

NEWSLETTER

Winter Issue

DECEMBER 20, 2017



Andrew Kane

TIME AND PROGRESS ADVANCE

Fall seemed to pass quickly on Wellesley Island this year as so much was accomplished. NYS Parks finished the beautiful renovation and expansion of the Nature Center and the Friends installed the first two exhibits; our restored topographic map table, and the “Two Un-Common Women” display.

In October, we launched our new partnership with Clarkson University after a student volunteer shoreline cleanup. In November and December, we moved out of the Temporary Nature Center and into our new building. Finally, after two years of construction, we are able to greet visitors in our main hall again.

2018 is sure to be a monumental year for the Nature Center, and Spring is sure to go faster than the Fall. We look forward to our new monthly lecture series, which will often tap into the knowledge and expertise of professors, students, and alumni from Clarkson.

Most importantly, complete exhibit installation is planned for early May. The official opening is scheduled for Memorial Day Weekend 2018.

Our Capital Campaign has been incredibly successful, but we still have a little way to go. Please consider supporting this cause with a brick for the new Terrace facing Eel Bay (see page 11).

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

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



STORM BRINGS OUT SNOW BIRDS

SNOWBIRDS ARE EASILY TOLD
BY THEIR ACTIONS

SEEN ON STATE ROAD

Flocks Stay Close Together and All Follow Actions
of One Bird-Snowbirds Used to Come Into City
When There Were More Vacant Lots.

By MRS. JAMES A. COMMON

This winter has been so warm and springlike and free from snow that it seemed as if we were not to be visited by the unusual winter birds. Then came this long-delayed storm. No one has complained much about it. When it is over we shall feel as if we have not been cheated after all and have had some winter. Evidently the snowbirds felt much the same about it and as soon

as the air became full of blinding flakes they began to sport about. No winter is quite complete without them, nor can the starlings in any way fill their place.

Years ago snowbirds came into the city and gathered food in the open spaces among the houses, but in those days weeds held their seeds above the snow on the many vacant lots and the birds could find the kind of food they liked. Now to see a flock of snowbirds we must go to the open country. This week, along with the snow, some flocks arrived which have been seen by many people out the State street road near the Theresa highway and over by Gotham hill. There are probably 50 birds in a company.

Snowbirds are more easily told by their actions than almost any other bird. A flock stays close together in a body and what one does they all do. If they alight to feed, the whole group alights; if they arise to dance in the air for fun, then every bird dances up and down, in and out, silver wings glistening, seeming to enjoy the sense of movement. It may be that they are playing a game of hide and seek among the snowflakes. At any rate they never are seen to dance this way except when the air is filled with big soft flakes.

In color, snowbirds are mostly white, but have some washings of light yellow, like sunshine, and quite a little black. Underneath, especially under the wings, they appear silver. When they alight on the ground they are scarcely visible because their light colored, speckled backs just sink into the landscape of white snow and purple shadows. Perhaps this is their protection from the birds of prey of the north.

They come with the snow storms and they leave with the snow storms, so living up to their common and delightful name of "snowflakes." No more truly descriptive name could be found.

- Reprinted with permission from the Watertown Daily Times.

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

FROM THE DIRECTOR

We are very happy to say we are in the process of moving back into the Nature Center! Unpacking will definitely take a while, but being back in the building feels a bit like coming home. The big aquariums and Scrappers are officially out of the Temporary Nature Center and we are beginning the process of turning that building back into our maintenance garage. It served us well during our construction period.



We had a successful summer season despite the poor weather and high water. In total, we offered 307 programs in 2017, attended by 13,160 people! Within that total are 2070 school children who visited the Nature Center as part of a school field trip. Many of those field trips were made possible due to the Connect Kids Grant. Of all the Parks and Historic Sites that participated in the grant program, we were 5th in the State for the total number of grants awarded! Many teachers are submitting applications to fund this year's field trips. We are very grateful for the program and we hope it continues to be funded for many years to come.



