

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2021 Issue • September 2021



Aerial view of Autumn Festival surrounded by Wellesley Island's fall foliage. Photo credit: Andrew Kane.

Wow! What a difference this summer has been compared to last summer during the pandemic! Our programs restarted and there was something happening each weekend. Things have certainly flourished. We were even able to hold a school fieldtrip late in the school year! The Friends were also able to hold our largest fundraiser, A Night For Nature, which was a great success even if Mother Nature tried to spoil the fun with her down pouring rain. We are so happy to let you know that the Autumn Festival will be happening this October! This is a great event that the children love so much. More information is within this newsletter.

Fall is such a beautiful time of the year along the shores of the St. Lawrence River. It becomes quiet and slows down to "River" pace as families move back to their winter homes. It is too bad that many people never see the beauty when the leaves change colors and

surround the beautiful blue river. I hope that you are able to visit some fall to see it with your own eyes. Above is a photo from a previous Autumn Festival so that you can see the beautiful colors of fall.

Minna reminds us of another important part of fall in the Newsletter, which is the celebration of Thanksgiving. However, Minna teaches us something we may not know about the holiday: the history of the turkey. Do you know where the name "turkey" came from? You will find out in Minna's article within.

I hope everyone has a great fall and please try to join us at the Autumn Festival where we celebrate this beautiful time of the year!

Andy Kane
Board President

The Minna Anthony Common Series

**Early Turkey Raising Method
Related****History of Traditional Thanksgiving
Turkey Traced**

by Minna Anthony Common

*Reprinted with permission of the
Watertown Daily Times.*

Benjamin Franklin once urged that the wild turkey be called the Bird of America, but his proposal was voted down in favor of the lordly eagle. We are glad for the side-wise stare, the long neck and rough legs, the strut of the gobbler and the coyness of the hen, the shyness and curiosity of the bird seem somewhat out of keeping with the spirit of our country. The turkey remains, as it has since the days of the Pilgrims, American's most filling feast. It is just that and no more.

Centuries of domestication have not changed the turkey's love of a free range and until very recently it was believed that as soon as the young birds "threw the red" they must be allowed to wander or they would sicken and die. Turkeys became familiar with those who attended them, were tamed somewhat by kindness and could be taught to come home at night. Every grower was sure that they could not be successfully penned.

There were three kinds of wild turkeys found in America: the Mexican, generally considered to be the progenitor of the common domesticated bird; the Honduras turkey which to date has baffled all attempts to rear it in captivity; and the North American turkey, the bird found roaming the woods of New England in the pioneering days. This last is something like the Mexican but larger and with no white in the feathers, but only chestnut. It is still very

important to turkey breeders who use wild cocks when possible to insure good health to their flocks and to improve the breed.

The followers of Cortez, soon after their landing, met the bird, probably already domesticated. He sent various products back to Spain, among them the turkey which he called "gallopavo"—pavo meaning peacock in Spanish. The bird fascinated the lords and ladies of the court.

The next cargo which Cortez sent three years later was captured by a French privateer and thus the bird reached France, also. They called it "paon," their name for peacock. How it happened to be named turkey is explained by etymologists. Their research led them back to India, home of the real peacock or "toka." This word adopted by the Hebrew traders became "tukki" and by slight change when it reached England was first turkey; then much later turkey.

In the first part of this century, St. Lawrence County held a high place in the nation in turkey raising. Almost every farm had its flock and they roamed the countryside at will. To tell one's own birds a system of paint on the wings was used. Often much difficulty was experienced in catching the turkeys in the fall and various plans were devised, the best being the tunnel trap. In earliest times the turkeys were driven to market overland like a herd of sheep. Small boys with long whips and well-trained dogs did the driving. There was always danger of a stampede and a loss of a good part of the flock.

Later turkey trains were run from more distant places. One went from Madrid, NY to Boston for many years. When the time came, the farmers collected their birds as best they could, then had regular turkey "bees" (similar to husking bees) when they went from farm to farm to help each other get the birds ready to ship. The plucking and drawing was all done by hand and those northern New York farmers seldom card for turkey for their own Thanksgiving feasts. ■

From the Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It's surely been an eventful summer! We were open seven days a week and offered daily programs in July and August. A Night for Nature returned this year, and despite the weather, we had over 180 people in attendance! See photos of the event on pages 7-8. We partnered with the Thousand Island Arts Center to host award-winning watercolorist Ken Hobson for a three-day watercolor workshop and offshoot "Behind the Brush" evening event. See photos of the



Mandala of autumn color adorns the Nature Center's walkway.

workshop and evening event on page 4. We are slowly returning to full capacity and hope to continue moving in that direction into the cooler months.

