

# Programs At-A-Glance

Please refer to program descriptions on the following pages.

Program Name – Full Session Programs	Division	Yearly Availability
Bird Study	J / I / S	Year-Round
Canoeing	J / I / S	Spring, Fall
ConservACTION	J / I / S	Spring, Fall
Cross-Country Skiing	J / I / S	Winter
Ephemeral Nature Art	J / I / S	Spring & Fall
Fish Ecology Lab	J / I / S	Sept, Mid-May - June
GPS Geocaching	J / I / S	Year-Round
Group Dynamics	J / I / S	Year-Round
Instincts for Survival	J / I	Year-Round
Lake Ecology Lab	J / I / S	Spring, Fall
Mini-Olympics	J / I / S	Year-Round
Nature Hike	J / I / S	Year-Round
Nature Journaling	J / I / S	Spring & Fall
Photo Orienteering	J / I / S	Year-Round
Plankton Lab	I / S	Spring, Fall
Quest for Fire	J / I / S	Year-Round
Treasure Hunt	J / I	Year-Round
Tree Study	J / I / S	Year Round
Watersheds	J / I / S	Year-Round
Wetland Wonders and Wanders	J / I / S	Sept, Mid-May - June
Wilderness Survival	J / I / S	Year-Round
Program Name – Buildable Programs		
Bracelets	J / I / S	Year-Round
Eco-Jeopardy	J / I / S	Year-Round
Ephemeral Nature Art	J / I / S	Spring & Fall
Map Orienteering	J / I / S	Year-Round
Nature Photography	J / I / S	Year-Round
Scavenger Hunt	J	Year-Round
Snowshoeing	J / I / S	Winter
Sun Catchers	J / I / S	Spring and Fall
Sun Print Art	J / I / S	Spring and Fall
Traditional Games	J / I / S	Year-Round
Tree Medallions	J / I / S	Year-Round
Program Name –Evening Programs		
Bracelets	J / I / S	Year-Round
Camp Fire	J / I / S	Year-Round
Camp Fire Leadership	J / I / S	Year-Round
Clue	J / I / S	Year-Round
Eco-Jeopardy	J / I / S	Year-Round
Evening Hike	J / I / S	Year-Round
Legends of Lake St. George	I / S	Year-Round
Scavenger Hunt	J	Year-Round
Traditional Games	J / I / S	Year-Round
Tree Medallions	J / I / S	Year-Round
Wide Games	J / I / S	Year-Round

# Day Program Descriptions – Full Session

Each program fills a 2.5-hour session.

<b>Bird Study</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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We'll have you "raven" about the many species of birds that live and migrate through this part of Ontario! Participants are introduced to bird adaptations with hands-on investigations indoors, then a field study will utilize tips and tricks, bird guides and binoculars, as participants experience a birding expedition around the property. Depending on the time of year, stewardship or community science activities may be incorporated.

<b>Canoeing</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Spring, Fall</b>
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This program provides an introduction to the basics of lake-water canoeing. Students will learn about the parts of a canoe, choosing an appropriate paddle, and the safety equipment that is required. Instructors will then demonstrate how to properly get into a canoe, basic strokes, and necessary steps for a safe canoeing experience. Students will have an opportunity to practice their skills as they paddle around the lake basin. Instructors are certified by the Ontario Recreational Canoeing and Kayaking Association (ORCKA) and lifeguards are present for the duration of the program. All equipment, including personal floatation devices, will be provided.

<b>ConservACTION</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Spring, Fall</b>
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Students will have the opportunity to take direct action that benefits local ecosystems at Lake St. George and the wider environmental scientific community! After an introduction to the real-world importance of what they will be doing, students will engage in habitat improvements on our site, such as removal of invasive plants, planting native plants or preparing seeds to bring back to school, or construction of bat or bird boxes (additional charge required for some projects and dependent on availability of materials). The remainder of the program is dedicated to community science; students will go on a hike to gather data that will be inputted to databases used by conservation scientists. Depending on the season, observations may be of frog songs, birds, water chemistry, local animals or plants. Discussion will encourage drawing conclusions and continuing to help the environment once back at home or school.

