

# The Central Point



Newsletter of Central Region Venturing | BSA

November Newsletter 2011

## Then and Now: Past Officers

By Thomas Spargo

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*Kris Zahrobsky, the Area 7 Venturing Advisor and past Regional President.*

**Kris Zahrobsky was the Central Region President for the 2000-2001 year. He is currently the Area 7 Venturing Advisor. The following is an interview between him and Thomas Spargo, the CRV VP of Communications:**

**Thomas Spargo**

**How did you find out about Venturing, and what motivated you to join?**

**Kris Zahrobsky**

Well, I happen to be working for the Des Plaines Valley Council Scout Shop in 1998 when it was first introduced. My Scout Executive and I met and discussed the program. Of course, I liked the co-ed aspect, the cool stand-out Green uniforms, the variety of activities, and the youth-led structure. Over the course of the next 6 months, I founded my Crew and was asked to be the Council Youth Venturing President. When it came to the application for Regional and National Venturing President, things were much different back then. My Scout Executive was first notified of this opportunity. She, the Assistant Scouting

Executive, and I, worked on the application and essay and submitted it. After a few weeks, I was notified that I had been chosen as the Central Region Venturing President.

Welcome to the 2011-2012 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 council VOA, Venturing Forums, professional staff, and the Central Region Venturing Areas. We look forward to being of service to you in Venturing.

### Follow us on:



### Cool! What other positions did you hold as a youth?

I have been in the program since a Tiger. I earned my Arrow of Light, Eagle, and Silver Awards. For Venturing, I have been Crew President, Council President, and Central Region President.

As a Boy Scout, I was a Senior Patrol Leader, Junior Assistant Scout Master, and pretty much everything underneath that.

### What is one of your favorite experiences as the Regional President?

Going to Japan and the National & Regional board meetings.

## Area 3 Conference

It's time for the Area 3 Venturing Conference registrations! This year one of my goals was to gear the conference for every level of the Venturing Program. So there will be 4 treks running during the conference. The 1st trek is designed to provide a new or existing Crew with the knowledge of how to make one successful. The 2nd trek is how to make your district and council Venturing program a success. The 3rd trek is for those that have a successful unit, district, or council program and want to improve it even more. Finally, the 4th trek will be a Course Director Conference on the new Kodiak training. In addition on Friday evening, January 13th, there will be two training courses: Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews (ILSC); and Venturing Adult Basic Leader Training. The conference will be held at Calvary United Methodist Church in Normal, Illinois. The church is located right off I-55 and is within 3.5 hours or less of each of our council's offices. Check-in starts at 7:45am and will be done around 4:30pm. This is one day activity you don't want to miss. The conference is designed to provide your crew, district and council with the building blocks for the success of your Venturing program. This one-day conference is designed to help you get Venturing "Out of the Box and Over the Top". No matter how successful your Venturing program is, this conference is for you. This conference is for professional Scouters, Venturing adult leaders and Venturing youth leaders ready to take the next step up in Venturing. The cost for the conference is \$15 by January 1st (\$20 after that). There is an additional charge of \$5 for Friday night and \$5 for the Kodiak Trek in order to cover the additional supplies needed. Space is limited and is already filling up, so sign up fast! Visit the Area 3 page [Http://area3.crventuring.org](http://area3.crventuring.org)

*Article submitted by Christina Vogt, Area 3 President.*

## Then and Now (continued from page 2)

### Can you tell me a little more about Japan?

It was for the 5th Nippon Venture held in 2000, part of the BSA-BSN Friendship Program - basically, Japan's equivalent to our Jamboree. We did just over 3 weeks there while we camped for a few days, stayed in hotels, and did a home-stay weekend. What an amazing event! Besides getting to see Scouting in a different country, it opens your eyes to how things are outside of the US. As for the home-stay portion, it was just amazing! Before going, it was definitely the part of the trip I was most nervous about. But, after experiencing it, it was absolutely the most rewarding to be immersed into their culture. I hold memories that I love to this day. We went to a local concert, bowled, and cooked Sukiyaki. We didn't understand each other, but it didn't matter. We found ways to communicate. It was just ... amazing.

