

Holliday Nature Preserve Association



Published three times a year for Friends and Supporters of The Holliday Nature Preserve

VOLUME 15 • NUMBER 1

• SPRING- SUMMER 2003

Wetlands And The West Nile Virus

The return of spring also means the return of mosquitoes –some of which may harbor the West Nile Virus. The threat, although very small, is real. While it should not prevent anyone from enjoying the outdoors (including walking in the Holliday Nature Preserve) experts recommend taking steps to lessen the risk of exposure.

But these steps **don't** include draining wetlands. Read article on page 3 for details.

HNPA Mission

The Holliday Nature Preserve Association is a group of volunteers dedicated to the Holliday Nature Preserve. Like Arthur Richardson who made a gift of the Preserve in memory of his uncle, William P. Holliday, we seek to nurture a greater appreciation of this unique local natural resource. We also seek to educate local communities on the importance of this Preserve within the Wayne County Parks system.

We host walks, assist with clean-ups, and work with government officials to ensure the continued protection of this 500+ acre preserve that runs along the Tonquish Creek, a Rouge River tributary. Our activities are free and are open to everyone.

HNPA Plans Spring Activities To Improve Preserve *Earth Day/Arbor Day – April 26*



HNPA will celebrate the “green holidays” of Earth Day, Arbor Day and John Muir’s birthday on Saturday, April 26, by working on the overgrown trail in the Foxland section of the Preserve. We start at 10 am. Loppers, shears and other pruning tools would be useful. What was once a sod farm has grown into a

young forest. The field now has small trees and many large shrubs. The trail winding through it can hardly be followed.

To have an easier walk through this interesting habitat, we have to invest some sweat, blisters and time. HNPA will provide cold drinks and some cake. John Muir would be proud.

Take Koppernick west from Hix Road (Hix is west of Newburgh) between Warren and Joy.

Rouge Rescue/River Day – June 8

HNPA has always supported Friends of the Rouge by coordinating a Rouge Rescue site. This year HNPA will be again working in the Preserve with the City of Westland. We’ll be in the Central City (formerly Cowan) section focusing on Morgan Creek. Volunteers can remove trash and shopping carts from the creek, reduce some of the invasive honeysuckle that is choking the trail or help walk the trails picking up trash and clearing fallen limbs that are blocking the path. If we have a large number of volunteers, we will also clean trash at the nearby Circuit City sedimentation basin.

No more log jam removals!
HNPA is a partner in riparian corri-

dor management projects, which includes woody debris management. It’s the environmental and legal way of dealing with SOME log jams.

Registration for River Day starts at 8 am. Use the parking lot of the former Service Merchandise store on Central City west of Wayne Road.

Dress in long pants and long-sleeved shirts. The Preserve does have poison ivy, thorns, and a few mosquitoes. We will have something to drink and a wash-up station. Call Bill Craig at (248) 476-5127 if you have questions.



HNPA Meets With Wayne County Commissioner Kay Beard

For many years now, HNPA has had many meetings with three different Park's directors. We received permission for all our activities. They also listened to our concerns, and a few times they actually acted on them, but for too long nothing has been done about our biggest concerns—the deteriorating bridges and trail system. In addition, the 25-year-old map no longer reflects the reality in the Preserve. HNPA decided it was time to take our concerns elsewhere.

We met with Wayne County Commissioner Kay Beard, a long time supporter of Wayne County Parks and 25-year veteran of the Wayne County Commission. The Preserve and most of our members are in her district. Commissioner Beard was kind enough to meet with HNPA representatives Bill Craig, Phil Crookshank and Dorothy Smiley on March 18.

After pleasant introductory discussion, Commissioner Beard explained that the new director will have operating jurisdiction over Parks, while the Commission only had budget jurisdiction over Parks.

Commissioner Beard did offer an excellent suggestion— HNPA could request a meeting with County Executive Bob Ficano — and she would gladly co-sign that request.

