

The FORUM

Venturing, Sea Scouting and Exploring Newsletter since 2003
November 2019 Issue

Forum Articles

Central Region

Ship 9024 Paddles the Muskegon River
Wam 2020
Crew 7 Jacket Patch

National

Commodore's Corner October 2019

Western Region

Celebrating 20 Years of Northern Lights High Adventure Base



WHAT IS THE FORUM!

The FORUM is a National cluster concept and a friendly way to help Scouting Leaders exchange ideas and programs among our Troops, Crews, Ships, Posts, Councils, Areas, Regions and National.

The FORUM is shared by Volunteers and Professionals across the country.

The FORUM has been published monthly since 2003 and is not an official publication of any Council, Area, Region or National. It is a Volunteers and Professionals newsletter to promote our senior program. Help support our teenage program by sending the FORUM your stories, Newsletters. Council articles, By-Laws, Questions and Best Practices to share with others.

As always, articles, questions and comments are welcome. Promote Venturing, Sea Scouting and Exploring by promoting your Unit and Council etc. stories. We are seeking support from anyone interested in working on the newsletter.

Thanks for all you do!

Bob the BEAR Monto, Editor in Chief

[How to submit an article]

The FORUM would like any articles and event promotions you have on Exploring, Sea Scouting and Venturing programs from your units, council etc. Articles with photos are best. Articles with youth (under 18) must use BSA Youth Protection guidelines.

Attach your article as a Word document (preferable method) with identified photos (With descriptions of photo), clipart, etc. and send to rmon-to47@gmail.com. Please email Bob "The BEAR" Monto by the 25th of the month with your articles. Since the FORUM is published monthly, if you miss one month it will get in the next month.

Your article should also include contact information and name of the individual submitting the article.

Use subject line FORUM to highlight this is a FORUM email.

Please edit your article.

All photos should have permission of all the participants in the photos. Indicate in the email that permission has been granted.

Submit a brief bio of the author(s) of the article.

Thanks for all you do for Youth

Bob "the BEAR" Monto

FORUM Newsletter Editor

FORUM Articles for Download

The Current FORUM Newsletter:

http://www.minsi-southmountain.com/newsletters/current_forum.php

The FORUM Back Issues

http://www.minsi-southmountain.com/venturing_archive.htm

Large Crews

http://minsi-southmountain.com/newsletters/documents/FORUM-Crew_27-Large_Crews_articles.pdf

UPDATED March Crew 27 Large Crew Series (Articles on Large Crew Operations)

Ship 9024 Paddles the Muskegon River



As all good things must come to an end, so do the warmer boating months in Michigan. And Ship 9024 (Northside Muskegon Michigan Lions Club) chose to end the on-the-water part of its season in style by holding a River Trip down the Muskegon River. 2019's 12 participants was an increase from last year's event, as the Ship invited other local Units to join in the fun as part of its recruitment efforts

When planning began in the weeks prior, there was concern that the weather may play an ugly part in the adventure, but with crossed fingers, prayers, and faith, the weather cleared up and we had a beautiful day on the water. Even though the air was cool, the sun shone brightly and made the extra layers everyone put on almost too much. The only down side was a strong headwind coming up the river which slowed our efforts for a while.



The Ship put in the water according to a typical Scout schedule (e.g. "late"), but everyone had all their gear and no one dumped on the way in. And with little fanfare, we said farewell to our chase vehicle with 3 canoes and 7 kayaks paddling into the distance.

Lunchtime provided our first break of the day, and everyone got to check out their docking skills, with the newbies finding it not so easy to get out of a boat once you got yourself balanced properly. The early paddling got everyone's munchies going, and one Youth took advantage the situation to work on his Cooking Merit Badge by making a heated meal for the participants. Separate meals quickly became a "potluck" as typical Scouting camaraderie brought everyone together to share, and various sweet and salty goodies began being passed around. Simple as it was, the chicken noodle soup and snacks were well received.



of

Ship 9024 Paddles the Muskegon River



Quicker than everyone thought, however, the hour reserved for lunch passed us by, and it was time to get back into the water. Over the next few hours, the frontrunners faded to the rear while the laggards occasionally ran to the front. We got a chance to see a lot of wildlife, although the river was running muddy, so we didn't see many fish. Turtles, especially, were in abundance, sunning themselves on the shoreline while they still could

The event also served as a service project, as we collected up any garbage we found for disposal later. While we acquired pool noodles, plastic bags and other miscellaneous scrap, the biggest "prize" was an inflatable (and still inflated!) pool toy someone lost off their beach. This was quickly secured as a support dinghy for one of the kayaks, and its cargo of "escargot" was maintained for the rest of the trip.



