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Monthly Patch Program

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September | Labor Day



Learn about Labor Day- what it's all about, who made it possible, and how you can celebrate this holiday!

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount of activities required for their level

1. Let's Learn! Watch this video to learn about the history of Labor Day: tinyurl.com/59hpd8rh
2. Labor Day is a great day to thank a worker! Make a list of everyone you see in a day that has a job- the postal worker who delivers your mail, the maintenance crew at your apartment complex, the nurses and aids at a senior living center, local childcare providers, people who work stocking shelves at a store, farmers and ranchers who produce the food we eat, the list goes on and on and on and on. Using your list to inspire you, make some Thank You Cards for the workers in your life. Some workers may have Labor Day off work, but others may be working that day- so be sure to think about that when you go to deliver your cards.
3. Talk about it with your Troop: In 1866, the Eight-hour Day Movement used the phrase "Eight hours for work, eight hours for rest, and eight hours for what you will." At that time, the average workweek for full-time manufacturing workers was 100 hours a week- even more for building tradesmen. It was bold to say that all workers deserved time for rest and "what you will" and in many places in the world, it still is. Now, some people are advocating for a 4-day work-week- even more time to have for what you will! Is this fair? How much rest do people need to have? How much rest do people deserve? Would you want to work for someone who asks you to work 100+ hours a week? Would you want to work for someone who values your rest and free time? What would you do with a 3-day weekend every weekend?
4. Labor Day is a day highlighting workers of all kinds. What do you want to do for work when you grow up? Read library books about potential careers and explore jobs that interest you. Remember- you don't have to pick one job to do forever! The average adult tends to go through 3-7 careers before they retire and this number may be higher by the time you're an adult! So you can be a baker AND work in sales AND be a veterinarian AND a school principal AND a yoga teacher! The sky's the limit!
5. Writing Prompt: Grab a Journal and use one of the following prompts to write your thoughts (Daisies - write at least 1 sentence, Brownies- write at least 4 sentences, Juniors- write at least 2 paragraphs, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors- write at least 1 page)
 - How does Labor Day honor our American principles?
 - How do federal holidays like Labor Day create solidarity in our community?
 - What are some important landmarks that workers are responsible for creating?
 - How can you and your family rest on Labor Day?
 - What does it mean to have a good balance between life and work?
 - How can we show that we value the hard work of others?
 - Do you think some workers are less appreciated than others? Why?

6. Have you heard of Invisible Labor? This term refers to the unpaid and often unacknowledged work that goes into the functioning of households, families, teams, and other groups. Things like cleaning, planning, organizing, being “the default parent”, even knowing where “everything” is- these are all examples of Invisible Labor. Sometimes this is also called the “Mental Load”. Even in relationships where all adults are employed, it’s often women who end up with these extra responsibilities. Most of the time, this work isn’t “assigned” to anyone- but that’s kind of the problem. If nobody is directly assigned, but it has to get done, it ends up being done by the person that *sees* the task. It’s likely the same person who “does it all” all the time.

Is there anyone in your life who does essential work that is unseen or undervalued? Is it fair for someone to have to do more than everyone else? How can you help make the division of work at home fairer? This Labor Day, ask a grown up if there’s a piece of their Mental Load you could help with. Here’s some ideas of how kids could ease the load of Invisible Labor for their adults:

- Make a list of all the foods that normally sound pretty good to you and give this to the adults who cook in your family. This will help them with meal planning.
- After a meal, check to see if there’s leftovers or condiments that need to be put away and put them where they go.
- Create a snack station! Use a basket or box to gather snack sized portions of some of your favorite goodies and put this in a place where the kids in your family can get to easily. Be sure to talk with adults to make sure there’s reasonable expectations about how many snacks each kid can grab per day or what kinds of things can be in the snack station.
- Look around and find things that are in the wrong place and take them where they should go. Try not to ask where each item goes- think about where it’s used or where you’ve found it before.
- Do you have a pet? Clean their litter box or help clean up the yard where they potty. This might already be a chore you help with- that’s okay! Your pets won’t mind having extra clean spaces. ;)
- Take an inventory of frequently used items in your house and give that list to the adult who normally does the shopping. For example: batteries, ziploc bags, laundry soap, toilet paper, pet supplies, or tape.
- Make a holiday gift guide! First make a list of all the people whose birthdays you celebrate throughout the year. Next to these names, list when their birthdays are- you may have to ask them when that is if you don’t already know. Your next step is to think of things each person likes. For example, maybe your cousin really likes cats or dinosaurs. While you won’t get them an *actual* dinosaur as a gift, it’s helpful to remember that they’re interested in dinos later. Finish this project up in one of two helpful ways:
 - Final Step Option 1: Use a calendar to mark each birthday. Add the notes about each person’s favorite things near the beginning of each month. This way, when you start the month, you’re already thinking of things you’ll want to pick up in time for any birthday celebrations.
 - Final Step Option 2: Use a small notebook to make a Portable Gifting Guide. Give each person their own page in this notebook so you have space to add words and pictures to their “profile”. Use sticky notes to mark when these birthdays are so you can keep an eye on what’s coming up- but having a purse/backpack sized book can help you find treasures to gift throughout the year- not just right before a holiday or birthday. This is especially helpful for those who like to shop at garage sales and after-season sales.
- With your troop (or team or youth group or neighborhood friends) make a list of all of your home addresses. Next add the address of where you have your troop meetings (or practice or other gatherings). Use a calendar to mark when your meetings happen. Gather as many of your adults as you can and present them with the list and calendar. Invite your grown-ups to pick a day marked on your calendar that they can be a driver for your group. This will help free up a lot of time for many grown ups while also giving them the chance to get to know all the kids in the group. (Some groups may need a few drivers each meeting day due to large groups or space.)

7. How many workers did it take to make your lunch? Pick a food you enjoy and then draw a picture that features all the people who made that food possible. Farmers, Ranchers, Butchers, Truck Drivers, Store Workers, Cooks, Food Scientists, FDA Employees who help ensure food safety, Cashiers...all these people (and maybe more!) help make our food possible. How many different professions are in your drawing?
8. One thing Labor Day is about is making sure we all have time for rest and “what we will” or our hobbies and activities we enjoy. Do one activity that is fun for you and one activity that makes you feel rested.
9. Many families celebrate Labor Day with a picnic or backyard barbeque. This is a great time to practice campfire cooking skills. There’s lot of tasty ways to cook over a fire or grill. Here’s one we really enjoy! Try this or another fun new recipe and have those at your Labor Day Cookout or Picnic rate the recipe on a scale of 1-5 stars.

Loaded Baked Potato Foil Packs

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 pounds baby red potatoes (other kinds of potatoes work well too!)
- 3 tbsp oil
- 2-3 tsp Garlic and Herb Seasoning (or a combination of seasonings you have already!)
- Salt and Pepper
- Sour Cream
- Shredded Cheddar Cheese (or another flavor of shredded cheese you enjoy!)
- Bacon Bits (optional)
- Chopped Green Onions

Instructions:

1. Quarter potatoes, making sure pieces are smaller than 1 inch. Toss with oil, garlic and herb seasoning, and salt and pepper to taste. Portion out into 12x12 inch pieces of foil.
2. Fold foil packs closed, pinching edges to seal. Grill over medium high heat for about 20 minutes, turning every 4-5 minutes until potatoes are tender and cooked through.
3. Open packets, top with sour cream, cheese, bacon, and green onions as desired and serve.

TIP: These can be prepped in advance and stored in a fridge/cooler and cooked when ready to serve!

10. We are human beings, not human doings. Who we are, our identities, is so much more than what we do for work. It’s easy to forget that- even as a kid. You aren’t just a student or an athlete or a dancer or even just a Girl Scout. That’s **part** of who you are, sure- but not the whole thing. In fact, the work we do is often the least interesting part of who a person is. Make affirmation notes for your room, locker at school, or bathroom mirror that remind you that who you are isn’t just what you do or who you are for others. Not sure where to start? Here’s some examples you might use to inspire you:

- My feelings matter, I can feel however I want.
- I have family and friends who like me for who I am.
- I grow towards my interests, like a plant reaching for the sun.
- I strive for joy, not perfection.
- People want to hear what I think and feel.
- Words may shape me, but they do not make me.
- I am here already.
- I am learning and growing.
- I am loved, and I am worthy of love.
- I am not defined by what I do.
- I can trust myself.
- I make good choices.
- I deserve to be safe and feel safe.
- My body is beautiful the way it is.
- My weirdness is wonderful.
- It’s okay to say “no”.



October | Founder's Day

Celebrate Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday! This month our holiday festivities have a focus on Girl Scouting, Halloween, and history!

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount of activities required for their level

1. Watch this video and "meet our founder": tinyurl.com/3np54m5b
2. Play Flip the Pancake. This was a common game when Juliette was alive. Take a pan (or plate) and a pancake- and see how many times you can toss it up and flip it over without dropping the pancake!
3. Juliette Gordon Low was known to her friends and fellow Girl Scouts as Daisy. As a fun way to remember that, grow a Daisy! Decorate flower pots and plant daisy seeds. Take your new plant friend home and put it in a sunny window to grow during the winter months- in the spring, you can transplant your daisy outside.
4. Try to stand on your head like Juliette did. One of Juliette Gordon Low's skills was standing on her head. She would stand on her head every birthday to prove that she still could. Do be very careful of your surroundings, have a spotter- someone to help catch you if you fall, and be sure to do this in an appropriate setting (maybe in a park instead of a library).
5. Juliette believed that Girl Scouts should make the world a better place- work on a community service project of your choosing- or try one of the ideas below!
 - Craft DIY cat scratchers or dog toys for your local animal shelter
 - Organize a donation drive for clothing and comfort items (blankets, stuffed animals, etc.) for families going through emergencies. Churches, fire departments, police stations, and shelters can often utilize these items. Be sure to contact the organization you want to donate to before dropping off donations.
 - Fill a little free pantry or library.
 - Create a New Baby Basket for the first baby born on Oct 31st at your nearest hospital. Fill it with things a baby needs- like diapers, baby soap and shampoo, bibs, a onesie, etc. You might choose to include a special birthday card welcoming them to the world and congratulating their family. Be sure to contact the hospital you hope to gift this to and make sure they can accept it.
 - Spread joy by singing songs or playing games at a local nursing home.
6. Host a Birthday Bash- invite friends, family, or another troop to come celebrate Founder's Day with you. Decorate cookies, cupcakes, or other treats. Play games and sing songs. Feel free to add in some Halloween fun!

