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The Radisson Hotel
Big River Magazine

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attending tonight.

Because of your support,
land will be protected and children
will learn to nurture nature.

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You make everything we do possible!



www.mississippivalleyconservancy.org

Save the driftless . . .



. . . for them.

Welcome to
Mississippi Valley Conservancy's
25th Annual Fall Fundraiser

Save the Driftless...for *them*.

Tonight we come together to celebrate land protection and support the future of our woodlands, wetlands, prairies, farms, and wildlife for the children who will inherit this place.

Your gifts help provide amazing outdoor classrooms that are open every day of the year!

The money we raise tonight will allow future generations to inherit a legacy that will forever define the unique and beautiful Driftless Area.

On behalf of Mississippi Valley Conservancy, we want to express our sincere appreciation for your generous gifts tonight.

Have fun, bid high and bid often!

Thank you.

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Members of this special group of Conservancy supporters have made a lasting commitment to land protection through a variety of estate-planning tools. These include bequests in a will or trust, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, IRA designations, and gifts of life insurance.

Please consider joining this dedicated group of conservationists today by making Mississippi Valley Conservancy a part of your legacy plan.

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Tonight's Program

5:30

Welcome Reception

Silent Auction

Wheel of Wine

Cash Bar

6:40

Silent Auction Closes

6:45

Conservancy Welcome and Update

Carol Abrahamzon, Executive Director

7:00

Live Auction Begins

8:00

Check-Out Station Opens

*Thank You to Auctioneer Steve Schuldt
for donating his services this evening.*

Our fundraising goal tonight is \$60,000.
Thank YOU for helping us meet our goal!

Silent Auction

- Driftless Sweetness** – Delight in local sweetness with this artistically arranged basket containing 5 pints of home-harvested and crafted maple syrup, pumpkin cookies, hot cocoa mix and nature napkins. Crafted and donated by Jon and Ann Rigden.
- Tree seedlings** – Choose from 5 tree seedlings (1-2 ft) and 1 large swamp white oak tree (3-4 ft) grown by John Sullivan of La Crosse. Species: burr oak, swamp white oak, American elm, red elm, silver maple, eastern cottonwood and catalpa. Suitable for moist well-drained soils but will also grow in sandy to clay soils. The trees will be available in the spring. Call John (608-785-2194) after April 15th to arrange for pick up.
- Winona Arts Experience** – See the sea (and the world) through the eyes of master artists at the Minnesota Marine Art Museum (2 free admission tickets) and be inspired by worldly documentaries at the Frozen River Film Festival (2 weekend passes). Weekend film festival passes allow access to all films and events, both in person and online (February 5-12, 2023).
- Clafin Fishing Rod** – Get out on the river with this legacy rod hand-crafted by the late Dr. Tom Clafin, a professor emeritus in the biology department at UW-L and founder of the River Studies Center. This exquisitely crafted rod is a 6.5-foot medium action spinning rod with a hardwood handle.
- Big River Media Package** – *Birds of the Upper Mississippi River and Driftless Area* is packed with fascinating stories and beautiful photographs of the most interesting birds in the Upper Midwest. Included in this package is a year subscription to *Big River Magazine*.
- Holiday Night Out** – Your holiday spirits will rise when you and a loved one attend the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra's "American Christmas" concert on December 16th 2022. Enjoy dinner before or after with a \$100 gift certificate to The Freighthouse.
- Monarch Woodland Sunflower by Tom Rhorer** – Watch the sun shine through this beautiful silk print of a monarch butterfly – this unique piece of art is meant to be hung in a window. Photo taken at Mathy Quarry and generously donated by Tom Rhorer.
- Meringue Bakery Cooking Class** – Bring a friend and take a class with Wisconsin-based pastry chef and owner of Meringue bakery or taste your way through their award-winning desserts! The variety of classes offered cover topics such as cake/cupcake decorating, baking French pastries and even making classic Italian breads. Gift certificates can be used for products or classes, must sign up in person at the bakery for classes. Valid for 1 year.
- Owen Gromme Lithograph - Red-bellied woodpecker** – Celebrate the legacy of Owen Gromme with this framed print of a red-bellied woodpecker. Gromme spent most of his career as the curator of birds and mammals at the Milwaukee Public Museum. His reputation as a painter of wildlife helped him create awareness of bird conservation issues.
- Get in the Christmas Spirit!** – *The Long Christmas Dinner*, a play written by Thornton Wilder and produced by Grey Area Productions, showcases the lives of several generations of the Bayard family. You and a loved one are invited to experience one family's holiday traditions – past, present, and future. Enjoy your own dinner before or after the show at Schmidy's (\$50 certificate). Donated by the Pump House and Schmidy's. Dates: Dec 2, Dec 3, Dec 8, Dec 9, Dec 10 at 7:30pm, Dec. 4 and Dec 11 at 2pm.
- Silver Screen Night** – Escape with a friend through the silver screen with a Pump House Film Society screening followed by a light meal and beverage (2 tickets for the December 18th Screening). To round this perfect night off, enjoy dinner at Schmidy's (\$50 certificate). Donated by the Pump House Regional Arts Center and Schmidy's.
- Art of the Table** – Bring fine artisanship to your table or complete your holiday shopping with these locally crafted pottery vase and coasters by Jennifer Erickson and handmade live-edge cherry wood bowl by Andrew Erickson. Donated by the artists.
- Art of the Side Table** – Bring fine artisanship to your home with this live edge, ash side table (a slice of natural history!) by Tim Larson; locally crafted coasters by Tom Rhorer; and handmade wooden bowl by Ken Critzman. Donated by the artists.

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Thank you to our generous Auction Donors

Jim Rogala	Sara Lubinski
Driftless Angler	Boats and Bluegrass
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Castle La Crosse	La Crosse County Convention and
Kelly Krieg-Sigman	Visitors Bureau / Explore La Crosse
Pat Caffrey	Allen Blake Sheldon
Sue Knopf	
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- \$250 Lodging discount at High Point Retreats** – Immerse yourself in tranquility and enjoy \$250 off a two-night stay at High Point Retreats. Perched in the solitude of nature, the ridge top retreats offer a picturesque view at one of the top elevations in all La Crosse County. Cozy up to your loved ones, relax with friends, or find inspiration in a cabin or one-of-a-kind duplex.
- Sightseeing on the La Crosse Queen** – All aboard! Watch for eagles and other wildlife while you and three friends cruise the main channel of the Mississippi and admire the beautiful bluffs you've helped protect! On this sightseeing tour, you'll learn facts and trivia of the historical and present-day river, even how the locking process works. Cocktails, soda drinks, and concessions are available onboard. You'll also receive a gift basket from Explore La Crosse to enjoy when you get home from your cruise!
- Wind Chime** - Enjoy being serenaded by the sounds of the wind with this locally crafted, unique, antique spoon wind chime. Generously donated by Trout Unlimited.
- Driftwood Wind Chime** – Enjoy the music of the wind with this unique and locally crafted wind chime with spoons shaped like little fish suspended from driftwood. Generously donated by Trout Unlimited.
- Amphibians & Reptiles of Minnesota, Wisconsin & Michigan** – The new and expanded edition of Allen Blake Sheldon's fabulous field guide now covers three states. It's an excellent specimen guide that's loaded with Allen's beautiful color photos. Allen generously donates the use of his nature images to Mississippi Valley Conservancy.

Live Auction

- Guided Hike at Holland Sand Prairie** – Jim Rogala from Friends of the Holland Sand Prairie and the current President of the Regional Prairie Enthusiasts will guide your group of up to six people on an easy hike to discover the amazing biodiversity of this nature preserve located just north of La Crosse. Roughly 150 species of plants have been identified to date, some of which are State threatened species or species of special concern. From early spring until late fall, there are always natural treasures to see at Holland Sand Prairie.
- Fishing on the Fly** – Learn the language of trout on a half-day of fly fishing for one angler with a professional guide from Driftless Angler (fee for additional guests). All gear provided. Enjoy locally roasted and brewed fair trade coffee with a bite to eat before or after fishing with a \$25 gift certificate from Wonderstate Coffee Cafe in Viroqua.
- Deluxe Kickapoo Valley Retreat** – Unplug and enjoy a 3 night stay right in the heart of the Kickapoo Valley. This 3-bedroom furnished cabin sleeps 6 people comfortably. Located on 13 acres bordering Wildcat Mountain State Park and very near the Kickapoo River and Kickapoo Valley Reserve. Enjoy great trout fishing, canoeing (includes two canoe rentals from Drifty's Canoe Rental), birding, hiking, or horseback riding in the state park. Enjoy the sunrise views from the porch with your morning coffee. Dogs are welcome. November 6, 2022 - December 31, 2023, subject to availability. Donated by Barb and Joe Kruse and Drifty's Canoe Rental.
- Birds and Brunch** – Join conservation associate Krysten Zummo for an early bird hike on the conserved land of Fred and Lou Anne Koerschner in Vernon County. Krysten will help you spot and identify the birds of the spring migration and tell you about their habitat needs. The 100-acre property features diverse habitats for many bird species, including meadowlarks, bobolinks, dickcissel, red-headed woodpeckers, yellow-billed cuckoo, orchard orioles, and many more! After your hike, your party of up to eight people will enjoy a delicious brunch, prepared and served by Fred and Lou Anne in their ridge-top home.
- Disappearing 4-patch Quilt** – This beautiful quilt by Susan Carpenter brings color and playful patterns from nature to your home with in a color block pattern. The quilt measures 72" x 79". The fabrics are 100% cotton, and it has a cotton blend batting. It was quilted by Katie Luyk of Third Coast Quilting. Designer: Pine Tree Country Quilts.

