



Blue Lotus Farm & Retreat

Spring 2020 Newsletter

Dear Blue Lotus Supporters,

Globally, we are dealing with a situation that is nothing like we've seen before. We are missing our friends, family, and even some version of a normal routine. As we stay home, keep our distance, and wear our homemade facemasks, our sympathy is going out to frontline workers in health care, grocery stores, and pharmacies.

My heartfelt support and condolences go to those of us who have been affected more severely by this pandemic such as loss of jobs or worse, loss of loved ones.

In the midst of this all, I am feeling community, and above all a rise of compassion that fills my heart and spills over in tears. As part of the Blue Lotus family, you already knew that we are all in this life together and depend on each other.



We've seen it at Blue Lotus when helping individuals into canoes so they can take their first glide across the water and feel a new freedom. And felt it when you hugged the child whose smile lit up their face when they caught their first fish and giggled when they let the wiggling guy back in the water. And you were touched when you saw a senior's gaze of enjoyment of being outside, taking in all the colors, sounds, and beautiful spring smells.

To do our part to help flatten the curve of the spread of COVID-19, we are taking directives from state and federal government. In person programming, events, and volunteer groups are being suspended temporarily, at least until May 26. We are following the situation closely and will continue to evaluate. During this time, we are posting videos and photos of Blue Lotus to help spread the joy of nature through our Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts. And we will also be hosting a series of music concerts by Fred Bliffert.

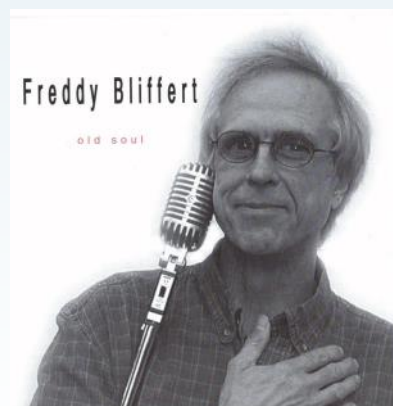
Most importantly, we want to support efforts that will keep us all as safe as possible. We will keep you posted and we are anxiously awaiting when you can join us at Blue Lotus.

Kindly,

Jacqueline



Freddy Bliffert Live to benefit Blue Lotus



Thursday, May 14, 7 pm
Facebook.com/Fred Bliffert

Fred will be entertaining us with his beautiful voice and guitar. We'll join together, from our own homes, for this heartwarming concert to benefit Blue Lotus during these challenging times. He will surely make us laugh with his wit then touch our hearts with an inspiring story. Feel free to join in and be his backup singer – no one will know!

Donations can be made at
bluelotusfarm.org/donate.



Update - Fundraiser Cancelled

For the last 14 years, many have enjoyed our Annual Golf Outing at Hidden Glen, a major fundraiser for Blue Lotus. Due to the pandemic and unpredictable conditions, we are cancelling the event this year. A special thank you to all the previous year's golfers and the wonderful team at Hidden Glen. Hopefully we will see you out on the greens next year!

Once Bitten, but Not Shy: Bink Steinbach Roast A Roaring Success

It was all set: West Bend real estate wiz and renowned wit Bink Steinbach had generously agreed to be the subject of a celebrity roast to benefit the Blue Lotus Farm and Retreat Center. The roast would be a fun opportunity for supporters of Blue Lotus to get together, have a few laughs at Bink's expense, and generate much needed funds for the Center.

But just over a week before the roast was set to happen, seemingly out of nowhere, Bink was attacked! The culprit? *Felis domesitcus*, more commonly known as your everyday house cat. Although these playful, diminutive felines are typically depicted in popular culture (think Tom and Jerry) as mildly ferocious, terrorizing unsuspecting dogs with razor claws and lightening reflexes, a cat bite is no trivial or laughing matter.

Is the Roast Toast?

Bink's bite put him in and out of the hospital, but, wiz that he is, he decided to go on with the roast—even though he was released from the hospital the morning of the event!

Mr. Steinbach inspired 182 caring souls who attended the dinner and roast at the West Bend Mutual Insurance

Prairie Center. Nota-

bles including Judge Andrew Gonring, Mike Paul, and Paul Steinbach each had the crowd laughing with their clever stories and jabs. Bink took it all in stride, most probably thinking that he knew only too well what real pain was.

