

Beyond Ziploc Baggies.....

Creative Ceremonies – Beyond the Ziploc Bag
Collection of suggestions taken from our members

From: sisblh@gwunix5.gwu.edu (Barbara Harner)

My two favorite (though probably not very original) ways are to (1) staple them all onto a wide ribbon with a pin at the top so the ribbon can be fastened to the vest/sash, and (2) stapled directly onto the vest/sash so parent knows exactly where to sew it! The latter takes a good stapler (one of those little wimpy ones won't work) but the girls liked it the last time we did it this way. Barbara

From: pepper_49@hotmail.com (Joyce Aldred)

Here is an idea I have used to present badges to a troop of Junior Girl Scouts. Get one of those straw wreaths (one for each girl) wrap the wreath in fabric; you can have the girls bring in fabric they like. It takes about 1/2 yard. If there is material left over a bow can be added. Use straight pins to attach the badges to the wreath. The size of the wreath depends on how many badges they have earned. Also, cut out of poster board a sash the correct color and attach the patches/badges on them. Joyce

From: time4you_time4me@hotmail.com (Cynthia Sattizahn)

We made trefoil shapes out of poster board as a troop - tied it into GS traditions. Each girl made one. At a C of A, the patches were attached with double-stick tape. Simple, but eye catching. YSIS, Cindy S. Downingtown, PA

From: saschneider@cmsu1.cmsu.edu (SHELIA SCHNEIDER)

Last year I did several great ideas for handing out patches and badges to my Girl Scout Junior troop. We studied Egypt all year as our country for Thinking Day so I made pyramids with poster board and had the badges and patches inside of it. At our year end bridging/court of awards we had earned our Sign of the Satellite so I did a shooting star. The star part had everything that went on the front of the vest/sash and the shooting part had all of their patches. Our girls loved neon green and yellow so I did the stars in those colors.

Shelia Schneider, Jr Leader, Council Trainer, Whiteman AFB, MO, Mid-Continent Council

From: JFGman

We always give out Try Its earned the first half of the year at our annual Christmas Party. In the past I have put them little stockings, and last year I put them in a Christmas card. Diane/Florida Brownie Troop 3rd year

From: kyoho@greenbelt.com (Karen Lee Yoho)

When I was a Junior Leader, I tried to theme my end-of-the-year recognitions. One year it was gardening and I gave girls small bags of potpourri and the adults these real neat garden glove memo pads for lending me a hand with our garden! (ha-ha) I stapled the girl's recognitions they earned since the last presentation on a themed cotton ribbon 3-4 inches wide (the kind you use for wreath bows) and cut nice on the bottom. I know many parents don't get around to sewing the badges and patches for a few months, so this long ribbon was sure not to get lost in the shuffle during the summer months. I guess you could even put a magnetic strip on it so it could be hung on the fridge! I have used sunflower, daisy (always appropriate), hats, etc., ribbon. Frank's usually has it on sale, so I just bought a few bolts.

Karen Yoho, Nation's Capital

From: gscritter@mediaone.net (Ann)

One of the girl's favorites when they were brownies - I got pinwheels and attached streamers too it and on each streamer was a try it or patch. I have also made chocolate kiss roses and attached to each leaf a JR badge. I bought needlework ornament start frames and last year when my girls earned their leadership pin I covered the cardboard with fabric and put the leadership in the center and then from the GS Junior green and GS Cadette blue ribbons I attached badges and patches. When Walgreen's had their sidewalk sale I picked up 10 for a \$1 little crystal plastic boxes - they are all different shapes and I put their badges in that one year. This year I was thinking of using those big balloons and putting the badges inside of the balloon then blowing hem up with a helium tank. Should be a hoot watching those girls try and figure out how to get the badges out! Ann

From: EMRoyer

I used to present the badges to the girls (Juniors) during their meeting time a couple of times a year. I found that this was much more tangible to the girls -- they didn't earn something in Sept and not have it to wear until May. Also, helped to make other girls more aware of things they had "almost" completed and encouraged them to get the final requirement done.

