



CONTACT:

Julie Somogyi, Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana
jsomogyi@girlscoutsgcnwi.org; 312-912-6336

Sondra Katzen, Chicago Zoological Society
sondra.katzen@czs.org; (708) 688-8351

Chicago Zoological Society Partners with Girl Scouts to Help Girls Reach Goals in Anniversary Year

Feb. 2, 2012 (CHICAGO, IL) – A partnership between Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana and the Chicago Zoological Society, which manages Brookfield Zoo, encourages people to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Girl Scouting, help girls reach their cookie goals and learn the facts about sustainable palm oil use, as well as other viable environmental practices.

Customers who support the Girl Scout Cookie program in 2012 will receive one free child's admission per paid adult admission when they bring five empty boxes of Girl Scout Cookies for recycling at Brookfield Zoo through Dec. 31, 2012.

Visitors to Brookfield Zoo are invited to learn more about reducing their environmental footprint and taking positive steps toward following more sustainable product practices.

"This year girls are learning about Girl Scouting's commitment to ensuring that its two licensed bakers use as little palm oil as possible, join the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and exclusively source sustainable palm oil from members of RSPO," said Jennifer Fredericks, vice president of product program for Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana.

The RSPO is an organization of growers, buyers, manufacturers, conservationists and interested parties who are striving to develop and follow best practices to ensure sustainability.

The Chicago Zoological Society is a conservation organization that strives to inspire conservation leadership by connecting people with wildlife and nature by providing year-round community-based outreach programs and educational opportunities for students, teachers, and the general public. Additionally, many of the zoo's special events such as Party for the Planet celebration and Ape Awareness Weekend feature activities that illustrate to guests of all ages that they can make a difference for wildlife through daily actions, including recycling, turning off the water when brushing their teeth, or becoming educated consumers when purchasing products made with sustainable ingredients.

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“We are thrilled to be partnering with Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana to raise awareness about the palm oil trade and its effect on Asian rain-forest inhabitants, especially orangutans,” said Stuart Strahl, president and CEO of the Chicago Zoological Society. “The Girl Scouts are excellent role models in encouraging people to make sound environmental choices in their daily lives that can make a difference.”

Girl Scout Cookies will be available for immediate purchase during site sales at hundreds of locations throughout the region during February and March. Customers are encouraged to visit www.girlscoutcookies.org to connect to local Girl Scouts who are selling cookies in their area. Customers have eight varieties from which to choose: Thank U Berry Munch, Samoas, Thin Mints, Trefoils, Tagalongs, Do-si-does, Dulce de Leche, and the new Savannah Smiles, which honors the birthplace of Girl Scouting in Savannah, Georgia.

Through the annual Girl Scout Cookie program, girls learn the basics of money management, product marketing, interacting with customers, and goal setting. Girls set cookie goals to support their chosen activities for the year, fund community service and leadership projects, attend summer camp, travel to destinations near and far and provide events for girls in their communities. All proceeds are used locally to support Girl Scouting.

Many local Girl Scouts also participate in the Gift of Caring program, a service project in which girls take orders from customers who wish to donate boxes of Girl Scout Cookies to organizations in their communities. For more information, visit www.girlscoutsgcnwi.org.

Girl Scout Cookie Program Background

It started in 1917 as a simple way for a group of Girl Scouts to finance their local activities. More than 90 years later, girls ages 5-17 engage in one of the nation’s premier financial literacy and entrepreneurship programs for girls. Participation ultimately furthers the Girl Scout Mission which is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Profits from the sale of each \$4 box of cookies help the council recruit and train new volunteers, update experienced volunteers, offer program events and outdoor experiences, maintain council properties; pay for materials and postage, provide support for nearly 87,000 girls, and offer financial assistance to girls from economically disadvantaged areas.

About Girl Scouts

Founded in 1912, Girl Scouts of the USA is the preeminent leadership development organization for girls with 3.4 million girl and adult members worldwide. Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana impacts the lives of nearly 87,000 girls and 24,000 adult members in 245 communities in six Illinois counties (Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kankakee, Lake, and Will) and four Indiana counties (Jasper, Lake, Newton, and Porter).

About the Chicago Zoological Society

The Chicago Zoological Society’s mission is to inspire conservation leadership by connecting people with wildlife and nature. Brookfield Zoo is known throughout the world for its innovative, naturalistic, multispecies exhibits and for its international role in animal population management and wildlife conservation. The Chicago Zoological Society is a private nonprofit organization that operates Brookfield Zoo on land owned by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. www.czs.org.

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