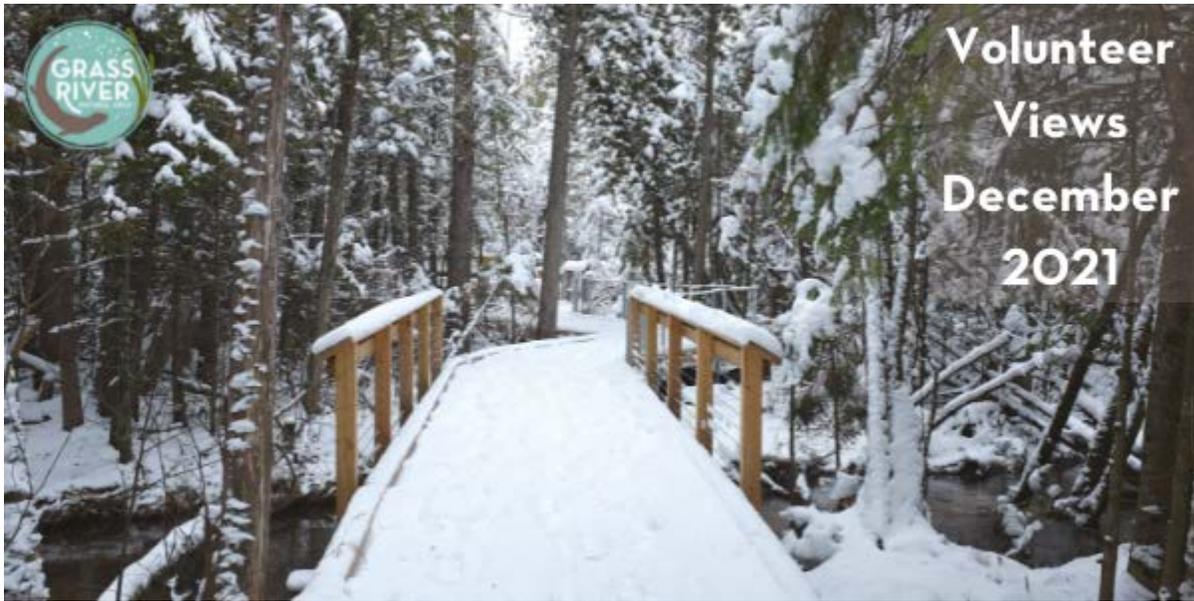


[View this email in your browser](#)



Dear GRNA volunteers,

The passing of the solstice means that it's officially winter, and the natural area has slowed down a bit, with early twilights and snow falling soundlessly through bare branches. But there is still plenty of activity out here too. Whether it's a flock of golden-crowned kinglets flitting through the firs, barred owls listening for voles scurrying about under the snow, or a red squirrel surreptitiously caching away cones in a secret stash, there are lots of important goings-on taking place each day at GRNA. We have plenty of human activity planned for this season too; take a look at the upcoming volunteer opportunities below, and please reach out if you have any ideas of other ways you'd like to help.

Wishing you a peaceful end to the magical holiday season,

Emily Burke
Conservation & Education Specialist
emily@grassriver.org

**IMPORTANT: PLEASE FILL OUT YOUR VOLUNTEER
WAIVER!**

If you plan on being an active volunteer in 2022, we need you to fill out and sign a volunteer waiver. This must be done every year, so though you have all already done this in the past, in order to be cleared for volunteering in 2022, we need to have a current copy on file.

Steps for completing your waiver:

1. Click **HERE** to access the waiver
2. Print it
3. Fill it out and sign it
4. Submit it using either of these options:
 - Scan it and email it to emily@grassriver.org
 - Bring the paper version with you next time you come to the Center

Alternatively, if you'd rather just complete your waiver in person, you can stop into the Center Saturdays and Sundays from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm to fill out a hard copy.

Thank you!

UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



FRONT DESK DOCENT

Ongoing

GRNA is in need of a few volunteer docents to help us cover the front desk of the Grass River Center. This position involves opening and closing the Center, greeting visitors and answering questions, performing simple point of sale transactions from our gift shop, and light housekeeping duties to keep the Center looking tidy. If you have excellent customer service skills, are knowledgeable about Grass River or are willing to learn, and want to give back to GRNA in a meaningful way, contact James at

james@grassriver.org. Training will be provided. From January through April, the Center is open on Saturdays and Sundays only from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

EVENT PHOTOGRAPHERS

Ongoing. First opportunity on Sat, Feb 12th

We're in need of a few volunteer photographers for our events. Photographs help us document the day's activities and market our events in the future. If you enjoy capturing the spirit of an event through photographs, have your own camera, and can commit to quickly getting GRNA the photos you took afterwards, this opportunity is for you! The next day for this volunteer

opportunity is during the Grass River Shiver and Winterfest (see below for descriptions), both on Saturday, February 12th. Contact Emily at emily@grassriver.org if you're interested.



**GRASS
RIVER
SHIVER**

**Sat, Feb
12th at 10:00 am**

The Grass River Shiver is GRNA's annual snowshoe 5k and 10k race. We need a handful of volunteers to help with racer check-in and timing, as well as a few volunteers out on the course at critical turns to point racers in the right direction. Email James at

james@grassriver.org if you can help out!



WINTERFEST

Sat, Feb 12th, time TBD but likely 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Winterfest is GRNA's annual family-friendly event celebrating all things winter. There will be indoor and outdoor activities including cross-country skiing and snowshoeing (weather permitting), crafts, games, nature story time, and a blazing fire in the pavilion with refreshments. We're looking for volunteers to help plan the event as part of our Events Committee and/or to help on the day of by staffing activities and assisting with set-up and clean-up. Email Emily at emily@grassriver.org if you'd like to lend a hand at this fun event.



MAPLE SUGARING VOLUNTEERS

February - March

Early spring will be here before we know it, along with the running of the sap, so we're putting out a call now for volunteers to participate in our maple sugaring program! Volunteers will prep equipment, tap trees, collect sap, split wood, and run the maple syrup evaporator to make maple syrup. Volunteers may also provide demonstrations to the public during events and may assist in clean-up and storage of equipment at the end of the season. A training will be



provided in mid-February. Email James at james@grassriver.org to be kept in the loop!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: KIM POPE

For this month's volunteer spotlight, we're featuring longtime GRNA volunteer Kim Pope. For the past 9 years, Kim has done it all, from being an active part of the Events Committee to helping out in the native plant gardens, assisting with education programs, and greeting visitors as a front desk docent. With her upbeat personality and can-do attitude, we caught up with Kim to hear about her experiences at GRNA over the years:

What inspires you to volunteer for GRNA?

Before my husband and I lived up here and back when we were just visiting the area, we would stop by Grass River to walk or cross-country ski. I decided then that if I could, I would like to volunteer in some capacity when we retired up here. I love Grass River and the conservation of such a diverse, pristine area is very close to my heart!

What's the neatest thing you've experienced since you started volunteering with GRNA?

I love the outdoors and animals so a big thrill for me was an owl prowl with James a few years ago when he called in a barred owl. It perched in a tree above us and just looked at us, very curious. I LOVED it!

When you aren't volunteering, what do you spend time doing?

I enjoy reading, cross-country skiing, rock hunting, anything on the water, gardening, walking/hiking, and dogs!



Any fun facts about you that you want to tell us about?

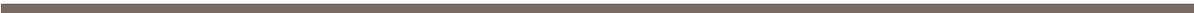
In the fall I also monitor a beach on Lake Michigan for birds who have died from avian botulism.



Grass River Natural Area is a nonprofit organization that has flourished for fifty-two years because of the generous support of people who value our mission "to manage the Grass River Natural Area, conserve and protect its watershed, and provide opportunities that increase knowledge, appreciation, and community-wide stewardship of the natural environment".

If you believe in our mission and want to help us fulfill it for many years to come, please click on the Donate button below. Your support is greatly appreciated.

DONATE



Copyright © 2021 Grass River Natural Area, All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

PO Box 231

Bellaire, MI 49615

Natural area address:

6500 Alden Highway, Bellaire MI 49615

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

