



The Maple Leaf

November 2022

Maplewood State Park
39721 Park Entrance Rd
Pelican Rapids, MN 56572
218-863-8383

Don Del Greco, Park Manager
Kristina Somes, Asst. Park Manager

Upcoming Events:

Feb. 25 – Candlelight Ski
April TBA – Maple Syrup Day

Advisory Committee

Scott Stenshoel **chairperson**
Stephanie Stenshoel **volunteer asst.**
Angie Stevenson **secretary**
Kay & Denny Albright
Susan Anderson, **Facebook**
Lynn Carlson, **membership**
Don & Bonnie Del Greco
Carol & Sanford Emery
Judith Engebretson **treasurer**
Kathy Eastlack
Bob & Kathy Hanson
Terry Heller
Ruth & Van Holmgren
Ruth Holt
Wendy Koski, **membership**
Diane & Dave Knopf
Phyllis & Cliff Knutson
Bob & Karen Kreiser
Denise & Brian Laymon
Bonnie & John Nordstrom **treasurer**
Larry & Judy Olson
Jerry Pederson
Stu Peterson
Wayne Runningen
Mary & Chuck Sorum
Becky Thompson

The **MISSION** of the Friends of Maplewood State Park is to support and encourage the Park's recreational, interpretive, educational and environmental activities through leadership, volunteerism, program development, and fund raising.

ANNUAL MEETING August 30, 2022

About 50 people gathered for the Friends of Maplewood Annual Meeting. It was recognized that 14 years ago, that day, the Josh Hanson Memorial Picnic Shelter was dedicated to his memory. It was 16 years ago that Josh was killed in action serving his country in Iraq. Many people pause at the flag and read the plaque below, and then take a moment to remember all the men and women who have died in service to their country.

There was a lengthy report on the trail project that will pass through Maplewood going from Pelican Rapids to Perham. Representative Jordan Rasmussen reported on the how this portion of the trail will be funded and Shawn Donais talked about the route the trail will follow through Maplewood. This plan is still on the drawing board.

Other discussions were about the new shower building, new land parcels donated to Maplewood, membership, Facebook, Sugar Shack plans, Leaf Days, and future activities. Information on those topics can be found in this edition of The Maple Leaf.

Friends of Maplewood WEBSITE

friendsofmaplewood.org

MAPLE SYRUP SEASON

The trees have produced sap every year without taking a break, but the volunteers were sidelined due to Covid. It was good to protect our volunteers and not take chances of exposing them to Covid. But 2022 found us able to tap and then finally, even have maple syrup education gatherings. The decision was made to not fire up the evaporator because we were not going to tap as many trees, so not as much sap would be collected. Instead, we used the outdoor boiler. The fruits of their labor was not enough maple syrup to be bottled and sold, so it was just given away to the volunteers.

On Saturday, April 9th, we had our Maple Syrup Demonstration Day. A steady flow of people came to Maplewood to experience maple syrup and learn about the maple syrup process. It was fun to be back volunteering at Maplewood.

Our school education plan ran into snow, cold, and muddy areas. We eventually cancelled them all but decided to reschedule them at a later date. The result was all 3 school groups, Rossman DL 4th graders, Underwood 6th graders, and Frazee 4th graders. who were scheduled, came to Maplewood on May 6th. The weather was beautiful, the snow and mud were gone, and they were able to learn and have fun and not fight the cold and snow. They all had lunch, ice cream topped with maple syrup, and hiking up Hallaway Hill. 200 kids spent the day enjoying the great outdoors, and spent half the day rotating through 5 stations learning about maple syrup. It might become a yearly plan to wait until later in the spring. The only thing they miss is the smell of boiling sap as we would just boil water. Otherwise our education about maple syrup is the same.

