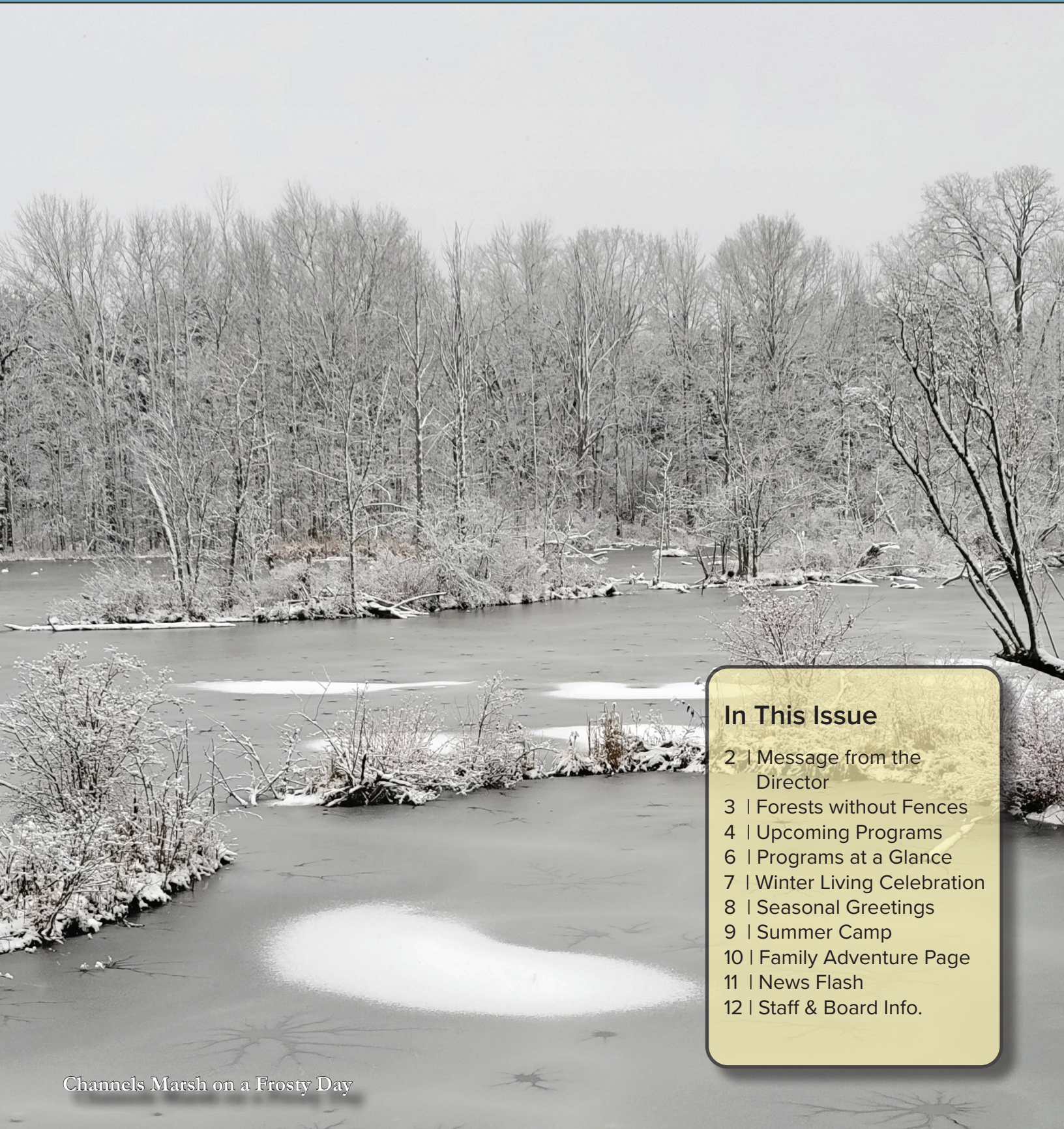




Rogers Ramblings

Newsletter from the Friends of Rogers

Winter | December 2023-February 2024 | Vol. 2 Issue 1



In This Issue

- 2 | Message from the Director
- 3 | Forests without Fences
- 4 | Upcoming Programs
- 6 | Programs at a Glance
- 7 | Winter Living Celebration
- 8 | Seasonal Greetings
- 9 | Summer Camp
- 10 | Family Adventure Page
- 11 | News Flash
- 12 | Staff & Board Info.

