



# **Harris Nature Center Foundation 2017 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.

**2017 Board of Directors**

Patty Robbins, President  
Roxanne Truhn, Vice-President  
Nora Thompson & Rachel McDaniel, Secretary  
Barbara Kissling, Treasurer  
Jim Buscetta  
June Hicks  
Julie Moore  
Nancy Parmenter  
Ex Officio - Kit Rich, Senior Park Naturalist

Honorary Directors:  
Howard and Helen Tanner  
Rick Preuss

## **Contact Information:**

### **Harris Nature Center Foundation**

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### **Harris Nature Center**

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## **A Message from the President**

**Happy 20th Birthday to Harris Nature Center!** How wonderful that in just two decades, a modest, private home on a beautiful, wooded property by the river has become Meridian Township's prime destination for year-round family fun and nature

enjoyment, thanks, in large part, to its creative and dedicated naturalists, Kit Rich and Kati Adams.

The Harris Nature Center Foundation was created in 2006 in order to provide financial support for HNC programs and enhancements that were not covered by Township funds (including millages). Foundation contributions have sponsored programs like bus scholarships for local school visits, and have funded the popular Nature Exploration Area. Because of the Foundation, classes can gather at the River Overlook for storytime, families can take pictures at or on the Turtle, children can climb on the Log Jam or build with Sticks & Stones, and budding paleontologists can find real 400-million-year-old fossils and some Ice Age mammal replicas in the Michigan Fossil Dig. Tots can climb the Spider Web, while their parents use it as a hammock! Groups can meet and musicians can perform at the Gathering Circle. Next spring, we will celebrate our newest addition - the Beaver Lodge! We can't wait to see and explore this fun, artistic creation for children - a beautiful gift, designed, built, and largely funded by our neighbor, David VanderKlok, of Studio [intrigue] Architects.

Of course, the funds and volunteer efforts that made these Foundation achievements possible came from individuals, families and organizations in our wonderful community! Our 2017 fundraising efforts included our Silent Auction/Nature Sale, Panera and Culvers Fundraisers, the Big Bang-quet Fundraiser sponsored by the University Club, the One Dime at a Time Fundraiser sponsored by Whole Foods, the Turtle Toast celebration, and the annual fundraising letter in the Fall. Once we finish supplementing the cost of the Beaver Lodge, we will concentrate on funding for our next big project - a pavilion! A grant from the DNR, plus a matching contribution from Meridian Township have already raised \$100,000. HNCF has pledged to raise the additional amount needed to build a pavilion large enough to be perfect for HNC and community programs.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that we have selected the Capital Region Community Foundation to administer our Harris Nature Center Foundation Endowment Fund. We feel confident that our endowment funds are wisely invested for growth of principal and generation of income that can provide long-term support for Harris Nature Center, contributing to the enjoyment of future generations.

Patty Robbins, HNCF President

## **2017 -The Year in Review**

### **Foundation Projects**

- **School Bus Scholarships:** Teachers can ask HNCF to provide \$100 for bus expenses for single classroom visits to the nature center. For week long programs, teachers can request \$200 per bus. During the 2016-17 school year, HNCF gave \$1617 so that 34 classes (697 children) could participate in nature programs. Scholarships are critical when school funding for field trips is limited or not available.
- **The River Overlook deck** was the first project funded by HNCF. It continues to be used for classes and other programs. It is a serene place to view the river and surrounding woods and to learn about wildlife.
- **Nature Exploration Area (NEA)** is a natural play area, created and funded by the Harris Nature Center Foundation. Components completed previously include the Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club Gathering Circle, the Spider Web, Sticks and Stones, the Log Jam, the DeLind Turtle Sculpture and the Michigan Fossil Dig. This year the perimeter of the Dig was upgraded by volunteers, who replaced the small border rocks with larger ones. The fossils were redistributed, and shovels were replaced. An Eagle Scout finished the fence around the east and south sides of the NEA. A new HNC-funded geology-themed Boulder Garden in the middle of the circular drive will complement NEA features. An MSU class worked with HNC naturalists to create a website with information about geology and fossils. Due to the size of the Beaver Lodge, now under construction, plans for a Treehouse and Aerial Walkways have been put on hold. HNCF plans to honor those who funded and helped complete the NEA with signs or plaques.
- **The Beaver Lodge (NEA) is nearing completion.** It will be a fun, beaver-themed play space for young children on a small hill near the Michigan Fossil Dig. Local architect David VanderKlok, from Studio [intrigue] Architects designed this fanciful and artistic play structure *pro bono*, and continues to secure funding for the project. The HNCF has contributed \$5,460 so far towards the cost of materials. Volunteers cut hundreds of saplings for David to weave into the Lodge. David has set up a Go Fund Me site to solicit donations to fund the blue-tinted tempered glass for the deck, which will simulate water. This feature is expected to be completed in the spring of 2018.
- **Pavilion** The Board has agreed to help fund a large, much-needed pavilion at the nature center. A DNR grant of \$50,000 will be matched by Meridian Township, totalling \$100,000 already committed to the project. HNCF will provide the rest of the money needed to construct an attractive pavilion large enough to accommodate nature center programs and public gatherings. This will be our focus after the Beaver Lodge is completed. Two local residents have

