Scouts "run" an area of carnival type games and do face painting.
- Special Olympics gets prizes that we give out to every child who comes and plays.
- Keep score.

Other Ideas

- Our Newcomers Club runs a huge craft fair every year and they ask Girl Scouts to act as "waitresses" for the crafters. We go to the booths, pick up their money and lunch order and then go to the caterers table where they put together the food and then we deliver it back to the crafters. Some troops also run the children's activities at this fair. (Face Painting, simple crafts, etc.) Ariel4008sf@aol.com
- Tie balloon animals at a school carnival (we made over 400 balloons in 3 hours!)
- Face painting: Crayola makes colored "watercolor" pencils. Dip the colored pencils in water before applying. They come off very easily with soap and water and are not messy at all going on.
- Hold a health fair.
- Teddy Bear Picnic - Two girls planned, organized and ran this event. Had all brownies bring their teddy bears. Held "contest" -- ribbons for all! Best dressed, biggest, smallest, etc. Made a paper teddy bear, played games, had a snack, a parade of teddies, and a small hospital area for bears that needed mending.
- THE PLAY'S THE THING! it is for brownies and is going to introduce them to different types of play. Each girl has her own responsibility; so they're doing theater, origami, sport and 19th century crafts that young girls did.
- Ready-Set-Camp! each girl took a part of camping and introduced it to girls who had never been camping so they would be ready to go on the encampment a few weeks later.
- Jungle Fever Campout - Our Cadette troop is planning a one-night camp session for Junior GS as our Silver Project. The theme is "Jungle Fever" because all of our activities will have something to do with the jungle or rain forest. So far we have planned a guided hike with "planted" items relating to the jungle (the girls will find them and then we'll tell them something about that item and how it fits in the jungle), and a food activity taste testing hot chocolate and making a banana shake. We will make a SWAP (items made and then traded) to give each Junior when they complete each station in our wide game.
- Wacky Olympics - They held a Wacky Olympics day for Junior scouts complete with opening ceremonies, a medal ceremony (gold, silver, and bronze), the "lighting of the torch", and a parade of "nations".
- Helped Jaycees with their Valentine carnival
- A local support group for families of children with attention deficit/ hypertensive disorder [this could be generalized to ANY family support group for kids with problems] holds a family outing once a summer at a local beach. Our Cadette troop would go and run several venues of carnival-like games for the children. The support group designed and built the game venues, and obtained the prizes for the 'winners'. All my troop had to do was show up and be the game operators (and prize givers). The girls got to be in charge of the games and they got to be heroines to the kids (who all got more than just a

trinket, the real prize was the praise and attention). Plus, the girls got a free picnic barbecue, time at the beach afterward, and a visit to an ice cream place on the way home (their money). Families of these 'demanding' kids have so little time to themselves and they were so grateful for the Girl Scouts to come 'to the rescue' even for just a couple of relaxing hours. Neilsavage@aol.com

- "Work" in the area for children at the local free arts/crafts show in June: paint faces, do kite flying (with the simplest kite you have ever flown). JudyBencke@AOL.COM

Food

Food drives

- Hold food drive throughout the whole year (2 cans a month)
- Coordinate a food drive at a town event - Brownie Square Dance, Fun Nite, Town Bridging.
- At Cadette/Senior Association pizza and movie evening, admission was cans of food - we got 260 cans of food to donate. headcookie@aol.com
- Girls write or stencil (an advertisement to collect food for needy) on paper bags, deliver the bags to neighbors and tell neighbors your troop will be back the following week to collect the filled bags. -- da_wolff@hotmail.com
- Ronald McDonald House: canned goods, blanket and linen drive
- Collect personal care items to be donated to a food pantry. Ariel4008sf@aol.com
- Annual Challenge Food Drive: We sent flyers home on Mon. explaining that we were challenging the grade levels to see which one could bring in the most non-perishable food/personal items. If possible send reminder strips home on Monday. We collected the food between 7:30am and 8am on the stage in the cafeteria. We hung signs on the backs of chairs for each grade level and put the food in front of the chairs. At 8am the girls when to class and the leaders finished up. Each child who donated got a sticker to wear for the day (Thurs and Fri). Friday morning, same thing. After the last one was collected we decorated the winners chair/food, posted a sign as to how much was collected by each grade and a total, the principal announced the winners and the winning grade got a certificate to hang in the hall. Both days the kids got to see the results during lunch. At 3:00pm, when school got out on Friday, the troop bagged the food, put it in the cars and we took it to the food bank. There we had a tour the first time, sorted the food and took pictures. We also had the local paper out to the school during the collection. This can be a great annual event at a school. Does require a good working relationship with the principal. We were very clear that we wanted to work within the schools schedule and not intrude on the classes. tonerjck@earthlink.net

Soup kitchens

- Older girls can prepare vegetables in a local soup kitchen.

