



AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS™

FAITH | SERVICE | FUN

**American Heritage Girls
Troop AZ1320
First Southern Baptist Church at Sahuaro Ranch
Troop Policy and Guidelines
2016/2017**

Troop Policy & Guidelines

AHG Mission Statement

Building women of integrity through service to God, family, community and country.

AHG Oath

"I promise to love God,
Cherish my family,
Honor my country,
And Serve in my community."

AHG Creed

As an American Heritage Girl, I promise to be:

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| <i>Compassionate</i> | Understanding others in fellowship, empathy, kindness, and caring. Respect others' opinions and emotions. |
| <i>Helpful</i> | Willingly serve others. |
| <i>Honest</i> | Always tell the truth and keep my promises. |
| <i>Loyal</i> | True to God, family, friends, community and country. |
| <i>Perseverant</i> | Continuing to strive toward a goal despite obstacles. |
| <i>Pure</i> | Keep my mind and body pure. |
| <i>Resourceful</i> | Wisely use my time, materials and talents. |
| <i>Respectful</i> | Honor my country, be obedient to those in authority, and courteous to all. |
| <i>Responsible</i> | Accountable for my own actions. Reliable in all situations. |
| <i>Reverent</i> | Faithful and honoring to God. Respectful to the beliefs of others. |

Statement of Faith

American Heritage Girls is a Christ-centered leadership and character development ministry. The following Statement of Faith applies to all American Heritage Girls Charter Organizations and Adult Members.

"We believe that there is one Triune God – Father; Jesus Christ, His one and only Son; and the Holy Spirit – Creator of the universe and eternally existent. We believe the Holy Scriptures (Old and New Testaments) to be the inspired and authoritative Word of God. We believe each person is created in His image for the purpose of communing with and worshipping God. We believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit, Who enables us to live Godly lives. We believe that each of us as an individual is called to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength; and collectively to love our neighbors as ourselves. We believe God calls us to lives of purity, service, stewardship, and integrity."

Clarity is further provided to the following terms:

Purity - God calls us to lives of holiness, being pure of heart, mind, word, and deed. We are to reserve sexual activity to the sanctity of marriage, a lifelong commitment before God between a man and a woman.

Service - God calls us to become responsible members of our community and the world through selfless acts that contribute to the welfare of others.

Stewardship - God calls us to use our God-given time, talents, and money wisely.

Integrity - God calls us to live moral lives that demonstrate an inward motivation to do what is right, regardless of the cost.

Girl Membership

Girl membership is defined as young women five (5) to eighteen (18) years of age who are registered and who meet all other qualifications prescribed in the policies of the Organization.

American Heritage Girls' Inclusion Policy states:

All biological girls of any color, creed, race, national origin and socioeconomic status who agree to live according to the standards of the AHG Oath and the AHG Creed are invited to be a member of American Heritage Girls.

- AHG unashamedly believes, teaches, and practices Biblical principles throughout its Program.
- AHG is committed not only to developing girls' character, but also to teaching girls how to apply the truths of God's Word to every aspect of life.

Helping AHG Girls Live a Life of Virtue

It is the expectation of AHG, Inc. that girl members not only subscribe to, but strive to live according to the values represented in the AHG Oath and Creed, to which they agreed when they became a member. With this expectation, it is also understood that, just like adults, girls face temptation and are not without sin. Because we all fall short from time to time, it is important that the AHG Troop remain a place of grace and truth. Girls, especially during their adolescent years, are trying to determine who they are and how their faith and the culture play into that identity. AHG can serve a critical role in guiding girls toward their identity in Christ. AHG is meant to be a ministry of transformation—a ministry which surrounds girls with godly adults that will offer them sound Biblical advice, encouragement, grace and truth. AHG should be a safe place for girls to navigate the confusion that is today's moral landscape.

When a girl falls short of living up to the AHG Oath and Creed, it is not a time for her immediate dismissal from the Troop. It is a time when a girl needs the Christ-centered program of AHG, her parents, her church and the faith-filled adults of her Troop the most. When a girl engages in behavior which contradicts the Oath or Creed, it is important that she understands her error and is given an opportunity to change. These behaviors might include, but are not limited to: gossip, bullying, stealing, sexual activity outside the context of marriage (opposite-sex or same-sex*), illegal use of drugs or alcohol, etc. When Troop Leadership becomes aware that a girl is engaging in such behavior, there are a number of steps that must precede dismissal from the program.

1. Depending on the level of severity of the behavior, the parents of the girl should be notified and included in the process. If the Charter Organization has policies regarding the behaviors being addressed, please refer to the Charter Organization for input, if agreeable to the parent. With parent approval, the trusted Unit Leader and/or Troop Shepherd plus one other adult (maintaining two-deep-leadership) should discuss their concerns with the girl in a loving manner. "Here is why we are concerned. Here is why this behavior contradicts the Oath/Creed." Share the Scriptural references regarding these behaviors. Girls should be given an opportunity to show remorse, repent and determine a plan for changed behavior. Accountability should be established in a manner which preserves confidentiality and promotes youth safety as described in AHG's KEYS to Child Safety Training.
2. If the girl member does *not* show remorse, does *not* agree to a plan of action, or repeats the behavior of concern, Troop Leadership should meet with the girl's parents/guardians as soon as possible, no matter how small the infraction. Troop Leadership should explain in a loving manner why the behavior is of concern; why it contradicts the AHG Oath/Creed; and what steps have been taken to assist the girl in addressing the issue. Following this meeting, girls should be given another opportunity to show remorse, repent and determine a plan for changed behavior. Accountability should be established in a manner which preserves confidentiality and promotes youth safety as described in AHG's KEYS to Child Safety Training.

