



To our members and friends:

May 2023 Newsletter

FAMILY CAMPOUT NIGHT RETURNS---FRIDAY JUNE 23

Our last family campout night was in June of '19 before the pandemic. We are pleased to bring this family camping opportunity back to the Preserve on Friday night June 23. Tents can be set up in the grounds area in front of Blackbear Lodge. We'll have a campfire going at sunset. Bathrooms will be available all night. We are collaborating with Goodspeed Cycle, who is organizing an "Off-leash Overnighter" event that same night that starts their ride from their store and continues into Griffith Indiana on Saturday. You can register for that bike trip on the Goodspeed Cycle website. (goodspeedcycles.com) That group will be camping in the west meadow by the west picnic pavilion. We know of a volunteer group that may be agreeable to cook breakfast for all. We'll keep you posted on our website about that possibility. So take advantage of this local and safe camping opportunity right here in Homewood. Cost for members is \$5 per tent; for non-members \$10 per tent. You can sign up for this event on our website in early June. But you can also just show up that evening any time after 6p.

GAMES FOR EVERYONE! OUR TRADITIONAL JULY 4th VILLAGE PICNIC !

Last year, after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, we enthusiastically brought back to our traditional July 4 picnic which has been a local favorite in Homewood for decades. The concept *Games for Everyone* (in lieu of the previous Park District Family Fun Fest) proved to be a big hit last year with enthusiastic participation across all age groups. So we will offer this event again this year but with better organization !

The event follows right after the Village's *4th of July Parade* which steps off at 10a from downtown. Preserve volunteers provide the facilities and offer food and refreshments for sale (cooked brats, hot dogs, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, corn on the cob, corn pudding, gourmet sandwiches, soft drinks, water etc.) from 11am to 2pm

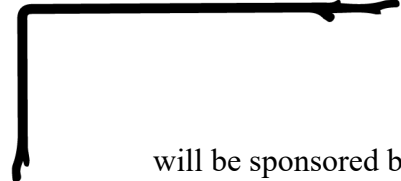
Games for Everyone ! will commence at noon out by the pavilion in our east meadow. We will conduct foot races for young age groups, individual and 3 legged sack races for older kids, water balloon toss, egg toss and catch contest, bag toss and volleyball tournaments, and others games that we are working on. The games will start at 12:00p except for the bag toss and volleyball tournaments which will begin at 11:30p. All events will conclude at approximately 1:45p. We intend to publish a schedule for the games that we will put in our website and in our June newsletter. You will be able to sign up in advance on our website for all games after approximately June 1. The bag toss tournament will be limited to 16 teams; volleyball just 8 teams of 4 players each. You can also "walk on" and participate in the games (but only if space available for the bag toss and volleyball tournaments) ALL winners will receive prizes and All participants will receive Dairy Queen gift certificates

Activity Stations will be also located around our beautiful grounds. Each activity station

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will be sponsored by local organizations and businesses that will offer fun things for kids of all ages to do. Participants so far include Homewood Science Center, Serendipity Yoga, Homewood Baseball, Goodspeed Cycles, John Harrell State Farm Insurance, Union Street Art Gallery, Fiddlesticks Forest School and perhaps others.

We have strong support from Board members to manage the event including Sam Casella, Jay Eagle, Shawn Straney, Todd Wittenberg, and Greg Busler. We'll be calling on a loyal group of volunteers from past July 4 events to help with the event but we could always use more help. If anyone wants to volunteer to help, please send an email to info@homewoodizaakwalton.com.


DOGS-FOCUSED GROUND RULES – COMPLIANCE IS A MUST!

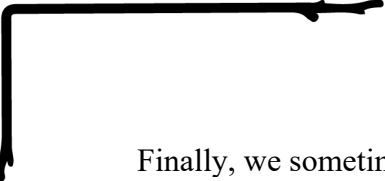
For as long as we can remember, we've permitted members to walk their dogs off leash in certain areas of the Preserve. Some of our most devoted members support allowing dogs to run off-leash and they take advantage of the privilege consistent with the ground rules. We've regularly discussed the ground rules in newsletters, but reports of non-compliance continue but thankfully are few in number (Last year 3 or 4 incidents) This leads us to believe that our ground rules need to be emphasized once again.

