



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release— January 12, 2018

Contact: Carol Abrahamzon, Executive Director, Mississippi Valley Conservancy  
(608) 784 3606 ext. 4, [carol@mississippivalleyconservancy.org](mailto:carol@mississippivalleyconservancy.org)

### **CRAWFORD COUNTY COMMUNITY FUND PROVIDES GRANT FOR FAMILY BAT FEST**

#### **Mississippi Valley Conservancy nature education event to be first of its kind offered at Kickapoo Caverns**

LA CROSSE, WIS. — The Crawford County Community Fund has awarded \$1,000 to Mississippi Valley Conservancy for its upcoming Family Bat Fest at Kickapoo Caverns in Wauzeka, WI. The event will be held on July 21, 2018.

The Crawford County Community Fund, a component of the Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin, was established in 2008 as a permanent endowment for the benefit of the County. The Fund's mission is to support economic development in the County. Once per year, a portion of the Fund's earnings are returned to area communities in the form of grants for projects consistent with the Fund's mission.

Family Bat Fest will bring families from all over the Midwest to participate in an evening of hikes, cave tours, educational stations and speakers. Advance registration for Family Bat Fest is required. To receive details and updates, sign up to receive [email updates](#) from the Conservancy.

Kickapoo Caverns is an 83 acre Conservancy-protected property located west of Wauzeka, in Crawford County. The property offers a unique opportunity for environmental education and the promotion of eco-tourism for Crawford County. The Kickapoo Caverns is home to one of Wisconsin's top five hibernating bat populations and is one of the most spectacular caves in the Midwest. To protect the bat populations, the caverns are open only for education events and scientific research during limited times of the year when bats are not in hibernation.

“This grant will help with public education about bats and their important role in our ecosystem,” said Carol Abrahamzon, Executive Director of the Conservancy, “We’re delighted to kick off our first season of bat education with Family Bat Fest thanks to a grant from the foundation.”

In commenting on the grant Camille Smith, chair of the Crawford County Community Fund Advisory Board, said “In reviewing grant applications we look for projects and programs that result in enhancement for our local communities. We also favor projects that bring people to our County. We know that happens through eco-tourism initiatives like this new event. Our motto is By Us. For Us. And, this is an excellent reflection of that motto.”

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#### *ABOUT MVC*

*Founded in 1997, Mississippi Valley Conservancy is a nationally accredited regional land trust that has permanently protected more than 19,000 acres of scenic lands in southwestern Wisconsin by working with private landowners, businesses and local communities on voluntary conservation projects. The focus of MVC is to conserve the forests, prairies, wetlands, streams and farms that enrich our communities, for the health and well-being of current and future generations. For additional information and to sign up for email updates, visit [www.mississippivalleyconservancy.org](http://www.mississippivalleyconservancy.org).*