

Newsletter of the Gahagan Nature Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 421, Roscommon, MI 48653 • 989-275-3217 • GahaganNature.org
Issue #24 ~ Spring 2014

MGNP Cliff Notes

By Tracy Bosworth

After selling her newspaper *The North Woods Call* in 1968, Marguerite Gahagan continued to write the *Pine Whispers* column for the *Bay City Times*. She penned her final column in 1982. While retired from writing, Marguerite continued to remain active in the politics of resource conservation while living at her cabin in Roscommon. However, in the fall of 1994 her health declined sharply. Unable to stay in her home, the vacant cabin was vandalized, prompting Marguerite's estate to begin executing her will. Her furnishings and other items were auctioned and the proceeds were donated to Kirtland Community College. The DNR received Marguerite's ten acre property with the stipulation that it be used as nature preserve or sold at auction, with proceeds to support conservation education. Fortunately, the DNR was unsuccessful in auctioning the property.

Through Herculean efforts spanning two years, RMRA (Roscommon Metropolitan Recreation Authority) was able to secure a property special use permit from the DNR in September of 1996. Shortly thereafter on October 30th, an organizational meeting was held in Marguerite's cabin where the Marguerite Gahagan Nature Preserve was informally established with \$550 in an account with RMRA.

Marguerite passed in January of 1997 at 89 years of age. By spring, thanks to DNR grant and contributions from members of the Roscommon community, the preserve had a \$7369 balance in the RMRA books. A mission statement was adopted. By year's end, a bill made it through the Michigan House of Representatives, the Michigan Senate and was signed by Governor Engler, officially transferring property ownership from the DNR to RMRA.

In May of 1998, a transfer \$40,000 was made by Marguerite's estate. This enabled a purchase of nine acres to add to the property. By this point, monthly planning meetings were being conducted to organize projects and deal with finances. A Board of Directors was elected at the first Open House and Annual Membership Meeting held on October 3, 1998. This was a good thing because the governor soon signed a second bill adding the adjacent 40 acre parcel of state land to the preserve's property. The preserve, now official, had 59 acres, its first members and a \$31,358 fund balance.

By-Laws were adopted in January of 1999. Throughout the year, improvements to the cabin and the property (made possible by community volunteers, boy scouts, contributions and grants) continued. Boardwalks, trails, benches, and a gazebo were built. The cabin was repaired and made secure. The foundations for the present education programs were set forth. Much to the total surprise of the board, on December 15, the executors of Marguerite's will presented the preserve with stock investments from her estate worth \$154,284. This gift initiated a long-term endowment investment which is still intact. At the close of 1999, The Marguerite Gahagan Nature Preserve had a fund balance of \$183,061. Pretty spectacular when just two years prior, the amount was just over \$500.

Flash forward to 2014 and you will find the balance is still healthy, with the total value of all accounts on March 31 at \$199,937. That does not mean the preserve has been stagnant. Far from it. Through the generosity of members, donors, grantors, Marguerite's endowment and volunteer efforts, the additions made to the preserve over those 15 years have been numerous. Interpretive signage, a garage, improved trails, a new classroom, a paved path, a website, field trips, deer enclosures, ramps to the cabin, an information kiosk, AuSable Watershed monitoring, summer camp, a conservation easement, the Visiting Naturalist and ELF programs quickly come to mind. There are far too many other projects and acquisitions to list. Many have been described in the twice yearly newsletters. You can take my word about the progress, but I would prefer that you stop by and see for yourself. Please wander along the trails any time you wish. Come visit when the kids are onsite for field trips or camp, or become an ELF volunteer. If you want a guided tour, just give me a call at 989-390-0903. Someone will be around, because MGNP is sticking around.

Marguerite Gahagan Nature Preserve Board of Directors ~ 2014

A 503(c) non-profit organization whose mission is to protect the balanced habitat that supports a wide-variety of plant and animal species.

