



Friends of Wild River State Park

Fall 2017

Newsletter

www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org ■ info@FriendsOfWildRiver.org ■ 651-253-3498



Mark your calendars! One of Minnesota's most beautiful 5K Runs is coming up soon: the 6th annual

Wild River Run

Otter Trotter 2017 – Oct. 14

See page 3 for more info and the registration form.

From the President:

Summertime and the Living is Easy!

By Brad Bjorklund, Friends of Wild River State Park



Especially if you spend some time outdoors at Wild River State Park. A place to pass through prairie, riverfront, woodlot and rarely fully occupied parking lot. Bike trails take it all in. Educational programs are posted for your attendance. Or like some of us a very secluded walk for lupine, heart leaf golden alexander or broad leaf panic grass brings on contemplation and the satisfaction of discovery.

Whoever knew there were so many horsey people about. Who knew they have such quiet conversations, those riders. Cabin sleepers, tenters, day fishers, canoe campers, meadow viewers and frisbee throwers.

Did you see the fight between the forest and the prairie? An active battle is going on along the roadway after entering the gate. What magic to behold. And it does not shut down in the winter.

Use some of the assets here. They are yours.

Our Fall 5K Run/Walk: Fun, Healthy, and a Beautiful Course

It's a wonderful time of year to get outdoors and take in some fresh air. And one of the most fun, healthy, and scenic things to do in the entire state is held on the 2nd Sat. in October: the Wild River 5K Run (and also) Walk. It's our 6th annual event and people of all ages and abilities take part: the record time was turned in by Dan Carlson in 2013 – 19 minutes flat, plus we always have youngsters under 12 and seniors over 60. In addition there were a number of parents pushing their infants in strollers. Everyone can do it!

There are 4 legs to the route shown below. Here is a brief description of what you will see and enjoy on each while on this very beautiful course:

NORTH LEG (in red): just after the start/finish line in the Picnic Area, this follows the Nevers Dam trail through a colorful forest. For much of the way you will be on top of the man-made dike that extends to the St. Croix where the actual dam was located.

EAST LEG (in blue): this is an amazing section which follows right along the west bank of the St. Croix River with the pristine forest on your right. Watch for otters, deer, bald eagles and many other birds.

SOUTH LEG (in orange): following the boat ramp, the trail opens up to the small Amik's Pond and native prairie. Check out the many wildflowers and native grasses in the open area plus ducks and other waterfowl on the pond.

WEST LEG (in green): returning to the forest after a small uphill section on the boat access road, you will be on the Old Logging Trail – a remnant from Minnesota's past logging industry. An upland woodland and wildflowers surround you until you get to the Finish Line back at the Picnic Area.



Registration information is on page 3 of this Newsletter. Please join us on Oct. 14th and pass along this information to others so we have our biggest 5K Run/Walk ever!

And if you have any questions at all, please contact the Friends of Wild River chairperson for this event:

Brad Bjorklund, poipubeach@aol.com, 651-253-3498.

Register On-line:
www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org

Naturalist Notes

By Mike Dunker, Park Naturalist

The Buzz on Pollinator Prairies at Wild River State Park

Like many of you, I still miss seeing the birds at the feeders behind the visitor center. Introducing our park users to new species and letting them see the old familiar birds was a joy of the job. It's not that we don't continue to have birds around the visitor center anymore, we do. They were just easily accessible and readily viewed for identification.

On the plus side, we have had fewer instances of bears at the visitor center this season and the pileated woodpecker damage has stopped.

In its place, a few bee and wasp houses were put up by Brandi Strand, last year's Naturalist Corps. They help bring attention to pollinator habitats and create dialogue on the benefits of these insects that so many people fear. A small amount of seeding has been done as well to increase the native plants already present.

This next year will see another addition to the park prairie pollinator project (say that five times fast). As part of a resource and interpretive partnership grant, about a dozen state parks will receive funding to enhance a small prairie area for the purpose of creating pollinator habitat, including interpretive signage. Work will begin this fall and continue on into the next year or two.

The recent addition of the rusty patched bumble bee to the Endangered Species list as well as the Monarch butterfly getting nationwide attention, it is important that we continue to lead the way at our state parks in protecting and preserving these wonderful resources we are entrusted with by the public. Many species of butterflies, bees, moths, beetles, flies and others are declining due to loss of habitat and specific native species that they rely on for survival.

Wild River State Park has already played a large role statewide in its Prairie Care program started by Dave Crawford all of those years ago. It was one of the reasons I wanted to come to Wild River State Park to work. Hopefully we can all help it not only continue, but enhance the program as we move forward. It is through the efforts of those like the Friends of Wild River State Park that make these projects possible.

Meet Justine Bigott, our 2017 Naturalist Corps employee



Hello! I'm Justine, and for the summer of 2017 I've been acting as the seasonal naturalist for Wild River State Park. I grew up in the Midwest, with family trips up to the north shore and northern Wisconsin. Without realizing it, I had been a part of the St. Croix watershed for a good portion of my life!

Through the University of Wisconsin - River Falls I got a field biology degree with interdisciplinary minor. But it was through volunteering with parks along the river valley that I came to learn of one of the best jobs in the world. Who doesn't like spending the day outdoors, and sharing exciting tidbits about the local flora, fauna and history? Perhaps not everyone, but I can hardly help myself when I have a neat fact to share.

