

REMEMBER WHEN . . . ?

The Friends of Mosquito Hill are in the process of gathering information on the history of the "Hill." This not only includes the history of the "Hill" before the Mosquito Hill Nature Center (MHNC), but we are also looking to document the development, early years and more recent activities of MHNC.

If you have stories to tell, pictures to share, or know someone who might, please contact Rosemary Eckley, Project Coordinator at fomhboard1@focol.org (include "history" in subject line), or by phone at (920) 851-8178 and leave message.

We are also looking for individuals to help gather information, including documenting verbal history through one-on-one conversations.

View from the Hill

Our Mission:
The Friends of Mosquito Hill support, promote and enhance Mosquito Hill Nature Center. We realize this mission through volunteerism, fundraising and our shared passion for nature.

Fall 2009 • A newsletter for friends and members of Friends of Mosquito Hill, Inc.



IDITAROD

Dallas Seavey and team on Bering Straits

1150 Miles of Frozen Alaska Wilderness Up close and Personal

Iditarod Musher To Be Featured As The 2009 Fenlon Memorial Speaker

*By Mike Hibbard,
 Director/Naturalist*

You can't compare it to any other competitive event in the world. A race over 1150 miles of the roughest, most beautiful terrain Mother Nature has to offer. She throws jagged mountain ranges, frozen rivers, dense forest, desolate tundra and miles of windswept coast at the mushers and their dog teams. Add to that subzero, winds that can cause a complete loss of visibility, long hours of darkness and treacherous climbs and side hills, and you have the Iditarod...a race extraordinaire.

Dallas Seavey is a rising star among Iditarod mushers. Seavey, 22, of Seward, Alaska, finished sixth in the 37th running of the Iditarod in March, finishing in 10 days, 14 hours and 49 minutes. He also won the title of most improved musher of the 2009 race.

In 2005, at age 18, Seavey was the youngest competitor ever to complete the dogsled race from Anchorage to Nome, finishing 51st. He is a third-generation musher, the son of 2004 Iditarod champion

Mitch Seavey and grandson of Dan Seavey, who competed in the first two Iditarod races in 1973 and 1974.

Seavey will present a program entitled "The 2009 J.J. Keller Adventure with Musher Dallas Seavey" September 25 at the J.J. Keller & Associates Inc. company auditorium, 3003 Breezewood Lane, Neenah. Keller President, James J. Keller sponsors Seavey's team. The program will begin at 6 p.m. with the showing of the J.J. Keller video of the 2009 race. Seavey will speak at 7 p.m., with a reception to follow.

Seating is limited. Tickets are available for \$15 by calling Mosquito Hill Nature Center at 920-779-6433. or Outdoor Outlet at 920-996-3633. FOMH members watch for your invitations in the mail.

The Charlotte Bates Fenlon Memorial speaker series presents educational programs annually on behalf of Mosquito Hill, funded by the Charlotte Bates Fenlon Memorial Fund within the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region.



By Mike Hibbard,
Director/Naturalist

If trees could talk, what a tale they would tell. Trees are among the oldest living things on earth. Trees can tell us stories, we just need to know how to read and interpret them. Dendrochronology, or tree-ring dating, is the method of scientific dating based on the analysis of tree-ring growth patterns. Dendrochronologists are the interpreters of these stories, comparing tree ring growth to events in history to help verify historical events. Dendroclimatology is the science of determining past climates from tree rings. You don't have to be a scientist to interpret tree stories, especially stories of recent history and weather you just have to know what to look for.

As autumn approaches and leaves begin to change color, the tree's leaf color can tell us about the weather conditions of the current and previous growing seasons. Before we can interpret these stories we need to know a little about how leaves change colors, so let's discuss leaf color change.

A leaf is green because of the presence of a pigment known as

chlorophyll. During the growing season when chlorophyll is abundant in a leaf's cells, the green color dominates and "masks" out the colors of any other pigments that may be present in the leaf. Thus, the leaves of summer are characteristically green.

