



Harris Nature Center Foundation 2015 Annual Report

The mission of the Harris Nature Center Foundation is to provide a reliable source of funding for special projects to enhance the quality of nature appreciation and education at the Harris Nature Center.

2015 Board of Directors

Patty Robbins, President
Roxanne Truhn, Vice-President
Julie Moore, Secretary
Barbara Kissling, Treasurer
Jim Buscetta
June Hicks
Ex Officio - Kit Rich, Senior Park Naturalist
Honorary Directors
Howard and Helen Tanner
Rick Preuss

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Harris Nature Center

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A Message from the President

Harris Nature Center is rapidly becoming a “Destination,” as more families discover its exhibits, walk its beautiful trails, take photos on the Turtle, attend programs and camps, and enjoy the growing Nature Exploration Area! The Harris Nature Center Foundation’s school bus scholarships enabled 39 classes (947 children) to discover and learn at the nature center during the last school year. Most of those children enjoyed three new features and other structures, built and funded by the Foundation, with the help of community supporters and volunteers:

- The Log Jam, behind the Turtle sculpture, is a “pileup” of real logs, anchored together, often covered with happy kids, climbing, balancing and jumping. It was funded by the Meridian Area Business Association. Volunteers from MSU Sparty Retail and Brian VanOrder helped put it together.
- A giant Spider Web hangs in a grove of trees on the hillside. Toddlers to adults enjoy climbing up the ropes or lying in it like a hammock. It was funded by profits from Silent Auctions and Raffles.
- The Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club Gathering Circle is a serene amphitheater or outdoor classroom in the woods. It can be a venue for nature talks, intimate music, plays or even weddings! Rotarians donated \$10,000 to sponsor the basic construction. Then our community voted to award this project a \$5000 grant from Flagstar Bank’s Makeover Contest to fund electrical hookups and paths. The remainder of the cost was paid by the Kiwanis Club and Helen and Howard Tanner, with some donated labor from builder Kevin Palmiter.
- Volunteers from Emergent Biosolutions put up the fence, and the Kiwanis Club built lovely benches. Many others worked cheerfully clearing, hauling, building, shoveling to make each project possible.

Planning is well underway for the next project in the Nature Exploration Area - the Michigan Fossil Dig. Large, fossil-laden rocks are already in place, many fossils have been collected and replicas created. The Red Oak Foundation has contributed \$1000 for the signs.

In an effort to provide a continual source for funding nature enjoyment in our community we have set up an Endowment Fund that now totals \$6000. The endowment can be a beautiful way to honor someone or leave a legacy for the future. .

We greatly appreciate the generous contributions to the Harris Nature Center Foundation this year.

Patty Robbins
HNCF President, 2015

2015 -The Year in Review

Foundation Projects

- **School Bus Scholarships:** Teachers can ask HNCF to provide \$100 for bus expenses for classroom visits to the nature center. During the 2014-15 school year, HNCF gave \$1988 so that 39 classes of 947 children could participate. Scholarships are critical when school funding for field trips is limited or not available.
- **Nature Exploration Area (NEA):** These major components of the NEA, a natural play area, were completed in 2015:
 - Log Jam (for climbing on real logs). This was funded by a 2014 contribution from the Meridian Area Business Association and constructed by Brian VanOrder, volunteers from MSU Sparty Retail, and the Greater Lansing Islamic Youth Center
 - Spider Web (a large rope climbing web suspended in a grove of trees), This was funded by Silent Auction and Raffle profits.
 - Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club Gathering Circle (an outdoor classroom/amphitheater in the woods, with seating, stage and electrical hookups). An October 6 Dedication of the Gathering Circle recognized major donors and volunteers: Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club, Flagstar Bank, Okemos Kiwanis Club, the Tanner Family and builder Kevin Palmiter
 - Fences were put up by volunteers from Emergent Biosolutions
 - Benches were created and installed by the Okemos Kiwanis Club.Saturday Work Day volunteers helped move dirt, place mulch, and clear brush for all projects.
- **Sign:** A new sign was installed that depicts the NEA design and recognizes major donors.

