Master Naturalists Make Difference

By Naturalist/Education Director Emily Stone

“The discovery that there was a Master Naturalist training program – an opportunity to learn more about the natural setting of northern Wisconsin which could lead to more opportunities to share my love of the natural world – was exactly the experience I was looking for,” says David Broadwell, a retired teacher and participant in the Cable Natural History Museum’s most recent Wisconsin Master Naturalist Volunteer Training Course.

The Wisconsin Master Naturalist Program (WIMN) is developing a corps of well-informed citizens dedicated to conservation education and service within their communities. Similar Master Naturalist programs are being offered in 48 states across the country. Since the Museum co-hosted a pilot course for 14 participants in the fall of 2012, WIMN has helped more than 228 people across the state (and some from neighboring states, too!) become more familiar with Wisconsin natural history, interpretation, and conservation stewardship.

It has also provided natural resources organizations with a much-needed, well-trained cadre of volunteers. Last year, Master Naturalist Volunteers trained by the Museum performed 402 volunteer service hours. In 2015, we project that number will jump to 785. Those hours are worth over $17,000!

In June of both 2014 and 2015, the Museum partnered with the UW-Extension and the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve in Superior, WI, to put on week-long intensive courses for a total of 32 people. The benefit of this intensive model is that more time can be spent in the field with natural resource professionals, immersed in learning about the natural world.

Ed Johnston, a Museum board member and volunteer took the course in 2015. He believes that “The best part of the training was the actual field trips. The men and women who did the presentations were truly professionals in their field and did an amazing job of not only sharing their knowledge but also instilling the desire to learn more.”

Ed is a retired IT professional, who “ran away” to the Northwoods only three years ago. The Master Naturalist training has helped him connect with two communities up here – the natural community and the human community. He is enthusiastic about completing the 40 hours of volunteer service that the WIMN certification requires each year. “I love that I can give something back to this amazing community that has welcomed me so warmly. The value the Museum brings to the entire region - rich, poor, young, and old - just can’t be overstated, and my opportunity to help in some small way is truly a privilege. Plus, the other people involved, both Museum staff and volunteers, are amazing!” says Ed.

Ed isn’t the only Master Naturalist who loves giving back to the Museum. Jane Weber, a retired elementary teacher, took the course in 2014. This past spring, Jane stepped in to help teach our MuseumMobile programs to local schoolchildren when staffing ran short. She did such a great job that we’ve hired her to do most of the MuseumMobile visits this coming year! Jane took the course because she “wanted to learn more about this amazing area, and get to know the natural world we live amongst, and see things in a whole different light.” Now, lucky for us, we have another skilled and knowledgeable teacher on staff.

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Collections Grant

Our grant from IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) is coming to a close. Museum staff are continuing to catalog the collections, and plan to be done by September 1. In the past six months, grant money has been used to purchase archival quality storage containers, such as zip top bags for moss species, and glass jars for aquatic plants. Recently purchased preservation albums will store Museum photos, phenology calendars, and drawings by Lois Nestel. Check out the Museum’s collections in our Virtual Exhibit on www.cablemuseum.org.

Lakes Alive! Whets the Imagination

What are those green things strung from ceiling to floor as you enter the exhibit? Several adults have been confused by our over-sized weed bed, but the toddlers and kids know just what to do! Sneaking through the underwater weeds is just one way our current exhibit whets your imagination. The blue screen swimming simulation has been a big hit, as well as the fish and crayfish tanks. Donna Post’s mural continues to amaze even Museum staff and regulars. What’s more, you might find something to learn about lakes. If you haven’t experienced this exhibit yet, come on down and dive in!

Lakes Alive! Spring Field Trips Were a Huge Success

To complement the “Lakes Alive!” exhibit theme, this year our spring field trips visited Perry Lake to do two types of water testing. First, students used Visual Colorimetric Analysis to measure the amount of dissolved oxygen in the lake. Simply put, this means watching a chemical turn a shade of blue. Then the students used nets to catch various aquatic critters. The types and numbers of species we caught are an indicator of the health of the lake. Good news! It’s doing well! We found dozens of dragonfly nymphs, snails, tadpoles, and frogs, among others. Plus, we had a ton of fun exploring nature!

In the Museum, students put on a short skit about the food chain in a lake, and had ample time to explore the “Lakes Alive” exhibit and the Curiosity Center. As you can tell from the “Thank You” letters we received, students had a great time!