3. If the girl member denies the behavior while the evidence is overwhelming, Troop Leadership must stand for truth and challenge the girl member to be truthful. Troop Leadership should explain that grace is available to all, but where truth cannot be found, grace will not be applied. If the girl member refuses to be truthful, then Troop Leadership should meet with her parents/guardians to explain the evidence, to describe the consequences that are available dependent upon the girl member's willingness/unwillingness to be truthful, and to request that the parents/guardians counsel their girl member. Troop Leadership should offer the parents/guardian and the girl member 24 to 48 hours to respond to the evidence and the possible consequences.
4. If the girl member continues to not accept responsibility for the behavior, does not show remorse, does not agree to a plan of action, or repeats the behavior of concern, Troop Leadership should again meet with the girl and her parents/guardians. At this meeting, discussions should be had around engaging a pastor, priest or other church leader within the girl's preferred denomination. Outside ministries that specialize in the issue at hand may also be engaged at this time. The object of this meeting is to again work on a plan of action in order to assist the girl in understanding her behavior, its consequences and work to overcome it. If the parents and girl understand the concern around the behavior and are willing to implement a plan for change, then the girl should be allowed to remain in the Troop. The Troop Volunteers are not expected to provide counsel, which is the job of the parents, but rather show support and acknowledgement of the worth of the girl.
5. If the above avenues have all been exhausted and the girl continues her behavior, refuses to recognize the behavior as contradictory to the Oath/Creed, and/or poses a threat to other girls in the Troop, she may be asked to terminate her membership in American Heritage Girls. The goal for every Troop should be to keep the girl in the Troop. The decision to ask a girl to leave a Troop should be one covered in prayer and discernment and in which counsel of the Charter Rep and the Member Services Coach is sought.

*Scripture addresses the issues of sin: homosexuality, adultery, fornication, lust, pornography, lying, stealing, etc. Sin is contrary to God's design and purposes (Romans 1:1, 1 Corinthians 6:1, 1 Timothy 1, and Leviticus 18). While AHG is well aware that the culture may promote various sins as natural and people are "born that way," AHG defers to the truth of Scripture that states that these behaviors are "sin" and an "abomination." AHG Leaders should communicate that God's grace extends to every form of sin when there is confession, repentance, and dependence on Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). As girls are maturing, there will be natural questions about same-gender attraction and the development of healthy relationships. Parents should also engage these matters with grace, truth, courage and understanding.

It is vital for the protection of the girls and Leaders, that "two-deep leadership" is maintained at all times. It is also important the girl/Leaders ratios be maintained.

Appropriate girl/Leader ratios are:

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|-------------|----------------------------------|
| Pathfinder | 6 girls per 1 registered leader |
| Tenderheart | 6 girls per 1 registered leader |
| Explorers | 8 girls per 1 registered leader |
| Pioneers | 10 girls per 1 registered leader |
| Patriots | 12 girls per 1 registered leader |

Levels may be broken into Squads according to size and the development stages of the girl members. It is very typical that the Tenderheart Level may be sub-divided into Squads based on grade level (i.e. 1st grade, 2nd and 3rd grade.) Pioneer and Patriot Levels may join together while the girls work on their age appropriate Program work, depending on the number of girls in each unit.

AHG Program

Our Troop provides a well-balanced Program that includes activities based on all six parts of the AHG Program.

Program Emphases

- Life Skill Enhancement
- Girl Leadership
- Developing Teamwork and Building Confidence
- Character Development
- Social Development
- Spiritual Development

Life Skill Enhancement

These experiences range in topic through AHG's six Frontiers: Heritage, Family Living, Arts, Outdoor Skills, Personal Well-Being, and Science Technology. The Badges are progressive so the girls will learn new skills at each Level, building on previous levels.

Badge Program- The Troop budgets for 3-4 Badges per girl to be implemented during Troop meetings. Unit Leaders help the girls plan their activities to revolve around their AHG Badge Requirements. If girls are absent from a Troop meeting where AHG Badge Requirements are being met, it is up to the girl member and/or parent to make sure she fulfills those requirements on her own time if she wants to receive the badge along with girls in her Unit. Girls may earn badges outside of the Troop setting. Summer months are a great opportunity for girls to earn badges in the Outdoor Skills Frontier as well as the other Frontiers. The individual must pay for all badges earned outside of the Troop meeting (\$3.25 each). AHG Badge Requirements earned outside of Troop meetings must be recorded and approved by the Unit Leader or Advancement Manager. Unit Leaders have the right to question any AHG Badge Requirements fulfilled outside of the Troop meeting. Girls will be required to bring a display specific to

the badge they earned outside of the Troop meeting or make a short presentation to the large group or their Unit at a scheduled time. Please set up this time with your Unit Leader. If there is a dispute regarding requirements, it will be brought to the attention of the Troop Board for rectification, after the Unit Leader and Advancement Managers have reviewed the situation and sought advice for a decision. All badges are ordered bi-annually through your Unit Leader. Individuals will be invoiced for their individual badges. Individuals may not purchase badges or insignia through the AHGstore.