7. Did you know that Juliette Gordon Low was hard of hearing? She lost her hearing fairly gradually, mostly during her adulthood, as a result of illnesses and medical treatments that should have helped but accidentally caused more damage. This Founder's Day, learn a little American Sign Language so you can make new friends with anyone- not just those who can hear! Find an ASL teacher in your area and invite them to a troop meeting to teach some basic signs. No teacher in your area? No worries- here's a resource to get you started! *Daisies, Brownies, and Juniors*: tinyurl.com/2dkjdeh2, *Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors*: tinyurl.com/ykjjzc24.

8. It's been 165 years since Juliette Gordon Low was born! What do you think the future will look like 165 years from now- in the year 2190? What kinds of things will kids like you do for fun? What will school be like? Will there be new technology or ways of living? Use magazines, newspapers, and other recycled materials to create a collage or vision board of what you think Girl Scouting will be like in the future.

9. Get outside! Girl Scouts are all about spending time in nature- go for a hike, play at a local park, head to a pumpkin patch, or another outdoor activity of your choosing!

10. Have a "Bring a Friend" meeting where you teach friends who aren't Girl Scouts about what Girl Scouting is all about. Sing 'Make New Friends', learn about our history, and try out an activity (or two!) required for a badge. Afterwards, your new friends can be invited to join your troop or to form their own troop!



November | Veterans' Day

November



Veterans' Day is a day of remembering and honoring those who have served our country. Explore this holiday with fun activities to earn your Nov Monthly Patch.

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount

1. Learn about Veterans' Day with this quick nugget of information: tinyurl.com/ystf438s
2. Make Thank You cards for your local VFW or the nearest VA Hospital. Be sure to make these so that they can be received by anyone.
3. March in a Veterans' Day parade with your troop!
4. Invite a Veteran to your next troop meeting. Interview them about what life in the military is like, where they have served, what training is like, and anything else that interests you. Remember that sometimes people have a hard time talking about scary or traumatic experiences and that it's okay if your guest doesn't want to answer certain types of questions. Try to focus on nonviolent topics and always ask if heavy topics are okay to talk about if they do come up in conversation.
5. Has your troop ever been part of a Flag Ceremony? This is a great time to learn! Flag Ceremony Trainings are held in our council often and info can be found in our Adventure Guides. If those dates don't work, or you're from another Council, try getting in touch with your local AMVETS Post for help learning about Flag Ceremonies and Flag Etiquette.
6. Did you know that about 13% of veterans are unhoused? That's over 2 million people. Homelessness is more visible in some communities and less visible in others, but with that many folks struggling, this impacts every town in some way. Today, we challenge you to learn about the unhoused population in your area- what needs are there? Are there any organizations that already work with unhoused people? Is there any way you can help out? Helping out might look like packing supplies, dropping off meals, volunteering at a shelter, or writing to your local representatives about this issue.
7. In our council, we support our local veterans during cookie season with Operation Cookie Share. But just because we already give cookies to the military troops doesn't mean we can't give other goodies too. Bake some tasty treats and gift them to the troops! If you know someone who is serving overseas, baked goods generally mail well and can be a great way to give active soldiers a taste of home. If you don't know anyone actively serving right now, that's okay- find a local veteran's organization like a VFW or a VA Hospital and see if they'll accept homemade treats. Be sure to be mindful of allergies when baking (it's good to avoid nuts) so that these can be enjoyed by all.

8. When we think about veterans, we often focus on the challenges that come with serving our country- things like being away from home, being in danger/scary situations, and risking one's life for others. It's easy to forget that the sacrifices of military life extend to their families. On average, military families move every 2-3 years- which is one of the many ways that military children are impacted.

Do you know anyone who is the child of an active service member? If they're comfortable, ask them what life in a military family is like. What kinds of challenges does this life present? What kinds of feelings do they have surrounding their parent's (or parents') career choice? Are there any cool or fun things that come with being a military child? Do they have any community with other military kids?

If your friend isn't comfortable talking, or if you don't know any military children- that's okay! Connect with a USA Girl Scouts Overseas troop! These special Girl Scout troops are for girls from military, foreign service, and American expat families all over the world! While USAGSO started with one troop in China, today USAGSO supports over 10,000 members in 60+ countries! There's many ways to connect with troops all over the world- one way is by emailing overseascustomer@girlscouts.org, to ask if any troops they know of are open to stateside pen pals and for help getting connected.

9. Veteran Spotlight! Learn about a veteran who was once a Girl Scout! Pick a name from the following list and research them. What branch of the military did/do they serve? What Girl Scout values do you see reflected in their adult life?

- Tammy Duckworth – Retired Lieutenant Colonel, US Army Helicopter Pilot, current US Senator
- Jeanette Edmunds – Retired Major General, US Army War Reserve
- Joan Engel – Rear Admiral, 18th Director of the US Navy Nurse Corps
- Lillian Fishburne – Retired Rear Admiral, US Navy
- Kathy Frost – Former Major General, US Army
- Joyce Johnson – Retired Rear Admiral, Director, Health & Safety, US Coast Guard
- Barbara McGann – Retired Rear Admiral, US Navy
- Kathleen (Kate) Paige – Retired Rear Admiral, US Navy
- Linda Stierle – Retired Brigadier General, US Air Force
- Sheila Widnall – 18th US Secretary of the Air Force
- Gen. Myrna Williamson – Retired Army General

10. In 1919, Americans celebrated our first Armistice Day- a day to remember and celebrate the armistice (formal agreement) that was signed signifying the end of World War 1. In 1954, Congress passed a bill to transform Armistice Day into Veterans' Day- this way we could honor all veterans, not just those involved in WW1. Expanding this day to include more people is awesome, and also, remembering the original meaning of the day is important. When we remember the armistice, we're remembering how people from all over the world, with different ideas and different values all came together and agreed to live peacefully. Do you think our world is peaceful? What might make it more peaceful? As a troop, or on your own, write your own armistice! By that we mean, write out a formal list of rules that would make the world more peaceful. Sign your name to your armistice when you're done to promise that you will be an advocate for peace in our world!



December | Winter Solstice

Discover the longest night of the year! This month features cozy, wintry, crafty activities to do with or without your troop.

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount of activities required for their level

1. Learn about the Winter Solstice here: tinyurl.com/37e8z9tp
2. The themes of Winter Solstice celebrations are hope, rebirth, and the promise that things will get better. Draw or paint an outdoor space you love- all snowy and wintry, waiting patiently until Spring comes and life-giving light returns. Include colors and images that make you feel hopeful or patient.
3. During the winter, many families have traditions of baking cookies for others. Try making Bird Seed Cookies using the recipe below as a fun new way to share holiday cookies- this time with our feathered friends!

Bird Seed Cookies

Ingredients and Materials:

- 2 cups bird seed (any type)
- 1/3 cup boiling water
- cookie cutters
- string
- 1 packet unflavored gelatin
- skewer
- 2 tablespoons cold water
- non-stick cooking spray

1. Spray your cookie cutters with non-stick spray to make the cookies easier to pop out.
2. Empty 1 package of unflavored gelatin into a bowl with 2 tablespoons of cold water. Let this sit for 1 minute. Add 1/3 cup of boiling water to the gelatin, stirring for a few minutes or until the gelatin is dissolved. This is the binder that keeps seeds together.
3. Next add 2 cups of bird seed to the gelatin and mix thoroughly.
4. On a tray or sheet of wax paper, lay out your desired cookie cutters. Fill the cookie cutters with the mixture and press into shape firmly. Make a small hole in each cookie with the skewer for the string.
5. Place in the refrigerator for a few hours to allow the seed mixture to set. After setting, warm to room temperature before removing from the pan. Carefully pop the cookies out of their molds and thread a string through the hole. Hang the ornaments from a tree, pole, or hook outside your windows and watch the birds devour them!

4. One way people like to celebrate the Winter Solstice is with pretty lights. It's a way to remember that the light of the sun will return- plus it helps brighten up dark, wintery nights. If you're feeling crafty, try the lantern craft below. Not into crafts? That's okay! Turn on some twinkly fairy lights or your favorite lamp and cuddle up under a warm blanket for a good book, video games with friends, or maybe a troop movie night.

DIY Lanterns

Materials:

- Glass jars- old jam or spaghetti jars work well!
- Colourful tissue paper
- Scissors
- Glue- any kind can work, we suggest liquid glue or Mod Podge painted on with a foam brush, but glue sticks or spray adhesives can also work well!
- A candle or small battery powered light to put inside the jar afterwards

1. Cut your tissue paper into different shapes and patterns. Or, instead of cutting, you may prefer to rip the paper into small pieces. Think about how you want your jar to look when it's finished with light shining through it.
2. Use the glue to attach the tissue paper to the jar. If you overlap your tissue paper, it will create new, darker colors.
3. Once you've covered your jar in colorful tissue paper, leave it to dry.
4. Put your candle or small light inside and enjoy the comforting, cozy light your lantern provides during this dark time of year.

5. When we think of the December Solstice, we think of snow and ice- but in the Southern Hemisphere, it's summer! As the Earth travels around the sun, it is slightly tilted. Because of this tilt, the Earth sees more or less sunlight at different times of the year, causing seasons. Since the seasons are caused by the tilt, we experience the "opposite" season as those living in the Southern Hemisphere. What do you know about life on the other side of the world? Pick a country located south of the Equator and learn about what it's like to live there! Use books or YouTube videos to explore what life is like for a kid about your age living in that country. What's similar? What's different?