At the end of the year during our "awards program," I would present each girl a ribbon with small cards attached saying the name of the badge or patch the girl had received and verbally acknowledge her accomplishments. Some ribbons were quite long! Elaine Royer, Trainer, Hemlock Girl Scout Council, Harrisburg, PA

From: rutledge@intrepid.net (Aarlene Garnitz)

One thing we did last year at our Bridging ceremony was to make paper flowers with a cardboard backing in the shape of the trefoil behind, with streamers in the colors of the world hanging from it. We had little wooden pieces for the girls to hold on to. The badges and pins were then put on the streamers and given to the girls as they crossed the bridge. This went over very well. The year before we had large trefoils in plastic with the badges stapled on and the girls names on them. Of course we are looking for another different idea for this years bridging.

Earlene Garnitz, Shawnee Council trainer, leader, SUM, etc

From: nicki@navicom.com (Nicki Merrell)

I had a leader make a necklace of the Try-Its and patches her Brownies were receiving. Tape on curly ribbon if I remember rightly. YIGGGS, Nicki Merrell, Santiam, Salem, OR nicki@navicom.com

From: J ARTSKYD

How about stapling the badges/try-its to a thin ribbon and then tying the ribbon very tightly to a lollipop stick? Take assorted lollipops and stick them in Styrofoam and then have the Styrofoam spray painted brown already and precut to fit small clay flowerpots. Now you have a flowerpot full of flower-lollipops!! You could do one of the flower ceremonies and then hand these out as each girl says her part or at the end of the ceremony!!!

YIS, Kathy Dykstra, Freedom Valley Girl Scout Council, Valley Forge, PA

From: Speckles2

One of the neatest ideas I've seen is to take those small clay flowerpots and fill with Styrofoam. Hot glue your patches, badges, etc., to pipe cleaners and arrange with silk leaves or flowers as an arrangement. You can paint the girl's name on the pot and hand out as a bouquet of flowers. Lynn, Deep South Council, Mobile

From: TAG7079 How about making a blue ribbon with a gold seal and attach the badges to it?

From: turningrn@aol.com (TurninGrn)

Have you done the paper bag vest yet? We did this for our Bridging to GS Brownies, Daisies ... who weren't sure if they would continue so didn't make the vest with the rest of the troop. We cut the vest from a plane brown grocery bag, then attached the one year star, Try-It, and Bridging patch, they had earned during Bridging steps then traced and colored on the Strips and such. Just thought as typing this, that with Try Its you could make a mini Pizza Pan and mount them with a dab of hot glue on the back, to form a portion or whole Pizza. With Junior Badges perhaps a mounted on a fun foam Ice Cream dish, like scoops of Ice cream (if that is not too childish). Then for the IPA's you could build a Pyramid, as they are the 'Building Blocks of Life'. Mary, Pacific Peaks Council, Tumwater WA

From: SWAPSALOT

We made Daisies out of construction or poster board. Attached badges to petals, also attached to ribbons that can be pinned onto the girl's uniform during ceremony. Kathy

From: Chieflyme

My best idea was to staple patches/badges to a strip of wide, kind of stiff ribbon. I also attached a sticker/label to top of ribbon with girl's name so I knew whose was what. When I presented it to the Scout, I pinned it to her sash/shirt. Looked kind of impressive. Have also seen them attached/stapled to an 8 1/2 x 11 piece of stiff paper. Judi Fulbright, Tarheel Triad GS Council (central Piedmont area of NC)

From: tgjgig@aol.com (TGJGJGJG)

Take a small terra cotta pot and paint it (we used silver and blue since several of the girls earned their silver award).

Put Styrofoam into each pot. Take pieces of coated floral wire in varying lengths (4" up to 10")

Wrap one end of the wire tightly around the end of a pencil, then slide the wire off the pencil. You should have something that looks like this O----- Be sure the coil of wire is coiled tightly.