6. **Driftless Sweetness** – Delight in local sweetness with this artistically arranged basket containing 8 pints of home-harvested and crafted maple syrup, french roast coffee, oven mitts, charcuterie board and two mugs. Crafted and donated by Jon and Ann Rigden.
7. **25# grass fed beef** – Bring home 25# of all-natural, free-range, farm-direct, grass-fed Angus beef from Willow Creek Ranch. Pick up on the farm by appointment. Donated by Rod Ofte.
8. **River Restoration Cruise** – Join Gretchen and Joe Pfeiffer on a tour of one of the world's most extensive large river restoration projects (near Stoddard and Brownsville). Gretchen grew up on the banks of the Mississippi River and has spent her career working to restore it. She'll share the river's history, ecology, and full potential. The entire trip is 3 hours (longer if desired). Delicious foods and beverages will be served, along with comforts necessary for the journey.
9. **Get'er Done – Full Day of Field Work** – Sit back and sip your ice-tea while Levi and his intern crew clear your invasives, plant your trees, or tackle whatever restoration work you need done on your land. This crew can do an amazing amount of work in one day saving you time to enjoy your land! This full day of fieldwork is donated by Conservancy staff.
10. **Viroqua Experience** – Head to Viroqua for gourmet goodies, eclectic shopping, culture, and outdoor fun with this weekend package! Enjoy a two-night stay at the retro-chic 217 on Main AirBnB (Blue Door apt. sleeps 4); a \$50 gift certificate toward two tickets to any show at the Historic Temple Theater; a Sicilian pizza at the Driftless Café (gift certificate); provisions from the Viroqua Food Co-op (\$25 gift card and canvas tote bag). Then fill out your weekend with hiking, golfing, cycling, or paddling the nearby Kickapoo River!
11. **Year of the Pie** – You'll have your pie and then some when you win a pie per month (for 12 months) homemade and delivered to the Conservancy office for you to pick up. Conservancy Board members Gretchen Pfeiffer and Sue Dillenbeck are the pastry chefs, and we can attest to their talents in the kitchen!
12. **Bad Axe Cabin** – Enjoy a scenic 4 day/3 night stay on the South branch of the Bad Axe River. This open concept, lofted cabin sleeps 8 and features plenty of space for family recreation and relaxation with a bar area, high-top table for cards or conversation, and multiple TVs. Stay cozy and connected in any weather with a freestanding wood stove, central A/C, and 5G Wifi. With the property bordering the river, trout fishing opportunities are excellent. Valid until May 1, 2023 (Nov. 18-28 and Dec. 20-Dec 31 are currently unavailable).
13. **Carol and Bill's Farm to Fork Dinner** – Have you ever dined on a farm where every item on the menu was grown? Here is a chance to invite a few of your friends and experience a farm-to-fork dinner. You will start with a meet and greet with the critters, from cows to pigs and even a guard donkey, you'll then tour the orchard and gardens to get a sense of what might be on the menu. Carol will cook a farm to fork dinner complete with pork, beef, chicken lots of veggies and of course dessert! For 6 people.
14. **Pollinator's Woodland Sunflower Suncatcher** – Bring nature inside with this beautiful framed photo on silk photo by Tom Rhorer. A composite of four different photos, all taken the same morning at the Mathy Quarry Tract in early September of this year. Species are common buckeye and monarch butterflies, a female common eastern bumble bee, a syrphid fly (hover fly) and an unidentified wasp, all important pollinators. Hang in or display near a window to illuminate the image.
15. **Cocktails and Dinner with the Madam at the Castle** – Inspired by the famous Bordello Cookbook (celebrating the owners of a magnificent Chicago bordello in 1900-1911), dinner will be served at Castle La Crosse in grand style. Infamous local Madam Kelly Krieg-Sigman will share stories of La Crosse's bordello history before dinner and possibly more scandalous stories while after-dinner drinks are served. Dinner for up to 8 guests will be served with local wines and other tasty treats. Donated by Kelly Krieg-Sigman and Castle La Crosse.