offered \$20,000 to stimulate fundraising efforts, and we will apply for an additional grant. The structure will be built in 2019-2020. In addition, the Township will fund construction of bathrooms, a drinking fountain, and a parking lot extension.

## **Fundraising and Volunteer Contributions**

- **Silent Auction and Nature Sale:** On January 28, the Foundation held its ninth silent auction in conjunction with the nature center's Winter Wonderland festivities. The auction featured nature-related items and merchant gift certificates and raised \$1425. The Okemos Kiwanis Club helped greatly by soliciting business gift card donations.
  
- **Restaurant Fundraisers**
  - At our Panera fundraiser on February 1, patrons turned in 44 flyers, and 15% of their bill totals were given to HNCF. Total earnings were \$168.
  - The Culvers fundraiser was held June 27 at the Okemos Road location from 5 to 10pm. No flyers were needed. Earnings totaled \$317.
  
- **The Big Bang-quet Fundraiser**, sponsored by the University Club, was held Feb 13 - March 22. People could vote for their favorite nonprofit at \$5 per vote, mostly online. Each of the 25 participating organizations kept the donated money (minus a 5% U Club fee to cover costs), along with the list of their donors. HNCF earned \$716 from this event.
  
- **The Turtle Toast** celebrated the Township's 175th year and Harris Nature Center's 20th Birthday on July 22. The Township solicited sponsors and arranged the event, which included food, wine, and entertainment, as well as the chairs, tables, a tent and other equipment, so that it was possible for HNCF to profit from ticket sales and auction items. HNCF Directors helped with ticket sales, decorations, the auction, and in other ways. The three families of our largest donors were honored at the event. 72 people attended the Turtle Toast Gala, which raised a total of \$1895.
  
- **One Dime at a Time** is a fundraiser sponsored by Whole Foods as part of their community giving program. Whole Foods chose HNCF as the local nonprofit to receive funds from April 1 through June 30 when customers chose to contribute a dime instead of using a store bag. The program yielded \$1892 for HNCF. Whole

Foods continues to support the nature center in other ways by providing a table for the nature center at its Earth Day event, donating finger foods and vegetables for our Turtle Toast, and donating \$5 gift cards for HNC visitors at the Halloween Adventures event.

- **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. The 2017 Fall funding letter yielded \$1725 and \$1400 for the Endowment.
- **Amazon Smile** HNCF is registered at smile.amazon.com for charitable donations. In 2017 HNCF received \$15 from Amazon.
- **Major Grants and Donations** for 2016 are listed at the end of this document.
- **In-Kind Donations and Volunteer Contributions**
  - Architect David VanderKlok and his team from Studio [intrigue], especially including Anna Breithaupt and Mackenzie Parsons, have been donating their time and materials to build the Beaver Lodge playhouse, designed *pro bono* by David. This community gift will delight children and their families!
  - Community volunteers cut hundreds of saplings to be woven into the Beaver Lodge structure.
  - Volunteers from Okemos Independent Bank, MSU Campus Lions and Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Department cut 700 leaf-shaped pads for the glass deck of the Beaver Lodge Playhouse.
  - Volunteers installed boulders, around the perimeter of the Michigan Fossil Dig to keep the sand in and helped maintain the Dig.
  - Three geology experts planned and helped install the new geology rock garden in the center of the circular drive. Brian Van Order of Michigan Demolition moved the boulders into place. This feature complements our Nature Exploration Area.
  - Students from an MSU class on Community Sustainability created a website with information about fossils and geology to enhance learning at our Michigan Fossil Dig and Geology Boulder Garden.
  - Many local businesses donated gift certificates and items to support our Silent Auction. The Haslett-Okemos Kiwanis Club helped to contact businesses and collect gift cards
  - Eagle Scout Kaden Bartlett finished the fence around the east and south sides of the NEA.
  - Many other community volunteers and all Directors provided labor, support, auction donations and financial contributions