6. Grab your fuzzy slippers and cozy blankets and host a pajama party for your family, friends, or troop! Whether you play games, watch a movie, make crafts, or have an indoor snowball fight, your party will be perfectly you!

7. Midwinter can be a harsh time for many families. One beautiful way to mark the solstice is by participating in local efforts to help others. How can your family or troop give to others this winter? If your town doesn't have any organization, charity, church, or club activities you can get involved with, try participating in the council's Community Service Patch Program.

8. Starting the day after the Winter Solstice, the days start getting longer! Slowly but surely- the warmth of Spring is returning. This is a great time of year to learn from the year we just lived and plan for the future. Use the journal prompts below (or make your own!) to pause and reflect.

- What would you like the coming year to bring?
- Is there anything you hope to leave behind with this winter's darkness?
- Which lesson or skill – big or small – have you learned this season that you hope to carry forward with you?
- What lights burn strong in your life, even in darkness?

9. The Solstice is an astrological event- meaning it happens in space. Winter is a great time to learn about the stars and other things in space since it gets dark so early! Try finding winter constellations! Here's a few helpful tools:

- App: Sky View Free
- 360 Video: tinyurl.com/3xz956yz
- Printable: tinyurl.com/39pyamb6

Psst: Did you enjoy finding constellations? Each level of Girl Scouting has a Space Science badge- check it out! Remember, Girl Scouts can earn badges together as a troop AND on their own at home!

10. The Solstice is celebrated all over the world in many different ways! Where is your family from? Talk with your adults about your family tree! Once you know more about your family's history, head to the library (or the internet) to learn about how people from that part of the world celebrate this time of year. Find a cool activity in your research? Try it out! What was it like to participate in something that your ancestors may have also done? What can we learn from the seasonal traditions of other cultures?



January | New Year's Day

January



New Year New You? This month we'll focus on growth and all things new.

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount of activities required for their level

1. Happy New Year! Watch this video to learn about New Year's Traditions from all over the world: tinyurl.com/nseynvm2

2. Make a 2026 Bucket List! List 26 things you want to do during the new year. Try to balance out any harder or more specific goals with some easily accomplished tasks- that way you're setting yourself up for success! Here's a few ideas to get you started:

- Go camping with my troop or family
- Call my grandma more often
- Learn a new cooking skill
- Go to every playground in my town or county
- Sing in the school talent show
- Earn a specific Girl Scout badge

3. Try a visual journal! This idea is inspired by a recent embroidery trend- but don't worry if you aren't good with a needle. Take a big piece of paper and hang it up somewhere where you'll get to see it every day. Each day, draw a little doodle that represents something that made you smile that day. You can divide your paper into sections for each month, or just doodle anywhere- it's up to you! At the end of the year, you should have a paper FULL of all the fun things from your year!



4. Have a 2025 Memories Scavenger Hunt! Print out at least one photo from each month of 2025. Glue or tape each photo to a piece of paper with the month labeled on the back. (If you have more than one person looking for photos at a time, use different colors of paper and have each person look for a different color.) Race to see who can find all 12 first! Once you've found them all, put them in order and talk about how fun all these memories were and the fun new memories you'll make in 2026. Some Scavenger Hunts are complicated- this one is pretty simple, feel free to add in elements to make this more age appropriate for your group!

5. Swiftie Activity! During her Reputation Era, Taylor Swift wrote the song “New Year’s Day”. A lot of Taylor’s music is poetic in nature, and this song is no exception. As the closing track of the album, she uses a New Year’s Party as a metaphor for the ending of the era itself- it’s the start of a new year and while she’ll always have the memories, it’s okay to look forward. Below are some lyrics from this song. Pick one that speaks to you and use it in a collage vision board for the year.

- “Don’t read the last page.”
- “You squeeze my hand three times in the back of the taxi. I can tell that it’s gonna be a long road.”
- “Hold on to the memories, they will hold on to you.”
- “But I stay when it’s hard or it’s wrong or we’re making mistakes.”
- “Please don’t ever become a stranger whose laugh I could recognize anywhere.”
- “You and me forevermore.”
- “I’ll be there if you’re the toast of the town, babe. Or if you strike out and you’re crawlin’ home.”
- “Candle wax and polaroid’s on the hardwood floor.”

Meg (aka Calico) made this example for us. She drew inspiration from the aesthetics of the Reputation album- using magazines, newspaper, and “graffiti” while also featuring photos and words that represent what she wants her 2026 to be like.



6. Host a Ball Drop! Let’s make our own sparkly, disco-like NYE Balls with paper mache! You’ll need: a balloon, newspaper, flour or glue (both recipes below), and OPTIONAL: candy/prizes to fill your NYE Ball with. (The real ball drop doesn’t work like a piñata, but for yours at home- why not add some candy?)

- First, we need to make our paste. Here’s two different recipes. Pick whichever one works best for your family or troop.

Piñata Making Instructions

Flour Recipe

Materials:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup warm water
- 1/2 tbsp salt

Mix until you have a glue-like consistency with as few clumps as possible. Give it a stir, if anything sticks in your utensil, add a bit more water- we want it to run off your utensil and not stay there too much.

Glue Recipe

Materials:

- 1 cup glue
- 1 cup warm water
- 1 tsp salt

Mix well. This should start to look creamy- like a soupy version of glue, but not clear (unless your glue was clear to begin with). You may want to add a little more glue to your mixture depending on the brand of glue you use.

Instructions:

1. Blow up a balloon- this will be the base of our NYE Balls. Be sure it's big, but not about to burst.
2. Cut or rip your newspaper into long strips of paper. Dip the strips into your homemade paste using your fingers to remove excess paste before placing each strip onto your balloon.
3. Repeat this process until your entire balloon is covered in pasted paper. Place this somewhere it can be unbothered while it dries for 24-48 hours.

- Pro Tip: Tie a string to the balloon and hang paper mache creations to dry. Garages or sinks work well for this. Put some extra newspaper on the floor below to catch any dripping paste.
- Once your paper mache projects are dry, pop the balloon and remove from the middle.
- Now it's time to decorate your NYE Ball! Use whatever decorating supplies you have handy things like markers, paint, or glitter work well!
- If you choose to fill your NYE Ball with candy like a pinata, be sure to cover the opening. Tissue paper and tape (or glue) is an easy way to seal this opening up until it's time to break it open!

Now you've got your own New Year's Eve Ball to drop! The best part of this is that you can do this anytime you want- you don't have to wait until midnight!

7. Because of time zones, people all over the world start their New Year at a different time during the day. Let's celebrate along with our international neighbors and snack around the world this New Year's Eve!

5am: This is the first midnight celebration of the New Year globally. We're all probably asleep here in Illinois, so we'll celebrate with Kiribati later when we wake up.

9am: It's 2026 in Australia! Let's celebrate with our Aussie friends with a quick breakfast.

Fairy Bread

Instructions:

1. Trim the crusts off several pieces of bread.
2. Cover the bread with butter.
3. Sprinkle a generous portion of confetti sprinkles on top of the buttered bread.
4. Enjoy!

10am: It's the New Year in Japan! Our Girl Guide sisters have put together a fun activity book for us to try some new snacks, make origami, and learn Girl Scout songs in Japanese! Check it out here: tinyurl.com/29ft4c9k

Noon: For New Year's and birthdays, it's customary in China to wish people a long life by serving Long Life Noodles.

Long Life Noodles

Ingredients:

- 3 quarts water
- 12 oz Yi Mein noodles (found in Asian grocery stores- or you may be able to find similar noodles in a general grocery store)
- 1/8 tsp sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp hot water
- 2 tsp regular soy sauce
- 2 tsp dark soy sauce
- 2 tbsp oyster sauce (or vegetarian oyster sauce)
- 1/2 tsp sesame oil
- Freshly ground white pepper
- 3-4 tbsp vegetable oil
- 5 shiitake mushrooms (fresh or dried, thinly sliced)
- 8 oz Chinese chives (cut into 2-inch long pieces, with the light and dark green parts separated)

Instructions:

1. Boil 3 quarts of water in a large wok or pot to pre-cook your Yi Mein noodles. Once boiling, add the noodles. The directions on the box may say to boil the noodles for 5 minutes, but we recommend no more than 3 to 4 minutes to keep them firm and chewy. Overcook them, and you will end up with a mushy texture.
2. Sample a noodle while cooking, and when it tastes closer to the uncooked side of al dente pasta, it's ready. When the noodles are done, immediately drain and set aside.
3. Dissolve the sugar and salt in 1 tablespoon of hot water, and add the regular soy sauce, dark soy sauce, oyster sauce, sesame oil, and white pepper. Stir until combined.
4. Heat the wok until just smoking and spread 2 tablespoons of oil around the perimeter.
5. Add the mushrooms and the light green parts of the chives and stir fry for 30 seconds. The mushrooms will soak up the oil, so add another tablespoon of oil if they look too dry.
6. Add the noodles (they still should be warm but with no water dripping) and stir fry everything for another 20 seconds. If they cooled off, just cook them a bit longer until they are warmed, because warming the noodles before adding the sauce is important!
7. Spread the prepared sauce mixture evenly over the noodles, and stir-fry everything together for 1 minute, or until the soy sauce mixture is distributed evenly. Spread another tablespoon of oil around the perimeter of the wok to prevent sticking if you feel you need it. How much oil you use is definitely a personal preference. If the noodles stick together, drizzle a bit of oil directly over the noodles. You can also add a splash of hot water if the noodles are too dry, even after adding the sauce.
8. Mix gently so you don't break up the noodles--remember, you want to have long noodles to give longevity and prosperity to whoever's going to be eating this dish!
9. Add in the remaining green parts of the chives and mix until they turn bright green and the noodles are heated through. This will take 1-3 minutes, depending on if your noodles were cold or still warm when you started stir frying, and how hot your stove and wok can get.

1:15pm: Most of the time, Time Zones are in full one hour jumps. But sometimes- like in Nepal, it's a little different. It's 1:15pm here in Illinois, which means it's Midnight in Nepal! Since we just had lunch, try this Nepalese-style smoothie as a snack!

