

# The Rogers Center Journal

Rogers Environmental Education Center



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
Division of Public Affairs and Education  
in conjunction with the not-for-profit  
Friends of Rogers Environmental Education Center, Inc.

**See Schedule of Events Inside!**

SUMMER 2004

[www.dec.state.ny.us/website/education/rogctr.html](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/education/rogctr.html)

June - July - August

## Rogers Environmental Education Center

2721 State Highway 80  
Sherburne, NY 13460-4507  
(607) 674-4017  
fax: (607) 674-2655  
E-mail: [rogers@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:rogers@gw.dec.state.ny.us)

### Staff:

Marsha Guzewich, Director  
Fred von Mechow, Program Coordinator  
Laura Carey, Project WILD Coordinator  
Chris DeCesare, Educator  
Amy Smith, Water Education Specialist  
Darlene Miller, Office Manager

### Visitor Center Hours:

Monday-Friday  
8:30 am - 4:45 pm  
Saturday 1:00 - 4:45 pm  
Sunday (*June-August only*)  
1:00 - 4:45 pm  
Closed State Holidays

### Grounds Open Sunrise to Sunset

### Friends of Rogers Board of Directors:

Byron Harrington, President  
Dan Nielsen, Vice President  
Thurston Packer, Treasurer  
Susan Connelly, Secretary  
Philip Clement  
John Novak  
Jim McDaniel  
Randy Muth  
Douglas Glass  
Vivian Fulton  
Gregory Fuller  
Bob McNitt

### Friends of Rogers Store

*Friends of Rogers operates a bookstore in the Visitor Center. Come in and look through the many field guides and natural history books for all ages – all at 20 percent off retail prices!*

We can also special order that hard-to-find nature title!

*The Rogers Center Journal is published quarterly and produced by Darlene Miller.*

## Notes From The Director

*by Marsha Guzewich*

The pavilion site is staked, snow is gone, foundation work and pavilion erection is due to begin at any time!



## Friends of Rogers Update

*by Byron Harrington*

On March 16, 2004, about 40 people braved a late-winter storm to attend the Rogers volunteer awards night at the Center. The awards dinner is held every two years to pay tribute to the many people that perform so many tasks that benefit Rogers and its mission. Our youngest volunteer was Olivia Miller at 9 years, and our oldest was Nickolas D'Agostino at 95 years of age. Sam Scafidi is one of our longest-serving volunteers. No one is exactly sure how many years Sam has "done his thing" at Rogers, but we know it is in excess of 26 years. A great thanks to all the volunteers, young and old.

Friends of Rogers Board meetings in 2004 will be June 8, August 10, October 12, and December 14 at 7:00 pm at the Visitor Center. All meetings are open to the public. See you there!

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New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
George E. Pataki, Governor ~ Erin M. Crotty, Commissioner

*Kids in Nature Daily*  
 Fun, stimulating activities that teach  
 about nature.

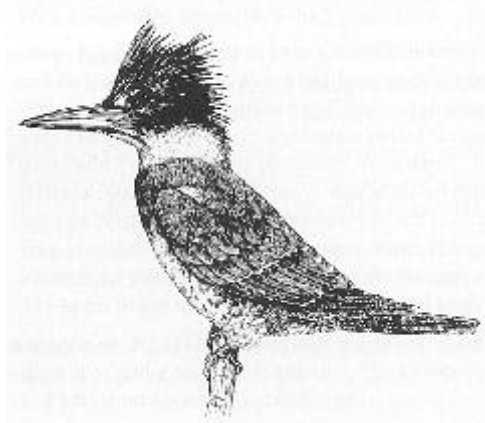


Be K.I.N.D. to your world!  
 Summer 2004  
 Issue #25  
 by naturalist intern  
 Mike Adriaansen

**Nature Quiz:**

Some animals can be picky eaters. Can you match the animals with the things they eat?

