



# Friends of Wild River State Park Newsletter

May, 2008

www.WildRiverParkFriends.org • info@wildriverparkfriends.org • 651-583-2926 (Visitor Center)

As I have signed up new members for the Friends of Wild River State Park, a frequently asked question is what do I have to do? My first answer is sign the check and send it in!

The next thing I talk about is visiting Wild River State Park and getting involved with the programs. You can be a Prairie Care Species Steward and follow the development of a plant from bloom to seed collection. Or become a "Buckthorn Buster" and keep an area of the park free from invasive Buckthorn. In fact, if you are a "Friends" member, you can borrow the park's buckthorn busting tools for use on your own land in exchange for two hours of buckthorn removal work in the park. Talk to Dave

Crawford for more details.

At our annual meeting I asked for volunteers to serve on the Friends Board of Directors. Sadly, no one stepped forward at that time, but we would still welcome additional members. The time commitment for a board member is four meetings per year which last about an hour, and helping out with our three main events, the Candlelight Ski in January, the Pancake Breakfast in March, and Seegwan in May.



**Dave Kozlovsky**

If you would like to help, but not make a board member commitment at this point, volunteer to help with either the Candlelight Ski, the Pancake breakfast or Seegwan. If office skills are one of your gifts, help is needed with the newsletter, keeping membership roles current or publicizing events. One easy way to help is to hang up the included Seegwan poster and plan to attend Seegwan May 17 with your family and friends. Another is to attend one of many summer park programs we sponsor.

Get involved and help promote the wonderful resource that Wild River State Park is! If you are interested in any of the aforementioned volunteer opportunities, email me at [kozlovsky@northlc.com](mailto:kozlovsky@northlc.com).



## Minnesota Sesquicentennial Program Series, Wild River State Park, 2008



As part of the observance of the 150th anniversary of Minnesota statehood, Wild River State Park is offering the following history-themed programs:

**\* Saturday, June 28, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Blacksmithing in 1858 - A Craft From the Past**

Pioneer farmers couldn't just run to the hardware store for tools and nails - they went to the blacksmith, who made them what they needed. Stop by and learn about the art of smithing from expert blacksmith Paul Webster during this working demonstration of an ancient art in modern times. Watch the sparks fly as raw metal is turned into tools before your very eyes! Bring lots of questions - Paul is good at explaining things and hammering hot metal at the same time. Meet at visitor center.

**\* Saturday, July 12, 1 to 4 p.m. The Ancient Art of Stone Tools**

Join flint knapper and Potawatomi tribe member Dale Cannon in a demonstration and discussion on making tools from stone. Cannon has worked as a consultant for the Smithsonian and as a college instructor. Learn about past and present-day techniques for making arrow points, scrapers, knives, and other tools, get an insight into the people who used these tools as part of their daily lives, see examples from Dale's collection, and get in-depth information about any points or tools you bring. Meet at visitor center.

**Saturday, July 19, 9 p.m. Loggers' Tales - The Story of the Great White Pine Logging Era Told in Photos**

Have you ever seen a 200-foot tall pine tree in Minnesota? You could have if you had been in the St. Croix Valley in the 1800s. This program uses 19<sup>th</sup> century photos and some help from the audience to tell the story of the lumberjacks who worked in Minnesota's biggest forest. Outdoor program at amphitheater adjacent to campground.

**Saturday, July 26, 10 a.m. Wildflowers of the 1850s on the Old Military Road**

When Army engineers built the Point Douglas to Superior Military Road across Amador Prairie in 1853-54, they probably didn't stop to smell the wildflowers. Now the route of the road once again crosses a prairie, restored on farm land purchased to create Wild River State Park. Explore a mile-long part of the route within the park. Prepare for walking on trails, roads, hills, tall-grass areas, and brushy woods. Sturdy shoes and protection from bugs and ticks are recommended. Global Positioning System (GPS) techniques will be used to follow the route where farming and restoration activities have hidden the road. Meet at visitor center.

*Continued on the following page.*

For a printable poster version of this list please visit our website at [www.WildRiverParkFriends.org](http://www.WildRiverParkFriends.org) or call 651-583-2925.



# Minnesota Sesquicentennial Program Series continued

## **Saturday, August 2, 2 to 4 p.m. Historical Herbs For Health**

Join herbalist/educator Teresa Wolfe as she shares fascinating facts about historical medicinal, edible, and other uses of wild plants in Minnesota. Learn how to recognize some of the plants you're likely to see. Each participant will make an herbal medicinal salve traditionally used for insect bites and stings. Meet at visitor center. Registration fee required: call (651) 583-2925 for details.

