



# Smoke Signals



## SCOUTING SKILLS LEAD THE WAY

An alum's account of the importance of skills learned in Scouts and camp, and how vital they are in the real world

## BLAST FROM THE PAST

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

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## SCOUTING SKILLS LEAD THE WAY | KEN SCHAEFLE

My name is Ken Schaeffe and I was a youth BSA member of Troop 3 in Evanston, Illinois. I attended Ma Ka Ja Wan as a camper '80-'85 and was an East Camp staff member '88-'89. I became an Eagle Scout in 1986 and a Vigil Member of the OA in 1988.

I am writing because I use my Scouting Skills every day of my life. I am a doctor working in global health, and I spend 3 months a year in rural Africa. I take groups of American medical students and medical residents to work in an understaffed, under-equipped hospital in Uganda. Every day something goes out - the water, the power. Every day we deal with shortages and outages of critical supplies. Every day we have more patients who are more critically ill than we think we can handle.

I have to improvise within the hospital the way we improvised on campouts: hanging IV fluids from ropes strung from window hinges. Having to create an emergency blood warmer for 14-year-old girl hit by shrapnel in a militia battle.

Every day my Scouting Skills are in use. It's a mosaic of the skills - always the interpersonal ones: Lead. By example. Demonstrate cheerful service. Don't show fatigue. Always the material ones: carry knife, matches, and rain gear. Bring rope. Wear pants with pockets. Use bug repellent. Plan for the unexpected. Bring extra stuff. Have extras for those who won't bring theirs, and for supplies that are likely to run out. Be prepared.

Always the group lessons: Stay together as a group. The group is more powerful than the sum of its parts. Strive to maintain the group morale and commitment - then we can withstand anything and emerge safely through the other side. Do not let anyone fall behind - no matter how bad the diarrhea, the jet lag, the emotional shock of what we do. Support people until they find their strength. Don't let them quit on themselves. People will grow.



**Picture 1:** Me outside the Kisoro District Hospital. The belt I am wearing I made myself; it is a modified carpenter's tool belt, used to hold all the instruments, bandages, and medicines I need to have at-ready for the care we give. Be Prepared.



Every day I am grateful that Scouting taught me how to be comfortable without reliance on material comforts, and showed me the importance of being cheerful in distressing circumstances. People who have not had the experience of transcending physical circumstances can be noticeably disadvantaged when first deprived of customary comforts.

Leadership and character are deliberately taught and nurtured in Scouting. They are not taught in medical school, business school or trade school. Scouting showed me the difference leadership makes, and how a group needs leadership to get organized and function – otherwise chaos will prevail. Scouting's lessons of leadership and endurance moved us along in our development to where we extend our focus beyond ourselves, to awareness, concern and function towards helping others. Of note, Scouting's core youth curriculum from 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade lasts longer than almost all degree-granting programs.

I am going to the Ma Ka Ja Wan 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary weekend this summer. I am going to pay respects to Eagle Scout Nicholas E.B. Coyne, who was my Assistant Scoutmaster, a Ma Ka Ja Wan staff member, Silver Beaver award recipient, and much more. Nick passed August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018 and his name will be added to the Wall of Remembrance along the shore of Lake Killian, alongside the names of my Scoutmaster Robert Grandy and my Troop Committee Chairman Wirt Stafford. These men had the vision to devote many decades of their lives to running a program for boys so kids like me could grow up and benefit from the skills and experiences Scouting has to offer.

At first I thought I was going up to camp to pay my respects to Nick, but I cannot go to camp without paying my respects to Ma Ka Ja Wan itself, to Scouting, and to the friends, leaders and staff who taught me. My life and my abilities are a reflection of their efforts. The life and abilities of all Scouts reflect on what the program has taught us.



**Picture 2:** Me helping a medical student do her first lumbar puncture, which involves inserting a needle in the lower spine to remove fluid. This was an AIDS patient with cryptococcal meningitis who needed fluid removed to relieve painfully elevated intracranial pressure. Whether teaching someone how to pitch a tent, start a fire, or do a lumbar puncture, the principles are the same: Be there next to them. Let them do it. Supervise closely. Provide encouragement and correction if and as necessary. Believe in them: You learned it, they will too.

## MEMBERSHIP

Friends,

If you have yet to renew your own dues for 2019-2020, we hope you do so soon. Instructions on how to join or renew can be found online at:  
<http://msraa.org/129/join/>.

We 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

That's not a deal!  
That's a STEAL!!!

