



# River Bend

## NATURE CENTER

Winter 2017, Volume 37, Issue 4

Helping people discover, enjoy, understand, and preserve the incredible natural world that surrounds us.

### Mark Your Calendar

See calendar insert for complete listings.

#### January

- 11 -- Restoration Club
- 14 -- Animal Ambassador Meet & Greet
- 18 -- OWLS Luncheon
- 18 -- Restoration Club
- 21 -- WinterFest
- 25 -- Restoration Club
- 30 -- Homeschool Science Day  
*Awesome Astronomy*

#### February

- 4 -- Bagels & Birds
- 11 -- Candlelight Snowshoe/Hike
- 15 -- OWLS Luncheon
- 18 -- Animal Ambassador Meet & Greet
- 25 -- Building with Buckthorn
- 27 -- Homeschool Science Day  
*Coping with the Cold*

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## Director's Desk

By Breanna Wheeler, Executive Director

**H**appy New Year to you! Aspirations abound in January as we begin a new year. It reminds me of the colorful seed catalogs that will soon arrive which offer all kinds of splendid promises for the gardening season. I love looking through, dog-eared pages, circling all the possibilities, but then practicalities such as size of the garden and time to devote to it come into play. What is possible? Could we add a few square feet? What will it mean in terms of time for weeding and watering? How delicious will the fruits of these labors be at harvest time?

And that's just one thing. In no particular order, a few other to-do's for 2017 are eating healthier, exercising more, spending more time with family, getting outside to enjoy nature more, and leading River Bend Nature Center to be the best it can be. They don't occur singularly but must mesh together somehow. Each one of these has its own list of questions like the gardening example and will need to complement the others.

Developing goals and to do lists can be overwhelming but we must move forward, one foot in front of the other, one thing at a time. While looking forward, we must also look for what's happening all around us right now. One foot in the now, one foot in the next.

After crafting plans and hopes for 2017, I want to give myself the gift of being present each day and each moment in the highs, lows, and middles of right now. The stuff that's happening right now is the stuff that is life.

As we embark upon the process of strategic planning, we want to thank you for caring about and investing in River Bend Nature Center over time making it what it is today and shining light on what is possible tomorrow.

### Manna

*Everywhere, everywhere, snow sifting down,  
a world becoming white, no more sounds,  
no longer possible to find the heart of the day,  
the sun is gone, the sky is nowhere, and of all  
I wanted in life—so be it—whatever it is  
that brought me here, chance, fortune, whatever  
blessing each flake of snow is the hint of, I am  
grateful. I bear witness, I hold out my arms,  
palms up, I know it is impossible to hold  
for long what we love of the world, but look  
at me, is it foolish, shameful, arrogant to say this,  
see how the snow drifts down, look how happy  
I am.*

-Joseph Stroud

# River Bend Nature Center

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rbncinfo@rbnc.org  
www.rbnc.org

## Board of Directors

Steve Underdahl, *President/City Council Rep.*

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Wendy Wustenberg

## Staff

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Emily Greger, Public Program Coordinator

Leslie Kennedy, Administrative Assistant

Jill Engle, Marketing & Comm. Coordinator

Jason Pecore, Facility Assistant

Karen David, Receptionist

## Seasonal Staff

Katie Elam, Environmental Educator

Kara Johnson, Environmental Educator

Elsa Litecky, Environmental Educator

Stephanie Rathsack, Environmental Educator

All content

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unless otherwise noted.



## Winter Program Offerings

River Bend Nature Center is once again offering group winter programs. We are able to accommodate groups of most sizes and all ages for our winter adventure programs. It's a great way to build a team, get a group active in winter, or bring your group



out to experience something new. Winter adventure programs can last for 1-3 hours depending on the activities your group is interested in. River Bend is the perfect place to experience the wonders of winter! The most common activities include:

- **Snowshoeing:** Come learn about the different styles, the history, and methods of snowshoeing then try it out using our traditional style wooden snowshoes. If you can walk, you can snowshoe, so all levels of experience are encouraged!
- **Kicksledding:** River Bend is one of the few places that you can experience traditional kicksleds from Finland (pictured above)! A kicksled is a human-powered sled equipped with a seat for a partner. You use it similar to a scooter but through the snow! Bring your energy and willingness to try something new, and kick sledding will quickly become one of your favorite activities.
- **Winter Tracking:** Snow helps animals tell their story and River Bend staff can help you read that story. This activity is all about learning River Bend's most common animal tracks and what those tracks can tell you about an animal's activities.
- **Maple Syrup:** As soon as the days are above freezing and the nights are below freezing we will begin harvesting maple syrup. In this hands-on educational program you will learn the ins and outs of creating syrup as well as how and why this process occurs. Bring your sweet tooth!

