

### **UNIT PROMOTION GUIDE**

**GREAT FALLS COUNCIL | 2025** 



#### Build a presence on social media

Parents of young families are on Instagram and TikTok, so that's where Scouting needs to be. Use our Social Media guide and look at what other units are doing to get ideas. Ask the Scouts and their parents to tag your account in their posts!



2

#### Make the most of signs, flyers, and posters

Post printed materials where they will have the highest impact. These items will reinforce your social media and press release messages and remind the community of your presence.



3

#### Be seen in the community

March in parades or participate in street fairs, festivals, and anywhere else people are gathering in your community. Leverage your chartered organization's presence at such events. Share activities with the crowds that demonstrate the fun of Scouting. Capture contact info and follow up!



4

### Write fun & informative press releases

Use the press release template and provide your contact information. Include clear, colorful photos and videos that show Scouts having a great time. Get close to your subjects and crop pictures if needed to convey the story effectively. Grammar and spelling count, so proofread carefully!



5

#### **Build relationships with local media**

Connect with reporters and staff of local papers and TV and radio stations, using connections through Scouting families when possible. Find out what kinds of stories they are most interested in hearing about so you know what will get their attention.



For more promotional tools, visit

https://gfcscouting.org/volunteers/unit-support/membership-recruitment/



# **UNIT PROMOTION...** a lifeline for Scouting

#### Why does my unit need to promote itself?

Many people believe that Scouting is no longer a thing. National is launching major marketing campaigns in traditional and social media. Great Falls Council will also advertise on TV and online this fall, but our resources are limited. The best way to make sure **your** community knows about Scouting is to hear it directly from **you**.

#### Does my unit really need to be on social media?

YES! As the chart to the right shows, people get local news nearly as much from social media as they do from local news sites. Many fewer people get local news from TV than in the past. If you aren't on social media, you're missing a large part of the local population.

#### Does my unit really need to get news coverage?

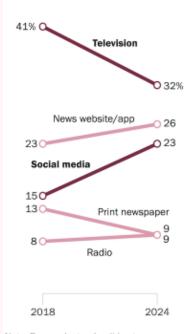
YES! There are still many people getting local news from traditional sources such as their weekly neighborhood paper, TV and news websites. People are also more likely to retain information if they hear it multiple times, so more coverage is better, regardless of the source.

#### Am I allowed to use kids' pictures in the media?

Scouting America's Medical Form A includes a media release for images, videos, and recordings of youth and adult members. However, it's a good idea to check with Scouts and families to make sure they agree to be on social media or in the news.

#### Americans' preferred path to local news is moving online

% of U.S. adults who say they prefer \_\_for getting local news and information



Note: Respondents who did not answer are not shown.

Source: Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 22-28, 2024.

"Americans' Changing Relationship With Local News"

PEW-KNIGHT INITIATIVE

### I don't know anything about promotions or marketing. How do I figure out what to do?

The GFC marketing team collaborated with the Recruiting team and DEs on these materials to help you get started. The most successful units recruit a volunteer to focus on marketing & promotion so that all the work doesn't fall on the Key 3.



### SOCIAL MEDIA reach your families where they are

#### Using social media is critical to unit promotion

- Two-thirds of adults in the US under the age of 50 use social media platforms daily.
- Of those, Facebook and Instagram are most commonly used
- Setting up a Meta account allows you to post to Instagram and Facebook at the same time



#### **Important!**

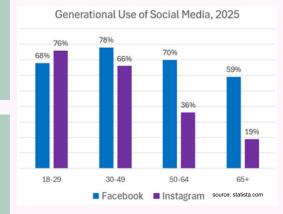
- Always appoint a co-administrator-ask your DE or one of your Key 3-so you can keep continuity
  when leaders change and have another way to log in to the account if needed
- Follow the Scout Oath and Law, as well as all safety protocols, in photos and videos
- Any youth members should be referred to by their given name and last initial to protect privacy
- If the District or Council asks you to take down content, do so promptly
- Post regularly-aim for 1-2 times per week so your audience remains engaged
- Do not endorse any products, services, or political viewpoint, or use the unit account for non-Scouting communications

#### **Using Instagram**

- · Name your account with your unit number and location
- Include contact information for unit leaders in the About section
- Posts require photos but have little room for text
- Use image filters and stickers to catch users' attention
- Add hashtags (i.e. #camping) to get more engagement
- Cross-post to your Story, especially for quick videos
- · Ask questions to generate interaction with your audience



