GRANDVIEWS

2026 newsletter

UPDATES, RESTORATION, AND PLANS

Paul Bunyan Restoration



Grandview has had a pretty cool project quietly taking place in Nick Engelbert's yard this summer. After 85 years, the hundreds of fragments of the Lumber Jack, Paul Bunyan, hidden in the basement of the house have been brought back together again bit by bit.

Art conservationist, Ben Caguioa, from International Artifacts in Houston, Texas, has spent a few months this summer working his magic. The original blew down during a wind storm in the mid 40's. The telephone poles Nick used for legs just couldn't take the pressure.





STRONGER FOR THE FUTURE

With reinforced stainless steel rods for legs, Paul is expected to stand for many years. His friendly smile graces the Snow White tableaux next to him. The concrete will take a few months to cure, so Paul will get a fresh coat of paint this spring. Included in the photos is a shot of what Paul's original head looked like.





NEWSLETTER TOPICS

Summer Workshops
Learn about this past year's educational offerings

The Engelbert Family Visit
Grandview had some very special visitors this year.

20 Years of Grandview After School
Education through the ages for ages!

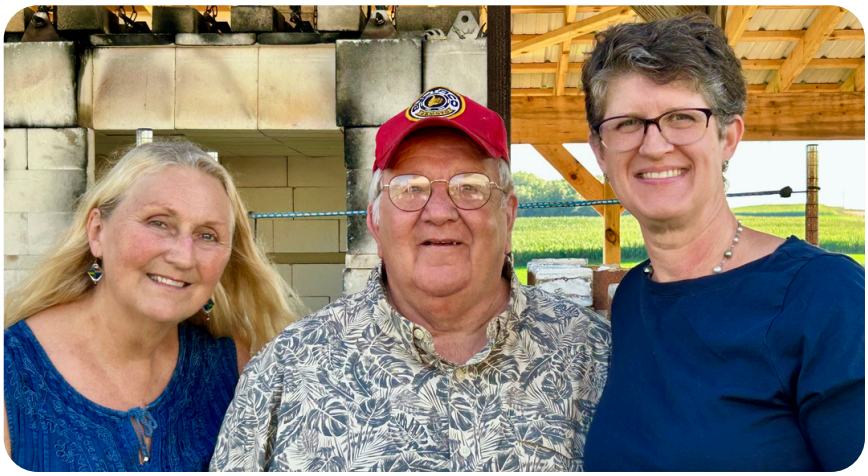
End of Summer Celebration
Rounding out the summer and celebrating big milestones

End of Summer Celebration

To round out the summer, friends and community members gathered to celebrate the completion of the newly constructed welcome kiosk and the debut of four colorful mosaic murals that depict vibrant scenes from Grandview's past & present.

As a dedicated team of artisanal chefs crafted homemade wood fired pizza, two legacy community members were granted honorary acknowledgement for their instrumental roles in the founding of Grandview as a historic site beginning in 1997: Mona Scott and Rick Rolfsmeyer. Folks reminisced, participated in art demonstrations, and shared good food while the setting sun closed out the 2026 summer season at Grandview.











KIOSK DREAM BECOMES A REALITY

The Kohler Foundation Inc. gifted Grandview to the PEC Foundation in 1996.

Since then, the governing boards have expressed a need for a place to register visitors and have information about Grandview as well as other local attractions. It took 30 years for it to happen and, just like the Engelbert home, it happened in grand style.

Boston mosaic artist, Josh Winer, partnered with two mosaic artists/teachers, Sally Koehler and Julie Olsen, to lead workshops with students in the Pecatonica Elementary School, the St. Joseph's Catholic School in Ft. Atkinson WI, and local community to create four amazing mosaic panels about Grandview.

Randy Toay and Bob Blazedale built the impressive cedar and copper roofed 8 x 12" building the mosaics were placed in at the entrance of Grandview.

The final touch was installing a people counter next to the structure to ensure an accurate count of visitors.

This project was made possible thanks to support from Kohler Foundation, Wisconsin Arts Board, National Endowment for the Arts, Ruth Arts, United Fund of Iowa County, and Blanchardville Hollandale Area Fund.











People Counter

Thanks to a generous donation from the Blanchardville/Hollandale Area Fund, Grandview has been able to purchase a counting system to accurately record visitation.

While we have always kept track of the number of people coming to workshops and special events, it has been impossible to know the number of visitors coming during unstaffed times.

The counter is designed for outdoor use and employs passive infrared technology to maintain visitor privacy.

The Board will use the visitor count data to advocate for grants and funding, as well as improve visitor's experience by guiding the timing of events and services. This new tool will be a big help in keeping the welcome mat out at Grandview!





