

May 2014
Volume 6, Issue 2



NEWSLETTER

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Thanks To: Nina Darling, Tom Cramer, Andy Reiland, and Jon Lange

Bruce Rasmussen, Editor
BruceRass@wi.rr.com

May is Membership Month

Become a "Contributing Member" of the MAC

Eleven months of the year the MAC is working hard on your behalf. The Board holds conference calls to organize and keep things running smoothly. Emails are sent to keep you up-to-date with all of our activities – there's truly something for everyone! Each year we sponsor a Holiday Event, which acts as a reunion for all alumni and a fundraiser for our Campership Fund, which we used in 2013 to give 12 weeks of camp for deserving kids. Last year we also made a \$2,000 donation to Minikani's Capital Campaign. All of this is done as your representatives, helping you keep connected to Minikani.

"Thank you Alumni Community for your amazing commitment to providing camperships for such wonderful kids last summer" says Jen Feltz, Executive Director. "Giving the experience that you had as a child to others is truly an amazing and life-changing gift."

As you know, every gift comes at an expense. One month a year we ask you to reach into your pocket

and help support the MAC. We never put a price on your membership – it's free for anyone who has worked at camp. But in May we ask if you can to become a "Contributing Member" and make a donation to help support what we do. Any amount is appreciated – from \$1 to \$1,000+. We'll use that money to support our community and give back to camp through all of our activities and programs.



If you haven't already, please consider making a donation. It's simple to do – go to our website (minikanistafflodge.com) and click on the "Gifts" tab. You'll receive a Thank-You letter from us and your name will be added to our "Contributors" page.



Volunteer Opportunities

Do you want to help the Minikani staff this summer? Here's a list of opportunities for you to give back to camp in a real way! Nina (Shully) Darling (nina.c.darling@gmail.com) sat down with Minikani's Executive Director Jen Feltz (jfeltz@ymcamke.org) and Summer Camp Director Tom Cramer (tcramer@ymcamke.org) and came up with the following ways that Alumni can help Counselors and Staff this summer:

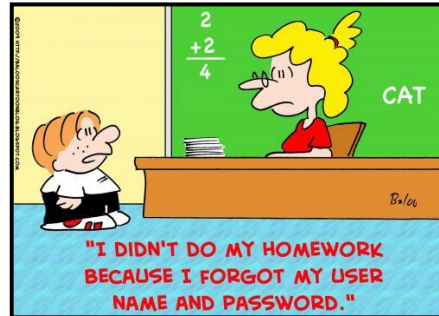
1. Come for a dinner & chat with current staff during Staff Training on June 11th at 5:30. When talking with staff Jen wants to remind everyone to keep stories about camp appropriate. Email Jen an RSVP if interested.



2. Tom had a great idea of creating "welcome" packages for new staff members. He was thinking that things like duct tape, a candle, erasable pens & words of advice (and other things, open for suggestions!) might be a great way to get staff excited & starting off on the right foot this summer. With AD staff, 3s and counselors it would be 120 packages. Email Nina if you can help.

3. Since this is camp's 95th summer Jen & Tom really want to emphasize camp history and tradition. They would love to have alumni sign up for one password a session and do a

password for all of camp that has to do with what camp means to you, camp history, tradition etc. The password people would need to be at camp by 8:30, as password usually starts at 8:45 and is done by 9:00 am. Email both Jen and Tom if interested.



4. During staff training they are looking for alumni to lead three different sessions. Staff training is June 1st-6th. Sessions will include "Working with children with special needs", "Diversity – teach cultural, ability, economic, and sexual orientation awareness" and "Professional Development - looking for someone not in the education field but in the business field to talk about how to write a cover letter, how to use camp on your resume etc." Contact Tom if you are interested.

5. Help with take down. August 16th. Get there at 9:00 am. Mark your calendar now!

6. Morale boosters. Both Jen and Tom said that it was so nice to receive letters from alumni during the summer. Handwritten or e-mails to staff are greatly appreciated! Icee pops, cookies, treats, care packages, etc. are always appreciated as well! Send the emails to Jen and she will see that they are shared with the staff.

