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Raven Hill Discovery Center is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation.

Mission: Raven Hill enhances hands-on & lifelong learning for all ages by connecting science, history & the arts.

Raven Hill Discovery Center Quotes and Reviews

Casey Cook **May 26, 2022**

Our family had a blast at the discovery center! I called on a weekday in their off season and they let us come with a private appointment! Hailey showed us around the hands on museum part and let our 3-year-old daughter hold a lizard and two snakes. Hailey was wonderful and very knowledgeable. We couldn't believe how much there was to do there and it kept our daughter's attention span (that's saying something for a 3-year-old!). It was the perfect rainy day activity. It stopped raining so we were able to explore the outdoors too. We spent 3 hours there! Our daughter loved the one room school house and tree house. I highly recommend this for families! We are so happy we discovered the discovery center!!

April Davidson **May 26, 2022**

Thank you so much for having us visit Raven Hill Discovery Center yesterday! We all had so much fun! Some of our favorite things were the trails, getting to hold the snake and bearded dragon, and the museum. A lot of us are planning on visiting again this summer with our families.

Thank you again!
Second grade
John R. Rodger Elementary School
Bellaire, MI 49615

Jacob Tasiemski **May 14, 2022**

Incredible and almost overwhelming how much they have there at Raven Hill. It was far beyond what I was given to expect, when I first checked it out. Won't spoil the surprise, but it's definitely 10/10. A must go to!

Mrs. Kristina Ruckman & Ms. Grace Carwile **May 6, 2022**

Thank you so much for the wonderful learning experience at Raven Hill. Our kiddos had THE BEST DAY! At Raven Hill Discovery Center, 2nd and 3rd graders got to experience the science and history of the world around us! We made connections to our classroom learning of animals and ecosystems, as we held snakes and lizards and explored the wetlands

boardwalk. After a time-traveling hike to the Ancient World, we climbed the great pyramid of Giza, ran into the sphinx, and visited the Easter Island head. There is something new to explore, connect to, and learn at every turn! Raven Hill brought science and history to life for our students with a fun-filled and engaging day!

Nakita Marihugh April 21.2022

If you haven't already taken the kids, you should keep this on your radar :)

Jessica Kolenda April 5.2022

We had SO much fun today exploring your place! THANK YOU for letting us visit!!

Jessica Poh February 2022

My friends and I (ages 24-26) were looking for something to do and thankfully found the Raven Hill Discovery Center! We expected to go for an hour or so, but ended up there for almost the whole time it was open! The activities are addictingly fun, the animal exhibit was wildly interesting and informative, and the educational parts are informative and engaging! Could not recommend this place enough! We all loved it!

Grant Raymor November 28, 2021

I first visited Raven Hill Discovery Museum as a kid, and I loved the experience. Every time I went up north to our cabin, I would beg my parents to take us to Raven Hill. My favorite part as a child was the animal room. The animal room was an immersive experience where one learned about biology and interacted with the different animals. At this time, they had a 10 ft Burmese python that we needed our whole family to hold.

This experience sparked my curiosity towards biology, and I ended up following this passion. I am now 23, and I recently graduated from CMU as a pre-med student studying Neuroscience and Biomedical Sciences.

I had the chance to go back to Raven Hill this past year with my family, and it was a great experience. They have added a lot to the place, and we spent a few hours exploring the different exhibits. Going back as an adult, I am very impressed with the creative ways to teach science and history. These types of hands-on experiences teach far more than what can be taught in a classroom. I would recommend this place to everyone and anyone. Especially to families with younger kids. The museum's explanation of the different exhibits is a great way to practice reading and teach kids that learning can be fun.

Thank you for everything you do! Grant Raymor

Sarah Crawford May 12, 2021

I wanted to reach out to say thank you for another wonderful visit! Our family has made it an annual tradition to come to the Raven Hill Discovery Center despite the 4 hour drive it takes to get there. My children especially love the hands on experience with animals and roaming your beautiful property all the while showing me new "discoveries" leading to conversations and more questions, which happens to be my favorite part! :) This year I have been homeschooling my 3 young children and I was so grateful to see that you were open and

that you were taking such precautions during the time of Covid. I believe you are an invaluable resource to your community and I am grateful that we can continue to support your endeavors!
Best Wishes, Sarah Crawford

Mariya S December 2, 2020

How wonderful for the Raven Hill vision of enriching the Community of East Jordan ; to assist individuals in need of assistance during these tough times of COVID19! The hard work and continued vision of the Land owners to give education, unique experiences found in Michigan to enlighten all who visit a new understanding of stewardship! Thank you Raven Hill: your love and lifelong vision is shining love and light!

