



December 2020: Pack 55 Monthly News

December is upon us, and while this is a December unlike any other most of us have ever experienced, it is still a great time of year to take a moment and think about how we can do a kindness and a service to others. Whether it is simply by sending a loved one an email or a card, or by saying hello to an elderly neighbor who might not have family nearby, we can all help bring a bit of cheer to people this season. Find little ways everyday to show the people around you that you care.

Communicate your scouting needs and concerns to your den leaders or pcc@pack55.org. We want your feedback and your ideas for how to make scouting great even in these challenging times. All scouts should be continuing with their rank advancements as a family/individually, or as a den, or in some other small group setting. RSVP for events and record all your rank advancements in Scoutbook. Be sure to keep your contact information up to date so you don't miss out on any of our fun virtual and in-person activities. Stay well, and enjoy the holiday season (safely) with your family and friends.

December:

Saturday, Dec 5 and 12, 2020 and Jan 9 and 23, 2021: God and Me/Family: A scout is Reverent. This is a voluntary program offered by St. John the Divine for all cub scouts. Your own religious institution may offer similar, tailored programs. Scouts will have fun earning their Religious Emblem as a small group. The four, 1-hour sessions will be led by Rev. Reagan Cocke and are scheduled to be held in-person at an outdoor venue at St John the Divine.

God and Me Program: 1st-3rd Grade (Tiger, Wolf and Bear), **9:00 – 10:00AM** – Registration at <https://pack55.doubleknot.com/event/2020-god-and-me-program-1st-3rd-grade/2756318>.

God and Family Program: 4th-5th Grade (Webelos) and scouts currently in 3rd grade who have also already earned the God and Me award, **10:00-11:00AM**. Registration at <https://pack55.doubleknot.com/event/2020-god-and-family-program-3rd-5th-grade/2756319>.

For more information visit <http://pack55.org/religious-awards.html>. The per scout cost is \$30, which covers teaching materials and awards to be presented at Scout Sunday in February 2021. Questions? Send an email to chaplain@pack55.org. Even if you missed the first class, we can catch you up! Join now.

Saturday, December 12 @ 11 AM, Virtual Caroling Project: Traditionally, Pack 55 gathers at a local assisted living facility to sing Christmas carols for the residents. This year, an in-person event at Brookdale West University is not possible. You and your family can volunteer in three different ways: 1) Make a hand-made/drawn Christmas card for the residents of Brookdale West University, 2) Record your scout and/or family singing a favorite holiday song which will then be compiled in a digital format, and 3) Meet outdoors at St. John the Divine in Class A uniform and sing and record some socially distanced Christmas carols that can be

shared with assisted living residents. Contact service@pack55.org and pcc@pack55.org. RSVP for the in-person socially distanced caroling event at:

<https://www.scoutbook.com/mobile/dashboard/calendar/event.asp?EventID=3029869>

Thursday, December 17 @ 7 PM: December Pack Meeting: Join us for some holiday fun with a live scavenger hunt and an opportunity to share your homemade neckerchief slide (details in the attached flyer).

Register in advance for this event:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwpd-CvrzkiH9WAhvDaWGwolK365mHhU8Ek>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Important: Make sure your Zoom name is accurate (full name and den/rank of your scout), as well as have your video on so that your identity can be verified as you are admitted from the waiting room. These protocols, in addition to the requirement to pre-register for these virtual events, are part of Pack 55's effort to increase the safety and security of our online events and to make sure only Pack 55 families are able to enter the meetings.

Popcorn Sales Continue Online! - To date, we have reached total sales of \$23,000 out of a target of \$40,000. Even if you have not made a single sale yet, you and your scout can help us reach our pack sales goal by selling popcorn online through the year end. Set up your account and create a short video to send to your friends and family. Popcorn sales comprise about 40% of our annual pack revenues, and the FY 2020-2021 budget assumes a \$350/scout sales goal, so let's hit this target. Gift cards earned by scouts can be claimed on your scout's Trail's End dashboard. Questions? Contact popcorn@pack55.org.

Earn the unofficial Pack 55 COVID Camper Award patch! - Large group camping as a pack is not possible this fall, but that does not mean camping has to stop. To receive the patch, snap a photo of your family camped out anywhere for the night (backyard, State Park, other) anytime between July 1 and December 31, and send it to campmaster@pack55.org.

Recruitment is in full swing! Are there families in your scout's school who might join Pack 55 if they knew more about it? We want to share the fun of scouting with as many families as possible. Share this link with your friends: <https://my.scouting.org/VES/OnlineReg/1.0.0/?tu=UF-MB-576paa0055>. Questions? Contact registrar@pack55.org.

Looking Ahead to January and February:

January 9, 2021, Arrow of Light Crossover Ceremony: This event is for Arrow of Light scouts and their families to celebrate their crossover from Pack 55 to Troop 54 and 55. AOL families: watch for more details coming soon.

