

# NEWSLETTER

*Summer Issue*

JUNE 12, 2019



Andrew Kane

## HISTORY REPEATS

We are certainly experiencing another remarkable weather phenomenon throughout the Great Lakes watershed. For many of us, who've experienced this beautiful area only since the Moses Saunders dam creation, this seems a bizarre and infrequent phenomena.

Yet before the dam, the St. Lawrence River, like many other rivers ebbed and flowed with the years, bringing nutrients and creating habitat necessary for the unique ecosystem and creatures found here.

Minna's article this month mentions the abnormally high water of 1930 and then low water the following year. The good news, she documented how the shoreline and

habitat responded to the water's inundation in 1932; nature always adapts and responds - so to will the people and communities living along the shoreline of the River.

Be wary of boathouses with electrical units under water (homeowners, remember to unplug/turn off shoreline electricity); please slow down to prevent any unnecessary damage from boat wakes; and please remember to check on your neighbors shorelines if they have to leave town. The River community pulled together to support the Nature Center in its time of need and must do so again to support each other.

We can't wait to see you on the trails!

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON SERIES - ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED JULY 12, 1932



## PLANT LIFE AT WATER'S EDGE NOTED

WATER'S RISE TWO YEARS AGO WASHED  
ROCKS CLEAN

*PLANT GROWTH LUSH AGAIN*

By Mrs. James A. Common

Two years ago the water in the St. Lawrence River rose higher than at any time within memory of the oldest inhabitant. Docks were inundated, boathouses were washed away, charted shoals disappeared while small islands became shoals, the river was three feet deeper along the shore so all plant life was destroyed. Last year the water was low and this year it is normal. To study what plants have sprung up in the rock cracks and in the new-formed soil along the water's edge was most interesting. For special observation, I selected a narrow and shallow

indentation between a jutting granite boulder and a row of great rocks tumbled hit-or-miss along a pebbly shore. It had been entirely under water and washed clean of all vegetation and a great part of the soil, except in the miniature bay.

The great jutting granite boulder is still rather bare of plant life. In a few of the cracks soil has formed made from sand washed up by storms and lodged there with disintegrated rushes and pine needles. These cracks are very small, not over an inch wide and the plants appear like soldiers marching in single file. We found four kinds of grasses and a sedge, cinquefoil or five finger with wee yellow blossoms, St. Johns wort also with yellow flowers, smart weed, and a few insignificant seedling wild cherry trees. That was all, for not even a moss nor a lichen yet showed anywhere.

Almost the same plants were growing among the tumbled rocks and pebbles on the other shore, but in the little indentation between, now just barely out of water, plant growth was lush. Sweet clover, four feet high thorough wort with great thick spongy leaves, mullein sending up its fat flower stalks, buttercup, jewelweed, both white and hop-clover, beautiful blue-eyed grasses turning their smiling faces toward the sun, blue speedwell so like forget-me-not, and silverweed trailing plume-like leaves along the ground, all were there.

Bog plants: pickerel weed and arrowhead, bur-reed and sweet flag grew close to the water's edge and straight wand-like reeds made a thick mass just off shore. The clear water between the reeds and the shore was full of timid water animals. A great school of tiny minnows, packed together like sardines in a tin, heads all one way, made a black spot over almost half the expanse. They moved continuously but got nowhere, the movement being circular rather than straight ahead.

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON SERIES - CONTINUED

Water snails clung to the stones, a strange awkward creature crawling up a red, and clinging closely, started to shiver and shake. Soon it split up its back, an awesome sight, and began to crawl out of itself. The new-hatched creature was wet and gooey, but in a short time its gauzy wings unfolded and there before us was a full-sized dragonfly.

Damsel flies, some red, some with black, some with blue bodies hovered about and alighted on the reed with wings folded lengthwise along the body; a frog croaked among the thick weed; a snake's head appeared swimming leisurely toward the minnows. He was met by another coming from the opposite direction and while we gazed wonderingly a

third came from the shore. If their object was to feed on the minnows we shall never know for our dog spied them and they departed swiftly in three different directions. A big lazy turtle was sunning itself on a rock and solitary sandpiper ran up and down, "peet-peeting."

Finally, with reluctance, we left the place, and we had gotten only a few boat lengths away when a graceful tern swooped down from the air and picked a minnow from the school. He swallowed it in midair, took a wing about and plunged again. After several repetitions he started off toward the Clayton shore.

- Reprinted with permission from the Watertown Daily Times.



### FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

For those of you on Facebook interested, *like* the **International Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River Board** for weekly water level and flow updates, press releases from the IJC, and accurate information about current flooding. The site has many short videos and charts explaining the terms and methods used to describe waterway management.



Remember to like us on Facebook for realtime updates and the calendar of events. Look for "Minna Anthony Common Nature Center - Friends."



### **The Board of Directors for The Friends of the Nature Center, Inc.**

Matthew Elliott

*President*

Stefanie Kring

*Vice President*

Andrew Kane

*Treasurer*

Joe Leskoske

*Secretary*

Barb Eldridge

Susan Mowers

James Miller

Jeffrey Weldon

Jeffrey Hanna

Jonathan White

Meredith Sullivan

Erin Lettiere

Kerry Roberge

Jane Arras

Leslie Johnson

### **Park Employees**

Steve Cline

*Park Manager*

Josh Dunlap

*Assist. Park Manager*

Kimberly Cullen

*Program Coordinator*

### **Friends of the Nature Center Employees**

Darlene Sourwine

*Volunteer Coordinator*

Mary Jean Jones

*Bookkeeper*



# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER



**4pm - 7pm: Wine & Cheese Reception**

Art Sale with Live Music

Meet the Artists in Cross Island Farm's  
Enchanted Edible Forest Garden

**10am-3pm: Watch Artists Work Outdoors**

in Wellesley Island State Park

Thursday, June 20th 2019



## CLARKSON CONNECTIONS

On May 11, the Friends of the Nature Center and TILT co-hosted the second lecture in the Clarkson Connections seminar series. Dr. Glenn Johnson, from SUNY Potsdam, gave an informative and entertaining lecture on the threatened Blanding's turtle and the status of this species in New York State. Dr. Johnson even brought a live Blanding's turtle for people to observe and touch. A great time was had by all!

There are three seminars left in the series on June 27 (Birkhead Lecture at Zenda Farms Preserve), August 8 (MACNC), and September 14 (MACNC). Snacks and refreshments are served at each lecture, and there is time before and after for discussion with the speaker. We hope to see you at these upcoming events!





# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## SCENES FROM AROUND THE CENTER - I LOVE MY PARK DAY



*Thank you for loving your Nature Center! Yet another great turnout for I Love My Park Day!*



*Even Captain Mason Zink docked his ship to swab the decks at the Nature Center.*



*Marcus Wolf received a helping hand from our former and greatly missed director, Molly Farrell.*

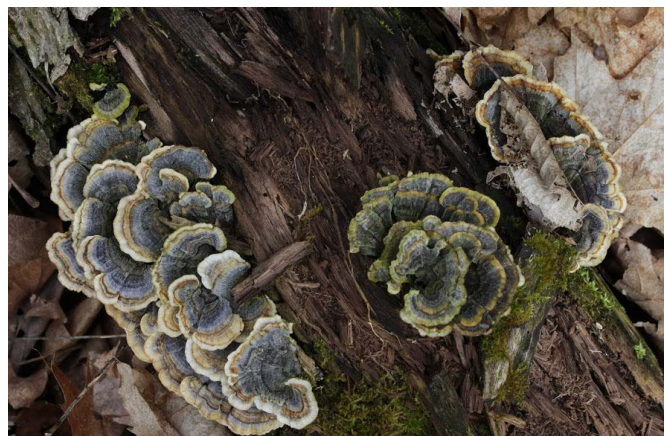


*Bradley and Emmett pulled landscaping duty... Who knew a wheelbarrow wasn't just for rides?*

## SCENES FROM AROUND THE CENTER - TRAIL MIX



*A hodgepodge of tracks, canine and deer, in the spring mud.*



*Beauty abounds on Wellesley Island!*

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Canoe Training

*Tuesday, June 26<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday,  
June 27<sup>th</sup> - 9am*

Our 36 foot canoe requires a lot of paddling power! Before summer programs start our staff needs to practice steering our 1000 lbs fiberglass canoe and learn the necessary interpretation. If you like to paddle or are interested in assisting with our summer canoe trips, this training is for you! You do not need to be available to help with canoe programs to participate in this training though. We need 8 paddlers to take the canoe out so even if you just want to add your paddling power to the canoe for one day, your help is appreciated. Preregistration is required.

### Front Desk Operations

#### *Ongoing Trainings*

If you enjoy talking to people and witnessing nature in action (you never know what will walk in the front door!) then come learn about our front desk position! You'll learn more about the Nature Center, see plenty of trailside pictures, and learn the answer to the popular question "what's the best loop to hike?". This is a much needed and appreciated volunteer position! Please let Darlene know if you are interested in working at the front desk and we will set up a time for you to be trained.