Chlorophyll has a vital function: it captures the sun's energy and utilizes it to make the plant's food — simple sugars (glucose), which are produced from water and carbon dioxide. These sugars are the basis of the plant's nourishment — the sole source of the carbohydrates needed for growth and development. This process is called photosynthesis.

During photosynthesis, the chlorophyll breaks down and is continually "used up." During the growing season however, the plant replenishes the chlorophyll so that the supply remains high and the leaves stay green. But as autumn approaches, certain influences both inside and outside the plant cause the chlorophyll to be replaced at a slower rate than it is being used up. During this period, as the supply of chlorophyll gradually dwindles, the "masking" effect slowly fades away. Then other pigments that have always been present in the cells all during the leaf's life begin to show through. These pigments are called carotenoids, which give the leaves their yellow and orange coloration. The bright reds, purples and crimsons we see in leaves are made mostly in the fall. In some trees, like maples, glucose is trapped in the leaves after photosynthesis stops. Sunlight and the cool nights of autumn cause the leaves to turn this glucose into red hues.

Temperature, light, and water supply have an influence on the degree and the duration of fall color. A late spring, or a severe summer drought, can delay the onset of fall color by a few weeks. A warm period during fall lowers the intensity of autumn color. Trees defoliated by insects or affected by other stress factors during the growing season may also show less fall color. A severe frost will kill the leaves, turning them brown and causing them to drop early. The best autumn colors come when there's been: a warm, wet spring, a summer that's not too hot or dry, and a fall with plenty of warm sunny days and cool, but not freezing nights.

This autumn, as you enjoy the fall colors, you can use this information to try to interpret the stories the trees are telling. Enjoy the colors knowing a little more about how they came about.

FALL 2009

View
from the Hill

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Interpretive Building Hours: Tues. - Fri., 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., • Sat. & Sun. 10 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Nature Art Fest

Area Artist Uses Her Gourd

Mary Swifka, Art Fest Coordinator

Last July, a woman from Brussels, Wisconsin drove to MHNC to inquire about our Nature Art Fest. In her front seat sat a box with towels wrapped around what turned out to be a striking collection of gourds from her garden. Not just any gourds. They had been transformed by paint and wood burning, and embellished with intricate pine needle weaving. Then she pulled out her finely woven pine needle baskets. (Note to self: make room on shelf for new basket purchase.)

Little did Christine Manno know that at that moment I intended on asking her to be our 2009 Featured Artist. Earlier this year, she accepted my invitation, and a few weeks ago I got to sigh with delight over the two pieces she graciously donated to be the grand prize awarded in this year's Art Fest raffle.

Manno told me that she has been making pine needle baskets for more than 20 years, but only recently discovered her talent for gourd art. She is a self-taught artist but shared that her mother and sister are prolific artists and some of their talent "must have brushed off" on her.

Much of her work can be seen in galleries in Door County and Florida, where she lived for many years. Currently she's working on some pieces commissioned by a museum in Kentucky, and keeps herself busy by entering pieces in competitions held around the country.

An exhibit of Christine's gourds and baskets will be on display at MHNC in October and November, but you can meet her during our 29th Annual Nature Art Fest on Saturday, November 14 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. She will be joined by other nature and wildlife artists as we transform our Great Room into an art gallery.

Friends of Mosquito Hill, Inc. will be sponsoring the annual Art Fest raffle. Artwork donated by Christine and other participating artists will be awarded the day of the show.

Great art, a lighted fire place, homemade soups and desserts on the menu, and soft music will make for a great November day at the Hill. Think of it as a win-win-win situation. Your attendance at our show supports the center. Your raffle ticket purchase allows FOMH to continue its mission to fund our environmental education and volunteer programs. Lastly, your purchases support local and regional artists who create art that is unique and not mass-produced. You'll see for yourself on November 14. *We look forward to seeing you there!*

Welcome
Green Apple
Folk Music Society



Log on to www.greenapplefolk.org for their schedule of folk concerts and open mics now being held at MHNC.

