Inspiring people to be stewards of the natural world
2022 Perspective

Chippewa Nature Center continues to buzz with activity thanks to school and public programs, as well as Nature Preschool. We are pleased to report that the challenges of the past several years have been replaced with an optimistic air as the community continues to support the work we are doing to connect people of all ages to nature. In 2022, Nature Day Camp once again achieved a record number of youth served over the 9-week camp season and Nature Preschool was at capacity with 140 students! Land stewardship and restoration remained a key priority as we strive to build healthy and diverse ecosystems for the public to enjoy and for wildlife to use as habitat. Last year was also a time for changes as caretaker Bruce Vaydik retired after 17 years of service and Director of Volunteers & Outreach Cathy Devendorf retired in December after serving CNC for 32 years.

Our mission and strategic plan continue to guide our organization toward the goals set forth in our master plan. At our core, we remain dedicated to serving our region with outstanding nature experiences while continuing to be stewards of our 1,500 acres. To help us serve the community at an even greater level, a core of board and staff have started discussing plans for a new program facility that will serve Nature Day Camp and one of our preschool classrooms in the years to come. We are excited for what the future holds, and we look forward to sharing more details in the months ahead.

While we look back on 2022, we are truly grateful for the continued support from our staff, board, members, volunteers, local foundations, individual donors and other philanthropic organizations. Their support in time, talent and financial contributions, ensures that Chippewa Nature Center remains an organization of excellence in the Great Lakes Bay Region. We’re looking forward to another year of outstanding programs and nature connection for all people and invite you to Venture Out!

Sincerely,

Rob Maxwell
Board President

Dennis E. Pilaske
Executive Director
Financial Report

Chippewa Nature Center completed 2022 with stronger than expected revenue due to several grants that were available in continuing support due to the pandemic. Program revenue was also solid with people looking for ways to engage fully in program activities again. Expenses increased slightly with higher costs due to inflation, however the year finished strong with operations consuming only 75% of the amount available to draw from the endowment. As always, the finances are managed closely with these changes and we expect 2023 to settle back to routine, but have also planned to experience the same inflated expenses this year. We continue to be grateful for support from the community both in terms of financial support and participation in activities and volunteerism. We will work to deliver experiences that entice one and all to Venture Out in 2023!

### 2022 Expenses

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<td>Administration</td>
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### 2022 Revenues

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*The figures shown here represent 2022 operations at Chippewa Nature Center. Audited reports are available.*
Connections Build Community

This year was incredibly successful from a program attendance standpoint, which you will read below. Much more importantly however, is that these numbers reflect connections. For each program participant, a connection was built. Families connected with one another along the trails and at festivals while friends connected over workshops and camp sessions. Adults sought solace and health along the trails while children built connections at preschool, camp, and school programs.

Visitors enjoy making yule logs at Winter Solstice Celebration

Drop-In Visitors and Trail Users

Visitor Center attendance increased by more than 5,000 people from 2021, landing at 24,900 people total for the year. Hands-on exhibits, including the Nature Discovery Area and Huge Hollow Hideout were brought back for visitors to enjoy. In November, CNC welcomed a new juvenile lake sturgeon to the large aquarium near the Wildflower Walkway as part of Michigan’s Sturgeon in the Classroom program. The Wildflower Walkway underwent a major renovation with installation of a wider concrete path and patio with tables and chairs. Visitors have truly enjoyed these additions.

Public Programs

CNC welcomed 5,700 people to 303 public programs in 2022. Over 260 of these programs were free, reducing the financial barrier to connect to nature through CNC’s programs. Young children and their caregivers attended Wee Stroll and Story Hour, while families participated in Family Snowshoe Hikes and Nature Art. Adults spent time on the river during kayak trips or enjoying the trails after dark during Full Moon Strolls. Mobility-limited individuals got out on the trails with Golf Cart Tours. A new Nature Play program, first hosted by Nature Preschool Teachers and continued by volunteer host families has been instrumental in connecting families to nature through play. Each program offered is designed to serve people at different points in their journey of connecting with nature.

