



# FALL

2022



**ADIRONDACK  
EXPERIENCE**

The Museum On Blue Mountain Lake

Fall 2022  
Newsletter

SEASON IN REVIEW

THAT'S A WRAP!

# OUR 2022 SEASON IN REVIEW

Our 2022 season has come to a close, and with it, our first full open season post-COVID. Our visitors enjoyed new events, like our Mushroom Mania Festival and Xperience for All, in addition to our traditional annual events like Adirondack Artisan Festival and the Rustic Furniture Fair.

New for this season was the thought-provoking special exhibition, *Scarred Landscape: The Adirondack Photographs of J. Henry Fair*, highlighted by large aerial photographs of the changing landscape due to over-use and climate change. We also brought Hideaway Circus and live music to campus, and opened a makerspace for artists of all abilities to show their creative sides. With a campus full of activities and games, there was something for everyone! People from all across the country once again made the ADKX a favorite travel stop, and the countless positive comments we received made this another great season for us all.

Our amazing seasonal staff met visitors with enthusiasm and a smile, ensuring that everyone had an exceptional experience at the ADKX. Their hard work and dedication is what made our 2022 season a memorable one; we can't thank them enough!

We already have our eyes on the 2023 season, with our new *Artists & Inspiration in the Wild* permanent exhibition opening in July. Thank you to everyone who visited this year—we can't wait to see you next season!



# MAKING NEW CONNECTIONS



## ADKX Partners with Outdoor Afro in 2022

During the 2022 season, the ADKX was excited to pilot an outreach initiative with Outdoor Afro of Albany and Upstate New York. Outdoor Afro is a national not-for-profit organization that celebrates and inspires Black connections and leadership in nature. Beginning in June and continuing each month through September, the ADKX sponsored bus trips from Albany to the ADKX for members of Outdoor Afro.

ADKX Trustee and Outdoor Afro Leader Benita Law-Diao was instrumental in making this program a success.

*“It’s evident from the posts and comments after each of these visits that those participating recognize the sincere efforts being made to be inclusive and to create a safe and welcoming place for all,”* said Law-Diao.

Each month 30-40 visitors from Albany and New York City traveled to the ADKX to explore the campus and exhibits, to learn about Adirondack history, and to enjoy the outside beauty of the region. Many took the opportunity to hike the Minnow Pond Trail out to the ADKX Boathouse for time on the pond, some paddling for the first time ever. A few visitors came just to decompress and sit at the water’s edge. Providing these kind of experiences for new visitors is the inspiration behind this partnership and ADKX’s larger commitment to being inclusive.

In the words of one visitor, *“I can’t properly express how fulfilling the day was. I appreciated the inclusion of many different cultures and backgrounds in the exhibits—the Adirondacks really has a diverse history! The museum really makes an effort to be inclusive in every aspect.”*

We were thrilled for the opportunity to collaborate with the Albany chapter of Outdoor Afro this season. We look forward to further collaboration in 2023 as this partnership grows through outreach to Albany, Utica, and Syracuse.

# A NEW CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Guiding a nonprofit organization these days is not an easy task. World events over the past several years have affected individuals, businesses, and nonprofits (even those tucked away in remote areas like the middle of the Adirondack Park).

The ADKX has been lucky to have great Board of Trustee leaders since the organization began. Most recently, Anne Van Ingen and Rob Searle

helped navigate the museum through the pandemic, racial upheaval on a national and even local level, and the beginnings of a recession. On July 29, at the museum's annual board meeting, the gavel passed to a new board chair, Nancy Reardon, who has vast knowledge of the Adirondack Experience, the region, and the nonprofit world.

Nancy started as an ADKX Trustee in 2010. She served three 3-year terms, the maximum allowed. After a year off the board, she rotated back on in 2020, to the great fortune of the trustees and staff. Her first nine years on the board were a heavy lift as she agreed to co-chair, alongside fellow Trustee Nancy Keet, the museum's For Generations Capital Campaign (the museum's second capital campaign since its opening in 1957)! The "two Nancys" helped make history with a campaign total of \$11M. Their work spurred the opening of *Life in the Adirondacks*, new hiking trails, a boathouse and boating experience, and other improvements to enhance visitors' time at the museum.