## 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 possible program! Check out the link above!

If you have any questions, contact Adam Hoeflich at:

<mailto:ajhoeflich129@gmail.com?subject=MSR Amazon Wish List>



## BLAST FROM THE PAST | BRIAN “JIVE MONKEY” SCHATZ

While I have enjoyed the serious discussions of leadership and manhood that have been written here by some of my contemporaries, I wanted instead to use this opportunity just to reminisce. We all get to share in a common staff experience, but for each of us it combines hundreds of different events, particular work crews, conversations shared around fires, skits and programs worked up, kids we taught, nights out under the stars and all the other tiny enchanted moments. For all of us together on staff in a given year, a lot of those stories overlap and interact, but for each of us they merge into a, like a... a unique quilt (“staff blanket” was already taken). So, I hope that you will find something in this story that is universally true about the Camp staff experience even though these are my particular anecdotes and perspective. I have a lot of favorite memories I might use for this (maybe a series?), but there is one obvious place for me to begin: the end. (All names have been omitted in order to protect the guilty. Also, I promise that this story is not going to end with a dismissal... this time.)

On the first all-staff 24 of the summer of 2007, after a sumptuous lunch of grilled venison (presented by a grateful adult leader after fighting a bear cub out of his campsite, surely a story for another time), a crew of about 8 of us decided to go out on Saturday afternoon to raft the Wolf River. On our way back to Camp we passed by a house, in front of which a cardboard sign advertised the availability of kittens for free (or best offer). I don’t remember who decided that we should go look, just look! Play with some kittens! About 30 minutes later we of course decided to bring all three of the litter (sadly, a fourth had been recently eaten by a hawk) back to Camp with us, figuring that allowed for one for each subcamp staff (East, West, Reservation), on the condition that all of the cats would have a permanent home at the end of the summer with any of the conspirators.

There was some recent precedent for this idea. The previous year in West Camp, we had dogs. Not all the time, but on several occasions, and always the same dogs. Black labrador puppies, left to roam from a neighboring farm, four of them at most together but often just one or two at a time, would follow staffers home from stargazing at the hill near County T, or just show up on staff row and wedge themselves under a stump, or have a slumber party in an accommodating senior staff cabin. On my last full day at Camp in 2006 I had gone for a hike and two of them followed me back to an otherwise deserted West Camp for the rest of the day and night. Doing a final walkthrough was like exploring the campsites and vacant program areas through new eyes. (Naturally, all of these sleepovers had remained undisclosed to the Ranger staff and Reservation Director (apologies), but my impression is that the full-time area

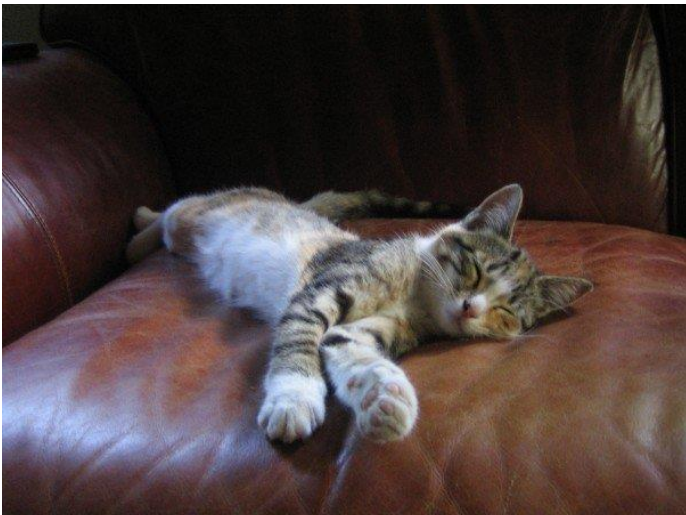


**Daisy supervises from a comfy perch. Photo from Daisy's FB account.**

residents knew of the owners' negligence and eventually it got put to a stop somehow.) Long story short, the puppies had come and gone, but the senior staff had enjoyed the "staff pet" experience and clearly wanted more.

Anyway, we didn't have any cat... stuff, of course. No food or bowls, or litter boxes, or litter, or even the means with which to transport the kittens back to Camp, so the kittens rode on the laps and in the sweaters of the passengers, and quick arrangements were made to pick up the supplies required to be responsible pet owners that very evening. The kittens were divided among the crew based on who they had gravitated to at the home and on the ride back. The black and white longhair was named "Pirate" and sent to live in Family Camp Cabin 11. The large, orange tabby tomcat was named "Ben Pearson" and he lived out his summer nestled in the placid repose of East Camp's Hilltop, when not visiting and harrying his sisters. The brownish calico, the runt of the litter, came to West Camp to live in Team Two. She was named "Daisy."

