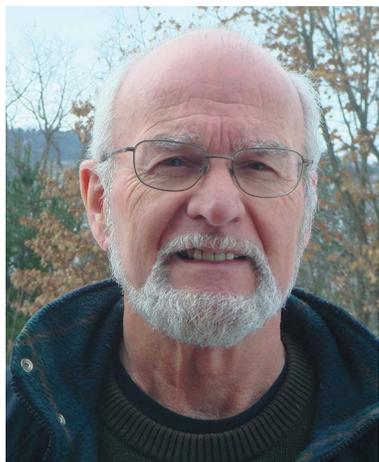


# FRIENDS *Connection*

THE NEWSLETTER OF FRIENDS OF THE KICKAPOO VALLEY RESERVE • (608) 625-2960 • kickapoofriends.org • Volume 15, Issue 2

## *Chuck Hatfield's Stories Open Students to the Wonders of Nature*



Chuck Hatfield holds up what looks like a blob of hard gray pebbles.

“Can you guess what this is?” he asks, causing the viewer to turn the blob over and over, searching for the answer.

You may not get the answer, but you understand how he's opened hundreds of students to the wonders of nature

during field trips to the Kickapoo Valley Reserve.

“You have about 10 minutes, when they're really open, to establish a relationship,” he explains. “So I take a rock and tell them the story about it.”

Hatfield, who's been teaching at the KVR since 1999, has other rocks in his arsenal, including a clay ball filled with quartz crystals, and one that's plain gray on one side, but beautiful fern impressions when he turns it over.

Once he's got the students engaged, “then they experience that all of life is filled with these amazing stories,” he says. “That everything has a story, it didn't just appear. Then when we take the hike, they begin asking questions, trying to figure it out.”

Raised in the Driftless, mainly on his family's farm on a ridge in Ontario, Hatfield returned in 1998 after obtaining bachelor and master degrees in elementary education, art and geography from UW-Oshkosh and UW-La Crosse, and teaching K-8 in Green Bay for 35 years. Meanwhile, he married Gwen Simenson, who grew up on the same ridge, and on their return to the Driftless they built a beautiful home on Maple Ridge Road on the edge of La Farge.

At first he taught summer classes, sometimes teaming with local historian Brad Steinmetz. In 2001, Jonel Kiesau, education coordinator, asked him to teach high school classes in the summer. Now he teaches all grades a mixture of geology, ecology and history during the school year.

The book “Last Child in the Woods” has been his guide. “The technical resources we have today have taken away any reason to

search for the real thing rather than take a virtual tour, so we're raising children that have a second or third-hand relationship with nature,” he says. “That's not good for our national parks or our spiritual values.”

He tries to keep the classes to about six students. “In a small group, you can have direct communication and the ability to tell stories,” he says. “I try to make it into a small interactive group. There's no audience, only the cast.”

The Reserve is always looking for teachers, he says. People don't need to have as much knowledge of the terrain as he does, he adds, noting that all the classes are written up, with background and materials, and that commitments can be long-term or short for specific classes.

“One of things you discover on the Reserve is that places have a spirit,” Hatfield says, recalling how elementary students named a shelter cave off Hwy. P the Valley of Elves, which they took from the movie Fern Gully. “I don't necessarily believe in elves,” he says. “But if I did, they would be living there because it's an amazing place for these little people to grow up and play tag and hide-and-seek.”

“When I hike with Ho Chunk elders, they find a lot of evidence that their people lived here,” he says. “Sometimes they offer prayers when they enter the shelter caves.”

“There are so many layers to the land,” he muses. “We look at rocks like we sometimes deal with people. Much of what we see is on the outside, but there's so much more within.”

### **One Rock's Story**

“[Students are] amazed when they learn this one is fossilized 15-million-year-old elk poop found in Iowa.”



*Contributor Joan Kent is a retired journalist who lives in Stark township with her husband Don and their cats Liza and Misty.*

# Celebration, Rustic Raft Rally Cap off A Year of Traditional Wisdom

The final proposal funded through the Friends 2017 Mini Grants was the yearlong celebration of traditional wisdom suggested by Janet Kruk. Winterfest and Spring Fling featured demonstrations of blacksmithing, flint knapping, falconry and seed saving.