Festivals and Major Events

Annual events and festivals were well attended in 2022, with members and visitors excited to participate. Maple Syrup Day returned with timed ticketing for the pancake meal and outdoor festival activities. Approximately 600 people ventured out to enjoy the day. The Native Plant Sale posted strong sales with a lot of excited shoppers during the first weekend in June. In October, Fall Harvest Festival welcomed 1,145 people and Nature at Night brought in 1,132 on a single evening, which was an increase over 2021 for both events. The Rock Show & Sale coordinated by the Mid-Michigan Rock Club had over 1,076 people attend during the weekend. Attendance was also stronger for the Nature Art Show & Sale, with about 650 people attending the members’ sale and Saturday’s public event. These major events are a great avenue for introducing people to CNC and its many opportunities.

Creating Connections for Students and Scouts

In February of 2022, the Program Department hired seven additional part-time Educators to prepare for increased school program demand that was expected as schools were once again allowed to take field trips and welcome guests to their schools. The team remained busy throughout 2022, ultimately serving 18,986 students through field trips and school visits. This is an increase of 1,661 students over 2019. In addition to serving the above students, Educators made 376 classroom visits to Bullock Creek kindergarten through 2nd grade classes and 128 classroom visits to kindergarten through 7th grade classes in Coleman Schools. These custom classroom visits support each district’s unique curriculum.

CNC continues to welcome Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Girl Scouts, and Pathfinder groups serving 350 scouts during 2022. In addition, CNC hosted 16 birthday parties, helping connect children and their families to nature through a guided celebration.
Nature Preschool

The spring of 2022 inched CNC closer to “normal” operations for Nature Preschool. While regulations from federal, state, and local entities began to ease, the preschool administrative staff continued to amend health policies in order to serve preschool families to the best of their ability. It was wonderful to once again host the family picnic at the end of the school year, welcoming families to participate in a preschool family event for the first time since 2020.

Nature Preschool resumed in the fall of 2022 with 8 full class sessions serving 140 children and a significant waitlist. Classes continued to operate entirely outdoors whenever possible. Children have had meaningful, fun, and educational experiences in nature and a considerable amount of the teaching focus continued to be placed on social interactions and emotional wellbeing in the wake of COVID-19. Adult volunteers were welcomed back and a modified version of family nights were resumed.

Nature Preschool continues to operate with funding from the Great Start Readiness grant from the Michigan Department of Education for at-risk 4-year-olds to attend preschool at no cost to the family. In addition, Nature Preschool receives funding from the Great Start Collaborative for at-risk 3-year-olds, and CNC offers scholarships to families that may not qualify for these funding sources. Nature Preschool always has a financial need for tuition assistance. CNC is grateful to local foundations and several private donors for their financial support to keep this scholarship program running. State-funded grants, such as those provided by the Michigan Education Association, were introduced in 2021 and continued to help us as a non-profit childcare center in the year 2022.

Nature Day Camp

The 2022 summer of Nature Day Camp was a tremendous success. Camp filled 1,171 individual sessions this year, seven more than the previous 2021 record (camp was 96% full). Eighty-five campers received scholarships to attend. The program was based out of the Visitor Center and Nature Preschool, with the Before and Aftercare program returning to the Homestead Farm. A new outdoor space was created in the natural area outside the Visitor Center classrooms, allowing campers to attend Flagpole, eat lunch, and play with other campers in a natural environment for unstructured free play. The staff worked hard to transform the space since being displaced from the Nature Study Building due to the flood of 2020 and the Covid-19 Pandemic the previous two years. For programming, the traditional Adventure Trips returned. For the first time, a team of seven talented Adventure Trip Leaders was recruited to lead eight successful trips, with one new trip offered called Tip-of-the-Mitt Adventure Trip.

Nature Day Camp assembled a hard-working, dedicated team with 30 members (70% retention rate from 2021). Allie Elliott joined the Nature Day Camp team as the full-time Assistant Camp Director in January 2022 and was critical to the success of this summer’s camp program. Together, with Steve Frisbee, Camp Director, they recruited an outstanding 127 teen volunteers who gave over 7,500+ hours of service. The NDC team made a tremendous effort to develop a supportive staff while providing a safe, dynamic camp experience for our campers.

