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Guide by Cell a Success!

The Guide by Cell audio tour 2010 pilot project provided valuable data and feedback from park users at Jester Park and Brown's Woods. Park visitors used their cell phone to call in and listen to more than 3,300 voice prompts. Callers heard information on unique park features, natural history of plants and wildlife and environmental issues. The callers represented area codes from 24 states ranging from New York to California. Seven percent of the callers participated in the voting option at the end of the Guide by Cell messages.

Many park visitors left verbal feedback on the system, such as concern of flooding at Jester Park to downed trees on the Brown's Woods trail. Several visitors let us know how much they enjoyed the new bird blind and Playscape at Jester Park. Here are a few of the comments visitors left:

"We really like this audio tour, very glad you did it, we hope it keeps going, very informative, we have just been wandering around, it is really cool, high tech."

"This is very awesome and helpful thank you to whoever put this together."

Due to the success of this pilot REAP-CEP grant, the Guide by Cell program will be expanded into other Polk County parks and recreational trails. This expansion is possible due to funding from the Great Outdoors Fund.

When visiting Polk County Parks this year, turn on your cell phone and give us a call. It's easy! It's fun! It's informative! Hear what you have been missing and give us your feedback!



Vosler Concludes Service on the Board



Barry Vosler served on the Polk County Conservation Board for over seven years. While on the Board, Barry was passionate about southside revitalization and Easter Lake Park projects such as trail development, lake restoration and special events. Barry also

served on the Easter Lake task force and was a liason with the local neighborhood association.

PCCB Welcomes Jim Cataldo



Polk County Conservation Board welcomed its newest board member, Jim Cataldo, at the April board meeting. Jim was born and raised in the Des Moines area. After graduating from Dowling High School in 1991, he attended the University of Iowa where he earned a BA degree in Finance. Since college Jim returned to Des Moines and undertook a number of civil duties within his church, the Italian-American community, and charitable organizations. He is currently employed by the Johnson and Johnson® Family of Companies as a hospital account manager. He and his wife, Jenny, reside in Des Moines and have three children. In his free time he coaches football at Dowling Catholic High School in addition to his kid's sports teams. His hobbies are spending time with family and friends, golfing, hiking, and fishing.

Music in the Park at Easter Lake

Come on out to Easter Lake Park this summer and enjoy some music. All three events will take place at Shelter #1 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

June 18 – Joe Kinser

Big Joe Kinser plays American roots music driven by acoustic guitar. He writes and sings songs that are at times humorous and heart breaking.

July 9 – Mary McAdams

Mary's music is a mix of electrified acoustic folk and traditional Americana music.

August 6 – Thankful Dirt

Des Moines Folk musicians Darren and Molly Matthews make up the American Roots duo "Thankful Dirt". Molly's voice is ethereal, complex, and evocative complimenting Darren's masterful guitar playing. Together, they ignite a sound both unique and universally appealing.

Music in the Park sponsored by:

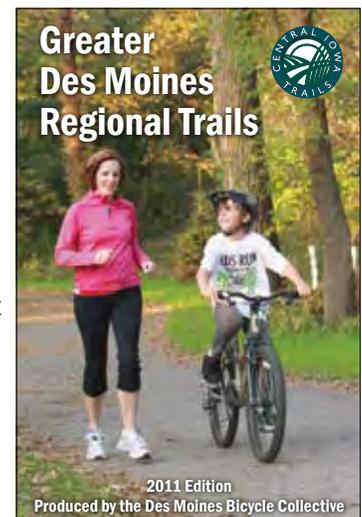


Butterfly Study at Chichaqua

During the next year Drake biology professor, Dr. Keith Summerville, will conduct a year-long intensive inventory of butterflies, skippers, and moths at Chichaqua. Dr. Summerville and his students will focus on four sites that represent rare and highly endangered prairie and wetland remnants.

Updated Trail Map Available

An updated Greater Des Moines Regional Trail map will be available by the end of April at the conservation office or on-line at www.dsmbikecollective.org. Get your free map and hit the trails this spring and summer.



Moving Ground

Renovations to the Jester Park Elk/Bison Exhibit have begun. Grade work and fence relocation is anticipated to be completed this spring with additional construction to follow during the summer. Improvements to this exhibit include an accessible pathway, observation deck, spotting scopes, and educational and interactive displays. Funding for this project has been made possible through the generosity of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Great Outdoors Fund, Polk County Board of Supervisors, and Wal-Mart.

New Willow Art at the Natural Playscape

Two willow art pieces have been installed at the Jester Park Natural Playscape. Artists, Ryk Weiss and Pam Dennis created a willow woven fence and a life sized osprey nest atop a hollow willow woven tree. Thank you to the volunteers who helped with this project. Come check out these beautiful natural public art pieces this spring. This project is partially funded by the Iowa Association of Naturalists.



