

FRIENDS *Connection*

THE NEWSLETTER OF FRIENDS OF KICKAPOO VALLEY RESERVE • (608) 625-2960 • kickapoofriends.org • Volume 20, Issue 1

Lynn Kronschnabel Comes Full Circle

Becoming the Executive Director of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve is a full circle moment for Lynn after having interviewed for a staff job at the KVR around 2004. She didn't get that job but the years between then and now have given Lynn valuable preparation for the executive director's position.

Lynn grew up in rural Manitowoc as the youngest of six children. Her home was on Kasbaum Lake with access to a hilly wooded terrain. With no neighbors or playmates and being a shy young person, Lynn spent her time exploring the woods and building rafts to float on the lake. Learning more about the blue and green herons, painted turtles and other living things intrigued her.

At the age of eighteen, Lynn joined the Army Reserve. For a small town girl, it was an eye opening experience being stationed in Milwaukee with an engineering unit. The Army Reserve built her self-confidence and sense of independence and also helped her afford her first home with a VA loan. Leadership and teamwork skills along with the ability to go into situations where she has to prove herself prepared her for a career in a predominately male oriented work life.

During her time in Milwaukee, Lynn attended UW-Milwaukee and got a degree in anthropology and a minor in art history. She was a teaching assistant to John Boatman who created the American Indians Program at UW-Milwaukee. Working with John gave her an overview of the Great Lakes First Nations People.



Another Milwaukee job was at the Milwaukee Public Museum as a docent and assisting visitors including school groups and families.

Working for the Milwaukee Park System in management was a job Lynn loved but when she was six months pregnant she left in order to have more time to spend with her child. She and her husband bought property near Wildcat Mountain, built a home, made maple syrup, and enjoyed the country life. But after a time the solitude began to feel more like isolation. A move to Viroqua 14 years ago resulted in finding events for her 1½ year old child with the Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School and led them to a community.

All her life, Lynn has lived near a park, a river or a lake and she and her son now have a house near Eckhart Park in Viroqua to provide the green space that gives her peace.

Lynn has recently worked for the DNR as a ranger and in recreational operations. She says, "Throughout my career in natural resources and park management, I feel it has been an honor to be in service to the public in protecting resources and creating clean and safe places to enjoy."

Twenty years after her first job interview, Lynn says, "It feels like my whole life my career experiences have been preparing me to come here – and I didn't even know it."

Debra Tryggstad is a Friends board member who lives near Dell with her dog, two cats and three Fjord horses.

A Fun and Productive Way to Celebrate Earth Day 2023!

Take part in Friends Adopt a Highway by joining other KVR Friends in road clean-up along Hwy. 131 from Jug Creek to Harris Road.

Meet at the KVR at 9 am Saturday, April 22, to learn your section of the road and obtain safety

vests and garbage bags. Don't forget to wear gloves! KVR staff will pick up full garbage bags.

A rain date is set for Sunday, April 23. Call the KVR at (608) 625-2960 to see if the date is changed due to weather.

**For other
Earth Day
activities,
see page 8.**



Busy 2022 for Friends Volunteers...



Another Successful Pasta Supper! (above) Karen Theis, Jan Gremban and Sally Colacino; (right) Joanne Shird, Pat Fisher and Karen Theis



Volunteer Gardeners Wrap Up Another Season (back to front, left to right) Barb Sarnowski, Jean Beck, Barb Monroe, Sally Colacino, Barb Sydnor, Pat Fisher, Jan Gremban, Maureen Hysel, Sharon Meissner, Joan Kent, Julie Hoel, Karen Theis, Louise Muller and Kim Wahl

Find your fit to volunteer at the KVR ... from serving soup to gathering garlic mustard.



