



Making the Guiding World Turn Guide Supporters and Helpers

Unit Support Group, Tasmania | Sarah Hugen

Walk into any Girl Guide Unit on any night of the week and you will see parents and supporters dropping off their daughters, staying around to catch up and finding out what events are coming up. What is often not seen is the considerable behind the scenes work that many parents and friends of Girl Guides do, to keep Guiding available for girls.

Sarah Hugen is a perfect example of this. Having been a part of the Girl Guide community since 2007, Sarah knows how important it is to have dedicated volunteers for community organisations.

“I love being a part of a community organisation and have some friends in the Support Group of our local Unit. I know that volunteers who are committed and take an interest are hard to come by.”

Not only a part of the Girl Guide community, Sarah combines her two to three hours a month of Girl Guide

activity with commitments to the local Little Athletics club, her local Netball Association and her daughter’s High School.

Her first introduction to Girl Guides was watching her daughter’s Leader (Possum) working with the girls. “She was so calm and respected as a Leader, which I thought was great! She kept the girls engaged.” Sarah recalls that her daughter was happy as part of the Unit and over time Sarah became more involved. From helping the girls sell their Guide Biscuits door to door, through assisting with the financial accounts and updating the processes and procedures.



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“Hopefully my contribution shows other people that you don’t need to have a daughter in Girl Guides to be part of the organisation.”

Whilst Sarah’s daughter is not in Girl Guides any more, Sarah is still committed to ensuring that the programs that were available for her family, are available to others.

“It is nice to know that you are helping an organisation that needs help.” Sarah is currently the Secretary of the Unit managing the minutes and writing up the Unit newsletter once a month. Sarah is also the Unit’s biscuit coordinator – a job that she finds very easy to blend with her role as Secretary and previously Treasurer.

“There is more to life than what is going on with your life” says Sarah. Volunteering is getting harder these days – we have fundraisers and sausage sizzles and it is important to know that the Units and Halls need funds to keep the buildings going and the girls supported.”

“There is a big world out there and the world doesn’t work without people who care.”

Sarah speaks highly of the dedication and work of the local Unit Leaders and is clearly driven by seeing their motivation and energy. “The Leaders need our time to help Girl Guides to keep going – the parents and the working bees are important. The organisation can’t run without volunteers.”

Sarah recommends being part of the Girl Guide community to her friends and family and is always advocating for them to become more involved. Sarah speaks highly of the opportunities to become involved in Girl Guides as a Leader of adults.

“There is a range of activities that volunteers and parents can do for a Unit” she says. “It’s not only turning up every week to help out at a meeting (although that is really helpful!) You can be an office bearer on the Unit committee, write grants, and help out with hall maintenance and working bees. There is something for everyone.”

Sarah puts the role of volunteering in context: “With organisations such as Girl Guides and Little Athletics the members of the groups are children, so they rely on Leaders and parents to help keep them running, the children cannot do it by themselves.



This is in total contrast to other organisations who have adults for their members. By parents volunteering, they are setting a great example to their children and creating positive role models.”

She loves doing the sausage sizzle down at the local supermarket and sees it as an opportunity to catch up with friends and people you haven’t seen for a while.

Sarah has many memories with her fondest being most recently when the unit went abseiling. “We were like mountain goats getting there” she says. “It was amazing to watch the girls overcome their fears – they started at the top being frightened and got to the bottom and were pumped – then went back to the top and they did it again!”

“In our world, Sarah is just plain good soil” says Viv Rylance, State Executive Officer of Girl Guides Tasmania. “Our Units just wouldn’t survive if we didn’t have the teams of volunteers – parents and friends helping out.”

“They are amazing and I know that they don’t do it for the public accolades but words cannot express how much we value them”

“We know that members of our community are looking for ways to volunteer” said Jane Dent, State Commissioner of Girl Guides Tasmania. “There are so many ways that parents and friends can contribute to the good work of Girl Guiding in Australia and also have a great community based volunteering experience where they know they are contributing to a better future.”

“Being acknowledged is a bit embarrassing,” says Sarah. “It’s not a big thing for me. I do it because I like to volunteer and it is something that I enjoy doing”

Bravo Sarah



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