Message from the Director

*Oh to the trees
We rattle in your leaves
We thank you with the breeze
And we sing to you
From the forest floor*

For an environmental education center as busy as Rogers, there are invariably times from spring through fall when we long for the quietude of winter. The soft sounds of snowshoes plodding along, the silence of a frozen pond, provide a respite from the endless energy of summer. The mergansers return to dive beneath the ice and the black cap chickadees sing out their winter song of solitude. For those of us involved in the practice of making maple syrup, however, the anticipation is almost too hard to bear.

All summer long the Sugar Maple absorbs the sun's energy and transforms it into sugar. Down to its roots this resource goes, stored for the season in which sunshine is in short supply. Come winter, as the sap begins to rise again from the roots in preparation for the energy that springtime buds require, we ask the Maples if we might have some too.

As the leader of the trees, the Sugar Maple is ready for our request and has more to offer than what it needs for itself. Its generosity and abundance meet us in the time when the local food supply is low and the winter winds are strong. It inspires us to be generous, and so we turn the sap into syrup and supply our community with what we can.

This year, building on the decades of forest stewardship that have delivered our sugarbush to the present moment, that generosity has returned to Rogers Center in-kind. The Chenango County Historical Society is donating their 1909 replica sugarshack to Rogers, and the carpentry program at DCMO BOCES is leading the deconstruction, transportation, and reconstruction to make the project possible. It is Maple Magic, clear as day and sharp as a hawk's cry at noon.

While the Sugarshack won't be fully operable until next winter, the rest of Rogers is primed for a full suite of winter activity. With six miles of trails, snowshoes and skis of every size, binoculars for rent, and nothing but the warmth of winter exploration, it's time to make the most of what we hope will be a snowy season.

Perhaps our biggest celebration, and certainly the longest standing, Winter Living Celebration will be back this year on February 3rd. Horse drawn sleighs, ice carving, hot food and warm apple ciders by the fire are but a few of the expected winter wonders.

Take a day off this winter, or better yet take a week, and come by to explore an area of Rogers you've never been before. There's a good chance we can point you towards a new adventure, and perhaps join you on it too.

See you soon,

David W. Carson





Forests without Fences

If you own forestland, walk in the woods, or came to our program about the overabundance of deer this last September, then you are aware of the massive problem these large herbivores have wrought across the eastern landscape.

For those not in the know, here's the Reader's Digest version: white-tailed deer are destroying our forest ecosystems.

It is hard to believe that a little more than a hundred years ago these animals teetered on the brink of extinction. Prior to the arrival of Europeans on these green shores, it is estimated that there were 15-30 million white-tailed deer across North America. The natural world kept everything in balance.

When Europeans came on the scene, however, they changed that dynamic by clearing many acres of forest for farming, for pastures, for building their communities. And, of course, deer were harvested for food and hides.

In 1646, the colony of Rhode Island created the very first deer hunting season as an attempt to slow down the population decline. It didn't work. By the mid-1800s, the price for venison and carcasses in the Midwest alone resulted in an out-of-control slaughter of deer. By 1890, it was estimated by the US Biological Survey that the deer population had declined by 99%.

What brought the deer (and several other species) back from the brink of extinction was the first conservation movement and hunting regulations that were based on science. The Lacey Act of 1900 was instrumental, as it banned market hunting for deer and other wildlife.

So, the question now is: what happened?

A trend of eliminating predators, which started with those first European settlers and continues today, is a major reason for deer populations not just "coming back," but exploding. The main predators of deer are wolves and cougars, which today are seldom seen throughout most of their historic range east of the Mississippi. Coyotes, bears, lynx and bobcats will take out fawns and the occasional adult if the opportunity presents itself, but their impact is fairly small.

