



The Connector

Vol. 2, Fall/Winter Edition



Contents

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| ❖ Letter from the Director (2) | ❖ Memorial Trees (8) |
| ❖ Interns and Volunteers (3) | ❖ Public Relations Students Help Out Greystone (9) |
| ❖ Down at the Farmers' Market(4) | ❖ Photo Gallery (11) |
| ❖ Student Discovers Greystone (6) | |

Newsletter Editor: Jules Hoepting

Letter From the Director



The three objectives of Greystone Nature Preserve are to instill the awe, appreciation, and stewardship of nature in community members of all ages and ability levels.

The COVID virus certainly taught us to have some awe of this little virus which cost the lives of so many humans and put our social functions to a stand still. We came to appreciate the basic fact that no matter how many systems we organize — stock markets, buildings, transportation — nature is still the vital force on the planet. Our form of stewardship was to prevent the virus from spreading by following the requirements of our sensible leaders. We maintain social distancing when outside and wear masks in close quarters.

The virus shutdown our normal classes, but opened the door for us to do social outreach at the Fredonia Farmers' Market on Saturdays. There's a special camaraderie among the vendors and an open sharing that is delightful in these contentious times. The virus has deepened our connection to the community, much like nature connects us to ourselves and our planet.

Diane Clark
Director of Greystone Nature Preserve

Yours
Diane

Interns and Volunteers



Asha Deharder
Educational Director Intern

Asha is very passionate about the environment and has also interned at Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History and Audubon Community Nature Center. This spring, Asha is planning on joining an Americorps NCCC program. Through this, she hopes to help communities, learn new skills, and meet new people. With Greystone, Asha has designed a 6-week educational program called “Autumnal Adventures”. Although the program was ill-suited for the Coronavirus era, Greystone hopes to utilize the plan at a later date. Asha is very excited to be working at Greystone and learns something new each week!



Hope Winter
Communication Intern

Hope is a Journalism Major at SUNY Fredonia and inspires to work for the news one day. She is a Producer for News 11 on WNYE, the campus T.V. station at Fredonia, and is also the Public Relations director of the station. Additionally, Hope is the Public Relations Chair for PRSSA, the Treasurer for Fredonia Democracy Initiative, and a student member of Fredonia’s American Democracy Project committee. Hope is using her Journalism and Public Relations skills to update Greystone’s website and social media.



Jack Fortna
Five-Star Volunteer

Jack has been volunteering at Greystone for about a year now. He comes down once a week to help Diane and Bill with landscaping, gardening, mapping-out the property, and assists with computer work. Jack’s biggest project at Greystone so far has been creating a Three Sisters Garden in the style of Native American farms. Jack thinks that it is really important to have a place in the Fredonia area where people can escape to nature and learn more about the natural world, and plans on helping the preserve out as much as he can in the future.



Tris Karcz
Five-Star Volunteer

Tris is a high school sophomore in homeschool who has been volunteering at Greystone Nature Preserve for three years. He enjoys all aspects of the natural environment at Greystone along with spending time with Bill and Diane; Tris has many conversations with Diane about a cornucopia of topics. Tris has assisted with numerous tasks on the nature preserve such as tech support, soil sifting, seed sorting, vegetable picking, tree watering, weed pulling, and winter prepping.

Down at the Farmers' Market

Jules Hoepting
Newsletter Editor

Every Saturday in the summer, Church Street transforms into what it once was; a place for community. For conversations to sprout. For nourishment — both in the sense home-grown food and the sense of an interwoven community.

Farms of different kinds — produce, maple syrup, honey, house plants — along with bakeries and handmade crafts set up tents to sell goods. Community-based organizations set up tents as well: a group advocating for people to vote, another group promoting the local historic museum.

People of different kinds make the market come to life. There are the regulars. There are the people who are intrigued by the sight of festivities and stop by. There are the college students who wander down the street and soak in the culture.

The Fredonia Farmers' Market is a break from the cold, fast-paced internet age. It's like gathering around a campfire, absorbing the warmth, getting to know the stories of those who join you.

This summer, Greystone Nature Preserve utilized its newly-acquired tent and decided to join the Farmers' Market.