Take each piece of wire and stick it in the Styrofoam in the pot. These will be standing up looking like flower stems.

Take the badge or patch and wedge it into the coil. Now you have a pot full of patches and IP's.

Once the girls take the patches out to be sewn on their vests, they can still use the pot and wire to display their favorite pictures. Jan, Junior #519, Cadette/Senior #2146

From: rutledge@intrepid.net (earlene garnitz)

At bridging last year, we had silver and gold ribbons tied to the flowers and silver and gold rings (found in the wedding section of our local craft store). They represented the make new friends but keep the old... This worked because some girls were bridging away from girls they had been with for awhile. Earlene Garnitz, Shawnee Council

From: Sandj324

For our holiday themed ceremony, I made wreaths out of construction paper (all I had to work with, although I would've preferred felt or something) and I taped the girls Try-Its and patches around the wreath and I put a red bow at the top with their names on it. Jen, Brownie Troop #633, Kapolei, HI

From: JTheidrick

I use Microsoft Greetings Workshop to make up presentation certificates. I use the borders option to border the certificate. For the space explorer try-it, I used little planets. For the Christmas Parade patch, I used Christmas trees. Then, I type the try-it or patch name, the date, a Congratulations, and the girl's

name. I make the certificate about 3 inches by 8 inches, so I can get about 3 or 4 on a page. I print out about 4 pages, cut them out with pinking shears and staple the patch or try-it to the certificate. We have not lost a try-it yet! Char

From: GuthLaura

We just had our first Court of Awards for this year at our Christmas Mother/Daughter Tea and used candy canes - double-sided sticky tape (make your own) with one try-it on one side and one on the other - we used small canes because of just 2 try-its, but if more, then could use larger, longer canes and attach down stem - we stuck to curve of cane, both sides. Make sense? Laura - Troop 446, Olympia, WA, GuthLaura@aol.com

From: JCGRANT I made each girl a snowman using paper plates. I used Try-Its for the eyes and nose. I used a half circle patch for the mouth. Other Try-Its and patches decorated the snowman.

From: momscout@aol.com (MomScout)

Have the leaders write down something ahead of time to say about each girl, something fun-outstanding memory of the activities, etc. This keeps the ceremonies from being dry no matter what props are used in handing the girls their badges, patches, and other awards.

Tell them to invite parents and relatives, having the girls make invitations each time. The leaders should pencil in prospective dates on their troop planning calendars so they and the parents are not caught off guard. Parents deserve plenty of notice and troop information in a timely manner. This keeps them on your side, no matter what mistakes happen during the year.

Too many leaders view parents as the enemy when they should be treated as allies of the troop. They can easily transfer their girls to other troops or out of Girl Scouting altogether.

Another idea is varying the location of the ceremonies from time to time. Having a lawn party where everyone brings their own blankets or chairs would be a nice change of pace, esp. for younger siblings. Have parents in charge of getting refreshments.

Put a notice in the newspaper afterward. Try to include a group picture.

A way to thank troop parent volunteers is to give each one a small plant for their garden. The girls can

decorate Styrofoam cups or small pots. Baskets can be made of paper. Or the girls can present their parents with a flower- live or homemade.

Have the girls take turn with parts or running the ceremony. The busier they are, the less fidgety they are during the ceremony.

Start and end on time! Everyone's time is valuable!

Do not wait until the last minute to plan the meeting or buy the supplies. A rushed leader takes a while to settle down and everyone wants the leader's attention as soon as she gets there.

Keep a notebook of ceremonies and evaluate them. Keep notes on each one you have used.

