



NEWSLETTER

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Thanks To: Morgan (Cox) Conti,
Lindsay Berman and
Hillary Lobenstein

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Britannica Dictionary defines the adjective '**Proud**' as being "Very happy and pleased because of something you have done, something you own, someone you know or are related to, etc.: feeling of pride.

That's me, all right. I'm so proud of the MAC. Since it was started 15 years ago, I've been very proud of what we have done as a community to support Minikani and her alumni in so many different ways. Over the years the various and talented Boards of Directors have guided our community with such skill and in so many positive directions.

I'm also proud of the Leadership Program. Aimee (Mozuch) Griswold and I were the very first Directors in 1972. We couldn't have imagined then what the program would grow to become in over 50 years. (See photo below.)

In this Newsletter you'll learn about a new program to organize volunteers to help out at camp. Another article will give you information about spending a weekend at Minikani at the end of the summer. We're in the middle of our fundraiser month, and you have been asked to support us. Keep up the great work. Thanks.



Minikani Leadership Trainees at their Spring Weekend.



MAC Alumni Weekend
Saturday August 24 – Sunday 25
“Weekend” or “Saturday Only” rates
All Alumni, Families and Friends Invited



Hello Minikani Alumni Community!

The 2024 Minikani Alumni Weekend is right around the corner! Do not miss the opportunity to romp around at Minikani and relive the ‘glory days’ with your lifelong camp friends.

The weekend will involve a wide variety of crafty/sweaty/wetly activities, s’mores, songs and so much more. Check out camp’s new ropes course while skills are open Saturday afternoon or soak in the final summer days with a swim in Lake Amy Belle!

Late night, meet up over a bonfire to hear banned ghost stories and cheers to the good times. Happy to map out a little GU/BU rotation to keep an eye out for sleeping younger campers.

This reunion of friends will be one for the ages. Grab your camp crew, pick up some Culvers in MF on your way, and spend August 24-25 at your summer homeland. The fun starts at 1pm on August 24th - we can’t wait to see you there!

Don’t you want to pretend you are 15 again and tell everyone you’re hanging out with your cool camp friends?! REGISTER TODAY!

PRICING BREAKDOWN

Early bird pricing is available now until August 11th

* By signing up early you get first dibs on cabin selection & NEW high ropes course sign up! *

Saturday Only Ticket:

\$15/adult, \$10/youth age 6-15. Ticket includes afternoon skills and dinner at camp!

Weekend Ticket: \$40/adult, \$25/youth aged 6-15. Ticket includes Saturday skill time, meals, s’mores and the cabin of your choice!

Future campers 5 and under are always free!

Prices increase by \$10 per person starting August 12th.

Sign up Now for Alumni Weekend’s Early Bird Pricing by using this [LINK](#) to Eventbrite



Questions? Wonderings? Things you are pumped for? Reach out to Morgan (Cox) Conti morgan.lee.cox@gmail.com or Will Caster willem.caster.99@gmail.com

Volunteer Group

Here's your chance to help out at Minikani and get rewarded for the hours you put in.

Consider joining the newly formed Camp Minikani Volunteer group. We are creating a volunteer group for staff, alumni, camp parents, staff members, and LTs. First of all, we need volunteers to help with specific projects before summer starts. To volunteer, you can choose your own volunteer adventure:

1. Contact Eli Fyksen at efyksen@ymcamke.org
2. Set up a time to volunteer-- come when it works for your schedule
3. Choose your own volunteer adventure – See possible adventures below.

Possible Volunteer Adventures

- ◆ Install canoe thwarts and seats
- ◆ Replace all oarlock pins
- ◆ Replace oarlocks: cutting off old oarlocks and re-riveting
- ◆ Fixing cracks in sailboats with epoxy
- ◆ Fixing cracks in the paddleboards
- ◆ Find the hole in the water trampoline and repair OR possibly install a new ring
- ◆ Check saddles and tack for corral

After these projects are completed, we will be moving on to other projects at camp. We hope to roll out an official Minikani Volunteer website soon.



By volunteering you can add to your Minikani Gear and more: Volunteers will receive a Camp Minikani Volunteer sticker for 1-3 hours of volunteer work completed, a Camp Minikani Volunteer t-shirt for 4+ hours of work completed, and receive an invitation to an official Camp Minikani Volunteer dinner at camp for 6+ hours of volunteer work completed.

