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NEWSLETTER

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Thanks To: Lloyd LaRoque,
Stacey Walthers Naffah,
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In 1891 the Milwaukee Y had camping trips for “Juniors” to various places in Washington County. They fished, hiked, learned campcraft skills and stayed in tents for 2 weeks. Later they stayed at a camp located on Phantom Lake. In 1919 the Y purchased 40 acres on Lake Amy Belle for their own camp. It included a house, a barn, and lots of open fields.

Such was the humble beginning of Camp Minikani, a name some say means “A place of beginnings”. Back then campers were Christian boys who came by car or train to spend 2 weeks sleeping in teepees. Today we celebrate 100 years and honor Minikani’s past, its present, and help to preserve its future.

August 24th and 25th are the dates for the 100th Celebration at Minikani. You’ll have a chance to re-connect with camp and former staff and campers as well. Both days there will be open skills and tours. On Saturday you’ll enjoy drinks and food, as well as a camp fire, entertainment and music throughout the grounds. Please see page 2 and check out camp’s website for the latest registration information. [Minikani 100th](#)

In this Newsletter you’ll be able to read about the history of the LT Program, some feelings about camp, an alumni Spotlight, and some nature. Thanks for supporting the MAC these past 10 years.



CAMP NEWS

100th Celebration Information

SATURDAY August 24, 2019 (9 AM - 3 PM)

Camp is open for everyone to come and experience the magic of Minikani. Enjoy camp activities, skills, local food trucks, and tours led by staff and alumni. A suggested donation is welcomed and appreciated.

SATURDAY NIGHT August 24 2019 (6 -10 PM)

Join us for the 100th Anniversary Party on the shores of Amy Belle Lake to celebrate 100 years of tradition and comradery! Heavy appetizers, cash bar, paddle auction for YMCA Camp Minikani, music, and more!

Adult Ticket: \$50 per ticket. Includes meal, bands, and festivities.

Child Ticket (12 and younger): \$10 per ticket. Includes meal and supervised kids' programming from 6-9 p.m.

Cabin Rental: \$500 each. Limited cabin rental available. Cabin rental includes two tickets. Must register by calling the camp office at (262) 251-9080

SATURDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE

- 5:15 – 6:15 p.m. - Evening event Check-in
- 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. - Speakers & Paddle Raise
- 7:45 p.m. - Toast at the lake to the next 100 years
- 8:00 – 9:30 p.m. – Entertainment and Comradery
- 10:00 p.m. – Rags Rededication

SUNDAY August 25, 2019 (9 AM -2 PM)

Pancake breakfast, skills, and staff/alumni tours. A suggested donation is welcomed and appreciated.

REGISTRATION

Register at <https://www.minikani.org/100th-anniversary/>

Can't attend, but want to support Minikani?
Go to <https://www.minikani.org/100th-anniversary/>

All proceeds from the event will benefit Minikani

Summer Ad Staff 2019

Assistant Summer Camp Director:

Ben Matthews

Wellness Coordinator

Rachel Kornetsky

Explorer Unit Directors:

Juliette Verley, Hunter Graff, Martha Herrenbruck

Boys Unit Director:

Sam Weber

Girls Unit Director:

Hailey Proebsting

Minicamp Director:

Nicole Eichelman

Day Camp Directors:

Gabby Oliveras-Bonaparte, Connor Robertson, Olivia Holbrook

LT Directors:

Haley Robertson, Anna Edwards, Austin Cox, James Jorgensen

Flex Director:

Sam Brose

WF Director:

Erica Kalberer and Sam Wigdale

WSA Director:

Jack Freiburger

AC Director:

Olivia Barnes-Wackman

Crafts Director:

Chris Malicky

Corral Director: Sam Nord



Invitation

Minikani will be hosting their Alumni Night at Staff Training on Wednesday, June 12th at 5:30 PM. All alumni are invited. If you would like to attend, please RSVP with Peter Drews at pdrews@ymcamke.org. The event is planned during Staff Training to give you an opportunity to enjoy dinner and socialize with the summer staff. Please come home to Minikani!



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 with our community.



MAC Addresses

Email
minikanistafflodge@gmail.com

Website
www.minikanistafflodge.com

Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/28911858611>

Minikani Around the World 2019



We had 2 groups of alumni celebrate this year. In Brooklyn, NY we had Grace Blumberg, Andrew Mendelson, Jane Wierdsma, Grace Edquist, and Carson Pope. Representing Dane Co, WI, was Michael Luckey, Hillary Lobenstein, and Mark & Kelsey Siegel. Thanks for your support!



