MAY - JULY 2012

Prairie Horizons

STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION

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New SCC Website goes LIVE!

Have you visited Story County Conservation at our new home on the web?

www.storycountyiowa.gov/conservation

In the coming year, we hope you visit our new site for current information about our parks and natural areas, environmental education programming and updates about current conservation projects. Check it out and let us know what you think!

Spring *Partners* Festival

Mother Earth's

Magical World

Sunday, May 6, 2-5 p.m.
McFarland Park
56461 180th Street, northeast of Ames

Miss Betty's Magical Storytelling

Live Music by Gatehouse Saints

Enjoy an enchanting afternoon filled with arts & crafts, storytelling, live music, face painting and more!

Programs & Events Key

This symbol denotes an O.W.L.S program

This symbol denotes a family-friendly program

✓ ***This symbol denotes a volunteer opportunity***

Conservation Center Open Sundays!
Sundays, 2-5 p.m. April-October 2012
Story County Conservation Center
McFarland Park

✓ The Story County Conservation Center will be open to visitors on Sundays from 2-5 p.m. These seasonal hours will begin April 15 and continue through October 28. Inside the center, visitors will enjoy photo and educational displays and an air-conditioned bird viewing area. Complimentary state and county park brochures are available in the lobby to assist you in planning your outdoor experiences, and volunteer hosts will greet you and answer questions. Bring your family out and enjoy McFarland Park. Hike or bike the numerous trails around the park, go fishing on our 6.5-acre lake, or visit the bird blind. If you are interested in volunteering as a center host, please contact Outreach Coordinator Tiffany Cornelius at 515-232-2516.

Conservation Center Displays
Exhibits on display in the multipurpose room are available for viewing from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and Sunday 2:00-5:00 p.m. unless a nature camp or private meeting is in progress. Visitors traveling distances are asked to call ahead for viewing availability.
Partners* Photo Contest - *April 27-June 27
Winners and selected entries from the annual photo contest will be displayed for the viewing public.
Wild Waters - *July 2-October 19*
This is a series of images of water features of wild places photographer Craig Meyers has visited.

Spring Fishing Tournament
Saturday, April 28, 7:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.
Hickory Grove Lake

This is a two-person tournament; fee is $35 per team if pre-registered with payment by 4:30 p.m., April 25; the fee after April 25 is $45. Individuals may fish for the same fee. Registration fee includes lunch. Teams can register the day of the event. Participants 16 years and older must have a valid Iowa fishing license, and all 2012 Fishing Regulations will be followed. Hickory Grove is an electric motor only lake. Test your skills against other anglers on Hickory Grove Lake this spring. $100 cash prizes will be awarded to teams that catch the longest bass, crappie, bluegill, and catfish. Day-of registration and check-in will begin at 6:30 a.m. at the beach house (67382 250th St., Colo). For a complete list of rules, contact the McFarland Park office at 515-232-2516.

Older, Wiser, Livelier Seniors
Bully! Meet Theodore Roosevelt
Tuesday, May 1, 11:00 a.m.
Story County Conservation Center
McFarland Park

O.W.L.S. programs are designed for "boomers" or older--but anyone can attend! The program begins at 11:00 a.m. followed by an optional lunch. ***There is a $7.00 fee for lunch with pre-registration required by Friday, April 27.*** *You do not need to pre-register if you wish to attend only the presentation.* Join us for Darrel Draper's presentation on "Teddy," which might even cause you to get swept up in the excitement of Roosevelt's campaign for a third term as president. This program was made possible by Humanities Iowa. Planned menu: meatball sub, chips, fresh fruit, and cookie.

Volunteers needed at SCC in 2012!
Interested in lending a hand at Story County Conservation? We're always looking for volunteers, and individuals, families, and clubs are welcome! For more information, contact Outreach Coordinator Tiffany Cornelius at 515-232-2516 or email her at tcornelius@storycounty.com.

Programs & Events

Partners Spring Festival
Sunday, May 6, 2:00-5:00 p.m.
McFarland Park

There is no fee or registration to attend the festival. Experience an afternoon of "Mother Earth's Magical World" with arts and crafts, storytelling, live music, and face painting. We'll also have canoeing with the Skunk River Paddlers, fishing pole check-out, solar viewing with the Ames Area Amateur Astronomers, free popcorn, and lemonade. Bring a lawn chair and enjoy the day!

Ames Area Amateur Astronomers
Telescopes 101
Saturday, May 19, 7:30 p.m.
Story County Conservation Center
McFarland Park & Adams Observatory

There is no registration or fee to attend a meeting. Information will be presented about the types and costs of a variety of telescopes. All of the major refractors, reflectors, cassegrains, and binoculars will be on display. If you would like to help or give advice, you are welcome to bring your equipment. Anyone thinking about purchasing a telescope would also benefit from our discussion. Meetings begin in the conservation center before moving to the Adams Observatory. Participants should dress for the weather and may bring binoculars. Visit www.amesastronomers.org for more information.