Melinda Study October 5, 2020

My family thanks you very much for the wonderful tour today. You were so gracious to give us a private tour and spend time answering our questions and inspiring us. We spoke of nothing else but Raven Hill at dinner tonight. Comments were made about science, creativity, family heritage, collecting, work, dedication, ideas, beauty, etc. My dad said that you and your (late) husband are passionate about science, my mom's favorite was the snake skin room, my sister was amazed by your rock wall and will be attempting her own wall with her rock collection, my son liked the Egyptian glass display and the display cases of different crafts. It was a beautiful day and I can't thank you enough. --Melinda

Facebook comments on Informal Learning Opportunities

- Comments from teachers & parents, include: "You've got the best ideas!" and "Thank you for your great posts lately. I love sharing them with our students" and "Thanks for teaching us something even when Raven Hill is closed".
- Love your daily posts. I share them. A best friend in KC, who is a 2nd grade teacher, has been sharing from me. She keeps getting comments from her local friends saying " how do you know about Raven Hill?, I've been there!" Small world. Thanks for your passion!! Amy Gillard
- 5.26.2020 Cheri – thank you so much for your daily posts on Facebook. I have been sharing them on my feed and friends, from far and near, have let me know they are sharing the posts as well. The posts have especially been a treat for educators and those who are now actively involved with at home learning. Many are including your activities in their daily schedules! Thanks for reminding us that science, history and the arts are everywhere!
- Thank goodness, teachers never stop teaching
- We still have our pysanky eggs. You & Raven Hill have been an important part of scouting in N MI since you opened your doors. Thanks for helping us make memories that will last a lifetime.

Schoolhouse comments on weekly update article January 17, 2021

- The schoolhouse is one of my favorites for sure! Thank for sharing this, Cheri!--Anne

- Great reminiscing about the school house. I'm sure it evokes many memories for your visitors. School was a different animal way back then. It's a great addition to the many other features of Raven Hill. Stay well, Joel
- I was thinking of 'schools' in many areas where the interest in education is so strong they people meet without any walls at all - but I agree that a school is a vehicle for 'tomorrow' and hope that the tomorrow will be better and positive.--Nancy
- Great painting of the schoolhouse!--Tom
- Love the idea of a school ..."with tomorrow inside".-- Janis Dietrich
- I L♥VE the School House!—Darrell

Christina Cornwall

I happened upon the RHDC while vacationing in the area...and what a happy accident! My 2 and 4-year-old children absolutely love this place, and even the 5 month old was looking around at all the fun things. Kyra spent a great deal of time showing my children the animals and answering all their questions. We enjoyed the discovery room and could have spent hours in there! We hiked the Jurassic trail and explored the schoolhouse and rang the bell. The treehouse was an extra bonus. We would frequent this place regularly, if we lived closer.

Anonymous

Terrific hands-on exhibits. Kind, knowledgeable and helpful docent. Our grandkids (ages 5 and 2) had a fabulous time. Our son-in-law, a special ed teacher, came away with great lesson-plan ideas. G'pa and G'ma seemed to see new neural pathways forming in little minds as they watched the kids play. We all had loads of fun. Thank you for the time, effort and thoughtfulness that continues to go into this wonderful place.

Bob M

My adult blind son (19) and my dad went here on a rainy day and it was a fantastic experience! Outside there was a 'Jurassic walk'. That had examples of fossils and minerals to touch. After that there was a one room schoolhouse to explore. Then we hit the music garden that had about a half dozen unique instruments that could be played to your hearts content. Then we hit up the inside where everything was touchable. He got to feel skulls and pelts of various animals, feel a display of the different organs and where they are inside your body. There were more instruments to play as well as a several games/challenges to attempt. The owner was very welcoming and brought out some items just so my son could check them out. We then went into the reptile room where he got to hold a corn snake, gecko, and bearded dragon. With lots of information given during the presentation also. He was also able to touch several turtles/tortoises. The only negatives are the long hilly dirt road to get to the Center was a little nerve wracking for people used to the flat Indiana landscape. Also don't expect a polished and state of the art exhibits. It is not dirty or unkempt but has a 'lived in, well loved'

kind of vibe. All in all, this is a hidden treasure for anyone looking for a one of a kind hands on experience. The staff is very friendly and will do their best to answer your questions.