Girl Leadership

Girl Leadership skills are encouraged at all Levels of AHG. AHG Troop AZ1320 will offer many leadership opportunities throughout the year. Through many successful experiences, leadership becomes a lifestyle to the AHG members. Some of these opportunities may include: Girl Leadership positions, Badge Requirements, and planning events for Level Awards.

Developing Teamwork and Building Confidence

It is our Troop's hope that the girls will take part in exciting outdoor opportunities.

Outdoor Experiences- Providing outdoor experiences to our Troop members is very important. Our Troop will sponsor or provide several opportunities annually for the girls. Please see the Special Event Calendar for specific information. From time to time, the Troop or Units will also make available overnight activities. Parent involvement is encouraged at all Levels, but is most essential for Kindergarten and 1st grade girls. Girl members that are in Kindergarten or 1st grade may not participate in extended overnight camping trips, but may participate in Unit/Troop sleepovers and day programs. Unit Leaders may request parent involvement for overnight activities.

Character Development

Girls develop character through community service and citizenship activities.

HUGS (Heritage Girls United Giving Service) is the service arm of American Heritage Girls. Community service is a key component of the AHG Program. Each Troop is asked to participate in at least three service projects a year. Units may do additional projects if there is interest from the girls. Girls earn Service Stars based on the number of service hours they log. All service projects completed at the Troop level will be logged by the Advancement Manager of their Unit. Girls may earn additional service hours outside of the Troop setting. Parents and girls will be notified through the Troop newsletter as to when to turn in those hours. Each girl will be supplied a *Service Hour Tally Sheet* at the beginning of the year to log personal hours of service. Unused service hours may be carried over from year to year until used. Each Advancement Chair will review all service hours and has the right to question service hours that do not fit within the service guidelines of American Heritage Girls. Any disputes on service will first be addressed by the Unit Leader and Advancement Manager.

If not resolved, it may be taken to the Troop Board for a final decision. In order for an act to be considered service in AHG, girls must not be reimbursed in any way. As we are called to love our neighbor, AHG does not count family service as service hours. For those older girls participating in long term mission trips, please consult with your Unit Leader as to what can be counted on a mission trip prior to submitting those hours. Only hours “serving” may be counted. Preparation time and planning time may not be counted. Please refer to page 41 of the Girl Handbook for more information.

Social Development

Social activities for girls are an integral and important part of AHG. The Troop offers many activities for girls and their families. These events have a separate charge and are not included in the Troop budget. It is important that girls try to attend 2-3 events per year in order to earn their Level Award at the end of their Level. The Troop will provide a Special Event Activities Calendar at the beginning of the year to help with setting your calendar.

Spiritual Development

Each girl is encouraged through the AHG Program to grow her faith and relationship with God. Whether through meeting prayer, Unit Bible studies, or modeling Christ-like behavior, AHG Volunteers can have an eternal impact on the lives of girls. Each AHG Troop has a special Troop Shepherd who seeks to get to know each girl and pray for each girl. Girls at all Levels are encouraged to participate in the AHG Religious Award Program. Our Troop also emphasizes the value of the Religious Recognition Program offered to Protestant girls through PRAY and to the Catholic girls through the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministries.

Uniforms

The AHG Official Uniform is to be worn to all meetings and ceremonies. It can be worn to service projects, fundraising activities and Troop activities that do not require more casual dress. While the girls are in uniform they are to be very conscious of the fact that they are representing AHG and the Charter Organization and making lasting impressions on those around them. AHG Class B T-shirts and spirit wear can be purchased through the AHG online store at americanheritagegirls.org/store/. AHG Class B T-shirts or Troop spirit wear can be worn, when appropriate, to AHG activities that are more casual in nature or an outdoor type event.

The AHG Official Girl & Adult Uniforms consist of the following items:



Pathfinder

AHG Pathfinder T-shirt
AHG Necklace Kit
Navy skirt, skort, pants, capris or modest shorts



Tenderheart

AHG Red Vest
Blue Neckerchief
AHG Polo Shirt, white
Navy skirt, skort, pants, capris or modest shorts



Explorer

AHG Blue Vest
Red Neckerchief
AHG Polo Shirt, white
Navy or Khaki skirt, skort, pants, capris or modest shorts



Pioneer

AHG Blue Sash
AHG Polo Shirt, White
Khaki or Navy pants, capris, skirt or modest shorts



Patriot

AHG Blue Sash
AHG Polo Shirt, Red
Khaki or Navy pants, capris, skirt or modest shorts



Registered Adult Member

AHG Polo Shirt, Blue or Red
Khaki, black or navy pants, skirt, capris or modest shorts
AHG Registered Adult Member Lanyard

It is our desire that requiring a girl to wear a uniform should in no way hinder her from joining the organization. If obtaining an AHG Official Uniform for your daughter is difficult, please speak with the Uniform Manager or Troop Coordinator about your need. For any concerns regarding uniforms please see the AHG Uniform FAQ.