I don't feel like I fit the naturalist trope. I love the outdoors and all it has to offer, but curling up with a good book and a mug of cocoa is just as exciting to me. I'm a hobby artist and also hope to write a thing or two someday. Being a lifelong learner is something important to me; the more you learn the less you know! Taking care of our planet and using its resources sustainably is something always on my mind.

I'm a Minnesotan who will take a snowy winter day over summer sun any time of the year. But I always have a blast working at the state parks over the busy season. It's hard to pick just one highlight to my summer. Some of my favorite things have been experimenting with new programs, uncovering the history of the park, working with the snakes, and delving into the mysteries of the Chisago County forts.

Every day is something to look forward to, with lots of new things in store to learn.

Friends of Wild River State Park
Sixth Annual

Wild River Run

Otter Trotter 2017!



Take a walk or run under the fall colors and along the St. Croix River at Wild River State Park, and on one of the most beautiful 5K courses in the state! This 6th annual event will take you on both paved and unpaved surfaces.

- Awards will be given to the top finishers, plus all those under 12 will receive a nice prize.
- Registration is available on the day of the race, but at a discounted price before Oct. 1.
- T-shirts are available race day while supplies last.
- All proceeds go to the Friends of Wild River to help support park events and improvements.

Early registration discount – register by October 1!

Race Day:

Saturday, October 14, 2017

Registration: 8:30-9:45 at Picnic Shelter.

Race begins at 10 a.m.

Wild River State Park

39797 Park Trail

Center City, MN 55012

(15 miles east of North Branch, 12 miles north of Taylors Falls)

651-583-2125

Sponsored by the Friends of Wild River State Park and the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota



Wild River 5K Run/Walk

Saturday, October 14, 2017

Registration: 8:30-9:45 am -- Race begins at 10 a.m.
Wild River State Park

Note: you can also register online at FriendsOfWildRiver.org and payment there is through PayPal.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email*: _____

Division: Female Male

Age: under 12 12-24 25-50 51 and over

T-Shirt Size: _____ (Requires a \$8 additional fee)

* Email will only be used to relay information regarding the Wild River Run
 Check here to be added to park and Friends email lists.

Cost: Before October 1, 2015:	\$20 (\$28 with T-shirt)
After October 1/Race Day:	\$25 (\$35 with T-shirt)
Friends Member Discount	Free T-Shirt (\$8 discount)

Amount Paid: \$ _____

A \$7 daily or \$35 annual Minnesota State Park permit is required on all vehicles entering the park – not included in the Wild River 5K Run registration fee.

Please write a check made out to our fiscal agent "Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota" with "Friends of Wild River 5K" in the memo field, then mail this form to:

Friends of Wild River State Park, c/o Jan Kozlovsky
re: Wild River 5K Run
17190 410th St
North Branch, MN 55056

The Wild River 5K Run will route participants on both paved and non-paved surfaces. By participating in this event, you understand the risks involved with trail running and individually take all precautions necessary. Should injury occur, the Friends of Wild River State Park, nor the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota, nor Wild River State Park will be held liable.

Call 651-583-2125 x227 (Mike Dunker) with questions.

Signature of understanding the terms of liability: _____



Thank you for your
Membership

FWRSP Membership Options

- Junior **Friend, 12 and under** – \$5 / year
Includes an "Action Guide" and other benefits
- Individual **Friend** – \$20 / year
- Family **Friend** – \$35 / year
- Silver **Friend** – \$50 / year
- Gold **Friend** – \$100 / year
- Platinum **Friend** – \$250+ / year
*Add an additional \$10 and be a member of
Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota*

Name:			
Address:			
City:			
State:		Zip:	
Email:			

(We will never sell or trade your email address.)

Option 1: Mail above with check to:
 Jan Kozlovsky, FWRSP Treasurer
 (make check out to "Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota"
 and put "Friends of Wild River membership" in memo field)
 17190 410th St.
 North Branch, MN 55056

Option 2: Sign-up Online and use your credit card:
www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org

(We will never sell or trade your email address.)

Option 1: Mail above with check to:

New Friends Booth at the Almelund Apple Festival this year

Stop by the Apple Festival in Almelund on Sunday, September 17, and visit the Friends of Wild River State Park's booth. The displays will highlight the annual activities of the Friends, including the Candlelight Ski/Walk, the 5K Run/Walk, the river clean-up, and annual meeting/pancake breakfast. Also featured will be information on presenters that are sponsored by the Friends each year.

The booth will be a great opportunity to recruit members as well as spread the word about funding available to help youth groups visit the park. Funding is also available to help with the cost of training through the Master Naturalist program. While at the Festival, check out the Silent Auction. The Friends will have items on the auction tables, to include:

- Photos of St. Croix River by Gary Noren -- 1 dozen pack of nature photo card from Joe Sausen -- Pottery Pot from Linda Christenson --*
- "St. Croix Wild" painting -- Wild Mountain Winery wines -- 2 tickets for Scenic Boat Tour of St. Croix -- Welder --*
- Pampered Chef Cookie Press -- Quart Jars of Maple Syrup -- A night at the "LaVoie Treehouse" in Long Prairie, MN*

Proceeds from the sale of these items will be added to the savings for the new amphitheater in the park.

So mark your calendar for Sunday, September 17. The Apple Festival, held on the grounds of the museum in Almelund, is a fun community event with food, entertainment, and exhibits. Hours are from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Friends of Wild River State Park
 Bob Kessen
 31145 Genesis Ave
 Stacy, MN 55079-9417