- **Endowment.** After considering many options, the Board voted in July to establish the Harris Nature Center Foundation Endowment Fund under the management of the Capital Region Community Foundation. The Community Foundation administers over 400 funds in our community, with with assets totalling more than \$88 million. Such a large portfolio of investments yields much larger dividends than our endowment monies were earning in a bank account. A guaranteed annual payment of 5%, minus 1% operating fees, can be spent or reinvested to grow our fund. The CRCF can accept both cash and tangible assets, current and deferred gifts, and memorial funds. The Harris Nature Center Foundation Endowment Fund can be named as a beneficiary in wills or estate plans. Several memorial funds, along with key donations, established our current endowment fund, which totaled \$16,926 at the end of 2017.
- **A Policy on HNCF Donations** was approved. Donors are asked to choose the fund for their donation (general, endowment, school bus scholarship, or current project). If no choice is made, monies go into the general fund, except memorials, which go into the endowment.
- **Tree of Thanks:** A wall graphic design of a tree with engraved gold and silver leaves honors those who have given \$500 or \$300 to the Harris Nature Center Foundation in one year.

## **Organization Development and Administration**

- The Foundation met on the second Monday evening of each month at the nature center, except in February and August.
- The following officers began their duties in January: President Patty Robbins, Vice President Roxanne Truhn, Secretary Nora Thompson, Treasurer Barb Kissling.
- During 2015, two new Directors joined the Board: Nancy Parmenter in April and Rachel McDaniel in July. Nora Thompson resigned from the Board in July. Director profiles are posted on our website.
- Officers elected for 2018 were President Jim Buscetta, Vice President Nancy Parmenter, Secretary Rachel McDaniel, and Treasurer Barb Kissling.
- The HNCF website, [www.hncfoundation.org](http://www.hncfoundation.org), is maintained by Julie Moore.
- A new gmail account enables HNCF to use Google Drive to store and share Foundation documents.
- The Foundation published a 2016 Annual Report with information on projects, activities, financial statements, the budget, and a list of donors. This report was

distributed to the Meridian Township Park Commission and placed on the Foundation website.

- An electronic mailing list of about 1700 names and a paper mailing list of about 280 names were used for event publicity and fundraising. Efforts were made to collect email addresses to avoid mailing costs.
- A combined Harris Nature Center and HNC Foundation newsletter was emailed three times during the year, as well as two activity notifications (Big Bang-quet Competition and Turtle Toast Gala). Information about Foundation projects is featured on the HNC facebook page and is included in HNC press releases.
- Directors spoke about Foundation projects to community members and organizations, to the media, and at local events. These included the Friends of the Parks Barbecue ,the Turtle Toast, the Nature Friends Barbecue, and HOMTV interviews.
- A PowerPoint on the Nature Exploration Area is updated as new projects are completed. It is used for speaking engagements and to provide visual and written information to potential sponsors.
- A brochure about HNCF is available at the Harris Nature Center and at fundraising events. It will soon be updated.
- The Foundation continued to carry Directors and Officers Insurance with Great American Insurance Company.

## Harris Nature Center Foundation Balance Sheet

(As of December 31, 2017)

<b>Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>	<b>\$</b>
Cash – checking	31,307.34	Opening Cash – checking	26,206.80
Savings – Endowment Fund	15,451.95	Opening Savings/ Endowment Fund	10,577.92



		Total Opening Balance Equity	<u>36,784.72</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>46,759.29</u>	Net Income	9,974.57
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>46,759.29</u></b>	<b>Total Equity</b>	<b><u>46,759.29</u></b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity    <u>\$46,759.29</u></b>			

**Profit & Loss**  
(January through December 2017)

<b>Income</b>		<b>Expense</b>	
Donations: General	6585.96	Insurance	748.00
Bank Savings/Endowment	4100.00	Postage	337.00
Grants		Fees	78.74
Fundraising Events:		Fundraising expenses	91.70
Silent Auction/Nature Sale	1425.00	Pass-through donations	180.00

Panera	167.89	Project Expenses	
Amazon Smile	14.57	Bus Scholarships	2446.50
Bg Bang-quet	715.50	Beaver Lodge	5459.66
Culvers	316.67	Fossil Dig	299.00
Turtle Toast	1895.00		
Whole Foods	1892.39		
Fall Fund Drive	1725.00		
Bank Savings/Endowment interest	1.50		
CRCF Endowment interest	772.69		
Insurance Rebate	3.00		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>19,615.17</u></b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>9640.60</u></b>
<b>Net Income</b>		<b><u>\$9974.57</u></b>	

**Harris Nature Center Foundation Endowment Fund  
Statement of Financial Activity  
Community Foundation  
1/1/2017 through 12/31/2017**

Contributions & Revenue	\$
Contributions - Non-spendable (CRCF)	1,400.00
Contributions - Agency (HNCF)	14,679.26
Interest Income on Investments	251.00

