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Raven Hill Discovery Center 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: November 28, 2020
Re: Greetings from Raven Hill!

Hello to Everyone!

Raven Hill's Treehouse was built in 2008 in response to author, Richard Louv's book, LAST CHILD IN THE WOODS. Louv writes of nature-deficit disorder, lamenting the time children spend inside "plugged in" and encouraging parents and teachers to help kids reconnect with the natural world around them, in an effort to encourage creative and critical thinking skills.

Designed in the shape of a maple leaf, the Treehouse draws families to the woods, as they explore inside, outside and around the structure. There are voice pipes for communicating and periscopes focused on the two trailheads. Visitors can write on the slate board & enjoy the marble roll.



If you look closely at the bottom of the Treehouse, you can make out its maple leaf shape.



Artist, Glenna Haney, made this stained glass piece especially for the Treehouse, so visitors can look at the world through "rose-colored glasses".

Two signs are posted inside the Treehouse. One quote is from historian, John Stilgoe and the other from Shel Silverstein's "Where the Sidewalk Ends." What better way to spend an afternoon than at the Treehouse – no matter what the weather!

During this pandemic, feel free to come explore the Treehouse and look at the world through the "rose-colored glasses" found there. The saying has been in use since the 1840's and indicates that a person has an optimistic outlook on things, viewing life in a positive way. Someone who sees the world through "rose-colored glasses", tends to look at the bright side of things, considers the glass half full and always finds a silver lining. Perhaps, the power of positive thinking can help us all survive COVID-19 better. It certainly can't hurt anything.

A tree house, a free house,
A secret you and me house,
A high up in the leafy branches
Cozy as can be house.

--Shel Silverstein
WHERE THE SIDEWALK ENDS

Having taken wood from the
tree, we bring the tree back to
the wood.

The tree becomes the house,
and in ceremony, the house
becomes the tree.

--John Stilgoe, historian

While Raven Hill’s turtles vacation at Boyne Valley Community Greenhouse during the pandemic, they are gone, but not forgotten. From paintings to papier-mâché, Sheldon and friends remain behind to the delight of every turtle lover who visits, whether they are staff working inside or guests walking outside. Turtles are reptiles with hard shells that protect them from most predators. Their top shell is actually their ribs and backbone fused together. Their bottom shell or plastron is called the sternum on us and other vertebrates. Turtles are among the oldest and most primitive groups of reptiles. They evolved millions of years ago. The earliest known turtle fossils are from the Triassic Period, about 220 million years ago. Raven Hill visitors can see Archelon, our nine-foot “teenage Ninja turtle” sculpture, when strolling through Jurassic Park. Turtles today are almost identical to the turtles that lived so many million years ago.



“Sheldon the First” was pretty gregarious. He loved interacting with visitors. He would do laps around the Animal Room and eat lettuce from your hand. If you sat on the floor with your legs extended, he would often stop & sit on your lap. Our current “Sheldon IV” is not nearly as personable.



Boyne City’s Martina Hahn is internationally known for her speed paintings. Sheldon was the perfect subject for one of her painting performances.



This papier-mâché Galapagos tortoise is the creation of sculptor, Lori Hough. In addition to this media, Lori also works in bronze, ferro-concrete and welded steel. You can see another one of her sculptures during a walk through Raven Hill’s Ancient World. In 2004, Lori worked with middle school girls using ferro-concrete to build the Moai or Easter Island Head in the Oceana Cultural area found there.

Try to keep your “*rose-colored glasses*” on as much as you can during these uncertain times. Stay safe. Wear your mask, socially distance from others and wash your hands often. You know that I always enjoy hearing from you, so text or call my cell—231.675.6025 or email cheri@miravenhill.org anytime.

Take care of yourselves,

Cheri



The Archelon at Raven Hill is an artistic interpretation of an extinct marine turtle that lived 150 million years ago in Kansas and grew to about 15 feet in length.