



PRAIRIE HORIZONS

STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION | NATURE PROGRAMS AND NEWS

November 2023 - January 2024



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IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|--------------------------|----|
| The Latest..... | 2 |
| New Park Spotlight..... | 3 |
| Programs & Events..... | 6 |
| Partners Membership..... | 11 |
| Events Calendar..... | 12 |

-THE LATEST-

Timely and brief updates on ongoing projects

McFarland Lake Restoration Update

Restoration efforts continue at McFarland Lake. Mechanical dredging remains the current focus as approximately half of the project's sediment has been removed from the lake basin as of early September. Progress has been slow but steady. Spoil removal has been challenging due to moisture levels in the lake sediment. The lake has a few slow but consistent seeps where water has continued to flow into the lake basin. The sediment being removed is very porous, and therefore retains moisture quite well, which compounds the difficulty of working with the wet spoils.

The contractor is using several techniques to combat sediment moisture levels, such as windrowing the spoils and allowing them to dry out for 24 hours before hauling away. The spoils are being taken outside of McFarland Lake's watershed, just northeast of the lake, and will be reconstructed into prairie.

Two forebays have been constructed east of the lake to prevent future sediment buildup.

Water will flow through the forebays before entering the lake, trapping the majority of sediments in the forebay. The forebays will also filter out nutrients, which will help maintain water quality within the lake.

This project is anticipated to run through December of 2023, however, slow spoil removal may present some risk that could impact this timeline. Ideally, the in-lake work will wrap up this winter and the lake will begin refilling naturally.

Remaining items include: lake drain pipe installation, in-lake fish habitat, shoreline fishing nodes, peninsula with ADA access, as well as a water's edge canoe and kayak launching point.

[Click here](#) to read past and future news related to this project. Be sure to follow us on social media, too!



Partners Update

Partners is off to an astonishing start for FY24, having already crossed the 20% mark towards the fundraising goal of \$45,000! This year's funds will be put towards the purchase of the Deppe Property (see more on Page 3).

When you renew or join with *Partners*, you get access to 10% off program registrations and services like building or campsite reservations. [Click here](#) to become a *Partners* member. Visit our website to find out how your contributions can make a lasting impact.

In the Parks . . .

Carroll Prairie

- State Hygienic Lab conducted a bioassessment of West Indian Creek (stay tuned for future results!)

Christiansen Forest Preserve

- Goat grazing in savanna restoration to set back undesired vegetation

Dakins Lake

- Solar panel array installed

Hickory Grove Park

- Goat grazing along north lake-shore to set back undesired woody vegetation
- Timber stand improvement between Oriole Ridge Lodge and scenic overlook

Jennett Heritage Area

- Invasive tree and shrub removal with Conservation Corps of Iowa

McFarland Park

- Lake renovation in progress

Peterson Park - West

- New dock installed on east side of lake

Robison Wildlife Acres:

- TEAM Day Event - filled steps with crushed limestone and bridge improvements
- Timber stand improvement

Wicks Wildlife Area

- Volunteer invasive honeysuckle removal event on Aug. 26 with Iowa Back Country Hunters & Anglers

Various Parks / Areas

- Parking lot renovations at Sleepy Hollow, Cooper's Marsh, Ed Powell Wildlife Area, and more.
- Removed autumn olive with Conservation Corps of Iowa from remnant prairie at Mound Cemetery; funded by grant from Iowa Native Plant Society

DEPPE FAMILY CONSERVATION AREA

An exciting new project is happening in Story County. A new park is coming soon near Ames and you can be a part of it!

Previously referred to as the "Deppe Property," the official Deppe Family Conservation Area, at 124 acres, will:

- Almost double the space available for hiking, birdwatching and quiet nature enjoyment near McFarland Park
- Permanently protect wildlife from agricultural, commercial or residential development
- Bring prairie and wetlands back to the landscape to hold soil, clean water and give a home to plants and animals

Story County Conservation (SCC) is partnering with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF) to permanently protect the property and transfer it to public ownership for enjoyment by all.

Fundraising for this project is a two-phase effort. First, we must finish acquiring the funds necessary for land acquisition – we're almost there! Then, we can shift gears to raising funds for restoration and site amenities.