LT Program History

Looking back at Minikani's history, few things have had a greater impact than the LT Program. Both the Ragger program in 1956 and camp becoming fully co-ed in 1971 can be seen as very positive events. But it was the Leadership program, created in 1971 by Minikani staff to solve a number of concerns, that set the camp on a successful path and which continues today to serve as a national model around the country.

In the summer of 1970, Camp Director Don Nordahl, and Program Director Lloyd La Roque were aware that the only program for older teens was the Explorer program. Most of these campers came for one year and didn't return. The previous few years a CIT (Counselor In Training) program similar to many other camps was tried. This involved hiring high school juniors as Jr. Counselors. Still, few of the CIT's returned to camp the following year.

Lloyd and Don put their heads together and created a new program with the following key elements: 1) Leadership Development instead of a counselor in training program. 2) Campers in the Explorer Unit that were going into their freshman year in high school were recommended by their Explorer counselors. 3) This would be a 3 year program that kept them returning to camp each year. 4) There were no fees for LT's the first six years of operation.

In addition, camp would invest in two full time exceptional staff to run the program. They would live with the LT's in cabins the first two years. They would evaluate the LT III with their counselors and recommend counselor positions for the following year. At that time over half of the counselors at camp were hired from the outside.



the campers would admire them and want to emulate them.

In 1971 the program started with six campers, boys and girls. By the next year, and every year since, it was full with 32 LT's in the summer and eight LT III's working half the summer. The program had really taken off. Bruce Rasmussen and Aimee Mozuch were the first two LT Directors. LT's and their directors stayed in Cabins 18 and 19 until Kossow Lodge was built, and were eventually moved to Halquist Lodge.

By the third year the program was presented at the national American Camping Association (ACA). Workshops on Leadership Development were presented at three national ACA conventions over the next five years. In the final analysis, the program was successful because of a dedication to high quality leadership by the LT Directors, and the philosophy that LT's were given a chance to be leaders at a young age with support from the full staff in a supportive role. The Leadership Program has allowed teenagers to mature in the camp setting and in a few year become the backbone of an exceptionally strong camp staff.



As most of you know, the LT program included two training weekends, spring and fall and playing a leadership role at winter camp. In the summer LT's waited on tables, did dishes, were Mini-Kamp counselors, built campfires, developed skits and did service projects. They took over cabins from noon on Saturday until noon on Sunday when all camp counselors had their day off. LT's worked directly with campers and counselors, joining cabins and teaching skills whenever possible.

The Staff were expected to be mentors, really big brothers and sisters. LT's were given status. They wore special LT camp shirts and were expected to involve themselves with campers every chance they had. It was designed so



What Makes Summer Camp at Minikani So Special? Could this be the Minikani “SPIRIT” – dissected?

Minikani has a lot going for it:

- We live together in close quarters, sharing space.
- We eat every meal together, gathered together in “family” groups.
- We close each day with a quiet time, sharing our highs and lows.
- We are isolated from the rest of the world, focused completely on our own community.
- We support and look out for each other.
- We encourage creativity and new experiences.
- We take care of each other, each of us serving in different roles, using our own talents and skills.
- We lead by actions, not just words.
- We respect and treat everyone with love, caring, and kindness.
- We greet everyone in our community with a smile.
- We promote a sense of acceptance and belonging.
- We spend time outside, in nature.
- We play, sing, dance, joke and have fun every day.
- Together, we unplug from our devices and live differently from the rest of the world, focusing on our face-to-face interactions.

Adapted from “Why Summer Camp May Be the Secret to a Longer Life” by Audrey Monke, ACA Blog 1/14/19