We had a stellar team of seasonal staff this year. Our Student Conservation Association (SCA) team was made complete with Julia Runkle and Nadia Durante joining existing member Jasmine Garrett in June. Read more about our new SCA members on page 3. The inaugural year of the *Kenneth Deedy* internship was a great success, with Mikey Melfi making a big impact with the Nature Center, Save the River, and the Thousand Island Land Trust (TILT). New York State Parks staff Anna Soykan and Dalton Waite have gone back to college, but Chet Sourwine, Sienna Varland, and Scott Perry remain with us until October.

Minna's article this quarter discusses the origins of a Thanksgiving tradition. As we approach autumn and back-to-school season, and we get outside to hike in the crisp fall air and experience the beauty of fall foliage, let's remember that autumn is a time to gather. We hope to see you at one or more of our annual events: the 42nd Annual Autumn Festival on 10/9, Luminary Hike and Membership Mixer on 10/23, and Holiday Bonanza on 12/11.

Gabriela Padewska
Nature Center Director

For Your Consideration

Minna's legacy reaches a wider audience...

"Reclaiming the legacy of an underappreciated ecologist and educator on the St. Lawrence River" is the subheading of a Belt Magazine feature story by Robin Catalano entitled [*The Forgotten Island Chronicles of Minna Anthony Common*](#). Belt Magazine is a digital publication by and for the Rust Belt and greater Midwest. We are so grateful to Robin for seeking to bring Minna's contributions to a wider audience!

Welcome New *Student Conservation Corps* (SCA) Members!



Welcome to our two newest SCA members Julia and Nadia! Left to right: Julia, Jasmine, Nadia.*



Hello! My name is Julia Runkle, and I am an environmental educator and social media manager at the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center (check us out @MACNatureCenter on Facebook!). My parents fostered my interest in nature from a young age, planning vacations to national parks over summer breaks and spending time in our garden learning about plants and animals. My interests only grew as I entered the world of academia. I recently graduated from Bryn Mawr College with a major in Environmental Studies and a minor in Biology. I hope to continue my studies in the future in the field of Conservation Biology.



My name is Nadia Durante, and I am an environmental educator with a focus on gardening here at the MACNC. I started this position after receiving my bachelor's degree in Animal Behavior Ecology and Conservation from Canisius College in Buffalo, NY. My favorite aspect of this job is being outside so much, and learning about how state parks function. I hope to accomplish creating a safe haven for pollinators here at Wellesley Island State Park, and the Pollinator House has been a beautiful place to start. If you have a love for hummingbirds, be sure to stop by!

**Read Jasmine's bio in our previous newsletter issue*



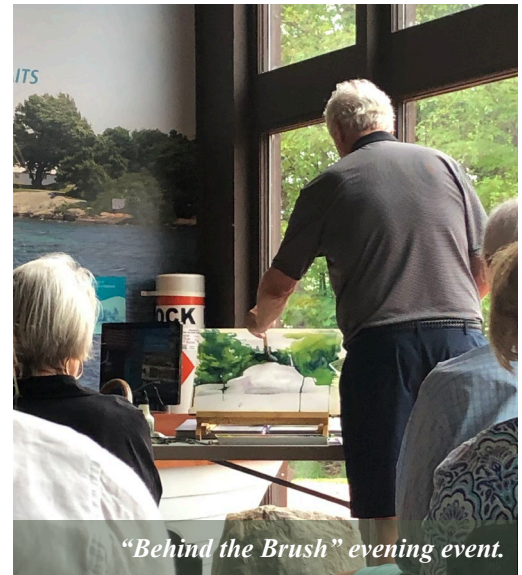
Watercolor Workshop and Evening Event with Artist Ken Hobson

Ken Hobson demonstrates his "loose and fresh" watercolor technique.

We were so happy to host Ken Hobson, in partnership with The Thousand Islands Arts Center, for a three-day watercolor workshop! Students learned various watercolor painting techniques and produced their own "Loose and Fresh" works of art. Ken also invited the audience "Behind the Brush" during our offshoot evening event. The Nature Center provided a beautiful backdrop for the class and evening event which so perfectly complemented Minna Anthony Common's artistic legacy.