Some of our field trip visitors wrote to share their impressions of the Museum and the Lakes Alive exhibit:

(at left):

Dear Cable Natural Museum,
I had so much fun at the Museum. I’ve never been to the Cable Natural Museum before. I loved the blue screen and the treehouses. And I loved the play in the beginning when we walked in. I loved all the pretty colors. I loved going outside to catch bugs! Thank you so much for having us, I wish I didn’t have to go.

Love, Kianna E.

(at right):

Dear Cable Natural Museum,
That was the first museum I have ever been to. My favorite part was the treehouse because there was a river otter. It looked cool. I learned that the food chain is really important because it keeps animals alive. Thank you for the wonderful time.

From, Marshall
Junior Naturalists

Junior Naturalists this past summer have had a bonanza of opportunities. Children between the ages of 5 and 12 have enjoyed catching aquatic insects in the Namekagon River, meeting Carson the Red-tailed Hawk during a bird program, exploring the Cable Community Farm, watching the fish crew from the Wisconsin DNR shock for fish, and even meeting a live Big Brown Bat in a program about nocturnal creatures. This summer program brings children outside to learn about their environment, and runs every Tuesday and Wednesday from the end of June through all of July. Our Naturalist Interns, Molly and Kellie, prepared lesson plans that included nature hikes, relay races, arts and crafts, and stories. Each child had something unique to offer to the program as well, whether a personal story, something they found in the woods, or expertise in the given topic of the day. Junior Naturalists also had the opportunity to participate in the annual 4th of July parade. Keep your eyes out for small children wearing sky blue Junior Naturalist t-shirts! No matter the weather, Junior Naturalists learned how to have fun in nature, and were able to share their knowledge with family and friends.

Fantastic Naturalist Interns Make Our Summers Much More Fun!

Mollie Kreb is a student at Northland College studying Outdoor and Environmental Education. She joined the Cable Natural History Museum this June as a Summer Naturalist Intern. She hails from Stevens Point in central Wisconsin, where she cultivated her passion for the natural world through childhood exploration of the surrounding lands, which often included skiing and walking along miles of the Green Circle Trail. As an incoming senior, Mollie plans to use her internship experience as a means to further her skills as a teacher and as steward of the natural world. Her other passions include studying art history and Ojibwe culture through college courses, drawing and crafting, and developing her techniques as a paddler. Mollie’s newest interests this summer reflect her current environment, which includes the culture of gardening and of foraging for edible and medicinal wild plants. She hopes that her connections with the Museum offer a platform to further pursue such interests.

Kellie Solberg has returned to the Museum for a third summer after graduating from Wartburg College this past May with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology and Environmental Science. She is happy to be back in Cable and ready for more adventures. When she is not teaching Junior Naturalists or helping with other Museum programs, she enjoys going on bike rides, morning runs, swimming, reading, and gardening. The best parts of coming back are seeing all of the people she met over the past two summers, including many of the Junior Naturalists. After her internship, she plans to serve in AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps from October 2015 – July 2016. There, she hopes at least one of her projects will be environmentally focused.
Volunteer Voice

By Larry Hanson

I know at least two things will happen when I volunteer at the Museum. I am going to learn and I am going to have fun.

Nearly every task for me at the Museum involves learning a new skill or information about something to be presented for our public. I am asked to solve problems and find ways to present ideas that engage our visitors and help them be good stewards of our world. In the process I get help from the staff to understand the issue and work through the process.

I never feel abandoned with no idea of where to go or what is expected. The staff allows me to make suggestions and we work as a team to accomplish the goal. I enjoy the challenge and feel good when the project works better than we planned.

Volunteering also involves a good portion of fun. The atmosphere at the Museum is supportive, relaxed and inclusive. It feels like everyone has a place on the team. When I show up to volunteer I am welcomed and I feel the gratitude of the staff as we work together and are thanked repeatedly when the work is done. Oh, and by the way, the lunches provided by Deb, Emily, Elsa, Leslie, and Beda when we are building the exhibit are pretty fantastic as well. I like to volunteer because it allows me to be on a good team, use my skills and make a contribution to our community.

Double the Fun! Comedy Night and Power of the Purse

The first weekend of October promises to be a weekend of fun and philanthropy when the Cable Natural History Museum holds two events to benefit exhibit development. Both fundraisers will feature Lorna Landvik, a nationally acclaimed author of ten novels, an actor, stand-up comic, and playwright.