Mango Lassi

Ingredients:

- 2 cups chopped frozen or fresh mango
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/4 cup sugar (or less or more to taste)
- Ground cardamom (optional)

Instructions:

1. Place the mango, yogurt, milk, and sugar into a blender.
2. Put on the lid and blend until nice and creamy, about a minute or two. Pour into tall glasses. Sprinkle each glass with a pinch of cardamom, if you'd like.
3. Enjoy!

4pm: It's New Year in the Mediterranean! Let's try this yummy cake from Greece to celebrate!

Vasilopita (New Year Cake)

Ingredients:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| - 3 1/4 oz unsalted butter, at room temperature | - 1 tsp ground cinnamon |
| - 1 cup plus 4 tsp super fine sugar | - 1 tsp ground nutmeg |
| - 4-5 medium eggs | - Pinch of salt |
| - 2 generous tbsp milk | - Zest of 1 orange |
| - 2 generous tbsp water | - 2 1/2 oz yogurt |
| - 1 1/2 cups self-rising flour | - 1/2 cup walnuts, chopped |
| - 1/4 tsp baking powder | |

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and grease and line a 9 inch cake pan.
2. In a large bowl, beat together the butter and sugar until pale and fluffy.
3. Gradually add the eggs, a little at a time, mixing well after each addition. Once all the eggs have been incorporated, beat for another 2 minutes. Add the milk and water and mix again for 1 minute, scraping down the sides of the bowl.
4. In a small bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt. Add the dry ingredients to the egg mixture and mix until well incorporated.
5. In another bowl, mix together the orange zest and yogurt. Using a rubber spatula, fold it into the cake batter until smooth. Finally, fold in the chopped walnuts.
6. Pour the mixture into the prepared cake tin and bake in the oven for 45-50 minutes. Once baked, hide a lucky coin inside. Whoever finds the coin is said to get good luck!

5pm: It's midnight in France! To celebrate, let's make a simple dinner that may be more familiar than you'd expect!

Croque Monsieur

Ingredients:

- 4 slices of deli ham
- 1/2 cup grated swiss cheese
- 4 slices of bread
- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp half & half
- 2 tbsp butter

Instructions:

1. Put two slices of ham and half of the cheese between two slices of bread. Put the remaining ham and cheese between the other two slices of bread.
2. In a large bowl, beat together the butter and sugar until pale and fluffy.
3. Whisk together the eggs and half & half in a mixing bowl.
4. Dip each side of the sandwiches in the egg mixture.
5. Melt the butter in a frying pan. Fry the sandwiches over low heat until they are golden brown on the bottom.
6. Use a spatula to flip the sandwiches over. Cook until the other side is golden brown and the cheese is melted.

6pm: Has your family had dinner yet? Try this simple and delicious Moroccan Side dish out to celebrate that it's the new year in Morocco now!

Moroccan Carrot Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 pound carrots, peeled and cut into 1/4 inch slices
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp paprika
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 cup cilantro, finely chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Fill a 4-quart saucepan with water. Bring it to a boil. Add the carrots and cook for 5 minutes. Using the strainer, drain the carrots and let them cool. Put the carrots in a mixing bowl.
2. Put the remaining ingredients, except the cilantro, salt, and pepper into a small bowl. Pour the dressing over the carrots and mix.
3. Add the cilantro. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Mix well and chill before enjoying.
- Want a spicier version? Add 1/2 tsp hot pepper flakes or 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper to this salad!

7pm: Only a few more stops on our international eating tour today! This next recipe from Iceland is a great evening snack for the whole family.

Litlabollur (Icelandic Donut Balls)

Ingredients:

- 4 cups flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 tsp baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 1/2 cup raisins

Instructions:

1. Preheat deep fryer to the highest setting. (Or if you don't have a deep fryer - use a deep pan with oil to fry your donuts!)
 2. In a large bowl, blend together the flour, sugar, and baking powder.
 3. Add eggs and milk, mixing well using a spoon or whisk. Batter should be smooth but not thin. An electric mixer is not recommended because it may thin the batter too much.
 4. Mix in raisins.
 5. Using two large tablespoons, scoop and drop batter into fryer or deep pan.
 6. Turn as they fry until they are golden brown on all sides.
 7. Drain on paper towel.
 8. Serve plain or sprinkle with powdered sugar or cinnamon sugar.
- Tip: These can be enjoyed hot or cold and freeze very well.

10pm: It's the new year in Brazil! Try late night docinho (DOH-see-noh), or candy, from Brazil to celebrate!

Brigadeiros (bree-gah-DAY-roh)

Makes 2 dozen truffles

Ingredients:

- 3 tbsp butter
- 1 (14 oz) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Optional Toppings:

- Chopped walnuts, pecans, or pistachios
- Chocolate or rainbow sprinkles
- Mini chocolate chips
- Shredded coconut

Instructions:

1. Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the sweetened condensed milk, cocoa powder, and vanilla. Whisk or stir until the mixture starts to bubble.
2. Turn the heat to low. Cook the chocolate mixture, stirring often, until it is thick and fudgy, about 5-10 minutes.
3. Butter and 8-inch square pan. Pour the chocolate mixture into the pan. Cover and refrigerate until firm, about 2-3 hours (or overnight)
4. To make each truffle, scoop out a small ball of chocolate with a teaspoon.
5. Wet your hands with water, then roll the ball quickly in your hands.
6. Coat the ball in any of the toppings or keep plain. Place on a plate. Repeat steps 4-6 for the rest of the batter, rolling each one in a topping.

Midnight: Happy New Year! We finally caught up with our friends around the world and are living in 2026! Thanks for snacking around the world with us today! It's time to go to bed though. Maybe we have time for a quick cup of Chamomile tea first? That part is up to you! Good night!

8. One thing we hear about a lot around New Year's Day are Resolutions. Resolutions are promises we make to ourselves or others about how we plan to grow and change in the new year. For 2026, work as a family or troop and set a Giving Back Resolution. What is something you can do together that helps others? Be sure to pick something that everyone can do, something that can happen anytime of the year, and something that will have an impact on a community you all care about. Maybe it's volunteering at the animal shelter, or crafting for a Senior Living Community, or helping make meals for neighbors- no matter what you pick, your 2026 is bound to be full of growth as you Give Back together!

9. Imagine yourself one year from now. What do you look like? What kinds of snacks do you like? Have you read any new books or tried any new activities at school? Maybe future-you is almost the same as now but has completed a cool goal- like trying 10 new cheeses or reading 12 books. That future version of you is out there- but how do we work to become that person? Draw it out!

- Draw a mountain on a sheet of paper. At the top of the mountain, draw Future You- you can be any age, but at least one year older than you are now. This future you have completed whatever goal you want to set for yourself.
- Draw a trail leading down the mountain. Add at least 3 "landmarks" along your trail that you might find when hiking. This might be a tent, a campfire, flowers, or whatever else you'd like!
- Now, we're going to do some imagining and think of this trail as a series of small steps that lead to the top of the mountain. This part might remind you of Dora the Explorer a bit, each "landmark" is a step you've accomplished towards your goal. What steps are needed to become the future you that you drew on top of your mountain? List your steps in order from start (bottom of the mountain) to finish (the top of the mountain) next to the "landmarks" you drew earlier.
- Finally, we're going to use another piece of paper to make a cut-out paper doll that represents you now. This Paper Doll You will "travel" along your trail throughout the year- showing you what step is next on your journey to completing your goal.

10. Try new things in 2026! New things have the chance to be amazing! New things also have a chance of being less than amazing. The thing is, you never know unless you try. If the new thing isn't great, no harm done, right? But what if the new thing is SPECTACULAR! If you don't try it, you're missing out on something So Good! Trying new things doesn't mean you have to finish them! Sometimes in life, we try something and then we stop. That's okay! The trying part is what's important! Your challenge, should you accept it, is to try one new thing a month this new year. Use the list below (or make your own!) to decide on 12 new things to try in 2026. Maybe you'll love them- maybe you won't. But you'll have tried something new! Exploring new things in our world is part of what makes life so fun!

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| - A New Meal I Will Try Is... | - A New Outdoor Activity I Will Try Is... |
| - A New Game I Will Try Is... | - A New Science Experiment I Will Try Is... |
| - A New Sport I Will Try Is... | - A New Girl Scout Experience I Will Try Is... |
| - A New Snack I Will Try Is... | - A New Place I Will Try Going Is... |
| - A New Routine I Will Try Is... | - I Will Make a New Friend by... |
| - A New Craft I Will Try Is... | |
| - A New Book Genre I Will Try Is... | |



February | Groundhog Day

Learn about critters, predicting the weather, and superstitions this month as we explore an uniquely American holiday- Groundhog Day!

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount of activities required for their level

1. Happy Groundhog Day! Watch this to learn more about groundhogs and Groundhog Day:
tinyurl.com/ycxzfjmj

2. Groundhogs are sometimes called “whistle pigs” because they whistle when in danger to communicate to other groundhogs that they need to hide. This is a great tool they use to communicate big ideas quickly. It would be handy if humans could communicate complex ideas quickly like groundhogs- only with human experiences (we don’t need an incoming Hawks song very often).

Try This! Create 3 different whistle-only songs to use with your family and friends. These three songs will tell them a little about your mood or what’s happening. Some examples of song themes are:

- A happy song
- A “haven’t woken up yet” song
- A “trying to do homework- gotta focus” song
- A silly mood song
- A “I’m hungry” song

3. Groundhogs are fairly solitary animals, preferring me-time over we-time. Do you ever like time to yourself? Some kids struggle with figuring out what to do with playing or hanging out mostly alone. Make a “Boredom Busting Menu” full of things you can do on your own when you’re bored at home! Then the next time you aren’t sure what to do, you can pick something off your list!

4. Groundhogs make burrows under the ground. Unlike other animals, groundhogs like to make super fancy burrows with some rooms for sleeping, some rooms for the bathroom, and some rooms just to have a good lookout spot to keep an eye on their territory. What kinds of rooms would you have if you were a groundhog? Draw out what you would put in your burrow! Would you have a movie theater room or maybe a room with a pool? It’s your burrow- make it as fancy as you want!