The Future is Looking Bright

As we look to 2023, we will continue to consider how we can connect all people to nature, seeking to create a welcoming atmosphere where each person is valued. We will continue to evaluate and adjust our core programs to serve people well and seek opportunities to build new connections in our community and beyond.
Welcoming New Staff to the Department
CNC’s Caretaker, Bruce Vaydik, retired after 20 years of service, and we thank him for his dedication! Riley McConnell was hired in November to fill the role. Other new DOLF staff that were hired included Cleaning Crew Members Brittany Anibal and Magan Schultz.

Deer Harvest
A total of 63 deer were harvested at CNC during the 2022 season. The estimated deer population is currently around 40-50 deer/mi², but based on the significance of deer browse on the land, CNC would prefer to lower the herd to closer to 30 deer/mi².

Wildflower Walkway
A new ADA-accessible colored cement path was poured in the Wildflower Walkway. A sitting area with tables was also created for people to meet and relax in one of CNC’s most peaceful locations.

Invasive Exotics
In 2022, 88.69 acres of new areas were reclaimed from invasive plants, bringing the total area considered relatively invasive exotic free to approximately 850 acres (57% of CNC land). New areas included land that was forestry mowed along the Chippewa and River trails, some areas at the Ridge, Wetlands and River Point and the Arbury property. Andrew Naert was hired for the summer to work alongside Logan Yonkus controlling invasive plants.

DNR Habitat Grant
CNC was awarded a DNR Habitat Grant for $46,600 to be used in 2022 and 2023. During the year, 18 acres were forestry mowed with grant funds to help control invasive plants and create wildlife clearings. Tree and shrub planting and caging and wildflower plantings have also been made possible with the grant.

WIN Grant
CNC received a grant from the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) for $14,975. This grant provided funds to conduct a prescribed burn on 20 acres of land to decrease woody vegetation and promote diversity. Approximately 10 acres were also forestry mowed in addition to the Habitat Grant work. Over 3,000 trees and shrubs were also planted with the combined funding of the DNR Habitat and WIN grants. The WIN grant also helped fund the construction of wood duck boxes, bat houses, snake boards and equipment to complete a turtle monitoring program.

Dow Land Work
CNC staff have worked along with Dow staff and contractors to provide signage, trail and land management guidance for the Natural Resource Damage Assessment projects at the Eagle Ridge, Tittabawassee River Floodplain and Greater Midland properties.

Maple Syrup Season
A total of 31.3 gallons of maple syrup was made during the season, for an estimated 1200+ gallons of sap collected.

Arboretum
Thirty-seven specimen trees and shrubs were planted in the Arboretum this year. There are currently 113 species represented in the Arboretum and 416 specimen trees and shrubs. An added effort included planting numerous species of shrubs along the open edges of the Arboretum and hemlocks throughout the forested upland edges.

Central Michigan Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CM-CISMA)
CNC was once again the fiduciary of the CM-CISMA. The partnership has been excellent for partnering with organizations throughout the 5-county region, and the education and control of invasive plants throughout the year continued to increase. CNC was also able to receive $8,000 to control invasive plants on its 1,500 acres.
Research

• Turtle Monitoring Program – A total of 592 turtles were captured over the summer with hoop nets baited with fish. Of the turtles captured, 42 were tagged with pit tags so that CNC staff could gain a better understanding of the turtle numbers, movements and age classes. Tags were placed into 21 Blanding’s turtles, three wood turtles and 18 snapping turtles.

• MSU entomology department is continuing their insect trapping research. This is to determine if there are any watch list species moving into the area. Thankfully, MSU researchers did not find any new invasive insect species, but did find five new long-horned beetles that have never been identified at CNC prior.

Land Consulting Work

CNC completed several consulting projects throughout the year including:

• Planted three acres of native grasses and wildflowers, controlled invasive species, installed a shed and helped with trail maintenance at the Frankenlust Nature Park in Bay County.

• Planted five acres of native grasses and wildflowers at the Lane Nature Preserve in Gladwin County.

• Helped control autumn olive and black locust at the Forest Hills Nature Preserve in Gratiot County.

• City of Midland’s Emerson Park – Continued to control invasive species and promote native species by planting, mowing and weeding.

• Planted wildflowers at the Eagle Ridge City Park in Midland.

• School Yard Habitat – Helped with prepping and planting pollinators at Zilwaukee Elementary and Meridian Elementary schools.

