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NEWSLETTER



Don't you just love Spring? We all know the cure for a long, hard winter is plenty of nice, warm, sunny days. Sure, all spring days can't be like that, but we'll take all we can get. It's a time to get outside and enjoy the weather and to begin thinking of the summer that's just around the corner.

While Minikani staff are busy getting everything ready for the best summer ever, your MAC Board of Directors are busy making sure that you can keep your connection with camp. Remember MAC's Mission: **To maintain a connection with our summer homeland, while also supporting traditions and current summer programming through acts of fellowship and service.**

Having great memories of camp "pop" in your head often is one way to keep connected. So is joining the MAC and taking advantage of what it has to offer: 1) Quarterly Newsletters that keeps you up-to-date, 2) Website you can always go to for information, 3) Occasional emails in you inbox that help you keep up with what is going on with the MAC, 4) Fellowship activities that bring you together with other alumni, and 5) Opportunities to give back to the camp you love so well.

Thanks for being a member of the MAC. Please let us know what we can do to continue to live up to your needs and to our own Mission.





Dinner Around the World 2018. Although it seems like our world is shrinking, it didn't stop these alumni and friends from having a great time. What a great way to get together with old friends and make new friends.



Camperships

Hello Alumni Community!!

Summer is fast approaching, and my students are anxiously awaiting their first day at camp! If you are a part of the MAC group on Facebook, you may have seen a post from Jon McLaren a few weeks ago about contributing to the annual scholarship fund, hoping to raise enough money to send a whole cabin of kids to camp! I'm here to ring that dinner bell again, and give you my Top 5 reasons you should make a donation TODAY. Here we go:

1) Every kid should have the chance to go to camp regardless of their financial situation. Period.

2) Camp is a life changing opportunity. We know this. But it's especially life changing for a kid who might otherwise never have the chance to come so close to nature, to build friendships beyond school, or to have role models like the counselors and staff at Minikani.



**WHEN SCHOOL IS OUT,
CAMP IS IN!**

3) Studies have shown that today, kids from low-income homes spend almost twice as much time in front of a TV or electronic device than their more affluent peers. Let's get them up, out, and building relationships with friends face-to-face.

4) Let's also not forget about the benefit of having kids from diverse backgrounds at camp for ALL campers. Raising kids who have the skills to understand each other despite their differences is our best bet at a more understanding and compassionate future.

5) You can always make more money. But these kids only have one chance to go to camp, and that chance starts with you. So GIVE TODAY!!!

😊 ~Kendall Dowsett 🌲

For your convenience, here is a link to Camp Minikani's "Donate" page. All you have to do is click!
<http://www.minikani.org/donate/>

CAMP NEWS

Camp Happenings

Things are moving right along at Minikani where everyone's getting ready for the best summer ever. Here's what's on the calendar so far: Memorial Day Family Camp for all interested families from May 25 – 28. Staff Training is June 9-15 and the 1st day of camp is June 17th.



Drop-off day Alumni Socials (at Cabin 20 after drop off) June 17, 24; July 8, 15, 22, 29; August 5, 12.

Closing Campfires are on June 29, July 20, August 3, and August 17.



Camp and Playworks

Minikani has formed a partnership that with Playworks, a national non-profit. A lot of camp staff members have worked for Playworks (including Peter Drews, Tom Cramer, Kevin Jennings,



Rachel Kornetsky, Rachel Whaley, and Natalie Sperling). It's an awesome organization that leverages play to teach kids social and emotional skills.

Part of Playworks programming is the Junior Coach Leadership Program, which allows 16 fourth and fifth graders apply to be leaders at their own school. Those Junior Coaches (or JCs) go to twice weekly after school meetings to develop skills, and facilitate games and conflict resolution at the recess periods of their younger peers. This year, Minikani partnered with two Playworks schools to send their JCs to camp for a week for only \$20. It's an awesome way for Minikani to give really cool kids a chance to come to camp, many of whom would not otherwise be able to afford it.



Summer Ad Staff 2018

Assistant Summer Camp Director:

Rachel Kornetsky

Explorer Unit Directors:

Allison Mitchell, Hunter Graff, Erika Ballentine

Boys Unit Director:

Ben Matthews

Girls Unit Director:

Grace Barlow

Minicamp Director:

Martha Herrenbruck

Day Camp Directors:

Alice Prescott Brann, Hailey Proebsting, Sam Weber

LT Directors:

Cole Vanderweele, Anna Edwards, Juliette Verley, James Jorgensen

Flex Director:

Sam Brose

WF Director:

Amelia Stastney

WSA Director:

Gabby Oliveras-Bonaparte

AC Director:

Andy Rosen

Crafts Director:

Haley Robertson

GNR Director:

Lizzy Tucker

Corral Director:

Daniel Wernsman

Still looking for our Trips Director and our Wellness Coordinator.