Reseeding 700 acres of Prairie at Chichaqua

In recent years, the reoccurring flooding at Chichaqua has had major negative impacts to thousands of acres of native grass and wildflower plantings. The amount and duration of the flood was greater than at any time in the memory of the PCC staff. Flood waters stayed on the landscape long enough to kill all but the most flood tolerant species. PCC has been working with the NRCS to come up with a new seeding plan that reflects the “new normal” of frequent spring floods. This spring PCC will use prescribed fire to clear the residue from over 700 acres of ground that will be replanted in a diverse flood tolerant native seeding. This new mixture of native grasses and forbs will be able to resist the effects of flooding and provide high quality diverse habitat for our native wildlife and exceptional outdoor recreational opportunities for the public.

PCC on Facebook

Have you found PCC on Facebook yet? Facebook is a great way to interact with each other and find out about what’s going on with PCC. We encourage you to become a fan of Polk County Conservation, and then invite your friends to become fans too!



Earth Day in the Junction April 17, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Valley Junction

Bring your family and enjoy the festivities!

Listen to live music from three local performers:

Mary McAdams, Brian Joens, and
Flying Pig & Banjo

Education programs include the ISU Insect Zoo,
Reptiles of Iowa, and more

Hands on art includes making a shopping bag,
water color painting, and more

For more information, visit
www.earthdayinthejunction.com

High Trestle Trail Grand Celebration

April 30, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Special events in all five trail towns

The towns of Ankeny, Sheldahl, Slater, Madrid and Woodward will provide activities throughout the day in celebration of this formal grand opening. Food, music, art displays, exhibits, games and tours are just a few things to look forward to. Trail users are welcome to travel the whole 25 miles from Ankeny to Woodward or pick a shorter route between a few of the towns.

For more information, visit
www.hightrestletrail.info

Each year Polk County naturalists select a variety of programs we feel the public will enjoy. Our programs have been designed with you in mind, so they are both educational and fun.

- Program and event information is available by visiting www.leadingyououtdoors.org or by calling our administrative office at 515-323-5300, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Fees and registration are not required unless otherwise noted.
- Many programs are family-oriented and are designed so all ages can participate.
- Outdoor programs will be canceled if there is lightning or other extreme weather conditions such as wind, cold, or rain.
- Programs are developed for beginners. No prior experience is required unless noted.
- Youth and adult groups such as church, scouts, and 4-H are always welcome.
- No refunds will be given after the registration deadline.

Do More Outdoors

May 1, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

River Plaza (2350 Euclid, DM) and
Trestle to Trestle Trail

Celebrate May Day and all that recreational trails have to offer. Spring is a great time to get active riding your bike, walking and exploring. Events will include an interpretive walk, geocaching, bike rodeo and helmet give away, bike tune-up and bike safety programs. Co-sponsored by Iowa Health Des Moines. *All ages welcome.*

Wild Night Life & Hike

May 6, 8:30 - 10:00 p.m.

Jester Park, Camp Area 5

Join Polk County Conservation naturalists for an evening of outdoor fun. We'll discuss some creatures of the night followed by a hike through the woods. *All ages welcome.*

Kayak Basics

May 14, 10:00 - Noon & 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Easter Lake Park, boat ramp

Learn the basics of recreational kayaking from a PCC naturalist. Participants will learn about types of kayaks, equipment, techniques, and have a chance to practice skills on the water. All equipment is provided. Sign up for the 10:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m. class. *Pre-registration is required; deadline is May 6. Minimum age 15. Fee: \$10.*



Kites & Kids

May 14, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Jester Park, Shelter #4

This class is designed for adults and children to do together. Parents, grandparents or adult friends can bring a young friend and "go fly a kite." Assemble

and decorate a small kite and send them aloft for a fun ending. Materials for one kite for each child are included in the price. *Pre-registration required; deadline is May 6. Fee: \$5.*

Catch-n-Croakers

May 20, 8:00 - 9:30 p.m.

Chichaqua Longhouse

Learn to identify frogs by sight and sound before sloshing into the wetlands to catch these amazing creatures. Bring your own net and flashlight. Wear shoes that can get wet and muddy. *All ages welcome.*

Hike

May 21, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Jester Park, Shelter #5

Come enjoy a spring hike with lots of extras. This two mile hike will take us through the woods, over a creek, past elk and bison and finally to the new bird blind. *All ages welcome.*

Pond Study

May 26, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Jester Park, Shelter #5

Splish splash! Come discover what creatures live in and around this beautiful pond. All sampling equipment will be provided. *All ages welcome.*

Kayak Basics

June 2, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Jester Park, meet at Shelter #5

See description for May 14 Kayak Basics program. *Pre-registration is required; deadline is May 26. Minimum age 15. Fee: \$10.*



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Senior Fishing Derby

June 3, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Easter Lake Park, Shelter #2

Senior Services of Polk County and PCC are hosting a Fishing Derby open to any person 60 and over. Fishing poles and bait will be provided but you are welcome to bring your own. Prizes will be awarded. A box lunch will be served to all registered participants. *Registration deadline is May 27. To register, call 515-286-3536.*



