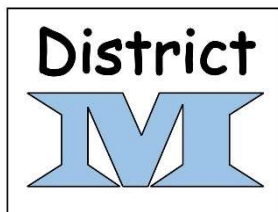
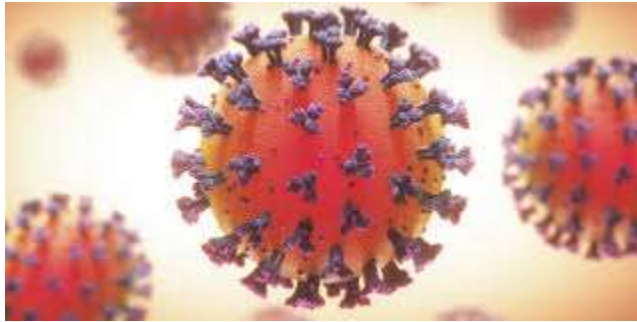




# Turn Almost Anything Into A Recruitment Event!

**A Guide to Best Practices for 2021**





## **The Impact of Covid-19**

The Covid-19 pandemic is likely to persist through most of 2021. This may, of course, require adjustments in your planning. You should, however, plan as if things were “normal.” This includes gathering information about community events in which you can participate, signing up early so you won’t miss a spot, and creating a game plan with a strong recruitment element.

We will continue to follow the Northern Star Council and Minnesota Department of Health Covid-19 guidelines, including the wearing of masks, social distancing, group size, etc., at all unit and District meetings, events, and activities. You may also need to consider special requirements established by the event in which you are participating.

# **A List of Annual Community Events in Our District**

## **February**

- 1 – Plymouth Fire and Ice Winter Festival

## **April**

- 25 - Memories Made Crappie Tournament Lord Fletcher's

## **May**

- Wheels 4 Meals Bike Ride (Mound) No date or details listed.
- 2 - Christmas in May (Chaska) Fix up homes of elderly and indigent.
- 16 - Springfest Artisan Fair – Norwood Young America Historic Downtown
- 16 - Crow River Serve Day. A day of community service in the Crow River Area.
- 30 - Bark in the Park (Plymouth) Hilde Performance Center

## **June**

- Burwell House Ice Cream Social (Minnetonka)
- 20-23 Glencoe Days (Glencoe) Various events. Gaga, Human Foosball.
- 27 - Minnetonka Summer Fest – Civic Center Park

## **July**

- 2-4 - Fourth of July (Chanhassen) Parade July 4<sup>th</sup>.
- 4 - Delano Fourth of July Celebration. Various Events and a parade.
- 4 – Celebration (Excelsior) Commons Park
- 11-19 - Hopkins Raspberry Festival. Parade on July 19<sup>th</sup>.
- 17-18 - Rails to Trails (Watertown) Downtown
- 19-20 - Fire and Ice Celebration (Chaska). Bean Bag Tournament.
- 19-20 - Spirit of the Lakes Festival (Mound)
- 24-26 - Chaska River City Days

## **August**

- Tour De Tonka. (Minnetonka) Bike race.
- 4 - National Night Out
- 7-9 - Rockford River Days. Various events and a parade.

## **September**

- Steamboat Days (Carver) Parade.
- 11-13 - James J Hill Days (Wayzata) Coaster Cart Racing
- 12 - Plymouth on Parade – Plymouth City Center
- 19 - Nickle Pickle Day (Waconia)

## **October**

- 8-14 - Scarecrow Contest (Waconia)

## **November**

- 17 - Westonka Tree Lighting. Veterans Memorial Plaza

## **December**

- 5 - Watertown Tree Lighting. City Center Park.

# Resources Available

## **Cub Scouts**

1. Mobile Archery Range
  - Cost for Recruitment Events is \$15 (Non-Recruiting Events is \$25)
  - Information/Reservation:  
<https://www.northernstar.org/mobile-archery-ranges-to-showcase-scouting-2>
2. *Welcome to Cub Scouts!* booklet
3. Recruitment Posters, Flyers
4. Giveaway Bookmarks
5. We can help you prepare unit-personalized postcards and flyers

## **Scouts BSA**

1. Mobile Archery Range
  - Information/Reservation:  
<https://www.northernstar.org/mobile-archery-ranges-to-showcase-scouting-2>
2. *Welcome to Scouts BSA!* booklet
3. Giveaway Bookmarks
4. Scouts BSA Posters, Flyers – personalized for your troop
5. Scouts BSA Troop Cards – personalized for your troop
6. BSA Marketing Tools – Be careful because these use the BeAScout.org registration site and do not have accurate registration information for our Council.

