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GRNA Volunteers,

The transition into fall has begun here in the natural area. It seems like everyday we walk the trails, there's a different harbinger of the new season. Recently, the Virginia creeper along the Rail Trail turned a brilliant shade of scarlet, the loons began their fall molt, and the jewelweed seedpods started to pop in the cedar swamp. During this beautiful season, there are several ways to get involved at GRNA, from data collection to event planning. Check out the upcoming volunteer opportunities below, and if you don't see something for you, don't hesitate to reach out.

This fall, we're also excited to announce the return of our Volunteer Appreciation Event! We'll be gathering at The Blue Pelican in Central Lake to celebrate the hard work all of you put in over the past year. See below for more information - we hope you join us!

Emily Burke
Conservation & Education Specialist
emily@grassriver.org

YOU'RE INVITED

to GRNA's Volunteer Appreciation Event, honoring YOU!

Wed, Oct 6th from 5:00 - 7:00 pm
The Blue Pelican
2535 Main St, Central Lake



Join us for appetizers, nature-themed improv with Lisa Thauvette of Tilt Think, and celebration! Cash bar available.



RSVP to
emily@grassriver.org
by Fri, Oct 1st



Let's Play: About Improv

Navigating life without a script is our human superpower. Adapting to the current moment is a strategy for survival in the wild and also a fun and hilarious way to connect and find joy together. During this 'playdate' session we will learn games and activities to create never-been-told stories and scenes that will delight and surprise us. Your brain on improvisation - it's a serious laughing grey matter.



UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



FALL STREAM MONITORING

Sat, Sept 25 from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

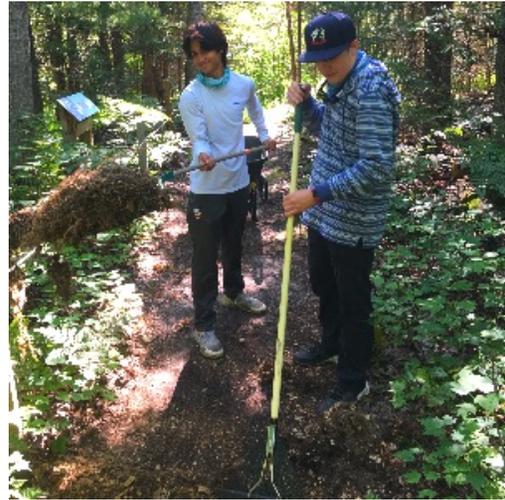
New and seasoned volunteers of all ages are invited to join us as we collect data for our biannual stream monitoring program. This year, teams will be collecting macroinvertebrates (creek "bugs") at three sites along Shanty Creek and then will return to the Grass River Center to sort through their critter samples. Pre-registration is required - email Emily at emily@grassriver.org. Note: new volunteers will be put into groups with more experienced volunteers. Dress for the weather, and bring hip waders if you have them

(though we have more than enough pairs to loan out!)

FALL STEWARDSHIP DAY

Sat, Oct 2 from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Summer is ushering in autumn, which means cooler weather and some good ol' fall season work! Come on out and join the many stewardship activities as we prepare the buildings, trails, and grounds for winter. No experience is necessary; just a pair of work gloves and an open spirit. Pre-registration is encouraged - email Brian at stewardship@grassriver.org.



AUTUMNFEST HELP

Sat, Oct 16 from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm and during the weeks leading up to the event

Autumnfest is GRNA's annual family-friendly celebration of all things fall. There will be kids' activities in the Center and out on the trails, refreshments, and a likely appearance by the Grass River otter itself! Plus, this year we will also be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the building of the Grass River Center. Volunteer opportunities associated with this great event include joining our Events Committee to

help plan Autumnfest, as well as lending a hand on the day of for set-up and clean-up. Email Emily at emily@grassriver.org if you're interested in helping out.

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. The Center is open 10:00 am to 4:00 pm



seven days a week through the end of October and on Saturdays and Sundays November through April.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: LYN PETTY

For this month's volunteer spotlight, we're featuring Lyn Petty, who has been volunteering at GRNA for at least 10 years. Over the years, Lyn has done it all, from leading school groups to stream monitoring to maintaining our native gardens and helping to plan Riverfest and our family-friendly events, plus so much more. A veteran volunteer with an exuberant smile, boundless energy, and a contagious sense of fun, we caught up with Lyn to hear about her experiences at GRNA over the years:

What inspires you to volunteer for GRNA?

I've met so many wonderful folks while volunteering at GRNA, folks I've kept up with. It nourishes me to be helping to conserve and preserve the natural world. GRNA volunteering has given me the opportunity to do that with equally passionate, enthusiastic, and like-minded folks.

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

So many marvelous, knowledgeable volunteers and educators/naturalists abound at GRNA. I have taken numerous classes, including birding classes, owl prowls(!), wild orchid identification classes, butterfly monitoring, water colors in nature, etc., and have learned so much about the natural world over the years.



What do you wish other people knew about GRNA?

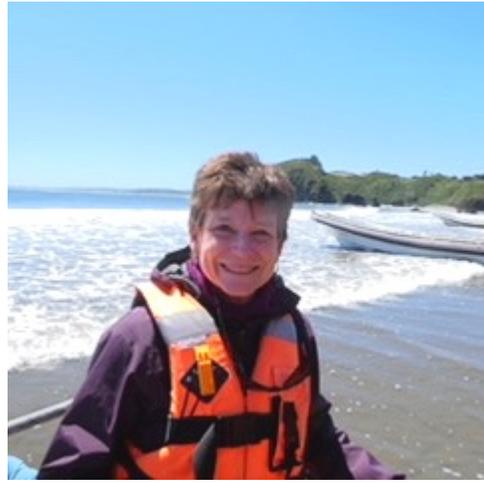
I don't think everybody knows what an amazing ecosystem the Grass River Natural Area is and how important it is to the waterways downstream of it!

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

For fun, I'm hiking, cycling on the road and in the woods, kayaking, paddle boarding, and doing yoga, plus snowshoeing and cross-country skiing when I can. My kids and grandkids are equally enamored with outdoor activities, including camping in the U.P. Also, my husband and I spent a good bit of time maintaining our own native garden, and I'm currently working toward a Master Gardener Certificate with MSU Extension.

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

For most of my career, I was a school psychologist in the DC metropolitan area, but I've spent time in nature for as long as I can remember, playing in fields, in the woods, along creeks and rivers, etc. My mom was active in a local nature center when I was young and was an avid birder. To this day, one of my favorite quotes is by Thoreau: "In wildness is the preservation of the world."



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: EXCITING NEWS!



GRNA is a finalist for one of three \$110,000 grants to be awarded by Impact 100 in late September. If awarded, these funds will go toward the reconstruction of the boardwalk from the cabin to the dock, beginning in 2022. We are honored to be among the group of very deserving organizations and will do our best to represent GRNA at the Impact 100 annual meeting this Tuesday. If you're a member of Impact 100, vote for this exciting project! Not a member but know someone who is? We'd love it if you encouraged them to cast their vote for us. Stay tuned for the results!

Grass River Natural Area is a nonprofit organization that has flourished for fifty-one 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.

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