<b>Cross-Country Skiing</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Winter</b>
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Learners will be introduced to the essentials of cross-country skiing. An indoor session touches on the history of the sport, equipment requirements, proper sizing, and safety considerations. Skis, boots, and poles are then distributed, followed by a group lesson which will present a step-by-step progression of the techniques that will allow the learner to enjoy a cross-country ski on the property. Learners are encouraged to incorporate cross-country skiing into a healthy, active lifestyle.  
*Notes: For groups over 20 students, this program takes place over 2 program blocks, with half of the group at a time. Please still select a full roster of programs, as the other half of the group will be doing another program at this time. This program is dependent upon suitable snow conditions.*

<b>Ephemeral Nature Art</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Spring &amp; Fall</b>
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Students will be introduced to the elements of design and how they can be used to create ephemeral works of art in nature, before heading outside to connect with nature in a unique way as they try it out themselves. Note: Your class will receive access to digital photographs of the artworks so that nature can reclaim the materials used.  
*Note: This is a stand-alone program lasting a full program period. As part of our Buildable Program, a shortened version of Ephemeral Nature Art is available without the photography component.*

<b>Fish Ecology Lab</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Sept, Mid-May - June</b>
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Your class can have hands-on and up-close experiences with fish in this lab. Students will be invited to fold, place and haul in our large seine net to gather fish from Lake Saint George. Once caught, the fish are carefully transferred to our aquaria. Students will be trained on the parts of a fish to help them use a visual key to identify the species that have been caught. Connections will be made to healthy aquatic systems through discussion of local issues such as invasive species.

<b>GPS Geocaching</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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We will begin with an introduction to GPS (e.g., uses, history, relevance to students' own lives or future careers, connection to topographical maps and the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinate system). Outside, students will learn how to use handheld GPS units to navigate before each small team sets out, using GPS units and a map of the area to race to as many geocache destinations as possible, gathering points along the way. May the best team win!

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<b>Group Dynamics</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Learners work in groups to solve a variety of defined challenges. Team success depends upon a combination of cooperation, communication, and physical and mental efforts from all individuals. Each activity is designed to build a cooperative group spirit and, at the same time, instill self-confidence in the learner and mutual respect for team-mates. This program may include Low Ropes Challenge Course activities.

<b>Instincts for Survival</b>	<b>J / I</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Learners will be involved in a simulation of predator-prey relationships while they play an active, outdoor food web game. After an introduction to set the parameters of the simulation, participants will assume the role of specific animals that are attempting to survive. Discussions involve the learner in gaining an understanding of animal ecology, as well as the impact of human activities on wildlife populations.

<b>Lake Ecology Lab</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Spring, Fall</b>
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Through an introductory discussion, students learn the unique geological features of the region, such as kettle lakes and the Oak Ridges Moraine. Students will measure several variables to create a profile of the lake and determine the health of Lake St. George, such as performing chemical tests on water samples. They will also learn safety aspects of being on the water, as a large component of the program is spent on the lake within the safety of a pontoon boat.

<b>Mini-Olympics</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Participants will enjoy taking part in a variety of non-traditional Olympic events. The class will be divided into teams, with each team choosing a name and cheer. A brief indoor period is given for teams to create their own flag and then the games begin! Weather pending, activities are run at a combination of indoor and outdoor locations, and may include water-based events. Games focus less on skill and athletic ability but, rather, are designed to be a bit ‘goofy’ and fun.