Significant Wildlife Sightings

Each year, there are very exciting sightings of wildlife at CNC. Some of the significant sightings in 2022 included:

• If you’re into birding, CNC is a great place to check out! There were 169 species of birds verified at CNC during the year and 203 over the last five years.

• The first ever sighting of the American White Pelican was observed at CNC as five were spotted flying overhead at the River Point on May 10.

• A golden eagle was spotted at CNC’s Chippewa River Access Site on March 21. The last sighting at CNC was in 1998.

• A Dunlin was spotted at the Wetlands Area on May 15. The last sighting at CNC was in 1971.

• Five new long-horned beetles identified for the first time at CNC: Acanthocinus obsoletus, Astylopsis sp., Brachyleptura champlaini, Graphisurus fasciatus and Phymatodus amoenus.

• Other great sightings included: river otters, lots of beaver activity, night photographs of a bobcat and wood and Blanding’s turtles (that we were able to pit tag).
In 2022, Cathy Devendorf, Director of Volunteers & Outreach, retired after 32 years of service. We thank her for her commitment to CNC! We also extend a sincere thank you to the 378 people who shared their time and expertise with CNC in 2022 and completed 11,684 volunteer hours. Their names are listed on page 8.

We thank the following groups for their volunteer participation in 2022:

- Bay Area Runners Club
- Bullock Creek Middle School Art Students
- Daughters of the American Revolution
- Dow
- Max Carey Blacksmith Guild
- Midland County Breastfeeding Coalition
- Midland Fiber Arts Guild
- Mid-Michigan Rock Club
- Mid-Mitten Chapter of Wild Ones
- Oxbow Archaeologists
- Phoenix Community Farms
- Small House Farm
- Studley Grange
- Troop 323

Thousands of volunteers shared their time and expertise with CNC in 2022.

Volunteer Feature

Zoey Archbold completed her Girl Scout Gold Award project for CNC in September 2022. She led a group of people to build six duck nesting boxes and two 4-chamber bat boxes. She chose this project because she has a passion to help animals.

CNC had a need for more duck nesting boxes due to the damage the flood in 2020 caused to the existing boxes. Bats in the area have been impacted by white-nose syndrome (WNS) and new boxes could help their populations rebound.

Zoey’s team spent a total of 140 hours on her Gold Award project. She also created a website to educate others on her project and inspire people to make a difference in their community: https://sites.google.com/view/zoeys-gold-award-bats-ducks/home.

Zoey will continue to pursue her passion for nature studying Environmental Science in college next year.

Thank you, Zoey!
Thank You, 2022 Volunteers!

