

Central Region, BSA
Area 4 Venturing
Area4.CRVenturing.org

The ADVENTURER

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New Program Associate Advisor Begins and JV Hooks retires

Matthew Blackwood has been named the Central Region Area 4 Associate Advisor for Program by Area Chair Duane Zobrist. He is the current VOA Advisor for Buckskin Council and previously served as the



VOA Advisor for the Elk River District VOA. Matthew has been involved in Venturing for over 3 years, but his experience in Scouting goes back nearly 35 years. He is an Eagle Scout and the Advisor to Crew 64 in Charles-

ton, WV. He is also a Webelos Den Leader and Scoutmaster, and a Venturing trainer. He has been awarded the Scoutmaster's Award of Merit, the District Award of Merit, the Silver Beaver and the Council Venturing Leadership Award. He has served on staff for Wood Badge and NYLT. He helped lead the Buckskin Council contingent to the 2013 National Jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Reserve. His oldest son is an Eagle Scout and has earned the Venturing Silver Award, and his daughter, the 2015-2016 Area 4 VP – Program, earned the Venturing Silver Award. His youngest son is a Star Scout. His wife serves as a Cub Scout Den Leader. His personal interests include genealogy, photography, bicycle touring, and backpacking/hiking. In his paid career, he is the

Deputy Director of the West Virginia Homeland Security State Administrative Agency.

JV Hooks now starts a new phase in his life with the birth of his first child, JV Jr., in October. He has stepped down as an Associate Advisor. JV started with C4VOA as the very first officer since restarting the Area VOA in 2013. He served as the 2013-2014 Vice President of Administration and then on his 2st birthday became the Associate Advisor for Administration advising two term VP Administration, Jon Crawford. JV attended three CRVOOs with three Area Presidents and contributed much to the success of the area. As a youth JV managed the creation of the Area 4 Operating Procedures an important step that helps ground up in what we should do.



A good friend and mentor, always able and willing to help and a lot of fun, JV will be missed at the Area Level. Everyone please congratulate the new father with his much more important mission. A Cub Scout application in on the way JV!



*WorldFest 2016: The Pirates of the Seven Ranges
Kensington, OH, April 22-24, 2016*

Advisors Corner



What can you get your favorite venturing crew this holiday season? How about a reservation for our second annual WorldFest.

What could be better than spending the weekend with 500 other Venturers shooting, climbing, eating and hanging out.

As the Area 4 advisor, this fun event is one of my main areas of focus. So, put it on your calendar now and plan to attend.

What else is happening in Area 4? How about new council VOAs. Several councils have started or are reinvigorating existing VOAs. We know that if a council has a VOA, crews are more likely to succeed. Do you need help in forming a VOS, let us know, we are happy to help in any way we can. Here's to a strong 2016 for Area 4 Venturing.

Duane Zobrist
Area 4 Venturing Advisor

Were you one of the 354 Venturers at the largest Venturing-Only Event in Central Region History?

Fun facts:

Nate Steele is the 2014-2015 Area 4 President, Current President Emeritus and the Central Region VP -Administration.

Nate is at the center of the creation of the soon to be released materials to help councils set up their VOAs.

Venturing Officer Associations - focus of this issue

National is working on a VOA administration guidebook and training event to help councils start and strengthen their VOAs. The training component is led by our own Nate Steele. We look for the release in 2016.



Area 4 has created training for VOAs and you can find these on our website. As Michael Gunther's article states, call us and we can help you with your Council Venturing Operations.

VOA's are critical for Councils. It is our mission to assist all Councils in starting their youth centered Council Venturing Program.

VOA's are very helpful in creating a seamless communication path between the National Cabinet and the local Crew. Unlike the Boy Scout Program, Venturing is led and represented by youth at all levels or tiers. And this communication path actually works!



ALPS | ADVENTURE

KODIAK

By Scot Nielson
Area 4 VP—Training

This summer my crew and I cycled from Cleveland to Cincinnati over the course of a week. Traversing roughly 330 miles, we rode about 65 miles a day to ultimately arrive at the Purple People Bridge spanning the Ohio River. Along the way, we completed Kodiak, a top-notch leadership course built for Venturing and based in High Adventure. I was surprised at how easy both the leadership program and the trek itself was to accomplish once we got the process going. It might be awhile before I get on a bike again, but I am sure to remember the experience.