Thrivent
Financial

ART GALLERY



Through September 27
"Monarch Celebration"

by Stephanie Feuerstein and Kathryn Wedge

Stephanie Feuerstein is a naturalist and owner of Nature's Guide Independent Naturalist Service that caters to the environmental education needs of the surrounding community. A recent addition to her educational programming has been writing and publishing the children's book, *The Monarch's Gift: A Journey through the Life of a Monarch Butterfly*. Her love of nature has always been complemented by a love of literature and her dream has always been to combine the two and create a work that reflects those two worlds.

The beauty of her book was not truly realized until she paired with artist Kathryn Wedge, who has more than 20 years experience using a variety of art media including watercolor, acrylic, and casein.

Kathryn's acrylic work on canvas is also complemented by her graphic design expertise, which led to a beautiful result in the layout of the book. Both women are from Neenah, and have chosen to publish the book themselves. They have made a conscious choice of keeping the book development as local as possible by using a printing company based in Stevens Point.

October 3 - November 29

Christine Manno, Featured Artist: 29th Annual
Nature Art Fest

Meet christine and view her striking gourd art and pine needle basketry at our Annual Nature Art Fest, Saurday, November 14. See related article on this page.

December 5 - January 31

Retro Images

Photography by Tracy Heerhold

FOMH Welcomes
These New Members

Cindy Carter

Jennifer Gruettner

Dawn Rohde



Mosquito Hill Nature Center

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FALL 2009

Pre-registration is required for most events.

Call 920.779.6433 or e-mail swifkamk@co.outagamie.wi.us

Fall Bird Hikes

Saturdays, Sept. 12 & 19, 7:30

Join us each morning as we watch for our summer birds winging their way south for the winter. These leisurely walks provide a great opportunity to enjoy summer's last gasp and learn to identify those confusing fall warblers with the help of birding experts. There is no charge to participate but donations are always appreciated.



Volunteer Information Session

Thursday, Sept. 10, 6:30 PM

For those of you reading this and thinking "hmm, I wonder if I could volunteer at Mosquito Hill?" Well, we want you to know that YES YOU CAN!! Just call Pat at 920-779-6433, or e-mail fomh.vc@focol.org to register. We'd love to have you join us for an overview of Mosquito Hill and conversation with current volunteers. We look forward to meeting you!

Fate of the Universe – Are Galaxies Colliding?



Saturday, Sept. 12 1:30 – 2:30 PM

We've heard of the Big Bang but what about the Big Crunch? When will it happen and how will it affect life on Earth? Is dark energy to blame? Come find out the answers while learning about the famous Andromeda Galaxy and why people are so interested in this galactic neighbor. Best for families with children ages 10 – 16. **\$5/adults, \$3.50/students, seniors, FOMH, \$12/families** Registration due September 9.

Honey Sunday

Sunday, Sept. 13, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Come and help us celebrate the honeybee and the gentle art of beekeeping during this annual event. The Waupaca County Beekeepers' Association will join nature center staff and volunteers in presenting informational sessions and demonstrations, selling delicious honey baked goods and honey sundaes. Bring your family and friends out for some sweet sensations.

\$8.00/car



Doodle Cap Magnets (A free program for children!)

Saturday, Sept. 19, 9:00 – 10:00 AM

During this fun morning, children ages 4 – 11 can create their own doodle-cap magnet made out of recycled bottle caps and corks. Children can personalize their creation by "doodling" on the magnet with magic markers. Our instructor is Girl Scout Emma Staudenmaier, who is planning and teaching this event as part of the requirements for earning her Girl Scout Gold Award. No charge. All materials will be provided. **Please call to register ASAP.**