Make Your Own Trellis

June 4, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Chichaqua Longhouse

Pam Dennis and Ryk Weiss will lead the group in constructing a willow trellis. The fundamentals of construction will be taught, as well as identifying and gathering the willows. No previous experience needed. Participants need to bring: small bow saw, sharp anvil pruning shears, small hammer. Willow and nails will be supplied. Participants also need to bring a lunch. *Pre-registration is required; deadline is May 27. Minimum age 12. Fee: \$55.*

Fishing Basics

June 9, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Fort Des Moines Park, boat ramp

Learn about the different kinds of fish in Iowa, fishing safety, and casting. Anyone over the age of 16 will need a 2011 Iowa Fishing License. Bait and poles will be provided. Bring something to sit on. *All ages welcome.*

Frog Hop

June 16, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Engeldinger Marsh

Come discover what creatures live in and around a marsh. Wear shoes and clothes that can get wet and dirty. All sampling equipment will be provided. *All ages welcome.*



Campground Cooking

June 16, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Jester Park, Shelter #2

Are you looking for some new recipes to try out on your next camping trip? Learn how to cook an entire meal, dessert, and snacks using Dutch ovens,

pie irons, roasting sticks, and foil packs. Recipes will be shared and everyone will get a chance to prepare and sample a variety of foods. *Pre-registration required; deadline is June 9. Fee: \$10.*

Pond Study

June 23, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Jester Park, Shelter #5

See description for May 26 Pond Study.

Hike

June 25, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Jester Park, Shelter #5

Join a Polk County Conservation naturalist for a hike through the tallgrass prairie at Jester Park. Learn about the plants, animals, and history of this once dominant habitat of Iowa. *All ages welcome.*

Fishing Basics

July 7, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

**Easter Lake Park, fishing pier
north side of lake**

See description for June 9 Fishing Basics.

Incredible Insects

July 8, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Fort Des Moines Park, Shelter #1

From ladybugs to butterflies, we'll explore the fascinating world of insects. The program will feature a large insect collection and an insect hunt. Nets will be provided. *All ages welcome.*

Canoe Basics

July 9, 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Jester Park, Shelter #5

Participants will learn about types of canoes, equipment, techniques, and have a chance to practice skills on the water. All equipment is provided. *Pre-registration is required; deadline is July 1. Minimum age 12. Fee: \$5.*

Kayak Basics

July 9, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Jester Park, Shelter #5

See description for May 14 Kayak Basics program. *Pre-registration is required; deadline is July 1. Minimum age 15. Fee: \$10.*

To register for a program, go to www.mycountyparks.com

Do More Outdoors

July 10, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Easter Lake Park, Shelters #1 & #2

Looking for summer fun? Come learn how to canoe, fish (participants will need a valid fishing license if over 16) and safely enjoy the summer sun. Educational programs will include intro to camping, water and boating safety, campfire building and safety, and healthy camping foods. Co-sponsored by Iowa Health Des Moines. *All ages welcome.*

Nature Photography

July 12, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at Jester Park Lodge & July 14, 6:00 p.m. to sunset at Green Meadows West Prairie, Johnston

This class is targeted to digital SLR camera (digital cameras that utilize interchangeable lenses) users. Join local nature photographer, Ty Smedes, in a "hands-on" nature photography class. During the first evening we will cover equipment, basic digital camera and post-processing concepts, photographic technique, composition, and lighting, as it relates to wildlife, scenic, wildflower, and macro photography. The second evening will be "hands-on". Students will have the opportunity to perfect their technique in the field, photographing wildflowers. Instructor will assist the students in improving technique. *Pre-registration is required; deadline is July 5. Minimum age 12. Fee: \$25.*

Wild Night Life & Hike

July 15, 8:30 - 10:00 p.m.

Yellow Banks Park, Savanna Trail

See description for May 6 Wild Night Life & Hike.

Creek Walk

July 21, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Thomas Mitchell Park, Shelter #1

Take a walk and cool off as we explore and investigate life in an Iowa stream. Participants need to wear old clothes and shoes that are secure (no flip flops) and can get wet. *Minimum age 5.*

Hike

July 26, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Jester Park, Shelter #5

See description for June 25 Hike.

Jazz in July

July 29, 5:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Thomas Mitchell Park, Shelter #2

Join in on an evening of food, fun, art, and music. Food, wine from Rosey Acres, and local art will be available to purchase along with free nature programs. Music by the Betsy Hickok Ensemble will play from 6:30-8:30. Betsy Hickok has performed as a solo jazz vocalist, and as a member of the Iowa City-based group "Too Much Yang." In 2006, she released her first solo jazz album featuring jazz standards. Sponsored by the Great Outdoors Fund.

