

We Have Taken Responsibility

From the closing remarks by Sondra Burnett, retiring President of the Northwest Georgia Girl Scout Council:

"I am so proud to be a part of this organization. Because we walk our talk. We are action oriented. We are value based. And we are committed to our mission. We have made a commitment . . . that Girl Scouts is and should be available to all girls. This organization and this Council in particular has taken responsibility. I am reminded of a poem for which I have taken a few liberties. Paraphrased, it goes like this:

We have taken responsibility for girls ...

- who sneak popsicles before supper
- who erase holes in math notebooks
- who can never find their shoes

And we have taken responsibility for those

- who can't bound down the street in a new pair of sneakers
- who never "counted potatoes"
- who were born in places we wouldn't be caught dead
- who never go to the circus
- who live in an x-rated world

We have taken responsibility for girls

- who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions
- who hugs us in a hurry and forget their lunch money
- who hug us and have no lunch money
- who wear our values as naturally as breathing
- and who learn and embrace our values as a way of becoming and being

We have taken responsibility for those

- who never get dessert
- who have no safe blanket to drag behind them
- who don't have any rooms to clean up
- whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser
- whose monsters are real

We have taken responsibility for girls

- who spend their allowance before Thursday
- who like ghost stories
- who shove dirty clothes (and everything else) under the bed
- who get visits from the tooth fairy
- who don't like to be kissed in front of the car pool
- who squirm in church or temple and scream on the phone
- whose tears we sometimes laugh at ... and whose smiles can make us cry

And we have taken responsibility for those

- whose nightmares come in the daytime
- who will eat anything and those who will eat everything (!)
- who have never seen a dentist
- who are spoiled by everyone
- who aren't spoiled by anyone
- who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep
- who live and move, but have no being

We have taken responsibility for those

- who want to be carried
- and for those who must,
- for those we never give up on and for those who don't get a second chance

- For those we smother ... and for those who will grab the hand of anybody kind enough to offer it

I'm so proud because I know we have, and we will continue, to offer our hand to them so that no girl is left behind because we did not act. Because we have taken responsibility, our girls too, will one day be responsible, caring, self-confident citizens ... not only able to survive but thrive.

Thank you for making this the experience of a lifetime. My life has been inextricably altered because of you. Thank you staff, volunteers, supporters, and donors, Board and Committee members and most importantly, thank you girls! While I'll no longer wield your gavel, I hope to forever remain in service to you and this stellar organization. Love ... Peace ... and May God Bless!"