

November 2009



FRIENDS OF WILDERNESS PARK

The Friends of Wilderness Park (FWP) is a non-profit group dedicated to protecting the floodplains, the environmentally sensitive areas that lie in and around these floodplains, and the rich history associated with them that is a part of Lincoln and Lancaster County's past.

As a non-profit group, FWP relies solely on memberships, donations, and fund raising events. Any contribution of time or money, no matter how small it may be, will help FWP achieve these goals. We strive to make Lincoln a better place to live today and in the future.

Consider a membership with FWP so our children and our children's children may enjoy the wide open spaces that are a part of our Lincoln, NE heritage. Cut and mail the membership coupon form included in this newsletter or contact an FWP member. Corporate donations are greatly appreciated. Editorial, news and current event submissions for the newsletter are welcome.

Please submit newsletter inputs to the Editor no later than the 25th of the month for the following month. FWP reserves the right to include, reject and edit any submissions. Please include your name, address and phone number with submission. Contact Editor for advertising information. Editor: Mike Carlin, 2700 West Paddock Rd., Lincoln, NE 68523, 420-9092, mcarlin@neb.rr.com.

FWP Website:
<http://www.friendsofwildernesspark.net>

FWP Board of Directors

President:	Mary Roseberry-Brown, 477-8282
Vice President:	Rosina Paolini
Treasurer:	Roxanne Mares
Co-Secretaries:	Janine Copple, Adam Hintz , Dan Lutz
Board Members:	Dick Boyd, Buffalo Bruce, Mike Carlin, Foster Collins, Tom McCormick

November Meeting

November is Native American History month and the Friends of Wilderness Park are honored to announce that Rob Bozell, Associate Director of the Archeology Laboratory of Augustana College in Sioux Falls, S.D., is scheduled to speak at our general meeting in November. Bozell, who oversees the cultural resource management program at Augustana will speak about the pre-European Native Americans of Eastern Nebraska. The meeting and presentation is Sunday, November 15th, at 3:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Church, 6300 "A" Street.

Bozell received his BA and MA degrees in anthropology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Before joining the staff at Augustana College, he was archeologist and Associate Director of the Nebraska State Historical Society from 1984 until 2006. His major research interests include late prehistoric-historic culture change, subsistence strategies, paleoecological reconstruction, cultural resource management and public archaeology. Throughout his career he has been involved in program management and budgeting, coordination of numerous archeological research efforts, and working with Native American tribes through state and federal compliance and education initiatives. He has worked extensively at sites in the Missouri River/lower Platte River valley and in the Omaha metropolitan area. Last year and again this past summer Rozell led a team that mapped prehistoric Native American burial mounds in South Dakota.

With November being Native American History month this is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the Native Americans that lived in Eastern Nebraska, including the area we now know as Wilderness Park, before European settlers came to the area.

The meeting and presentation are free and open to the public. Feel free to bring friends and/or young people who you would like to share this experience with. Refreshments will be provided.

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting will be held immediately prior to Rob Bozell's program. The meeting will be short and will include election of board members. If you are not a member or have let your membership lapse (it's so easy to let it slip by), please fill out the membership form on the back of this newsletter and either mail it in or bring it to the meeting. You must be a current member in order to vote.

There will not be a general meeting in December.

November Meeting

3 PM, Sunday, Nov 15

Unitarian Church

6300 "A" Street



Weekly Wilderness Walkabout

With the hustle and bustle of our everyday lives, we sometimes forget that we are inseparable from the natural community around us. You are invited to join us in reconnecting with one of Lincoln's true living beauties, Wilderness Park. Adam Hintz (Friends of Wilderness Park) will guide you through an hour-long hike of giant trees, tiny insects, cackling creeks and fluttering birds. Hikes will be held every Sunday afternoon at 2 P.M. Hikes are for the experienced and inexperienced hiker alike. There is no charge for the hikes and all ages are encouraged to participate. Meet at the concrete arches at First and Calvert and dress for the weather.

Red Oak Forest Update

Wilderness Park is still involved in negotiations regarding the red oak forest parcel adjacent to Wilderness Park. Following is part of a statement about this land written by Dr. Robert Kaul, Professor Emeritus of Botany and Curator of Botany in the State Museum at the University of Nebraska. "These adjacent parcels are in excellent, near-pristine biological condition and represent the Park's native biota at its best.