The Traditional Wisdom Celebration and Rustic Raft Rally event was held on Saturday, July 28th. About 200 people from 41 different zip codes were on hand for additional demonstrations of beekeeping, basket weaving, maple syruping, herbal remedies and wood carving. Ho Chunk Elder, Rhonda Funmaker, prepared a feast with local foods using outdoor cooking methods. The weather was fabulous; a good time was had by all!



**Friends Thank KVR Staff.** The Friends Board hosted an Appreciation Dinner for all staff and their families on Thursday, August 23. It was a perfect summer night for thanking them for another season at KVR. A compilation of Trip Advisor reviews was shared that highlighted the excellent experiences visitors enjoy at KVR thanks to their outstanding work. It was truly the calm before another storm!



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Winterfest**  
Saturday, January 12

## August 2018 – Here we go again!



Photo: Robert Dom Jr.



*Volunteer crews have helped with restoration and clean up. This crew cleared debris from the river on Saturday, September 15th.*

## Holiday Happening – for the Whole Family!



Friends of the KVR welcome the holiday season on Saturday, December 1 at the Visitor Center. The **Craft Show** featuring gift items made by Friends members and the **Cookie Walk** begin at 1 pm. A silent auction of **seasonal centerpieces** will go on from 1-6:30 pm.

**Live music by local musicians** begin at 1 pm and continues all day. Whiskey Chicken is scheduled from 5:30-6:30 followed by String Ties at 7 pm.

A **soup and salad dinner** will be served from 3 pm until the soup is gone! The meal is \$6 for adults, \$3 for children age 12 and under.

Winners of the **2018 Friends Photography Contest** will be announced at 6:45. Weather permitting, **KVR Astro-educators** will have the telescope available to take advantage of our beautiful dark sky! The event is free and open to the public. All proceeds support educational activities and trail maintenance at KVR.

### 2018 NEW MEMBERS

A big thank you to all renewing members in 2018 and a warm welcome to the following new members (March-August 2018)!

Koletta Steinmetz  
 Jeffrey Rand  
 Ashly Magee & Jaclyn Cardin  
 Diana & Moran Thundercloud  
 Rita Wachuta-Breckel  
 Mae Farris  
 Cynthia Freise  
 Tamera Dean & David Klann  
 Patricia Roth  
 REM Wisconsin  
 Andre Paquette  
 Ken & Jean Cornish  
 Becky & Matt Marshall

### BOARD CANDIDATE

*2018 nominee for a three-year term on the Friends of the Reserve Board:*



**Tom Miron** has lived at the edge of the Reserve for 10 years and is a regular Reserve hiker and biker. His background is in information technology. Tom says, "The Reserve

and the Old 131 trail are like trustworthy old companions. I look forward to helping care for them through the Friends of the Reserve board."

*The election of Board members will be held during the Annual Meeting on Saturday, November 3, 2018.*

## New Fall and Winter Gifts



Louan Hoffer and Sam Riedl of the Gift Shop Committee are looking for more volunteers to help with stocking shelves and ordering. Shifts are flexible and at

your convenience. Contact Louan at lhoffer10@icloud.com if you can help.

*Local craftspeople are invited to bring samples to the Visitor Center by October 12 for consideration for Holiday Sales.*

SAVE THE NEW DATE!

# Friends Annual Meeting Appreciation Dinner

Saturday, November 3, 2018  
Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center

**5:30 PM: Meeting**

Agenda items include yearly reports, the election of a new Board Member, and commitment of funds for the Exhibit Renovation Project.

*Your presence is important!*

**6:00 PM: Social Hour and Dinner**

Joanne Shird will prepare another fabulous feast for us!

*Please RSVP to Joanne by October 27:*

*joannes@mvt.net or 608-625-2768.*

*Bring or wear your vintage KVR clothing for fabulous prizes!*

Clip here and save as your reminder! No other reminders will be sent.

## 10th Annual Photography Show & Contest!

Submit up to three of your favorite photos of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. Entry deadline is midnight, October 10, 2018. Not a photographer? Participate by voting for Best-In-Show at the Reserve in November. Winners in the Adult and Student Divisions will be announced at the Holiday Happening December 1, and each awarded a \$50 prize. Full details and photo entry at [kickapoofriends.org](http://kickapoofriends.org).



*Thanks to all the Gardeners who kept our beds looking great for another season!*