



Seasons

Marshall County Conservation Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 38, Issue 1

Spring 2024



If You Build It...

By Emily Herring, Director

Over ten years ago, Marshall County Conservation started to pursue the idea of constructing a campground at Green Castle Recreation Area. Steps were taken to design the area, and an estimate of the campground's overall cost was obtained. Over the years, MCC completed small projects to prepare the area for a campground. Unfortunately, the funds were not available to move forward with the project. Not a week passed that we didn't get asked what was happening with Green Castle Campground.

Enter American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. These funds were given to each state, county, and city government to help rescue the local economy after the COVID-19 pandemic. Marshall County Conservation presented the Green Castle Campground as a possible project for ARPA funds, and the project was approved! We had money to build a much-needed campground.

Unfortunately, things don't always go as you plan. MCC put the project out to bid in February 2022, in which we received one bid that came in at almost \$350,000 over the estimated cost. With no other options, MCC declined the bid and began fundraising, again. Over the next few months, we wrote grants and requested donations. We secured a Community Foundation grant, donations from Lennox, additional county ARPA funds, and other donations from community members, but we still had a ways to go.

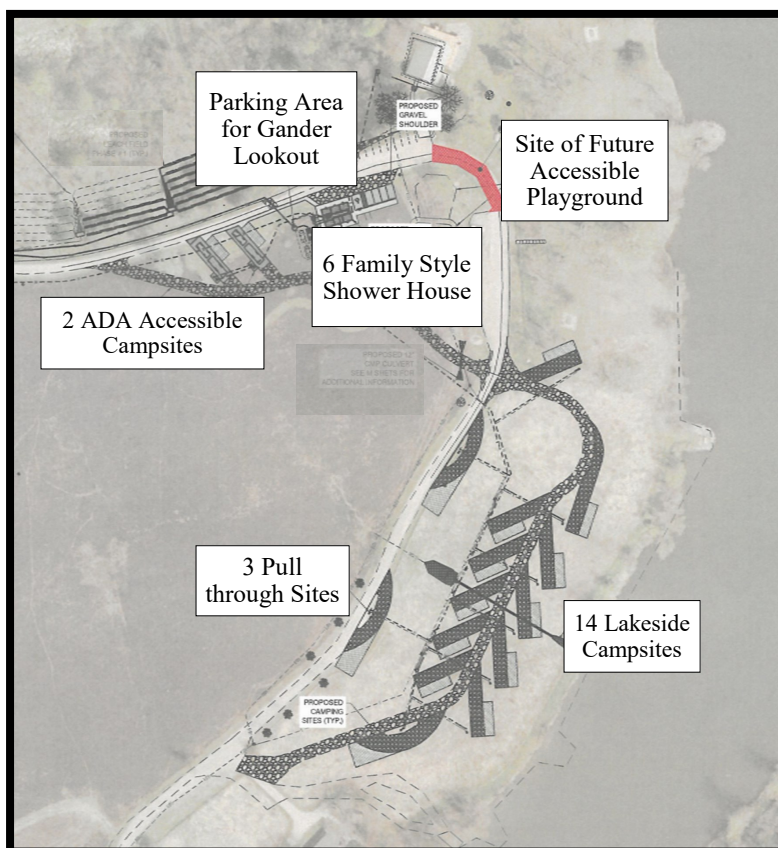
As a new director, my goal was to complete the fundraising for the Green Castle Campground by the end of 2023. I had a game plan, knew my work was cut out for me, and was determined to make this project happen. But things don't always go as you plan.

I was attending a conference for County Conservation Board Directors when a representative from an engineering firm approached me and said, "Congratulations!" I was not sure what she was congratulating me on, but I assumed it was my new role as Director. I think she saw the somewhat puzzled look on my face because she then stated, "for getting the Destination Iowa grant." Still confused, she pulled up the press release that had gone out that day announcing the most recent recipients of the Destination Iowa grant. There listed was \$400,000 to Marshall County Conservation Green Castle Campground. And just like that, we had our funds,

again, to build a campground.

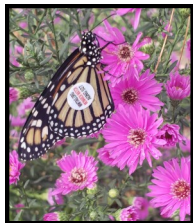
Over the next few months, we worked with engineers to update and finalize designs for Phase One of Green Castle Campground. In October of 2023, we put the project out to bid, which came back under bid and was granted to local contractor Weidner Construction. Construction will begin in April (maybe sooner with all this nice weather!)

Green Castle Recreation Area will remain open during the construction, we ask that you respect construction barriers. Once completed in October of this year, Green Castle Campground will have 16 campsites with water and electricity, a six-stall family-style shower house, and a dump station. We are still fundraising for an inclusive playground, which we hope to make happen this fall! If you would like to support this or any other projects, don't hesitate to get in touch with us. We will be excited to see you camping at Green Castle soon!