In true Greystone form, Diane Clark and Bill Moran brought along several items found in nature for children to guess what animal they belonged to: an armadillo shell, antlers of a deer, the skeleton of a cactus. Diane



Bill Moran, left, and Diane Clark, right, in their new tent at the Fredonia Farmers' Market.

and Bill did not feed children answers, they merely gave them hints; they let children ponder it over, letting them discover what wonder of nature they beheld.

A craft was set up designed to further encourage children to appreciate nature: peanut butter pinecone bird feeders. Young hands chose a pinecone, stroked peanut butter onto the scales, and sprinkled the pinecone into bird seed. A string was tied to the pinecone, ready to be suspended from wherever the child chose. Diane explained how the nutty pinecone would provide food to the birds; how the pinecone feeder would encourage birds to come into their backyards. That if the child tied the bird feeder on a branch near their window, they'd have a good chance of watching birds.

In addition to making a pinecone, kids had the option of coloring a in a coloring page of a bat. The bottom of the page declared in text "I like bats." Diane shared the story of how bats were in need of protection and needed people to care about them. She spoke of the town's political tension best visible as signs in people's lawns. She asked the children, if they so felt inclined, to put up the bat coloring page in the windows of their house to let people know that they were advocates for about. That they cared about nature.

Beanie, Diane and Bill's Australian shepherd, was a popular attraction for all ages. Their dog stuck by her humans' sides, greeting everyone who came near the tent with a radiant, contagious energy. As a result, Beanie received lots, and lots, and lots of pets and snuggles.

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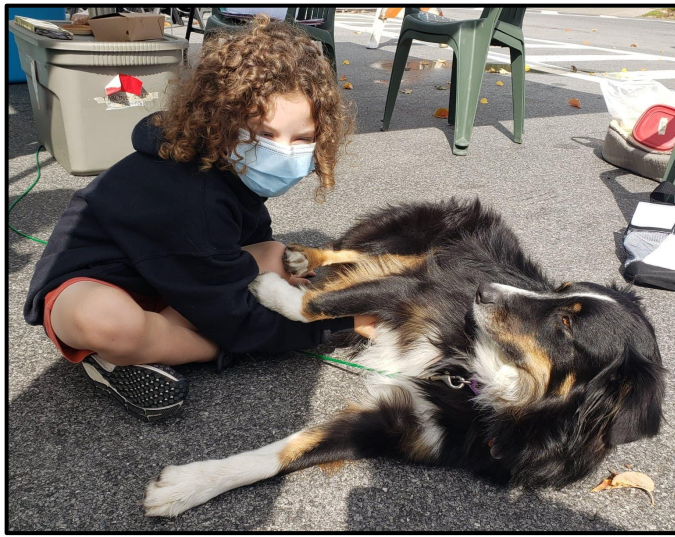
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The true gem of the tent was Diane and Bill themselves. They had an aura of welcoming, an open invitation for conversation. They seemingly knew everyone there and everyone there seemed to know them. Even if people were unable to make their way to the preserve, Diane and Bill were still able to connect to people and get them to think about the natural world.

Before leaving the tent, people were encouraged to take a plant home from Bill and Diane's plant swap. The idea was to bring fresh air — new life — to the inside of their homes.

Overall, it is fair to say that a Saturday spend at the market is never wasted. Like how nature is the great connector of all life, the Farmers' Market is the connector of the community.

*Note: the Farmers' Market is held on Church Street from Mid-May to October and is held in the Masonic Forest Lodge, 321 East Main Street (Rte. 20) from November through Mid-May. Hours are from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.



(Left) Beanie enjoys pets at the market.

(Right) Child puts peanut butter on pinecone scales.



Diane Clark, right, and Bill Moran, left, middle bottom, help a child make a pinecone bird feeder. .

Fredonia Student Discovers Greystone

Jules Hoepting,
Newsletter Editor

Megan Munroe didn't know Greystone Nature Preserve existed.

A English major with a love for the environment, Meg learned about Greystone from Christina Jarvis's Environmental Literature class. Christina traditionally takes students out to Greystone to plant a tree in honor of a nature-influenced author in the Literary Grove. Like so many other things, the pandemic made it impossible to ask students to meet at a certain location; many students were not on campus, and many that were on campus didn't have a means of getting there without violating COVID protocols. Thus, Christina decided to have Diane and Bill talk to the class over Zoom, and make it optional for the students to visit the preserve.