TEAM Day (Trail Enhancement And Management)
Sunday, May 20, 1:30 p.m.
Christiansen Forest Preserve

✓ *Pre-registration is required by 4:30 p.m., Thursday, May 17 to ensure enough help and refreshments.* Be a part of our TEAM! This will be a general trail workday out at Christiansen Forest Preserve (55973 310th Street, Huxley, 50124). All volunteers are asked to bring a water bottle and dress for the weather; long-sleeved shirts, pants, gloves, and sturdy, close-toed shoes are strongly recommended.

Evening Prairie Walks
May 24, June 28, July 26, August 23, 7:00 p.m.
Doolittle Prairie

Join Iowa Prairie Network's Lloyd Crim at monthly prairie walks and enjoy viewing the largest prairie remnant in Story County. See rare prairie foliage that changes each month and learn the history of central Iowa prairies from a prairie enthusiast. Long pants, sturdy shoes, and bug spray are recommended. Bring your camera for beautiful photographs! Doolittle Prairie is located 1.25 miles south of E-18 on 560th Avenue.

Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve Dedication
Sunday, May 27, 1:30 p.m.
Hertz Woods

The public is invited to the dedication of the Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve near Nevada on Sunday, May 27. A short program will begin at 1:30 p.m. with a nature walk following. The area was recently donated to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF) by CarMar Farm, Ltd. As planned by the Hertz family, INHF is transferring the project to the Story County Conservation Board to be open for public enjoyment. The Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve (25401 Country Club Road) is located one mile south of Nevada on Country Club Road.

Historic Cemetery Tour
Saturday, June 2, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Meet at McFarland Park

Pre-registration with payment is required by 4:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 30. The fee for this program is $5.00 per person. Participants will have a guided tour to several older cemeteries in Story County. We'll look at gravestone symbolism, facts about pioneers, and the places they are laid to rest. Participants are asked to bring water to drink and a sack lunch. Light to moderate hiking may be involved; long pants are recommended as some cemeteries may be overgrown with parsnip or poison ivy.

Lekwa Access Re-Dedication
Sunday, June 3, 1:30 p.m.
Lekwa Access

Join us as we celebrate National Trails Day with a re-dedication of the Lekwa Access on the Skunk River Water Trail. We will unveil improvements to the area and celebrate with some refreshments. The water trail access is located at 56156 130th Street, just west of the Skunk River bridge on County Highway E-18.

TEAM Day (Trail Enhancement And Management)
Saturday, June 9, 9:30 a.m.
Skunk River Greenbelt

✓*Pre-registration is required by 4:30 p.m., Thursday, June 7 to ensure enough help and refreshments.* Be a part of our TEAM! This trail workday will include weedwacking and other general trail work along the Skunk River Greenbelt from Bear Creek to Soper's Mill. All volunteers are asked to bring a water bottle and dress for the weather; long sleeved shirts, pants, gloves, and sturdy, close-toed shoes are strongly recommended. Participants will meet at the Bear Creek trail entrance (16415 Pleasant Valley Rd., Story City 50248).

Ames Area Amateur Astronomers
Robots in Space II
Saturday, June 16, 7:30 p.m.
Story County Conservation Center
McFarland Park & Adams Observatory

There is no registration or fee to attend a meeting. Join us as we review some of the most interesting and exciting robotic space exploration missions flown by NASA. This program is part two of an entertaining and fact-filled look at human forays into space. Join us for a conversation about the machines that worked and those that didn't (sometimes spectacularly), and how the machines helped NASA explore the solar system and beyond. Meetings begin in the conservation center before moving to the Adams Observatory. Participants should dress for the weather and may bring binoculars. Visit www.amesastronomers.org for more information.

Canoe Clinic
Wednesday, June 20, 5:00-6:30 p.m.
Hickory Grove Park

The fee is $10.00 per canoe. Pre-registration with payment is required by 4:30 p.m., Monday, June 18. This event is open to the public but specifically planned for participants in the Adult/Child Canoe Trip. Join SCC staff on the beach for an evening of canoe instruction. Participants will learn canoe safety, steering and paddling techniques, and then test their canoeing skills on the lake. This program is strongly recommended for participants in the Adult/Child Canoe Trip (scheduled for July 28) who have never canoed. The general public is also welcome to attend.

Naturalist's Lunchbox
June 22, June 29, July 20, July 27
Noon-1:00 p.m., McFarland Park

Bring your lunch, spread a blanket, and join a naturalist for a Friday picnic in the park. Each 'lunchbox' will feature a nature topic that we'll experience through stories and activities. The program is free, appropriate for all ages, and will be held inside in case of inclement weather. Adults are expected to remain with their children.