Additional factors contributing to the overabundance of deer are the decrease in the number of hunters, and an increase of open areas where there is an abundance of herbaceous vegetation and low woody stems - the perfect diet for deer.

As a result, deer have essentially eaten the entire understory of our forests. Now, to some people this is great - they love the open view through the forest, but from an ecosystem point of view, this is a disaster. When walking through a woodland today, one sees a few old trees, a selection of mid-age trees, but next to no seedlings and saplings - because the deer have eaten them all. Shrubs? Aside from Asian honeysuckles and other invasive species, there aren't many shrubs in the understory, either.

What's to be done? I've heard stories of people fencing in their forests to keep the deer out. One could plant individual trees, and put fences around them to keep the deer from eating them. Fenced exclosures, 10' x 10' x 10', can set aside small areas for regeneration, too.

Is there a solution for those who don't want to fill the forest with fences? Yes! Exclosures can be made using the forest itself. Deer do not like to walk through areas where the ground is covered with coarse woody debris. By arranging downed trees and their limbs in such a way as to create "fenced-in" areas, one creates opportunities for seedlings to establish and grow far from the hungry glare of deer.

In a recent walk through the Rogers Center sugar bush with DEC senior forester Paul Romenko, this very scenario played out before our eyes. Paul noted that an entire age class of trees is missing from the forest: the youngsters. Noting that deer are the culprit, he recommended that a few strategic trees be cut, and their tops and limbs placed to form a protective barrier to deter the deer and allow natural forest regeneration to take place.

If you are interested in protecting your forest holdings using similar strategies, we recommend you contact the DEC foresters in your region to develop a land management strategy that will meet your goals.

Armed with knowledge, we can strive to make better decisions for our future forests, and hopefully need fewer fences. ❄️

Upcoming Programs Winter 2023-2024

All programs require preregistration unless otherwise noted.

To register or for more information, call (607)674-4733 or email Ellen@friendsofrogers.org.

Monday Morning Rambles

Start the week off right with a nature walk. We meet every Monday 10:00 AM (or 9:00 AM if we are traveling). See page 6 for destinations. Check our website for details.

Dec. 4, 11, 18
Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29
Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26

Storytime & Hike

At 10:30 AM every Wednesday, families are invited to join Jenni Larchar for an hour and a half of stories, music and outdoor exploration.

Jan. 10, 17, 25, 31
Feb. 7, 14, 28

December

Saturday Family Program: Natural Ornaments

Saturday, Dec. 9, 10:00-11:30 AM

It's amazing the wonderful decorations you can create from natural materials and a hot glue gun! All ages welcome - adult supervision required for young children. This free program is brought to you by the Otis Thompson Foundation. **Space is limited - call or email to register.**

Solstice Nature Trivia Night

Thursday, Dec. 21, 7-8:30 PM

Do you know your bird trivia? How about botany? The names of famous naturalists? Stretch your mind and celebrate your inner nature nerd. Come as an individual or form a team. This quarter it is too dark to hold trivia night at the fire pit this night, so we'll meet indoors. There will also be special treats to celebrate the Winter Solstice. **Call or email to register.**

The Quarterly Book Club

Welcome to Rogers Center's new **Quarterly Book Club!** Each quarter we read a new book, with two meetings to discuss what we have read, and the third meeting a trip to a regional destination that ties into the book.

The meetings can be virtual or in-person at Rogers Center, and the trip will be in-person, carpooling from Rogers Center.

Q1: Jan-March *Eager - The Surprising, Secret Life of Beavers and Why They Matter* by Ben Goldfarb.

Mtg. 1: Jan. 30, 7 PM Chapt. 1-5

Mtg. 2: Feb. 27, 7 PM Chapt. 6-9

Destination: March 30, 9 AM - Beaversprite & Ch. 10

For more info or to register:

607-674-4733; Ellen@friendsofrogers.org

Upcoming Programs

Winter 2023-2024

All programs require preregistration unless otherwise noted.