Not that the trip was uneventful, mind you. Multiple challenges awaited us on our journey. First of all, to reach our point of exit, we needed to navigate our way to the North Channel of the Muskegon river, which is no easy task with the maze of cross-streams available to get there. In 2018 we missed our "exit" and wound up very far from where we wanted to be. But this year, armed with better GPS maps and with higher levels of attention, we made the right turn and crossed over onto our chosen path.

Ship 9024 Paddles the Muskegon River

The next obstacle had us “stumped” for a while trying to figure out how we were going to surmount it without getting wet. We found that a sizeable tree had recently fallen, completely blocking the river from boat traffic. A couple of daring souls got out and dragged their boats over the trunk to the other side.



But the younger Youth weren't ready to give up that easily. They soon found that the fallen tree raised the local water level just enough that the river flooded the shore grasses. With a little “scooching” and “heaving,” we were able to paddle across the grass and around the obstruction to the clear waters beyond.

The final obstacle came when we reached the launch that was to be our putout point – we found it completely submerged! The lesson was definitely learned that we should have scouted out our entire path for any surprises. We weren't too delayed, though, as the road was still quite passable and our chase cars were still able to get to us. Albeit we had to drag our boats and gear a bit farther than we anticipated.



Ship 9024 Paddles the Muskegon River



In the end, while some had an easy time with the trip, others were dragging by the end. But no one regretted taking the journey. This year we had no “casualties,” and no one got dumped into the river. 7 hours and 18 miles after we started, we finished our explorations. The boats were trailered up, the gear stowed away, and 12 exhausted paddlers piled into vehicles for celebratory pizza and the journey home.

David Betz is the author of the article, and is the Committee Chair of Ship 9024, having taken over the position in late 2017. David has been directly involved in Scouting since 2010 when his youngest son began as a Tiger Scout, but indirectly since 2003 when his oldest son began as a Wolf Scout. He has served as Den Leader through all the Cub Scout ranks and as Cubmaster for 5 years at Pack 3264. He serves on the Training Team for his local Council, and assists where he can with the STEM, shooting sports, Wood Badge, and other programs. .



Commodore's Corner October 2019

By National Commodore



**National Sea Scout Director
Owen McCulloch
photo by Richard Lipham**

Hi all – there's a lot going on and I'm overdue getting a Commodore's Corner out, so here we go...

In case you missed the earlier announcement, the biggest news is that we have a new National Director of Sea Scouts. As part of the reorganization at National, Janice Downey has moved over to the Marketing department, and Owen McCulloch has taken over as our National Sea Scout director. Owen says:

I am excited to be working with our Sea Scouting programs which have such a rich and strong history. I've got some experience on the water, and much of my Scouting career has been in supporting programs.

Starting as an Exploring Executive in Portland, Oregon in 1993 (which also supported Sea Exploring – that was the name at the time), I moved to Longs Peak Council/Boulder, Colorado Area in 1999 and supported "The Colorado Anhydrous Fleet" (they even had a shirt). In 2002 I became the Director of Program at the Florida Sea Base overseeing the program operations at the two facilities in the Florida Keys and the program base in the Bahamas. While in the Keys I was an active member of USCGAUX Flotilla 13-8 (boat crew certified). I was DFS in Jacksonville, FL 2006, and moved to Philmont in 2009-2013 where I managed Base Camp operations and all the Seasonal Personnel (1,100+ summer staff). In 2014 I moved to the National Service Center as part of the Corporate Engagement team, representing BSA programs and properties to the corporate and outdoor industry markets. I became the National Venturing Di-

rector following the 2017 Jamboree.

