

THE NORTH STAR NUGGET

VOLUME II, ISSUE 2
FEBRUARY 2025

GSLAC – NORTH STAR ROUNDTABLE NEWS





MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February/March 2025

Feb 8 , 2025	Pathfinder Klondike
Feb 16, 2025	Eagle Review Board
Feb 22, 2025	STEM – U @ SIUC
Mar 29, 2025	STEM – U @ Lake Land College
Mar 28-30, '25	Taste of Venturing

Looking Ahead Beyond March 2025

Apr 25-27, '25	Council Wide Spring Event
Mar 7, 2025	Venturing – Bonfire
May 9-10, '25	Venturing Lock-In
May 30, 2025	Venturing – Swifts Big Kickoff
Jun 15-21, '25	Swift Venture Week
Jun 29-Jul 6	Swift Sea Scout Week

A Surprising Duty to God Moment A Scout is Friendly

Robin Williams once brought laughter back to a grieving gorilla who had been mourning the loss of a friend for six months. This remarkable story began when American ethologists taught a gorilla named Koko to communicate with humans using sign language. Koko was exceptionally intelligent, but she was going through a deeply difficult period, to the point where biologists feared she was suffering from severe melancholy. The researchers wanted to help Koko by finding her a new companion while also studying how she interacted with humans. Since Koko had learned sign language and could communicate with our species, she was the perfect subject to explore whether there were true cognitive boundaries between humans and gorillas. To assist, they reached out to Robin Williams, the renowned comedian, and asked if he would spend time with Koko, interacting with her naturally, as if she was simply a person in need of comfort. Williams agreed, though he had reservations. He wasn't an expert on primates and worried he might be too awkward to connect with the gorilla. However, when he met Koko, Williams had an unexpected revelation. By letting the gorilla approach him at her own pace, Williams realized that interacting with Koko felt like engaging with a curious child. Gradually, Koko grew more interested in his visitor, even becoming fascinated by Williams' glasses, which she referred to as "strange glass eyes."



Soon, Koko began communicating with Williams through sign language, suggesting games and asking surprisingly insightful questions that left the actor stunned. Within minutes, the two were joking, tickling each other, playing, and sharing stories from their lives. The researchers were amazed and asked Koko to describe Williams in one word. The gorilla chose the term "friend."

Williams was deeply moved by the encounter, especially when he learned that he had managed to make a gorilla laugh who was on the brink of depression due to loneliness. Inspired, he decided to visit Koko whenever possible and even filmed public service announcements with

him, advocating for species conservation and against animal experimentation.

The bond between Koko and Williams was so profound that it endured even after the actor's death in 2014. When Koko learned of Williams' passing, she asked the instructors if she could cry and spent days in quiet reflection, her lips trembling with grief. The gorilla was inconsolable, knowing she would never see her friend again.

Koko passed away four years later, in 2018, at the age of 46. Today, she is remembered as one of the most significant primates in the history of scientific research, a testament to the extraordinary connections that can exist between species.

COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

Happy 115th birthday to Scouting America!

Allow me to introduce myself, I am John Kavanaugh the new District Commissioner for the North Star district.

The commissioner staff, Unit Commissioners, Assistant District Commissioners and I are committed to helping your unit provide the best possible program for the youth.

One of my first tasks is to make sure every unit has a unit commissioner assigned to it. You can help in a couple ways; 1. If you don't know who your commissioner is, let me know. 2. If you think you'd like to join the commissioner staff as a unit commissioner, let me know. We can never have too many commissioners.

This past Saturday, 1 February, several of us attended the Council Coordinated Operating Committee Meeting (CCOCM). North Star district made a good showing! We are rated amongst the best districts in the council in areas like member retention, membership growth, fundraising, and percentage of youth attending camp. I congratulate you on all of these. These are important areas to focus on for quality programming.

An area of focus for our district will be rebuilding lost units. The pandemic and other factors really hurt some of our numbers. There is an initiative within the Council to assist in identifying new charter partners, finding adult leaders, and then starting new units. More on this as things develop.

Another "highlight" from CCOCM was the hour long airing of grievances concerning the new recharting process. Even our Scout Executive had problems getting his children reregistered. Every unit in every district throughout the council seemed to have issues this year. National has taken note and for the first time actually hired a Chief Information Officer. If your unit is still hung up in the process, reach out to the council office. We have until 31 March to get everything fixed.

That's all for now!

If you have any questions or concerns or just want to sit and talk over a coffee, reach out.

John Kavanaugh

North Star District

District Commissioner

(C) 314-651-7885

gslac.crew2749@gmail.com

The Camping Corner



I hope each and every one of you had a great Christmas and a Happy New Year.

It is now time to get back to scouting camping and recruiting.

Coming Up:

Klondike with the Pathfinder District.

Saturday February 8th 8 AM to 4 PM

Cost \$11 for a hot lunch. Cost is for Scouts and Adults.

Registration ended January 30 at 11:59PM

If you think you are going, before you leave roundtable, give me your email. I will send you a lot of information as well as the Klondike Manual for you to run off.

