**Sunny Trails Service Unit**

**Chula Vista, CA**

**Top 10 Things You Need To Know About Financials**

Prepared by Beth Ann Coleman, Service Unit Treasurer

**1. Get started with a bank account at Wells Fargo.** Girl Scouts, San Diego has a partnership with Wells Fargo. This makes it easier for everyone who participates and there are no monthly fees! Banking specialists are Jonathan Kernoski, (619) 265-8051, Jonathan.J.Kernoski@wellsfargo.com and Alfonso Porras, (619) 591-4358, alfonso.porras@wellsfargo.com. To set up an account or make changes you will need a driver”s license, second form of photo identification and money for deposit for a new account (suggested $100).[[1]](#endnote-1)

**2. Handle as little cash as possible.** Once your troop is established and the troop has earned money from either product sales or money earning projects use the troop account to fund troop expenses. Take time to plan and set goals. Consider an annual start up fee for returning girls and a separate start up fee for new girls joining mid-year. Make regular deposits at the bank. This can be done by anyone as long as they have a deposit slip and the troop bank account number.

**3. Use your debit card.** Debit cards are a great convenience as they provide for an electronic record of all your transactions and also will cut down on reimbursements that may have to be made directly to the leader. If you or another co-leader are usually the one shopping for supplies or making a trip to the girl scout store then have them use the troop debit card. Review monthly statements and reconcile transactions. The debit card should be used with caution and only for valid troop expenses.[[2]](#endnote-2)

**4. Use troop checks for payments.** In cases where you cannot use the troop debit card and a check is requested or required complete a *Check Request Form* and ask your Treasurer to write you a check. The Check Request Form is a good tool to aid the Treasurer when writing checks. Receipts should be provided at the time of the request or shortly thereafter.

**5. Train leaders and parents.** There is an abundant number of forms and resources available to assist you and your troop on the Girl Scouts San Diego website at <http://www.sdgirlscouts.org>. Training is not only for the designated Treasurer. Ask your parents to read through *Volunteer Essentials*, Chapter 5 *Managing Group Finances*. Have a parent meeting to familiarize everyone with training resources available on line and related forms.

**6. Transparency is key.** Provide regular financial reports to the troop and parents. Share results from product sales or money-earning events. Maintain copies of all receipts and a detailed ledger for payments received and payments made. As the Treasurer you are in charge of making sure money is spent wisely and that accurate records are kept (keeping copies of all receipts in a binder or folder), and tracking all income, too.[[3]](#endnote-3)

**7. Keep girls safe during money-earning.** Girl Scout Cookies and other council-sponsored product sales are an integral part of the program. During Girl Scout product sales, you are responsible for the safety of girls, money, and products. In addition, a wide variety of organizations, causes, and fundraisers may appeal to Girl Scouts to be their labor force. When representing Girl Scouts, girls cannot participate in money-earning activities that represent partisan politics or that are not Girl Scout–approved product sales and effort

**8. Ensure that no girl is treated differently**. Girl Scouts welcomes all members, regardless of race, ethnicity, background, disability, family structure, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic status. When scheduling, helping plan, and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all girls involved, including school schedules, family needs, financial constraints, religious holidays, and the accessibility of appropriate transportation and meeting places.

**9. Individual Teen Girl Scout Records.** While all funds are for Girl Scout activities, Girl Scout Cadette, Senior and Ambassador troops may use the *Teen Girl Finances Ledger System*. The system allows for individual record keeping within the troop account -- it does not allow individual bank accounts for each girl. Any money contributed to a girl and deposited into the troop bank account remains the property of the troop; the troop must determine its use in the event the girl does not continue with Girl Scouting. The records of charges from and contributions to a girl’s record within the troop bank account must be available at all times to the girl and her parents. Documentation, such as receipts, is required for any Girl Scout purchase. Note: This system is not appropriate for use in Girl Scout Daisy, Brownie and Junior troops.

**10. Annual financial reports are not optional.** Each troop is required to complete an annual Troop Financial Report at the end of each school year. The Annual Report consists of three parts.

**1. Detailed Cash Record**- an accounting of all income and expenses. Input dates, details and categorize transactions. This is similar to your check register.

**2. Annual Financial Report & Equipment Inventory** -a record of your troop information, bank account information, equipment listing and summary of the troop financials.

**3. Current Bank Statement** - provided by Wells Fargo and mailed monthly. Your current bank statement balance must balance out with the ending balance on your annual financial report. If there are transactions outstanding then they need to be accounted for.

Failure to submit a completed financial report could result in your troop banned from participation in product sales, encampments and/or the troop account being frozen. Any troop changes will be on hold until the annual report is completed and submitted to the Service Unit Treasurer and Council.

1. See Steps For Banking At Wells Fargo. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Use of the debit card for non Girl Scout expenses is a misuse of Girl Scout funds and may result in criminal charges. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Create a budget. Use a budget worksheet (available at www.sdgirlscouts.org/eventbudget) that includes both expenses (the cost of supplies, admission to events, travel, and so on) and available income (the group’s account balance, projected Cookie Program proceeds, and so on). Once the group has a financial plan, describe it in writing. If the plan involves a group money-earning activity, fill out an application and submit it along with the budget worksheet for approval. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)