Discovery Center Opening Reception (clockwise from top left) Jay & Carolyn Scott of Prairie Springs; Paul Fleckenstein Charitable Trust, and Dave West listen to former KVR Director Marcy West; Kristin WhiteEagle, Benjamin Cleveland, Reggie Nelson, and Stephanie Begay; Jill Winters, Julie Hoel, Chuck and Gwen Hatfield; appetizers provided by Driftless Cafe



FRIENDS EVENTS

Check the KVR website for updates:
www.kvr.state.wi.us/Events.

Earth Day Clean-up

Saturday, April 22 9 am

Meet at the Visitor Center. Safety vests and bags provided. KVR volunteers will be working on the Friends Adopt A Highway segment on Hwy. 131 from Harris Rd to Hwy P.

Register to volunteer: kvr.state.wi.us/Get-Involved/Volunteer. Earth Day general clean up period is April 15-22.

Spring Fling

Will not be held this year.

National Trails Day

Saturday, June 3

Check KVR website, <http://kvr.state.wi.us/Events> or Friends website, www.kickapoofriends.org for details. Enjoy guided hikes or walk on your own. Rain or shine!

Garden Walk

Check KVR or Friends websites for date and locations.

Drive the Old Hwy 131 Trail

Tuesday, July 4 Noon-4 pm

Open house at the KVR: enjoy a leisurely drive on Old Hwy 131. One-way traffic from south to north – to enter, follow Seeleyburg Rd. to Corps Rd. Stop in for cookies and lemonade at the Visitor Center, noon-2 pm.

Pasta Supper

Friday, Oct. 6

Dam Challenge

Saturday, Oct. 7

Over 100 volunteers are needed to support the race. Mark your calendar now to be part of this great event.

Annual Photo Contest

Entries Due Oct. 13

Submit photos of the KVR Sept. 1-Oct. 13 at the Friends website, www.kickapoofriends.org. Judges select 12 finalists; vote for your favorite entries during the month of November. Winners are announced at Holiday Happening.

Annual Meeting

Check KVR or Friends websites for date and details.

Holiday Happening

Saturday, Dec. 2

Check KVR or Friends websites for time and details.

... Continues into 2023!



Holiday Happening Warms with Cookies and Soup (above)

Louise Muller and Sharon Meisner renew memberships; (top right) Kristy Shore, Peggy Pasker, Karen Theis, Sally Colacino and Barb Sydnor serve soup; (bottom right) Cookie Walk volunteers Beth Thayer and daughter Leah Thayer



Snow Fun at Winterfest (left)
Karen Theis, Beth Thayer, Marla Lind and Barb Sydnor serve lunch; (below) attendees participate in the Mutt Fun Run; (right) ice carving by Martino Studios



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We wish a warm welcome to the following new members!

(September 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023)

The Friends are grateful for all renewing members. Your continued support keeps the KVR's education programs strong.

Dorsey Ames
Rebecca Backman
Leanne Buttke & Bill Hauser
Karen Bomkamp
Scott & Kathryn Braaten
Bill Brooke
Dan Buckland
Olivia Burstad
Jason Burt
Darren (Rutabega) Bush
Kevin Clark
Nichole Cruse
Christian Donaldson
Heidi & David Gering
Toby Grotz
Trish Helgerson
Jay Hoffman
Jeffrey Hopton
Thomas Huber
Kurt & Joan Jacobson
Michael Johnson
Tedd Johnson
Renee & Kurt Knutson
David Krier
Lynn Kronschnabel
Penny J Langer
Peggy Lindley
Jonah Lottig, Snowtrekker Tents
Peter Mahlock
Mary & Kevin Marchant
David McNamara
Brittany Pierpont
Randy Rockwell
Jean Ruffin
Wes & Brenda Siemandel
Peggy Skemp
Elizabeth & Nathaniel Slack
Gus & Patricia Smerud
Victoria Leigh Strauser
Arris & Allen Sullivan
Ardell Syth
Heidi & Tim Tabat
Ryan & Jennifer Thompson
Joseph Traynor
Jon & Amy Wedell



Gardens Wanted...

