



# Friends of Hidden Valley, Inc.

The mission of the Friends of Hidden Valley is to provide support to the Lawrence Hidden Valley Committee, Inc., in programs, development, maintenance, and goals that promote and benefit Hidden Valley Camp.

Spring 2020

[www.friendshv.org](http://www.friendshv.org)

[Facebook.com/:friends-of-hidden-valley](https://www.facebook.com/friends-of-hidden-valley)

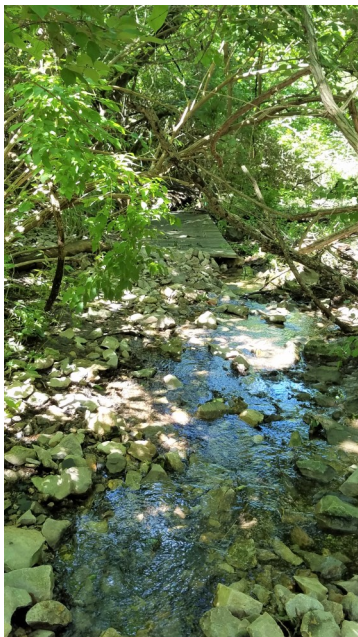
## Would you like to round that up? Yes!

For the entire month of May, Friends of Hidden Valley will be the recipient of the Merc's Change for Our Community Program. In the past 5 years, the Merc has been able to raise over \$330,000.00 for over 40 local non-profit organizations by asking folks to donate their change for Community Change at the cash register, and Friends of Hidden Valley was selected to be the designated recipient for the Month of May! There are three ways you can participate:

- 1) Anytime in May, when you get your groceries totaled up at the cash register, the clerk will ask "would you like to round that up?" All you have to do is say "yes" and the difference between your total and the next dollar up will be donated to Friends of Hidden Valley. So for instance if your grocery purchase costs \$17.21, your rounded up total becomes \$18.00 and you just donated 79 cents to the Friends. If the clerk forgets to ask you, just ask them to "round it up" and they'll know what to do.
- 2) If you want to get rid of that change at the bottom of your purse or pocket, or if the cashier gives you back some bills, there will also be donation jars at each cash register where you can drop it in the jar.
- 3) Bring your own bag to the Merc and you can give your 5 cent rebate to Friends as well.



We are inviting the Merc staff to come and have a guided walk of the trails in April to familiarize them with our wonderful camp so they can explain what it is to their customers. May is the perfect month for us to be receiving the Change for Community Change because we will have a table near the checkout area occasionally that will be inviting folks to come check us out for Trails Day in June, help us clear honeysuckle and make biochar on a work day, and have information about Day Camp. We will be using the funds raised through the Merc to help the camp prepare for a future with more frequent extreme weather events by developing better storm runoff strategies that include better bridges and an improved driveway so that youth will continue to have the opportunity to access and experience nature first hand into the future.



The Merc is locally owned by shoppers who buy shares in the food Co-op, but anyone can shop there whether they are a member or not. The Merc has also selected the following organizations to be recipients for other months of 2020, from a pool of over 35 applications, so we consider ourselves in very good company: LINK, Centro Hispano, Lawrence Humane Society, Community Mercantile Education Foundation, Kansas Land Trust, Sunrise Project, Friends of the Kaw, Headquarters, Willow Domestic Violence Center, Coalition for Homeless Concerns and Giving Tree for Adopted Families. So shopping at the Merc any time of the year provides a great opportunity to support our community.

**Be sure to share this information with your families and friends, encouraging them to shop frequently during the month of May!** We will be spreading the word via social media and at our table on Earth Day as well, but tell everyone you know what a great opportunity it is to support a local food supplier and support Hidden Valley at the same time!

*This long-standing bridge was moved about 20' downstream TWICE last year during unusually high rain events. Our bridges will need to be built higher, longer and stronger to withstand what we expect to become a new norm with flash flooding. Merc funds will help!*

## Honeysuckle Becoming Popular for Wood Crafting

What to do with all that honeysuckle you cut is a BIG problem when you have nearly 40 acres of it! At Hidden Valley, we used to pile it up and leave it, resulting in huge unwanted piles. Our Honeysuckle Warriors now burn most of it down to biochar. But there are other creative ways to turn this woody problem into an asset, such as using honeysuckle to whittle small objects, make hiking sticks, and garden teepees. At Day Camp we have built amazing tunnels and intriguing shelters crafted from the long branches, and we also use the bigger branches for erosion control on hillsides and to line our trails.