I understand that not everyone was happy with this development. A few days later at an Admin meeting, my counterpart in East Camp actively replayed the "meow" game from Super Troopers, subtly enough to not alert the ignorant, but direct enough to make a point to me. Emergency shenanigans had to be employed during the Vigil Weekend as some donors were coming to visit and inspect Team 2. Even day-to-day secrecy was pretty difficult to achieve... Team 2 was a popular place for staff to come hang out, and, as it turns out, it is actually physically impossible to prevent a kitten from climbing unfinished plywood walls. The residents tried to keep things under wraps with just the senior staff being made aware and daytime music and codewords deployed (discussions of "soda therapy" and "I'm gonna go play with the soda" were often heard around the inner office), but eventually many of the junior staff found out just by dropping by at opportune times. Yet, somehow, key people for which it was important they not find out never did.

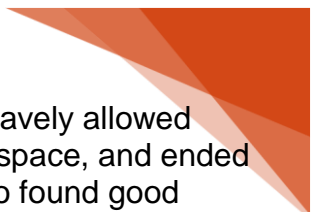


**Daisy taking a snooze. Photo from Daisy's FB account.**

Daisy was a sensitive soul as a kitten, content to lie out on warm laps and torsos and sils and armrests. When pitted against a mouse in a cage match, she conscientiously refused to fight. She looked outside so often that it seemed she was perhaps pining to explore, but when harnessed and released she immediately climbed onto the head of one of her roommates; she had seen what fate had befallen her littermate in the outside world and wanted none of it. She was often rambunctious and stinky, as kittens often are, particularly those tasked with living with a bunch of

teenagers sharing the same qualities. Never the most graceful cat when it came to balance or leaping, and yet her spirit was imbued with pretty substantial grace. Like Sally O'Malley, she was fond of stretching and kicking.

I did not live with Daisy at Camp, so I enjoyed seeing her when I would visit Team 2 at night. I had played with her at the kittens' original home, and had felt like we had a rapport then, and it had only deepened every time she curled up on my lap to sleep (I am blessed to be a human furnace, so cats and other small creatures tend to like sleeping on me). As the summer was winding down, the promise that had been made to ensure the cats had a permanent home became more pressing. I had two cats growing up and was moving into a pet-friendly apartment in the fall, so I was interested in adopting Daisy, and it worked out that my situation was the best fit for her compared to the available dorm rooms or parents' houses otherwise on offer. Having offered to drive a fellow staffer home after camp ended who was actually allergic to cats, we first attempted to keep Daisy in her carrier on the



drive home. However, when she proved too spastic for the cage, my companion bravely allowed Daisy to come out of her cage. Daisy promptly settled down on the proffered chest space, and ended up snuggled there for the rest of the trip. (Don't worry - Pirate and Ben Pearson also found good homes, and if any of your humans are reading, please send them Daisy's best wishes.)

As you alumni already know, it is difficult to leave Camp at the end of a summer. Sure, you are exhausted and eager to sleep in a normal bed after a hot shower and see your friends and family and dozen favorite meals, but you are leaving behind your other friends (and really, family) with whom you just lived and worked and laughed and shared the indelible and profound experience every day and every night for weeks. I think this gets to be difficult on another level when you had a great year (some are just better than others), and then increases further when you know that you aren't going back the next year. I'd certainly had some more emotional departures from Camp, in years when I didn't know if I would be back or not and didn't feel like I knew what else to do, where Camp was mooring and the rest of life felt adrift. At least I had been able to retire on my own terms and experience closure on parts of my staff life for the last time as I was going about the summer, and I even knew where I was going in my real world life and career. Yet, I also knew that the ending feeling was going to hit me hard at some point and I didn't know how I was going to be able to handle it, honestly. I hope it doesn't come off too maudlin to write that Camp was home in my heart, the place where I always felt like the most authentic version of myself, a refuge of support and affirmation in an often cynical real world.

