



River Bend

NATURE CENTER

Fall 2022, Volume 44, Issue 4
October, November, December



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

Director's Desk: First Words

By: Brad Bourn, Executive Director

The newsletter is now digital!

If you would still like to receive a paper copy please email rbncinfo@rbnc.org or call us at 507-332-7151

Upcoming Programs

OCTOBER

- Oct 1 - Little Sprouts Prairie Flowers
- Oct 1 - Bagels & Birds
- Oct 1 - Family Tree ID Hike
- Oct 10 - Homeschool: Colors in Nature & Nature Art
- Oct 11 - Little Sprouts: Colorful Leaves
- Oct 15 - Fall Phenology Hike
- Oct 19 - Lunch & Learn: All About Owls
- Oct 25 - Little Sprouts: Animal Houses
- Oct 29 - Bats, Bones & Bonfires

NOVEMBER

- Nov 5 - Bagels & Birds
- Nov 5 - Bird Hike
- Nov 8 - Little Sprouts: Conifers & Cones
- Nov 14 - Homeschool: Geocaching & Map Reading
- Nov 16 - Lunch & Learn
- Nov 19 - Little Sprouts: Rocks Rock
- Nov 19 - Animal Ambassadors
- Nov 22 - Little Sprouts: Rocks Rock

DECEMBER

- Dec 3 - Bagels & Birds
- Dec 3 - Reduce, Recuse, Recycle
- Dec 10 - Little Sprouts: Animal Signs
- Dec 12 - Homeschool: How do Animals Survive Winter?
- Dec 13 - Little Sprouts: Snow Fun
- Dec 14 - Lunch & Learn: Wetland Conservation
- Dec 17 - Citizen Science Bird ID

Dear friends,

In River Bend's last newsletter, my predecessor, Breanna Wheeler shared her final words as executive director of River Bend Nature Center. I want to start my first words as executive director in this newsletter by once again thanking Breanna for her tireless talent and dedication to RBNC over the years. Thanks in large part to her work, I come to the helm of an organization poised to succeed in the weeks, months, and years ahead. Thank you, Breanna.

As I'm wrapping up my first few months at River Bend, change is in the air everywhere you look. The days are getting shorter, temperatures are changing, Monarchs are migrating, and all the signs of summer are changing to fall and winter. I'm reminded of the changing seasons as I help lead the work to transition River Bend Nature Center from one beautiful season to the next.

I've had the opportunity these last months to meet with many of you and learn what has made River Bend so special for more than four decades. While we will do our best to preserve those things, we also hope to also transition River Bend into an era where we are more relevant to, and meet the needs of, all our guests from all walks of life and all corners of the globe. This means telling stories that are often left on the margins like acknowledging the Dakota people whose land RBNC stewards as well as better honoring the history and experiences of the people that lived on these grounds when it was the Faribault Regional Center. While we reconcile our past, we'll also work to make our future more relevant and inviting to the many cultures and people with different abilities who call Faribault their home through planning culturally specific programming and providing improved adaptive recreation and accessibility opportunities.

While we have lots of hard work ahead of us, we are lifted by the great work of those who came before us from our founder, Orwin Rustad to my predecessor, Breanna Wheeler. Although the transitions ahead will require work, I'm hoping we'll all find them to be as natural and beautiful as the transition of the seasons.

I look forward to working with you!

Yours in service,

Brad Bourn

River Bend Nature Center

1000 Rustad Rd—PO Box 186
Faribault, MN 55021

Trail Hours: 6am - 10pm

Building Hours: Fridays 10am - 4pm

1st and 3rd Saturdays 10am - 2pm

During the week the building is reserved for
prescheduled programs

Board of Directors

Dustin Dienst, *President*

Patrick Mader, *Vice-President*

Karen Zeller, *Treasurer*

Tom DeMatteo, *Secretary*

Tom Spooner, *City Council Liaison*

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Sarah Hammer, Laura Isenor

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Erin Liu, Abby Malmanger

Patrick Schaefer, Greg Simons

Staff

Brad Bourn, Executive Director

Katy Anderegg, Naturalist/Operations Manager

Brittany Smith, Naturalist/
Natural Resources Manager

Molly Olson, Naturalist/Marketing Coordinator

Erin Tone, Naturalist/Program Coordinator

Matthew Johnson, Naturalist

Kate Ford, Naturalist

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Little Sprouts



A parent/child class exploring the natural world. For children birth-5 years old. Each week has planned educational activities and nature-play time.