Minikani History Game: Below are 9 pictures of camp places. See if you can put them in chronological order when they were 'built'. The answers can be found on the next page. (Hint: Picture "D" shows the oldest...)

A: New Dining Hall and Pool was completed.



B: Robertson Lodge was built as the first Craft Lodge.



C: Pine Seedlings were planted in an open field.



D: YMCA purchased 40 acres along Lake Amy Belle.



E: Walter Steimke donated the flag pole to Minikani.



F: The first Minikani Dining Lodge was built.



G: 1st rappelling and climbing wall was built by Stew Brown.



H: In memory of Mildred, the first LT lodge was built.



I: This lodge was built in memory of Peter Scott Wright.



Put your answers here: D _____

History Game Answers (From the previous page)

“**D**” 1919 – The Milwaukee YMCA purchased 40 acres of land on Amy Belle Lake. Mostly farmland with two buildings, one of the first resident youth camps in the US. Boys, ages 8-16, came for 2 weeks and slept in teepees.

“**F**” 1924 - The first Dining Lodge was completed. It was built attached to the original farmhouse (Log Roller’s Den) and is now called Fireside Lodge. Headquarters (Program Office) and tennis courts were also built at this time.

“**B**” 1939 - Robertson Lodge was built as the first Craft Lodge. The late 30’s also saw the purchase of 24 acres of land to the east and 10 cabins that stretched across the hill where the Dining Hall now stands.

“**C**” 1942 - Pine Seedlings were planted in an open field. The trees grew to become one of camp’s greatest asset: a beautiful patch of forest which has been the site of many games and personal growth ceremonies.

“**T**” 1956 – The Health lodge (Infirmary) was built in memory of Peter Scott Wright. The same year 3 Rec buildings, 3 Kybos, and 13 new cabins were completed, forming the 3 units we know today.

“**E**” – 1960 - Walter Steimke donated the flag pole to Minikani. A horse corral and a fenced pasture had been built just to the west of the Indian Unit. Norris field was also developed this year.

“**A**” – 1973 - The New Dining Hall and Pool construction was completed. What had been called “Junior Staff” became an extended, year round LT Program, and MiniKamp saw its first campers.

“**H**” – 1981 - In memory of his late wife, Mildred Icke Kossow, Art Kossow donated the Kossow Center, which was used by the LT’s. Also this year a new Kybo was built in the Pioneer Unit, attached to the Rec building.

“**G**” – 1988 – The 1st rappelling and climbing wall was built by Stew Brown. It was built facing the upper parking lot, and behind it was the Campcraft Woods. A new corral had been built the previous year to the east of the parking lot.

Camp Memories

By Karl Schoendorf

Over 40+ years ago I was an 8 year old camper exploring Pine Forest for the first time on a nature hike. As we walked through the forest, Nature Bruce showed us the tiniest little mouse bones at the base of a pine tree. He explained that the owl who lived in the forest went out and found mice as prey during the night. Without teeth, the owl swallowed the mouse whole, then separated the indigestible material such as teeth, skulls, and claws, into the owl's gizzard. It finally compacted the material into a tight

pellet that the owl regurgitated, which then fell to the forest floor.

“Can I keep ‘em?” I asked. Seeing a teachable moment, Bruce answered “Yes, you can. But if you do, no one else will get to find and see them for the rest of the summer.” So we chose to leave them there in Pine Forest where we found them. But as an 8 year old I wouldn’t let the story end there. No.



I found out that ‘free time’ is actually FREE time and I

headed back to Pine Forest that evening to find some bones. I picked up some in my hand and looked at them very closely. It was decision time. Closing my hand around the bones, I thought to myself “No one will ever know.” But Bruce’s kind words came back to me and I decided to put the bones back on the ground, covering them up with just a little pine straw so other kids could hunt and find them.

As a Minikani staff member, how many times did you teach a kid something that he or she would remember for the next 40 years? Probably many more times than you ever thought possible.



SpotLight On Alumni

By Michael Jurken

Mike currently owns and operates the company he had while at camp which has become Majic Productions, a Milwaukee-based sound, video, fabrication and lighting production company. Each year they produce over 1,000 events on 5 continents such as the Super Bowl, US Open, large corporate meetings and national presidential campaigns. Mike was recently selected by the Business Journal as one of the top 40 under 40.

◆ What is your history at camp?

I started going to camp when I was 12. After a rough first cabin, I enjoyed every year since. I did not come back my first summer after my LTIII year, but did come back a summer after that for a year in the BU and then a year as an explorer counselor. I took two years off after my explorer year and did a half summer as LT Director with Emily Tremel.

◆ Any particularly ‘fond’ memories of camp?

Yes - too many to count! I always loved the memories formed with the staff more than anything. Many of those people remain my best friends



to this date. I loved when we caught every kid in the runt hunt, having fake birthday parties at 2 a.m. for campers, getting yelled at by Fathead for having a 35 minute question of the day, and spending time with Nina, Carl and Johnny F. on the craft porch, etc.