Planting for Monarchs

Have you ever wondered what you can do to help the monarchs? Per Monarch Watch.org, milkweed and nectar sources are declining due to development and the widespread use of herbicides in croplands, pastures, and roadsides. They also predict that this year will be the lowest EVER overwintering population of monarchs in Mexico.



When planting your gardens this year, consider host and nectar plants that can be added to your garden(s). Why are host and nectar plants important? Monarchs need host plants to lay their eggs and serve as a food source for growing caterpillars. Nectar plants are the source of nutrients and energy for adult monarchs.

Suggestions of plants (this is not a complete list):

Host plants

- Common milkweed (perennial)
- Butterfly milkweed (perennial)

Nectar plants

- Bee balm (perennial)
- Black-eyed Susan (perennial)
- Blazingstar/gayfeather (perennial)
- Catmint (perennial)
- Cleome (annual)
- Coreopsis (perennial)
- Cosmos (annual)
- Hollyhock (perennial)
- Ironweed (perennial)
- Joe-Pye Weed (perennial)
- Lantana (annual)
- Mallow (perennial)
- New England Aster (perennial)
- Phlox (perennial)
- Purple Coneflower (perennial)
- Sedum (perennial)
- Sweet William or Dianthus (annual)
- Verbena (annual)
- Zinnia (annual)

Spring is approaching, so it is never too early to start planning your garden plantings. Add some new and colorful plants to help the monarchs!

We will be hosting an early Fall/late Summer event on how to tag monarchs. Watch our Summer Newsletter for more details.

Helpful resources:

<https://www.blankparkzoo.com/conservation/plantgrowfly>
<https://www.monarchwatch.org/waystations/>



Volunteers Needed:

We need help maintaining and weeding the flowerbeds by the Nature Center at Grimes Farm. If interested, please get in touch with our offices at 641-752-5490 or mccb@marshallcountya.gov.

Congrats to the 2024 Photo Contest Winners!

Native Wildlife

1st Place Allison Wolken
Honorable Mention Gary Pusillo
Honorable Mention Walt Huffaker



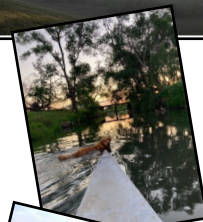
Scenic

1st Place Andy Spellman
Honorable Mention Libbie Willert
Honorable Mention Brandon Case



Outdoor Recreation

1st Place Maria Crow
Honorable Mention Walt Huffaker
Honorable Mention Allison Wolken



Youth

1st Place Sabrina Anderson
Honorable Mention: Sabrina Anderson



Native Plants

1st Place Andy Spellman
Honorable Mention Allison Wolken
Honorable Mention Nathan Wolken



Open Nature

1st Place Kathy Ross
Honorable Mention Nancy Sebern
Honorable Mention Tammy Backoff



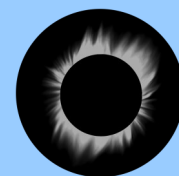
Peoples' Choice

1st Place John Ernst
Honorable Mention Mary Pusillo
Honorable Mention Allison Wolken



Amateur Astronomers of Central Iowa

Meetings will be held at the Masonic Temple;
for more information, call 641-751-4645.



The April 8 Total Eclipse of the Sun March 8 at 7:30 p.m.

What exactly is an eclipse? Can it be seen from Iowa?
Where is the best place to view it? How can I safely
view it? Come to get answers to these questions and more!

Features of the Moon April 12 at 7:30 p.m.

Learn to identify many of the prominent features of our
nearest neighbor in space. Why is it called a Quarter
Moon instead of a 'Half Moon'? Learn the names of the
dark patches as well as some of the bright features that
can be seen with the unaided eye as well as binoculars.



Marshall County Conservation

Trees to Table Pancake Feed



March 2, 2024

7:00 to 10:00 am

Grimes Farm & 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 beat.

Ticket includes: 3 pancakes, 2 sausage links, locally harvested maple syrup, & a drink.

Advanced Tickets

\$6.00

At the Door

*\$7.00**

**while supplies last*

*Tickets can be purchased at
the Grimes Farm and
Conservation Center*

Sponsored by Noon Kiwanis

Summer

C

Cricket

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

June 18 - 20 at 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

GrimesFarm and Conservation Center

Ages 4 to out of kindergarten

& accompanying adult

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

Fee: \$20

Registration Deadline: May 24



A

Acorns and Asters

June 25 - 27 at 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

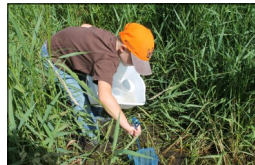
GrimesFarm and Conservation Center

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 7



M

Muskrats

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

Izaak Walton League

Out of 3rd and 4th Grades

A little dirt never hurt anyone! What better way than to spend your summer's day getting dirty, learning about rocks, and having fun while doing it!