Dress for the weather.

On the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, from 9:30-11 am

*note Saturday Programs

September 13- Terrific Turtles and Fabulous Frogs

*September 17- Terrific Turtles and Fabulous Frogs

September 27- Prairie Flowers

*October 1 - Prairie Flowers

October 11- Colorful Leaves

October 25 - Animal Homes

November 8 - Conifers & Cones

*November 19- Rocks Rock

November 22- Rocks Rock

*December 10- Animal Signs

December 13 - Snow Fun

for more information and to register
visit rbnc.org/little-sprouts call
507-332-7151 or scan the QR Code below



River Bend Nature Center 1000 Rustad Rd. Faribault, MN





River Bend
NATURE CENTER



BATS, BONES & BONFIRES

Saturday, October 29, 2022

2:00-5:00 PM

\$10/Member Family ~ \$15/Non-member Family
Bonfire with s'mores & cider ~ Games ~ Crafts ~ Face Painting
Horse-drawn Wagon Rides ~ Live Peregrine Falcon
Goodie bags (while supplies lasts) & More!

Event Sponsors

The Putrah Foundation

Mark L. Zeller

Barton Jackson Agency LLC



MICHAEL B
PHOTOGRAPHY

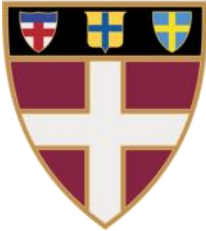
River Bend Nature Center
1000 Rustad Road . Faribault, MN

RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER BUSINESS MEMBERS

STAR



SHATTUCK-
ST. MARY'S



The Putrah Foundation
Faribault Rotary Youth Services, Inc.

Advocate

A&W Restaurant
Anderka Construction
Anderson Race Management
Clean River Partners
Community Co-op
Country School Financial
Donahue's Greenhouse
Faribault Animal Center
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Glenn's Service & Towing
Humphrey Manlift Company, Inc.
Krause Feeds & Supplies
Mill Town Cycles
Quality Appliance
Tom's Lock & Key

FOUNDER



Faribault Flyers Bike & Ski Club

PATRON



Chappuis Jewelers
Erickson Furniture
Faribault Area Retired Educators
Fette Electronics
KidzRule Daycare & Preschool
Mercury Minnesota
Schroder Concessions
Sertoma Club of Faribault



THANK YOU for your Support!

Become a Business Member

Become a Business Member today at rbnc.org/membership

For more information on:

How to sponsor 2023 events

Maple Syrup Fun Run, Summer Camps, Ramble, or Bats Bones & Bonfire

Group volunteering

Team building programs

How to match employee donations

How to buy memberships for your employees

Contact us at rbncinfo@rbnc.org or call 507-332-7151

RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER BUSINESS MEMBERSHIPS

Connect with your community and become a River Bend Nature Center Business Member

Membership Perks

New \$100 Memberships

Marketing item at Maple Syrup Fun Run 2023 by 12/15/22
+ business name listed
on website, kiosks, and newsletter

New \$250 Memberships

Marketing item at Maple Syrup Fun Run 2023 by 12/15/22
+ \$100 voucher for rental or program
+ business logo listed on website, kiosks and newsletter

New \$500 Memberships

Marketing item at Maple Syrup Fun Run 2023 by 12/15/22
+ \$250 voucher for rental or program
+ business logo listed on website, kiosks, and newsletter

New \$1000 Memberships

Marketing item at Maple Syrup Fun Run 2023 by 12/15/22
+ \$500 voucher for rental or program
+ business logo listed on website, kiosks, and newsletter

FACILITY & GREEN SPACE RENTALS

Use your voucher and choose from the following rental spaces to host your next meeting, company picnic, staff appreciation day, etc.