Fundraising and Volunteer Efforts

- **Silent Auction:** In January the Foundation held its seventh silent auction in conjunction with the nature center's Winter Wonderland festivities. The auction featured nature-related items and merchant gift certificates and raised \$2056.
- **Grants and Donations** for 2015 included:
 - The Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club gave \$10,000 to sponsor the Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club Gathering Circle
 - HNCF won Flagstar Bank's \$5000 Makeover Contest by community vote!
 - The Helen and Howard Tanner family donated \$3250 in 2015
 - The Red Oak Foundation gave \$1000 for the Dig.
 - Endowment fund donations totaled \$3550.
- **In-Kind Donations and Volunteer Contributions:**
 - The Okemos Kiwanis Club built and installed benches and recruited donations for the Silent Auction

- The Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club helped remove debris and spread ground coverings to complete the Gathering Circle that they sponsored.
- Emergent Biosolutions volunteers installed fences.
- Brian VanOrder constructed the Log Jam and excavated the Dig and paths.
- Cyrus Miller created fossil replicas in cement for the Dig
- Luke Bossenbroek moved huge rocks into the Dig site.
- Artists Debbie Hottle and Patty Robbins contributed original drawings for the Dig sign.
- Dr. Danita Brandt, paleontologist, advised about the Dig.
- Many other community volunteers cleared foliage, hauled logs, shoveled mulch, stones, and ground cover, and helped where needed.
- HNCF Directors planned and made individual donations to all these projects.
- **Annual Fund Drive:** In the Fall a letter describing Foundation activities and community support during the year was sent to individuals on the mailing list. This year the Fall 2014 Fund Drive yielded \$1945 and the Fall 2015 Fund Drive yielded \$1575. Supporters were encouraged to consider donating to the Endowment Fund, with a goal of reaching at least \$10,000 to qualify for better investment opportunities.

Organization Development and Administration

- The Foundation met on the second Monday evening of the month at the nature center, except in June.
- The following officers began their duties in January: President Patty Robbins, Vice President Roxanne Truhn, Secretary Barb Kissling, Treasurer Mike Lenkowski
- The Foundation is a member of the Meridian Area Business Association, with Directors Mike Lenkowski and Roxanne Truhn representing the Board
- The Foundation published a 2014 Annual Report with information on projects, activities, financial statements, budget, and a list of donors. This report was distributed to the Park Commission and placed on the Foundation website.
- A mailing list of about 270 names was used for event publicity and fundraising. Efforts were made to collect email addresses to avoid mailing costs.
- A combined Harris Nature Center and Foundation newsletter was emailed four times during the year.
- A PowerPoint on the Nature Exploration Area has been updated as new projects are completed. It is used for speaking engagements and to provide visual and written information to potential sponsors. The PowerPoint is available online.
- HNCF is now registered at smile.amazon.com for charitable donations
- The Foundation continued to carry Directors and Officers Insurance with Great American Insurance Company.
- During 2015, changes in membership on the Foundation were as follows: In June, Directors Mike Lenkowski and Tony Bauer resigned. June Hicks joined the Board in September.
- Officers elected for 2016 were President Patty Robbins, Vice President Roxanne Truhn, Secretary Julie Moore, and Treasurer Barb Kissling.

Harris Nature Center Foundation

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2015

Assets

Checking/Savings:

Cash – checking 18,794.27

Savings – Endowment Fund 7,527.04

Total Checking/Savings 26,321.31

Total Current Assets 26,321.31

Total Assets 26,321.31

Liabilities & Equity

Opening Balance Equity:

Cash – checking 22,207.37

Savings – Endowment Fund 3,976.52

Total Opening Balance Equity 26,183.89

Net Income 137.42

Total Equity 26,321.31

Total Liabilities & Equity 26,321.31

Harris Nature Center Foundation

Profit & Loss

January through December 2015

Income

Donations	4,949.20
Donations - Board of Directors	500.00
Grants	15,000.00
Endowment Donations	3,550.00
Fundraising Events	5,575.53
Interest	.52
Gift in Kind	200.00
 Total Income	 <u>29,775.25</u>

