

Introducing County Newsletter - Autumn 2008

County Calendar

11	October 2008	- 'Changing the World' - Autumn Training Day
1&2	November 2008	- 1st Aid Training, Maidenhead
23-25	January 2009	- County Weekend, Foxlease
28	March 2009	- County Training and County Review
1-8	August 2009	- WINGS 2009, Windsor

Vision: to be recognised as the leading organisation for girls and young women and to widen and increase its membership.



Poems...

During a meeting of 6th Slough Guides (St. Andrews) the Guides were set a challenge to write a poem. Here are two of the Patrol's poems that Guider Joyce Jarman thought were particularly good!

Great helpers
Unity and friendship
Independent and fun
Doing our best
Ever lasting Sisters for Life

Over the years I have been welcomed
In a place no one fears
I have become part of the family
I love it so I cry no tears

I feel happy when I am around them
And I never want to leave
GIRL GUIDES are the best
And love is what I receive

Contributors

We would like to thank all of the Girlguiding Royal Berkshire Members who have provided content for this newsletter. If you would like to contribute please email newsletter@berkshireguiding.org.uk.

PR Team
If you would like to be an active part of the County PR Team, please contact Tracey Gillingham, County PR and Media Advisor

Sue's Scribbles

Welcome back to a new term of Guiding. I hope you all had a restful and refreshing summer. I know many of you were camping or holidaying in the UK and abroad - I do hope the weather was kind to you. Thank you for all for the opportunities you give to the girls in the County.

The countdown for the Centenary in 2010 has begun. Have you started to "Change the World"? The resource catalogue was published in Guiding and the materials look really good. I'd love to hear from your Units about the projects you have undertaken. As a County we launched our bid to change the world by supporting Macmillan Cancer Support largest coffee morning. Not only have units, districts and divisions been holding unusual coffee events all over the County, but also hundreds of Rainbows and their families enjoyed a great day out at Beale Park where they took part in various activities including building Mount Everest block by block and parachuting Olivia and their teddies from the top of a scissor ladder courtesy of the local Fire Brigade. Congratulations to Tracey Gillingham and her team for organising such a spectacular event! The culmination of this year of changing the world will be in summer 2009 and what better way to draw the challenge together than at WINGS2009!

Speaking of which - have you registered to either bring your unit or join the team of Staff members for WINGS2009? Remember, you don't need a Camp Licence to bring your girls to be part of one of the largest and most exciting international camps in the country.

In January we have the County residential training weekend at Foxlease. I do hope to see many of you there as this is a great opportunity to meet new people and to enjoy refreshing our guiding in the beauty of the New Forest.

Other projects this year include a drive to reduce waiting lists and increase our adult members. As of October 1st all CRB checks are to be done electronically and we "Go" live as part of the Streamline project in May 2009. Look out for the training in the Spring of next year.

- *Have a good term!*

'We give girls
and young
women a voice!'

'We provide a
unique girl-only
space!'

'We promote
equality and
diversity!'

'We're
relevant to
today's girls!'

Olympic Day Camp - Cookham & Maidenhead Central District

Almost 100 Guides, Brownies and Rainbows gathered together on Saturday 19th July for an Olympic Day Camp. Designed to give the girls a taste of camp life the day was held at Dorneywood Scout Campsite and amazingly it didn't rain all day! Units were allocated a different country and the day began with the girls making individual flags and a banner for their country. There followed an Olympic-style procession behind the Olympic flame. After a picnic lunch, mixed groups of girls moved round five activity stations...archery and chop stick bean races, cooking orange cakes and chocolate bananas in the woods, making foam finger puppets of the Beijing mascots, following an obstacle course through the woods whilst blindfold or in a wheelchair to simulate the Paralympics and also a session of fun races.

Tea was either Chicken Chow Mein (care of the local Noodle Bar) or sausages in a roll! Whilst waiting for tea each of the groups sang songs they had made up during the day about the event. It never ceases to amaze me how good the girls are at performing in this way....in the main FUN was the word which seemed to describe the day! The finale was a real campfire in a real campfire pit! An exhausting event, involving a lot of preparation and planning but thanks to the Guiders, Trefoil members, their husbands and many parents helping on the day it was so worthwhile...Just what Guiding is all about!

Pants and Pads Appeal

The County Senior section Team are currently working on the "Do Something Great in 2008" Challenge and will be collecting Sanitary towels (all thicknesses, but not tampons) and girls' (age 11 and up) and ladies pants (not thongs or exotic styles) to enable girls in Africa to go to school at any time of the month! This is being run by feed the children. Please send your donations to The Berkshire Senior Section Team.

