

The City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Division presents...



Parent Handbook 2016



City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Division

1800 W Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431
Phone: 952-563-8877 TTY: 952-563-8740

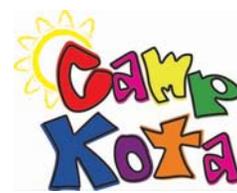
CAMP KOTA IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ON-SITE CAMP PHONE/VOICEMAIL: 952-374-7687

Camp phone answered from 8am-4:30pm M-F during camp sessions
and during the overnight on Thursdays.

smoran@bloomingtonmn.gov

WEATHER INFORMATION LINE: 952-563-8878



Fast Facts:

For quick daily reminders, cut on the line and hang this page on your fridge. Use the handbook as a more detailed reference.

- Session 1: July 11-15
- Session 2: July 18-22
- Session 3: July 25-29
- Session 4: August 1-5

*Note: K-1 campers do not attend on Fridays

Sunday (prior to camp)

- ★ Counselors will call families to welcome you to camp and answer questions

Monday ~ East Bush Lake Park

- ★ Bring a bag lunch and snack
- ★ Campers in the 4-5 grade and 6-7 grade groups bring waivers to camp
- ★ Check backpack for tie-dyed shirt and care instructions

Tuesday ~ East Bush Lake Park

- ★ Bring a bag lunch and snack
- ★ Check backpack for a letter with important camp information

Wednesday ~ East Bush Lake Park

- ★ Campers should wear their tie-dye shirt
- ★ Bring a bag lunch and snack

Thursday ~ Sumac Knoll Group Campsite in Three Rivers Park

- ★ Bring assigned food item for lunch (from Tuesday's letter)
- ★ Bring a snack
- ★ Theme Day (more info will come home in the Tuesday letter)
- ★ Campers and families should return to Sumac Knoll at 6:30 p.m.
- ★ Bring a picnic dinner for your family and a blanket or chairs

Friday ~ Sumac Knoll Group Campsite in Three Rivers Park

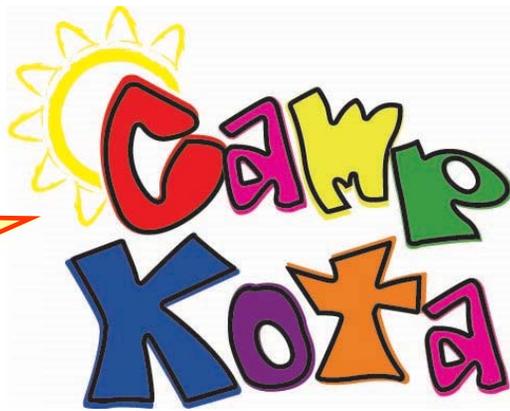
- ★ No morning bus transportation
- ★ No K-1 program

~~ Please Note ~~

*If your child will be late to camp or absent, call the camp on-site phone (952) 374-7687.

*Send a note or call the on-site phone if there is any change in your child's routine. Without this communication, your child will be sent home according to the information on the Camper Registration Form.

*Call the Parks & Rec Weather Line at (952) 563-8878 for all weather updates and information.



CAMP KOTA

Sign-up
for text reminders!
See page 4.



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☺ General Information ☺

It is important that you go over the following information with your camper. This will ensure that camp is a positive experience for everyone. Thank you!

***About Camp:** Camp Kota is a day camp designed to provide an opportunity for kids to make friends, learn basic camping skills and develop an appreciation for the outdoors in a fun and safe environment. Activities include swimming, songs, active games and camping skills activities such as knot tying, orienteering and fire building. In addition, each session includes an overnight camping experience for 2nd-7th graders on Thursday night at Sumac Knoll Group Campsite in Hyland Park.

***Camp Hours:** Camp is in session from 8:30am until 3:00pm each day. On Thursday evening, campers and their families should arrive at 6:30 for the family picnic and parent program.

***Supervision:** All campers are under the direct supervision of qualified, trained counselors, with an approximate counselor-to-camper ratio of one counselor for every ten campers.

***Rules at Camp:**

- Campers will treat all people and equipment with respect.
- Campers must get the permission of their counselor before leaving the group.
- Campers should stay with a buddy at all times.
- Shoes must be worn except when at the beach.
- **HAVE FUN!**

***Contact Information:** If any phone numbers are not up to date or you have other registration information to update (friend request, bus stop, etc.) please call the Park and Recreation office.

