Leader Information: GIRL SCOUT S.W.A.P.S.

"Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere"

What are they?

SWAPs were started at the original National Roundup Conferences. At the time, a SWAP was a little remembrance that one Girl Scout gave another. SWAPs are always handmade, thus the girl is giving a part of herself to show friendship. SWAPs are exchanged at National Conventions, council events, Wider Ops, Service Unit events, and camp. **Girls AND leaders are encouraged to make and trade SWAPs.**

SWAPs are usually one or two inches in size, and usually have a pin back to hang on a hat, shirt or banner. They can have a tag attached with the event name or date, troop number and/or girl's name, and council name and state if SWAPping outside your service unit. SWAPs should not contain edible food or be very fragile. There are many idea suggestions on the Internet, or come up with your own! The possibilities are endless and some of the best ideas are really quite simple. It is fun to spend time at a troop meeting designing and making swaps.

Why SWAP?

SWAPs are a great way to make new friends. With their little craft in hand, a girl has a reason to approach someone she may not normally speak to in order to ask that all-important question: "Want to SWAP?" SWAPping promotes creativity, resourcefulness and friendship; encourages girls to meet and speak to other people; and are special mementos of a good time. They are also a great way to share something about who we are, what we enjoy and where we live, depending on what you make.

How do I trade them?

When trading, you should approach the person with whom you wish to trade, introduce yourself, and ask if she would like to "SWAP." If a leader notices girls who are struggling, encourage them by setting an example with your own SWAPping. It's contagious!

How many SWAPS should we make?

Think in terms of how many you want to receive, and how long you want to be able to SWAP. If you make 10, you will receive 10. About 20 is a recommended number per girl, but it also depends on the event and how many attendees and much time is available. It is also recommended that each girl make her own individual SWAPs to help promote variety and to keep girls from often running into someone who already has "their" SWAP. Troops may also make SWAPs to express their unique group culture. The choice is up to the girls and their leaders.

SWAPping Etiquette:

- SWAPs for trades are carried *separately* from those you want to keep ("keeps" should be displayed on hat or bandanna for instance, and trades are best kept in a bag for quick SWAPping).
- It is nice if you give someone a SWAP even if they don't have one to SWAP in return, or if you see a girl who may be shy; it is good to offer her a SWAP as a gesture of friendliness.
- *It is rude to refuse to SWAP* with someone who asks. If you don't like the other person's SWAP, don't hurt feelings! but simply take it with a smile and give her one of yours anyway. If you already have one of that that kind, (maybe they were made as a troop), see if you can introduce that person to another one of your troop members to SWAP, or just go ahead SWAP anyway. That person is still meeting you and getting your SWAP.
- Try to make your SWAPs something that you would want to receive. Remember, it's supposed to be fun, not a competition.

Happy SWAPping!