MAPLE SYRUP PROGRAM

The maple syrup program of setting up tap lines, collecting the sap, boiling the sap, and cleaning out the equipment is at a point where we aren't sure that it will continue to happen. Bob Hanson and Lorin Abel have led this program since it began in 2010. They are ready to cut back on the number of days they need to be there. **So we need a volunteer or volunteers to step forward and guide the maple syrup program forward.** No experience is necessary as there will be plenty of on the job training. Bob and Lorin aren't going to disappear and are anxious to mentor and share their experiences with new leaders for the maple syrup program. The Friends of Maplewood put a huge effort into building the sugar shack and installing state-of-the-art equipment (2016) for education and demonstration. Covid set us back for three seasons, and now is time for new blood to take the program to the next level.

The Friends of Maplewood has good volunteers to help with all aspects of the syrup project and some new ones who are ready to learn. What we need are a few key people who can be there during the week and not just on weekends or days off. Would this fit into your schedule? The season usually runs for 3-4 weeks in March/April, plus some post-season clean-up. It is not a lifetime job so one year or two is just fine. At any rate if you have any interest or just want to volunteer a day or two, give me a call or text or email. **We do need your help.** Thanks.

John Nordstrom: 218-841-7673 nordlake7@hotmail.com

We have a couple of other problems that we are working on solving. One is dry firewood and a place to store it close to the Sugar Shack. The other is hot water at the Sugar Shack to assist us in cleaning the equipment properly. Both of these solutions would help the volunteers a lot and make their job easier and less time consuming.

LEAF DAYS

It was good to have Leaf Days again. Only one weekend as we were afraid to jump in with two weekends after 3 years off. The Friends were a little rusty and struggled to remember where things had been stored and how to do everything. And even though we had rain on Saturday and wind on Sunday, our volunteers were the best. Maplewood visitors that weekend had lots of fun with our planned activities.

Our food sales netted us a profit of about \$1200, although our purpose is to have food available for visitors and provide them with some fun activities besides just being able to view the beautiful leaves and take a good healthy hike.

Maplewood State Park had some sunny warm fall weather for the leaf viewers in October and the colors were just fabulous. Lots of cars full of people came to see what nature can do in the fall.

Maplewood Fall Color Update

The 2022 fall color season lingered into October providing extended viewing even with high winds and chilly temperatures. This year, we saw our biggest park visitation the weekend of October 8th and 9th, and warm weather and beautiful colors even brought out over 2,000 visitors on a Wednesday!

2022 Fall Color Weekend Park Visitation Numbers:

Saturday September 24 – 1,149

Saturday October 1 – 2,467

Sunday September 25 – 1,338

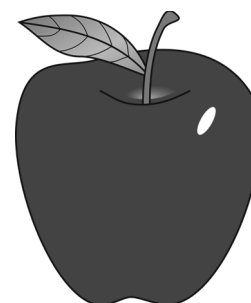
Sunday October 2 – 2,710

Saturday October 8 – 4768

Wednesday October 5 – 2243

Sunday October 9 – 3664

Many thanks to the Gottenborg Apple Orchard in Audubon, Minnesota for providing the apples to use in our apple press. The apples are so tasty and the juice produced is enjoyed by all the visitors. You might want to remember to visit Gottenborg's Apple Orchard next fall to pick up some of those wonderful apples. Many different varieties available.



Dear Friends of Maplewood,

First things first- thank you! The last couple of years have been long and challenging. It was great seeing everybody who attended the Annual Meeting and jumped right into planning for Leaf Days 2022.

Regarding Leaf Days, thank you to all who volunteered and worked so hard to put on a great event! A special thank you to John and Bonnie Nordstrom and to Van and Ruth Holmgren who arrived incredibly early on Friday morning to move all the Leaf Days supplies and equipment to the Hanson Memorial Shelter.

In November, we are planning to hold a small gathering with Stu Peterson to learn how to operate and maintain the evaporator at the Sugar Shack. Please contact the park office and leave your information if you are interested in learning and volunteering to make maple syrup next spring.

We will also soon be looking for volunteers to help with the Candlelight Ski event on February 25th, 2023. If you'd like to add your name to the list, please call or email me at 701.793.8213 or sastenshoel@gmail.com.