SCC wants to open this property to you soon, once the land acquisition fundraising goal has been met and some on-site work – like prairie plantings, invasive species removal and adding a parking lot – is done. With the addition of this land, SCC will:

- Increase habitat for native plant and animal species
- Increase outdoor user destinations and experiences
- Increase the buffer for McFarland Park from commercial and residential development
- Complement McFarland Park's destinations, experiences, and services

You can be part of ensuring that nature spaces are part of our community by supporting SCC's work to connect

you with nature and improve natural resources, making Story County a great place to live, work, and recreate.

The Deppe family partially donated this new park property to INHF. Their generosity, along with support from Story County Conservation *Partners*, a legacy gift from Charles Ruth and a grant from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, means we are more than 83% of the way to meeting our land acquisition fundraising goal – just \$170,000 left to raise on this \$1.8 million project!

Your gift now brings this park closer to completion and closer to being open for you.

Please give to be a part of adding this new park to your neighborhood!



[Click here](#) for more details on this property, its proposed features or to donate.





BIOPHILIA: Addiction or human nature?

Beth Waage, Former Naturalist

CURE TO WINTER DARKNESS:

I thought I had an addiction. But it turns out, I am just really trendy. Who knew? My addiction is plants, both inside and outside of my home. Lately, however, I have been slowly turning the inside of my home into a jungle, and it makes me so happy!

The trend I have unknowingly partaken in? Biophilic design! A mouthful, I know. The word biophilia breaks down into a love of life or living things. In his book "Biophilia," American biologist E.O. Wilson defined it as "the urge to affiliate with other forms of life." Inside each and everyone of us is a need to be close to nature. Some of us are able to ignore it, much to our and nature's detriment. Nature is a part of the cure for many ailments, if only we allowed ourselves to use

it as such. My ailment at times of the year is winter darkness, and surrounding myself in green while the winter winds cause my old farm house to sing is a definite cure.

Frank Lloyd Wright was an early adopter of biophilic design. He got much of his inspiration from nature. His designs had all the benefits you can also enjoy from adding some natural design elements to your indoor surroundings. These can include things such as houseplants, increasing the natural light in your home, and using natural materials, images, and colors associated with nature. Studies show that adding these can lead to more productivity, better focus, reduced stress, and quicker recovery from illness and injury.

Who knew? I could not wait to tell my husband about all of these benefits because, although I have tried being stealthy, it is hard to camouflage a large monstera plant when you have placed it next to the dining room table!

BEGINNER-FRIENDLY HOUSEPLANTS:

Here are a few low-maintenance houseplants to get you started with your new addiction. Er... we mean "design aesthetic"!



Peace lily



Pothos



Snake plant



Jade plant



Madi Nolte, Outreach Coordinator

As community leaders in the world of conservation and beyond, SCC makes strides toward more sustainable practices and solutions whenever possible. When we implement these changes, it serves as an educational tool to those around us as well as showing that small changes can make a big impact if we all do it together.

Installation of energy efficient LED

shop lights, the recent purchase of an electric vehicle and the planned purchase of electric chainsaws name just a few of the recent changes we have made.

With the recent installation of a solar array at Dakins Lake in Zeoring, SCC has joined the renewable energy movement! If you've been to Dakins

Lake, you know sunlight is in great supply. This new addition to the park includes a solar array near the Main Campground (pictured above) as well as a small array in the East Campground.

These panels, installed in early August, will provide nearly all the energy needed annually to power the park!



A major improvement paddlers will notice is the new concrete boat ramps providing easier access to the South Skunk River. This view faces downstream from Soper's Mill Access.

Update on Soper's Mill Improvements

Work at the Soper's Mill Water Trail Access progressed throughout the summer. Many of the features have already been installed with, work continuing on others. Installation of the limestone blocks surrounding the access ramps are a nice touch to the site. Most recently in early September, pilings, sand bags and water pumps were utilized to de-water the boat ramp areas in order to pour two concrete ramps - one above and one below the existing rock riffle.

The final major remaining item is creating a spacious, compacted limestone parking area. SCC Staff will install parking posts to delineate the single vehicle and vehicle with trailer parking spots.

Once completed, this project will provide an improved experience for all our water trail and river enthusiasts!

-PROGRAMS AND EVENTS-



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW ONLINE
EVENT CALENDAR / REGISTER](#)

Animal Engineers

Monday, Nov. 6, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Can you build like a beaver or bird? Explore the outdoors to find out what gives animal shelters their strength and waterproofing. After learning about the “tools” animals use, see if you can build a small shelter from natural materials to keep an “animal” dry and safe. We’ll test your engineering with water and weights! Register online by November 5.