To say Nancy has business acumen is an understatement. A retired executive of Campbell Soup Co., Nancy held the position of Chief Human Resources and Communications Officer from 2004 to 2012. Her professional experience coupled with a long history of serving on boards of major national nonprofits and arts and museum organizations makes her the perfect fit for the Adirondack Experience's new Board Chair. While Nancy

and her husband, Steve Sayer, spend some time at their home in Bluffton, South Carolina, they find themselves spending more and more of each passing year at their camp on the Fulton Chain of Lakes near Old Forge. As a longstanding member of the Adirondack League Club (ALC), Nancy played a role there too, recently completing three 3-year terms on the ALC's Board of Trustees.

The ADKX is thrilled to welcome Nancy Reardon into the position of Board Chair. There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the museum will continue its upward trajectory to expand its offerings and make positive improvements for all visitors in the years ahead thanks to a dedicated board with strong leadership.



## Senator Schumer at the Adirondack Experience

US Senator Chuck Schumer visited the ADKX in late August and toured the campus and *Life in the Adirondacks* exhibition. The Senator met with Board Chair Nancy Reardon, Trustee Benita Law-Diao, and Executive Director David Kahn to discuss and ask for the support of future projects, like a new permanent exhibition on African American history in the Adirondacks. The Senator's last visit was over 10 years ago when he came for a similar tour of the North Country and participated in a Q&A session with visitors at the museum.



# XPERIENCE FOR ALL

## A Celebration of Outdoor Recreation

On September 24 admission was free for all to come and explore the ADKX campus and experience a day full of special demonstrations and workshops as part of a new event to celebrate outdoor recreation—**Xperience for All**. Visitors took part in programs such as Intro to Birding, Plant Identification, Adaptive Sports, How to Pack a Go-Bag, and Nature Journaling. There was also an opportunity to try paddling in a canoe, riding a fat-tire bike, and throwing an atlatl. In the center of campus, a community expo showcased several recreational organizations from the North Country and Capital Region and the work these groups are doing to serve under-represented and marginalized communities. A highlight of the day was the meet-and-greet with Percy Shenandoah, a former player of the Iroquois (now Haudenosaunee) Nationals lacrosse team, and his son, a competitive youth athlete.

We want to thank all of the participating organizations and visitors that helped make Xperience for All such a success! We look forward to building on this successful event to continue to make the Adirondacks more welcoming for all.



# EDUCATION UPDATE

## Meeting the Needs of Schools around the Park— and Beyond!

Our School Programs team has the best job—bringing fascinating objects, fun facts, and smiles to our local communities. With the 2022/23 school year in full swing, we are back to “business as usual” for the first time in a long time. We have been steadily rebuilding our successful outreach program, with many teachers requesting ADKX programs now that we can visit in person again. We are at 70% of where we were pre-pandemic and hear from more schools every day. Teachers have weathered many challenges these last few years, yet still find a way to bring our fun, engaging programs to their students. Programs like those offered by ADKX are vital to the social emotional wellbeing of both students and teachers.

While in-person learning is always preferred, connecting remotely is still an essential part of education post-COVID. Technology allows us the flexibility to connect with more schools outside the Adirondack Park and gives more choices to teachers. By offering a variety of ways to engage with students—in classroom enrichment, remote programs, and on-site field trips—we can have a deeper impact on student learning throughout the Park and beyond.