Reptiles

August 2, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Jester Park Lodge

Come and learn about Iowa's reptiles. We'll discuss the fears and myths that surround these scaly creatures people love to hate. *All ages welcome.*

Incredible Insects

August 5, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Yellow Banks Park, Shelter #1

See description for July 8 Incredible Insects.

Butterflies

August 27, 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Chichaqua Longhouse

Learn about the amazing life cycle of the monarch butterfly. Then, you will help researchers gather valuable data by catching and tagging butterflies. Nets will be provided. *All ages welcome.*

To register for a program, go to

www.mycountyparks.com

Polk County

Conservation Board Members:

Jim Cataldo, Des Moines
Tom Levis, West Des Moines
Michelle McEnany, Urbandale
Tina Mowry-Hadden, Altoona
Mike Smith, Des Moines

Polk County Conservation

Director:

Dennis Parker

Nature Friends

Preschoolers Exploring Nature
3-5-year olds with an adult
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Join a naturalist in a nature adventure! We will explore a different nature topic each evening through stories, sharing time, guided exploration, and art activities. Snacks will be provided.
Fee: \$7 per program

Participate in a **Park Passport Program**. Attend five different programs, each located at a different park and receive a Nature Friend Explorer Pack. Participants must record program name, location and date with the speaker's initials on their passport. Turn the passport in at the Conservation Office at Jester Park or Raccoon River Nature Lodge to receive your Nature Friend Explorer Pack. One pack per child please.

- May 3** - Color Hike at Yellow Banks, Shelter #3
- May 16** - Rrrabbit! at Raccoon River Park Nature Lodge
- June 7** - Everyone Needs a Rock at Jester Park, mini shelter near Shelter #3
- June 20** - Let's Go Fishing at Raccoon River Park Nature Lodge
- July 5** - Grandfather Buffalo at Jester Park, Shelter #6
- July 18** - Life Underground at Pearson Park
- August 2** - Beaver Buddies at Fort Des Moines Park, Shelter #1
- August 15** - Incredible Insects at Southwoods

To register for Nature Friends programs, call the West Des Moines Parks and Recreation Office at (515) 222-3444 or visit www.wdm-ia.com. These programs are co-sponsored by the Des Moines Chapter of the Izaak Walton League and West Des Moines Parks and Recreation.



Nature Play Dates

10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Explore, discover and play in your local parks with a Polk County Naturalist. Meet families interested in getting their children outdoors for natural play and discovery. Wear clothes and shoes that can get wet and dirty. We may be hiking, discovering life in a log or playing in the creek. This is a morning of adventure and discovery with curiosity being the most important ingredient.



- June 8** - Nature's Treasure Hunt at Jester Park, Shelter #3
- June 22** - Pond Study at Jester Park, Shelter #5
- July 6** - Stream Walk at Brown's Woods
- July 20** - Tyke Hike at Jester Park, meet near Shelter #3
- August 3** - Fossil Dig at Jester Park, Shelter #6

Nature Story Hour

Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Bring your picnic lunch, blanket and family for an hour of nature stories and activities with a naturalist from PCC. Come enjoy the fresh air, sunshine, munch your lunch, listen to a story or two, and discover some new natural areas with your children. This family-friendly program is free and all ages are welcome. Look for us on Wednesdays:

- June 1** - Easter Lake Park, Shelter #4
- June 15** - Fort Des Moines Park, Shelter #2
- June 29** - Easter Lake Park, Shelter #4
- July 13** - Fort Des Moines Park, Shelter #2
- July 27** - Easter Lake Park, Shelter #4
- August 10** - Fort Des Moines Park, Shelter #1



Park Packs

Nature-Themed Backpacks
Free two-week checkout

These backpacks come with a field guide and a variety of activities and fun facts to assist in the discovery of a specific nature topic. Themes include: Birds, Trees, Insects, Animals of Iowa, Geology, Life in a Pond, Wildflowers & Plants, Animals of the Night, and Outdoor Skills. *For more information, contact Lori at (515) 323-5380 or email: lori.kirpes@polkcountyia.gov*

Central Iowa River Kayak Trips
May 21, June 18, June 25, July 1, August 13
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

We're offering several kayak trips this summer. Which way we'll float, we just don't know, but we'll definitely float. Due to fluctuating river levels, we'll decide what river to float the week prior. Naturalists will guide participants down the river. Bring food and drink. Prior kayak experience is required.

Fee: \$35; includes transportation and kayaks. Departure from Jester Park. Minimum age 16. Registration deadline is one week prior to each trip.



RVing Iowa Style at
Winnebago Industries
May 25, 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Kick off the camping season touring the largest RV manufacturer plant in Iowa and viewing the new RV models. Eat lunch at the historic Waldorf College campus then tour downtown Forest City. Step back into the past at the Mansion Museum and view the tractors and farm equipment of days gone by at the Heritage Park. End our day exploring Pilot Knob State Park, one of the oldest state parks in Iowa.

Fee: \$55; includes motorcoach transportation, lunch, and tour fees. Departure from the parking lot by Bonanza Family Restaurant at 5029 NE 14th Street in Des Moines. Registration deadline is May 11.

Canoe and Cache on the
Des Moines River
June 4, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Meet at Harriett Street boat ramp,
just off NE 14th St.

Join us as we canoe and geocache down the Des Moines River. We'll start at Harriet Street and paddle down to Yellow Banks Park for a total of 10.25 miles. Geocaches will be hidden along the river

and at Yellow Banks Park for you to find. Previous paddling experience is required. GPS units will be available for check-out. Bring food and drink.

A limited number of canoes are available from Polk County Conservation for \$10/person. Register on www.mycountyparks.com for a spot in a canoe. You are welcome to join us if you have your own canoe or kayak, email Heidi at heidi.anderson@polkcountyiowa.gov to register. *Fee: \$10/person for canoe registration. FREE if you bring your own canoe or kayak. Minimum age is 10. Canoe registration deadline is May 27.*



Canoe/Kayak on the Niobrara
June 11-15

TRIP FULL! Naturalists will lead 10 adventurous souls on a three day river excursion on this unique river in the heart of the Great Plains.

Father's Day Canoe Trip
June 19, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Looking for something to do on Father's Day? Join us on a float down a river. Due to fluctuating river levels, we'll decide what river to float the week prior. Naturalists will guide participants down the river. Bring food and drink. Prior canoe experience is required.

Fee: \$25; includes transportation and canoes. Departure from Jester Park unless otherwise noted. Minimum age 10. Registration deadline is June 13.



Picket Fences to Temples Tour
June 29, 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Explore the diversity of culture, eco-tourism, and alternative agriculture in Central Iowa. We will begin the day at Turtle Farms, a certified organic CSA. Afterward we'll make a quick stop at the Jester Park Natural Playscape and the bison/elk exhibit. We will then tour the ornate Hindu Temple. Corncrib catering will serve us lunch in a restored corncrib overlooking Iowa's farm fields. Save room for wine tasting and leisurely tour of Snus Hill Winery. Afterward, we'll enjoy a view of

To register for a trip, go to www.mycountyparks.com

the Des Moines River Valley from the new High Trestle Trail Bridge via a tram ride. This bridge is 13 stories tall and a 1/2 mile long making it one of the largest pedestrian bridges in the world. Our final stop will be a tour of Pickett Fence Creamery where we'll have pie and homemade ice cream.

Fee: \$50, includes motorcoach transportation, lunch and tour fees. Departure from the Walmart Parking Lot in Grimes. Registration deadline is June 15.

Cruising Clear Lake

July 19, 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Cruise Clear Lake aboard the Lady of the Lake, an authentic stern-wheel paddleboat. Tour the 2.75 acre Central Gardens. Enjoy lunch in the historic Surf Ballroom. Listen to the step-on guide weave the story of water quality challenges and successes in the area. Cap the trip off with bargain hunting in the antique and speciality shops of downtown Clear Lake.

Fee: \$65, includes transportation, meals and tour fees. Depart from Living History Farms parking Lot off of Hickman Road in Urbandale. Registration deadline is July 5.



Western Iowa Wonders

August 31, 7:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Experience eco and historic tourism in Western Iowa. Our first stop will be at the new Whiterock Rest area, where Kay Neumann will give a short program with live hawks and owls. Our journey continues with a tour of the very popular Templeton Rye bottling facility. We will continue traveling westward to Manning and tour the German Haus Barn, a 17-acre exhibit. Lunch will be catered by a local church. Next stop will be at Albert the Bull and Nathaniel Hamlin Park in Audubon. Our final stop will be at the "Tree in the Middle of the Road" on our way back to Des Moines.

Fee: \$60, includes motorcoach transportation, lunch and tour fees. Departure from the Living History Farms parking lot in Urbandale. Registration deadline is August 17.

Get Outside: Young Adults!

More than 20 high school and college age young adults came together on February 13th at Jester Park to take part in a special event geared towards getting young adults more active in the outdoors. Polk County Conservation staff and volunteers took participants on a snowshoe scavenger hunt, educated them about our parks and programs, and asked for feedback about conservation and recreation issues.

PCC will work with these young adults to form an advisory committee who presents opinions and ideas from a younger perspective. This committee will plan events that help draw other young adults outdoors and engage them in outdoor recreation activities.

If you would like to become involved with the Get Outside: Young Adult group, please contact Heidi Anderson at 515-323-5360 or Heidi.anderson@polkcountyia.gov. Bring your friends too! We can't wait to hear what you have to say. Expect to make some new friends, eat some good food, and have some outdoor fun (all for free)!



Some of our young adults enjoying the snowshoe scavenger hunt at Jester Park.

Jester Park Amphitheater

Some ambitious Eagle Scouts from West Des Moines Troop 888 will begin construction of an amphitheater at Jester Park. It will be located near the lower showerhouse and construction will likely begin this spring.

Water Wonders Camp

June 20 - 23

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Ages 8 - 9 years

**Meeting location: Jester Park,
Shelter by Lodge**

Come and get your feet wet as we discover all we can about water. We'll compare ponds, rivers, lakes, and wetlands plus the animals that live in them. Daily field trips will take us to other Polk County parks.

Fee: \$100. Registration deadline is June 10. Limited to 12 campers.



Junior Naturalist Camp

June 27 - 30

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Ages: 10 - 11 years

**Meeting location: Jester Park,
Shelter by Lodge**

Do you know a child who loves the outdoors? Campers will spend the week fishing, canoeing, hiking, geocaching and more while exploring the outdoors. Campers will also learn how to use a compass, build a fire, and cook a snack over a fire. On the last day of camp, campers will become official Iowa Junior Naturalists and receive a badge and certificate. Daily field trips will take us to other Polk County parks.

Fee: \$100. Registration deadline is June 17. Limited to 12 campers. (At press time, only 1 spot left).

Paddling Camp

July 11 - 14

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Ages: 12 - 14 years

**Meeting location: Jester Park, Shelter by the
Lodge**

Campers will learn the necessary skills and techniques to safely canoe and kayak. Students will then get the opportunity to apply their new skills during a daylong river trip led by naturalists trained by the American Canoe Association. This camp will be physically demanding and challenging in a safe and supervised environment.

Fee: \$100. Registration deadline is July 1. Limited to 12 campers.

“Articipant” Camp

July 19 - 21

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Ages: 8-12 years

Meeting location: Jester Park, Shelter #5

“ARTicipant”: (noun) one who participates in an art and nature camp. “Articipants” will explore the relationship between art and nature by gathering and using natural items from three unique Iowa habitats, woodland, prairie, and wetland, to create works of art. This three day hands-on camp will conclude by working as a team of artists to plan, design, and create a lasting natural art piece at the Jester Park Playscape teaching the students the importance and benefits of public art. “Articipants” should have an interest in the arts and nature.

Fee: \$75. Registration deadline is July 1. Limited to 12 campers.

Camp Details: These day camps are designed to encourage hands-on learning through outdoor explorations, activities, games, crafts, and more. Camps will be led by naturalists.

**To register for a camp, go to
www.mycountyparks.com**

Volunteer News and Opportunities

On March 6, the annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet took place at the Jester Park Lodge. This banquet honors volunteers, who have put in a minimum of 10 hours of service individually, and 25 hours collectively as a group. Throughout the course of 2010, over 600 volunteers gave more than 9,600 hours of volunteer service to Polk County Conservation. This year's theme was "Seasons of Giving", which reflects how volunteering fits into the lives of the diverse group of people who choose to give of their time to conservation efforts. The special speaker was Ty Smedes, who presented his photo series and the stories that inspired his book "Capturing Iowa's Seasons".

2010 Volunteers of the Year



Don Donovan has served as our Bluebird Trail Coordinator for many years and has chosen to retire. In addition to monitoring the bluebird trail at Jester Park, he also coordinated with other volunteers to make sure all seven bluebird trails in the PCC park system were taken care of.



Deb Knoll gives her time and expertise by providing meals for the participants at clinics and shows at JPEC. This is very helpful for the participants as they don't have to run out for food and can concentrate on what they're doing. She always makes sure that the menu is nutritious, and delicious.



Colton Cornwell from Boy Scout Troop 89, built and installed a custom bike rack out of an old piece of the railroad rail discovered along the High Trestle Trail. The bike rack has been placed at the "Oasis" along the High Trestle Trail between Ankeny and Sheldahl.



Mid-Iowa Retriever Club is an Adopt-A-Park sponsor of Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt. They have provided service at special events, given financial support for special projects, and were eager to help with flood recovery in August of 2010. Several members graciously removed goat fencing that was damaged and buried by flood debris.

Volunteers are Needed for:

Brown's Woods Clean up on April 16
Earth Day in the Junction on April 17
Earth Day/Arbor Day Tree Planting on April 22
Trash Bash on April 22
Residential Tree Program on May 14

To help with any of these events, please contact Pat Spain at 515-323-5280 or pat.spain@polkcountyia.gov



- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. High Trestle Trail | 10. Four Mile Creek Greenbelt |
| 2. Beaver Creek Greenbelt | 11. Gay Lea Wilson Trail |
| 3. Brown's Woods | 12. Great Western Trail |
| 4. Carney Marsh | 13. Jester Park |
| 5. Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt | 14. Mally's Weh Weh Neh Kee Park |
| 6. Chichaqua Valley Trail | 15. Sycamore Trail |
| 7. Easter Lake Park | 16. Thomas Mitchell Park |
| 8. Engeldinger Marsh | 17. Trestle to Trestle Trail |
| 9. Fort Des Moines Park | 18. Yellow Banks Park |

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Pledge your support today for high quality, healthy living for Greater Polk County through expanded open space, restored landscapes, and greater recreation and outdoor education opportunities.