Fee: \$35

Registration Deadline: June 28



P

Praying Mantis (Uncle Ike's)

July 23 - 24 at 3:00 p.m. - 9:00 a.m. (overnight)

Izaak Walton League

Out of 5th and 6th Grade

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

Fee: \$45

Registration Deadline: July 12



SUMMER SKILLS



Do you have a youth 10 to 15 years of age who is interested in increase their outdoor skills base? Join us for our newly created Summer Skills courses where they can learn to geocache, kayak, and outdoor survival skills! Sign up for one or all sessions!

Geocaching

Monday, July 8 at 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

GrimesFarm and Conservation Center

Ages: 10 - 15

Registration Fee: \$10

Registration Deadline: June 21

Summer is about having fun and getting outside. Join MCCB naturalists as they introduce your youth to geocaching. Geocaching is a high-tech scavenger hunt using a GPS handheld unit that will have your youth racing to find the hidden caches throughout the park. **Participants must pre-register by calling 641-752-5490 or emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov.**



Kayaking

Tuesday, July 30 at 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Green Castle Recreation Area, 2891 Green Castle Road, Gilman

Ages: 10 - 15

Registration Fee: \$10

Registration Deadline: July 18

MCCB naturalists will be introducing your youth to kayaking, a great outdoor activity that can be enjoyed for the rest of their lives. Participants will learn about types of kayaks, equipment, and techniques and practice their new skills on the water. **Participants must pre-register by calling 641-752-5490 or emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov.**



Survival

Monday, August 5 at 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Grammer Grove Wildlife Area, 2030 127th Street, Liscomb

Ages: 10 - 15

Registration Fee: \$10

Registration Deadline: July 19

Learning survival skills is great fun and essential to keeping you safe when exploring the outdoors. Join MCCB naturalists as they introduce your youth to basic survival skills, that will last them a lifetime. They will learn how to build a survival shelter, what to pack for a hike, and how safely start a fire. **Participants must pre-register by calling 641-752-5490 or emailing mccb@marshallcountytia.gov.**



How to Register for Summer Camp

Register online by following this link: <https://bit.ly/48UQENo> or by taking a picture of this QR Code with your smartphone. Once registered, send payment to Marshall County Conservation at 2349 233rd Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158, or call or stop at the center to pay via credit card.

SPRING

Nature Story Hour

Nature Story Hour is held the first and third Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. during the summer months at the Leonard Grimes Memorial Amphitheater at the Grimes Farm. In case of inclement weather, the program will be held inside the center. The program will start with local celebrities reading a storybook, an educational program by the naturalist about the topic, and an activity or craft. Each session will last about 30 - 40 minutes. Upcoming topics and guests include:

May 2 - Snake; Naturalist

May 16 - Fireflies; Naturalist

June 6 - Recycling; Jenn Clemann, Marshall County Landfill



Prairie Burn

An evening during the week of April 14th

Exact date TBD at 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. This program's exact date depends on weather conditions and will be determined on short notice. Listen to KDAO, KFJB, and watch our Facebook page for updates. Call our office at (641)752-5490 or email mccb@marshallcountvia.gov to be put on the notification list.



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 offer 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, head out to one of the 34 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 22 through Friday, April 26, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. to receive your gift certificate.



Brown Bag Bunch

To register for Brown Bags, call 641-752-5490, email mccb@marshallcountvia.gov, or text only 641-758-9777.

March (rescheduled from February)

Iowa Bird Rehabilitation

Thursday, March 14 at 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Grimes Farm and Conservation Center

Registration Fee: FREE

Registration Deadline: March 8

Iowa Bird Rehabilitation (IBR) is 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 organization, goals, volunteer opportunities, and what to do if you find an injured bird in need!



April

Iowa Ornithologists Union

Wednesday, April 10 at 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Grimes Farm and Conservation Center

Registration Fee: FREE

Registration Deadline: April 4

Iowa Ornithologist Union (IOU) was founded in 1923, bringing together a group of people interested in the study and enjoyment of birds. Join Mark Proescholdt, a member of over 40 years of the Iowa Ornithologist Union as he discusses his experience with IOU, birding opportunities in Marshall County, Iowa's Birds, and how to become involved with IOU!