Ames Area Amateur Astronomers
Star-B-Q Potluck
Saturday, July 21, 4:00 p.m.
Story County Conservation Center
McFarland Park & Adams Observatory

There is no registration or fee to attend a meeting. Beat the summer heat and come out to the Astronomers' annual summer Star-B-Q potluck held at the Story County Conservation Center. Please bring a side dish to share; the club will supply meat and buns. Weather permitting; there will be safe solar viewing outside followed by an informal meeting inside the conservation center. Visit www.amesastronomers.org for more information.

Adult/Child Canoe Trip
Saturday, July 28
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Meet at McFarland Park

The fee for the trip is $40.00 per canoe; registration with payment is required by 4:30 p.m., Wednesday, July 25. Please register with the phone number where you can be reached the morning of the trip. Participants must also list life jacket sizes on registration forms: less than 50 lbs., between 50-90 lbs., or over 90 lbs. Return time is approximate. The trip is dependent on weather and river levels and will not be rescheduled if cancelled. Space is limited; early registration is strongly encouraged.

Join us for a canoe trip down a central Iowa river. We'll meet at the conservation center and have a brief orientation before traveling to our launching site. Participants need to bring plenty of water, sunscreen, a swimsuit, towel, water shoes (or shoes that can get wet and dirty), and a sack lunch. We will provide canoes, paddles, canoe shuttle, life jackets, and coolers for lunches. *Each canoe can hold a maximum of two adults with one child, one adult with two children, or two adults with two SMALL children.*

Special instructions for participants in the Adult/ Child Canoe Trip: *If you have never canoed before, it is strongly recommended you attend the canoe clinic on June 20. There is no additional cost to attend the clinic if you are registered for the Adult/ Child Canoe Trip. Please explain your canoe experience or sign up for the canoe clinic on your registration form.*

F.L.O.A.T. - V

Backpacking in
Porcupine Mountains
Wilderness State Park
Monday, July 2, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, July 18-Monday, July 23

This camp is for youth completing grades 8-12. The fee for the week is $250 and includes transportation, tents, mess kit, cook stove, water filter, equipment rental, camping fees, and most meals. Campers will need to provide personal items and money for meals and souvenirs while traveling. To keep the cost of this trip as low as possible, the fee is based on a specific number of campers. Please be positive you can attend before submitting an application as no refunds will be issued. Full payment must be received by June 25. Space is limited!

Interested campers must submit an application (found at www.storycountyiowa.gov/conservation) by 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 30. Upon being chosen, letters, pack lists, and itineraries will be mailed out to the participants prior to the training day in July.

For the second year, Story County Conservation is very excited to offer a high school backpacking trip. This year we will trek to the "Porkies" of Michigan. Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park (60,000 acres) is one of the few remaining large wilderness areas in the Midwest. Towering virgin timber, secluded lakes, waterfalls, miles of wild rivers and streams, and the chance to see black bears make a visit to the "Porkies" a trip to remember.

If selected, you will begin your journey at a training day on July 2 at McFarland Park. At training, you will get a glimpse of back country camping, practice hiking with a loaded pack, learn to use the gear that we will need on the trip, and find out how to prepare for such an adventure. Backpacking is a very physical activity, so you will want to be in decent shape before we leave. This is an adventure to top them all.

Space is limited! To have a chance at the fun we have planned, you need to fill out an application! This trip is co-sponsored with Plymouth County Conservation.

Zaletel says goodbye to Story County Conservation

Congratulations to long-time employee and conservation champion Linda Zaletel on her retirement this spring. Recently honored with the Aldo Leopold award for lifetime achievement in environmental education, Linda has touched many lives, and her presence with SCC will be greatly missed. We congratulate her on her accomplishments and wish her the best!

By Linda Zaletel
SCC Naturalist

SCC Naturalist Linda Zaletel will retire in May.

My love of nature and the outdoors started with my mother. My mom (and grandmother) were both birdwatchers, and they passed that passion on to me. So how do you find a job that pays you to be outside, watch birds, and have fun? I attended Iowa State University and got a degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology.

In April of 1979, I began my career with Story County Conservation in the campground. I registered campers, sold firewood, picked up garbage, cleaned lodges, and presented a Saturday night campground program. I was young, enthusiastic, and filled with joy to be working in a park. Problems in the campground were always about parking, saving campsites, and cleaning the shower house. Benefits were being invited to eat fresh fish, walking everywhere, and getting to know the campers. The other part of my job that I liked was that it was part-time, so I could stay home with our two girls.