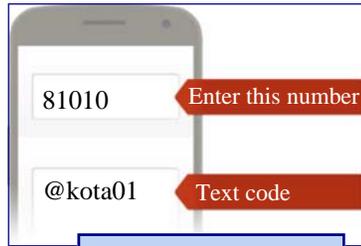
***Sick or Absent Campers:** We need to know if your child won't be attending camp or if your child will be late to camp and transported by an adult. Please call the camp on-site phone/voicemail at 952-374-7687 and let us know.

***Lost and Found:** All lost and found items will be brought to the Park and Rec office by the Tuesday following each session. Calls will be made for items that have a name on them. Please keep in mind that some locations we visit have their own lost and found and items may turn up there (Bush Lake Beach, Hyland Visitor Center, Richardson Nature Center).

***Camp Locations:** Camp Kota begins each day at either Bush Lake Park or Sumac Knoll Group Campsite. Check the Fast Facts card (on the back of the front cover) for specific daily information.

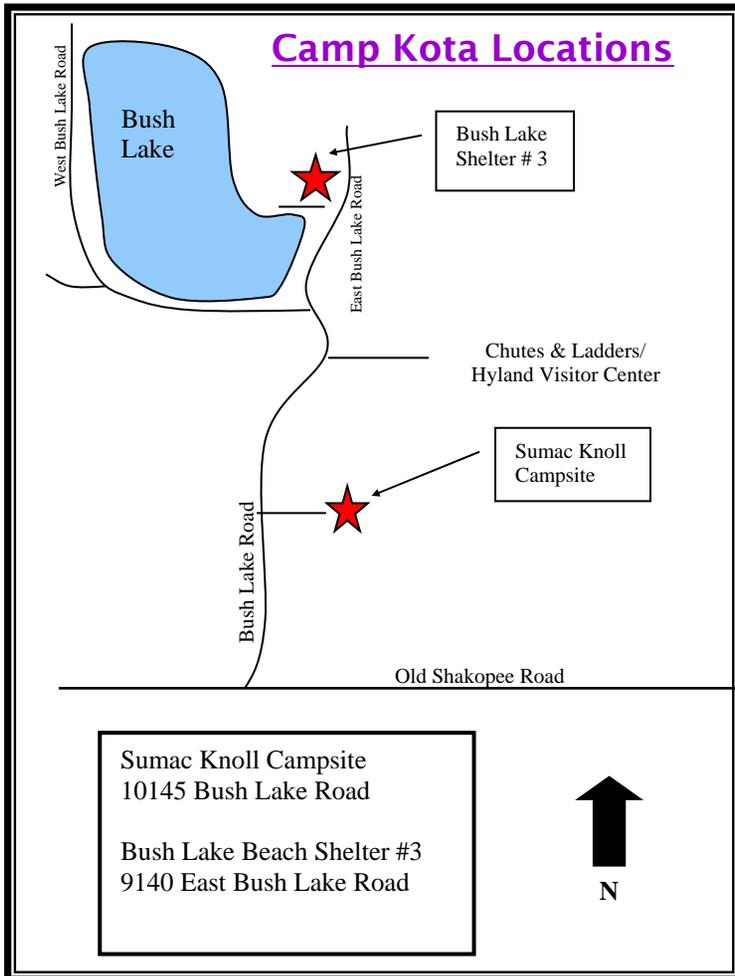
Sign-up for Text Reminders

- * To receive reminders and weather updates via text, sign-up to receive messages from Remind.
- * Families are welcome to sign-up multiple phones.
- * If attending more than one session, sign-up for each session individually.
- * Please sign-up for each session separately.
- * Remind is a one-way text messaging system and staff will never see your phone number.
- * Standard text message rates apply.
- * You can opt-out of messages at anytime by replying, ex. 'unsubscribe @kota01'.
- * Groups will be cancelled at the end of the summer.
- * Visit remind.com to learn more.



Text Codes:
 Session 1 - @kota01
 Session 2 - @kota02
 Session 3 - @kota03
 Session 4 - @kota04

Camp Kota Locations



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* Camper Groups *

***Counselor Groups:** Each camper will be placed in a counselor group for the week of camp. Since some activities are geared for different age groups, counselor groups are made-up of campers going into the same grade at school. Every effort will be made to place campers together who listed each other on the Camper Registration Form, but due to the nature of our programming and group numbers, this may not be possible. Campers will have many opportunities each day to interact with members of other counselor groups. We have whole camp activities such as songs, lunch, swimming, large games and times when campers will be making activity choices independent of their group.