- Girls can help on World Food Day.
- Cook a meal for the homeless (that has temporary housing in a local church) and spend the afternoon with them. In between preparing the meal, our girls did lanyard and nail polishing. It turned out one of the 'homeless' girls had been a scout...very humbling and worthwhile experience for my scouts. Tied this into earning Our Own Councils (Lone Star) Cooking Badge. maura1@fcc.net
- Cook dinner for a Senior Citizen outreach at a local church. Girls cook, serve, clean up, decorate the tables and play bingo with the seniors. campi@prodigy.net

Food banks and pantries

- Help create a food pantry at a local church.
- Donate paper and plastic grocery bags to food pantries.
- Helped at "Food Gathers", a "warehouse" of sorts. Grocery stores and individuals donate food items to FG. FG volunteers then separate the big bags of flour, salt, beans etc., and then "price" the food items. For example they had big industrial sized cans of spaghetti sauce for \$1. The "buyers" can feel good about getting the food -- like they are "providing" for their families instead of just getting handouts. Girls go in and organize the "grocery store", separate out the bulk items and that sort of thing. gina-davidson@mediaone.net

Meals-on-Wheels

- Help with [delivery of] meals on wheels. ddcaiman@cnw.com; Deliver weekend Meals on Wheels.
- Troops take turns making tray favors. Neilsavage@aol.com
- Fill little plastic gray film canisters (photo places save them by the bundles) with plaster of Paris and make lovely little arrangements with silk flowers. da_wolff@hotmail.com
- Make Valentine and Christmas favors

Goodies to share

- for troops in Bosnia-- krwilton@worldnet.att.net
- Cupcakes for hot lunch programs in one of the schools apple pies for community dinners. ddcaiman@cnw.com
- Bake pies for the community Thanksgiving Dinner.
- for Ronald McDonald House
- Make chocolate candies to be used for Valentine's Day at our local Senior Citizen's Center (regular & dietetic). gscouts@frognet.net

Other Ideas

- Collect coupons - and send to the local food pantry, shelters etc.
- Collect left over party ware - plastic knives, spoons, forks and napkins. Take napkin - roll fork, spoon and knife into it - tape it closed or some other creative method. Donate to local soup kitchen or nursing home.

- Help make or maintain a community garden ...everything grown in it is donated to the community.
- Collect canned and boxed items for a Thanksgiving food basket. CraftyCat1@aol.com. Could add a card and decorations too.
- "Breakfast in a Box". Many shelters serve a basic breakfast - cereal and milk. But kids get really excited when someone brings in pop tarts, cereal bars, juice boxes, and some things for an after school snack when they get "home" from school.
- Accept the responsibility for cooking for your family for one week.
- Adopt-a-Spot Program in our community - any person or group can adopt a public space and clean/beautify it. Example: "Stream Team" cleans up an area stream or creek.
- Contact a food shelf, see what they need. We collected personal care items at Town elections and then delivered them and helped stock the shelves
- Senior citizens prom Talent show for a nursing home

Multicultural

- Thinking Day 2000 Gift Exchange With Girl Guides and Girls Scouts Around the World Lauretta Pierce fjp@earthlink.net
- Picture books could be sent overseas to areas, which don't speak English, girls in those areas could create libraries with the books. Some girls might try writing stories in their language to
- go with books. Troops without funds to ship overseas, or lots of English books could create libraries in homeless shelters, local schools, etc. Education is one of the best ways of helping girls around the world, according to the UN. Neilsavage@aol.com
- Donate toys, [books and] school supplies, and toiletry items to the missions. Neilsavage@aol.com
- Teach English as a Second Language to younger troops or other groups... in an area where there's a large Spanish-speaking or other-language -speaking population. -hkosmat0@alan.coastal.edu
- Help teach English to non-English speaking children in your community
- If you have an ambitious & talented group... teaching basic Spanish to emergency personnel who have to interact with a large number of Spanish-speaking people (I keep saying Spanish because I am in SC where there are a lot of migrant workers... I mean any other-than-English- language where many of the people speak it but few of the emergency personnel do... that would be more like Russian than Spanish at home (I'm from Ohio) .- kosmat0@alan.coastal.edu
- Juliette Low World Friendship Fund
- Pictures to Kosovo schools
- Organize an ethnic fair for your Girl Scout Council.
- A Winter Celebration Day for Daisies. They came and learned how other cultures celebrate the holiday of Christmas! The made crafts and played games of the different cultures.

- Leading a brownie troop in learning the promise in Spanish and showing it at a Girl Scout gathering! Also information was learned about Mexico for thinking day.
- The Brownies sang and gave lots of hugs to lonely seniors in a retirement home. It was really special because some of the seniors were immigrants and so were some of the girls; they were lonely for their grandchildren and their grandparents respectively.
- Two girls working on their Silver Award (for girls of about grade 7-9) during Desert Storm wanted to do something to help bring peace to the world. It seems idealism comes in big pieces!
- They held a Peace Corps Evening, with returned Peace Corps Volunteers sharing their experiences (and how to apply) with Cadettes and Seniors (grades 6-12) The RPCV's were all former GS, and 2 were current adults members.