Jan Brewington, Fredericksburg, VA

From: Ledbeth

One of the ideas we used was to make "Brownie" angels - our Court of Awards was in December (I think this idea came from Pack-O-Fun) - the leaders cut and glued the angel and the girls decorated them -

Materials: Brown grocery bags toilet paper tube doll hair in various shades

markers or crayons 1/4" or 1/2" wide ribbon hot glue

Using brown grocery bags - cut out 2 angel shapes for each angel using "pinking shears" (they looked like paper dolls with long skirts) - the leaders cut and glued the angel except for the bottom of the skirt. Cut a toilet tube in half and glue into opening of shirt to make it stand up.

Girls added details like doll hair, faces and decorations on dress area with markers.

We took them home and then glued a piece of ribbon between the angel's hands and stapled the Try-Its and other awards to it. At our COA they were all lined up on a table looking so festive. The girls later got to put them on their Christmas tree as a decoration.

Our latest COA we cut green trefoils - about 4" size and wrote each girls name on them - we stapled to this a gold wire edged ribbon (about 2 1/2" wide) and stapled all the Try-its and membership stars to each one - the girls pinned this to their vest using the star pin (this was great because they didn't lose it before the end of the meeting!)

Liz LeDeoux, Brownie Troop 1546, Daisy Consultant, Suffolk County GSC, NY

From: bdhunter@aol.com

Get 1 helium balloon per girl. Tape or staple try-its/patches to the end of the streamer on the balloon.

Cut a huge trefoil out of green poster board (it's really not that hard!) Put green crepe paper streamers behind the trefoil -- 1 streamer per girl w/ Try-Its and patches attached.

Get a cheap clay pot (1 per girl). Sponge paint/decorate it. Attach one try-it or badge to a paper cupcake cup, then to a green chenille stem (in other words, make each patch/try-it into a flower...add leaves, etc.) "Plant them" in florist foam in the clay pot.

Do a Hawaiian theme (great in the winter!) Order cheap Hawaiian decorations from Oriental Trading or buy at your local "party and paper" store. Put each try-it/badge on a lei and present the lei to the girl.

Do a "Make new friends but keep the old" theme ceremony. Decorate everything in silver and gold. Buy cheap silver and gold metallic material and make little drawstring bags big enough to hold patches/try-its. Give the gold to the "old" scouts and silver bags to the "new" ones. Barb, GSC of the Nation's Capital

From: BatGrr1

I made wreaths out of green felt glued to poster board and cut out. Then I glued on a bow made of red yarn and "drizzled" (for lack of a better word) the yarn around the wreath. Then I hot glued the patches and Try-Its on, finishing it off with snowflake shaped sequins here and there. We are going to hang them from the ceiling at our Christmas party and at the end of the party, take them down and present them. They are super cute.

Kim Williams, Leader, Brownie Troop #3444, Circle T Council

From: Yatfam@aol.com

I had a vision of a Christmas tree decorated with Try-It "ornaments". Perhaps out of green poster board. You could also add tinsel or draw lights etc. with metallic marker. Kelly Groff, Brownie Troop #1106, Olney, MD

From: "Jennifer Geisbert" <jenefer@earthlink.net>

On the meeting before an awards ceremony the girls decorated clay pots with paint pens. Then we stuck Styrofoam circles inside (painted green) the rim so it was pretty much flush with the top of the pot. I painted Popsicle sticks and cut out leaves from green construction paper and attached the leaves to the stick. I glued their patches on the sticks and handed them to the girls this way. I brought their pots to the ceremony and as the girls came up and received their badges (called out by badge, not girl). They stuck their green sticks into their pot and made a flower arrangement of badges. yigggs, Jennifer

From: Patricia Troutt <snptroutt@EARTHLINK.NET>

Our troop does monthly Court of Awards. We used to do twice a year, when we were in Brownies, but we changed that the third year so the girls could wear the Try-Its and enjoy them. Now in GS Juniors, it rewards the girls for their work right away. We have earned several badges as a troop, but many of our girls are earning them on their own. It also encourages the girls to do badge work on their own, when they see what the other girls are doing.