<b>Nature Hike</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Explore the beautiful Lake St. George property through the lens of your choosing with one of our knowledgeable guides! Select from the following options:

- Sugar Bush - Learn about the biology and history of harvesting and processing maple sap. (only available in March)
- Animal Detectives: Learning how to identify tracks, homes, scat and other signs of animal activity.
- Active Animal Games: Playing games that illustrate animal behaviours, interactions and adaptations.
- Community Science: Contributing observations to community science platforms such as iNaturalist.
- Biodiversity: Examining different species along the route to compare and contrast their features and ecological roles.

*Note: If also doing an Evening Hike, we can take a different route to provide two unique experiences. Please ensure the chosen themes are different.*

<b>Nature Journaling</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Spring &amp; Fall</b>
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Students will be guided in slowing down to observe and connect with nature through intentional thinking routines and journaling strategies, with a focus on journals as "perfectly imperfect" tools for reflection rather than polished works of art. A combination of sketching, imprinting, creative writing, water colours and other techniques can be explored.

<b>Photo Orienteering</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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In this more advanced orienteering activity, learners have the opportunity to develop their compass and map-reading skills. Working in small teams, they will be given a photograph of a particular spot on the property. The team must travel to this spot, take a compass bearing, and mark the location on a map using a specific symbol. The team then returns to a check-in destination where they receive points and a new photograph. Learners aim to complete as many photographs as possible in the time allotted, while maintaining the highest accuracy in their compass and map work.

<b>Plankton Lab</b>	<b>I / S</b>	<b>Spring, Fall</b>
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In this introduction to aquatic microbiology, students will use specialized equipment such as plankton nets to collect plankton samples from the littoral zone of Lake St. George. After a brief review of aquatic food webs and an introduction to some common types of plankton and microorganisms they may find, students will prepare slides and use microscopes to observe and record various phytoplankton and zooplankton they had collected from Lake St. George. Please note that classes must bring their own microscopes for this program.

<b>Quest for Fire</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Students will begin by considering the symbolic and practical importance of fire to different cultures and in different times. They will learn about the basic chemistry and physics of fire and then apply that knowledge by learning to make fire with a bow-drill or flint and steel. Finally, students will work in groups to complete an adventure style race using a map to find all the parts necessary to make a fire and then use it to boil water.

<b>Treasure Hunt</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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“Arrr, matey!” Participants are told a legend about pirate activity on the Lake St. George property. They learn that a treasure chest and partial map have been uncovered, but that the key to unlock the chest has yet to be located. Participants work to complete the ‘pirate’s map,’ while learning to use a grid coordinate system, legend with symbols, and compass directions. Working in four groups, they then use the map in conjunction with written clues to travel the property in search of keys. The correct key will open the chest and reveal treasure of immeasurable value!

<b>Tree Study</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Get to know some of the trees at Lake St. George through unique and engaging activities tailored to your students' age and the season! Activities may include using multiple senses to find a specific tree, an interactive game about biodiversity and invasive species, exploring leaf characteristics and applying identification keys to a team-based challenge around the property, slowing down to connect with trees through guided green breath, investigating and applying methods to measure tree height, trying out tools to calculate the ecological benefits of specific trees, learning about maple sugaring and, of course, discussing how we can all help support healthy trees and forests.

<b>Watersheds</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Dive deeper into the water cycle with this place-based learning experience! After a review of the water cycle, we will introduce the concept of a watershed, locate which watershed your school is in, and explore why and how to maintain good watershed health. Students will then rotate through the following activities: 1) Tour the property while discussing the parts and natural features of a watershed, types of land use and their effects, and mitigation measures we can all take; and 2) Perform chemical testing on water samples from Lake St. George and the local area that will be submitted for real-world community science work. Discussions will encourage making conclusions about the lake’s health.

*Please note that there is some overlap between this program and Lake Ecology.*

<b>Wetland Wonders and Wanders</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Sept, Mid-May - June</b>
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It’s time to get out those rubber boots and meet the cool creatures in Lake St. George’s wetlands! In this Pond Study, students will learn about the four main types of wetlands that can be found in southern Ontario, their importance, and ways to help conserve these vital areas. They will then hike to a series of wetlands and use an analytical tool to study some of the invertebrates they find. Discussions will encourage making conclusions about wetland health.

