



N O U R I S H Y O U R N E E D F O R

NATURE™


SUMMER/FALL 2021



TOGETHER
WE BUILD

*Access to
NATURE*

D O D G E N A T U R E C E N T E R



Natasha Rambacchus, a Dodge board member, and her daughters enjoy a hike and wildlife viewing on the solid surface of the new Cloverdale Trail.

MAKING STRIPES

When Larry Stoller and Meleia Jordan (pictured on cover) arrive at Dodge on a spring day, nothing stands in the way of a wonderful afternoon observing wildlife—not mud, uneven terrain or washed-out trails.

That's because the raised decking of the new Cloverdale Trail lets Larry's mobility scooter easily make the transition onto the Farm Pond's boardwalk. Soon enough, he and Meleia are spotting red-winged blackbirds in the cattails and Canada geese tending to their island nests.

"Being enabled to view the birds, waterfowl and deer at their level is a rare treat," Larry says. "The trail is a gift to those of us who otherwise would have difficulty enjoying nature at its best."

This improved trail is possible through the generous support of Vicki and Si Ford and their family and friends for the *Nourishing Everyone's Need for Nature* campaign. Vicki is the niece of Olivia Irvine Dodge, the nature center's founder, and the trail is named in honor of the Irvine family farm in Stillwater.

Accessibility and sustainability are among the top priorities of the \$40 million comprehensive campaign. Cloverdale Trail is just the start of efforts to make Dodge more accessible to all who want to visit. In May, the Farm parking lot at 1701 Charlton Street was graded, paved and striped to create more than 50 standard and accessible parking spaces. The lot will be easier to maintain in every season and better handle traffic flow for daily use, special events and school bus drop-offs. The driveway is paved to the Farm Education Building to ease access to nature programs, especially for those who need mobility assistance, families with strollers, and people on foot in winter's snow and ice.

These developments are possible because of generous donors like you. As of May 2021, your generosity has **raised \$30,226,919—over 75% to the 4-year goal!**

For more information on how you can ensure access for all to Dodge Nature Center and Preschool, please visit www.dodgenaturecenter.org/campaign.



ON DECK THIS SUMMER

- Renovating the Farm Education Building kitchen, a flexible space to bring families and students together for farm-to-table cooking experiences and provide commercial-grade facilities for event rentals. This work will be completed in early June.
- Paving the main lot at 365 Marie Avenue to aid access.
- Creating an outdoor classroom at the lower level of the Farm Education Building.
- Planting wildflowers and native plants to provide wildlife habitat at "Cloverdale Corner," at the north end of the Farm Pond boardwalk.



Gini and John McCain are nearby neighbors and frequent visitors to Dodge's main property in West St. Paul.

SUPPORTING A SENSE OF PLACE EGRET SOCIETY MEMBERS ENSURE STRONG FUTURE

Even above the birdsong in their backyard, John and Gini McCain can hear one of their favorite sounds: the laughter of children exploring at Dodge.

The McCains moved to their Delaware Avenue home in 1996, and within a year were donating to the nature center within walking distance.

For them, Dodge is a place that engages all the senses. When John is out on the trails, his practice—and advice to others—is simple: “Keep your eyes wide open. There is so much to see, touch and smell in nature.”

Nature learning and enjoying the outdoors mean so much to the McCains personally. But moreover, they want everyone to have access to nature within close reach of the Twin Cities. To support Dodge’s environmental education mission, Gini joined the Egret Society by making a future gift through their estate.

“I can’t give as much time as I’d like,” Gini says. “But I can support others doing the work.”

With their estate gift, the McCains will help children enjoy the seasons of Dodge for years to come.

YOU HAVE A PLACE IN THE EGRET SOCIETY

Planned gift donors are welcomed as members of our Egret Society and receive recognition and special event invitations. Making a meaningful gift to Dodge through your estate is simple. To join, you can name Dodge as a beneficiary in your:

- Individual Retirement Account (IRA)
- Life insurance policy
- Will or trust
- Stock account or other financial assets

If you’ve included a future gift for Dodge in your estate plans or would like more info on joining the Egret Society, please contact Brenda Teats at **651-789-5218** or **bteats@dodgenaturecenter.org**.