To schedule your group for a program, contact Education Coordinator Amber Brossard at [brossard@rbnc.org](mailto:brossard@rbnc.org) or 507.332.7151.

## New & Returning Members

*New members, welcome! members who have been away, welcome back!*

SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER MEMBERSHIPS

Jonathan Beardsley

Gary Braun

Jonathan Finnesgard

Kris Graves

Stan/Charlene Herauf

Brandon/Jessica Johannsen

Jon Kerr

John/Kathy McFarlane

Zachery/Jennifer Pelletier

Troy/Linda Temple

Grant Wilson/Lisa Humfeld-Wilson

# Deer Management

By Emily Greger, Public Program Coordinator

**T**hank you to everyone that helped make this year's deer management hunt a successful one! It was very important to us that we find a way to keep our trails open for the public to enjoy, while still implementing a critically important land management strategy.

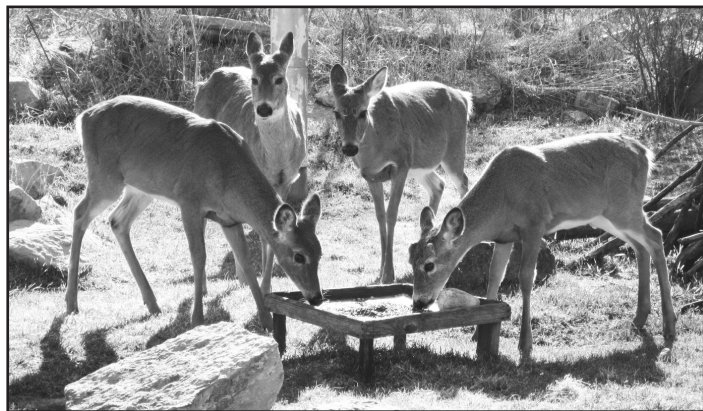
Some of the frequently asked questions during and after the hunt were:

## What safety precautions were taken during the hunt?

All of our hunters went through an application process, and then after being selected they attended a mandatory orientation session prior to participating in the hunt. During this meeting we outlined our safety rules.

Some of these precautions were:

1. This was an archery-only hunt in which hunters must be in elevated stands. This forces them to shoot downward as opposed to horizontally, decreasing the risk of an arrow traveling long distances.
2. We had a set limit to the amount of hunters allowed on site, and assigned each to specific zones which we monitor daily.
3. There was no hunting within 50 feet of trails or roads, within 100 feet of our canoe-in campsite, or within 200 feet of buildings.
4. Hunters are not allowed to shoot towards trails or buildings.
5. We had signs posted around the grounds asking visitors to stay on trail and keep pets on leash. There were also orange vests available to the public in our Interpretive Center.



## How many deer were harvested?

During the 14-day hunt, 36 deer were harvested from the Nature Center, of which 25 were female and 12 were male.

## Are there still deer at the Nature Center?

Yes! While 36 may seem like a large number, the population estimates of deer at River Bend are between 100 - 200. There is still a significant population that can be observed and enjoyed at River Bend.

# Gathering Ideas for Our 40th Year

## June 2018 to June 2019

Big occasions deserve big celebrations, and our 40th Anniversary planning is starting right now.

**We are casting the net widely for ideas** from staff, volunteers, members, directors, donors, the original founders, and others who are important to our history as well as our future. **We especially want yours!**

Please take a few minutes to consider three questions:

*“What is the value of River Bend Nature Center to me today?”*

*“Why will River Bend Nature Center be important for the next 40 years?”*

*“What ideas could breathe life and excitement into the 40th Anniversary?”*

- Fun parties to kick off and end the year in glorious June weather?
- A special approach to the fall Ramble?
- A showcase for longtime supporters of River Bend?
- Special programs to showcase the miles of trails in all seasons?
- Outreach to new visitors from a larger region around Faribault?

