

# Jay C. Hormel

## Nature Center News

Fall & Winter Newsletter 2016-2017

Volume 35, Issue 2



A fall sunrise, seen from the observation tower  
Photograph by John Duren



## Director's Desk

**Larry Dolphin, Jay C. Hormel Nature Center**  
Director/Naturalist 1988-2016

Thank you!

For the last 28 years, I have been blessed to have a great job and wonderful supportive people to work with. I wouldn't have wanted to do anything else, with anyone else. I thank "all" of you who have been part of the Nature Center and part of our lives.

Our Nature Center message, as well as a good "life message," is simply to get outdoors to enjoy our natural world, so that ultimately, we will want to know and understand it. We will then be more likely to advocate for the planet, for the people of the planet, and for all the other incredible forms of life we share it with. It is this shared passion that will carry Nancy and me forward into our retirement.

Industrialist/physician Armand Hammer said it quite well: *"It is the responsibility of every human being to aspire to do something worthwhile, to make this world a better place than the one he [or she] found."* It is safe to say that all of you are partners in this endeavor, so on behalf of the planet and the Nature Center, we thank you for your shared talent, hard work, and gifts.

For the Wild Ones and the Little Ones,

*Larry & Nancy Dolphin*

*"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."*

## News Release

### Luke Reese Named as New Director

We're happy to welcome Luke Reese as the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center's new director/naturalist. A past intern and Austin resident, Luke knows the Nature Center well and looks forward to rejoining the community. He has spent the past several years managing the Nature Conservancy's 873-acre Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve in southern Arizona.

This has been a very exciting month for Luke and his wife Anna! All in just a few weeks, the family welcomed their new baby girl, Luna, moved from Arizona to Minnesota, and Luke began as the new Nature Center director.

The staff looks forward to working with Luke, as the transition to the new Interpretive Center fast approaches. His fresh perspective and experience will help propel the Nature Center into an exciting new time. Stop by to welcome Luke back into the Austin community!



# President's Letter

**Peter Mattson**, President of the Friends of the Hormel Nature Center

Greetings and welcome to the fall edition of the newsletter. You'll see that the Nature Center continues to offer lots of great programs and activities during the construction of the new Interpretive Center and the transition to our new director. I hope you'll come out to enjoy some of these offerings.



The Thanksgiving Feast Fundraiser is coming up on November 5. It's a fun evening filled with entertainment, good food, and many opportunities to bid on worthwhile auction items donated by individuals and businesses throughout the community. This is our major annual fundraiser—the proceeds cover summer staffing, programs, and usually the entire salary of the Nature Center Naturalist Intern.

I'd like to let you know about an important land management project we're working on. A few years ago, the Friends hired a company named Stantec to do buckthorn removal in several areas, including north of the tower. That has held up very nicely thanks to ongoing work by land manager Mike Goetz and folks from Stantec.

We are now working with Stantec on a grant application for a broader land management project. This first grant request will focus on the north end of the Nature Center property, and will include a prairie restoration plan for the approximately 40 acres still being farmed. Improvements will be made to the former home sites along the gravel road so they can develop into natural areas. This project will also include buckthorn removal in the area between the gravel road, the remnant prairie and the tower, as well as between the west boundary and the Larry Dolphin Trail rock. Tree plantings will expand the oak savannah area to the north of the tower. We will also expand the cleared savannah area north of the prairie, next to the golf course.

If we are approved for the grant, Stantec will do the initial work and provide maintenance for several years, so we're not adding to the workload of Nature Center staff (well, not too much anyway). The Friends will contribute 10% of the cost in cash or in kind. The amount of the grant request hasn't been finalized, but will probably be in the neighborhood of \$150,000.

Thanks to your generous support, we'll be able to take a major step toward restoring acquired land to its natural condition. We then intend to expand the work into more areas of the Nature Center. Luke Reese, our new director, has a background in forestry and will have ideas for the forested areas on the south and east sides.

