

Camp Alexander Mack

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MACKABILIA



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News from the Director

Not Just Words

*“Knowing the correct password—saying ‘Master, Master,’ for instance—**isn’t going to get you anywhere with me. What is required is serious obedience—doing what my Father wills. I can see it now—at the Final Judgment thousands strutting up to me and saying, ‘Master, we preached the Message, we bashed the demons, our God-sponsored projects had everyone talking.’ And do you know what I am going to say? ‘You missed the boat. All you did was use me to make yourselves important. You don’t impress me one bit. You’re out of here.’”** Matthew 7:21-23 (The Message)*

On May 25th, George Floyd was murdered in Minneapolis. Derek Chauvin ignored pleas from the crowd and Mr. Floyd as he cut off oxygen to Mr. Floyd’s lungs and blood to his brain. There was no empathy. There was no compassion. There was no concern for life. The video set off a reckoning in this country that continues; although, the really hard work is yet to come.

As a staff, we began to look at our mission, our values, and our role in the systemic racism that allowed a policeman in Minneapolis to believe that showing his power and authority was more important than Mr. Floyd’s life.

The mission and values of Camp Mack clearly state that we are welcoming of all people, and our role is to give them a place where they find God, sanctuary, and community. Yet, as we examined ourselves, we found that our website is full of people who look the same. Our staff is all white. We do not often serve people of color in our programs, including summer camp and sponsored retreats. Some of our traditions are not respectful of other people and cultures.

On June 3rd, we published a statement on Facebook and our website. You can read it again at campmack.org/race. One part of that statement reads:

We, as a full-time ministry, must take the time to examine our own complicity in systemic racism and violence, standing in support of those who suffer. Then we must take the next step and make visible and difficult change that will lead us toward God’s vision of equity, hope, and community, providing this sanctuary as a place of nurture for all.

We are committing to do two things. The first is to examine. The second is to act. We have been examining our practice and our traditions, resulting in planning for new training of staff and volunteers. We have also committed to aggressive recruiting of people of color as staff and participants in our programs.

None of this will be easy, but we are committed. The excerpt from the *Sermon on the Mount* shared at the beginning of this article is our warning that the statement we made on June 3rd means nothing if there is no action. Please hold us accountable for making Camp Mack a sanctuary for ALL people. Ask the hard questions. Require us to demonstrate what we are doing. Because whether you do or not, Jesus will.

Beginning this month, I will make a brief *Diversity Report* in each newsletter, at least for the next year. Please take time to read it. Let us know how we’re doing, and by all means, tell us if we are missing the mark or moving too slowly.

Gene Hollenberg, Executive Director



Nature Nut News

Your Big Backyard



My big backyard borders with the Camp Mack wilderness area. So, over the years, I have gotten to experience a lot of nature. The bullfrog currently lounges lazily by my pond, and the barred owl is one of this year's babies that nests close by. I feel blessed to experience so much nature. If you don't have a big backyard or want to get to know the natural diversity of yours more, keep reading.

When is the last time you explored your backyard or around your house? I bet there are little ecosystems brimming with life all over. Get out and explore and observe. If you have trumpet vine, you may experience hummingbirds visiting the flowers, wrens making nests in the vines, and moths visiting after dark. After months of non-use, what surprises do you find when you open your grill lid? Was it full of walnuts from a thrifty squirrel, did a bird fly out from a nest, or a snake slither out to greet you? If you grow fennel or other plants in the carrot family, are the flowers now full of swallowtail butterfly caterpillars? Are there rabbit nests in the tall grass under your fence?

Whether you have no backyard or a big backyard, I encourage you to take the time to observe and even think about small things you can do to improve the diversity of the area surrounding your dwelling. Using native landscaping is one way to attract wildlife and reduce the use of chemicals to manage your yard. During the summer, set up a mothing area and stay up late to see the night life at your home. Aside from moths, you may also experience beautiful mammals such as flying squirrels or bats. Tell us, what is living in your big backyard?

Jessie Kreider, Program Director

Sunny Camp Mack

Progress!

It's the last half of August and we are starting to think of what needs to get done before the snow flies. Snow flying is not a very comforting thought, but it is going to happen, so we best be getting the work done. We were blessed with the presence of Jim Bates this past week. He helped us do some more work on the Auditorium roof, and we think it is ready for the winter. We also did some work on the new golf cart storage shed which is just east of the JKC. We have been waiting some time for the location permit, and we finally received permission from the State and from Kosciusko County Planning dept. to build our little storage shed. The shed is now sided, roofed, and waiting for the new metal roof from our friends at Hoover Lumber. The metal roof was paid for by a gift, but we will wait until next year and some funding to put the two garage doors on it. We built this so we could get the office and the health office golf carts inside out of the weather in the summer.

