

December 2008
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Central Region Venturing Monthly Newsletter



Welcome to the 7th edition of the 2008-2009 monthly Central Region Venturing Newsletter. Each edition will feature information that you will find useful for your council's Venturing program. We will highlight items that support the development of your Teen Leadership Councils, Roundtables, chairmanships, commissioners, professional staff, council-wide activities and the Central Region Venturing Areas. We look forward to being of service to you in Venturing.

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Happy Holidays!

December is full of spiritual and cultural celebrations across the wide spectrum of religious affiliations. Scouting appreciates the diversity among its members and encourages mutual respect for all beliefs. Each religion treasures their festivities and we can all learn something that we have in common with other cultures and faiths.

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To contact the entire Central Region Venturing Committee, e-mail Communications Coordinator Debbie Keyes and she will pass on the message.

Venturer You Should Know

Ben Hayes is serving as the 2008-2009 Central Region Area 4 Venturing President.

Ben is from Simon Kenton Council and lives in Delaware Ohio. He is a proud Eagle Scout and is currently President of Crew 318. Ben has finished his Wood Badge ticket and is an honorary member of the Yocona Area Council where he took his Wood Badge course SR888. He also has completed the JLT course Eagle Feather. Ben is both Kodiak and VLSC trained and has attend a Kodiak CDC.

As a Venturer, Ben has earned both his Sports and Outdoor Bronze Awards, his Gold Award and just finished up his Silver Award.



Ben is a recent graduate of Rutherford B. Hayes School, where he was a varsity athlete in both Swimming and Tennis. This fall he is attending The Ohio State University and plans to major in health exercise with the further intent of attending optometry school.

Ben started his Scouting career as a Tiger Cub and moved through Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and currently is active in Venturing and is assistant Scoutmaster of his troop. In Cub Scouts, Ben achieved his Arrow of Light and in Boy Scouts the rank of Eagle.

As a Boy Scout, Ben has experienced many high adventure activities. He has participated in treks at Florida Sea Base, Philmont, and Northern Tier. In addition, he attended the 2005 National Jamboree, 2006 BSA/SAJ Friendship Program in Japan, and the 2007 World Scout Jamboree in England.

Council Standards of Venturing Excellence Award



Council requirements for the Council Standards of Venturing Excellence Award must be completed for the 2008 year by December 31! Make sure you check with your Council leadership to see if the application is being submitted. The award is meant to ensure positive progress for Council Venturing Officers Association (VOA). A Council earns the award by completing requirements and meeting certain criteria for the previous year. All of the mandatory and elective requirements are meant to ensure an upward trajectory for the Council and its Venturing program. Councils must meet the listed criteria by December 31, 2008. To apply for the award, the Council and VOA leadership fill in the council information at the top of the form, mark the requirements that have been completed, and get the requested signatures. The completed form is then mailed or faxed to the Central Region office. Recognition items will include a plaque, recognition in the Central Region newsletter, listing in the Central Region luncheon program at the Annual BSA Meeting, and listing on crventuring.org. Applications for the 2008 Council Standards of Venturing Excellence Award are due by February 15, 2008. CSVEA forms are available on the Central Region website at www.crventuring.org.

Happy Holidays!

Mark these dates on your calendar!

December 6 St. Nicholas Day (International) While feasts of Saint Nicholas are not observed nationally, cities with strong German influences like Milwaukee, Cincinnati, and St. Louis celebrate St. Nick's Day on a scale similar to the German custom. On the previous night, children put one empty shoe (or sock) outside, and, on the following morning of December 6, the children awake to find that St. Nick has filled their previously empty footwear with candy and small presents (if the children have been "good") or coal (if not). For these children, the relationship between St. Nick and Santa Claus is not clearly defined, although St. Nick is usually explained to be a helper of Santa. The tradition of St. Nick's Day is firmly established in the Milwaukee, Cincinnati and St. Louis communities, with parents often continuing to observe the day with even their adult children. Widespread adoption of observing the tradition has spread throughout the German, Polish and Belgian communities throughout Wisconsin, and is carried out through modern times.