## **August 23, 2 p.m. A Visit With Anna Sheldon, 1876**

Anna Sheldon welcomes you to Wild River State Park and tells some of the stories of her life. She and her first husband arrived in the area 4 years before Minnesota became a state. After her first husband died, she married William Sheldon, and lived at the present location of the park entrance. Anna, dressed to receive guests in the latest 1876 fashion, will share her perceptions of her way of life, relatives, neighbors, and the landscape of 1876. Since her house is gone, she will receive you at the visitor center.

## **\* Saturday, August 23, 5 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. Fiddler Pierre Jacques Pleau and the Northern Lights Musicians and Junior Folk Dancers**

### **5 p.m. Folk Dance Workshop, 6:30 p.m. Stories, Music, Games, and Dancing**

Travel back in time with fiddler and storyteller Pierre Jacques Pleau and his friends to the days of candlelight and campfires. Come join Pierre for an early evening round of storytelling, music, folk dancing, and musical games. Meet at the campground amphitheater. Come early (5-6 p.m.) for a free folk dance workshop, and join in during the "dance-along" parts of the performance!

## **September 7 through October 26, Saturdays and Sundays only, 1 p.m. From Prairie to Potatoes and Back Again – Restoring the Landscape at Wild River State Park**

The first immigrants from the eastern U. S. who settled on Amador Prairie just before Minnesota became a state found an open landscape of grasses, wildflowers and scattered oak trees, rich in wildlife. Now, after 150 years of farming has passed, you can be a part of a continuing effort to rebuild a similar natural landscape on land that was once fertile ground for potatoes and other crops. Begin at visitor center, then spend some time roaming the restored prairie and collecting seeds for further restoration. Great family activity. Suggested reading: "Potato City" by Sue Leaf, Minnesota Historical Society, 2004.

\* indicates programs funded by Friends of Wild River State Park through a Minnesota Sesquicentennial grant and proceeds from the annual native plant sale held during Seegwan. Seegwan is Saturday, May 17th!



## More Programs! Summer 2008! More Programs! Summer 2008!

### **Saturday, June 21, 7:30 p.m. Stephanie "The Bat Lady"**

Take a lively, around-the-world tour of bats with Stephanie! Learn how bats help to save the rainforests, and why you should thank a bat for bubblegum and bananas! At the end, meet a live Minnesota bat, up close, but safe, and watch him eat some "bugs". Did you know bats are good luck? And that there are over 1100 different kinds of bats? Join us to discover more! Meet at campground amphitheater.



### **Saturday, July 5, 2 to 3 p.m. Big, Bad, and Beautiful Bugs**

Bruce Giebink from The Bug Zone will provide entertainment and education about some of the world's smallest critters. See (and touch, if you dare) a giant millipede, hissing cockroach, or a "friendly" tarantula; view an incredible assortment of specimens of metallic-blue butterflies, walking sticks a half-foot long, beetles with giant pincers, and much more, while hearing fascinating stories about insects and how they live. Meet at visitor center.



### **Saturday, July 26 and August 13, 7:30 p.m. Nature and Campfire Stories Told by Dwight Wilcox.**

Dwight Wilcox will be telling stories about the St. Croix Valley and sharing campfire tales. Some true, some not so true, but all fun and entertaining. Hear tall tales and true tales of the north woods and the St. Croix Valley, and fun stories and fables with a few surprises. Meet at campground amphitheater.

### **Friday - Saturday, August 8 & 9, 9 p.m. Prairie Skies and Perseid Meteors**

What better place to view the night sky than the open prairie! Join guest astronomer Steve Tonsfeldt for images of some of the most impressive and beautiful sights from space (August 8) or a slide show of meteorite impact craters, and a chance to handle actual meteorites (August 9). Following the slides, (about 10:00 p.m.) take a short walk into the prairie for a live view of the night sky's features through telescopes, and watch the Perseid meteor shower. Bring bug spray, flashlights, and binoculars if you have them. Meet at the visitor center for the first part of the program, then drive to the astronomy site near the campground amphitheater for the meteor watch. There are benches at the site, but meteor watching is best from a reclining lawn chair or lying on a blanket.



These are programs that the Friends of Wild River helped fund for the summer of 2008. Though not necessarily history related they appeal to audiences of all ages and are lots of fun! Come out and see one!

**Open House Day!**  
**FREE ADMISSION to the Park!**



# \* SEE GWAN 2008

\* OJIBWE WORD FOR SPRING

A Day of Family Fun and  
Hands-On Learning ~ Pack a  
picnic lunch & come out to the park!



Wild River State  
Park is located on  
the St. Croix River  
near Almelund, MN,  
north of Hwy 95.  
For more call  
651-583-2925  
or visit [www.mnstateparks.info](http://www.mnstateparks.info)

## SATURDAY, MAY 17<sup>TH</sup>

### The 25th Annual Celebration of Spring at Wild River State Park

All programs are FREE and open to the public. OPEN HOUSE DAY!  
MN State Park Vehicle Permit is NOT Required on May 17th, 2008.