Nathan Keith

I give this a rating of 5 is based on responses from my 7 year old grandson. Small time science center that had the warmth and charm that the big city science center wishes that it could achieve. Live reptiles and turtles, the let the children hold snakes and lizards. They have hands on science that engages the children and a nice nature walk exhibit with an old school house and a treehouse

Amber Sheldon

Awesome place, lots to do and see! Will definitely be going back and I highly recommend!

Timothy Peterson

Quirky mix of things, but worth finding it off the beaten path

Sidney Elyse

This place was so cool and the staff was so helpful and friendly! There's such a variety of things to do here. It was a great way to spend our day!

Samantha Mumaw

I went here with my best friends during my bachelorette/bachelor party. What an amazing time! We played, learned and ... More

Beth Robinson

I went there with my almost 13-year-old daughter while we were camping nearby. We were both absolutely enchanted and engaged. Lots of fun, hands on stuff to do and the property and everything on it is magical.

Holly Sasso

We came upon the magic Raven Hill in 1994 when Max was two and Andrew was four years old. There was a special spirit and energy about the early museum and vision of the one room museum sitting on a beautiful hillside above a Jordan River tributary. Today, the boys are adults, who still visit Raven Hill. Andrew is an exploratory geologist, who attributes that career choice to all he learned at Raven Hill. Max is a skilled welder, who volunteers his time to teach

summer classes at the Center and I serve on the Raven Hill Board of Directors. We remember the early times and eagerly watch Raven Hill grow and change every year. –Holly Sasso

Charlie Dyer (2014)

A local nineteen-year-old college freshman, Charlie, brought a friend to visit a favorite place from his past: Raven Hill Discovery Center. He promptly sent a letter saying, “My recent visit makes me want to emphasize the importance of Raven Hill to the local community. Northern Michigan does not have the level of academic enrichment opportunities as found in the museums, schools and science centers of urban areas. Raven Hill provides children and families alike a place for scientific exploration that is incredibly valuable for developing minds. Whether sparking an interest in science or providing a day of fun while exploring the exhibits, Raven Hill is a priceless asset to the Northern Michigan community.”

Outreach Programs

Charity Huff

My preschooler came home very excited to show me something she learned at school. She proceeded to pull two plastic cups from her backpack and tell me that she made a big wheel. Scanning the living room, she selected two items to help her build a ramp. She stuck the cups together, placed a piece of red tape on the floor as a destination line, and began experimenting what would happen to her big wheel as the ramp inclined or declined. My husband and I found great pleasure in seeing our daughter excited about sharing the science she had learned from you. As the days and weeks have passed, the big wheel has been placed in a safe spot where Erin still pulls it out and experiments with it to see how far she can send it and at what speed. I have caught her teaching it to her dolls.

As parents, we cannot thank you enough for exposing our daughter to the wonderful world of exploration and science. It is intriguing to watch her as she discovers answers to her questions on her own. We are hopeful that you will be able to visit her classroom again to help fulfill her hunger for knowledge and her sense of wonder.

Thank you,

The Proud Parents of Erin Patten- Brian and Charity Patten

Volunteer Program

Jean VanDam September 2019

Imagine a building that is so full of “stuff” that it is impossible to enter more than a few steps. Then imagine two women, one “collects” (or is the term “hoards”) and one who is a purger who can’t stand clutter.

Now put the two of them in that building together. You would think the collector would be so comfortable and the purger would be very uncomfortable to the point of plotting an escape at the first opportunity. You would be right. But let’s look at the rest of the story:

We're talking about the Print Shop at Raven Hill. The Print Shop used to be a place to display a huge print machine and all kinds of historical printing apparatus and classes in glass blowing, etc. However, when the need arose for storage space during the "refreshing of the main museum" and collecting items for the ET building, there was some room in the Print Shop. . . . And there you have it, the Print Shop became the Storage Shed! But now we go back to the two women entering the Storage Shed, one with thoughts of finding her "treasures" again, the other with "let's get rid of most of this stuff so we can have a Print Shop again". Sounds like a recipe for anger and frustration.

But it wasn't, in fact it was a special experience. Cheri and I made a pact: If she would give me a good reason to keep a "treasure" I would concede her victory over THAT ITEM ONLY. Cheri knew exactly who donated each item, and a story that went with each. However, if the item did not have a use, or if the story didn't jive with the mission of Raven Hill, it was allocated to another use – recycling, Deer Creek Junk, Habitat ReStore, etc. It was, for this purger, a very special experience. Over many weeks, I learned to appreciate the small things and the stories behind Raven Hill.