It is snowing as I type this article and our snowshoes are in the renovated Nature Center waiting for energetic people to come give them a try! Come out to our annual First Day Hike and ring in the New Year with an adventure in the winter woods. If the snow sticks around, we will be on snowshoes. We hope to see you soon!

- Molly Farrell, Environmental Educator II

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Eagles have returned to Wellesley Island. Please consider this documentary from Nat Geo WILD for a closeup view of this majestic bird.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qz5_d11M7dM

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



THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

CREATING MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

We proudly kicked off our new partnership with The Clarkson University Institute for a Sustainable Environment on October 28 at the Nature Center. Clarkson faculty and a group of 12 students worked on much needed shoreline cleanup and gardening work at the Nature Center. As a reward for their hard work, students had a sneak peek of the exhibits in the newly renovated Nature Center and an opportunity to partake in the increasingly popular “Luminaria Hike.”

This exciting partnership engages students in community service that allows them to experience and value our natural environment. The Clarkson partnership is critical for helping students develop the sense of place and love for the environment that is essential for their understanding of their role as a professional in sustaining our natural world.

Furthermore, this partnership will lead to more educational opportunities for Friends members and our community alike. Coming in 2018, we will kick off a monthly lecture series that taps into the cutting edge research performed by Clarkson faculty and students. Topics have yet to be released, but the series will focus on important issues facing the River and our environment. As the partnership grows, opportunities to assist in research may become available as well.

Clarkson University educates the leaders of the global economy. One in five alumni already leads as an owner, CEO, VP or equivalent senior executive of a company. With its main campus located in Potsdam, N.Y., and additional graduate program and research facilities in the Capital Region and Beacon, New York, Clarkson is a nationally recognized research university with signature areas of academic excellence and research directed toward the world's pressing issues. Through more than 50 rigorous programs of study in engineering, business, arts, education, sciences and the health professions, the entire learning-living community spans boundaries across disciplines, nations and cultures to build powers of observation, challenge the status quo, and connect discovery and innovation with enterprise.

- Stefanie Kring, Friends Board Member
Associate Professor, Clarkson University



Director of the Institute for a Sustainable Environment and Professor Susan Powers, Stefanie Kring, Sonja Gagen, Michael Howard, Maurice Peploski, Casey Radomski, Owen Curry, Emilie Bovin, Frederik Kastrup, Daniel Fuller, Bas Grootnibbelink, Claudia Bronsard, Megan Flory, and Lindsey Norfleet.



THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

RENOVATION UPDATE



Construction is complete and our first two exhibits are in place! The rest are set to come in May 2018!



The refurbished hand-made topographic map will continue to impress visitors in the renovated Nature Center.



The Two "Un-Common Women" exhibit. The Minna display (left) pays homage to our namesake, the strong, independent naturalist Minna Anthony Common. The Catherine Johnson display (right), Minna's daughter and catalyst for building the Nature Center.



THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS RENEWED THEIR COMMITMENT RECENTLY:

Leslie Johnson and Alex Carmen	Stamford, CT
Jill Bouvier	Elbridge, NY
Brian and Kate Breheny	Clayton, NY
Barbara Butts	Vero Beach, FL
Ellen Darabaner	Antwerp, NY
Tom Gamage	Watertown, NY
Robert and Rita Gefell	Watertown, NY
Jean Gianfagna	Watertown, NY
Ellen Jagger	Hop Bottom, PA
Sue and Harold Johnson	Watertown, NY
Stephanie Johnston	Jackson, NH
Kevin Kieff	Watertown, NY
Michael Kimber	Fayetteville, NY
Ted Meylor	Westfield, NJ
Rob and Judy Parmiter	Newark, NY
Windsor and Kay Price	Wellesley Island, NY
Steve Pullinger	Palmyra, VA
Joanne Rhode	Sackets Harbor, NY

Thank you for your critical support!