By becoming a friend, you will...

- ◆ Have your name published in The Great Outdoors Fund Annual Report and Polk County Conservation Nature News Newsletter
- ◆ Be put on the mailing list to receive current GOF and PCC news and information
- ◆ Participate in special programs, tours & events designed exclusively for our Friends
 - ◆ Be invited to the annual 'Friend of the Great Outdoors' banquet
 - ◆ Support conservation and recreation projects in your own backyard

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ City, Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Individual (annual): _____ \$50 Family (annual): _____ \$100 Corporate: _____

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity (*pre-registration required)</u>	<u>Location</u>
May 1	1:00 p.m.	Do More Outdoors	River Plaza and Trestle to Trestle Trail
May 3	11:00 a.m.	OWLS - Iowa Spaces, Places, Faces	Jester Park Lodge
May 3	6:30 p.m.	Nature Friends*	Yellow Banks Park
May 6	8:30 p.m.	Wild Night Life and Hike	Jester Park
May 14	10:00 a.m.	Kayak Basics*	Easter Lake Park
May 14	1:00 p.m.	Kayak Basics*	Easter Lake Park
May 14	1:00 p.m.	Kites and Kids*	Jester Park
May 16	6:30 p.m.	Nature Friends*	Raccoon River Park
May 20	8:00 p.m.	Catch-n-Croakers	Chichaqua Longhouse
May 21	8:00 a.m.	Central Iowa River Kayak Trip*	Central Iowa
May 21	10:00 a.m.	Hike	Jester Park
May 25	7:00 a.m.	RVing Iowa Style Bus Tour*	Forest City, Iowa
May 26	6:30 pm.	Pond Study	Jester Park
June 1	Noon	Nature Story Hour	Easter Lake Park
June 2	6:00 p.m.	Kayak Basics*	Jester Park
June 3	9:00 a.m.	Senior Fishing Derby	Easter Lake Park
June 4	8:00 a.m.	Canoe and Cache	Des Moines River
June 4	10:00 a.m.	Trellis Class*	Chichaqua Longhouse
June 7	11:00 a.m.	OWLS - Bonnie and Clyde	Jester Park Lodge
June 7	6:30 p.m.	Nature Friends*	Jester Park
June 8	10:30 a.m.	Nature Playdate	Jester Park
June 9	6:30 p.m.	Fishing Basics	Fort Des Moines Park
June 11-15		Canoe/Kayak the Niobrara River	Northern Nebraska
June 15	Noon	Nature Story Hour	Fort Des Moines Park
June 16	6:30 p.m.	Campground Cooking*	Jester Park
June 16	6:30 p.m.	Frog Hop	Engeldiner Marsh
June 18	8:00 a.m.	Central Iowa River Kayak Trip*	Central Iowa
June 18	6:30 p.m.	Music in the Park	Easter Lake Park
June 19	8:00 a.m.	Father's Day Canoe Trip*	Central Iowa
June 20-23	9:00 a.m.	Water Wonders Camp*	Jester Park
June 20	6:30 p.m.	Nature Friends*	Raccoon River Park
June 22	10:30 a.m.	Nature Playdate	Jester Park
June 23	6:30 p.m.	Pond Study	Jester Park
June 25	8:00 a.m.	Central Iowa River Kayak Trip*	Central Iowa
June 25	10:00 a.m.	Hike	Jester Park
June 27-30	9:00 a.m.	Jr. Naturalist Camp	Jester Park
June 29	8:00 a.m.	Pickett Fences to Temples Bus Tour*	Central Iowa
June 29	Noon	Nature Story Hour	Easter Lake Park
July 1	8:00 a.m.	Central Iowa River Kayak Trip*	Central Iowa
July 5	11:00 a.m.	OWLS - Lovina Benedict	Jester Park Lodge
July 5	6:30 p.m.	Nature Friends*	Jester Park
July 6	10:30 a.m.	Nature Playdate	Brown's Woods
July 7	6:00 p.m.	Fishing Basics	Easter Lake Park
July 8	6:30 p.m.	Incredible Insects	Fort Des Moines Park
July 9	10:00 a.m.	Canoe Basics*	Jester Park
July 9	1:00 p.m.	Kayak Basics*	Jester Park
July 9	6:30 p.m.	Music in the Park	Easter Lake Park
July 10	1:00 p.m.	Do More Outdoors	Easter Lake Park
July 11-14	9:00 a.m.	Paddling Camp*	Jester Park
July 12&14	6:30 p.m.	Nature Photography*	Jester Park Lodge

