



P.O. Box 6552
Rochester, Minn. 55903

THE FOX DEN

Newsletter for Friends of Oxbow

www.friendsfoxbow.org

Aug / Sept 2010

Park Report by Celeste Lewis, naturalist

Once again, Oxbow Park and Zollman Zoo received a perfect score on USDA inspection in June. Also this month, a local volunteer group (LIS) painted the nature center and parking barriers at the main picnic area. Oxbow participated in Rochesterfest again this year, and it was a big success, both at the park as well as the family fun night. Hundreds of people got to 'meet' our raptors and learn about our programs.

In the Zoo, we have a new red fox on display, as well as five fawns, one bison calf and one elk calf. Around the Park, speed bumps were installed in the campground, and the Zollman memorial pergola is now complete, except for the center panels with Dr. Zollman's biography and bronze bust.

Park staff has produced a park usage survey for visitor feedback – please fill it out when you visit and let us know how we're doing, and how we could improve to serve you better.

Meet the Friends of Oxbow Summer Interns



Hello! My name is Beth Twaddle and I am an intern at Oxbow Park for the summer of 2010.

First, a little of my background: I grew up in Kasson, and visited Oxbow Park frequently as a child. Currently I am living in Mankato, where my life is happily run by animals. I have a family of pets at home:

3 cats, 5 naughty ferrets, and a chinchilla!

I am majoring in Zoology at Minnesota State University, and working at Petco as a Companion Animal Specialist. In the future, I plan to work as a zookeeper at a zoo in Minnesota.

My time at Oxbow has been a very educational and rewarding. It will definitely help me attain my future career goals! The staff at Oxbow makes sure that I learn and get to experience as much as possible.

I want to thank Friends of Oxbow for providing me with this amazing opportunity and the Oxbow Park staff for teaching me so much!



Hi! My name is Courtney Pikel and I am one of the 2010 summer interns at Oxbow Park and Zollman Zoo. I am a senior biology major and chemistry minor at Crown College.

I have long been a fan of the zoo here at Oxbow, having started volunteering here in the summer of 2008. Many of my fondest memories have taken place here, whether is watching the female fox bury her food with her nose or listening to the mother porcupine chatter with her new baby.

I am so grateful to Friends of Oxbow for providing me with this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to advance my knowledge of animal care. I plan on using new animal husbandry and park management skills in a future career of wildlife rehabilitation.

As a future career is coming fast and my internship is almost in the past, I will continue to cherish the new memories I have made as an intern at Oxbow Park and Zollman Zoo.

About Our Organization

Friends of Oxbow's mission is to support the educational, environmental and recreational goals of Oxbow Park. Our Newsletter is published 6 times a year. Copy deadline is the 2nd Monday of the month prior to the publication date. All submissions are subject to editing. Copy may be submitted as typed copy to: Ruthann Yaeger, 5731 Co. Rd 105, Byron, MN 55920 or as email to: friends@friendsofowbow.org. The Friends board meets monthly at Oxbow Park Nature Center on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm. Everyone is welcome.

Friends Board Officers

President - Peggy Morris
Vice President - open
Secretary - Jean Davison
Treasurer - Ruthann Yaeger

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Loren Dehling	2-11
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Marina Kemp	2-12
Jen Rand	2-11
Kristin Hjerleid	2-11
Dawn Zollman	2-12

Friends Web page

www.friendsofowbow.org

Olmsted County Parks Information

www.co.olmsted.mn.us

Oxbow Park Hours

Park Grounds: 7 am -10pm

Nature Center & Zoo:

10 am to 4 pm daily

Nature Center, Zoo are closed for Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years Day and Easter

Want to sponsor a zoo animal?

Go to:
www.friendsofowbow.org

Programs and Events at the Parks

Oxbow Park

*In case of inclement weather, call 775-2451 for program details.
All programs are appropriate for all ages unless otherwise noted.*

Special Program! Collaboration with the Rochester Art Center

Sat Aug 7, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Make a watercolor painting of your favorite zoo animal or simply paint the beautiful landscape at Oxbow Park. Visitors of all ages are free to roam the park grounds and enjoy a day of self-guided painting. Art supplies will be provided free of charge. Art center and park staff will be on hand to assist.

FEED THE RIVER OTTERS – Sat August 14, at 1:00 p.m.

The otters eat, you watch! Who will you root for, the otters or the minnows? This popular program promises to educate and entertain!