My goal was to become a naturalist (no, not the kind that runs naked in the wood and eats nuts and berries!), which happened in 1987. I still learn something new about nature and conservation every day. I thought I'd share some of my favorite moments:

Strangest animal in the park: An iguana running across the road at McFarland Park.
Favorite education animals: Scruffy the Screech owl and Ona the Barred owl
Best campground program: Campfire Cooking
Best *wildlife rescue:* Barn owl
Best prairie burn: Doolittle Prairie. I got the truck stuck as the fire crept toward it!
Favorite school program: Woman of the Woods
Funniest comment from a kid: What are toad stools? "That's where toads go potty!"
Best marsh walk: Larson Marsh with the Patrick Family at midnight with crackers and cheese following.
Best bike ride: Full Moon Bike Ride on HOINT
Saddest moment: Losing Mark, my campground helper, to a car accident.
Laughed so hard I cried moment: Cele Burnett and the starling that flew out of the freezer.
Favorite place in the park: McFarland Park under the spreading oak tree with summer nature camp kids.
What I'll miss the most: Taking kids outside and watching them catch that "sense of wonder" and everything about the park and my co-workers.

But, it's time to give my artificial knees a rest and get back to birdwatching and enjoying mountain vacations in Colorado.

Old naturalists don't really retire. They volunteer at schools, mentor children, hope for grandchildren, lead an occasional hike, and enjoy what nature has to offer. It has been an amazing 33 years! Thanks for letting me watch you and your children enjoy Story County Conservation parks!

Nature Camps

For children starting kindergarten fall 2012:

POLLIWOGS $35/session (Monday-Thursday only)

Camp A - Children experience nature using dirt, rocks, plants, and water and get wet and dirty in the process!
June 18-21 or June 25-28, 9-11:30 a.m.

Camp B - Whether they have fur, feathers, fliers, or fins, preschoolers explore what makes each animal special. On the last day, we'll venture near the lake with nets, so be prepared to get wet and dirty!
July 16-19 or July 23-26, 9-11:30 a.m.

For children completing kindergarten spring 2012:

FROGS $40/session

Camp A - Children discover their world with games, activities, and songs about animals and their homes.
June 18-22 or June 25-29, 9-11:30 a.m.

Camp B - Every day at Frogs camp is an adventure as children examine the natural world around them.
July 16-20 or July 23-27, 9-11:30 a.m.

For children completing grades 1 or 2 spring 2012:

WATERBUGS $40/session

Camp A - Children investigate animals, insects, and plants in and near the water. Get ready to splish-splash in a local marsh. Plan on being very wet and dirty each day of camp.
June 18-22 or June 25-29 9-11:30 a.m.

Camp B - Children will go on expeditions to find nature's wonders right here in Story County.
July 16-20 or July 23-27, 9-11:30 a.m.

FUN-LOVING OUTDOOR ADVENTURE TEAM $50/session

****Life jacket size and all dietary restrictions due upon registration. ****

For youth completing grades 3 or 4: FLOAT-I campers learn basic outdoor skills while preparing for the higher level FLOATs. Fishing, canoeing, map reading, outdoor cooking, and other outdoor skills will be taught.
June 5-6, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., or June 7-8, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

For youth completing grades 4 or 5: FLOAT-II teaches a variety of outdoor skills which may include canoeing, orienteering, outdoor cooking, and fishing. Skills are tested with an overnight camp out.
June 12, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. & 4:00 p.m. June 13 overnight through 8:30 a.m. June 14.

For youth completing grades 5 or 6: FLOAT-III campers explore life on an Iowa river by taking an overnight canoe trip. *Campers must have prior canoe experience or have attended a previous FLOAT camp.*
August 7, 9:00 a.m. overnight through 4:00 p.m. August 8.

For youth completing grades 6 or 7: FLOAT-IV explores Iowa underground! Go caving and hiking on a two-night camp experience in eastern Iowa. *Please note that caving involves crawling through dark, small spaces.*
August 1, 9:00 a.m. overnight two nights through 3:00 p.m., August 3.

For those completing grades 8-12: FLOAT-V backpacking trip to the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. The fee for this trip is $250. See **Page 5** for information about the trip and application process.

Nature Camp Registration Form

Camp registration begins immediately. Registrations cannot be processed over the phone. Camp T-shirts are available for $7.00 in youth sizes XS-XL and adult sizes S-XXL. The deadline for shirt orders is May 18 for camps prior to July 16 and June 20 for camps after July 16. All shirt orders are final. Please copy and complete a separate registration form for each child. Payment must accompany the form. If your child must attend with another child, place all registration forms in the same envelope. Camp confirmations and information will be emailed, if possible. Cancellations must be processed at least **seven** business days prior to the camp's start date to receive a refund. For questions regarding registration, call 515-232-2516 between 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Child's name_____Name for name tag_____
Address_____City_____State_____Zip_____
Daytime phone _____Alternate phone _____
Parent/guardian full name _____E-mail_____
Dietary restrictions (please list):_____