Amphitheater or Lawn - starts at \$50

Trailside Building - starts at \$100

Interpretive Center - starts at \$250

NATURALIST-LED PROGRAMS

Use your voucher for a variety of naturalist-led programs. Choose one or multiple offerings! Our most popular offerings:

Archery, Compass Course, Orienteering, Survival Skills, Canoeing/Kayaking, Guided Walk/Snowshoe, Team Building and more!

Team building has many benefits for groups, committees and businesses. It improves productivity, increases motivation, encourages collaboration, identifies leadership qualities, and builds trust and respect among teammates. Team building programs are facilitated from start to finish by a RBNC naturalist.

Each program accommodates groups up to 20 for a duration of one hour and thirty minutes. Programs start at \$150.

Vouchers must be redeemed within 1 year.
(Voucher use affects tax deductibility of membership donation)

For more information, contact rbncinfo@rbnc.org or 507-332-7151

Left Photo: Federated Insurance Employees spent a few hours on a sunny afternoon removing buckthorn from critical Dwarf Trout Lily Habitat.

Right Photo: Minnesota Master Naturalist Program for adult education. Our buildings are available for conferences or meetings.



News & Notes

New Faces Around River Bend Nature Center

Welcome Erin Tone! She is the newest addition to the River Bend staff. Erin is a Naturalist/Program Coordinator for school field trips and outdoor education. Erin grew up in Northfield and attended Gustavus Adolphus College, where she earned her B.A. in Biology and Environmental Studies. After graduating, Erin attended UST and earned her M.A. and teaching licensure in secondary science teaching. Erin has had internships working with animals and wildlife, has worked as a middle school science teacher, and most recently as a naturalist. Her favorite part of being a naturalist is getting outside and sharing her love for animals and the natural world with others! In her free time, she likes to hike, spend time with family and friends and take trips up the North Shore with her husband and golden retriever, Turk.

Favorite Animals: Seals

Favorite Book: The Book of Hope by Douglas Carlton Abrams and Jane Goodall



Welcome Zach McCarty! He will be serving as our 2022-2023 Minnesota GreenCorps member. Zach grew up in Omaha, Nebraska and moved to Minnesota to attend St. Olaf College, where he graduated with a B.A. in Economics and Political Science. During his time there, Zach worked as a researcher on environmental organizations and completed internships focused on water resources and environmental policy, while also serving as a coach for the local swim team. He loves helping others get excited about nature and exploring the outdoors. In his free time, Zach enjoys wildlife photography, competitive swimming, and travel.

Favorite animal: Red-Bellied Woodpecker

Favorite Book: Why We Swim by Bonnie Tsui



Free Estate Planning Workshop



November 15, 6:30 to 8pm

At River Bend Nature Center . Registration required

River Bend Nature Center is pleased to offer a free estate planning workshop for RBNC members presented by Kristin Yahnke of the law firm Schmitz, Ophaug, Blumhoefer & Yahnke, LLP.

Having a clearly spelled out estate plan is an important thing to leave your loved ones. It helps ensure that your wishes are carried out and can prevent conflict among your loved ones after you are gone. You don't need to be wealthy to have an estate plan and it's never too soon to put your wishes and directives in writing.

Attorney, Kristin Yahnke of Schmitz, Ophaug, Blumhoefer & Yahnke will take your questions and explain the legal documents that encompass estate planning, including wills, trusts, powers of attorney, and health care directives and why you may need them. She will touch specifically on the considerations in planning including estate and income taxes, Medical Assistance planning, special needs planning, blended families, and charitable giving. She will also walk through probate and non-probate assets and what the post-death administration process entails.

