



# Annual Report

July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

## Mission Statement

The Friends of Jackson County Conservation brings people together through educational and recreational opportunities in partnership with the Jackson County Conservation Board and inspires people to understand and care for our environment.

## Brief History

Friends of Jackson County Conservation is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that was created in 1999 to help with fund raising for the building of the Hurstville Interpretive Center. It has since expanded its fund raising efforts and other projects to support all aspects of the conservation department.

## Board Members

Board Members can serve two 3-year terms. Board members during the 2017-18 FY were:

Jeremy Meyer, Chair

Julie Reuter, Vice Chair

Wendy Hainstock, Treasurer

Sandy Walton, Secretary

Clayton Pederson, At Large

Kathi Atkinson, Board Rep

Jessica Wagner, Staff Rep

## Membership

A mailing was done in January to encourage more membership renewals. Over \$2,400 was brought in for membership during the fiscal year.

## Prairie Creek Pavilion

This was our big project this fiscal year and the previous two fiscal years. Most of the fundraising was done in previous fiscal years and was wrapping up. Construction began in May 2017 and the Pavilion was completed in November 2017. A grand opening was held Saturday, November 18, 2017 with 65 people in attendance. The Pavilion was built at a total cost of \$168,152.26. Friends raised all the funds needed to build the Pavilion!



*The Prairie Creek Pavilion was completed in November 2017!*

## Projects/Programs

- Little Free Libraries – field guides and nature related fiction and non-fiction books were purchased and placed in Little Free Libraries throughout the county by Friends members. A few books were placed every several weeks over the spring, summer and fall of 2018. Our goal was to put more field guides and nature books into kids' hands to encourage them to explore outside.
- Sponsored the summer naturalist intern position.
- Continued support of the trumpeter swan reintroduction program and live education animals at the Hurstville Center.
- Continued to hold a native plant sale to encourage people to grow native species in their gardens.
- Naturalists created a local phenology calendar that was sold in the gift shop for \$10.

## Bus Scholarship

Each year Friends allocates up to \$1,000 to help fund the cost of transportation for student field trips related to

environmental education. Funds were given to Bellevue 5<sup>th</sup> graders to go to Whitewater Canyon, Dubuque Jefferson 6<sup>th</sup> graders to go to Maquoketa Caves State Park and Maquoketa 7<sup>th</sup> graders to go to Isle Royale National Park.

### Sustainability Committee

The Sustainability Committee focused its efforts toward raising awareness and motivating Jackson County residents and businesses to behave more sustainably. The Committee's efforts included outreach or partnerships with businesses, other not-for profit organizations, students, and everyday consumers:

- Performed outreach to local restaurants encouraging less use of plastic straws and Styrofoam take-out containers,
- Conducted outreach to select organizations (e.g., JC Historical Society) to encourage use of reusable tableware rather than single use plastic tableware at their fundraising and organization meetings,
- Created and branded "Sustainabration" tableware and saw the tableware successfully utilized at JC Historical Society meeting,
- Encouraged and supported research by Preston HS class to evaluate decomposition of "compostable" tableware; research demonstrated the efficacy of compostable tableware as a substitute for consumable plastic tableware,
- Developed a survey for individuals to assess the extent to which they behave sustainably across their home, travel, shopping, and consumption practices; saw the survey applied to Delmar middle school age students,
- Created and contributed newsletter articles promoting behaviors that enable sustainability.

### Endowment

We participated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Great Give Day in May sponsored by the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque. Donations on GGD go to our endowment fund. We started the fiscal year with \$48,112.82 in our endowment fund (agency & donor accounts) and ended the fiscal year with \$57,485.35. We increased our endowment fund by more than \$9,000 through great give day contributions, other donor contributions, interest and Friends annual contribution of \$1,000.

### Fundraisers

- Friends began the Codfish Hollow Fundraiser in the summer of 2017. Friends' members and volunteers provided food for the band members at Codfish Hollow. All funds raised in 2017 were put towards the pavilion. We continued doing food for Codfish in 2018. Friends member Mary Hayward coordinated the effort.
- A raffle was held late summer/early fall of 2017. Tickets were sold to win \$300 cash, a bicycle or canoe.
- Dinner in the Diner was held October 15, 2017 to raise funds for the pavilion. Friends members made dishes for a dinner following a program sponsored by Humanities Iowa – Grass Between the Rails by Denny Rehder. 60 people were in attendance for the program and dinner. Thrivent Financial sponsored a silent auction in conjunction with the event to raise additional dollars.

### Gift Shop

Friends continues to maintain the gift shop at the Hurstville Interpretive Center. It is stocked with local wine, honey and handmade items as well as nature toys, story books, field guides, t-shirts, and many other items that relate to nature. The gift shop brought in over \$3,000 in revenue this fiscal year.

### Programs

- Friends supported public and youth programs and events at the Hurstville Interpretive Center and throughout the county, including: day camps, OWL event, bug house workshop, jelly class, soap class, basket weaving workshops and Dubuque bald eagle watch.
- Friends sponsored outside speakers, including: Denny Rehder (Grass Between the Rails in October, 2017) and Eulenspiegel Puppets (August 2017).
- Friends of Jackson County Conservation & Jackson County Conservation served over 12,000 people through environmental education programs and events.

### Awards/Grants

- Jackson County Area Tourism Assoc. awarded us \$500 to develop a paddling guide of the Maquoketa River.
- Maquoketa Education Association granted us \$500 towards a pollinator garden at Prairie Creek Recreation Area. Volunteers helped plant flowers in the cul-de-sac near the Pavilion in May.