Leopold Education Project Workshop

Saturday, Sept. 19, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

The Leopold Education Project (LEP) is a curriculum based on the writings of the renowned conservationist, Aldo Leopold. Activities follow the chapters in Leopold's *Sand County Almanac*. Each participant will receive a copy of this book, an activity guide, TASK cards, and other handouts (\$35 value). This workshop is perfect for K-12 educators, natural resource professionals, 4-H and Scout leaders, and anyone interested in fostering a relationship between kids and the natural world. **\$20/person. Registration and payment due September 11.**

Leave No Family Inside: Little Habitat on the Prairie

Sunday, Sept. 20, 1:00 – 3:00 PM

A prairie is a type of grassland that contains many species of native flowers and grasses. It is also home to many mammals, birds and insects. Join naturalist Jessica Miller as she guides you through Mosquito Hill's 12-acre prairie to discuss prairie plant adaptations and the animals that make their homes in such a diverse area. **\$6/Person, \$10/family. Register by September 16.**

Composting Barrel Workshop

Sunday, Sept. 20, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Turn that organic waste into beneficial nutrients by building one of these effective 55-gallon barrel tumble composters. Join Naturalist Mike Hibbard as he guides you through the process of recycling a plastic 55 gallon drum into a useful tool for recycling

yard and kitchen waste. All materials and instructions will be provided as part of the class. Participants will receive a list of simple tools to bring to class upon registration. Class size is limited so please register soon. **\$60/adults, \$55/students, seniors & FOMH** Registration and payment due September 15.

Fenlon Memorial Speaker Series

Friday, Sept. 25, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

See article on Page 1

Cycles of Nature

Saturday Sept. 26, 12:30 – 4:00 PM

Join fellow recreational cyclists and enjoy the fall colors while peddling your way through eastern Waupaca County. The trek will take us through farmlands and forest as we delight in the colors of the season. A bounty of delicious roadside refreshments will be provided at a rustic rest stop. Participants are required to have bikes in good working condition and a helmet must be worn while on the roadways. **\$10/person. Registration and payment due September 20.**

Harvest Moon Festival

Saturday, October 3, 4:00 – 9:00 PM

Don't miss the family event of the season! The full moon will shine down on us, lighted jack-o-lanterns will smile, the wagons will be filled with fresh hay, and the center will be visited by live critters. The evening will be filled with stargazing through telescopes, hayrides, the Great Pumpkin Walk, learning sessions and cider and caramel apples for sale. See article on Page 8. Watch our web site for updates. **\$8/car. See www.mosquitohill.com for final schedule of events.**



Songbird Nest Identification

Saturday Oct. 3, 10:00 – 11:00 AM

Naturalist and avid birdwatcher Steve Petznick will provide real nests with tips and tricks on how to ID many of the songbird nests found in the Fox Valley area. The "Laws of Nature" and nest etiquette will be discussed during this hands-on opportunity being presented during the Northeast Wisconsin Birding Club's monthly meeting. **\$5.00/person, \$3.50/students, seniors and FOMH, \$12/family. Walk-ins welcome.**



Paddle the Embarrass

Saturday, October 10, 12:30 – 4:30 PM

Enjoy the fall colors on the scenic Embarrass River from your canoe or kayak. A delicious homemade lunch will be served riverside. Some hutting will be provided. **\$10/person, \$8/FOMH. Registration and payment due October 4.**

Moon Madness

Saturday, October 10, 7:30 – 10:00 PM

Harvest Moon is over and there is still much to learn about Earth's only satellite. This evening is filled with fun hands-on indoor activities that will answer questions you've had about the moon. We'll toss asteroids onto the moon's surface and see the results, see how high you can jump on the moon, sample crater cheese and more before venturing outdoors to view the lunar landscape. Great for the whole family! **\$5/adults, \$3.50/students, seniors, FOMH, \$12/families. Registration and payment due October 6.**

Bird Seed Sale

October 24 – 25, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Call for more details.

