



# MVAC

**CONNECTING THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND THE FUTURE**



**MISSISSIPPI VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGY CENTER**

2024 | UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE



MVAC staff at the Artifact Show at Valley View Mall, March 2024. Click photo for a brief video, including interviews with avocational archaeologists Jim Losinski and Jay Bittner.



What's it like to paddle a dugout canoe on the Mississippi? Thanks to the Ho-Chunk Nation, MVAC/UWL archaeologists (Kathy Stevenson pictured) and local officials got a chance to find out. Click photo for more information.

## 2024 Update

As always, MVAC's hardworking staff have been busy all year. Our field crews have been out on projects from April into December, finding and evaluating sites and monitoring construction in sensitive areas. Our online and in-person outreach activities have benefited community members in a wide range of settings. And we've also helped undergraduate students gain experience and develop their career skills.

## The Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center

Founded in 1982, MVAC is a research and educational organization based at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse (UWL). Our mission of regional research, preservation, and education focuses on understanding and preserving the rich cultural heritage of the Upper Mississippi Valley. We offer:

- Resources and professional expertise for research, preservation, and planning
- Public engagement and hands-on learning for all ages
- Career-building experience for undergraduates
- Curation of regional artifacts and documents

## How We're Supported

MVAC is a self-sustaining unit of the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

We're funded by:

- Contracts and grants
- Endowment income
- Public donations
- United Fund for the Arts and Humanities (UFAH)



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MVAC began a new Video Glossary series in 2024. Click photo for an entry that features Senior Research Associate Dr. Connie Arzigian discussing grooved stones.



Jean Dowiasch shovel testing and Lindsay Lentz sifting for artifacts while checking for possible sites on a CRM survey.

## Archaeological Research and Cultural Resource Management (CRM)

MVAC's CRM specialists help agencies, developers, and others fulfill their historic preservation responsibilities through all stages of a project, from initial planning to successful completion. Our services include:

- Evaluation of project needs and requirements
- Records reviews and surveys to find out whether cultural sites are present
- Special considerations and monitoring for sensitive locations
- Evaluation of site condition and significance
- Excavation to recover information
- Artifact processing and analysis
- GIS mapping
- Project reporting

## Repository and Library

Our region's cultural heritage spans thousands of years. We're helping to preserve this rich, meaningful history for future generations. MVAC's archaeological repository is the largest in western Wisconsin, featuring:

- Documented collections from hundreds of sites
- An extensive library of reports and files
- Curation services for federal agencies and the State of Wisconsin
- Information for planning and research
- Respectful treatment of information and artifacts related to Indigenous sites



Bill Quackenbush, Ho-Chunk Nation Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, gave a presentation on how Ho-Chunk people adapted to the region—including its harsh winters—over thousands of years. A link to a recording will be available in early 2025.



Long-time MVAC friend Loren Cade shared the process of making traditional bows. (Click photo to watch video.) His previous video on traditional arrow-making is also available on MVAC's YouTube channel.

## Public Education & Outreach

MVAC's trusted public archaeology program encourages understanding and respect for the region's long cultural heritage. Our outreach activities include:

- An on-campus exhibit area
- Outreach events:
  - Annual Artifact Show
  - Public presentations
  - Public field surveys
- Resources and information for avocational archaeologists and the general public
- Support for K-12 education:
  - Working with teachers
  - Classroom visits (in-person or virtual) and resources

## We bring archaeology to you!

MVAC's digital resources make it easy to get the latest information:

- Free monthly **e-News** emails with updates, information, events, book reviews, and more
- **Archaeology News** newsletters with updates, project information, and more
- **Website** with news, upcoming events, and interesting content
- **Videos on YouTube** with a variety of topics
- **Facebook** posts with upcoming events, weekly informational posts, and regional information
- **Tumblr** blog with weekly informational posts and monthly archaeology fiction reviews

Questions about archaeology? Contact us at [mvac@uwlax.edu](mailto:mvac@uwlax.edu) or 608.785.6473.



Our new Archaeology Alumni Podcasts feature MVAC/UWL alumni discussing their experiences, career journeys, and insights. Click photo to view/listen to the podcast with 1997 grad Jeremy Nienow, who now owns his own cultural resource management firm.



MVAC's 2024 Public Field Survey took 14 volunteers to a Vernon County property where a former landowner had found multiple projectile points. After the field work, the crew returned to the lab to process their finds. Click photo for more information.

## Support for Undergraduate Education

UWL's highly regarded Archaeology program prepares students for careers in archaeology and other fields. MVAC enriches that experience by providing:

- Collections and resources that enhance undergraduate learning
- Internships and other opportunities for research, learning skills, and creating knowledge
- Hands-on field and lab experience as volunteers or paid crew

MVAC experience helps students and graduates shape and refine their career plans, get jobs, and apply for graduate school successfully. Many have become professional archaeologists, while others have carried their experience into other careers.

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## MVAC Staff

**Timothy McAndrews**  
Director

**Erik Anderson**  
Research Archaeologist

**Michael Bednarchuk**  
Laboratory Manager

**Jean Dowiasch**  
Education Coordinator  
Senior Research Archaeologist

**Wendy Holtz-Leith**  
Senior Research Archaeologist

**Katherine Stevenson**  
Operations Manager

**Bonnie Jancik**  
Director of Public Outreach  
Development Budget Manager

**Vicki Twinde-Javner**  
Senior Research Archaeologist  
Contracts Budget Manager

**Cindy Kocik**  
Archaeologist

**Lindsay Lentz**  
Archaeologist

## Research Associates

David Anderson  
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