

## D.C. Summer Adventure

We left Faith Presbyterian Church at around 9:00 A.M. on Thursday, July 14th, and began a six hour car trip to Kingsport Tennessee, where we would be meeting another, alternate Troop 48 and staying at their chartered church. The drive as a whole went fairly well, and when we reached the church, we were met with a sign saying: "Welcome Troop 48," which we assumed was intended for us, and not the alternate Troop 48. We were also met by several members of their troop who helped us unload our van and showed us around the church. The hospitality they showed was surprising and gratifying, and this only increased when we saw they had left us several food items for that night, as well as for breakfast the next day. After a game of basketball in the church gym, we went to bed, rising at 5:30 the next morning to eat and load the van again.

The trip that would take us to D.C proper was a bit more interesting, and we stopped at Shenandoah Valley National Park to see the various sites the mountainous area of Virginia had to offer. After stopping at the gift shop and an overlook, where we saw a vast view of mountains and forests, we drove on, pausing at another rest stop along the way before finally reaching Washington D.C. Our first glimpse of the Potomac river was amazing, and when we reached the hostel within a church in D.C, we claimed our various bunks, before departing to find a place where we could eat dinner. We found a pizza restaurant that would, we found, be helpful later.

After getting considerably more sleep than we had the previous night, we ate a breakfast of muffins, danishes, cereal, and bacon, and walked to a metro station where we boarded a train for Arlington National Cemetery. There, we saw the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and saw the thousands of graves that provided an honored final resting place for many military veterans. After leaving the cemetery and eating lunch, we toured the navy memorial and the washington monument, where we took an elevator to the top and were able to see incredible views of the city. We were also able to tour the World War II memorial, the Korean War memorial, the Vietnam veterans memorial, and the Lincoln memorial. Walking from the Lincoln Memorial, which had provided shelter from the sun inside its cool stone confines, we were caught in a sudden torrential downpour that forced us back into the memorial where the

city before us was obscured by the rain. After this was over, we ate dinner at Shake Shack and walked back to the hostel, in anticipation of the next day.

On Sunday, we had breakfast at Lincoln's Waffle shop, across from Ford's theater, which would be the main focus for the day. We toured the interior, and were given an overview of the fateful night of Lincoln's assassination in the main, remodeled theater. After eating lunch, we toured the holocaust museam, which was interesting and moving. An integral part of the experience involves each museum-goer receiving a card that details the life and experience of a holocaust victim. We then walked to the Museum of African-American history, where we had an interesting self-guided tour. From there, we walked to East Potomac mini golf, where we had an enjoyable respite from walking. William won with less than sixty putts in total. From there, we walked to another Shake Shack, and split for dessert, some getting bubble tea, and others buying milkshakes. From there, we took the metro to the hostel.

On Monday, we toured the national archives, where we saw the original documents that founded America, a concept that was incredible. We also had a fantastic tour of the capitol with an intern who worked with our representative, David Kustoff, who we had an opportunity to take a troop picture with. We saw the rotunda, one of the more remarkable parts of the capitol, holding endlessly detailed paintings. We then ate lunch at a sandwich shop in the capitol and went to the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, which houses the remarkable hope diamond. After dinner, we once again departed for the Steinbruck hostel.

The next morning, we toured the Smithsonian museum of American History, and were able to see various inventions that America was instrumental in creating, including certain types of cars, and businesses that helped build the American economy. After this, we went to Smashburger for lunch, and from there, took a troop picture at the Jefferson memorial.

The next day, we drove to the national Air and space museum, and were able to see the myriad aircraft there, all rich with history. All of this formed an unforgettable trip, and one that formed memories that will be looked back on fondly.