

# **MacKenzie Sugar Bush Gazette**

## **PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

-- by Steve Siegler

This year has been exciting so far. The Sugar Mapling season was once again in the hands of Mother Nature. It was warm and cold which in turn affected the sap flow. Production was down compared to the past several years. Our Maple Fest on April 2 was a snowy affair. Because of this, attendance was down, but we still sold quite a few items in two different area tents.

In May, we volunteered for the MOHEE (Youth Expo) and the two days were a lot of fun. I believe the attendance was over 2000 kids and chaperones. We have now reached the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For the first time we sold gift shop items at the Youth expo and accepted credit cards as payment. Technology has finally reached the Friends!

Pope and Young invaded MacKenzie in June for an archery rendezvous and we were somewhat disappointed by the turn out. Still, those who participated had a great time and loved our facility. We did have our gift shop set up and did sell numerous items. Not sure of their plans for next year. Stay tuned!

We have welcomed to the board three new members. Sue Poznanski, Lyn Koenig, and Dan Martinson. They bring to the board young fresh ideas and it's a pleasure to be a part of this.

August 21 is our annual Friends volunteer picnic. It will be held at the picnic shelter at MacKenzie. Invites will be headed your way.

A lot of exciting things are on the horizon for the Center. More details as they come!

I want to thank all the volunteers that have given their precious time to make all of our events a success. We can't do what we do without you!

**Friends of MacKenzie Center**

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## **WEB SITE**

The Friends of MacKenzie now have a website.  
[www.friendsofmackenzie.org](http://www.friendsofmackenzie.org)

Here you'll find a calendar of events, announcements, photos and much, much more – check it out!

Thanks to our website committee who helped to get it set up and to Sheila Siegler, Kyle Jackson and Deb Wearne-Neurohr for keeping it up-to-date.

## **Volunteer Picnic, August 21, 2016**

Each year we gather at the picnic shelter at the MacKenzie Center to thank everyone who helps to make this such a great place. This year's picnic will be Sunday, August 21. We'll gather at noon for conversation and refreshments. Lunch begins at 12:30. The Friends will provide brats, burgers, chicken, beverages, and eating utensils. Please bring a dish to pass, based on your last name: A-G appetizer, H-M dessert, N-Z salad. Please RSVP to Don Lucke (920-992-3999 or 920-988-3914 or [heartshare@centurytel.net](mailto:heartshare@centurytel.net)) by August 15 to make planning easier. This is a great time to come together and have fun as we celebrate all the hard work the staff and volunteers do throughout the year!



## **Friends of MacKenzie Maintenance Committee Update**

By Don Lucke, Committee Lead

First and foremost a huge THANK YOU to all our MacKenzie Volunteers! Your effort, made on many levels, is the back bone for fulfilling the Friends of MacKenzie mission to the MacKenzie Center. Your comments and suggestions are needed and always welcome.

Work day activities began early this year with a February wood splitting crew that replenished the nearly empty wood supply needed for the Maple season. We put the Center's new wood splitter to good work and we always make maximum use of the new dump trailer. On that note, a special thanks to Dan Martinson and Dick Preston for building a wooden bunker for storing kindling and fire starting materials - It has really helped organize the Sap Room and aided the early morning fire starters.



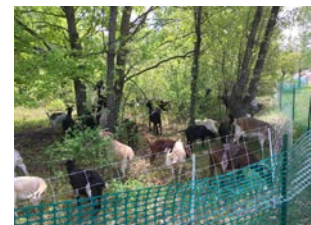
The Finishing House gave up that bulky twelve foot wooden step ladder as we built and installed a retractable ladder that now serves to provide access to the upper mezzanine. With this more convenient access we can better utilize storage space.



In January a group of Friends joined MacKenzie staff and our Ho Chunk representatives to rebuild the Chepotakay to a more authentic Ho Chunk inspired construction. Willow saplings were the building material and were forced into pre opened holes, strategically positioned. They were then carefully bent and tied together to form the frame. Canvas tarps were used to cover the finished structure, including a controlled opening in the roof to exhaust smoke and provide ventilation. Check it out! You can see the willows

sprouting stems - maybe there is a second story is in the making?

The Friend's ongoing support for invasive species control took a new turn with the Center's experiment using buckthorn leaf eating Green Goats. In the areas East of the Lodge, we helped the staff install snow fence (for people) and then days later, the inside electric fence - just in time for about forty hungry goats to arrival. About a week or so later the buckthorn was bare.





Fun Pulling  
Garlic Mustard

More good news for Mackenzie's invasive species program - Steven and Kyle have both recently earned their certification for application of herbicides. The Friends are looking forward to providing work day crews for removing buckthorn, anticipating more sustained results with the use of herbicides. Also adding to the tools available, the Friends fulfilled one of the Center's wish list requests and purchased a new DR walk behind 26 in. brush mower.

This year's Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo (MOHEE) was a great success. Over 2300 students and 600 adults attended this two day event. The Friends helped with general set-up and delivering a catered lunch and morning coffee to the various exhibit volunteers and sponsors. Later in the day we helped provide drinking water locations for the kids. Sue Brockel led the efforts to provide the Friends gift shop tent - a first - which surprisingly grossed about \$600. Also a first, thanks mostly to our President, Steve Siegler, was implementing our very own Friends credit card system. The card reader performed well and will continue to be a great asset moving forward with our gift shop plans.



The MacKenzie Center also hosted the very first Pope and Young Rendezvous, June 10th - 12th. This event was long in planning and, as a first ever event for P&Y, presented some expected challenges. JD was able to acquire some extra management and grounds support from DNR resources and with his staff managed to present the MacKenzie Center in its finest condition ever - as was expressed by many of the participants. The Friends provided brat sales from the Maple building as one of ten available lunch venues. We also had our gift sale tent well stocked and ready to take credit cards. Unfortunately, the event fell far short of the expected 2500 participants and we experienced a substantial net loss. However, it was still a good experience. We had some fun and learned some things that could lead to improvements if a similar event is held again. We look forward to working with the Pope and Young organization regarding possible plans for the future.

In closing, we are all looking forward to the next six months. We plan to get more involved with JD and the DNR staff on both long and short term plans for the Center, focusing on Wildlife Area enhancements, invasive species control and splitting wood.

Thanks again for all you do!