- Use a Public Page so it can be seen by more people
- Name the page with your unit number and location
- Include contact information for unit leaders
- Invite your Scouting community to Like the page and share posts
- Add 3-5 quality photos or a short (<30 seconds) video to all posts
- Share posts from District, Council, or National pages
- Respond to comments and questions promptly



#### **Other Platforms**

- **TikTok** is rising in popularity for people under 40, and Scouting America is on this platform. If you have youth members or volunteers on TikTok, get them to post about their experiences! Content authenticity is key to attracting attention.
- **YouTube** is used by >90% of the population across all age ranges, primarily for longer entertainment content. Short-form content is becoming increasingly popular-just make sure your unit contact information is easy for viewers to find.
- LinkedIn can be used to find volunteers and for fundraising content.
- **SnapChat** use is very strong with people under 30. This is another platform that youth members and younger volunteers can help with.



## SIGNS, POSTERS, AND FLYERS are the backbone of promotion

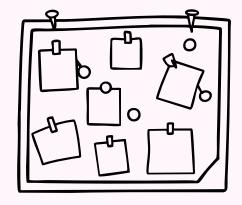
#### Printed materials remind people that Scouting exists

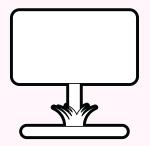
- Flyers & posters are best used to inform people about recruiting events and fundraisers
- Yard signs are best used to advertise BeAScout.org or provide a unit contact phone number
- Careful placement is key to making your messages count!



#### **Flyers & Posters**

- Great flyers have simple, clear messages and visual interest.
   Use District-provided Canva templates or Scouting America pre-made flyers to get started.
- Make sure to include event time, date, place, and contact info.
   QR codes can help people quickly capture that information
- Schools use Remind or other mass contact apps instead of sending paper flyers home. Ask your school administrator if you can provide a file to include in their weekly messages.
- When posting paper flyers, opt for high-traffic areas in your community. Many stores, supermarkets, restaurants, laundromats, and public buildings have bulletin boards, but double-check their posting policies before you put anything up. Don't forget your chartered organization bulletin boards!
- Area employers may also have bulletin boards ask unit parents if they can get to them. Large employers may have an internal social media system where information can be shared.
- Post a version of your flyer to social media and get your parents to share.





#### **Yard Signs**

- Make it easy to read from the road otherwise it's a waste of time
- Identify busy corners near schools, shopping districts, and major employers where signs would be most effective
- Get permission from private landowners before you post
- Avoid posting on public land your sign will likely be removed

Need a Canva account? You may be able to access Canva Pro for free through Canva for Nonprofits.

Email marketing@gfcscouting.org for more information.



# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS be where the people are

#### People want to see Scouts in their community

- Seeing Scouts do community and service events reminds people that Scouting is alive, well, and relevant
- Make sure to wear uniforms or unit t-shirts so Scouts can be identified at a glance
- Make it interactive: set up a fun game at a street fair, hand out bookmarks to parade-goers, or set up Scouting for Food drives in public places. The more creative and fun, the better!
- Partner with local high school, rec leagues, or professional sports organizations to set up information booths, tunnel walks, or half-time recognitions for your unit
- Unit fundraisers can also be leveraged for community awareness
- Make sure to have unit contact information available as handouts, or use a QR code
- Have a signup sheet for more information, and follow up after the event!

#### List your community events and how to participate below.

Event Name & Location	Event Date & Time	Signup Deadline	Signup Contact



### WRITING GREAT PRESS RELEASES who, what, when, where, why, how

#### Press Releases get the word out

- If you write a newsworthy story, even if it's not flashy, media contacts will run it
- Spelling, grammar, and accurate information are critical-proofread your work
- Use pictures from previous year's events for event announcements
- Good stories educate, entertain, tie into current events, or have a local impact
- Good topics include: service projects, major trips/outings, anniversaries, awards, Courts of Honor



Email subject should include the unit name

Photos should be attached to email as .jpg or .pnp. They must tell the story as well as the text does!

#### **Email Press Release - Event**

To: Anchor Mann (amann@wbsa.com)

From: Vera Denleader (vdenlead@gfcscouting.org)

Subject: Cub Scout Pack 007 (Mytown, NY) Silly String Festival 2025

3 Photos attached

For Immediate Release, August 15, 2025 Contact: Vera Denleader, 607-555-4321 vdenlead@gfcscouting.org

Pack 007 (Mytown, NY) is delighted to present its annual Silly String Festival for families in the greater Mytown area. Any family with kids in K-5<sup>th</sup> grade who love Silly String and want to have a fun afternoon out with friends and neighbors are welcome to join. We will have hot dogs, hamburgers, chips, and fruit, plus a sundae bar and homemade cookies.

