



SQUARE KNOT NOTES

Monthly Edition

From your Sam Houston Area Council Commissioner Team

May 2020

COUNCIL OFFICE HOURS

The Cockrell Scout Center and Scout Shops are open with limited staff and social distancing protocols. The district executives are working remotely. The Cockrell Scout Center will have a “drop off only” visitor policy. Interaction needed with staff members should be conducted through phone and email.

#8 SHAC COMMUNICATION FOR COVID 19 RESPONSE

The leadership of the Sam Houston Area Council would like to present this response to the COVID-19 outbreak and protocols for Scouting operations going forward. We appreciate your patience as we navigate this situation as best we can. Since our last update, Harris County has expanded the “stay at home” order for non-essential business through May 20th. Therefore, the following modifications will be made to our plan. The Cockrell Scout Center will be open for drop off only beginning on Monday, May 4th with hours of 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday. The Scout Shop locations will reopen on Monday, May 11th.

The following updates from update #7 are still applicable.

- Our in-person Cub Scout District Day Camps for 2020 are cancelled and will be replaced with an alternative program to be rolled out in detail later in May.
- Our Cub Scout Resident Camps at Bovay Scout Ranch for 2020 are cancelled.
- Scouts BSA Summer Camp 2020 at Tsuru Scout Camp at Camp Strake is cancelled.
- Our camping team is currently developing an alternate plan for a condensed Scouts BSA camp program at Camp Strake in July that incorporates current governmental guidance and social distancing.
- All council camping facilities will be closed through June 30th.
- All district and council meetings, activities, and events through June 14th are cancelled or postponed unless conducted over teleconference or online.
- The Scout Fair Coupon Book Sale for 2020 is now closed.
- The online popcorn sale is open.
- Units should continue to consult with their chartered organizations to determine the best path forward for their Scouting programs.

This situation continues to be dynamic and changing daily. Our Enterprise Risk Management Team is working regularly and diligently to determine our plans going forward. If you have any questions regarding the COVID-19 response for the Sam Houston Area Council, please contact Thomas Franklin, Deputy Scout Executive, at thomas.franklin@scouting.org. **The council remains committed to keeping our constituents updated regularly with new information as we have it.** We will continue to communicate through three main mechanisms – Facebook, Email, and Council Website. Please consult these regularly for updates. Thank you for all you do for Scouting

Forrest Bjerkaas, Council Commissioner

Clay Williams, Chair of the Board

Tom Varnell, Scout Executive / CEO

<https://www.samhoustonbsa.org/8-shac-communication-for-covid-19-response-2020-05-03>

CALENDAR

Cockrell Scout Center - open for drop off

Scout Shops - limited retail and curbside pickup

Council/District meetings - virtual meeting through June 14

Council camps - closed through June 30

DIGITAL SAFETY

Many units and families are discovering creative ways to have fun Scouting at home. When using digital and online resources, there are some important guidelines from the National Council about youth protection, safeguarding personal information and recording online meetings. <https://shac.org/scouting-at-home-2020-03-23#digital-safety>

SCOUTBOOK UNIVERSITY

May 19, 2020 | 8:00 pm | Tuesday

Scouters of the Sam Houston Area Council have a tremendous opportunity to hear from a leading national expert on using Scoutbook. Scott Fisher, the founder and current member of the national Scoutbook User Advisory Council (SUAC), will be our host. Please join us on Zoom for this excellent training opportunity including audience Q&A on using Scoutbook! Participation is free, but pre-registration is required. After registration, attendees will have the chance to submit specific questions to the instructor that they hope to have answered during the session.

- Scoutmasters, Cubmasters, den leaders, unit advancement coordinators
- Parents, volunteers, and professional Scouters
- Scouts and Venturers
- Merit badge counselors, committee chairs and other Scouters

Scoutbook is BSA’s online WebApp that is free to all youth, parents, and leaders. Scoutbook tracks advancement, communications, camping nights, service hours, awards, schedules, unit leadership and will connect your Scouts with Merit Badge Counselors and so much more! It is the one platform where Scouts, parents and leaders can all have access to the unit information and an individual Scout’s progress. It is also Youth Protection compliant. This training will teach you how, or make you better, and will cover recent updates.

<https://www.samhoustonbsa.org/scoutbook-university-2020-05-12>

UNIT STRONG

How has your unit remained strong during this historic time? Scouting has offered our youth an excellent opportunity to interact virtually. Virtual Scavenger hunts and campouts are an awesome way for kids to keep entertained and learning! Strong units are creative!