

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



**NORTH LAKE LAND DISCOVERY CENTER**  
(715) 543 2085 - [www.DiscoveryCenter.net](http://www.DiscoveryCenter.net) - Manitowish Waters, WI



# WORDS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

There is no doubt that 2021 brought on new challenges for the Discovery Center; yet we emerged stronger, more resilient, and better able to address our mission than at any point in history.

Despite the threat of COVID, we found a strong foothold through reimagining our teaching methods, implementing program safety modifications, and strengthening our future with tremendous operational and capital campaign support from our members. The application of external grants in addition to delaying the fulfillment of staff vacancies provided us with healthy reserves which will help meet our needs moving forward.

This coming year we will be diversifying our revenue stream to include new fees for services, year-round facility uses, and expanded residential programming. We will be honing new staff into their respective roles and capacities to bring you the best services and experiences possible. Finally, we will be forging and designing our new nature center, classrooms, and grounds to be an updated educational and experiential resource for all ages. This is a huge turning point in our already proud history.

The endless passion we see in our members and volunteers to learn, experience, and care for this precious Northwoods environment is one of the characteristics I love most about our NLDC community. Ultimately, we are all the stewards of the precious land and waters that mean so much to us and your enthusiasm is what drives our progress. We stand here for, and because of you, our members. We are your North Lakeland Discovery Center.

- John Huesinkveld







# STAFF MEMBERS

- John Huesinkveld, Executive Director
- Licia Johnson, Education Director
- Lisa Fossum, Finance Manager
- Ryan Walgren, Facilities Manager
- Rachel Terracina, Naturalist & Residential Coordinator
- Emily Heald, Water Program Coordinator
- Autumn Hill, Membership & Marketing Coordinator
- Marsha Kray-Fairfield, Facilities & Event Coordinator
- Colette Anderson, Administrative Assistant
- Maggie Klein, Grounds & Maintenance
- Al Fairfield, Grounds & Maintenance (Seasonal)
- Lucian Gindorff, Grounds & Maintenance (Seasonal)

# BOARD MEMBERS

- Eric Koster, Chair
- Richard Phillips, Vice Chair
- Gary Engstrom, Secretary
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- Rolf Ethun, Capital Campaign Coordinator
- Diane Briggs
- Marc Kettleson
- JoAnn (Jody) Miller
- Tom Olson
- Stephen Russell
- Russ Schroeder
- Beth Wetzler
- Brent Jelinski, North Lakeland School Liaison
- Craig Dalton, Department of Natural Resources Liaison





# SEASONAL INTERNS

- Emma Holtan, Lake Technician
- Emma Bruck, Lake Technician
- Nathan Clem, Water Monitoring Intern
- Matt Flynn, Water Monitoring Intern
- Jaycie Korth, Water Monitoring Intern



## FEATURED PHENOLOGY

We started the year with a really neat meteorological event known as “rime ice.” This is different from hoar-frost in that for rime ice forms as fog settles over the landscape when the temps are below freezing- super cooled water droplets (water that is below freezing but still liquid) in the fog attach to any object it hits and forms a beautiful furry or spikey ice on the object. Hoar frost is formed when water vapor in the air goes straight from vapor to a solid on objects, skipping the liquid phase- this occurs on clear nights with a light wind. We had fog warnings both nights, creating rime ice vs hoarfrost.





# DISCOVERY VOLUNTEERS

Rollie Alger  
Ken Arvidson  
Anice Arvidson  
Merry Beckel  
Penny Benson  
Cathy Berch  
Kim Bires-Jenich  
Lydia Bouffiou  
Cheryl Bowen  
Jim Brzezinski  
Diane Briggs  
Jeff Burke  
Daryl Carrington  
Bill Cerny  
Jack Cooper

Amanda Cowart  
Craig Dalton  
Trygve Danielson  
Jeanette Danielson  
Karen Dixon  
Dorothy Douglass  
Alan Drum  
Gary Engstrom  
Dick Fahning  
Rolf Ethun  
Joan Fahning  
Marsha Fairfield-Kray  
Anita Flantz  
Sally Gessner  
Todd Gessner

Larry Gorrilla  
Sue Holloway  
Jim Hornbrook  
Brent Jelinski  
Mary Jenks  
Dick Jenks  
Nancy Johnson  
Tom Joseph  
Marc Kettleson  
Maggie Klein  
Mary Koster  
Eric Koster  
Kurt Landauer  
Paul Lewandoski  
Dick Logan