5. Make a groundhog puppet! You’ll need: a toilet paper tube, a popsicle stick, some paper, glue or tape, scissors, markers or crayons.

First, make your groundhog! All you really need is a head that will pop out of their burrow, but if you want to make a full groundhog, go for it! Be sure your groundhog will fit through your toilet paper tube though. Once you’ve drawn your groundhog, cut out around your critter and attach to the popsicle stick.

Next, we’ll create our burrow with our toilet paper tube. Color the tube green and carefully cut the top of the toilet paper tube to look like grass. Now you’re ready for some groundhog fun! Your groundhog on a stick can pop in and out of their little burrow. I wonder if they’ll see their shadow?



6. Predict the weather! Take a sheet of paper and draw 2 rows of 7 squares. Kind of like this:

Next, label your boxes- each column is for a day of the week. The top row is for our predictions and the bottom row is for recording the daily weather at the end of the day. Now, write or draw what you think the weather will be like each day in your top row. It might look something like this:

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Sunny, cold	Sunny, cold	Rainy, cool	Cloudy, cool	Sunny, warm	Sunny, cold	Snowy, cold

Throughout the week, record what the weather was actually like each day in your bottom row. Compare your predictions to your weather data. How close were your guesses? Was it easy or difficult to predict the weather? Unlike groundhogs, meteorologists don't just guess, they use lots of data to make their forecasts. What kinds of information might help you make a more accurate prediction? For fun: check out your local library for books on weather and climate to learn more about the tool's meteorologists use!

7. Learn more about weather! Some of us have really awesome resources in our own backyards! For our friends in the northern part of our Council, check out the LaSalle Library's Weather Kit in the Library of Things Collection! There's a LOT of libraries in our council that have really cool things like this you can borrow- check with your local library to see what you might be able to borrow from your branch or from other libraries in the state using the InterLibrary Loan System!

8. Learn about broadcasting the weather! Contact your local news station and schedule a tour with their weather team! See how they gather data, ask how they interpret that data, and tour where they present the weather news to viewers. If this isn't possible in your area, take a tour from home: tinyurl.com/3ven2dbx

9. Believing that a groundhog can predict the end of winter is what is called a superstition. Take a poll of your troop members or friends and family about what common superstitions they believe. Below is a sample chart for recording your data. Feel welcome to make your own if you'd like more space!

Person Interviewed: _____

Superstition	Believe	Not Sure, but best to not risk it	Don't Believe	Notes
Find a penny, pick it up, all day long, you'll have good luck.				
A black cat crossing your path is bad luck for a year.				
Breaking a mirror can bring seven years of bad luck.				
Quickly knocking on wood will undo any bad luck or accidental tempting of fate.				
You can make a wish on a wishbone by pulling on both sides- the person with the larger piece of bone after breaking gets their wish.				
Finding a four-leaf clover is lucky.				
Don't whistle at night in the woods- some believe that creatures might come get you.				
Knitting outside can bring longer winters.				

10. Ultimately, Groundhog Day is a silly tradition that brings a little fun and whimsy to the dark, cold days of winter. Phil may not always get it right, but that's okay! It's not about being right or wrong, it's about bringing people together to have a little fun. As a troop, or with your family, plan your own silly mid-winter celebration. Your celebration doesn't have to include weather, superstitions, or groundhogs- just something a little unusual that brings some fun and cheer.

March | Pi Day

March



3.14159265359... it's time to celebrate Pi Day! This month's activities will focus on math, pie, and the math of pie!

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount of activities required for their level

1. Happy Pi Day! Learn a bit about Pi Day here: tinyurl.com/msbse4br
2. Go for a Pi Hike! Each time you find a circle along your hike, take a photo. How many can you find? What kinds of circular things did you find?
3. Have a themed dinner using a Pizza Pie, Chicken Pot Pie, or Quiche!
4. Make a Pi Day Bracelet! For this, we'll assign a number to each different kind of bead you have and then string them in order of the digits of Pi. We made a handy chart for you to use, but if you have different colors or shapes of beads you want to use, we have a blank copy you can add your own bead information to.

1	Red Bead
2	Orange Bead
3	Yellow Bead
4	Green Bead
5	Blue Bead
6	Purple Bead
7	Pink Bead
8	White Bead
9	Black Bead
0	Sparkly Bead

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
0	

5. Write a Pi-Ku Poem! This is much like a Haiku, but Pi Themed! A Haiku is a poem written with three lines- the first and third each have 5 syllables in them, and the second line has 7 syllables.

Like this...

I love to eat pie (5 syllables)

Cherry, Pumpkin, Dutch Apple (7 syllables)

But none last as long as Pi (5 syllables)

But a Pi-Ku is...

3 syllables

1 syllable

4 syllables

Give it a try!

Strawberry

Pie

Delicious Math

Can I have

Pi

For dessert?





6. It's Cookie Season- have you ever tried using Girl Scout Cookies to make pie? Our friends at WCIA created this awesome recipe last year- try it out! tinyurl.com/r6kz7axu

7. Memorize the digits of Pi! Use this fun song to remember the first 100 digits of Pi:
tinyurl.com/mra4696e

8. Time for some pie math! Below is a recipe for pie crust. The thing is- this recipe will make enough for a dozen pies! Can you help convert the ingredients to just enough for one pie crust? Our brains like to understand math in many different ways. Here's a handy chart that may help you out. You may also want to think about dividing the recipe in half first- then into smaller amounts. OR! Try visualizing this with drawings, like in the example below.

KITCHEN Conversion & Cooking Chart

DRY MEASUREMENTS

 1/2 oz	 1 tbsp	 1/4 C	 15 g	-
1 oz	2 tbsp	1/8 C	28 g	-
2 oz	4 tbsp	1/4 C	57 g	-
3 oz	6 tbsp	1/3 C	85 g	-
4 oz	8 tbsp	1/2 C	115 g	1/4 lb
8 oz	16 tbsp	1 C	227 g	1/2 lb
12 oz	24 tbsp	1 1/2 C	340 g	3/4 lb
16 oz	32 tbsp	2 C	455 g	1 lb

Spoons








1 tbsp
3 tsp
1/2 oz
15 mL

Butter



1 stick
1/2 cup
1/4 lb

LIQUID MEASUREMENTS

 1 oz	 6 tsp	 2 tbsp	 30 mL	 1/8 C	-	-
2 oz	12 tsp	4 tbsp	60 mL	1/4 C	-	-
2 1/2 oz	16 tsp	5 tbsp	80 mL	1/3 C	-	-
4 oz	24 tsp	8 tbsp	120 mL	1/2 C	-	-
5 1/2 oz	32 tsp	11 tbsp	160 mL	2/3 C	-	-
6 oz	36 tsp	12 tbsp	177 mL	3/4 C	-	-
8 oz	48 tsp	16 tbsp	240 mL	1 C	1/2 pt	1/4 qt
16 oz	96 tsp	32 tbsp	470 mL	2 C	1 pt	1/2 qt
32 oz	192 tsp	64 tbsp	950 mL	4 C	2 pt	1 qt

Egg Timer

Soft - 5 min
Medium - 7 min
Hard - 9 min

Dash / Pinch

1/16 tsp 1/8 tsp

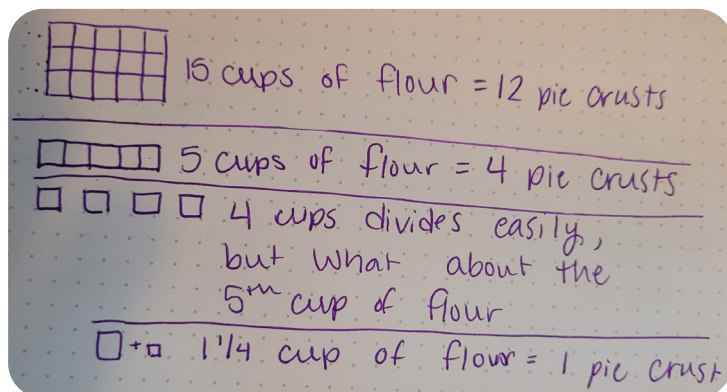


Herbs
1 tsp dried =
1 tbsp fresh

OVEN TEMPERATURES

°F	225	250	275	300	325	350	375	400	425	450	475	500
°C	110	120	140	150	170	180	190	200	220	230	240	260

Melissa's SOUTHERN STYLE KITCHEN
melissassouthernstylekitchen.com



Ingredients Needed for 12 Pie Crusts:

15 cups of Flour
2 tbsp Salt
4 cups of Butter
2 1/2 cups Water

Ingredients Needed for 1 Pie Crust: (Divide the previous amounts by 12)

_____ of Flour
_____ of Salt
_____ of Butter
_____ of Water

9. Community Service Idea: Host a Pi-Day Party for a local Day Care or After School Program! Have pies for tasting, pin the whipped cream onto the pie, sing the Pi Song, help students with their math homework, or other fun things you can think of!

10. Pi is an infinite number- meaning it goes and goes and goes and the digits never stop. To celebrate the infinite nature of Pi, make art that has infinite possibilities. Take a piece of paper and section it into a grid. You can have as many sections as you'd like, but make sure there's quite a few sections- and that they all have space inside to draw. In each box of your grid, draw a pattern of any kind- but try to not repeat any one design. At the end, you'll have a bunch of different patterns and designs- reminding us that when we make art, we have infinite possibilities, just like how pi is infinite!



April | Earth Day

Earth isn't just another planet, it's our home! Learn about our ecosystems, our animal neighbors, our waters, and what you can do to help our world stay beautiful and healthy for generations.