Best regards, Scott Stenshoel. Chairperson, Friends of Maplewood

NOTES

MEMORIALS

Remember the Friends of Maplewood when you are giving a memorial. All donations are used to improve Maplewood State Park. Mail them to the Friends group and a thank you receipt will be sent to you.

IN MEMORY OF

GIVEN BY

Truman & Phyllis Strand	Steve & Chelsea Strand
Merilyn Fischer	Rod Mittelsteadt
Fred Berg	Cliff & Phyllis Knutson
Norbert Benke	Brian & Denise Laymon
Orville & Mabel Flatin	Dotty Egge
Evar, Laura, & Glenn Fladmark	
	Robert & Mary Bowers
Edward L. Colman	Thomas Colman
Joan McMillen	Jon & Bonnie McGregor
Scott King	Marlo & Sheri Meester
Jerri Baker	Ron Baker/Jane Roberts
Herb & Eileen Kohler	Sue Kohler
Marilyn Stenger	Nancy & Duane Palibicki

Following people MEMORIAL for Bill Stutsman

John & Bonnie Nordstrom	PR School District
Orlean & Pat Rudie	Glenn & Colleen Moerke
Everett & Deb Ballard	Jim & Kristen Bullis
Bonnie Thorfinnson	Helen Miller
John McMillen	Cleo & Duane Bohne
Betty Frosilie	Stanley & Robyn Kitson
Milo & Marge Larson	Dennis Draeger
Hal Stutsman	Kirk & Janet Lindberg
Pat & Dave Huseby	

Sandy Irely	Richard & Andrea Billany
Sandy Irely	Helen Miller
Chet Nettetstad Sr, Shirley	Nettetstad, Arthur Christianson
	Mike & Sheri Nettetstad
Steve Fladmark	Ralph & Sandra Carpenter
Steve Fladmark	Bob & Mary (Fladmark) Bowers
Connie Michealson	Paul & Connie Miller
Mary Elizabeth Martineau	Elizabeth & Jeremy Moore

IN HONOR OF

GIVEN BY

Grandkids & Great Grandkids	Erv & Iris Ohman
Our Family	Orlean & Pat Rudie
Cleo King	Marlo & Sheri Meester
Park Staff	Davis Scott

LIFETIME MEMBERS

We now have 77 Lifetime members.

Clifford & Phyllis Knutson

Steve & Barb Backstrom

Richard & Patricia Dubord

Brian & Denise Laymon

THRIVENT CHOICE

If you are a member of Thrivent, you can direct your Choice dollars to the Friends of Maplewood State Park. We appreciate your donation.

We received \$242.

Kathryn Mary Anderson Carol Ann Emery

Bonnie Nordstrom Gregory Wayne Slotto

MONEY DONATIONS

Lisa & Dennis Ouren

Robert & Lynda Backman

Joan Ellison

Dewey & Donna Walkup

Ann Westby

Don & Sue Kunelius

Pamela Hovland & Steve Lawrence

Don & Diane Westrum

Kim Haugrud

Richard Vogt & Rlberta Reed

Stu & Corinne Peterson

Geo & Hazel Retzlaff

Dong & Sue Bruggeman

Marilyn Folden

Vance & Katie Nichelson

Tom & Sharon Hintgen

Thomas Colman

Mary Jane Zeini

Jan A. Rolfson



Heart of the Lakes Trail Ottertail County Regional Trail - Maplewood State Park Segment

Developing and designing a sustainable trail through the heart of Maplewood State Park is a tremendous opportunity to create an outstanding outdoor recreational experience for future generations. As is typical with trail design, the greatest challenge has been determining the best route that both provides an enjoyable recreation experience & minimizes natural resource impacts to this treasured natural landscape.

Currently, Otter Tail County has funding available to for the landscape design, environmental & archeology review, & planning processes. Additional funding will be required for construction.