Purchasing Girl Uniforms

AHG Official Uniform packages may be purchased individually at the AHGstore or through the Troop. AHGstore also carries the official polos for girls and leaders and AHG Class B T-shirts. Orders may be placed at the Parent's Registration Night or by contacting the Troop Coordinator. For placement of the badges and insignia on vests and sashes, please refer to the American Heritage Girl Handbook on pages 26 and 27.

Leader's Uniforms/Adult Recognition

New Unit Leaders will receive the AHG Membership Pin at the annual Joining Award ceremony. The AHG Membership Pin is to be worn on the right lapel. Unit Leaders also may earn the Gem of a Leader Pin (at 2, 4, 6, or 8 years of service) and the Religious Award Mentor Pin which may be placed on the AHG official polo as well. See the Leader Handbook for placement.

AHGstore

The AHGstore is a convenient way for parents and leaders to order the Official AHG Uniform, AHG Class B T-shirts spirit wear, gifts and collectibles.

Awards and Recognition

Joining Award

This is the first award an American Heritage Girl (except for a Pathfinder, whose first award is the Fanny Crosby) earns, despite her age. The Joining Award can be earned within a Troop/Unit or independently. If a girl joins, and the majority of her Troop has already earned their Joining Award, her Unit Leader, along with the parent, can assist the girl in completing the requirements within the first quarter of her membership. New members will need to complete the Joining Award section in the Girl Handbook and have the Unit Leader sign off on the requirements before the Joining Award may be presented. All girls must wear their "Official" Uniform to receive the Joining Award. Girls may be recognized at the mid-year or end of year ceremony or may be recognized during a Troop meeting flag ceremony.

Sports Pins

AHG hopes that this Program will encourage life-long health through exercise. Sports Pins are designed to introduce AHG Members to both group and individual sports and to encourage teamwork, respect for authority, goal setting and good sportsmanship. Girls can work together on these pins or can participate individually through community and church teams or clubs. Parents can find Sports Pin Requirements on pages 341-356 of the AHG Girl Handbook and pages 69-81 of the Girl Handbook Supplement.

Level Awards

Level Awards are available at all Levels of AHG. It is highly recommended that each girl earn her Level Award, however, she is not required to earn it in order to continue in the AHG Program. The steps towards the Level Awards include badge work, leadership opportunities, special event participation and service. This award is earned at the end of each Level. Because earning Level Awards usually takes work over a couple of years, girls joining AHG in the 3rd or 6th grade may choose to earn their Level Awards; however, parent involvement outside of regular Troop Meetings may be needed to complete necessary work. Girls receiving their Level Awards will need to participate in a Board of Review. Once the girl has participated in her Board of Review and she has been approved to receive her Level Award, she will receive this recognition at the End of Year Recognition Ceremony. The Level Award Tracking Sheets can be found in the Girl Handbook on pages 64-67.

Board of Review

Each girl member completing her Level Award must participate in a Board of Review, at the end of their Level, and prior to the End of Year Recognition Ceremony. The purpose of a Board of Review is to make sure the American Heritage girl has completed all of her requirements for her Level Award. The Board of Review provides the girls with the opportunity to develop and practice skills needed in an interview situation and is an opportunity for the girl to review her accomplishments. Unit Leaders will assist girls with preparing for their Board of Review. Typically the Board of Review will take place in late spring. The Board of Review will be offered during a regular Troop meeting and girls will be notified prior to the meeting of their required attendance. Girls must be dressed in full Uniform with badges and insignia. Girls should wear the Official AHG Uniform appropriate to their level.

Award Ceremonies

The Troop plans two or three Award Ceremonies per year so those girls may receive their Badges, Joining Awards, Level Awards, Service and Religious Recognitions. You will receive a calendar in the fall for all of these important dates.

- Joining Award Ceremony (or Dedication ceremony) when girls are ready to receive their Joining Awards
- Mid-year ceremony to recognize achievements from the Fall
- End of Year Court of Awards Ceremony where the remaining badges, service starts, Level Awards, and other achievements may be recognized

Award Ceremonies are open to parents, family and relatives to attend. It is important to the girls that they have at least one parent/family member in attendance for these Award Ceremonies. If a girl is unable to attend the ceremony, her recognition will be given to her during an opening ceremony at the next available Troop meeting. When scheduling your family calendar, please make these ceremonies a priority.