To join the volunteer group, please contact Hillary Phelps Lobenstein at hillary.lobenstein@gmail.com or 920-285-0452.



Staff Training Help

Skills Focused Staff Training: Alumni volunteers wanted

We are looking for staff alumni to help out our current staff during Staff Training with learning hard skills, past activities, and past curriculum. We want to call on your experience from your years at camp to share your activities and past ideas with skill heads and current Minikani staff.

Staff Training is from June 9th until the 14th. There will be specific times during Staff Training to work

alongside current staff to share ideas, lessons, and hard skills. If you are in the Milwaukee area and available to help out with skills training during Staff Training, please contact Hillary Phelps Lobenstein at hillary.lobenstein@gmail.com or 920-285-0452.



From the Gold Rag Study Material


God, give me clean hands, clean words, and clean thoughts. Help me to stand for the hard right against the easy wrong. Save me from habits that harm. Teach me to work as hard and play as fair in Thy sight alone as if the whole world saw. Forgive me when I am unkind, and help me to forgive those who are unkind to me. Keep me ready to help others at some cost to myself and send me chances to do some good every day. Amen



Why Donate to MAC?

Few of us are in the position to be able to donate \$5,000 to help send kids to Minikani. But as a group (community), that's exactly what we recently did. Because of your generosity the MAC was able to make a donation to Minikani's Campership Fund.

Carrie Wall, President and CEO of the Milwaukee YMCA, replied to the gift this way: "Thank you for sharing your blessings to support YMCA Camp Minikani. Thank you for the Minikani Alumni Community's generous \$5,386 investment in 2024 campership scholarships. We're honored for this continued support from the passionate Minikani alumni connected through the MAC. Your generous support helps us welcome local youth to their first overnight camp experience and welcome back campers year-after-year, so they can benefit from the full Minikani journey."

The MAC's "May Giving Month" continues until the end of May. Please consider making a donation today. Any amount is welcome. Every donor will get their name listed on our website and receive this nifty sticker (below) in the mail. Please join us as we honor our connection to the best camp ever – Minikani. 



To donate you can go to our website ([DONATE](#)) or use the Venmo QR code here:



venmo

Your .edu Email

We here at the MAC know you get plenty of emails daily that fill up your mailbox. You certainly don't need more items to add to your 'Delete' list.

We also respect your privacy and have never sold or shared the MAC membership list with any commercial outlet. Your email address is safe with our email server, MailChimp.

Unfortunately, some alumni have been "Bounced" from our email list because their address ends with .edu. We lost another 8 members in the last mailing. The school that originally issued (janedoe@school.edu) for your address has cancelled their account because the person is no longer a student at that school.

If this happens to you, you probably won't even miss the MAC's few emails. But there is a solution to this problem: If the address that the MAC uses for email ends in .edu, just contact us with a different email address and we'll be able to keep in touch. Here's our email address:

minikanistaffloege@gmail.com

2024 Minikani Ad Staff

Summer Camp Directors

Robby Gral, Aubrey McLaren

Asst. Summer Camp Director

Anna Rooney

Wellness Coordinator

Rae Lord-Huertas

Trailblazer Unit Director:

Josie Morkin

Pioneer Unit Director:

Jack Gorski

Explorer Unit Directors:

Grace Dugan, Maggie Vorlop,

Cole Batchelor

Day Camp Directors:

Drew Noviski, Patrik Soros,

Mindy Weber

Minicamp Director:

Emma Smith

LT Directors:

Harry Coffou, Grace Gridley,

Fred Allenstein, Margo Kurth

Crafts Director:

Nina Hinz

Gun and Run Director:

Sam Albert

Corral Director:

Michael Bolger

AC Director:

Zion Zarwell-Robinson

WSA Director:

Michael Ruhl

Waterfront Director:

Ellie Liengh

Trips Director:

Will Moran

Flex Director:

Alex Lewein 

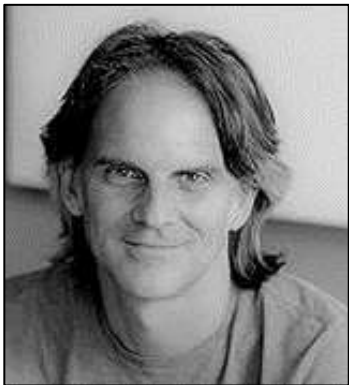


Spotlight Update

Jim Frohna

Jim is a Minikani alumnus (1986-89) who was featured back in the May 2015 Newsletter. (You can view the article with this [LINK.](#)) He joins a rather small group of alumni who have found success working in the entertainment field.

