



Seasons

Marshall County Conservation Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 37, Issue 4

Winter 2023



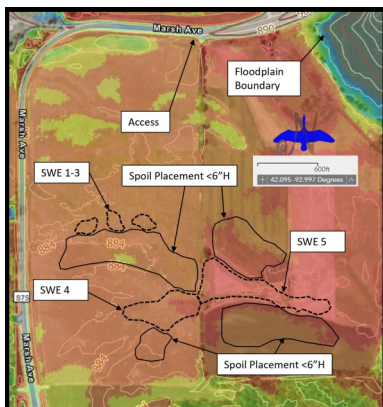
How Did This Happen By Emily Herring, Director

“How did this happen?!?” comes out of my mouth fairly often as a mom of a 5-year-old boy who pretends to be a dinosaur most of the time. Usually, the question is related to something that has gotten broken, or tears are involved. And often, his reply is, “I don’t know.” Even though we all know, he knows. It is comical how often I ask myself that question in my personal life. However, I’m grateful to say in my professional realm, I do not ask that question very often, except with the Mann Wetlands.

You may recall that I spoke about the Mann Wetlands in my first director’s article in the Seasons Newsletter. Marshall County Conservation (MCC) had recently acquired the land from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF), and we were excited to start planning the wetland restoration work.

In my mind, this restoration project would require several months of planning and design, years of fundraising for a project I was told could cost up to \$290,000, and by the time I retired in 15 years, there would be a beautiful wetland full of life for everyone to see just south of Albion on Highway 330.

Today, just eight months later, I sit at my desk and ask myself, “How did this happen?!?” Yesterday, I watched a bulldozer dig new shallow wetlands, which we hope to have seeded with wet prairie species by the end of the year. All of which were paid by donations and crop lease payments from the property. Never in a million years would I have thought this to be possible. For this to happen, all the key players and pieces fell into the exact right places, at the exact right time.



So... How did this happen?!?! As a Naturalist in my previous life, I did not know much about wetland restoration, and I was not afraid to say so. On a call with INHF Senior Land Protection Director & Counsel Ross Baxter, I did not hesitate to ask what I needed to do next to restore the wetlands that once dotted the property. He replied, “Let me reach out

to some guys I know.” And he did. He contacted Andrew DiAllesandro, Iowa Private Lands State Coordinator with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (U.S. FWS), and Darrick

Weissenfluh, Private Land Biologist with the U.S. FWS.

We all met at Mann Wetlands this spring. In my mind, we were there to discuss a design for the area, the first

step needed to return it to its former glory. But Ross, Andrew, and Darrick were thinking much bigger! As I listened to their plan unravel, I realized they were talking about utilizing different grant sources, matching funding, thinking outside the box, and formulating a plan to not only design the wetland complex but also make the restoration happen.

The plan they came up with included the FWS designing the wetland at no cost to us. INHF had enough seed money from a grant to plant half of the property. FWS could seed a majority of the other half with grant funds. Marshall Tama Pheasants Forever donated five acres of seed to match another grant. Prairie Partners with the Iowa DNR would help chip in as well. MCC would only need to add \$15,000 to finish the entire seeding of 159 acres.

Regarding dirt work, the U.S. FWS had grant money to help cover the operator's cost for a few days. They had a bulldozer nearby at Neil Smith Wildlife Refuge. If MCC could cover the gas and transportation of the dozer to the site, we could make these wetlands happen. And it is. Yesterday, we walked through future shallow wetlands on the Mann property.

So, “How did this happen?!?!” It started with a family that wanted their land available for everyone to use, some hard work to secure REAP Funding, a request for help, and an amazing group of people dedicated to providing habitat for wildlife, improving water quality, and improving Iowa’s natural areas came together and found a solution.

Never underestimate the power of passionate people!



Welcome Ben Steinberg!

Welcome, Ben Steinberg, Marshall County's newest Conservation Technician. Ben graduated from Hawkeye Community College with a degree in Natural Resources. He then went on to get his bachelor's in Wildlife Ecology at Iowa State University. Ben has previous experience working for Marshalltown Parks and Recreation and for Iowa State University. Being from the Marshall County area, he is familiar with our parks and looks forward to maintaining them and completing projects in the future to help serve and benefit the community.



In his free time, Ben loves to spend time with his wife, son, and two dogs, especially enjoying the outdoors with them. Hunting and working on outdoor projects are his two favorite hobbies, and he almost always spends every weekend doing one or the other. If you can't find him outdoors, you will find him inside working on a home improvement project his wife probably convinced him needed to be done.

Looking for a gift for that
hard-to-shop-for person???

Congrats, Tyler Renze!

For those of you who may not know me, my name is Tyler Renze, and I have been in the position of Maintenance Technician since the fall of 2014. I have recently taken up the newly created position of Natural Resource Manager.



