

TOP STORY



B-N Girl Scouts prep for cookie sales, build skills

Julia Evelsizer [jevnsizer@pantagraph.com](mailto:jevensizer@pantagraph.com) Jan 14, 2018 1



Lakkiah McDougald, 5, of Normal works on a pinwheel craft Saturday, Jan. 13, 2018 during "Cookie Spectacular," a Girl Scouts rally, at Illinois Wesleyan University's Shirk Center in Bloomington. The rally helped prepare the young girls for upcoming cookie season, which begins Feb. 2.

BUY NOW

LEWIS MARIEN, THE PANTAGRAPH



BLOOMINGTON — The methods of selling Girl Scout cookies might be changing, but lessons learned by troops are staying the same.

More than 200 Girl Scouts from the Bloomington-Normal area started the cookie season Saturday with a rally at Illinois Wesleyan University's Shirk Center in Bloomington.

"Cookie Entrepreneur" was the theme of the rally, which prepares troops for the season that begins Feb. 2. Several local troops will have booths set up outside Twin City groceries and home improvement stores.

"They're learning how to obtain goals, learn customer service skills, how to count money and other business and entrepreneurial skills," said Erin Lockwood, event director.

Lockwood said the rise in technology has impacted the ways scouts track their cookie sales.

"Girls use digital platforms to send out cookie sale emails and track their orders on an app," she said.

[Cookie sales fund field trips, visits to summer camp and prizes for each troop.](#)

"The takeaway for the girls from this event is to gain general skills that will help them in a future career, but also learn about the cookie program and have fun," said Lockwood.

While learning practical skills by creating business cards and resumes, girls at the rally also made crafts, designed cookie boxes, swam and danced.

"We do fun stuff at these events and it's a way to learn without being super serious. We have fun while we're working on projects," said Taylor Kuethe, 10, of Normal.

She and other members of her troop said selling cookies is the best part of Girl Scouts.



“We learn safety skills when selling cookies, like not giving away our name or address, not selling after dark and not going into someone’s house unless our parents are with us,” said Taylor.

Her troop mate, Rhyan Harden, 9, said she has learned better people skills through Girl Scouts.

“We learn about making nice introductions and being polite. I’ve also learned how to help others and open my imagination,” said Rhyan, of Normal.

Angie Harden, troop leader for the girls, said the annual cookie rally gets the girls excited about the season and is a good refresher for skill building.

“We always make learning fun. When we taught them about first aid, we visited the fire station. When we learned about health, they tried snacks at HyVee. It’s fun for all of us,” said Harden of Normal.

The troops were able to let off some steam by dancing to a DJ in a racquetball room at the Shirk Center.

Dressed in blue Daisies vests, Sierra Parker, 7; Natalie Hotchkiss, 5; and Naomi Weeks, 5, took a quick break from the dancing.

The girls’ parents, all of Bloomington, said the trio became friends when they entered Girl Scouts together.

“I like Girl Scouts because of the projects,” said Natalie. “And I love selling cookies.”

Cookies are \$5 per box. This year's flavors are Thin Mints, Samoas, Tagalongs, Trefoils, Do-si-dos, Lemonades, Savannah Smiles, Thanks-A-Lot, Toffee-tastic, Trios, and returning this year — S'mores.

Girl Scouts of Central Illinois serves more than 17,000 girls and 4,000 adult members in 38 counties. For more information, visit www.getyourgirlpower.org.