<https://scouting.webdamdb.com/bp/#/www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/resources/scouts-bsa-marketing-tools/>

# Best Practices & Suggestions for Turning Almost Anything into a Recruitment Event

## Best Practices & Suggestions for all Events

- Invite! Invite! Invite! Give every family the opportunity to intelligently weigh the advantages of joining the Scouting Adventure.
- *Always* wear a Scout shirt (Class A blue or tan uniform shirts) because they are the most easily identified by onlookers.
- If you wear matching unit T-shirts, also wear matching unit baseball caps.
- Signage, signage, signage – identify your unit or Northern Star Scouting.
- Have flyers to distribute and inexpensive business cards with basic unit information.
- Be ready to answer questions, direct inquiries to another unit (including pack to troop or troop to pack).
- Know where they should go to register to join: [AdventureIsCalling.org](http://AdventureIsCalling.org).
- Make your participation in these events a family event for your unit as often as possible.
- Packs and troops from the same town or same chartered organization – work together on as many of these events as possible.

## Community Events

Participate in Community Events all year long – Recruitment is a year-round opportunity!

### **1. Community Parades (Packs and Troops)**

- March with flags (US, Northern Star Scouting, Unit) and a parade banner.
- Be bold! Create a float or other eye-catching activity that symbolizes the Scouting ethos and the activity of your unit.
  - Need Float/Decoration Ideas? Try Pinterest!
  - Need Activity Ideas? Life-size Pinewood Derby cars (in a mini race), robotics, Scout-skill demonstrations, and much more.
- Do more than just march! Hand out wrapped candy or water bottles – and information/recruitment materials.
- If there are multiple units serving the parade community, work together and march together. 100 Scouts marching is far more impactful than 15!

**NOTE:** Be sure to have plenty of water for your scouts and their families and try to stage in a shaded area.

## Scout Parade Ideas

### Unit Presence on Foot

- Make go cart sized Pinewood Derby cars. Have Scouts push Cub Scouts in them and stage a couple of “races” along the parade route, complete with checkered flag at the finish.
- Have Scouts ride their bikes as a unit on the parade route. Decorate the bikes in a Scouting and/or patriotic theme. Balloons, bunting, flags, streamers, noisemakers in spokes etc.
- Does your Unit have 1 or more skilled musicians? Stop on the parade route at intervals and do a flag ceremony or bugle calls could be incorporated into your theme.
- Print up mylar balloons with Scout themes and Unit contact information. Have the Scouts hold them as they march, and occasionally distribute them to potential Scouts in the crowd.

### Floats

Use flags and banners on the float. Include your Troop and Pack names and a website or email address. Promote Scouting themes on the banners.

- On a trailer behind a towing vehicle, set up a camping scene with pitched tent, and mock campfire. Place plastic plants and trees on the edge.
- On a trailer behind a towing vehicle, set a canoe in place and strap it down. Place Scouts in canoe with paddles. Plastic plants and trees can be added for decoration. Fake waves of plywood or cardboard can be attached to the side.
- On a trailer behind a towing vehicle, create a large model rocket. Toy foam rockets could be launched from the float into the crowd.
- If your Unit has a decorated trailer be sure to include it your marching plans.
- Attach banners or magnetic clings to any towing vehicles with Unit ID and contact information.
- In the bed of a pickup or on a towed trailer, lash together a log banner holder with your Unit information.

### Tips for prepping Scouts for parade marching

- Smile, Wave and make eye contact with people on the sidewalks.
- Use the bathroom before the parade starts.
- Have adult leaders carry, and issue out in small batches, any giveaways, flyers, and water for the Scouts to prevent running out before the parade route is finished. Adults carrying the materials prevents younger Scouts from tiring out and prevents their uniforms being covered by backpacks or bag straps.
- Prep the Scouts days in advance of the parade so they know the plan on parade day. Who carries the flags and the banners, how should they distribute giveaways, what to do if they get tired, thirsty or have to use the restroom.
- Decorate any of your vehicles in the parade. This should include flags and banners with your Unit information, but can also include blow up balloons, streamers, tinsel, and pool floats affixed to the vehicle.
- Test your floats, bikes, demonstrations and other gear well before parade day. Have backups available where possible.

Plan your rides to and from the parade and make sure drivers and Scouts know where they need to drop off and pick up Scouts. Make sure Adult leaders have a roster of attendees and that everyone is accounted for before and after the parade.

Assemble small bags of non-melting candy (Dum-Dums, Tootsie Rolls, mini Jolly Ranchers, etc. and include a contact card for your unit. Hand these to younger kids or their parents instead of throwing them into the crowd.

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## **2. Community Festivals (Packs and Troops)**

- Develop relationships with city council members and/or festival leaders and ask how your unit can *help* the event be successful.
- Request permission for placement of a unit booth for promotion of Scouting. If you are able to *help* (see above) ask that any booth fee be waived.
- The Mobile Archery Range or a Dunk-the-Cubmaster/Scoutmaster Tank are crowd pleasers (always distribute information/recruitment materials).

NOTE: Be sure to have plenty of water for your scouts and their families.

## **3. Community Blood Drives or Food Drives (Sometimes Packs; Troops)**

- Volunteer to help.
- When you can, give each participant a “Thank You” card with information about your unit.