PRAIRIE HIKE – Sat August 21 at 10:00 a.m.

Come and enjoy a beautiful morning stroll through one of Oxbow's restored native prairies. A park naturalist will guide you on a short hike and discuss the benefits of native prairie grasses.

DEER AND ELK FEEDING – Sat August 28 at 1:00 p.m.

A short hike over to the elk and deer pens will allow participants to get a closer look at these spectacular creatures. Come and learn more about antlers, deer and elk behavior, and possibly even get the chance to give them a treat! Accommodations CAN be made for seniors, etc.

BEAR FEEDING – Sat September 4 at 10:00 a.m.

Our resident black bear is hungry once again! Join us as we share some natural history facts about black bears. We will tempt her with a wide variety of foods. What will she eat first?

RAPTOR FEEDING – Sat September 11 at 3:00 p.m.

Spend an afternoon learning more about some of our area's most common birds of prey. Not only will you enjoy hearing interesting facts, but you'll also enjoy watching them eat.

BISON FEEDING – Saturday September 18 at 1:00 p.m.

Bring the entire family out for a closer look at the majestic Plains Bison. You'll learn interesting facts about these marvelous beasts and get a close-up look at feeding time. A short hike is involved, and accommodations can be made for folks needing to drive to the bison pen.

SEED COLLECTING – Saturday September 25 at 10:00 a.m.

Come and enjoy a beautiful morning stroll through one of Oxbow's restored native prairies. A park naturalist will guide you on a short hike while discussing the benefits of native prairie grasses.

Think 'Green' - Get Your Newsletter Electronically

Please help Friends of Oxbow save trees and other natural resources by receiving your newsletter by email (PDF). A big benefit to you is that you will always get it in full color. Postage and printing costs are taking their toll on Friends resources and those of our planet. These costs use donations that would otherwise be used for the interns, exhibits and other work we do. Under no circumstances will we ever sell our mailing list or send you fundraising pleas or other spam. By saving us postage, you will also be making a little 'extra' donation to your park every other month!

Please send your name and email address to friends@friendsofowbow.com. Thank you for supporting this very special park!

Chester Woods Programs

A \$5.00 daily or \$25.00 annual vehicle pass is required to enter Chester Woods Park. Call 287-2624 for program information, registration and in case of inclement weather.

NATURE WALK- Sat., Aug 14th at 9:00 a.m.

Get some fresh air and enjoy an exciting morning hike at Chester Woods Park. This is a great opportunity to view the abundance of wildlife throughout the native and restored prairies. Nature Walk led by Joel Dunnette. Meet at the boat ramp. All ages are welcome.

MOONLIGHT PADDLE – Sat., Aug 21st at 8:45 p.m.

Enjoy a relaxing paddle around the lake by the light of the moon. Bring your own canoe/kayak/paddleboat and gear. Life preservers are to be worn at all times while on the water. We will not be paddling if there are thunderstorms. Meet at the boat ramp. Launching at 9:00 p.m.

NATURALIST CHOICE - Sat. Aug 28th at 7:00 p.m.

Join Chester Woods Park Staff and others as they eagerly await an evening of discovery. An Oxbow Park Naturalist will be visiting and may bring along a few critters. We never know what we are in for, but it has always been fun and exciting. Meet at the Kisrow classroom. All ages are welcome.

A DAY IN THE PARK

Sat. Sept 18th 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Join Park Staff, Friends of Chester Woods and other volunteers in helping people with disabilities enjoy the park. A variety of activities are planned. Contact the Park Office for more information.

PRAIRIE PLANT SEED COLLECTION

Sat. Sept 25th at 1:30 p.m.

Enjoy the richness of the prairie in late summer and fall. Learn about prairie plants, help expand the remaining prairie, and chat with fellow conservationists. Come prepared for walking through prairie vegetation, and 2-3 hours in the field. Bring water, collecting jugs and your enthusiasm. Different species mature at different times, so come more than once to experience more diversity! Meet at the boat ramp.

MOONLIGHT PADDLE – Sat., Sept 25th at 8:45 p.m.

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No Time to be a Child? Con't from pg 4



them into defined and unvarying roles. Less athletic children may feel less valued and sometimes bullied by the more physically coordinated kids.

Parents fret that if they don't give their child every advantage, he or she won't be accepted by their college of choice, or won't get that internship or advanced program that will give them a competitive edge.