Barb McFarland  
Chad Mcgrath  
Jody Miller  
Joannie Morgan  
Cindy Moriarity  
Tim Nickels  
Otto Novak  
Tom Olson  
Barbara Olson  
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Joe Osfar  
Richard Phillips  
Tom Preston  
Paul Rosenberg  
Marsha Rosenberg  
John Rossmiller  
Stephen Russell  
Nancy Russell

Joan Sayre  
Christy Schoofs  
Russ Schroeder  
David Sharken  
Quita Sheehan  
Elizabeth Stone  
Ted Tabbert  
Dick Theile  
Wally Thiel  
Dave Vogt  
Carl Watras  
Beth Wetzler  
Debby Wilson  
Kath Wilson  
MW Womens  
Service League  
Betsy Wulff

Please accept our apologies for any volunteers not listed!

800+ hours  
dedicated!



## Volunteer Opportunities

We enjoy matching volunteers to their areas of interest. Many join us to assist with Education, Programming, Office Assistance, Clean Boats, Clean Waters, Maintenance, Event Assistance, and Committee Participation.

## Citizen Science

You don't have to be a scientist to make a scientific impact! We train volunteers of all ages and abilities to conduct scientific research. Each year our nonprofessional scientists make a difference through aquatic invasive species monitoring, lake level monitoring, acoustic bat monitoring, monarch tagging, picture posts, crane counts, and amphibian surveys!

their time may be  
valued at \$25,000+  
but if you ask us  
they are priceless!





# NATURE EDUCATION

## RESIDENTIAL

- Green Edventures and The Center for Conservation Leadership groups joined us for custom overnight programming.

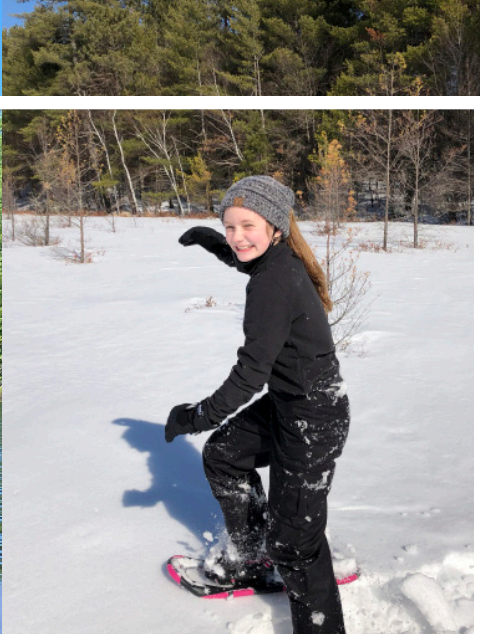
## ONLINE

- 18 Custom school programs served 330 students from 7 schools.  
- 7 Public program offerings served 216 participants.

"I love working at my job because I can be creative with programming. Researching new and interesting topics for family, youth and adult programming, visiting new places to hike and canoe - whatever I find interesting, or wherever I want to explore- I am able to learn all about it, and then have the great privilege to share what I have learned with others!"  
Licia Johnson,  
Education Director







## OUTREACH

- 24 Custom school programs served 774 students from 9 schools.
- 33 Public program offerings served 820 participants.

## ON-SITE

- 160 Program offerings served 1,837 participants.



"The staff at NLDC are excellent and provide developmentally appropriate programming to our students. The 4K students enjoy being on the NLDC campus and learn so much from being outdoors and participating in the activities. They always especially love catching the critters in the lake and looking at all of the different ways animals adapt to their environments. NLDC Discovery Day is our favorite field trip and event of the school year."

Linda Donner,  
Lac du Flambeau Public School







# THE WATER PROGRAM

The Water Program Team, made up of about 150 volunteers, 3 Water Monitoring Interns, 2 Lake Technicians, and 1 Water Program Director, is proud to partner with Towns, Lakes Associations, professional consultants, and residents to preserve our lakes and fight the introduction, establishment, and spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) in the Northwoods. The Water Program team offers consulting, shoreline habitat restoration and management, lake level monitoring, grant writing, and both public and private workshops for our partners.