We don't have a real big deal of a ceremony, but I try to give the badges creatively. I made felt flowers, and attached the badges to the centers of them when we earned the Plants and Animals badge. We attached the Frosty Fun badge to the center of paper snowflakes. I made envelopes out of Girl Scout wrapping paper for the Girl Scouting in the USA badge. We attached the badges to heart doilies in February. We don't like to just hand the girls a badge in a baggy or something.

We have an end of year ceremony that the parents are invited to. We usually have a potluck dinner. We will give the girls certificates telling what badges they have earned. We will probably save the Signs that the girls earn for the end of the year. Pat , Jr Troop 561, Sybaquay Council

I have one very creative leader in my Service Area who in the past two years has:

- stapled them to the ribbon of a helium filled balloon - party theme
- hot glued them to florist wires and used them as flowers in clay pot - garden theme (I used this at our leaders party and used decorated paper cups as the pot)
- Made paper bag angels and glued them to ribbons on her robe - holiday theme
- put them on a paper fan

- posted them in a folder cut into the shape of a Trefoil that opened like a book, with the girls name on the front

- Made rosette buttons with wide ribbons (badges on the ribbons) - everyone's a winner! Jeanne Carnot, GSCM

From: "Gloria Haney" <ghaney@potter-cpa.com>

At our Court of Awards last June for my Brownie troop, I cut a large trefoil from poster board. Then I outlined it with puffy gold paint, let it dry overnight, then a spot of hot glue for each patch or try-it. I wrote each girl's name in the center with a gold pen. The girls and their parents just raved over them. Gloria Haney, Brownie Troop 1471

From: JWoodruff@via-net.net (Woodruff, Julie)

I made a copy of the Brownie membership pin (it was in the GS Uniforms, Insignia, and Recognitions book). Then I blew it up on the copier until it was about 4 inches square. Once I had it the size I wanted, I copied it onto heavy card stock paper. Then I cut out each "pin". I stapled a ribbon to the "pin" and stapled all the badges/Try-Its for the girl on the ribbon. I wrote the girl's name on the back of the "pin". Separately I did a program listing each girl and the badges she had earned. Another time I did the same basic thing only it was a green trefoil cut out of that foam stuff that looks like felt. Jul.

From: "Kathy Giessuebel" <giessuebel@vabch.com>

Last year I had 3 courts of awards. The first one was around Christmas time. I combined the presentation of the badges with a little Christmas gift from myself - a heart-shaped pumpkin bread, wrapped in purple plastic wrap (that's what I had...) It was tied up with curly ribbon, and I'd sewn a thread through the badges they earned, and also included one of those little gift decorations things. (You know, those cheap, tiny doo-hickeys that you can put on a present to jazz it up) All the girls had earned the same two badges that time so I didn't personalize the awards. The next Court of Awards was in the spring. I did Ziplocs, but I had the girls at the meeting before the Awards ceremony, write their name on and decorate their bag. I also enclosed in each bag a picture I'd taken of each of them on horseback while we'd worked on the Horse Lover badge. The last Court of Awards was in June, and I thought it would be neat to make a picnic out of it. I took green cardboard and cut it into the shape of a sash, (the vest would have been too complicated for me.) This time, most of them had earned the Junior Aide badge, and the sign of the rainbow, in addition to a few badges, so I placed them on my cardboard sash approximately where

they'd go on the girls' sashes. Next year, around Christmas, I might do something like stockings. Kathy G.

From: "Katy" <furryfeathers@mindspring.com>

As far as handing out recognitions, I have just finished cutting out 13 green construction paper vests. I just folded the edges over to the middle, and cut arm holes, and the neck in a V shape. I will be hot gluing the badges and patches to the front or back, in proper position, to help the parents figure out what goes where. My co leader is also leader for a Brownie troop. She is making brown "vests" for her Brownies, and hot gluing the recognitions on.

We are holding an Investiture/Reded/Court of Awards tomorrow night, for all 3 of "OUR" troops.