Sunset Hike

Friday, Nov. 17, 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Hickory Grove Park - Oriole Ridge Lodge

Celebrate National Hiking Day! What better way to celebrate than a guided sunset hike through the wooded areas of Hickory Grove Park? Join us for an easy-going hike on soft surface trails while we discover beautiful views of the park. Register online by November 15.

We’re Off to the Moon!

Saturday, Nov. 18, 8:30 - 9:30 p.m.

McFarland Park

Co-Sponsored by Ames Area Amateur Astronomers

Come-and-go as you please for this out-of-this-world experience, where you can discover the secrets of the moon! We will have hands-on activities and a chance to observe the night’s waxing crescent moon through a telescope. You won’t want to miss this adventurous night that the whole family can enjoy! Free event, no registration required.

Thank-Full Moon Refresh

Monday, Nov. 27, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

McFarland Park

Join us for a front row seat outdoors for the full moon on November 27! As we begin the busy holiday season, spend some time with us for a fireside evening of sharing and REFRESHING our souls under the light of the full moon. All ages welcome. Register online by November 22.

Brrrds

Saturday, Dec. 9, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Explore nature as it prepares for winter, with a special focus on birds who brave the cold. Explore with binoculars, play games,

and make a take-home craft. Most activities geared toward younger elementary ages, but all are welcome. Register online by December 4.

Pyrography Creations

Saturday, Dec. 16, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Turn up the heat and learn to create beautiful art with a wood burning tool. We will be designing on wood cookie ornaments that are yours to take home. They make the perfect small holiday gift for friends and family. Register online by December 8.

Solstice Craft & Cider

Monday, Dec. 21, 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Bring the whole family out for a cozy evening of nature crafting and warm cider. We’ll celebrate the Winter Solstice and learn about how changing seasons shape our world and the world of wildlife. Register online by December 18.

Beat the Blues Winter Activity Marathon

January 1 - March 1

Various Parks & Trails

Challenge yourself to complete a full marathon—26 miles!—between January 1 and March 1. Walk, run, ski, snowshoe, or bike 26 miles outdoors at your own pace, when it works for you and your family. Or play outside for 30 minutes to equal one mile. Record your mileage on the Mileage Log, available for pick up at McFarland Park or download at www.storycountyconservation.org. Turn in your completed log to win a discount on SCC online registrations, camping, and rentals.

Natural Jewelry Making

Saturday, Jan. 13, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Join us for a relaxing morning of guided natural jewelry making. You will learn interesting background information on jewelry making and wearing, as well as making some of your own jewelry using nature-inspired materials. Register online by January 8.

Wild Tots: Chilly Adventures

Saturday, Jan. 20, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

McFarland Park

Bundle up your little for a winter adventure! We will explore the outdoors and discover what animals like to stay and play with us, even when it’s chilly. Some activities will take place indoors so we can warm up. Program includes a story, craft,



short hike, and many hands-on activities. Register online by January 16.

*Program intended for tots ages 18 months to 4 years, plus an adult.

*Accessibility: Activities will take place inside or directly behind Conservation Center. Short hike will take place on a paved or mowed trail.

Winter Play Day

Saturday, Jan. 20, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

McFarland Park

Let’s celebrate winter and the new year! It may be chilly out, but there’s no need to get cooped up. Get outdoors and discover how amazing nature can be during winter months. We will spend the afternoon building shelters and exploring the woods. After we play, we’ll warm up by a fire and enjoy some s’mores and hot cocoa! Register online by January 16.

*Accessibility: We will go off trail into the woods to explore during program. Other activities will be in flat area outside the Conservation Center.

Pine Needle Weaving 101

Saturday, Jan. 27, 12:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Curious as to how to turn festive pine needles into a beautiful basket? This program will teach you how to do just that! This is a hands-on craft that can be recreated again and again at home once you know it. Register online by January 12.

Soap Serenity

Saturday, Jan. 27, 3:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Dive into a world of bubbly fun with Siberian Soap Co., a local business offering all-natural and eco-friendly products. Learn the art of creating luxurious soap at this workshop. Unleash creativity, experiment with fragrances, and leave with your own personalized batch of soap! Register online by January 19.



O.W.L.S. programs are designed for “boomers” or older, but anyone can attend.

