

WESTOVER COMPOSITE SQUADRON ASSISTS GIRLS SCOUTS WITH BULK COOKIE DELIVERY

On Saturday February 27, 2010 Civil Air Patrol cadets with Girls Scouts from the Central and Western Massachusetts Council working together moved two trailer loads of Girl Scout Cookies, an estimated 600,000 boxes in four hours at a location in West Springfield Massachusetts.

Civil Air Patrol volunteers participating included:

Adult/Senior Members:

LTC Glenda Belden

1LT Stephen Edelman

CAPT Claire Belden

Cadet Members:

Ashley St Pierre

Jason St Pierre

Amber Hoxie

Benjamin Fay

In mid December individual Girl Scouts begin taking orders for cookies from their families, friends and neighbors. Those orders are compiled at the troop level and the combined orders of all the troops are placed with the cookie company. The cookies are baked, packaged and delivered to the Council. Then in a system that is so simple yet requires much planning, organization and coordination the cookies are transferred from warehouse to trailers to the troop leaders waiting cars. That's where we come in.

Since the beginning seven years ago when Girl Scouts first implemented this delivery system, Civil Air Patrol cadets have been there. The process requires lots of volunteers but only for a few hours. LTC Glenda Belden, CAP, a Girl Scout for twenty-five years, and the Cookie Sale Manager for East Springfield has from the beginning asked CAP cadets for their help. It's a good partnership as CAP cadets can earn service hours, and they are rewarded with a pizza party after. The cadets wear their BDU's and that sparks questions about the organization from the Girl Scouts, which can be a great recruitment tool. To date only Westover Composite Squadron has been involved, but if this delivery method is accepted by more Girl Scout Councils it could become more wide spread.

The process is simple. The trailers are parked generally in a straight line and the doors are opened on the sides of each. As the cars arrive an order sheet is taped to the outside of each vehicle with the total number of cases of each kind of cookie. Rear doors or trunks are opened and the driver stays in their cars. As a vehicle drives by it stops at each variety of cookies only long enough to have the order placed in the car by volunteers who count while they load. At the end of the line the driver signs a receipt and they're off to deliver their cookies to the individual girls. This system is vastly different than the way it used to be done. Trucks would be loaded and drive to individual locations that are in service unit areas. The truck would be unloaded and the Unit Cookie Manager would

then break down the cookies into troop orders. Troops would then go there to pick up their orders and I do mean pick up, usually from the garage floor. This delivery method is more fuel efficient as trucks just park the trailers, usually at a location near the warehouse. The time saved is considerable and the Girl Scouts can make new friends in CAP.