In his career Jim has worked on a number of critically acclaimed projects, including the Amazon series *Transparent*, the HBO miniseries *Big Little Lies*, and the Apple TV+ series *Shrinking*. He is known for his intimate and expressive cinematography, which has earned him an Emmy nomination.



The role of a cinematographer is all about the overall visual style — determining the look, color, and lighting of a scene. They're the ones who take the director's ideas and translate them into actual, tangible images, and are responsible for the overall visual look and style of what you see on screen. They work with the director to translate the story's mood and themes into stunning visuals, using camera angles, shot composition, lighting, and camera movement to guide the viewer's eye and create an emotional impact.



Most recently, Jim has been the cinematographer for the current Prime Video hit movie titled “The Idea of You”, described as “a rom-com with a twist: it features a 40-year-old divorced mom (played by Anne Hathaway) falling for a 24-year-old pop star (Nicholas Galitzine).

One reviewer describes the movie as “a charming and thought-provoking film that offers a fresh take on the romantic comedy genre. The film explores the challenges of the relationship in a mature way, rather than being a fluffy fantasy. It's a good choice for those who enjoy relatable characters and a touch of realism in their rom-coms.”

Other reviews have been almost entirely positive, giving the movie a Certified Fresh Rotten Tomatoes score of 83%. While the score could still fluctuate as more reviews are added, 94 critics have already weighed in, giving it a statistically significant score. Perhaps “The Idea of You” could be worth your time.

(FYI - The movie is rated “R” – so it is not for viewing by campers!)



Muddy Puddles and Leaky Ceilings

Below is a quote by James Clear, author of the book *Atomic Habits*:

“I split problems into two groups: muddy puddles and leaky ceilings. Some problems are like muddy puddles. The way to clear a muddy puddle is to leave it alone. The more you mess with it, the muddier it becomes.

Many of the problems I dream up when I'm overthinking or worrying or ruminating fall into this category. Is life really falling apart or am I just in a sour mood? Is this as hard as I'm making it or do I just need to go workout? Drink some water. Go



for a walk. Get some sleep. Go do something else and give the puddle time to turn clear.

Other problems are like a leaky ceiling. Ignore a small leak and it will always widen. Relationship tension that goes unaddressed. Overspending that becomes a habit. One missed workout drifting into months of inactivity. Some problems multiply when left unattended. You need to intervene now.”

The key takeaway is to identify which problems are puddles and which are leaky ceilings. By understanding the nature of the issue, you can choose the best course of action - either letting go or taking decisive steps to fix it.



2024

Minikani Around the World

Eight locations were submitted to celebrate “Minikani Around the World” this year. Minneapolis, Wilmette (Chicago), Park City, UT, Milwaukee, Halifax, NS, Canada, Lower Garden District, New Orleans, Denver and Madison. Alumni met at various times during the weekend to celebrate their connections to Minikani and share their Spirit of Minikani. Canada joined us this year and hope to get even more countries to join in 2025.



Minneapolis



Milwaukee



Chicago

When I saw that Park City, UT was hosting an event, I emailed the only person I know who lives there – a counselor from the early 70’s. I wanted to make sure she saw the invitation.

It turns out that the host was a neighbor and actually lived just down the street, but they never knew that they both had a Minikani connection.

That’s what “Minikani Around the World” is all about!

Bruce



Milwaukee



Lindsay Berman

◆ **What is your history at Camp?**

I started going to camp in the summer of 2004 when I was 10 years old and loved taking tech diving, bb guns, and AC as a camper. I was part of the OLT program from 2009-2011 and have such fond memories from the Superior Hiking Trail trip! I became a counselor in the summer of 2012!

I was a proud Waterfront Staff Member at camp and was a counselor through 1st year, 2nd year (GU Cabin 7 which was called Mohegan at the time), and Explorer year (Wild Wolf!) before leaving the Minikani counselor life. I had a brief return summer of 2018 when I came back to lead the expedition trip to Colorado, which was a blast!

◆ **Which did you like best – Opening or Closing Day?**

I liked closing day best; that feeling of your cabin and all of camp being so bonded and connected by then, and the combination of both hilarious and sentimental performances and skits that weren't created in a complete and total rush like on opening day, always felt so special.