- Special volunteer recognition?
- Invitations to area organizations for special events like film nights, church services & company picnics?
- An oral history project to gather the stories and historical artifacts to exhibit at River Bend and Rice County Historical Society?
- Improved educational signage throughout the grounds?
- A bold, new entrance?

We eagerly await your answers by email to [wheeler@rbnc.org](mailto:wheeler@rbnc.org) by March 1. If you are interested in serving on the 40th Anniversary Committee, or want to nominate someone else, please add contact information to your note. With your help we will announce official plans by June 2017. Thank you!



## Business Members

*Please support our business members!*

### Platinum

1st United Bank – Faribault  
 Brushwork Signs  
 Post/MOM Brands  
 Paddington’s Seed & Feed  
 Shattuck-St. Mary’s School  
 State Bank of Faribault

### Gold

ABC Bus Companies, Inc.  
 Faribault Transportation Company

### Plus

Cannon River STEM School  
 Cenneidigh, Inc./Inisfail, Inc.  
 Faribault Flyers Bike & Ski Club  
 Faribault Rotary Youth Services, Inc.

Faribo Farm & Home Supply, Inc.  
 Mercury Minnesota  
 Milltown Cycles  
 Schroder Concessions, Inc.  
 Sertoma Club of Faribault

### Basic

A & W Restaurant  
 Anderka Construction  
 Arnold Law and Mediation  
 Boldt Funeral Home  
 Brite Way Window Service  
 Cannon River Watershed Partnership  
 Donahue’s Greenhouse  
 Faribault Animal Center  
 Faribault Area Retired Educators  
 Faribo Air Conditioning and Heating  
 Faribo Insurance

Faribo Sno-Go Club, Inc.  
 Fette’s Electronics  
 Historic Hutchinson House B&B  
 HomeTown Federal Credit Union  
 Humphrey Manlift Company, Inc.  
 Hy-Vee  
 Landscape Restoration, Inc.  
 Mortenson Fire & Safety, Inc.  
 Parker Kohl Funeral Home  
 Pawn Minnesota LLC  
 Quality Appliance  
 R.C. Mutual Insurance Co.  
 Reese, Winter & Associates, Ltd.  
 Reliance Bank  
 Reynolds Services, Inc. Seal Coating  
 Tom’s Lock and Key LLC  
 TRB Electric LLC  
 Treadway Graphics

# News & Notes

## Bats, Bones, and Bonfires Wrap-up

Fall ended with our spook-tacular annual event, Bats, Bones, and Bonfires, on October 29th. This year, even with a little rain, we had a grand total of 1300 visitors, participating in a wide variety of activities including games, s'more making, hayrides, and much more. Admissions and event sponsorships helped River Bend raise \$5,300 at the event which goes into our general fund to support programs and maintenance of the trails and facilities. The success of this event was made possible by generous donations, as well as by extensive volunteer efforts: throughout the day River Bend hosted approximately 75 youth and adult volunteers. We are already looking forward to next year's festivities, and hope to see it continue to grow!

## WinterFest is January 21st

Come celebrate winter at River Bend Nature Center this January! We will be hosting our 33rd annual Winterfest event on Saturday, January 21st from 1:00-4:00pm. Join us for games, hot chocolate, music, and s'mores! Snowshoes and kick sleds will be available to try. Admissions will be \$7/person or \$25/family (\$5/member or \$20/member family).

## Snowshoe Rental and Ski Passes

Thanks to a group of hard-working volunteers, River Bend is able to provide you with miles of trails for cross-county skiing, hiking, snowshoeing, and fat tire biking. River Bend is a participant in the Great MN Ski Pass program through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Accordingly, a Great MN Ski Pass is required on all River Bend trails. A ski pass can be purchased at your local

DNR or anywhere where hunting or fishing licenses can be purchased.

Interested in skiing or snowshoeing, but don't own equipment? We've got you covered!