### How has your experiences helped you in your daily life and in your work?

Venturing and Scouting overall teaches so many amazing qualities and life-lessons. From teamwork to leadership, it is about understanding your team and knowing how to accomplish great tasks. It would be too easy to say the Scout Law, but really that is what it is. Those values last a lifetime and are so important to a person's moral fiber and character.

### Did Scouting have an influence on your career?

Actually, yes it did. I'm in the fire business because of my Dad. But, before, I applied and was almost a District Executive. At the last minute, I chose not to accept the position because I didn't want to stop the good work I got to do with the Venturing program. So, yes, Scouting helped make my career decision.

### Who was the biggest influence when you were President? Who was the biggest help?

Well, unfortunately, there was no Central Region Venturing Committee when I was President. So, it was just me and Bill Robinson. Bill was the deputy director at the time. Unfortunately, he retired and has since passed away.

As for biggest help, it is a tie between him and Dick Newton, the former Area 3/current Area 7 Director. He also has retired and since passed away. (Man, I feel old. Everyone is dying.)

**Then and Now (continued from page 2)**

Tony Roth and Irene Szinavel from Des Plaines Valley Council also played a huge part (Irene and Tony are still very much active and living.)

**Good to end on a lighter note. What advice can you give current officers?**

Have fun and enjoy the time you have, because it goes so fast! Meet as many people as you can make sure you keep in contact.

**Can you give any advice on how to balance a position, work and/or school?**

Oh this is a tough one. It definitely takes discipline, but it really is about the advisor-advisee connection.

As long as the youth's advisor and superiors understand what's going on, there usually are no problems.

Communication is key. I always tell Aaron, the Area 7 Youth President (and every President before), that family comes first, then school, then work, and then Scouting. But, make sure you work out a plan with your advisor so that Venturing doesn't take over too much of your time, and you can still accomplish all of your goals. So to sum up: Planning, Priorities, and Communication.

**What is the biggest change in Venturing you have seen over the years from your time as Regional President to the present?**

Biggest change - the support structure. From my time as a youth officer to now, the support structure has just grown tremendously. Because of that, we have newsletters, conferences, and big events. It just shows how much the program has grown and evolved.

**It is hard for me to imagine Venturing without the support.**

Oh it was a completely different world. There really was no program outside of the Councils. The four Regional Presidents and one National President were public relations representatives (in a way) who answered questions about the

**National Youth Leadership Society**

*From top Left: Christina Vogt, Area 3 Venturing President; Dustin Readenour, Central Region President; Bottom Left: Hannah Bisch, 2010-2011 Greater St. Louis Area Council President; Sam Yahl, 2010-2011 Area 3 Venturing Vice President of Communication*

This year at the Fall Fun Rally, Dustin Readenour, the Central Region Venturing President, two other youth, and I were inducted into the National Youth Leadership Society. For this society a youth must have completed multiple leadership courses including one of the following: the Troop Junior Leader Training, the Venturing Leadership Skills Course, or the newer Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews or Troops. From there the youth must complete three of the following courses: Kodiak, Kodiak X, NYLT, or NAYLE. Then the youth must demonstrate the leadership skills they have learned by holding leadership positions. The four youth inducted at the Fall Fun Rally this year were: Dustin Readenour, the

Central Region Venturing President; Christina Vogt, the Central Region Area 3 Venturing President; Hannah Bisch, the Greater St. Louis Area Council VOA President; and Samantha Yahl, a past District VOA Officer, Area 3 Venturing Vice President and the Co-Chair for this year's Fall Fun Rally. These youth have helped staff numerous leadership courses besides completing them ourselves. To submit a candidate to the National Council for this society visit [www.scouting.org/venturing](http://www.scouting.org/venturing) for more information. Since 2009 only 35 youth have received this recognition. Congratulations to all of these youth!