To register or for more information, call (607) 674-4733 or email Ellen@friendsofrogers.org.

January

First Day Hike

Monday, Jan. 1, 10:00-11:30 AM

Welcome the new year with a walk on the trails at Rogers. We'll have guided walks for those looking for a workout as well as those who are interested in a more leisurely pace. No registration required - just come on over!

Saturday Family Program: Frosty Morning Exploration

Saturday, Jan. 13, 10:00-11:30 AM

This family-friendly walk takes a close look at what is around us on a cold winter morning. Dress for the weather. This free program is sponsored by the Otis Thompson Foundation. **Call or email to register.**

February

53rd Annual Winter Living Celebration

Saturday, February 3, 2024, 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

It's that time of year once more! Join us for a day filled with CNY wintry traditions. See page 7 for more details.

Maple Magic

Saturday, Feb. 24, 10:00-Noon

All winter the maples have been sleeping, and as the days start to warm in late winter, sap starts to rise. We cannot predict exactly when this will happen, but it could be any time now. Join us for a tour of our sugarbush to learn the history and science of maple sugaring. **Call or email to register.**

The Monday Morning Ramble - *an Invitation*



Have you been debating whether or not to join us on one of our Monday Morning Rambles? Let me tell you a little bit about what we do to perhaps tip the scale for you.

Each week we head out to explore a nearby natural area.

The goal of these walks is not to pack on miles. We are a group of naturalists out enjoying what nature has to offer us on that day. Insects, plants, birds, tracks, fungi, scat...everything is fair game. Armed with binoculars, hand lenses and cameras, we are led by our curiosity and sense of adventure. Everyone contributes something - for no one person can be an expert in everything!

The MMRs started last spring, and to date, we have investigated the Rogers Center trails several times, but have also ventured to Labrador Hollow, Ferd's Bog, Nelson Swamp, Charles E. Baker State Forest, Jam Pond and Montezuma NWR.

We meet most Mondays at 10:00 AM, although if we are traveling, we usually meet earlier (watch our website and Facebook pages for updates). We don't put an end time on our walks because that can vary, too. Our local walks typically run a couple hours, while the more distant trips can last a full day.

If your Monday mornings are free, and if you enjoy exploring nature, then this invitation is for you! We hope to see you soon.

Rogers Center Programs at a Glance: Winter 2023-2024

D E C						1	2
	3	4 MMR: Adams Farm	5	6	7	8	9 Natural Ornaments
	10	11 MMR: Sugarbush	12	13 Chenango Bird Club	14	15	16
	17	18 MMR: Spruce Ridge & South Loop	19	20	21 Solstice Nature Trivia Night	22	23
	24	25 Holiday	26	27	28	29	30
J A N	Dec 31	1 First Day Hike - DEC	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8 MMR: Farm Tower	9	10 Storytime & Hike	11	12	13 Frosty Morning Exploration
	14	15 MMR: Channels/ Boundary	16	17 Storytime & Hike	18	19	20
	21	22 MMR: Round Pond	23	24 Storytime & Hike	25	26	27
	28	29 MMR: Nichols Pond	30 Book Club Mtg #1	31 Storytime & Hike			
F E B					1	2	3 Winter Living Celebration
	4	5 MMR: Summit Trail	6	7 Storytime & Hike	8	9	10
	11	12 MMR: Adams Farm	113	14 Storytime & Hike	15	16	17
	18	19 MMR: Hillside Trail	20	21	22	23	24 Maple Magic
	25	26 MMR: Nelson Swamp	27 Book Club Mtg #2	28 Storytime & Hike	29		

Winter Living Celebration



It's the 46th Annual Winter Living Celebration at Rogers Center!

