



Seasons

Marshall County Conservation Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 37, Issue 1

Spring 2022



New Opportunities

By Mike Stegmann, Director



Marshall County Conservation Board (MCCB) was organized on July 1, 1958. During the preceding month, the citizens of Marshall County were asked a question on the primary election

ballot: "Shall a County Conservation Board be established and financed by a tax of up to 1 mill?" The voters said yes. The Code of Iowa states the purpose as, "To acquire, develop, maintain and make available to the inhabitants of the county, public museums, parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreation centers, county forests, wildlife and other conservation areas, and to promote and preserve the health and general welfare of the people, to encourage the orderly development and conservation of natural resources, and to cultivate good citizenship by providing adequate programs of public recreation."

Over the past 50 years, MCCB has focused on traditional public outdoor recreation needs such as camping, picnicking, canoeing, boating, wildlife observation, public hunting, fishing, hiking, bicycling, and family time for quiet relaxing activities. As new opportunities present themselves, the staff and board review each opportunity to see if they coincide with the overall operations, goals and budget. If the project meets all the objectives, MCCB then moves forward with the project.

Over the years, some of these opportunities have not panned out for one reason or another. Others have been much needed and have exploded with opportunity. Marietta Sand Prairie, for example, started out as a 17 acre state preserve with a remnant prairie. This complex has now grown to 229 acres of land that had the lowest CSR rating of any crop ground in the county. It was decided to convert it back to what grows best there, prairie, and let wildlife resume its inhabitation of the land. Additionally, it allows people to visit this unique ecosystem.

Not to leave any out, but other areas like Green Castle, Sand Lake, Grimes Farm and Grammer Grove have become

cornerstones of the county as destinations for many outdoor recreation pursuits. Many times these parks are featured on the front of brochures and visitor guides to entice visitors to our county and towns.

However, relatively few of these picturesque parks make up the total land percentage in Marshall County. Marshall County is comprised of 366,720 acres. Between state and local government there is 3,104 acres (0.9%) open for public use. This equates to roughly .06/acre for each person to recreate on. MCCB is proud to be the major provider for outdoor recreation in the county.

Within a recent short period of time MCCB has been presented several opportunities to improve its operations including: campground construction and improvements, storm damage repairs, and expansion of current areas. In the last issue of Seasons Newsletter, I spoke about expansion of Sand Lake, thanks to the American Rescue Plan Act Funds, these projects are on their way to fruition.

One of these amazing opportunities recently presented to MCCB was the acquisition of natural occurring wetlands just south of Albion. The proposed Mann Wetlands is 215 acres of mixed grassland, wetland and forest habitats, which all lie within the floodplain of the Iowa River. MCCB's Timmons Grove County Park, encompassing 216 acres, lies to the west of the Mann Wetlands and is bordered on the south by the Iowa River. Once the property is acquired, two public parking areas will be constructed by MCCB off Iowa Highway 330 on the west and north boundaries of the property. Protection and restoration of the Mann Wetlands acquisition will provide much needed wetlands for Marshall County with room for wildlife, recreation and education. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, public outdoor spaces across the state are experiencing increased use, making it hard to overstate the need for more public land. Acquisition of this area will provide additional acres in Marshall County, close to a population center, relieving stress from other heavily used public areas. The area will be posted as a natural area where public hunting will be allowed.



Continued on next page

New Opportunities Cont.

Fundraising for this large project is underway with over 1/3 of the funds raised. Multiple partners have banded together to financially assist this project including the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Pheasants Forever, National Wild Turkey Federation, Friends of Marshall County Conservation, and the Marshalltown Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism. Additional local grants and donations are being sought to finalize the project by the end of the year. If you have interest in more information or protecting natural lands in Marshall County and want to contribute to this project, **donations can be made to MCCB, 2349 233rd Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158.**

Congrats to the Photo Contest Winners!