We also are having the girls rededicating as GS Juniors pinning the new GS Juniors, who will pin the Brownies, who will pin the Daisies. Sounds fun, doesn't it, and this way, they all get to pass on the great feelings. Katy

FROM: Ricky & Elaine Anderson [4hares@cconnect.net]

We've used Construction Paper (multiple colors) and titled our colorful sheet "Badge Recognition Awards", attaching the Badge to the construction paper by using a stapler. To make the paper more fancy, we used special scissors on the edges. On the computer made a label with the proper badge name. Below that was a brief description of activities done and date completed. It allowed parents to see it took many meetings to accomplish the requirements.

We also have made pockets on our construction sheet for the badge to slip in to. Put the Contemporary Logo on the pockets and made an envelope style for closing and seal with mini bow. All sheets had the Girl Scout Name and we printed various Girl Scout slogans and sayings.

We have done flower pots with the Popsicle and tongue depressor as the stems and made paper flowers and leaves. Each tongue depressor had the Girl Scout Name in Gold on the table with our Good Conduct Candle burning and they would come and build their bouquet of Flower Badges. The badges being the center of each flower.

We used a scanner and put the Contemporary Logo and the words Girl Scout on a sticker and glued to the flower pot. The pots were painted white and the top rim we used a sponge and Green paint to match sticker design. The bottom saucer was also painted white with Green sponge painting on the rim. We modge podge them to give a gloss touch. At the end of the year we put Peace plants and gave them out with bows and attached a gold and silver ring with a date to their parents. They were very neat and

beautiful. Badges were presented on a Girl Scout Tree design using a Circle of Life theme and bringing Native American ceremonies. There was not a dry eye in the house.

From: "Shari Teresi" <steresi@ix.netcom.com>

Treasure Chest: Day: The girls had to find their Treasure Chest (painted gold with little beads of their names on it) with the Try-Its they earned in it only after they figured out where a poem was sending them. Candy Bar awards with their try-its. "Chuckles" for my #3's giggling daughter was the easiest one. For a mixture of rededication and Try-It's earned earlier, I bought a wishing well and had the fairy on a pail bring their try-its up (and don't forget the fairy dust!) Make "fairy wands" and attach the badges/awards to streamers (not particularly reusable - but cute). Make a floral (silk and dried) wreath/coronet for their hair with badges/awards attached to streamers (these can be reused later or turned into candle wreaths at a meeting). Make "treasure boxes" for your girls with the awards tucked inside. Prepare 3-ring binders (with a taped on fairy tale book cover) and the awards inside.

Source unknown:

Cut a trefoil (with or w/o Brownie depending on age level) template about the size of the GS cookie cutter. (A dry cleaner's shirt board works great for the template.) Use this to cut a trefoil for each girl out of heavy yellow construction paper. Cut two lengths of 1" grosgrain ribbon (again, the color depends on the age level) to accommodate all their Try-its/Badges, bridging patch, wings, Jr. Aide patch, etc. Attach the two lengths of ribbon to the back of the trefoil to resemble a "blue ribbon". I use hot glue for this, as well as to attach the patches to the ribbon. You could always use a stapler as well. The year pin (star) and any other pins, like the GS pin if they are bridging to Jars. or their leadership pins, etc. (here in Hawaii we also have honor troop pins) are pinned right through the trefoil. The girls name and, if there's room, a list of the patches, is written on the back of the trefoil. A nice way to present these to the girls, especially at a more formal court of awards ceremony.

