

SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS HISTORY CENTER

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CONSERVATION OF LOCAL CRITTERS HIGHLIGHTS JULY 14 "TUESDAY TALK"

JULY 3, 2020 -- "Conservation in West Michigan" highlights Saugatuck-Douglas History Center's July 14 "Tuesday Talk", promising an *animated* outdoor presentation in SDHC's Back In Time Garden behind the Old School House at 130 Center Street, Douglas. The one-hour program begins when the school bell rings at 11 a.m.

Public attendance is invited and audience participation is welcomed to enrich the discussion. As part of the SDHC's Stay Safe plan, attendees must wear face masks as they arrive to check in and during direct interactions with participants and presenters. To help with social-distancing protocols, audience members are asked to bring their own camp chairs.

Presenter Sheila Postmus, Naturalist for the ODC Network, will discuss the importance of animal conservation in West Michigan. She will bring a variety of live animals to accent the stories behind each species' conservation status and any reintroduction efforts that have been made. Notable among them will be the barn owl, which is prominent on Michigan's endangered list as their population has greatly declined here and throughout North America.

The ODC (Outdoor Discovery Center) Network is a non-profit education and conservation organization founded in the year 2000 with the mission to connect people with nature through outdoor education for the benefit of wildlife and conservation of the natural world. Since then, the organization has served more than 1.25 million children and adults through outdoor education and recreation programs, with some 75,000 people annually visiting ODC Network sites to walk the trails and view the wildlife.

Thanks to the 2009 merger of the Outdoor Discovery Center and Macatawa Greenway Partnership, the organization now protects more than 1,200 acres along the Macatawa River in Ottawa County and a 160-acre nature preserve south of Holland's West Michigan Regional Airport. The preserve features a 5,000 square foot Visitors Center with taxidermy exhibits ideal for visiting during any season, the DeWitt Birds of Prey Center, the Eldean Family Play Park, plus habitats including meadows, remnant dune, upland forests, lowland hardwood forests, marshes and ponds, all laced with gravel and boardwalk trails.

The ODC Network also operates the DeGraaf Nature Center for the City of Holland, including day-to-day management and the coordination of all its education programs. Both the Outdoor Discovery Center nature preserve and DeGraaf Nature Center are free and open to the public.

A summertime tradition since 1996, SDHC's weekly Tuesday Talks present entertaining and informative insights into local community life throughout July and August. This program is sponsored by SDHC members Betsy York and Demetrea Terrien.

Tuesday Talks' increasing popularity puts limited seating on "first-come, first-served" basis. While admission is free for current SDHC members, non-member guests are encouraged to attend with a donation of five dollars, or to become new members at the Talk.

For more information about the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center, its Museum in Saugatuck and Old School House in Douglas, or its activities planned for the months ahead, visit www.MySDHistory.org.

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PHOTO ATTACHED SEPARATELY (see jpeg "BarnOwl")

Caption: Barn owls are among the endangered local critters coming to SDHC's July 14 Tuesday Talk.