**Please pre-register by  
calling the Nature Center at  
315-482-2479**

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

The summer season fast upon us, and our visitor numbers are happily going up! The Nature Center is once again echoing the sounds of children on school field trips, cheerfully interacting with our new displays. Wildlife is busy and our trails are trimmed with new growth... this is the busiest season for the Nature Center! This is also when we seek out new volunteers to join our awesome team.

Calling out to all who'd love to be a part of nature, enjoy the outdoors, or enjoy talking with visitors from around the world at the reception desk. This is a *great* place to spend your time! Our volunteers are vital to the Nature Center, and they're a big part of our day to day operations and programs. They help with the butterfly house, gardens, work at the reception desk and much more.



One volunteer, Barb Hearn, enjoys working in the gardens and loves to volunteer for many of our programs as well. Here she is preparing the butterfly house for summer visitors. Thank you Barb for all you do!

And speaking of volunteers, I am truly excited that we have collaborated with the Alexandria Bay Central School's agriculture/ Future Farmers of America students. The students volunteered to start our Autumn Festival pumpkins from seed in their greenhouse then they came to the Nature Center to transplant them. It great to have the next generation take part in this wonderful project!

Please consider being a part of our team. Get into the nature side of life! Any time donated is greatly appreciated, whether an hour, a day or once a month! Your volunteer hours not only directly help with tasks and fill shortages of staffing, but can be documented to qualify for grants for the Nature Center.

Thank you for considering becoming a volunteer. If interested, please contact the Nature Center.

Darlene Sourwine, Volunteer Coordinator



# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

---

## NEW BOARD MEMBER POSITIONS FILLED



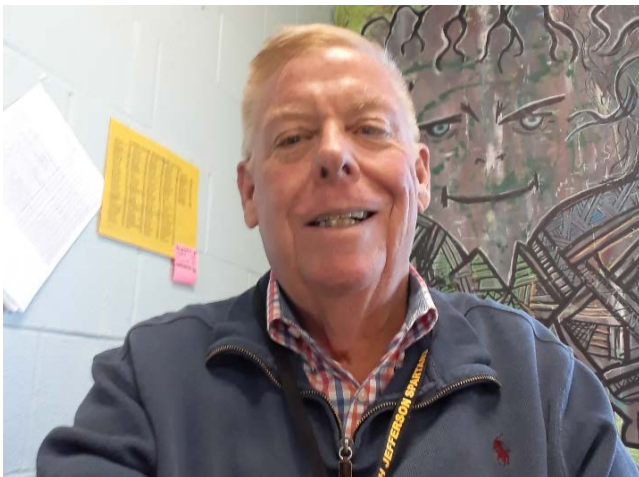
Our former board secretary, Jane Arras first joined the Friends of the Nature Center Board of Directors in 2007. She recently retired from the field of health education, having worked in schools and agencies in the Syracuse area for over thirty years.

"I am honored to be a returning board member. Although I didn't discover the joys of the River until I became an adult, I now consider myself a tried and true river rat, happily sharing my love for the river with my husband, 2 sons, 2 daughters-in-law and 3 grandsons. I'm delighted to be a part of a board that appreciates and works to share the wonders of this magnificent place." Welcome back Jane, and thank you for your time and dedication!

---

Leslie Johnson grew up in Watertown, NY spending summers on Wellesley Island. She earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Education & Sociology from Nazareth College and Teachers College, Columbia University, returning during summers to lifeguard at Wellesley Island State Park. Leslie prefers to spend her time outside and can frequently be found hiking with her two dogs. She currently resides in Pound Ridge, NY but can often be found at Lake of the Isles.

"I am honored to serve as a new board member alongside those who care so deeply about the Nature Center and the impact it has on the surrounding community!" Welcome Leslie and thank you for carrying forward our mission and legacy!



Kerry Roberge served the Friends of the Nature Center as board president since February 1997, recently stepping down to fulfill updated board term limits. He retired from his practice in medical billing and consulting and has served numerous philanthropic organizations throughout the North Country. Kerry has a treasure trove of Nature Center history.

"The Nature Center is truly an asset to the 1000 Islands, New York State Parks, and all the surrounding communities. I look forward to serving yet again." Welcome back Kerry! Thank you for your leadership and passion!

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER



## THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS JOINED OR RENEWED THEIR COMMITMENT

The Friends of the Nature Center appreciate our members and their continuous generosity. Such steadfast support allows us to continue to provide the community and school children with critical natural education.