Carole Adams
Norah Adams
Dave Albers
Bobbi Allen
Taylor Allen
Greg Allington
Ivah Alvesteffer
Deb Anderson
Emillie Anderson
Karen Andrews and Family
Zoey Archbold
Martin Arford
Shea Arnold
Alexis Atkinson
Julie Babcock
Ballien-Czolgosz Family
Niyah Banfill
Janet Barber
Joey Bebeau
Tony B eeck
Kayleiana Beibling
Scott Beld
Lila Belmer
Kathi Benchley
Addison Bennett
Linda Berry
Addison Birchmeier
Luke Birchmeier
Jacqueline Birnbaum
Alayna Black
Ely Black
John Blaha
Laura Blaha and Family
Christine Borchert
Emma Bornemann
Jeff Bowen
Ava Bridges
Denny Brooks
Dennis Broomall
Angela Brown
Ashton Brown
Irene Brown
Jill Brown
Ben Bucci
Cara Bucci
Duane Burcht
Julia Burcht
Sue Burcht
Jenni Bush
Sharon Caldwell
Anessa Cantu
Nancy Carney
Katelyn Cassidy
Madison Champagne
Mia Chappell
Troy Che
Olivia Cherry
Ethan Clark
Brynna Clute
Scout Coady
Bevin Cohen
Heather Cohen
August Comeau
Bridge Connor
John Copp
Deb Cress
Will Cummin
Caden Cummings
Connor Czolgosz
Devyn Dana
Marcia Dana
Janet Danek
Kristy Daoud
Autumn Dast
John Davis
Anaid De la Fuente
Doug Dean
Grayson Dean
Anjali Debrach
Beth DeVries
Charlie Dewitt
Marcia Dilling
Brady Dixon
Janelle Dombek
Andra Drake
Aimee Dupuis and Family
Brooklyn Duranceau
Brooke Durfee
Kaleena Durfee
Darrell Eagle
Aristotle Economou
Alyssa Eddy
Morgan Ehmantraut
Tricia Eisdoes
Trent Elliott
Michelle
Emmdommer
Eldon Enger
Judy Enger
Shawn English
Susan Erhardt
Rogan Evans
Bill Ferris
Neal Fetner
Ethan Finney
Judy Firenee
Kirk Fisher
Marijane Fitzgerald
Carolyn Foley, Dan Ewold and Family
Mattia Fornari
Dale Foster
Laura Foster
Adam Fournier
Autumn Fransen
Maddie Frisbee
Angelina Fuller
Chloe Fuller
Ella Gaffke
Sarah Galt
Riley Gayheart
Kelsea Gear
Elizabeth Geiger
Irene Gibbons
Carter Gilstad
Lynne Glynn
Sheila Gombar-Fetner
Kari Graebner
Aaron Grasman
Kristen Gray
Hannah Lacusea
Catelin Greiman
Paige Gromaski
Regan Gross
Rebecca Guerlin
Jacob Guettler
Shalini Gupta
Tiffany Haase
Sheanna Hagle
Robin Hamann
Steven Hamilton
Isabella Harmon
Brenden Harrington
Angela Hasenburg
Melissa Haswell
Tina Hawley
Jaden Hayes
Joseph He
Hilton Headley
Jim Heffel
Jeanne Henderson
Jim Hignite
Brial Headley
Mark Holder
Reagan Holder
Cindy Holliday
Jimmy Holliday
Brian Holmes
John Houvener
Matthew Huber and Family
Eleanor Hughes
Nancy Humphrey
Samuel Hurd
Emma Husted
Bill Ferris
Alex Iwanow
Cindy James
Barb Jammer
Skyllie Jenkins
Claire Jimkoski
Ollie Juengel
Siobhan Kall
Angie Kelleher, Ryan Smith and Family
Karyn Kelly
Alexandra Kessel
McKenzie Kessel
Kyle Killmaster
Steve Kin
Kathy Kinkema
Bailey Kirkman
Patrick Kirts
Tate Kirts
Brady Kish
Niko Knizacky
Butch Kosth
Diane Kosth
Kaylin Kraus
Cricket Krenel
Hannah Krotzer
Susie Kruse
Landry Kuhn
Randy Kurskinsky
Hannah Lacusea
Anna Landenberger
Bryce Landenberger
Conrad Latuszek
Alex Launderbach
Henry Leadman
Bob Lehmann
Sandi Lehmann
Tyler Lemieux
Paige Linton
Evan Lipschatz
Sydney Lipschatz
Andy Longuski
Greg Lowe
Laurie Lowe
Adalina Luz
Kate MacLachlan
Griffin Mai
Larson Makie
Ryan Malabanan
Jim Malek
John Marcou
Leah Markey
Marilynn Marry
Hailey Marshall
Jaunita Martin
Janet Martineau
Sachie Matthews
Maisy Matthews
Irene Matz
Rob Maxwell
Baylor May
Olivia Mayer
Eljah McCreddie
Scott McDonald
Janessa McIntosh
Fred McKevy
Marianne McKelvy
Philip Meister
Trishy Morris
Carol Morse
Livana Moua
Ted Mudd
Christian Mueller
Bev Murray
Diane Myers
Linda Myers
Tom Myers
Andrew Naert
Ted Nagel
Jessica Neal
Phoenix Neal
Keith Neffe
Maggie Nelson
Baily Notherler
Noah Northrup
Ryannah Nunamaker
Mike Nusbaumer
Hannah Ober
Kayden Okerblom
Deagan O’Neil
Angie Oros
Katie Papst
Jess Parham
Ricardo Pastor
Paige Payter
Jackson Pazdro
Gina Pederson
Keaton Pellegrini
Garett Perez
Marlene Perry
Sarah Petersen
Bradley Phillips and Family
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Madeline Plaske
Bridgette Plante
Allysa Pomranky
Karen Postma
Ella Ream
Denise Reiling
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Logan Reynolds
Fierce
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Linda Rita
Maidsyn Robb
Mark Robertson
Don Robinson
Marilyn Robinson
Kay Rocklitz
Julia Roper
Megan Rosolowski
Jamie Ross
James Rozevold
Jabal Family
Christian Schall
Bill Schuette
Alvia Schultz
Laurenne Schultz
Mackenzie Schultz
Sienna Eve Schultz
Carly Seymour
Ama Shahzad
Avery Shepard
Reese Shepard
Dylan Sheridan
Anastasiya Shick
Ren Short
Conrad Smith
Gilly Smith
Marcia Smith
Scott Smith
Marc Snyder
Alex Sonoras
Shannon Sonoros
Mia Spalding
Peter Spence
Squires Family
Bailee Stachlewicz
JD Starks
Janelle Steckley
Mark Stedemann
Rick Stevenson
Ethank Zinkweg