For more than a year, Ottertail County and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff have worked with an engineering consultant to explore and evaluate several potential trail alignments through the park. Designing a trail route through a state park landscape requires significant research and analysis. The proposed route will be required to meet state and federal regulations to ensure the protection and preservation of Maplewood's bountiful & rich natural resource features. Considerations must be made for wetland protection, tall-grass prairie restorations, wildlife habitats, old-growth hardwood forest, archeological and cultural features, and glacial features. Additionally, a sustainable design includes safety design considerations in hilly topography, with consideration for the various trail user groups such as horse riders, hikers, and auto tourists.

In essence, selecting the best trail corridor may be likened to "the threading of a needle." We will be weaving a trail corridor through remarkable natural resources, preserving the balance of stewardship and protection of those resources while providing for safe, accessible and enriching outdoor experiences for future generations.

Progress is being made, and several proposed routes have been proposed and evaluated. We look forward to providing additional updates and information as we approach the next phase of trail development through Maplewood State Park.

We are working together to discover the best and most sustainable pathway through Maplewood State Park; a pathway that welcomes visitors to explore the wonder and beauty of Maplewood State Park.

TREASURERS REPORT

Bell Bank checking account	\$49,376.20
Park & Trails Account	\$13,732.03
TOTAL	\$63,108/23

THE RANGER REPORT



2022 PARK MANAGER Don Del Greco

Land Acquisition/Stewardship Updates: In recent years 3 new land acquisitions have been added to Maplewood State Park. Maplewood's total acreage is now at 9,482 acres. Each new acquisition requires an ongoing series of cultural (archeological), natural and recreational reviews. These parcels provide abundant habitat for diverse wildlife species, geological features, deep hardwood forests, open grasslands and prairies, sparkling lakes, ponds and wetlands. Being good stewards of and providing for the preservation of these precious lands will provide the opportunity for future generations to discover new places to experience the wonder & beauty of Maplewood State Park.

South Lida - Lestina Island Acquisition: (2015) - The 14.75 acre island on South Lida Lake was purchased from Dale and Bonita Lestina, longtime landowners and faithful stewards of this property. The island is a remarkable parcel will be preserved as part of Maplewood State Park. Research & evaluation of this unique & treasured parcel is in process.

Fladmark Land Acquisition: (2019) - We are also thankful to the Fladmark-Bowers family for their faithful stewardship of this land and for their gracious consideration to provide the opportunity for this land sale to the State of Minnesota. This magnificent 80 acre parcel will provide future generations of park visitor's opportunities to enjoy this treasured parcel.

Fahrlander land Acquisition: (2022) - This 137 acre acquisition occurred in 2022 and is a beautiful parcel along the north-central boundary of the park. We are thankful to the Fahrlander/Poling family for making this parcel available for sale to the State of MN/Maplewood State Park.

Hallaway Hill Trail visitor comments/quotes:

· Proud Mom & Dad - October 23, 2022) "We just hiked the Hallaway Hill trail with our 1 month old son Rowan!" It is his first official hike on this good earth and he made it to the "top of the Hill" with just a little help from his parents.

· Action Track Chair visitor: (October 11, 2022) "Wonderful! Giving independence to thoroughly enjoy nature on a glorious day."

· Handwritten note from an elderly couple regarding their recent hike on the new Hallaway Hill Trail: "The Trail is wonderful, thanks for making it possible for 79 year old Hazel and 82 year old George to climb it." (August 15, 2019)

Minnesota State Park's Mission: 'Our vision is to create unforgettable park, trail and water recreation experiences that inspire people to pass along the love for the outdoors to current and future generations.'

Purchase a vehicle permit today and get a year of unlimited visits to all of Minnesota's state parks & recreation areas.

Quote from a family during the pandemic: 'We have lived in the area all our lives and we needed a place to go this spring during the pandemic and we found Maplewood. It is now our favorite refuge to come as a family.'