## Daily Rental Fees

Snowshoes

\$10 per person (\$5 for River Bend members)

Ski Bundle

(includes a pair of skis, boots, and poles)

\$10 per person (\$5 for River Bend members)

Skis, boots, or poles rental only

\$4 per item (\$2 for River Bend members)



Join us as we celebrate the winter season at

# WinterFest

Sunday, January 21st

1:00-4:00 pm

St. Olaf College  
Carolers

Games

Live  
Animal  
Shows

S'mores  
Popcorn  
Cocoa

Snowshoes  
to Try

Kicksleds  
to Ride

Indoor  
Crafts

& More!

**Admission:** *\$7 per person (\$5 per River Bend member)  
Capped at \$25 per family (\$20 per member family).*

Admission includes all  
activities/food listed above  
(while supplies last).

[www.rbnc.org/winterfest](http://www.rbnc.org/winterfest)  
507.332.7151

# Naturalist Notebook

Illustrated by Moe Brand  
Text by Katie Elam, Seasonal Environmental Educator

## Common Nighthawk *Chordeiles minor*

Have you been walking down a trail or sidewalk and noticed dark shapes swooping and looping high and low near dusk? Did you hear a funny, almost electric-sounding “beant” noise? Then you have probably seen *Chordeiles minor*, the Common Nighthawk, chasing insects for its daily meal! While this graceful little bird may seem a little mysterious, it is a fantastic flyer and insect-catcher, gulping down hundreds of mosquitoes, flies, grasshoppers, and more with its gaping mouth. The explanation for the mystery surrounding this bird comes from both its cryptic coloration and crepuscular customs. It has a gray body with brown blotches, which makes for great camouflage in this ground-nesting and twilight-hunting bird.

When the female makes a nest, it doesn't take much time – she just lays her 2 eggs on some rocks or a shallow depression in dirt or gravel. They have also adapted to living in cities, where they may make a nest on rooftops or window ledges! The fluffy and well-camouflaged chicks hatch after only 20 days, and by the time they are a month out of the egg, they are flying, hunting insects, and living on their own. By the end of the summer, it is time to migrate south! These birds typically mate for life, and both parents feed the chicks while they are growing. Outside of the breeding season, Common Nighthawks are usually solitary unless they are migrating, when they can be seen in large flocks.

As its name implies, this is a common and widespread bird, ranging from northern Canada, through most of the continental U.S. in the summer, all the way down to the middle of South America for winter. Part of the reason for this large distribution lies in the migration tendencies of this species – they have one of the longest migration routes of any bird in North America. Some birds travel so far that they end up arriving late for their breeding season in the north, and then have to leave early to go south for winter! They are also known for being seen far outside their normal range: they have been spotted in Iceland, Greenland, and throughout the British Isles too, probably from being blown off course!

Here in Minnesota, it is pretty easy to find these birds, as long as they are flying. If you see them flying in the day time, you will notice a gray brown body, a thin white stripe horizontal across the tail, and bright white vertical bars across the edges of the primary feathers, along with an almost bat-like flutter to their flight. If they are laying on the ground, though, that



camouflage kicks in and they can be hard to spot! They are not very afraid of people, and are commonly seen near light sources in town, as well as near rivers and lakes, attracted by the large number of bugs, so keep an eye out for them on spring and summer nights, and watch them head south in the fall!

# The Volunteer Page

Thank you to the volunteers listed below for their hard work and dedication to River Bend! Our mission is at work in our community because of you. *October through mid-December volunteers listed.*

## **Animal Ambassadors**

Minnesota State  
Academy for the  
Blind Volunteers

David Lee  
Tim Madigan  
Janet Mitchell  
Janet Mostrom  
Jolene Mostrom  
John/Patti Nowacki  
Laney Ohmans  
Patricia Ohmans  
Amber Olson  
Linda Olson

## **Bats, Bones & Bonfires**

Chandler Apling  
Delores Barta  
Gregory Barta  
Terry Barta  
Jeremy Bokman  
Anna Brennan  
Dawn/Phil Brossard  
Evan Brossard  
Seth Brossard  
Gregory Carlson  
Jane Egerdal  
Myron Engle  
Ron Engle  
Don/Judy Graunke  
Sandra Hagel  
Fraser Harrison  
Jan Harrison  
Stan Herauf  
Dave/Diana Hering  
Penelope Hillemann  
Glenn/Kathleen  
Holman  
Brent/Lisa Johnson  
Jeffrey Kingland