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Society & Life Members

**Meadow Society**
- Todd & Cindy Armbuster
- Shari & Greg Armentad
- Ryan & Lindsay Ash
- Rick White & Melissa Barnard
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- Mark & Maureen Becker
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- Carol & Eric Van Wert
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- Janelle Dombek & Tim Wagner
- Patrick & Renee Waldie
- Joseph & Cindy Weir
- Jennifer & Jonathan Wendt
- Carrie & Matt Widenmier
- Heather Wood
- James & Cathy Yanacek

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- Alex & Rebecca Bangs
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- Eugene C & Deana J Beckham
- Grayson Mitchell Beckham
- Parker Andrew Beckham
- Jeffrey & Karen Beckwith
- Irene J Beshgetoor
- John & Lara Blaha
- Ruth Blair
- Ralph & Marilyn Boeker
- Roger Bohl
- Barbara Boman
- M Victoria Bowes
- Shirley Branch
- Adam & Nicole Bruski
- Jenni Bush
- Dave Alsgaard & Carolyn Busse
- Mike & Pam Butter
- David & Marilyn Camp
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- Taffy Cline
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- Mary Currie
- Ralph & Donna Czerepinski
- Mike & Diana Dalton
- John & Nancy Davis
- Judith Dean
- Marcia & Wendell Dilling
- Junia Doan
- Ruthetta Dornbos
- Michael D Driver
- Carole Adams & Darrell Eagle
- Gerald D Eichinger
- Edward Elliott
- William Elliott
- Leanne Erickson
- Jim & Fran Falender
- Vernon Fauer
- Donald & Marilyn Findlay
- Eileen Finzel

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- Sue & Timothy Dyste
- Susan Erhardt & Matthew Zabik
- Neat Fetner & Sheila Gombar-Fetner
- Yvonne Hall
- Richard & Denise Helling
- Jim & Anna Hemeier
- Ernesto Sanchez & Tracey Henson
- Elizabeth Kulling
- Drs. Gail Hoffman & Thomas Lane
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- David & Marcelle Molzahn
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- Marjorie Hekman & Patrick Philipp
- Bob & Claire Rollenhagen
- Colette St. Louis
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- Lowell & Judy Youngquist
- Greg & Marilyn Zank

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- Kevin & Lynda Frazier
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- Melvin & Elaine Garrett
- Chris Gaumer
- Inge Geisert
- William & Ruth Gnagey
- Virginia Gohrband
- Jean Goodnow
- Imrtraud Gordon
- Kristen Gray
- Daniel Hall
- Timothy & Robin Hamann
- Mark Hamburg
- Richard Harris
- Neil & Annmarie Hawkins
- Michael & Debbie Hayes
- Jeanne & Jerry Henderson
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- Nancy Holt
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- Alice Jensen
- Wayne & Phyllis Johnson
- Suzan Kastura
- Betty Keil
- Kay Kenaga
- Dave & Patti Kepler
- David & Julia Kepler
- Steve Kin
- Ronald & Ruth Klump
- Kenneth & Vickie Konst
- Mark & Theresa Kotanchek
- Randy Kursinsky
- Geoffrey & Jennifer Kusch
- Ilah Kwast
- Robert & Marcella Lachance
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For more information or if you have any questions, please contact Dennis Pilaske, Executive Director, at dpilaske@chippewanaturecenter.org or 989.631.0830.

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