

# View from the Hill

A newsletter for friends and members of Friends of Mosquito Hill, Inc. | SPRING 2015

## Displays and Discovery

### Part II: A look into the conceptual design

*Mike Hibbard, Director*

In the winter issue of *View from the Hill* we introduced plans to renovate the well loved, yet aging displays in the interpretive building. This issue will introduce some of the features of the conceptual design book that was developed by Split Rock Studios. These features will serve as the foundation for the future look of the space.

#### A New Defined Entrance

A memorable visitor experience begins as early as the parking lot. To foster rewarding and repeat visits, it's all about the first impression. The conceptual design features a re-defined entrance to the interpretive building with an extended pergola structure which will help new visitors avoid confusion about which doors are the main entrance.

#### A Welcoming Experience

As visitors enter the interpretive building they will know how to start their adventure indoors and outdoors. Staff and volunteers will greet visitors, answer questions and offer directions from a curved welcome desk in the lobby.

#### An Interpretive Experience

A visit to the indoor exhibits will serve as a precursor to exploring the natural features of our property. No interpretive exhibit can replicate a hike through the natural beauty of the nature center, but imagine a hike that offers a different perspective of the natural world – atop a towering glacier,

through the eyes of a hungry walleye, or entangled amid a thick web of prairie roots. Imagine an open learning space for all ages with a winding path that weaves a story of natural forces and human impact on the ecosystem.

This renovation project has the potential to eclipse the incredible Science and Education addition that, when completed in 2002, tripled the size of our building. Though we won't be adding space, we are over the moon at the possibilities for what our 40 year old building will look like when the new exhibits are completed.

You can support our planning efforts for this project by attending or contributing to our Spring Fever Fundraiser on Tuesday, April 21 at MHNC. Stay tuned to future issues of *View from the Hill*, e-mail and social media for more details from the concept design sketchbook. If you can't wait, you may view the sketchbook on our website and give us your feedback.



*A conceptual image from the design sketchbook.*



### 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.*

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# Staff Casts a *Magical Spell* over **Spring Fever Banquet**



**Little Red Riding Hood, a fairy princess, Robin Hood and a wicked witch walk into a bar...**

No, not really, but you will see them at this year's Spring Fever Fundraiser on **Tuesday, April 21 at 5:30 PM**. MHNC will be transformed into the

## *Enchanted Forest*

for the evening where guests will mingle, hoist an ale, gnaw on a turkey leg and drop a few shekels into the wishing well, all to benefit Mosquito Hill programs and our upcoming capital campaign to renovate our 40-year old exhibits.

The cost is \$50/person or \$90/couple and tickets are on sale now.

Visit [mosquithill.com](http://mosquithill.com), call 920-779-6433 or e-mail Mary at [mary.swifka@outagamie.org](mailto:mary.swifka@outagamie.org) to order banquet tickets, purchase raffle tickets, or for details on greater levels of giving.



## **Support MHNC & Win Big!**

Can't make it to the banquet? You can still win big by purchasing raffle tickets in advance for the following prizes:

**First Prize\***—Adventure Package, includes an Old Town canoe, men's and women's Fuji bicycles and 2 pairs Yukon Charlie aluminum snowshoes & poles

**Second Prize\***—Primo *Kamado* ceramic charcoal grill

**Third Prize**—\$500 cash

\*Prizes may not be substituted for cash.

Tickets are \$15 each or two for \$20 and may be purchased at MHNC. For assistance with your purchase, call us at 920-779-6433 or e-mail [mary.swifka@outagamie.org](mailto:mary.swifka@outagamie.org).



## Looking Ahead to Summer

*Mary Swifka, Staff Assistant*

November and December are relatively quiet months at MHNC. The busy fall field trip season is over, and the dust has settled from Harvest Moon Festival and the Warrior Princess Mud Run. And without the heavy snowfall that signals an early start to snowshoeing season, visitation drops off.

That quiet season afforded staff and volunteers the time to have thoughtful conversations about what summers at MHNC will look like now that Butterfly House has been retired. What would our summer calendar of events look like? What would we do with the metal structure? Most importantly, what type of attraction might we develop with a regional appeal?

After a series of sugar and caffeine-fueled brainstorming sessions, we committed to the following:

- An expanded list of topics for summer field trips, including butterflies, of course!
- A new summer program for grandparents and their grandkids.
- Developing a new Junior Naturalist program
- We want to build a tree house!