Help the Helpers

Refreshments

- Walk/Run Benefits Helpers. We've been water girls (handing water to the runners - sounds easy but is the very hardest job), trash picker-uppers, parking lot attendants, registration booth, prize drawing attendants - we do 3 or 4 of these a year. Probably the hardest part is being at the volunteer check-in around 6 a.m.! We usually have an early lights out sleepover at my house the night before.
- Serve cookies at your local Red Cross blood drive.
- Provide refreshments for the Habitat for Humanity workers. gburrell@worldnet.att.net

Red Cross:

- Older girls may be able to facilitate or set up a blood drive. da_wolff@hotmail.com
- Assemble Red Cross toiletries & friendship boxes.
- Serve cookies at your local Red Cross blood drive.
- Red Cross Christmas stockings

Other Ideas

- Help with local non-profit organizations -(e.g. help hand out info for MADD, walk for the diabetes foundation, help the local school with events or projects, etc)
- Collect lost pennies - for a month and donate to a local charity.
- If you have a military base nearby, contact the Chief of Staff, there is almost always a service project that can be done on post/base. da_wolff@hotmail.com
- We make and serve breakfast for our local volunteer firemen on two Sundays in February. They sponsor our troop. They have required OSHA training in February and were having a hard time getting their volunteers to come, so we volunteered to serve breakfast to them. dvosburg@wycol.com
- Hang up United Way posters. troll@MULTIPRO.COM
- Distributed flyers for a benefit
- Nickelodeon channel has done "The Big Help" campaign and I got a copy of their calendars several

years ago and it listed many service ideas and places and organizations that needed help.

- It listed the GSUSA as a resource for service projects.
- Made Goodie Bags for the Senior Center's Walk-a-thon they needed 300 goodie bags put together. They supplied the items and we put them together, We gave them out to the seniors at the walk-a-thon.
- Working with Habitat for Humanity or similar community organizations -- even if there are minimum age restrictions perhaps you can make box lunches, collect tools or materials, or provide
- baby-sitting services for workers
- Ring bells for the Salvation Army

Homeless

- Make sleeping bags for the homeless. ddcayman@cnw.com
- Make Birthday Boxes for a local children's home. Children there use them for all sorts of parties that they wouldn't otherwise celebrate under the circumstances. kcandgc@telepak.net
- Put together duffel bags and suitcases for kids at a local children's home. When children come to them they sometimes have all they own in a garbage bag. It's nice to send them on their way with their own bag. I was amazed how many bags girls have laying around they were willing to give up. kcandgc@telepak.net
- Comfort Kits: To be given to children who are removed from their homes and placed in foster care.
- Volunteer to help in a soup kitchen for the needy/homeless. POOF1967@aol.com
- Fun Boxes for kids
- Make Easter baskets for a children's home, or your local Headstart centers.
- During the cold months, the neighborhood churches take turns each night opening their doors to people who have no where to go. They provide shelter, a place to clean up, dinner, a safe place to sleep, and breakfast. The girls were surprised to find out that kids were homeless too! The organization is called PADS and we are in Illinois. scotty_gs@hotmail.com
- Collect toys for local shelters
- Cadette/Senior Association hosted a pizza and movie evening and admission was a blanket to give to the homeless shelter. -headcookie@aol.com
- Our girls are going to make blankets and afghans for the homeless.
- Prepared sack lunches for Midnight Run for the Homeless in NY City (We did this several times as we really liked it)
- Set up for PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) - where the homeless are sheltered at a church each night. The girls never come in contact with the 'clients' - they lay out mattresses, roll silverware, & make table centerpieces decorations to hang in isolettes of premature babies at the hospital (the babies can't go home & it touches the parents' hearts when the isolettes have a "special" touch - or so

we've been told by moms who have been there) the decorations can't have glitter or loose parts that could fall off (glitter can clog tubes)

- Adopted a group of Native American children in SD who often go from foster home to foster home. Here's what we donated -Patscake@aol.com:
 - --August - items to use for school for the grade level GS was at
 - --Sept, Oct - used but in good shape winter coats
 - --Nov - holiday toy
 - --Jan - underwear
 - --Feb - make-up, ass't hair things
 - --March - socks
 - --April - a duffel bag and backpack for a child - one of each per troop
- Adopt a family for Christmas and/or birthdays (check with churches or outreach agencies near you)
- Adopt a homeless shelter - Collect and donate personal care items and cleaning supplies for temporary housing units for families.
- Adopt a Children's Shelter - and each month do something: Donated toothbrushes/toothpaste, hair brushes, socks, bibs, new clothing. Each girl used \$1.00 from their dues to purchase teddy bears for the children, so when they get placed there they are given a new friend. Craft kits: Put easy craft kits together--e.g. puzzle, puppet, coloring items.