Scott Reher  
Barb Rost  
Michael J. Sandberg  
Dustin Simpson  
Leah Weston  
Charlene/Walter  
Wetzel  
Debra White  
Elizabeth Wright  
Girl Scout Troup  
#25205  
Girl Scouts Troup  
#22207  
Girl Scouts Troup  
#22222  
4H Student Volunteers

## **Charitable Gambling Committee**

LaVonne Brick  
Gene Buhr

Gregory/Suzanne  
Carlson  
J. David Green  
George Smith

## **Finance Committee**

Matt Carlander  
Nalani McCutcheon  
Steven Underdahl  
Doug Zahn

## **Board of Directors**

Gregory Carlson  
Matt Carlander  
Penelope Hillemann  
Tim Madigan  
Nalani McCutcheon  
Dirk Peterson  
Dustin Simpson  
Paul Stegmeir  
Steven Underdahl  
Cody VanDerVeen  
Elizabeth Wright  
Wendy Wustenberg

## **Trail Grooming**

Glenn Holman  
David Lee  
Bob Nesvold  
Todd Trembley

## **General Cleaning/ Trail Clean-up**

Minnesota Academy  
for the Deaf  
Volunteers

## **Habitat Restoration**

Audrey Greger  
Henry Greger  
Penelope Hillemann  
David Lee  
Jason McDowell  
Susanna McDowell  
Laney Ohmans  
Dirk Peterson

## **Mowers**

Ralph Meehan  
Roger Riesing

## **Newsletter Art**

Maureen Brand

## **Office Mailings**

Delores Barta  
Cecilia DeGrood  
Charlotte Dirksen  
Judy Lee  
Kandie Mensing

## **Office Receptionist**

Janet Mitchell

## **Restoration Club**

David Angell  
David Lee  
Sue Riedel  
Leah Weston

## **Volunteer Naturalists**

John Battles  
Diana Hering  
Glenn Holman  
Robby Holmes  
Janet Mitchell  
Mary Niermann  
Barb Rost  
Josh Torkelson  
Monica Wallace

## **Trail Maintenance**

Glenn Holman  
David Lee  
Bob Nesvold  
Zach Smisek  
Mark Thatcher  
Joy Zimmerman

## **Weekend Volunteers**

Eddie/Janet Lozon  
Charlene/Walter  
Wetzel

## Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

A great way to support River Bend Nature Center is by volunteering your time.

### Maple Syruping

We are looking for volunteers to help tap trees, collect sap, and run the evaporator for our annual maple syrup harvest this spring. We will need volunteers both on weekdays and weekends throughout the day. No experience necessary, training is provided.

👉 Contact Kara at [kara@rbnc.org](mailto:kara@rbnc.org) to volunteer.

### Weekend Volunteers

Volunteers greet, assist, and provide an interpretive and educational experience to weekend visitors. Shifts are from 9am-12:30pm and 12:30pm-4pm. Training will be provided.

👉 Contact Amber at [amber@rbnc.org](mailto:amber@rbnc.org) to volunteer.

### River Bend Ramble Committee

The 36th Annual River Bend Ramble will be held on October 7, 2017. We are seeking volunteer committee members who are interested in planning, implementing, raising funds, and soliciting item donations for this annual event. The committee will meet monthly through October.

👉 Contact Leslie at [kennedy@rbnc.org](mailto:kennedy@rbnc.org) to volunteer.

### Restoration Club

Members meet in the Interpretive Center each week and then head out to learn about and implement restoration techniques at River Bend. Learn about buckthorn removal, protecting species, identification techniques by bark, leaf and bud characteristics and more!

👉 Contact Emily at [emily@rbnc.org](mailto:emily@rbnc.org) to volunteer.



**River Bend**  
NATURE CENTER

PO Box 186  
1000 Rustad Rd  
Faribault, MN  
55021

507.332.7151  
www.rbnc.org

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
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Faribault, MN  
Permit #35

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Scholarships  
Available

Registration Opens February 1st!

# SUMMER CAMP

2017

Members  
receive  
discounts  
on camp  
registrations,  
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Half-Day & Whole-Day Camps For Children Ages 3 to 16

JOIN US FOR ADVENTURE AND DISCOVERY!

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