Though the Butterfly House is closed, butterflies will continue to be an important topic in our school-year and summer programming. You'll still see plenty at MHNC; they'll just be outside the house instead of inside! Groups may also choose from topics as varied as ponds and wetlands, forests, and bees, bats and birds. Our popular summer field trips are open to groups such as child care centers, park and rec. programs, senior centers, summer school classes, scout troops and others.

We're rolling out a new program this summer especially for grandparents and their grandchildren. G3 (which stands for "grandma, grandpa, grandchild") is an eight-week series of hour-long naturalist-led programs held each Tuesday morning from June 30 through August 18. Each week will feature a nature theme and include exploring on and off the trails, a small item to make, and resources

to help continue the fun and learning at home. These programs are suitable for all ages and you may sign up for one or many.

You've seen them in state and national parks. This summer we'll introduce our own Junior Naturalist program for youth ages 5 – 12 years. Young visitors can pick up a booklet in the office, complete a number of activities from the booklet and earn a Junior Naturalist award. More details will be coming soon.

What we're most excited about is a plan to build a natural playscape for children, including a tree house! Playscapes, often called natural playgrounds, are like miniature natural landscapes, and they're full of intriguing play and learning opportunities. It's a place where children can be active, use their imaginations, climb, crawl, hide, jump, get dirty and get wet in a place that's safer than a manufactured equipment playground. Plus, who doesn't love a treehouse!

Our staff and volunteers are currently in the dream phase of this project, but thanks to a couple of generous donors, we're on solid footing to start some preliminary designs, explore features to include in the area and nail down an approximate cost.

The timeline is uncertain for the completion of the playscape. As you might expect, much of that hinges on the amount of time needed to raise the necessary funds. If you would like to support this project with a cash or in-kind donation, we would be more than happy to share our ideas and goals with you over a cup of coffee. Please contact me at [mary.swifka@outagamie.org](mailto:mary.swifka@outagamie.org) for more information.

### *Robins in the Snow*

I know that it is April, the calendar tells me so—  
Yet I look outside to see robins in the snow!  
A day ago it rained and they, as happy as can be,  
Pranced around the lawn—searching, hungry, free.  
But now a surprise to all of us, as only nature can bring,  
A thick and not-so-welcome chilling snow of spring.  
A disappointment surely, to birds and humans as one,  
When all of us are yearning for warm rays of summer sun.  
Instead the birds retreat, back deep into the trees,  
And I stop to make a wish for a gentle warming breeze.  
Patience, though a virtue, is one I struggle to show.  
And winter-weary I care not to see robins in the snow!

by Rebecca McClone, 4/15/14  
Volunteer and FOMH board member

# Calendar of Events



[www.mosquitohill.com](http://www.mosquitohill.com)



## **27th Annual Musky Magic**

Sunday, March 15, 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Our featured speakers are Tony Rizzo and Jeff VanRemortel, both talking about their favorite fish. Vendors, pool-side demonstrations, food sales, raffles and more are planned for this daylong musky fishing expo. Admission is \$8/adults and \$6/youth 14 years and younger. This event is held at the New London Intermediate/Middle School, 1000 W. Washington Street.



## **Third Thursday Lecture Series: Plants, Pollinators & People: Making the Connection**

March 19, 9:30 – 11:00 AM

In his role as a restoration ecologist, Randy Powers promotes the idea of landowners becoming back yard ecologists, and using native plants to increase and improve biodiversity for plants and animals. Randy will offer examples of how we can be good land stewards and explain why it is so important to our existence. \$6/adults, \$4/students, seniors, FOMH Registration and payment due March 13.

## **Outdoor Cooking with Cast Iron**

Saturday, March 28, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Learn how easy it is to cook with cast iron over an open fire. We'll make a hearty stew with fruit cobbler for dessert. Dean Sauers, AKA the Brutal Gourmet, will lead you through the steps from food prep through clean-up. All ages are welcome. \$6/person, \$4/students, seniors & FOMH Registration and payment due March 21.



## **Leave No Family Inside: The Beauty of Bluebirds**

Saturday, March 28, 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Bluebirds have always lived in harmony with people. They take care of insect pests and provide beauty outside our windows. During this indoor program, naturalist Steve Petznick will share tips to attract and raise bluebirds, what to look for in nest construction and discover how the young are raised with such good parental care. Following a slide presentation, a small number of nest boxes will be visited to check for dwellers.