Join us for a day brimming with seasonal activities, including:

- horse-drawn sleigh rides
- ice rescue demonstrations
 - snowshoeing
 - X-country skiing
 - ice fishing
 - ice carving

Indoors we have vendors from many area outdoor and conservation groups:

- Chenango Bird Club
- Bullthistle Hiking Club
- Chenango Valley Trout Unlimited
 - Chenango County 4H
 - Grow, Cook, Serve
- Otselic Valley Fishing & Heritage Assoc.

This year the Bird Cabin will be open!
See the newly remodeled space and join us there for kids activities.

Food is provided by:

Sherburne Rotary Club

with hot drinks and cookies from the
Chenango Bird Club

'Twas the Night Before Caddis

By Richard Frank

'Twas the night before Christmas when down by the stream

The full moon looked out on a chill winter scene.

A lone trout was sipping a midge in his brook,

Untroubled by worries of fishers with hooks.

Then from above a small sleigh did appear

Pulled by a brace of eight tiny reindeer.

It swerved of a sudden and down it did glide,

Settling its runners along the streamside.

The fat, jolly driver dove into his sled

And emerged with his three-weight held high over head.

"Thank you, my elves, for this wand smooth as silk.

This break will be better than cookies and milk."

So saying, he jumped from his sleigh with a chuckle,

Hiked up his boots and cinched up his belt buckle.

Santa meant business that cold winter's eve.

A fish he would catch – that you'd better believe.

Looking upstream and down, he spotted that trout,

Then he open his flybox and took something out -

"Size 32 midges are only for faddists;

I'll go with my favorite tan reindeer caddis."

So he cast out his line with a magical ease

And his fly floated down just as light as you please.

And it drifted drag free down the trout's feeding lane,

But the fish merely wiggled a fin of disdain.

"Oh, Adams; oh, Cahill; oh, Sulphur; oh, Pupa;

Oh, Hopper; oh, Coachman; oh, Olive Matuka!

I've seen every fly in the book and the box.

I'm old and I'm wary and sly as a fox.



To catch me you'll need an unusual gift,

For a present this common no fin will I lift."

Old Nick scratched his head, for his time it grew short.

The reindeer behind him did shuffle and snort.

He looked once again in his box for a fly

When a pattern compelling attracted his eye.

"The Rudolph!" he muttered and grinned ear to ear

"Far better to give than receive, so I hear."

So he cast once again and his magic was true,

And the trout it looked up and knew not what to do.

"This fly has a body of bells don't you know,

And if that's not enough there's a shining red nose!

I know it's fraud and I know it's a fake,

But I can't help myself. It's a gift I must take!"

So he rose in swirl and captured that thing,

Flew off down the stream. Santa's reel it did sing.

"Ho!" shouted Santa, "You're making my day.

If the heavens were water, you'd be pulling my sleigh."

So, Santa prevailed and released his great rival

First taking great care to ensure its survival.

He then mounted his sled and he flew out of sight

Shouting, "Merry Caddis to trout and to all a good

night!"

***Holiday Greetings and Best Wishes for
the New Year to all our Friends!***

From the Staff and Board at Rogers Center



Summer Camp

Are you looking for something special to gift your kids or grandkids this year? How about a week or two at Rogers' Summer Adventure Camp? We have sessions for 4-6 year olds, 7-11 year olds, and 12-15 year olds. Each week has a theme and each day is packed with fun and adventure. Forms are available on our website, or you can pick them up at the visitor center. Registration for members opens Dec. 1 and for the general public on March 1.

July 8-12 The Joys of Summer
 This session celebrates all the wonders of summer that make it special in the eyes of a child: catching insects, playing in water, building forts, flying kites, and getting muddy. **Sessions for 4-6 year olds and 7-11 year olds.**

July 15-19 Amazing Adventures
 Every day is a new adventure. One day teams compete in the Amazing Nature Race. On another day, we spend our time exploring ancient skills. A day spent studying the river and/or ponds is guaranteed to get us wet! What other adventures await you? You'll have to come and find out. **Sessions for 4-6 year olds and 7-11 year olds.**