## LAKE LEVEL MONITORING

Since 2010, the North Lakeland Discovery Center (NLDC) has coordinated a lake level monitoring project in Vilas County. The project formed as a partnership between UW Trout Lake Station, the Wisconsin DNR, and NLDC after concerned citizens and scientists began noticing very low lake levels around 2008 in northern Wisconsin. The program started with 15 lakes, now referred to as the 'heritage lakes' as they are surpassing 10 consecutive years of data, and in 2021 we installed gauges on a total of 26 lakes. Our program collects long-term data required to compare how different lake types respond to precipitation events spatially and temporally. Most of the lakes monitored are in Vilas County in Winchester and Presque Isle, but some span as far as Phelps. We have big lakes (maximum 1,165 acres) and small lakes (minimum 21 acres), seepage lakes and drainage/drainage lakes, lakes with and without public landings, and deep lakes (maximum max depth 105 feet) and shallow lakes (minimum max depth 16 feet). Each lake has a citizen scientist volunteer to record the lake level weekly during the ice free season. Our volunteers also share their lake level data with their lake associations for discussion. Lake monitoring enhances volunteers' knowledge of their lake, and often encourages participation in other citizen science programs such as water clarity and chemistry, loon activity, and aquatic invasive species monitoring. This connection of people to the nature world is invaluable to the program, as well as the ecology of the entire region. In this way, we believe this program is not only an asset to scientific research, but also a fabulous avenue to spread our mission of connecting people to the natural world.





# AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

Our Water Program Team works to monitor over 36 lakes in Vilas County and the surrounding area, as well as several wetlands and sections of rivers. In 2021, our team hosted 5 AIS identification training programs throughout Vilas County, teaching new volunteers and citizens how to identify invasive species and what to do when they find them. NLDC also coordinates the Town Aquatic Invasive Species Partnership (TAISP) which consists of the NLDC, the Winchester Town Lakes Committee, the Manitowish Waters Lakes Association, and the Towns of Manitowish Waters, Winchester, and Boulder Junction. Our work includes managing existing known populations of AIS such as curly-leaf pondweed and purple loosestrife, as well as monitoring for new populations by performing early detection surveys on lakes without known AIS populations.

## YELLOW IRIS REMOVAL

Yellow iris is considered an invasive species because it disrupts native vegetation and may dry up wetlands. Its origin is the Eurasian continent and it was brought here for its beauty in gardens. The removal of this invasive species is important so that the wildlife and native fauna can thrive off of the diversity of native shoreline vegetation. Yellow iris is especially widespread on the Turtle Chain of Lakes in Winchester. In 2020, we partnered with the Turtle Lakes Chain Association to contact thirty property owners who had yellow iris growing on their shorelines offering support from our team to help eradicate this species. The most challenging portion of the removal process was ensuring the entire rhizome was removed from the soil to reduce the probability of resprouting in the future. Yellow iris grows by sending out a thick red/orange rhizome into the soil, and multiple plants sprout off a single rhizome. Continuing the effort from 2020, our team spent another 60 hours removing Yellow Iris in 2021, bagging over a thousand pounds of plant material.



## LOOKING FORWARD

The 2022 year brings big changes at the Discovery Center, campus-wide and throughout the water program. With the new buildings and grounds development comes new partnerships and programs to grow with. The Water Program has said farewell to Emily Heald, Water Program Coordinator, who has been an invaluable member of the Water Program and has left an impressive mark on the lakes community in Vilas County. The new year has brought in a new Water Program Director, Jamie Van, who is excited to continue our efforts in AIS, lake level monitoring and water programming, while expanding our reach to include land stewardship, habitat restoration, and instilling passion to care for our earth and ecosystems that surround us here in the Northwoods.





# MEMBER COMMUNITY



## **DISCOVERER \$10,000+**

Liz and Dick Uihlein

## **GUIDE \$5,000+**

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Pat and Robert Buenz  
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Debbie and Fred Schwartz

## **PATHFINDER \$2,500+**

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Steen Traxler

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WJ Truettner  
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## **EXPLORER \$500+**

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Bob Twelmeyer  
Kath Wilson

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Stormy Kromer  
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Dietz's Service  
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Beth Douglass  
Stephen Eager  
Meg Erler  
Pam and Al Eschenbauch  
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Anita Flantz  
Patricia Frazier  
Joanne and Robert Fredberg  
Sandy Fuchs and Steve Koehler  
Bob Fuller  
The Geurts Family  
Char Glashagel



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 Renee and Frank Groh  
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 Maureen and John Keyes  
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 Patricia and James Logan  
 Connie and Jim Long