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

Kerry Roberge

President

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Park Manager

Diane O'Hara

Assist. Park Manager

Molly Farrell

Nature Center Director

Kimberly Cullen

Program Coordinator

Friends of the Nature Center Employees

Darlene Sourwine

Volunteer Coordinator

Patty Davis

Bookkeeper

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER



38TH ANNUAL AUTUMN FESTIVAL

October 7th began with a steady rain in the morning....clearing in the late morning. Over 1000 people braved the weather and enjoyed our Festival in a new location. Due to construction at the MAC (Minna Anthony Common) Nature Center, H area was our venue of choice for 2016... the large campsite area just before reaching the Nature Center.

Vendors, visitors, volunteers and state park staff found H area to have numerous advantages. For the first time, everyone could see the entire Festival from any location. Set-up and break-down were so much easier for all involved. The site offered much more flexibility in set-up plans, and most importantly, the area will enable the Festival to expand in the future.

A HUGE thank you is extended to our Nature Center staff as they explored creative ways to prepare for the off-site Festival location. They were extremely well-organized. The NYS Park staff was again a HUGE help in setting up and breaking down all of the tents (a greater number of tents was helpful with the inclement weather). Their assistance with parking was most appreciated.

This year our number of volunteers increased which was helpful for our vendors and for the numerous other Festival activities. This group of people is so dedicated and committed to providing assistance with activities and program for Autumn Festival and throughout the year. Without you, the Nature Center could not offer as many quality programs.



We deeply appreciate everyone who came to participate in our scarecrow gallery production, play games enjoy children's crafts and face-painting, visit our crafters, enjoy the food vendors goodies, listen musicians and so much more. Rick West's "Birds of Prey" and the Stark's sled dogs are always favorite attractions, as well.

The Autumn Festival is the Nature Center's largest fundraiser of the year. This event provides critical monies for high quality programs and for the purchase of supplies throughout the year. New York State has provided us with significant monies for physical improvements and for the expansion of the Nature Center. However, all of the future exhibits will be financed through our Capital Campaign and fundraising events like our annual "Night For Nature" in July.



Your participation in our Autumn Festival was MOST appreciated. Next year's Festival will be **October 6th**...Save the Date!

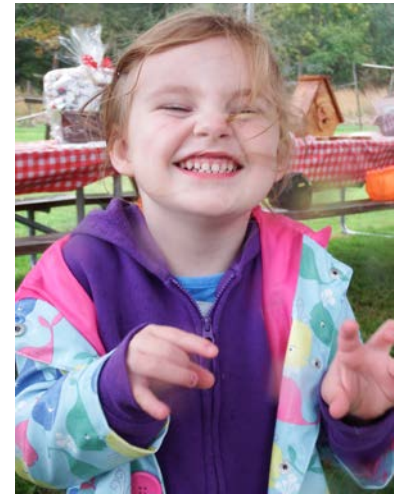
Come visit the Nature Center throughout the year with your family. Enjoy this beautiful treasure in our own backyard!!

- Lynn Morgan, Volunteer and Board Member



THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS AUTUMN FESTIVAL SUPPORTERS!



Thank You to Our Sponsors and Donors!

*Citizens Bank of Cape Vincent (LaFargeville),
DAK Design & Constructing (Wellesley Is.),
Target (Watertown), Price Chopper (ABay),
Caskinette Ford (Carthage),
Griff's Beverage Center (Watertown),
Gouverneur Savings & Loan Association
(ABay), Sams Club (Watertown),
Watertown Savings Bank (ABay)*

*Clipper Inn (Clayton), Comfort Inn & Suites
(Watertown), Dunkin & Donuts (Watertown),
Heath Photography (Redwood),
Great American (Watertown),
Impossible Dream (Watertown),
Ontario Orchards (Oswego),
North Country Seed and Feed (ABay),
Kohls Cares Program*



THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

If there was ever proof needed regarding the necessity and value of volunteers, it was apparent this past summer. Due to surgery, I had missed the entire summer season, but our volunteers went above and beyond, offering availability whenever and wherever needed to fill the gap. The Nature Center staff and I would like to thank every single volunteer who contributed in any way to the success of our busy summer season, filling my empty spot behind the reception desk and watching the store.