<b>Wilderness Survival</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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A popular team challenge! After an introduction to some important aspects of basic survival techniques in the outdoors, students will work in a cooperative team situation to put them into practice. Each team will be challenged to construct a small cooking fire and/or shelter from natural materials. Key elements of this lesson stress a ‘no-trace’ camping philosophy, as well as the safety aspects of preparation and planning for a successful outdoor experience.

## Day Program Descriptions – Buildable

Some valuable and fun activities just don't last 2.5 hours. Using this list you may choose **two** activities to fill a morning or afternoon program session. We recommend selecting at least one outdoor activity.

<b>Bracelets</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Students work with natural hemp cord to make a bracelet, key chain or zipper pull, learning how to add personal touches, or use paracord to make their own "survival bracelet".

*Note: There may be an additional fee for supplies.*

<b>Eco-Jeopardy</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Modeled after the popular television game show, participants will be divided into teams and challenged in a fun and interactive manner to answer environmental- or animal- themed questions. Categories include such topics as wildlife, water, waste minimization, energy and climate change, and are meant to raise awareness of human impacts on the environment.

<b>Ephemeral Nature Art</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Spring &amp; Fall</b>
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Students will be quickly introduced to the elements of design and how they can be used to create ephemeral works of art in nature, before heading outside to connect with nature in a unique way as they try it out themselves.

<b>Map Orienteering</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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A fun and active program to introduce map-reading skills! Students travel in small teams throughout the Lake St. George property, searching for checkpoints marked on their maps. This can be either a competition - where every group receives a map with all the checkpoints and the team that reaches the most checkpoints wins - or a cooperative challenge, in which each team’s map shows only one checkpoint and teams must share amongst one another to achieve the highest class score possible (by combining the scores from every team). Please include which version you would like when making your program selection.

<b>Nature Photography</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Students will be introduced to six key elements of composition in nature photography, then groups of 4 will share a digital camera to put them into action. Note: Your class will receive access to an online folder with the digital photographs rather than hard copies.

<b>Scavenger Hunt</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Participants work cooperatively in small teams to collect everything on their Scavenger Hunt sheet, including information and non-living items from nature. This activity provides a great opportunity for participants to have fun and be active outdoors, while gaining familiarity with the dorm-to-dorm area of the Lake St. George property, and some of its plants and animals.

<b>Snowshoeing</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Winter</b>
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In this program, the learner is introduced to the basic skills of snowshoeing. An introduction covers the history of the snowshoe, as well as the essential techniques needed to enjoy a snowshoeing trail walk. Half of the students will snowshoe at a time (please select another Buildable Program for the students not snowshoeing)

*Note: This program is dependent upon suitable snow conditions.*

<b>Sun Catchers</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Spring and Fall</b>
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Design your own suncatcher to hang in a window back home! Students will learn how to gather materials from nature while maintaining the health of the environment and seal them onto contact paper within a craft stick frame, which they can decorate. Finally, they can add string so it can hang in a window as a personalized souvenir of their time at Lake St. George.

<b>Sun Print Art</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Spring and Fall</b>
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Create artworks using the power of the sun! Students will learn how to gather materials from nature while maintaining the health of the environment and arrange them on a cyanoprint sheet in the sunshine. After a few minutes of exposure time, they will rinse the sheet and hang it to dry as a beautiful souvenir of their time at Lake St. George.

*Note: This program is weather-dependent.*

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<b>Traditional Games</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Learn and try out some games that have been played by Indigenous cultures across Turtle Island! This program includes a combination of activities that use strength, speed, observation and coordination.

<b>Tree Medallions</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Students each decorate a ‘tree cookie’ with a nature-themed picture and creative expression of their name, then coat it in lacquer and add a cord so that it can be worn around their neck.

