A Time-Honored Tradition

One of my first interactions with Maywood upon moving to Sheboygan was taking part in a very special program which focuses on not only producing delicious maple syrup but educating the community on the unique steps and rich history that are involved in its creation. The maple syrup produced at Maywood is only possible because of a group of highly dedicated and motivated volunteers.

Inside the Sugar Shack, Jim Van Akkeren keeps a close eye on the maple syrup evaporator.

Currently spearheading the efforts in the sugar shack are Mike DeMaster and Jim Van Akkeren who have devoted countless hours and diligent effort into ensuring this program continues to thrive for future generations. Over the years, the program has become a place where people can gather and develop a stronger appreciation for the natural world and the volunteers who make these opportunities possible. As longtime leaders, Mike and Jim have helped build a strong foundation for the future of the program, but continued success will depend on welcoming a new generation of volunteers willing to step into leadership roles and carry this tradition forward.

The maple syrup program at Maywood is much more than simply making syrup – it's about stewardship, education, and community. This program connects people of all ages to nature and reminds us of the importance of preserving the traditions that make us unique. We need to hang on to things that make us special and continue to educate and inspire curiosity in the natural world.

Nathan Dallesasse

My Maywood Experience

The Community Impact Internship Program, designed by the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, offers wages for student internship positions that may otherwise go unpaid. One of the purposes is to expand the network of on-the-job experiences while supplying an hourly wage. I was granted the opportunity to work with Maywood through the Community Impact Internship Program and would love to share some of my experience.

Already having knowledge of Maywood and enjoying its natural spaces, it felt like a dream to have the opportunity to participate in the organization's mission while developing my skills and career aspirations.

One of the first projects I participated in was maple sugaring. I was fortunate enough to have had prior experience collecting sap when I was younger. Going from a slightly smaller operation to Maywood's maple forest was a great way to reignite my interest in maple sugaring and reflect on my past. I really enjoyed tapping some of the trees and was excited to see some of the sap immediately flowing. The collection process was speedy with the help of volunteers, collecting between 40 and 150 gallons a day!

Another very special and rewarding project I had worked on was the Pond Restoration Project. Over multiple weeks, I was able to participate in the preliminary invasive cleanup, land survey, planning, and planting. Being a part of the project from start to finish provided valuable learning lessons as well as a feeling of accomplishment and fulfillment.

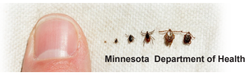
The Community Impact Internship Program has opened new doors and created new connections in my life. The value I have received from working with Maywood is not quantifiable, and I have many thanks to give to the Park Director Kendra for taking me under her wing, as well as the University of Wisconsin, Green-Bay for making this opportunity possible. I have gained a new wealth of knowledge and experiences that will help me in my future professional life, as well as a greater understanding of who I am, the work I find purpose in, and what causes I am passionate about.

Marli Schmitz

Tick Awareness and Precautions

When I grew up, I was afraid of everything creepy and crawly. I disliked snakes until I was a Boy Scout and handled them. I was terrified of spiders until, as an adult, I had to kill them in the house when my wife and son called on me to do so (they still do!). The only remaining problem is ticks. Ticks can be very dangerous to humans and animals, and you should be aware of them as you explore the outdoors.

Ticks often live in woody and brushy areas, resting on various parts of the plant so that they may crawl onto any passing animals or humans. It is now the time of year that you should be checking yourself regularly for any tick activity after you have been outside.



Minnesota Department of Health

Deer ticks are quite small, so it can be challenging for them to be found. Wearing loose, covering clothing and using insecticide is good practice before going outside. Checking all of your clothes for ticks after coming inside, then showering within two hours will also help a great deal. If you find a tick that is embedded within your skin, use tweezers to remove the tick, save the body of the tick in a small plastic bag, and go to see your physician for prophylactic treatment. Pets should also be regularly checked for ticks.

Common deer ticks carry Lyme disease, which can be treated successfully with drugs if caught early, but if left to linger can cause long-term nerve issues, brain fog, persistent fatigue, and muscle pain. A common sign of Lyme disease at its early stage is a bullseye rash around the tick bite itself, though this does not always appear. There are other tickborne diseases that you should also look out for. The Lone Star tick can cause alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) which involves an allergy to red meat. Other illnesses like Rocky Mountain spotted fever and Powassan virus disease are rarer but still show up in the US.

Awareness of where ticks are outside, and proper prevention practices can allow you and your pets to remain safe. If you become aware of a tick or tick bite, seeking immediate treatment can help prevent the worst of the effects of disease or illness.