How to run a Kodiak

Kodiak is an adventure with a purpose. This challenge is one that pushes the boundaries of every person involved and encourages participants to go out of their comfort zone and explore new things. It is an experience based in the application of leadership skills taught in Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops or Crews, NYLT, and/or NAYLE.

Kodiak is grounded in experiential education; it can take place after participating in Leadership Skills for Troops or Crews, after taking part in NYLT, or after NAYLE. As in most Scouting experiences, one's growth in leadership depends on what the participant brings to the adventure.

More skilled leaders will grow as well as



younger Scouts and Venturers; they will simply have a different but equally rewarding experience. Indeed, Kodiak and the process of developing and implementing a vision can be done more than once.

Kodiak is unique in that the setting in which one experiences the course is never the same. A Kodiak trek can be an expedition, a road trip, an adventure, a visit to another country, a whitewater rafting trip, a cross-state bicycle adventure, running a sports week for special-needs youth— anything that pushes the participants out of their personal comfort zone for the sake of adventure and learning.

For some units, it may be more challenging to do a weeklong city tour than a backpacking trip similar to other trips in the past. Do something that is truly a challenge to each participant.

Treks should be a minimum of five days. During the Kodiak trek, BSA leadership skills will become a framework for participants to live out their adventure—and grow from this. Each day there is an activity to focus on one or more leadership

How to Kodiak—continued

The Kodiak trek is the adventure, but the leadership skills learned and practiced on the trek pave the road for the journey of life.

skills. All treks begin with planning and all groups must communicate effectively about expectations and shared tasks.

Each day, there is one activity designed to reinforce the concept of one of the leadership skills. Staff leads the group in an evening reflection session to discuss situations where leadership skills have come into play on the trek experience so the real-life experience of the adventure becomes reinforcement of the leadership lessons.

Working in the context of the adventure provides additional challenges for the Kodiak. Besides knowing “what” to do, it is important to know “how” to approach making sense of the challenges.

The focus is on identifying what actions challenged the group—or what experiences helped the group succeed. As some of the learning opportunities may come in response to an obstacle, the guide can help the group process how a better and more insightful application of a leadership skill would help them better accomplish their goals.

Save the Date Next Summer for Summers Last Bash Central Region Venturing Fun Event, Springfield, Illinois

August 5-7, 2016
Camp Illinek
Springfield, Illinois.

The SLB will be a fun-filled weekend of on-the-water and beach activities to help you end your summer with a bang! Some of the many activities will include sailing, kayaking, canoeing, beach volleyball, ultimate Frisbees, and tug of war. Make sure to stay tuned for more information as it comes! We will see you all there!



http://www.crv venturing.org/Home/CRV_Fun_Event/

WorldFest 2016: The Pirates of the Seven Ranges Kensington, OH, April 22-24, 2016

Ahoy mates!

By Veronica Day, Area 4 VP Communications



This year, like the last we are expecting big things from our 2016 annual fun event, WorldFest. This year we are calling it WorldFest, Pirates of the Seven Ranges. We plan to have nearly 500 in attendance; last year in 2015 we had nearly 300 people. Last year we had multiple fun things that crews got the opportunity to participate in such as, shooting sports of all kinds (archery, shotgun, rifle, muzzleloader, and handgun), knife throwing, a midway, inflatables and a rock wall, COPE, nightly dances, and so much more. We are planning on having a lot of the stuff we had last year with maybe some new activities this year in 2016. One thing also that I believe, is that anyone that went last year can brag the food. We had gourmet dishes that made regular scout camp look no better than eating a PB&J when a homemade hamburger with fresh toppings on a sesame seed bun was provided. I don't think anyone can say they've eaten that good at camp. The

cooks at Seven Ranges did a wonderful job and if we are lucky enough to have them cook for us again then I can guarantee that the food will be great! So come to WorldFest, Pirates of the Seven Ranges mates. Enjoy some and more of the fun activities mentioned earlier in the article with your crew, make memories that will make your scouting experience even more worthwhile. Registration is currently open. We look forward to seeing you this year at WorldFest!



Please send all questions to WorldFest@CRVenturing.org

Registration is now open at tiny.cc/WorldFest

Discounts until January 15

You may register now for FREE, but payment must be made in full by January 15 to get the discount prices.