Leave No Family Inside: Old Fashioned Orienteering

Saturday, October 31, 12:30 – 3:00 PM

Could you find your way out of the woods if you were lost? Orienteering is a sport that requires navigational skills using a map and compass. While many people today are using GPS, you'll learn the art of staying found the old fashioned way! Join us for some fun on Halloween as we find our way to tricks and treats. **\$6/person, \$10/family. Registration and payment are due by October 20.**

Snowshoe Lacing Workshop

Saturday & Sunday, Nov. 7 – 8,

Saturday 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Sunday 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM

Autumn doesn't seem like the time to think about winter activities, but it's a great time to prepare for a season of cold weather fun. Naturalist Mike Hibbard and volunteer instructors are gearing up for our annual classes and they would love to show you how to make your own 10" x 56" Alaskan-style snowshoes. All materials and instruction will be provided. The handsome white ash frames will be pre-bent, drilled, varnished and ready for neoprene lacing. Your shoes will be completed in plenty of time for the first snowfall. **\$150/person, &140/FOMH. Registration and Payment are due by October 20.**

The Truth about Black Holes and the Lives of Stars

Saturday, Nov. 7, 1:30 – 3:00 PM

Ok, so you've seen black holes on TV but what really happens in space. Is the Earth going to be sucked in? How many black holes are there? The number may surprise you and you can see where some are located in the sky. Black holes can be part of a star's cycle. Learn how all this ties together by doing some experiments. **\$5/adults, \$3.50/students, seniors, FOMH, \$12/families. Registration and payment due November 1.**



Leave No Family Inside: From the Beginning

Friday, Nov. 13, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Families will have fun and learn some of the basics of astronomy related events. Topics include moon phases, seasonal changes, meteor showers, explanation of measurements and other interesting facts during this hands-on overview of the world of astronomy. **\$6/person, \$10/family. Registration and payment due November 10.**

28th Annual Nature Art Fest

Saturday, Nov. 14, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Enjoy great art, warm soups, and artist demonstrations, all in our cozy building. See article on Page 3. **\$3/person, \$2/students, seniors & FOMH**

Reusable Tote Bags

Sunday, Nov. 15, 12:30 – 3:00 PM

Learn to make a stylish, reusable tote bag with just a few simple items including recycled fabric, a roll of duct tape and a stapler. **\$15/person, \$12/FOMH. Registration and payment due November 10.**

Natural Ornaments

Saturday, Nov. 21, 9:00 AM – 12 noon

Create a selection of holiday ornaments made from natural and collected materials. Grapevine, sheet moss, tamarack cones and milkweed pods are just a few of the items used to bring a bit of the outdoors into your home this season. This class is best suited for adults and older teens. **\$15/person, \$12/students, seniors & FOMH. Registration & payment are due before November 14.**

What is IYA?

It's the International Year of Astronomy and it is taking place around the world in 2009. Many exciting activities are planned, including monthly programs at MHNC. If you have ever had an interest in astronomy this is the year to get involved! Check our newsletter and web page for more details. Just look for the star.



Scarves Dyed Naturally

Saturday, Nov. 28, 10:00 AM – 12 noon

Natural dyes can be derived from almost anything...fruits, vegetables, herbs, flowers, even soil! The colors obtained from natural dyes have a depth that is missing from synthetic ones. Join naturalist Jessica Miller as she explains the process of natural dying. Participants will make two hand-dyed scarves using a variety of natural materials. All materials provided. These will definitely make a great gift! **\$20/person, \$17/FOMH. Registration and payment due November 17.**

Natural Twig Lamp

Sunday, Nov. 29, 12:00 noon – 3:30 PM

Add a touch of flair to your home with this natural twig lamp. Twigs sustainably harvested from a variety of trees on the nature center property make this project so attractive you'll want to make one for everyone you know! Naturalist Jessica Miller will guide you through the process of making this wonderful adornment just in time for the holiday season. **\$27/adults, \$25/students, seniors, FOMH. Call to register before November 20.**

Holiday Make It & Take It

Saturday, Dec. 5, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

You won't want your kids to miss this one! They'll make 8 unique gifts for \$12, wrap them up and your children's holiday shopping is done. **Register before November 20, we fill up every year! (Most appropriate for K – 5th graders.)**

Discovering New Worlds – Can there be Life out There?