## **School Events**

### **1. School Festivals (Packs)**

- Build relationships with the school principal and the PTO leadership and always volunteer to provide *helping hands* for these events.
- Whenever possible, have a Scout booth with activities appropriate to the theme of the festival and lots of giveaways, flyers, etc.
- The Mobile Archery Range is great for these events (but reserve early!).
- Be sure to have a good supply of information/recruitment materials.
- Be prepared with pens, tape, paper, and other items you will need to be successful.
- Troops: Remember that you can participate at your local elementary school as *helpers* and as recruiters of 5<sup>th</sup> graders. *Be sure to talk with the pack that covers the school before you show up at the event!*

### **2. School Open House (Packs and Troops)**

- If your school allows, have a table or booth in the school lobby or similar location. It should be colorful and scouts and leaders in uniform should be present to answer questions.
- In some situations, you may be able to have some activity going on to entertain the children while you talk with the parents. (Always get permission first!)
- Prepare recruitment folders that include all the information that a family will need to make an informed decision about Scouting and your unit (registration information, unit calendar, etc.).
- Be prepared to help families register their children at the Open House.

- Troops: Remember that you can participate at your local elementary school as *helpers* and as recruiters of 5<sup>th</sup> graders. *Be sure to talk with the pack that covers the school before you show up at the event!*

### **3. Middle School/High School Club or Activity Days (Troops)**

- Get permission to have a troop table/booth.
- Decorate with high adventure/camping/hiking pictures.
- Have scouts wear cool t-shirts.
- Include a demonstration, game, or other activity.
- Be ready with materials to answer questions.

### **4. School Parent Conferences (Packs; Sometimes Troops)**

- Ask permission for your scouts (in uniform) to serve as guides to classrooms.
- Have a couple of adults present to answer questions about Scouting with appropriate handouts (informally, not at a table or booth).

### **5. School Night for Scouting (Packs)**

- Have a table in the assigned location. It should be colorful and there should be scouts and leaders in uniform to answer questions.
- In some situations, you may be able to have some activity going on to entertain the children while you talk with the parents.
- Prepare recruitment folders that include all the information that a family will need to make an informed decision about Scouting and your unit (registration information, unit calendar, etc.).
- Be sure to have information for your Pack Open House or next special event to give to each family.
- Be prepared to help families register online.
- Troops: Remember that you can participate at your local elementary school as *helpers* and as recruiters of 5<sup>th</sup> graders. *Be sure to talk with the pack that covers the school before you show up at the event!*

## **Unit Events**

### **1. Den Chiefs (Troops to Packs)**

- Be sure your troop is placing Den Chiefs with a nearby pack – one for every den if possible.
- Work closely with the pack so that the Den Leaders understand the role of the Den Chief and use them well.
- Through the Den Chiefs, invite the den (or the whole pack) to troop-sponsored events.
- Always be talking with the whole pack about what lies ahead as they continue the Scouting adventure into Scouts BSA.

### **2. Popcorn, Wreath, or Christmas Tree Sales (Packs and Troops)**

- Scouts should wear uniforms or unit t-shirts when involved in making sales.
- Sales tables or sales sites should be clearly marked with unit logos and can be further decorated with pictures of scouts engaged in activities.
- Attach information about your unit to each popcorn item, wreath, or tree.
- At fixed sales sites be sure to have recruitment information and registration information available.



### **3. Unit Open House (Packs and Troops)**

- You can plan a special event at the beginning of each school semester that includes lots of activity and information to welcome new scouts who have registered at other recruitment events or are specifically invited to “take a look.”
- Every unit meeting, hike, campout, etc. can be a “Bring a Friend” opportunity. Create excitement and competition (if appropriate, with prizes) for bringing a friend and getting them to join the unit.

### **4. Unit Service Events (Packs and Troops)**

- No matter what you are doing or where you are doing it, be sure that your Scouts are clearly identified with your unit (uniforms, signs, flags, etc.)
- Work with your chartered organization for service projects focused on their needs and try to work hand-in-hand with members of the organization.
- Be sure to add pictures to your unit social media, submit articles (with pictures) to local community newspapers and to the communications channels of your chartered organization.

## **Social Media (Packs and Troops)**

### **1. Unit Facebook Page**

- A Unit Facebook Page, separate from your unit’s closed Facebook group, can be set up as a non-profit business page. NOTE: If you don’t post often your page does not get in the Facebook algorithm. Post at least a few times a week every week for best results.
- Keep this page full of pictures of activities and events. NOTE: *If you are going to post photos showing the faces of individual Scouts be sure to have permission from the parents – and only use first names!*
- You can create events specifically designed to invite families to your activities.

### **2. Local Community Facebook Groups**

- Join the group and regularly post things about the unit activities. Be sure to let everyone know why you think Scouting is so great for your children.
- Always post about scouting in general. If your post is unit-specific the site administrator may block you.
- Work with the other units in your area so keep Scouting constantly before the group – and everyone wins.

### **3. Next Door**

- Make regular short but bold posts with information on all unit events, including pack or troop meetings.

### **4. Unit Website**

- Most units maintain a website for internal use by Scouts and parents but remember that this site is also visible to the general public.
- Keep your site up-to-date, attractive, and include pictures where appropriate.
- Find ways for your website to be welcoming to non-scout families – what Scouting is all about, what your unit is all about, and how to join.