Location: McFarland Park, Conservation Center
Doors open at 10:00 a.m. for coffee/tea & chatting.

Iowa Arboretum & Gardens: Today & Tomorrow

Thursday, Nov. 2, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

The Iowa Arboretum, (Madrid, IA) completed its master plan in 2018, creating a new direction for the rural public garden. Executive Director Mark Schneider will discuss the Arboretum’s 55-year history and the roll-out of the first phase of the master plan, Treehouse Village.

Mongolia: Land of the Nomadic Eagle Hunters by Ty Smedes

Thursday, Dec. 7, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Sandwiched between Russia and China is Mongolia - a beautiful country noted for its nomadic people. These superb horsemen celebrate a tradition of launching trained Golden eagles from horseback to hunt fox and hare. Join photographer Ty Smedes for narration exploring the Mongolian countryside and its culture. We’ll journey to Flaming Cliffs and Gobi Desert, where endless sand dunes and Bactrian camel herders reign.

Symbols of Iowa

Thursday, Jan. 4, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

ISU Extension and Outreach’s Beth Waage, co-author of the State Symbols book in the Iowa Wildlife Series of booklets, will talk about the history of our state symbols, plus some not-so-official ones. Do you know them all? Join this program to find out!



OASCO Winter Hike Series

Tuesdays in January, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Various Parks

Join members of [Outdoor Alliance of Story County](#) on a guided hike series featuring numerous SCC parks. See **page 10** for more details.

CAMPFIRE CUISINE

with Amber

By Amber Piatt, Naturalist

Crafting meals by the campfire is a great way to express creativity and relax. After a long day of hiking or outdoor activities, there's nothing better than gathering around the campfire for a delicious meal with great company. There are many unique ways to cook your meal outdoors and endless recipes to choose from.

KNOW YOUR FIRE - Starting out with the basics, to cook outdoors you will need to build a campfire, and not all campfires are the same. Cooking over an open flame works best with a clean-burning, hot fire. This is achieved by using dry, seasoned wood as opposed to freshly-cut or green wood, which makes a smoky fire. Cooking with pie irons or a Dutch oven requires slightly more prep time, as these methods work best over hot coals. You can burn down your



Amber Piatt,
Naturalist

wood until it's a bed of hot coals, or you can use charcoal.

Knowing how to work with your fire is key. Placing hot coals on the lid of a Dutch oven, for example, helps evenly distribute heat, making it perfect for baking things like peach cobbler. This is one of my favorites and is super easy. See my recipe card below.

**Pro tip:* Many campgrounds supply firewood. Call ahead to see what is available!

CHOOSE A RECIPE - I have enjoyed many different campfire meals over the years and tried several recipes. I have fond memories of making "cowboy dinners" while camping with my family when I was young. These are one of the easiest, yet tastiest and hearty campfire meals.

For cowboy dinners: Make a foil pack with your choice of meat, potatoes and veggies. Season to your liking, add oil/butter and bake until potatoes are soft.

As a rule of thumb, anything you're comfortable grilling at home can be cooked on a grate over a campfire, too. Help yourself out by prepping at

home (or indoors, if you're cooking in the backyard) as much as possible too streamline your cooking (chopping veggies, padding burgers, etc.).

Anything just needing a hot sear and flip is great. The following can be cooked excellently in a heavy skillet/ grilled over a campfire:

- Burgers
- Fish Fillets
- Chops
- Quesadillas

Spread out your embers for more gentle heat and you can also cook the following foods in a cast iron skillet:

- Over-easy eggs
- Scrambled eggs
- Omelets
- Frittatas
- Pancakes

Foods you can simmer, bake or boil in a Dutch oven:

- Soups and stews
- Oatmeal / grains
- Pasta
- Desserts



Pie irons are great for beginners, like these members of June's 'FLOAT I' nature camp, who enjoyed a hot lunch of pie iron pizzas at Hickory Grove Park. Pie irons require few supplies and are great for a backyard fire pit.

GATHER SUPPLIES - Now that you've chosen recipes, it's time to gather all the things you'll need to make some mouth-watering meals in the great outdoors! Don't forget to pack a good drink and a comfy chair or hammock. Here is a list to get started:

- Skewers/sticks
- Long-handled tongs/utensils
- Aluminum foil
- Cast iron skillet or dutch oven
- Pie irons
- Potholder
- Plates & utensils
- Wood
- Fire starters
- Containers for leftovers

Winter can be a great time to think about recipes you want to try during the upcoming camping season. It is also a good time to try out some recipes that will keep you warm. From hearty meals to easy snacks and sweet treats, there are plenty of opportunities to get creative in your outdoor kitchen—whether it be at the campground or in your backyard!