\$6/person, \$10/household  
Registration and payment due March 21.



## **Annual Midwest Crane Count Training Session**

Saturday, April 4, 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Be a part of the Midwest Sandhill Crane Count taking place on Saturday, April 18. Anyone interested in participating in the Count must attend this training session. We will review an instructional video, learn about crane biology, receive site assignments and learn how to enter our data into an online database. Sign up for both Outagamie County and Waupaca County will be held at Mosquito Hill Nature Center.

No charge

## **Build Your Own Rain Barrel**

Saturday, April 11, 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Join naturalist Mike Hibbard as he shows you how to turn a plastic 55-gallon drum into a useful tool for catching rainwater and preventing storm water runoff problems. All materials and instructions will be provided upon registration. Participants will receive a list of simple

tools to bring to class.

\$30/person, \$25/students, seniors, FOMH  
Registration and payment due April 1.



## **Third Thursday Lecture Series: Galapagos Travels**

April 16, 9:30 – 11:00 AM

Explore the exotic Galapagos Islands and the Amazon wilds with Randy Williams, New London, who visited the area in 2014. See slides and videos of a variety of wildlife including tarantulas, monkeys, sea lions and blue-footed boobys. Learn about the culture and indigenous people who still hunt with blow guns and collect shrunken heads. Randy will also display items collected from the region.

\$6/person, \$4/students, seniors & FOMH  
Registration and payment due April 10.



## **Annual Midwest Crane Count**

Saturday, April 18, 5:30 – 7:30 AM  
The Annual Midwest

Crane Count is a tradition dating back to 1976 and one of the largest citizen-based inventories in the world. It helps the International Crane Foundation to monitor the abundance and distribution of both sandhill and whooping cranes in the upper Midwest. Annually, the count involves more than 3,000 volunteers from 100 counties in five states. Anyone interested in assisting with the count needs to attend the training session on Saturday, April 4.



## **Saturday Morning Bird Walks**

April 18, 25, May 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30, 7:00 – 10:00 AM

Join us for any or all of these Saturday morning walks. All skill levels are welcome.

Unless otherwise noted, advance registration and payment are required. Call 920-779-6433 or e-mail [mary.swifka@outagamie.org](mailto:mary.swifka@outagamie.org).

Dress for the weather and bring your binoculars (or borrow a pair of ours), field guides and waterproof boots. No charge



### Leave No Family Inside: Wetlands—The Earth's Giant Sponge

Saturday, April 18, 1:00 - 3:00 PM

Wetland definition: "A lowland area, such as a marsh or swamp that is saturated with moisture." Upon closer examination, however, we can see that wetlands are cool! Join naturalist Jessica Miller as she guides you through one of the most unique ecosystems on the planet. Learn about aquatic insects up-close and personal, how trees and plants survive floodwaters, animals that make wetlands their home and just why wetlands are so important to our environment.

\$6/person or \$10/household

Registration and payment due April 10.

### Spring Fever Fundraiser

Tuesday, April 21 at 5:30 PM

(See page 2 for details.)



### Newstar Astronomy Program: Viewing Constellations and Asterisms

Friday, April 24, 8:00 PM

Learn about constellations and asterisms—complex star patterns seen in the night sky. Newstar member Tom Jorgenson will show you how to find them and explain the significance of their colors. Then head outdoors for an evening of stargazing. Bring your own scope, or take a peek through Newstar members' scopes.

\$6/person, \$4/students, seniors & FOMH

Registration and payment due April 18.



### Feather Fest

Saturday, April 25, 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Spend the day with us as we enjoy and learn about birds. Bird walks and bird paddles will be held here and in the New London area; speakers will address bird rehabilitation and using native plants to attract birds; bird watching activities for youth will be held; vendors and concessions will round out the day. Call us for more details. No Charge.



### Birding Basics

Thursdays, May 7, 14, 21, 6:30 – 8:00 PM

This hands-on series with naturalist Steve Petznick is designed for casual bird watchers who wish to hone bird identification skills. Participants will learn about correct focusing of binoculars and spotting scopes, avian field marks, bird behaviors, feeding habits, preferred habitats and numerous tips and techniques to improve your birding enjoyment. We'll travel to local birding areas each week to practice what we've learned.