This past week, Nick Yoder of Millwood windows started putting in the new windows in Sarah Major Lodge. These windows were able to be provided because of a wonderful gift this spring. They are really going to help us with our heating issues in cold weather.

Another nice change that is happening is the construction of the new health center. They took down the west stone restroom this past week. A fair-sized excavator took it down in less than a day, and it was all hauled away. Those of us who have tried to keep that building clean and dry were glad to see it go. The construction of the new building should start soon.

The Peace Garden continues to grow. The upper element is just about done, and work has begun on one of the lower elements. Judy continues to lead a group of volunteers and staff to get as far as we can before cold weather.

We have a couple more roofs to work on, a well pit to re-plumb, considerable outside painting to be done, and we want to take down the two canvas yurts yet this fall. We continue to watch our spending very closely with most of the above projects having already been funded. Isn't it amazing how God has provided for us in these times of drastically reduced income! If you have some spare time, we would love to have you come and work alongside us to take care of this "sanctuary where people connect with God."

Galen Jay, Facility Director



Be Our Guest

Matching



Are you the kind of person that likes when things match? I am. It's not a must, but it's something I think about. Sometimes it's fun to not match, too. These days, I often coordinate my mask with what I'm wearing, just because. Oh the strange days we live in. And, if that's not what you like to do, that is completely okay by me. Do you match your socks, or grab whichever two you can find first?

Do you notice anything matching in the pictures above? We have some new matching things at camp! As we have announced and you may have seen, the Arky Parky animals and ark were painted this summer with a memorial gift in honor of Verne Leininger. They look vibrant and fun—certainly something to catch the eyes of the children who come to camp. And now, with some help from Marvene Pippenger, staff members, and other volunteers, the W cabin bed frames are being painted the same colors as Arky Parky with some new colorful matching curtains, too. They look great so far. It brightens up the cabins and gives guests a refreshing space to stay.

I invite you to come check them out and spend some time at camp! We still have rentals available. Bring your family, your extended family, your youth group, your friends that need to get away for a weekend, or anyone else. We have a space waiting for you at sunny Camp Mack.

Deanna Beckner, Guest Services Director

Another Way of Giving

Mystery Paintings



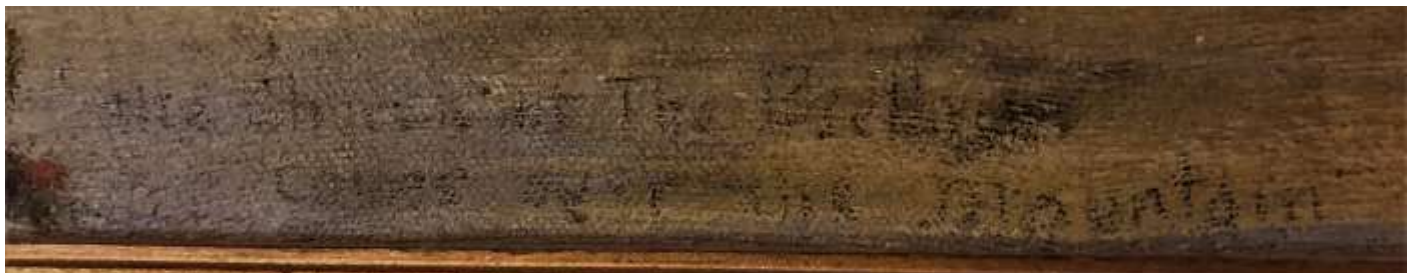
It is no secret that I enjoy digging through Camp Mack's archives. Usually it's documents or maps that I find most interesting, but in some recent digging, I came across a unique painting.

This is a Medford Neher original. The caption at the bottom reads: Fireside Council, YP-44 My best guess is that YP-44 means "Young People's Camp 1944," which was the group that came up with the idea for the murals. It is not clear if Neher painted this in 1944, or if he painted it for a specific purpose. It was great to find this tucked away.

There is another more recognized painting in the John Kline Welcome Center by Medford Neher.

This painting sits above the fireplace in the gathering room. I had thought that it was John Kline with the ghostly figures being God, Jesus, and the torch for the Holy Spirit. However, Nell, John's Horse is depicted in the auditorium murals as being a brown horse. John Kline is shown in those murals with a brown beard, not a white one.