Take a walk or ski out to the loop north of the tower sometime. You won't believe how things have changed since the buckthorn is gone. The tall grasses were planted to help with ongoing buckthorn control, but native flowers and grasses have already reappeared. Thank you for making this work possible.

*Peter Mattson*

## **Friends of the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center's Mission Statement:**

*To enhance and encourage environmental education, scientific opportunities, and the enjoyment of nature at the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center.*

[www.hormelnaturecenter.org/friends-of-the-hormel-nature-center](http://www.hormelnaturecenter.org/friends-of-the-hormel-nature-center)

# The Volunteer Page



## Summer Mentees

Thank you to all of our mentees who helped over the action-packed summer months: Adrianna Meiergerd, Simon Hirst, Blake Ross, Ray Wicks, Sarah and Hannah Hecimovich, Toria Strampe, Cerise Lerum, Sarah Hillson, Sarah Bachmeier, and Alec Ille. Without these participants in the Kevin Dammen Memorial Mentorship Program, the Nature Center wouldn't be able to offer all of its fantastic summer programming! All together, these mentees put in over 500 hours of work!

Thank you to all of our hard-working volunteers who have donated their time to help the Nature Center put on quality events and programs throughout the year!

### Trail Access Volunteer Drivers

Terry Taylor  
Gary Zimmerman  
Kevin Murray  
Ed Koch  
Dick Waldman  
Jim Burroughs  
Terry Dorsey  
John Duren

### Bird of Prey Vet Services

Dr. Mike Williams

### Thanksgiving Feast Committee Volunteers

Duane Champlin  
Darrell and Diane Ingvaldson  
Alice Tylutki  
Peter and Karen Mattson  
Gary and Marjorie Zimmerman  
Mark and Barb Owens  
Courtney Kremer  
Annette Mueller  
Arlen Schamber  
Jerry Ibberson  
Darlene and Ron Walth  
Phil Burkhart  
Caitlin Olson  
JoAnn and Rich Aho  
Kristine Wolner  
Autumn Hamberg  
Linda and Joe Dolan  
Stacy Rowbal  
Julie Brunner  
Rachel Stange

### Sunday and Special Event Volunteers

Ruth Collette  
Dorothy Schulz  
Susan and Toria Strampe & Family  
Duane Champlin  
Ann Bundy  
Jalene Wagoner  
Quin Brunner  
Alec Ille  
Julie, Sarah, and Hannah Hecimovich  
Kevin Murray  
Janet Larson  
Elden and Jean Huemann  
Miriam Luehmann  
Lorraine Krausert

### Friends of the Nature Center Board Members

Peter Mattson..... *President*  
Gary Zimmerman ..... *Vice President*  
Ron Walth ..... *Treasurer*  
Jill Merten ..... *Secretary*  
Alice Tylutki  
Darrell Ingvaldson  
Jerry Ibberson  
Rachel Stange  
Greg Larson  
Joe Dolan  
Arlen Schamber  
Chris Anderson

### Current Nature Center Staff

Luke Reese—*Director/Naturalist*  
Mike Goetz—*Land Manager*  
Julie Champlin—*Office Manager*  
Maria Anderson—*Naturalist/Teacher*  
Jill DeMoss—*Custodian/Event Staff*  
Ben Sherman—*Naturalist Intern*

## Special Award Recipients 2015



### Ruth Collette—2015 Nature Center Volunteer of the Year Award

Ruth has volunteered at the Nature Center for over ten years. She donates much of her time to volunteering throughout the Austin community.



### Ron Walth—2015 Sigurd Olson Leadership Award

Ron is the Treasurer for the Friends of the Hormel Nature Center, integral to their ongoing financial support of the Nature Center's mission.



### Chris Anderson—2015 Sigurd Olson Leadership Award

Past Friends of the Hormel Nature Center President, M.C. for the Feast Fundraiser and more, Chris actively supports the Nature Center.



### Gary Ray—2015 Sigurd Olson Leadership Award

Gary was instrumental in supporting the Hormel Foundation grant for the new Interpretive Center, and has supported the Nature Center for many years.

Read more about our award recipients online at: [www.hormelnaturecenter.org/get-involved](http://www.hormelnaturecenter.org/get-involved)  
These volunteers received their awards at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on April 14, 2016.



# Fall & Winter Event Schedule 2016

Please RSVP for any event at least one full day ahead of the scheduled time.

## September

**10 (Sat)**

**Sola Fide Observatory: 9:00 p.m.** Moon viewing, with other objects of astronomical interest

**17 (Sat)**

**Annual Friends Member Bus Trip: 8:30 a.m.** Day trip to Sea Life Aquarium & Como Zoo. Cost is \$19 for adults, \$14 for children. Space is limited.

**20 (Tues)**

**Sparky Stensaas: 7:00 p.m.** *What's so Great about the Great Gray Owl?* Join us to learn all about these large and mysterious forest dwellers. Cosponsored by Austin Audubon.

**24 (Sat)**

**Nature Center 8k Trail Run**

- **8:00 a.m.** In-person registration begins.
- **9:00 a.m.** 8k and Kids Race begin.

Details can be found at: [www.hormelnaturecenter8k.org](http://www.hormelnaturecenter8k.org)



**Sola Fide Observatory: 9:00 p.m.** Astronomical viewing

**27 (Tues)**

**8:00 a.m.** Registration for Christmas crafts opens.

## October

**03 (Mon)**

**Stan Tekiela: 7:00 p.m.** *Deer, Elk & Moose: Grand and Majestic Creatures.* Join us to hear about Tekiela's experiences with interesting ungulates. Cosponsored by the Austin Izaak Walton League.

**08 (Sat)**

**Walking Meditation Class: 1:30-3:30 p.m.** Learn how to practice awareness of the present moment by exploring several methods of walking peacefully in nature.

## October (continued)

**08 (Sat)**

**Sola Fide Observatory: 8:00 p.m.** Moon viewing, with other objects of astronomical interest

**14 & 15 (Fri & Sat)**

**33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Halloween Warm-Up**

Every ten minutes, a group of 25 is led into the "boo"tiful forest to meet the assorted spirits that reside there. Select your time slot when you purchase your tickets.

**First Hike: 6:50 p.m. • Last Hike: 9:10 p.m.**

**\$6.00 per person** (includes apple cider & a cookie)

**Tickets go on sale Friday, Sept. 9 at Super Fresh Produce, Bakery & Garden Center** — 2101 4<sup>th</sup> St NW • 507-437-6554

Interested in playing a part in Halloween Warm-Up? Call Matchbox Theatre at 507-437-9078 for more information.

**22 (Sat)**

**Sola Fide Observatory: 8:00 p.m.** Astronomical viewing

## November

**05 (Sat)**

**Thanksgiving Feast Fundraiser**

**SEE BACK PAGE** for more information.

**Sola Fide Observatory: 8:00 p.m.** Astronomical viewing

**12 (Sat)**

**Sola Fide Observatory: 8:00 p.m.** Moon viewing, with other objects of astronomical interest

**15 (Tues)**

**National Eagle Center: 7:00 p.m.** Come meet a live eagle and learn about the Golden Eagle Research project from Scott Mehus, the National Eagle Center's Education Director. Cosponsored by Austin Audubon.

*Programs are subject to change.*

For more information, visit our website at [www.hormelnaturecenter.org](http://www.hormelnaturecenter.org), contact the Nature Center directly by phone (507-437-7519) or email ([info@hormelnaturecenter.org](mailto:info@hormelnaturecenter.org)), or stop by in person.



# Winter Event Schedule 2016 - 2017

Please RSVP for any event at least one full day ahead of the scheduled time.

## December

**Cross country ski and snowshoe rental begins** (dependent on snow conditions). Visit our website under "Programs & Events" or check with staff for trail conditions and more information.

### 01 (Thurs)

**Christmas Crafts** (Details below)

- **Session 1: 6:00-9:00 p.m.**

### 03 (Sat)

**Christmas Crafts**

- **Session 2: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

Fee: **\$35.00** (includes materials & refreshments). *Refunds will not be offered.*

This class fills up fast! Please register in person.

**Registration opens September 27 at 8:00 a.m.**

### 10 (Sat)

**Sola Fide Observatory: 8:00 p.m.** Moon viewing, with other objects of astronomical interest



## January

**Free ski and snowshoe rental every Thursday afternoon** in January from 3:00-6:00 p.m. (dependent on snow conditions).

### 28 (Sat)

**Dammen Cross Country Ski Race Fundraiser**

- **8:00 a.m.:** Packet pick-up begins
- **9:00 a.m.:** One-Mile Beginners/Kids Race
- **10:00 a.m.:** 8k Classical Race
- **11:00 a.m.:** 13k Freestyle Race

**Register by January 20 for a discounted entry fee.**

Details at: [www.hormelnaturecenter.org/ski-race](http://www.hormelnaturecenter.org/ski-race)

**Ski Lessons: 1:30-4:30 p.m.** Lesson cost is **\$6.00** for adults and **\$1.00** for children (accompanied by an adult), which includes poles, boots, and skis. *Preregistration is required.*

## February

**Free ski and snowshoe rental every Thursday afternoon** in February from 3:00-6:00 p.m. (dependent on snow conditions).

### 18 (Sat)

**Friends of the Hormel Nature Center Annual Meeting:** SAVE THE DATE! 2016 in review; program TBA. This event is open to the public.

## March

### 04 (Sat)

**Sola Fide Observatory: 8:00 p.m.** Moon viewing, with other objects of astronomical interest

### 25 (Sat)

**Sola Fide Observatory: 8:00 p.m.** Astronomical viewing

Check our website for more upcoming events:  
[www.hormelnaturecenter.org/programs--events](http://www.hormelnaturecenter.org/programs--events)

## Sola Fide Observatory

Open to the public on specified Saturdays throughout the year. Come out and discover fascinating facts about the night sky from our resident experts as they host free public programs for our community!

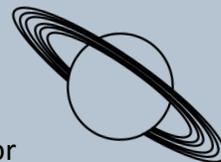
### Directions:

From Interstate 90, take Highway 218 south 2.5 miles to County Road 28. Turn right (west) one mile to the stop sign. Turn left (south) on County Road 29 for 1.5 miles to 180<sup>th</sup> Street. Turn right and go west for 1/4 mile. The driveway will be on your right.

### GPS Coordinates:

N43° 37.000', W092° 58.550'

For more information, call the Nature Center (507-437-7519) or volunteer Keith Snyder (507-440-1244).



For more information, visit our website at [www.hormelnaturecenter.org](http://www.hormelnaturecenter.org), contact the Nature Center directly by phone (507-437-7519) or email ([info@hormelnaturecenter.org](mailto:info@hormelnaturecenter.org)), or stop by in person.



## Summer Intern Jacob Burkhart

Nature has always been close to my heart. From a young age, my family took me fishing, canoeing, and camping around Austin and throughout Minnesota. These early experiences with the outdoors instilled an appreciation for nature that has stuck with me, even as I moved on to college.

I was born and raised in Austin, and I graduated from Austin High School in 2015. After graduation, I enrolled in college at the University of Minnesota Duluth. This fall, I will be returning for my sophomore year to continue pursuing my Bachelor of Arts degree in Instrumental Music Education. This year I will also be working for the university as a Resident Advisor in a residence hall.

With a full schedule of classes, studying, and instrument practice, it's easy to get stressed out and weighed down. Spending time in nature is how I've learned to relieve that stress and recharge. My favorite hobbies bring me outdoors—I am an avid cyclist and photographer, and Duluth offers world-class opportunities for both. When I'm all studied out and my face is sore from playing trumpet, going out for a ride on the trail or taking pictures by Lake Superior is a better remedy than being inside in front of a screen could ever be.