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount of activities required for their level

1. Happy Earth Day! Learn about the history of Earth Day here: tinyurl.com/56j4wnyc
2. Earth Day was started as a way to raise awareness of how our actions impact our planet- both good actions and not-so-good actions. Think about all the things you do in one day that impact our planet. Do you ride the bus to school or do you walk? Do you go to the grocery store with your adults or do you have a garden at home? What ways could you adapt (or change) your actions as a family or troop to make sure you're doing more good actions than not-so-good actions?
3. Did you know that being mindful of our environment often saves money? Things like turning off lights when we aren't in a room anymore, turning off the water while we wash dishes or brush teeth, and composting our food waste can have a big impact! Let's see if we can lower our energy use for one month! Ask an adult in your life if you can see an electric bill for your house. Use the bill to find out what your most recent electricity usage was and write it down on a big piece of paper. This is your score to beat for this coming month. Put this big paper in a place where you'll see it often and will remind you of your goal. Do you think you can use less electricity than before? Do you still have that bill handy? Let's look for something! Often these bills have a chart that shows how your household's usage has gone up or down throughout the year. What month do you have the least electricity usage? What kinds of things happen during that month that may cause that? What can you learn from that month that may help you as you try to conserve energy?

Life isn't always as straightforward as we'd like it to be. There's a chance you'll use less energy, but your bill will still show a similar amount of use. This might be because of the temperature- switching from Heat to A/C can use lots of energy. This might be because of things happening in your family- maybe a grown-up has started working from home or there's a new baby who has a sound machine and fan running all night. It's okay if this challenge doesn't go the way you want it to, the important part is that you try new things and think about what is best for our planet every day for a whole month!
4. Have you ever read The Lorax by Dr. Seuss? If you haven't, check it out- it's a good read. In this book, The Lorax speaks for the trees and advocates for the environment of Thneed-Ville. As a way to remember the lessons from this story and to be an advocate for our environment, try crafting a Lorax Flower Pot! This craft is pretty simple- you'll need some hot glue, an orange pom pom, some yellow yarn, and googly eyes. Glue the eyes, pom pom nose, and yarn mustache to the side of a flower pot to create a Lorax face. Bonus points if you grow a Truffula Tree in it (or just a flower!)



5. Grab some friends or family members and head to a local park or trail for a clean up day! See who can find the most trash items! Be sure to be careful and not touch anything that is dangerous (unless you're an adult).

6. Make an upcycled flower bouquet!

Upcycled Flower Bouquet

Materials:

- Small round object for tracing a circle
- Cardboard
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Yellow paint
- Paintbrush
- 7 pouch bottle caps (or regular bottle caps)
- Hot glue gun and glue sticks
- Wooden dowel
- Green paint
- Green cardstock or construction paper
- Extra strong glue
- Mason jar

Instructions:

1. Trace a circle on the cardboard. The circle should be at least a few inches in diameter- not larger than the flower you're making. Cut out the circle.
2. Paint the circle yellow. Let it dry.
3. Create your flower design using 6 pouch bottle caps (or regular bottle caps) for the petals. Add an extra one for the center. You can use whatever colors you want- if you want to change the colors of your bottle caps, add some paint!
4. Have an adult help to hot glue the bottle caps to the cardboard. Start with the center and then add the petals.
5. Paint the wooden dowel green for your flower stem. Let it dry.
6. Have an adult help hot glue the wooden dowel to the back of the flower (the yellow cardboard part). If you want the flower to show on both sides, you'll need to glue another set of bottle caps to the back of the flower.
7. Cut out a lead for your flower from your green cardstock or construction paper. Leave a little strip at the end of the lead to wrap around your dowel. Glue the lead to the wooden dowel.
8. Place the flower in the Mason jar for display. Add extra bottle caps into the jar for decoration.

7. This DIY is both a Girl Scout tradition AND an eco-friendly upcycle! Try this Duct Tape Sit-Upon!

Sit-Upon

Materials:

- Ruler
- Duct Tape (any color or pattern)
- Scissors
- Lots of plastic grocery bags (25+ per crafter)

Instructions:

1. Decide how large you want your sit-upon to be. Cut a strip of duct tape the length of your sit-upon. Lay the strip sticky side up on a flat surface.
2. Cut another strip of duct tape the same length. The second strip should overlap the first by about 1/4 inch.
3. Continue laying down overlapping duct tape strips until you reach desired sit-upon height.
4. Cut open a plastic shopping bag and lay it flat over the sticky duct tape strips. Trim any excess plastic bag.
5. Repeat the process to create a second piece of duct tape strips covered in plastic. Make this piece the same dimensions as the first piece.
6. Lay the two pieces on top of each other with their plastic sides facing out. Tape the pieces together along 3 sides.
7. Turn the sit-upon right side out. The colored duct tape sides should be facing out.
8. Stuff your sit-upon with plastic shopping bags. Once it's filled like a pillow, use another strip of duct tape to close up it's open side.
9. Your Sit-Upon is ready for use! Go outside and enjoy your DIY seat!

8. Want a fashionable way to show off your eco-friendliness? Try painting a reusable bag for school or for the store! First, you'll need a blank canvas bag- this can be any size or color you want, but lighter colors will show more of your artwork! Next, use acrylic paints, puffy paints, or fabric markers to design your bag. Let this dry completely before using it.

9. Did you know you can visit some of our National Parks without leaving your house?! This Earth Day, explore our public lands (these are parks that all Americans own together!) online. Use this link to find awesome livestreams, 360 videos, and clickable walking tours of places like Crater Lake National Park, Yellowstone, Women's Rights National Historic Park, and even the Channel Islands. tinyurl.com/77p3jex7

10. Loving the Earth isn't just about cleaning or learning. While those things are important, it's equally important that we fall in love with being in nature and playing outside. This option is fairly simple- grab some friends or maybe just a good book and spend some time outside together. Explore your backyard, go for a walk or hike, play at a local playground, take a nap in a hammock, your options are endless! The more we enjoy time in nature, the more we'll want to protect nature- so there's no wrong choice about how to spend time outside.

May | May Day

May



April showers brought May Flowers- now it's time to celebrate May Day! This holiday celebrates the springtime, spreads cheer in your neighborhood, and includes fun flower crafting.

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount of activities required for their level

1. Happy May Day! Learn a bit about the history of May Day here: tinyurl.com/s27uac2n
2. The most classic May Day activity is probably dancing around a Maypole. A Maypole is a tall pole with long ribbons attached to the top. During the dance, each person participating holds a ribbon and dances in circles around the pole, causing the ribbons to weave together around the pole in pretty patterns. Most folks don't have space for a giant pole at home, but we can craft a mini maypole!

Mini Maypole

Materials:

- Stick or dowel rod
- Colorful Ribbons
- Hot Glue

Instructions:

1. Cut your ribbon into long strips- at least twice as long as your stick.
2. Once you have your ribbons cut and ready, use your tape or glue to attach the middle of your ribbon to the end of your stick.

Pro-Tip: Try to criss-cross how you attach them so your ribbons will come from all angles, just like a big maypole! For fun, you can look up videos of Maypole dances and try weaving your ribbons around your mini pole like the dancers do!

3. May Day is a celebration of the beauty of Spring and the beginning of Summer! What do you love about this time of year? Make a collage of all your favorite May things. You might even try including some dried flowers in this craft!
4. Make a flower crown! There's lots of tutorials online for how to transform flowers into crowns. Some are easier than others- do whatever style works best for you!

5. In the U.S., it's a common May Day tradition to surprise neighbors, family, and friends with a May Day Basket. You can use actual baskets if you'd like, or you can craft a simple paper cone and fill that with flowers! The silliest part of the tradition is sneaking them onto the porch or doorway of whoever you're gifting it to and then knocking or ringing the doorbell before running away! What a fun surprise flower bouquets can be!

6. In Hawaii, May Day is Lei Day! Learn a bit about the history of the Lei: tinyurl.com/2u33z4f3 and try making a Lei of your own: tinyurl.com/33crmj6b Want to learn more about Hawaii this May Day? Head to your local library and find books about Hawaiian history and culture! Or learn about our Girl Scout sisters in Hawaii here: tinyurl.com/yu8cvxas (Leader Tip: This Girl Scout Council has some really cool patch programs you may be interested in checking out if your troop is interested in learning more about Hawaii!)

7. Try upcycling! Tin cans make great planters (or even May Day Baskets!) First, you'll need clean tin cans that have had any sharp edges removed or covered by electrical tape or duct tape for safety. Next, have an adult help by drilling a few holes in the bottom of the can so your flowers will have proper drainage. Now it's time to decorate! Find some paints or permanent markers and decorate your cans however you want! Once the paint is dried, you can plant flowers in your cans. Be sure to put these somewhere where they'll get plenty of sunshine and won't be bothered by pets.

8. Does your town have a community garden? If you do, find out how you can help! If your town doesn't have a community garden, you could....

- *Start a community garden as a troop!

- *Find a neighbor and ask to help in their garden!

9. Go for a Flower Hike! The idea is pretty simple- you'll hike and look for flowers! If you're hiking somewhere that you are allowed to pick flowers, collect as you go (be sure to leave some for others to enjoy!) and leave your hike with your own bouquet! If you're hiking somewhere that you aren't allowed to pick flowers, try to find flowers in as many colors as you can! You can always take photos of the pretty flowers you find if you aren't able to collect them. Maybe these photos can be used for a fun craft later!

10. May Day is also International Workers Day! We celebrated workers in September with our Labor Day activities, so we wanted to focus on the more floral side of May Day. But, celebrating workers is important all year round! Pick an activity from the September section of this booklet as your final activity option for May Day!





June | Pollinator Month

June is National Pollinators Month! Learn about who pollinators are, what they do, and how we can help them! This is a great way to kick off your summer!