Now that I have cast doubt on everything you thought you knew about this painting, here are two lines of text from the very bottom:



The first line is rather legible to me at least: "the Church of The Brethren." The second line is the mystery. Any guesses what it may be?

Artwork has something called provenance, or its chronology of ownership. We do not know the provenance of either painting, so it is hard to know a lot about them. When we lack this, it can lead to myths and stories around the art that aren't true. Sometimes, like I had to do with the second painting, we have to reevaluate why we know something. We should always be looking to grow in our knowledge. Asking questions of traditions is healthy and makes us better people. May you ask lots of questions in whatever is next in your journey.

Todd Eastis, Director of Development and Business

Kitchen News

Delicious Rub

When camp decided to host a picnic in place of the Annual Dinner this year, I wanted to make sure it was still a nice, delicious meal for our guests. Like most Annual Dinners, I wanted to push myself a little bit and try something new. When we settled on the menu of grilled chicken and BBQ ribs, I knew the ribs would be the challenge for me. I absolutely love eating ribs but had only attempted making them at home twice, both times without the level of success I would have liked to present for our picnic guests. I started doing some research online. I watched a few Youtube videos and browsed through some recipes and tips on Pinterest. I settled on a particular cooking method that seemed pretty fail proof. Then, I had to find a rub that would be just the right amount of sweet and salty with just a hint of a kick. I ended up finding this delicious Kansas City rub that was perfect. It is very similar to the seasoning mix I use when I make baked chicken. I really enjoyed the whole process of making the ribs for this event, and I heard they were delicious. One of my volunteer staff members got the last piece, so I didn't get the chance to try them myself, but I look forward to making them again at some point. I'm sure my husband would love for me to make them again, as well! This rub paired very well with the BBQ sauce we use at camp—it's very similar to the Sweet Baby Ray's Original BBQ Sauce that you can buy at the grocery store. For those of you who attended the dinner, it was a pleasure to serve you, as always. For those who couldn't make it, here's the rub recipe if you want to try it out yourself.

1 cup brown sugar, packed
1/2 cup smoked paprika
2 tablespoons black pepper
2 tablespoons coarse salt
2 tablespoons mild chili powder
1 1/2 tablespoons onion powder
1 tablespoon granulated garlic
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper



Mix all ingredients together and rub as much as desired on both sides of the ribs before cooking.

Vanessa Bohannon, Food Services Director



Education Station

It's Turkey Vulture Season

Did you know that the first Saturday in September is International Vulture Awareness Day? While many people don't have a favorable opinion of vultures, they are very important to the ecosystem and I hope to change your mind about them.

There are 23 species of vultures, but around here you're mostly likely to see turkey vultures and the occasional black vulture. Turkey vultures feed on carrion (dead animals). Their heads are bald because they are often sticking them into carcasses, and the lack of feathers helps keep their heads from obtaining parasites.

A large group of vultures is called a committee. When a group flies together, it's called a kettle. When a group of vultures are feeding on a carcass together, they are called a wake.



If you look to the skies, you'll probably see these magnificent creatures soaring on air thermals. They can soar for up to 6 hours without flapping! Most birds do not smell well, but turkey vultures have a very well-developed sense of smell. Vultures find food by both smell and sight, and they can find carrion over a mile away! They will soar on these air thermals sniffing out food sources. Contrary to popular belief, they don't circle over things that aren't already dead. If they find food, they aren't going to sit back and just watch it! They are the only scavenger birds that can't kill their own prey, so they are completely reliant on finding dead animals.

Turkey vultures can help prevent diseases. Their stomach acids are so strong that they can feed on animals that have died from things like botulism, anthrax, salmonella, and cholera without becoming ill. The stomach acids actually kill the bacteria and toxins. If a group of vultures consume an infected carcass, the harmful bacteria or toxin is destroyed so that it can no longer spread to other animals or humans.

Vultures will regurgitate food to protect themselves from predators (trust me, if you ever smell it, you'll want to run away). When a turkey vulture feels threatened, they can launch their vomit up to 10 feet away! They regurgitate to deter predators, to "lighten the load" so they can take off from the ground and fly away faster, and to provide food for the predators so they don't come after the vulture. Bald eagles will often stop chasing a vulture and eat the regurgitated food instead.



Vultures will also urinate on their legs and feet when they are hot. This habit cools their blood vessels and kills harmful bacterial and parasites on their legs. If you were holding a vulture and it peed on you, your hands would be sanitized! How's that for a handwashing alternative during a pandemic?

