

1000 Islands Environmental Center

September 2026 Naturalist Report

Brad Garrity – Naturalist, 1000 Islands

Admin/Finance

Asst. Naturalist Benson took vacation time for her honeymoon in Hawaii.

Friends of 1000 Islands donated \$2500 for the 2026-27 school year for bussing subsidy requests.

Friends of 1000 Islands agreed to sponsor the National Eagle Center programs at 2027 Eagle Days in January and donated \$1900 to cover the costs.

Kaukauna Utilities has agreed to sponsor and fund the 2027 seedling sale.

A new printer/photocopier was installed at the Center. We are now on the City contract with Marco, greatly reducing our costs for prints and supplies.

Education / Programming

We had a brief 2-week lull in programming between the end of summer and the beginning of the school year. This was a welcome and deserved break after a very busy summer.

Our first two Junior Naturalist programs were held. We have a small but interested group of students. We expanded this program to be twice per month and changed registration to encompass the entire semester.

Kaukauna Public Library and Scouting America offered the monthly Survival Skills program onsite in collaboration with the Center. The theme and lesson were trail preparedness and orienteering.

Our Focus on the Fox – Papermaking program was held on Saturday, 9/12. The number of participants was down from last year, due in part to the weather, but this is still a popular program for participants. Three papermaking stations were staffed by KHS Key Club volunteers. Naturalist Garrity provided pizza for the students for their enthusiastic work.

Outagamie County Public Health held a teambuilding/enrichment day on Monday, 9/14. Naturalist Garrity presented about what we do and what we offer at 1000 Islands and led the participants on two Crayfish and Critter hunts in Konkapot Creek.

Naturalist Garrity visited Park Charter School 4k for their annual Five Senses walk around the Park School grounds and neighborhood. The students enjoyed apple slices at the end of their hike.

Richeson School of Art held a Plein Air painting session on site after hours. Approximately 8-12 artists painted along the river.

Due to heavy soaking rains on 9/18-9/19, our Focus on the Fox – Community Campfire and Focus on the Fox – Fishing Day events were canceled.

The Amcor Focus on the Fox Conservancy Zone Cleanup was rained out on 9/19 but rescheduled for the following week on 9/26. Approximately 16 volunteers from Amcor and the community collected 29 pounds of trash. Amcor coordinated the event and provided themed t-shirts, scavenger hunt activities, and snacks.

Field trips picked up in frequency as the month went on. Highlights included two days with the 3rd grade from Electa Quinney for Plant and Animal Adaptations programming and hikes. Special thanks to Friends of 1000 Islands for subsidizing their bussing cost to help bring students to the Center. We also welcomed Bay Harbor Elementary from Suamico for a fun day of Crayfishing, Hiking and Shelter Building.

Brian Jacobs presented his Honey Extraction program on 9/26 along with his wife Paula, and beekeeping protegee, Megan Knuth. Participants were given samples of this year's honey and learned about beekeeping, the biology of honey making, and the extraction process. Kids were invited to help extract honey from the honeycomb that Brian provided, and jars of honey were available for sale afterwards. The Center provided Brian with gift cards in appreciation of his time and effort.

Thanks to volunteer Diane White for stepping up to assist with two days of field trip programming, and to Asst. Naturalist Benson for her adaptability in the wake of Naturalist Garrity being out ill. The field trips were successful with limited disruption.

22 new compasses were ordered for our Orienteering program to replace the old ones which had developed air bubbles, reducing their usefulness.

Building and Grounds

The Center was closed on 9/7 for the Labor Day Holiday

Annual grease trap cleaning was completed

Local resident Danah Stumpf began volunteering in the gardens to help clear some of the invasive plants prior to them going to seed.

Volunteer Kim Kaufman came each Tuesday morning to work in the gardens and help with goat watching.

The American Heritage Girls scout troop spent the day onsite to earn their hiking badge and did trash pickup on the grounds.

NACEL Open Door rented the building for their annual meeting. They also have a rental in November for their Thanksgiving banquet.

Outagamie County Department of Land Services volunteered for nearly a full day. They helped prepare the goat browsing areas by repairing fencing and removing debris and helped wash and clean all materials from the Papermaking program.

SOAR sent volunteers to help clean around the Center twice in September. They wiped tables, dusted and other odds and ends to help make the Center look great!

Fox Valley Technical College student Katrina Moe started her Co-op hours at the Center. She will be completing 80 hours of conservation focused volunteer time between now and December for her class as she prepares to graduate.

The goats arrived from Mulberry Lane Farms on 9/21 for their fall browsing through 10/5 to help reduce/eradicate buckthorn and other invasive plants.

A volunteer from USI Insurance helped with invasive plant removal and a few other tasks on the property.

The entryway upgrade construction project started on 9/21 and should wrap up by the end of October.

Kaukauna HS student Ethan Shalkhauser began volunteering. He is interested in pursuing Environmental Science in college and wants to gain knowledge and experience while helping at the Center.