Meg was inspired by Diane and Bill's dedication to the Earth. How they built a sustainable house, running on solar energy. How they decided to share the magic of their property with the public instead of keeping it for themselves. How they asked for rocks that "spoke to people" as wedding gifts, and put them around the gray stone in the center of their property. Meg decided to take Christina up on her offer, and visited the preserve to plant a sycamore.

Instantly, she became enchanted. She ended up staying for five hours, talking to Diane and Bill and exploring the place. She had such a wonderful time that she decided to bring her friends, family, and her dog, Monte, for a visit a few weeks later. Monte, a furbaby used to the restraints of Orchard Park suburbia, especially loved roaming



Meg Munroe watches chickens at Greystone.

free and chasing tails with Beanie, Greystone's official greeter AKA dog.

Meg adores spending time with the salt-of-the-Earth couple, hearing their stories about working in Job Core, and relating to Bill's passion for music (Meg's in a band, and her and Bill bonded singing songs like "Heart of Gold" and "Harvest Moon" throughout the evening of her second stay). She admires their passion; how Diane helped organize an environmental justice march across the U.S., how Diane planted trees as a form of protest. How Diane's a social justice advocate as well, literally standing (on the corner of the street with a sign) for women's rights and other causes.

Like their relationship with nature, Diane and Bill know how to

interact in harmony with each other. Diane takes the reigns in most conversations, with Bill providing insightful or humorous asides. Meg thinks of them almost as grandparents, or grandparents away from home. She wants to help them, and visit and check-in with them more often.

When asked what stood out to her, Meg brings up the garden on top of the roof, how it was in an accessible location simultaneously eco-friendly. She likes the bat houses and the organic gardens with delicious, Earth-flavored grape tomatoes. She likes watching sunsets on Lake Erie's blue horizon, as the sun transforms from a circle to a half-circle to a golden memory. But the scenery — which is impossible to capture in photographs — is not what Meg adores the most.



Christina Jarvis, left, Meg Munroe, middle, and Diane Clark, right, plant a sycamore tree in the Literacy Grove.



Meg Munroe takes in the views at Greystone.

Memorial Trees

Hope Winter
Communications Intern

Greystone Nature Preserve believes that an individual's legacy should not end after they have passed. Losing loved ones during these hard times makes it especially hard to honor the transition and give them the goodbye they deserve. Funerals have to be shortened and restricted to a few people. Memorial services cannot be gatherings of hugs and shoulders to cry on. COVID-19 has taken away the true point of a memorial and has replaced it with worry.

During these difficult times, it's beneficial to know there are more opportunities to honor a loved one after they've passed. Greystone Nature Preserve, a 75 acre nonprofit experiential environmental education facility in Fredonia, is opening up its land to offer community members a chance to plant trees in the new Memorial Tree Lane. Founders Diane Clark and Bill Moran want to help people cope with grief and to honor loved ones in a way that gives back to the Earth.

Memorial Tree Lane sits on top of one of the hills at Greystone, with a breathtaking, panoramic view of Lake Erie in the distance. The idea of this lane began a couple years ago when a friend of Greystone and SUNY Fredonia English professor, Christina Jarvis, lost her mother. Christina's mother was a participant in the first Earth Day and life-long environmental advocate, and Jarvis wanted to honor her mother in a natural way.



Christina Jarvis, with the Native Roots staff, plants a memorial in honor of Jeanette McVicker's mother.



Bill Moran stands beside a newly-planted memorial tree for his cousin, Abigail Winograd.



In May 2019, Jarvis gathered with family and friends to plant a Tulip tree and celebrate her mother's legacy of education, environmental advocacy, and social justice.

Although the memorial tree planting was a new event for Christina, she has had a decade-long relationship with Greystone Nature Preserve. Since 2010, Christina has been working with her Environmental Literature students at SUNY Fredonia to plant trees and honor authors who use nature as a muse in their writings. A literary grove honoring more than 15 major American environmental writers borders Memorial Tree Lane.

This past May, Christina sparked the interest of her friend, Jeanette McVicker, to honor Jeanette's mother who passed away on Earth Day of this year.