Native Wildlife

1st Place Lori Sogge
Honorable Mention Gary Pusillo
Honorable Mention Gary Pusillo

Outdoor Recreation

1st Place Jennifer Cook
Honorable Mention Lori Sogge
Honorable Mention Sarabeth Soria

Scenic

1st Place Walt Huffaker
Honorable Mention Linda Eastman
Honorable Mention Andy Spellman

Youth

1st Place Kody Carver

Native Plants

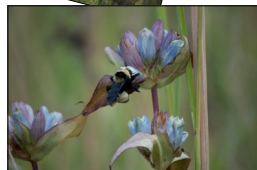
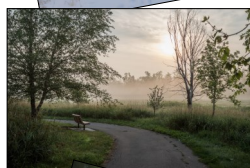
1st Place Lori Sogge
Honorable Mention Andy Spellman
Honorable Mention Ed Siems

Open Nature

1st Place Linda Eastman
Honorable Mention Gary Pusillo
Honorable Mention Andy Spellman

Peoples' Choice

1st Place Gary Pusillo
Honorable Mention Lori Sogge
Honorable Mention Kelly Gerke



Summer

C

Crickets

June 13 - 15 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

June 21 - 23 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

GrimesFarm and Conservation Center
Ages 4 to out of Kindergarten
& accompanying adult

Let's play! Crickets camp is all about nature play and will have kiddos and adults having hands-on outdoor fun!

Fee: \$20

Registration Deadline: May 27



A

Acorns and Asters

June 28 - 30 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

GrimesFarm and Conservation Center
Out of 1st or 2nd Grade

All about aquatic fun! Kids will spend their time getting muddy and wet, while learning about the watery world around them.

Fee: \$25

Registration Deadline: June 10



M

Muskrats

July 12 - 14 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Izaak Walton League
Out of 3rd and 4th Grades

Ever want to travel back in time? Join us as we learn about fossil, prehistoric creatures, Native Americans, and pioneers of Iowa.

Fee: \$35

Registration Deadline: June 24



P

Praying Mantis (Uncle Ike's)

July 7 - 8 3:00 p.m. - 9:00 a.m. (overnight)

Izaak Walton League
Out of 5th and 6th Grade

Ready for a camp out? Come learn how to cook over the fire and pitch a tent, all while learning the basics of survival.

Fee: \$45

Registration Deadline: June 17



How to Register:

Register online by following this link: <https://rb.gy/8rqra2> or taking a picture of this QR Code with your smart phone.

Once registered, send payment to Marshall County Conservation at 2349 233rd Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158, or by calling or stopping out at the center to pay via credit card.



Friends of Marshall County Conservation

Live & Local

Live Music & Local Food Trucks

Leonard Grimes Memorial Amphitheater
at the Grimes Farm Conservation Center
5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

June 23



**Fat Tuesday & The
Grease Fire Horns**

July 21



Kaizer Jazz

August 18



**Bob Dorr & Friends
Feat. Jeff Petersen**

September 15



**The Dueling
Fiddles**

October 6



**William Elliott
Whitmore**

In case of inclement
weather watch the
Marshall County Friends
Facebook Page for location
change or cancellation.

Thank You to Our Sponsors

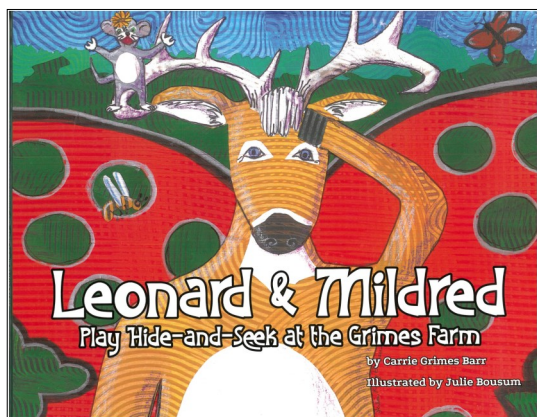
Ann C. Keyser Charitable Trust & supportive members of the Friends
of Marshall County Conservation.

SPRING

Nature Story Hour

Nature Story Hour will continue to be held through the spring months via Facebook Live, instead of in-person at the Conservation Center at Grimes Farm. The program will include a story book, education program about the topic, and a suggested activity or craft to do as a family. Each session will last about 20 minutes and viewers can type in questions to ask the naturalist about the topic of that day. Log into Facebook on the following days and times to learn about fun nature topics and listen to a great book!