Contingents can save by registering now and paying by January 15 which preserves your preference order for housing.

You do want a cozy cabin don't you?

Even Lower Sale Prices on BYOT

(BYOT = bring your own tent)

Early registration saves you money and puts you in line for preferential housing.

Riding the C&O, the GAP and Challenging Yourself

By Ellen Blackwood, Area 4 Vice President - Program

This past summer, my dad and I went on a self-supported biking trip along the Great Allegheny Passage and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal rail trails. It was a 360 mile ordeal through neat towns and sometimes not so great conditions. It was a challenging, but exciting, experience I will always remember.

My dad had talked about doing a longer ride for some time and finally planned one. He had gone on a few multi-day rides before and soon got me interested. We trained as much as we could a few months before we left. We went on short rides along our town's bike route as much as we could. Then, a couple weeks before we left, we did fully-loaded rides where we had all of our gear with us. It was good preparation.



The morning of July 12th my dad and I were dropped off in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at Point State Park. We navigated the city and finally were on our way. The path that day followed the river and the railroad. We went over many train trestles and discovered the steepest hills outside the city. That night we were lucky to have picked a campsite that had Adirondack shelters, so we didn't need to set up a tent. We ate backpacking food for dinner and made it an early night.

The next morning we were up and out of there before eight. My favorite part of the day was riding into Ohio, PA. Beautiful views of the Youghiogheny River and various waterfalls. We hadn't experienced any bad weather until after we stopped for lunch in town. It was pouring. Everything was soaked and I was chilled to the bone. We ended up spending the night in a hostel in Rockwood, PA to be comfortable and dry off completely.

The following day had to have been my favorite of the entire trip. So many interesting sights to stop at along the trail. We rode over the Salisbury Viaduct, over the Keystone Viaduct, up and over the Eastern Continental Divide, through the Big Savage Tunnel, past the Mason-Dixon Line, and through Brush Tunnel, all before noon. There was a more noticeable incline that day, building up to the divide. After we crossed the divide, it was all downhill from there until Cumberland, MD. Sadly we couldn't coast the rest of the way but it sure was less taxing. In Cumberland, the trail joined with the C&O Canal Towpath. That's where it got interesting.

The towpath was a completely different environment compared to the luxury of the GAP rail trail. Recent storms had done a number on the terrain, making it muddy and digging ruts in it. It wore me out. I pushed myself, however, and ended up riding farther than expected. That afternoon we rode past many lock houses and through Paw Paw Tunnel.

The day after was another long and tiring day. The trail didn't improve, but at one point we found a way around it. We took the Western Maryland Rail Trail, a 20-mile bypass that was paved. We were able to make up some of the time we had lost trying to fight the trail. Another place, called Big Slackwater, helped us improve our time as well and had pretty views. Even with easier spots like that, we were both very tired. My dad called in a favor and changed our itinerary slightly. We would have to bike more than we had originally planned, but we'd be able to stay in a comfortable hotel if we did. So that night we stayed in Sheperdstown, WV. No complaints here.

On Thursday morning, my dad and I rode through Harpers Ferry and did a little sightseeing because we were finally making good time again. It was a beautiful day. The ride was also much shorter than previous days and the trail improved with gravel. We spent the night in an open campsite along the Potomac River about 16 miles outside of DC.

Continued on page 11



ALPS | LEADERSHIP

How to start a VOA

Michael Gunther
Area 4 Venturing President



Creating a Council VOA is a vital step to creating and sustaining Crews in your local Council.

Creating a VOA is a fairly straight forward process, and Area 4 is here to help! There are three key people needed to form a VOA. First, you will need a Venturing Staff Professional appointed by the Council's Scout Executive. Next you will need an volunteer adult Council VOA Advisor. Finally, you will need a Council Venturing President, a youth. These three people will work together to

form the VOA.

Once your VOA is started, your first goal will be to find Vice Presidents to fill the VP positions. Once the VP's are found, the Council VOA should strive towards the Council Standards for Venturing Excellence, or CSVE's. Don't forget that the VOA must include all of the Crew Presidents from the council and together these powerful youth leaders will drive your Council to Venturing Excellence.

