



Blue Lotus Farm & Retreat Center

"Serving those with special needs, located in the countryside of Newburg, Wisconsin"

Winter 2015

Office Remodeling Project in Progress at the Farm



The "home" office of Blue Lotus Farm & Retreat Center is officially being established at the farm. After years of working out of the founder's home, volunteer's homes and coffee shops around the greater Milwaukee area, it was time to move the headquarters to the facility. The new office location will enhance our customer service, optimize office efficiencies, and allow us to expand our commitment to the community groups we serve. The new office will be established in the existing farm house porch (see picture). The footprint will remain the same, but the doors, windows, flooring, interior and exterior siding, soffits and fascia will all be replaced. We will also be adding one interior wall to enclose the office area from a meeting space.

Special thanks to Callen Construction for donating time and a design plan for the new space. We are collaborating with local vendors, Steiner Electric & Mueller Heating, to upgrade our electrical and heating systems. April is our target completion date, just in time for the new season!

Are YOU interested in helping with this project?? We would love some hard workers to help "gut" the space, replace the flooring and walls, and move and set-up the office into the new space. Contact the office at: 262-675-2473 to join the fun!

WE ARE OPEN FOR RESERVATIONS!

Many special needs groups visit us during the sunny, warm summer months, but did you know we are open for programming in the spring and fall, too? Many of these spring and fall days can be beautiful, and while they are ideal for a paddle around the pond or a trek down a trail, they also provide a great setting for campfires, sing-alongs and s'mores! Do you know of a family or group who could benefit from our services? Help us connect with them—we love meeting new visitors!



Blue Lotus once again welcomes the Easter Seals of Southeast Wisconsin for two outings this coming year. To the left is a picture of an Easter Seals camper & counselor from last year enjoying some R&R time in the sky chairs. We look forward to seeing you again in July!

For more information on Easter Seals of Southeast Wisconsin, please visit www.easterseals.com/wi-se/



SAVE THE DATES and JOIN US!

****Sunday, February 8, 2015**

Celebrate Families Fair—West Bend High Schools, 11am-3pm

****Thursday, February 19, 2015**

Hamburger Mary's HAM Bingo to benefit Blue Lotus, 8pm—Must RSVP to Hamburger Mary's! 414-988-9324

****Friday, March 13, 2015**

Home & Garden Show, Wash Co Fair Park, \$5 admission fee to benefit Blue Lotus, 4-8pm

****Saturday, June 13, 2015**

Catch a Wave—Surfs Up at Blue Lotus! Annual Farm Fundraiser with food & spirits, raffle, auction and live entertainment, 3-9pm

****Monday, July 13, 2015**

10th Annual Blue Lotus Golf Outing At Hidden Glen Golf Club, Cedarburg

For more information on programs & events, please visit www.bluelotusfarm.org

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

A Brief Look at Volunteerism in America...and Newburg, WI

A philanthropic spirit has been with Americans since the very first pioneers traveled west. Historians believe the earliest instances of volunteerism in America began when colonists had to form support systems in order to survive the many challenges that came with relocation. From farming the land to overcoming devastating illnesses, togetherness was vital for survival.

Did you know? Benjamin Franklin founded the first volunteer firehouse in 1736. This tradition still continues today, as many small towns, (including our own Newburg!) have a volunteer fire department. In the 1800's, the YMCA, American Red Cross and United Way were all started to coordinate services for those in need. The Rotary, Lions & Kiwanis Clubs all came into existence in the 1900's, with the sole purpose of helping other organizations find their way. Historically, America has been full of volunteers functioning in every region of the nation, giving others the chance at a better life. *Today, nearly one in four Americans – an estimated 64.3 million people – have served as volunteers.*

While the start of Blue Lotus dates back only about 15 years, our journey began from the determination of a group of volunteers looking to create a community space for all those with special needs. Today, volunteers continue to play an instrumental role in our existence. Last year, 244 individuals volunteered approximately 3,800 hours; this has an estimated value of nearly \$83,000*! WOW!

The good news for you is that we are ALWAYS looking for more help! Volunteer tasks at Blue Lotus are quite varied, but involve working with our special needs groups, planning our events/fundraisers and helping to care for our beautiful facility. Volunteering is truly a win-win situation! Call us today to get involved—we promise you will not regret it!

**As estimated by the Independent Sector for the value of one volunteer hour in the state of WI (\$21.78).*

Volunteers

The HEART Of The
COMMUNITY



Above: Volunteers from St Luke's Church, Slinger—Assisting with Fall Clean Up, 2014.

CONTACT US:

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 211
Mequon, WI 53092

Email: info@bluelotusfarm.org

Phone: 262-675-2473

STAFF:

Becca Stringer, Executive Director
Michelle Spettel, Office Administrator
Susan Bliffert, Staff Advisor
& Volunteers Galore!

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Fred Bliffert, President
President & Owner, Bliffert Lumber

David Lemke, Vice President
Owner, KingsHead Hair Salon

Mark McHale, Secretary
Materials Manager, ACS Group

Susan Bliffert, Treasurer
Owner, Reflections in Health

Charlie Stevens, Trustee
Attorney—Michael Best & Friedrich, LLP

Dan Miota, Trustee
Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine

David Slinde, Trustee
Community Development

Welcome, Michelle Spettel!



Please welcome Michelle, who joins the Blue Lotus Farm and Retreat Center staff as our new Office Administrator. Michelle has lived in West Bend for 22 years with her husband Tim. They have two daughters; Maddy, who is a sophomore at UW Madison and Lydia, a sophomore at West Bend East. For fun the family enjoys working with Spotlight Productions, a community theatre group. Michelle is the Set Designer for Spotlight. She also enjoys warm weather outdoor activities. You can find her getting out on Silver Lake where the family lives, working on projects around the yard, doing remodeling and DIY projects around the house, and getting to the farmers market whenever she can. Michelle is looking forward to her first season with Blue Lotus. She can't wait to get to know all of the clients, volunteers, and see the gardens around the property come alive.

Special thanks to Lisa Halloran, our previous office administrator, for her help over the past year! We wish you all the best in your next chapter, Lisa!

Like us on Facebook!



For more information on programs & events, please visit www.bluelotusfarm.org

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