Thank You

7. Come in and do a skill! Remember how much fun that was? Contact Jen if you are interested in sharing your talents with a skill. They would love to have more people come in to do this!

8. "Friends of Minikani" Dinner and Fellowship is Wednesday, July 23rd. Help Minikani celebrate their 95th year. It's a great opportunity to come back and see how camp is doing without you. RSVP with camp at (262)251-9080.



Summer AD Staff

Skills Director: **Sarah Whaley**
 Trips Director: **Sharon Cross**
 BU Director: **Wyatt Caldwell**
 GU Director: **Lauren Schoendorf**
 EU Directors: **Carlyn Shanley, Kevin Jennings, Ryan Costello**
 Day Camp Directors: **Rachel Whaley, Ian Harding**
 Minicamp Director: **Kelsey Strode**
 LT Directors: **Leah Harari, John Ogenorth**
 OLT Directors: **Peter Drews, Kelsey Gusho**
 Crafts: **Jane Wierdsma**
 Wrangler: **Maggie Shanahan**
 WSA: **Michael Kushner**
 AC: **Oliver Wierdsma & Haley Adams**
 GNR: **Michael Rooney**
 WF: **TBD**

Reminder: No Alumni Weekend This Summer

Next Alumni Weekend is
 August 22 & 23, 2015
 Camp Minikani

Dinner Around The World 2014

A great time was had by all! A big 'Thanks' to our 22 hosts - you helped the Alumni Community reach out and remind everyone, near and far, about the power of the Minikani Spirit.

Here are some of the comments, photos, and stories that alumni wanted to share:

Matt Gelb: Gelb family representing the Frozen Tundra (50th day this winter with below zero temps) in Green Bay with some Gallagher's pizza followed by smores over the fire...



Kelsey Jane Madges: The Madges family is representing Ohio! Sung our grace, drinking bug juice, and have a candle campfire. More singing after dinner. A pajama pizza party isn't totally authentic but we're going with it!

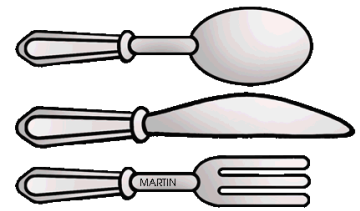
Brett Haydin: The Madison gathering swapped some good stories with Hillary Phelps Lobenstein, Brett Haydin and Shannon Dobbins Haydin.

Lauren Haack: In honor of Minikani tradition, the San Franciscans decided to spread their Explorer wings by trying out new hotspots around the city! The night started with dinner at a Burmese restaurant in the Richmond district and ended with sangria at a Cuban hole-in-the-wall bar in the Mission district. Old camp memories, new foodie experiences, and laughs were shared by all!

Travis King: Last night a very raucous and excited group of two of us had dinner at my apartment in St. Kilda, which is the beach town just south of Melbourne in Australia. My friend Meghan

Barthel and I cooked some burgers and mashed potatoes and we shared camp stories. The dinner was actually similar to many of our dinners because camp comes up in most of our conversations.

Meghan is still the girl's side director at a summer camp in New York called Camp Echo, so camp stories flow freely and



neither of us has to feel like the other person doesn't get it or is annoyed about constant camp references.

I made Meg learn the boy's unit cheer, and she admitted that she was jealous because her camp has gotten away from songs and chants over the years. However, I am very jealous of Meg because she's leaving in May to go back for yet another summer at her camp. THUNDERATION!