Children starting kindergarten fall 2011: POLLIWOGS ($35/session)

Camp A: (Monday through Thursday only)
June 18-21 _____ or June 25-28 _____

Camp B: (Monday through Thursday only)
July 16-19 _____ or July 23-26 _____

Children completing kindergarten this year: FROGS ($40/session)

Camp A:
June 18-22 _____ or June 25-29 _____

Camp B:
July 16-20 _____ or July 23-27 _____

Children completing grades 1 or 2 this year: WATERBUGS ($40/session)

Camp A:
June 18-22 _____ or June 25-29 _____

Camp B:
July 16-20 _____ or July 23-27 _____

FUN-LOVING OUTDOOR ADVENTURE TEAM ($50/session)

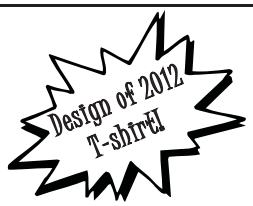
Children completing grades 3 or 4 this year: FLOAT-I
June 5-6, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. _____ or June 7-8, 9 a.m.-4 p.m._____

Children completing grades 4 or 5 this year: FLOAT-II
June 12, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. & 4 p.m. June 13 overnight through 8:30 a.m. June 14_____

Children completing grades 5 or 6 this year: FLOAT-III
August 7, 9 a.m. overnight through 4 p.m. August 8_____

Children completing grades 6 or 7 this year: FLOAT-IV
August 1, 9 a.m. overnight two nights through 3 p.m. August 3_____

FLOAT only:
Life jacket size
____ less than 50 lbs
____ 50-90 lbs
____ over 90 lbs



Registration fee **_____ X ___ session/s = $_____**
(*Partners* members receive a 20% discount)
Sub-total = $_____
T-shirt size **____ *# of shirts*___ X $7/shirt = $_____**
Total = $_____

Make checks payable to STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION & mail to:
Nature Camps, Story County Conservation, 56461 180th Street, Ames, IA 50010-9451

SCC staff receive environmental education awards

Story County Conservation's environmental education staff received two notable awards from the Iowa Association of Naturalists and the Iowa Conservation Education Coalition. They were awarded the 2011 Outstanding Environmental Education Program award for excellence in environmental education programming (with three or more full-time naturalists). SCC environmental education staff (shown above, left) are Linda Zaletel, Jerry Keys, Heather Hucka, and Amy Yoakum. Zaletel (shown above, right) was also awarded the 2011 Aldo Leopold Environmental Education Award for lifetime achievement in environmental education excellence and leadership.

Public invited to Lekwa re-dedication June 3

By Carol Williams
Special Projects Ranger

Join us as we celebrate National Trails Day on June 3 with a re-dedication of the Lekwa Access on the Skunk River Water Trail. We will unveil improvements to the area and celebrate with some refreshments at 1:30 p.m. The water trail access is located at 56156 130th Street just west of the Skunk River Bridge on County Highway E18.

Story County Conservation first received a lease for the nine-acre property in 1995. John and Janis Lekwa renewed the lease for another 10 years in 2006. The small park was originally called the Lekwa Access; however, the name was changed to the E18 Canoe Access when the road bridge was replaced in 2001.

A member of the Skunk River Paddlers (SRP) encouraged the conservation board to reinstate the original name last fall. In his letter to the conservation board, he stated that the name change would "best tell the story of the land and recognize the donation that made this access possible. Referring to this access as the Lekwa Access would also acknowledge Steve Lekwa's support of the Skunk River Paddlers' many grants and other efforts to make the Story County South Skunk River Water Trail even better when he was director."

The Lekwa Access is considered the "birthplace" of the new Skunk River Water Trail. The bridge replacement project left a steep and hazardous carry to the river. The paddlers, along with the SCC Trails Committee, the Skunk River Navy, and a number of other local and ISU student volunteers, cut a new trail into the hillside, stabilized potential washout areas with Geoweb®, and placed gravel and stone along its length.

While discussing the need for improvements at Anderson Canoe Access, the SRP decided to seek outside funding for development and renovation of all access points--both along the Skunk River Canoe Trail and further downstream in Story County. The result was a cooperative project among the Skunk River Paddlers, Story County Conservation, Prairie Rivers of Iowa RC&D, and the cities of Ames and Story City.

Ten years and multiple grants later, the South Skunk River Water Trail now spans 33 miles in Story County with 11 public access points. The Story County portion of the water trail starts just below the historic Works Project Administration (WPA) bridge in Story City and continues south to the new C.J. Shreck Access on Highway 210.

We aren't done yet! This year, new information kiosks will be installed at five of the accesses, and signage that complies with IDNR Water Trail guidelines is being planned. Whether you kayak, canoe, tube, or walk, the Skunk River is a great place to explore. Make plans to experience it this summer!