Additional Award Opportunities

Presidential Service Award

The Presidential Service Award was put in place to honor Americans that use their time, energy, talents, and compassion for others to make a difference in the world through volunteering. To earn an award, individuals, families and groups must keep a record of volunteer activities and hours served. This Record of Service may be kept as a diary or calendar in your Service Hour Tally Sheet, or tracked online using the USA Freedom Corps Record of Service. Individuals must submit their records along with the Presidential Volunteer Service Award Order Form to “certifying organizations” that will review and verify their records and order and distribute the award. American Heritage Girls is a “certifying organization” registered with the President’s Volunteer Service Awards. To be recognized, service activities should meet national or community needs in the areas of youth achievement, parks and open spaces, healthy communities, and public safety and emergency response. Troop Leaders can find more information about the Presidential Service Award by visiting AHGsource.

Stars & Stripes

Patriot girls may go above and beyond and earn American Heritage Girls’ highest recognition, the Stars & Stripes Award. Girls must have earned the Dolley Madison Level Award in order to earn the Stars & Stripes Award. The award honors girls who epitomize the Oath, Creed, and mission of AHG. Stars & Stripes incorporates badges, service, and leadership. This award takes a great deal of hard work, and may take a few years to achieve. [Patriot girls interested in earning the Stars & Stripes Award should ask their Unit Leader to go to the AHGsource and locate more information about the Stars & Stripes process.]

Finances

Member Costs

The following is a breakdown of initial and annual costs. (Please note these costs are subject to change annually.)

Girl National Registration \$26.00 (annual) AHG Membership Registration; \$60 “sister cap”

Troop Dues \$60.00 (annual) – Helps cover Troop budget

Program Support Fee \$20.00 (annual) per girl member, to be covered with fundraising

Fundraising Obligation See Fundraising Policy and guidelines below. All girls are expected to participate in the Fundraising Activities of the Troop.

Adult Member Registration \$26.00 (annual) – Annual membership registration with AHG, Inc.

Girl Handbook \$18.00 (one time purchase)

Special Events (optional) Additional charges vary. Registration forms delivered through the Troop and in the mail. See special event calendar.

Troop Dues

Troop dues is \$60.00 annually, collected bi-annually in October and in February. The Troop Board annually determines the amount of “dues” to be assessed each girl member to operate a Troop Budget. This budget includes badges, unit supplies, camping supplies, refreshments for ceremonies, crafts and school supplies, girl and leader recognitions, general office supplies (copies etc.), and charter fee. A Troop Budget is given annually to parents at the beginning of the Program Year for approval. The Troop’s source of income is from dues and fundraising by all its members. If you should have any questions regarding the Troop Budget, please contact the Troop Coordinator.

Annual Stewardship Campaign (ASC)

The Annual Stewardship Campaign is an annual family donation drive. Each registered family receives information about this stewardship campaign and how to participate. Each Troop is asked to promote and encourage Troop Family participation, as this campaign is crucial to the health and growth of the American Heritage Girls ministry.

Program Support Fee

American Heritage Girls spends far more than \$26 per member annually to provide the AHG Program. The annual registration fee covers the processing of member registrations, background checks for adult members, and group liability coverage provided for both girl and adult members. The remaining cost to provide the AHG Program comes from the assessment of the Program Support Fee which is \$20 per registered girl paid to AHG, Inc. annually by the Troop. (This fee is assessed annually during the Troop’s year 2 and after). The Program Support Fee covers the development of new badges and Program relationships, the maintenance of AHG’s website and AHGconnect online registration system, as well as the Member Services provided each Troop through the AHG, Inc. office. The recommended way to raise this money is through fundraising.

Fundraising Policy

Fundraising is an essential activity for the success of a Troop. Funds earned support the *Troop Budget*, provide for the AHG Program Support Fee obligation and enable girls and their families to lessen the out of pocket costs of the Program. Therefore, each American Heritage girl member is expected to participate in this effort. Participation in fundraising provides an intrinsic value to each girl member. She will develop her leadership skills and marketing experience as well as life skill development.

Each year, the Troop Board reviews the *Troop Budget* and sets the fundraising goals for the coming year. The Troop may fundraise as a whole for the operational budget and/or Units may raise funds for a particular project or trip. AHG's fundraising guidelines allow for a Troop to fundraise up to three times per year. It is the goal of the Troop Board to keep fundraising to a minimum. If girl goals are met with the first fundraiser of the year, additional fundraisers may not be needed. All families will be notified of the financial status of the Troop on a regular basis.

The troop will participate in a Fall Troop Fundraiser. All girls are expected to participate and assist in raising funds for the troop. Girls are expected to earn a minimum of \$30.00 for the troop. A "buy-out" option is available per-girl for families. If fundraising goals are met during the Fall Troop Fundraiser, no further troop fundraisers will be held. If fundraising goals are not met, a Spring Troop Fundraiser will be added. Other fundraisers may occur during the year which the girls can participate in on a voluntary basis, the funds from which will be awarded directly to the girl for AHG use (i.e. summer camp, registration and dues, special events, etc.). *Girls must participate in the Fall Troop Fundraiser to participate in optional fundraisers.* American Heritage Girls has been granted a 501(c)3 -public charity status. Fundraising using a girl account system is considered a private benefit (inurement) and not acceptable for a public charity. Private benefit (Girl Accounts) creates a risk for both American Heritage Girls and the Charter Organization. The IRS could decide that either group is in violation of its public charity status and that all fundraising is taxable.

