

Troop 212, Winter Backpacking Trip, January 28-29-30, 2022

Dear Scouts and Scouters,

Our January backpacking adventure will take us into the local mountains to trek through forests and streams, hopefully with a beautiful blanket of snow on the ground. The exact location is still TBD but will be within a two-hour drive of Lakewood UMC, and having actual snow will be a prime determining factor influencing the decision. The most favored Plan A option is the Lytle Creek area...it is a new location for the troop and most likely to have some snow. The Plan B option is the back country of Camp Tahquitz. Either option involves a 2.5 mile hike on Saturday and 2.5 miles on Sunday.

Our adventure begins Friday evening, January 28th. We'll meet 7:00 pm at the Church parking lot and drive to the trailhead where we will camp near our vehicles for the night, acclimating to the roughly 5000 ft. elevation. On Saturday, we will enjoy a quick base camp breakfast, and then set off on foot to a remote, back woods destination chosen by the SPL, in consultation with the Scoutmaster, and the other experienced backpackers. Once the back woods camp has been reached, we will set up for cold weather camping in snow conditions, as well as low impact camping techniques. Scouts will be organized in teams of two participants per team, with each team being assigned a double walled winter tent during the Thursday bag check gear pick up meeting. Snow caves or igloo construction may be considered, but will be finalized upon review of the safety conditions when we actually arrive at the remote campsite. The evening MAY feature a campfire, provided conditions allow and firewood is secured by the backpackers. Each patrol should plan to bring sufficient rope and tools to build the campfire.

Sunday morning we will eat breakfast, break camp, making sure we practice our best Low Impact Camping Skills, then hike back to the vehicles. Depending upon which site we use, and our arrival time at the vehicles, the plan may be to enjoy a nice lunch at or near the vehicles before heading home or stop for lunch on the way home. This final decision will be discussed during the Thursday bag check gear pick up meeting.

Scouts are to be in Class B uniform for the drive to and from camp. Scouts may hike Saturday and Sunday in non-uniform clothing to ensure that they stay warm and dry. Upon reaching home, troop gear should be cleaned and dried at home, to be returned on Monday during the troop meeting.

Important Days and Costs:

Monday, January 24th Troop meeting: Please bring \$35 per hiker cash or check (drivers bring \$35 as well; see process reminder below) to the troop meeting, with the standard permission slip (available on the Troop website). \$25 covers 1 trail dinner, 2 breakfasts, program fees + \$10 for gas. Troop packs will be checked out at this meeting for those who need one.

Thursday, January 27th at 7:00 PM : Our standard mandatory final "bag check" will be held at the church at 7pm, in our second floor equipment room location, where we will also distribute the backpacking food, stoves, fuel, and tents, ice spikes, enabling hikers to finish loading their

packs for final weigh-in.

Friday, January 28th at 7:00 PM, Meet at the Church parking lot: Please arrive promptly to allow for a quick visual pack inspection and vehicle loading. Drivers....please be sure that your vehicles are fueled, ready to depart, before this meeting time.

Sunday, January 30th, return at approximately 4:00 PM: We will return to the Church. Do not depart for home until all troop gear has been accounted for and your SPL has dismissed you.

Process Reminder: All scouts and adults will submit the same payments amounts on the scheduled Monday collections night. Adults who drive to/from the event will be rebated their gas allowance as part of their share of the actual gas pool money collected.

Equipment:

As a minimum, the following items should be packed in a backpack (NO black duffel bags):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Appropriate clothing (Day 40's/Night low 10's) ☞ Brim Hat sunny daytime ☞ Warm hat for cold ☞ Pocket Knife ☞ Small Flashlight w/extra batteries ☞ Sunscreen and Chapstick ☞ First Aid Kit ☞ Compass ☞ Hiking boots with extra socks ☞ Boot spikes/crampons ☞ Trek/ski poles w/basket ☞ Gaiters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Ground Cloth ☞ Poncho/Rain Gear ☞ Small baggy of Handy-wipes, Toothbrush & paste ☞ Toilet paper & trowel ☞ Water bottles – 2 liters (not“camelbaks”) ☞ Mess Kit (utensils, bowl, mug) ☞ Whistle ☞ Trail Map (passed out at camp) ☞ Warm gloves/Mittens. ☞ Warm Sleeping Bag and Pad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Matches or Flint ☞ Pencils, Pens, Notebook ☞ Rope – 10 Feet ☞ 2 Small towels ☞ Sunglasses/Ski goggles ☞ Money for Sunday lunch ☞ Favorite Trail Snacks for two days ☞ Saturday Lunch and possibly Sunday lunch.
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Important Equipment Notes:

1) We anticipate beginning the mountain portion of our hike on dirt, then encountering snow as we climb into higher elevations. Ice spikes should be carried until they are needed. Gaiters can be fitted when dressing on Saturday morning.

2) January temperatures averages range from the teens at night (sometimes lower) , to the 40's during the day. If the sun shines all day it could go up to the 50's. Hikers this trip must be prepared for a very wide range of temperatures and maybe even some rain showers.

3) Each backpacker is responsible for their own lunches and snacks. Lunches are Saturday on the trail , and Sunday, which will be either on the trail or on the way home at a restaurant. However, when backpacking, one cannot always get out at a scheduled time, especially in

snow conditions. Also, remember that winter backpacking burns many more calories than normal. Be prepared with extra food rations.

4) Please keep in mind that a full backpack should be no more than one-fourth the weight of the scout carrying it. Remember to plan for your share of food and troop gear distributed on Thursday.

5) Proper uniform for this event will be Class B level, due to the nature of the weather conditions we will be encountering Friday night as soon as we leave the comfort of the cars. All participants should have their warm coats and flashlight readily available when we arrive at Friday camp and NOT packed in their backpacks.

Important Driver Notes:

The exact location of our trip will be announced no later than the Thursday Pack Check meeting. The two options present slightly different needs:

1a) If we choose the Camp Tahquitz option, any vehicle can be used because we will park near the camp entrance, on the cabin side of the road, and not drive up the narrow road to the commissary and campsites. However, we must be prepared to encounter snow and ice on Hwy 38. California State Law requires that all vehicles traveling into the mountains between Nov. 1 and April 1 carry tire chains, even if no snow is on the road. This includes 4WD vehicles. If conditions turn out as predicted, we will need to “chain-up” so be prepared by having chains in your vehicle. If you do not own chains, check with other T212 parents who may be willing to loan a set to you (must fit your tires properly). If this option is selected, we will need one vehicle/driver to stay with us Friday night that will assist with shuttle driving Saturday morning to the trail entrance and the return home that Same Saturday morning as a non backpacker.

1b) If we choose the Lytle Creek option, tire chains are not required. However, vehicles with sufficient clearance WILL be necessary. The road to the hiking starting point is similar to the Half Moon Campground we visited in early October (and prior years). We do not anticipate enough snow/ice on the road to impede our travel to the Friday night camp/car park. However, if you have snow chains handy, you might want to include them in your vehicle, along with a shovel. If this campground option is selected, it would be nice if we had one vehicle/driver to stay at the Friday night base camp for the weekend to keep an eye on the vehicles while the hikers are away on the trail, and the return home with us Sunday.

2) Regardless of which location option we choose, car pooling, with proper safety masks, will be encouraged to keep our group safe and fuel costs as low as possible, and to adhere to the campgrounds' vehicle limits. Please ensure that your vehicle's antifreeze is sufficient to park your car in overnight temperatures that may dip into the low teens. If you are uncertain, a simple gauge is available. See Chuck for more information.

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