My three kids are all in Scouting (two daughters in a Crew, one of the daughters multiple in a troop, son in a troop) and I'm a registered leader (Crew Advisor, ASM for girl troop and ASM for boy troop). Also LNT Master Educator, NRA instructor (multiple very)/RSO, Scuba Rescue cert, etc. I grew up in the program and basically never left. In my "spare time" I'm a competitive bagpiper with a pipe band in the Dallas/Fort Worth Area.

I'm looking forward to supporting the Sea Scouting program as we move forward together.

Owen is already on the job – on the day of the official transition he was at Minto Rendezvous meeting Sea Scouts and adult leaders – so look for him soon at Sea Scouts events near you. We'll really miss Janice, who has done a great deal for the program, but, she's not really gone because now we have a Sea Scout friend in Marketing!

The AUXSCOUT program. As most of you know, the new Coast Guard Auxiliary relationship allowing the Auxiliary to charter ships and youth Sea Scouts to join the Auxiliary has been in a pilot in two Coast Guard Auxiliary districts. That pilot has gone very well, and we expect the program to roll out nationwide soon, but we don't yet have a firm date. While you are waiting, this would be a great time to seek out your local Auxiliary flotilla and schedule a boater safety class for your youth. That is a good way to get the relationship going! Meanwhile, we have a webinar coming up to talk about this on October 22 (tonight!) at 2000 central time – it's aimed at Council and Area Commodores, but anyone interested is welcome to attend. Register [here](#). If you miss it, don't worry, we'll be posting a recording. [Update: the webinar is over and the recording is [here](#)]

SEAL Re-Launch. Under the leadership of new national SEAL coordinator Rob Freas, SEAL is undergoing a significant update and an expansion – in past years we've had to turn Scouts away but this year will see the addition of new locations and some new adventures (paddlecraft SEAL anyone?) so there should be room for everyone. I want to dispel one myth about SEAL – some youth don't sign up for SEAL because they're afraid they'll fail. But the reality is that the only way to fail is to show up not willing to try. If you show up willing to join the team and engage, you'll do fine! So please get the word out to everyone to plan to come to the new and improved SEAL training this summer – with a lot more options for locations! For a youth perspective on SEAL watch [this](#) or [this](#).

Commodore's Corner October 2019

By National Commodore

Seabadge. In the past, Seabadge opportunities have been too rare. We are working to make Seabadge available a lot more often in a lot more locations. Just this past weekend we had Seabadge courses underway in Atlanta and at Lake Tahoe; last week was Illinois, and next week is Pennsylvania – I think courses in all four regions in the same month is a first! 2020 is the 50th anniversary of Seabadge and you will be seeing a lot of courses across the country, including one back at the original location in Monterey. If you haven't yet been to Seabadge, keep an eye on the upcoming course listings for upcoming courses and make a point to join us for one of them! And remember, your friends from other branches of Scouting are welcome too – it isn't required that you be a Sea Scout leader to attend.

OA Unit Rep. Now that we are officially part of the Order of the Arrow, they've decided (with the concurrence of the National Program Development Committee which includes Sea Scouts) to rename the Order of the Arrow Troop Representative Position to Order of the Arrow Unit Representative and to allow that position in Sea Scout Ships and Venturing Crews as well as Scouts BSA troops. Once the stock of OA Troop Rep patches is used up, there will be a single patch for all 3 programs, but since it will be a while before that happens, if your Ship is in a hurry to get started, just use the Specialist patch for now. Duties will be similar to those of a Troop Rep, but will include promoting our equivalent of a long term camp, the long cruise. You can find more details here.

Hidden Treasures from SeaScout.org. There is a lot of great material just waiting to be discovered on the Sea Scout website. Someone was recently looking for a lesson plan to teach navigation to their ship and I pointed them at this excellent work by Vice Commodore Douglas Love – this is designed to get you through teaching all the navigation requirements up to Quartermaster and is based on public domain sources like Bowditch:

Ordinary requirement 10

Able requirement 10

Ordinary piloting test

While we're speaking about navigation, this looks like a fun winter project: Celestial Navigation on a budget. Paddlecraft! Now that we have got an increased focus on paddlecraft in Sea Scouts, I want to remind you that BSA's national aquatics committee has developed some pretty good paddlecraft safety training – in many councils, the Council Aquatics Committee offers that training, or if yours doesn't, perhaps a neighboring council does. You can learn more about what is out there at the aquatics resources site but check with your local council to see what is offered.

