

Sioux County Conservation Board

4051 Cherry Ave, Hawarden, IA

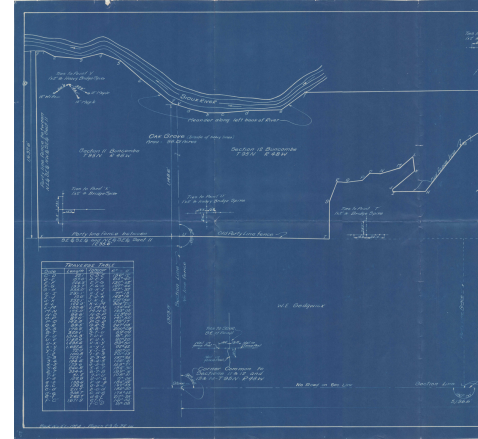
siouxcountyparks.org

712-552-1047

Spring 2024

Oak Grove Park celebrates 100 years this summer!!!

We are excited to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Oak Grove Park. We will officially be celebrating with a day of events and activities on June 22, 2024 which is just two days shy of the date of papers being signed by the John Feikema family 100 years ago. There has been a lot of research happening in the nature center this winter to determine the timeline of events of what has happened over the past 100 years, to make today's Oak Grove Park what we see today. So, the story starts back in the early 1920's. Early visitors to the park would enter and travel along neighboring properties to reach the river bottom to have their picnic gatherings. There was a group of seven men who saw something very special in this area. So much so they traveled all the way to Des Moines, IA to petition the State of Iowa to make the property a State Park. The men are pictured to the right they are L to R: Bill Metcalf, Merle Stone, Dr. A. Mann, ?Mulder, Russ Metcalf, Fred Vernon and G. L Venard. Those men were able to invite the State Park system back to Hawarden and to see the property themselves. They agreed that this location was indeed something special and they purchased the 101 acres from the John Feikema family on June 24, 1924. In our exploring of historic files we came across the original blueprint of Oak Grove from 1924 seen to the right. In 1925 a gravel road was constructed to the park, from Hawarden. Once this road was completed it became a popular drive for those to visit the park. In 1926 James Younie Sr. was hired by the state as the first park custodian, he lived in a shack by the river during the summer months.



1929 an open shelter was constructed in the lower park area. March of 1931 the road was to be graded and graveled. Additional property from the Feikema family was added to the park, the Sioux River had the highest water in many years. August the Hawarden Chamber of Commerce held a frolic for businessmen at Oak Grove. The Civilian Conservation Corp came in 1934 camping on the north edge of Hawarden. They came out to the park to create hiking trails, improve picnic areas and built the park residence which is still in place today with park staff residing, including two stone fireplaces, hiking trails, and grills. Ray Hughes was named as park custodian in 1938. US Soldiers from Sioux Falls Air Base camped at Oak Grove on their camp break in 1943. In 1951 Don Cole was appointed as a new custodian at Oak Grove and invited residents to a picnic. The Hawarden Chamber asks the Sate Conservation Commission to cleanup Oak Grove and a custodian was needed in 1952. In November of that year Harold Morgan is appointed as the new conservation officer.

April of 1962 the State of Iowa entered into a management agreement with the newly formed Sioux County Conservation Board for management of the park. A workshop was constructed and a place to house equipment. William Kelly was hired as the first park supervisor under the Sioux County Conservation Board. An addition was added to the house, and electrical services were brought into the park. Now this is just the start of the history we have on the park, more will be available in the next newsletter. Or check out our 100 year timeline in the Prairie Woods Nature Center. We will also have more offerings for historical information as the year comes along.

Seasonal Summer Positions Available



Sioux County Conservation Board is looking to hire seasonal help at Oak Grove Park, Big Sioux Recreation Area, and Sandy Hollow Recreation Area. Whether you are a college student looking for a summer job, high school student exploring career options or a retired adult looking for something to keep you busy during the summer months we have positions available. Hours vary including weekends, evenings, holidays and weekdays. **Deadline for applying for all positions is April 15, 2024, or until positions are filled.**

All applicants must have an interest in the outdoors and working with people of all ages, be able to communicate effectively orally and in writing, apply knowledge and common sense to solve problems and/or achieve work objectives. Must possess a current valid driver's license, be 16 years of age or older and undergo background checks in reference to driving record, criminal history and child abuse registry. Education or training in environmental education, natural resources, wildlife biology, biology/ecology or related field is preferred, but not required. See below for further information on department positions.