March 3 10:00 a.m. - Nature ABC
 March 17 10:00 a.m. - Packs
 April 7 10:00 a.m. - Clouds
 April 21 10:00 a.m. - Baby Mammals
 May 5 10:00 a.m. - Worms
 May 19 10:00 a.m. - Salamanders
 June 2 10:00 a.m. - Ants
 June 16 10:00 a.m. - Endangered Species



A new children's book has been put together that introduces six main sites of the Grimes Farm with an adventurous white-tailed deer and a deer mouse. An interactive map guides readers along the trails with Leonard & Mildred as they play hide-and-seek. Books are available at \$15.00 and can be purchased at the Grimes Farm office (check and cash only), McGregor's, Hellberg's, Strand Paint, Clark and Family Dentistry, Lillie Mae's and Lowe's. Families will enjoy visiting the special sites of the Grimes Farm and taking a 1 ½ mile walk while reading the book.

Iowa Taxidermy Show

Saturday, March 26 12:00 - 5:00 p.m.
 Meskwaki Convention Center
 1504 305th Street, Tama, IA 52339

View amazing bird, mammal, reptile, and fish mounts from taxidermists across the Midwest.



Brown Bag Bunch

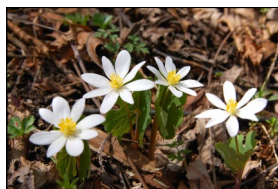
March Brown Bag - Rain Barrel Take and Make
Registration Deadline March 18
Kit Pick up Week of March 28
Fee - \$35.00



Did you know that rain barrels help you save money, conserve water, reduce runoff and erosion, promote plant and soil health, and with this take and make kit, they are easy to make? What is not to love! Marshall County Conservation will have limited Rain Barrel Kits available for this March's Brown Bag. Supplies include all the materials you need to create a rain barrel, as well as construction instructions and tips. You will need to be able to transport the large barrel from the nature center to your home, as well as a way to connect it to your down spout. Start this spring off right by helping the environment and your garden with this fun Brown Bag. Pre-registration and payment of \$35 are required by March 18 before 4:00 p.m. to secure a limited number of kits. Register by calling the Conservation Center at 641-752-5490, emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov, or text only 641-752-9777. Pick up of supplies will be the week of March 28 during the hours of 8:30 to 4:00 p.m.

Brown Bag - Spring Ephemeral Walk

Tuesday, April 19 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Iowa River Wildlife Management Area
2503 Sand Road, Marshalltown
Registration: Deadline - April 15
Fee - Free



Join us April 19 at Iowa River Wildlife Area for a walk to learn about spring ephemerals. Ephemeral means "lasting a short time" and is a common term for the wildflowers that bloom in Iowa's spring woodlands. We will explore

Grammer Grove and enjoy these short blossomed spring beauties. Participants can bring a sack lunch to enjoy before or after the program. **Register by calling 641-752-5490, email mccb@marshallcountytia.gov, or text only 641-758-9777 by April 15.**

Warbler Walk

Saturday, May 14 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Grammer Grove
2030 127th Street, Liscomb
Registration: Deadline - May 13
Fee - Free



Migration in spring time can be some of the most fascinating times for birders. Join MCCB Director Mike Stegmann for a walk through Grammer Grove from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Bring a sack lunch to eat at the upper shelter then a short walk to discover Neotropical migrating birds as they find their way back from wintering grounds in South America. **Register by calling 641-752-5490, email mccb@marshallcountytia.gov, or text only 641-758-9777 by May 13.**

Plant a Prairie Plant - Take and Make

Registration Deadline March 18
Kit Pick up Week of March 28
Fee - \$10.00

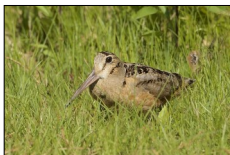
Celebrate National Plant a Plant Day with us! This take and make activity kit provides you with the supplies you will need to start and grow seven different types of prairie flowers, including Wild Bergamot, Purple Prairie Clover, Silky Blue Aster and more. These flowers can then be transplanted to create a wonderful pollinator flowerbed in your yard. Supplies include: plant trays, seeds and instructions. If you can find a grow lamp, your plants will benefit greatly. **Pre-registration and payment of \$10 are required by March 18 before 4:00 p.m. to secure a limited number of kits. Register by calling the Conservation Center at 641-752-5490, emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov, or text only 641-752-9777. Pick up of supplies will be the week of March 28 during the hours of 8:30 to 4:00 p.m.**