\$25/person, \$20/students, seniors, FOMH  
Registration and payment due May 1.



### Growing Green

Saturday, May 9, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Focusing more on health and wellness this year, our presentations, workshops and vendors will be sure to please. Appeal to your creative side and make a concrete garden tile (nominal fee). Learn about essential oils, making healthy (and decadent) desserts and many other topics. Purchase wonderful handmade and/or local wares from vendors including jewelry, plants, natural foods, clothing and much more. You can even pamper yourself with a massage or round of meditation. As always, we'll offer gardening tips, a rain-barrel raffle and healthy concessions. Add this event to your weekend lineup!

No Charge



### Mother's Day Wildflower Hike

Sunday, May 10, 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Join naturalist Mike Hibbard for a spring wildflower hike. A short indoor presentation on spring flora will be followed by a leisurely hike on the hill in search of the ephemeral beauties of spring. No previous plant identification skills are required. Here's a wonderful way to spend Mother's Day with your favorite mom.

\$6.00 /person, \$4.00/students, seniors, FOMH (no charge for moms)  
Registration and payment due May 4.



### Third Thursday Lecture Series: Theodore Roosevelt National Park—A Land of Changing Beauty

Thursday May 21, 9:30 – 11:00 AM  
Naturalist Steve Petznick will help you relive the life of the old west by exploring the cow poke town of Medora, North Dakota and the rugged beauty of the Badlands. Discover how the times of Teddy Roosevelt helped shape the region and what the land looks like now a century later. The geology, flora and fauna of the park will be explored while reviving memories or exciting the passion to visit for the first time.

\$6/person, \$4/students, seniors, FOMH  
Registration and payment due May 15.



### Leave No Family Inside: Wisconsin's Frogs

Saturday, May 23, 12:30 – 3:00 PM

A sure sign of spring is the sound of frog calls coming from our lowland forest. Wisconsin is lucky enough to be home to 12 different species of native frogs and you'll have the opportunity to learn about them all, including how to identify them by sight and sound. After an indoor presentation with naturalist Jessica Miller, we'll venture outside to find and listen to frogs singing on the nature center property.

\$6/individual or \$10/household  
Registration and payment due May 16.



### Backpacking Basics on a Budget

Saturday, June 6, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Have you ever wanted to try backpacking or backpack camping but didn't know where to begin? Instructor and outdoor enthusiast, Tiffany Schulz, will cover the basics on how to plan your own backpacking trip, as well as equipment. Participants will practice packing both internal and external frame backpacks in addition to learning about traveling light and on a budget.

\$6/person or \$4/students, seniors, FOMH  
Registration and payment due May 30.

View From The Hill is published four times per year by Friends of Mosquito Hill, Inc. New London, WI [www.mosquitohill.org](http://www.mosquitohill.org)

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- Tiffany Schulz, New London School District
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New London WI 54961  
(920) 779-6433  
[www.mosquitohill.org](http://www.mosquitohill.org)

**Interpretive Building Hours:**

Tuesday-Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday: 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Staff:**

- Mike Hibbard, Director/ Naturalist
- Steve Petznick, Assistant Naturalist
- Jessica Miller, Assistant Naturalist
- Mary Swifka, Staff Assistant
- Loren Dieck, Director, Outagamie County Parks
- Pat Lund-Moe, Volunteer Coordinator

**Newsletter:**

- Editors - Pat Brown, Ginny Buschke, Susan Hankin, Mary Swifka
- Layout & Design - Jayne Thielen Frazier
- NEW Printing, Appleton
- Outlook Graphics, Neenah

# Save the Date for Jungle Jack Hanna

Mark your calendars for the evening of Friday, October 16. The 20th anniversary of the Charlotte Bates Fenlon Memorial Speaker Series will feature the director emeritus of the Columbus Zoo, Jack Hanna.



Jack has two television shows, *Into the Wild* and *Wild Countdown*, which air on Green Bay television. He has also been a regular guest on *The Late Show* and *Good Morning America*. The program will take place at Kimberly High School. Watch the summer issue of *View from the Hill* and our website for ticket information.

## Wish List

We're grateful to those generous folks who stepped up during the holiday season and purchased an item from our wish list tree. If you would like to help out our cause, please consider a small donation to purchase or offset the cost of the following items:

- Apple grinder (for our cider press)
- Colored copy paper
- Garden tools
- Bird Seed
- Gift cards (Fleet Farm, Menards, Michael's, Kwik Trip)

Thank you!