But what is the result of all this frantic jockeying for advantage? Rising rates of teen suicide, soaring childhood obesity, increasing rates of attention deficit/hyper-activity disorder, diabetes, hypertension and high cholesterol levels in young children and teens. There are reports of more and more college graduates living at home, unable to decide what to do with the rest of their lives.

What is the answer? There is no one best answer of course. But increasing evidence has shown that natural, unstructured outdoor play gives children a creative outlet that prepares them well for adulthood. The stronger ones play the physical roles, the more creative ones imagine and construct the scenarios. With help from responsible adults, children learn how to deal effectively with the more aggressive among them. All types get a chance to make contributions and find out what they can do.

Where can children go now for such unstructured activity and be reasonably safe? Many parks are now building 'natural' play areas, consisting of patches of woods or prairie that are suitable for exploring without worrying about damage to the child or to the resource. State parks and county parks like Oxbow Park and Chester Woods can offer kids a chance to explore and poke around, but parents have to allow them to do so. Allow them to get dirty and wet, ask questions, and explore in areas set aside for that purpose.

It may take awhile for some children to 'unwind' – they may expect someone to tell them what they're supposed to do and may get restless and bored when no direction is forthcoming. But from this restlessness comes eventual creativity. From creativity comes joy in living and interest in the natural world.

For a fascinating and comprehensive look at this issue please read *Last Child in the Woods* by Richard Louv (available at local bookstores). Not only does he address this situation, but offers many ways to help parents give their children these opportunities. In other words, help your children be children! And by doing so, help them to become creative, productive adults.

FRIENDS OF OXBOW
PO Box 6552
ROCHESTER, MN 55903-6552

Friends of Oxbow

Yes, I'd like to be a Friend of this great Park!

<input type="checkbox"/> Friend	\$25 - 49	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
<input type="checkbox"/> Partner	\$50 - 99	
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$100 - 249	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ranger	\$250 - 499	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor	\$500 - 999	
<input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropist	\$1000 - 4999	
<input type="checkbox"/> Director Circle	\$5000 and up	

Be sure to ask your company if it matches donations!

Name: _____

Address: (home or EMAIL - please print clearly)

City/State/Zip: _____

I prefer to receive my newsletter in color by email
I have entered my email address above

Make checks payable to Friends of Oxbow.

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PO Box 6552
Rochester, MN 55903

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No Time to be a Child? How Parks Can Help

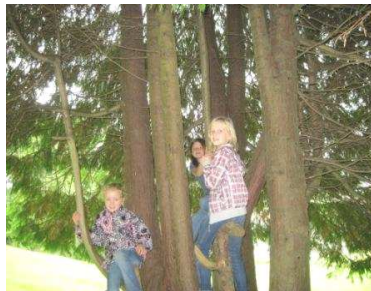
By R. Yaeger

When I was a kid, I went outdoors to play with my friends after school and we weren't expected home until supper. All the families in the neighborhood looked out for kids, so no one worried about 'stranger-danger' or abduction. The vast majority of my classmates walked to school (alone or with sibs) or walked to a rural school bus stop, usually as early as 4th grade.

We would wander about, alone or together, building tree houses and snow forts, making up elaborate games. These allowed for shifting roles and constantly changing scenarios. Squabbles arose over who would play what role and were often solved by taking turns. There was no structure, no adults telling us what the 'rules' were, no score, no winning or losing. If we got bored with whatever we were doing we just wandered off or started anew.

No adults told us it was too dangerous to be outdoors or too messy to dig in the mud for crawdads or poke at some hapless insect. Yes, sometimes we did something dumb and got stung or cut, but likely as not, our parents simply

Photo by: porttalbot.gov.uk



asked us if we'd 'learned our lesson'.

What about kids now? For many, their lives are heavily structured. They are ruled by liability, fear and time constraints. We've all heard about the Super-Mom, Super-child syndrome - piano lessons, soccer practice, dancing lessons, tennis club, all tightly organized with exacting rules and little room for imagination.

Then of course, there is homework.

Any time left over is often spent texting friends, watching TV or playing computer games. Teens may volunteer for extra credit

or work at part-time jobs to get a recommendation or to have money for the latest electronic gadget. Seldom are children allowed to make and learn from their own mistakes, learn on their own what works and what doesn't, or in short - learn how to think and evaluate options. They are either spoon-fed or not-so-subtly 'guided' to the 'right' (conventional) answers.

Organized sports, while valuable exercise, tend to favor only the more athletic children and quickly pigeonhole

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