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 Amanda and Lawrence Megan  
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 Jillayne and Jeff Waite  
 Kerry and Carl Wilke  
 Deborah Wilson and Wes Doak  
 Winchester Town Lakes Committee  
 JoAnn and Dean Zaumseil  
 Phyllis Zeiss  
 Donna and Mike Zierdt  
 Cindy Zubowski

### TREKKER \$50+

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 Tom and Pat Ahonen  
 Barrett Albert  
 Renae Alswager-Klein and Mike Klein  
 Carolyn and Rick Andrejat  
 Nan Andrews

Nicole and Rich Andrews  
 Angela and Gregg Apostoloff  
 Susan and Roger Appell  
 Lori and Dennis Aukstik  
 Geary and Valerie Axen  
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 Elodie and Geoffrey Bacci  
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 Michele and Tom Baer  
 Kay and Robert Baetz  
 Shirley and Bob Barnum  
 Patricia and Robert Barofsky  
 Judy and Al Barry  
 Beth Barutha  
 Sarah and Howard Bass  
 Simon Batistich  
 Patricia and Richard Bechtel  
 Dianne Wichmann and Gerhard Becker  
 Jeanne and Rudy Becker  
 Diane Beda  
 June and Gary Beier  
 Kristin Beischel  
 Karen Berg Helfgot and Mike Helfgot  
 Richard Bergman  
 Jeanne and Andy Bergstrom  
 Sarah Besadny and Jim Meiers  
 Susan and John Biedron  
 Kathy and Tim Biernat  
 Christine Binter  
 Kim Bires-Jenich and Marty Jenich  
 Birken Household  
 Louise and Kevin Birschbach  
 Bitner Household  
 Sue and Steve Blankenheim  
 Judith Bloom  
 Jim Blum  
 Terri and Bob Bodee  
 Karin Bodenhagen and George Simatovich  
 Kristoffer Boerner

712 members  
 support our mission  
 to connect people,  
 nature, and the  
 community!





your membership  
inspires love and  
an ethic of care for  
the northwoods  
throughout the  
community!



Emily and Jim Bokern  
Bomrad Household  
Mary Jo and Craig Boyd  
Meta and Jim Brandt  
John and Susan Brant  
Linda Brazzoni  
Catherine and Dennis  
Breitholtz  
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Dianne Briggs  
LaVergne and Ed Brodsky  
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Christine and Tony Solano  
Sherie and Dr. Paul Sondel  
Daniel and Sherri Stafford  
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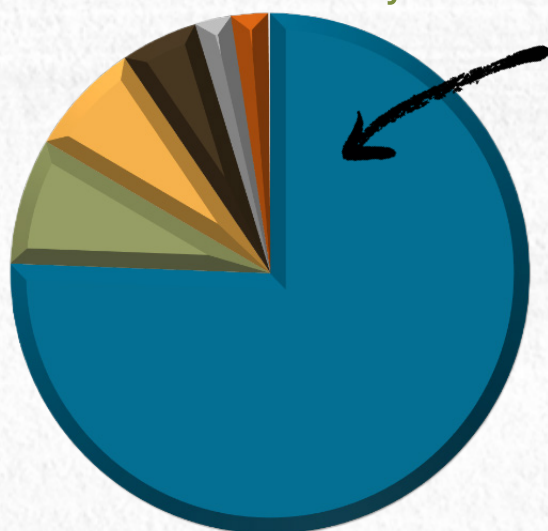


we appreciate each  
and every member  
who supports the  
growth of discovery  
year after year!



# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

2020-2021 fiscal year

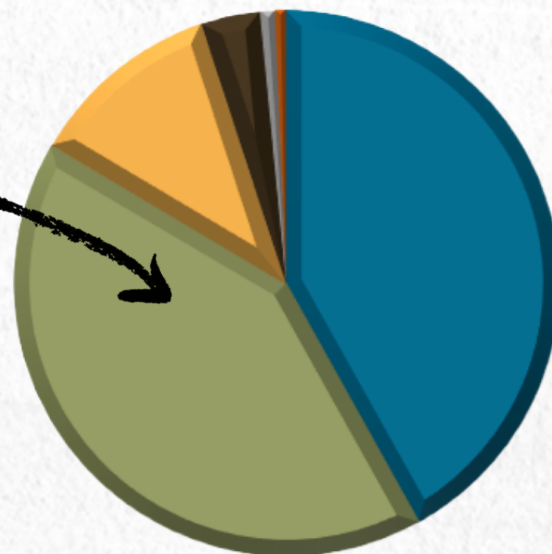


## EXPENSES - \$539,736

Sales	\$179	0%
Insurance	\$12,154	2%
Membership & Fundraising	\$12,227	2%
Facilities & Trails	\$25,921	5%
Programs	\$38,279	7%
Administration	\$42,437	8%
Payroll, Benefits, & Taxes	\$407,948	76%

