



04737 Fuller Road, East Jordan, MI 49727
(231) 536-3369 | <http://www.MiRavenHill.org>
info@miravenhill.org

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 2, 2022
Re: Celebrate with us!

It's time to celebrate. Find your calendar and circle July 10, 2022 or make a note in your planner or enter the date on your cell phone. From noon to 4pm on that Sunday, Raven Hill Discovery Center will celebrate its 30th year of connecting science, history and the arts with an open house. Everyone is invited.

Over the next few months, leading up to July 10th, several of these weekly updates will feature different aspects of Raven Hill and the changes that have taken place over the past 30 years. This week we focus on most everyone's favorite place at the Center: The Animal Room.

By way of background, Raven Hill incorporated in July of 1991. It received its 501 (c)(3) tax exempt status in 1991. The original 40'x60' museum building was constructed in the fall of 1991. The Hands-on Room, kitchen and two bathrooms inside were finished over the winter of 1991-92 and the Center opened its doors in May of 1992.



In 1992-3, the animals were housed in Raven Hill's kitchen. The aquariums were originally in the Hands-on Room, but were moved into the kitchen, when the kids couldn't keep their hands out of the water! That was just a little too hands-on!



In 1994, the Animal Room was home to orphaned mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates. In 2003, the mammals and birds were re-homed. They were too expensive to keep, too smelly and many visitors were allergic to the animal dander. Now the Animal Room has reptiles, fish and invertebrates. Visitors can look, pet or hold, depending on their comfort level.

Thanks to community support from local foundations, businesses, and individuals, the original museum building has seen three expansions. The first expansion included the Animal Room, Periodic Room & a small front entryway added to the Main Museum Building in 1993-94. In 2004, a second expansion moved the parking lot to its current location and enlarged it. Originally, the parking lot was on the road side of the Center. At the same time, a larger entryway was added to the Center adjacent to the new parking lot. The third and most recent expansion of the Main Museum Building was in 2010-11, when the Art Corridor and the Great Room were added to the south end of the building. At that time, the Hands-on Room, Animal Room, kitchen & bathrooms were also renovated.

Raven Hill's Animal Room is an orphanage for animals that people buy at pet stores. Sometimes, the animals get to be too big, too messy, too expensive to feed or, mostly, no one wants to care for them anymore. So they come live out their lives at Raven Hill. There are no Michigan animals, because it is against the law to keep Michigan animals in captivity & they can give our animals diseases.



Former summer staffer, Kim Stadt, helps youngsters hold Buddha (circa 1995). Raven Hill still has a python. We call Leroy a “Chihuahua” python, because it is a species of python that never gets big.



Buddha was featured in Traverse Magazine one summer, along with Raven Hill’s co-founder, Tim Leach!

Currently, Raven Hill is open to the public noon to 4pm on Saturdays and 2pm to 4pm on Sundays, plus other times by appointment. Make any time special by scheduling a visit to the Center. You can call 231.536.3369 or email info@miravenhill.org for reservations. Be sure to schedule classes, summer day camps, field trips, birthday parties and scout groups soon. The Smithsonian **Labor Days: History of Work** exhibit also remains on display during regular hours or by appointment. Another reminder: don’t forget to mark Sunday, July 10th from noon to 4pm as a “**red letter day**”, so that you can help us celebrate 30 years of science, history and art at Raven Hill Discovery Center.

Note: With the lifting of local mask mandates, visitors can choose to mask or not indoors at Raven Hill. However, the Center’s masking policy may be reinstated, if there is a new spike in coronavirus cases, as with the BA.2 sub-variant, which is currently surging in the UK and is on the rise in the US. Visit soon!

Cheri

Buddha, a reticulated python, lived at Raven Hill from 1994 to 2003. The snake was 6 foot-long, when a college student donated it, because he didn’t want to care for it anymore. Buddha was 20 foot-long, when it got pneumonia & died. His skull is on display in the Hands-on Room. His skin was tanned and now hangs on the wall in the current Animal Room.



Buddha’s skin is the bottom one hanging on the wall. The middle skin is from an anaconda. Someone brought the anaconda skin home with him from his military service and his wife would not let him bring it in the house! Consequently, it “hangs out” at Raven Hill. Both the anaconda (22’) and the python (20’), were only half-grown and they both could have grown to over 40 feet.



The kitchen walls are covered with an assortment of artworks, making the kitchen as much a part of the museum as the more formal exhibit areas.

The animals moved to the new Animal Room in 1993 and the aquariums followed them in 2011. Now, counters & cupboards line the walls in the kitchen, allowing students & volunteers more workspace.

