

January 2016
Volume 8, Issue 1



NEWSLETTER

Inside this Issue

- 1 2016 New Year
- 2 Dinner Around the World
- 2 Camp Planning 2016
- 3 Holiday Party 2015
- 3 Announcements
- 4 Spotlight on Alumni
- 5 Ragger's Point
- 6 Nature Notes

Thanks To: Jen Peterson, Amanda Hendrickson, and Andy Reiland

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Welcome to 2016. We hope you will find something you like during this year that will keep you connected to Minikani and all of your alumni friends.

Here are some of the things you can count on in the coming year:

- ◆ A couple more Newsletters you can download, read and enjoy.
- ◆ An invitation or two to 'come home' to Minikani, help out, and see what has changed and what has stayed the same.
- ◆ We'll offer you plenty of opportunities to support the MAC with your time, talents, and gifts.

We've got a couple of things already planned for the New Year. Our very popular "Dinner Around the World" will be on Saturday, March 5th this year. We'll have a Service day at camp sometime in April or May, and you'll also be invited to join the Summer Staff during their Staff Training week in June. We'll again be sending kids to camp this year, thanks to your support of our Campership Program.

As we begin the 8th year of MAC Newsletters, we want to thank you for your participation and support. We hope to see you in 2016.



“Dinner Around the World”
Saturday
March 5th

Greetings from your Minikani Alumni Dinner Around the World Ambassador, Jen Peterson! In keeping with tradition, this year’s event will take place on Saturday, March 5th 2016.

Who?

Any alumni and their spouses / significant others and children (depending on the host/location).



Where?

Any city that has Minikani Alumni. Some will take place at an alumni's home, and some will opt to meet at a bar or restaurant. We will be asking for people who are willing to host/organize.

Why?

Not everyone can make it back to Hubertus. It's a great way to reconnect with Camp and old friends.

What goes on?

Eating, drinking, laughter, seeing old friends, making new ones and lots of reminiscing about fun times at Camp. We will be asking each location to check in via photo on Facebook. Which group will have the most people? Which can

remember the most camp songs? It would be awesome to have some videos of some singing!

What do we need right now?

We need people who are willing to volunteer as a “Host” for a dinner. You become our contact person, and we share your information with the rest of the alumni. Then alumni will contact a “Host” living in their part of the world and invite themselves to their dinner activity.

I look forward to "seeing" you on March 5th. If you are interested in being a “Host”, please message me on Facebook or shoot me an email at jenpeterson25@yahoo.com. If you have any questions at all or need any information, please don't hesitate to contact me. Let's make this year the biggest and best DAW yet!



Camp Planning

By Amanda Hendrickson

Can you believe that camp starts in just 5 months? It may seem like a long time from now, but it’s going to be here before we know it. As alumni, it’s never too early for us to start thinking about the ways that we can get involved with camp this summer. With these frigid temperatures lately (at least for those of us who still live in Wisconsin) we can’t help but reminisce about our hot summer days spent at camp. We can all think back to those days at camp spent diving into the waters of Amy Belle, climbing the rock wall and camping out at Acres Edge.

One thing I remember from when I was at camp were those days when I saw Alumni at Minikani – how exciting it was to see my role models from when I was a camper.



Now, it’s our turn to bring that excitement and joy to the staff and campers in 2016!

“How can I get involved this summer?” you ask. Well, here are just a couple ways:

- sponsor a food night in the staff lodge
- give an alumni password
- teach a skill
- donate a package of supplies for cabins

After I talked with AD staff members and others last summer, there was a lot of interest in seeing if Alumni would be interested in putting together a small package of supplies for cabins to use. You may remember as a counselor all the small things you would spend your hard earned (but small amount) of money on, like construction paper, erasable pens, markers, candles, and other miscellaneous things.



Anyway that you can help this summer will be greatly appreciated by the staff at camp. If you have any interest in learning about these ideas or you have an idea of your own on how to get involved this summer, please contact Amanda Hendrickson at hendrickson.amanda@gmail.com



Holiday Party

We had a great time at the Holiday Party that MAC hosted on December 19, 2015. Almost 100 people participated and enjoyed socializing, eating, drinking, and supporting our commitment to sponsoring Camperships at Minikani this summer. Some of you may be familiar with the venue, Door 7 of the Trocadero on North Water Street in Milwaukee. It provided a perfect place to gather alumni and celebrate the season. The food really tasted good (sliders, chicken, kabobs, cheeses, fries, etc.), the price of admission included two drink tickets, and an exciting raffle made for an enjoyable evening.

Raffle prizes included a snow board, an electric guitar, tickets to a Buck's game, and the grand prize, four tickets to the Justin Bieber concert this April in Chicago.

Although there was special pricing for the younger alumni to attend, the Bieber tickets were actually won by the 2nd oldest person at the party! A big "Thanks" to Jenny Risch and her team from the Alumni Board for all the work and effort that went into hosting the fun event.



