

TROOP 96 GAZETTE

Knights of Columbus
St. Gilbert Church



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July 2013

Troop Heads for MaKaJaWan Summer Camp



Bright and early on a sunny Sunday morning the scouts heading for a week or two of summer camp met at the St Gilbert parking lot. Final paper work was completed and shortly after 7AM they loaded into vehicles for the 5 hour drive to northern Wisconsin.

Expect to hear about fun times of camping in the north woods, earning

advancement and zillions of merit badges.

The first week will end with a good number of our scouts headed out for the National Jamboree in Beckley, West Virginia. Imagine that! Troop 96 will have spanned the continent from the mountains of Wyoming, to the northern reaches of Wisconsin, to the Appalachian hills of West Virginia all within a month.

Big Trip 2013: Go West, Young Man (by Pat Klemens, Scoutmaster)

This year, the troop made plans for an epic adventure. A committee of Scouts and adults planned and executed a nine-day, 2500-mile trip to visit some of the most well-known national parks and monuments in America.

The committee, headed up by Mr. Ostick and Bryan W, began organizing many months ago. In the depths of our Chicago winter, a cross-country trip seemed like an idyll dream. But on June 14, it became a reality. Four 15-passenger rental vans were loaded up along with a U-Haul truck pulling our troop trailer plus the Nitto truck and camper. Forty-nine passengers headed out on a grey and sometimes wet Saturday morning.



Just past 8 AM, the first rendezvous at a rest area north of Madison saw all the vehicles and Scouts gathered for the first time. We were on our way.

There is a plan to prepare a very detailed story of our trip, but for this report, I'll just hit the highlight in bullets!

- One van has a tire blow out at highway speed but it ended okay.
- The Spam Museum is interesting and they can put "SPAM" on every conceivable trinket to sell.
- Distances in "The West" seem further apart than back in GL.
- Adrian!
- Wall Drug is still there. You gotta stop, but you don't know why (even after you leave).
- Devil's Tower is awesome. Very.
- Our troop trailer has never been so far west.
- There are no fire ants in Wyoming.
- Deadwood is like a sad Wisconsin Dells. If given the choice, pass.
- Custer State Park is fantastic. Great camping, amazing animals.
- Mount Rushmore is smaller than most people imagine – but impressive.
- Rock tunnels are fun.
- Needles Highway is a must see.
- Crazy Horse monument will be a work-in-progress for decades to come. Be sure to visit. Leave a donation and take a rock.
- Mount Rushmore is also amazing at night.
- It can rain hard when you are in a tent.
- The Badlands are stark and beautiful. Even when wet.
- The Minuteman Missile Site is a must-see. We need to understand and remember what was done here. See it if you can.
- It's good that tents dry fast, cuz they were getting wet every day.
- We moved our last night's camp site to avoid the storms. We weren't successful.



When you hear the words Big Trip in the future, plan to make your deposit early. You can't beat a Troop 96 Big Trip.

In our past, we've gone to Mammoth Cave, Fort Knox and the Patton Museum, Wright-Patterson AF Base and the Air Force Museum, Saint Louis and area attractions. We've got a long list of great trips to take. I hope you can join us for the next adventure.

Thanks to the Big Trip Committee: Mr. Ostick, Mr. Cambio, Mr. Hoffman, Mr. Boos, Mr. Wehde and Bryan W, Jackie T, Spencer B, Joey C, Nathan T, Eric O, David H and Nick G.

In the merry, merry month of May... (by Pat Klemens, Scoutmaster)

(Ed. Note: This article was written for the June Gazette but due to a snafu was unintentionally omitted)

Once again, our determined troop headed out for a monthly campout. Despite some pretty awful weather in March and April (first, snow and ice, then floods), we left for Lake Le-Aqua-Na full of hope. The forecast called for rain, but it couldn't be as bad as the last two months, right?

Traffic was bad as we left the StG parking lot for the 2-½ hour ride to the state park northwest of Freeport, Illinois. Arriving just after dark, we were surprised to find the group campsite empty. In the past, we've been jammed in tight. This time we s-p-r-e-a-d o-u-t and took advantage of the space. By the time we finishing making camp and enjoying a quick cracker barrel, we headed to bed at about 11:15. The PLC decided our wakeup was going to be early so we could fill the day with fishing and cycling. Although we braced for rain, the skies cleared. It was perfect.

We awoke to sunshine! Warm temps and light winds assured the bikers and fishermen that we were in for a great day. Breakfasts were cooked up fast: pancakes with bacon & French Toast with sausage were big hits.

Acting SPL Paul Jacks assembled the troop and shared the information about the day's logistics. One group of dedicated fishermen headed to try their skill and luck catching the elusive lunker (you can read Mr. Jack's ~~lies~~ story elsewhere in the Gazette). Another group loaded up their bikes and helmets and drove about 25 minutes to the trailhead.

The bike riders gathered under perfect spring conditions for a group photo. This point



marked the start of an epic 27 mile ride: longer than an Olympic marathon!

