



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Senator Ritchie's Community Spotlight: The Newly Restored Minna Anthony Common Nature Center

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

One of the treasures of the North Country is the Wellesley Island State Park. Its breathtaking views and unrivaled recreational opportunities draw more than 200,000 people each year.

This year, just in time for the summer season, Wellesley Island State Park got even better. The Minna Anthony Common Nature Center, which helps people learn more about the local

environment and encourages them to get outside and enjoy the outdoors, underwent a complete renovation and is now open to the public.

Last year, I was able to secure \$100,000 in state funding to help this important project, led by the “Friends of the Nature Center”, a nonprofit group that works to improve the facility to expand exhibits and improve offerings for patrons.

It was originally dedicated in 1969, and named for Minna Anthony Common, a leading authority on the birds, flowers, trees, animals and grasses who also did pen and ink illustrations and written work on natural history.

This year, the new-look center officially re-opened, featuring a number of new interactive exhibits highlighting the St. Lawrence River, its beauty and wildlife and much more.

One of the largest nature centers in the state park system—and in New York State—the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center boasts eight miles of hiking trails, as well as seven miles of cross-country ski trails.

It is also home to exhibits about wildlife and the center hosts special programming throughout the year. School districts throughout the North Country bring students to the Nature Center on field trips to teach the importance of protecting the environment.

This summer, take some time to visit the newly renovated Minna Anthony Common Nature Center and learn more about the wonders of the St. Lawrence River. For more information, go to <https://www.macnaturecenter.com>.