16. **Frank Lloyd Wright Inspired Floor Lamp** – A beautifully crafted floor lamp in the prairie style of Frank Lloyd Wright. Inspired by nature, the lamp design is based on a tree with branches and leaves. Wright had five of these in his Taliesin home. This lamp was custom made by Joe Pfeiffer for you from driftless hickory, red oak and maple with a tung oil finish and stands 6' tall with a solid 12"x12"x3" thick red oak base. With 9 light boxes, each being illuminated by an LED bulb, the subdued light spreads over the wood creating a diffuse warm glow.
17. **Guided Hike of McGilvray Seven Bridges on the Black River** – Pat Caffrey, long-time Conservancy board member and Friend of the McGilvray Road, will guide you, and up to six guests, on a 3.6 mile round-trip hike on the relatively flat McGilvray Seven Bridges Trail that is part of the Van Loon Wildlife Area near Holmen. Pat will share information with you about the historic bridges, the Black River delta, the history of the road, and the wildlife of Van Loon, including endangered species. Don't miss out on this scenic and educational hike.
18. **Private Tour of Kickapoo Caverns** – Bring your group of 8 to a guided tour of the recently acquired and now protected Kickapoo Caverns – seasonal home of three rare bat species, oak savanna, and many wild-flowers. Sarah Bratnober and Sue Knopf, of the Conservancy's Educational Outreach Committee will guide the tour. Light refreshments will be provided. Scheduling subject to other scheduled tours. (June 15-August 15, 2023)
19. **Flying High** – Soar over the beautiful Driftless area in a Cessna 172 piloted by Carol or Drake. Take in the spring greening, the fall colors, or see what your home looks like from above. You get two window seats for the 45-minute flight. Donated by Carol Kratz and Drake Hokanson.
20. **The Refuge by Sara Lubinski** – "This humble, little painting brings me joy," says Sara. "It contains a piece of my life and work within the Upper Mississippi River National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. It's one part of the hundreds of hours I have spent wandering, drawing, or painting in the Refuge and contributes to my evolution as an artist and as a human being. As I painted it, I watched the birds and clouds and trees, and saw beauty everywhere, even in the unnoticed corners of the Refuge." Oil on linen on board. Framed 13.5" x 15.5"
21. **Boats and Bluegrass Weekend Package** – Come celebrate roots music and explore the backwaters of the Mississippi River by canoe at Boats and Bluegrass in 2023! Enjoy a long weekend at this family friendly event listening to bluegrass, folk, americana, country, everything in between with over 40 bands all weekend long. Your two weekend passes include access to camping, music, and boat rentals for the whole weekend! Kids 16 and under are free with an adult ticket. (September 22-24, 2023)
22. **An Evening at the Rivoli** – Roll out the red carpet for your guests at your own private party in the Rivoli Theater's Screening Room for up to 15-20 people with a movie viewing! Gift certificate includes theater admission, movie screening, pizza and beer for you and your guests on a scheduled date. This item excludes the Rivoli's previously scheduled events including Packer football games and may be limited by movies the Rivoli Theater is able to secure.
23. **Fund the Future** – Tonight, we've come together to celebrate what your support has accomplished in 25 years and a bright future that includes YOU! Your support will help kick off 2023 and the next 25 years of saving the driftless! A gift tonight ensures that land is protected from future development for the health of our habitats, wildlife, and children. When you give, you are supporting healthy communities by protecting climate and water, and helping a long list of who families who are conserving their land for all of us. This all takes resources, time, and money. Tonight, you can bolster the resilience of the beautiful bluffs, farms, prairies, wetlands, and streams so they'll be here for wildlife and for our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. A generous couple has started our fund off with \$5,000. Please dig deep and join them with your own bid. Our goal tonight of \$25,000 reflects our 25th anniversary year. I'm confident that with your help we can reach that goal and *Save the Driftless for Them*. Every bid matters. Every bid counts. Please bid what you can, and *thank you!*