This workshop is offered free of charge by RBNC. We certainly hope that you'll remember a charitable gift to River Bend in your estate plan but that is not a requirement for attending the workshop.

Light refreshments will be provided and space is limited. To register for the workshop visit rbnc.org

News & Notes

Invest in a Nature Class & Yourself

Everyone is welcome to visit the nature center and enjoy a class with our knowledgeable staff. From young kids to senior living centers, everyone can still learn something new while exploring the great outdoors. Our classes include a wide variety of topics and we're always open to suggestions. Call 507-332-7151 or email rbncinfo@rbnc.org to inquire about scheduling a class. To get a taste of what we do, join us for a one hour nature program on the 1st or 3rd Saturday of the month this fall and winter. We hope to see you soon!



River Bend Gift Shop

Buy for yourself or make it a gift! Choose from a variety of nature gifts and visit the nature center. Shop our store or go online at rbnc.org. Shipping is not available. Stop in to pick up your items. If the door is open, come on in!



River Bend Nature Center has a \$6,000 matching donor challenge on Give to the Max Day! It begins Thursday, November 17, 2022.

An anonymous group of donors have come forward and offered to match every dollar we raise on Give to the Max day up to \$6,000. Please mark your calendar to make a contribution to River Bend on Give to the Max to double the impact of your gift. Give online at <https://www.givemn.org/organization/Riverbendmn>

Homeschool Programs are Back!

Sign up your kids or grandkids for a two hour outdoor educational program on the 2nd Monday of the month from 1-3 pm. You don't have to be homeschooled to join us! Come on out if you have a day off of school. You don't want to miss out on all the fun! These programs are tailored for ages 5-12. The program fee is \$10 per child. If your child is older, call us and we'll see about adding a program if we get enough interest. Visit rbnc.org for all programs October-May.



Natural Resource Updates

By: Brittany Smith, Naturalist/Resources Manager

Thank You Trail Volunteers

Fall is the season of change. The lush green woods of River Bend becomes a kaleidoscope of reds, oranges, and yellows. The warm breeze quickly turns into a brisk north wind. But, there is one thing that remains unchanged; the amount of constant enjoyment of River Bend's trails. River Bend's ten miles of multi-use trails are used every day. Families on their nightly stroll, pets taking their humans for their daily walk, runners, bikers, and, in a couple of short months, skiers. No matter the time of year, the ten miles of trails at River Bend Nature Center are always in use and in need of constant upkeep for all to enjoy. River Bend would like to thank all the dedicated volunteers that do so much to keep the trails open and accessible. Clearing trails of trees and other debris after storms, picking up trash, mowing, grooming the ski trails, maintaining signage, and other maintenance items that come up. Without these dedicated volunteers, the trails would not be usable. THANK YOU!

If you are interested in getting involved with trail maintenance or other land activities please contact River Bend Nature Center. Without dedicated volunteers, River Bend would not be what it is today!

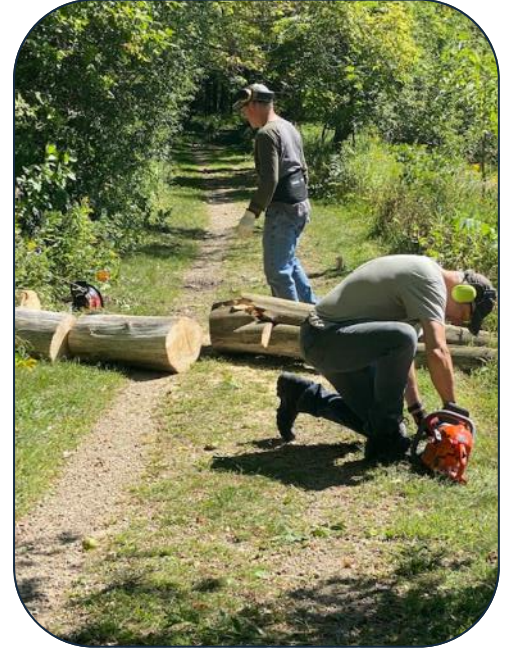
Trail Reminders

- Always keep your pets leashed and in control at all times for their safety and others using the trail
- Always pick up after your pet and use the garbage cans provided
- Be respectful of other trail users, as well as nature
- Please stay on designated trails
- Anyone 16 years of age or older must have a MN State Ski Pass to ski on the groomed trails at River Bend Nature Center. Passes are purchased through the MN DNR.