July 22-26 Call of the Wild
 Our "caveman camp" celebrates the primitive skills our ancient ancestors mastered for their survival. Learn how to follow a trail, use a slingshot, create "cave art" and more. Campers are sorted into clans and each clan selects a territory and a specialty skill, and at the end of the week, the Clans gather to trade goods and enjoy a campfire. **7-11 year olds.**

July 29-Aug 2 Magical Woodland
 After receiving an invitation via Owl Post, campers arrive at Rogers Magical Woodland ready for a week of fantastical fun. The week begins with sorting into one of four "houses," and the creation of a wand. From there, each day campers participate in lessons in Herbology, Potions, Charms and more. **7-11 year olds.**

Aug. 5-9 Joys of Summer Session 2
4-6 year olds.
Curious Naturalists
 Older campers are invited to spend a week doing "deep dives" into the many branches of natural history. Each day we study a different branch of science: ornithology (birds), entomology (insects), botany (plants), and more. Campers choose a sit spot, which they visit each day for half an hour of observation, which they record in their nature journals. **12-15 year olds.**

Age	Time	Member/General Public
4-6 YO	9:00 AM - Noon	\$149/\$190
7-11 YO	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	\$199/\$245
12-15 YO	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	\$199/\$245



Where the Road Might Lead

Family Adventure Page with Jenni Larchar



Now that winter is here, it's time to think about the best ways to get outside and enjoy the season.

I prepare for winter by putting on snow pants and a warm coat that I've brought out from summer storage. Sweaters, long pants, hats and gloves accompany me outside on my winter adventures. If I dress appropriately, I can enjoy all kinds of winter activities, like snowshoeing, ice fishing, building a fort, or playing fox & goose.

Animals also have to get ready for winter. Some animals grow a heavy coat to protect them from the bitter cold, while others eat a lot before curling up for a long winter nap.

Some animals bring food home and make sure they have a good supply stored before winter starts, while others harvest the fruits that grow on branches and vines as

they ripen/sweeten throughout the winter.

We all prepare for winter in our own way.

When the snow falls in the woods at Rogers Center, will you be prepared to explore our paths and trails? Bring the kids and utilize not only the landscape, but also our rentable equipment for your winter adventure at Rogers.

Now, I understand struggling with the child that refuses to keep a hat over their ears or can't bear to trap their fingers inside mittens, even if it means frozen fingertips! Let that be part of your adventure!

Find some time to get outside this winter and bask in the beauty of the cold and snow. Bundle up and let the fun begin! When we are prepared we can truly enjoy everything the season has to offer. ❄️

Nature's Nursery Winter Session

Nature's Nursery is a place for learning and exploration for ages 3-6. This program is a unique opportunity for children to be introduced to new concepts, social interactions, and hands-on games and activities about our local wildlife. Jenni Larchar, the program's founder and leader, incorporates playful melody into her stories, lessons, and outdoor adventures as she encourages independent and inquisitive exploration.

Classes are for children ages 3-6 years old with independent bathroom skills, and run when Sherburne-Earlville Public Schools are in session. If there is a snow day, this program is canceled as well.

Fee is \$125 per child for the session. **Registration is required.** You can pick up a registration form at Rogers, or you can contact us and we will email you a copy. Late registrations are prorated at \$12.50/day.

Items your child must bring to Nature's Nursery:

- clothing appropriate for the weather (i.e. snow pants, hat, mittens, rain gear, boots, etc.)
- one change of shoes (close-toed only)
- two changes of clothes (including socks)
- labeled sippy-cup or water bottle for water
- please apply sunscreen and/or insect repellent prior to your child's arrival at Nature's Nursery

The Winter Session runs eight weeks, Jan. 10 - March 6, with no class Feb. 21 (mid-winter break).