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity (*pre-registration required)</u>	<u>Location</u>
July 13	Noon	Nature Story Hour	Fort Des Moines Park
July 15	8:30 p.m.	Wild Night Life & Hike	Yellow Banks Park
July 18	6:30 p.m.	Nature Friends*	Pearson Park
July 19	7:00 a.m.	Cruising Clear Lake Bus Tour*	Clear Lake, Iowa
July 19-21	9:00 a.m.	“Articipant” Camp*	Jester Park
July 20	10:30 a.m.	Nature Playdate	Jester Park
July 21	6:30 p.m.	Creek Walk	Thomas Mitchell Park
July 26	6:30 p.m.	Hike	Jester Park
July 27	Noon	Nature Story Hour	Easter Lake Park
July 29	5:30 p.m.	Jazz in July	Thomas Mitchell Park
August 2	11:00 a.m.	OWLS - Stephens State Forest	Jester Park Lodge
August 2	1:30 p.m.	Reptiles	Jester Park Lodge
August 3	10:30 a.m.	Nature Playdate	Jester Park
August 5	6:30 p.m.	Incredible Insects	Yellow Banks Park
August 6	6:30 p.m.	Music in the Park	Easter Lake Park
August 10	Noon	Nature Story Hour	Fort Des Moines Park
August 13	8:00 a.m.	Central Iowa River Kayak Trip*	Central Iowa
August 15	6:30 p.m.	Nature Friends*	Southwoods Park
August 27	10:00 a.m.	Butterflies	Chichaqua Longhouse
August 31	7:30 a.m.	Western Iowa Wonders Bus Tour*	Manning & Audubon, Iowa

Jester Park Equestrian Center Calendar

Summer Riding Camps

- June 14-16 ~ Beginning Western**
- June 21-23 ~ Beginning Western**
- June 28-30 ~ Beginning Western**
- July 12-14 ~ Beginning Western**
- July 19-21 ~ Intermediate Western or English**
- July 26-28 ~ Beginning Western**
- August 2-4 ~ Beginning Western**
- August 9-11 ~ Intermediate Western or English**

Mother/Daughter Camp

May 7, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Celebrate Mother’s Day weekend on horseback! Learn all about horses together: safety, grooming, saddling, basic riding skills, horse drawn wagon ride and much more. Register by calling (515) 999-2818. *Fee: \$100 per couple.*

Julie Goodnight Horsemanship Clinic

June 18-19, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. each day

Call 1-800-225-8827 to register. Sign up online at <http://juliegoodnight.com/clinicreg.html>.

Fee: \$450 to ride; \$25 to audit.

All camps are from 9:00 a.m. - noon. Equestrian camps are a wonderful way for a child to discover the world of horses. Beginning western camps cover an introduction to the horse, safety, horse care, grooming, saddling, and basic riding skills. Intermediate camps are for the more experienced rider. Campers must be able to tack their own horse, ride independently, and trot comfortably on a loose rein. Horse and equipment are provided. Children should wear jeans and sturdy shoes.

Cost for all camps is \$130 per child. Campers must be at least 8 years old. Register early as space is limited. Register for these camps on www.mycountyparks.com.



Jester Park Equestrian Center
 11171 NW 103 Court
 Granger, IA 50109
 (515) 999-2818
www.jesterparkec.com

Polk County Conservation
11407 NW Jester Park Dr.
Granger, IA 50109

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(Older, Wiser, Livelier, Seniors)



Looking for an excuse to get out of the house, make some new friends, enjoy a good meal and learn about the exciting world of nature? Then join us! These programs are held the first Tuesday of each month. The nature program will start at 11:00 a.m. at the Jester Park Lodge. An optional luncheon follows the program at noon in which pre-registration is required. The cost of the catered lunch is \$8.00. Lunch registration is due the Friday before the program.

Iowa Spaces, Places, Faces

May 3

Carson Ode of Des Moines is a freelance artist and writer who had a dream of producing a comprehensive book on Iowa while taking advantage of the complementary talents of his science-oriented wife Connie. They spent the year 2008 researching all 99 counties and compiling the material into a glossy, 412-page, hard cover book with 1,400 color photos and an information-laden text. The book has become an Iowa best seller and is in a second printing.

More About Bonnie and Clyde

June 7

Rod Stanley with Dallas County Conservation will share the Bonnie and Clyde's story, starting after the famous shootout north of Dexter. They had less than a year to live and made at least six trips back to Iowa and robbed a bank in Stuart, Iowa. Rod has several eye witness accounts of people who saw the outlaws as well as a slideshow of pictures that trace the last year of their lives.

Lovina Benedict

July 5

Jeanne Lillig will relate the story of Lovina Benedict, a Quaker, who moved to Iowa in the 1850's. Mrs. Benedict had a passion for helping women of ill-repute. With the support of the WCTU (Woman's Christian Temperance Union) she raised funds to purchase a house for wayward women in Des Moines in 1882. She also lobbied legislature making it illegal to operate or inhabit a home of ill fame.

Stephens State Forest

Past and Present

August 2

Bill Schaefer is a retired photography professor from Grand View University. Bill built a cabin on land adjoining his beloved Stephens State Forest. During his program, he will share photos and history of Stephens Forest.

**To register for lunch go to
www.mycountyparks.com**