The weekend kicks off with Comedy Night, an evening of entertainment for all, at 5:30 PM on October 2, at Mooselips in Seeley. Don’t miss the chance to see this national performer on stage when Landvik presents her all-improv, one-woman show, “Party at Mooselips.” The $50 ticket includes appetizers, desserts and show. A cash bar will be available. Join your spouse, friends, and neighbors for this great night out.

The sixth annual Power of the Purse auction and brunch is the following day, October 3, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Lakewoods Resort in Cable. Laugh with Lorna again as she provides post-brunch entertainment and talks about her newest book, *Best to Laugh*. Booklist has this to say about the book – “Filled with historical lore about Hollywood’s glory days, inside observations about the chauvinism that pervades the comedy boys’ club, and a bevy of secondary characters straight out of central casting, Landvik’s homage to funny ladies everywhere is a joyful, breezy trip down memory lane.” Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing at both events. Redbery Books in Cable will also host a book signing on Saturday afternoon.

Consider donating a distinctive new purse for the Power of the Purse auction. Donations can be dropped off at the Cable Natural History Museum in Cable, Firefly Trading Company in Seeley, and Outdoor Ventures or Titus Salon in Hayward. Get your tickets early for one or both events by calling the museum at 715-798-3890! Seating is limited.
The Forest Lab Intermediate Program is a great way to get students in their early teens outside and learning more about nature. This summer we offered several half-day adventures, and one multi-night canoe trip. By partnering with the Northern Waters Environmental School in Hayward, we gained access to a greater number of participants – who come with their own set of drivers and chaperones.

In late June, retired Forest Service and Park Service biologist Jim Bryce met us near the Namekagon River for a bird banding demonstration. Although our first check of the nets came up empty, the downtime allowed Jim the students’ undivided attention for explaining about his tools and the process of banding. When we finally caught a magnolia warbler, they were ready! The hairy woodpecker we found in our final net check showed the students a nice contrast between two very different types of birds. In a testament to teenage humor, the kids were quite excited when the woodpecker drew blood from Jim’s hand. Most students got to hold or release a bird. What a special experience!

For the fourth annual FLIP Paddle the Namekagon canoe trip, I was joined by six boys from Drummond and Hayward, and a co-leader – Monica Blaser, an intern at the National Park Service. We paddled from County K Landing almost all the way to the St. Croix River! We even found time to tie two different types of artificial flies, and learn to fly cast as well. The boys were great, and the weather could not have been nicer. You can read more about it on the Natural Connections blog, accessible from the Museum website.

We seem to be centering our FLIP activities on the Namekagon River more and more. Ranger Joan Jabobowski met us for a fun afternoon of snorkeling and water testing at the Cable Wayside Landing, and the students caught at least fifty crayfish! On another day, we joined DNR fisheries biologists to witness fish shocking in Cap Creek, a tributary of the Namekagon on Telemark Road. It was a banner year for brook trout because of the easy winter. Thanks to all of the amazing natural resource professionals and volunteers who make these experiences possible and meaningful.

HELP RELEASE THE WILD!

What lurks behind closed doors at the Museum? Help us find out! We have critters in our Collections Room at the Museum that are ready to be released for up close investigation by visitors. Your support of the Group Ask will help us purchase display cases that allow these creatures to be out in the Museum, yet be protected from wear and tear of the elements – like little sticky hands! SO...Please consider a donation to the Group Ask and help us release the WILD into the MUSEUM! Thank you!

Make a donation to Release the Wild Group Ask by calling the Museum 715-798-3890 or by going to our website www.cablemuseum.org.

Upcoming Exhibit

Although it feels like we just started exploring the living world of lakes, preparation has begun for the 2016 exhibit. We are still in the idea gathering stage, so if there is a theme that excites you, let me know! Here are some thoughts of mine:

- **Phenology:** Seasons of change with your host, Winifred the Weasel. Scamper through a year in the Northwoods and discover the transformations that take place every year.
- **Adaptations:** Animals that stay for winter, those that sleep through it, and those that migrate.

I am also looking for creative and energetic folks to be on the exhibit committee. It'll be an opportunity to dream big and make a big difference in our community! E-mail elsa@cablemuseum.org with any ideas or interest in being on the committee.
The Museum uses the WIMN courses to help train our Summer Naturalist Interns, too. Mollie Kreb, a Northland College senior, reminisced that “Throughout the week of truly interesting field trips among a community of nature enthusiasts, I not only learned an immense amount about Wisconsin’s Northwoods but also about the strength of my interest in sharing this passion with others. I have come out of this experience with a stronger sense of purpose and capacity to make a difference in my community.”