Nature Activities

JUNE 2021 - OCTOBER 2021

For activity details and registration, visit **DodgeNatureCenter.org** or call **651-455-4531**

JUNE

| | | |
|----|--|----------|
| 24 | Nature After Dinner: Wild About Berries | Families |
|----|--|----------|

JULY

| | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 16 | Nature at Night | Families |
| 22 | Nature After Dinner: Turtle Time | Families |

AUGUST

| | | |
|----|---|----------|
| 12 | Nature After Dinner: Flight of the Butterfly | Families |
| 14 | West St. Paul Summer Fun Fest | Families |
| 28 | Migratory Monarchs | Families |

SEPTEMBER

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|----|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 9 | Nature After Dinner: Deer, Oh Deer | Families |
| 23 | Nights for Nature: Wine & Wellies | Adults |

OCTOBER

| | | |
|-------|--|--------------------|
| 1 | Nights for Nature: Family Evening at Shepard Farm | Families |
| 1 | Nights for Nature: Virtual Benefit, Live from Shepard Farm | All Ages |
| 21 | Nature After Dinner: Nature Glows | Families |
| 21-22 | Fall Break Camps | 1st-5th Graders |



PLEASE SAVE THE DATES FOR

Nights for Nature

THE ANNUAL BENEFIT FOR
DODGE NATURE CENTER AND PRESCHOOL

DANIELLE & CHRISTOPHER PARISH, EVENT CHAIRS

MORE INFORMATION AND TICKET SALES AVAILABLE SOON AT
WWW.DODGENATURECENTER.ORG/NFN2021

WINE & WELLIES RECEPTION - SEPTEMBER 23 | FAMILY EVENING AT SHEPARD FARM - OCTOBER 1 | LIVE STREAM - OCTOBER 1



Dodge naturalist Jeff Boland offers outdoor environmental education to Garlough Elementary students every week of the school year.

"Before we go outside, the students and I say together: A naturalist is someone who cares about nature, learns about nature and shares nature with others. We're ready to be naturalists."

Jeff Boland
Naturalist, Dodge Nature Center

NATURE, NO MATTER WHAT, FOR GARLOUGH STUDENTS

Under clear May skies, students spread out in their outdoor classroom on the sun-warmed planks of the Farm Pond boardwalk. They observe, and are observed by, the wildlife around them.

Dipping nets and cups into the water, they draw up duckweed and small snails. Someone scoops up a fishing spider. Shrieks bounce off the surface of the water—but are soon overtaken by the questions of curious student scientists. (For one, they learn fishing spiders are harmless to humans).

It's not a long distance for these Garlough Environmental Magnet students to reach the pond; their school is located across Charlton Street. But it feels a world away from a year ago, when they were all learning from home. It's a far cry from fall and winter too, when they were back part-time at school but couldn't yet learn outside at Dodge.

Across these many months and education delivered in different ways, there's been a calm constant for Garlough students: the naturalist they know well. Jeff Boland—better known as "Mr. Jeff"—is the Dodge naturalist who teaches every Garlough class, kindergarten through 4th grade, every week of the school year.

In his work with Garlough, Jeff says he operates by two principles: **"Everyone can be naturalists, and always go outside."**

He modeled that when he filmed videos for his students last spring from outside his Minneapolis home, and in fall, when he taught in live Google Meets. From his perch on a bench right outside

Garlough—to best connect to the school's Wi-Fi signal—Jeff aimed to make lessons vivid, bringing his iPad camera close up to insects and changing leaves.

Then the school gave him a mobile hotspot. "A total game changer," Jeff says. "I was no longer tied to that bench. I could go anywhere."

Anywhere was across the street at Dodge. Virtually, his classes came along as he tracked wildlife, tapped maple trees, and visited roosters crowing in the barnyard. And soon it got even better. In February, students were back in person and learning with Mr. Jeff.

The partnership with Garlough dates back to 2006, when a naturalist was placed there to provide outdoor education for the newly designated environmental magnet. A sequence of K-4 lessons emerged, integrating what Dodge does best with the school's science, social studies, and language arts curriculum.

Pete Cleary, director of environmental education, knows well the importance of the Garlough-Dodge relationship. He's been there since the start, as the first naturalist assigned to the building.

"Dodge can help by giving kids something constant," Pete says of this 15-year partnership. "They know they have naturalist time every week."

"This year, whether it was virtual, live or hybrid, they knew they'd have outdoor learning with Mr. Jeff. Kids need something constant in a sea of change. They need something to look forward to."

WEST ST. PAUL
Summer Fun Fest
AUGUST 14
4 - 8PM AT DODGE

Free event sponsored by the
South Robert Business Street Association

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO FOR DODGE!

365 Marie Avenue West | West St Paul, MN 55118
651-455-4531 | DodgeNatureCenter.org