Chairperson: Jeff Mellgren
Vice Chair: Troy Fairbanks
Secretary: Bobbie Werle
Paul Bertrand
Julie Borak
Joanne Borak
Brian Hutchins
Craig Jacobs
Jeremy Jones
Richard Silverman

Tom Dale, Education Director
275-8206
thdale@core.com

Tracy Bosworth, Exec. Director 989-390-0903
adm@GahaganNature.org

www.GahaganNature.org

2014-15 Honor Roll Donations and Memorials

The Marguerite Gahagan Nature Preserve thanks the following organizations and individuals that kindly donated to our mission during 2013 and early 2014.

Lisa & Dan Sutton
Lucy M. Thomson
Richard Seton in memory of Toni Seton
West Branch Optimists
Mason- Griffith Founders Trout Unlimited
Roscommon County Community Foundation
Nadyne Hunt in memory of Max Hunt
Mershon Chapter Trout Unlimited
Merrill Pete Petoskey in memory of Jean Petoskey
Cliff & Carolyn Colwell
Jack & Liz Wade in honor of Tracy Bosworth
Kirtland Foundation
Duane & Terri Martin in memory Tom Weaver
Mary & Brian Hutchins
Mark & Tracy Bosworth
Bob & Dawn Tupper
Anglers of the AuSable
Art & Kathryn Ketelhut in memory of Shirley Ketelhut
Dr. Robert and Donna House
Terry Nanry
Bruce & Betty Phillips
Weyerhaeuser Company
Sherwood Boudeman
Roberta Werle
Julie Boushelle
Colleen Criner
Wade Family Fund
Mike Kent
John & Betty Colwell
Roger & Mary Fechner in memory of Joe Kuthkun
Vicki & Pat Springstead
Duncan & Kathy Lawrence
Stu Powrie in memory of Sylvina Powerie
Kaki Almirall honor of Libby Mundy
Mark & Jo Ann Doyle
Anne & Russell Kidd
Paige Nelson in memory of Susanne Nelson
and Mary Wickes
Martha Clapp in memory of Richard Clapp
Kirtland Garden Club
Michael McDonald in memory of Al Hutchins

MGNP Members are published in the Fall newsletter

2014 Gagahan Schedule

April 28-June 6: School Enviro Field Trips at Gahagan
May 16: Annual MGNP Bird Count at 8am
May 16: Guided preserve walk at Gahagan at 5pm
May 21: Roscommon Business Expo CRAF Center
June 7: AuSable River Collection 10am at Gates Lodge
July 22-24: Nature Camp from 9am-Noon at Gahagan
July 24: Family Night at 7pm at Gahagan
July 19: Riverfest downtown Roscommon
Sept. 6: AuSable River Collection 10am at Gates Lodge
Sept. 8: Fall Field trips begin
Sept. 21: 1-4 pm Open House at Gahagan
Oct. 25: Cabin Closing

Board of Directors meet on the 2nd Monday at 7:00 pm.
Everyone is Welcome to attend.

For up-to-date schedule, changes and event details visit
www.GahaganNature.org.

Get alerts and updates through our Twitter feed located at
[@gahagannature](https://twitter.com/gahagannature).

Where have all the Monarchs gone?

By Troy Fairbanks

Do you remember seeing any Monarch butterflies or caterpillars last year? In the past few years the Monarch population has dropped precipitously. So much so that last year I was not able to find any Monarch caterpillars on Milkweeds, their only food source. The Monarch butterfly migrates to a specific area in the mountains of Mexico where it overwinters. This year the overwintering population only covers 1.65 acres while last year it covered 3 acres. At their peak in 1995-96 the monarch butterfly winter population covered 45 acres.

So what has happened to the Monarchs? It is speculated that three things have led to this massive drop in their population. The first reason is a loss of habitat, both in their winter home and in their summer home in the Midwest. Their winter home has undergone deforestation from human activity while in the Midwest many acres that were left fallow previously have been planted with corn to meet the demand for ethanol. This has meant less growing areas for the milkweed, which is of primary importance in the Monarch's life cycle.

Secondly the use of herbicides has pretty much eliminated the Milkweed plants growing alongside or within corn and soybean fields. The Monarch needs the Milkweed to survive. The Monarch Butterfly uses it as a source of food but more importantly it is where they lay their eggs and what their caterpillars feed on.