If you'd like to share the beauty you've created in your yard, the KVR Friends are looking for gardens for this year's Garden Walk. They don't have to be perfect! If you'd like to participate in this year's walk, let's talk!

Do You Have Organizational Skills? KVR Friends also are looking for a volunteer to organize this year's Garden Walk. If you are interested in

either showing your garden or organizing this year's Garden Walk, contact Deb Tryggestad at (608) 625-6633 or trygd@me.com.

Spring Learning at KVFS

Spring has sprung at the Kickapoo Valley Forest School. The children have been delighted with the changes in weather, the snow melt, the new spring sounds and the returning birds. There are opportunities for learning everywhere!

The Hemlocks (1st grade) have recently been working with community volunteer Laurel Lee on learning about bird migration (especially to Nicaragua where Lee volunteers with another community conservation organization). They have been painting large migration maps and learning about specific birds that share habitat in both Wisconsin and Nicaragua.



The Lindens and Oaks (4K/5K) have been planting seeds with Ms. Jessie, KVFS Farm to School member. These seedlings will find their way to the school garden and eventually the student's bellies! The Oaks and Lindens have also been working hard at learning consonant-vowel-consonant words with kinesthetic or body movements, which can, of course, be done indoors or out!



And lastly, due to the generous donation of many beautiful and sturdy kites by Friends members Rob Danielson and Terese Agnew, the children are getting to learn about weather, wind direction and simple physics by flying kites on windy spring days!

Jonel Kiesau, Leadership and Planning Coordinator, Kickapoo Valley Forest School

Calling All Outdoor Lovers!

Spring Is in the Air The KVR Garden group is looking for volunteers to help beautify and maintain the gardens that welcome all to the Visitors Center.

Our group starts at 5:30 pm on Tuesday every other week and we work for an hour or so weeding, planting, deadheading and doing other tasks.

After gardening, we enjoy snacks, beverages and camaraderie on the back deck, taking in the sounds of nature. Delightful!

If that sounds like something you'd enjoy, please contact:

Louise Muller
virweese@yahoo.com
(608) 528-4436



The 2023 **Creative Communities Canvas Project** involved artists of all ages and talents interpreting the word "Reflections" as it pertains to nature. The online art auction raised \$3,000 that will support KVR hands-on nature-based education programs for all ages of learners.

KVR Board Considers Possibly Moving Forest School Site

The Forest School is a nature oriented public school affiliated with the La Farge school district, and located on the grounds of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. The Friends of Kickapoo Valley Reserve has been involved with managing donations for construction of the two current school buildings and hiring the contractor for the second building which was completed last Fall.

Should the Forest School remain and expand at its current location near the KVR Visitors Center, or should the existing buildings be moved, and a third one built, on one of four sites on Corps Road?

The Management Board wrangled with this question during a 2.5-hour March 30 meeting attended by Forest School parents and teachers, La Farge school officials and interested citizens. The board's Finance Committee met April 3 to consider where the money will come from to pay for a feasibility study.

The school, a joint project of La Farge School District and the KVR, opened in September, 2021 with one building for 4K and kindergarten classes, and has two buildings accommodating 4K, kindergarten and first-graders this school year. Another space is needed to house second-graders next year.

Almost all the Management Board members present voiced support for the school, but several raised concerns about having the

“homerooms” so close to the Visitors Center. Most of the learning and playing is outside; the homerooms hold supplies and gear and provide space for rest time and lunch on cold days.

Two members of the audience, including one of the KVR enforcement officers, raised student safety issues because there is no way to lock down the property. A few board members said they fear the front area is sometimes congested with students and people coming to the Reserve to hike or attend events.

One board member questioned whether children's education is part of the Reserve's purpose. But others said it is, noting that area students make field trips to the Reserve every spring and children attend summer day camps.