◆ **What song makes you think of camp?**

Blackalicious "Alphabet Aerobics" from when I was an explorer camper driving in the Star Trans (throwback!) on the way to Rhinelander!



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

Camp taught me from a very young age about so many different types of human behavior, different ways to bond and connect with people, as well as how to bond and connect people to each other. I think it was so impactful to learn about how different behavior often stems from challenging home life environments, and how to navigate different situations with empathy, compassion, and care, rather than judgment. This stays with me and is equally as important to take into consideration with ourselves and with adults as well!

Camp taught me how to take initiative, how to receive and give feedback, and the importance of goal setting. Camp encouraged a lot of creativity within me, taught me how to plan and create itineraries that were equal parts fun, silly, empowering, and meaningful.

Camp taught me the power of familial relationships through the sister and brother friendship bonds formed at camp, and friendships I very much still maintain today. Camp created an appreciation within me for nature and the healing and



joy I feel when connected to the water, the trees, and an unplugged natural environment.

◆ **If you could go back in time and re-live just one Special Day, what would that be?**

There are so many! I loved Centennial Forest Fest days "(woodstock" esque fest- do they still do that?); I loved mornings on the waterfront leading skills with my waterfront family, especially when a trambopline waterfront send-off was involved, days up north in the EU cooking at base camp, or doing the rope swing on the canoe trip first thing in the morning, special cabin vespers, the adrenaline of a particularly intense bug hunt night, the sacred feeling of all of the units walking into closing campfire, torches aflame, or the mornings as second year counselors we would all wake up early and do a Saturday morning super early lake Amy Belle dip before everyone woke up!

◆ **What you're doing now?**

Since my days counseling at Minikani, I have had anything but a straight and narrow path. At 23 years old, I bought a one way ticket to Vietnam, quitting my toxic, corporate job. What began as a one way ticket led to 2 years of working and traveling through Southeast Asia as both a tour guide leading 2 week trips through Vietnam, and as a Yoga Teacher. During that time I built up my resume in all things adventure, including an Open Water Scuba Diving certification, a 200 Hour Hatha and Vinyasa Yoga Teacher Certification in Thailand, learning to surf in Sri Lanka, and riding motorbikes on the Chinese border in northern Vietnam.

I moved back to the US in 2019 to work for a US based global travel company, traveling full time in the

corporate events and hospitality space. After traveling to over 30 countries, working as a tour guide leading 2 week long backpacking tours in Vietnam, teaching yoga around the globe, and working on the events team for fortune 500 corporations, I decided to combine my own passions for people, travel and wellness into my own travel and yoga business, with the ultimate mission of empowering people through travel, inspiring others to live out their passions, reminding people to not take life too seriously, and above all, to foster an environment for people to have a fun and unforgettable experience along the way!

I founded my company, **Inhale for Om**, as part of my personal mission statement to live a healthy, well-traveled and deeply connected life. The company offers travel and yoga trips globally and have most recently expanded to offer 200 hour yoga teacher training, online meditation courses, and custom retreat planning services. I also have worked with corporate groups, both virtually and in person at leadership conferences teaching yoga, mindfulness, empowerment workshops, and more.

So much of what I choose to do both in my personal and work life has largely been fueled by some of the core principles and values I learned and developed at Minikani: Connection, Fun, Initiative, and Leadership. In a way, leading international retreats is just an elevated version of what I did as a 18, 19 and 20 year old camp counselor, building out week long itineraries that are centered around group well-being, safety, fun, connection, adventure and friendship. Long before I ever did a formal yoga teacher training I was

teaching short yoga or relaxation sessions to my cabins in Pine Forest, makeshift Paddleboard Yoga on the Waterfront, and leading my cabins through thoughtful group discussion circles and fostering an environment where everybody could connect more deeply with each other and with themselves.



Prioritizing personal development, goal setting, being intentional, learning different communication and leadership styles, are just a handful of dozens of practices and traits I can strongly attribute to my time as a camper, (O)LT and counselor at Minikani. I think above all, the most deeply ingrained trait I carry with me from having to go up to a much older, "cooler" Minikani counselor as a 15 year old and shake their hand and introduce myself, to conducting myself around parents from a young age, to embracing a phone-free, make-up free natural, come as you are lifestyle, is Confidence. In every job/internship/ personal interaction I have had since Minikani, this trait above all has been so deeply instilled that it

makes the scary, hard, things like starting a new job or showing up alone in a new country feel so much more possible.