- |                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Snapping turtle     | A. Mouse         |
| 2. Dragonfly           | B. Tree bark     |
| 3. Owl                 | C. Frog          |
| 4. Beaver              | D. Carpenter ant |
| 5. Pileated woodpecker | E. Mosquito      |



**Which Friend Am I?**

I recently metamorphosed in a nearby pool of water (vernal pool), where I was safe from fish. I have a brown body with a light grey belly. I have two rows of yellow spots running along my sides from head to tail. I can live as long as 20 years, growing up to nine inches long! My short front legs and long, folded hind legs keep my smooth, moist body in contact with the soil so that I don't dry out. I spend most of my days hiding in an underground burrow, beneath logs, or under rocks in hardwood forests. You may be able to find me on damp nights while I am searching for earthworms, insects and other small invertebrates to eat. I can secrete a milky toxin from glands in my back to prevent being eaten by a racoon, skunk or opossum. I return to the same water pool each spring to breed.

**Which Friend Am I - Entry Form**

To learn what the creature described above is, visit your local library or the library and other resources at Rogers Center. Mail your answer to Rogers Center, 2721 SH 80, Sherburne, NY 13460, by **July 15, 2004**. One name will be drawn from all the correct responses received, and the winner will receive a Friends of Rogers T-shirt.



What Am I? \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address and Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Nature Quiz Answers:  
 1. c, 2. e, 3. a, 4. b, 5. d

## Xiting Sitings

by Fred von Mechow

We've had quite a few notable sightings in late winter and early spring. In the Spring 2004 issue of the *Rogers Center Journal*, you may recall mention of a pair of bald eagles on December 20. We were fortunate again to see an eagle over Rogers Center on February 4!

Bald eagle sightings have been increasing dramatically over the past few years, a reflection of the rebounding population of eagles in New York State. Wintering eagles averaged around 50 in the 1980s, 150 in the 1990s, and 347 since the millennium began. Eagle surveyors found a record 75 breeding pairs in 2003, which successfully raised 87 young! Keep an eye out, they're around!

On the evenings of March 13 and 15, I heard a saw-whet owl singing in my woods, only 200 feet from the house. Alas, as in the past, I was unable to spot it, despite being armed with a flashlight and binoculars. I've still never seen one. Pretty exciting to have heard it, nonetheless.

Mike Adriaansen, our winter intern, and Amy Smith, our Water Education Specialist, spotted an otter at the Williams Road bridge, just two miles north of Rogers. Mike had been out earlier, looking for otter sign with DEC Wildlife Biologist, Bob Gotie. Mike and Bob saw enough evidence to be certain there was at least one otter present, and when Mike and Amy returned a little while later, they saw the otter!

We were all fortunate to watch a skunk wandering around near the Visitor Center on March 4. Skunk tracks were everywhere in the snow throughout the winter, but come spring, the urge to mate brings them out even more!

Also on March 4, Mike was checking out a Rogers trail and noticed a tadpole wiggling around on top of the ice on a frozen pond. Seems the little thing swam up a small stream of meltwater coming off the ice and got stranded. Mike rescued it by steering it back to the water.

Chris DeCesare, Environmental Educator, and Darlene Miller, Office Manager, saw six snow geese on the morning of March 11, mixed in with the huge flocks of Canada geese migrating north. Darlene had a Carolina wren serenading her in front of the Visitor Center on March 30. I heard my first woodcock of the season on April 3, near my home.

## Volunteer Recognition

We are very grateful for the many hours of service contributed by volunteers at Rogers Center:

- C Wells Horton – digital photography for Rogers Center events
- C Audrey Wakefield – library cataloging and provider of sweet sustenance
- C Jean Dewey – office receptionist
- C Barbara Meeks – press release mailings, roller of quarters and library assistance.
- C Hamilton United Cerebral Palsy – stamping WILD books and clipping trails
- C Earth Fest Volunteers
- C Dee Strnisa – reptile program

## A BIG Thank You to Facilitators!

A huge "Thank You" to Project WET and WILD Teacher workshop facilitators who are committed to protecting our natural resources. They enable other educators to incorporate more environmental education into their teaching and are an essential part of the program's success:

Kami Patrizio, Ray Wassinger, Gail Tooker, Annie O'Reilly, Patty Nelson, Senta Korb, Sue Williams, Cindy Simpson, John Lancos, Mike Jabot, Tom Hennigan, Harry Strano, Brendan Herlihy, Dave DeForest, Judy Spring, Craig Harvey and Liz McCheyne