Thinking back, I've had so many positive experiences at the Nature Center. Whether it was my father taking me to see the salamanders and snakes when I was a toddler, field trips with school, skiing in the winter, or hiking in the summer, the Nature Center has always been a fun and formative part of my life for as long as I can remember. When the opportunity came to be employed here, I was very excited to work at a place full of happy memories, where I had learned so much as a kid. My favorite part of working at Jay C. Hormel Nature Center has to be teaching. I have been very fortunate to observe and learn from all of the amazing educators here at the Nature Center. I have enjoyed the opportunity to assist in teaching subjects that I find both important and interesting.

I would like to thank the Friends of the Hormel Nature Center for supporting my position and giving me the chance to work at such an incredible place. This past summer, I looked forward to coming in to work every day; I could truly say I love my job.

## Become a Friends Member

If you love the Nature Center, help sustain all the programs you enjoy with a Friends of the Hormel Nature Center Membership! Becoming a Friends Member is a great way to support and promote environmental education programming in our community! Become a member for a full year for a contribution of \$25 or higher.

### Individual & Family Membership Benefits

- **\$5.00 off** each child's fee for all Summer Adventure Programs (parent must be a member)
- **\$5.00 off** tickets to the annual Thanksgiving Feast fundraiser
- **Access to** members-only events and programs for youth and families
- **An invitation** to the annual members-only bus day trip
- **An invitation** to the Friends Annual Meeting—February 18, 2017
- **An opportunity** to give a one-year gift membership to a non-member (More information to be included in the membership renewal mailing in the coming weeks.)
- **A subscription** to *Nature Center News*, to stay up-to-date on all that's going on at the Nature Center, special events, nature facts and more! This publication will be delivered by post or email.



For more information, visit:

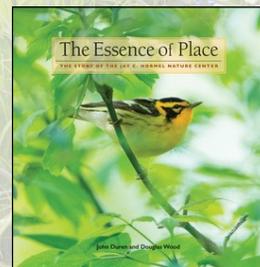
[www.hormelnaturecenter.org](http://www.hormelnaturecenter.org) and select "Friends of the Hormel Nature Center" under "Get Involved" or call 507-437-7519.

## Dedication Ceremony

The dedication of the new Interpretive Center is scheduled for

**April 22<sup>nd</sup> • Earth Day • 2017**

Check the website for details as the date approaches, and to see photos of the building progress so far.



### **A new book!**

***The Essence of Place: The Story of the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center***

Written by Douglas Wood, Photography by John Duren

### **Looking for a great holiday gift?**

**ALL** profits go to the Friends of the Hormel Nature Center, whose support preserves the Nature Center for future generations.

The book is available in the Interpretive Center, as well as these Austin locations:

**Sweet Reads:** 407 North Main Street

**Super Fresh Produce:** 2101 4<sup>th</sup> St NW



Jay C. Hormel Nature Center  
PO Box 673  
1304 21<sup>st</sup> St NE  
Austin, MN 55912  
507.437.7519  
[www.hormelnaturecenter.org](http://www.hormelnaturecenter.org)

Follow, Like, Review



Address Service Requested



# Annual Thanksgiving Feast Fundraiser



*"A Nature Celebration: Building a Living Legacy"*

**Saturday, November 5, 2016, at the  
Holiday Inn Conference Center**

Join us for social hour, music & entertainment,  
silent & live auctions, raffles, and a delicious  
Hormel turkey dinner!

This event is sponsored by: **Hormel Foods, Hy-Vee,  
Super Fresh Produce & Bakery, Ruth Wunderlich,  
and the Friends of the Hormel Nature Center**

Tickets are **\$35** for members and **\$40** for  
non-members. *Tables may only be  
reserved for a full party of eight.*

Tickets are available at the Nature Center and  
though JoAnn & Rich Aho (507-433-6928 or  
[finn44@charter.net](mailto:finn44@charter.net)).

**Questions?** Visit [www.hormelnaturecenter.org](http://www.hormelnaturecenter.org)