Benevolence Funds

Benevolence funds are available from time to time for Program related issues on a case by case study. Please submit your request in writing to your Troop Coordinator for Troop Board approval. Benevolence Funds are typically not available until after the fall fundraiser is complete. Also the granting of funds from the Benevolence Fund is not a total coverage benefit, but an assist to aid in the specified need. If a family is granted funds, a portion of the event expense is expected to be paid by the individual.

Members must participate in the Fall Troop Fundraiser to seek benevolence funds.

Meeting Procedures

Permission Slips

When girls will be participating in a field trip or activity that requires transportation outside of the Troop meeting, they must have a permission slip. If the girl's parent is attending and driving, that girl does not need to have a permission slip with her. If a girl forgets the permission slip, she will not be able to attend. Troop leaders are not authorized to take girls without a permission slip. Permission slips are given out at least one meeting prior to the activity.

Troop Trips

A *Troop Trip Notification Form* must be completed for all Troop/Unit/Squad trips that are planning a camping trip or a trip that exceeds 75 miles away from the Charter Organization. All trips must be approved by the Charter Representative and reviewed by the AHG, Inc. office at least three weeks prior to the activity. Appropriate levels of certified First Aid/CPR adults must be present at all activities of the Troop. Along with this form Troops must also submit a roster of all girls and adults that will be attending this activity. Any activity that involves a High Risk Activity (horseback riding, rappelling, canoeing, etc.) must have Charter Representative approval prior to the activity and a *High Adventure Notification Form* must be completed and sent to the AHG, Inc. office for review at least three weeks prior to the activity.

Girl or adult members participating in a High Adventure activity (see health and safety section of Troop Coordinator & Unit Leader Handbooks), must complete *the High Adventure Health and Medical Form* which includes a doctor's signature. These must be provided before leaving for the activity. It is the responsibility of the family to make sure that this information is provided. See your Unit Leader for the necessary forms. High Adventure Health and Medical Forms are good for one year.

Transportation for Troop Activities

All potential drivers for Troop activities must complete a "Troop Transport Form," verifying auto insurance, seatbelts and driver's license. This form must be on file with the Troop Coordinator and the Unit Leader, in charge of the activity. Typically these forms are available for completion at the Parent/Girl Registration Night. Parents choosing not to complete this form may not transport girls other than their own daughter on a Troop-related activity. This form must be updated annually.

Appropriate girl/Leader ratios and two-deep leadership should be present during transportation. All drivers must be licensed and at least 21 years of age. The AHG Troop Board/Leadership reserves the right to deny a driver based on automobile safety or driving record. The driver's motor vehicle record may be randomly checked.

When a Unit/Squad of the Troop travels for an activity of the Troop, each car will be provided with a Troop Trip packet, directions, maps, and contact information. Vehicles traveling more than 75 miles should each have a first-aid kit available.

Release of Troop Members

If a parent is unable to provide transportation to/from a Troop meeting, a written note is expected to be given to the Troop Coordinator prior to the beginning of the meeting. No verbal approval accepted.

Inclement Weather Cancellation

A Troop meeting may be cancelled by the Troop Coordinator if there is inclement weather. The final determination to cancel a troop meeting will be made by the Troop Coordinator and Unit Leaders. If a Troop

meeting is cancelled, Unit Leaders will notify all Troop members, by telephone, of the cancellation. A Troop meeting or Unit meeting may also be cancelled if 50% of its members are absent due to illness. Again, if there is a Unit meeting cancellation, the Unit Leader will notify the Troop Coordinator and Unit members of such cancellation. If both Unit Leaders are unable to attend a meeting and no adult volunteers are able to assist, that Unit meeting may also be cancelled or rescheduled for another date and time. It is up to the Unit Leader as to how the unit will function under an emergency situation.

Girl Visitors

From time to time, girls may like to invite a friend to visit a Troop meeting. The following procedure must be followed when inviting a guest(s):

1. The Troop Coordinator and Unit Leader should be notified at least one week in advance of a girl visit.
2. Pathfinder and 1st and 2nd grade Tenderheart parents must accompany the girl and remain with the girl during the Troop meeting or activity.
3. If a parent is unable to attend, a permission slip should be submitted with vital parent information provided. The Troop Coordinator should be notified if a parent is not attending, explaining the lack of parental attendance.
4. A new girl and their parent may visit **one** time before registering as a Troop member.
5. All non-member "visitors" attending a "Bring a Friend" Activity sponsored by the Troop must provide a completed permission slip with emergency contact information.
6. All other visitation situations must be communicated with the Troop Coordinator in advance.

Sibling Policy

AHG Troop Leadership recognizes the fact that parents may sometimes need to bring children who are not AHG participants to Troop meetings and events. This is permissible provided the parents strictly adhered to following rules:

1. Children must remain at their parent's side, or at the side of an adult designated by the child's parent, at all times during the meeting or activity. Children must never be unattended.
2. Children may not be unsupervised in the hallways at any time.
3. Siblings may not participate in AHG activities, as this may create logistical problems for those organizing the meetings and it may cause distractions.
4. Parents are to remove disruptive children.
5. Any Leader taking an active role in a meeting is to make arrangements with another adult to supervise her non-AHG children.