A motion to relocate to Corps Road failed on a tie vote. The board then unanimously passed two resolutions: one for a feasibility study of the five options, not to exceed \$24,000, and another that no KVR funds be used for the study.

One option would keep the two existing buildings and renovate the garage near the Visitors Center into classrooms and bathrooms. (The students now use Visitor Center bathrooms.) This option would require building a new garage. The other four would study feasibility of building on KVR property on Corps Road, which is near the Town of Stark municipal buildings.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend that La Farge Area Schools investigate their threshold for spending limits for the study, and if that shows the study is cost prohibitive for the district, the finance committee will consider how the funds are distributed. The possibility of limiting immediate consideration to how to provide a temporary space for the incoming second graders was discussed. At the March 30 meeting, two Town of Stark board members offered the use of the town hall for a temporary classroom.

Friends Connection editor Joan Kent is a retired journalist living in La Farge.

Guided hikes

Self-guided hikes for bridges, prairies, woodlands, KVR history

Citizen Scientist Activities: plant identification, pollinators, Monarchs, bumble bees, frogs

Monarch enclosures that protect caterpillars until they fledge into butterflies



June 3 is National Trails Day

Sunrise to Starry Skies
the KVR is full of activities!



KVR Nature Walks Continue in 2023

The sixth season of Kickapoo Valley Reserve's Frog Walk Tuesday is underway, with Plant Hikes to resume in May.

Frog Walk Tuesday began on March 21, and will continue through July 18. Each Tuesday evening, come to the KVR for a short "frog walk" to participate in Single Wetland Frog Monitoring on behalf of the WI Frog and Toad Survey. Walks start 15 minutes after sunset (check sunset tables). Meet and park at the south gate of the Old Hwy 131 Trail. We will walk to the ponds just north of Bridge 18 to hear and identify the species of frogs calling. Additional night sounds may be heard at no extra charge.

Total distance is one-half mile and the event lasts about an hour. Attendance is free and open to anyone interested in hearing and identifying frog calls, or any others who might want to take a short walk with people who are interested in frogs. No registration is required; fun for all ages. Heavy rains and/or thunderstorms will cancel the evening walk, yet a light rain is ideal for frogging.

Plant Identification Hikes KVR

Plant Lookers will meet on the second Saturday of each month, beginning in May and ending in September. Start time is 9 am. We will meet at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Maintenance building (off Corps Rd.; park near KVR building, not Stark town building, and don't block garage access) and walk the West Ridge Trail. The intended section of trail is atop the hill, between the powerlines and where the trail enters the woods to the west/north (we will attempt to not spend too much time between trailhead and powerlines). This section of trail has plenty of grassland/prairie associates, including pussytoes, lady tresses, rough blazing stars, and cream gentian. Grasses? You bet. Sedges, ferns, mosses, trees? Not so much. Plant walks are at the same location each month.

KVR Trail Passes are required for parking for either walk. For more information, contact