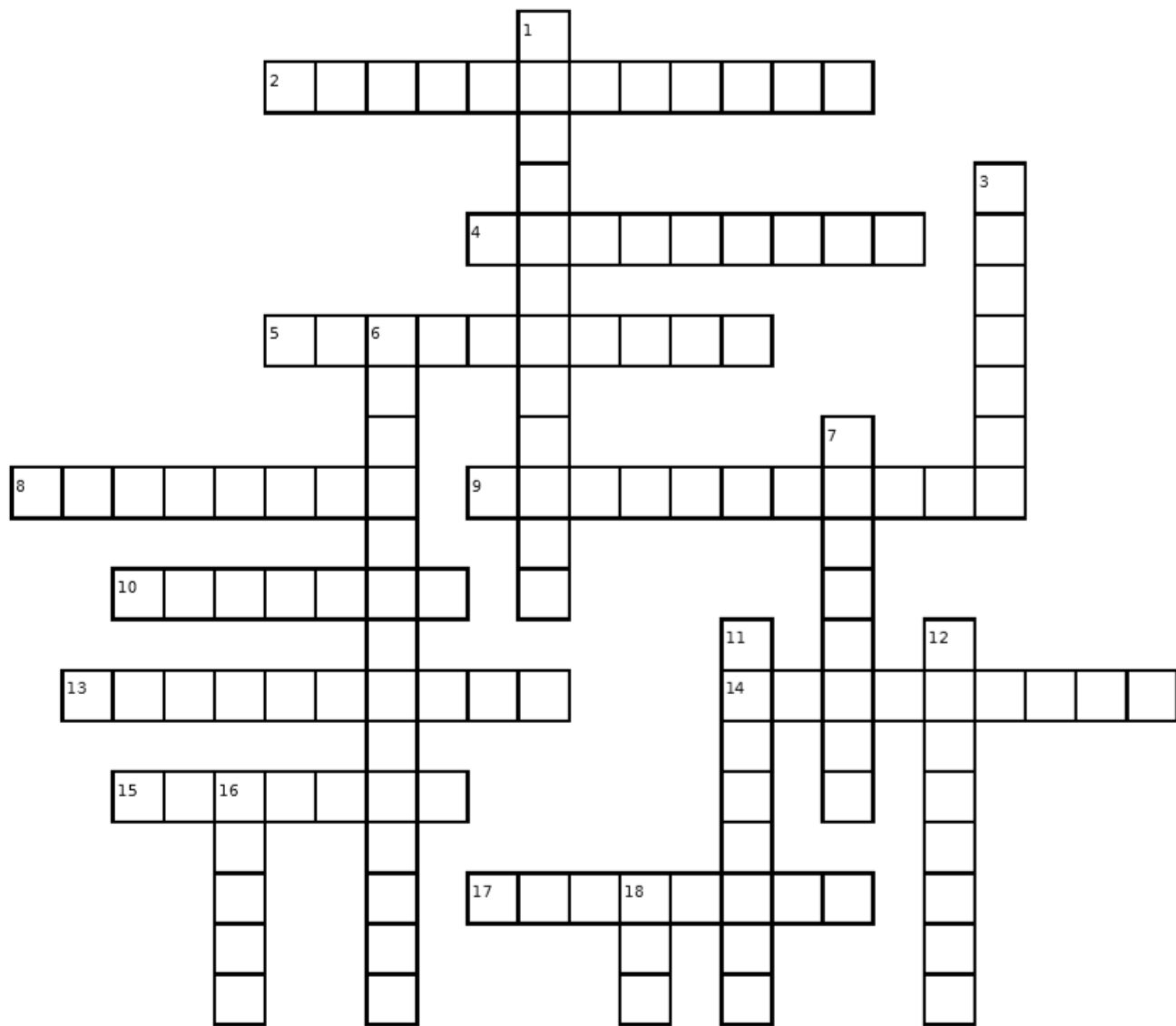
By bringing Daisy home with me, it felt like I was taking a living, breathing piece of Camp along with me when I left, and I would have that spirit with me wherever I was going to end up. The transition between Camp and the real world got to be more gradual, incremental. Her presence kept me feeling like Jive Monkey for a longer time in Brian's life, and I think perhaps helped me to incorporate some of the parts of my Camp self that I wanted to keep into my non-Camp persona. Daisy made it possible for me to leave and not sever.

She still does. Although I realize I have been writing about her in the past tense, Daisy is still with me. She is 11 now (with an unofficial birthday of May 5 (Cinco de Mayo party cat!)), settling gracelessly into senior cat life, ornery with most people (except for her old friends, when they come to visit), reluctantly tolerant of curious young children, and curled up on my lap as often as she can find it. Happily, my life and career trajectories did not take me exactly where I had expected them to when I was leaving Camp all those summers ago, but she has followed me loyally through that first move and a half dozen others since, and she remains one of the best things ever to happen to me; in that sense especially, she continues to fulfil her role as part of Camp away from Camp. Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm gonna go play with the soda.



# HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR MSR MERIT BADGES?

See last page for answer key.