Questions contact: joel.schwartz@shawneeLodge.org Pathfinder Camping Chairman

Council Wide Camporee April 25-27. There WILL NOT be any district camporees. Go to council website to register.

North Star Fall Camporee

October 3, 4, and 5 Camp Warren Levis

More information in the Fall

Fred Schaljo
Camping Chairman

North Star Annual Giving Campaign Planning for the 2025 Campaign

The Friends of Scouting campaign has been renamed the Annual Giving Campaign with a revised purpose and revised incentives. Our 2025 North Star giving goal is \$65,000. As of January 29, 2025, North Star has reached commitments of \$10,290.

Giving can be accomplished via the following links:

<https://fundraise.givesmart.com/vf/SCOUTS2025/NorthStar>

or

https://fundraise.givesmart.com/form/B6ZvPg?parent_id=1001844&vid=1hl0pt

or

Text SCOUTS2025 to 71777

Unit incentives to earn free rank advancement are:

Packs: 25% of youth attend a summer camp experience

Troops and Crews: 75% of youth create an online account

Thank you North Star.

Jerome Flynn, North Star Annual Giving Campaign Chairperson

Eagle Board Information

Here are the dates for the upcoming Eagle Boards of Review:

- Sunday, February 16th
- Sunday, March 16th
- Sunday, April 27th - The only month that is not the 3rd Sunday is in April, as the third Sunday is Easter.

Location: All Eagle Boards of Review are all held at the Florissant Valley Library Branch

Address: 195 S. New Florissant Rd. Florissant, MO 63031

Time: All Boards of Review start at 1:00pm

All Eagle Scout candidates must reach out to Debbie at least 7 days in advance of the Board Meeting date.

Any questions or to schedule a Board please call Debbie Huber at 314-960-4842.

Debbie Huber

Eagle Scout Review Board Coordinator

North Star Venturing Officers Association (VOA) News

North Star VOA officers:

President – Amelia Bazzell (Crew 2749)

VP Administration – Aiden Ham (Crew 2921)

VP Program – Charlie Saunders (Crew 2749)

VP Communication – Gabe Blamey (Crew 2921)

Lots of Venturing Activities and Events at both Council and District level. The youth are working very hard to plan and run the following events.

stlbsa.org/venturing-calendar

VSOA Training

- 25-26 October
- Sverdrup Lodge
- Begin planning 2024-2025 events

STL After Dark

- Awsome event
- Over 150 youth and adults in attendance

Taste of Venturing

- 28-30 March
- Camp Waren Levis
- Registration is live
- \$20 for the weekend

Venturing Celebration Dinner

- 18 May

Swift's Big Kickoff

- 30 May - 1 June

Swift Venture Week

- 15-21 June

Swift Sea Scout Week

- 29 June - 6 July

Fall Fun Rally

- 19-21 September

North Star Venturing events/activities:

ILSC/Adult Leader Training

- 8 February (10 AM - 3 PM)
- Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

Bonfire

- 7 March

Lock-in

- 9-10 May

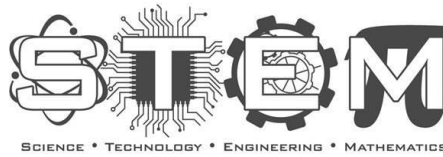
First-Aid

- August

Alan Kreppert

North Star VSOA Advisor

alan.kreppert@sbcglobal.net



Upcoming Events: <https://stlbsa.org/stem/upcoming-stem-events/>

22 February 2025 – STEM-U SIUC

- \$17 for Youth, \$10 for adults – includes lunch and all course materials
- Scout BSA only – 17 Merit Badges and 3 Novas
- Free adult STEM training available
- Registration closes 16 February

29 March 2025 – STEM-U Lake Land College

9-10 May – Cub Scout Camp-in at the Magic House

- \$35 – includes late night pizza and breakfast
- Free time to explore the Magic House
- Sleep under the exhibits
- Mystery program

From Council:

- STEM programming will be available at all 6 camps for Adventure Summit
- Please continue to use scoutbook to track all Nova and Supernova awards
- STEM encompasses all scout programming and has been since scouting began.
- Nova and Supernova awards are not just for Cub Scouts. All STEM awards are available for all levels of scouting including Scout BSA and Venturing

STEM STAR Patches:

- Available for all levels of scouting
- By earning a Nova Award AND Cub Adventures/Merit Badges/STEM Explorations scouts can earn a scout level appropriate STAR Patch
- I am not aware of any way to track these in scoutbook. Please let me know if you award any of your kids these so we can take credit on the District STEM Challenge.
- Old Cub Scout Adventures are being mapped to the new Cub Scout requirements
- **Ordering patches is temporarily on hold. Council is hoping to open it back up soon!**



<https://stlbsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/STEM-STAR-Patch-2022.pdf>

If you need any assistance implementing STEM into your program, please let me know.

Alan Kreppert
North Star District STEM Chair
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