Jean Ponzi, from the Missouri Botanical Garden, and her husband Dale Dufer, make furniture with harvested bush honeysuckle, and had been enlisted by the Douglas County Extension Master Gardeners for an all-day workshop hosted at Hidden Valley Camp. The April workshop has since been cancelled due to COVID-19, but hopefully can be rescheduled in the fall. Participants learn about the invasive shrub, how to identify it, then create their own unique table from the harvested branches. You can check out Dales' work at <http://www.woodworms.net>.

What have YOU done with your honeysuckle as you cut it down? Join the conversation on our Facebook page!

## Southern Shade Fireplace



*The roof and patio extensions are also done*

We look forward to officially dedicating our new stone fireplace and grill at Southern Shade. This fireplace has been years in the dreaming and planning, and we are finally able to bring a new chapter of outdoor activities to Hidden Valley. We owe a special thanks to Jackson Clark for planning and organizing, Mike Myers for designing, Bob Sweeney for masonry, Karl Ramburg for the featured medallion and Marlan Construction for their coordination and contracting. We also are very grateful to the Kriz Charitable Foundation and Friends of Hidden Valley for funding.

**Please watch for plans to celebrate this grand addition to the camp.**

## Eagles Day

The 24th Annual Kaw Valley Eagles Day was back at Lawrence Free State High School on Saturday, January 18 and people were happy to return. The event is hosted by Clinton Lake, US Army Corps of Engineers and Jayhawk Audubon Society.

Activities included informational booths, presentations, arts and crafts, owl pellet dissection, live animals on display and excursions to Clinton Lake for eagle viewing.

Friends of Hidden Valley board members staffed a booth and had a steady stream of visitors all day long. Our display included a history of the camp in pictures and photo albums, natural items found at camp including a box turtle shell, deer antler, and various plants and wildlife coloring sheets and crayons. As usual, the mystery boxes were a big hit with kids and adults!

Many of the visitors shared their memories of time spent at Hidden Valley while others learned of the camp for the first time.



*Mystery boxes and hands-on discovery are always popular at the Hidden Valley display.*



## Biochar Grant Project is Complete

### HONEYSUCKLE WARRIORS CONTINUE TO CREATE BIOCHAR DURING WEEKLY CUT AND BURN EVENTS

The 8-month Biochar Project ended on December 31, 2019. All parts of the project (spreading the word to the public about the benefits of using biochar in the home landscape and making it at home, treating trails with biochar to reduce sogginess after rains, using biochar to reduce erosion where honeysuckle had been removed near streams, using biochar to boost sapling growth, investigating the effects of biochar filtration on stream water quality, and participating in a Citizen Science biochar project out of St. Paul, MN) resulted in much new knowledge and excitement about future possibilities. The Biochar Team (Durand Reiber, Ken Lassman, Melinda Black, Margaret Townsend, and Gwen Macpherson) as well as many volunteers made this project a great success. We are thankful to the Great Plains Biochar Initiative and the Friends of Hidden Valley, the latter of which provide matching funds, for the opportunity to complete the project. Well over 20 acres of Hidden Valley woods is still dominated by bush honeysuckle, so the Honeysuckle Warriors will continue to eradicate, burn, and quench it to produce more biochar for a long time to come. We encourage everyone with bush honeysuckle in their yards to help in the battle by taking it out!



*Biochar for sapling growth*

## Welcome New Members

The Friends of Hidden Valley welcome the following new members as of mid-February: Joanne Altieri, Barry and Lisa Barnes, Anna Busby, Diane Church, Thomas Guba and Caryl Chacey Guba, Jessica Hensley, Michael Morley, Karl Ramberg, Sharon Reynolds, Nicole Sabatini, and Patti Wakolee. People choose to join FHV for many different reasons. Perhaps they have been involved with Girl Scouts and have fond memories of day camp. Other supporters enjoy walking through the serene nature setting while bird watching, learning about native plants, or taking nature photographs. Still others join because of their commitment to maintaining and enhancing this unique natural setting. Connecting with others who share similar interests and a desire to give back to the community by volunteering at camp are other reasons for becoming a member. Whatever your reason is, we appreciate your support! If you know of a friend, neighbor, or colleague who might be interested in joining FHV, please refer them to our website or contact Brigid Murphy, Membership Chair, by email at [brigid@sunflower.com](mailto:brigid@sunflower.com). Gift memberships are also available.



*Members provide support at events like Eagle Days*

*And new to the board–* Welcome back Lily Yu. Lily grew up with Girl Scouting in Lawrence and as a Campus Scout at KU. She has volunteered in several roles including with a local Cub Scout pack, Compassion International, Hidden Valley Board, and Friends of Hidden Valley. Lily works as a budget analyst for the state of Kansas and enjoys classical music and gardening vegetables.

