

Superintendent's Report

By Judy Klippel
Havenwoods State Forest Superintendent

It's been a year since we implemented our new interpretive master plan, and I'm pleased with how far we've come. Despite frequent staff changes and shortages, we've been able to initiate or complete many of the projects we identified as priorities. Here are some highlights.

We applied the popular format of our NatureFests to learning opportunities in green living and outdoor nature activities. In April, our new Earth Day NatureFest featured energy, lawn and garden, composting, tree planting, recycled crafts, and an eco-scamper hunt.

In September, Explore the Outdoors NatureFest addressed a variety of ways to recreate in nature (a particular challenge with the continuous rain that day). Camping, star gazing, geocaching, nature crafts, wildlife watching, fly tying, and hunting dogs were some of the attractions of the day.

The Earth Day event will be an annual one; Explore the Outdoors will be biennial, alternating with Snake NatureFest in October. Many thanks to Education Specialist Sue Johansen for coordinating all of our festivals.

Last fall's series of four wildlife programs brought in many people eager to see animals up close. It was so popular we have scheduled four more programs like them in 2009. Our thanks to FOH for sponsoring these programs.

Sue developed a new field trip on biodiversity and invasive plants that is catching on with elementary and middle school classes. "Weed Busters" involves kids in doing nature

activities and pulling garlic mustard or cutting teasel.

Upstairs in the center, Books In



Books in your Backyard display

Your Backyard provides a cozy place and an opportunity for families to enjoy nature books together. They can also take activities and materials outside to continue their explorations. Donations from the George Washington Lodge of the Masons helped us fund this project.

Seasonal photo displays in the lobby are promoting visitors' interests in migrating birds and butterflies,



Seasonal Display in lobby

blooming prairie flowers, and wildlife found at Havenwoods. And the environmental center is now open six days a week, providing the consistency of hours every Saturday morning, instead of just on program days.

As we continue implementation of

the plan, here are some of the things we're working on for the next 12 months: interpretive hikes and programs for adults and youth on biodiversity and invasives, summer field trips involving nature games and nature art for youth groups, frog monitoring program for adults, pond habitat field trips for schools, geocaching workshops for families, and placement of geocaches that highlight Havenwoods history. Some projects require more planning before we can announce them, so watch for them in *Horizons*.

Last Fair Trade Coffee for sale

There are exactly seven bags of that delicious Mount Meru fair trade coffee for sale yet. The price is right at \$8 per 12 ounce package, so come in and help Havenwoods and the coffee farmers by filling your cup with some of this great brew.

Birds are on the move to their winter quarters. Come spot them at Havenwoods

There is plenty of good bird spotting and watching at Havenwoods State Forest these days. The birds have begun their journey south to warmer climates. Here are some that have been identified during September.

Palm warbler, Swainson's thrush, bluebird, great horned owl, rose-breasted grosbeak, red-tailed hawk, great egret, brown creeper, hermit thrush, yellow rumped warbler, sapsucker, junco, scarlet tanager, kingfisher, pie-billed grebe, woodcock, swamp sparrow, field sparrow, song sparrow, and Brewer's blackbird.

Havenwoods visitors also spotted several snakes including the Milk Snake and a Northern Red Belly snake.

Explore the Outdoors festival ignored the rain and moved indoors

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 people decided to go ahead with their compass activity despite the rain. Another outdoor event that was held in rain was the Cook in the Outdoors class. Held under a canopy, this event proved to be very popular with a number of visitors.

Some of the other interesting festival events included Autumn stars , Geocaching for Beginners, Catch "Backyard Bass", Let's Go Camping, Paint Nature Scenes, Make a Sunprint, and Weave—Naturally!



Shawn Hansen from the Fly Fishers, Inc. demonstrates the intricate art of tying flies. Fly Fishers Inc. promotes fly fishing and skills needed for it.

Nan Calvert from E3-Environmental Education for Everyone brought a specially developed tent held up by air pressure (StarLab) which children entered to view a star-filled night.

Ann Elsenpeter from the Wisconsin Geocaching Association taught the Geocaching for Beginners class. Unfortunately, the uncooperative weather made it impossible for the students to go outside and participate in an actual exercise. Geocaching is a growing family activity.

One of the most popular activities was the Catch "Backyard Bass" program. Many of the young people migrated to the balcony and were greeted there by volunteers. They were then armed with casting rods with lures attached, and the young 'uns were taught the basics of how to cast the lure out, with an emphasis on trying to control where the lure landed.



FOH Board President Paul Klein (center) and Secretary Rachael Jones work the food concession during the festival. Usinger's wiener plates were featured.

Of course, there was no water on the balcony, so no one got wet wading there.



A young visitor examines one of the tents set up at the festival's Lets Go Camping

A nice group of 33 volunteers turned out to help seven staff members conduct the Festival.

As in the past, Havenwoods festivals, the food service featured Usinger's wieners, which were graciously donated by the Usinger Company.

Give to the Friends of Havenwoods.

Use the Pick 'n Save "We Care" Program.

The FOH Pick 'n Save Account Number is 245500.

Apply for a Pick 'n Save Advantage Plus Savers Card the next time you shop at one of their many stores.

The account number should be given when you make application for the card.

Shop often and help FOH!