Skipper Club. The National Safe Boating Council has developed a training called Skipper Club, adapted from the NSBC's Open Water and Close-Quarters Boat Control curriculum and aimed at young people ages 13-19. Working with them, we've been awarded a grant from the Coast Guard to train as many as 80 adult instructors for this class – all we have to do is provide the volunteer instructor-candidates and appropriate powerboats, the instructors and their travel are covered by the grant. Adults who are trained as instructors will be able to deliver the training to Sea Scouts at no charge (other than actual costs for things like fuel etc). We ran a pilot of this program last year with Sea Scouts in a couple of locations and it was well received – the youth who participated found it both fun and useful. If you are interested in hosting this training, please contact your Area or Regional Commodore – the Regional Commodores will be responsible for determining which locations we schedule. See more info on the Skipper Club program at beaskipper.org.

What are you doing next summer? Our National Quarterdeck decided that they really wanted a National Sea Scout event that everyone can attend. Koch Cup is great, but not many Scouts can attend and they wanted someone for everyone! In searching for a way to do that, they spoke to their counterparts in the Venturing program and decided that the most efficient way to proceed would be to join forces with them to establish a Sea Scout 'subcamp' at VenturingFest next summer. Join us for a fun and exciting event in the company of Sea Scouts from all over the country! Learn more and get yourself registered at the Summit site.

I'd love to hear from you about what's going on out there, or any questions or concerns you may have. Drop me a line at twcook at seascout.org!

T.W. Cook – National Commodore



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
BAY-LAKES COUNCIL

WINTER AMIDSHIPS

SAVE THE DATE for The 46th WAM

February 29, 2020 www.BayLakesBSA.org/WAM

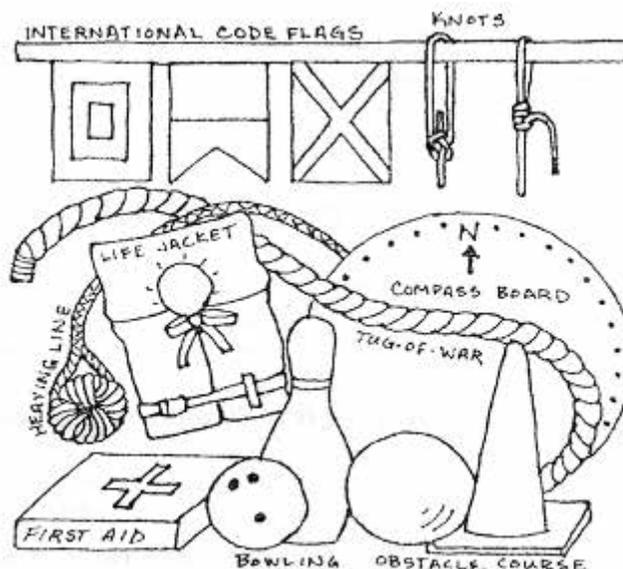
WAM is a 1-day event for Scouts BSA Troops, Venture Crews, Sea Scout Ships, Career Explorer Posts, Varsity Teams, Girl Scout/Mariner Troops, American Heritage Girls Units, and 4H Clubs. Youth participants must be registered members of the Boy Scouts of America (Troop, Crew, Ship, Team, Post participant), Girl Scouts-USA, American Heritage Girls or 4H. Dinner is included; lunch is on your own.

DATE/TIME: Saturday, February 29, 2020; 8:30 AM-10:00 PM
PLACE: National Guard Armory, 796 Sullivan Dr., Fond du Lac, Wisconsin
REGISTRATION: cost TBD (*Online Registration Required*)
LATE FEE: \$5 per Youth Starting 02/16/2020

Events:

- * Life-Jacket Relay
- * Obstacle Course
- * Scooter Race
- * Tug-of-War
- * First Aid
- * Bowling
- * Knots Relay
- * Heaving Line
- * Compass Board Relay
- * Happy Feet Relay
- * International Code Flags
- * Surprise Event(s)
- * Awards
- * Dance

Overnight offered at
Church of Our Saviour, Fond du Lac



For more info contact
Winter Amidships Chair
Ann Gratton
(920) 231-3015
wamgratton@gmail.com

**ORDER YOUR VENTURING JACKET
PATCH TODAY - \$5/each**

**Every Venturer wants the cool Venturing
Pocket Patch!**

**Help Support Crew 7 of Water & Woods Field
Service Council**

Metallic and 'Glow-In-The-Dark' Thread

Order Yours Today!