Sunday, Dec. 6, 1:30 – 3:00 PM

Are we boldly going where no one has gone before? Yes, with our telescopes. We know there are planets in other star systems, but can they support life as we know it? Do they have what it takes? Scientists are finding the answers. Join us as we enter the habitable zone. **\$5/adults, \$3.50/students, seniors, FOMH, \$12/families. Registration and payment due December 3.**



Leave No Family Inside: Hark, Who Goes There?

Saturday, Dec. 12, 12:30 – 3:00 PM

You'll become an official animal private investigator by learning how to identify animal tracks, scat (animal droppings), and other clues left by local wildlife. Make and take a special plaster cast of an animal track as your badge of honor and expertise. **\$6/person, \$10/family. Registration and payment due December 9.**

Ask The Naturalist

Jessica Miller, Assistant Naturalist

Not long ago, a friend mentioned to me that a black bear was hit along Highway 10 in Winnebago County. Pretty far south for a black bear, he thought. That prompted me to do a little bit of investigation into other potential black bear sightings from the central to southern regions the state. Having found quite a few reports from Eau Claire to Green Lake and Dane counties, it now begs the question, "Why are we starting to see so many black bears moving south of Highway 64?"

Preferring dense woodland edge habitat with thick ground cover and access to swamps or river bottoms, black bear populations have always been much greater in the northern, one-third part of the state (north of Highway 64). Because they are omnivores, a typical black bear diet consists of plants, berries, seeds, nuts, insects, rodents and other small mammals, eggs, fish and even carrion. When natural food sources or adequate habitat is scarce, bears move to new locations and dine on readily available goods such as livestock, birdseed (from feeders), beehives, cornfields, grease from grills or garbage from unsecured receptacles. With a territory of about 15-25 square miles for boars and about 5 square miles for sows, hungry bears can travel quite a distance for food.

That said, as more and more people are moving "up north" into bear territory, more and more bears are being spotted in central and southern Wisconsin. Coincidence? I think not. A recent two-year study conducted by a UW-Madison student indicates that black bear populations may be more than double the original estimate of 13,000 statewide. If the study is accurate, upwards of 25,000 or more bears could be vying for their own personal space. In addition to a potential increase in bear populations, many former dairy farms in the southern part of the state have now

become cornfields or hunting and recreational properties which are enticing to bears. As more people manage their properties for wildlife, woodland edges and hedgerows are now acting as corridors for bears moving south.



While black bears are typically wary of humans and flee at the first sight (or smell) of us, a frightened or very hungry bear could potentially become a threat or nuisance. To prevent such occurrences, don't feed bears! Ever! The minute bears associate humans with food, they will become more brazen the next time their stomach growls. Bird feeders, garbage cans, greasy grills and compost piles are considered food. If bears are there, those items should not be. If you encounter a bear in your yard, in the woods, or even walking down the street, stay calm but make some noise so as not to startle the animal. By backing away slowly, you will allow the bear to make a quick escape. When hiking, camping or doing any recreational activities in bear territory, make noise by singing, talking or simply wearing bear bells, which jingle as you move. By taking a few precautions, your first or fiftieth bear sighting will definitely be a safe and memorable one.