Woodcock Walk

Tuesday, March 29 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Marietta Sand Prairie - 1744 Knapp Avenue, Albion

Join MCCB Director Mike Stegmann in an attempt to find and view American Woodcock males performing their courtship flight. Also known as Timberdoodles, these shorebirds are frequently found in upland and forested areas. Please meet in the main parking lot on Knapp Avenue for a short walk into the prairie. Bring a folding chair to sit and watch.



Prairie Burn

An evening during the week of April 11th
Exact date TBD 7:30 p.m.
Grimes Farm - 2359 233rd Street, Marshalltown

Come watch prairie management in action. Spectacular views are expected as the fire lights up the night sky. The exact date for this program is dependent on weather conditions and will be determined on short notice. Listen to KDAO and KFJB and watch our Facebook page for updates. **Call our office at (641) 752-5490 or email mccb@marshallcountytia.gov to be put on the notification list.**



FREE FISHING DAYS JUNE 3, 4, & 5

The Iowa DNR is once again offering a free fishing weekend for Iowa residents June 3-5. No fishing license is required, but all size and catch limits apply.

Happy Earth Day!

Want to do something that helps the planet, is delicious, and benefits Marshall County Conservation for Earth Day? Again this year we will be offering a free ice cream cone gift certificate to every participant that helps us clean up the county conservation parks! So grab some family and friends and head out to one of the 32 Marshall County Conservation Parks and collect as much garbage as you can. Before you leave the park, take a picture of your group with the trash bags by the park sign. Then bring the trash and your picture to the Grimes Farm Conservation Center Monday, April 25 through Friday, April 29 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. to receive your gift certificate.



Mother's Day Terrariums

Wednesday, May 4 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Grimes Farm Sugar Shack
(Red Building south of Nature Center)
Registration: Deadline - April 22
Fee - \$30.00

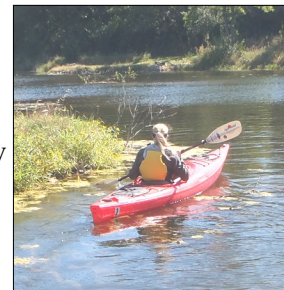


Looking for the perfect Mother's Day gift? Here is fun activity for sons and daughters of all ages. Marshall County Conservation will be hosting a succulent terrarium making class on Wednesday, May 4 starting at 5:30 p.m. and running for about an hour. Participants will receive all the materials to create and take home a geometrical shaped terrarium to give to their mother or keep for themselves (no one is judging). This programming is open to all ages, but youth under the age of 16 must have an adult present to help with the project. **Participants must pre-register and pay the \$30 registration fee before April 22 at 4:00 p.m. to reserve limited spots. To register call (641)752-5490.**

Kayaking

Wednesday, May 25 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Green Castle Recreation Area
2891 Green Castle Road, Gilman
Registration: Deadline - May 19
Fee - Free

Join us as we explore Green Castle with kayaks. This family friendly event is to encourage participants to learn the basics of kayaking and how to be safe on Iowa's waters. There is no fee for this program, however you must pre-register to reserve limited spots. **To register contact Grimes Farm and Conservation Center by calling 641-752-5490, email mccb@marshallcountytia.gov or text only 641-758-9777.**



SEASONS

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Marshalltown, IA 50158
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Newsletter Editing

Bren Lee

Playscape Table

Jenny Bledsoe

If we inadvertently missed *someone*, our thanks to you also.



Help us keep costs down and save resources. If you would like to receive the newsletter electronically rather than having it mailed, please email mccb@marshallcountyia.gov Also the electronic version is in color!

MARSHALL COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

2349 - 233rd Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158
(641) 752-5490

mccb@marshallcountyia.gov

www.marshallcountyia.gov/501/conservation

Administration Office Hours

Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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