

VENTURING MAGAZINE

Crew 709 Super Activity with Kodiak & COD Rendezvous

September 2015



Back in September of 2014 my Crew and I, Crew 709, decided at our annual officer's conference to take a weeklong trip to Oregon to attend the Corps of Discovery Western Rendezvous during the summer of 2015. In the following months two activity chairs, youth who volunteer to lead an outing, began working with our Crew Advisor to brainstorm and organize the activities and logistics of our trip to Oregon. Activities my Crew was interested in, including white water rafting, backpacking and a service project were included in the rough outline of the trip. Additionally our activity chairs decided that a Kodiak course should

be included as an opportunity to improve our Crew's leadership skills in the long road trip up north.

As early as February reservations were made and deposits placed for those attending the trip. As the month of June drew closer additional requirements, such as completing medical forms and a swim test for our rafting trip were completed. By May our Crew was fully prepared for the outing, with a decided meal plan for ten days, course instructors prepared for the Kodiak course and gear checks completed. Shortly after school drew to a close for our Venturers, on June 20th we began our ten day odyssey.



After leaving early in the morning we arrived for lunch in Kettleman City during the heat of the day. In the near one hundred degree heat we began the first section of our Kodiak course—our vision. Our vision included aspects of our hopes for the Kodiak course, upcoming trip and the future of our Crew. Quick to evade the furnace that is central California we hopped back in our caravan for our final destination of the day, Sacramento. Arriving in the early evening we were graciously hosted by Crew 808 of Sacramento and their sponsor organization, United Methodist Church of Rancho Cordova. After finishing the first lesson of our Kodiak course that night we hit the sack, exhausted after what seemed like an eternity of a road trip.

Only halfway to our final destination we took off the following morning after again thanking our kind hosts of Crew 808 for our first adventure in Oregon: white water rafting in Maupin. Our second day's drive was far more pleasant than the first instead of the California desert we were greeted by the Central Oregon forest and plains. Arriving in Maupin we ended up at a breathtaking campsite just feet from the Deschutes River, where we would be rafting the next day. We continued to progress through our Kodiak course with that day's lesson on deliverers and receivers, how to effectively give and receive messages. After a delicious dinner including Dutch oven cooked dinner rolls we were excited and prepared for our next day's adventure.

We woke up early to meet our river rafting guide at the High Desert River Outfitters, took a van ride up the Deschutes River and launched out onto the river. Out on the water that our tour guide very

accurately described the turbulent waters as "somewhere between shocking a refreshing," we reviewed safety procedures essential to our enjoyment and well being on the river. At our first rapid our Crew was given the opportunity to "ride the bull" which is to sit on the very front of the raft as it sailed through rapids. Needless to say many of us ended up soaked just at the start of the trip. After lunch at a park in Maupin, which the river runs right through, we finished the second half of our full day adventure. Along with more rapids we were given the opportunity to swim in natural pools alongside the river as well as float through rapids with just our life vests on. After the exhausting day was over we prepared for the next phase of our journey, a drive to Seaside in the upper west corner of Oregon.

Our drive was shorter than previous days as we rode across half the width of Oregon, arriving midday to begin a section of our Kodiak course. The section in question centered around servant leadership and what it means to put a group's needs ahead of your own to effectively lead any sort of team. As participants we were instructed to look out for demonstrations of servant leadership in our upcoming service project. The following day we began our backpack along the coast which mimicked a path taken by the Lewis and Clark expedition as they mapped the area. We hiked through an incredible landscape of a forest ride on the edge of a cliff, dropping right into the Pacific Ocean. Along the way we held a ceremony of reading a journal entry of William Clark as we stood at the location where he recorded his thoughts and vision of the surrounding land over 200 years ago. This, along with a service project we would complete the following day where parts of our effort to earn the Historic Trails Award. After spending the night in log cabins at the semi-isolated hiker's camp we began our service project of renovating a section of trail located near the hikers camp and leading to a viewing area for Dismal Point, a notorious lighthouse known for its cold and isolated winters. All and all, my Crew and I, with help of the Park Ranger Mr. Bo Ensign completed over 300 feet of the trail. We spent the rest of the day hiking back out of the forest and driving to what would be our home for the next three days, a KOA in Astoria.



Day six: we spent the day after our backpack along the coast as time to relax at the campground as well as freshen up for the remaining days of the trip. There we began another segment of our Kodiak course



on working with and incorporating peoples' differences to make a team stronger. The following day we took a brief trip into Washington to view and hike around the spectacle of Mt. St. Helens. The crater as well as the knocked down trees for miles around was a stunning display of the power of nature. That evening we finished some of the last lessons of Kodiak course involving trust with communication and being an impartial but supportive leader when working with multiple groups. At last the day we had all been waiting for had arrived, the Western Region Rendezvous for the Corps of Discovery. We met at Fort Clatsop, a reconstruction of the fort used by the Lewis and

Clark expedition during the winter of 1805-1806. We watched an authentic black powder demonstration, took a tour of the fort and the area around it and started the planning meeting for the future of the Corps of Discovery. In the discussion with decided upon new strategies for expanding the Corps of Discovery and national officer elections. After the meeting my Crew and I took at seven mile hike along another historic route of Lewis and Clark, the Fort to Sea trail leading to the beach where they discovered a beached whale. Upon arriving at the water front we took a refreshing, if rather freezing dip in the Northern Oregon Pacific. Closing out our stay in Astoria we explored the wreck of the Peter Iredale, a steam boat that grounded on the coast in 1906.

After a wonderful (rain free) stay in Oregon we began our long return trip to Vista, California.

We spent the following evening at the Indian Mary Park were we held our graduation ceremony from our Kodiak course. After leaving the smallest Indian Reservation in the United States we stopped at the Tillamook Cheese Factory. Leaving loaded upon on cheese and fudges we drove down to a KOA in Stockton, spent the night, and began the final day of our drive back home. Finally arriving home after ten days we were exhausted but impressed in all that we accomplished in the period. In the end our trek to Oregon contained what my Crew considers is the spirit of Venturing, our five focuses of Fun, High Adventure, Unique Experiences, Leadership and Learning, and Service. As a Crew we will never forget the adventure of a lifetime we shared together.

Article provided by: Grant Matais, Crew 709 President