Thanks You!
Marion Heath

Swan Collage

Next time you are at Thirtover, nip in and see 2nd Kennet Vale Rainbow's Swan Collage in pride of place, on the wall of Donnington Lodge!! The Rainbows went to Thatcham Discovery Centre and collected the media for their picture and the following week started to make the collage. It was then taken home by Assistant Guider Vanessa Nightingale who must have cast some magic over it before framing it because as I am sure you will agree it is really quite a brilliant picture!! Hope you all enjoy seeing it and well done to all the Rainbows and of course to Vanessa!

Newbury Senior Section & 2nd Newbury Guides go to Switzerland

We travelled by coach from Newbury to Adelboden, which took 18 hours including stops to complete the journey. Whilst out in Switzerland we stayed in a chalet just outside Adelboden village. The views from our accommodation were amazing, snow-capped mountains surrounded us, with warm and sunny weather throughout our stay.

We took part in various activities; we went to an adventure park which involved using a variety of zip wires and high ropes. We also visited Kandersteg where we went tobogganing up in the mountains, which was brilliant; we stopped off at the World Scout Centre, they had a great room that had different Neckers hanging from the ceiling. We looked around Adelboden, used the local swimming pool and went ice skating, we visited the local woodcarvers and bought personalised wooden trefoil badges, we went to Choleren Gorge to do some abseiling, there were two stages to the abseiling session, the first was 12 metres and the second was 25 metres with waterfalls and a river surrounding the route, all you could hear whilst abseiling was the rush of the water. At the end of the week we were taken by coach to the mountains in Chalstein to do some climbing on a rock face, this was fantastic and a lot easier than using an artificial wall, like we are use too. We visited our world centre 'Our Chalet', the buildings were beautiful and they are up in the mountains which look down on Adelboden, we were given a tour and told of the history of how it came to be built in Adelboden.

We took part in a Swiss evening and got a chance to meet the other Guide and Scout groups that were in Switzerland at the same time as us. On our last full day we visited the famous waterfalls called Trummelbachfalle, you could walk through the waterfalls and there were areas that you could look down at it, it was fascinating to watch how the water moved through the rocks and it was very loud. We then went to Interlaken near the waterfalls to go shopping before starting a long journey home to the UK.



7th Thatcham Guides go French!

Twenty Guides and Leaders from 7th Thatcham Guide Unit have recently returned from a very successful trip to the Gorges du Tarn region of France.

The group left Thatcham on Thursday 31st July and travelled overnight by coach to the Lozère and Aveyron region where they arrived at about 2pm the next day and stayed until August 9th.

During their stay the Guides enjoyed many interesting and varied visits. They went down into a grotto at Aven Armand to see some of the oldest stalagmites on the planet. They went to a wolf park, a local evening market and a water park at Cap d'Agde on the South coast. Physical activities included a high ropes challenge with zip wires across the river Tarn, swimming in the Tarn, horse-riding, rafting and -the highlight of the trip for most- paragliding near the famous Millau Viaduct.

Leader Vanessa Westacott said "The Guides were brilliant and made it a very enjoyable trip for myself as well as the other leaders. The highlight for me was definitely the paragliding. It was exhilarating. We went up to about 1,300m and the views were just stunning!"

The Guides were also treated to a surprise stop at Paris on the way back where they took a bateau mouche trip by night and saw the Eiffel Tower and other major monuments illuminated. It was a great trip and everyone's French improved as well!

Berkshire Stag Reunion - Saturday 7 June 2008

A reunion is held every 2 years for holders of the Berkshire Stag award. This award was first presented in 1973 and to date 223 have been presented.

Saturday 7 June was a sunny day and 55 Stag holders attended the reunion this year, held at Thirtover Place where everyone enjoyed the lovely surroundings and could see all the improvements that have been made. Many members have now moved away from Berkshire and we were delighted that 6 travelled some distance to join us. However it being the holiday season plus clashing with the National Trefoil AGM, a number of members were unable to attend.

A marvellous lunch was served and it being a nice day, people were able to eat outside. The reunion gives everyone a chance to meet up with long lost guiding friends but also to find out what is happening in Berkshire today. A raffle was held which raised £90 for Berkshire Girlguiding. Thank you to all who contributed.

Many messages were received thanking the organisers and helpers for a wonderful day and I am sure everyone had a good time.

Jill Nicholls - Assistant County Commissioner

PGL Weekend to Merchants Hill, Surrey - Sam Creber, Bracknell West

Firstly a big thank you to Chris Francis and Gill Brunsten for organising this event and for Caroline Smith for being First Aider.

Our accommodation was fantastic the girls were six to a room with en-suite facilities! They were so excited on the first night the Brownies and Guides struggled to get to sleep finally going quiet about 2 am! Next morning, all up at 6 a.m. and off for a walk in the woods, followed by a wide game before breakfast - all prepared. The leaders were certainly experiencing luxury!