(Evening Programs on next page)

# Evening Program Descriptions

Each program fills a 1.5-hour session.

<b>Bracelets</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Students work with natural hemp cord to make a bracelet, key chain or zipper pull, learning how to add personal touches, or use paracord to make their own "survival bracelet".  
*Note: There may be an additional fee for supplies.*

<b>Campfire</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Many groups enjoy the tradition of including a campfire circle in their visit to Lake St. George. For this open-ended program, our staff will start a campfire for your group. After providing safety instructions, we will leave you and your students to enjoy the campfire at your leisure and according to your own timeline. We will provide additional firewood. Please remember to bring your own marshmallows.

<b>Campfire Leadership</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Build on the traditional campfire with some student-led entertainment! This evening program will provide participants with the skills, techniques, and resources needed to lead a successful, fun-filled and inclusive campfire. Participants will prepare, practice and deliver one or more campfire components such as an opening, poems, skits, songs, stories, and games. They will also have an opportunity to roast marshmallows. An emphasis is placed on safety considerations. Please remember to bring your own marshmallows.

<b>Clue</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Participate in a murder mystery based on the board game Clue! Student detectives will work together in small groups to come up with a strategy and use the process of elimination to determine who committed the crime, where the crime was committed and what type of weapon was used.

<b>Eco-Jeopardy</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Modeled after the popular television game show, participants will be divided into teams and challenged in a fun and interactive manner to answer environmental- or animal- themed questions. Categories include such topics as wildlife, water, waste minimization, energy and climate change, and are meant to raise awareness of human impacts on the environment.

<b>Evening Hike</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Join us on a guided walk through the forests and meadows of Lake St. George property. Teachers may choose a theme from the list below or allow their leader to run the activities they feel are best suited to the season.

- Owls: call for owls, learn about owl adaptations and ecology (available year-round, best chance to hear Owls is in Spring), owl pellet examination available if requested
- Bats: use a bat detector to listen for the echolocating sounds of bats, play a game to experience life as a bat, and learn about the special role Lake St. George's barn plays in their life cycle (bats are active in Spring and Fall only)
- Frogs: learn about different frog calls and identify the species calling at Lake St. George
- Astronomy: after watching a slide show about astronomy, go outside to identify constellations (best time is Winter, not available when sunset is after 7:00PM)
- Senses: walking in the dark brings attention to our other senses, through games and demonstrations students learn about their senses and the senses of animals adapted to the night

<b>Legends of Lake St. George</b>	<b>I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Get ready for an informative and a spooky dive into the history and lore of Lake St. George! A slideshow introduces participants to the history of the site from its first documented resident Henri Quetton de St. George through to the opening of the Lake St. George Field Centre in 1979. The program then leads into an outdoor storytelling hike describing “strange happenings” - around the property over the years.

<b>Scavenger Hunt</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Participants work cooperatively in small teams to collect everything on their Scavenger Hunt sheet, including information and non-living items from nature. This activity provides a great opportunity for participants to have fun and be active outdoors, while gaining familiarity with the dorm-to-dorm area of the Lake St. George property, and some of its plants and animals.

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<b>Traditional Games</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Learn and try out some games that have been played by Indigenous cultures across Turtle Island! This program includes a combination of activities that use strength, speed, observation and coordination.

<b>Tree Medallions</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Students each decorate a ‘tree cookie’ with a nature-themed picture and creative expression of their name, then coat it in lacquer and add a cord so that it can be worn around their neck.

<b>Wide Games</b>	<b>J / I / S</b>	<b>Year-Round</b>
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Participants will have an active and enjoyable set of both indoor and outdoor games to bring out the best in any group! Activities may span the areas of traditional, group/cooperative, athletic/sport, trust, recreational or just plain fun! Please let us know in advance if you would like to play broomball in the winter: a spin on hockey that uses a broom and a ball rather than a stick and a puck — and is played on a gravel surface instead of ice.

*Note that the games played may depend on the weather.*