Welcome to new facilitator:  
Sharon Pikul, a fifth-grade teacher from Buffalo

## Donations

Friends of Rogers expresses appreciation to the following individuals and organizations for generous contributions in the form of much-needed items, services and monetary donations:

Rome City School District  
Kim Somers  
Joel and Julie Wexler  
Cub Scout Pack 9 - Clinton NY  
Golden Artist Colors, Inc.  
NYSEG  
Wali Mart

## Volunteer Highlight

by Amy Smith

The staff at Rogers Center are guaranteed big smiles, sounds of laughter and an occasional “high five” once a week when the Hamilton United Cerebral Palsy group comes to share their time with us. Since January 2002, the crew has been volunteering at Rogers Center doing various tasks such as stamping Project WET and WILD activity guides and brochures, clipping the trails and mulching around trees. They are very happy to do any work that needs doing and are a wonderful help. The trees have a thick layer of mulch that not only looks nice, but helps to return nutrients back into the soil. The mulch came from recycled Christmas trees. Many, many educator activity guides are stamped with Rogers Center information, and excess growth on the trails is neatly trimmed back – a variety of jobs well done!

When asked what each likes best about volunteering at Rogers Center, Bob said that he especially enjoys the animals he sees around here; Becky likes stamping the books, visiting the staff and watching the animals. Anthony and Tom feel good about helping us in any way they can.

Some of Becky’s favorite things to do are going out for ice cream, visiting with her family, swimming, and playing golf and baseball. Anthony finds art very relaxing. Collecting comic books, snow boarding and listening to music are also some of his favorite things to do. Bob enjoys having coffee with friends and is interested in John Deere farm tractors. Tom collects model cars, spends time on the computer, and likes to play cards, Gameboy®, basketball, football and golf.

Anthony really looks up to the staff at UCP. He admires the hard work they do and is thankful that they teach him lots about life and take him to fun places. Dale Earnhardt was a star in Tom’s eyes because of his talent for race car driving. Becky’s sister is her role model because she has a great personality, is caring and very nice. Bob also admires his older brother who is nice and looks out for him.

We are very grateful for the work the crew does and their contagious smiles. Thank you all so much and we hope you continue to join us at Rogers for years to come!



Shown left to right are: **Hamilton UCP Group: Tom, Becky, Anthony, Bob and Terri**

## Milkweed Patch Insects

by Chris DeCesare

When most of us think about insects associated with milkweed, we think of monarch butterflies and caterpillars. Children certainly like to find the caterpillars and watch them change to chrysalises and then butterflies. Monarchs are very neat, but there are many other interesting insects and arthropods that are often overlooked in the milkweed community. Each has a different role or niche, some feeding on milkweed and some feeding on the insects attracted to milkweed.

One very common and brightly colored insect found on milkweed is the milkweed longhorn beetle. Milkweed longhorn beetles are large (one-half inch long), bright red with black spots, and have antennae about as long as their bodies. They feed on the leaves and flower buds of milkweed and can be easily seen in early summer. As the summer progresses and most beetles have laid eggs on the milkweed stems, they are not as noticeable.



In mid- to late summer, milkweed bugs can be seen foraging on milkweed. True bugs have wings held flat over their bodies in a distinctive “x” shape. In small milkweed bugs, this “x” is highlighted in red on a black

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## Dragonflies

by Amy Smith

Visit any weedy pond or slow-moving river in the summer, and you will probably see many dragonflies. Over the water, these long-bodied insects fly, some with long swoops, others with a rapid, darting flight. Many species are brightly colored and all are a very important part of the waterside scene. While in flight, most will be feeding – snatching insect prey in midair. Some will be males, patrolling up and down, looking for females to mate with. Others will be females, looking for places to lay their eggs, usually on floating vegetation in the water.

Water is essential for dragonflies, as a large part of their life cycle is spent underwater. The eggs of dragonflies hatch into nymphs that are drab and well camouflaged, and, like all insects, have a head, thorax and abdomen. They are eager predators eating a wide range of small creatures including water fleas, worms, snails, the larvae of beetles, other insects, tadpoles and even small fish. The dragonfly nymph's gills are located inside its body. To get water to pass across the gills, the nymph draws water in through an opening at the end of its abdomen. As water passes over the gills, they absorb dissolved oxygen. Then, the water is expelled out of the body and propels the nymph forward. Dragonflies nymphs are important food for fish.