More information can be found on our website, at <https://sites.google.com/a/crventuring.org/c4voa/resources-for-councils/starting-a-voa>

As always, the Area 4 VOA is here to help!

The Birth of a VOA - Buckeye Council

Starting a VOA requires support from the Council Leadership. Think of the VOA as similar to the OA Lodge Executive Board. The Youth Council Venturing President leads the Venturing



Program for the Council and with all of the Crew Presidents offers a representative governance that allows all Crews to have their voice heard at the Council Level and the Council to communicate with the Crews. Studies have shown councils with VOAs have better membership growth.

Here is the story of one Council's VOA birth.

In late 2013, the then Area 4 Venturing President went to Buckeye Council to assist them in forming a VOA. He was accompanied by an Area Associate Advisor and the Great Trail Council VOA Advisor. The room was a who's who of the professional and volunteer leaders of the Council. This was their second meeting on the subject and the Area 4 Venturing President presented. However, a lot of interest was in hearing from the

"I think that it takes someone from high in the organization to take on the mantle and run with it. In our case it was our Council Commissioner who was the spark plug. In my opinion, if this is not supported from the top, it will be very difficult to start." - John Fehrenbach, VOA Advisor, Buckeye Council

neighboring Council's VOA Advisor. "Tell us how you did it, how you started your VOA." The combination of the theory and practice of a VOA paid off as the Buckeye council VOA was started in mere months. The Volunteer VOA Advisor was appointed and a search for applicants for office were sought.

"As Area Venturing President I was asked to present to 'Buckeye Council' to help them start their Council VOA. In the meeting were Council VP of Program, the Council Commissioner, various professionals and a number of volunteers. All seemed focused and determined. Their support was amazing and within a few months they had a VOA, modeled after the Area 4 VOA." - Henry Gunther, 2013-2014 Area 4 Venturing President.

Council Standards of Venturing Excellence—totally redone

Venturing Excellence REQUIRES a VOA!

Without a VOA it is only possible to get Bronze.

With a VOA Silver is more likely.

Gold in 2015 requires highest scores on every one of the 6 Core and 7 Elective requirements.

Nate Steele is the National CSVE Chair. He asks that every council in the Nation complete a CSVE form.

The data compiled from every council will help the National Cabinet better meet the needs of Local Councils.

The Council Standards of Venturing Excellence Award is presented by the BSA National Council to councils that complete the requirements during the calendar year. In 2015, the requirements are completely redone to be more in line with the Bronze, Silver and Gold levels of Journey to Excellence. Councils that score high are doing their best to run a quality Venturing program.

The CSVE is a guideline on how the Council Venturing Officers Association and the Council Venturing Committee should operate to achieve Venturing Excellence. (See the next story in this newsletter about having Excellent Crews).

Here are the core requirements.

Not counting requirement 1, if you have a Venturing Committee, but no VOA your maximum points on the CORE are 500 points. With a VOA your maximum points are 1000 points.

1. Building Venturing: Growth in Venturing membership and/or Venturing crews.

- No loss in membership **OR** Venturing crews 100 points
- Positive growth in membership **OR** crews 200 points
- Positive growth in membership **AND** crews 300 points

2. Governance: Council has a governing Venturing officers' association (VOA).

- Council has a VOA president and VOA Advisor 25 points
- Council has a full VOA cabinet and Advisor group 75 points
- Council has a full VOA AND a Council Venturing Committee 200 points

3. Recognition: Council utilized the Venturing Leadership Award to honor exceptional service.

- Council actively promoted the Venturing Leadership Award 50 points
- Council presented one Venturing Leadership Award 100 points
- Council presented two or more Venturing Leadership Awards 200 points

4. Activities: In the past year, Venturers have participated in two or more activities conducted by the council or a district.

- Activities planned by the district program/camping committee 50 points
- Activities planned by the council program/camping committee 100 points
- Activities planned by the council VOA 200 points

5. Promotion: Venturing awards and achievements given high visibility.

- Council promoted the Venturing awards as part of the advancement plan 50 points
- VOA presented awards at a Venturing awards banquet 100 points
- Council presented Venturing awards at the council awards banquet 200 points

6. Reporting: The VOA gives regular reports to the council governing bodies.

- VOA gives one status report to the council Scout executive and board president 50 points
- VOA gives two status reports to the council Scout executive and board president 100 points
- VOA gives three status reports to the council Scout executive and board president AND gives a formal report to the council Executive Board 200 points

An additional 350 points can be had by having a Council Representative at the Area Meetings and on the Area Calls, A social presence including a council Standalone Venturing Website, Youth Protections, Award recognitions and Trainings.