Recycling

- Collect pop tabs for Ronald McDonald House
- Tabs for Tots (collecting pop tabs for children goes towards diabetic supplies or wheelchairs)
- Recycle glass and aluminum. This was part of a SU project to erect a gazebo on a town park. Nasty at times, esp. when people don't rinse out the beer bottles, but raised lots of money! After the gazebo was built, this became an on-going fundraiser for older girl troops in that town
- Collect paper bags (or plastic) for your local food banks or churches food closet. -- da_wolff@hotmail.com
- Hold a bottle and can drive to boost recycling. CraftyCat1@aol.com
- Kept the recyclable separate for our Recycling Center

Safety

- Poisons in the Home Awareness at a local shopping center. gscouts@frognet.net
- Collect used cellular phones for abused women. Shelters reprogram them to dial 911 . BossScout@aol.com
- Safe Kids Day - fingerprinting, art projects, story reading, etc.
- Dog Bite Clinic: This is a great project for either Cadettes or seniors. Gather information from The Humane Society or a veterinarian on how to prevent dog bites. Compile all your information and set up your format for the clinic. Some of the things that you could do during the clinic are live demonstration on the correct and incorrect ways to approach dog,

how to handle the approach of a dog, and what to do when a dog looks like it is going to attack you. Cover things like eye contact, walking away slowly not running a getting a description of the dog if it bites you. You could set up booths so that the younger children could practice what you have taught them. Make up an informational flyer about Dog Bite Prevention to send home with every child.

- Remember April is Dog Bite Prevention Month.
- Develop a bicycle safety course.
- Teach basic water skills to non-swimmers
- Motivate a group to take CPR training and organize a class
- Organize a block association
- Organize self-defense classes for senior citizens.
- Design and conduct home safety activities for a local tenants' association
- Conduct a fire preparedness workshop for community residents.
- When my troop met in a branch library, and I was filling out forms and they asked about safety, I showed them my battered copy of Safety-Wise (I'm sure you must have a similar compilation of safety policies) which they admired. We bought a copy for their shelves. (They returned the favor by putting up a plaque!)

Scouting

- How We Did our Thinking Day 2000 Gift Exchange With Girl Guides and Girls Scouts Around the World - Laurretta Pierce fjp@earthlink.net
 1. My daughter Laurie and I, started the project September 23 and worked on it until December 15, which gave troops who were exchanging with other countries enough time to mail their exchanges. Our goal was to have 2000 girls participate.
 2. Laurie made brochures explaining the Thinking Day exchange, which she gave to leaders in the service unit. She also passed out the brochures at her Basic program aide training class, at the Silver Award meeting, the Wider Opportunity meeting and at the On my Way event. The brochure also provided information to those interested in exchanging who didn't have access to the Internet.
 3. I updated the Centennial Star leaders of the Thinking Day process at the service unit cookie meeting.
 4. With help from the Gulf Pines Girl Scout Council in Mississippi, we each made WebPages at 2 sites which contained information for Troop Leaders to register their troops. <http://www.angelfire.com/co2/tdswaps/> <http://www.zyworld.com/TDSWAPS/index.html>
 5. Mile-Hi Council listed the site in their newsletter. Virginia Skyline Girl Scout Council did a write-up on us in their monthly newsletter "The Skyline". Girl Guides of Australia helped us out by listing the Thinking Day project at their web site <http://www.guidesaus.org.au/Events/Think2000/ThinkingDay2000.htm>. The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), and World

Guiding <http://worldguiding.anzagl.com/> assisted with the advertisement along with various Service Units and Troops around the world.

6. We also organized the Thinking Day Around the World Webbing for troops with WebPages to join to help advertise the event.

7. Out of the 299 troops that registered 243 of them participated, for a total of 3,424 girls. Girl Scouts and Girl Guides from Africa, Australia, Canada, Kuwait, New Zealand, United Kingdom as well as the United States participated in this event.

8. Laurie said she had a lot of fun with the project and hopes to do it again for the next Thinking Day. I am amazed at how successful working with other troops can be, the support we received from troop leaders around the world, and how coordinating with other troops internationally can really add to the concept of a true Thinking Day.

- Older girl troops offer themselves to new leaders especially in the beginning of the year as they start up the troops. They assist with parent meetings, earning badges, working on crafts.
- BossScout@aol.com Assisting with completing paperwork, etc. Whatever the new leader needs help in. This has been a great service to me since I am also the SUC. BossScout@aol.com
- Baby baskets for newborn girls at hospital on Juliette Low's birthday. gburrell@worldnet.att.net
- Donate Girl Scout & Juliette Low books to the public library. gburrell@worldnet.att.net
- Start a lending closet. Collect used Girl Scout Uniforms for all levels to wear. Then when the Cadette Troop goes somewhere special (like Legislative Day) they can all be decked out in uniform. -- da_wolff@hotmail.com
- Older Scouts can learn to sew and make Scout vests for younger scouts that can't afford vests. -- da_wolff@hotmail.com
- Baked cookies for troops in Bosnia-- krwilton@worldnet.att.net
- Organizing an easy, simple service project... for/with a younger troop... would be leadership and service...
- Volunteer for council-owned camps, there were service opportunities offered every time, age-adjusted, and we usually did whatever they needed.
- Organize and run a Girl Scout Council library.
- Bring program to younger troops, including talking about Wider Ops, doing camp preparation, teaching songs, games, crafts
- Have several leadership service projects including leading the nature hike at Brownie Outdoor Skills Day, leading the closing campfire at the Brownie Campout, organizing and running the Service Unit campout two years-- dgaudier@houston.ssa.slb.com
- Run SU crafts tables at the town youth functions, e.g. Halloween party
- Participate in Thinking Day.
- Organize an ethnic fair for your Girl Scout Council.
- Create a display of girl scout "stuff" for the showcases at school or library display case. Promoting Girl Scouts!