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount of activities required for their level

1. It's National Pollinator Month! Learn about why pollinators are important here: tinyurl.com/jayw9wps.
2. This month there will be lots of pollinator focused events happening- especially during Pollinator Week (mid-June). We've found a few cool options within our Council that may be good options for you. Be sure to check out what's happening in your area too! Is there nothing happening in your area? Maybe your troop can host a Pollinator Party!
 - Resources for all of Illinois: tinyurl.com/mstrzwm8.
 - Champaign Area: Bee Blitz is an annual event hosted by the University of Illinois. This is a great option for Girl Scouts who love being part of Citizen Science projects. tinyurl.com/ybj5eda
 - Clinton/Decatur Area: Check out Weldon Springs State Park's calendar. They love pollinators and love Girl Scouts! tinyurl.com/46t38hke.
 - Southern parts of our Council: The Missouri Botanical Garden (specifically the Butterfly House) generally hosts educational, and sometimes artistic, programs celebrating Pollinator Week. Learn more about what they do here: tinyurl.com/mr5pecsh.
 - Quincy Area: Check out Four Winds Farm! They offer educational courses throughout their growing season and will even schedule private field trips for troops and other groups! Even if you aren't local to Western IL, they're worth the drive: tinyurl.com/3zj5ajrw.
 - Champaign, DeWitt, Livingston, McLean, Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford Counties: Be part of the Pollinator Pathway Project! Info on what is involved here: tinyurl.com/2vy7xewt

3. Play Pollinator Tag! This takes a whole group- so grab your troop, your siblings, or your friends from school for this one. Here's how to play:

You'll need: Bandanas or balls (4+ per Flower), a large container- like a laundry basket or box

Set Up: Place your container on the edge of your play area. This will be for collecting "Pollen" (your bandanas/balls). Those playing Flowers will start somewhere on the other side of your space.

This game has 3 roles: Pollinators, Flowers, and Birds. Decide who will be each kind of player. You'll need at least one of each.

The Flower Role is the most stationary (maybe you can recruit some adults for this one!) Flowers stay put until they've been tagged by a Pollinator. Once tagged, they are free to find a new spot to be a flower or they can choose to stay put. Flowers must start on the opposite side of the play area as the Pollen Container, but are welcome to get closer as the game progresses.

The Pollinator's job is to tag the Flowers, take 1 "Pollen" (bandana or ball), and then deposit it into the Pollen Container without getting tagged by a Bird. If tagged by a bird, Pollinators must return their Pollen to the Flower they got it from before trying again.

Birds have one job only: tag the Pollinators. Depending on the size of your group, you may decide to have a Bird Nest. A Bird Nest is a well defined zone within your play area that the Birds must visit for at least 30 seconds after every 3 Pollinator Tags.

The game ends when all the pollen has been collected.

Try this fun twist! Some birds are considered Pollinators! You can choose to have both Birds and Pollinators collect Pollen from Flowers if you want to add an element of team competition, make the game end quickly, or have a more cooperative game.

4. Plant a Pollinator Garden! There's lots of great ways to get started on this! We definitely encourage you to get in touch with your local gardening, ecology, IDNR, and County Extension groups as you start learning about what kinds of plants are best for encouraging pollinators to visit. You may even have local resources for seeds to start with!

5. Make an upcycled Pollinator Hotel! Find a container (mugs, tin cans, flower pots, and broken dishes work well!) and fill it with paper, sticks, straws, and natural materials to create cozy bug-sized spaces that our pollinator friends can rest in. Put this outside somewhere where it won't be bothered and won't be sprayed by any lawn treatments.



6. Head out on a hike! For fun: count how many pollinators you can find!

7. Host a Pollinator Party! Do pollinator crafts, play pollinator tag, and teach your community about why we need to help our pollinator friends!

8. Did you know? Each year, Girl Scouts from all over complete awesome Take Action Projects to earn their Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards. Several troops have focused on Pollinators in the past few years. Contact Tiffany Kaufmann at tkaufmann@girlscouts-gsci.org for help getting in touch with older Girl Scouts who might be willing to share what they learned about pollinators during their project! While you're chatting, ask about the Highest Awards process and how you can get started on your next big project!

9. What do lizards, crustaceans, cockroaches, honey possums, slugs, and lemurs have in common? They're all pollinators! While we mostly think of bumblebees and butterflies when we think of pollinators, lots of animals help pollinate our world! Pick one of these unusual pollinators and do some research about them! Where do they live? What do they eat? Do they pollinate on purpose or by accident? What do they look like? Research can be done online or in person at your local library!

10. Girl Scouts love having a fun fire starter recipe in our back pockets for easy campfire building! Try this one featuring some familiar pollinator flowers for your next camp out!

Fun Fire Starter Recipe

Materials:

- Empty egg cartons
- Wax- soy wax or beeswax pellets are awesome, but melted candles/melted crayons work well!
- Natural candle wicks, bottom metal piece removed
- Vessel for melting wax that is only used to melt wax
- Flower Petals- Milkweed, Coneflowers, Asters, and Black-eyed Susans are great!
- OPTIONAL: Other dried natural items- just for fun. This can be things like cinnamon sticks, pinecones, fully dried fruit, bay leaves, or pine branches from trees. Just a heads up, the cinnamon sticks and some other items might make a crack sound as they catch fire in the fireplace.

Instructions:

1. Place a wick and some of your natural materials/flower petals into each section of your egg carton.
2. Carefully melt your wax and fill each section of the egg carton.
3. As your wax dries, you may carefully add more of your petals so the top is decorated too.
4. Once dried completely, cut your egg carton apart into smaller pieces. Now you're ready to have a fire with your pretty fire starters that remind us about pollinator friendly plants.



July | 4th of July



Celebrate 250 years of our Constitution this Independence Day with fun games, crafts, and activities.

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount of activities required for their level

1. Watch this to learn about the history of Independence Day: tinyurl.com/26w7dmy2
2. Did you know there is a poem on the Statue of Liberty? As a troop or family, read this poem and discuss afterwards.

The New Colossus by Emma Lazarus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

Discussion Questions:

- What does it mean for the Statue of Liberty to be the “Mother of Exiles”? What does exile mean? Who would be considered an exile in 1903 when this was added to the statue? Who would be considered an exile today?
- What is “storied pomp”? How would you rewrite this in more modern words?
- The Statue of Liberty was once one of the first things many immigrants would see when arriving in the United States. How do you think these people might have viewed her?
- How can we as Girl Scouts make the world a better place for the “huddled masses yearning to breathe free”?

3. Our Country's National Bird is the Bald Eagle. Surprisingly to some, this is a pretty recent thing. Until 2024, the Bald Eagle was simply a famous symbol of our country and featured in things like our "Great Seal", quarters, and in military uniforms. Let's have some fun by making some hand and footprint eagles!

Handprint/Footprint Eagles

Materials:

- Yellow, White, Brown, and Orange paint
- White paper (heavy paper like cardstock works well)
- Scissors
- Black marker
- Tape or glue

Instructions:

1. Paint the heel of your foot white, the toes of the same foot orange, and the middle part brown.
2. Gently press this against a piece of paper. This will create the body of your eagle.
3. Next, paint one hand brown and gently press this against another piece of paper.
4. Once both your footprint and handprint are dry, you can add in your yellow beak and black dot for an eye.
5. Once the beak is dry, cut out around your footprint and handprint. Attach the handprint to the top footprint to give your eagle a wing.

A note for older Girl Scouts: This may strike you as a craft for younger girls. Parents LOVE getting hand footprint crafts from kids of all ages. Even their adult children. Invite your troop leaders to make one with you!



4. Have you ever heard of something being "as American as Apple Pie"? Apple pie is one of our unofficial symbols- but we certainly didn't invent apples, pie, or apple pie. The earliest pies were created by the Egyptians, modern apples originated from Kazakhstan, and the first recorded apple pie recipe is from England in 1381. So how did apple pie become so American? Johnny Appleseed may have played a part in cementing apples as part of American folklore, but really the apple pie imagery started around WW2 when many soldiers told reporters that they defended their nation "for mom and apple pie." Our country was founded to be a place where everyone was welcomed- a new, beautiful country for all regardless of your home-country, traditions, or customs. Apple pie, poetically enough, took a blend of traditions and tastes from around the world in order to exist. While apples, pie, and apple pie aren't technically from the US originally- being a sweet combination of cultures feels very American.

Try making this tasty treat this 4th of July!

Classic Apple Pie

Ingredients:

- 2 (9") pie crusts
- 7 large Granny Smith apples peeled, cored and sliced into 1/2 inch slices
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar, loosely packed
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice plus the zest of half of a lemon
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten in a small bowl for egg wash
- 2 tablespoons sanding sugar (optional)

Instructions:

1. Start by preparing this flaky pie crust recipe which makes 2 (9") pie crusts, one for the bottom and one for the top of the pie. The pie dough will need to chill for at least 1 hour before rolling out. Or use a store-bought pie crust and follow package directions.
2. Place the oven rack in the center position and preheat the oven to 400°F (204°C).
3. In a large bowl, combine the sliced apples, granulated sugar, light brown sugar, flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, and lemon juice and lemon zest; toss to coat evenly.
4. Remove the pie crust dough from the fridge and let rest at room temperature for 5-10 minutes. On a lightly floured surface, roll one disc into a 12" circle that is 1/8" thick. Carefully lay the crust into the bottom of a deep-dish pie plate.
5. Spoon the apple filling over the bottom crust and discard juices at the bottom of the bowl. Roll out the second disc of pie crust until it is 1/8" thick and lay it over the apple filling.
6. Use a sharp knife to trim the dough along the outside edge of the pie plate. Lift the edges where the two pie crust meet, gently press to seal and fold them under. Rotate the pie plate and repeat this process until edges are neatly tucked under themselves. Cut 4 slits in the top of the dough to allow steam to vent. Place the pie on a baking sheet.
7. Brush the surface of the pie crust with the egg wash and sprinkle with sanding sugar. Cover the edges with a pie shield or a strip of foil to keep them from over browning during the first 25 minutes.
8. Bake at 400°F for 25 minutes. Carefully remove the pie shield, turn the oven down to 375° and continue to bake for an additional 30-35 minutes or until the top is golden brown and the juices are bubbly. Cool at room temperature for at least 3 hours.

5. Watch then Discuss: As you watch this video, take notes on things that stick out to you as important. Think about the lyrics and what message the author is trying to tell us. tinyurl.com/yx6kwny6.

