



Outdoor Skills and Environmental Education

2015 was a great year for the MacKenzie Center with new groups, new partners and the continued support of many long-time friends. Looking forward to 2016, we are nearing the end of our strategic planning process and will be seeking stakeholder feedback in the next few months. There will also be plenty of opportunities to get involved and volunteer around the Center. It is time for volunteers to sign-up to help make our Maple season a success once again. Please consider joining us! We are also happy to report we will be hosting the first Pope and Young Bow Hunter's Rendezvous in June. This is a promising partnership between Pope & Young, DNR and several community groups with great opportunities for volunteer involvement.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Maple Volunteer Training:	February 23 & 25; 9am-noon
Maple Education Program:	March 2-31
Maple Festival:	April 2, 8am - 2pm; breakfast 8am-noon
MOHEE Youth Expo	May 18-19
Pope & Young Rendezvous:	June 9-12
2016 Summer Wildlife Series:	Several evenings this summer - check our website for updates



The Wallen Sugar Shack is ready for Maple!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR MAPLE PROGRAM

Ruth Ann Lee,
Education Co-Lead

MacKenzie Center's annual Maple Education Program begins in March and your help is needed in many areas. Volunteers will be trained to conduct student tours, boil sap, process maple syrup and assist with other sugarbush duties. No previous experience is necessary, but we do caution you that this experience is addicting! Volunteers are needed throughout the month of March for the Maple Education

Program. Volunteer training sessions will occur on February 23 and 25. Bring a friend and join us for a few days or the entire maple season. We will also need volunteers for the MacKenzie Maple Festival on April 2, 2016. Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering by emailing DNRMacKenzieCenter@wisconsin.gov or call (608) 635-8112 prior to February 15.



High Marq student works on eagle nest replica.

FACILITIES & GROUNDS

Steven Kaylor, Facilities and Grounds Lead

The MacKenzie facilities and grounds crew has been busy as always. With the help of the wildlife team and their interns we completed the education pond installation. Be sure to swing down and take a look; we think it turned out great. The MacKenzie Center is working to continue our relationship with High Marq, a local environmental charter school. We have been working with the

wildlife team and High Marq's field biologist, Kim Wahl, to figure out how we can best meet High Marq's needs and what kind of projects they can take on. High Marq previously designed the landscaping around our entrance sign. They have already started a project in the wildlife area, where they are building a life size replica of an eagle nest. We have also

discussed numerous other projects with them. They will, as always, be helping with invasive species control, enrichment in the wildlife area, and they may even adopt one of our trails. We greatly appreciate High Marq, and all of our volunteers and partners for all of the hard work that they do to help us keep MacKenzie running smoothly.

EDUCATION

*Chrystal Seeley-Schreck,
Education Co-Lead*

After a busy fall, we are settling in to the rhythm of winter, reflecting and looking ahead. In 2015, we brought in 30 new groups and welcomed back many returning groups. All in all, this past year we served nearly 12,000 participants — 5556 youth and 1819 adults in our education programs and 4529 youth and adults through our collaborative events. We are continuing to strengthen and grow our programs. We hosted a Master Naturalist training for adults in November, and we are working on a new early childhood program for the coming year. Cayla Matte joined our



Master Naturalists in-training learn on the trail.

internship program this fall. She was a great help teaching and completed a much needed project of updating many of the Center's lesson plans for group use. Our interns are invaluable each season, and we are looking forward to hosting three more in 2016.

Environmental education and outdoor skills are going strong at MacKenzie. We invite new and returning groups to make



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reservations for 2016 overnight or daytime field trips. The weather is perfect for snow-shoeing and leaf-less tree identification this winter. Or plan to join us in March to learn how to make maple syrup!

KUDOS FROM THE FIELD

"We absolutely love our experiences, which is why we return every two years. The staff is professional, helpful, and wonderful with our students!"

"Our campers LOVED seeing the animals in the habitat area. I liked that the staff was so willing to align their lessons with our curricular goals."

*- thoughts from group leaders
after their MacKenzie visits*

YEAR OF THE WILDLIFE AREA - ROUND TWO

*Kyle Coker,
Wildlife Lead*



At the end of 2015 MacKenzie Center's director, JD Smith, continued 2015's declaration of the "Year of the Wildlife Area" for another year. This means that we will continue to focus heavily on updating and cleaning up the

Wildlife Area, as well as invasive species control in and around the Wildlife Area in 2016. The Wildlife Team at MacKenzie is very excited and has already started planning projects and setting deadlines. We will continue to expand and update enclosures, and the continuation of the "Year of the Wildlife Area" will allow us to draw heavily on other staff to help us in these efforts. We have already completed the first phase in another upgrade to the outdoor Lynx enclosure, and we have been working on some equally exciting infrastructure improvements as well.

We are very much looking forward to the year ahead: completing multiple projects, improving our enclosures, updating our interpretive materials, working to push back invasives, and much, much more.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

Ruth Ann Lee, Education Co-Lead

Every year the MacKenzie Center receives many generous donations. Big or small they are all appreciated and help contribute to our success. This past year we have received monetary donations that assisted in a variety of projects. A few of those include a new pond bench, pond interpretation, new snowshoes, and reupholstering of the lodge furniture. We have also received an iPad, bush cutter, leaf blower, a freezer, numerous food donations for the Wildlife Area and so much more. In addition, the Friends of the MacKenzie Center have donated to several projects, purchases, and contributed thousands of hours of their valuable time. Thank you for your support of the Center!

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