- Volunteer for your service unit, do they have a newsletter, if not start one for them. if they have one write articles on the older girl program in your area. Develop - (group of Service Units) newsletter -- working with 5 SU managers, the Assoc. team, etc.
- Designed the SU web site -- getting a free sponsor, securing the certificate, working with our council on things that could and could not be included, training leaders in managing the webpage, etc.
- Volunteer to help your council - mailings, large events,
- Juliette Low World Friendship Fund
- Design a special ceremony regarding Girl Scouts and Girl Guides spreading PEACE around the world. Make and place PEACE POLES in public parks or school grounds etc. Neilsavage@aol.com
- Leader - Daughter Christmas Party at the December Leader's Meeting.
- Each Leader & Daughter brings a Christmas snack and the Service Unit provides beverages. Each "team" is also requested to bring an unwrapped gift for a boy or girl, along with wrapping paper, tape, etc. As we party, the girls wrap the gifts (and what a great job they do!) and mark the gifts with the appropriate gender and age range. Last year, we donated the majority of the gifts to a homeless shelter (a privately run shelter through a network of local churches staffed mostly by volunteers). The girls are given credit for service time for wrapping the gifts. This year, I hope to be able to have some of the troops assist in delivering the gifts which will provide them with even more service time.
- Work with your local library or council office to record library or Girl Scout books onto cassette tapes for blind and visually limited individuals, or other scouts who have difficulty reading standard handbooks/pamphlets/other written material.
- Girl Scout outdoor skills activity boxes for use at a camping and outdoor education skill training for the Girl Scout Leaders.
- Girls collaborated on a training video for troops to use in Outdoor Skills (cooking, cleanup, firebuilding mainly). Each girl had a specific part (director, props, script, soundtrack, all were actors, etc.). We 'filmed' it in slide format. The local cable station worked with us to transfer it to videotape (using 1/2" master tape) as well as to do the voiceovers in their sound studio. A grant from Chevron allowed us to make about 80 copies which we distributed all over the Council (San Francisco Bay). Made the tape 6 years ago and it's still in use and I still get the occasional compliment.
- Birthplace Troop Corner project:: Have your girls make a craft item that you think other scouts would be interested in buying. When completed mail to the Birthplace. These items will be placed in the troop corner for sale. The proceeds will go to help with the upkeep of the Birthplace. jmjbeh@dmcom.net
- Plan and implement a Try-It day for Brownies. (Try-its are Brownie badges)

- THE PLAY'S THE THING! it is for brownies and is going to introduce them to different types of play. Each girl has her own responsibility; so they're doing theater, origami, sport and 19th century crafts that young girls did.
- Leading a brownie troop in learning the promise in Spanish and showing it at a Girl Scout gathering! Also information was learned about Mexico for thinking day.
- Two girls working on their Silver Award (for girls of about grade 7-9) during Desert Storm wanted to do something to help bring peace to the world. It seems idealism comes in big pieces!
- They held a Peace Corps Evening, with returned Peace Corps Volunteers sharing their experiences (and how to apply) with Cadettes and Seniors (grades 6-12) The RPCV's were all former GS, and 2 were current adults members
- Develop a "Brownie Bridging Program" or "Bridging Brownie workshops" in Service Unit. The four components to the program are: skill training, troop training, bridging Camporee, and the bridging ceremony (Bridging is the process of moving from one level of Scouting to another. There are specific steps to complete and a badge to be earned)
- Have a dinner for the leaders on Leader's Day or during Girl Scout Week.
- Take the leader-in-training workshop offered by your Girl Scout Council and utilize the leadership skills you acquire with a troop of younger girls.
- Become a Counselor-in-training and demonstrate your leadership abilities as a camp counselor for your council. Become a First Aider and teach first aid skills to a group of younger children.
- Become active in your Girl Scout Service Unit by assisting a troop leader or the troop organizer.
- Plan and implement a thank you activity for your leader or leaders in the Service Unit.
- Set up and run extended-day activities at a council day camp.
- Plan and carry out the entertainment for a leader's dinner.
- Become a recruiter for you council and organize other girls to help form new troops.
- Volunteer your services to help train others in the council in specific skills, such as campcraft skills, song leading, handicrafts, etc.
- Organize a group of girls to become service unit song leaders.
- Purchase Girl Scout signs to put up under town signs
- Volunteer to assemble updates to council or SU manuals.
- Have a fundraiser and purchase a CPR baby or other items needed by the council for training.
- THE PLAY'S THE THING! it is for brownies and is going to introduce them to different types of play. Each girl has her own responsibility; so they're doing theater, origami, sport and 19th century crafts that young girls did.
- A Winter Celebration Day for Daisies. They came and learned how other cultures celebrate the holiday

of Christmas! The made crafts and played games of the different cultures.

