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a community publication



Girl Scout Summer Camp Fosters Friendship,  
Confidence, and Leadership

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**girl scouts**   
of wisconsin  
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# From Troop Leader to Day Camp Director: How Beth Inspires Local Girl Scouts

Sun Lakes Day Camp Director Beth Hahn has volunteered with Girl Scouts for more than 25 years. When her daughter first joined Girl Scouts, Beth became a troop leader. As her daughter continued bridging in Girl Scouts, Beth took on facilitator and service unit manager roles. In 2006, Beth became Director of Sun Lakes Day Camp, her favorite role.

Beth learned her leadership skills from a 4-H program, where she earned a Key Award. She incorporates those skills to create several theme-related activity stations for the campers at Sun Lakes so that they can try new activities while also learning about independence and resilience. As a volunteer Day Camp Director, she starts researching topics for the next summer's camp just three weeks after camp season ends.

“My favorite part of being Day Camp Director is watching the girls try a new activity and seeing when the light bulb goes on. When they attempt something new, fail, try again, and figure out what they did wrong and how to fix it – that is what courage and confidence are all about,” said Beth.

The camp can't run smoothly without a team working together and their planning team of more than a dozen meets monthly to discuss ways to improve the camp. They also offer events throughout the year to stay engaged with the campers. Several alumni who live in other states even return to camp and model to younger campers how much they believe in camp and the program. Beth and her team received the prestigious GSWISE President's Award in 2014 and 2023 for their outstanding teamwork and dedication.

Beth returns to Sun Lakes Day Camp every year to help Girl Scouts build confidence needed for the next stage of their lives – whether they are young campers or teen program aides. Her experience volunteering at Girl Scouts has been filled with lifelong friendships and countless learning experiences, all of which create a memorable summer camp for campers throughout the years.



*Beth Hahn leads campers, encouraging personal growth and confidence, each year at Sun Lakes Day Camp.*

## A Family Legacy

*Alice and Merrill Read share their favorite Camp Alice Chester memories; Ross and Mary Read celebrate Alice Chester's legacy; Camp Alice Chester has been a Girl Scout staple since 1924 (left to right).*



Camp Alice Chester opened its doors in 1924 after a generous donation from namesake Alice Chester, the first president of the Milwaukee Girl Scout Council. The now 333-acre property provides an introduction to nature to local Girl Scouts participating in overnight and day camps.

Alice Chester's daughter, the late Marion Chester Read, and her grandchildren Alice and Ross, along with their families, have continued to pave the path for Girl Scouts of all backgrounds to realize their full potential outdoors.

“Camp Alice Chester is a place filled with opportunities for adventure, new experiences, and personal growth,” said Alice Read.

“I'm proud of what my grandmother started 100 years ago. That pride grew during my own camp experiences with Girl Scouts, when I took my daughter's troop to camp. They

all returned home stronger, dirtier, and more confident,” continued Alice. “It's with even greater pride that I see my grandmother's legacy continue each year as hundreds of Girl Scouts experience the wonder of the outdoors and are encouraged to look within and then live beyond expectations.”

“My grandmother was motivated by the desire to help young women become strong, capable leaders by facing challenges in the natural world and beyond while in the supportive environment of camp and Girl Scouts. My family and I feel the same desire,” said Alice.

Valued partners, like the Read family, help provide opportunities for Girl Scouts to discover their independence, leadership, and resilience in the great outdoors and beyond.

# Girl Scout Summer Camp Fosters Friendship, Confidence, and Leadership



*Girl Scout from Bethune Academy enjoyed a week of classic camp fun at Camp Alice Chester.*

This summer, Girl Scouts from Bethune Academy had the opportunity to spend an unforgettable week at Camp Alice Chester through our Community Outreach program, which offers staff and volunteer-led programming at schools and other organizations in Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha counties.

Many of these Girl Scouts had never participated in a summer camp experience before and arrived at camp nervous, shy, and unsure what to expect. Supported by positive and encouraging new friendships, these Girl Scouts explored new activities, grew their confidence, and had fun in the outdoors.

At the start of the week, Girl Scout Daisy Kaylana struggled to adapt to long days outdoors. However, she leaned on Girl Scout Brownie Khari, who encouraged her in every activity, from swimming to long hikes. By the end of the week, Kaylana's confidence in the outdoors grew so much that she returned for a family camp a few weeks later.

Girl Scout Junior Nyla was reserved and cautious when camp kicked off. She received support from her fellow campers to find her voice. One of her proudest moments was advocating to retake the swim

test after initially struggling with understanding the directions. With encouragement, she approached the lifeguard to speak up and successfully retook the test. Nyla continued to blossom, participating in new ventures like fishing and even courageously trying archery, an activity only a few daring campers attended.

Girl Scouts of all ages also tapped into their inner leader throughout the week.

Girl Scout Brownies and Juniors Emily, Juliet, Ta'Laya, and Smile bravely took the lead during water play day. Their courage, kindness, and inclusivity encouraged other timid campers to join in the fun.

While the Cadette campers were initially nervous about acting out first-aid scenarios, they cheered each other on, used teamwork to solve the prompts from counselors, and embraced the exercise. The group was able to fairly identify roles for each camper in the skits so everyone could participate too.

Your support provides opportunities for Girl Scouts to tap into supportive, empathetic friendships, build their bravery, and become leaders.

**“The girls really cared for each other, and it showed in the way they talked to each other and encouraged one another. What stood out to me was the friendships created across all backgrounds.”**

**– Girl Scout Volunteer**

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Register now for the  
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Dear Girl Scout friends,

It's no secret that between long school hours, reduced school recess periods, and the popularity of tech-based activities, today's youth aren't spending as much time engaged in the outdoors—despite nature's well-researched benefits. Outdoor exploration reduces stress levels, improves self-confidence, and positively influences children's environmental attitudes, values, and behaviors.

At Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast (GSWISE), we've been committed to getting Girl Scouts of all ages outdoors for 100 years! 2024 marks Camp Alice Chester's 100th birthday, and we're thrilled to carry forward Alice Chester's mission of providing safe spaces for Girl Scouts to learn key outdoor skills, build resilience and independence, and make lifelong friends.

As we celebrate this milestone, I'm thankful for the long-lasting generosity from supporters like the Read family, who have played a vital role in preserving Camp Alice Chester and building Girl Scouting's outdoor programming (page 2). Support has helped empower experiences like the Girl Scouts from Bethune Academy who enjoyed camp for the first time (page 3), facilitated by a large, dedicated team of camp staff and volunteers, including Beth Hahn, who has encouraged Girl Scouts to discover their passion for the outdoors for years at one of our day camps (page 2).

We hope you join us on Saturday, October 5 to celebrate this occasion with a family-friendly, event at Camp Alice Chester. Hundreds of Girl Scouts, volunteers, alums, and community members will spend a day enjoying their favorite camp activities, including archery, rock climbing, s'mores, and campfire songs. This celebration will offer a nostalgic look back at all things camp and a snapshot of the future.

Again, I sincerely appreciate your support helping Girl Scouts boost their confidence, become environmental stewards, and discover new interests in the outdoors. We couldn't do this without you.

Yours in Girl Scouting,

Ana Simpson, CEO