James Kabrhel

Revegetation of the Wetlands

Invasive phragmites (*Phragmites australis* subsp. *australis*) or common reed can be detrimental to wetland habitat. It is a tall, perennial grass that aggressively colonizes and forms dense stands up to 20 feet tall, reducing biodiversity by displacing native plants, including the native subspecies of phragmites (*Phragmites australis* subsp. *americanus*).

A regional, collaborative, long-term approach to invasive phragmites management with grant funding totaling over $4 million since 2012 has engaged a multi-disciplinary team of ecologists, field practitioners, and Geographic Information Systems experts across six counties in northeastern Wisconsin. As the Director of Projects and Programs with Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership at the time, I was a part of this team when treatment began at Maywood and throughout the Pigeon River Corridor in 2017. Management continued under this program for five consecutive years of treatment, followed by continued monitoring and mapping.

A few scattered stands of invasive phragmites remained and were growing back over time. In 2025, Maywood was awarded funding from the Southeastern Wisconsin Invasive Species Consortium to treat about 30 acres of invasive phragmites throughout the park's wetlands. Funding also supported the purchase of 12 different species of native plants and shrubs to revegetate two small sections of the project site in spring of 2026, which will help crowd out the invasive plants and reduce the need for future treatment.

Among the native replacement species selected are several plants that are exceptional for attracting pollinators. Not only do these plants provide nectar to support pollinators in the adult stage, but several are larval host plants as well. Different species of butterflies and moths have specific host plant preferences. They rely on these specific plants to support their larval stages by providing food for young caterpillars. These plants are necessary to sustain the next generations of pollinators. They also happen to be very attractive, adding a splash of color to the wetlands.

Kendra Kelling

Maywood Summer Calendar

For more detailed program information or to register for a program, visit GoMaywood.org, call 920-459-3906, or stop by the desk in the Ecology Center. The Ecology Center is closed July 3-6 and September 5-7. The park and trails are open daily 4 am–10 pm.

Summer Self-Guided Nature Journaling. June 1 – September 6. Available during park hours. Visit GoMaywood.org, or pick up a guide in the maps box along the front walkway or at the reception desk in the Ecology Center.

Team Maywood: Rides Mondays at 5:30 pm. Rain moves rides to Tuesdays. Visit website for weekend ride dates and more information.

iRest® and Gentle Yoga. Mondays, June 8, July 13, Aug. 24. 5:30-6:30 pm. Free to members. $30 for series or $15/class general public. Register by June 4.

JUNE

4 **Keeping our Nights Natural: Why Less Light Matters.** 6:30 – 7:30 pm. Free. Learn how lighting choices impact nature with Sam Saeger of DarkSky Wisconsin.

9, 16 **Yoga in the Woods.** 5:30-6:30 pm. $20 for the series. Experience yoga in the forests at Maywood. Bring yoga mat and blanket. Inclement weather moves class indoors. Register by May 26.

20 **Walk on the Wild Side.** 9 am-12:30 pm. $10/member adults; $15/member public; $5/ages 4-17; 3 and under free. Trail walk in support of Maywood. Live birds with Open Door Bird Sanctuary. 3-mile and 1-mile route options. Registration available at the door.

20 **Scoping the Skies.** 9-11 pm. Free drop-in program. View the night sky with Sheboygan Astronomical Society. Cloudy skies cancel.

JULY

3-6 **Ecology Center closed.**

7, 14 **Yoga at the Ponds.** 5:30-6:30 pm. $20 for the series. Experience yoga at the Maywood ponds. Bring yoga mat and blanket. Inclement weather moves class indoors. Register by June 23.

25 **Prairie Walk.** 9 am-3 pm. Free, donations appreciated. Prairie tours at Maywood and host sites, guest presenter, musical entertainment, and food trucks.

25 **Scoping the Skies.** 9-11 pm. Free drop-in program. View the night sky with Sheboygan Astronomical Society. Cloudy skies cancel.

AUGUST

20 **Volunteer Appreciation Picnic.** 5:30 pm. Registration required. Volunteers, watch your email for an invitation.

22 **Scoping the Skies.** 8:30-10:30 pm. Free drop-in program. View the night sky with Sheboygan Astronomical Society. Cloudy skies cancel.

25 **Yoga in the Prairie & Campfire Meal.** 5:30-7:15 pm. $25. Registration by August 10 required. Outdoor yoga class in the prairie followed by vegetarian and dessert pudgie pies at the campfire. Rain date September 8. Bring yoga mat and blanket.

Christel Maass

Feeding Sheep

Velvet Sheep Farms, Sheboygan

So unlike the ambitiously friendly Pygmy goats
in another enclosure, just three sheep,
heavily burdened with unkempt fleece,
shyly approached, while a dozen others
stayed distant, cautiously watching
as licked pellets fell out of our hands
onto rain-saturated, hoof-printed muck,
only furtively flocking in to glean
after the gate clicked farewell behind us.