*Article submitted by Christina Vogt, CRV Area 3 President.*

## Upcoming Deadlines

The end of the year is just around the corner and Council Standards of Venturing Excellence assessments are coming up.

The Council Standards of Venturing Excellence serves as recognition for the delivery of excellent Venturing programming in a local council. If a council has strong youth leadership, communication, and opportunities for programming and training for all Venturing youth and adults, then the CSVE is a worthy certification. The CSVE is due February 15th and is available online at [http://www.crventuring.org/Other/Council\\_Standards\\_of\\_Venturing\\_Excellence/](http://www.crventuring.org/Other/Council_Standards_of_Venturing_Excellence/).

Besides CSVE, selection for new officers is coming upon us. This is a great opportunity of leadership and meeting other youth who want to improve the Venturing program. The selection process is a nation-wide event, starting with the selection of a new National Venturing President, followed by regional officers, area officers, and drawing to a close with council and districts VOA leadership. The application form for National, Regional, and Area youth leadership is located here: [http://www.scouting.org/filestore/venturing/pdf/2011-](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/venturing/pdf/2011-2012VenturingPresidentNominationForm.pdf)

[2012VenturingPresidentNominationForm.pdf](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/venturing/pdf/2011-2012VenturingPresidentNominationForm.pdf)  
The deadline for submitting your application begins on February 1, 2012 for the National President, with regional and area deadlines to follow. Why would someone want to seek a role as an officer?

*"Every youth should seek a role as an officer because it helps develop a strong sense of responsibility. You learn how to budget your time and get things done. It also gives you a great opportunity to make a difference in Venturing. By being an officer, you have more of a chance to let your voice be heard and help others step up and do the same."*

-- Samantha Yahl Past Area 3 Vice President of Communications 2010-2011

Article submitted by Sarah Mittrucker, CRV VP of Administration

## Then and Now (continued from page 3)

program and promoted it. Since it was so new, everyone wanted to know about it. There were no planning conferences, no conference calls, no newsletters, etc.

I know for me, I reported directly to the Regional Deputy Director. There wasn't a volunteer adult advisor, and for me, that was just fine at the time. But now, I could never imagine it going back to that.

### What were your duties as President since there wasn't any conference, etc.

Mainly to tour to the different Councils in the Region and meet Venturers, speak at award ceremonies, and appear at an event, etc. (Shaking hands and kissing babies)

### What do you currently do in Scouting/Venturing?

I get to advise and facilitate Venturing with some of the best youth and adults that are our Area has to offer as the Area 7 Venturing Advisor.

### If you had not been involved in Venturing, how different do you think your life would have been?

It would be very different. I honestly can't imagine my life without Scouting in it. How it has affected me and what an impact on my life... I just couldn't think of my life without it. And the one word answer to your question would be: Bored. I mean, seriously, I would really have to come up with a lot of hobbies to fill the timeslot currently filled by Scouting. Beside the qualities, I can't imagine not knowing the wonderful people I do because of Scouting. Almost all of my best friends I have met along the Scouting trail. The connections you can make are just unlimited. There are so many good people.

### If you had to choose one scouting event from your scouting career so far, which one did you enjoy most?

There are so many! And while most of them had awesome activities and events, they all come down to the people and the great memories. But if I had to pick one, I guess it would have to be the 2001 National Meeting in Boston, MA. Besides meeting some amazing officers like Robert Rescot and Christine Capen, I had the opportunity to meet and sit at the same table as Steve Fossett.

### As a Regional President, did you form any friendship with other Regional Presidents?

**Then and Now (continued from page 4)**

Oh yes - and ones that are still strong today - even recent ones. It's sort of like being a part of the same club. Robert Rescot, Paul Lee, and Christine Capen (Northeast Region), are all personal friends. Chris Kerzich and I grew up together (He was National Boatswain and National Venturing President). Kate Knuth is a personal friend. She is a state rep now for Minnesota!