Lastly the climate has not been kind to the Monarch. During their migration they have been hit with high temperatures and droughts in the fall or unusually cold springs both of which greatly reduced the number of butterflies able to survive the long trip.

If you would like to help the Monarch I suggest you plant Milkweeds where possible. The website monarchwatch.org has seed kits you can purchase. Let's hope the spring weather is good for the Monarchs as they travel back up north.



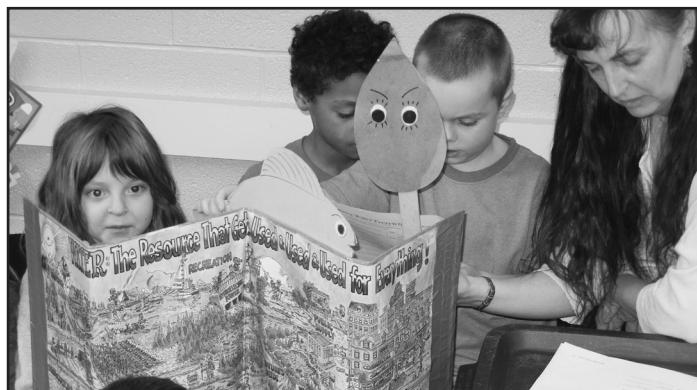
Gold and black wings, so fragile,
Trembled in the warmth of the sun.
Some secret message to migrate;
Instinct of thousands of years.
The monarch butterflies
Resumed their thousand-mile trek.

*Marguerite Gahagan
So Fragile - 8/24/1966*

Caution when hiking at MGNP

Boardwalks: The harsh winter has caused some severe heaving of our boardwalks. We are waiting for the frost to leave the ground before determining a course of action. Please watch your footing. Currently the boardwalks are not stroller or wheelchair friendly.

White Trail: The markers for the white trail have been removed. Last spring the trail was damaged due to a plow line trench that was created when the nearby village compost pile caught fire. The white trail will need to be rerouted and remarked after the timber harvest.



Collins Elementary volunteer Kathy VanderMollen assists with the "Water, Water Everywhere" puppet show. Nearly every kit contains a puppet show. Information presented via puppet commands more attention and retention than info presented by an adult!



Our Lady of the Lake ELF volunteers, Amy Galea and Steve Bane, assist with making pine cone bird feeders. The cones kit is from the Designs of Nature theme.

The Eleventh Hour

The letter was dated August 27, 2013 and began with, "Hello education leader: My name is Tom Dale and I am the Visiting Naturalist from the Gahagan Nature Preserve." It ended with, "Can your school afford the fee? Are you ready to get on the schedule? Pick a day. I can't wait to get started!" It was mailed to all the schools in a six county district as well as several north-eastern Michigan libraries.

For the first time, Gahagan was facing the likelihood of needing to charge the schools for the Visiting Naturalist Program. After 12 years of generous financial support, Kirtland Community College advised Tom that they would no longer be able to continue funding the program. We figured that certain civic organiza-

tions would chip in in certain schools, and MGNP would absorb some of the costs, however in the final accounting, it was determined that individual schools a libraries themselves would need to begin paying something for the program.

The letter was just being opened by the first recipients, when, in the same week, we were thrilled to find that two organizations were coming to our rescue. Weyerhaeuser Company and the Wade Family Fund of the Roscommon County Community Foundation were both contributing to support the Visiting Naturalist program. With backing from both organizations, the 2014 Visiting naturalist program was again offered to all, totally free of charge.

Gahagan, as well as over 3,000 students, is extremely thankful for the support from Weyerhaeuser and the Wade Family Donor Advised Fund to the Visiting Naturalist Program!

CAT TALES

Try to visualize the skull of a cat big enough to consume your entire head in one bite. That cat skull would be *Panthera leo atrox*, the American lion. You can imagine the collective gasp when a replica of the massive lion skull is unveiled. Even more excitement is heard when a child's head is "consumed" inside those jaws.