The Silly String Festival will be held on September 3, 2025 at the Mytown Fire Department from 12-3. The event is free, but you must register by emailing vdenlead@gfcscouting.org. Each family who registers before September 1 will get a bonus can of Silly String! Disposable ponchos will be available for \$5 each.

"The Silly String Festival is a wonderful tradition in Mytown," says Ima Scoutleader, Cubmaster for Pack 007. "The town's founders held the first Silly String Festival in 1872, and the Cub Scouts are proud to carry on that grand tradition."

About Cub Scout Pack 007: Pack 007 provides boys and girls in K-5<sup>th</sup> grade with high-quality Cub Scout education. For more information, visit them on Facebook at facebook.com/Pack007 or Instagram at @Pack007Mytown.

For more press release templates, email marketing@gfcscouting.org

include the unit name and describe the message in a few simple words

First paragraph: what is going on and why it's important. Who should attend? What will happen?

Third paragraph: quote from an event leader or youth participant. Describe why it matters!

Optional: more quotes, background information, benefits of Scouting. Media will cut from the bottom so put the critical stuff at the top!

Specify the date of the release and contact info for someone who can provide more info

Second paragraph: date, location, registration, logistics. Keep it short and sweet!

Last paragraph: unit description and contact information



## BUILD MEDIA RELATIONSHIPS cutting through the clutter

#### Understand what makes your local media folks pay attention

- Media professionals are often overworked and underpaid. Help them do their jobs with great stories and photos/video
- Build a relationship with local reporters and editors, so you know their preferred topics, lead times, etc.
- Find out if they have Scouting experience & leverage that background
- Find out their requirements to cover an event in person-usually depends on timing and priorities within the next 24 hours. Keep patient, and keep trying!
- Always be courteous and helpful if they make a mistake, let them know and ask for a correction
- Contact names and information may change. Please update the Council media listing
  if needed
- If you feel comfortable on-camera and know your message well, ask to go on morning interview shows, and bring some Scouts along!

To see the press contacts for your District, use the QR code to find the <u>media contacts</u> for your district. List key contacts in the table below.



Outlet	Name	Contact Info





### NEED SOME EXAMPLES? More help is available!

#### **Instagram Accounts**

- Scouting America https://www.instagram.com/scouting.america/
- Great Falls Council <a href="https://www.instagram.com/gfcscouting/">https://www.instagram.com/gfcscouting/</a>
- Camp Gorton <a href="https://www.instagram.com/campgorton/">https://www.instagram.com/campgorton/</a>
- Order of the Arrow <a href="https://www.instagram.com/oa.scouting/">https://www.instagram.com/oa.scouting/</a>

#### **Facebook Accounts**

- Scouting America https://www.facebook.com/scouting.america/
- Great Falls Council <a href="https://www.facebook.com/gfcscouting/">https://www.facebook.com/gfcscouting/</a>
- Scenic Trails District <a href="https://www.facebook.com/ScenicTrailsGFCScouting">https://www.facebook.com/ScenicTrailsGFCScouting</a>
- The Water Cooler (private) https://www.facebook.com/groups/538696359962177

#### **Reference Materials**

<u>Great Falls Council Membership Website</u> - process, checklists, and how-tos to have a great recruiting season! <u>https://gfcscouting.org/volunteers/unit-support/membership-recruitment/</u>

<u>Scouting America's 2025 Recruiting Guide</u> - more depth on marketing messaging and content, plus a comprehensive media promotions guide <a href="https://scouting.webdamdb.com/bp/#/folder/14057764/">https://scouting.webdamdb.com/bp/#/folder/14057764/</a>

<u>New Unit Sales Kit</u> - includes downloadable, printable handouts that promote the value of Scouting <a href="https://scouting.webdamdb.com/bp/#/folder/13731633/">https://scouting.webdamdb.com/bp/#/folder/13731633/</a>

<u>Scouting America Brand Guidelines</u> - official Scouting America colors, fonts, branding dos and don'ts, and more <a href="https://cdn2.webdamdb.com/220th\_sm\_cXyJOoE79J15.jpg?1731728538">https://cdn2.webdamdb.com/220th\_sm\_cXyJOoE79J15.jpg?1731728538</a>

#### **Key Contacts for additional help**

- Council VP for Membership Darlene Sprague darlene.sprague.ds@gmail.com
- Council VP for Marketing Jill VanDewoestine <a href="marketing@gfcscouting.org">marketing@gfcscouting.org</a>
- Your District Executive contact's info gfcscouting.org/about-us/council-staff/