



SMOKE SIGNALS



Spring 2018 – Vol. 3, Issue 2

The Official Publication of the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Alumni Association

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Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Summer Kickoff

Brian Rasmussen

Dear Friend of Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan,

Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan is gearing up for the 89th season! With the successful completion of the two WES weekends, and the traditional OA work weekend the repairs, upgrades, and general housecleaning places the camp in position for a great season.

Camp office staff will begin arriving on June 10, with the rest of the senior staff coming in on the 13th. The balance of the staff arrives on the 17th, and we begin our week of staff training. We will learn about the long history and many traditions of Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan as well as how to do our jobs, preparing program areas, leading songs and practicing skits all in anticipation of the 2100 Scouts who will call camp home for a week or two this summer.

Reservation director Quinn Ryan, associate director Dan Redding, East Camp director Will (Scuttle) Delva, West Camp director Michael (Kuhnle) Kuhn, and reservation program director Sarah Johanson have been meeting weekly since December in an effort to make the 89th year a memorable one for the campers, leaders, and staff.

If you find yourself in the area be sure to stop by camp to visit your favorite places in camp, and maybe even rest for a while in one of our new "hammock zones."

See you this summer!

-Brian Rasmussen

[Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scout Reservation Amazon Wish List](#)

I'm sure many of you alumni camp staffers remember trying to provide your programs with minimal materials. Here's a link that could help out the current and future staff to provide the best program possible. Check out the link above!

If you have any questions, contact Adam Hoefflich at: ajhoefflich129@gmail.com

Work Project Weekends

Nicole Ludmer

Dear Friends,

Have you ever had a home improvement project that you've been putting off because you don't have the time or the manpower to get it done? Have you ever thought if you had a work crew that you might actually get that deck built? Or those buckthorn trees cut down? Or a room painted?

We are proposing the Work Project Weekend: a way for members of the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Alumni Association to reach out to each other to be able to get those weekend work projects completed. We will be creating a calendar where members can share their projects and request volunteers. As a project host, you will be responsible for providing materials, and have the materials ready before volunteers show up to help you—for example: if you are building a deck, you should have all the lumber, nails/screws, etc. you need already purchased beforehand.

If you are doing a project where specified tools are needed that you may not own, you can request for volunteers to bring them if they own them. For example, if you need a chain saw(s), you may request for your volunteers to bring their own; however, as the host, you might want to consider having extra fuel available.

If your project is outdoors, you may want to consider a back up day in the case of inclement weather.

If you volunteer for a project, you are expected to show up. The Work Project Weekend can only be successful if volunteers that signed up actually attend. Please be respectful to the host and make sure that you are able to attend the days for which you signed up.

We are hoping that by setting up this Work Project Weekend that MAA members can continue to build new friendships and be of service to each other. We are looking forward to hearing from you about your projects, and please remember to take before and after pictures!

Please email me your projects, and estimates of volunteers needed, so I can compile a calendar: k.nicole.ludmer@gmail.com.

All the best,
-Nicole

Membership

Friends,

If you have yet to renew your own dues for 2018-2019, we hope you do so soon. Instructions on how to join or renew can be found online at: <http://msraa.org/129/join/>. Beginning this year we are also offering Young Alumni & Lifetime memberships.

3 Types of Membership:

1. Young Adult: 18-25 years; no dues payment
2. Regular Membership: \$20/year
3. LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP: \$201.29

*Thank you,
for your
continued
support!*

Vigil Weekend Alumni Schedule

Friday - July 13 -

2pm - Alumni Gathering at Gilwell field

4pm - Vigil Brat Fry

Dusk - OA Fire

After Fire - Afterglow Pizza Party (Location TBA)

Saturday - July 14

9am - Coffee & Rolls - Country Store

10:30 - Remembrance Ceremony - Chapel

After Lunch - 1st Annual Alumni Wolf River Canoe Trip (experimental program) River Road to Military Park

So, as you can see it is a busy weekend.