Calendar of Events

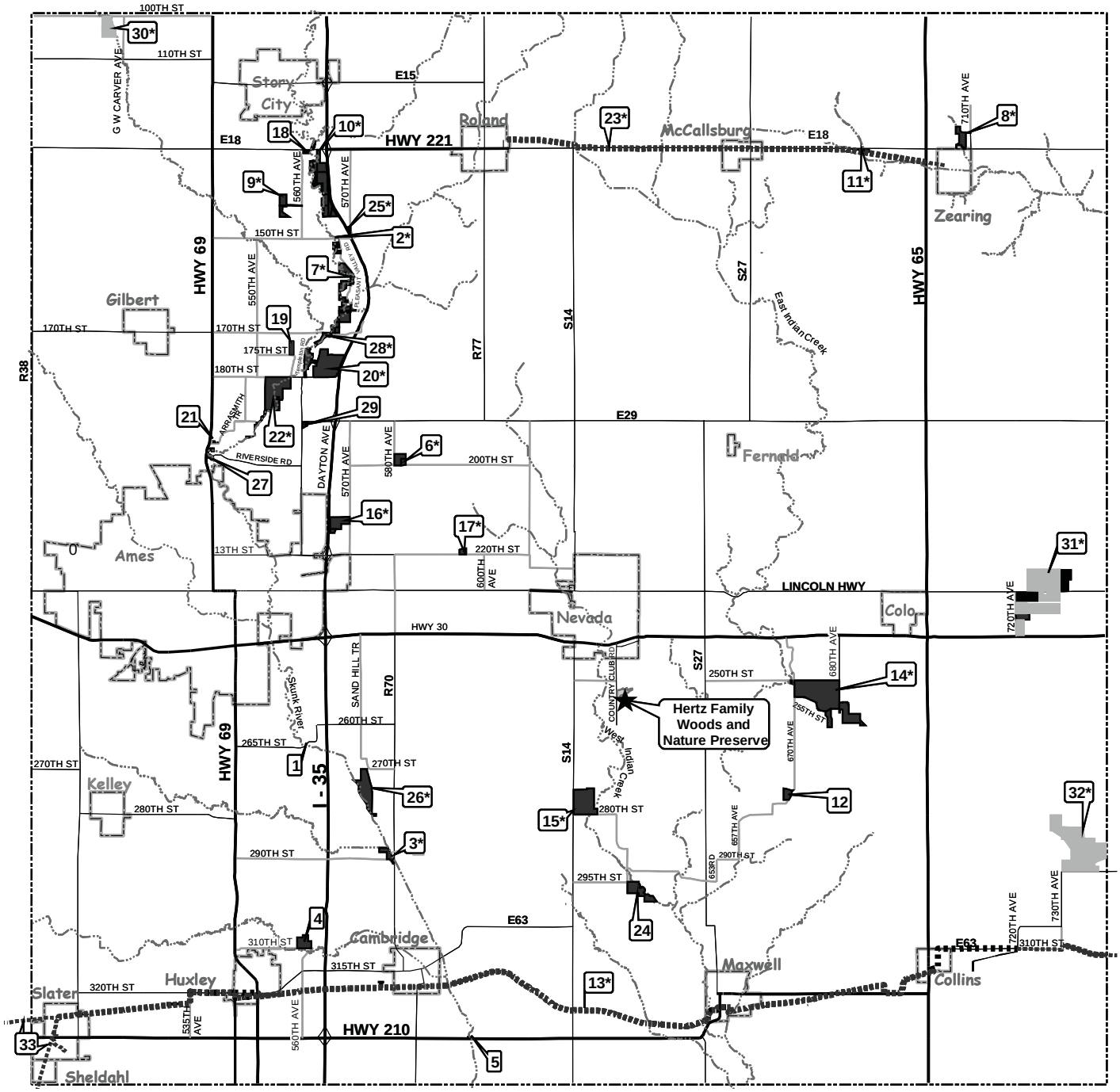
Date	Time	Event	Location
APRIL HIGHLIGHTS:			
Sun., April 15	2-5:00 p.m.	Conservation center opens for seasonal Sunday hours	McF
Sat., April 21	7:30 p.m.	Ames Area Amateur Astronomers Meeting	McF/OBS
Sun., April 22	12:30 p.m.	Earth Day TEAM Day*✓	RWA
Sun., April 22	3:00 p.m.	Earth Day Wildflower Hike*	RWA
Thurs., April 26	7:30 p.m.	Story County Trails Advisory Committee meeting	McF
Sat., April 28	7:00 a.m.	Spring Fishing Tournament* ✓	HGP
MAY			
Tues., May 1	11:00 a.m.	O.W.L.S. *Bully! Meet Theodore Roosevelt*	McF
Thurs., May 3	7:00 p.m.	Story County Conservation *Partners* meeting	APL
Sun., May 6	2-5:00 p.m.	*Partners* Spring Festival ✓	McF
Mon., May 14	7:00 p.m.	Story County Conservation Board meeting	McF
Sat., May 19	7:30 p.m.	Ames Area Amateur Astronomers	McF/OBS
Sun., May 20	1:30 p.m.	TEAM Day (Trail Enhancement And Management)* ✓	CFP
Thurs., May 24	7:00 p.m.	Evening Prairie Walk	DP
Sun., May 27	1:30 p.m.	Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve Dedication	HW
Thurs., May 31	7:30 p.m.	Story County Trails Advisory Committee Meeting	McF
JUNE			
Sat., June 2	9:00 a.m.	Historic Cemetery Tour*	meet@McF
Sun., June 3	1:30 p.m.	Lekwa Access Re-dedication	LA
Sat., June 9	9:30 a.m.	TEAM Day (Trail Enhancement And Management)*✓	SRG(Bear Creek)
Mon., June 11	7:00 p.m.	Story County Conservation Board Meeting	McF
Sat., June 16	7:30 p.m.	Ames Area Amateur Astronomers	McF/OBS
Weds., June 20	5:00 p.m.	Canoe Clinic*	HGP
Fri., June 22	Noon	Naturalist's Lunchbox	McF
Thurs., June 28	7:00 p.m.	Evening Prairie Walk	DP
Thurs., June 28	7:30 p.m.	Story County Trails Advisory Committee Meeting	McF
Fri., June 29	Noon	Naturalist's Lunchbox	McF
JULY			
Thurs., July 5	7:00 p.m.	Story County Conservation *Partners* meeting	McF
Mon., July 9	7:00 p.m.	Story County Conservation Board Meeting	McF
Fri., July 20	Noon	Naturalist's Lunchbox	McF
Sat., July 21	4:00 p.m.	Ames Area Amateur Astronomers Star-B-Q	McF
Thurs., July 26	7:00 p.m.	Evening Prairie Walk	DP
Fri., July 27	Noon	Naturalist's Lunchbox	McF
Sat., July 28	9:00 a.m.	Adult/Child Canoe Trip*	meet@McF

