

Cub Pack 61 Event Planning Guide

Flemington Community Christmas Tree

Event Coordinator & Volunteers:

Event Description:

The Flemington Community Christmas Tree, installed adjacent to the veteran monument on Main Street in Flemington, is a community tradition dating back to the early 1900s. The community Christmas tree was originally sponsored by the Flemington Children's Choir School, a music school that taught young people to sing so that church choirs in town would have an adequate talent pool for their adult members. When the Choir School ceased operation, the local alumni took over installation of the traditional Christmas tree for a number of years. In 1965, after a gap of several years, the tradition of a community Christmas tree in Flemington was taken over by Cub Scout Pack 61. The pack's founding Cubmaster, Douglas H. Niece, was a graduate of the Choir School and was president of the alumni association for many years.

The tree is traditionally installed on the Saturday before Thanksgiving each year beginning at about 8:00 am. The tree lighting is preceded by a community gathering to sing traditional Christmas carols on the first Friday evening in December. The tree lighting must be scheduled prior to the Holiday Parade, which is typically the first or second Sunday in December. Mr. Dan Butt, of Hunterdon Musical Instruments, organizes the brass players for the carol sing and tree lighting. The tree lighting is capped off when Santa arrives by fire truck to distribute candy canes and oranges. Dave Thomas, an Assistant Den Leader, has played Santa for the tree lighting for the past 3-4 years.

The community Christmas tree is a cooperative community service effort involving several community organizations and local government. Pack 61 obtains a tree and coordinates the overall effort. The Flemington Rotary Club provides oranges and candy canes for Santa to distribute at the tree lighting event on the first Friday of December. The Flemington Fire Company provide lighting for this event as serves as Santa's chauffer for the evening as he rides around town on the big ladder truck. Tamke Tree Experts has provided arborist services for many years and the Samuel Stothoff Company has provided a trailer and crane truck with operators for the tree installation. Employees of the local telephone company, now CenturyLink, have installed the lights, which are stored at the Flemington Fire House between seasons.

Planning Timeline:

August – September: Identify potential trees in the area that owners are willing to donate. Trees should be between 20 and 25 feet high, reasonably well shaped, with a straight trunk. Taller trees may be used if the top section is suitable. Major gaps, flat spots or twists/bends in the trunk make installation difficult. If possible, trees should be located within a reasonable distance of a road or driveway to allow truck access.

September - October: Contact Tamke Tree Experts and Samuel Stothoff Company so they can evaluate the trees for suitability and access. Coordinate tree installation schedule with Tamke and Stothoff and agree upon the resources necessary (truck, trailer, crane, etc.).

October: Recruit adult leaders and parents to assist with tree cutting, installation, and traffic control. Identify a parent or leader who can provide wooden wedges of various sizes to secure the tree in the pipe.

November: Confirm time & date for tree installation and tree lighting with volunteers from Tamke, Stothoff, Rotary Club, Hunterdon Musical Instruments and pack.

Budget:

The pack has purchased a Santa costume for use in the tree lighting and Santa's visit to the December pack meeting.

The only cost to Pack 61 for this event is the cost of a Borough of Flemington Parade Permit (~\$25.00) for the tree lighting event.

Candy canes & oranges are provided by the Flemington Rotary Club.

Tree cutting and installation services are donated by Tamke Tree Service and Samuel Stothoff Company.

Installation of the lights is contributed by employees of CenturyLink telephone company and other local businesses.

Volunteers:

Tree Installation: Approximately 6 adults are needed to assist with the tree installation and for traffic control at the Monument during the tree installation.

Saturday before Thanksgiving, ~8:00 am to 11:00 am

Tree Lighting: One leader must obtain a Parade Permit for the tree lighting event and pay the \$25.00 fee. That leader must also contact the Flemington Police Dept. with a schedule for the tree installation to see if they can provide traffic control assistance. Approximately 3-4 scouts and/or adults are needed to assist with the tree lighting by greeting people and distributing song sheets. The Cub Scout who has sold the most popcorn gets to light the tree. One leader is needed to serve as Master of Ceremonies for the tree lighting.

First Friday evening in December, ~ 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

SAFETY NOTES:

Safety guidance from the arborist and workers handling the tree cutting and installation should be followed. Cub Scouts may help by hand-sawing branches and Exercise special caution when the tree is being felled and rigged onto the truck and in-place at the monument. During the tree installation, volunteers directing traffic must wear reflective safety vests and exercise caution around traffic.

**COMMUNITY CHIRISTMAS TREE
LIST OF CONTACTS**

Dick Stotohoff, Samuel Stothoff Company & Flemington Rotary Club
W: 782-2116
H: 782-7097

Rich Wheeler, Tamke Tree Experts
C: 908-930-4624
W: (609) 397-0774

Bob Biance, CenturyLink Telephone (may be retiring soon)
28 Allen St., Flemington
H: 782-7460

Bob Evans (assists with lights)
18A Bonnel St., Flemington
H: 782-7878

Sheldon "Bub" Hoffman, Flemington Fire Co. (assists with lights)

Flemington Borough Police Dept.
George Becker, Chief
782-3434

Flemington Fire Company (lights & ride for Santa)
782-5151

Dan Butt, Hunterdon Musical Instruments (brass players)
W: 782-0620
H: 782-2341
C: