



Friends of Wild River State Park Newsletter

**ANNUAL
DUES FORM!
CANDLELIGHT SKI
POSTER!**

January, 2010

www.wildriverparkfriends.org • info@wildriverparkfriends.org • 651-583-2926 (Visitor Center)

Park Update

By Paul Kurvers,
Wild River State Park Manager

It's hard to believe another year is about to come to a conclusion. We had another very busy and successful year at the park. Plentiful snowfall last season resulted in an increased number of snowshoers, winter hikers, and skiers, and great weather in the spring and summer contributed to substantial increases in park visitors and revenue. Compared to 2008, overall visitation increased by 11% to 186,000 and overnight camping by 17% to 32,000. As a result of increased visitation, park revenues also increased by 6% from 2008. It pleases me to see, despite a poor economy, people still value and set-aside time to visit and experience places such as Wild River State Park.

As many of you are aware, long-time park naturalist Dave Crawford retired this past October. Dave began his career with the DNR in 1976 and had worked at Wild River since 1990. Besides providing interpretive programming and services to thousands of park visitors and school groups over the years, Dave was also very active in the park's resource management program. Through Dave's

Continued on Next Page >

2010 Programs and Changes to Membership Levels

By Dave Kozlovsky - President, Friends of Wild River State Park

As I sit down to right this article for the newsletter, I have just finished my first skiing at WRSP for the winter season! I am really excited that I was able to ski on groomed trails on December 20. The snow was terrific and met three families



**Enjoying a ski with 3-year old
grandson, Caden.**

with children amongst others enjoying the beautiful winter weather.

Yes, my grandson Caden (see picture) did have a great experience at the Candlelight Ski last year and his three year old legs did carry him to the bonfire and back. This year he thinks he needs ski poles and will

have to see what Santa has under the tree. Caden was only one of hundreds of skiers, hikers, and snowshoers that enjoyed the 2009 Candlelight Ski. I hope that our Candlelight Ski on Saturday, January 30, 2010, will have the same great conditions as the 2009 Candlelight Ski.

Speaking of the Candlelight Ski, that is only one of the events that the Friends of Wild River State Park sponsors. I would like to say that the Friends of WRSP has huge sponsorship from corporate America, but that is not the case and we survive mainly on our membership dues. These are the programs we now support; Candlelight Ski, \$500, Summer Interpretive Programs, \$1500, Seegwan, \$1000.

The Friends of WRSP would like to continue to support these programs and add more to encourage more families and young people to come out and enjoy our Park. So, to have the funds to do so, we have decided to have our lowest level of membership \$20 individual/family, and then add other membership levels as \$50 silver membership, \$100 gold membership, and \$250+ platinum membership.

I hope you will continue to support the Friends of Wild River State Park!

Wild River State Park CANDLELIGHT

❄️ *Ski • Snowshoe • Hike*



Saturday
January 30th
6-9 pm

Raffle for
Set of Skis

❄️ **Join Friends of Wild River State Park** ❄️
**for a fun moonlit evening of cross-country
skiing, hiking or snowshoeing on over five miles of
candlelit trail. Enjoy refreshments, indoor and outdoor
programs for all ages, musical entertainment, and the
BIGGEST prairie bonfire around to warm your buns on!**
IT'S WINTERTIME FUN FOR ALL AGES!

To get to Wild River State Park go 14 miles east of North Branch or 10 miles northwest of Taylor's Falls on MN 95. At Almelund go north on CR 12 about 3 miles to the park entrance. Vehicle permits and ski passes are required. Annual ski passes can be purchased at any ELS vendor or by filling out a mail-in application at the park office on your arrival. Freewill donation for refreshments provided by Friends of Wild River State Park.

❄️
SKI & SNOWSHOE RENTAL AVAILABLE
Call the park for more info: 651-583-2125
<http://www.wildriverparkfriends.org/>



< **PARK UPDATE.....Continued from Page 1**

development of service learning programs called Prairie Care and Species Stewards, hundreds of acres of oak savannah and prairie have been restored at the park utilizing school groups and citizen volunteers. Dave's lasting contributions to the park can not be understated. Even though Dave has retired; don't be surprised if you see him at the park as he has officially signed up as a volunteer. At this time, due to hiring restrictions resulting from the state budget shortfall, we are unable to move forward with hiring a successor to Dave. Until we are able to hire a new naturalist, we will rely on volunteers to help us maintain some Visitor Center hours and offer some limited programming.

In November, the park conducted another successful managed deer hunt. About 160 hunters participated in a four day hunt which resulted in a harvest of 113 deer. The goal of park deer hunts is to reduce the deer population to a level which results in less damage to park vegetation caused by over-browsing. This year's hunt marked the final year of a five-year study to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative hunting regulations to reduce deer populations. The alternative regulation which was studied at the park was called an earn-a-buck hunt which required hunters to harvest an antlerless deer prior to taking an antlered deer. This type of hunt favored the harvest of female deer which should reduce the breeding and overall population of deer in the park. To help us make decisions about future deer hunts in the park we will analyze the data collected over the five-year earn-a-buck study period and also conduct an aerial deer population survey this winter.



If you're looking for a great gift idea, may I suggest the purchase of the just recently introduced new State Park Gift Card. These new gift cards can be purchased for any amount over \$10 and can be used for camping, lodging, and vehicle permits, as well as clothing, books, and other items sold at Minnesota State Parks. The gift card is a great way to introduce people to state parks and all the great scenic and recreational opportunities that await them.

Hope to see you all at the Candlelight Ski on January 30th.

Seegwan Performer Chosen



Charlie Maguire

Photo by Cheryl Walsh Bellville

We are excited to welcome Charlie Maguire back to Wild River State Park to help us celebrate Seegwan 2010, planned for Saturday, May 22nd.

Charlie Maguire is a singer and songwriter, a recording artist, and a member of the Board of Directors- American Federation of Musicians Local 30/73. He serves

as Minnesota's "Centennial Troubadour" for Minnesota State Parks and the first and only "Singing Ranger" for the National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior.

He brings his voice, guitar, harmonica, spoons, and jaw harp for a one-of-a-kind-program of songs and stories about Minnesota. Go to www.charliemaguire.com for more bio info, songs, and the latest news with Charlie.

Upcoming Events



Upcoming Board Meetings

- 1pm, January 30th - WRSP Trail Center, prior to Moonlight Ski event
- 6:30 pm, February 25th - Park Manager's Residence, planning meeting for Annual Meeting and mailing list update

Upcoming Events

- March 20th - Annual Meeting/Pancake Breakfast
- May 22nd - Seegwan

WR Youth Nordic Ski Club to begin fourth season

2010 will be Wild River Youth Nordic Ski Club's fourth year at Wild River State Park. The WRYNSC brings the joy of cross-country skiing to local youth.

The Minnesota Youth Ski League provides a structured 8-week curriculum at six different ski levels to clubs. Groups of skiers ages 4-14 will meet at the Trail Center on Sundays between 2 and 4pm. Park staff hopes to groom several special areas around the Horse

Camp to accommodate up to 40 young skiers and their coaches.

The club is organized by a volunteer coordinator and volunteer coaches. The club leader welcomes help with snacks, drinks, assisting group coaches, and even being a group coach (several spots are available!). Group coaches need to make a commitment to eight Sunday afternoons, understand the fundamentals of skiing, and have fun! Volunteers do not need to be an experts,

just willing to help!

Contact John Grund, 651-674-6096 or jmgdape@yahoo.com for more information or go to www.mysl.com

Have you paid your Friends of WRSP dues? Dues are the Friends' main source of funding for programs we support at the park. Send in the form below and help support the great programs Friends member bring to Wild River!

2010 FRIENDS Membership Dues	<input type="checkbox"/> Friend – \$20/year	Name/Address _____ _____ _____ City _____ State _____ Sign Up Online! Zip _____ Email _____ <small>We will never sell or trade your email address</small>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Silver Friend – \$50/year	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Friend – \$100/year	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Platinum Friend – \$250+/year	
	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Add an additional \$10 and be a member of MN Parks and Trails</i>	
Favorite activities at the park include: _____ _____		
Mail with check to:		
Friends of Wild River State Park c/o Treasurer Maurice Whalen 3663 164th Ave NE Ham Lake, MN 55304		
www.wildriverparkfriends.org to donate using your credit card		