Counselors will call each camper in his/her group on the Sunday prior to the first day of the session. Please do not use Caller ID to call counselors back at their home numbers. If you have questions or have further information for the counselor, call the camp on-site phone/voicemail listed on the cover or send a note to camp.

***Programming:** At times, Camp Kota's programming may differ between age groups. This is done to make each camper's experience unique and age appropriate.



Waivers for campers going into 4th-7th grade

- Campers in grades 4-5 need to complete two waivers to participate in stations at Hyland Park on Wednesday.
- Campers in grades 6-7 need a stand up paddle boarding waiver (Wai Nani).
- If you did not receive waivers with this mailing or misplaced them, they can be downloaded from the city website (go to Parks & Recreation).
- Please send these waivers to camp with your child on Monday.
- We only need one complete set of waivers—even if your child is attending more than one session of camp.

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★ Kota K-1 Notes ★

***About Kota K-1:** We are excited to offer kindergartners and 1st graders an opportunity to be a part of the camp experience! This is a program created to give 5 and 6 year old children the chance to attend camp Monday - Thursday.

***Programming:** K-1 campers will be involved in many of the same activities as the rest of Camp Kota and are very much a part of the camp. The biggest difference is that they do not sleep over on Thursday or attend camp on Friday.

***Picnic, Parent Program and Overnight:** Kota K-1 campers are invited to return to camp with their families on Thursday for the family picnic and parent program (see the Overnight Information section for more information). K-1 campers will go home with their families after the parent program and will not stay overnight.

Additional Notes

If your child will have any **medications** while at camp, please call the Parks and Recreation Office at 952-563-8877 and ask to speak with an Inclusion staff member about completing a medication form. Medications should be sent to camp in their original containers with the original labels attached along with the City of Bloomington Mediation form (physician signature required).

Meals are a big part of camp. If your child has any **food restrictions** and you have not been contacted by an inclusion staff member, please call the Parks and Recreation office. With the proper information from families, we can make accommodations and plans to keep your child safe.

Camp staff may not apply or provide **sunscreen and/or bug spray** to campers. This will be your child's responsibility, please discuss this at home. Staff will give reminders to reapply.

Although we have back-up plans, we make every effort to hold camp outdoors. Please be aware of the **weather** and dress your child appropriately. We will send out text message updates through Remind (for those who sign up for texts). In addition, the Bloomington Information Line (952-563-8878) will be updated with all weather related changes. Please do not call the on-site phone with weather related questions as staff are usually busy making decisions to keep campers safe and having fun!



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Transportation Information

***Transportation:** Transportation is provided to and from camp each day. Please arrive at the bus stop 10 minutes early on the first day. On Monday, the buses do not always run on time, please be patient. A staff member will be on each bus.

There are no Friday morning bus pick-ups due to the Thursday overnight.

***Change in Routine:** If your child's after camp routine will be different in any way, please send a note to camp. This includes an adult picking up your child or change in bus stops. Without a note, your child will be sent home according to his/her regular routine as indicated on the Camper Registration Form.

***Pick-up - Drop-off Information:** If you will be providing transportation for your child, plan to arrive at camp by **8:30 a.m.** and pick-up from **2:45 - 3:00 p.m.** Please send a note with your intention to pick-up or drop-off if this is not what is indicated on the Camper Registration Form.

When arriving at camp to pick-up or drop-off your camper, please follow the directions of the camp staff so we can assure an orderly and safe pick-up and drop-off location. Parents do not need to exit the car—we will have drop-off/pick-up zones at the curb.

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, campers can be picked-up and dropped-off at East Bush Lake Park. On Thursday and Friday, Sumac Knoll Campsite is the pick-up and drop-off location.

If you wish to pick-up or drop-off your child during the day, please call the on-site camp phone at (952) 374-7687 to determine your child's location.

For safety reasons, campers should not leave without talking to a staff person first.



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Kota Bus Information



Due to low participant registration for buses, there will only be one bus for Camp Kota this year. Please refer to the bus insert or go online to the city website (go to Parks & Recreation) to see a detailed description of each Kota session bus route.

