1000 Islands Environmental Center

October 2026 Naturalist Report

Brad Garrity – Naturalist, 1000 Islands

Admin/Finance

Naturalist Garrity spoke at the Outagamie County Finance Committee budget meeting, thanking the county for their contribution to our operating expenses, highlighting our work and successes from the past year and discussing potential budget challenges in the next year. Their budget will be approved in early November.

There have been no questions from the City Council during the review process as to our operating budget and CIP proposals for 2027.

Education / Programming

In collaboration with Kaukauna Public Library and local scout leaders, a Survival Skills program was held on October 3rd. The theme was fire building and was held in the bug hunt area.

1000 Little Wonders was held on October 9th with the theme "Autumn." Our Storybook walk collaboration with KPL was the same day. Assistant Naturalist Benson also provided self-guided learning, hiking and crafting materials for our special 1000 Little Wonders "Saturday Edition" on October 17th. The "Saturday Edition" provides an opportunity for families and preschoolers who do not have the opportunity to attend the regular monthly Friday program to have a self-guided experience with the same theme.

The 2nd Annual "Trail of Terror" collaboration with KPL was held on Friday October 30th. 521 people did the haunted trail and 250 S'mores were served at the campfire. Donations covered the expenses.

Building and Grounds

Kaukauna High School JET student Onyx Kempen worked at the Center through October 23rd. She helped with various tasks including building and Conservancy Zone Cleanup and gathering program materials.

The Kaukauna Goats wrapped up their work in the Conservancy Zone on October 5th. Around 150 volunteers filled slots for goat watching, including Girl Scouts, students from Kaukauna High School Key Club and Appleton East High School Key Club. Thanks to our fantastic Goat Team for their work organizing and running the daily movement and care of the goats.

Assurance Women's Center rented the building and used the track for their annual Celebrate Life Run/Walk and Silent Auction. Staff assisted with set up and other rental details. The Assurance Center staff and participants enjoy having 1000 Islands as the site for the event, and we will

continue to work with them to use the facility. Future years will require a Special Event Permit from the City due to the inclusion of the public at large, use of amplified sound, and other considerations for use of the track and parking areas.

The annual Fall property walk for 1000 Islands Committee Members was held on October 8th, touring the Kayak trail and Hoersch Memorial Trail.

Work continued on the entryway project. The work was initially projected to be completed by the end of October, but finishing work is stretching into November.

New signage for at the trailheads detailing the Conservancy Zone guidelines have been received from Eagle Graphics. Site Manager Gonnering has begun installation of the signs.