The Visiting Naturalist Program began in 2002 and brings Gahagan's Education Director and resident Naturalist, Tom Dale, to classrooms across our area. This year's program, "Cat Tales" explores the seven species of wild cats that are native to North America. Along with a puppet show, replicas of scat and tracks, stories, stuffed toys, and several cat skull, the presentation also includes full body pelts of the bobcat, cougar and lynx. "These kids are terrific," says Dale. "You should see them crowd the front row. In all the years I've been doing this, I don't think I've ever had a kid not pay attention."

Of the seven species, only the bobcat is still doing well throughout its range. The cougar, jaguar, ocelot, lynx, jaguarondi and margay have all lost significant habitat and population. "Cat Tales" impresses upon children the need for responsible stewardship of wild places and wild animals. Only with understanding and care will these cats keep their place in our world.

Visiting Naturalist Program Stats

2002	Wolf Songs	19 schools/2600 students
2003	Cat Tales	19 schools/2990 students
2004	Bear Tracks	20 schools/4000 students
2005	Wolf Songs	20 schools/4500 students
2006	Cat Tales	19 schools/4100 students
2007	Bear Tracks	24 schools/5500 students
2008	Wonders of Weasels	20 schools/4800 students
2009	Wolf Songs	24 schools/5200 students
2010	Cat Tales	22 schools/5100 students
2011	Bear Tracks	18 schools/3600 students
2012	Wonders of Weasels	17 schools/3000 students
2013	Wolf Songs	15 schools/3500 students
2014	Cat Tales	15 schools/3200 students

Dear Mr. Dale,



*I loved the place.
I loved the cat tales.
I loved the animals.
I loved the print.
I loved the skeletons.
I loved the pensile.
I loved the stiker.
I loved the lions and
the bobcats.*



Timber Cut at Gahagan

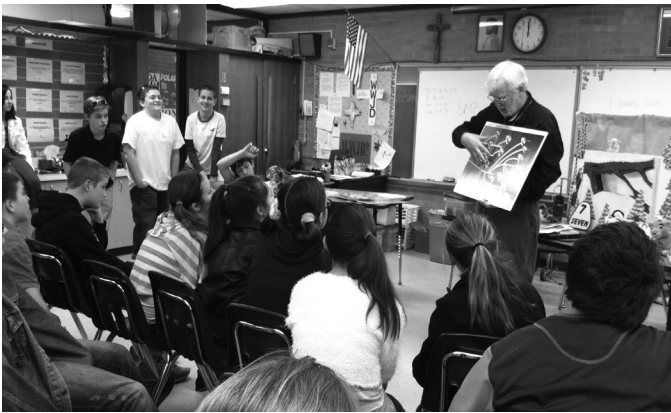
By Brian Hutchins

The Gahagan Board approved a plan for a small timber harvest at Gahagan Preserve. The cut will be approximately 12 acres and will start adjacent to the village and township recycle area and proceed to the south section of the orange hiking trail. Weyerhaeuser will conduct the cut. Tree marking will be done by one of their staff foresters and Gahagan's environmental educator. The objective is three-fold; to thin an area of forest largely containing trees near the end of their life cycle, to provide an outdoor teaching tool allowing students to see the impact of harvesting, and to provide habitat variety for birds and other wildlife species.

Another impact of the cutting will be the re-routing of the white trail following the harvest. Most of the white trail is within the cut area. It has been unrecognizable since last Spring when a small wildfire that started in the recycle area entered the Preserve. Fire control lines and fallen trees obliterated parts of the trail. The Preserve has been working with Higgins Township to take measures to prevent future fire occurrences. Following the cutting, the white trail will be re-routed to correct the problems caused by the fire.

Additionally, the harvest will provide income to the Preserve. In the agreement, Weyerhaeuser will pay Gahagan Preserve \$1000 to make the cut plus an established fee for the volume of the various types of wood harvested. Funds will go toward Gahagan environmental education programs.

The cutting will be done by low-impact methods and will take about a week. Harvest dates are not set but it is expected to be completed by year's end. The last harvest at the Preserve was conducted in 2001. That area has returned to aspen.



Tom describes various members of the feline family to Mrs. Fitzgerald's middle school science students at St. Joseph's Catholic School in West Branch.