**Besides Scouting, what other hobbies do you do?**

Wait, there's time for that? HAHA, just kidding. Of course, I enjoy friends and families, movies, bowling, softball, Haunted Houses, traveling, and my dog. I'm a big Wisconsin Badger sports fan, as well as the Chicago Blackhawks, and I like music too.

**Haunted Houses, what do you do with them?**

Actually, I write reviews of them for Haunted House Chicago, Chicago Tribune, and several others. I have been doing that for 15 years now.

**Really! So you could say you are a haunted house enthusiast?**

Oh very much so, I actually created/founded HauntedHouseChicago.com, know a ton of people in that industry, go to the tradeshow, etc.

**Since that is one of your hobbies, I will change the next question. How can you relate Venturing to a Haunted House?**

HAHAHA! A possible answer: There's always a monster hiding around the corner.

Venturing, whether on the Unit, Council, Area, Region, or National level, still has to have the entire team functioning together to make sure they succeed. Similar to a haunted house - one or two people can't make a great show. You need an entire team of people who all work together to create a masterpiece.

Some of our highest-ranked haunted attractions have over 200 people on their staffs. Each person performs a different function to make sure that as a whole, the performance is flawless.

Venturing & Scouting are amazing programs (and we all know that). It really is about the opportunities, connections, and networks that are created and maintained.

**Venturing Leadership Award**

The Area VLA has been added to the different levels that it can be earned by youth. The Venturing Leadership Award is presented by councils, areas, regions, and the National Council to youth Venturers who have made exceptional contributions to Venturing and who exemplify the Venturing Code and Oath.

To qualify for one of these award levels, nominees must do the following:

~Be registered and involved as a Venturer for at least one year. Be a youth member when nominated for the award. Hold a leadership position or an office at the unit, district, council, area, region, or national level, as appropriate for the level of the award presented.

~Show exceptional dedication and give outstanding leadership and service to Venturing and Venturers (on the level appropriate for the award). Please note: Councils may select adult council VLA's for this year using the current guidelines if the paperwork has been submitted to them before December 31, 2011.

For more information on the Venturing Leadership Award, download the VLA guidelines. Please contact [program.content@scouting.org](mailto:program.content@scouting.org) with any questions.

**Area 1** Upcoming events:



Feb 4<sup>th</sup>, Winter Amidships, Fon Du Lac, WI

Aug 1st-5<sup>th</sup>, Powder Horn, St. Paul, MN

President: [Jennifer Wells](#)  
Advisor: [Chris Sandberg](#)



**Area 2**

Upcoming Events:

Jan 28<sup>th</sup>, Area 2 Conference, Lansing MI



Feb 11<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>, Kodiak CDC, Grand Rapids, MI

Feb 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, Area 2 Venturing Kickback Weekend, Twin Lake, MI

May 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>, Leave No Trace Trainer Course, Toledo, OH

July 22<sup>nd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>, MI International Camporee, Lupton, MI

President: [Nick Huyser](#)  
Advisor: [Jeff Gerald](#)



**Area 3** Upcoming events:



January 13<sup>th</sup>-14, Area 3 Conference, Normal, IL

Jan 14<sup>th</sup>, Snowstorm, Poplar Grove, IL

Jan 21<sup>st</sup>, U of Scouting, High Ridge, MO

April 20<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012, Powder Horn, High Ridge, MO

President: [Christina Vogt](#)  
Advisor: [Bob Vogt](#)



**Area 4**

Upcoming Events:



Aug 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>, Wood Badge, Kensington, OH

Aug 25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>, Powder Horn, Peninsula, OH

President: [Blaine Lott](#)  
Advisor: [Dale Hayes](#)



**Area 5** Upcoming Events:



Jan 8<sup>th</sup>, Area Five Conference Call, see event online

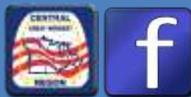
Feb 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, Area 5 Conference, Kansas City Area

May 26<sup>th</sup> – June 2<sup>nd</sup>, NYLT, near Wichita

President: [Sarah Griffey](#)  
Advisor: [Julie Dalton](#)



## Area 6 Upcoming Events:



Jan 21<sup>st</sup>, U of S/ Kodiak Challenge CDC, Indianapolis, IN

Apr 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, Spring Icebreaker, Indiana

Apr 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, Sea Badge 2012, Lake James Assembly, IN

President: [Tyler Andrews](#)

Advisor: [Len Roberts](#)



## President's Corner

By Dustin Readenour

“Scouting only has one program.”