Realized Gain (Loss) on Investments	(0.47)
Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Investments	595.85
Total Contributions & Revenue	16,925.64
Net Assets beginning 8/28/2017	0
Change in Net Assets	16,925.64
Net Assets ending 12/31/2017	16,925.64

## 2018 Budget

Income	\$	Expenses	\$
Checking balance 12/31/17	31,307.34	Insurance	800.00
Reserve fund	11,307.34	Postage	500.00
2016 carryover	<u>20,000.00</u>	Printing & Copying	200.00
<b>Income: 2018</b>		Fees	200.00
Donations		Fundraising Expenses	1,000.00
Individual	5,000.00	Project Expenses	
Club/Foundation	3,000.00	Bus Scholarships	3,000.00

Fundraisers		Nature Exploration Area	
Silent Auction/Sale	1,500.00	Beaver Lodge	10,000.00
Turtle Toast	1,000.00	Signs	1,000.00
Restaurants	500.00	Future Projects	21,300.00
Fall Fund Drive	2,000.00		
Grants	5,000.00		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>18,000.00</b>		
<b>Total income with 2017 carryover</b>	<b>38,000.00</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>38,000.00</b>

## 2017 Donors

We thank the following friends of Harris Nature Center and Harris Nature Center Foundation for their support in 2017. If your name is missing or inaccurate, we apologize and ask that you let us know so that we may correct our records.

<p><b>\$4000+</b> Helen &amp; Howard Tanner</p> <p><b>\$2000+</b> H. Mark &amp; Sally Tanner</p> <p><b>\$1000+</b> Charles Hagen Red Oak Foundation</p>	<p><b>\$100+</b> Gerry and Cary Adkins Ron &amp; Sue Bacon Ellen Dohr Maribeth Fletcher Gary Guenther Mary &amp; Larry Hennessy Scott &amp; June Hicks Margaret Holtschlag Patricia Kircher Marilyn Lee Scott &amp; Rebecca Lehmann</p>
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<p><b>\$500+</b>          Girl Scout Troop 30251          Tom &amp; Barb Kissling          Gerry McNamara          Nancy Parmenter          Kenneth &amp; Evelyn Stoffer</p> <p><b>\$300+</b>          Martha (Pat) &amp; Larry Robbins</p> <p><b>\$200+</b>          Frances Dittrich          Virginia Ederer          Alan &amp; Cara Jones          Meridian Garden Club          MI Health &amp; Hospital Association          Nathan Moore          Richard &amp; Joan Witter</p>	<p>Mike &amp; LuAnn Maisner          Betty &amp; Michael Moore          Ryan &amp; Nicole Olszowy          Bruce &amp; Marcia Tanner          Kay Trosko          Roxanne Truhn          Katherine Rich          Jerrold &amp; Sue Weiss</p>
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**\$1 - \$99 Donors**

<p>Armstrong/Kapp          Jennifer Arnold-Champagne          Joyce Benvenuto          Patrick &amp; Rebecca Baughan          Jim &amp; Rosemary Buscetta          Larry &amp; Patricia Bacon          Leona Bronstein          Laura Brown          Kelly Boyle          Teri Banas          Richard Cole          Pamela Cantin          Charitable Giving Card Program          Frances Dittrich          Richard &amp; Doris Drake          Brett Dreyfus</p>	<p>Tina Kahn          James Kidder          Paul &amp; Judy Kindel          Mark Kissling          Charles &amp; Barbara Kotz          Jessica Kovan          Mike &amp; Connie Lenkowski          Branden Lyon          Pamela Mayle          Brian &amp; Joyce McKenna          Laurie McMahon          Julie Moore          Lora Pence          Tiffany Peeler          Siri Rainone          Matt Schoenherr</p>
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Katie Donnelly Elaine Davis Abigail Eaton Gail Goodknecht William & Mary Gray Dave Gupta Deborah Guthrie Patricia Hepp Marcia Hall Ronald Hagaman Elizabeth Johnson	Martha Stanbury Ken Rosenman Margaret Scribner Gordon & Jane Spink Jade Sims Jill Seaman Charlene Vogan G. Voit Alexia Whitcombe Colleen West-Schultz Maureen Zalba
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## 2017 Silent Auction Donors

Thanks to all individuals who contributed items for our Nature Sale.

Art Unlimited Backyard Barbecue Blue Gill Grill Breadsmith Brookshire Golf Club Burgdorf Winery City Limits Bowling Demmer Shooting Sports Doggy Care & Spa Douglas J Salon Dusty's Cellar Farm Fresh Seafood	Leo's Lodge Mackinaw Woodworks Marco's Pizza Maru Mert's Meats Noodles Playmakers Preuss Pets Tanin Vine & Brew Woodcraft Kits Zap Zone
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