

Patrick Henry Student Hikes Utah's Desert Canyons: A Photographic Tour

-Zachary Kohl, Volunteer Worker at Henry High School

April 26, 2012

Intro

Benjamin Yang's '15 spring break probably looked different than most Henry High School students. Rather than staying home and catching up on sleep, television, video games and hanging with friends (as many his age may admit to having spent their week), Benjamin set out on March 31st with Scout Troop 100 to hike and camp in the Utah desert.

The Trip

As a member of the infamous Troop 100, an all Hmong Boy Scout troop, Benjamin went with a group of 29 to the Canyonlands of Utah camping in five tents and cooking outdoors.

The drive out to Utah took two days and he and his fellow troop members camped along the way in Nebraska and Moab, UT. In Moab on the second day of their trip they hiked 10 miles to "the Arch" (presumably Delicate Arch in Arches National Park pictured below). They then "set up camp, cooked and went to sleep."



Benjamin and his troop hiked Little Wild Horse Canyon and Bell Canyon on the fourth day, 20 miles in 1 day! The hike included "lots of narrow paths." Because the hike was so long, they had to eat lunch while on the hike. (Below: Little Wild Horse Canyon)

On the third day they set up their main camp and hiked the Goblin Valley (pictured top right), which has cool "stacked rocks." One student hurt his foot jumping from a rock and was laid-up most of the trip.



The fifth day included a 12 mile hike again through Bell Canyon and “another.” On the hike they encountered “dangerous downhill climbs.” (Below: Bell Canyon.)



On their final day in the desert, they hiked 6.5 miles in Horseshoe Canyon “to see cave and rock paintings from thousands of years ago.”



On this hike, Benjamin was surprised to see so many plants and trees in the desert.



The return trip again took two days to drive, camping in the same places on the way back.

Inside Scouting

Benjamin got involved with Troop 100 about a year and a half ago. He was looking for something “challenging that would get him out of his comfort zone. Scouting is fun.” Benjamin thinks that “many kids don’t join because they don’t see it as comfortable. They think it’s too much work.” He really enjoys it though. The joy finds in it is that you can learn what you do without technology. Being able to find ways test his personal limits is something in which he takes pleasure. It is a forgotten, unused skill today that you can do everything he and his group did on this trip without the convenience of GPS but using a map and compass. It’s challenging to hike the way they did and then have to cook your meal over a flame rather than in two minutes in a microwave.

Surprises

When asked what surprises that he encountered on his trip Benjamin said, “I didn’t expect to see so many plants.” Also, “the microbial really old growth on the rocks was cool.” He further mentioned that he loved the scenery with the endless clear skies while also enjoying camping and the food.

Benjamin urges others to “find things that challenge them. Get outside and test your limits. You’ll learn a lot about yourself and what you are capable of.” If interested, anyone under age 18 can join Boy Scouts. However, Scouting isn’t the only way to encounter the things Benjamin did. Various other groups such as Camp Fire USA, The Y and local church groups offer similar experiences.

Benjamin has many more adventures ahead. He says that he is looking for anything that “will kick him out of the chair.” One place he’d like to go is China. Thinks it would be fun to climb the “temple steps.”

You can see Benjamin’s pictures from his trip at:

http://henry.mpls.k12.mn.us/picasashow/8ac32ef29be049bc86ce4820871b93e8/photo_galleries.html