All applications and/or resumes will be open to public inspection unless requested in writing to be kept confidential. Discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability is prohibited. Sioux County is an equal opportunity employer.

Registration Booth Attendants

The registration booth attendant will operate at either the Big Sioux Recreation Area, near Hawarden, IA and/or Sandy Hollow Recreation Area, near Sioux Center, IA. Primary responsibilities include: registering vehicles upon entering park, selling firewood and snacks, renting canoes/kayaks, cleaning of assigned areas and other tasks as assigned.

Seasonal Park Technician

Seasonal park technicians will assist the full-time Park Ranger/Maintenance Technicians in daily operations of the parks and facilities. Duties may include: mowing, cleaning restrooms and facilities, cutting firewood, staining, running farm equipment, register park users, maintain records and much more. Applicants interested in the seasonal park technician position should have previous experience with maintenance, landscaping and farm equipment, as well as the ability to engage in physical work.


Naturalist Internship


As a Summer Naturalist Intern, you use your talent and skills to impact public understanding and attitudes about nature and the environment. Assist professional Naturalists with planning and implementing nature interpretation, outdoor recreation and environmental education programs and media for a wide range of audiences. Programs range from summer camp, fishing, kayaking and canoeing, archery, library programs and other summer programs. Headquarters based out of the Prairie Woods Nature Center. Additional duties may include animal cares, cleaning and maintaining classrooms and facilities, other tasks as assigned. Please print application and turn in with resume and cover letter to Sunday Ford- 4051 Cherry Ave, Hawarden, IA 51023, or send to sundayf@siouxcounty.org


Front Desk Receptionist


This position is located at the Prairie Woods Nature Center at Oak Grove Park. Responsibilities include watching the exhibit hall of the nature center, greeting guests, answering questions, selling gift shop items and other items as available, cleaning of facility and other misc. tasks as assigned. Hours vary including weekends, evenings, holidays and weekdays. Please print application and turn in with resume and cover letter to Sunday Ford- 4051 Cherry Ave, Hawarden, IA 51023, or send to sundayf@siouxcounty.org


Environmental Education Programs


Pre-registration is required for most events, please visit our website to learn more about the programs or register. Programs held at the Prairie Woods Nature Center are indicated by:  All other program location noted in description. Day of cancellation will be posted on our Facebook and on 93.9 FM.


 **April 16- Senior Environmental Learning and Fellowship (SELF)** **10 am, 12:30 pm or 2:30 pm**
Independent Seniors! Are you looking for a great place to gather with friends? Come enjoy coffee, treats, fellowship and a short nature presentation.
Topic: Migration

 **April 20-Falconry Seminar** **3- 4 pm**
Falconer Eric Harrold will share his experience in the ancient practice known as "the sport of kings". Falconry is the art and practice of hunting with trained birds-of-prey. He has more than 35 years since he began as an apprentice and has enjoyed flying red-tailed hawks, Harris's hawks, Cooper's hawks, and a prairie falcon. The topics covered will be regulations, hawks vs falcons, and the different opportunities in falconry, which is just one of the ways Eric has found to be connected to the natural world. After Eric's presentation, there will be a chance for attendees to ask questions.


 **April 24- Wild Child Nature Series** **10 am or 1 pm**
Attention animal and nature lovers ages 2 through 5! Our Wild Child Nature Series is a one-hour nature-based experience that will get your child exploring, moving, playing and using their senses. An adult is required to join child(ren). New topic each month!