The Leading Edge

The President's Award was established in memory of Ellwood and Mary May. Each year, the Maywood association president presents this award to individuals or organizations who have made a significant and timely contribution to the progress and purpose of our Association and the Ellwood H. May Environmental Park Trust. I am pleased to announce our 2026 recipients, Joe Kerlin and Marlyn Meinnert.

Joe has served Maywood as the Superintendent of Parks and Forestry for the City of Sheboygan beginning in July of 2013. He served in that role until his retirement in 2026. During this time, he served as an ex-officio member of the Advisory Board.

Joe worked closely with the Trust Board and Staff. He was a valuable liaison between Maywood and the City. Joe attended Property Stewardship Committee meetings providing guidance on projects within the park. He also served on the Search Committee for the Maywood Park Director position. For many years, Joe volunteered with the "pancake crew" at Flapjack Day, giving his time to help cook the pancakes and sausage for the event. On behalf of our staff, we are grateful for Joe's many years of service to our park.

Marlyn joined the Advisory Board in 2016 as a representative for the Boy Scouts of America. He continues to serve in that role today.

Marlyn has provided a valuable link between Maywood and the various Boy Scout troops in our area. As a member of the Property Stewardship Committee, Marlyn has provided valuable insights on park projects as well as participating in many of the committee's work-days at Maywood and the Bur Oak property. Marlyn has been an active volunteer with the maple sugaring program, special events, and programs. He has volunteered with events such as Earth Ride, Walk on the Wild Side, and Flapjack Day. He has also shared his professional experience in AV equipment by assisting with the installation and wiring of a new overhead projector in the Pavilion.

Maywood has so many dedicated volunteers. We would not be able to offer the events, programming, and continued upkeep of the park without all of you. Know that you are appreciated, even if you are only able to provide a few hours of volunteer work.

Join us for our annual Walk on the Wild Side event on Saturday, June 20. It is a terrific opportunity to get out in nature and enjoy all our park has to offer.

Marty Steinbruecker

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GoMaywood.org

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Park Director: *Kendra Kelling*
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Office Coordinator: *Nathan Dallesasse*
Custodian: *Donna Pantel*
EcoEdges Editor: *Nathan Dallesasse*

Our Mission
To foster environmental stewardship
through educational and outdoor experiences
that connect our community with the natural world.

Summer 2026

ECOEDGES

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Restoring Maywood's Pond Habitat

Maywood Photographs

Volunteers plant native shrubs around Maywood's ponds.

If you've been to Maywood over the past few months, you may have noticed big changes around the ponds! Maywood staff, volunteers, and supporters have been working hard to improve this habitat.

In early spring, the Property Stewardship Committee seized an opportunity to tackle invasive shrubs that have been crowding in around the ponds, removing over six cubic yards of brush. The Sheboygan County Planning and Conservation Department assisted by developing a Shoreland Restoration Plan to reestablish this significant shoreland buffer, and Maywood's Conservation Intern coordinated the implementation of the plan. Maintaining a shoreland buffer along the water is essential to preserving water quality, providing wildlife habitat, controlling erosion, and maintaining natural scenic beauty.

Financial assistance from the Sheboygan County Water Quality Improvement program, along with a generous donation from an individual Maywood member, helped cover the cost of native trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants, and compost, and the City of Sheboygan Department of Public Works provided mulch.

A dozen dedicated volunteers participated in Maywood's 2026 Earth Day & Arbor Day celebration, planting 13 trees and 45 shrubs around the pond area. Additional volunteer groups will assist with the addition of herbaceous plants among the trees and shrubs to create a layer of groundcover under the canopy.

Species have been selected to meet the needs of the site, including their ability to support shoreline stabilization as well as wildlife benefits. Shrubs of varying heights have been planted to create cover for birds and small mammals around the ponds. Native perennial plants, along with emergent aquatic plants around the ponds' edge will enhance habitat for fish, reptiles, and amphibians.

A floating eco-island will also be added to the ponds, providing an excellent demonstration of biomimicry. Biomimicry is the practice of learning from and emulating nature's designs and strategies, which can lead to innovative and sustainable solutions to human challenges. Natural floating islands are formed by vegetation growing from a buoyant mat of roots and other organic materials like wood, moss, or peat. Eco-islands are man-made floating wetlands inspired by those that occur in nature and built to mimic these micro-ecosystems. The eco-island will contribute to additional water quality benefits, species diversity, and habitat both above and below the water.

Kendra Kelling

Visit GoMaywood.org for current Ecology Center Hours