I returned the week of the Autumn Festival, our biggest event of the year, and was once again amazed. The continued success of the Festival is surely due to the hard work and dedication of our volunteers. Again, thank you to all our volunteers – whether you're a seasonal, year-round, or an annual volunteer, your special contributions to the Nature Center are valued. Your presence and support adds strength to our foundation.

Unfortunately, we are losing three great volunteers: Mary & Tom McNeill and Kathy May. Kathy May was a weekly reception desk and store volunteer. She loved the store and jumped right into organizing the inventory, keeping the store appealing to shoppers. Kathy didn't like to sit much so she kept herself busy cleaning and straightening the building or working on special projects. She also enjoyed greeting all who visited.

And then there are Mary & Tom McNeill who had been dedicated volunteers for around 12 years!! In their early volunteer days both Tom & Mary took pride in and tended to the maintenance of the butterfly house and volunteered for special events such as our annual Autumn Festival. Mary enjoyed greeting and talking with visitors, sharing her knowledge of the Nature Center and its trails and answering questions about the Nature Center's resident critters. Tom also enjoyed volunteering and would arrive early the morning of Autumn Festival to help with set up. When the Festival was over, Tom would quietly hit the road to go take down all our directional scarecrows. They were a significant part of our volunteer team.

We wish Kathy, Mary, and Tom well and hope someday soon they will drive over the river and through the woods for a visit!! Please contact me if your interested in volunteering!

- Darlene Sourwine, Volunteer Coordinator

Get into the nature side of life, become a volunteer!! If you are interested in joining our volunteer team, please contact Darlene Sourwine at (315)-482-2479, any time donated is appreciated!

Exploring Winter



Next time it snows take sometime to explore the outdoors! You can learn so much about the animals that live around you by looking at the snow. Here are some fun things to explore next time you are outside! Come take a winter walk at the nature center!



Listen to the sound of winter or staying absolutely still. What sounds did you hear?

You can even rent our snowshoes!

What is the largest icicle you can find? Measure it using this ruler.



Study the snow with a magnifying glass. What does it look like?

Find a leaf still hanging to a branch or on the ground.



When it is snowing, open up your mouth and taste the snowflakes or find some clean snow to taste. What does it taste like?

Search for tracks in the snow. Who do you think made them?

Find a twig or a branch in the snow. Where do you think it came from?



Smell the snow carefully. What does it smell like?

Winter Scavenger Hunt

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Melting ice | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowman |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green Tree | <input type="checkbox"/> Moving Water |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shovel | <input type="checkbox"/> A Small Bird |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Track | <input type="checkbox"/> Frozen Puddle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tree With One Leaf | |

Take off your mittens to touch the snow. What does it feel like. Describe its color and texture.

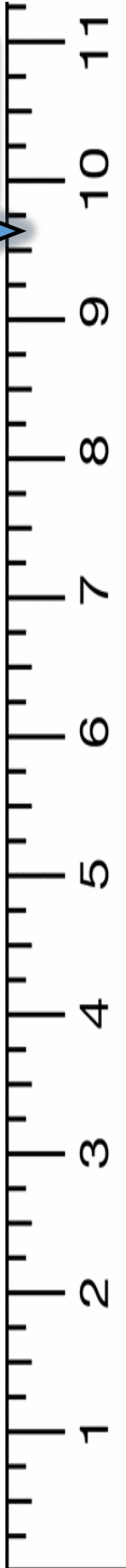
Snow Ice Cream

Ingredients: 1 can of sweetened condensed milk
 1 tablespoon vanilla
 Freshly fallen snow (no yellow snow please!)

Mix all three ingredients to make ice cream!