If you plan of attending any of these events, PLEASE CONTACT:

makajawan.alumni@gmail.com

**VIGIL
WEEKEND
SCHEDULE**

Activity Calendar

June 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Week 1					O.A. Fire	

O.A. Fire Afterglow locations to be determined!
Stay tuned for updates on the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan FB groups!

Activity Calendar

July 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Week 2						
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Week 3					Vigil Fire	Vigil Weekend
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Week 4						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Week 5					O.A. Fire	
29	30	31				
Week 6						

Please join us for Vigil weekend!
PLEASE CONTACT: makajawan.alumni@gmail.com
Hope to see you there!

Blast from the Past

Matt “Kazzy” Kasriel (1997-2004)

I was both honored and humbled to be asked to share a piece of my “Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Story” and the role it played in influencing my career in the fire service as I transitioned into my “Post-Staff” years in this edition of Smoke Signals. Since my departure from a healthy stint with the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Staff in 2004, I have closely followed the formation and subsequent thriving of the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Alumni Association, albeit largely from a distance, with the utmost admiration and respect for those who crafted its mission and established its foundation for success. While my words of praise likely carry little weight, allow me to open by offering my most sincere thanks to all those, many of whom I had the pleasure of serving with during my tenure on the MSR Staff, for dedicating your time and effort to “Honoring Yesterday, Connecting Today, and Supporting Tomorrow.” Those very words invoke a flurry of emotion in my soul as I am forever thankful for the values that were engrained in my existence during my service on the MSR Staff. I’ll do my best to share what I mean by this in the words that follow.



First and foremost, being a member of the MSR Staff thrusts a constant and crucial responsibility upon all those who have the honor of being a part. That is the role of “24-hour customer service agent.” As new staff members, you are subconsciously inundated with the concept of “Service before Self” (campers come first). You serve them food, provide entertainment, develop their skills, counsel them, and are generally trained to drop whatever it is you’re doing at any given moment and tend to their needs. Staff members wave and greet each and every scout and leader they pass with a smile, and exude an image of professionalism and confidence that lets people know “they’re in good hands.” At “Mug Club,” office staff openly accepts both accolades and grievances from Scoutmasters, taking note of the proactive actions taken by staff which elicited compliments, as well as those areas requiring responsive action to demonstrate our commitment to improvement.

The staff always delivers excellent service based on the unique needs of those in camp at any given time, and explores innovative ways to constantly improve because that is the expectation. My experience in the fire service has been no different. We are required to develop and constantly evaluate the effectiveness of our delivery model utilizing the finite resources at our disposal to provide service that exceeds the expectations of a diverse and constantly evolving community. I have one of my most influential mentors, Steve Silca, to thank for instilling in me not just an understanding of how to tailor service



to meet and exceed diverse expectations, but how to execute its delivery. It is a skill set I have employed every single day of my career. Thank you, Silca, for instilling the value of providing both proactive and responsive customer service.

Another fundamental yet critical value which the MSR Staff instills in its members is proficiency. Even as a young staff member, you are expected to possess an admirable level of knowledge, skill, and ability on the topic(s) which you are charged with instructing. If you do not, you lose credibil-

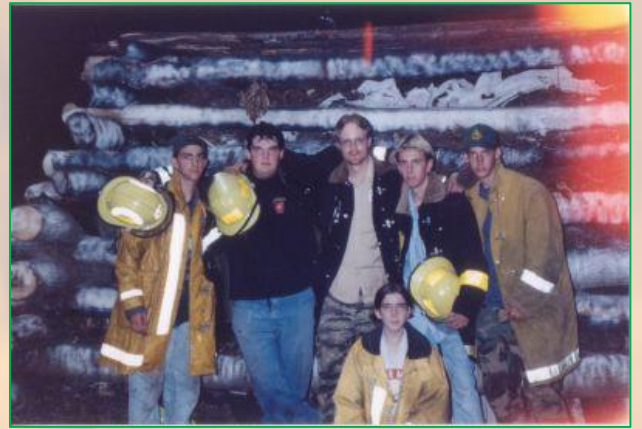
ity, as does the rest of the staff by association, which is unacceptable. As a young scout, I remember admiring those senior to me for their ability to quickly pitch a tent in the darkness of night, orchestrate a well-cooked camp meal, or start a one-match fire. With that, very few people can instantaneously develop true skill proficiency without dedication and repetition. It took another mentor of mine, Bill Crawford, an entire week to teach me how to do a back splice during my last summer as a camper. In the years that followed I performed hundreds of back splices as a member of the Scoutcraft Staff. I did so to the point that I could literally “do it with my eyes closed.” This was not because I was exceptional or gifted, it was because of dedication and repetition. This was my first exposure to what is commonly referred to as “muscle memory”.