✓=Volunteer at this event *=Fee and/or pre-registration required #=RSVP appreciated APL = Ames Public Library
DP=Doolittle Prairie HOINT= Heart of Iowa Nature Trail HGP=Hickory Grove Park JHA=Jennett Heritage Area
McF=McFarland Park OBS=Adams Observatory SRG=Skunk River Greenbelt HW = Hertz Woods
CFP = Christiansen Forest Preserve LA = Lekwa Access

Sign-up for our e-version of Prairie Horizons!

Help SCC save resources by signing up for our e-version of *Prairie Horizons*! To change your delivery method, email **conservation@storycounty.com** with your current address and the email where you would like to receive the newsletter.

Story County Conservation Map



1. 265th Access
2. Anderson Access*
3. Askew Bridge/Cambridge Pond*
4. Christiansen Forest Preserve
5. C.J. Shreck Access
6. Cooper's Prairie Marsh*
7. Crooked Bend*
8. Dakins Lake*
9. Doolittle Prairie*
10. E-18 Greenbelt Access*
11. Ed Powell Wildlife Area
12. Gladys Leui Preserve
13. Heart of Iowa Nature Trail*
14. Hickory Grove Park*
15. Jennett Heritage Area*
16. Jim Ketelsen Greenwing Marsh*
17. Larson Marsh*
18. Lekwa Access
19. Leopold Woods
20. McFarland Park*
21. O'Neil Prairie
22. Peterson Park*
23. Praeri Rail Trail*
24. Robison Wildlife Acres
25. Sheffield Wildlife Area*
26. Skunk River Flats*
27. Sleepy Hollow Access
28. Soper's Mill*
29. Wakefield Woods
30. Bob Pyle Marsh, DNR*
31. Colo Bog, DNR*
32. Hendrickson Marsh, DNR*
33. High Trestle Trail

*Portions of these areas are open to public hunting

Public invited May 27 to Hertz Woods dedication

The public is invited to help dedicate Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve near Nevada, Sunday, May 27. A short program will begin at 1:30 p.m., with a nature walk following.

This new Story County natural area was recently donated to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF) by CarMar Farm, Ltd. INHF worked with the family to place deed restrictions on the land that permanently protect its natural values. As planned by the family, INHF is transferring the project to the Story County Conservation Board to be open for public enjoyment.

The property covers 21 acres, much of it steep terrain that had not been cropped or grazed since Carl and Marjory Hertz acquired the property in the 1950s. It was a special place for the family, with more than 20 species of trees and abundant wildflowers. About ten acres have been replanted to prairie using seed from local prairie expert Carl Kurtz.