A dragonfly nymph molts, or sheds its skin, several times before changing into an adult. Wing buds develop and the whole nymph grows larger after each molt. Shortly before they emerge as adults, dragonfly nymphs move to the edge of the pond or stream and climb out onto projecting logs or stems. After the final molt, the adult dragonfly emerges. Their huge compound eyes allow them to see nearly 360 degrees around them. The lower "lip" of the dragonfly nymph is hinged in two places and has grasping pinchers on the end, enabling it to snatch prey. Adults catch flying insects with their legs and stuff their meal into their mouths.



## Dragonflies - continued

Adults fly at 25 miles per hour and can reach speeds of up to 75 miles per hour. As adults, dragonflies are important food for frogs, birds, spiders and other insects.

Visit your favorite pond or stream this summer and count how many dragonflies you see and how many different colors they are. What do you think they might be doing when you see them? Enjoy watching these beautiful flying insects of the pond.

### Just Say No to Dumping Animals

by Chris DeCesare and Darlene Miller

Please do not release cats, geese or any other animals, either domestic or wild, on the grounds of Rogers Center. We do not have the resources to care for them. Creatures released here often die from predation, starvation or disease. Half-starved and possibly diseased animals are a threat to both visitors and wildlife. Those animals that do manage to live for a time become a nuisance in other ways. Cats quickly assume their natural predatory role and compete with other wild predators for food. Domestic geese join the wild Canada goose flocks and sometimes pair with them. This year there was a domestic and Canada goose pair that managed to mate and produce mixed offspring. None of the effects of dumped wildlife are good ones. We cannot state strongly enough, please **do not** leave animals here. Thank you.

### Milkweed Patch Insects

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background. Large milkweed bugs have a black band across their mostly red wings. Both species suck nectar from milkweed flowers and sap from the stems, but their preferred food is milkweed seeds. They are more abundant later in summer when seeds are developing and maturing. Like monarch caterpillars and butterflies, both milkweed bugs and milkweed longhorn beetles are toxic for most birds and mammals to eat.

Throughout the summer many arthropod predators inhabit the milkweed patch, including crab spiders and jumping spiders, ambush and assassin bugs, dragonflies, ladybug beetles and preying mantids. Keep your eyes open for these and other arthropods. Watch their behaviors. You will be amazed by the diversity and abundance of creatures you see.

*We welcome those who have any type of physical challenge to all of our programs.  
If you call ahead to let us know your needs, we will be happy to learn how we can best serve you.  
Call (607) 674-4017 to register.*

## JUNE

- June 5  
Saturday  
7:30 pm**      **BAT BOX BUILDING AND BAT WATCHING**  
Bats are very efficient insect eaters and fun to watch. It is possible to attract them to your home if you live in suitable habitat by providing a roosting box. Join us to assemble bat houses and then journey outdoors to watch some bats swoop over the Ice Pond. **Bring a hammer and \$8.00 for every box you take home.**
- June 12  
Saturday  
11:00 am**      **BASIC FAMILY CAMPING TIPS**  
Join Molly Baker, from Colgate's Outdoor Education Program, to learn the basics of camping gear selection and use. Molly will bring along some samples of sleeping bags, tents, cooking equipment and more.
- June 19  
Saturday  
8:30 am to noon**      **CANOE/KAYAK BEAVER CREEK**  
Enjoy a lovely paddle on a slow-moving stream. Observe frogs, red-winged blackbirds, dragonflies, and perhaps kingbirds defending their nest. **Registration is required. There is a \$5.00 non-refundable fee per paddler.** (Water bottle, sunscreen and a hat recommended.)
- June 26  
Saturday  
10:00 am to noon**      **FAMILY FISHING DAY**  
Bring the family to learn basic angling skills, catch a fish, make a spinner jig, and learn basic fish identification. Trout Unlimited will be here to guide you in rods, reels, knots, and bait. Get a close look at the tiny creatures that live in the pond mud. Fish depend upon them for food.