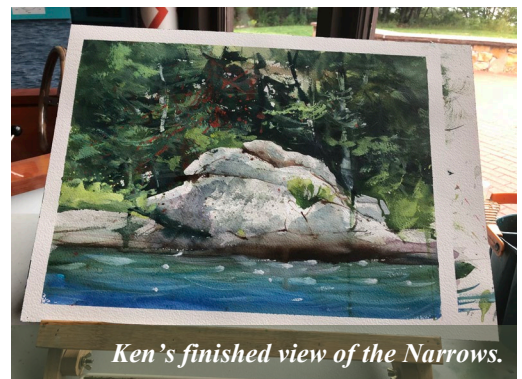
Workshop students practice their watercolor painting skills.



"Behind the Brush" evening event.



Ken (center) with students of the 3-day workshop.



Ken's finished view of the Narrows.

Benefit Auction a Big Success!



Don Peck, Auctioneer, donated his first-class auction services.



Big ticket item Honda CRV donated by Reid Beadel.



Classic Ford tractor donated by Jeremy Smith.

On Tuesday, August 17th, the Friends of the Nature Center held a benefit auction that raised over \$13,000! Auctioneer Don Peck, having a soft spot for nonprofits, graciously offered his time and talents towards this Facebook Live fundraising event.

The generosity didn't end there! We were fortunate to receive two large donations from fellow Wellesley Island residents: a 2009 Honda CRV donated by Reid Beadel, and a classic 1955 Ford Tractor donated by Jeremy Smith of Hopewell Hall, LLC. The venue for the live auction and mainland donation drop-off was made possible by the Town of Alexandria Bay. The Recreation Center proved to be a great location for a large-scale auction – they even promoted the fundraiser on their electronic billboard! Hunter Horton, owner of T.I. Landscaping, helped with our Wellesley Island donation drop-offs by donating his large utility trailer and transportation services back-and-forth between our two drop-off locations.

This was a true community effort. To all who donated and volunteered – a big THANK YOU! Last but not least, thank you to our very own Darlene Sourwine, Outreach Coordinator, whose vision, coordination, and tireless community outreach made this all possible.



Rec Center billboard promoted the event.

THANK YOU to the following 33 members for joining or renewing their commitment recently

Windsor Price Wellesley Island, NY
 Matt & Cindy Sherrill Ontario, NY
 Mary Burgmeier Wellesley Island, NY
 Gary Burgmeier Wellesley Island, NY
 Rozalia Berlin Queens Village, NY
 Art Mack & Mary Jo Champion Port Charlotte, FL
 Daryl Rippeteau Washington, DC
 Judith Rippeteau Washington, DC
 Steve & Deborah Pullinger Palmyra, VA
 Sarah & Greg Clement Wayne, PA
 Paul & Sandra Garrett Wellesley Island, NY
 Anna Napoli (Johnson) Wayland, MA
 Greg & Cindy McLean Clinton, NY
 Tara Parmiter & Ray Ratliff Brooklyn, NY
 Richard Stout & Kathleen Cross Alexandria Bay, NY
 Daniel Keohane Natick, MA

Slack Chemical Watertown, NY
 Frank Martino Brooklyn, NY
 Nigel & Lee Gardner Skillman, NJ
 Mike & Julie Chavoustie Alexandria Bay, NY
 Don & Linda Blauvelt T.I. Park, NY
 Kerry Roberge Watertown, NY
 Mike & Amy Phelps T.I. Park, NY
 Robert & Diane Miron Manlius, NY
 Stephen & Nellie Taylor T.I. Park, NY
 Dorie Bater Cape Vincent, NY
 Rollin Hanson Cape Vincent, NY
 Robin Smith Spencerport, NY
 Sarah Baldwin Clayton, NY
 Steve & Nancy Martin Syracuse, NY
 Jim & Martha O'Donnell Bradenton, FL
 Frank & Wink Beadel T.I. Park, NY
 Ken White Ithaca, NY



Common Currents
 MEMBERSHIP MIXERS

Oct 23

LUMINARY HIKE + MIXER
 Saturday, October 23
 6:30-8:30pm

Members will be able to enjoy conversation, snacks, and refreshments in the classroom throughout the duration of the Luminary Hike.

Please RSVP by 10/20
 (315) 482-2479



Highlights from the 6TH Annual *A Night for Nature*



Thank you for coming!



Music by the Buoy Rockers and special guest Meredith Gould.