SpotLight On Alumni

Stacey Walthers Naffah

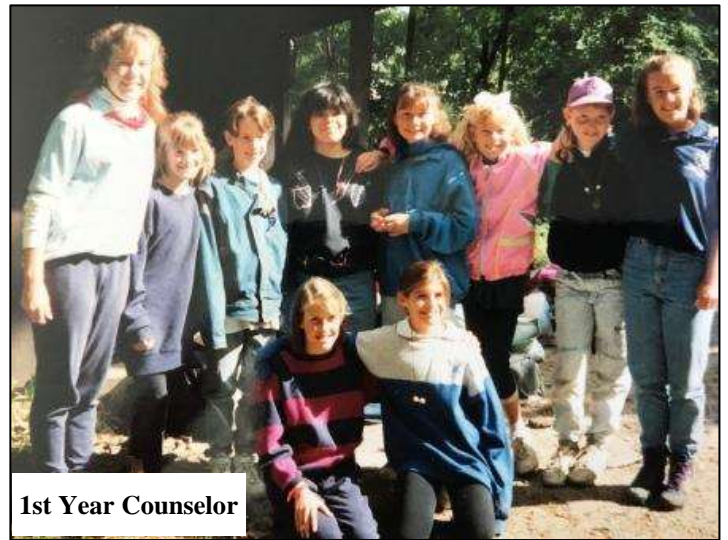
◆ What is your history at camp?

I started going to Minikani as a 1 week camper when I was 10 years old in 1983. It was the place to be in the 80s! I went with friends and enjoyed many fun summer days.

I went on to be an Explorer, the first time I was away from home for two weeks. We stayed in the platform tents behind the berm in the Girls Unit. They were not fancy, but they sure were fun! While I admit I was a little homesick, I absolutely loved being an Explorer - you were the top of the heap in terms of the coolest campers in camp. I loved the cheer, the camaraderie with the rest of the Unit and the anticipation for the trip. The trip itself was magic, in my opinion. Such an adventure to go so far away, and to truly live off the land. We were highly competitive with our lashing skills and created some pretty great stuff to make amazing campsites! I loved the challenge of the canoe trip and getting the opportunity to really push myself.

As a camper and then again as an LT, I was able to challenge myself in many ways. As a first born, relatively cautious and shy person who really liked to get things right, camp provided the canvas to teach me so much: how to meet new people, try new things, not take myself too seriously, to push myself outside of my comfort zone, to be ok with being messy and silly, to make mistakes and be a leader. To this day, those skills are some of the

most important that I took away from camp. And, I'd be hard pressed to find someone who would describe me as shy today camp played a huge role in making me the person I am today!



1st Year Counselor

I worked as a counselor in the Girls Unit and the Explorer Unit until 1995. My last year at camp I was part of the team that launched the Expedition Program. I did the very first one (with August Herschede, if memory serves me correctly). We did our first Expeditions at Devil's Lake and in the Porcupine Mountains and somewhere I can't recall where we did mountain biking.

◆ Do you have a favorite "job" at camp?

I loved being an Explorer counselor. What an amazing adventure and an honor to help kids have the same kind of fun, and pursue the same kind of growth opportunities that that Explorer trip afforded me. To be outside, with talented smart people with freedom and responsibility - what a gift that was! I particularly loved the canoe trip and navigating the rapids.

◆ Do you have a favorite place at camp?

Pine Forest, for sure. It's so peaceful and serene. It always seemed like a little secret.



◆ Any particularly 'fond' memories of camp?

Rags provided a wonderful discipline to set goals and pursue personal growth and reflection.

I recall a pretty entertaining event during one of my last Expeditions where a bear snuck into our camp site and stole all of our food! Talk about problem solving - the kids thought it was great, and the counselors were pretty freaked out! We had to hike out a day early since we didn't have enough food to last another day! And, we wound up renting a bear suit to reenact the harrowing tale at a closing campfire. That's the type of memory you can only create at summer camp!

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

I gave up my job as a counselor the summer after my junior year of college. I wanted to work in music and marketing. My transition to a super fun job at Summerfest was directly tied to camp — I sent a letter to the head of Summerfest at the time and asked if I could have a summer job there in Marketing. It helped that I was her daughter's

camp counselor the previous summer! That connection led me to an unpaid marketing internship. I was thrilled! I got paid in tickets, food, and backstage access to shows. I did hard work for them and learned a lot.

Since then I have grown my network to include some pretty amazing people over the past 23 years of working through simple acts like that over the years. People in positions of power really want to help others who are creative, clever and want to do good work. I subscribe to that same philosophy and am happy to help, too.



◆ Please tell us about your family.

I have been happily married to Chris for almost 19 years - we met after college in Chicago. We lived there for 13 years and had 2 great kids. We've been back in Milwaukee for 10 years now. My kids BOTH go to Camp. Jack is 14 and will be a second year Explorer this year. Cate is 12 and will go back for her 3rd summer in the Girl's Unit. They love it there and I can see the positive impact it makes on them -it's pretty magical.