Expense

Insurance	0.00
Postage	294.00
Printing and Copying	0.00
Memberships	125.00
Fees	61.45
Fundraising Expenses	504.50
Project Expenses	28,652.88
School bus scholarships	1,988.28
Nature Exploration Area	26,664.60
 Total Expense	 <u>29,637.83</u>

Net Income 137.42

Harris Nature Center Foundation

2016 Budget

Income

Carry-over from 2015	10,500
Donations	
Individual Contributions	5,500
Club/Foundation Contributions	3,000
Fundraisers	
Silent Auction	2,000
Fall Fund Drive	3,600
Raffle	4,500
Grants	5,000
Total Income	<u>34,100</u>

Expenses

Insurance – D & O	750
Postage	294
Printing and copying	200
Memberships	155
Fees	75
Website	
Fundraising Expenses	550
Project Expenses	
Bus Scholarships	2,500
<u>Nature Exploration Area:</u>	
Fossil Dig	7,365
3 Interpretive signs	3,450
Materials	1,550
Fossils	1,500
Teaching supplies	865
Beaver Lodge	10,000
Architect for 2016-2017 projects	10,000
Total Expenses	<u>31,889</u>

2015 Donors

We thank the following friends of Harris Nature Center and Harris Nature Center Foundation for their support (financial or gift-in-kind) in 2015. If your name is missing or inaccurate, we apologize and ask that you let us know so that we may correct our records.

Businesses & Groups

<p><u>\$10,000</u> Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club and Foundation</p> <p><u>\$5000</u> Flagstar Bank</p> <p><u>\$1000</u> Okemos Kiwanis Club Red Oak Foundation</p> <p><u>\$100 - \$499</u> Burgdorf Winery Demmer Shooting Sports Emergent Biosolutions JD Small Photography Light & Shadow Photography, Joe Yarbrough Luke Bossenbroek Massage by Tina Kahn Meridian Garden Club Meridian Screen Printing Michigan Athletic Club Michigan Demolition and Excavation, Brian VanOrder Noodles Restaurant Preuss Pets Zap Zone</p>	<p><u>\$1 - \$99</u> Biggby Breadsmith Creative Wellness Deb Drew Photos Douglas J Dusty's Cellar Farm Fresh Seafood Great Harvest Guido's Pizza Head to Toe, Kendra Robinson Marco's Pizza Meridian Sun Golf Club Meridian Township Parks & Recreation Mert's Meats Playmakers Woodcraft Kits, Gene Wasserman</p>
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Individuals

<p><u>\$1000 +</u> Helen & Howard Tanner</p> <p><u>\$500 - \$999</u> Denecia Deford Kissling Family Gerry & Gaelen McNamara</p> <p><u>\$100 - \$499</u> Tony Bauer Frances Dittrich Bobbi DuByne Virginia Ederer Steve & Ivey Gruber Mary & Larry Hennessey Margaret Holtschlag Debbie Hottle Mike & Connie Lenkowski Raddie Mauer Mike & Betty Moore Heather Mytom Billie Proper Kit Rich Patty and Larry Robbins Kenneth Ryan Thomas & April Streit H. Mark & Sally Tanner Beverly Trosko Sue Weiss</p>	<p><u>\$1 - \$99</u> Nicholas Adkins Ron Bacon Joyce Bartels Joyce Benvenuto Jim & Rosemary Buscetta Nancy & James Cuddeback Elaine Davis Mike Eberlein Ronald & Betty Hagaman Jean Holley Arnie Johnson Scott Kiesel Paul & Judy Kindel Joyce King Jessica Kovan Stu Leslie Louis & Eugenia Pocalujka Steve & Susan Rock Bruce & Marcia Tanner Roxanne Truhn Bill & Paula Weinert</p>
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