Kristen Werling, Outdoor Education Coordinator

Diversity Report

This is our first *Diversity Report*. As stated in the Executive Director article at the beginning of this newsletter, we will report on our progress toward becoming a more diverse organization with intentional work toward anti-racism. We are committed to publishing this monthly for at least a year.

Since June 3rd, when our statement on race was first published (campmack.org/race), we have had conversations in management team meetings regarding our practices and our traditions. The purpose has been to examine each of these and begin prioritizing the work we need to do. From these discussions, we have identified two areas to begin developing right away:

1. Training staff and volunteers
2. Recruiting staff, volunteers, and campers of color

In late July, our full staff met with a Black pastor from Indianapolis over Zoom. He told us his story and suggested some ways we could become better allies. This was followed by a full staff meeting to discuss what we had learned and to get more direction for future action.

Gene is participating in webinars offered by the Church of the Brethren on healing racism and will be integrating learning from these programs throughout the next year. The takeaways from the first session are:

- Claim anti-racism
- Proclaim that ALL people are created in God's image
- Name racism as a sin
- Focus on reconciliation and healing
- Actively learn about racism around us
- Act even when you don't know what to do (open doors, ask questions)

This is just the start. We are developing actions to become more open and welcoming to people of all backgrounds and cultures, because, as the pastor in Indianapolis has shared, our job is to love God, love our neighbors (everyone), and preach the Gospel. When we do that by our words and our actions, God can do the rest.

Upcoming Events

September 12—Cold Process Soap Making Get-A-Way Day Learn about using lye, the saponification process, design techniques, using natural colorants, and the curing process. You'll get to take home a booklet of tried-and-true recipes and soap making notes, and you'll get to make your own soap! Pick it up or have it shipped to you once it has cured for 6 weeks. Please wear pants, long sleeves, and closed-toe shoes. Saturday 9a–3p at the John Kline Welcome Center. Cost: \$25 lunch included Led by: Kristen Werling Limit: 10 persons



September 12—Write Your Story Get-A-Way Day Life experiences, dreams, and the what ifs of life shape who we are. Your story matters, and it is just waiting to be written down. Learn to share your story and being the writing process. Saturday 9a–3p Cost: \$20 lunch included Led by: Deb Peterson



October 10–11—Father Son Retreat “Under Construction”: Spend a weekend under construction at camp developing, reimagining, and building in the workshop. Create new constructions with building sets and construction toys, and learn to navigate the road map of life. Males of all ages are invited. Anyone under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult. 9a Saturday–1p Sunday in Mission Village Cost: \$42 per child ages 5–8, \$77 per person age 9–adult

October 15–18—Scrapbooking Retreat Bring the scrapbook you need to finish or may have been waiting for the perfect time to begin. Spread out your supplies and enjoy uninterrupted time with fellow scrappers. 6p Thursday (early arrival)–3p Sunday Cost: \$128 per scrapper arriving Friday evening, \$142 Friday morning arrival, \$162 Thursday evening arrival; meals begin Friday dinner.

October 17—Knitting & Crocheting Get-A-Way Day Whether a beginner or advanced in the world of knitting and crocheting, bring along your yarn and needles/hooks, and share a relaxing fall day at camp. Learn how to knit/crochet, learn a new stitch, finish a project, or learn about knitting for charity. Saturday 9a–4p in the John Kline Welcome Center Cost: \$20 lunch included Led by: Jessie Kreider



October 17—Scrapbooking Get-A-Way Day Join us for a day of scrapbooking, sharing, and learning with fellow scrappers. Work on current projects. Crop, journal, and finish a page or two. A show and tell table will be there for you to show off your creations. Saturday 9a–4p in Dining Rooms B and C in the John Kline Welcome Center Cost: \$20 lunch included

October 18—Fall Nut and Tree Identification Walk Get-A-Way Day If you've ever dreamed about chestnuts roasting over an open fire, come along for a day of nut and tree identification. We will focus on edible nuts and their uses. Nuts include acorns, walnuts, hickory nuts, and more. Sunday 2p–4p, meet outside Wampler Lodge Cost: Free (bring a snack to share) Led by: Jessie Kreider



October 24—Children's Drum Building Get-A-Way Day You don't have to be a child to enjoy a day of drum building at camp. Bring your children or grandchildren to build a Youth Ashiko Drum, or come and design the perfect gift for them. Drums will be pre-headed and ready to play. You sand, stain, paint, and wood burn the drum to your creative standard. Bring your ideas, and we will supply the rest. Saturday 9a–3p in Ulrich House basement. Cost: \$20 + \$35 per drum, lunch included

October 26–28—Volunteer Days Volunteers will work with Camp Mack's staff as we make preparations for the summer camp season. We have planned work tasks for all skill levels and ages. Workers of all ages are welcome, and anyone under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Cost: Free! Come for a few hours or all three days. Meals and lodging are available. Please contact the office for reservations.