As a Natural Resource Manager, I will manage the green infrastructure in our parks. This will include forest management techniques, prairie management, invasive species removal, and more. I am excited to spend time working in Marshall County's areas, enhancing habitat for our native wildlife.

Pick up a Marshall County Conservation Parks Atlas at the Grimes Farm. The Atlas includes a county wide maps of all our areas and colored maps



of all individual 35 parks. Atlases are \$10.00 and can be preordered by calling 641-752-5490.

A SCARY SUCCESS!!!

We would like to thank all of our supporters for the 2023 Park Apocalypse. Without your support, the event would not have been possible. Thank you!

DONORS

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Our apologies if we inadvertently missed someone.

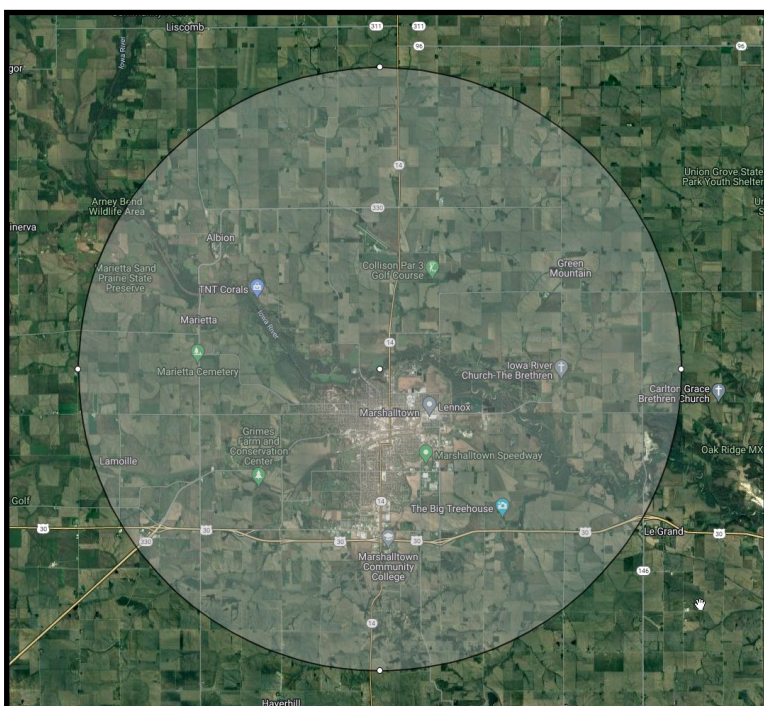
VOLUNTEERS



Christmas Bird Count

Tuesday, December 19 All Day
Throughout Marshall County Christmas Bird Area
(See Below Image)
Registration Fee: FREE
Deadline: December 15 by 4:00 p.m.

For 124 years, the Audubon Society has held Christmas Bird Counts across the United States. Data gathered from these counts are used to understand bird populations. During the Christmas Bird Count, groups are assigned an area that covers a 15-mile radius - the group records as many different birds and their numbers. The species and numbers are then compiled, sent to the Audubon Society, and documented. The count must happen around Christmas, and groups must pick a specific day for 24 hours to record birds. The date we have selected is December 19. We have multiple bird experts and have divided the quadrant into sections. There are a few ways to join and volunteer for birding for a day. 1. If you are an expert, you can help lead a group. 2. Even if you don't know birds, you can join an expert and learn your birds along the way. 3. If you have bird feeders at your home, you can watch and record the birds that come to your feeders. You do not have to dedicate 24 hours. You can give as much time as you want. **If you are interested in joining us for the bird count on December 19, please get in touch with Emily Herring at 641-752-5490 or eherring@marshallcountytia.gov by December 15 at 4:00 p.m. The map below shows you the regions we will be covering. This includes the towns of Marshalltown, Albion, Green Mountain, and Laurel.**



Brown Bag Bunch

Winter Preparation

Tuesday, December 5 at 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
GrimesFarm and Conservation Center
Registration Fee: FREE
Deadline: November 30 by 4:00 p.m.

It's that time of year again for animals to get ready for winter. Join us at the Grimes Farm Conservation Center as the naturalist discusses how animals prepare for the cold and where animals go in the wintertime. **There is no fee for this program. However, preregistration is required by November 30 before 4:00 p.m. Register by calling 641-752-5490, emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov, or texting only 641-758-9777.**



Ty Smedes presents Mongolia- Land of the Nomads

Wednesday, January 17 at 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
GrimesFarm and Conservation Center
Registration Fee: FREE
Deadline: January 12 by 4:00 p.m.