Spring Field Trips

From now until the end of the school year, your preserve will be focused on school field trips. The grounds, trails and cabin have been cleared and cleaned and primed. The video projector is 'talking' to the compound microscope and stands ready to peer into a sample pond water to observe protozoa and bacteria. The indoor and outdoor classrooms are prepped. We expect several classes from Roscommon Elementary and Middle Schools as well as groups from Grayling, West Branch and Houghton Lake. A great spring season is in the making.

Schedule your field trip by contacting Tom at thdale@core.com. Hurry, the calendar is filling quickly!

The Spring Bird Count: May 16th

8:00 until Noon and again at 5:00 pm (until we call it quits)

It is mostly about listening. When birds establish their nesting territories the males sing. When they are passing through during migration they often sing, and we all stand around and listen. Once the birds have made themselves known, we study the trees for the source of the singing. Hopefully we can spot them, although it is not necessary to actually see them in order to add them to our count.

If the ovenbirds are singing, it is a very territorial thing. We try to assess the extent of one territory when we hear another singing from a different location. We should probably count two for each singing location, a singing male and a silent female, but we don't. In order to count the female you need to actually see her; and that doesn't happen very often.

Standing in the parking lot, we sometimes hear "drink you teeeee" and that's the Towhee. Walking down Maplehurst we have often heard the buzzing trill of the Northern Parula, a member of the warbler family. We often have the Eastern Phoebe nesting near the cabin and from time to time, a family of chickadees nesting in the birdhouse with the video camera. That makes them very easy to count.

Once, back a few years as we were walking the trail near the south end of the preserve Joanne Bouck raised her hand as if to say "quiet" and then pointed and proclaimed "blue headed vireo." I had never heard of such a bird, but raising my binoculars and searching in the indicated direction, actually spotted the bird and then the nest! Once a herring gull flew over us; yup, we counted it.

Over the years, we have counted a grand total of 64 species. The count for a typical day will be 20-30 species and 100 or so total birds. The totals last year were 26 species and 75 total birds. May 16th is quite early for the count and we might not get to count very many, but, I heard winter wrens singing just last week. Hey, it's fun! Join us.

Upper AuSable Watershed Monitoring

By Tom Dale

The Upper AuSable River Watershed Monitoring Project, which began in 2007, samples the river's 6 major tributaries twice each year in June and September. When we first began the project, Irene Borak and I took part in a Michigan Clean Water Corps (MiCorps) training at CMU in Mount Pleasant. It included participation and support from every river centered organization in the neighborhood. As part of that training, our class of beginners visited the Chippewa River for some sampling practice. Everyone had nets and try as we might; the entire group was only able to find a dozen or so "bugs." That contrasts quite sharply with our experiences so far in our efforts to monitor the mighty AuSable River. In studies of river ecosystems, high bug diversity translates as high watershed quality.

In 60 sampling events (10 river day events times 6 sites) we have never failed to collect at least 11 varieties of benthic (bottom dwelling) macroinvertebrates; our average is 24.5; a high value for a single site was 38. That was from the Big Creek at North Down River Road. Our absolute diversity value, that is, the total number of benthic macroinvertebrate families found in all 60 samples is 88! When data from each site is used to compute the MiCorps water quality score, our average value is 50.9, well above a level that would indicate excellent water quality. The water in some of Michigan's rivers is so contaminated that latex gloves must be worn when collecting samples. That's what makes monitoring the AuSable River watershed so much fun. It is wonderful water and we all intend to keep it that way.

The AuSable River project began with a grant from the Michigan Clean Water Corps. In our grant proposal we identified two broad objectives for the project. The first objective was to collect water quality data to monitor the health of the watershed, both for short and long term. The second objective was to enlist a large cadre of volunteers who love the river to work together to guard and protect it. We need everybody and that means you. It's fun. Why not join us. Contact Tom at thdale@core.com. That's all it takes. We provide everything else.

Our 11th AuSable River Day is June 7th Come Join Us!