December 8 Bodhi Day – Buddha's Enlightenment (Buddhist) Bodhi Day, traditionally the 8th day of the 12th lunar month, has been observed on December 8th in Japan since the Meiji Restoration (1862-1869). It is the Buddhist holiday that commemorates the day that the historical Buddha experienced enlightenment, also known as Bodhi in Sanskrit or Pali. According to tradition, Siddhartha had recently forsaken years of extreme ascetic practices and resolved to sit under a Pipul tree and simply meditate until he found the root of suffering, and how to liberate one's self from it. Bodhi Day is not as popularly celebrated as Hanamatsuri or Wesak Day, both celebrating the Birth of the Buddha; however, it is still observed in many mainstream Mahayana traditions including Zen and Shin Buddhist schools. Services and traditions vary amongst



Buddhist sects, but all such services commemorate the Buddha's achievement of Nirvana, and what this means for Buddhism today. Individuals may choose to commemorate the event through additional meditation, study of the Dharma, chanting of Buddhist texts (sutras), or performing kind acts towards other beings.

December 8 Eid al-adha (Islamic, Muslim) "Festival of Sacrifice" is a religious festival celebrated by Muslims worldwide to commemorate the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ishmael as an act of obedience to God. However, God provided a ram in place once Ibrahim demonstrated his willingness to follow God's commands. Eid al-Adha is the latter of two Eid festivals celebrated by Muslims, whose basis comes from the Quran. Eid al-Adha begins with a short prayer followed by a sermon. Eid al-Adha annually falls on the 10th day of the month of Dhul Hijja of the lunar Islamic calendar. The festivities last for three days or more depending on the country. Eid al-Adha occurs the day after the pilgrims conducting Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia by Muslims worldwide, descend from Mount Arafat. It happens to be approximately 70 days after the end of the month of Ramadan.

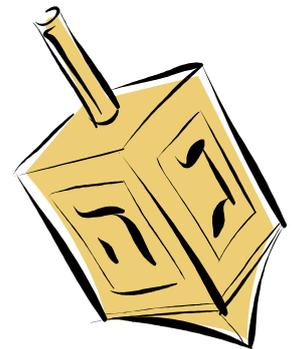
December 12 Virgin of Guadalupe (Mexico) Our Lady of Guadalupe, also called the Virgin of Guadalupe is a 16th century Roman Catholic icon from Mexico representing a Marian apparition. It is perhaps Mexico's most popular religious and cultural image. Our Lady of Guadalupe's feast day is celebrated on December 12, commemorating the account of her appearances to Saint Juan Diego on the hill of Tepeyac near Mexico City from 9 through 12 December 1531. The Virgin of Guadalupe is a symbol of significant importance to Mexican Catholics. She is recognized as "Patroness of the Americas". The Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City is the second most visited Roman Catholic shrine in the world.



December 13 Saint Lucy's Day (*Santa Lucia*, Saint Lucia) is the Church feast day dedicated to St. Lucy and is observed on December 13. It retains traditional forms of celebration mainly in Scandinavia, parts of the United States and southern Europe. It is celebrated in Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Norway, Finland, Malta, Italy, Bosnia, Iceland, and Croatia. In the United States, people in areas of Minnesota and other states with Scandinavian roots continue to celebrate the holiday, often centered around church events. Before the reform of the Gregorian calendar in the 16th century, St. Lucy's Day fell close to the winter solstice on the Northern Hemisphere. In traditional celebrations, Saint Lucy comes as a young woman with lights and sweets. It is one of the few saint days observed in Scandinavia. In the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), which is the successor church to hundreds of Scandinavian and German Lutheran congregations, St. Lucia is treated as a commemoration on December 13th, in which red vestments are worn. Usually, the Sunday in Advent closest to December 13th is set aside for St. Lucia, in which the traditional Scandinavian procession is observed.