Photo: Peter Schmidt

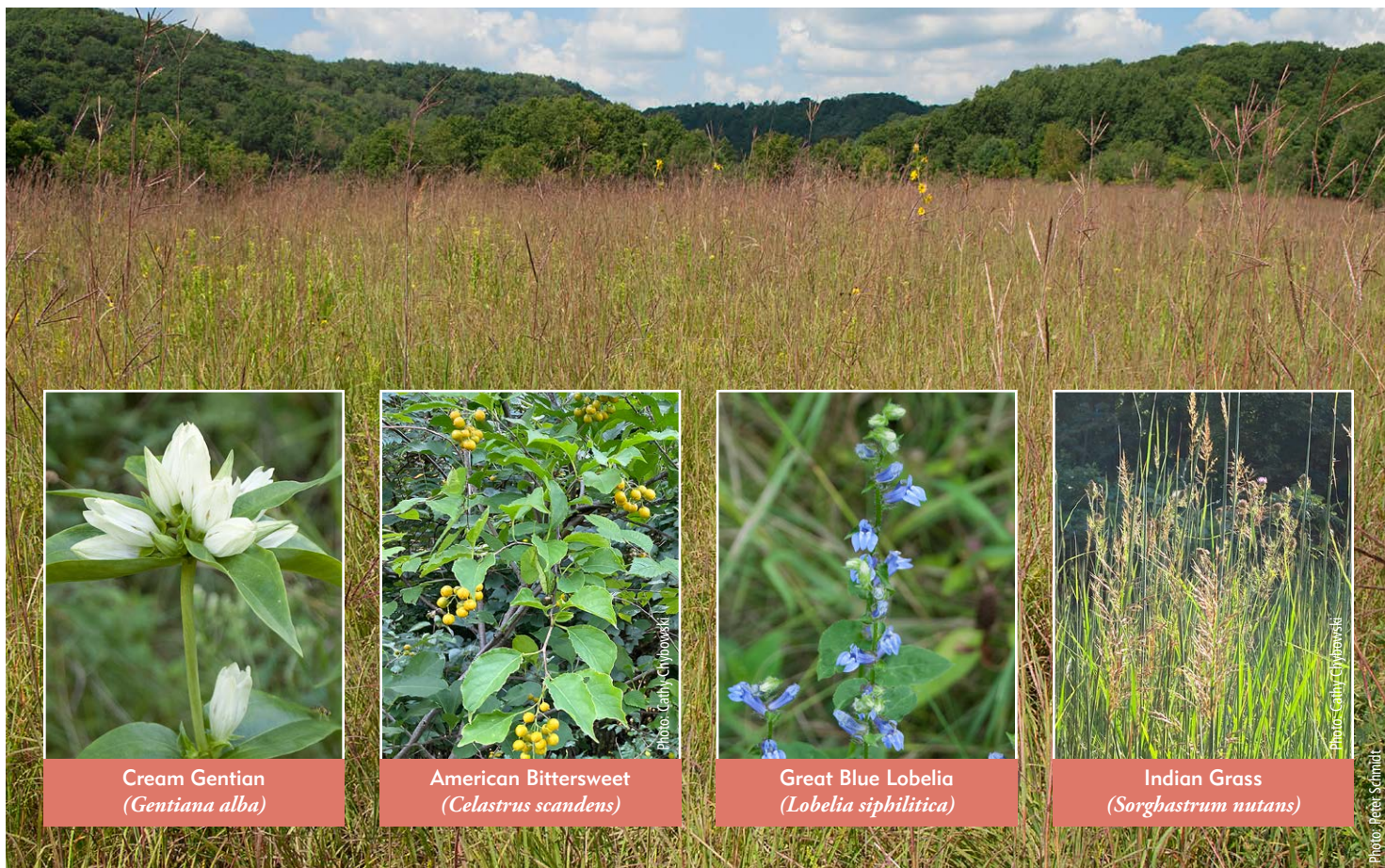


above:
Northern Leopard Frog
(*Lithobates pipiens*)
right:
Spring Peeper
(*Pseudacris crucifer*)

Photo: Margaret Failey

the Kickapoo Valley Reserve (608)625-2960 or email kickapoo.reserve@krm.state.wi.us.

Ben Johnston, WI Frog and Toad Survey and Rare Plant Monitoring Program Volunteer



Cream Gentian
(*Gentiana alba*)

American Bittersweet
(*Celastrus scandens*)

Great Blue Lobelia
(*Lobelia siphilitica*)

Indian Grass
(*Sorghastrum nutans*)

Photo: Peter Schmidt

Summer Camps Open – Love Bugs, World of Plants and Fly Fishing

KVR's summer educational programs, including several new camps, are up and running, and Friends are invited to volunteer as instructors.

The KVR has 21 camps this year, with 170 spots available, Education Director Maggie Manke reported. "Registration opened in early March and we have almost 100 students registered already. Five of our camps are already filled, which is wonderful! Some of the new camps we are offering this year include Love Bugs, Wild World of Plants, and Black Ghost Fly Fishing. We are looking forward to seeing all of the happy campers soon."