Mary Beth Branche	Alexandria Bay, NY
Leslie Johnson	Pound Ridge, NY
Erin Lettiere	Clayton, NY
Phyllis Schwartz	Camillus, NY
Bill and Tina Siebels	Gouverneur, NY
Maggie and Roger Reid	Fayetteville, NY
Mary Ann Karp	Newark Valley, NY
Windsor and Kay Price	Wellesley Island, NY
Edward McNally	Wellesley Island, NY
Meredith Sullivan	Clayton, NY
Mike and Amy Phelps	Wellesley Island, NY
Leslie and Rick Tolman	Chesterland, OH
Dani Baker	Wellesley Island, NY
Bernard Forth	Fayetteville, NY
Libby Benson and Timothy Cummings	Hingham, MA
Jonathan and Heather White	Watertown, NY
Denis Roberts	Winter Garden, FL
Gary and Mary Burgmeier	Wellesley Island, NY
Sue Mowers	Wellesley Island, NY
Hunter Horton	Wellesley Island, NY
Audie Cerow	Clayton, NY
Richard and Helen Fuhrman	Theresa, NY
Susanne Duclon	Wellesley Island, NY
Don and Barb Rumpf	Wellesley Island, NY
Tom and Irene Carman	Wellesley Island, NY
Maggie and Dan Lort	Wellesley Island, NY
Jennifer Smathers	Farmington, NY

**Thank you!**



# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

SUMMER PROGRAMS 2019

315-482-2479

## **Voyageur Canoe Program**

*Most weekdays beginning July 4<sup>th</sup>, 9am-11am*

Come and spend a few hours helping to paddle our 36-foot Voyageur Canoe while learning about the history of the Voyageurs and the ecology of the St. Lawrence River. If staffing permits, we may be having one evening canoe tour per week. Preregistration is required.

\$4 for adults and \$2 for children under 13

## **Spider's Fishing Programs**

*Saturdays, July 6<sup>th</sup>, August 31<sup>st</sup>,*

*September 14<sup>th</sup>, & October 5<sup>th</sup>*

Basic Fishing 11:00am - 1:00pm

Basics of Fly Fishing 1:30pm - 3:30pm

Join Spider on the Nature Center dock as he shares his knowledge and love of fishing.

Spider brings a limited number of fishing poles, hooks,

bobbers, and

worms. If you can

bring your own tackle, it will allow

for more

participation in the program. of this and

other programs.

Spider's classes are

free thanks to the

support of the

Barbara and Daniel

Butts Enrichment

Fund.



## **Splash Bash**

*July 7<sup>th</sup>*

11am - 2pm

Join us at Keewaydin State Park's Pool for a pool party! We'll have corn hole, turtle races, a dinosaur egg hunt, a water balloon toss, and so much more for the children to enjoy!

## **Westy's Birds of Prey**

*Friday, July 5<sup>th</sup> at the Park Pavilion: 10am*

*Friday, July 26<sup>th</sup> at the Park Pavilion: 10am*

*Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup> at MACNC: 10am*

Rick West will be returning this summer with his live birds of prey. These programs are made possible this year thanks to funds Wellesley Island State Park raises by renting boats at our marina. Please call the Nature Center for directions.

## **Kathy Sommer & Paul Hubert of THE BUSKERS**

*Friday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 4-6pm*

Featuring fantastic fiddle, guitar and great vocals, seasoned with mandolin and banjo, local fiddler Kathy Sommer and guitarist Paul Hubert make heads turn with their wide variety of music from traditional tunes to blues, swing, and original songs, and seasoned stage presence. Both are members of the roots/folk/pop band THE BUSKERS, the NH-based touring band that visits the North Country each year.

*Concert to be held at the Park Pavilion  
by the Marina*

## **Children's Fishing Derby**

*Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup>: 12:30-3:00pm*

Come join in the fun with Spider Rybaak at our fishing derby for children 14 and under! There is a \$2.00 entrance fee that will support future programming at the Nature Center. Prizes will be awarded to participants in three categories: the longest, heaviest, and most fish. Fish must be taken with rod and reel; all legal baits will be allowed. Preregistration is required. This event is sponsored by the Barbara and Daniel Butts Enrichment Fund.

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

SUMMER PROGRAMS 2019

315-482-2479

## **Yoga on the Lawn**

*Thursdays, July 26<sup>th</sup> and August 8<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>*

10-11am

Come join Barb Eldridge for a calming yoga class on the side lawn of the Nature Center! Yogis of all abilities are welcome. Bring a mat if you have one! We will have a few spares.