- The Brownies sang and gave lots of hugs to lonely seniors in a retirement home. It was really special because some of the seniors were immigrants and so were some of the girls; they were lonely for their grandchildren and their grandparents respectively.
- Plan the annual Service Unit campout, a Brownie campout for all troops.
- Prepare an illustrated what-to-do book for the area: kids activities, walking tours, annual events, fun things to do/see, local history, etc.
- Coordinate and organize a "Father-Daughter" or a "Mother-Daughter" event
- Develop - an equipment lending/donation system for her Service Unit and created a craft booklet that complemented the materials available through the lending/donation system.
- Develop - 30 craft projects designed for a wide range of age groups, and created a "How-to" book that she donated to her Service Unit. Each project included a full set of instructions, a list of potential suppliers and a reference photograph illustrating each craft.
- Develop and carry out sports activities for a resident camp

Thank You's...

- Make Thank You notes - for our Girl Scout council to use.
- Donate cookies to various public service organizations. CraftyCat1@aol.com
- Painted park poles and tables as a service for having camp there
- We have to wash the windows and blinds as a service to the hall in order for us to stay in our meeting place. The girls actually loved it last year, as long as they got the bottle of Windex.
- Do landscaping and yard work at a school in appreciation for being able to hold Girl Scout meetings there. SU27GSPPC@aol.com
- We make and serve breakfast for our local volunteer firemen on two Sundays in February. They sponsor our troop. They have required OSHA training in February and were having a hard time getting their volunteers to come, so we volunteered to serve breakfast to them. dvosburg@wycol.com
- Plan and implement a thank you activity for your leader or leaders in the Service Unit.

T.L.C. for Sick, Disabled, Grieving Stuffed animal projects:

- The girls sent e-mail to the local newspaper, TV and radio stations. Response was incredible.
- Emergibuddies Program. We collect new and like new stuffed animals. We present the animals to our EMS (emergency management service) to be placed in every emergency vehicle in the county. On each event we hold we tell the troop that they have a fee and 1 stuffed animal per girl.(not a must - just try) The girls ask all their friends and bring in plenty. k candgc@telepak.net

- State Police-Teddy Bear Drive: This project is collecting new or "gently used" teddy bears of all sizes & colors. The bears will be given to the State Police and distributed among their various vehicles. When the troopers respond to a call & a child is present, they will give the child/children a teddy bear as a "warm, fuzzy" to keep, and hopefully comfort the child while the police take care of business.
- Hospitals (fire departments, ambulance drivers, police, etc.) need stuffed animals for children who are hurt, in a difficult situation or whatever. Your troop could make "bears" from a simple pattern using leftover fabric, fabric paint and ribbon around the neck. Stuff with fiber fill, but old hose could be used.
- "Boo Boo Bunnies" are easy to make, effective, and easy to store or carry for a small child's use when needed. Neilsavage@aol.com
- Collect stuffed bunnies in the spring to give to hospital patients. BossScout@aol.com
- Collect stuffed animals for Love and Caring. L & C is a program dedicated to giving children in hospitals (mostly AIDS/HIV) children a stuffed animal to keep with them. Most are from extremely poor families that cannot afford the luxury of having someone there when mom & dad can't be. jenefer@earthlink.net
- Gathered teddy bears at the teddy bear toss during local hockey game to donate to a benefit.

Fun for hospitalized children:

- Fun kits for hospitalized kids: Busy Bags, Sibling Packs, Craft Kits
- Make mobiles for the nursery/ICU
- Make room decorations, get well cards
- Home-made books and stories: home-made fabric touch & feel books, joke book, journals with construction paper covers & white paper for the inside pages & attach a pencil, older girls can coordinate a visit to play/read/sing with the children
- Joke Book - make a kids and one for the adults of all clean jokes, comics and put them in photo albums and send to the Ronald McDonald House or Children's Hospital, Nursing homes etc.
- Make pins for the children (& nurses too!!)
- Make a small toy to be given to visiting siblings
- Collect videos for the children's hospital. gburrell@worldnet.att.net
- Made suncatchers for pediatrics
- Tray favors for hospitals, retirement homes, etc. POOF1967@aol.com
- Troops could collect toys or make picture books in their troops from magazine cutouts. The project could involve troops making cards for the children, bring in punch, and singing some GS songs to the children. Depending on the area where the troops are located, troops could aim for a major hospital where terminally ill children go. Neilsavage@aol.com
- Make balloon animals at Ronald McDonald House (where families of critically ill children can stay while there child receives treatment)