After watching talk with your troop or family:

- Who is this land, the United States, made for?
- What does it mean that this country is made for everyone? Who specifically is included when we say this land was made for "you and me"?
- In your life, have there been any times that it doesn't feel like everyone is welcomed?
- This song was written to unite people- do you think the people in your town feel like they're on the same team? What about our state? What about the country?
- What could make people remember that this land is made for all of us?
- Do you think the land itself is being enjoyed and protected for future generations to enjoy? If it's *our* land, how should we treat it?

6. March in an Independence Day parade with your troop!

7. On the 4th of July, we often celebrate with fireworks! In recent years, a new kind of patriotic display has been gaining popularity: Drone Light Shows. These shows are more eco-friendly as they don't pollute our air, are safer than fireworks- especially in places with wildfire risks, they can go longer than a traditional firework show since they don't run out of anything, plus they don't feature the sounds of explosions respecting the needs of animals, veterans with PTSD (and civilians with PTSD), and people with sensory sensitivities. While these light shows are just as artistic as fireworks, critics say that there's just something missing- plus they're really expensive. While drones certainly aren't the same, it's cool that we're exploring our celebratory options. Check out this video and decide what you think- are drone shows the future of 4th of July celebrations? Are they a cool fad but fireworks are more your thing? tinyurl.com/2ru484rs

8. This year marks 250 years of our constitution! There's lots of fun events happening around the state to celebrate. See if any are near you! If there is, try to attend! If not, maybe your troop can help host a birthday party for the US! tinyurl.com/3epjsnsk (Note for leaders: some of these events are in other months than July- these totally count too!)

9. Living in the midwest, we don't often get to tour the historic sites of the American Revolution. However, today we'll get to take a "walking" tour of historic Philadelphia- the birthplace of our democracy! We hope this inspires you and your troop to travel IRL in the future. (Heads up: this video is about 40 minutes) tinyurl.com/y2cf4229

10. As a troop (or family) make a patriotic playlist! Have each person add a few songs that mean something to them as an American. These may or may not be songs that are about the United States- all music is welcome!

Some of our Council staff put together their own playlist as an example that we hope helps inspire your creativity!

- Firework- Katy Perry
- Party in the USA- Miley Cyrus
- Everyday People- Sly and the Family Stone
- Wide Open Spaces- The Chicks
- Crowded Table- The Highwomen
- Kids in America- Kim Wilde
- American Oxygen- Rihanna
- American Saturday Night- Brad Paisley
- Love Can Build a Bridge- The Judds
- Take Me Home, Country Roads- John Denver



August | Gotcha Day

This month we're celebrating Gotcha Day- the day often celebrated by families with rescued pets! Whether you have a furry friend or not, you're sure to have lots of fun with this month's nature activities, crafts, games, and community service ideas.

Daisies and Brownies- Complete at least 3 activities

Juniors and Cadettes- Complete at least 4 activities

Seniors and Ambassadors- Complete at least 5 activities

Adult Volunteers- Guide your Girl Scouts through the amount of activities required for their level

1. Learn about animal shelters and why it's important to adopt not shop here: tinyurl.com/4d5awzxh.
2. Let's show our local animal shelters and rescues some love with homemade treats! (Be sure to contact the organization you want to donate to- some organizations can't accept all kinds of treats.) Here's an awesome recipe for no-bake treats that are loved by both dogs and cats! tinyurl.com/mr463tps.
3. Did you know that some animal rescues are for specific kinds of pets? A good example of this is C&M Small Animal Rescue in El Paso, IL- near Bloomington-Normal. They specialize in rabbits, guinea pigs, ferrets, and other small pets. Use the internet to look up the kinds of animal rescues in your area! Do any of the pets featured surprise you? How would a specialty rescue need to be different than one for dogs and cats? Would the building need special play areas? Maybe they would need extra space for extra large animal residents? Do they allow volunteers? Is there anything your troop can do to help?
4. Do you know any pets who love to pretend to beg for food and treats even though they've already been fed? Try this easy chalkboard photo frame craft!

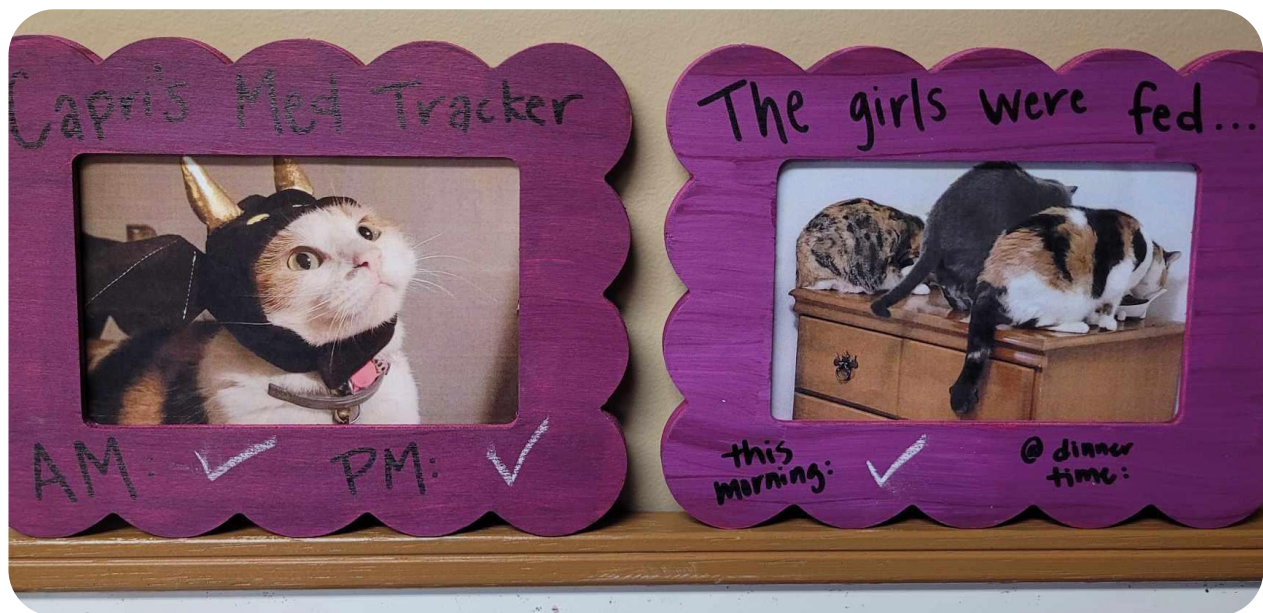
Chalkboard Photo Frame

Materials:

- Photo frame
- Photo of your pet
- Chalkboard paint
- Regular paint
- Chalk

Instructions:

1. Paint the whole frame with your chalkboard paint- this will be our base coat.
2. Once the base paint layer dries, use your regular paint to write out "_____ was fed at" For the blank part, you can put "the cat", "the dog", "the hamster", etc. OR the pet's name. For our example, we used "the girls" since that's what the 3 cats in the photo are called as a group.
3. Once this is dry, put a photo in your frame and use the chalk to write in what time the pet was last fed. This will help avoid anyone accidentally getting double dinner. (Note- pets may not be thrilled that they will no longer get away with begging for seconds.)



5. Play this with a dog! Did you know that some pets like playing hide and seek just as much as humans do? This is a great game for super hot August days when it's a little too warm to play outside. Your dog will practice their listening skills, nose work (finding things/people by scents), Sit/Down, Stay, and Come. Plus it's fun for everyone involved!

Dogs can't hide without a human. If you have lots of people, you can have a partner help your dog hide. If it's just you and a pup (or many), you'll be the one hiding each time.

First- choose where you'll hide, but don't hide yet. Make sure your spot isn't very hard and is in a room where your dog is normally allowed to be. Places like in a shower behind the curtain, under the bed, and behind furniture are great hiding spots!

Next pick a room far from where you'll hide or maybe a room with very few hiding spots. This will be the Sit and Stay room. Ask your dog to sit and then stay as you leave the room. This is normally the hardest part for dogs. If your dog isn't one to stay without you, you may want to find a human buddy for them.

Quickly get into position and call to your dog. You don't need to call super loudly or until they come. Just every so often so they know it's time to come find you. If you hear them almost find you a few times, call out again and see if there's anything preventing them from successfully finding you.

Once your dog finds you, celebrate with them so they know they did a great job.

6. Do you still have any leftover cookie cases? Make something for your feline friends! Lots of people enjoy crafting cat scratchers from cookie cases, but you can also make a climbing tower/castle, a cat maze, or simply fill a case with treats and crumpled newspaper for a fun enrichment activity!

7. Some kids have fish as a pet! While these are generally less pet-able creatures, decorating their tanks can be a great way to add some enrichment to their lives. Create art for your fishy friend with markers, crayons, paint, or whatever you have on hand! Once you're done- tape this to the side of their tank. Do not put painted, glittered, or generally decorated items into the tank!

Tip: Do not use reflective materials in your artwork as we don't want our aquatic buddies to think they're being invaded by enemy fish! Instead, try painting/coloring/drawing them something they may not have seen before- like a beach, a mountain, your classroom at school, or Taylor Swift's Eras Tour stage.

8. Let's do some fun crafting for our furry friends! Here's a few different options of easy DIY projects that you can donate to a local shelter or give as a gift to a dog or cat you know! tinyurl.com/yzapdpv5.

9. Some families can't adopt pets for lots of good reasons. That's okay! If you want to have a pet one day, you can start preparing now by learning about this animal- what their species or breed needs, what they eat, if you can legally own one, what kind of space they need, etc. Head over to your local library and find books about your dream animal! Draw yourself as an adult with your dream pet- maybe one day you can recreate this portrait as a photo with your dream pet!

10. Volunteer with your local animal shelter or rescue- a lot of times this might look like cleaning cages, changing litter boxes, or walking dogs. Do not volunteer for any At-Home projects (like fostering a pet) without first talking with your family and getting adult permission. Can't be around animals due to allergies? Ask if there's anything you can do virtually! You may be able to help with things like distributing flyers, designing brochures, or calling pet stores to ask for donations.