December 16-25 Las Posadas (Mexico) Las Posadas is a traditional Mexican festival which re-enacts Joseph's search for room at the inn. Each Christmas season, a processional carrying a doll representing the Christ Child and images of Joseph and Mary riding a burro walks through the community streets. The processional stops at a previously selected home and asks for lodging for the night. The people are invited in to read scriptures and sing Christmas carols called *villancicos*. Refreshments are provided by the hosts. The doll is left at the chosen home and picked up on the next night when the processional begins again. This continues for eight nights in commemoration of the journey of Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

December 22 Hanukkah (Jewish) Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of Lights, is an eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt of the 2nd century BCE. Hanukkah is observed for eight nights, starting on the 25th day of Kislev according to the Hebrew calendar, and may occur from late November to late December on the Gregorian calendar. The festival is observed by the kindling of the lights of a special candelabrum, the *Menorah* or *Hanukiah*, one light on each night of the holiday, progressing to eight on the final night. An extra light called a *shamash*, (Hebrew: "guard" or "servant") is also lit each night, and is given a distinct location, usually higher or lower than the others. The purpose of the extra light is to adhere to the prohibition, specified in the Talmud, against using the Hanukkah lights for anything other than publicizing and meditating on the Hanukkah story.



December 25



Christmas (Christian, Roman Catholic, International) Christmas, also referred to as Christmas Day or Christmastide, is an annual holiday celebrated on December 25 that marks and honors the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. The birth of Jesus, which is the basis for the anno Domini system of dating, is thought to have occurred between 7 and 2 BC. December 25 is not thought to be Jesus' actual date of birth, and the date may have been chosen to correspond with either a Roman festival or with the winter solstice. Modern customs of the holiday include gift-giving, church celebrations, and the display of various decorations—including the Christmas tree, lights, mistletoe, nativity scenes and holly. Santa Claus (also referred to as Father Christmas, although the two figures have different origins) is a popular mythological figure often associated with bringing gifts at Christmas. Santa is generally believed to be the result of a synchronization between St. Nicholas of Myra and elements from pagan Nordic and Christian mythology, and his modern appearance is

believed to have originated in 19th century media. Christmas is celebrated throughout the Christian population, but is also celebrated by many non-Christians as a secular, cultural festival. The holiday is widely celebrated around the world, including in the United States, where it is celebrated by 96% of the population.

December 26-January 1 Kwanzaa Kwanzaa is an African-American cultural festival beginning on December 26 and ending on January 1. The festival was created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Ron Karenga. Dr. Karenga's goal was to establish a holiday that would facilitate African-American goals of building a strong family, learning about African-American history, and developing unity. Karenga identified seven principles, the *Nguzo Saba*, of the African-American culture and incorporated them into Kwanzaa. The principles are *Umoja* (unity), *Kujichagulia* (self-determination), *Ujima* (collective work and responsibility), *Ujamaa* (cooperative economics), *Nia* (purpose), *Kuumba* (creativity), and *Imani* (faith). Before the Kwanzaa celebration begins, a straw mat (*Mkeka*) is placed on a table. A *Kinara* (seven-candle candle holder) and *Mshumaa* (the seven candles) are placed on the *Mkeka* along with *Muhindi* (ears of corn) and the *Kikombe Cha Umoja* (unity cup). The seven candles include three red ones placed on the right, three green ones placed on the left, and a black one placed in the center. The black candle represents the African-American people, the red candles represent their struggles, and the green ones represent their vision for the future. Each day of Kwanzaa focuses upon one of the seven principles. After a candle-lighting ceremony, participants discuss what the principle means to them. Gifts are also exchanged during this time. A *Karamu* (feast) featuring traditional food, a ceremony honoring ancestors, music, and dancing is held on December 31.



These are just a few of the holidays that are celebrated within the melting-pot of cultures that we cherish in our country!

Religious Awards

December's parade of celebrations makes it the perfect time to work on your Religious and Community Life Bronze Award and the TRUST award. Both awards encourage Venturers to delve into their own beliefs and into the beliefs of others.

Now is a perfect time to give these requirements a shot!

- Talk with a history/social studies teacher, attorney or other legal professional, or other knowledgeable adult about the U.S. Bill of Rights, and especially about the concept of freedom of religion. Hold a discussion about freedom of religion with members of your crew.
- Find out what religious groups are worshipping in your community. Talk to at least five adults in your community about the impact various religions have on your community. Report you findings.
- Attend a religious service/gathering/festival of a religion other than your won. Write about your experience and how it relates to the thoughts and practices of the religion. Compare the basic tenets expressed in the religious service/gathering/festival with those of your own religion.
- Attend two cultural events and compare these two events and their cultures with your own culture.