Spoiler alert: they all made it – barely! Heading north on the trail, we immediately found ourselves making bike, rider and safety adjustments during the first three miles. Once we

got past the initial, “how-do-I-ride-on-a-trail-with-other-people” start-up problems, we were going great! The miles added up as we pedaled towards our destination: the invisible line that separates Illinois from Wisconsin.

In Orangeville, we stopped for lunch. (Note: Orangeville has no oranges and doesn't even seem to have a ville.) At the shelter on the side of the trail, we got some of the worst news of the day: the water fountain was out of service. The nearby gas station wasn't willing to

let us fill our water bottles, but they were willing to SELL us their bottled water! We needed water to keep us feeling good and to avoid dehydration, so we opened our wallets and plunked down \$30 for water (and you thought gasoline was expensive).

After lunch, there was a (short) debate about going all the way to the stateline (just another 2-3 miles). Debate over. Everyone saddled up for the quick ride to the Cheddar Curtain.



At the stateline, we stopped long enough for another photo, before turning around and heading south. Everyone “knows” that riding south is going “down” so we found the ride back much easier. In fact, we were cruising along until we had an “incident.” It seems two bikes tried to occupy the

same space on the trail – at the same time. Although this experiment has been tried many times in the past, we proved once again that it is not possible. One of the bikes sustained considerable damage to its derailleur (the mechanism that allows the bike to shift the chain to different cogs – makes riding much easier).

Mr. Borovka, our cycling wizard, took a look at the damage and said, “Oh, this is not good.” Considering we were about seven miles from the end of the trail, we all nodded thoughtfully and agreed: this is not good.

Then, he started FIXING it. With a length of wooden stick found on the ground, some tape taken from the First Aid kit and a few incantations, he fixed it to the point that it could be ridden! It couldn't shift anymore, but it *could* be pedaled and that's all that mattered. It didn't look pretty, but it worked for the last seven miles and that's what we needed.



And so, this is a biking story about the one that *almost* got away. Thanks to Mr. Borovka, we finished our ride almost one hour faster than we did in 2010. Everyone returned to the southern trailhead with happy smiles, some with sore legs and some with tender bottoms. We conquered the Jane Addams Trail.



Scoutmaster's Corner
by Pat Klemens

Looking Back:

- Kyle Judge and Ethan DeKeyser have completed one week of **National Youth Leadership Training** at Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan. We look forward to hearing of your experiences and learning what our troop can do to improve.
- **Our 2013 Big Trip is over!** With six vehicles and our troop trailer, some 49 Scouts, leaders and family members made the unforgettable trip to beautiful Wyoming and South Dakota. Check out the photos on our website.

Looking Ahead:

- Final preparations are being made to send **Scouts to Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan**. We held a special "readiness" meeting on June 24. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Doug DeKeyser or Mr. Pat Klemens.
- After more than two years of preparations, the Scouts participating in this year's **National Jamboree** will leave on July 14 for the Summit in West Virginia. Wish them well and expect to hear great stories upon their return.
- Note that we will hold our July 8th meeting at **Jones Island Park on Gray's Lake** with a special Lifesaving session by Spencer B. There will be **NO MEETING** on July 15. We will continue our summer switch to Jones Island for the meetings on July 22, 29, August 5 and 12.
- Our **August Campout** will be held on Aug 16-18 in Rock Cut State Park. We'll have fun on the water – bring your canoes and kayaks. On Saturday evening, we invite any families to take the "just over an hour" ride and join us for a meal cooked by your scouts.

- Our very busy summer continues. Here are some key dates to remember:
 - July 7: MaKaJaWan Week #1 campers head north.
 - July 8: Troop Meeting at Jones Island – special Lifesaving instruction
 - July 12: Order of the Arrow Callout at MaKaJaWan
 - July 13: Week one campers return to Grayslake
 - July 14: Week #2 at MaKaJaWan begins
 - July 14: Scouts head to the Summit in WV for the National Jamboree
 - July 15: NO troop meeting
 - July 22: Troop Meeting: "Special Recreation Night" at Jones Island
 - July 29: Everyone is back from MaKaJaWan and the Jamboree – meet at Jones Island
 - July 30: PLC Meeting
 - Aug 5: Troop Meeting at Jones Island
 - Aug 12: Troop Meeting at Jones Island
 - Aug 16-18: Camping at Rock Cut: Families welcome for BBQ Dinner.

PLC Notes – June 11, 2013

13 Scouts attended: Bryan, Paul, Kyle, David, Nathan C, Matthew, Ethan, Drew, Alex, Rahil, Nick, Spencer, Christian.

Bryan requested the PL's provide monthly reports beginning in July.
Theme for July and August: water sports

<p><u>July 8th:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jones Island: Lifesaving instruction by Spencer 	<p><u>June 15th:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No meeting due to Jamboree and MKJW
<p><u>July 22nd, July 29th and Aug 5th:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jones Island 	<p><u>Aug 12th:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> campout prep Safety Afloat training: Bryan Float Trip plan: an TBA adult Family cookout
<p><u>Aug 19th:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website and social media, phone tree Game: Name that merit badge, Kyle 	<p><u>Aug 26th:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> emergency preparedness Update phone tree.

****If you have any ideas to concerns you would like to make known about the troop, then join us at the next PLC on August 20th****



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