Thank you for your kind, gracious and faithful support of Maplewood State Park throughout the seasons and in future years to come.



Maplewood Shower Building Update



In addition to the normal hustle and bustle of hikers, campers, horse riders, and other park users, Maplewood visitors also saw quite a bit of construction traffic during the 2022 season. The much-anticipated new shower building construction began in June and progress towards completion of the project is made each day.

The new shower building boasts five independent showers (three of which are ADA compliant), two family assist restrooms also complete with showers, and new men's and women's restrooms with four stalls and four sinks each, a welcome improvement from the previous building.

Other improvements include a new informational kiosk and paving of the center loop of the main campground to allow for additional shower building parking and campground overflow parking.

The grand opening of the building is scheduled for spring 2023 and we appreciate the patience of our campers throughout the construction season. We are thrilled and look forward to having a wonderful new facility for park users this spring.



Action Track Chair Update

Maplewood was one of five Minnesota State Parks selected to receive an Action Trackchair to offer to park users with limited mobility. We were overjoyed to be able to pilot our Action Trackchair to a handful of users this fall. From late September through early October, seven individuals reserved and took the chair up to the top of Hallaway Hill. We are delighted to report that all conveyed a positive experience following the use of the chair and look forward to using it again.

We asked users to provide comments on a feedback form following their experience and below are just a few of the comments received:

“Something I enjoyed, couldn't have without this machine.”

“Wonderful! Giving independence to thoroughly enjoy nature on a glorious day.”

“It was great!”

“Big fan of the accessibility in nature and scenic views.”

There is no cost to use the Action Trackchair but it is currently available by reservation only and the Hallaway Hill trail is the only designated Trackchair trail. We look forward to continuing to offer this experience to users of limited mobility and will begin taking reservations again in the spring.

EDITOR THOUGHTS

This is my 23rd year of putting together the Friends of Maplewood newsletter. It might have only been 2 pages the first year, but it quickly grew in size. When Covid came there wasn't much news to share so the newsletter kind of died. Instead of two issues a year, we were down to just one issue. I use email to send out notification of events, but the Friends need a newsletter that has the possibility of getting to all members and also visitors at Maplewood. It is our only method of reminding people to join and pay their membership dues.

Other than the articles I receive from the Park Rangers at Maplewood, I write, type, assemble, put together the pages, address, and mail all the newsletters. Yes I know there might be easier ways of doing it all, but much of that technology isn't in my vocabulary. That's why I'm writing this as the Newsletter needs a new editor. The old one has ancient ideas and over these past 23 years is getting tired. How do we track memberships? How do we keep all those addresses up to date? How do we keep the email address lists up to date? How do we make it easier to assemble the newsletter? How do we get people to write articles about events at Maplewood? Who takes pictures that might be used in the newsletters?

I'll be the first to admit that I enjoy having a purpose in life and I enjoy writing and editing. But I'll also tell you I'm getting tired of the newsletter and it gets put off for longer and longer times. For instance, today is November 7th and I just started. My goal was to have it in the mail by November 1st. Yes it is another volunteer activity for which we need help. If you might be interested

Contact: John Nordstrom 218-841-7673 nordlake7@hotmail.com

As someone who sees all the incoming mail, it is always fun to read what some people send in along with their dues or donations. Here are a couple the Friends received this fall.

Thanks much for the recap. I was so happy that Leaf Days had returned and delighted once again by the exhibits and demonstrations (although unhappy not to be able to get my bottle of syrup). I'm always impressed by how friendly, welcoming, interesting, and talented the exhibitors are. Keep up the great work!

A special treat this year was the appearance of the new vehicle DNR is placing in state parks...and the opportunity of trying it out. Climbing Hallaway Hill had been a favorite activity of mine for over 50 years. I decided during my last time to the top several years ago (on the old trail when I was nearly 90) would probably indeed be my last time. But I'm motivated to try again, now that the new trail is available AND marvelous vehicular back-up is also available should I need it.