To see the complete requirements and more information, check out the resources on www.crventuring.org.

Central Region Areas

Area 1: Councils: Bay-Lakes, Central Minnesota, Chippewa Valley, Gamehaven, Gateway Area, Hawkeye Area, Hiawathaland, Mid-Iowa, Northeast Iowa, Northern Lights, Samoset, Sioux, Twin Valley, Voyageurs Area, Winnebago, and Northern Star.

Upcoming Events

Feb 1-3: Hannah Winter Resort 4
Feb 8-10: Hannah Winter Resort 5
Feb 15-17: Hannah Winter Resort 6
Feb 15-17: Arctic Adventure

Contact them at

Area President: Carrie Schmitz
area1president@crventuring.org

Area Chair: Chris Sandberg
area1chair@crventuring.org

Area 2: Councils: Anthony Wayne, Blue Water, Buffalo Trace, Chief Okemos, Clinton Valley, Crossroads of America, Detroit, Gerald R. Ford, Great Sauk Trail, Hoosier Trails, Lake Huron, LaSalle, Sagamore, Scenic Trails, Southwest Michigan and Tall Pine.

Upcoming Events

Jan 10: OKPIK
Jan 23-25: Boyne Mountain Ski Weekend
Feb 15-17: Venturing Kick-back weekend 08

Contact them at

Area President: Kaytie Corlew
area2president@crventuring.org

Area Chair: Jeff Gerald
area2chair@crventuring.org

Area 3: Councils: Abraham Lincoln, Blackhawk, Calumet, Chicago, Des Plaines Valley, Glaciers Edge, Illowa, Lincoln Trails, Milwaukee County, Northeast Illinois, Northwest Suburban, Potawatomi, Prairielands, Rainbow, Southeast Wisconsin, Three Fires and W.D. Boyce.

Upcoming Events

Jan 17: Snowstorm
Feb 9: VLST
Feb 13: VLST
Feb 15: Arctic Bast

Contact them at

Area President: Cody Romano
area3president@crventuring.org

Area Chair: Kris Zahrobsky
area3chair@crventuring.org

Area 4: Councils: Allohak, Black Swamp, Buckeye, Buckskin, Dan Beard, Erie Shores, Great Trail, Greater Cleveland, Greater Western Reserve, Heart of Ohio, Miami Valley, Mountaineer, Muskingum Valley, Ohio River Valley, Simon Kenton, Tecumseh and Tri-State Area.

Upcoming Events

Jan 16-18: Venturing Arctic Weekend
Feb 8-10: Wilderness First Aid
Feb 16-17: Ski Weekend Extravaganza

Contact them at

Area President: Ben Hayes
area4president@crventuring.org

Area Chair: Len Roberts
area4chair@crventuring.org

Central Region Areas (continued)

Area 5: Councils: Cornhusker, Coronado, Great Rivers, Greater St. Louis, Heart of America, Jayhawk, Mid-America, Mississippi Valley, Okaw Valley, Overland Trails, Ozark Trails, Pony Express, Quivira, Santa Fe Trail and Trails West.

Upcoming Events

Feb 22-23: HOAC lock-in

Contact them at

Area President: Sarah Ward

area5president@crventuring.org

Area Chair: Bob Vogt

area5chair@crventuring.org

More information on all of the events and links to the councils listed above can be found on www.crventuring.org

Venturing & Sea Scouting Discussion Lists

Please sign up for the many Yahoo Groups and Discussion Lists dedicated to Venturing and Sea Scouting. Information on these groups can be found by searching Yahoo Groups for Venturing, clicking on "Discussion Groups" at seascout.org, or by clicking on the links below.



Venturing Yahoo Group: this group shares information with Venturers and Advisors from across the nation: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/venturinglist/>



Central Region Venturing Yahoo Group: this group is used to share resources and ideas, and to ask questions about Venturing in Central Region: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/crventuring/>



Sea Scouting Discussion List: this group shares information with Sea Scouts and Sea Scout leaders across the nation:

<http://listserv.seascout.org/cgi-bin/wa?A0=SEASCOUT-NET>



Central Region Sea Scouting Discussion List: this group is used to share resources and ideas, and to ask questions about Sea Scouting in Central Region:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/crseascouting/?yguid=280725914>