***Return Route:**

Buses will pick children up at 3:00 p.m. at East Bush Lake for the afternoon bus routes. Buses will wait at the stop until the designated time. Please be aware that buses will not wait at stops beyond these times. We recommend that you arrive 10-15 minutes early to drop-off and pick-up your child at the bus stop.



✓ Daily Information ✓

Everyday:

- Campers should wear or bring the following each day: backpack, water bottle, T-shirt, long-sleeved shirt or lightweight jacket, socks, tennis shoes, sunscreen and rain gear.
- Toys, electronics (including cellphones) and knives are not allowed at camp.
- Always come ready for some hiking!

Monday:

- Campers will meet the staff and be put into groups.
- Bring a bag lunch, small snack, swimsuit, towel and beach shoes.
- We will be tie-dying T-shirts today. T-shirts will be provided.
- Campers in the 4-5 grade and 6-7 grade groups should return their signed Three Rivers or Wai Nani waivers.

Tuesday:

- Bring a bag lunch, small snack, swimsuit, towel, and beach shoes.
- Look for a letter to come home with your child explaining our camp meal and theme on Thursday.

Wednesday:

- Wear your tie-dye shirt today so we stand out as a group!
- Bring a bag lunch and a small snack.
- Kota K-1, 2-3 and 6-7 bring swimsuit, towel & beach shoes.



Thursday:

- We will be making a camp meal today - do not send a bag lunch. Each camper will contribute an assigned food item.
- Bring a small snack.
- Camp starts and ends at Sumac Knoll Campsite today rather than Bush Lake Beach. We will be preparing the campsite for our overnight!
- Campers should wait until they come back in the evening to bring their overnight gear.
- Campers will ride the bus home as usual.
- Family picnic and camp program tonight. See the overnight section for more information.
- The Kota K-1 program is done at the end of the parent program.

Friday:

Theme Days

Each Thursday at camp will be Theme Day! Campers are invited to participate by dressing up according to the themes listed below. Please do not feel your camper needs to participate, it is just a way to add a little more fun to each session! A reminder will come home in the Tuesday letter.

- Session 1: Sports Day
- Session 2: Costume Day
- Session 3: Crazy Mixed-up Day
- Session 4: Color Day

- No morning bus transportation due to the overnight. Families are welcome to drive any child who did not spend the night to camp. If you are dropping off later than 8:30AM, call the on-site camp phone (952) 374-7687 to determine camp's current location.
- We will provide breakfast, a snack, and lunch.
- Last day of activities and swimming with our Camp Kota friends!
- No Kota K-1 today.



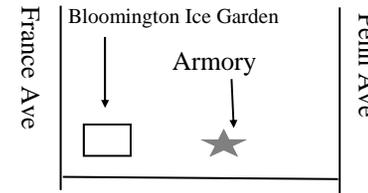
Overnight Information



***About the overnight:** On Thursday night, campers and their families are encouraged to return to Sumac Knoll Campsite at 6:30pm for a family picnic dinner and camp program. Please do not come into camp until that time as staff need to prepare for the program and overnight. At 8:30pm parents and other family members leave and campers stay for the overnight.

We encourage all campers to participate in the overnight, but if your child is unable to attend, please send a note with your camper before the overnight. Campers who are unable to stay for the overnight are still invited to attend the picnic and program. Remember, there is no transportation on Friday morning. Parents will need to drive any campers who do not sleepover to Sumac Knoll in the morning.

In case of inclement weather, we will hold our picnic and overnight program at the Bloomington Armory. The Armory is located at 3000 W 98th Street.



***Thursday Night Packing List:** In addition to the usual camp gear for Friday, each camper needs to bring the following:

- Sleeping bag and pillow
- Warm clothes (pants/sweatshirt)
- Flashlight
- Insect repellent
- Clothes for Friday
- Don't forget a small bag or backpack to carry your swimsuit and towel in on Friday.

Campers are not allowed to bring cell phones, iPods, electronic games, pop, candy, etc. to the overnight.

2016 Meet the Staff

***Tent Groups:** Campers are able to pick their own tent mates. There may need to be some flexibility due to the wishes of all campers involved, tent size and to make sure all campers are placed in a tent with someone they know. For the comfort and safety of our campers, boys and girls will not share tents and campers will be within one age group of each other. We know this is important to the campers and we do our best to make everyone happy!

