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Leadership announced for realigned area Girl Scout organization

Joining a historic and national Girl Scout initiative, five councils — Cannon Valley, Greater Minneapolis, Peacepipe, River Trails, and St. Croix Valley — from across the Twin Cities metro area, southern Minnesota, and western Wisconsin have merged as of Oct. 1 to become the Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys (River Valleys).

Phyllis A. Willerscheidt has

been named as the chair of the board of directors and Barbara Horgan has been named as the interim chief executive officer.

“As we come together to form this new entity, we will build on our successes and best practices, make new friends and community resources, and share resources, becoming an even greater organization able to meet the diverse needs and interests of all girls to help them discover,

connect, and take action in their community,” said Willerscheidt, a longtime Girl Scout volunteer and a former board president of the Girl Scout Council of St. Croix Valley (1979-1984).

Shakopee-area Girl Scouts were part of the Cannon Valley organization.

Officials said that as the Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys, there will

be expanded opportunities for girls, enhanced services for adult volunteers, continued outreach to underserved populations, and strong partnerships with the greater community to meet the commitment to girls.

Services to girls and volunteers will continue through the five legacy councils' 20 properties, including the five regional service centers — Brooklyn

Center, Northfield, Redwood Falls, Rochester and St. Paul. In addition, all programs, trainings, and camp facilities will be open to every Girl Scout member in the River Valleys' jurisdiction, which consists of 51,000 girls and 19,000 volunteers in 49 counties. River Valleys' headquarters will be located at the St. Paul Service Center (400 Robert St. S.).

Over the past two years, Girl

Scout councils across the country have been engaged in a plan to revitalize the iconic organization that was established 95 years ago. Nationwide, 312 councils will realign to become 109 high-capacity, community-based councils to make the most effective use of resources, offer even more programs opportunities for more girls, and to better serve the local community.