Summer Workshops



Over the summer Grandview was host to many wonderful workshops including Intaglio, Bug Houses, Shibori, and the very popular, Stained Glass workshop to name a few.
With 20+ workshops and two wood firing clay camps the site was busy with endless creative ambition. The workshops inspire community gathering and collaboration. It's a wonderful way to make friends and learn new skillsets taught by amazing members of our artistic community!
A huge thank you to all of our wonderful educators who led our workshops this past season!













Camp Pec

Not to be outdone by the workshops was the annual Camp Pec!
Camp Pec brings together students from the local school for learning opportunities at Grandview where they can learn more about the magic of Grandview as well as how to make their own creative projects.
Pec students made buildings, flowers, vehicles, and inspired designs for the mosaics of the kiosk.
The Grandview classes are held at Camp Pec in the High School and are taught by Dane Co. art teacher: Julie Olsen and artist Julie Sabo.
The annual field trip to Grandview includes artist-led workshops, tours of the site, and activities where students learn about the Engelbert family.









TWENTY YEARS OF GRANDVIEW AFTER SCHOOL



What began with a hand full of students meeting at the Pecatonica Bowling Alley five times a year, now runs 20 two-hour classes at the Pecatonica elementary school each Thursday in the spring and fall. Thanks to support from Ruth Kohler's gift, and United Fund of Iowa County, this program keeps growing.
Nikki Cooper, the elementary art teacher at Pecatonica Elementary School, is the glue that holds the program together. She recruits about sixty K through 5th graders each week to enjoy learning about art from local artists/ teachers: Evy Thuli, Sally Schaller, Sarah Thompson, Julie Sabo and Tessa Hughes, as well as faithful parent volunteers.
We are fortunate and grateful to have support from the district administration and staff.







GARDEN GOALS

We began the process of transforming Grandview's garden beds into native prairie plantings this summer.

Talented volunteers, Roger and Mary Nelson, generously donated a variety of homegrown healthy plants that were sold at our plant sale in May. The best part was planting the sale leftovers around the lion, the viking boat, and alongside Nick's house.

The native plants love the sunny locations and are developing deep root systems to hold soil in place and allow rainfall to penetrate deeper rather than run off and erode Nick's precious concrete structures.

In early June, while Mary was planting the golden alexander a young swallowtail was visiting the plant, providing a real time example of native plant coevolution with our wildlife.

Board members, volunteers, and part-time gardener Monica K are busy preparing other Grandview tableaux for prairie plantings in 2027.

Please let us know if you'd like to help contribute to our ever evolving gardens!

The Engelbert Family Visit



The Engelbert family visit to Grandview was an unexpected and a delightful treat. Alice Fellbaum brought her children and grandchildren to the family home/farm, Grandview, in early August. Fun was had by all, especially those of us giving the tour.

We were fortunate our conservator, Ben Caguioa, was there to talk about the Paul Bunyan restoration.

Alice later wrote in a thank you note: “We all talk of the trip and the grandchildren want to come back. Some of the grandchildren are making little cement sculptures with broken glass and shells. When our 5 year old granddaughter saw one on our patio, she thought we took it from Hollandale (Grandview) and we should return it. Of course I explained to her.”







Next Restoration: Nick's Fantastic Fence



We have high hopes for new projects at Grandview...and we could use your help!

Now that Paul Bunyan is finished, we look ahead to the next projects. And there are two pieces of Nick Engelbert's work that are in need of urgent attention. The first is the mural on the south wall in the house that Nick painted of two trees, one for his wife Katherine and one for himself.

Over time, the heating and cooling of the exterior wall has caused the mural to start cracking off, along with the plaster. In an effort to arrest this tragic event, last year, we kept the house at a constant temperature of 65F through the winter. But with the summer heat, and no air conditioning, we've noticed the problem persists.

So this year we are requesting support for the purchase of central air conditioning and replacing the aging furnace in the house.

Our second immediate concern is the 200 foot fence that bordered the Engelbert yard which in the early 90's was carefully placed on tarps behind the footprint of the barn. This spring we began removing the pieces from the tall grass and dirt that had built up over the years. Ben Caguioa and Ruth Rolfsmeyer, both conservators, directed this effort. Each piece was placed onto pallets, photographed and assessed. Sadly, the years of weather and neglect have caused some pieces to deteriorate and crumble.

With this information and the pieces now accessible, we are on a path to restore as much of the fence as possible in the next two years. We've started fundraising for the project and will begin in the spring of 2027.

This is a huge project that will take ongoing support and many months of work by both conservator, Ben Caguioa,and employee, Ash Kyrie. Your gift of any amount will be most appreciated and will be a visible reminder of a contribution you made to a very unique place in this rural community.













Special thanks to:

Blanchardville Hollandale Area Fund
Blue Ribbon 4H youth for beautiful flowers
United Fund of Iowa County
Kohler Foundation
Ruth Arts
BHAF
WAB



Welcome New Board Members:
Willow Finch and Caleb Carr



Cheers until next year!



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