2014 Dinner Hosts:

Milwaukee- Mike Whitcomb
 Milwaukee- Drew & Amy Dowd
 Maxwell
 Milwaukee- Aimee Griswold
 Chicago- Anne Petree
 San Francisco- Lauren Haack
 Davis CA- Hogan Hayes
 SoCal- David Pincus
 Seattle- Lisa Mihm
 Madison- Brett Haydin
 Washington D.C.- J.C. Hauser
 Costa Rica- Greg Branch
 Australia- Travis King
 Australia- Dave Burck
 Ohio- Kelsey Jane Madges
 Denver Area- Stew Brown
 Colorado Springs- Emily Vollmer
 Adams
 Toronto- George Doty IV
 Minneapolis- Martie Woods
 South Bend IN- Amy Langenkamp
 New York City- Aaron Bell
 Portland, OR- Jamie Kodner

The next Dinner Around the World will be March 7, 2015



“Monster” Beer

MAC members and their guests at last year’s Holiday Gala had an opportunity to take a unique gift home. “Mud Lake Monster Beer” is an adult beverage that is all about camp and its traditions. It is brewed by Kevin Wright, has a bottle designed by Andy Reiland, and includes a story written by Carl Fuldner, all three Minikani alumni.

Rambler Ales & Lagers is an on-going passion project of brewmaster



Kevin Wright, affectionately known at camp by his nickname “Fathead”.

Kevin is head brewmaster at Hanger 24 Craft Brewery in Redlands, CA.

In 2009 Kevin won the prestigious JS Ford Award, given to the top scorer on an exam from the London-based Institute of Brewing and Distilling. Brewmasters from around the world took the same exam, and Kevin achieved the highest score of anyone in the world. Last fall, Kevin created the special brew, an Imperial Porter with cocoa nib and vanilla bean that he named “Mud Lake Monster” beer. He then donated the 48 - 22 oz. bottles to the MAC at the Gala.

Andy Reiland developed the labeling for the beer. He has also designed the past 3 Holiday Fundraiser invitations. For the Monster beer he created the front and back label, which features an illustration of the mythical swamp beast and a story, written by the wildly brilliant Carl Fuldner.




With infinite amounts of scary stories, Minikani history, and Minikani legends to draw inspiration from, the trio sees the opportunities for the Rambler Ales and Lagers to grow endlessly. But it is all good news for the MAC. The “Mud Lake Monster Beer” raised \$1,000 for our Campership fund. Thanks, guys.



Mud Lake Monster by Carl Fuldner

Captain John Morgan’s aircraft mysteriously went off radar in 1919, leaving no trace. The plane, which had been carrying radioactive cargo, lost contact somewhere near the rural township of Hubertus, Wisconsin.

Since the Morgan incident, accounts of small engine aircraft disappearance near Hubertus have proliferated. Most of the testimonials center on Mud Lake, a unique pond located among the woodlands and rolling hillsides of YMCA Camp Minikani. For decades, local scientists have struggled to explain the strange ecology of the pond, which seems to survive paradoxically in a constant state of dying and smells faintly of vanilla beans, cocoa nib, and coffee.

Over the years, Minikani staff members have reported hearing propeller noises while patrolling the lake at night. Recently, a group of campers on a bog walk discovered what is believed to be the remnant of a parachute. A widely accepted theory connecting these strange facts involves a large amphibious biped lurking in the dying pond, which locals call the “Mud Lake Monster.” 

SpotLight

On Alumni

Jon Lange

Jon Lange started at Camp Minikani in 1969 with a flag football camp when he was 7 years old. He came back as a camper for 7 years, was an LT for 3 years, and a counselor for 1 year. He was asked to be Wrangler for the next 2 years, and finished his career as Boy's Unit Director for 3 years. All told he was there for 16 years from 1969 to 1984. Here's what he has to say about his experiences at Minikani and after:



Jon at Minikani

◆ Do you have any particularly 'fond' memories of camp?

As an adult I look back at how very profound the raggers program was and still is in my life. My rags hang in my office to this day. Most of my fondest memories come from the camaraderie that we had; Dave Kruse, Craig Bulluck, John Wood, Nick Hayes and the whole host of other people who were there during the time that were all so special.

◆ Did you develop any special skills while at camp?