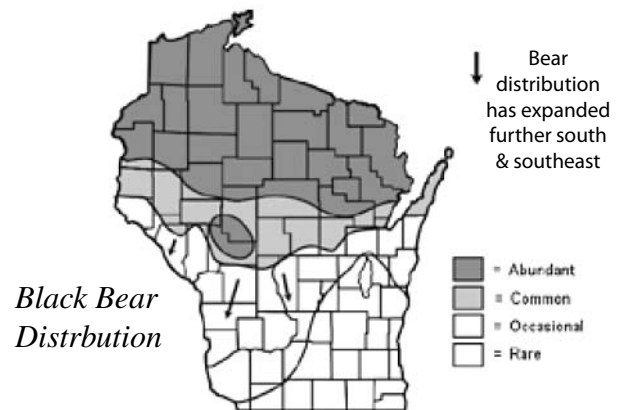
All People's Trail Update

By Mike Hibbard, Director/Naturalist

If you visited to the nature center this summer it may have appeared as if no progress was being made on the All People's trail. Looks can be deceiving. The progress that is taking place is not visible.

Since the trail is planned to run through an environmentally sensitive area, steps are being taken to ensure that the trail has as little environmental impact as possible. A soil scientist has performed a wetland delineation study to determine the boundary of the wetland soils and vegetation in the area where construction will take place. It was necessary to have the wetland delineation study done because the trail cannot be constructed within the wetland boundaries. Since August we have been working with the Army Corps of Engineers, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Outagamie County Zoning Board to make sure all of the proper permits and procedures for erosion control are in place before construction begins. Although construction has been delayed, most likely until this fall, we want to make sure it is done in an environmentally responsible way.

For more information about the All People's Trail or if you would like to support our fundraising efforts, please visit our web site at www.mosquitohill.com.



Wish List

- Handheld GPS units
- Chain saw
- Belt Sander
- Large Ziploc Bags
- Homemade soups and desserts for Art Fest
- Tiki torches for Harvest Moon Festival & Snowshoe Trails
- The following supplies for Holiday Make & Take:
 - Electric pencil sharpener, Tamarack or hemlock cones (very small), votive candles in glass cups, 6x9 lined note pads, deer antlers (yup, that's right), fabric remnants, ribbon (polyester), Christmas wrapping paper, gift tags, heavy duty craft staplers & staples, fabric shower curtains (not liners)

The Volunteer Voice

You make a living by what you get, but you make a life by what you give... – Winston Churchill

Volunteer Reflections

Pat Lund-Moe, Volunteer Coordinator

Minutes.....Hours.....Days

Just like the Eveready Bunny, you keep on going and going! What an amazing group of volunteers we have here at Mosquito Hill. Next time you're out, please take a minute to look at the bulletin board outside the volunteer room. You will see a detailed list of all the different areas YOU have spent your time volunteering in at Mosquito Hill. All the details add up to 2918.5 hours from January-June of this year! That equates to 364.8 eight-hour days. Congratulations, and THANK YOU from the bottom of all of our hearts for all you do to make this such a wonderful place to be!

Ageless Volunteering

Our volunteers – what a wonderfully diverse group we have! Because of the diversity, each volunteer offers unique gifts and talents to our nature center. Some love to work with the public through our events, school groups, office reception, and educational presentations. Others are busy behind the scenes with food preparation, gardening, maintenance, program set-up, and computer programs. One is just as important as the other as each helps the wheel turn smoothly as we move.

We are reaping the benefits of schools promoting community service! A number of middle school and high school age students are jumping in to help in a variety of areas. Some are interested in continuing studies in natural resources, where others are here because they enjoy being outside and working with people. It's been a joy to see our younger volunteers working alongside our veterans, learning and sharing life experiences from both ends of the spectrum! The knowledge and experiences exchanged at those times is invaluable, and often we don't know what impact it may have until long afterwards. Thank you to all of you who are passing on your love of nature, and volunteering, to another generation----whether older or younger than you!

This summer we offered a somewhat "new" twist on a much needed activity. Each Wednesday morning, from 9-12, we had "Group Gardening". There was hot coffee and cold juice to drink, along with a snack to keep everyone going. We had a small, but dedicated group who kept the gardens and Butterfly House looking great for all who came to visit. There is still work to do in the fall, so anyone interested in doing fall work so next year the gardens look great again is welcome to come on out. We'll continue to plan projects for Wednesdays, or any day that works for you! The Garden Shed is full of tools, gloves, and knee pads to make your time here oh so pleasant. Thank you to all

those with dirt under your fingernails – you came, you got dirty, and we love the results!