 **April 27- Amie Adams, Author of "The Observer"**
Morning 10 am- 11:30 am **Lunch 11:45 am- 12:45 pm** **Afternoon 1:30- 3 pm**
Join Amie Adams, an Iowa Master Naturalist, graduate of Northwestern College of Orange City, and author of "The Observer" to learn about a little-known Iowa naturalist named Olaf Wolden. Born in Emmet County in northwest Iowa in 1886, Olaf lived through a time when the Iowa landscape was changing rapidly. Throughout his lifetime, Olaf studied plants, birds, and the landscape of his home. Both morning and afternoon session will include a short lesson about naturalists from Iowa's past, a book talk and Q&A about "The Observer", and a nature walk (feel free to bring your favorite field guide or your binoculars). Morning session is geared toward adults of all ages. Afternoon session is geared towards families. Lunch hour will be your opportunity to have a picnic with the author. Bring your own sack lunch and conclude or start your day with the author. Day is cosponsored by Orange City Library.

 **May 2- Fly Tying with Donald Mulder** **6- 8 pm**
Do you want to learn to tie your own flies? Don is a local hobbyist who can teach you knots, technique, and give you the know-how to start tying on your own. Then join us on May 4th for fly fishing at Oak Grove Pond!


 **May 4- Fly Fishing with Donald Mulder** **9:30 am- 2:30 pm**
Enroll in this fly-fishing session and enjoy free basic instruction from local hobbyist, Donald Mulder of Sioux Center. This course will cover everything from equipment, casting techniques, and presentation. The session includes casting practice and actively fly fishing at Oak Grove Pond. Class is geared towards teens and adults, although anyone is welcome. A current valid Iowa fishing license is needed for ages 16 and older. Limited to 20 participants. Bring a sack lunch and equipment if you have it. Attend the whole day or part of the day.


May 11- Bird Watching at Oak Grove Park **8 am**
Join area birders to look and listen for migrating songbirds including warblers, vireos, grosbeaks, thrushes, and more! If you have a bird guide or binoculars, you're encouraged to bring those along. Meet at the entrance booth, leave when you need to.


 **May 11- Landscaping for Wildlife and Native Plant Sale** **10- 11 am program, 11 am- noon sale**
Inviting wildlife into your yard can be a rewarding experience for you and the wildlife! Learn how and why to bring nature closer to home. This program is presented by Rock Valley's Siouxland Prairie Farms. There will be native plants available for purchase after the program, from 11:00-noon, cash or card accepted.

 **May 21- Senior Environmental Learning and Fellowship (SELF)** **10 am, 12:30 pm or 2:30 pm**
Independent Seniors! Are you looking for a great place to gather with friends? Come enjoy coffee, treats, fellowship and a short nature presentation.
Topic: Conservation on the Land


June 6- Outdoor Skills Day **Sandy Hollow Rec. Area** **\$5** **8:30 am- 4 pm**
All ages welcome! (Ages 8 and under must have an adult present). This is a fun-filled Thursday with sessions that may include: bird watching, air rifles, archery, outdoor cooking, wrist rockets, deer hunting lessons, canoeing, improving outdoor skills, and much more! This event is cosponsored with 4-H Extension and Outreach and Sioux County Sportsmen's Club. Lunch will be provided for participants. **Sign up will open April 3**, follow the link on our website or go to <https://go.iastate.edu/OUTDOOR2024>, space is limited.

 **June 8- Paul Brooke, Walking with Pumas** **10- 11:30 am**
Come walk with pumas. Dr. Brooke will take you on a journey as he spent deep time with pumas while in Chile. Since he is a photographer, he got very up close and personal with these amazing cats. His guide also took short videos so you could see how close he got to the pumas. He will teach you about their behavior, show you other wildlife in the region (Chilean Flamingos, South American foxes, Darwin's Rhea, Guanacos, etc.), and tell you about photographing in challenging conditions (over 50 mph winds many days).

 **June 8- Sack Lunch with the Artist/Author Paul Brooke** **11:30 am**
This is your opportunity to bring your lunch and picnic with the artist/author! Brooke is the author of seven books including Jaguars of the Northern Pantanal, Sirens and Seriemas: Photographs and Poems of the Amazon and Pantanal, The Skáld and the Drukkin Tröllaukin: Photographs and Poems of Iceland, and Light and Matter: Photographs and Poems of Iowa. His photographs have been featured in nine exhibits across North America and in Audubon and Wild Planet magazines. Please check out his website for more information and images.

