



File art

Nature House, just south of Gaylord, is a backyard transformed into a mini-forest wonderland.

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Nature centers provide escape from city life

BY SARAH HENRY
Record-Eagle staff writer

For city slickers yearning for a greener horizon free of bricks and concrete, visiting an off-the-beaten-path nature center for a day could be a breath of fresh air.

Just south of Gaylord, one such destination is Nature House.

"This is Gaylord's best-kept secret," said John Facchinetti, who with Joan LaMarra owns Nature House.

Facchinetti and LaMarra have transformed their backyard into a mini-forest wonderland. It's a haven for Boy and Girl Scouts, nature enthusiasts and those who just seek a peaceful place to eat.

"We've got one person that comes during her lunch hour and just sits and reads a book," Facchinetti said.

Facchinetti and LaMarra invite visitors to take a leisurely walk down a trail they have dubbed Serendipity Lane.

There are many stops along Serendipity Lane, including the Chapel in the Woods, which has hosted five weddings and one christening, and a Troll City. Facchinetti said the Troll City is made from hollowed-out logs, which become houses for the trolls.

Facchinetti and LaMarra import trolls from Tennessee and decorate them. Some troll character profiles include policemen, bikers, doctors, nurses, gardeners, cooks, musicians and artists.

"We have sweetheart trolls too, with their tails tied together," Facchinetti said.

Farther down Serendipity Lane is a staged shipwreck starring the S.S. Minnow, affectionately dubbed after the Gilligan's Island boat.

An extension of Serendipity Lane, Memory Lane celebrates the memory of Facchinetti's parents,

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Summer Fun!

Stimmers

MAY

- 23 - 24 **Freak Brothers**
- 30 - 31 **CP2**

JUNE

- 6 - 7 **Impact**
- 13 - 14 **Rave (xes-9)**
- 20 - 21 **Uncle Ugly**
- 27 - 28 **Grand Scam**

JULY

- 4 - 5 **Risque**
- 11 - 12 **CP2**
- 18 - 19 **Orchid Pool**
- 25 - 26 **TBA**

AUGUST

- 1 - 2 **Uncle Ugly**
- 8 - 9 **Maximum Effect**
- 22 - 23 **Risque**
- 29 - 30 **CP2**

JUNE

- 27 **Fabulous Horn Dogs**
- 28 **Jay Webber**
- 29 **Mark Staycer**



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