## **Discovering Wild Mushrooms - Hike and Discussion**

*Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup>*

1pm

Jean Fahey, President of the Central New York Mycological Society, will be at the Nature Center to teach people about the many species of wild mushrooms that grow on Wellesley Island. The program will include a brief talk where she introduces people to the different forms of mushrooms and explains a little about their life cycle. She will then lead the group on a hike to search for mushrooms along our trails. If you are at all interested in wild mushrooms then this program is not to be missed! Call the Nature Center for more information or to preregister.

## **Boater Safety Course**

*Sundays, July 28<sup>th</sup> and August 18<sup>th</sup>*

8-4pm

The course will be held at the Nature Center. Adult and children are welcome to participate. There is no charge for the course but you will be expected to pay the \$7 day use fee to enter Wellesley Island State Park. If you are 18 or older there is a \$10 fee payable to NYS OPRHP for your certificate. Please call Gary Kocher at 315-486-5230 to pre-register. Pre-register is required and space is limited.

## **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration!**

*Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup>*

It will be a special day of programming at the Nature Center, including sketching and coloring book activities, reading and storytelling, and much more! Rick West with his Live Birds of Prey will attend and introduce us to his feathered friends! This event is hosted by the Friends of the Nature Center Educational Committee.



Clarkson™



## **Clarkson Connections Lecture Series:**

### **“ReWILDING the East: Protecting and Restoring an Atlantic to Appalachian to Adirondack to Algonquin Wildway”**

Thursday, June 27<sup>th</sup>: 6pm

\*Held at Zenda Farms Preserve\*

*Rewilding Earth* editor and wildways scout John Davis will show photos from his explorations of wild places of eastern North America, to make a case for restoring and protecting a continental wildlife corridor. Light refreshments offered. Register in advance by emailing [treks@tilandtrust.org](mailto:treks@tilandtrust.org), calling (315)686-5345, or visiting [www.tilandtrust.org](http://www.tilandtrust.org)

8/8 - Thursday - Manon VanSchoyck (Ohio Nature Education)

9/14 - Saturday - Tom Langen (Clarkson University)

\*\*\*More information about future lectures can be found online or on Facebook Events\*\*



# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Friends of the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center support environmental education programming that fosters conservation of local ecosystems, encourages outdoor recreation, and inspires our visitors to develop an increased respect for the natural world.

## OAK AND HICKORY MEMBERS

**Limited edition plate depicting the Narrows as seen from Eel Bay**

**Hand painted, hand thrown plate from the talented artists of St. Lawrence Pottery**

**Renew your membership at the Oak or Hickory level to receive your plate**

- Oak and Hickory members may purchase additional plates (for gifting) for \$75

**Call the Nature Center store for more information (315) 482-2479 or stop by!**



## 4th Annual "A Night for Nature"

*A heartfelt thanks to our loyal sponsors:*

### **Oak**

Watertown Savings Bank

### **Hickory**

Uncle Sam Boat Tours Inc.

Macar's Interiors

Slack Chemical

Watertown Daily Times

### **Maple**

Weichert Realty- T.I. Realty – Eileen Kaleel

Premier Building Associates, LLC

White's Lumber & Building Supply

The Clipper Inn

Thousand Islands Landscaping Company

Weichert Realtors - Eileen Kaleel

RBC Wealth Management

Boathouse Marina

Griffith Energy

Jeffrey and Carolyn Weldon

Joe and Kathleen Leskoske

Widrick Auto Sales

A.T. Mathews & Dier

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT



### **Art for Nature**

*Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>*

Painting in the Park: 10am-3pm

Reception 4pm-7pm

Visit plein air artists as they paint in Wellesley Island State Park, from 10am-3pm. From 4-7pm, attend a wine, cheese and live music reception in Cross Island Farms' Edible Forest Garden. Artwork created that day will be available to purchase. Guests are asked to donate \$5 to attend the reception.



### **4<sup>th</sup> Annual A Night for Nature**

*Thursday, July 11<sup>th</sup>*

6-9pm

Bring your dancing shoes to the popular July fundraiser at the Nature Center! A portion of this year's proceeds will support the Ken Deedy Environmental Internship. Our silent auction boasts plenty of opportunities to win big, including a 4-night cruise aboard the Celebrity Infinity ship, provided by Econotravel, Watertown.

---

Friends of the Nature Center, Inc.  
Minna Anthony Common Nature Center  
Wellesley Island State Park  
44927 Cross Island Road  
Fineview, NY 13640

Hours of Operation:  
Museum 8am-4pm  
Trails open sunrise to sunset



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**