I found this very same approach to establishing proficiency to be an integral part of the fire service. Those who know me would certainly agree that my physical prowess is not particularly impressive, however through hard work, dedication, and repetition I was able to develop and apply what I believe to be extremely proficient skills as a firefighter and EMS provider. I would add that by pursuing opportunities to teach others early in my career (another MSR takeaway), I was able to offer myself avenues to not only share my passion with others but enhance my personal skill set. As a result of developed proficiency, firefighters are able to stretch a hoseline, extricate an entrapped person from a vehicle, or care for a patient suffering from cardiac arrest because of muscle memory which was achieved through training and repetition. Thank you, Crawford, for instilling in me the value of proficiency. To this day I can do a back splice with my eyes closed.

Closely related to the previous discussed topic of proficiency is work ethic. As I alluded to previously, unless you are unusually blessed (some are, I am not) a significant amount of work is typically required to achieve commensurate success in anything. Simply stated “you get out what you put in.” As a member of the MSR Staff, there is certainly no shortage of opportunities to work. From day-to-day program, to siesta plat-moves, to OA work projects, it’s an eight week test of your physical endurance.



You either deliver, or you don't. More often than not those who don't are remembered as the "one to two year" staffers, but if you're reading this, you probably delivered. Staff members who achieve any sort of tenure typically have demonstrated exemplary work ethic, because anything less wasn't widely accepted or tolerated by a staff which held each other accountable to a standard of excellence. Yet another mentor of mine, Eamon Kelly, said it best when he told me "you're going to have to show them how hard you're willing to work for it" when referring to my candidacy to become a trainee member of the "OA Ranger Staff." As a young yet determined staff / OA member, I remember leaving every OA work project covered in soot and sweat as many others did, but also strong in the knowledge that I volunteered for every undesirable task with an unrelenting vigor.



As I pursued a career in the fire service, I failed the first physical agility test I took. Recognizing the need to "put in the work" I took to doing something that I had never done before, working out. I swallowed my pride as a 130 pound college student amongst a sea of Oklahoma meat-heads and went to the gym every single day. I signed up for and passed a regional fire department hiring consortium physical agility test six months later and began my career in the greatest profession in the world (second only to serving on the MSR Staff). Thank you, Eamon, for instilling in me the value of a strong work ethic. It has allowed me the opportunity to positively impact the lives of others, just as you did mine. I continuously see in myself, and many others, that a strong work ethic can help you overcome numerous obstacles and personal shortcomings impeding progress.

I would be remiss if I didn't pay homage to perhaps the single most valuable thing that membership on the MSR Staff offers its members, and that is lifelong brotherhood, friendship, and mentorship. The bonds built during our time on staff remind us that the most important thing we can cultivate in our lives is lasting and meaningful relationships. With that, I thank all of my mentors (too numerous to mention) for not only having the patience to share your experiences and wisdom with me, but for instilling in me the value of mentorship itself. I model the mentoring relationships I establish in the fire service off those that were forged during my years at MSR. We should all strive to seize the opportunity to provide mentorship to those who share our passions.