January 15-17, 2021, Winter Campout: Postponed to April/May 2021, due to current COVID-19 conditions in Houston and the significant logistical challenges associated with group gatherings (especially overnight). Watch for more details on a planned April/May campout. Pack 55 plans to hold a social distanced day activity in Houston (similar to the November 7 Field Day) instead.

February 6, 2021: Pinewood Derby Day: Logistics are being discussed, but build your car and prepare to have fun either in-person in smaller groups, or at a live streamed event. Cars can be obtained from your den leaders. Watch for more Pinewood Derby details coming soon.

February 7, 2021, Pack Scout Sunday and Religious Award Recognition: Join Scouts from Pack 55, Troop 54 and 55 as we celebrate Scouting at St. John the Divine.

February 25, 2021, Blue and Gold Banquet: Tentative date; our ability to hold this event depends on COVID-19 conditions at that time. This event will likely be held outdoors, and/or be pushed to a date later in the Spring.

Virtual Events: Pack 55 encourages all dens to remain connected and engaged while observing social distancing. The Pack supports regular, YPT compliant den communications via email, phone or video chat. Scouts may complete any remaining required adventures or electives as a family. Dens may coordinate periodic virtual meetings to discuss advancement activities. Please do this at least monthly. Even as we begin to offer some in-person gathering options, virtual events will still be a part of our scouting program.

Youth Protection: In order to protect the health and well being of our youth members, we must ensure 2 adults are present at every in-person gathering, on each call and on any form of digital communication at all times. Two deep leadership must be maintained in the virtual world as well as the in-person world. Stay engaged virtually or in-person, but remember that our scouts' safety is of paramount importance. Your den leaders are being provided guidance on rules for virtual engagement and best practices for video conferencing. If you have questions or concerns, or ideas for how best to navigate the potential need for virtual meetings or our return to in-person gatherings, please reach out to your den leader or pcc@pack55.org.

Key Volunteer Opportunities: *Popcorn Co-Chair, and Training Chair.* Join the fun!

Popcorn Co-Chair: Sean Smith stepped forward to serve in this important role for the fall, and for that we say thank you. We want another volunteer to assist Sean. Are you looking for a way to make a difference? Email the Cubmaster (cubmaster@pack55.org) or Committee Chair (pcc@pack55.org) and join the Pack 55 popcorn team.

Training Chair: Enjoy giving adult leaders the tools and training they need to be successful? Volunteer to help promote and manage leaders' training.

Contact the Cubmaster (cubmaster@pack55.org) or Committee Chair (pcc@pack55.org) for more information.

Pack Information:

New Scout Coordinator and Registrar: registrar@pack55.org Encourage interested new scouts and families to submit an application online at:

<https://my.scouting.org/VES/OnlineReg/1.0.0/?tu=UF-MB-576paa0055>

Adult Training / forms for all registered adults:

<https://www.samhoustonbsa.org/Data/Sites/1/media/forms/adult-disclosures-and-authorization.pdf>

Youth Protection Training: online course takes approx. 1 hr

<http://www.scouting.org/Training/youthprotection.aspx>

Cub Scout Leader Training: online course takes approx. 3 - 4 hrs. <http://www.samhoustonbsa.org/cub-scout-leader-training>

Youth Training / Advancements: Parents can mark their scout's advancements as Completed in Scoutbook. Den Leaders please mark as Completed and Approved for all advancements/awards for your dens before each months pack meeting.

Scoutbook: Make sure your scoutbook email is active and up to date to receive all Pack communications.

Pack 55 Communication & Training Tools

Pack Website: www.pack55.org

Scoutbook Advancement Tracking and Email updates: www.scoutbook.org

All Scouts BSA training website: www.my.scouting.org

Monthly Pack Newsletter: sent to all Pack emails registered in Scoutbook.

- During the school year, the newsletter is usually published on the Monday after a committee meeting. Please send your proposed short entry to our email address: pack55news@pack55.org.
- **Monthly submission deadline is by noon the Friday after each committee meeting.**

About the Pack 55 News

The Pack 55 News is a volunteer effort and is not an official communication of the BSA. Please consult the Sam Houston Area Council website for official BSA communications.

In an effort to consolidate pack wide messages and information into regularly scheduled communications, this newsletter will be circulated monthly in order to keep you apprised of **key pack news** and **upcoming events**. Time sensitive messages will still be sent via Scoutbook as a "News Flash" from adult leaders. Monthly Den meeting info and den specific messages will still come directly from your Den Leader.

If you **have an item you want included** in the monthly news, please send a short summary with key information (e.g., time, date, place, cost, contact info) to pack55news@pack55.org no later than noon the day after the monthly scheduled Pack Committee meeting (generally the first Thursday of the month). Newsletters will typically go out via Scoutbook email the Monday after the monthly Pack Committee Meeting. Thank you.