Get the form and make sure your council is doing what is suggested in these guidelines to guarantee the best Venturing Program possible.

Why a VOA? Because all research points to Councils having VOAs have the best programs and the best membership growth.

The CSVE Form is at Scouting.org/Venturing

ALPS | Personal Growth

Journey to Excellence: Is your CREW running an Excellent Program?

Crew Advisors use the JTE to make sure they are running an excellent program as designed by the BSA. A total of 800 points are possible for a Crew that achieves the highest level of Crew Level Venturing Excellence on just the four ALPS requirements and that is enough for Silver on the 2015 JTE. This shows how important the ALPS mode is to running an excellent crew.

The JTE gives guidance to Crews how to organize and plan their program. The ALPS requirements are shown below. How well does your crew do? If you aren't at 800 points what can you do to move your Crew into a better result?

Program		50 points	100 points	200 points
#4	Adventure: Conduct regular activities including a Tier II or Tier III adventure.	Conduct at least four activities including a Tier II or Tier III adventure.	Conduct at least five activities and at least 50% of youth participate in a Tier II or Tier III adventure.	Conduct at least six activities and at least 50% of youth participate in a Tier II or Tier III adventure.
#5	Leadership: Develop youth who will provide leadership to crew meetings and activities.	Have a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer leading the crew.	Achieve Bronze, plus officers meet at least six times. The crew conducts officer training.	Achieve Silver level, plus each crew activity has a youth leader.
#6	Personal growth: Provide opportunities for achievement and self-actualization.	Crew members participate in advancement by earning the Venturing Award.	Achieve Bronze, plus crew program includes at least three experiential training sessions.	Achieve Silver level, plus the crew has members earning the Discovery, Pathfinder or Summit Awards.
#7	Service: Participate in service projects, with at least one benefiting the chartered organization.	Participate in two service projects and enter the hours on the JTE website.	Participate in three service projects and enter the hours on the JTE website.	Participate in four service projects and enter the hours on the JTE website.

Leadership Beyond the Crew—Apply now.

Think you have what it takes to be an Ambassador for Venturing? In part that is what our officers are, whether at the Council, Area, Regional or National tiers. The picture shown here was taken in Great Trail Council in August 2015 at the GTC Luau and Pool Party. Pictured in the back are two council presidents, Scot Neilson, Buckeye Council Venturing President, and Katelyn Keckler, Great Trail Council Venturing President. In the foreground is Area 4 Venturing President Michael Gunther and Central Region Venturing President, Brian Parro. The four held a brief meeting of the minds before joining in the fun. You too could be part of a leadership team and not only serve Venturing, but experience the growth that comes with this type of leadership. You will be on a team (as a Vice President) or lead a team as a President and represent your team to the next tier or leadership.



Applications for VOA positions are online at Scouting.org/Venturing
 Or
 email Area4President@CRVenturing.org
 and Michael will make sure you get the appropriate application.

ALPS | Service

Get your
events in
the
calendar

Let us know
and
remember
to add your
events to
the Central
Region
Venturing
Calendar at
[CRVenturing.org
/Activities/
Events_Listing](http://CRVenturing.org/Activities/Events_Listing)

Council Happenings

Great Trail Council

Mar 5, 2016 U of Scouting
Katelyn Keckler, President
Kimberly Myers, Advisor

Buckeye Council

Feb 6, 2016 Baden Powell Institute
Scot Nielson, President
John Fehrenbach, Advisor

Muskingum Valley

Julia Roberts, President
Connie Roberts, Advisor

Ohio River Valley

Doug Reinbold, President
Liz Yaron, Advisor

Simon Kenton

Jan 23, 2016 U of Scouting
Emily Dilyard, President
Patty Hisey, Advisor

Buckskin

Jan 30, 2016 Area 4 Officer Orientation and
Venturing Lock-in
Feb 27, 2016 U of Scouting & Venturing Night
on the Town
Apr 29, 2016 Spring Camporee at the Summit
Hanna Edens, President
Matthew Blackwood, VOA Advisor

Greater Cleveland

Dec 28, 2015 Whirly Ball Tournament
Mar 19, 2016 Baden Powell Institute
Stephanie Rickets, Advisor

Mountaineer Area

Will Drennen, Advisor

Heart of Ohio

Greg Gradisek, Advisor

Allohak

Stewart Lewis, Advisor

Greater Western Reserve

No volunteer Advisor

Service Requirements

Service in the ALPS awards system is intense. Why not, Venturers should be giving back to their schools, churches, communities and in general to be helping others at all times. No where is that more pronounced than in the new requirements.