This, along with the next five sentences, was a great statement from a Scouting volunteer. Everyone in the Boy Scouts of America is in the same program. The difference between a Cub Scout, a Boy Scout, and a Venturer is how we teach the Scouting values to the youth. In Cub Scouts we teach a youth by carving a pinewood derby car. Boy Scouts go camping. Venturers go hiking 60 miles in the mountains in order to learn Scouting's lessons. Given this: why is it that Boy Scouts are afraid of Venturing? Plain and simple, they shouldn't be.



The natural progression is that Cub Scouts go on to be Boy Scouts. Then Boy Scouts should go on to be Venturers or even Sea Scouts. Showing Boy Scouts and Boy Scout Troops this progress is key. However, you must also show them that we are a continuation of the Boy Scouts, not some program trying to steal their membership. The youth can be in a troop and a crew at the same time. So next time you try to approach the topic of Venturing with Boy Scouts, simply explain that we are ONE program teaching the values of Scouting in different ways to make an impact on the age youth that we serve.

## Area 7

Upcoming Events:



Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>, Christmas Ship Sleepover, Chicago, IL

Feb 19<sup>th</sup>, Arctic Blast, Wilmot, IL

Mar 10<sup>th</sup>, Area 7 Conference, Addison, IL

Submit your council or area event by going to the CRV website!

President: [Aaron Beatty](#)



## Submit your Venturing event on the Central Region Website.

Go to <http://crventuring.org> and click on the “submit a calendar event” button on the lower left side of the page. Fill out the form, and now you will be able reach thousands of Venturers to come to your event!



## Contact Us

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Newsletter designed and  
compiled by  
Thomas Spargo

## CRVenturing.org Highlight

This month we are highlighting the Central Region Venturing website resource page for Winter Sports.

It can all be found under the Resources tab on our site at <http://crventuring.org/Resources/Links/> in the links section [Outdoors Links \(Ranger Award\)](#) or directly at [http://crventuring.org/Ranger\\_Award\\_Resources/Winter\\_Sports](http://crventuring.org/Ranger_Award_Resources/Winter_Sports)

Included in the list are links for Associations, Manufacturers, Publications, Video Tapes and other miscellaneous Winter Sports pages.

If you find a link that needs to change, please let us know via email to [communications-coordinator@crventuring.org](mailto:communications-coordinator@crventuring.org). Please also contact us if you have information not listed that you would like to share via a website link.

*Article contributed by Deb Keyes*

From Guide to Safe Scouting, please note:

“APPROPRIATE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT IS REQUIRED FOR ALL ACTIVITIES. THIS INCLUDES THE RECOMMENDED USE OF HELMETS FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS ENGAGED IN WINTER SPORTS SUCH AS SLEDDING AND OTHER SLIDING DEVICES. THE USE OF HELMETS IS REQUIRED FOR THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES: DOWNHILL SKIING, SNOWBOARDING, AND OPERATION OF SNOWMOBILES (FULL-FACE HELMETS).”

For more safety information, also see the BSA Winter Sports Safety page at <http://scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/Alerts/Winter2010.aspx>

### About Our Organization...



Venturing is a Scouting program for male and female youth ages 13-21 that lets youth experience new activities, build leadership skills, earn awards, make new friends, and of course have fun.

The Central Region is one of four regions of the Boy Scouts of America. This region includes the states of: Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and West Virginia.