Sandwiched between Russia, China, and Kazakhstan, is Mongolia- a beautiful country noted for its nomadic people and culture. These nomads, who are superb horsemen, celebrate a time-honored tradition of hunting with trained Golden Eagles from horseback, for fox and hare. Join nature photographer and world traveler Ty Smedes as he narrates a slide presentation exploring the Mongolian countryside, while experiencing the rich culture as a guest of local nomadic people. We'll also journey far to the south of the country, to explore the Flaming Cliffs, and renowned Gobi Desert, where seemingly endless sand dunes and the Bactrian Camel herders reign. **There is no fee for this program. However, preregistration is required by January 12 before 4:00 p.m. Register by calling 641-752-5490, emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov, or texting only 641-758-9777.**



Iowa Bird Rehabilitation

Thursday, February 29 at 11:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.
GrimesFarm and Conservation Center
Registration Fee: FREE
Deadline: February 23rd by 4:00 p.m.

Iowa Bird Rehabilitation (IBR) is a wildlife rehabilitation center located in Iowa where we provide care for songbirds, waterfowl, gamebirds, shorebirds, and small raptors. IBR was founded in 2012 and was formally established as a non-profit in 2018. Iowa Bird Rehabilitation's goal is to recover, rehabilitate and release orphaned and injured wild birds in the state of Iowa. In this program, IBR staff will talk about their organizations, goals, volunteer opportunities, and what to do if you find an injured bird in need! **There is no fee for this program. However, preregistration is required by February 23rd before 4:00 p.m. Register by calling 641-752-5490, emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov, or texting only 641-758-9777.**



Nature Adventures

Hibernation

Wednesday, December 13 at 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

GrimesFarm and Conservation Center

Registration Fee: FREE

Deadline: December 6 by 4:00 p.m.

Join us at the Grimes Farm Conservation Center for a nature program delivered in a flexible format specially designed for kindergarten through third-grade students. We will explore the theme of Hibernation and discuss why some animals sleep all winter long, and others do not. Programs will engage students with a story, craft, or activity and an outdoor fun component. **There is no fee for this program. However, preregistration is required by December 6 before 4:00 p.m. Register by calling 641-752-5490, emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov, or texting only 641-758-9777.**



Owls

Wednesday, January 31 at 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

GrimesFarm and Conservation Center

Registration Fee: FREE

Deadline: January 26th by 4:00 p.m.

Join us at the Grimes Farm Conservation Center for a nature program delivered in a flexible format specially designed for kindergarten through third-grade students. We will explore the theme of owl adaptations and different species that call Iowa home. Programs will engage students with a story, craft, or activity and an outdoor fun component. **There is no fee for this program. However, preregistration is required by January 26 before 4:00 p.m. Register by calling 641-752-5490, emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov, or texting only 641-758-9777.**



Herpetology

Wednesday, February 21 at 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

GrimesFarm and Conservation Center

Registration Fee: FREE

Deadline: February 16th by 4:00 p.m.

Join us at the Grimes Farm Conservation Center for a nature program delivered in a flexible format specially designed for kindergarten through third-grade students. We will explore the theme of herpetology, which is the study of amphibians and reptiles. Programs will engage students with a story, craft, or activity and an outdoor fun component. **There is no fee for this program. However, preregistration is required by February 16 before 4:00 p.m. Register by calling 641-752-5490, emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov, or texting only 641-758-9777.**



Annual Photo Contest

Deadline: January 31 at midnight.

- **All entries must be emailed to mccb@marshallcountytia.gov titled Photo Contest by **Wednesday, January 31** at midnight.** In the body of your email, state the category for the photograph(s), your name, address, a brief description of the photo, and phone number. No photos will be accepted in person. Do not compress photos in email.
- Photographs will be judged the week of February 5 for the categories listed below.
- Categories: Scenic (Natural Resources), Native Wildlife, Native Plants, Open Nature, and Outdoor Recreation. Winners of each category will receive a \$25 gift certificate. For more information on the categories, <https://www.marshallcountytia.gov/510/Annual-Photo-Contest>
- All photographs received will be posted on Facebook from February 5 through February 11. The photograph that gets the most likes for Peoples' Choice will win a \$25 gift certificate.
- All certificates will be mailed to winners.



Winter Cardinal Needle-Felting Workshop

Saturday, January 20 at 12:30 - 3:00 p.m.

GrimesFarm and Conservation Center

Registration Fee: \$50

Deadline: January 12th by 4:00 p.m.

Learn the art of needle-felting! Create beautiful felted wool art confidently, as you learn needle-felting techniques step-by-step in a casual, relaxed environment. Choose from a variety of colors and get as creative as you wish! All tools and supplies will be provided for use during the workshop, including a 4" embroidery hoop for framing your work. Additional supplies will be available for purchase. Because of the use of sharp needles, this workshop is recommended for kids aged ten and up, with adult assistance required. Led by fiber artist Megan Hammer, www.meganhammer.com. **There is a \$50 fee for this program. Preregistration is required by January 12 before 4:00 p.m. Register by calling 641-752-5490, emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov, or texting only 641-758-9777.**



Nature Pop Art

Tuesday, February 13 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
GrimesFarm Conservation Center
Registration Fee: \$25
Deadline: February 8 by 4:00 p.m.