Barb Hearn (left) with Linda and Ken Adams.



Despite the rainy weather we had over 180 people in attendance!



SCA members, Kenneth Deedy intern, and Nature Center staff take a moment to enjoy the band.

Highlights from the 6TH Annual *A Night for Nature*



Dr. Tony Ferrari (left)
and Barbara Fischer.



Event guests mingle and enjoy live music in front of the Nature Center.

THANK YOU!



NNY Community Foundation
Weldon & Weldon Financial Coaching
WD Bach Excavating & Marine Construction
Lake Ontario Realty
Griffith Energy
ABC50



Watertown Savings Bank

Andrew Kane / Feather in Flight
Boathouse Marine
White's Lumber & Building Supply
Uncle Sam Boat Tours
Widrick Auto Sales
AT Matthews & Dier

Fall Events



Scan to see the full
calendar of events on
our website

Program size may be limited.
Preregistration recommended.
Please call **(315) 482-2479** to register.
Face covering encouraged.

OCTOBER

WHAT'S A WATERSHED?

Saturday, October 2 // 10:00am–1:00pm

Are you curious to see how a watershed works? You might be surprised! Come see for yourself how pollution works on a watershed module.

42ND ANNUAL AUTUMN FESTIVAL

Saturday, October 9 // 10:00am–4:00pm

Join us at the Nature Center for this family-friendly fall day. Enjoy craft and food vendors, live music, farm animals, arts and crafts, a scarecrow contest, birds-of-prey demonstration, and more! Admission: Children 12 & under \$1 or free with non-perishable donation for local food pantry; Adults \$3; Military & Seniors \$2

A STORY THROUGH SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS

Saturday October 16 // 1:30pm

Come on a journey around the world through science experiments! During this exciting story, discover the challenges humans face keeping our planet clean enough to enjoy.

COMPOST SOIL EXPERIMENT

Sunday October 17 // 10:00am

Learn how to create compost at home! Learn how rich soil can be productive during this interactive experiment!

LUMINARY HIKE

Saturday, October 23 // 6:30pm-8:30pm

Join us for our signature illuminated night hike! The fall woods transform into a magical landscape with moonbeams and trailside lanterns lighting the way. This self-guided hike takes place on half-mile North Field Loop.

+MEMBERSHIP MIXER: Members will be able to enjoy conversation, snacks, and refreshments in the classroom throughout the duration of the Luminary Hike. RSVP by 10/20.

HALLOWEEN ANIMALS

Saturday October 30 // 10:30am

Bats, spiders, and rats are just a few animals that are considered to be scary animals, especially around Halloween. Discover why these animals are awesome and not scary!

NOVEMBER

PINECONE, SUMAC & CEDAR WREATH WORKSHOP

Saturday, November 6 // 10:00am

Bring holiday cheer to your front door with a handmade pinecone, sumac, and cedar wreath! Bring a pair of wire cutters and join us to make a natural wreath for the holidays. Preregistration is required. Class size is small for more personal instruction.

FAIRY HOUSES

Saturday, November 13 // 1:30pm

Listen to a magical story of a young girl wanting to catch a glimpse of a fairy in the house she built for them. After the story is finished, we will find a special place in the woods to build fairy houses. Please dress for being outdoors.

SEARCHING FOR FALL

Saturday, November 20 // 10:00am–12:00pm

Fall is an exciting time of year! So much to see and explore. Stop in at the front desk to pick up a self-guided, fall scavenger hunt. When returning from your adventure, stop in for a prize!

FROSTY FRESH AIR HIKE

Saturday, November 27 // 9:00am–3:00pm

Take a hike on our trails and enjoy the crisp, fresh fall air. Share a picture on our Facebook page of you and your family to enter a drawing to win a private tour with a naturalist. Winner will be announced on December 4th. Trail maps are available at the kiosk by the parking lot and inside the Nature Center. Trails are open from sunrise until sunset.

DECEMBER

NATURAL GARLAND WORKSHOP

Saturday, December 4 // 10:00am

Come use all sorts of natural objects to create a beautiful garland you can hang on your tree or over your mantel this holiday season. Pick out what you want to use from the assortment of things we have collected, drill a hole in it, and string it onto wire. This is a craft loved by both men and woman! If you are able, please bring your own drill. Preregistration is required. Class size is small for more personal instruction.