I credit Minikani with almost everything I know - from the waterfront skills (skin diving, diving, canoeing, sailing) to horsemanship as well as my backpacking/camping skills. The main skill though was learning how to be a leader by involving people. As a counselor our job was to work with our kids to determine what cabin activities we'd do, who would be waiter during the week, cabin clean up, camp outs and dinner cooking. All of that got me ready for working in the real world in a leadership position...I do a presentation titled "Everything I learned about Leadership I Learned as a Camp Counselor."

◆ How did you make the transition from camp to the "real" world?

My transition came when I got a job as Aquatic Director at the Green Bay YMCA. For me it was an easy step because I had been the Aquatic Coordinator for 3 school years at the Central YMCA in Milwaukee and then came out to Camp each of those summers.

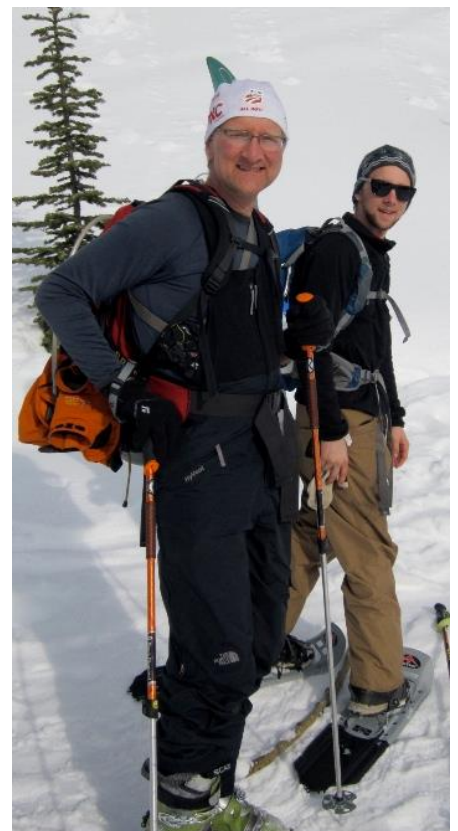
◆ What work you are doing now?

I'm currently the Chief Executive Officer of the YMCA in Missoula Montana. This is my 30th year in YMCA work, something I've enjoyed tremendously. Previously I had the privilege of working in the Milwaukee YMCA as the VP of Programming, a position that included working with the Minikani Board and the leadership transition that brought our amazing Executive Jen Feltz to Minikani.

◆ What influence do you think being at camp had on your present success?

I always say that I came into the YMCA through the back door, through camp. Camp had a

tremendous influence on my life in the Y. One of the main things we did at Camp was to create a world where love was/is unconditional. It was in that space that campers and counselors were willing to stretch and grow, learn and teach. It has been my objective to create that kind of "sacred space" in our Y facilities as well. The YMCA, in its highest mission driven work, is an organization that transforms people's lives. To do so we need to be intentional, just like we were at Camp. I've been told that I'm not like a normal Y executive, and I think that's because of the influence of camp. By the way, I normally hire anyone with a camp background because I know they've felt the 'magic'!



Jon and son Nick in MT

◆ How often do thoughts of camp and Minikani people 'pop' into your head?

I carry many of my Minikani friends

in my heart and my soul. Some I even stay current with; John Wood lives here in Missoula and was the one person I knew when I moved to Montana three years ago. Last week John and I had breakfast with Peter McNamara. I had the chance to work for about 4 years with the Minikani Board...great people both from my past and present on that group. Yes, Minikani is a consistent part of my life.

◆ **If you could go back and re-live your years at camp, what would you do differently?**

I don't think I would do anything differently. All of the experiences I had (both the successes as well as the failures) help to make me who I am today.

◆ **Anything else you'd like to share?**

Being on the Minikani staff was an awful lot like playing for the Green Bay Packers under Vince Lombardi. He coached his men to be more than football players...he demanded that they become decent and successful human beings. When I look around at my counterparts from Minikani from so many years ago, almost everyone I know is very successful.



Update Your MAC Information

Have you changed your mailing address or your email address recently? If so, please send an update to the MAC so we can keep in touch with you. All you have to do is send your correct address(es) to minikanistafflodge@gmail.com. We'll take care of the rest, and you'll be able to keep connected.



