



# San Gabriel Valley Council PACK 730 SCOUT NEWS



December 2006 Issue

www.pack730.us

Diamond Bar, California

## *Cub Scout Stars*

This month learn which constellations and stars light up our winter sky. Visit a planetarium or star gaze in a remote area. Don't forget that the stars in the sky are not the only "stars" that shine. This is a great time for our Cub Scouts to shine by giving service, singing, performing in a skit or magic show, or any activity that exemplifies the purposes of Cub Scouting.

## *Origins of the Modern Santa*

Santa Claus is perhaps the most remarkable of all the figures associated with Christmas. To us, Santa has always been an essential part of the Christmas celebration, but the modern image of Santa didn't develop until well into the 19th century. Moreover, he didn't spring to life fully-formed as a literary creation or a commercial invention (as did his famous reindeer, [Rudolph](#)). Santa Claus was an evolutionary creation, brought about by the fusion of two religious personages (St. Nicholas and Christkindlein, the Christ child) to become a fixed image which is now the paramount symbol of the *secular* Christmas celebration.



In parts of Europe such as Germany, Nicholas the gift-giver had been superseded by a representation of the infant Jesus (the Christ child, or "Christkindlein"). The Christkindlein accompanied Nicholas-like figures with other names (such as "Père Noël" in France), or he travelled with a dwarf-like helper (known in some places as "Pelznickel," or Nicholas with furs). Belsnickle (as Pelznickel was known in the German-American dialect of Pennsylvania) was represented by adults who dressed in furry disguises (including false whiskers), visited while children were still awake, and put on a scary performance. Gifts found by children the next morning were credited to Christkindlein, who had come while everyone was asleep. Over time, the non-visible Christkindlein (whose name mutated into "Kriss Kringle") was overshadowed by the visible Belsnickle, and both of them became confused with St. Nicholas and the emerging figure of Santa Claus.

The modern Santa Claus derived from these two images: St. Nicholas the elf-like gift bringer described by Moore, and a friendlier "Kriss Kringle" amalgam of the Christkindlein and Pelznickel figures. The man-sized version of Santa became the dominant image around 1841, when a Philadelphia merchant named J.W. Parkinson hired a man to dress in "Criscringle" clothing and climb the chimney outside his shop.

The Santa Claus figure, although not yet standardized, was ubiquitous by the late 19th century. Santa was portrayed as both large and small; he was usually round but sometimes of normal or slight build; and he dressed in furs (like Belsnickle) or cloth suits of red, blue, green, or purple. A Boston printer named Louis Prang introduced the English custom of Christmas cards to America, and in 1885 he issued a card featuring a red-suited Santa. The chubby Santa with a red suit (like an "overweight superhero") began to replace the fur-dressed Belsnickle image and the multicolored Santas.

At the beginning of the 1930s, the burgeoning Coca-Cola company was still looking for ways to increase sales of their product during winter, then a slow time of year for the soft drink market. They turned to a talented commercial illustrator named Haddon Sundblom, who created a series of memorable drawings that associated the figure of a larger than life, red-and-white garbed Santa Claus with Coca-Cola. Coke's annual advertisements — featuring Sundblom-drawn Santas holding bottles of Coca-Cola, drinking Coca-Cola, receiving Coca-Cola as gifts, and especially enjoying Coca-Cola — became a perennial Christmastime feature which helped spur Coca-Cola sales throughout the winter (and produced the bonus effect of appealing quite strongly to children, an important segment of the soft drink market).

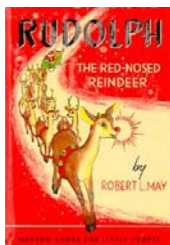
The success of this advertising campaign has helped fuel the legend that Coca-Cola actually *invented* the image of the modern Santa Claus, decking him out in a red-and-white suit to promote the company colors — or that at the very least, Coca-Cola chose to promote the red-and-white version of Santa Claus over a variety of competing Santa figures in order to establish it as *the* accepted image of Santa Claus.

