

**A special invitation  
to Home School Families  
to consider the educational possibilities  
and  
to utilize the facilities of  
Machen Retreat and Conference Center**

MRCC is located 9 miles south of McDowell, VA in the Bullpasture Valley of secluded, beautiful and mountainous Highland County. It could be a resource in your plans to fulfill a multitude of curriculum goals for your children's education not only as an open air science lab but also as a site with overnight accommodations which could provide a base from which your family can explore many historical, cultural, educational and recreational opportunities in the Allegheny Region of both Western Virginia and / or Eastern West Virginia. The facilities at Machen are available for use during the spring, summer and fall each year. Mid-week dates are generally the most available.

SOME OF MACHEN RESOURCES:

- Star Gazing with ***no*** light pollution
- Watch for birds on site or along many recommended birding trails in the region
- Wildflowers are plentiful on the property. A wildflower identification project begun in the spring of 2008 has identified well over 150 different plants. ***Only*** photography of wildflowers is allowed.
- Insects abound; please collect some and take them home with you – dead or alive!
- Many types of fern, grass and moss can be found on site. Come, find and identify them.
- Elevation changes on the property makes hiking great physical exercise.
- Generally Machen is a woodland habitat area. Trees are plentiful; identify and / or collect their leaves in the fall.
- There is some roadside and open field area on the Machen property.
- Extensive road side and creek / river side as well as woodland habitat are nearby in National Forest, State Parks, Wildlife Management Areas and on public recreational land.

Interested persons can contact the director, ([director@machen.org](mailto:director@machen.org)) who can verify the availability of the center (active conferences and home schooling field trips do not work well together).

Cost is \$1/person, which allows the use of the barbecue pits, picnic tables, and the bathroom facilities.

Sarah Leslie (if available) can assist you to “Machenize” some of your home schooling or plan an educational family vacation in the current summer. Sarah is a past (1984-1999) home school mother of 2 who guided the education of her children in the dark ages of home education when curriculum development by parent was the only option. She can assist you to maximize your usage of resources available at Machen and in the surrounding area by discussing current educational needs and goals of your children and making suggestions for possible activities to meet a variety of these educational objectives.

**Please note:** NO ONE ASSOCIATED WITH THE OPERATION OR MAINTANCE OF MACHEN RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER WILL IN ANY WAY ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR, OR OVERSITE OF, THE EDUCATION OR SUPERVISION OF YOUR CHILD(REN) WHILE YOU AND THEY ARE AT MACHEN.

To learn more about Machen Retreat and Conference Center, its facilities and fees please refer to the MRCC website: [www.machen.org](http://www.machen.org)