Alumni Work Project Day

It was a beautiful Spring day for this year's Work Project. 15 people, including some very helpful 3's, helped get camp ready for the summer. In addition to enjoying just being outdoors, the following projects were completed: 1) New pier sections for the rowboats in Amy Belle were built, 2) Drainage ditches to prevent cabin flooding were dug for cabins 1, 2, 3, and 14, and lastly 3) Colorful flowers were planted at Camp's entry and Health Lodge. Thanks to everyone who helped.



Alumni Rag Night

To celebrate 100 years of Rags, Camp Minikani will give the alumni an opportunity to once again take a rag at camp. On **Friday, June 27th**, alumni can come to Minikani and take a rag. The invitation has been extended by Summer Camp Director, Tom Cramer. Please email Tom with your questions or to receive study material and reserve a spot at a rag ceremony on June 27th. tcramer@ymcamke.org

100 Years Of Rags



The Ragger program turns 100 years old this year. It was started in 1914 by Thomas "King" Caldwell, the Program Director who ran the Camp Loma Mar program for the Oakland YMCA in California.

The Rag program began as a way to symbolize positive character traits exemplified by campers. Today, the program has expanded to camps around the world and focuses on goal setting and personal growth. The number of people in the world who credit the Rag program for helping build them into the person they are today is too vast to count.

Looking for something to do on Sunday, October 12, 2014? Why not join others at the Birthplace Centennial Celebration at YMCA Camp Loma Mar? You can even make a full weekend of it, from October 10th through the 13th. Everyone is welcome. For more information go to their website at <http://lomamar.ymcaeastbay.org/ragers>



"I would be true, for there are those who trust me."

Nature Notes

By Bruce

I have fond memories of sitting on the edge of Norris Field on warm summer nights and watching the bats flying over the field, catching all kinds of insects. Moths, beetles, gnats, and especially mosquitoes are favorite foods for Wisconsin's most common bat, the Little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*). (See its range in North America below.) Most active in the early evening, these bats are an important part of the state's ecology.



While many people equate bats with rabies (they are one of the few mammals that are susceptible to the disease, as are skunks, dogs and humans), rabies is not common in this species. But "never touch a sick animal" is a good warning for all of us to follow.

During the summer the bats spend their days resting in trees, tree hollows, and the occasional man-made structure such as an attic. Little brown bats mate in the fall and experience delayed fertilization until the spring, when usually only one 'pup' is born, blind and helpless. It nurses from its mother and learns to fly in just 3 weeks.



In winter they head for a 'hibernaculum' where they join other bats for a long winter's nap. Abandoned mines and caves are the preferred spots, with perhaps 500,000 bats overwintering in Wisconsin before dispersing in the spring to Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Iowa and Michigan.

Unfortunately, a bat-killing fungus was recently discovered in one such Wisconsin cave. "White-nose syndrome" causes bats to awake while hibernating. Flying and other movements deplete their energy stores and causes dehydration and death before spring. Wisconsin now joins 23 other states that have reported the disease to experts.

First discovered in New York in 2006, white-nose syndrome has killed more than 5.7 million bats in the United States and eastern Canada, according to estimates. While it poses no threat to humans, it is sure to decimate the bat population in Wisconsin, which may lose as many as 95% of its bats over the next 5-10 years. 🏠



Richard Louv

Quotes

Richard Louv, author of the book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* and other books encourages adults to help children experience nature close up. Here are a few quotes from his books:

◆ "We have such a brief opportunity to pass on to our children our love for this Earth, and to tell our stories. These are the moments when the world is made whole. In my children's memories, the adventures we've had together in nature will always exist."



◆ "There's no denying the benefits of the Internet. But electronic immersion, without a force to balance it, creates the hole in the boat — draining our ability to pay attention, to think clearly, to be productive and creative."

◆ "Time in nature is not leisure time; it's an essential investment in our children's health (and also, by the way, in our own)."

◆ "To take nature and natural play away from children may be tantamount to withholding oxygen."