 **June 8- Paul Brooke, Jaguars of the Pantanal** **12:30- 2 pm**
Dr. Brooke with his co-author Paul Donahue wrote a definitive book on jaguars. This 350-page book, Jaguars of the Pantanal, is considered a foundation of understanding about jaguar behavior and family lineage. He will share stories and photographs, teaching you how to identify these cats from their spot patterns. He will also share some of the prey items and images from photographers from all over the world who shared in creating this project.

June 15- Pancakes and Panfish **River's Bend Campground** **10- 11:30 am**
This morning is cosponsored with the City of Rock Valley and Rock Valley Ambulance Association. Pancake feed starts at 8:30 am with a free will donation, proceeds benefit local ambulance association. Then walk over to the pond to start fishing for panfish (and others) starting at 10. Preregister with the City of Rock Valley for the fishing by calling 712/476-6065. Entrance fee waived to participants during program.

 **June 18- Senior Environmental Learning and Fellowship (SELF)** **10 am, 12:30 pm or 2:30 pm**
Independent Seniors! Are you looking for a great place to gather with friends? Come enjoy coffee, treats, fellowship and a short nature presentation.
Topic: Iowa Rocks

Mark you calendar for our upcoming events:
September 14 Dutch Oven Gathering
October 12 Trick or Treat Hike
October 19 Youth Pheasant Hunt

June 22- Family Fishing Clinic**Sandy Hollow Rec. Area****9 am- 12:30 pm**

All ages welcome! (Ages 8 and under must have an adult present). Join us at the shade shelter for a fun filled morning. Program will include fishing instruction, casting contest, fishing, lunch and giveaways. Fishing poles and bait provided or bring your own. No cost, entry fee to park waved for participants during event hours. Event is cosponsored with Sioux Center Library and Sioux County Sportsmen's Club. Those 16 year of age and older must have a valid fishing license to actively fish.

 **June 29- Gourd Painting****\$20****9 am- 4 pm**

This class will teach you how to create works of art with gourds while enjoying the view from the Nature Center! Instructor Dave Opegard will provide all instruction and supplies to make a beautiful southwest style gourd bowl. This year's design is animals such as turtle, bison, salamander, bear. Beads, leather, wood burning, stones and pine needles will be available, too. Gourds and materials are supplied. This class is limited to 14 people ages teen through adult. Please bring sack lunch and snacks.

July 16- Senior Environmental Learning and Fellowship (SELF)**Field Trip Outing****9 am- 2 pm**

Independent Seniors! We are excited to bring you on a field trip. Sign up is required! More info online.

July 20-Erickson Brothers Outdoor Concert**Sandy Hollow Rec. Area****6-8 pm**

These local artists will perform acoustic duo, rock, oldies, classic country. Bring your family and friends, blankets and lawn chairs, and join us in the lawn at the open shelter for a free evening concert. Rain date of July 27. EBB or The Erickson Brothers Band consist of Eric on percussion and vocals and Lucas on guitar and vocals. Eric is a Senior at Unity Christian and Lucas is a Junior. The boys started performing with their family around 9 years ago and decided to start performing on their own as an acoustic duo after seeing buskers or street musicians performing in Omaha's Old Market 7 years ago. Eric is playing a Latin percussion instrument called a Cajon (K-uh Hone), outfitted with some special accessories. For full-band performances, Eric either plays an electric drum kit or his favorite DW Collectors Acoustic Drum Kit...but for acoustic duo performances, the cajon has a great sound and he can sit on it while he plays it!

August 3- Ringneck Rendezvous**Rock Valley Gun Club****\$10****4- 8:30 pm**

Archery, live animals, outdoor obstacle races, tossing games, water guns, bb guns, trapping, LOTS OF PRIZES and more can be found at this annual event in Rock Valley. "Regalia International Birds of Prey" from Oklahoma will be providing a live raptor demonstration at the event. Must register by July 26th by following the link on our website. Preregistration includes merchandise and chances at door prizes. First 400 kids will be accepted. Event cosponsored by Sioux County Conservation Board, Sioux Prairie Pheasants Forever, Iowa DNR and Rock Valley Gun Club.