"The impetus to plant a tree to honor mom, especially after my conversations with Christina, was already there," says Jeanette. "I decided to plant a pair of trees to include my dad, since it's been a long time and I wanted to find a way to honor them together."

Jeanette decided to plant a native White Oak tree for her mother, and also planted a Red Oak to honor her father who passed away 10 years ago.

"I decided to plant a pair of trees [so that I could] include my dad, since it's been a long time and I wanted to find a way to honor them together."

Jeanette is also an English Professor at SUNY Fredonia, and teaches posthumanism in several of her classes. Posthumanism suggests that humans should understand that they are a part of the ecosystem, rather than at the top of the food chain. An environmental application of posthumanism suggests that once we die, our bodies get buried or scattered within the earth, and we are put into the ecosystem to help growth occur again.

Greystone Nature Preserve exemplifies this idea of posthumanism through the planting of Memorial Trees. With the help from Ron Cook and the staff of Native Roots, the company that will plant the trees, nine to eleven-foot native trees will be planted as memorials. The trees will be nurtured and the colors will shine throughout the seasons to come.

Public Relations Students Help Out Greystone



Diane Clark, right, is filmed by Noah Knight, middle, and Leanne Brigham.

Jules Hoepting
Newsletter Editor

Professor David Norman's Public Relations Campaigns class pairs prospective PR practitioners with local, non-profit organizations. The students are assigned to come up and execute a campaign to boost profits and awareness for the organizations. Greystone Nature Preserve, along with the Chautauqua County Rural Ministry and the Boys and Girls' Club of Northern Chautauqua County, were the organizations David partnered with this year.

Led by Kaitlyn Vanstrom, students Noah Knight, Jules Hoepting, Katherine Jose, Leanne Brigham, and Anna Molitor came up to the preserve to sit down with Diane Clark and Bill Moran about what the preserve needed help with.

Greystone relies heavily on interns both as a source of work and as another means of providing education. Unlike other organizations, Greystone is unique in that Diane and Bill mold the internship around the intern, rather than have a preset, ready-to-fill intern position.

Thus, Greystone internships have consisted of everything from writing grants, to managing social media, to designing a trail, to planting a garden and making a salad. Interns have had such a valuable experience, in fact, that the preserve won the first-ever Excellence in Internship Advancement Award from the State University of New York at Fredonia. To make it easier for students to find Greystone, Kaitlyn set up an official internship position with SUNY Fredonia's Career and Development office. She also put the internship on job search platforms like Handshake.

As with any small organization, funding is hard to come by — especially during a pandemic. Noah decided to focus her attention on creating interesting fundraising campaigns and finding new platforms for people to donate through. For Giving Tuesday, the Tuesday after Thanksgiving that is internationally designated for donating to charities, Noah has filmed and edited a donation-pitch-video and created a social media campaign to promote the event. She has also assisted with the website.

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Images are what sells nature, at least Jules thinks so. She has spent several evenings wandering around Greystone and taking photos, attempting to preserve the preserve's beauty. She has also spent a Saturday morning with Diane and Billa at the Farmers' Market, observing their place within the community's favorite gathering, and further getting to know the couple. She made a radio PSA that will play on WCVF 88.9 FM in the spring. Furthermore, she wrote a few articles and did the layout of the newsletter you are reading right now.

Posters, postcards, envelopes, fact sheets and other documents that are handy to have on-hand were put together by Katherine Jose. To get the word of Greystone out, Leanne and Anna have spread posters to different campus organizations. Leanne has written an article for The Leader, SUNY Fredonia's newspaper, and updated Greystone's page on the Fredonia Farmers' Market website. Anna has registered Greystone with Give Lively, a fundraising platform, and has written press releases She has also claimed Greystone and added images, so that people will better understand what the preserve is about.

The group has had a wonderful time working with Greystone, and hopes that their efforts bring more students to the preserve.



Tomatoes from Greystone garden.



(Below) garden made by former Greystone intern. .

Photo Gallery By Jules Hoepting









2020 Board of Directors

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Musical Director: Bill Moran**

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Treasurer: Jen Raines

Land Manager: William Moran

**Legal Consultant, Wesolowski Law
Group, P.C.: Keith Wesolowski**

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Regina Paul

Jonathan Townsend

Jeremy Woolson

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