Instructors Needed

"KVR is seeking a pool of applicants to join our instructor team," she said. "These instructors work on an as-needed basis. We are looking for individuals interested in leading programs in a variety of areas

including geology, animal tracking, orienteering, team building, and human history. Working at KVR is a great way to get out in nature and give back to the community!" If interested, please email maggie.manke@wisconsin.gov.



Starting in April, the KVR is offering its second round of Forest Fridays, a weekly class where students aged 3-5 get to experience nature play and wonder-filled exploration," Manke said. "Each session includes a hike, story, healthy

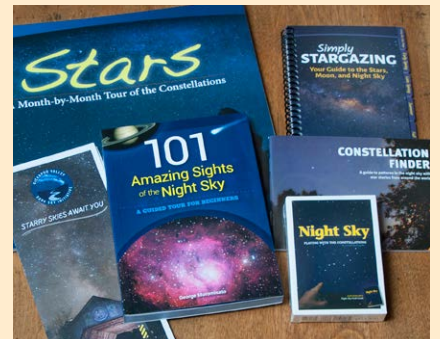
snack, singing, and nature-based games. Students will participate in six sessions between April 21 and May 26. It is a fun-filled introduction to environmentally based learning, and to the great outdoors!"

Something Sweet...

New in the Gift Shop The KVR Friends gift shop has a new order of honey items from Wanna-B-Honey-Bees of Hillsboro: honey, soaps, lip balm and lotion, gift bags. Free recipes!

Other new items: books on constellations geared to different age groups, nature playing cards and origami birds by Peg La Martina.

Stop by when you're in the Visitor Center to see what other great gifts are available.



2022 Friends Photo Contest Winners

Visit the Friends' website to enjoy all of the entries: www.kickapooofriends.org.

Entries for the 2023 Photo Contest can be submitted to the Friends website Sept. 1-Oct. 13.



1st Place:
Emily Oium,
"Reflections
on Weister
Creek"



2nd Place:
Angela Copper,
"Blackhawk Trails
Golden Way"



3rd Place (tie):
Dan Van Vuren, "Blackhawk Ridge Trail"

3rd Place (tie):
Valerie Ewing, "Campsite AA Gibbous Moon"

KVR Earth Day Celebration April 15-22

The KVR will celebrate Earth Day in a big way this year. For a whole week.

Activities begin with a **Driftless Dialogue Lecture**, Saturday, April 15 from 12:30-2 pm at the Visitor Center. "Tracking Invasives in Vernon County" with Matt Wallrath, Invasive Species Program Manager, Upper Sugar River Watershed Association.

Weeklong activities include:

Garlic Mustard Gathering. Come with friends or family to learn plant ID, then get materials and a location to pull this invasive from areas of the KVR. There will be a friendly competition garlic mustard weigh-in on April 22 at 3 pm at the Visitor Center.

Roadside Cleanup to pick up roadway litter anywhere in the area. Stop at the KVR Visitor Center for safety vest, disposal bag and commemorative gift.

Earth Day Celebration events on Saturday, April 22:

Earth Day Poetry Contest, for youth in Grades 3-8. Poems can be any type, using a nature theme. Poets of Merit will be selected in each age group and invited to read their poems at 2 pm.

Live Music from 3 to 4 pm.

Zero Waste Potluck Meal at 4 pm. To participate, bring a labeled dish to pass with serving utensils, and your own reusable place settings/cloth napkins/cups for beverages. Take it all home when you leave!

Froggy Starry Walk at 8 pm. Take in the sights and sounds of twilight on the KVR, on a guided hike lead by KVR Astro Educators.

Everyone is welcome to attend. Earth Day Celebration is free and open to the public. For more information, go to kvr.state.wi.us/Get-Involved/Volunteer.