Health & Safety

Knife Policy

Knives can be an important and exciting piece of equipment for outdoor adventures, but they also bring with them an inherent increased risk. Knives may only be brought to an AHG activity when deemed appropriate by chaperoning AHG Adult Leaders and included on a pack list for the AHG activity. For activities when knives (or other equipment, such as cell phones, electronic devices, etc.) are not appropriate, they should be included on the activity pack list under a “do not bring/leave at home” category. If pocket knives will be permitted at a Troop activity, Troop Leadership must train girls about safe and appropriate use of a pocket knife.

AHG Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco and Firearm Policy

As the use of alcohol and drugs has been proven to be a significant health hazard, they are not permitted at any AHG function or activity. Tobacco has also been proven to pose serious health risks. Since the adult leaders serve as examples for the girl members, smoking is not allowed in the presence of girls at AHG activities or events. Use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco by an AHG member should be reported to the girl's parents. Use of alcohol, drugs or tobacco by an AHG adult member during an AHG event should be referred to the Charter Organization Representative. Persons using or possessing firearms must comply with all local, state and federal laws during all AHG activities.

Electronics Policy

Mobile phones, beepers, pagers, or any other related electronic communication devices are not to be turned on or visible during meeting or activity time. Please consult with your Unit Leader or Troop Coordinator for permission to call out to a parent or guardian when needed. Other electronic devices, music players, gaming systems etc. are not to be brought to Troop meetings or activities. Any photos taken during Troop activities may not be posted online or passed along in emails without the direct consent (including a signed media release,) of all families included.

Administration of Medication Policy

1. AHG members are discouraged from taking medication at AHG events unless absolutely necessary.
2. No AHG girl member is allowed to self-medicate while participating in an AHG event. Exceptions include inhalers and EpiPens, which may be kept on a girl's person for emergency use. Parents must indicate in writing that the girl is in possession of this medication and possesses the knowledge and ability to administer.

3. The AHG Unit Leader fulfilling the Troop Health and Safety Lead role can accept the responsibility of medicating or making sure an AHG member takes the necessary medication at the appropriate time. The Unit Leader must first receive a completed medical form and *Request for Medication Administration Form*.
4. AHG policy does not mandate, nor encourage, the Unit Leader to dispense medication. If a Leader is uncomfortable administering medications, efforts should be made to make it possible for the girl to still attend the function. If all ideas are exhausted with no resolve, in an effort to keep the AHG Program available to all girls, please contact your Member Services Coach to further problem solve.
5. No AHG girls may bring over-the-counter medications for self-administration. Over-the-counter medications may be administered by the Health and Safety Lead on an as-needed basis. Parents must include these over-the-counter medications on the *Request for Medication Administration Form*. These are kept in the possession of the Health and Safety Lead for the duration of the event.
6. Administration of all medication will be done per the instructions provided on *the Request for Medication Administration Form*.

Sick Policy

Your daughter should be 24 hours fever-free in order to attend any AHG event. Any girl who has an unknown rash will be unable to stay for a meeting. If any medication must be given during an event, the request for Administration of Medication must be provided to the Unit Leader before the event. A First-Aid and CPR certified adult will be present at all activities. The Troop has a first-aid kit at all meetings and activities. Each girl's health and medical information will always be readily available at all meetings.

Troop Communication

Emergency Numbers – if you have an emergency and need to contact your daughter during a meeting, call the Troop Coordinator's cell phone at (480) 353-8357 or Vice Coordinator's cell phone at (480) 285-4170.

E-Mail – this is our PRIMARY form of communication. Troop e-mails will typically be sent out the week prior to a meeting. You may receive updates from your Unit Leader, Troop Coordinator and as appropriate from your Troop Treasurer. Troop email address is ahgaz1320@gmail.com

Website – the Troop website is www.ahgaz1320.wix.com/az1320 . The website will be updated weekly to let parents know what is happening in the troop as well in the individual units. All pages within the website are password protected, except the home page, for the safety of the girls.

Troop Newsletter – The Troop will publish a newsletter on a monthly basis of upcoming events, activities and reports on events that have occurred. Newsletters will be distributed to families on the 1st meeting of each month and will be available on the troop website as well under the Troop Business page.

Special Event Announcement Flyers – These will be emailed or handed out at Troop meetings to keep parents informed of current activities. Most special events have deadlines. Payment and reservation form will be due on a particular due date.

Parent Responsibilities

The girls should be at the meetings and events in the required uniform; they should arrive before the starting time and after a visit to the bathroom. Parents are also required to obtain information at check-in for upcoming events, monitor e-mails and make sure the girls remember to bring their AHG Handbooks or other necessary information to each meeting.

Parent Participation Pledge

Providing a quality Program for girl members requires a commitment from all families involved. Each family must agree to actively participate in the Troop to ensure the success of the group as a whole. Due to various circumstances, some families may need to complete their service outside of regular meeting times; some families can better complete their service during meetings, while others will do a blend of both. It is an important priority to fill position vacancies and delegate work appropriately to insure a fulfilling experience for all.