This legend is not true. Although some versions of the Santa Claus figure still had



him attired in various colors of outfits past the beginning of the 20th century, the jolly, ruddy, sack-carrying Santa with a red suit and flowing white whiskers had become the standard image of Santa Claus by the 1920s, several years before Sundlom drew his first Santa illustration for Coca-Cola.

### *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*



Rudolph came to life in 1939 when the Chicago-based Montgomery Ward company (operators of a chain of department stores) asked one of their copywriters, 34-year-old Robert L.

May, to come up with a Christmas story they could give away to shoppers as a promotional gimmick. (The Montgomery Ward stores had been buying and giving away coloring books for Christmas every year, and May's department head saw creating a giveaway booklet of their own as a way to save money.) May, who had a penchant for writing children's stories and limericks, was tapped to create the booklet.

May, drawing in part on the tale of The Ugly Duckling and his own background (he was a often taunted as a child for being shy, small, and slight), settled on the idea of an underdog ostracized by the reindeer community because of his physical abnormality: a glowing red nose. Looking for an alliterative name, May considered and rejected Rollo (too cheerful and carefree a name for the story of a misfit) and Reginald (too British) before deciding on Rudolph.

The Rudolph phenomenon really took off, however, when May's brother-in-law, songwriter Johnny Marks, developed the lyrics and melody for a Rudolph song. Marks' musical version of "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" (turned down by many who didn't want to meddle with the established Santa legend) was recorded by Gene Autry in 1949, sold two million copies that year, and went on to become one of the best-selling songs of all time (second only to "White Christmas"). A TV special about Rudolph narrated by Burl Ives was produced in 1964 and remains a popular perennial holiday favorite in the USA.

### *Pinewood Derby*

Our Pinewood derby will be held on January 14, 2007 at Mount Calvary's gym. Check-in begins at 1:00PM and the races will start promptly at 2:00PM. Again we will have an "open" division for adults and siblings who wish to make and race their own car. See your den leaders for more information, rules and when the cars will be available for pickup. For some ideas on building and designing your car you can visit the pack 730 website for web links to pinewood derby sites.

<http://www.pack730.us/scoutlinks.html>

### *Scout Sunday Feb 4, 2007*



The Boy Scouts of America celebrate annually in the month of February the Anniversary of the founding of the Boy Scout program by Lord Baden Powell in England. Scout Sunday was added to the scout celebration around the middle 1940s. Scouting's anniversary is celebrated on February 8. Scout Sunday is always the Sunday preceding the 8th, unless the 8th is a Sunday, in which case the 8th would be Scout Sunday. The Saturday following February 8th is Scout Sabbath.

Scout Sunday tradition was started to make people in church aware of Scouting, and to allow Scouts to live out parts of what is pledged each week.

The Scout Law says that a "Scout is Reverent" and the Scouts of all ages promise to do their "Duty to God". These values strengthen youth character in their family, community and faith.

The purpose of this activity is to assist parishes who are not presently celebrating the anniversary of scouting with their scouting families and wish add a "Scout Sunday" service. Parishes who already celebrate the lives of their scouting families may find the information helpful to enhance their present liturgy.

### *Pack Calendar*

**Dec 15** Caroling (in place of Pack Meeting)

7:00 PM Senior Center

**Dec 20** Committee Meeting

7:30 PM It's A Grind

**Jan 14** Pinewood Derby

1:00 PM Mt. Calvary

**Jan 24** Committee Meeting

7:30 PM It's A Grind

**Jan 29** Pack Meeting

7:00 PM Deane Homes

**Feb 4** Scout Sunday

**Feb 21** Committee Meeting

7:30 PM It's A Grind

**Feb 25** Blue & Gold Banquet

6:00 PM Mt. Calvary

### *Cubmaster Final Thought My Favorite Lyrics from a Song*

And in the end..... The love you take  
Is equal to the love..... You make  
(Lennon/McCartney)