In closing, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to "honor yesterday" by sharing some of my fondest camp memories, "connect today" by correlating my camp experience to my passion and career in the fire service, and "support tomorrow" by encouraging the mentoring of those who will continue our work long after we are gone and forgotten. Respectfully,
Matt "Kazzy" Kasriel



We Remember: Bob Brown

Paul Jordan

On April 25, 2018, Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan lost a beloved staff member and long-time supporter. At age 72, Bob Brown passed away at Aspirus Wausau Hospital. In 1971 at 16 years old, I was a provisional assistant scoutmaster working with Bob who was the provisional scoutmaster. I loved that summer - working with Bob was such an enjoyable experience. In later years when Bob was Camp Director, all of the staff would reap the benefit of Bob being a good, fair, and effective leader. Bob always had a happy grouchiness about him that was endearing. He was fun to be around and was always willing to listen and help. In his 20's, Bob always looked older than he was, but as he got older, he never seemed age. We always told Bob that he looked the same as we remembered him at camp. Of course, Bob was no stranger to camp after being on staff; as a paramedic Bob was a volunteer over the last 20 years in the health lodge and an active WES member. I imagine Bob was a wonderful teacher, because at camp, he always made people feel important, while quietly setting a good example and constantly serving others. Over the last 50 years, Bob served Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan, his community, his family, and his friends unselfishly - he was one of those people that made Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan so important to us ... a brotherhood of men, women, boys and girls that believe in the values of scouting and the beauty of the North woods. He left us too soon, but we will always remember Bob as part of the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan spirit.

From Bob's obituary: Robert E Brown, of Pearson, died Wednesday, April 25, 2018 at Aspirus Wausau Hospital at the age of 72. He was born March 17, 1946 in Pontiac, IL, son of the late Eugene and Zilla (Jump) Brown. He married Alice (Sanborn) Brown on November 18, 1972 in Pekin, IL. Mr. Brown graduated from Western Illinois University, where he was a member of the service fraternity Alpha Phi Omega (APO). He later earned a master's degree from Lesley College. He was a teacher in Antioch, IL for most of his career, specializing in middle school science and computer technology. He was active with Boy Scouts of America, serving as Scoutmaster for Troop 91 and Troop Leader for Troop 92 in Antioch. He also worked a volunteer paramedic at Salem and Elcho rescue squads from 1979-2018, and he also was a CPR teacher. Other community involvement included serving as volunteer for Elcho Senior Center and Meals on Wheels, photographer and historian for Trailblazer Sled Dog Club for over 10 years, and health lodge volunteer at Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Boy Scout Camp 1999-2017. He also was author of "Grandpa B's Birch Trees," a children's story that he wrote for his grandchildren, which was later published by his family and shared with many. Survivors include his wife, Alice Brown of Pearson, WI; son, Gene Brown of West Allis, WI, and daughter Marcia (Scott) Hall of St. Francis, WI; and grandchildren, Nadia, Lucy, and Isaac Hall. A memorial service [took] place at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 29, 2018 at Arbutus Lutheran Church ([W6607 Church Lane, Pearson, WI](#)). Visitation [was] at the church from 3:00 until the time of the service on Sunday. A lunch and reception will follow the service. A second memorial gathering [took] place in Southeastern Wisconsin on Saturday, May 5 from 1:00PM until 3:00PM at the Village of Salem Fire/Rescue Station One located at [11252 254th Court, Trevor, Wisconsin](#). The family suggests contributions in Bob's name to the Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scholarship Fund at [neic.org/donate](#).

We Remember: John G. “JJ” “Jage” Johnson

David Johnson



It's with great sadness that we've lost another Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Staff member—John G Johnson, “JJ,” “Jage”—my brother and fellow assistant West Camp Nature Director from '72-'74—on the 12th of April 2018.

John was an Eagle Scout from Troop 23 in Glen-coe, IL, and a Brotherhood member of Order of the Arrow. He began his Scouting in Troop 502 in the Dan Beard Council in Cincinnati, OH.

John loved camping, hiking, and kayaking while at Camp. We would often kayak under A-Bridge and blaze the many new trails at Camp.