Commissioner Beard also said she would try to get a budget hearing in Westland, so we could know better the administration's budget, especially items regarding the Parks Department. While we plan to work closely with the new Parks Director and work primarily through him, HNPA will take action on Commissioner's suggestion: We will plan to meet the new Executive. Maybe we can even get him to step into the Preserve.

Welcoming Joe Nardone To Parks

Joe Nardone is the new director of Wayne County Parks. He replaces Larry Fitch. Nardone will oversee all of Wayne County parks and golf courses, including our Holliday Nature Preserve.

We want to congratulate him on his new responsibilities. Members of the HNPA hope to meet with him in the near future both to introduce him to the Preserve, make him aware of its importance and to discuss its needs.

Saying Farewell To Larry Fitch

HNPA President Bill Craig spoke to Larry as he was about leave his Nankin Mill office for the last time on March 11. "We warmly shook hands and I was able to thank him for his support of our efforts and concern for the Holliday Preserve," said Craig. "He, in turn, thanked HNPA for our dedication, hard work and persistence to protect the Preserve."

We wish Larry well and will miss his friendship.



This winter, DTE crews carved a wide corridor out of the Preserve between Newburgh and Hix in order to access their lines and prevent outages caused by falling trees. Cutting trees for these purposes is understandable but the crews did seem to get carried away in their work.



The Preserve is continually full of wonders -- and things that make one wonder. HNPA President Bill Craig found an example of the latter this winter: a deer blind in the Hix section of the Preserve. Not only is hunting in Westland illegal (and dangerous), but this area is a wildlife Preserve. This is one of the reasons your support of the HNPA is so important. We also ask that you keep your eyes open and report any illegal activity. Call the Parks Department at (734) 261-1990 or the Wayne County Sheriff at (734) 591-6949.

Take Steps To Protect Your Family From Mosquitoes (But Don't Drain The Wetlands)

It doesn't take much standing water to support mosquitoes. Dozens can breed in the water that fills a discarded pop can. A pool cover full of water can be home to millions of mosquito larvae. And the water doesn't have to stand long. Mosquitoes can grow from egg to adulthood in four to 14 days.



While experts recommend getting rid of sources of standing water they don't recommend draining wetlands like those in the Holliday Preserve. Here's what the Wayne County's Department of Environment has to say in its flyer entitled *West Nile Virus, Wetlands and Stormwater Ponds Frequently Asked Questions*:

Healthy wetlands provide minimal habitat for mosquitoes. Water conditions, water quality and natural predators minimize larval success if egg laying occurs. Predators including other aquatic insects, amphibians, fish, bats and birds feed on any mosquitoes present.

Wetlands are a critical element in a health ecosystem. Wetlands benefit people, water quality and wildlife. Wetlands clean and slowly release rainwater and provide flood protection and wildlife habitat. Many wetlands recharge groundwater critical for local drinking water supplies and prevent streams from drying up during the summer.

Draining wetlands will not eliminate mosquitoes. In fact, mosquito populations could actually increase because draining a wetland may destroy the mosquitoes natural predators. With approximately 80% of

Wayne County's wetlands already destroyed by human activities, additional wetland loss is not desirable.

So what should families do to protect themselves from the threat of the West Nile Virus?

Health experts recommend the following:

- * **Avoid contact with mosquitoes by staying indoors during peak mosquito activity** (e.g. evening and early morning).
- * **Wear protective clothing and mosquito repellents containing "DEET" when outdoors.** (Be careful when applying DEET to kids, however).
- * **Eliminate places where water can stagnate.** This includes containers such as buckets, flowerpots, tires, landscaping plastic, and pool covers because mosquito species need only small puddle or depressions to breed.
- * **Change water regularly in bird-baths and clean all rain gutters.** Clogged gutters hold water.



Wayne County Parks is using the Newburgh section of the Preserve as a storage site for wood chips. The chips are from ash trees that were killed by the Emerald Ash Borer that's decimated Ash trees. While it's understandable that the huge piles of wood chips need to be placed somewhere, it is our opinion that a nature preserve is not a good choice. We're asking that the county not add to the pile and that these be removed in the near future.