## REVENUE - \$533,483

Memorials	\$3,120	1%
Sales & Interest	\$4,942	1%
Fundraisers	\$18,791	3%
Facilities & Trails	\$61,397	11%
Programs, Events, & Grants	\$221,548	42%
Membership & Donations	\$223,684	42%



\*These figures exclude \$1.8 million revenue and expenses from our capital campaign





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"To invest in your own community is always good business. After having owned a place in Manitowish Waters since 1970, I am convinced the Discovery Center is a great asset to our community. Educating tourists, residents, and our youth about the value of protecting and conserving our Northwoods lifestyle becomes more important every year."

- Peter & Ellen Johnson



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Dorothy Rose Baker Endowment in support of Citizen Science

Tom and Barbara Olson Endowment in support of Nature Education

Ilg Endowment in support of Education



305 dedicated  
supporters  
contributed to the  
discovery center  
operations  
in 2021!





# CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

## An update on our pathway to new discoveries:

The year 2021 was an exciting time as we began to see the campus develop and take shape for the next phase of its legacy.

Renovations of the Historic YCC Lodge were completed and feature a large gathering room, lakeside portico, two functional restrooms, and a wing of staff offices. In past years you could have harvested ice in the middle of the lodge anytime from October to March. Now, its geothermal heating is maintaining a cozy 68 degrees, even when temperatures have dipped to -20 outside.

The cozy feeling also transferred over to the team of personnel. The staff is finally able to cooperate alongside one another during their worktime which promotes collaboration throughout different sectors in our organization. This cohesiveness will be imperative as we grow services and expand our reach over the next decade.

Additionally, two cabin connections have been finalized, and a third is nearing completion, to house residential groups year-round. This involved filling the empty space between cabins with a functional and accessible bathroom and shower area. Thus, the table is set for expanded programming to further our mission of connecting people with nature and our vision to be a leading resource to lifelong environmental learning and outdoor recreation.

Possibly one of the most exciting aspects was growing our donor list from 190 to over 600 individuals! This combined community effort has established \$3.6 million for the campaign. That includes \$2,249.50 from the North Lakeland School's annual change drive, as well as nature lover Max Geurts' 11th birthday money. We're simply overwhelmed with the size and breadth of community support.





Looking ahead to next year we have signed a fixed-price construction contract with S.D. Ellenbecker, Inc., to build our new Discovery Hall. Work will commence in spring 2022. Many different elements of the center will be added or upgraded to complete the site and make our campus safe, environmentally friendly, and easy to find. We have plans to include rain gardens, crushed granite pathways, signage, site lighting, septic, wells, and more.

The nature center will be the showstopper element in the new addition. We can't wait to show off our human-scale eagle's nest, the new digs for our critters, murals, a river motif and so much more! The dynamic teaching space will be invaluable to the community and guests as we inspire an ethic of care for the Northwoods.

The core work of the Discovery Center has never been more important. Exposure to and connections with nature yield not just knowledge, but also a better-informed citizenry more capable of addressing the critical environmental issues of today and for decades forward.



549 supportive donors contributed \$1,800,000+ to this project during 2021!

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 Doug Edwards and Michelle



"I'd like to say it's a really fun experience. There's a lot of nature and, sort of like, a way to get away from all the city stuff."

- Max Guerts

With the help of his mom Jenny, Max raised money for his 11th birthday and donated it to the capital campaign - a cause special to his heart.





"Each year, the school and the NLDC staff partner in a variety of ways, from Outdoor Education, to birding, to invasive species control, and our new tradition of hosting graduation at the amphitheatre. North Lakeland students take on a fundraiser each year to help the community in some way. In 2021, when the Discovery Center launched their capital campaign, it made sense for the school to raise money for this cause. In the course of a week, students collected change and were able to make a sizable donation."

- Christine Wallace, North Lakeland School

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we cannot wait  
 to open your doors  
 on discovery hall  
 next year!



"Being one of the founding members of the Discovery Center, it has been a 26-year dream to finally have adequate facilities to educate youth, host community gatherings and house visiting groups all year-around. Our member donors have made that happen"

- Rolf Ethun,