John worked hard at giving Scouts at Camp a good experience with Nature and other Merit Badges.

His Eco-Con sign would stand as a gateway to the West Camp Nature Lodge for many years.

John and I would often man the Gimmick at the East Camp fire bowls.

When I hear the wail of the loons on Lake Killian, the ethereal song of the Hermit Thrush, the winds whispering through the White Pines and Hemlocks—I'll think of John's Spirit—and how so dearly he loved Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan.

Often, he would bring his two boys, Tanner and Scout, back to Camp. Both of his sons are now Eagle Scouts.

So long John! We miss you!

Fellow Eagle Scout and Brother,
David

The Remembrance Area

During the summer of 2004, the Remembrance Area was dedicated at a special Chapel Service at the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scout Reservation Chapel. Since its conception, the purpose of the Remembrance Area has been to honor individuals who were part of the Northeast Illinois Council and/or Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scout Reservation.

These honorees may have been a youth member of the program, adult leader, former staff member, OA member, WES member, a professional Scouter and/or local Pearson/Pickerel citizen. Each gave of their talents and time to the council or camp.

The individuals added to the display boards:

Robert E. Brown

Mark Gaines

Arnell J. Gregorski

John G. Johnson

David Neimi

The above list of honorees and past additions to the Remembrance Area can also be found on the website.

Please join us for the Remembrance Area chapel service on July 14th at 10:30AM.

Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Prayer

***'Neath these tall green trees we stand,
Asking blessings from your hand.***

***Thanks we give to you above
For your help and strength and love;
For these waters crystal blue;
For all Scouts strong, brave, and true.***

***Guide us well from morn to night
With Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan's pure light.***

***Grant that all we see and do
Is a living prayer to you.***

Amen

Smoke Signals Publishing Guidelines:

We want to hear from YOU!

*Want to contribute a Snippet of your camp memories or experiences?
Follow the guidelines listed below, and send it to us for publication!*



Smoke Signals Publishing Guidelines:

The Smoke Signals Editorial Board invites all members to submit articles, reviews, Trivia, and/or Blast from the Past stories according to these Guidelines.

-K. Nicole Ludmer, Editor-in-Chief

Submission:

Please send your works for publication with a brief suggested title to K.Nicole.Ludmer@gmail.com; please include "Smoke Signals" in the subject line. All acronyms and abbreviations must be defined. Any photos or other graphics to be used must be sent in a separate file with proper citation. Camp nicknames should be included in quotation marks. Years on staff will be included in parentheses, next to author's name.

Review Policy:

The Smoke Signals editorial board will review all submissions regarding format, style, and language.



Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Alumni Association Application

INSTRUCTIONS

Join online at neic.org/alumni OR mail this form with dues payment to:

Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Alumni Association
2745 Skokie Valley Road
Highland Park, IL 60035

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Birth Date (must be >18 to join): ____/____/____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: (____) ____-____ E-mail: _____

May we share your name and e-mail with the Association Membership? __ (Y) __ (N)

OTHER INFORMATION

Please mark all that apply: Camper ____ Leader ____ Staff ____ Friend ____

First Year at Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan _____



Relationship to Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan (e.g. years, E/W/R, Unit, etc.): _____

Professional Information (job, employer, city, industry, etc.): _____

Are you interested in participating in the Mentorship Program? __ (Y) __ (N)

TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP:

Annual Dues (check box)

<input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult (18 to 25 years of age)	Free
<input type="checkbox"/> Standard	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/>  Lifetime 	\$201.29

Additional Contribution _____

Total Enclosed _____

Dues are on the calendar year and not prorated. Make checks payable to "Northeast Illinois Council BSA," place "MAA Membership" in the memo line. Any additional amount contributed will be used in direct support of the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scout Reservation under the supervision of the Association and the Council Executive Board. MA-KA-JA-WAN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION.

Honoring Yesterday  Connecting Today  Supporting Tomorrow

www.makajawanalumni.org