Join us for this fun all-ages nature art activity! Using a scraper technique and a frame you will learn how to create a one-of-a-kind masterpiece with a 3D effect.

The cost for this program is \$25. Preregistration is required by February 8 before 4:00 p.m. for limited spots. Register by calling 641-752-5490, emailing mccb@marshallcountvia.gov, or texting only 641-758-9777.



Shoes and Soup

Thursday, February 1 at 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
GrimesFarm Conservation Center
Registration Fee: \$12/person
Deadline: January 26 by 4:00 p.m.

Bundle up and join naturalist Emma Bruck as we brave the cold and spend the evening snowshoeing the trails of Grimes Farm. The full moon will illuminate the winter trails as we explore and take in the peaceful beauty that winter has to offer. The evening will consist of a brief snowshoeing tutorial, followed by time to explore Grimes Farm independently. Complete the evening with a warm bowl of soup at the conservation center. Participants must weigh 40 lbs. or more, and anyone under the age of 18 must have an accompanying adult. Registration fee includes snowshoes, instruction, and soup supper. Participants must pre-register and pay a \$12.00 registration fee before January 26 at 4:00 p.m. to reserve limited spots. To register, call 641-752-5490, email mccb@marshallcountvia.gov, or texting only 641-758-9777.



Herbal Soap from Scratch

Thursday, February 29 at 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
GrimesFarm Conservation Center
Registration Fee: \$35.00
Deadline: February 23 by 4:00 p.m.

Explore the art and science of making handcrafted soap from scratch with Ann Staudt of Siberian Soap Co.! Using the centuries-old cold-process soapmaking technique, students will combine plant-based oils and lye to create soaps that are mild, moisturizing, and eco-friendly. This workshop is very hands-on, with each participant making and taking home 1 pound (4-5 full-size bars) of their own custom batch of herbal handcrafted soap. Long sleeves, long pants, and closed-toe shoes are required of all participants. Please bring an old towel or blanket to insulate your finished soap. Open to age 16+; younger students must have advance permission from the instructor. Pre-registration and payment of \$40.00 are required to secure limited spots by February 23 before 4:00 p.m. Register by calling the Conservation Center at 641-752-5490, mccb@marshallcountvia.gov, or texting only 641-758-9777.



Trees to Table Pancake Feed

Saturday, March 2
7:00 - 10:00 a.m.

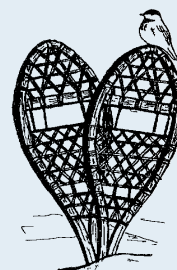
GrimesFarm &
Conservation Center

Join Marshall County Conservation as we celebrate maple sugaring season with a pancake fundraiser. Come to learn about the making of syrup and enjoy a stack of flap jacks topped with real maple syrup. From trees at Grammer Grove to the tables of the Conservation Center, this sweet treat cannot be beaten. Ticket includes: Three pancakes, two sausage links, locally harvested maple syrup, and a drink.

Tickets can be purchased at the GrimesFarm and Conservation Center \$6.00 in advance or \$7.00 at the door. Any questions, please call (641) 752-5490.

Snowshoe Rental

Chase away the winter blues by getting outside! The Marshall County Conservation Board has snowshoes for rent at \$5 a day plus a \$50 deposit per set. A waiver of liability must be signed. The deposit will be returned when the equipment is returned in good condition within 72 hours. The Marshall County Conservation Board offers many trails where snowshoes are allowed including: Grimes Farm, Green Castle, Timmons Grove, and Grammer Grove. During Marshall County Conservation Board sponsored events, the equipment will be available for use at no charge.



SEASONS

Marshall County Conservation Board
2349 - 233rd Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158

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Zombie Run

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Donations

Jim Nusbaum Memorial, Dick Warden Memorial, MHS Class of 1973, Iowa Valley Bicycle Club, MHS Class of 2003

Monarch Tagging

Dena Graff, Jack & Linda Mackin

Newsletter Collation

Kathy Sievers, Irene & Gary Williams, Dianne Freiboth, Charlotte McGinty, Jack Mackin, Kayann Lowry, Marvis Drew, Joyce & Rob Christensen, Dianna Mick

Newsletter Editing

Bren Lee

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

MARSHALL COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

2349 - 233rd Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158

(641) 752-5490

mccb@marshallcountyyia.gov

www.marshallcountyyia.gov

Office Hours

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

Nature Center Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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Naturalist

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Natural Resource Manager

Conservation Technician

Conservation Technician

Administrative Assistant

Our offices will be closed for Holidays and Trainings:

December 25, January 1 and 15, February 19