More Ideas for Presenting Awards

Wrap recognitions in festive packages. Put recognitions on pipe cleaner stems in a flower pot. Put recognitions in a plastic egg for a springtime ceremony

"Theme" the ceremony based on what was earned...Put recognitions: In crayon boxes

On leafy branches or pine boughs In a bandana on a stick On a natural wood plaque

On a paper doll chain Attached to international flags On cardboard hearts

On tongue depressors On paper airplanes Attached to pencils or rulers

Attached to paintbrushes or sheet music Strung on balloons with a photograph of something girls did

From: Debi Joy (Geneva team) daj112@aol.com

I have a huge piece of fleece that has a forest pattern on it (owl & the forest) and I put their awards on leaves (most schools have the die cut for this) and pinned it to the leaves in the print. If you would like to borrow, just email me. -dj

From: Jackie Jozwiak <JJozwiak@gfksm.com>

We did hobo bags one year & the girls loved them and still ask for that today as seniors! Very inexpensive to do - bandanas from AC Moore for like .87 and sticks we got from my yard. I had my husband sand them down so the sticks were smooth then just tied the 4 corners of the banana around the end with their awards tucked inside.

From: Juanita, Kentuckiana <jgadley2000@yahoo.com>

Things I have done so far:

- stapled awards to a ribbon with a flower at the top
- stapled awards to a paper vest made from lunch bag (great for that first round, or when you want to make sure they know where something goes)
- hot glued awards to fake flowers to make a bouquet

- put awards inside helium balloons
- stapled awards to a fun-foam vest
- awards in an envelope (not very creative, I know, but it works)
- stapled awards to a paper flower

From: <nacritters4@aol.com>

My dd former leader decorated glass jars with 3D paint with the four pliers. I have done mini Chinese take out boxes.

From: Necole Hurley <caelasenvy@yahoo.com>

I've done 4 things so far.

1. With my GS Daisy troops (3 years in a row), I had the parents give me the tunics 2-3 weeks before the Investiture/Court of Awards, and my co-leader and I ironed-on or sewed on the awards. This guaranteed proper placement and helped the parents be less confused as patches and petals came home from meetings.

2. At the end of the year Court of Awards for the GS Daisy troops, my co-leader cut trefoils out of craft foam and the awards were stapled to the craft foam (we tried double-sided tape the first year, and it didn't stick very well). Items for the front of the tunic or sash/vest went on the front of the trefoil and patches went on the back.

2. With my GS Brownie troop, at our Investiture/Rededication/Court of Awards, I made vests out of paper bags and stapled the awards in the appropriate places. After pinning each girl, she was given her "vest." This showed parents where to put the awards on the vests (and we told them that... along with the fact that if it's on the front of the vest, it goes on the front of the sash and if it's on the back of the vest, it goes on the back of the sash).

3. At our end of the year Court of Awards last year, I made flowers out of craft foam. Each petal was a different color and had a Try-it stapled on the front. The membership star and disc were pinned through the center of the flower along with one of our council's pins as we were realigning over the summer and would no longer be GS of Genesee Valley. They each received only one patch (by happenstance), so the patch was stapled on the back of the center of the flower.

I also remember when I was a girl, my leader (who taught me the creativity in giving awards) gave my Cadette troop our awards attached to a large Leadership Torch since we had finished the earning the silver torch. She used to do a different shape out of poster board every year, so I'm sure there were other related shapes. I have a vague memory of a sash-shaped piece and a trefoil-shaped piece.

From MEW <wirzburg@erols.com>

I gave each girl a small terra cotta pot with a piece of oasis/Styrofoam/whatever in the bottom. Each badge was stapled to a length of pipe cleaner. Pins were pinned on a piece of cardboard or craft foam.

As each award was presented, the girls receiving it received a stem to place in the pot. When all was over, each girl had a bouquet of awards. They tended not to lose things when it was such a neat arrangement.

Another year the girls wanted to have a "Miss America" pageant. So I purchased very wide and very inexpensive ribbon. (the really cheap stuff!) From it we made sashes like the sashes contestants wear with "Miss Troop and our number" on it. (It was such a hit we did it a second time but this time the leaders picked out some outstanding quality of each girl, serious or humorous, and each girl was presented her sash as part of the ceremony with such things as "Miss Gabby," "Miss campfire queen," etc. with appropriate fanfare.) All badges and pins were put on the sash as announced. Badges went on with double sided tape; pins, pinned on. We had a tape of "Here she comes, Miss America" and the proud parents in the audience sang along.