***Severe Weather:** If severe weather (heavy rains, lightning, or strong winds) is forecasted during the picnic, campfire or overnight, the event will be moved to an indoor location. A bus will be at the overnight site to transport campers if it becomes necessary. For weather related program changes, call the Bloomington Weather Information Line at 952-563-8878.

***Picnic:** Please plan to arrive at Sumac Knoll at 6:30pm. After enjoying your picnic dinner, we will conclude with a fun camp program that you won't want to miss!

Please bring a picnic dinner for your family and a blanket or lawn chairs.

***Pets:** The campsite is not in an area of the park that allows dogs. All pets must be left at home.



**Jenna ~ Parks and Recreation
Youth and Family Supervisor**

Jenna lives and breathes Parks and Rec; she works here year-round! Jenna moved here from Kentucky, but always called Minnesota home. In her free time, she can be found doing all sorts of outdoor recreation activities or playing a variety of rec league sports!

Shannon ~ Coordinator

Shannon is in her fifth year as an 8th grade Language Arts teacher at Watertown-Mayer Middle School where she also coaches golf. She has been working at camp for ten years, but she was also been a camper and JC for many years. This fall, Shannon will be getting married in Mexico!



Caitlin ~ Assistant Coordinator

Caitlin is in her eighth year working at Camp Kota. She is a 1st grade teacher at Normandale Hills Elementary in Bloomington. Caitlin's favorite camp song is the Bubble Gum song. She looks forward to seeing all of the campers having fun and being kind to each other.



Julie ~ Assistant Inclusion Coordinator

This will be Julie's fifth year working for Camp Kota. In the fall, Julie will be working as a preschool teacher at Central Family Center in Shakopee. Her favorite thing about camp is the theme days. Fun Fact: Julie has a pet bunny named Pebbles!



Thanks to our friends at the Droolin' Moose for providing a surprise for all of the campers! Be sure to thank the staff at Droolin' Moose the next time you are over at their store on Lyndale by purchasing some fabulous chocolate.



Gretchen ~ Program Lead

Gretchen teaches 5th grade in the Bloomington Public Schools. This will be her third year working at Camp Kota. In her spare time, she teaches dance at a local studio. Gretchen enjoys exploring new hiking trails with her friends and family. Her favorite camp activity is going to Richardson Nature Center!

Derek ~ Program Lead

This will be Derek's sixth year out at Camp Kota, and he is SUPER excited about it. In the fall, Derek will be starting a new job at Kennedy High School. Outside of work, he likes to run, spend time with family and friends, and go camping. Derek's favorite activity out at camp is slacklining and paddle boarding.



Kackie ~ Junior Counselor Lead

Kackie is a 2nd Grade teacher at Nativity of Our Lord School in St. Paul. She has been coming to camp since she was 7! In her free time, Kackie likes to be outside and hang out with family and friends. Kackie's favorite camp activity is the campout every Thursday Night!

Ian ~ Counselor

Ian was a camper for four years and a Junior Counselor for three. When he is not at camp, he attends Jefferson High School in Bloomington, and he will be a Senior in the fall. When away from camp, Ian can be seen playing tennis, running, and hunting horcruxes! He is looking forward to campers' smiles and enthusiasm!



Hailey ~ Counselor

This will be Hailey's 12th year out at Camp Kota, and it will be her third year as a counselor. She just graduated from Northern Michigan University studying Elementary Education and English with a minor in Art. Hailey is looking forward to meeting all the new Kota Kids!



Alexa ~ Counselor

Alexa has been a Junior Counselor for three years, and this is her first year as a counselor! She is going to be a Junior at Jefferson High School in the fall. Alexa is in the marching band and a member of the speech team! She is looking forward to singing camp songs and doing fun activities. Alexa's favorite camp song is the MILK song.



Noah T. ~ Counselor

Noah attends Burnsville High School and this will be his rookie year out at Camp Kota. While Noah isn't at camp, he loves to swim and do anything that involves the water. Noah is quite the entertainer! Ask him to tell you one of his favorite jokes.



Trevon ~ Counselor

Trevon will be a Junior at Jefferson this fall. This will be his first year as a counselor, but he was a camper and Junior Counselor for many years! Trevon is an all-star rower. Ask him to teach you all the different row strokes at camp. You can find Trevon roaring the Sticky Moose song all throughout camp.