To try your hand at campfire

cooking, visit the following SCC parks for free access to grills, no camping required:

- Dakins Lake
- Peterson Park
- Robison Wildlife Acres
- Wakefield Woods
- Hickory Grove Park
- Heart of Iowa Nature Trail (many trailheads provide grills)
- McFarland Park

Amber has cooked dozens of campfire meals over the years of camping and leading programs. One of this summer's creations includes a foil pack pizza, (pictured below) created in the Boundary Waters of northern Minnesota.



EASY PEACH COBBLER

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 Can peach pie filling
- 1 Box yellow cake mix
- 1 Stick of butter

3. Empty peaches into skillet.
4. Dump cake mix on top of peaches. Do NOT stir.
5. Slice butter into dollops and scatter evenly on top of cake mix.
6. Lay skillet on top of bed of coals and add coals on top of lid to heat the top.
7. Bake 30 minutes, turning 90 DEGREES every 10 minutes.
8. **Optional:* Add vanilla ice cream!



NEW! RESERVABLE ARCHERY HUNTING BLIND

Help us spread the word about an exciting new hunting opportunity in Story County!



Youth (15 & under) and disabled persons may now utilize a new hunting opportunity at Sleepy Hollow, just north of Ames.

Reservable blind open for archery hunting only, during specific windows September thru January in four-day blocks (Thurs thru Sun).

SCC is willing to provide mentor for hunt/harvest when planned in advance.

More details online.



[Click here](#)
to view Rules & Regulations
or make reservation:
Scan QR Code or call

New Faces in Conservation Center

Meet Jessica Paulin, Administrative Assistant

If you've stopped in the Conservation Center or called the main phone lately, you've likely met our new Administrative Assistant, Jessica Paulin.

Jess grew up in Iowa before attending the University of Arizona, where she received degrees in Political Science and Criminal Justice Administration. She spent time in the legal field before returning to the Midwest; she also has vast background in childcare.

Her family, including her husband and two children, keep her very busy

with activities and more. When she gets time to herself, you will find her gardening or curled up with a book.

The family also includes two dogs, a cat, and a whole flock of chickens on their hobby farm near Luther where they raise apples, peaches, and a variety of berries. And several bee hives, too. Her family shares the same passion for being outside—camping, kayaking, fishing and hunting are regular occurrences.

"I am excited for this new adventure with SCC. I can't wait to get to know you. The next time you are at McFarland Park, please stop by to say hello!"



Pictured here is Jess with the family's German Shorthaired Pointer, Peaches.

Meet Clair Pfantz, Naturalist



Clair Pfantz, Naturalist

Clair Pfantz (pronounced "fontz") began her journey with SCC last fall, working as a seasonal outreach assistant until the spring, when a seasonal naturalist position opened—extending her stay. A full-time position then unexpectedly opened and Clair jumped at the chance to apply. She transitioned into her role as a full-time naturalist in mid-July and jumped full force into

leading Nature Camps.

Clair is Story County grown. She attended high school at Collins-Maxwell and graduated from Ellsworth Community College with a degree in Conservation Technology in 2020.

"As a child, camping was a huge part of my family's summers, which ignited the first spark of my interest in conservation education."

When not working, Clair enjoys woodworking, fishing, and creating taxidermy pieces.

"My favorite part of being a naturalist is seeing the excitement on peoples' faces when they are learning about nature."



OASCO Winter Hike Series Hosted by Outdoor Alliance of Story County

Hikese will take place on THURSDAYS in January:

January 4 - Anderson Access - Meet at parking lot on Northeast side of river.

January 11 - Soper's Mill - Drive up the lane and look for parking area on your left. Hike begins from southwest side of river.

January 18 - Heart of Iowa Nature Trail, Cambridge - Hike begins where Main Avenue and Heart of Iowa Nature Trail cross near the grain bins. Park on east side of road only.

January 25 - Peterson Part West - Hike begins from east edge of parking lot near lake.

*Visit www.oasco.org or email info@oasco.org for more details.