Contact Crew 7 at mapesni@aol.com

Cost \$5/each plus postage



Send your order to: mapesni@aol.com

All profits support Crew 7 W&WC (782)

Include address, name, number of patches requested Crew

Northern Lights High Adventure Base Fairbanks, Alaska Celebrating 20 Years of Northern Lights High Adventure Base

This past Summer season marked the 20th anniversary for the Northern Lights High Adventure base, and proved worthy of celebration in every way.

Troops from across the “lower 48” trekked across glaciers, paddled over 150 miles down the legendary Yukon River, hiked above the Arctic Circle, and pitched tents under the midnight sun. Wildfires raged across most of interior Alaska this summer, but fortunately no treks were cancelled and very few re-routed to alternative locations.

Each trek is planned exclusively for the Troop or Crew visiting based on their needs, goals, and expectations. Alaska boasts vast, diverse landscapes, climates, and endless opportunities to explore, which is why Northern Lights High Adventure takes so much time to learn the wishes of each individual Troop or Crew and plan the best possible adventure, down to the very last detail.

Although the majority of treks occur during the Summer season, those wishing to try cold weather camping, snow sports, and maybe catch a glimpse of the aurora borealis might consider a winter trek.

Interested in learning more about visiting the Land of the Midnight Sun? For more information on planning your trek or open guide positions contact Matthew Banaszewski, Director of Northern Lights High Adventure: (907) 452-1976 Matthew.Banaszewski@scouting.org

Space is still available for Summer 2020 and 2021!

Facebook: [facebook.com/NorthernLightsHighAdventureBase](https://www.facebook.com/NorthernLightsHighAdventureBase)

Instagram: [@NorthernLightsHighAdventureBase](https://www.instagram.com/NorthernLightsHighAdventureBase)

Website: alaskahighadventure.com Written

Written by

Stephanie Kelly, Backcountry Trek Manager and 2018 & 2019 Backcountry Guide.

Photos courtesy NLHA.

**Northern Lights High Adventure Base Fairbanks, Alaska
Celebrating 20 Years of Northern Lights High Adventure Base**



**Sea kayaking off the coast of Valdez,
July 2019**



**Hiking across Root Glacier in Wrangell
St. Elias National Park, July 2019
Backpacking**



**Backpacking in Denali State Park,
June 2019**



**Backpacking in the White Mountains
National Recreation Area, July 2019**

Websites

National Venturing

<http://www.scouting.org/venturing.aspx>

National Sea Scout

<http://www.seascout.org/>

Central Region Venturing

<http://www.crventuring.org>

Northeast Region Venturing

<http://nerventuring-bsa.org/>

Southern Region Sea Scout

<http://srventuring-bsa.org/wordpress/>

National Exploring

<http://www.exploring.org/>

Yahoo Groups

Central Region

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/crventuring/>

Northeast Region

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nerventuring/>

Southern Region

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/srventuring/>

Western Region

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wrventuring/>

National

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/venturinglist/>



the FORUM

The FORUM is a National cluster concept and a friendly way to help Scouting Leaders exchange ideas and programs among our Troops, Crews, Ships, Posts, Councils, Areas, Regions and National..

The FORUM is shared by Volunteers and Professionals across the country.

“The **FORUM**” has been published monthly since 2003 and is not an official publication of any Council, Area, Region or National. It is the Leaders and Professionals newsletter. Help support our teenage program by sending the FORUM your stories, Newsletters. Council articles, By-Laws, Questions and Best Practices to share with others.

As always, articles, questions and comments are welcome. Promote Venturing, Sea Scouting and Exploring by promoting your Unit and Council. We are seeking support from anyone interested in working on the newsletter .

Thanks for all you do!

Bob the BEAR Monto—Editor in Chief

Pete Mapes—Associate Editor

Bernie Suess - Webmaster

TO SUBSCRIBE to the FORUM:

Email Bob the BEAR at

rmonto47@gmail.com

Use the email account you want to receive the FORUM and give Full name and Council to place you in the right email list.