

GWI 2014

A Collaborative Effort by Bryce Asberg and Silas Tuthill to Capture the Greatness of the Great West Invitational

The adventure that is Great West has long been shrouded in a cloud made of equal parts mystery and awesomeness. This account will chronicle the awesomeness, pain, sadness, laughter, and pure joy to vaporize the shroud. That fateful trip started on a cheery Thursday, bright and early. Everyone arrived in high spirits, ready for the great excitement that lay ahead. While some made sure everyone had paid and some loaded the vans, most stood, talked and greeted one another warmly. After a brief meeting, and instructions from Joe and Cutty, Scott hastened everyone to the vans. Not to be deterred, others insisted on pictures, to which he acquiesced. Eventually, the vans left, Scott and his van peeling out of the church parking lot in the lead.

Van rides are one of those things that you can spend hours describing and still not have given anywhere near the full magnitude of the joy, laughter, and bonding that takes place. In this year's van rides, there was much playing of Sausage, encore, and catchphrase. In addition, there was singing of worship songs and many discussions, ranging from theology, the movie Frozen, dating, foreign languages, past quizzing experiences, and more. We had a quick stop at a rest stop to stretch and do necessary things. Those who played Frisbee too long got in trouble and nearly left behind for delaying the journey. Back in the vans, there were mystery questions being asked in an effort to stump each other, mafia, some studying, sleep, and more fun. Our first official stop was in Moses Lake for lunch, to enjoy some good food. Options consisted of McDonalds, Burger King, Arby's, and Subway. Then we came to our customary stopping place of a Walmart out in the middle of nowhere, to stop and get whatever anyone desired, ranging from ice cream to taffy to chips. For the next leg of the journey, one van consisted of top quizzers being asked ridiculous and challenging questions by Jeremy and Lawrence. (e.g. quote James in under 6 minutes, or list all of the names of people that appear in the material). After stopping for dinner at Wendy's, we started our final leg of the journey to the camp. One van enjoyed playing catchphrase and laughing most of the time during that time. Once we arrived, we unloaded the vans and then chatted a little bit while we waited for our room assignments. While we waited, Jeremy discovered a Bopit and thoroughly engrossed himself in his playing. Once we had obtained our room assignments and put our things in our rooms, we enjoyed hanging out until bedtime.

The next day, we went on a hike, lead by the infamous hiking guide, Joe Wilson. This year, over half the group got separated from the rest, so there were two hikes: one planned, the other not. The reason there was a separation is because Joe trespassed onto private property to get to his destination, so the rest of the group decided to go another route, not realizing that Joe had continued on his original route. There was a lot of snow and ice on the ground, so at times it made walking difficult. That aside, the hike was a wonderful time to soak in the gloriousness of Glacier National Park. The location is breathtaking and the beauty of nature is wonderful. After the hike, we prepared for the arrival of the Canadians. One element was nametags, which Anna Kong eagerly participated in. While we waited for the Canadians' arrival, we played ultimate in the parking area, or relaxed by the fire.

If you don't know that Canadians are awesome, you discover that at Great West. GWI gives you the ability to hang out with them for hours on end in the great atmosphere that quizzing provides. Once Western Canada arrived, we played a rousing game of Ultimate Frisbee until dinner. Quizzing began after dinner. Though it took a little bit of getting use to the environment, most did quite well adjusting. The next day, after all the quizzing was done, afforded much opportunity for relaxing, hanging out, and enjoying the surroundings and fellowship of others. Directly after finals, Shamus Westra and Gideon Mentie from West Can broke out some Canadian treats so that the uninformed Americans would know what they were missing out on. At that time, The Americans discovered Wagon Wheels and Nanaimo

bars-products that are not sold in the US. Wagon wheels are made of marshmallows and a sort of graham cracker, covered in chocolate. Sort of like moon pies, but way way better. The Nanaimo bars are heaven on earth in edible format. The bars are made up of a fudgy-chocolate layer on bottom, a custard in the middle, and milk chocolate on top. They are AMAZING.

In the evening, a bonfire was started, and Joe Wilson organized a game of Capture the Flag. The first game went surprisingly fast, lasting only two minutes, although the next five were spent in informing everyone that the game was over. The second game continued for a long while, and was quite the physical workout!

Later that night, some watched frozen, and others played board games, and still others just talked with each other. The Frozen watching ended late, and one quizzer from West Can was SOUND asleep. No amount of shaking or loudness woke him. So, with the situation being as it was, some others decided to take a bag of marshmallows, and set it on his back. In addition they put one marshmallow on top of his shoelaces. After the laugh, they eventually were successful in waking the sleeper up and sending him to his cabin, though the sleeper did not realize one marshmallow was still in the loop of his lace.

The next day, Sunday, began the sorrowfulness of packing up and saying good bye. Though difficult, it is something that must be done. After sending the Canadians off with much cheering, cries of goodbye, and well-wishing, PNW set off on its own.

Once we reached another traditional stopping place, Cabela's, we all had lunch. Well, almost all of us. Jeremy Swingle fainted from a combination of things, and had to go to the hospital. In my opinion, he just didn't want to eat at Cabela's, so he threw a fit. While Jeremy was being cared for by paramedics, before he went to the hospital, the rest of us played at the shooting arcade, or perused the store. Then we got our traditional pictures outside Cabela's by the kayaks, and Lilli gave out fun awards. Some of the highlights of the awards were Micah Hollen, for always smiling; Silas Tuthill, for excellence in not getting a Canadian girlfriend; Abby Ashcraft, for attracting unwanted attention; and Daniel Emme, for being super hot. Daniel's award was scientifically tested, as Daniel melted snow in 1:14 seconds with his forehead.

There is too much that happens in the vans to be able to relate it all, but one van ride is worth sharing. One of the designated vans home was the Man Van, specifically designated for the guys who went to GWI. Scott Peterson, as he has done before, opted out of the Man Van in lieu of being with Lilli. The guys in the man van decided to write a song for him, making a parody of the song, "Do you want to build a snowman" from the movie Frozen. Once arriving at our destination, it was time to say goodbye. Though it was hard, there were so many good and happy memories that were made together that would make it easier to say goodbye. Great West is one of those amazing experiences that you don't fully comprehend the depth of its awesomeness until you actually go, and once you go, you wish you could go every year.