I am the oldest of 4 kids — my sister, Alison, was a counselor for many years and my brother, Adam went through the LT program. Both of them live in California now and

have been flying back during the summers to send their kids to camp here at Minikani. The pull is very strong! My kids and their cousins all go together - talk about magic, we feel very lucky and blessed.

◆ What do you do now?

I recently took over as the fourth president (and first woman president) of Wm. K. Walthers, Inc., an 87-year-old model railroad company based in Milwaukee. I am honored to carry on the legacy of the three generations that preceded me. I was deeply honored to learn from my Dad over the past 10 years working together. I get to work with a great group of people who work hard and who really care about each other and doing quality work.

◆ Anything else you'd like to share?

We are a lucky bunch. Let's continue to help spread the spirit of Minikani - the world needs people who care about others, who aren't afraid to get their hands dirty and who know how to be creative and have fun.

Thanks for the opportunity to share my story - I look forward to seeing many of you at Camp this summer and welcome you to come visit the trains anytime at Walthers.

Editor's Note: Stacey has 2 more things to share: 1) Some great advice for everyone, especially those alumni who are just starting their careers, and 2) A great explanation of how model trains are a super hobby even in this digital age. To read what Stacey has to say click [HERE](#).



- Hey Alumni -

Do you have a favorite camp memory? Can you nominate an alumnus we can "Spotlight" in a future edition? Have a question about camp you've always wondered about? How about a future Newsletter topic?

This is your Newsletter – feel free to be a part of it. Send your thoughts and contributions to minikanistafflodge@gmail.com



Nature Notes

By Bruce

I know I've seen hummingbirds at Minikani along the edge of the corral. They were probably the Ruby-throated hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*), the most common species in the Midwest.

Hummingbirds have to make up for being the SMALLEST birds on Earth in a BIG way. You probably already know that they drink sugar water (nectar) for food and are able to dart back and forth from flower to flower. They are the only birds that can fly backwards, hover, and even fly upside-down, beating their wings up to 200 times per second. Their heart beats 1,200 times per minute, and they take in 250 breaths every minute. Whew.



Unfortunately, they quickly lose heat. To keep their 107° F. body temperature and supply all the energy they need, they drink pure sugar - supplied by flower nectar. They don't actually suck up the nectar, but use their long tongues to lick it up, similar to how a cat licks up milk. The tongue moves in and out about 13 times a second.

All of this activity takes a lot of energy, which may explain their need to eat *constantly* – about every 10 minutes. They end up eating 2 to 3 times their body weight each a day. Amazingly, only about 15% of their time is spent eating, and the

rest of their time is spent sitting and digesting food. Nectar is not a great source of nutrients, so they supplement this by also eating insects and spiders.



Hummingbirds have no sense of smell. While they can't sniff out feeders and flowers, they do have good color vision. They can see a whole bunch of colors that we can't, thanks to their ability to process ultraviolet light.

Have you ever seen hummingbirds at a feeder? (By the way, a group of hummingbirds is called a "charm".) The birds bicker and jostle and fight and chase and dive and squawk – all to claim the feeder as being in their territory, and they will defend it from all other intruders.

Scientists say they are very smart - they have the largest brain in the bird world in proportion to its body size. They also have great memories, and can remember every flower & feeder they've been to, and how long it will take a flower to refill. It's been estimated that they can visit up to 3,000 flowers a day.

Hummingbirds are native to the New World. No hummingbirds are found in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia or Antarctica. But there are over 330 species of hummingbirds in North and South America.

Hummingbirds definitely don't mate for life. They don't even stay together to raise the babies. The female does all the nest building, incubating, and caring for the babies herself, and a male hummer will mate with any females that he can attract to his territory. The average number of eggs laid by female hummingbirds is only two. These eggs are found in nests smaller than a half dollar and compare in size to a jellybean or a coffee bean.

Hummingbirds are not social creatures. They neither flock, nor do they migrate together in groups. When Ruby-throated hummingbirds migrate in the spring they make a 20 hour, solo, non-stop flight across the Gulf of Mexico, which is a distance of about 500 miles. To prepare for the trip, they double their weight – from about 3 grams to 6 grams, loading up on calories for the flight. (A nickel weighs about 5 grams.) Once on land their migration path follows the development of spring flowers, arriving in Wisconsin in April or May, and leaving again in September.



Here is a link to a short video (in slow motion) showing how hummingbirds use their beaks – it's really quite swashbuckling!
<https://youtu.be/8BVJoJMeNJc>

