Superintendent’s Update

BY BRIAN MARKOWSKI

High amounts of snowfall this winter at Peninsula State Park resulted in a record attendance of 75,000 visitors in February and another 57,000 in March. The Peninsula Trail Groomers were busy keeping up with the conditions, putting the new tracked groomer to good use. The candlelight ski event brought in an estimated six hundred visitors due to the excellent trail conditions. To date our visitor attendance is up approximately twelve percent.

On April 20th we had a beautiful day for our Work*Play*Earth Day event. We had seventeen volunteers including five cub scouts. We planted two hundred white spruce tree seedlings in South Nicolet Bay Campground, collected eight large garbage bags of trash from Tennison Bay Campground and put eight new picnic tables together.

There are many exciting facility projects taking place in the next couple years. Two of the most recently approved projects include graveling all of the campsites and the purchase of new water fountains. Thanks to the Friends park enhancement match we were able to purchase eighty picnic tables, 168 fire rings, twenty-eight grills and three orientation signs. Staff and volunteers have been busy painting and assembling picnic tables for the last couple of months and we can’t wait to have them in place for visitors to enjoy.

Some of you may have already noticed dead or dying ash trees scattered throughout the park. The first Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was found here in 2014 and now we are seeing increasing impact from the insect. Woodpecker damage is frequently visible on infested trees and created as the birds search for EAB larvae. Due to the infestation you may see selected ash trees removed. We are also working with our local forester to carry out a large-scale tree removal as well.

Thank you to the Friends Board Members, Camp Hosts, Nature Center Hosts, Peninsula Trail Groomers and volunteers for your continued support and dedication to Peninsula State Park.

I hope to see you in the park as we finally see warmer temperatures!
Hi to all Peninsula Park Friends and volunteers.

Thank you for assisting us raise money for park projects and helping in so many ways. A special shout out to Camp Hosts and Nature Center Hosts. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. It has been a busy year for the Friends.

Listed below are our accomplishments for this year.

» Contributed 4,440 volunteer hours to the Park.

» Received the 2018 Hero Award for Outstanding Friends Group from the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks.

» Achieved the goal of raising $750,000 for the new Eagle Tower.

» Provided funding for new grooming equipment for ski trails with the help of a grant from the Raibrook Foundation.

» Provided funding for the preservation of historic documents and photos with support from the Raibrook Foundation.

» Raised over $30,000 to match a state grant for park improvements which will provide new orientation signs, fire rings, grills, and picnic tables.

» Provided grants to fund a summer naturalist and a summer maintenance/trails position.

» Provided funding and volunteers for the planting of trees and flowers at the park entrance with support from the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks.

» Provided grants for orchid research and research into the impact of deer on forest plant communities.

» Provided volunteers for special events and ski trail grooming.

We are looking for a Friends Board member. Please contact us if you are interested in applying or for more information.

We look forward to seeing you in the Park this summer.

Sincerely,

Chris Holicek
New Tribute Program Launched

BY STEVE STRUCELY

The Friends unveiled a new tribute wall at the Nicolet Beach shelter over Memorial Day weekend. This program takes the place of the memorial benches that the park offered in the past. Gift levels are $1,000, $1,500, and $2,500 (or more) and contributors are able to specify the wording they would like for a plate that honors or memorializes a loved one. Generous donors have already contributed $35,000 to this program, which has provided 168 new fire rings, 28 new grills, and 80 new picnic tables for the park, along with 3 new orientation signs.

Please visit PeninsulaFriends.org/tribute to download a gift form or make a gift online.

A History Preserved

BY DAVID LEA

This past winter was an exciting time for history at Peninsula State Park. The Park maintains an extensive collection of historical documents, photographs and artifacts dating back to the earliest days of its history. Thanks to a grant obtained by the Friends of Peninsula State Park, Park Naturalist Kathleen Harris was able to hire an Archives Assistant, Steven Rice, who worked from January through May to organize, digitize and preserve many of these vital resources.

Rice worked closely with Harris to create a digital archive of many of the Park’s core collections, including the Camp Meenahga oral history collection, the records of Eagle Bluff Lighthouse, and a priceless set of original photographs documenting life at the Civilian Conservation Corps’ “Camp Peninsular”. Sensitive records were carefully placed in archival-quality storage, and filing systems were reorganized to improve ease of use. Hundreds of photographs were scanned at high resolutions, labeled and catalogued by topic. All in all, over 1,500 digital files were created over the course of the winter, and over 1,000 photographs were labeled and sleeved.

The most exciting element of this project is its potential for the future. Many of the methods developed this winter will lay the groundwork for continued historic preservation and archiving at the park. Forward-thinking initiatives such as this will ultimately ensure that the historical treasures of Peninsula State Park can be shared and enjoyed for generations to come.
The best thing about memories is making them. Peninsula’s cozy Nature Center, once a winter warming house, is the heart of family adventures today. It’s centrally located on Bluff Road, near the Woodyard.

**Grow Your Mind.** Free Wisconsin Explorer booklets are available for children. Complete activities and earn a patch. Fishing poles are also available for free loan.

**Restore Your Spirit.** Visit the butterfly meadow behind the Nature Center. Let the kids run in circles along the meadow’s mowed path while you unplug in the shade of a massive cedar tree, reaching its century mark. Clear sight lines make for safe play.

**Move Your Body.** Walk the White Cedar Nature Trail, a half-mile loop with signs about deer and forest ecology. Try “plogging” (picking up litter while jogging, all the craze in Europe) and receive a custom sticker. Kids receive eco charms.

The Nature Center is open daily 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with extended hours to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Memorial Day through Labor Day. For more information call 920-854-5976 or pick up a 2019 Peninsula State Park VISITOR magazine at the Nature Center or Park Headquarters.

**Special Events.** Call 920-854-5976 for program details.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>May 25th &amp; August 31st</td>
<td>Smokey Bear</td>
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<td>June 1st &amp; 2nd</td>
<td>DNR 600-gallon Tank (with Native Fish)</td>
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<td>June 2nd</td>
<td>Children’s Lighthouse Festival</td>
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<td>July 2nd</td>
<td>Open Door Bird Sanctuary: Live Raptors</td>
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<td>July 3rd</td>
<td>Flag Raising with Smokey Bear</td>
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<td>July 11th</td>
<td>National Honey Queen</td>
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<td>July 20th, August 10th, September 6th, October 5th</td>
<td>Stargazing with Universe in the Park</td>
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<td>August 4th</td>
<td>Summit Theater: Romeo and Juliet</td>
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<td>August 19th &amp; 20th</td>
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<td>September 23rd</td>
<td>Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy</td>
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