## Down:

1. Withers and hock
3. Rocks and minerals
6. Ridge ending and whorls
7. Ribbed and campstool seat
11. Single-bladed paddle and
12. Learn about forests and different species of trees and shrubs
16. Check mate!
18. Six principles of design

## Across:

2. Option: Make a plankton net
4. Malleable and nonferrous
5. Save a person in a water accident
8. Belay on!
9. Aperture and shutter release
10. Fletching andnock
13. Throw and splice a rope
14. One star-two star-red star-blue star
15. Derailleur and hub
17. Double-bladed paddle

## HOW TO SIGN UP FOR SSS #129 AND MAA

### Join Ship 129!!

We encourage you to join the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Alumni Association (MAA) to reconnect with your friends and beloved camp. You can enhance your MAA membership and experience by joining Sea Scout Ship (SSS) #129. This is an active Scout unit in the Northeast Illinois Council (NEIC) and is comprised by current and former staff members.

By joining SSS#129 as an adult leader you can reconnect with Scouting and Northeast Illinois Council. Members of the Ship receive the National BSA Council's monthly magazine: "Scouting" for adult leaders and all NEIC's publications and e-mail newsletters. For an additional fee, you can subscribe to "Boy's Life" magazine.

To be eligible for adult membership:

- ☐ You must be over 18 years of age;

Working in cooperation with the broader Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Alumni Association, the goal of the Ship is to bring together, in a support organization, all those who have experienced that unique adventure of being a member of the Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scout Reservation staff or as a long-time volunteer. Membership in SSS#129 requires the completion of the "online" Youth Protection Program every two years to maintain your membership. Annual SSS#129 membership renewals will occur every May.

The official adult application forms can be accessed on the Internet using the following link and printed out on your printer.

Select "Adult Application" and print the forms. You may also request applications by contacting John Lillstrom at:

John.Lillstrom@gmail.com or calling him at (715) 623-6629.

To complete Youth Protection Training you must go to: [www.myscouting.org](http://www.myscouting.org) and create your account. Once your account is established you can click on the Youth Protection Training tab to complete the 20minute course.

- |                                                            |          |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yearly membership for MAA         | \$20     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MAA LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP           | \$201.29 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yearly membership for SSS#129     | \$24     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yearly subscription to Boy's Life | \$12     |

A check for \$56 gets all three yearly memberships. A check for \$237.29 gets you a Lifetime Membership for MAA and a Yearly membership and subscription to SSS#129 and Boy's Life Magazine, respectively. If you are a registered Scouter, there is no charge to add SSS#129 as an additional unit. Boy's Life is an optional fee.

Completed applications, Youth Protection certificate (if necessary), along with the appropriate check made payable to: Northeast Illinois Council will then be mailed to:

Sea Scout Ship #129  
c/o John Lillstrom  
W8986 Claire Rd  
Deerbrook, WI. 54425

Upon acceptance of your application, you will be commissioned as a Skipper's Mate in SSS#129. (This is equivalent to an Assistant Scoutmaster position.) A certificate of

membership in the Camp Staff Veterans of Sea Scout Ship #129 (if qualified) will be sent to your mailing address. You will receive your Ship registration card from the National Council, BSA. As a full member of the MaKa-Ja-Wan Alumni Association you will be alerted to alumni events, activities, and important information regarding your Scouting alma mater.

Please direct any questions regarding registration to:  
Brian McIlwee [Brianm@mcilweemillwork.com](mailto:Brianm@mcilweemillwork.com) or  
John Lillstrom [john.lillstrom@gmail.com](mailto:john.lillstrom@gmail.com)

## MA-KA-JA-WAN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION APPLICATION

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Join online at [neic.org/alumni](http://neic.org/alumni) OR mail this form with dues payment to

Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Alumni Association  
850 Forest Edge Dr.  
Vernon Hills, IL. 60061

### CONTACT INFORMATION:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Birthdate (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? \_\_\_\_ (Yes) \_\_\_\_ (No)

### 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 the Mentorship Program? \_\_\_\_ (Yes! Send me more info!) \_\_\_\_ (No)

<u>TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP (check box):</u>	<u>Annual dues:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Young adult (18-25 years of age).....	<u>FREE</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Standard yearly.....	<u>\$20</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> LIFETIME.....	<u>\$201.29</u>
Annual contribution.....	_____
<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b> .....	_____

Dues are on the calendar year and not prorated. Make checks payable to "Northeast Illinois Council BSA," place "MAA Membership" on 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.Ma-Ka-Ja-WanAlumni.org](http://www.Ma-Ka-Ja-WanAlumni.org)



## CROSSWORD ANSWER KEY