7:30 - 9 a.m. **SPRING BIRD HIKE** at the Boat Landing (River Access)

- Led by Sue Leaf, Wild River Audubon Chapter
- Bring binoculars if you have them

10 a.m. - 4 p.m. At the Trail Center

- **NATIVE PLANT SALE** by the Friends of Wild River - Come find the perfect native plant for your garden or prairie restoration area
- Chisago County Master Gardeners - Locally grown plants, answers to your gardening questions
- Kids for Saving Earth and seed matching activities for kids

11 - 11:45 a.m. - **BIG SNAKES** at the Visitor Center

- A brief summary of Wild River's slitheriest critters and a chance to touch Minnesota's biggest species - the prairie-loving bull snake

1 - 2 p.m. - **BRUCE WHITE** at the Trail Center

- Meet local historian, anthropologist, and author of "We Are at Home: Pictures of the Ojibwe People" Mr. White will share photographs of Ojibwe people in the St. Croix Valley and Mille Lacs area.

2 - 3 p.m. - **HELP BRING BACK A PRAIRIE** at the Trail Center

- Help sow some of last fall's volunteer collected seed in new locations. Easy and fun to do for any age.

3 - 5 p.m. - **PERFORMANCE MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE** At the amphitheater

- Join several singers and dancers from the Mille Lacs Band who will share traditional stories, dances, artifacts and pictures.

Seegwan is sponsored by Friends of Wild River State Park. Additional funding provided by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and a Minnesota Sesquicentennial grant.

[www.WildRiverParkFriends.org](http://www.WildRiverParkFriends.org)

#### Summer Programs at Wild River State Park

[www.mnstateparks.info](http://www.mnstateparks.info)

##### Seegwan

May 17, 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

##### Slithery Snakes

June 8 through August 24,  
Weekly on Sundays, 11 a.m.

##### Stephanie "The Bat Lady"

June 21, 7:30 p.m.

##### The Art of Blacksmithing in 1858

June 28, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

##### Big, Bad and Beautiful Bugs

July 5, 2 to 3 p.m.

##### \* The Ancient Art of Stone Tools

July 12, 1 to 4 p.m.

##### \* Logger's Tales - The Story of the Great White Pine Logging Era Told in Photos

July 19, 9 p.m.

##### Nature and Campfire Stories Told by Dwight Wilcox

July 26 & August 16, 7:30 p.m.

##### \* Wildflowers of the 1850s on the Old Military Road

July 26, 10 to 11:30 a.m.

##### \* Historical Herbs for Health

August 2, 2 p.m. Call for registration

##### Prairie Skies & Perseid Meteors

August 8 & 9, 9 p.m.

##### \* Visit with Anna Sheldon, 1876

August 23, 2 p.m.

##### Get Your Dancing Shoes

August 23, Dance Workshop  
from 5 to 6 p.m.  
Performance at 6:30 p.m.

##### \* From Prairie to Potatoes and Back Again - Restoring the Landscape at Wild River

September 7 through October 26,  
Saturdays only, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

\* DENOTES



EVENT

# Grow Native Plant, Grow!

by Kia Donais, Prairie Care Species Steward

If you've ever been on a hike with park naturalist Dave Crawford you know to tread lightly no matter where you are walking at Wild River State Park. This land is home to precious, astoundingly beautiful, and really amazing native plants. Plants that need YOUR help. Volunteer to become a Prairie Care Species Steward this spring. Not only will you be doing something good for our environment you'll also become intimate friends with one or two species of plants that you will always be able to identify (usually in a road ditch somewhere that brings a smile to your face and a cheer...Grow Native Plant, Grow!). You will visit "your" plant several times over the season...forcing you outdoors to enjoy a walk.... and collect vital information about your plant and it's particularities. It's a fun way to help bring back a landscape while enjoying the outdoors. Contact the park for more info: 651-583-2925



**Park staff, volunteers, and other DNR personnel were on hand Tuesday, April 29th for this prescribed burn...one of several planned this spring in the park to help restore native plant communities.**

## UPCOMING FRIENDS GROUP EVENTS: MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Next Board Meeting: Sat., July 19th, 9am at the Visitor Center

**Friends Group FUN Canoe Trip: Sun., August 24th, afternoon - ALL MEMBERS INVITED!!!!**

Tentative Dates for Next Year: Moonlight Ski - Jan. 10th, 2009 • Seegwan, May 19th, 2009

**Yes!**  
**I'll be a Friend!**

- Individual Friend** - \$10/year
- Family Friend** - \$20/year
- Community Friend** - \$100/year
- Add an additional \$10 and be a member of MN Parks and Trails*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite activities at the park include:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mail with check to:  
**Friends of Wild River State Park**  
 c/o William A. Carlson  
 810 Dellwood St. S.  
 Cambridge, MN 55008-2122  
[www.WildRiverParkFriends.org](http://www.WildRiverParkFriends.org)