Written by, Kimbrie Cullen



THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

WINTER PROGRAMS 2018

315-482-2479

First Day Hike

*Monday, January 1st
1pm*

Start the New Year off right with a guided hike at the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center. Look for tracks and learn about how wildlife adapts to winter conditions while we walk. If weather permits, this hike will be offered on snowshoes. You may bring your own or rent a pair from the Center. A free giveaway from NYS Parks will be given out while supplies last! We will hike for no more than 2 miles over easy terrain.

Indian River Lakes Conservancy Winter Hike

*Saturday, January 20th
1pm*

Come explore the winter woods at the Indian River Lakes Conservancy in Redwood. The hike will take place at IRLC's Redwood Hill Preserve, 44010 Stine Road, Redwood. Please contact the Indian River Lakes Conservancy (indianriverlakes@gmail.com) for additional information. This hike will be led on snowshoes if there is sufficient snow.

Super Science Saturday at Jefferson Community College

*Saturday, February 3rd
10am-3pm*

Come join the Nature Center and other local organizations for a day of family friendly fun at Jefferson Community College! We will have crafts, animal artifacts, and other fun activities!

Save the River Winter Conference

Saturday, February 3rd

Join the Nature Center at Save The River's Winter Environmental Conference! The conference is one of the ways we bring important information to the large and diverse River community. It is a regionally significant and well-attended event that has

been held annually for over 25 years. Contact Save the River at 315-686-2010 for additional information or to register for the conference.

Guided Moonlight Snowshoe Hike

*Saturday, March 3
7pm*

Explore our winter woods by the light of the full moon! Look and listen for signs of wildlife as we walk, along our trails guided by moonlight. If weather permits, this program will be offered on snowshoes. Registration is required. Please call for additional information or to preregister. We encourage you to try walking by moonlight alone, but you can bring a flashlight with a red light (or with the light covered with red cellophane) if desired. Please do not use white lights as it interferes with the development of night vision.

Snowshoes may be rented from the Nature Center for \$3/pair

Crafty T-Shirt Bag Workshop

*Saturday March 10th
10am*

Come learn how to recycle old T-shirts into fancy bags! We call it creative recycling! We will have plenty of T-shirts available but feel free to bring your own as well!
\$5/person

March Pack Basket Class

*Saturday, March 24th
9am*

Learn to weave a traditional pack basket from start to finish. The cost of the programs includes all materials. Each participant will leave with a completed basket. Participants are encouraged to bring a bag lunch. Preregistration is required by calling the Nature Center.

\$65 for members
\$75 for non-members

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.



Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Check enclosed. Please make checks payable to: **Friends of the Nature Center, Inc.**

Please charge my credit card: Amex Visa MasterCard Discover

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____ CVV: _____

Signature: _____

My company's matching gift form is enclosed.

\$

ENGRAVED PAVING BRICK ORDER FORM

4 X 8

14 CHARACTERS PER LINE 3 LINES PER PAVER

PLEASE SEND COMPLETED FORM TO: P.O. BOX 6523 WATERTOWN, NY 13601-6523

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

COME USE OUR NEW SNOW SHOES

Rental Information:

Snowshoes: \$3 to enjoy as much snowshoeing as you like
All snowshoes must be returned to the nature center by 3:45pm. There will be no rentals after 3:00pm.

Please note: You are more than welcome to bring your own cross country skis but we will no longer be renting skis as ours need replacement. We will continue to groom our trails for both skiing and snowshoeing.

Conditions:

We need a minimum of 7 inches of snow to pack the trails and set tracks. We strongly recommend calling the Nature Center before heading to the island to ski or snowshoe. Weather and snow conditions can be quite different at the Park than areas to the south. Wind off the river can increase the wind chill and remove snow from sections of the trails. Please remember to dress appropriately.



Goal: \$920,000

Raised: \$390,971

The capital campaign is under way..

Please consider our naming opportunity for a gift!

www.macnaturecenter.com

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**