Other podium celebs shared heartwarming stories of the unique value that Blue Lotus provides the community. Roman Blood and Mike Kahn each echoed the priceless experience visitors enjoy in a pristine, natural environment where fun commingles with deeper values of acceptance and inclusion.

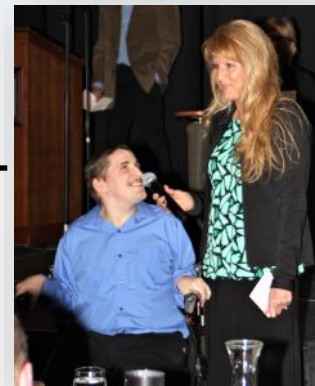
Bink's dedication to Blue Lotus and unflagging commitment to raising much needed funds overwhelmed the staff and board with appreciation. An event-closing live auction that inspired hundreds of raised "Yes, I'll bid!" paddles raised \$22,000. The event raised \$34,000 in total through Bink's efforts and invaluable assistance from volunteers, staff, and board.



"...when caring and thoughtful people join together for a uniquely worthy cause, as they did for Bink's roast, their generous support makes all the difference."



Judge Gonring comments during the roast even made Bink laugh.



Roman Blood and Gina Stephan told heartwarming stories of Blue Lotus.



Participants taking leaves from the Giving Tree.

BLFRC Executive Director Jacqueline Janz summed up the event in gushing tones: "Bink's tireless efforts and the community's response have truly touched my heart. It costs us \$1,248 a day to operate Blue Lotus; sometimes we're not sure how we will keep going. But when caring and thoughtful people join together for a uniquely worthy cause, as they did for Bink's roast, their generous support makes all the difference."

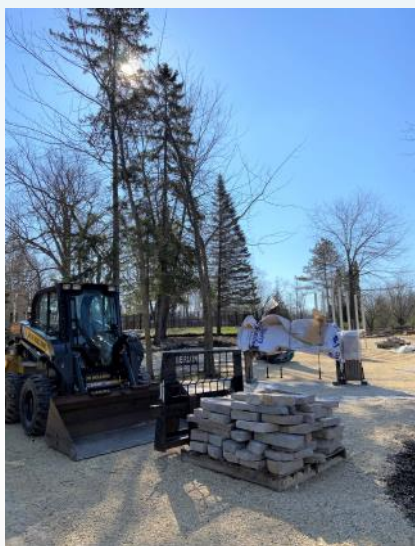


May Means Gardening

Many who visit Blue Lotus comment how gorgeous the gardens look. We usually spend three full days with dozens of volunteers prepping the grounds. Weeding, moving mulch, planting annuals and vegetables, and raking are all on our to-do list. This year is going to be a bit challenging because we cannot hold our annual Work Days to prepare the property.

We will have volunteers coming out – one at a time or in pairs if they live together – to help with landscaping. It will take us much longer to complete, so we've already begun the work.

If you are interested in safely assisting us, give Lisa a call or email her at lisa@bluelotusfarm.org.



Music to our Ears

Some changes are being made while you are away. Thanks to a Potawatomi Heart of Canal Grant we have a fun, accessible music garden. This spring we are putting the finishing touches on the area surrounding the new attraction.

We can't wait until you see it!

**Check out our newly
designed website!**

Bluelotusfarm.org

Staff

Jacqueline Janz
Executive Director

Lisa Starke
Community Engagement Coordinator

Dianne Rinn
Groups & Site Coordinator

Susan Bliffert
Staff Advisor

Board

Fred Bliffert – *President, Founder*

David Lemke – *Vice President*

Mark McHale – *Secretary*

Roger Dickson – *Treasurer*

Susan Bliffert – *Trustee, Founder*

Charlie Stevens – *Trustee*

Todd Leichtle – *Trustee*

Patricia Fabian – *Trustee*

David Slinde – *Trustee*

Easy Way to Help Blue Lotus

Video Nature Breaks from Blue Lotus have been popular on our Facebook page. We wanted to share nature's beauty for those who can't get outdoors during our current conditions, and to share the magic of Blue Lotus.

An easy way to help Blue Lotus is to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. By liking and sharing our posts, you can help build awareness of Blue Lotus. We are always looking for ways to build our fan base and inform additional groups, individuals, and businesses of our facility.



Blue Lotus Farm & Retreat Center is a 501c3 tax exempt charitable organization