The Butterfly House...

What an awesome place to spend a warm summer day. Many new people ventured out and were greeted by an equally awesome group of volunteers. We had a number of people join our volunteer team by starting in the Butterfly House. This is where the expertise is really passed on by the veterans---your mentoring was wonderful. Not only did the visitors learn from everyone, but volunteers learned from each other! Thank you for another successful summer of butterfly adventures.

Economic Woes.... Giving Shows...

It seems as though everywhere we turn these days, the economy is the only thing we hear about. Sadly, it has affected many people directly in jobs lost. Because Mosquito Hill Nature Center is one of Outagamie County's parks, funding here is determined by the county budget. Of course, as we all know, all government programs are having to adjust to these difficult times.

Because of these budget constraints, an e-mail was sent asking for help with supplies and treats for Summer Ecology classes. Your response was absolutely wonderful!! Thank you so much for your generosity, especially at a time when so many are struggling.

A huge way you can help is by becoming a member of Friends of Mosquito Hill (FOMH). This group is the membership organization that supports the mission of Mosquito Hill Nature Center. Joining FOMH benefits Mosquito Hill by providing additional funding for programs, supplies, and other needs not available through the county budget. FOMH is the funding source for our volunteer program, and we all know how crucial that is! It also benefits you! You receive this quarterly newsletter, discount on educational programs and bookstore purchases, and free snowshoe rental all winter! The real benefit though is knowing you're helping more people enjoy Mosquito Hill Nature Center, all year round. Membership information is included in this newsletter, and you can check out the "Friends" table next time you're out.

If you are wondering about other needs we may have, please refer to the Wish List in this newsletter. Maybe something on the list will be just the item you'd like to share with Mosquito Hill. If you have questions about other needs, please feel free to speak with any staff person.

Welcome New Volunteers

Jean, Sandie, Sofia, Kate, Danielle, Dan, Mark, Michaela, Colleen, Carol, Denise, Chris, Jennifer, Anna, Judy, Sandy, Andrea, Alissa, Lisa and Shelly!!

You May Contact Volunteer Coordinator Pat Lund-Moe at:
email: fomh.vc@focol.org Phone: 920-779-6433

Volunteers: If we don't have your e-mail address, please send it in!!

Harvest Moon Festival
Saturday October 3
4:00 - 9:00 PM
 Admission: \$8/car
 Hayrides: \$1/person

Picture this: a lovely fall evening, not too chilly, moon rise over the hill, and 1500 of your closest friends! That was Harvest Moon Festival in 2008. To say we were crowded is an understatement. (Insert lots of exclamation points here.) So in June, staff and volunteers got together for brats, burgers and brainstorming. What resulted are plans for an extended Harvest Moon Festival on a new day: one resulting in fewer lines to wait in, more hayrides, better parking opportunities, and, an earlier starting time. Families with young children will be able to enjoy all of the event without having to keep young ones up too late.

Although people really seemed to like the Friday night format of past festivals, we realized we couldn't accommodate all our visitors in that small window between dinner time and bed time. So our annual fall event is moving to Saturday, October 3, between 4:00 and 9:00 p.m. All the same fun activities are planned: hayrides, an after-dark lighted jack-o-lantern walk, New London FFA animal displays, astronomy programs and stargazing, apple cider, caramel apples and other homemade treats. In addition, new activities will be added to the event, including a daytime pumpkin hike, a giant spider web obstacle course, crafts, demonstrations and much more.

The theme of this year's event is "Harvest Time Around the World". Plans are in the works to give an international flare to our festival by incorporating harvest traditions from different countries.

A final schedule will be available at www.mosquitohill.com.

Mary Swifka, Staff Assistant

Extended Harvest Moon Festival Planned for 2009

(FOLD LINE)



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