Comfort clothing and blankets

- Make clothing for premature babies or babies who have passed away. ddcaiman@cnw.com
- Collect toys for the group that comforts children within the school system after a loss. (Compassionate Friends?)
- Knit hats and blankets for the Children's Hospital. ddcaiman@cnw.com. Involve elderly knowledgeable knitters in project. Ariel4008sf@aol.com
- Comfort Caps for Cancer patients (a really easy sewing project, we had a pattern from a sewing store. I wasn't in charge and really don't know sewing but if you want more info I can get it). Ariel4008sf@aol.com
- Project Linus: This is a national program. This project involves creating blankets to be given to terminally ill children. All blankets will be distributed through the local Project Linus chapter. Also, instead of MAKING the blankets, younger girls can collect yarn for a group that can knit them into blankets. <http://www.projectlinus.org>
- My Junior troop did "binky patrol" - we made receiving blankets and bought bottles and a small item (pacifier, teething ring, rattle, etc.) We had a workshop on a Sunday afternoon and the girls made the blankets themselves with the help of those of us who sew. Check your local health center or young parents organizations, they except all kinds of donations.
- Construct some baby and child quilts to work on and donate to local battered women and children's shelter or hospitals. (The quilts are very easy to do. A print fabric and a solid fabric with batting in between is stitched together and 'tied' every 6 to 8 inches.)
- Quilts - for AIDS babies (very good project for my girl who was hospitalized with anorexia and could not get out of bed.) or make, collect, or donate "blankies" to babies/toddlers in need.
- We collected night clothes and soft toys for a shelter for women and children, who often run from an abusive home just when they can, and don't bring these things. The shelter sent someone to accept the donations (since their exact location is kept secret) (They returned the favor by telling us how you can tell before he hits you that your date might be into abuse!)

Special Olympics

- In between organized events, the Scouts "run" an area of carnival type games and do face painting. Special Olympics gets prizes that we give out to every child who comes and plays. JudyBencke@AOL.COM
- Help keep score at Special Olympics basketball tournament. Kamleht@aol.com

Books on tape

- Made books on tape for children at a local day care for children with AIDS. Each girl donated a book

from home. She recorded the book on cassette (donated from a parent) and dinged a bell when the pages turned and then the book and tape were placed in a ziploc bag with a label that said "Readers are Leaders from Troop #XXXX". Making books on tape for the library or

- visually impaired school
- Providing information-on-tape for visually impaired or other scouts who have difficulty reading standard handbooks/pamphlets/other written material. I have a friend who did that for his
- Eagle Scout for the BS merit badge books. I'm not sure how much GS material is available on tape from GSUSA. -hkosmat0@alan.coastal.edu

Other Ideas

- Operation Comfort Pins: This project is based out of Texas & was started up by 2 moms in response to the shooting in Littleton last April. OCP is looking for donations of pins to distribute to people that have been touched by tragedy (man-made or by Mother Nature) to let these people know that others are thinking of them. The pins are to be of angels, hearts, teddy bears or candles, and can be made of any kind of material. (This is the along the idea of SWAPS.)
- Make butterfly pins for "compassionate friends" group of people who have lost their children - symbol is the butterfly
- Distribute flyers for organ donation. troll@MULTIPRO.COM
- Collect Christmas cards for St. Jude's Hospital
- Work a pancake breakfast for a cancer patient fundraiser
- Volunteer to do yard work for ill or elderly people. -- Kamleht@aol.com
- Help increase accessibility! For campsites (platform tents, ground-camping-sites, cabins, and on and on) or other places. Just remember... on a platform tent... a wheelchair will NOT go through the central support pole!!! -hkosmat0@alan.coastal.edu
- Make fabric bags to be used by patients using wheel chairs or walkers to carry their 'needs'.
- Work with a hospital to set up recreational music therapy activities for children.
- Organize a Special Olympics for children with disabilities.
- We also have an ongoing, monthly project. We visit with the children at our Child Crisis Center for a couple of hours. We play games, do crafts, help with homework, whatever. The children are already bathed (ages from newborn to 12 years) and we help put them to bed and read bedtime stories. The girls REALLY love this one! As we all have experienced, it's hard to get the girls together on a regular basis. Well, regular meetings are tough, but almost every girl goes to visit with the kids! Msdeby73@aol.com
- Our troop works with "Life Connections" by providing transportation once a month for someone who is blind (Ron). A registered adult drives with 2-3 girls and Ron. When we get to the store (or library, or dry

cleaners, etc.), the adult stays in the car, while the girls go in with Ron. It has been great and given some much-needed publicity to both Girl Scouts and Life Connections. Our troop was on the front page of the Life section of the local city paper and they recently made a PR video for Life Connections. We've been doing this a couple of years, so Ron has practically become one of our troop -- attending our holiday parties and going to concerts that the girls are in. It is quite a commitment for the adults though, as we have to do all the driving. Karen - mathisgreat@aol.com

- Organize - a 1-day hiking/outdoor adventure day for disabled youth.
- Work with a community agency to establish a hot line for teens (YMCA would be a good outlet for this one)

Women

- We collected for a shelter for women and children, who often run from an abusive home just when they can, and don't bring these things. The shelter sent someone to accept the donations (since their exact location is kept secret) (They returned the favor by telling us how you can tell before he hits you that your date might be into abuse!) Appreciated items: night clothes, toys - cuddly, other
 - disposable diapers, baby powder, used infant car seat, baby wipes, blankets, socks, bottles
 - clothing
 - toiletries
 - books (including maybe home-made touch & feel books)
- Have a Baby Shower - collect items (new or gently used) for babies & toddlers - Everything is donated to the local Crisis Pregnancy Center, homeless shelter, a shelter for battered women & children, or infants born to poor families at local charity hospital.
- Fun Boxes for kids
- Make health care kits for the women's shelter . ddccayman@cnw.com
- Collect used cellular phones for abused women - Shelters reprogram them to dial 911 . BossScout@aol.com
- May Day baskets - for the women's abuse shelter (soap, shampoo and lotion)
- Complete outfits for women packaged in gift boxes donated by a local store and give to a women's shelter. - mathisgreat@aol.com
- We donated time to a crisis center for teen pregnancy by folding and helping do laundry.