 **August 13- Hunter Education Classroom Course****9 am- 7 pm**

All ages 11 and over are invited to join us for this course. Participants must attend full length of class. Must register for course online at www.gooutdoorsiowa.com. Once you have registered you will receive an email with the Hunter Safety Manual. You will need to complete the review questions and bring them to class. Class will cover firearm safety, hunting ethics, first aid, hunting laws and much more. Students will need a sack lunch and snacks for the day, supper will be provided.

 **August 15- Book Discussion "The Seed Keeper" by Diane Wilson****6- 7 pm**

On a winter's day many years later, Rosalie returns to her childhood home. A widow and mother, she has spent the previous two decades on her white husband's farm, finding solace in her garden even as the farm is threatened first by drought and then by a predatory chemical company. Now, grieving, Rosalie begins to confront the past, on a search for family, identity, and a community where she can finally belong. In the process, she learns what it means to be descended from women with souls of iron- women who have protected their families, their traditions, and a precious cache of seeds through generations of hardship and loss, through war and the insidious trauma of boarding schools. Cosponsored by Hawarden Library. Do not have to read book to participate, but encouraged to do so. The Hawarden Library will have copies available for check out.

August 20- Senior Environmental Learning and Fellowship (SELF)

10 am, 12:30 pm or 2:30 pm

Independent Seniors! Are you looking for a great place to gather with friends? Come enjoy coffee, treats, fellowship and a short nature presentation.

Topic: Grasses

August 28- Dutch Oven Class

Sandy Hollow Rec. Area

6- 8:30 pm

This is an intro to Dutch Oven class that includes preparing dishes and as a reward, eating them! Cost is \$15 a person, class size is limited. Cosponsored by Sioux Center Library. Please look for sign up on their website at siouxcenterlibrary.org.

Summer Camps At Oak Grove Park

Join us this summer for outdoor adventures. **Preregistration required and will open April 1 at 8 am online** only at www.mycountyparks.com/county/sioux.aspx. Ages 3 and 4 are \$5 per child. All other summer camps are \$10 per child. Space is limited. Must attend **full camp**.

Ages 3-4: Budding Naturalists

(Different from last year)

These little naturalists will have a hands-on introduction to nature. Parents/adult must attend. Includes games, crafts, and trail hikes.

Choose from:

June 12	9-11 am	June 13	9- 11 am OR 2- 4 pm
June 14	9- 11 am OR 2- 4 pm	June 21	9- 11 am OR 2- 4 pm



Ages 5-6: Herps Alive!

What is a herp, you say? Turtles, frogs, salamanders, and yes...snakes! In this camp we will watch them wiggle, catch them in the pond, and find their homes along the hiking trails. This two day camp is offered multiple times.

Choose from:

June 11-12	9 am- noon OR 1- 4 pm	June 13-14	9am- noon OR 1- 4 pm
June 18-19	9 am- noon	June 20-21	9am- noon
July 2-3	9 am- noon		

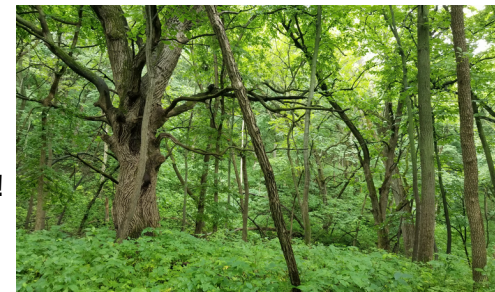


Ages 7-9: Adventure Camp

Are you the type that likes to explore, whittle soap, cook outdoors, lay in a hammock, canoe and kayak? Then this is your camp! Amazing adventures await you.

This two-day camp is offered from 9 am- 2 pm each day.

June 18-19	June 25-26	June 27- 28	July 2-3
July 9-10	July 11-12	July 16 - 17	



Ages 10-12: Water Works

Get ready to get wet! We will discover and learn about Iowa's wetlands-hands on! Explore the pond, go fishing, skip rocks, and learn how important water is for survival. This two day camp is offered from 9 am- 3 pm each day.