Some dogs simply aren't friendly; others like women but not men. Some don't like runners but tolerate walkers just fine. Some crave human companionship and run toward any person in view. But people don't always like dogs and some of these people may have been bit by a dog at some point in their life. Because of these factors, we have ground rules. We ask that they be obeyed and when people see that they are being ignored, we would appreciate members asking the offenders to follow the ground rules. Let's review these rules.

- There's no excuse for a master coming to The Preserve without a leash because leashes are required at all trail heads. You can't reach the greater trail system without passing through a trail head.
- Dogs who are under their master's control are allowed off leash only in specific areas of The Preserve. These areas are clearly indicated in our ground rules, copies of which are given to every member, every year when they purchase a membership.
- We have new, large maps at our three principal entrances. They graphically show the areas where dogs are allowed off of leashes and they also list key portions of our ground rules.
- In those areas where dogs are allowed off of leashes, the privilege applies only to dogs firmly under their master's control. Such dogs must be well-tempered & well-trained; they must come promptly when called.

When members see that dog-related ground rules are not being followed, we ask that they do one of two things:

- a) Ask the dog owner to comply with the ground rules, or
 - b) Call the office at 708-798-1850 or send an email to us at info@HomewoodIzaakWalton.com. Names or descriptions of the dogs and their owners would be appreciated.
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Finally, we sometimes find dog waste that has been picked up, put in a bag, and left along the trail. This leaves us with 2 litter items – dog poop and a plastic bag. Please don't leave these for someone else to dispose of. Rather, take them back to our trail heads where you will find well maintained receptacles in which the waste bag can be placed. *Thank You !*

FIDDLESTICKS FOREST SCHOOL

Fiddlesticks Forest School is a free outdoor educational program and meet up for children of all ages accompanied by a parent or caregiver ! Fiddlesticks has a child-led ethos, which typically includes days full of learning outside through hands-on experiences, nature-themed crafts, music, games, imaginative play, STEAM activities, and more!

The group, which has been meeting regularly on Thursday mornings for the last two years at our east pavilion, is organized by local moms and looks forward to growing our community in order to serve more nature-loving families. Registration in advance is required. To learn more, please find them on Facebook or email Gina DeAngelo at Fiddlesticksforestschool@gmail.com

INVASIVE LESSER CELANDINE

We first noticed this invasive 3 years ago. Those of you familiar with Apollo Park in Homewood can see its wild spread in spring when large areas over there are carpeted with yellow flowering lesser celandine in April. Volunteer Jeff Maharry noticed its presence in the Preserve and started a one man campaign to bring it under control and eventually out of the Preserve. Jeff uses a glyphosate mix and a hand sprayer to apply the herbicide directly and carefully on the plant. We are pleased to report that Jeff's multi-year efforts have been quite successful. The incidence of this plant this spring is now reduced by 75%+ from when he first started. A huge thanks to Jeff !


THE WHITE PINES OF DECEMBER

In mid December, we learned of native 5' white pine trees still available at Possibility Place (a local nursery that specializes in native plants and trees). So with time to plant just before the ground froze, we assembled a crew and planted 5 of them on the island in the wetlands area and another 10 of them by the cliff swallow tower. Each tree is protected with netting from deer nibbling. Our thanks to Dave Zaber, Clayton Wassilak, Dave Sheppard, Warren Becker, and our contractors Jesse and Armando for the great effort on short notice.

OFFICE HOURS HONEY, AND MILKWEED SEED PACKETS

A reminder that we staff the office on Saturday mornings from 9-noon. We have plenty of milkweed seed packets available **free of charge** and an ample supply of Preserve honey for sale for \$8 per 12 oz jar.

Your President, John Brinkman





FAMILY CAMPOUT

Friday June 23 at 6 PM

In front of Blackbear Lodge

See article in this newsletter for further details