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Project ELF

The close of the 2013-14 school years wraps up another successful year of Environmental Learning for the Future, otherwise known as Project ELF. Roscommon Elementary, Our Lady of the Lake Regional Catholic School, Collins Elementary, Houghton Lake Middle School and St. Joseph's Catholic School participated in the ELF program this year.

ELF covers five ecological themes: Habitats, Cycles, Adaptations, Designs of Nature, and Earth and Sky. Each ELF school covers one theme with eight kits per year. ELF teaching kits contain multiple activities complete with resource materials such as slideshows, mammal and bird skull sets, audio tapes, puppet shows, rock collections, games, etc.

Each ELF school has committed team of volunteer educators. The volunteer educators attend a one-hour training workshop each month at their school. MGNP provides the training workshop and helps volunteers develop teaching skills and adapt the lessons to various grade levels. The volunteers then go into the classroom for roughly one hour each month to share the lessons and activities included in that month's particular kit.

Kudos go out to the many volunteers who have shared their time and talents to enrich the scientific education of hundreds of our elementary school students. As with many volunteer opportunities, our ELF volunteers feel they get more in return than they give. The most frequent volunteer comment is, "I am amazed by how much I learn from the ELF lessons." Parents have also mentioned the impact of ELF programming on their children. One parent recently shared, "When my daughter comes home from school she mentions very little. But when she has had an ELF presentation, she tells me everything!"



Roscommon ELF volunteer Sue Jock shows a variety of tree galls to the students from Mrs. Mires' second grade class. Roscommon Elementary covered the cycles theme this year.

Come Join Us at the Marguerite Gahagan Nature Preserve!

Marguerite Gahagan Nature Preserve operates as a non-profit organization run by volunteers and funded by its members, generous donors and the endowment left by Marguerite. Did you know that it provides environmental education for many of the schools in the surrounding counties? Did you know that the 60-acre preserve is open to the public for hiking, snowshoeing, birding and many other uses? Did you know we have an asphalt and boardwalk trail that is wheelchair friendly? It travels through woods and wetlands and along the beginnings of Tank Creek. Interested in learning and helping? Please join us!

Yes, I/we want to join Marguerite Gahagan Nature preserve. Enclosed is my/our yearly membership.

\$20 ☐ Individual / \$30 ☐ Family / \$50 ☐ Organizational \$_____ Donation

I am making a donation of \$_____ ☐ in memory of, ☐ in honor of _____

Name: _____ Ph: (_____) _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ @ _____

Please make checks to Gahagan Nature Preserve, Inc. and mail to P.O. Box 421, Roscommon, MI 48653

You can also donate, join, or renew your membership on-line at www.GahaganNature.org

Membership Fees

There's no way to soften this announcement. We have to raise our membership fees. We haven't done that since the creation of the organization, but our costs have increased to the point that it is necessary. So, effective in October 2014, your annual dues will increase to \$20.00 per year for an individual membership and to \$30.00 for a family membership.

We hope this will allow us to continue to create and mail our newsletter twice a year to you, as well as continue to support our education programs. We thank you for all your past support and hope it will continue in the future.

Making (More) Waves from Weyerhaeuser Employees

Making Waves is a program created by the Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund that fosters volunteerism and supports Weyerhaeuser employees' good works in the community. During the summer of 2014, Faith Dandois, David Spencer, Tim Weismiller, Greg Finkbeiner, Lesley O'Dwyer, Simon Thomas, a group of employees and friends from the Weyerhaeuser OSB mill in Grayling, spent a day cleaning the banks of the AuSable River. As a result of their actions, they were awarded a \$1000.00 grant from the Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund. Once again, the Weyerhaeuser employees chose to award that grant to Gahagan. We are very grateful to the Grayling OSB employees and the Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund for their generosity.

Gahagan Nature Camp 2013

Be sure to mark your calendar!