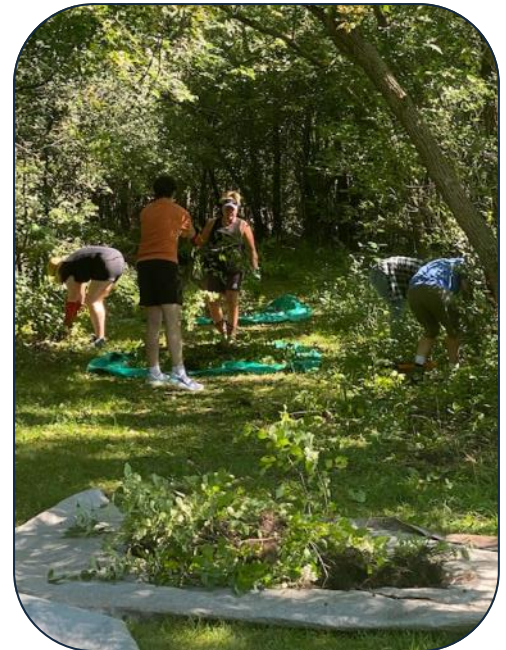
Volunteer Opportunity

Ski Trail Maintenance/Groomer

It is that time of year again when River Bend starts to gear up for cross-country ski season! Volunteers and staff will be working to cut back brush along the trails and preparing them for when the snow starts to fall. If you or anyone you know is interested in helping to maintain and groom the cross-country ski trails please contact River Bend. Please email smith@rbnc.org for more information.



Volunteers clearing trees fallen on the trail. Contact us if you have chainsaw experience.



Volunteers removing buckthorn to keep it under control and prevent spreading to areas sensitive habitat areas.

Naturalist Notebook

By: Matt Johnson, Naturalist

Fall's Other Spectacular Show

As the weather begins to cool and leaves begin to change, obvious signs of fall are all around us. We often think of this time of year as the beginning of the end for many of our native plants, before the dormancy and quiet of winter changes our natural landscape. But to do this would be ignoring the many species that step into the spotlight and fill a critical role during this time of great transition. Fortunately, there is still much to observe and enjoy as we savor the glorious days of autumn.

Nowhere are we more rewarded for our patience than in the prairie. What was once a sea of green, quickly shifts to include a wide range of colors and textures. Prairie grasses such as Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardi*) and Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) dazzle us with beautiful shades of purple and orange. Seed heads that top these grasses also reach their peak, providing both interest and a source of food for many birds well into winter.

Within the prairie, we also see the emergence of many of our most critical wildflowers. A quick check of New England Aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*) illuminates this, with a variety of bees and tiny pollinators still busy as ever moving between flowers. We may also be lucky enough to stumble upon one of our local species of gentian (*Gentiana* spp.), who favor wet conditions and show off their signature shade of blue as one of the last plants to bloom. Then there is of course the golden glow of our native goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.), which provide us with a spectacular show and an abundance of nectar.

By providing a late food source, all of these plants ensure the survival of our many native insects. Consider the now internationally endangered migratory Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*). We often think of milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.) as an essential part of their lifecycle, however, they also need flowers to visit as adults. This is especially true late in the year, as they begin their long trip back to their wintering grounds.

So the next time you are out enjoying the comfortable fall weather, take the time to stop and notice the many native plants that play a vital role in our ecosystems. Just a quick hike can illustrate both the beauty and importance of this time of year.



