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Raven Hill Discovery Center, incorporated in 1991, is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation.

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

To: Friends and Family everywhere
From: Cheri and Raven Hill
Date: April 10, 2021
Re: Weekly Update

Greetings Everyone!

After closing in March of 2020 to prevent the spread of COVID-19, Raven Hill Discovery Center is working hard in hopes of re-opening on Saturday, April 17, 2021. However, Michigan's governor and the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services have released recommendations to avoid indoor dining and large crowds, along with suggesting that schools return to remote learning and youth sports suspend games & practice for at least the next couple weeks.

That leaves the Center wondering what the best course of action is. Because Raven Hill is committed to protecting the health and safety of our guests, volunteers and staff, visitor numbers and time spent indoors will both be limited and **by appointment**. For reservations, please call 231.536.3369 or email info@miravenhill.org. Visitors will be asked to mask and socially distance inside and out, **assuming that state and local guidelines allow** us to open. Be sure to check in with us by phone, email or the website (www.miravenhill.org), just before your scheduled visit, to make sure that the Center is open.

Despite the pandemic, Raven Hill continues to offer programs to educate the community. First, Robin Gleason of the Climate Reality Leadership Project talked about climate change in a zoom presentation last Monday, April 5th.

Her presentation was titled "Must we? Can we? Will we?" and listeners came away with a heightened awareness of the need to reduce our carbon footprint. Robin ended the session with a list of ways we can all make a difference, including minimizing waste (reduce, reuse, recycle, compost); buying local produce; supporting sustainable policy and environmentally aware lawmakers; being water wise by avoiding waste, fixing leaks, planting sustainable plants; being mindful of traveling; avoiding palm oil products; eating less meat; dialing the thermostat up or down to conserve energy; using green energy; voting AND educating children.



A few familiar hands-on exhibits remain on display, like the generator bikes, marimba and kaleidoscopes. Visitors will also find intriguing displays of skulls, fossils, petrified wood and much more!



(Left) We all need to play a part in protecting this beautiful planet of ours.

"The Apollo 17 image shown here was released by NASA during a surge in environmental activism in the 1970s. The 'Blue Marble' became a symbol of the environmental movement, as a depiction of Earth's frailty, vulnerability, and isolation amid the vast expanse of space." –Wikipedia



Upper elementary students observed white pine trees and learned how to estimate the number of needles on one of the smaller pines. Raven Hill provided each student with the Center's booklet, **Trees as Learning Centers**.



Second, the Center is still offering outreach for schools in Charlevoix and Emmet counties. Thanks to grant awards from Charlevoix County and Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundations, outreach programs are still available for hands-on and minds-on STEM lessons. This week, Boyne Falls elementary students met Raven Hill staff outdoors for STEM activities. There is still time to book a date for your classroom to enjoy STEM Outdoors at your school. Call 231.675.6025 or email info@miravenhill.org to schedule a day and time.

(Left) Early elementary students explored the technology of measuring. They measured the school building wall using their "student" cubits, then with a measuring tape and finally with a laser measurer. A cubit is an ancient measure of length, equal to the distance from your elbow to the tip of your fingers. On adults that is about 18". It's a great way to estimate whether your couch will fit in a different spot without having to search for a tape measure!

Third, Raven Hill has been selected to participate in the **National Informal STEM Education (NISE) Network Sustainability Fellowship** program. The program is part of Arizona State University's Sustainability in Science and Technology Museums initiative. The program is sponsored by the Rob and Melani Walton Foundation. Raven Hill staff will attend online workshop sessions, as they develop and complete a project specific to sustaining Raven Hill's future in northern Michigan. The NISE Network brings people together to engage in STEM as a way to understand our world and build a better future for everyone.

Finally, the Center keeps moving forward and thinking positively about re-opening. Exciting things are happening. In the Main Building, the drywall is being repaired, saltwater tanks upgraded with new inhabitants and new exhibits created in preparation for spring and summer visitors. Outdoors, the **Connections Trail** is becoming a reality. The pathway is laid out and artists have begun to design and build some of the learning stations. We await word on several more grant applications. If awarded, they will allow us to complete the Trail as planned.

American author Seth Godin said, "Optimism is the most important human trait because it allows us to evolve our ideas, to improve our situation, and to hope for a better tomorrow." Please think positive thoughts and continue to do your part to fight this coronavirus and its variants. Get vaccinated, wash your hands often and well, wear your mask, socially distance & stay away from crowds. Take care of yourselves and each other, especially as the weather gets nicer. We want to see everyone here at Raven Hill soon, enjoying the new exhibits, both indoors and outside.



Hermit crabs aren't just land animals! Two "extra-large" marine hermit crabs are making their new home in the Animal Room's saltwater tank. Make sure you check them out on your next visit.

Hugs from a distance,

Cheri