Cancelled events: Fall Quilt Camp, Fall Seasoned Citizens Retreat, Build-a-Drum Weekend Retreat, and F.L.Y.E.

Rentals Available!



BRING YOUR FAMILY TO CAMP MACK THIS SUMMER

Camp Mack has cabins to rent to families looking for a getaway to a safe and relaxing space. All four of Camp's cabin areas are available at affordable rates, so book your reservation now!

Each cabin/yurt rental includes:

- A fully prepared and disinfected cabin
- Bathhouse/restroom dedicated to your family
- Campfire circle with wood
- Use of all camp green spaces and trails
- The experience of connecting with God in this holy place

Families will be able to choose additional options to add to their stay:

- Meals may be available at regular rates with different options to choose from
- Kiosk rental with table service, Dutch ovens, and other campfire cookware for outdoor cooking
- Popcorn campfire (popped by the Camp Mack staff in a kettle)
- Boating for 1 hour on Lake Waubee
- A night hike through Camp's trails with flexible timing

Call the Camp Mack office at 574-658-4831 or email a request to info@campmack.org to ask about availability and prices.

Get away to a safe and beautiful place to make new memories and connect with God!

Steering Committee Announcement

M.A.C.K. Mack is your camp.

In 2025, Camp Mack turns *100 years old!* We are entering the beginning stages of planning this centennial celebration. We are looking for a steering committee to help direct the vision of the 100th. This group will meet a few times a year to talk about the overall vision for the 100th year of Camp Mack and to work to incorporate all corners of the Camp Mack community. Other committees will be formed to lead specific parts of this special year. Please email 100@campmack.org if you are interested.

We are looking for people who have:

- A Connection to Camp Mack through their personal journey
- A Desire to Discern a vision of Camp Mack's centennial celebration
- An Enthusiasm for Camp Mack's mission and ministry
- An Inspiration for the next 100 years on Lake Waubee

Camp Mack Festival Announcement

For over 20 years, the Camp Mack Festival has served as a highlight of the fall season. Beyond the food, entertainment, auction, and many more activities, Camp Mack Festival is about bringing the Camp Mack community together. The festival committee thought creatively and worked tirelessly to find a creative way to bring the community together in these uncertain times. While we did consider an alternative drive-in festival to provide a safe environment, in the end, it was not going to be viable for many of our regular contributors.

It is with heavy hearts that we are cancelling all in-person parts of the Camp Mack Festival due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

We will still be putting together an online silent auction to take place in late September and early October. This auction will be significantly smaller due to technology limitations, therefore we will be soliciting specific items to auction. The festival committee will be using this time to dream big for the 2021 Camp Mack Festival to come back stronger than before. Please take 5 minutes to complete this survey so that you can be a part of this.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of Camp Mack.

Help us make Camp Mack Festival stronger in 2021 by completing this short survey:

<https://forms.gle/bCN7jz2io1jHknew7>

An Easy Way to Help!

Camp Mack is currently working hard to make up for lost income this year. It is not easy, and we have had limited success. However, there is one way you can help that is easy and simple.



Amazon has been one of the big winners during the pandemic. Mostly because it is able to help people get the things they need in ways that keep them physically distanced and safe. For years now, they have had a program called **Amazon Smile**. Anyone who purchases from Amazon can participate. It's so simple. When you buy something from Amazon, a small donation is made to the charity of your choice.

Camp Mack is one of the charitable organizations that is registered, so you can help us by registering at Amazon Smile and selecting us as the organization, or you can switch to us if you are already registered.

For more information, you can follow this link:

https://smile.amazon.com/gp/chpf/about/ref=smi_aas_redirect?ie=UTF8&%2AVersion%2A=1&%2Aentries%2A=0, or you can sign in to your Amazon account and click on "Customer Service." Under "Find more solutions," type in "Amazon Smile."

Each individual contribution isn't huge, but together, we can make a difference. If you have any questions, please email todd@campmack.org, or call the Camp Office.