Carl and Marjory founded Hertz Farm Management, a well-known Iowa business run today by sons Tom and Randy. Marjory often visited the woodland near the family's home, enjoying the wildflowers and hiking there into her 90s.

The family tended the land and invested in developing limited amenities, including a 1.1-mile trail around the woodland and a small parking lot. Future plans for the land include benches and interpretive signage. It is expected to be a favorite "stopping point" for those using the planned bike lanes along County Club Road (Indian Creek Greenbelt Trail Extension).

"This is an amazing example of a family creating, then donating, a 'turn-key' park--a labor of love over many years as a gift that will especially honor the memory of their mother, Marjory, and brother, Doug," said Mike Cox, Story County Conservation director.

The Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve (25401 Country Club Road, Nevada) is located one mile south of Nevada on Country Club Road.

SCC welcomes new board members

Story County Conservation welcomed two new board members in January. Sandy Opstvedt of Story City and Allen Weber of Ames were sworn in at the February 13 board meeting. The conservation board is composed of five volunteer members appointed by the county board of supervisors for five-year terms. County Supervisor Wayne Clinton now serves as an ex officio (non-voting) member. SCC Board members shown above are: Sandy Opstvedt, Allen Weber, Ted Tedesco (Vice Chair), Jim Pease (Chair), Wayne Clinton, and Joyce Hornstein (Secretary).

Dakins Lake project update

By Carol Williams
Special Projects Ranger

The Story County Conservation Board and the Story County Board of Supervisors are planning a major expansion of Dakins Lake County Park. A new lake (below the existing one) and larger campground will be two major features of this project.

Thanks to the Dakins family, the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF) was able to purchase 62 acres west of the existing park in 2009. Story County Conservation will purchase the land this spring from the INHF.

Tax-increment financing (TIF) on the windmills in the northeast corner of Story County will be used to fund the project. The project is progressing very quickly, however, many factors will need to come together for SCC to achieve its goal of a grand opening in the spring of 2014.

Tentative timeline:

February 2012 - Hire engineering firm

March-December 2012 - Prepare design, hold public meetings, and issue permitting

January 2013 - Let bids to contractor

Summer 2013 - Build dam; complete Phase 1 amenities

2014 - Build Phase 2 amenities (if needed)

Donations

Thank you to all those who support Story County Conservation programs with donations of time, funding, and materials. A special thank you to the following for their generosity:

Cash donation towards parks and natural areas from Ellie Mathews

Cash donation from Tre Wilson

Cash donation towards bird seed from Maridel Jackson

Aerial photo of Hickory Grove Lake from Carl Kurtz

Thank you to the sponsors of our fourth annual Trek the Trails Snowshoe Race & Trail Run:

Alfred's Carpet & Decorating	Aunt Maudes	Barilla America	Bobcat of Ames
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State Farm Insurance - Brandon Geise			

Partners Membership Form

Story County Conservation *Partners*

Each membership receives a magnet with the *Partners* logo and free or discounted admission to select conservation and *Partners* events. Goldfinch membership level and above receive a token of appreciation (to be used for programs, merchandise, or SCC services) based on level of membership. Red Fox membership level and above will be recognized in the conservation center.

Red-tailed Hawk - $1,000 or more
Great Blue Heron - $275 to $999
Red Fox - $125 to $274
Goldfinch - $70 to $124
Otter (Family) - $35 to $69
Great Horned Owl (Individual) - $30

Business and Corporate Levels:
Eagle - $1,000 or more
Monarch - $250 to $999

Name_____
Address_____City _____State____ Zip_____
Phone _____ E-mail_____
Enclosed is my check for $ _____. My membership level is _____.
Make checks payable and send to: Story County Conservation *Partners*, 56461 180th Street, Ames, IA 50010-9451; Phone (515) 232-2516; Fax (515) 232-6989

This booklet is brought to you with support from Story County Conservation *Partners*. *Partners* was formed in 1996 when budget cuts forced the cancellation of Story County Conservation's newsletter. *Partners* has expanded its support of Story County Conservation to include funding and support of various conservation projects, spring and fall festivals, and the *Partners* Photo Contest. *Partners* members are people who continue to make a difference with financial, volunteer, and program support.

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Registration Form

To pre-register for programs:

1. Return the registration form and fee, if applicable, to the Story County Conservation Center.
2. Call the office at 515-232-2516 or email conservation@storycounty.com

Story County Conservation Registration Form

Name _____

Address _____ **City** _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

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Email Address _____

Program	Date	Participant Names	Fee*

NO REFUNDS AFTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE OR 1 WEEK PRIOR TO PROGRAM

Mail to: Story County Conservation: 56461 180th Street, Ames, IA 50010