Some of your MAC Board members pictured below:

Front Row: Anna Patrick, Jen Peterson

Back Row: Sean Demet, Brian Siegel, Brett Andrews, Jenny Risch, John Hyland, Amanda Hendrickson, Ryan Derus, Bruce Rasmussen

Not Pictured: Michael Luckey, Amy Owen



- ◆ Mark your calendars now for the upcoming **Dinner Around the World** on March 5, 2016. See the article on page 2 for information.
- ◆ January 21st is "**Squirrel Appreciation**" day. How about some peanuts for those guys on their special day?
- ◆ **Pancake Breakfast and Family Friend Day** at Camp Minikani is Sunday, April 24, 2016 from 8:30 to 1:30. More information at camp's website.
- ◆ How are we doing? Contact us at minikanistafflodge@gmail.com. We'd love to hear from you.



Websites

www.minikanistafflodge.com
This is the main site for the Minikani Alumni Community.

www.minikani.org
This is the official web site of YMCA Camp Minikani. You can get information on dates for summer camp, check out Minikani's blog, and enjoy a collection of Alumni Photos.



SpotLight On Alumni

By Andy Reiland

Andy’s creative skills have been a valuable asset to the MAC. He has designed everything from invitations to logos to beer labels for us. For a glimpse at Andy’s work, visit his portfolio website at www.infinityandybeyond.com

Andy was first introduced to Minikani by two babysitters his parents hired for him and his 3 brothers – Kevin Casper and August Herschede. What a great intro to camp! He contributed the following answers to my questions:

◆ **What is your history at camp?**
My formal years were as follows: Camper 1996–2001, LTI 2001, LTII 2002, Staff 2003–2008 (BUD ’07 & ’08)

◆ **Any particularly ‘fond’ memories of camp?**
Yes—as many memories as there are star projections in the Starlab. Stand outs include getting in a fight with my cabin mate Andy Hansen my first year at camp, who would later be one of my best friends, and whom I would co-counselor with in the same cabin our first year on staff. Laughing uncontrollably at Brian Digate during post dinner camp songs as one of his campers. Mind bending vespers with Aaron Bell during my LTII year. Dreaming up elaborate theme days alongside Bryce Caldwell in the waterfront cabins our first year

as a counselors. Getting lost on the Rock River as a trail master counselor with Lauren Haack. Catching every kid in the Runt Hunt under Fathead’s dynasty as program director. Mark Siegel hoisting my short body into the air during camp songs, Brian Siegel laughing uncontrollably at me. Walking along side Nina Shully as we carried director torches in front of our respective units....I could literally go on and on until the stars meet the sky.

◆ **Were there any special skills you learned while at camp?**
One could argue the approach to any original thought I’ve ever had was subject to a creative thinking processes I developed at Minikani. The environment that camp harbored for creative thought is incomparable: Every 15 minutes had some kind of opportunity to plan, experiment, and challenge creativity amidst an incredibly positive, supportive, and inspiring community of campers and staff. I remember fondly planning out my week on the first night of camp my LTIII year, next to the likes of Carl Fuldner, Travis King, and John Hyland, and having a kind of “eureka” moment, where coming up with ideas is THE most fun thing in world. They weren’t always great ideas, but the sheer dedication to exploring Minikani as a creative muse in an environment where I was inspired by every single one of my peers really left a mark on me.



◆ **How often do thoughts of Minikani and Minikani people ‘pop’ into your head?**
Often. But do I dig deep into those memories? Not enough. It’s the same thing as those “butterflies” you get driving up Amy Belle Lake Rd.: Once far removed, it’s hard to reconnect with that rhythm that camp beats on. What fun is life without butterflies though?



In my experience, camp was such a monumental part in my life, it takes time to do those thoughts and people justice. It is always worth breaking that ice and revisiting our time at camp together, The MAC has been an incredible resource in making that possible.

◆ **How did you make the transition from camp to the “real” world?**
Very Slowly. I started a screen printing business after college and pursued that for 4 years until I sold it onward. The relationships I had established at camp were one of my main lines of clientele, making the business possible as I started out.

◆ **What are you doing now?**
Today I work as a Creative Director for a coffee importer based out of Minneapolis called Cafe Imports. We are the link in the supply chain between many coffee producers and

Continued on page 5

Ragger's Point

many coffee roasters around the globe. My Job is to create a visual landscape for the company and their activities. It enlists a lot of travel to coffee producing countries, where I document the beautiful people and places from which these exceptional coffees come from through photography, videography, graphic design, information gathering, and writing. Cafe Imports plays a unique role in a commodity that truly connects the whole planet, and with that comes an opportunity to collaborate and create momentum in the lives of many hardworking people. I, along with my colleagues and coffee partners, take pride in meeting that opportunity with respect and responsibility, aiming to explore and create progress in the industry through ideas and innovation. For more on that, check out www.cafeimports.com/progress

◆ **Anything else you'd like to share with Minikani alumni?** Delving into camp memories is a meditation of sorts. Simply walking through this questionnaire and facing those butterflies has opened up a myriad of memories that were character-shaping milestones in the most important period of my life. Camp was awesome. It is

awesome—there is a whole new generation going through the ranks, probably having the exact same rewarding experience I had.