One of our biggest blocks as humans are those little thoughts inside our own heads. At Minikani we did so much work as campers and counselors to reframe our internal scripts to be positive and uplifting, to encourage each other, to spread love and kindness and embrace all sides of each other and ourselves. At Minikani, there was always that feeling that anything is possible, We learned how it feels to believe in ourselves, to choose our own adventure, to get outside of our comfort zones, and to thrive.

In reflecting back on my entire journey, the memories, skills, and friendships created the perfect foundation for all of the leaps into the unknown that have led me to where I am today, and I am eternally grateful. Feel free to check out my upcoming retreats on www.inhaleforum.com and maybe relive some of that Minikani Magic with new friends in beautiful, natural settings around the globe!

◆ **Anything else to share?**

If you, your business, or someone you know would be interested in going on a retreat, having a custom retreat planned, completing an immersive 200 hour yoga teacher training, or hiring a wellness speaker/practitioner for an upcoming event or conference, I would LOVE to hear from you! You can email me at hello@lindsaybtravelandyoga.com, and if you're interested in any of my upcoming offerings through Inhale for Om, join our email list: www.inhaleforum.com, and give us a follow at @inhaleforum on instagram. 🌲

Nature Notes

By Bruce

The Thing About Birds Is...

Chances are you already know a lot of things about birds. You probably see and hear them just about every day, you may enjoy them as a food, and some of you may have had a pet bird or two.



You know most birds can fly, and all of them have feathers, and lay eggs. You know they range in size from hummingbirds to ostriches. You may even know they are classified as vertebrates because they have backbones, just as fish, amphibians and mammals.

Well, here are some things you may NOT have learned about birds - yet. Like mammals they are warm blooded, but they keep a warmer body temperature of 102 to 104 degrees. They are the only animals with feathers, which help insulate their bodies. Modern birds evolved from a specific kind of dinosaur called Theropods, which includes the Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Most birds are adapted for flight, which means they have strong chest muscles, light hollow bones, a streamlined shape, and feathers which, you must agree, are very light. Unlike our bones, inside

many of their bones they have hollow, air-filled spaces, known as pneumatic sacs. These sacs connect to the bronchial tubes and increase respiratory efficiency by providing a large surface area for gas exchange

Birds don't have a diaphragm like we do. They rely on a combination of rib movements and changes in the volume of their air sacs to facilitate inhalation. As the air sacs expand, fresh air is drawn into the system. Also, most birds can't suck up water into their mouth. They have to tip their beak into the water and then tip their head back to swallow it. There's one exception - pigeons and doves can keep their heads down and suck up water.

The eyes of some birds are very acute. The fovea of a sparrow has 400,000 photosensitive cells per square millimeter, while you and I have about 200,000. Some hawks may have up to a million. Most birds can see colors well, as you may have guessed from their body coloring. A bird's eye takes up about 50 percent of its head; where our eyes take up about 5 percent of our head. To be comparable to a bird's eyes, our eyes would have to be the size of baseballs.



Birds do not have teeth, although they may have ridges on their bills that help them grip food. No teeth means no chewing, so their food is always swallowed whole. At the end of their esophagus is a storage

sac called the crop. This lets birds grab a lot of food and then fly away to process it later. The first part of their stomach is called the gizzard. This muscular sac uses small sharp stones that the bird has swallowed called 'gastroliths' to grind up their food.



When it comes to going to the bathroom, I'll use some non-technical terms. Birds secrete liquid wastes (#1) in the form of uric acid. This is mixed with the digestive waste (#2) in a structure at the back end of the bird called the cloaca. To lighten the load for flight, the cloaca is emptied all at once. (This usually is done over your just-washed car.) The white part of their excretion is the #1 and the more solid brown or green part is the #2.

By the way, most male birds pass a sperm packet from their cloaca to the female's cloaca during mating. There is no penetration. She can store the sperm for 2 to 4 weeks, and eventually the sperm swims to the oviduct and fertilizes an egg.

Birds do have a larynx, but they also have an additional organ below their larynx called the syrinx. It was named in 1872 after a Greek nymph who was turned into a panpipe. The syrinx has a similar structure as a panpipe and the cartilage and surrounding tissue structure is used to make their bird songs.