Volunteer Position Selection Based on Gifts

American Heritage Girls is a family-supported Program that encourages both girl and adult involvement. Our Troop will benefit most when we can utilize gifts from all our members. We, the Board Members of AHG Troop AZ1320, recognize that each of you has been given different gifts by God and is called to use these gifts for His glory. Although we have been very blessed with many wonderful volunteers who have given their time and talent, we are in need of more. Our Troop cannot exist without those who give themselves for others. Volunteering for a position should be done with discernment. Prayer and ones' circumstance in life should be weighed when considering a position within the Troop. Please do not think that if you are unable to volunteer that your daughter will not be able to participate with our Troop, but we do ask that you pray for guidance in helping our Troop in any way possible. The following Spiritual Gift list may help you determine what position you may be called to volunteer for:

Your participation is vital to our success. An AHG Troop Board member will be in contact with you as to the position for which you were selected and provide you a job description and time table for the selected position. AHG Troop AZ1320 thanks you for helping enhance the lives of these young girls through your participation in the Parent Participation Pledge

Conflict Resolution

Steps to Conflict Resolution

1) Seek Biblical guidance- humble yourself- The Bible addresses conflict consistently. Some verses that you may reflect upon include:

Galatians 6:1 “Brethren even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

Colossians 3:12 “And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience bearing with one another and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone, just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.”

2) Understand the uniqueness of each volunteer- Identifying personality traits, spiritual gifts and preferred management styles will help the Coordinator understand the motivators each Volunteer possesses. Most conflict is a result of a lack of understanding. The conflict may arise from a lack of understanding of the personality of the volunteer, a lack of understanding of a process or a lack of understanding of the “why” behind the “what.”

3) Honor the feelings of each volunteer- Their concerns are real to them, whether you feel they were right or not. Seeking to truly understand their reasons and perspective is key to successful conflict resolution. Helping each other understand perspective, but reiterating the concerns of another, honors the Volunteer and helps you know that you have an understanding of their feelings. Start your conversation with, “Help me understand....” and remember not to be so busy trying to be understood as to understand.

4) Retrace the Loop- As mentioned earlier most conflict comes from a lack of understanding. Determine how this lack of understanding came to be.

5) Deal with the conflict in a timely manner- Allowing conflict to fester only makes it worse. Using the Biblical approach found in Matthew 18, meet with the person who has the conflict with you as soon as possible.

6) Do not let the conflict steal your joy of serving- Nothing will burn out a Volunteer quicker than unresolved or continued conflict. Pray for the armor of God to surround you and take control of the situation. Remember you cannot make others do what you want them to do; you can only make choices to which others respond and create an environment where others can make choices, too.

Conflict Management Strategy: LOVE

L – Look for the good. It takes a special effort to look for the Good and not the Bad. Assume good intentions. Love is Kind. Love Hopes.

O – Only talk to people who are related to the problem and will be able to help solve the problem. Otherwise, it is gossip and destructive. Love always protects.

V – Value one another. Christ did! He gave His life for each of us. Surely we can hold our tongues and communicate in love with each other. Love leads to Trust.

E – Enjoy the differences. God made each of us unique. We all have different talents, gifts, and abilities. None of us do things the same way. Love is Patient.

Keep in mind; it is the goal of the Troop to resolve all conflict. However, if the conflict cannot be resolved amicably, the adult and/or girl involved may be asked to leave the Troop or step down in leadership, if applicable.

Suggestion Policy

The Troop Board welcomes all constructive suggestions for improvement. Suggestions should describe the problem and recommend a solution. They are to be submitted to the Troop Board or Unit Leader by email or mail. All complaints and concerns must be signed in order to be reviewed. Thinking through the problem and coming up with a possible solution allows criticism to be constructive. If you are emotionally upset about something, it is advisable to take time to pray and weigh options before addressing the concern with the Troop Board or Unit Leader. If you're unable to find a solution, the process may lead you to the realization that the Troop is handling the situation in the best way possible--there may not be a better way to do it. The Troop Board will consider your suggestion and implement the changes if deemed beneficial to the entire AHG Program.

Parent/Guardian Signature Page

Parents please review and approve our Troop's Policy Handbook and Guidelines. Indicate below your review and approval of the following documents, sign and date this form. Once completed, tear off this back page and return to either the Troop Coordinator or a Troop Ministry Team member by the first Troop meeting.

- ☐ I have reviewed and approved the AHG AZ1320 Troop Policy Handbook for the 2016-2017 Program year and agree to adhere to Troop Policies and the guidelines contained therein.
- ☐ I agree to actively participate in the Troop and to ensure the success of the Troop as a whole.
- ☐ I have reviewed and approved the Troop Budget.

Preferred Communication Method (check all that apply):

Outside of information provided in family folders at Troop meetings, please indicate below the way in which you would like the Troop to communicate information to you.

☐ Email: _____

☐ Phone: _____

☐ Mail: _____

SIGNATURE:

Parent/Guardian Name (please print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____