## JULY

- July 3  
Saturday  
8:30 pm**      **FIREFLIES**  
On a warm summer night you are bound to notice tiny flashes of light among the plants and zipping through the air. It is the annual summer mating dance of the firefly. After an indoor introduction, we will catch and release fireflies outdoors. Bring a flashlight and a container.
- July 10  
Saturday  
11:00 am**      **LEOPOLD WALK**  
Join in a walk and look at the natural world through the eyes of Aldo Leopold. With keen observation skills, Leopold viewed the landscape with a broad perspective through time and across diverse life forms. Through his writing, we will explore the landscape and wildlife of Rogers Center.
- July 17  
Saturday  
9:00 am to noon**      **FINGER LAKES TRAIL HIKE**  
This incredible system of trails extends across the state and yet, it is not well known. We will take a general nature walk to look at a variety of plants and animals found in New York State. **Please call to register and for trip details.** (Water bottle, a snack and sunscreen are recommended.)

- July 24  
Saturday  
9:00 am to noon**      **CANOE/KAYAK LELAND POND**  
A perfect opportunity for novice and expert canoeists alike to enjoy life in and along the pond such as herons, signs of beavers and many wonderful plants. **Registration is required. There is a \$5.00 non-refundable fee per paddler.** (Water bottle, sunscreen and a hat recommended.)
- July 27  
Tuesday  
7:00 pm**      **EDIBLE WILD PLANTS**  
Jane Swingle and Barb Collins will scour the Rogers trails for wild plants to eat. They'll also bring some samples to taste!
- July 31  
Saturday  
8:00 am**      **SUMMER BIRD WALK**  
The morning is a very active time for many birds. After a slide show and bird call identification review, we will walk the trails and watch and listen for local birds going through their morning rituals.

## AUGUST

- August 7  
Saturday  
9:00 am to noon**      **PHARSALIA TORNADO OF '98**  
Experience the fascinating process of forest succession through the eyes of Forest Manager Greg Owens. Greg will take us to several spots, explain the effects of the tornado, and the surprising response of tree growth. **Wear sturdy pants for brushy undergrowth conditions. Meet in Rogers Center's main parking lot.**
- August 14  
Saturday  
9:00 to noon**      **CANOE/KAYAK NINEMILE SWAMP**  
If you haven't paddled Ninemile Swamp, you're overdue for a great trip, perfect for everyone, especially families. The Sangerfield River flowing through the swamp is slow, meandering, and as scenic as any waterway in Central New York. We'll provide all the equipment. **Registration is required. There is a \$5.00 non-refundable fee per paddler.** (Water bottle, sunscreen and a hat recommended.)
- August 21  
Saturday  
10:00 am to noon**      **FROLIC THROUGH THE FIELDS OF ADAMS FARM**  
The Adams Farm fields are no longer farmed and have many hidden treasures. We'll explore summer flowers, a huge variety of nifty insects, and walk a recently cut trail along the Chenango River. **Wear pants and shoes that can get a little dirty. Meet in Rogers Center's main parking lot.**
- August 28  
Saturday  
8:00 to 9:30 pm**      **NIGHT SIGHTS AND SOUNDS**  
A rising full moon greets you and lights your way through the trail, in search of the signs of nocturnal life. We'll listen for owls, frogs, and other night creatures. Bring a flashlight, but be prepared not to use it.

**ALL PROGRAMS MEET AT VISITOR CENTER UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE.**

### Children's Series

The summer children's series explores some animals that make you squeal with delight, amazement or fear. The line-up includes: ladybugs, spiders, turtles, salamanders and birds of prey. Through activities, discovery walks and crafts, children will take a look at different animals each week to learn about their interesting characteristics. Programs for 4 to 6 year-olds are at 10:30 am, and programs for 7 to 10 year-olds are at 12:30 pm. Please call to register: (607) 674-4017.