Discovery 24 hours—"8. Participate in service activities totally at least 24 hours. Up to half of the service may be delivered personally; the rest must be delivered through crew activities."

Pathfinder 36 hours—"8. Plan, organize, and give leadership to a project designed to sustain and grow your crew. Submit the plan to your Crew president (or Advisor if you are president), and explain how you think it will encourage more young people to join Venturing."

"9. Participate in service activities totaling at least 36 hours. This in addition to the 24 hours of service required to earn the Discovery Award. Up to half of the service may be delivered personally; the rest must be delivered through crew activities."

Summit—a Summit Project that rivals an Eagle Project in planning, scope and total hours.

"8. Since earning the Pathfinder award, plan and conduct a service project as described in the Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook. Before you start, have the project proposal form from the workbook completed and approved by those benefiting in the effort, your Advisor, and designated crew or ship youth leadership. This project must be a different service project than one carried out for the Eagle Scout Award, the Sea Scout Quartermaster Award, or the Girl Scout Gold Award. "

Photo Caption Contest



Biking continued from page 6

Our final day, July 17th, we spent taking our time. We walked through Great Falls National Park and witnessed many rough waters and amazing waterfalls. In Georgetown, we were directed to MM 0 where we unofficially completed our ride. We still spent time riding around DC, going through the many monuments and memorials. Then we took the Metro to Vienna, VA where we were picked up and taken home.

Altogether, my dad and I rode around 360 miles. The first day we completed a little over 50 miles, the longest ride I had ever gone on. The second day, a little less than 60 miles. Now the longest ride I had ever gone on. It was that way for a couple more days, I kept beating my record until it got to be over 80 miles in a day. I found that to be really cool to achieve those milestones.

I enjoyed the ride and the time I was able to spend with my dad. It was a lot of fun and a lot of hard work. The ride was very tiring, but rewarding at the same time.

Last issues picture caption contest was won by Wesley Broadus of Crew 2001 in Great Trail Council with the caption: "Welcome to Funky Town." Wesley and his friends at the Great Trail Star Wars weekend all offered captions, but all in the end decided that Wesley's was best. Wesley wins our undying gratitude for playing our little game.

This issues' photo may be more challenging. Advisor Barry Palmer of Greater Western Reserve is captured during the busy active and loud Star Wars weekend in Great Trail Council just last month.

Give us a great caption and you may be richly rewarded with your name and crew number appearing in the next issue of The Adventurer.



So send your captions to

Area4VP-communications@CRVenturing.org and you may be a winner. Submissions may also be made on our social media. And winners may be acknowledged there as well.

The ADVENTURER



Michael Gunther
2015-2016 Area 4 Venturing President
Area4President@CRVenturing.org

Veronica Day
2015-2016 Area 4 VP Communications
Area4VP-communications@CRVenturing.org

Duane Zobrist, Area 4 Advisor
DZ@DuaneZobrist.com

Steve Myers, Area 4 Associate Advisor Communication
Area4AA-communications@CRVenturing.org

Todd Walter, Area 4 Director



Stay in touch with us



Hey Everyone! I just wanted to let you know that if you ever have any questions on absolutely anything in Venturing, from upcoming activities to the ALPS model, that myself, and my fellow officers would be more

than happy to help you in any way possible.

Also, send me what your crew is doing and you could be in the next Newsletter.

My email address is below.
Yours in Venturing,
Veronica

Want to get your event or a story about your crew or Council VOA in the ADVENTURER? Send your entries to
Area4VP-communications@CRVenturing.org
Recommended size: 1-2 pictures and 100-175 words
<https://sites.google.com/a/crventuring.org/c4voa/>