Kellie Solberg – now back for her third summer internship at the Museum – says that “Other people should take this course because it not only teaches us about our natural history, but immerses us in nature through field trips looking at ancient rock outcrops, walking around bogs, seeing how bird banding works, having plants pointed out for identification in the forest, and so much more!”

This course is an excellent way for any newcomer to the area to start learning about their new home. Sharon Shaver, a recent transplant to Bayfield County from southeastern Wisconsin, told me that she took the course to establish a deeper connection to the landscape, to people, and to the place she now calls home. Sharon recommends taking this course whether you have a science background or not, because it will sharpen your observations of nature, teach you about designing interpretive programs, and – most importantly – it’s FUN!

Nanette Rasmussen, a retired special education assistant who has been visiting the Museum every summer since she was a child, agrees. “I have had minimal natural science education,” she admits regretfully. “The curriculum exposed me to many opportunities to build on ‘citizen scientist’ awareness and an understanding of the local ecosystem.” She loved the course because “It’s fun to engage with curious people!”

David agrees. “Joining the group of similarly motivated fellow naturalists-to-be, I discovered the wonderful diversity among participants to be an unanticipated bonus. I’ve come away from the program with an enhanced understanding of the natural world of Northern Wisconsin, as well as a realization of how much more there is to discover. I look forward to sharing what I’ve learned and can more greatly appreciate, as well as becoming involved in some study of the natural world here in the Northwoods.”

This fall, four recently graduated Master Naturalist Volunteers have offered to lead programs on our Fall Calendar of Events. Look for the Master Naturalist logo next to the program descriptions. Come learn from them, and then consider taking the course yourself in June 2016!
**AAM Conference Report**

By Elsa Hansen, Naturalist/Curator

After only a few weeks on the job, I hopped a plane to Atlanta, Georgia, for the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Annual Meeting and Museum Expo. This conference experience was written into our IMLS grant. From Accreditation 101, Creating Integrated Label Graphics, to Accessibility and Universal Design, many of the available sessions were helpful to both large and small museums. At a luncheon, I sat across from someone from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. I visited the museum back in college, and to this day I still remember the quiet room filled with shoes. While in Atlanta for the conference I visited the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. I saw the house he was born in and visited his burial tomb, but the part that resonated with me was my time in the Ebenezer Baptist Church. Both King and his father preached there, and while sitting in the pews, I closed my eyes and listened to a recording of a sermon that King gave at that church.

Museums have the power to share more than facts; they share stories. They provide experiences. They create opportunities for people to think about things differently. Back here at the Cable Natural History Museum, I look forward to engaging visitors and finding ways to make the natural history collections of the Northwoods come to life.

**Wayside Wanderings Natural Play Area**

Another summer has warmed up nicely at the Wayside Wanderings Natural Play Area. In June, Teacher Naturalist Sue Thurn worked with Drummond Area School District’s Summer Edventure Club Discoveries program. Fifteen 5th-8th graders felled trees, lopped off branches, and designed and constructed a Little House in the Big Woods. This log cabin will be the perfect place for children to imagine they are Laura Ingalls Wilder, or act out their own pioneer adventure. A Spider Web is being built for children to climb in and out of. A Stairway to the Sky has been created in which logs have been placed into a hillside, designed so that you can run up or down the stairs. Vivianne Hanke created a Willow Hut and tunnel that once is grown will provide a shaded play space. Jodi Kingdon is creating artistic birds on the “birdhouse,” an old cabin donated by the Steve and Amy Louis family that is being used as a storage and mini-classroom facility. The Museum is continuing its work to connect children and families to Northwoods nature through free play experiences that inspire wonder, discovery, and responsibility through the Wayside Wanderings Natural Play Area. Be sure to check our calendar of events or connect to informal programs on Facebook.
Membership Has Its Benefits

In addition to supporting the work of the Cable Natural History Museum, Museum members enjoy a variety of benefits, including:

- Free admission to our collections and exhibits
- Reduced rates for participation in our nature and education programs
- Receive the Museum Messenger twice a year
- 10% discounts in the Museum Shop
- Opportunities for Museum Naturalist-led programs for your special family events

To become a member of the Cable Natural History Museum visit cablemuseum.org/membership, call 715-798-3890 or complete and mail the form at the right to CNHM, P.O. Box 416, Cable, WI 54821