Archery was next on the agenda! All the girls really enjoyed this and the instructor was brilliant. Next came the giant swing, everyone had a go, some from full height and some from half way. There was great excitement and lots of screaming!

After lunch it was time for quad biking, after a few crashes the girls got the hang of it before moving on to their next activity a 65ft pole! The girls had to climb to the top. There were a few pale faces.

After that it was back to their rooms to get ready for the disco. This was enjoyed by all and there was definitely no problem sleeping that night!

The next morning we were not up quite so early, 7.30am. Packed, had breakfast and off for more adventures: climbing, abseiling and fencing. The final activity was trapeze; it's a 37 ft pole with a small square on the top. Climb, stand up and jump from the trapeze!

At 4.30 we finally had to leave, we all wanted it to continue for longer. It had been an amazing weekend and a real treat for the leaders, being able to enjoy it all and not be organising and constantly busy. The girls' last words were, "When are we going again?"



Berkshire Rainbows Rise to a Challenge!



Hundreds of Rainbow Guides (5 - 7 year olds) from all over Berkshire gathered at Beale Park, Lower Basildon, nr Pangbourne recently to take part and enjoy a family fun day. Rainbow High! was organised by Girlguiding Royal Berkshire as part of Macmillan Cancer Supports "Worlds' Biggest Coffee Morning". The event was sponsored by Somerfields and supported by many!



I would like to say a HUGE THANK YOU! To all of you that offered your help on the day and before hand. I want to extend special thanks to the Trefoil Guild who came up trumps from several Divisions - what would we have done without you!! To the PR Team for attending all the meetings and working on the website, to Vanessa Nightingale who took up the challenge of Everest personally by making our Everest Cake and helping on the day! To Region, Jennie, Chris and Kate especially, Louise at Beale Park, to Mark and Tom at Beale Park Catering, to Macmillan, Claire Cohen at CHQ, the Fire Service, SCA Packaging for all the things they made for us - Free! To Camp Hopsons, Costa Coffee, and the biggest thank you to Anne Eldred, Rainbow Guider and great friend that has made organising Rainbow High! fun and on the whole an enjoyable if not stressful experience and has saved me from jumping off Everest a few times when things got tough. Anne has worked tirelessly all over the summer holidays with me, never complaining and always up for a challenge - I am so grateful for her support and every ones, I could not have done it without them. Thank you!

Tracey Gillingham - Media and PR Advisor

Voyager Camp Foxlease 2008

Voyager Camp was held this summer in the heart of the New Forest at Foxlease in Lyndurst, Hampshire.

There were over 450 participants with representatives from Australia, Japan, USA, Canada, Wales, Korea, England, Rwanda, Denmark, South Africa and France.

Foxlease was built before any of the 4 World Centres, so it was envisaged that the four World Centres would come to Voyager. Everyone journeyed there, and the sub-camp names reflected this theme representing Armstrong, Columbus, Earhart, Hillary, MacArthur, and Shackleton, with the sub-camps journeying to the opening ceremony in appropriate attire to represent their sub-camp. (I was on Ellen Macarthur and travelled with my boat, buoyancy aid and a globe with her epic journey marked on it.)

There were 2 days out during the week for everyone with journeys to London, Southampton Portsmouth, Brownsea Island, Legoland, Paultons Park, The Owl and Otter sanctuary and many more. I was the Co-ordinator for the 4 World Centres and we held 5 sessions with themes from Pax Lodge, the Cabana, Chalet and Sangam. Crafts such as Amate painting, Gods Eyes, Decorating Pinatas, Peace Doves, Cuckoo digital clocks, Wali art painting, Dressing up in Saris and sessions on Salsa and Bollywood dancing. I also led sessions and had display materials on Teenage Health Issues. A HUGE SUCCESS! Not just amongst the teenagers, but Womens Health generally!

Evening sessions includes Camp Fires, Swimming Bouncy Castles and Drop in Work shops, with Morris Dancing and a Band. The Community Action Projects were also popular and over £800 was collected bag packing at B&Q. for their current charity -Cancer Research. The church in Lyndhurst was cleaned inside and out and gravestones re-discovered and cleaned. Walks in the Forest to note the environmental changes, moving compost around the grounds of Foxlease and gardening/recycling and litter picking had a huge impact. The closing ceremony - all the sub-camps broke the piñatas that had been made, and Cindy and Paula smashed the "Secret Pinata" which held thank you notes from everyone at camp - they were in tears!

Everyone had so much fun the weather was kind and many new friendships were formed. A truly memorable camp for all who attended

I completed nine D of E Gold Award syllabuses and five OQ record books for the girls' Residential experience, and they've all promised to come to WINGS next year!

Marion Heath OQ Adviser (OrinocoH@aol.com)