Board & Staff

Conservation Board

- Christine Laumer, Chair
- Dr. Nancy Franz, Vice Chair
- Dr. Jim Pease, Secretary
- Craig Meyers, Member
- Ted Tedesco, Member
- Linda Murken, Ex Officio Member

The Story County Conservation Board typically meets the second Monday of each month at the Story County Conservation Center at McFarland Park (56461 180th St.). Meetings are open to the public.

Conservation Center Staff, Ames

- Michael Cox, Director
- Ryan Wiemold, Parks Superintendent
- Pat Shehan, Special Projects Ranger
- Marianne Harrelson, Financial Data Manager
- Jessica Paulin, Administrative Assistant
- Jerry Keys, Environmental Education Coordinator
- Rebekah Beall, Naturalist
- Bobbi Donovan, Naturalist
- Amber Piatt, Naturalist
- Clair Pfantz, Naturalist
- Madison Nolte, Outreach/Community Engagement Coordinator

McFarland Park Shop, Ames

- Russ DeWall, Operations Supervisor
- Logan Heissel, Park Ranger
- Dillon Schmidt, Conservation Technician II
- Kallie Judson, Conservation Technician I
- Derek Seward, Trails/Natural Resources Technician

Hickory Grove Park Shop, Colo

- Jake Smith, Operations Supervisor
- Olivia VanderHart, Park Ranger
- Hunter Simmons, Conservation Technician II
- Maxwell McCarty, Conservation Technician I
- Brandon Clough, Natural Resources Specialist

IRVM Office & Shop, Nevada

- Joe Kooiker, Vegetation Management Biologist
- Tyler Kelley, Vegetation Management Specialist

Administration Bldg., Nevada

- Sara Carmichael, Watershed Coordinator

HELP PURCHASE A NEW PROPERTY!

Help us reach our goal of \$45,000

Your Story County Conservation *Partners* membership will help purchase the Deppe Property. You will receive a nature-themed magnet and a 10% discount on all programs, facility rentals, and merchandise. The Red Fox membership level and above will be recognized in the conservation center for their support.

Eagle Business Level - \$1,000 or more Monarch Business Level - \$250 to \$999

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

My membership level is _____

Make checks payable to: Story County Conservation *Partners*
56461 180th Street, Ames, IA 50010-9451; Phone (515) 232-2516

Or join online!

Thank You!

We are grateful to all those who support Story County Conservation with donations of time, funding, and materials.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR GENEROSITY:

- All *Partners* members & volunteers
- Many contributors *in memory of Paul Mumm, Michael Childs, and Kenneth Shaw*
- Burke Corporation
- David & Marsha Hegland
- Outdoor Alliance of Story County (OASCO)



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EVENT CALENDAR

| Date | Time | Event | Location |
|-------------------|--------------------|--|---------------------|
| Thursday, Nov. 2 | 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. | OWLS - Iowa Arboretum Update | Conservation Center |
| Monday, Nov. 6 | 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. | Animal Engineers | McFarland Park |
| Monday, Nov. 13 | 5:30 p.m. | Conservation Board Meeting | Conservation Center |
| Friday, Nov. 17 | 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. | Sunset Hike | Hickory Grove Park |
| Saturday, Nov. 18 | 8:30 - 9:30 p.m. | We're Off to the Moon! | McFarland Park |
| Monday, Nov. 27 | 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. | Thank-Full Moon Refresh | Hickory Grove Park |
| Monday, Dec. 4 | 5:30 p.m. | Conservation Board Meeting | Conservation Center |
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| Saturday, Dec. 9 | 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. | Brrrds | Conservation Center |
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| Monday, Dec. 21 | 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. | Solstice Craft & Cider | Conservation Center |
| Thursday, Jan. 4 | 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. | OWLS - Symbols of Iowa | Conservation Center |
| Monday, Jan. 8 | 5:30 p.m. | Conservation Board Meeting | Conservation Center |
| Saturday, Jan. 13 | 10:00 a.m. - Noon | Natural Jewelry Making | Conservation Center |
| Saturday, Jan. 20 | 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. | Wild Tots: Chilly Adventures | Conservation Center |
| Saturday, Jan. 20 | 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. | Winter Play Day | McFarland Park |
| Saturday, Jan. 27 | 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. | Pine Needle Weaving | Conservation Center |
| Saturday, Jan. 27 | 3:00 - 5:30 p.m. | Soap Serenity | Conservation Center |