

Found by Workers, Not Searchers!

The hidden key to our eighth Treasure Hunt was found in record time. Here comes an improbable tale.

By Mike Beno, Editor

“YOU CAN’T make this stuff up.”

So goes the old saying in the newspaper business. This past May, it was again proven true in the tiny town of Kennan in Price County. That’s where Noah Miller of Catawba found the hidden key to our Treasure Hunt.

As our lucky winner, he takes home a teardrop camping trailer worth \$6,000!

Congratulations to Noah, age 21, and his three younger brothers, who found the hidden key in Kennan Community Park. They hadn’t even set out to look for it!

We’ll share the improbable story about their lucky find in a moment, but first, here’s the background on our Treasure Hunts.

To put a little fun and intrigue into our pages, we’ve run these contests since the magazine’s inception in 2013. We hide a key in a public park *somewhere* in the state and challenge readers to find it.

A Short Mystery This Time

We provide a clue in each issue and print a map of the state’s 72 counties. Issue by issue, we eliminate 10 counties to narrow the search. Step by step, the mystery unfolds, which adds to the fun. At least, that’s the way it’s supposed to work!

We’ve given away two new cars, two new boats and some substantial packages of smaller prizes. Last year we gave away

a custom camping trailer built by TC Teardrops of Wausau. Because teardrop trailers are so popular, we decided to do it all over again in 2021. That leads us back to Noah Miller’s lucky find.

We had published exactly one clue in our April/May issue on the mid-May day when Noah made his find.

Kennan Community Park has several buildings that folks rent for weddings, reunions and other gatherings. There’s the kitchen/dining hall used for food prep by

“We wanted to make chicken coops...”

caterers, a dance hall with bar, concessions stand, an elevated announcer’s booth for the annual tractor pull and clean modern bathrooms.

“We put up the facilities in 2009,” says Nick Quinnell, chief of the Kennan Georgetown Volunteer Fire Department, which maintains the park. “Two older outhouses were kept as backups but have long stood unused. So the town officials asked to have them removed.

“We put out the word that if somebody wanted to salvage them for use as a chicken coop or garden shed, they could have them. The only stipulations were to move them



AMISH IN ACTION. The Miller brothers of Catawba had a surprise when they pulled this building onto their hay wagon for transport.

right away, fill in the holes and tidy up.”

From there, Noah picks up the story. He’s a member of the Amish community of Catawba.

“On a sunny day, we headed to the park with a team and two hay wagons to load ’em up. We wanted to make chicken coops.”

The first outhouse they approached carried a sign saying: *Men. Donated by Frosty’s Women’s Fastpitch Team, 1987.*

A Productive Workday

“We were pulling that first building up onto the wagon,” Noah explains, “when we saw a plastic bag hanging from the siding. It held a note that said, *You Found It!*”

“What a great day!”

The Millers’ neighbor John Wonders was onsite with his cell phone, so he took the photo you see here and handed the phone to Noah to make a call to *Our Wisconsin’s* editorial office to report the lucky find.

Had Noah even heard about the Treasure Hunt? Yes, he had, but he wasn’t searching on this day.

“My parents are subscribers. My brothers and I do a lot of fishing, so over the past few years, we’d look for the key on our fishing trips,” Noah says. “We checked at Big Falls on the Jump River and near the lakes around Phillips with no luck.”

Brothers Amos, Omer and Chris were excited to be with Noah when he made the find.

Noah confirms he intends to camp with the trailer. How and where the rig might be pulled is yet to be explained. We’ll update you on that particular mystery in a future issue!

While our Treasure Hunt didn’t unfold in the same way the previous seven did, we’re confident in saying this improbable story about outhouses on wheels could never have been cooked up by some editor in a newsroom.

Again, our congratulations, Noah! May your chickens roost securely. 🐔