<b>July 2</b> <b>Friday</b> <b>10:30 a.m. (4-6 years)</b> <b>12:30 p.m. (7-10 years)</b>	<b>ARACHNOPHOBIA</b> Little Miss Muffit had it wrong. Spiders aren't all that bad or scary, unless you're an insect! Find out about different types of spiders and what makes them pretty neat animals.
<b>July 9</b> <b>Friday</b> <b>10:30 a.m. (4-6 years)</b> <b>12:30 p.m. (7-10 years)</b>	<b>TURTLE TRIATHLON</b> Life is a world of hurdles, if you're a turtle. From sunning on logs in the marsh, to swimming in water, and crawling on land to lay eggs, turtles are versatile creatures. Check out these unrecognized animal athletes!
<b>July 16</b> <b>Friday</b> <b>10:30 a.m. (4-6 years)</b> <b>12:30 p.m. (7-10 years)</b>	<b>HAWKS AND OWLS: SUPER-BIRDS</b> Hawks and owls have abilities that could rival those of Superman. With great vision, sensitive hearing and super strength, these birds of prey make super hunters. Discover more about hawks and owls around here.
<b>July 23</b> <b>Friday</b> <b>10:30 a.m. (4-6 years)</b> <b>12:30 p.m. (7-10 years)</b>	<b>LADYBUG PICNIC</b> In the mostly creepy world of insects, ladybugs are well-liked and a joy to find crawling on plants. What makes these little beetles with the red and black suits so interesting? Let's find out together!
<b>July 30</b> <b>Friday</b> <b>10:30 a.m. (4-6 years)</b> <b>12:30 p.m. (7-10 years)</b>	<b>SALAMANDERS</b> If you look in streams and moist places, you're sure to find salamanders in the small spaces. They're less like lizards and more like frogs. Learn more about these cool amphibians that live under logs.

### JULY 2004

#### *Camp Read-A-Lot "Nature's Notes"*

*Nature's Notes* is a special summer program presented in collaboration with Sherburne Public Library, Sherburne Rotary's *Music in the Park* and Rogers Environmental Education Center. *Special funding through Chenango County Council of the Arts and Howard K. Finch Foundation. All events are free.*

Signup starts Monday, June 30! Stop in during library hours to get a reading log and check out the hot new books of 2004! Every week that you meet your reading goals fill out a raffle ticket to win a great prize!!



#### **Mondays are family nights! Events start at 7:00 pm.**

- July 5 -Campfire with George Steele - Rogers Center
- July 12 -Ross Park Zoomobile - Gaines Park (next to Sherburne Public Library)
- July 19 -Dan Duggan - Environmental Concert - Sherburne Public Library
- July 26 -Children's Nature Film and Refreshments - Sherburne Public Library



**Wednesdays are Story and Craft Time – July 7, 14, 21 and 28 at 1:30 pm  
for Nursery School through Grade 1 at the Sherburne Public Library**

**Thursdays are Art in the Afternoon: Nature Crafts at Rogers Center – July 8, 15, 22 and 29 at 1:30 pm  
Grades 2 and up - signup is required, call (607) 674-4242**

**Special guest Tom Chapin, Wednesday July 28<sup>th</sup> Sherburne Rotary's  
*Music in the Park* at Gaines Park-6:00 to 8:30 pm**

*One of America's most beloved folk singers, a pioneer in the field of children's music, and a charismatic live performer.*

## Reminder Newsletter Recipients!

The NYS Division of Budget has directed all state agencies to curtail printing and mailing newsletters unless required by law. They have asked that such publications be made available on the agencies' website.

If you have Internet access, we ask you to send us the following information so that we can send your newsletter electronically. Each season we will send you an e-mail with a link to the latest newsletter to be posted on the DEC website.

For those who do not have access to an Internet server, we will try to make arrangements for you to receive this information by other means. Thank you for your cooperation.

If we do not hear from you, we will assume you no longer wish to receive the newsletter and remove your name/organization from our mailing list. If you have any questions, please call Rogers Center at (607) 674-4017.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you do not have Internet access.

Yes, I would like to become a member or renew my membership. Enclosed is my check for \$15.00 made payable to Friends of Rogers, Inc. to cover membership. Donations are welcome and may be included with your membership fee. I understand that benefits of membership include 50 percent off snowshoe rental, first bag of sunflower heads FREE during U-Pick (all others \$1.00/bag), annual membership meeting, \$1.00 off bluebird or bat box, \$1.00 off T-shirt, quarterly newsletter, membership roster posted at Rogers Center. Mail to: Friends of Rogers, Inc, PO Box 932, Sherburne, NY 13460.