By the way, I'm definitely interested in the possible project of producing greeting cards for sale. And I'm sure hoping the Maple syrup demonstration event can be held next spring.

Thanks to the Maplewood Friends and Park Staff for a great day at the park. Dave Scott, Mhd

Hey John,

We drove up just to hike Maplewood and we loved it.

We're from SE Minnesota and although we might be kinda biased (Whitewater, Frontenac, Great River Bluffs, Beaver Creek Valley to name a few), you also have a beautiful park. We also hiked Glendalough as well. You live in a beautiful area and we're happy to support Maplewood.

Have a great day and greetings from your friends in SE Minnesota. Jon & Judy

(From members who moved to Colorado) We loved camping there when we were back this summer. It was like being at home. Colorado has a lot of state and national parks, but nothing compares to Maplewood.

MEMBERSHIP

Yes, it is the beginning of our 2023 membership drive. Our numbers the last couple of years have been down due to Covid and also not sending out a newsletter. But so far this year we have had 24 people renew their memberships for 2023 and 6 new memberships. Enclosed find a membership blank for 2023. Take the time to send in your dues and help support the Friends of Maplewood.

Another interesting fact is that we also have seen in the past few years a real increase in donations and memorials from our members, both when they renew their memberships or just send them in as a memorial. During the 2022 year we received the following:

Memorials - \$1825 Donations - \$900 Thrivent - \$242

Bill Stutsman was the elementary Principal when I started teaching in Pelican Rapids. He and Monica moved to Florida to live close to one of their children and enjoy warm weather. They always remained members of the Friends of Maplewood. When Bill died this past year, in the obituary they requested memorials be given to the Friends of Maplewood and included our address. \$926 were given in memorials. Thank you Stutsmans for thinking of the Friends of Maplewood.

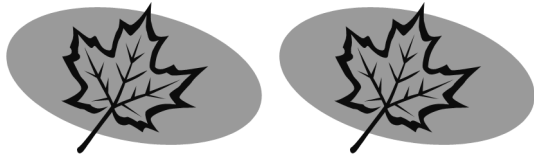
Memorials and Donations are always appreciated. 59 people sent in a memorial or donation this past year to help support the Friends of Maplewood. Thanks.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Next summer will find the Friends of Maplewood sponsoring some summer activities. During each month of the summer we'll have a musical group entertaining during our Music at Maplewood evenings. Some of the previous years we have sponsored meditation classes, art classes, fly fishing, edible plants, and photography in nature class. A couple of other suggestions have been yoga at Maplewood and also archery. Do you have a suggestion for a class? Do you know of someone who might teach a class? Do you have a talent you'd like to share?

Contact John Nordstrom: 218-841-7673 or nordlake7@hotmail.com

We hope to have a summer full of activities for all visitors to Maplewood. Come on Friends members. Let's share those ideas you have for Maplewood.



Friends of Maplewood
Box 259
Pelican Rapids, MN 56572
Address Service Requested

CANDLELIGHT SKI

SATURDAY, February 25th

6:00-8:00

Our Candlelight Ski will again become a reality in 2023. It will be held on Saturday, February 25th. We'll have the chili hot and ready to serve by 5:00. The candles will be lit from 6:00 until 8:00.

This event increased in size before Covid hit. What a great time to get outside in the winter and enjoy the night sky. The 1 mile ski trail will be lighted with 150 candles. This evening **ONLY**, walkers, snowshoers, and skiers will share the trail. So if you don't ski, you can walk, snowshoe or stand around the campfire, chat with friends, and enjoy hot chili, smores, bars, and hot drinks. Maplewood State Park has 12 sets of snowshoes that you can try out. No skis are available.

Remember, if you come to go skiing, you do need a Ski Pass if 16 or older. \$10.00 daily ski passes are available at the Park or a 1 year ski pass (\$25) can be purchased. Of course, Minnesota Park Stickers are required on all vehicles. Questions can be answered at Maplewood State Park, 218-863-8383.