Web Sites

- ABC Quilts Project - <http://www.jbu.edu/ABCQuilts/>
- Christmas Site-International Lutheran Hour Ministries - <http://www.lhmint.org/christmas/countries.html>
- DisasterRelief - <http://www.disasterrelief.org/>
- HELP AMERICA'S BABIES!
- Hunger Site Home - Donate Food for Free- <http://www.thehungersite.com/>
- Keiki Cards - <http://www.keikicards.org/>

- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's - Home - <http://www.missingkids.com/>
- Operation Christmas Child <http://www.samaritan.org/>
- Polly Klaas® Foundation - missing children, child abduction, prevent <http://www.pollyklaas.org/>
- Project Linus Home Page <http://www.projectlinus.org/>
- Project Puffin <http://puffin.bird.audubon.org/>
- Read Across America: Celebrate <http://www.nea.org/readacross/celebrate.html>
- SaveRainforest.net - Thank You! <http://www.ecology.net/index.html>
- International Youth Week 2000 <http://www.youthweek.org/>
- St. Jude's Ranch for Children <http://www.stjudesranch.org/>
- Virtual Quilt <http://metalab.unc.edu/~ephesus/quilt.html>
- Service Project Ideas <http://members.aol.com/GSLdrKay/serviceideas.html>
- Service Project compilation <http://www.geocities.com/heartland/ridge/1089/>

Writing Letters and Cards

- Participate in something like "Project Dear Abby" which writes to servicemen/women stationed overseas. Those members, who do not have military overseas, can adopt a base nearby. Or, everyone could adopt a VA Hospital. Vets are ignored most of the year, except when Abby has her readers write to them at Valentine's. This could be done before the holidays. Neilsavage@aol.com
- Write and distribute a form letter suitable for sending to local newspapers and radio stations, letting them know who, what, when, where, and why. Other troops would really enjoy picking which radio stations to send this to! Neilsavage@aol.com
- We have made greeting cards for a nearby Veterans' hospital for Christmas (Season's Greetings), Valentine's, Easter/Spring, and Memorial Day. Kamleht@aol.com
- Monthly letters, pictures, gifts, and cards, etc. to senior shut-ins through the Senior Center or churches.
- Created a community birthday calendar. rmp@thetahoe.net
- Christmas Cards to the nursing home. rmp@thetahoe.net
- Letters to injured farmers rmp@thetahoe.net
- Letters to service members stationed overseas. rmp@thetahoe.net
- Valentines for Veterans. rmp@thetahoe.net
- Anniversary cards to a couple married 76 years. rmp@thetahoe.net
- Fold and place stamps on mailings for the local Humane Society. rmp@thetahoe.net
- Make cards - "get well" - "hope you feel better" - for the local hospice center.

Miscellaneous

- Make valentines for needy children. troll@MULTIPRO.COM
- Help wrap presents for a gift give-away for the needy. campi@prodigy.net
- Buy gifts for a needy child at Christmas (through Salvation Army or local groups). Ariel4008sf@aol.com
- Make holiday ornaments for a local shelter
- Adopt-An-Angel
- A world wide Sharing Tree. At the end of November, put a tree up in a downtown business building. Pass out flyers through local paper, churches, and businesses, requesting new gifts. Also contact ministers, and school superintendents requesting families in need. People drop off things unwrapped under the tree. Troops periodically collect them and get together on a day, and wrap them all. Then a small group of volunteers match the items with the families in need and deliver them during the Holidays. Ask for toys, hats, mittens, clothing, non-perishable food packages, toiletries, light bulbs, stationary, any thing people might need. Neilsavage@aol.com
- Focus on festivals of light (Hanukkah, Diwali & Christmas) and base your service around brightening up the winter (Northern Hemisphere) for those in need. This could be done by visiting old-peoples homes; children's homes; hospitals etc to provide entertainment, gifts & help perhaps leaving candles or other lights as a "sign" that you have been there. Neilsavage@aol.com
- Caroling - in your neighborhoods knocking on doors; at a senior citizen's/retirement complex, some hospitals welcome this as well.
- Collected donations and purchased over 50 gifts for the area Christmas Party served punch and cookies, handed out hats at the Christmas Party
- Develop and carry out a fitness program.
- Work with a wellness clinic to encourage good health habits in the community in which you live.
- Plan and carry out a no smoking program
- Work with a community group to promote voter registration
- Run for an office in school or in your troop
- Design and carry out a welcome for girls new to the community. Could include a pamphlet or videotape of activities available to teenagers. Could expand this into families new in the area.
- Set up a career internship with an industrial company
- Tied red ribbons around the community for drug awareness week
- Produce a play for your community. Travel to schools, senior citizen centers or hospitals to put on this entertainment.
- Quilt squares
- Green Hand Project
- For service projects...our Service Unit has been involved with a local mine (we mine gold here in Nevada), It has been very good for all involved to help with the mine reclamation.