From Tammy <tammysue@suddenlink.net>

If you go to vistaprints.com you can order 100 postcards for free (just pay shipping). You can design them to have a place to write the name of the badge, the activities completed, and the date received. Attach the badge and you're done. The girls can then scrapbook all the postcards they receive.

From: Julie <JulieW428@yahoo.com>

Let's see over the years I've tried to do everything- but always avoid those Ziploc bags- when it comes to giving girls their awards.

1. Miniature Christmas Trees with the awards attached as ornaments
2. Easter egg- with the awards attached to a ribbon glued inside the egg- so that when the two halves of the egg were opened they were attached to both
3. Gift bag with the awards on a ribbon- with the top of the ribbon being a picture of the girl- when you pull the cut out of the girl out all the awards followed
4. Attached to Hawaiian leis
5. Made flowers and put into a pot

6. attached to a string of fake pearls (did the JGL pearl ceremony before)
7. Created certificates for each meeting with a "run down" of what was done and any associated awards attached to it.
8. Program Books- each girl's awards were listed in the program- and the awards were attached to an insert.
9. Beauty Pageant sash
10. Attached to a towel for a swimming party
11. Rolled in a replica bed roll at camp
12. Given in a heart shaped candy box
14. inside little pumpkin containers
15. On small vests made for teddy bears (we did build a bear before this so all had bears)
16. Mixed into a jar of candy
17. inside empty cookie boxes
18. Pinned to a hat that was to be swap hat
19. Tied up in a bandanna
20. inside a reusable water bottle
21. with a planner/calendar
22. inside a baby bottle the year we did Baby Think It Over program

I'm sure there are a few other ways- the girls would usually have an unofficial theme for the year- and everything we did would sort of tie into this one- one year we did the 1930's for a "through the years" Thinking Day event- and so they got a small picnic basket (like Toto's basket) with the awards, cans of spam, and Twinkies...

I also would use holiday themes or tie it into an event or activity we were doing around the same time

We would typically have 4-5 Court of Awards Ceremonies a year with some being more formal than

others- but all had some different way of presenting the awards.

I think the girls like that more. Typically the girls share something they enjoyed in the earning of the awards when they are awarded- to sort of remind them that they did something to get those. We also make a big deal out of awards not earned by all- but that could have been earned by all- those girls who took the extra effort to do more.

Cookie incentives are the only thing we don't do a big deal about- other than- that the girls know who sold more than others- but we keep it in award categories- not specific # of boxes- and always point out that they helped the troop- I've always had one girl "not allowed" to sell- (for many years at least)- but she was an artist and would make all of our posters for booth sales- and would come up with songs or chants for selling cookies. She never had cookie prizes- but the troop would get her something to the theme anyway- since she did participate but since those incentives were tied to how many boxes sold- and her parents wouldn't sign a permission slip- we couldn't even give her boxes from booth sales.

I think the girls love Court of Awards- and I cringe when people wait till the end. My biggest COA is usually right before our direct cookie sales- so the girls can have everything on their vests before going out- some of the awards are eye catchers and help sell cookies too :)

From: Lisa <wedpro1@cox.net>

I have also done med-wide ribbon and stapled the badges on but ours were like Olympic metal ribbons around the neck—the star pin they received joined the ribbon in the middle stapled them to a tie dye back pack we were giving the girls—in bag were swaps pinned them directly to their vest

Attached to a card

Attached to a big daisy cut out

And at bridging we have the new vest ready with all attached and the old one is removed at one end of the bridge and the new one is put on at the other end of the bridge.

From: Betsy <betsyva@cox.net>

A friend's Girl Scout Senior troop voted to have a pool party for their court of awards, gold award, and bridge to adults ceremony. The leader put their awards in zip lock bags and tossed them into her pool. The girls dove into the pool and 'rescued' their awards.