Jordan ~ Counselor

This is Jordan's first year as a counselor because she says she has never done anything this cool before! She just finished her first year at Notre Dame where she participates in all things band; she plays the clarinet. In the summer, Jordan likes to spend time at her cabin doing a variety of sweet things. She looks forward to getting to know all of the wonderful campers and spending time outside doing awesome activities.

More staff →





Annie ~ Counselor

This year will be Annie's first year working at Kota. She goes to Burnsville High School and loves to play sports and be outdoors. Annie plays lacrosse, tennis, and softball. She looks forward to getting to know the campers and doing fun activities. A fun fact about Annie: she likes to take her pet cat for walks!



Brendan ~ Counselor

This is Brendan's third year working for Parks and Recreation! He is a Sophomore at Saint John's University studying Political Science and Economics. Brendan loves to go running, play tennis, and wander in nature! Little known fact: Brendan went bowling in the White House!



Katie ~ Counselor

Katie was a camper for many years, but this is her first year as a counselor. When she is not at camp, she attends school at Carleton College where she will be a Sophomore in the fall. Katie is looking forward to being outdoors and hanging out with a bunch of awesome kids!!



Courtney ~ Counselor

This is Courtney's first summer working at Camp Kota. She really loves her dog Juno... almost as much as she loves Culver's custard! This fall she's going to be a Senior at Winona State University studying Recreation. Courtney loves to spend time with friends & family and stay active in any way she can! Before camp begins, she will be on a mission trip where she will be helping to build a school for young children!



Kara ~ Counselor

This is Kara's second year as a Camp Kota counselor! When she's not working at Camp Kota, she plays sports and hangs out with friends. Kara is going to be a Senior at Burnsville High School where she plays softball, tennis, and many different clubs. Kara is super excited to meet a bunch of new campers, as well as seeing returning campers!



Jack ~ Counselor

Jack attends the University of Wisconsin-Madison when he isn't spending his time at Kota. This will be his second year at camp. If Jack could, he says he would have karaoke as his career. Ask Jack to sing a couple of his favorite tunes. He particularly likes The Buffalo Song!



Alyssa ~ Counselor

This will be Alyssa's 2nd year with Camp Kota, and she's very excited to be back! Alyssa loves to hang out with the wishy washy washer woman, who lives way down in the valley. This summer, Alyssa can't wait to play Kota Ball.



Matthew ~ Counselor

This is Matthew's second year as a counselor. He is a Senior at Burnsville High School. Matthew likes to play football and capture the flag in his spare time. His favorite camp activity is the overnight, and he loves to sing the Camp Yell!



Kacie ~ Counselor

Kacie is a Senior at Eastview High School. This is Kacie's fourth year at Camp Kota. When she's not at camp, she is either working at Starbucks as a barista, singing loudly in the car, or spending time outside! Kacie is most excited for the overnights this year at camp, and obviously, the pizzadillas!



Noah K. ~ Counselor

Noah will be a Senior at Kennedy High School this fall. It will be his fourth year working for Park and Rec. Noah's favorite camp song to belt out is Tarzan. A crazy fact about Noah is that he can juggle one watermelon!



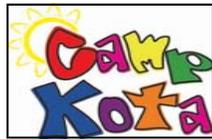
Schuyler ~ Counselor

This will be Schuyler's second year of camp! He will be a Junior at the University of Minnesota, Morris. Schuyler's favorite outdoor activity is running, especially up the big stairs at camp! Be sure to catch Schuyler leading his favorite song this summer: Sticky Moose.



Scott ~ Counselor

This will be Scott's first year out at Camp Kota! He is interning this summer for the Bloomington Parks and Recreation department and just graduated from Minnesota State University-Mankato. Scott enjoys hanging out with family/friends and playing Spikeball as much as he can. Fun fact about Scott is that he has seen country musician Eric Church seven times!



2016

Camp Hours- 8:30am-3pm

Session 1

Grades K-1 (115-1A) July 11-14
Grades 2-7 (115-1B, 1C, 1D) July 11-15

Session 2

Grades K-1 (115-2A) July 18-21
Grades 2-7 (115-2B, 2C, 2D) July 18-22

Session 3

Grades K-1 (115-3A) July 25-28
Grades 2-7 (115-3B, 3C, 3D) July 25-29

Session 4

Grades K-1 (115-4A) August 1-4
Grades 2-7 (115-4B, 4C, 4D) August 1-5



CITY OF
BLOOMINGTON
MINNESOTA

PARKS AND RECREATION DIVISION