# ADIRONDACKS FOR ALL

## Exploring Racial and Environmental Justice

Over the summer, the ADKX hosted an eight-part virtual series focused on examining the intersections between racial and environmental justice. *Adirondacks for All: Identity & Environmental Justice in the North Country* explored experiences of inequity and oppression in the Adirondacks and the ways in which those realities connect with issues of preservation, pollution, and access to land, water, and nature more broadly. The series was led by Erik Reardon, PhD, a scholar whose work has focused on environmental history and Native American histories, in a collaborative program between the ADKX, the Adirondack Diversity Initiative, The Wild Center, and the Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy.

The series culminated with a three-part Symposium that featured roundtable discussions covering critical issues raised during the summer programs.

As part of ADKX's commitment to engage new voices, ideas, and communities from across the region, this series brought hundreds of people from around the country together to engage in conversations with community leaders, educators, scholars, artists, and advocates about the challenges of social and environmental justice across the North Country.

“With the summer programs, ADKX and its collaborators began important dialogues about climate change, preservation, social justice, and policy.



The conversations revealed critical challenges and explored possible solutions. The Symposium provided another platform to expand on these discussions, continue to drive solution-oriented actions, and to engage in community building around these topics, which have resonance in many other areas of the country and the world. *The Adirondacks for All* initiative is a long-term endeavor as we work toward a more inclusive, accessible, and protected Adirondack Park,” said Reardon.

For more information about this series as well as recordings of each program, visit: [www.theadkx.org/events/adirondacks-for-all-series/](http://www.theadkx.org/events/adirondacks-for-all-series/)



**AMAZING EXHIBITS / BEAUTIFUL GARDENS  
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**How is it that you get ALL of this at the ADKX?  
Because YOU make it happen.**

Hundreds of gifts, large and small, given toward general operations allow us to deliver more and better each and every year. Thanks to a steadfast (and growing) family of supporters, the ADKX has been able to blossom, even during the toughest years.

The Annual Fund campaign, launched each fall through letters, email blasts, and social media posts, has had record years in 2020 and 2021. We are immensely grateful for the outpouring of generosity. Your support allowed us to maintain staffing levels and make necessary changes on campus due to the pandemic. Best of all, many of these changes were done with such a degree of professionalism that they didn't take a moment away from the experience of our tens of thousands of visitors.

As we face continuing economic uncertainty across the nation, even across the world, we hope you will see the value and importance of giving to the ADKX this year. The inflationary spiral has increased expenses in all areas of operations here at the museum. Your contribution is critical in keeping your favorite museum going strong.

**Already a donor?** Please consider upping your support if you are able. We recognize the pinch is felt everywhere these days, but we simply hope that you can lend your support in even a small way before the close of 2022. Please visit our website to make a year-end gift or use the envelope enclosed. **Thank you!**

# CONSTRUCTION HAS BEGUN!

If you were on campus this season, you saw that Main Building was closed and construction was underway for *Artists & Inspiration in the Wild*, the ADKX's upcoming permanent exhibition. Through the winter and spring, building work will continue to create the clean canvas for the exhibit fabrication team, Capitol Museum Services (CMS) out of Manassas, Virginia. This award-winning company recently completed an exhibition project at the re-opened Smithsonian's Arts and Industries Building: *Futures*, a 32,000-square-foot project. Along with CMS, we continue to work with exhibit designers Gallagher & Associates, who also designed *Life in the Adirondacks*.

We are so grateful to those who have made generous financial commitments to this project. We have raised close to \$4.9 of the \$5.2 million goal and hope to close the \$300,000 gap by the end of December. We are looking ahead to the exhibition opening—July 1, 2023. Stay connected with us over the coming months to see the progress. We'll also be announcing hardhat tours and previews as we get closer to opening day. Members like you will be some of the first to see this exciting new addition!

## ARTISTS & INSPIRATION SERIES

Tune in each month for our Artists & Inspiration programs to hear from scholars, artists, teachers, and creative visionaries from across North America as they consider the creators and the collection that will be showcased in this new exhibition.

[www.theadkx.org/events/artists-inspiration-series/](http://www.theadkx.org/events/artists-inspiration-series/)



## Adirondack Historical Association

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