ALL HNPA MEMBERSHIPS RENEW DEC. 1

All memberships in the HNPA will now carry a common renewal date of December 1.

Whenever you send dues for a NEW or RENEWAL membership the expiration will be December of the following year. (Membership payments sent in this year will run until December 1, 2004.)

The change was made to simplify our bookkeeping. Problems arose when members sent in more than \$5 -- something many supporters do. In the past, we just recorded one year of membership regardless if you sent in \$5 or \$100. (If a person sent in \$100, we did not record 20 years of membership. We recorded one year of dues and a \$95 donation.)

This new procedure will also save many of our members from the inconvenience having to send a small \$5 check annually. Now they can designate multiple years worth of dues in one check.

All funds, whether dues or donations, are used for the newsletter or for the benefit of the Preserve. That means funds are used to purchase materials for bridges and trails, garbage bags and gloves for clean ups and sometimes refreshments for thirsty work crews.

Please contact Bill Craig at (248) 476-5127 if you have questions.

New Address

Please note that the HNPA has a new address:
Holliday Nature Preserve Association
P.O. Box 5210
Livonia, MI 48152

The new address can also be found on the membership form.

Holliday Nature Preserve Association
P.O .Box 52104
Livonia, MI 48152



Reminder: Please renew your membership annually. Send address corrections to the above address or e-mail to envirowhc@aol.com

Preserve Walks

Note: All walks are free and go regardless of weather. A good pair of hiking boots are also suggested. Trails are generally uneven.

Saturday, April 26, Earth Day Work Activity – 9am, Foxlands, (On Koppernick Road, 1/2 mile west of Hix.) Help clean up the newest section of the Preserve.

Sunday, May 4, Spring Walk – 10am Central City Parkway entrance (North of Westland Mall.) A nice time in the Preserve as the flowers are many and the mosquitoes are still few.

Sunday, May 11, Mother’s Day Wildflower Walk – 1 pm. Central City Parkway entrance. Parking is available in the former Service Merchandise lot. Leisurely walk enjoying the flowers that Mother Nature offers in the heart of Westland. Max Nemazi, (734) 421-4397.

Saturday, June 7, Rouge Rescue/River Day – 8am, Central City Parkway entrance. Dress to get dirty and to fend off mosquitoes as we help clean the Tonquish and the Preserve’s trails.

MEETINGS

All meetings of the HNPA take place at 7 p.m. in the lower meeting room of the Noble Library in Livonia. The library is located on the south side of Plymouth Road east of Farmington Road. Everyone is welcome to attend.

**April 17
May 13**

Thanks To Our Most Recent Supporters

We wish to thank the following people for their recent new memberships, renewals or donations:

- Gerald & Marilyn Barbour**
- Cathy & Larry Bean**
- Arthur & Priscilla Booth**
- Roberta Campbell**
- Allen & Nancy Chartier**
- Thomas Clough**
- James & Elizabeth Cook**
- John Covert**
- Bill Craig**
- Al Dawg**
- Georgia McDaniel**
- D.J. Mundle**
- Paul & Irene Overmyer**
- Elaine Shipe**
- Carol Sullivan**
- Nathan & Sue Wood**
- Karen & Richard Zyczynski**

Join Us!

We only ask a minimum of \$5 annually to receive our newsletter. Any additional amount that you care to send will be considered a donation and used to benefit the Preserve. Thank you for caring!

Name: _____

Address: _____ Apt: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip Code: _____ - _____

() NEW () RENEWAL

\$5 ANNUAL DUES X ____ Years.....\$ _____

ADDITIONAL DONATION (optional).....\$ _____

TOTAL.....\$ _____

(Make checks payable to Holliday Nature Preserve Association and mail to: HNPA, P.O .Box 52104 Livonia, MI 48152