Of unusual interest are the many red oak trees, including what is probably the largest tree of its species in the state—about four feet in diameter and perhaps 250 years old. This is the only stand of red oak in Lancaster County (the nearest other stands are on the bluffs of the Missouri River). Of note too is the fact that these oaks are reproducing, as evidenced by the numerous saplings and young trees of various ages. While much of Wilderness Park has large bur oaks, including some of great age, these proposed additional parcels have the only red oaks. The largest red and bur oaks were there long before Lincoln was settled, and it is a wonder that they weren't cut by early settlers, whose search for wood was in what was then an essentially treeless county. There is rich undergrowth of native vegetation, with very few weedy, non-native species. Even the dreaded and invasive white mulberry, so common at the Park's edges and openings, is barely evident in these parcels—a sign of a healthy ecosystem. In fact, healthy ecosystems are remarkably resistant to invasive species, and these parcels exemplify that.

With a healthy, robust diversity of native plants comes the greatest diversity of native birds and mammals and the fewest invasive, non-native ones. Some native species, such as red-breasted grosbeak and tufted titmouse, are very specific in their requirements for breeding habitat, and these parcels are prime examples of those requirements. Invasive birds, such as English sparrows and starlings, that out compete native species are not found in such places. With the city literally at the edge of the proposed additions, the time is perfect to obtain and maintain these parcels as part of Lincoln's natural heritage."

Wachiska Audubon Bird Count

The Lincoln Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday, December 19. Field counters and feeder counters are both welcome. In case the count is postponed due to inclement weather, counters will be notified. Call Linda Brown at 489-2381 for information and to get an assigned area or to register as a feeder counter in your yard. After the count Bruce Mellberg and April Stevenson will host a potluck supper at their home, so we can compare field notes and the day's adventures. For more information, contact:

Mary Bomberger Brown petrochelidon@hotmail.com;
Linda Brown, lindar1brown@gmail.com;
or the Wachiska office, 486-4846.

Watch the newspaper for details on all the events that will be part of **America Recycles Day** on November 14.

LPSNRD District Director Opening

It has recently been announced that the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District is seeking applicants to replace director Jason Hayes of Lincoln who resigned from the board as a representative from Subdistrict 10. The applicant must live in Subdistrict 10, which covers roughly the area between A Street and Pine Lake Road and from 1st to 33rd streets in Lincoln. The appointment will run through the end of 2010, and you could run for reelection if you chose to at that time. Application letters are due by **November 20**, and the current board will fill the vacancy in December. For more information, visit the NRD's website at www.lpsnrd.org (click on Board & Staff). The NRD board deals with a host of natural resource issues in Lincoln and the surrounding area. Directors are reimbursed for mileage and receive a per diem for meetings attended.

DON'T FLUSH MEDICATIONS!

The Nebraska Medication Education for Disposal Strategies (MEDS) encourages individuals and families to properly dispose of left-over medications in the trash. **DO NOT FLUSH** medications down the toilet or drain. This can contaminate waterways. A 2002 USGS study, which included streams and groundwater samples from Nebraska, detailed very low concentrations of medications in 80% of waterways across the country. Nonprescription drugs were most frequently found, but prescription drugs such as antibiotics, hormones, and anti-depressants were also present. Here's what to do with your medications:

1. Place unwanted medication in a plastic bag and crush it or add water.
2. Mix in coffee grounds, cat litter, sawdust, or some other undesirable product (to discourage someone from removing and using the medication).
3. Place in the trash, as closely as possible to the time that trash pickup is likely.



Friends of Wilderness Park would like to prepare some material about Wilderness Park which would be useful to school teachers. We already have all the needed information. We just need to put it into an attractive, accessible format. Can you help out. Please call Janine at 435-5612 or Mary at 477-8282 if you can help

Have you ever thought of a speaker that you would like to hear or a topic you would like to hear about at our monthly meetings? We know there are a lot of very smart people with good ideas reading this newsletter; if you have any recommendations for speakers or topics, call Mary at 477-8282.

The City and several other agencies recently completed a study titled "*Evaluation of Storage Areas in the Salt Creek Watershed*" that stated "...*Wilderness Park provides valuable flood control benefits and should be preserved.*" The study can be viewed on the Watershed Management portion of the city's website under Projects: <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/pworks/watrshed>. A more detailed summary of the study will be provided in the next newsletter (I have to finish reading it first!).

The Friends of Wilderness Park Board meeting schedule has changed too! Starting in October, meetings will be held on the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

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Friends of Wilderness Park

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