Three days! July 22-24 Each Day 9:00 till Noon

Nature Camp is all about interacting with the outdoors. We explore the far reaches of the preserve, investigate the various ecosystems on the property, play games and work on a few craft projects along the way. Best of all we develop new friendships. Children of membership families attend for \$10. The fee for children of non-membership families is \$20. Participation is open to children in the age range of 7-11 and is limited to the first 24 children who register. You can register by calling Tracy Bosworth at (899) 390-0903 or by contacting Tom Dale at thdale@core.com



Family Night

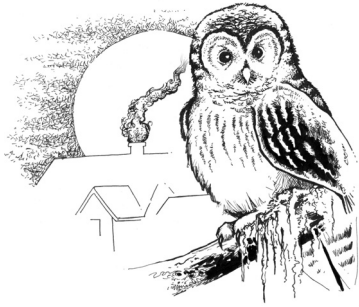
Every year, MGNP presents Family Night on Thursday evening during the week of camp. Again this year, we have an exciting program that is suitable for all ages. Jim Miller, director of the Michigan Outdoor Skills School will present "Wilderness Skills of our Ancestors." Jim's production of early American skills is an entertaining and educational demonstration that includes hides, pelts, bows, arrows, baskets and a 14 foot birch bark canoe, all created using ancestral techniques. What is new this year is our venue, MGNP Family Night will be held at the newly completed Roscommon Area District Library.

Join in Thursday, July 24th at 7:00pm at RADL! 7

Marguerite Gahagan Nature Preserve

P.O. Box 421

Roscommon, MI 48653



Pine Whispers

The Biography & Writings of Marguerite Gahagan founder and publisher of the *North Woods Call*
for more information and to order visit: www.GahaganNature.org

Jeanne's Story

By Bobbie Werle

Sometimes the stars align and a wonderful story is the result. Such was the case last fall during a visit to deliver copies of our book *Pine Whispers* to the AuSable Artisan Village, in Grayling.

Jeanne Prevost was at the Gallery and upon hearing the name Marguerite Gahagan said she met Marguerite Gahagan when Jeanne was about ten years old. Each summer, after school ended in Dearborn, she spent in Grayling with her grandmother who lived in a cabin on the AuSable River. The 1950's were a time before telephones were common in summer cabins, before cell phones, television, Interstate I-75, or many paved roads.

One summer in 1956 or 1957, the neighbors in the next door cabin, while on their way to Grayling, found a raccoon hit by a car on the side of the road with a very tiny baby attempting to nurse. There was no hope of recovery of the mother and the family believed it would be best to take the baby with them and try to save it. A couple of weeks later, the family had to return home and couldn't take the baby with them.

In the meantime, Jeanne had bonded with the little animal, and her understanding grandmother, allowed Jeanne to take the baby and continue raising it, including allowing it to sleep on Jeanne's bed. Jeanne got a small collar and leash and the two of them became familiar sights along the banks of the AuSable. Sometimes Jeanne and Pepper (the newly named raccoon) would float on the river in her grandmother's pole boat.

Soon the collar and leash weren't necessary and as the sum-

mer progressed those who didn't know the story of Jeanne and the raccoon would often shout to her: "Hey, little girl, do you know there's wild animal in your boat/ on the dock behind you/ lying on your jacket/ sitting right behind you/ following you?"

Summer continued until time for Jeanne to return to Dearborn and begin school. What to do with Pepper? Jeanne couldn't stay in Grayling. Pepper couldn't go to Dearborn because of a city ordinance against having wild animals as pets. Jeanne couldn't just abandon Pepper. What to Do? Once again the stars aligned and one of her grandmother's neighbors suggested a solution. As luck would have it, the neighbor was Mort Neff. [For those of you who aren't familiar with the name Mort Neff--he was one of the early television personalities and hosted an extremely popular program devoted to Michigan natural resources.]

Mort suggested they contact a woman who lived near Douglas Lake who often took in raccoons who needed special attention. The woman? Marguerite Gahagan. Jeanne remembers it seemed a very long ride until they got to Douglas Lake and met Miss Gahagan. She was very sympathetic to Jeanne's dilemma and also very direct with Jeanne's parents, that Pepper would not be a pet. Rather, her efforts would be to reorient Pepper to live in the wild.

Jeanne's parents subscribed to the newly formed *North Woods Call* and sometimes Pepper activities were reported in the newspaper. Eventually Pepper was no longer mentioned and Jeanne knew Pepper was back in the wild.