News Flash



When you pull into main parking lot at Rogers Center, you may immediately notice something is different. Is there new construction going on? Indeed there is! This is the

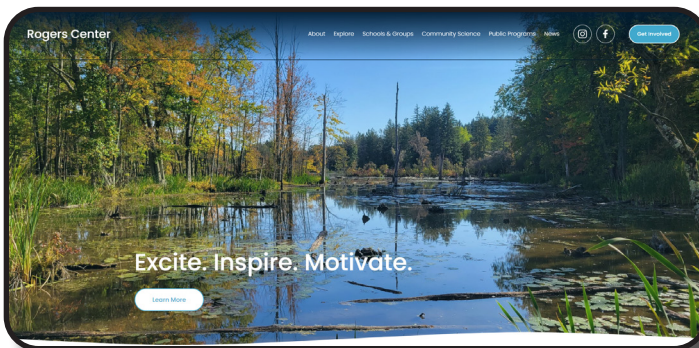
site of our new-to-us sugar shack, donated to Friends of Rogers by the Chenango County Historical Society, and rebuilt on-site by the carpentry students at DCMO BOCES.

The acquisition of this replica 1909 sugar shack has been a long process, with many bumps along the road, but we are thankful to the Historical Society for offering

the building to us and funding the project. We owe the final reality entirely to the carpentry students at BOCES, who disassembled, transported and are reassembling the structure at Rogers Center this fall.

It is our hope to use this building as part of our growing maple sugaring project that honors former board member and Colgate geology professor Bruce Selleck. Bruce had a passion for the outdoors, education, and finding ways to promote our local economy. Maple sugaring ticks all three boxes.

Upon completion, the sugar shack will give us the opportunity to host small scale demonstrations on how maple sap is transformed into the liquid gold for which our region is well-known. We anticipate a grand opening for the 2025 sugaring season. ❄️



Website development is exciting and full of potential, but it is also a long and sometimes arduous process.

Our staff began overhauling the Friends of Rogers/Rogers Center website last spring, and as the weeks became months, the reality of completing the task sometimes seemed like it was a long way away.

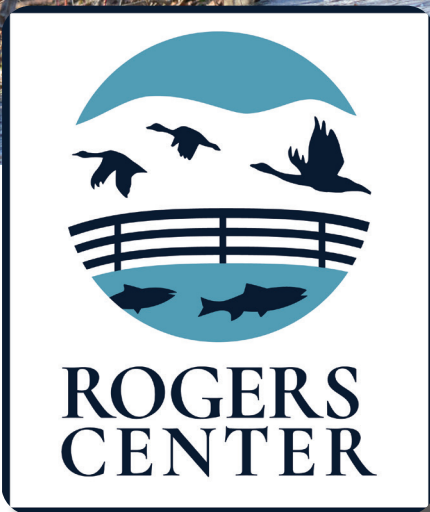
But perseverance pays off, and we are delighted to share with you that the new and improved Friends of Rogers website (www.friendsofrogers.org) is up and running.

We have a new website!

The cleaner, simpler format makes navigation easier for those seeking information about Rogers' trails, history, programs and more.

Are you interested in community science? There's a page for that. Want to schedule a program for your scout troop? There's a page for that. Do you have a burning question about something you saw while out in the woods? We have a page for that, too!

So fire up your computer, phone or tablet and take a look at what awaits you. We welcome your feedback. ❄️



If you need to reach us...

The Friends of Rogers is here for you. If you have any questions about programs, nature, or visiting, please reach out and contact us.

Contact Us!

Phone: 607-674-4733
Web: www.friendsofrogers.org
Email: info@friendsofrogers.org
Address: 2721 State Hwy 80, PO Box 932, Sherburne, NY 13460

The Visitor Center is Open
Wednesdays- Saturdays
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Sundays Noon - 4:00 PM
Mondays & Tuesdays by appointment

Rogers Center, in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, will assist in providing for those individuals with special needs. Please notify us in advance of your needs that may require special staffing.

A wheelchair is available for use on our trails and paved paths.

Friends of Rogers Staff

David Carson, Executive Director
Ellen Rathbone, Senior Educator
Jeremy Fetzko, Media & Marketing Coordinator
Jenni Larchar, Children's Program Coordinator
Amy August-Ruiz, Bookkeeper & Administrative Assistant

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