# Welcome Aboard!

Friends of Mosquito Hill recently welcomed two new members to the Board of Directors: Jared Ashland (pictured), and Paul Christensen.



## WELCOME! NEW MEMBERS

- Stacy & Larry Glick
- Mary Rebman
- Amanda Welch
- Douglas Allen

Please consider supporting Friends of Mosquito Hill with your membership. See back page for details.

**Collaboration** was the key to many successes in 2014. Hortonville High School students constructed the new garage. New London High School National Honor Society members assisted at two of our events. Boy Scouts worked hand in hand with our volunteers at Winter Family Fun Day. Bemis Company, Kimberly Clark, and Wolf River Community Bank offered teams of their employees to assist us with projects and events. We continue to seek collaboration with other businesses, schools and organizations to better our nature center and offer new experiences for our friends in the neighboring communities.

# Volunteer Voice

*"You make a living by what you get, but you make a life by what you give."*

*– Winston Churchill*

## Fresh and New for Spring

*Pat Lund-Moe, Volunteer Coordinator*

Our volunteers make things happen! Annual events continue to draw people from all over and volunteers assure everyone has a good time. Visitors are welcomed, served delicious food, entertained through participation in games, activities and crafts and educated at presentations and demonstrations. Now we are seeing a number of veteran volunteers moving into leadership and mentoring roles to welcome and train newer volunteers. Who better to show someone the ropes than one who has been here and done that?! Some tasks that took extra staff time are now the responsibility of volunteers who have special interests in those areas.

As we enter our next decade, volunteers are excited about their roles in creating and planning for new activities, displays and events at your nature center. Keep your ears and eyes wide open to what's in store.

We have volunteers working with staff to plan new summer programs and a great new outdoor natural play area. Watch for details about these plans and ask yourself: How can I be involved?

A new bookstore and gift shop is in the works, with volunteer involvement to get it off the ground. Our

Spring Fever Fundraiser is being organized and driven by more volunteers who serve on sub-committees. More brat fries are being planned and staffed by volunteers to raise necessary funds for new projects.

Our Friends of Mosquito Hill Board welcomed two new members this year, offering fresh ideas and talents. Again they are both volunteers. Thank you all for bringing everything you have to offer to your nature center.

There is excitement bubbling for so many new things happening here at Mosquito Hill. Please take the time to peruse this issue and see what grabs your attention. Give us a call, or send an e-mail to sign up for any event. If you enjoy something different, consider joining us at one of our brat fries! You know, we usually bring some interesting weather for the day, but we have a great time while we're there. Check with us for dates and locations. If you can't volunteer, at least come on over for a brat or burger, served with a smile.

## Volunteer Opportunities

- Spring Fever Fundraiser: Share your artistic talent, organization and sales abilities.
  - Growing Green is a newer, evolving event. We would love for you to be a part of it.
  - Gardening season will be here soon. Folks with green thumbs wanted.
  - School groups will arrive in spring. Teaching and sharing our nature center with these kids is a gift for all. Consider giving the volunteer naturalist role a try. We provide all the training and opportunities to watch and learn from the veterans.
- Contact** Volunteer Coordinator Pat Lund-Moe: email [fomh.vc@focol.org](mailto:fomh.vc@focol.org) or call 920-779-6433.

**In 2014 we logged  
3,737.5 volunteer hours!**

**Congratulations and Thank You  
for being the best of the best!**

Welcome new volunteers: Vicki, Jack, David, Joey, Jenna, Marilyn, Emily, Jordyn, Justin, Tammy, Natalie, Judy, Annabelle, Stacey, Larry, Colleen, and Richard. We thank you for choosing Mosquito Hill Nature Center as the place to share your time and talents.

**Friends of Mosquito Hill, Inc.**

Mosquito Hill Nature Center  
N3880 Rogers Rd. • New London, WI 54961  
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**Enjoy these benefits:**

- ✓ Receive our quarterly newsletter.
- ✓ 10% discount at our bookstore.
- ✓ Discount on programs.
- ✓ Complimentary snowshoe use on our trails.
- ✓ Knowing you make a difference!

# Join Friends of Mosquito Hill

**MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:**

(please check one)

- Senior Citizen/Student—\$15
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