It's kinda sad knowing those days are memories now for me as an alumnus, but it really is a magical thing revisiting it in my mind. I take great comfort knowing we can always do that.

I look forward to creating new memories together as alumni, and at the very least, helping each other revisit the memories that would be impossible to recreate.

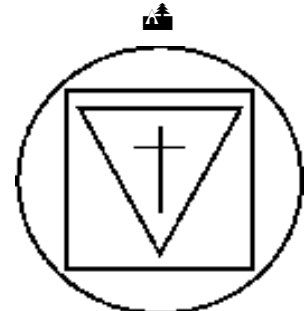
XOXO Andy




As you probably know, Thomas Caldwell started the Rag Program at a camp in California back in 1914. Minikani adapted the program in 1960 under the supervision of Executive Camp Director Bob Harlan. The original site for Ragger's Point was on Indian Hill. There was a clear view of Chief Heineker Lake (Mud Lake) from this area, as the vegetation had not completely recovered from the farming. It was a beautiful site. Over the past 55 years additional Ragger sites have been built around camp, from lower Indian Hill to Sleepy Hollow to Heineker Hill.

Some Y camps around the country are just now getting the Ragger's Program. One camp in North Carolina was established in 1884, but only recently built their first Ragger's Point. For the site they chose "a remote setting of natural beauty, 'a setting created by God, not man.'"

The design of the Rag Society symbol incorporates 4 well-known shapes, each representing the values of the Program: the triangle (representing the YMCA triad of spirit, mind and body); the square—to signify the four-square life of a Ragger (spiritual, mental, physical and social); the circle representing the circle of friendship amongst Ragers; and the cross symbolizing the Christian faith.



Nature Notes

By Bruce

Have you ever wondered where ants go in the winter? As soon as cold weather arrives, ants seemingly disappear into thin air! How do ants survive in the winter? As we nestle in for the winter, are ants also taking steps to brave the elements? The answer is yes.

Ants are masters of overwintering, or waiting out the winter season. When cold air arrives, the ants' body temperatures drop dramatically and their



movements become sluggish. Ants respond by seeking out warm places, such as deep soil, under rocks or under the bark of trees. Ants overwinter on a community level by hunkering down in clusters to maintain body heat, as they huddle protectively around the queen, sheltering their population's lifeline.

During this time, the entrance to their nests close as ant traffic slows down and ceases. When warm weather returns, the ants will become active again, opening up the entrance to venture outside.

Most species of ants consume large amounts of food in the autumn to put on fat, thereby allowing them to go without much food through the winter. As winter passes, ants enter a dormant stage in which they lay low, feeding off the fats, carbohydrates and proteins they stored the previous fall.

The first warm days of spring lull the colony out of their dormancy, and it's back to work. Worker ants leave the nest in search of food. After they've located a food source, they eat and head directly back to the colony to alert others of the food find. Marking their return path, the worker ants lie down an odor trail leading from the food to the colony. The nesting ants then follow the odor back to the food; explaining why we may see trails of ants.

Spring-hungry ants perform a valuable service when they go out looking for food. Many wildflowers native to the woodlands of eastern North America have seeds that are dispersed by ants. Most of these wildflowers bloom early in spring. Little protein and fat rich fleshy structures called 'elaiosomes' are attached to their seeds, which the plant uses as a bribe to encourage the ant to disperse its seeds.

These elaiosomes are an important early season food source for the ants, when the dead bugs that the ants prefer to dine on are in short supply. The plants benefit because their seeds are carried away from the parent plants, are protected from predation by rodents, and are placed in a favorable germination spot.

Many of Minikani's spring wildflowers are dispersed by ants, including the state's wildflower, the wood violet. Others include the hepatica, trillium, trout lily, wild bleeding heart and wild ginger.



Some Ant Facts

- ◆ There are more than 12,000 species of ants in the world.
- ◆ Scientists estimate there are at least 1.5 million ants on the planet for every single human being.
- ◆ Ants are capable of carrying objects 50 times their own body weight - using their jaws!
- ◆ Ants lived alongside the dinosaurs.
- ◆ It estimated that the total number of ants alive in the world at any one time is between one and ten quadrillion (10,000,000,000,000,000).
- ◆ Some queen ants can live up to 30 years, the longest of any insect. Workers may live for 1 to 3 years, while male drones usually only survive a few weeks.
- ◆ Surviving underwater for 24 hours is a common feature of most ants.