◆ Were there any special skills you learned while at camp?

I learned how to work as a team and how to work on very little sleep!

◆ How often do thoughts of Minikani and Minikani people ‘pop’ into your head?

Almost daily and they almost always result in me laughing or smiling.

◆ You started Majic Productions at the age of 12 with a boom box and cassette tapes and were booking DJ "gigs" with local friends and family. What was it like working at Minikani and MAJIC at the same time?

It was quite comical at times. Although the business was much smaller at the time, I still found

ways to make it work. I had a little jet pack that provided Wi-Fi in my cabin or yurt. Since internet and phones were not as common back then, lots of

other counselors would “secretly” come to check their e-mails, etc. during rest periods. I got the nickname that I still have today from Drew Dietz as “Blackberry Jurken”. It was really tough the second week up on the explorer trip, but I was still able to get some e-mails come through in Blackwell and on the bear lake hike. When I came back to Minikani for Ad-staff, Brian Siegel was very accommodating with me running the business and also being present at camp.



◆ Please tell us about your family.

I am married to the love of my life Monica and we currently reside in Brookfield, WI. We met at College and she is from the Chicago Suburbs. I am the youngest in my family and have two older brothers and one sister. None of my other siblings went to camp, but my sister currently sends her kids to camp.

◆ If you could go back and re-live your years at camp, is there anything you would do differently?

I would come back for those years I took off and create even more memories. I’d not try to challenge Cliff with every decision he made. I would stay more involved with camp as an alumnus.

◆ Anything else you’d like to share?

Never forget – That summer we got **Every Kid** during the Runt Hunt.



Nature Notes

By Bruce

“Connect with Nature”

Last Spring the Nature Conservancy held over 220 events to help people get outdoors and get involved with nature. Recently I had a chance to meet and talk with LaTresse Snead, the Director of Volunteer Programs & Community Outreach. She gave the following 4 ideas to help everyone “Connect with Nature”, and help celebrate “Earth Day” every day.

◆ **Get Dirty.** A great way to get your hands dirty? Volunteer! This spring there will be lots of opportunities for you to help plant a tree or flowers, clean up winter debris, etc. (Why not join Minikani’s Spring Work Day on May 12th?)



LaTresse says dirt contains a microscopic bacteria called *Mycobacterium vaccae*. Studies have shown that exposure to this bacteria can increase the levels of serotonin in our brains, helping to relax, soothe and calm, and it also can help improve cognitive function.

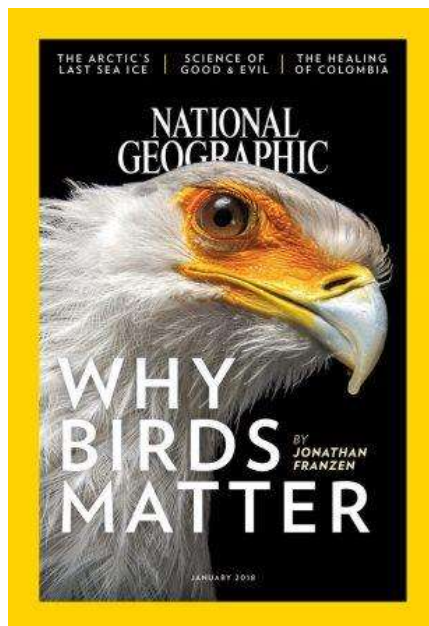
◆ **Take a Hike.** Spring is a perfect time to get outside and experience the waters, trails and landscapes that

make up nature’s playground. Spending time outdoors in nature helps renew and rejuvenate our bodies, minds and spirits. Studies show that nature reduces stress, helps behavior problems, and improves our moods.



◆ **Take a Closer Look.** Noticing the subtle changes of the seasons is a good way to take a closer look. Birds singing, frogs croaking and beautiful wildflowers blooming are just a few of the ways that nature announces the arrival of spring. Get out there and start looking!

◆ **Remember the Birds and the Bees.** According to the USDA bees (and other pollinators) add \$15 billion to crop production nationally



each year. By planting flowers and native plants in your yard, you can help provide food, shelter and protection for the birds and bees — not to mention butterflies, spiders, and other native wildlife. Migratory birds serve as important indicators clean air and water, fertile soils and abundant wildlife.

2018 Year of the Bird

2018 marks the centennial of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the most powerful and important bird-protection law ever passed. In honor of this milestone, nature lovers around the world are joining forces with Audubon, National Geographic, and over 150 other organizations to celebrate the “Year of the Bird” and commit to protecting birds today and for the next hundred years.

Together they hope to heighten public awareness of birds because of their wonder and beauty—and because they symbolize nature’s interconnectedness and the importance of caring for our shared planet. How can you celebrate birds today?



Bruce’s Note: I’m not much of a birder, but I saw a Painted Bunting (above) once at Minikani along the corral fence. I’ll never forget it.