HOLIDAY BONANZA

Saturday, December 11 // 10:00am–3:00pm

Come enjoy some holiday cheer at our Holiday Bonanza! There will be live music, local craft vendors, food, and holiday craft-making for both children and adults. Spend the day chatting with family and friends at this fun community event. It's a great way to kick off the holiday season!

TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS SCAVENGER HUNT

Saturday, December 18 // 10:00am–12:00pm

Take a hike on our trails and play our Christmas scavenger hunt with a nature spin. Can you find all twelve? Stop in and give it a try.



42ND ANNUAL



AUTUMN FESTIVAL



SATURDAY, 10.9.21 | 10AM-4PM

MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER



PUMPKIN PATCH, SCARECROW BUILDING
CONTEST, PETTING ZOO, AND MORE!



CASH ONLY EVENT

CHILDREN (12 & UNDER) : \$1 OR FREE
WITH NONPERISHABLE FOOD DONATION

ADULTS: \$3

SENIORS (65+) & MILITARY: \$2



SEE YOU THERE!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL (315) 482-2479



Back to School! Schedule a Nature Center Fieldtrip this School Year

June 11, 2021, was a day to celebrate! We had our very first fieldtrip since the start of the pandemic! Alexandria Bay 2nd grade had a wonderful time exploring our woods and our Pollinator House. We were covering our butterfly unit, which entails: how to identify native butterflies, learning about their life cycle, monarch migration, classifying an insect, and the importance of pollination.

I am hoping during the 2021–2022 school year more students will be able to visit our outdoor classroom. We can accommodate all age groups and needs. All field trips follow New York State Science Standards, and we can customize programs to meet classroom goals.

If you are teacher and would like to schedule a fieldtrip, please give me a call at the Nature Center (315) 482-2479. Fieldtrips can be scheduled from the end of October to the end of June.

I am looking forward to working with returning dedicated teachers and students, as well as welcoming new faces to our outdoor classroom.

Kimberly Cullen
Education Coordinator



Kim Cullen points out an insect to students.



Second-graders hiking our trails on a field trip.



A class learning in our Pollinator House.

Quilt Raffle Begins! Winner to Be Drawn at Holiday Bonanza



Lynn Morgan (left) and Director, Gaby Padewska, show front of quilt.



Chickadee theme continues on back of quilt.



Lynn Morgan — master quiltmaker and former Friends of the Nature Center board member — has handcrafted and donated a quilt for the Nature Center entitled *Chickadee Window*. The nature-inspired quilt, elaborately featuring four borders and traditional quilt patterns such as wandering geese and two-colored ribbon, will be raffled off at our Holiday Bonanza on Saturday, December 11th.

Lynn has been honing her craft for decades, but after retiring from a career as an elementary school librarian has become a prolific quiltmaker. On average she creates three to four full-sized quilts each year, while also enjoying making table runners, wall hangings, and smaller quilted projects.

Traditional quilting meets originality in Lynn's one-of-a-kind pieces: "I love to select the fabric for the selected pattern... [it's] fun to experiment with different colors. I prefer the more traditional patterns, but it is fun to occasionally try other techniques."

All proceeds benefit the Friends of the Nature Center. Raffle tickets will be on sale at the Nature Center beginning September 1st.

\$5 for 1 Ticket.
\$10 for 3 Tickets.



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.

The Friends of the Nature Center, Inc. works in partnership with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS THE FRIENDS OF THE NATURE CENTER, INC.

•

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Jonathan White, *Treasurer*
Jeffrey Hanna, *Secretary*
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Erin Lettiere
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Meredith Sullivan
Jeffrey Weldon

NATURE CENTER STAFF

•

Gabriela Padewska, *Director*
Kimbrie Cullen, *Education Coordinator*
Darlene Sourwine, *Outreach Coordinator*
Mary Jean Jones, *Bookkeeper*

WELLESLEY ISLAND STATE PARK STAFF

•

Steven Cline, *Park Manager*
Bill Carr, *Assistant Park Manager*

Mark Your Calendars!

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AUTUMN FESTIVAL**
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**Minna Anthony Common Nature Center**

Wellesley Island State Park
44927 Cross Island Road
Fineview, NY 13640
(315) 482-2479

HOURS OF OPERATION**May–October:**

Nature Center open daily
9:00am–3:00pm

October–May (off-season):

Nature Center open Wednesday–Sunday
9:00am–3:00pm
Closed Mondays and Tuesdays

Trails open sunrise to sunset daily



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the electronic version
of the newsletter