

MEMBERSHIP

The BSA has a year round growth plan which is designed to facilitate Scout recruitment and pack-troop relations. The South Mountain District Membership Committee supports the individual units as they implement their yearly growth plan and will offer monthly advice to units in this column to give your unit leaders some ideas and suggestions.



DECEMBER: Membership—Marketing and Promotion

Last month's article focused on Recruitment: How to reach out to available youth in your area, engage parents to make a personal invitation to come to visit your pack, and finally things to consider in planning your recruitment event.



This month we focus on Marketing and Promotion. Before anyone can consider joining, they need to know that you're out there. How will parents find you? Now that the holidays are rapidly approaching, are there events on your calendar that can be used for marketing your unit? If not consider taking some actions that will make your unit more "high profile" in the community. Scouting offers youth a diversity of activities and recognitions that are not duplicated in other youth oriented programs. That's what makes Scouting different and should be promoted as such.

One way to increase community awareness of your Pack is to participate in a community wide event. Most every town of any size has a tree lighting ceremony. Bethlehem has a very large one that draws hundreds of families. Especially families with young children which is you're demographic; families with kids able to join scouting. You see where we're going with this. The event organizer may allow your unit to help make decorations, help put lights on the tree, hand out programs or serve refreshments at the event. Being a helping hand is a great way to increase community awareness of your Pack and that you value the same things these families do. Handing out inexpensive candy canes or Hershey kisses at the event with your Pack information will reach the right families with kids able to join Scouting.

Suppose instead you are going to an Assisted Living Facility for caroling, skits or homemade gifts with the residents or you organized a coat drive or some other noteworthy community service. If so, a simple press release to the local newspaper in advance might bring some free media exposure. The Minsi Trails Council has a free basic press release document for your Pack to use to publicize your event. Council also has very colorful sample flyers, postcards, mini boys life magazines and inserts that can be customized free of charge by ordering these in advance at the Council Office. You can find this information at <http://www.minsitrails.com/Volunteer/MediaToolkit>

Have a Wonderful Holiday Season, Mark Firth, SMD Membership Chair

Let us know your successes and your challenges with marketing and promotion. The district Membership Committee wants your feedback so please drop us an email with your thoughts to: Mark Firth, SMD Membership Committee Chair at: Stee1cty@yahoo.com