July 9-10	July 11-12	July 18-19	July 23-24
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Ages 13-15: Bigfoot Youth Camp

We are finding signs of a Bigfoot living at Oak Grove Park and need your help. You put those clues together to find him, but be warned, it won't be easy. Bigfoot does NOT want to be found! This camp includes a meal, please bring a side for supper.

July 25 noon- 9:30 pm

Nature Center Mural Project

Starting the March the current mural in the entrance way will come down and be replaced with a new design. The local preK- 2nd grade classrooms that have decided to work on this project have been working hard on their tiles. No one knows what the new design will look like. It is always exciting to see the anticipation of the new design get put together. Come out towards the end of May to see the new design and find your child's square, if they were one of the classes to work on it. This project is co-funded through the Friends of Sioux County Conservation Foundation.



Traveling Photography Exhibit July

This art exhibition highlights the work of photographer and poet, Paul Brooke. Who is a professor, poet, and photographer. He teaches at Grand View University in Des Moines, Iowa. This exhibit was taken during a week-long visit to Torres del Paine National Park, where Brooke photographed 12 different pumas. Some days he spent up to nine hours with one animal (the big male) or walked along with Blinca (female) as she hunted for her two cubs. The wind was exhausting as it often roared through the region at 50 mph. His book, Pantagruelian: Photographs of Torres del Paine, will be released in mid-January, it features most of these photos.

Distinguished Conservationists

Anonymous
Den Hartog Industries
Siouxland Machine
Sioux Prairie Pheasants Forever
Harlan & Karen Van Voorst
Harold & Darlene Westra
Michael & Joyce Wiggins

Memorials Given in Honor

Malena Miller



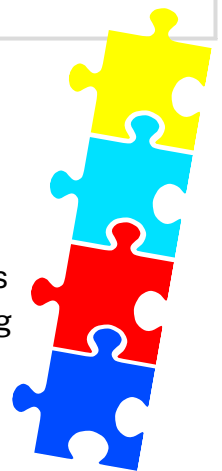
Foundation Members

Brian Van Engen- Chairperson
Dawn De Wit- Member
Stan Hoekstra- Treasurer
Cal De Ruyter- Member
Gordon Pottebaum- Member
Greg Hansen- Member
Stan Visser- Secretary
Lena Vollink- Member
Mike Wiggins- Member

Escape Grandma's Cabin!

April 19 & 20 \$25/team

Think you have what it takes to escape grandma's cabin and figure out her mystery? Gather your thinking caps and your team. Come out to the Duck Blind located at the Big Sioux Rec. Area and see if you have what it takes. Must register your team of 8 for various time slots as posted when you register. Entrance fee waived for vehicles of teams coming in for their time.



June 22, 2024 100 years in the making!

Join us in celebrating Oak Grove Park's anniversary. Activities being planned for this exciting day are: Oak Grove Park Presentation, Classic Car Show, food vendors, live band and movie.





Sioux County Conservation Board

4051 Cherry Ave

Hawarden, IA 51023

Return Service Requested

Staff	Board Members
<p>Robert Klocke- Executive Director Sunday Ford- Assistant Director/EE Coordinator Jessica Van Oort- Office Assistant Myron Dekkers- Park Ranger/Maint. Tech- Oak Grove Zach Weyer- Park Ranger/Maint. Tech- Sandy Hollow Rec. Area Alex Lynott- Park Ranger/Maint. Tech- Big Sioux Rec. Area Damon Anderson- Park Ranger/Maint. Tech.- Sandy Hollow Rec. Area Sarah Davelaar- Naturalist Ryan List- Park Ranger/Maint. Tech.- Oak Grove Robert Upton- Park Ranger/Main. Tech- Big Sioux Rec. Area</p>	<p>Gordon Pottebaum- Chairperson Dave Meylink- Vice Chairperson Josh Boersma- Secretary Jason Smith- Member Randy Larson- Member</p>
	<p>Conservation Board meetings are held 6:30 pm the first Wednesday of the month in the Conservation Corner at the Prairie Woods Nature Center</p>