May

Spring Stroll

Monday, May 6 at 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Grammer Grove Wildlife Area, 2030 127th Street, Liscomb

Registration Fee: Free

Registration Deadline: May 3

Join us on May 6th at Grammer Grove for a walk to learn about woodland flowers. Time to leave the cold behind and discover the blooms of late spring and early summer. We will explore Grammer Grove and enjoy these colorful beauties. Participants can bring a sack lunch to enjoy before or after the program.



FREE FISHING DAYS

JUNE 7, 8, & 9

The Iowa DNR is once again offering a free fishing weekend for Iowa residents June 7-9. No fishing license is required, but all size and catch limits apply.



Nature Adventures for Students

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. Programs will engage students with a story, craft, or activity and an outdoor fun component. There is no fee for this program. To register for Nature Adventures, please call 641-752-5490, email mccb@marshallcountya.gov, or text only 641-758-9777 by the registration deadline.

Water Cycle

Tuesday, March 19 at 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
GrimesFarm and Conservation Center
Registration Fee: FREE
Registration Deadline: March 15

In the month of March, we will explore the theme of the Water Cycle and discuss how water moves around our planet.



Eggs

Tuesday, April 9 at 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
GrimesFarm and Conservation Center
Registration Fee: FREE
Registration Deadline: April 5

April is a great time to explore the theme of eggs and that chickens aren't the only ones that hatch their young from them. Come learn all about oviparous animals.



Insects

Tuesday, May 28 at 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
GrimesFarm and Conservation Center
Registration Fee: FREE
Registration Deadline: May 24

Come and explore the theme of insects, learn their characteristics, and how to identify them in the prairie.

Programs will engage students with a story, craft, or activity and an outdoor fun component.



Night Photography

Wednesday, May 15 at 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
GrimesFarm and Conservation Center
Registration Fee: FREE
Registration Deadline: May 10

Capturing beautiful nighttime images may not be as difficult as you think, especially with today's amazing digital cameras. Join us on May 15 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the GrimesFarm and Conservation Center. This class will go over some of the basic camera settings needed as well as composition and tips to help you get some spectacular shots. If the weather permits, we will head outside for some hands-on instructions, so please bring your camera (including your cell phone) and a tripod. If you have a remote shutter release (wireless or cable) - bring it along as well (helpful but not required). **There is no fee for this program, however we request that participants pre-register before May 10 at 4:00 p.m. by calling 641-752-5490 or emailing mccb@marshallcountya.gov.**



Watercolor Class

Thursday, May 23 at 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
GrimesFarm and Conservation Center
Registration Fee: \$20.00
Registration Deadline: May 17

Join us for a fun and easy watercolor class. We will create a blooming coneflower watercolor masterpiece using a continuous line technique. All ages and artistic ability are welcome.

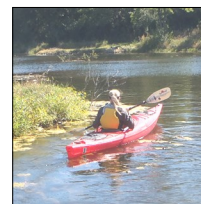
Youth under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult. All supplies will be provided. **Pre-registration and payment required. Register by calling 641-752-5490 or emailing mccb@marshallcountya.gov for limited spots.**



Kayaking

Wednesday, May 29 at 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
Green Castle Recreation Area
2891 Green Castle Road, Gilman
Registration Fee: Free
Registration Deadline: May 24

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@marshallcountya.gov or text only 641-758-9777.**



Friends of Marshall County Conservation

The Friends of Marshall County Conservation meet the third Thursday of every month at 6:00 p.m. at the Grimes Farm and Conservation Center. If you are interested in serving on



**FRIENDS OF
MARSHALL COUNTY
CONSERVATION**

the friends board, join them for a meeting to see what they are all about!

Friends of Marshall County Conservation

Live & Local

Live Music & Local Food Trucks
Leonard Grimes Memorial Amphitheater
at the Grimes Farm Conservation Center
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

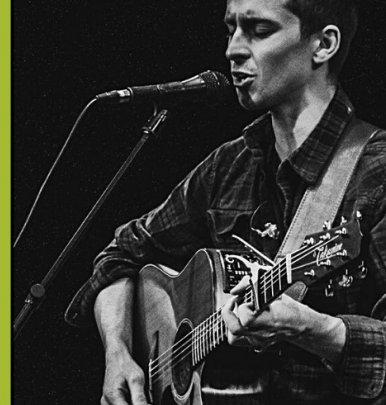
Bob Dorr
June 20



Awful Purdies
July 18



Royce Johns
October 3



Katie & The Honky Tonks
August 15



Joseph Huber
September 12



Watch the Marshall County Friends Facebook Page for location changes or cancellations in case of inclement weather.

Thank You to Our Sponsors

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

SEASONS

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



MARSHALL COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

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

mccb@marshallcountya.gov

www.marshallcountya.gov/501/conservation

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