Story Spotlight

By: Katy Anderegg, Naturalist/Operations Manager

Ramble Reflections

Ramble 2022 was filled with many caring, passionate people who wanted to help us build community through nature. I was honored to be empowered with the responsibility of planning Ramble. Thank you to the board of directors and director for trusting me with such an awesome responsibility. Planning for Ramble, our largest fundraiser, began in January with the setting being The Inn at Shattuck. They have always provided professional service and delicious food and this year was no exception. In the moment, they were on the spot setting up more table settings because we had more people show up to Ramble than expected and had enough food on hand to feed everyone! Which was great all around and meant that there are more people out in the community that wanted to show their support for River Bend.

The evening began with social hour, drinks flowing, selling raffle tickets, silent auction bidding and the hum of the room growing louder as more people arrived. Fun, laughter and love filled the room as we rolled into dinner featuring grilled chicken and cream cheese stuffed mushrooms, Yum!, finished off with dessert by Cakewalk of Northfield, and coffee by MightyFine! Coffee Company.

Dan Maslowski, with Fladeboe Auctions, amped up the love in the room encouraging everyone to turn to one another and show appreciation for being there tonight. Some partners even shared a kiss! With the laughter carrying on, live auction items were sold quickly! Brad Bourn, River Bend's new executive director, shared some thoughts on what it means to build community, what everyone in the community means to River Bend and how we wouldn't be here without their support; support from monetary donors, members and volunteers.

One dedicated family of volunteers and their friends were the featured story of the evening. Wendy, Bill and Lauren Wustenberg are part of five generations that have helped care for and maintain the Marsh Bench Overlook on Raccoon Trail in memory of Wendy's mother, Ruth Morris, for many years. Melodee Smith and family and Mike Anderson and family are out here frequently with the Wustenbergs working on the trails and Kids in the Wild. Their message of "Saying Yes" to helping do what you can for River Bend whether it's time or resources was so moving and motivating that everyone in the room generously helped us raise \$25,000 for building repairs that are currently underway and more planned for the future. I was so overwhelmed by your generosity that all I could say in response was "Wow, wow, wow! Thank you! Thank you!" It means so much to me and the staff here at River Bend to see the community come together to help maintain our buildings so we can continue to provide outdoor education and be a place for people to escape to from everyday stresses.

In the end, you helped us beat our fundraising goal! We raised over \$65,000! Thank You!



Silent auction filled with great items donated from local businesses and community members



Over flowing with people who are passionate about River Bend Nature Center

Story Spotlight

Continued Ramble Reflections



Words of Building Community from Brad Bourn, Executive Director and Wendy & Lauren Wustenberg, featured family of Ramble



Everyone was excited and gave generously to our Fund-A-Need, helping us raise \$25,000 to fund needed repairs, programming, and strategic planning

**Thank You, Ramble Sponsors
for helping us build
community through nature!**

Platinum

The Putrah Foundation

Gold

Dr. Karen and Simon Zeller



Silver

**Dr. Richard & Nancie Huston . Marvin & Sara Schrader
Dr. William & Wendy Wustenberg**





River Bend
NATURE CENTER

PO Box 186
1000 Rustad Rd
Faribault, MN
55021
507.332.7151
www.rbnc.org

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Return Service Requested

 **SAVE THE DATE**
BATS, BONES & BONFIRES
Saturday, October 29, 2022
2:00-5:00 PM
River Bend Nature Center
1000 Rustad Road . Faribault, MN

Can you Volunteer or Donate some Goodies?

Bats, Bones and Bonfires has been a traditional community event for many years at River Bend Nature Center. If you are able and interested in volunteering your time to help run the event, please contact us.

Or, please consider donating something from the list below.

Marshmallows, Chocolate, Graham Crackers, Apple Cider, or Pumpkins.

Contact Katy for donations or volunteer inquiries at anderegg@rbnc.org or 507-332-7151

Check out volunteer opportunities at www.rbnc.org/volunteer.