Welcome also to Gayle Sigurdson. Gayle discovered Hidden Valley as a leader in the late 1980's and has volunteered as a leader, member of the Hidden Valley Board and the Kansas State Fiddling and Picking Championships. Gayle works for Lawrence Parks and Recreation and fills her time with fiber arts, walking and biking.



## Calendar of Events

Due to precautions intended to minimize the impact of the COVID-19 Virus, many familiar annual events have been postponed or cancelled. Please check our website for regular updates. You can safely self-isolate while getting some exercise, fresh air and peace of mind at Hidden Valley. We encourage our members to follow CDC recommendations while continuing to enjoy our camp during these hard times. For updates on all of our events, please check our Facebook page: [facebook.com/friendsoflawrencehiddenvalley](https://facebook.com/friendsoflawrencehiddenvalley)

See enclosed flyer and stay posted about National Trail and Prairie Day at Hidden Valley on June 6th, 9am to 1pm

**And now...wintry reports from the trails!** I hiked HV today, Friday, Jan. 3, another gorgeous too-warm-winter day. I hiked the trails that I didn't hike on Jan. 1, and repeated some I had hiked. I saw mostly robins, but one cardinal and some small birds (probably juncos). I think I heard blue jays, but didn't see them. While on the trail from Mulberry area to the cabin, a hawk of some kind swooped by. I stopped to watch where it landed. I moved cautiously forward, but then lost sight of it as I do need to look at the trail in front of me frequently to keep from tripping. Rats. I kept going, and then, apparently when I was underneath it, it took off again and flew over my head and up to Flagpole Hill (I was near Locust fire ring by then). Still did not get a good view, so I don't know what kind it was. I also angered a squirrel just downhill from Redbud--he had words for me!-- and I flushed a rabbit while walking Deer Run. There was some fresh scat on the Westward Ho trail, just after Thorn Hill fire ring--coyote? On the way out, a large family group of a Girl Scout was walking into Mary's Meadow, the Girl Scout eager to show her family the wonders of Hidden Valley--very heartwarming! Also, the scrap wood was gone from Southern Shade and the fireplace, as were the 1x4's that had been stored by the Cache. One last tidbit, on my way in, I picked up some debris from an auto accident--someone's front light, I'm thinking, was smashed. -Gwen



*Thorn Hill fire ring, glowing with green moss.*

It is a good thing that I hiked last Tuesday in view of the snowfall we just received this weekend, although I'm sure HV is gorgeous with snow-laden trees and grasses. I had the privilege of showing my longtime friend and new FOHV member, Linda Lang, around the camp, and she was duly impressed by all the improvements and changes made since she was a camper here in her youth. Fortunately, all sites and locations were secure and orderly, not to mention that the weather Tuesday was extraordinary for January! The Honeysuckle Warriors were making biochar near the camp entrance with that wonderful wood smoke wafting into my nostrils, bringing with it fond memories of my own camping experiences with the GSUSA. Long live Hidden Valley and the memories of its founders! -Nancy

**Thanks for hiking and sharing!**

**Friends of Hidden Valley, Inc.  
PO Box 442073  
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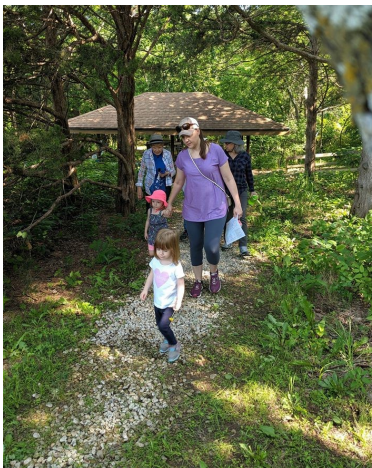
# Celebrate National Trail and Prairie Day at Hidden Valley!

**Saturday, June 6 | 9am-1pm**

The first Saturday of June is time to celebrate all trails through National Trails Day ® as well as Prairie Appreciation Day, and we will be doing just that at Hidden Valley Camp! National Trails Day ® encourages people to find a local trail to help maintain and/or hike, bike, canoe, whatever floats your boat. Of course we can't canoe our little streams, but we do have over two miles of hiking trails that crisscross streams and wander through tallgrass prairie, meadows, woods and rocky hillsides. This is our seventh year, and promises to be bigger and better thanks to our growing list of partners.

Jayhawk Audubon Society will be co-sponsoring this event, and we will be partnering with many area environmental and conservation organizations to help guests get outside and learn about local nature as they navigate our trails. Exhibits and activities for all ages will abound as guests explore the power of the prairie, discover the wet'n'wild creatures of our wetland, marvel at the abundance of pollinator plants, see native woods restoration in progress and learn about invasive species and biochar. For history buffs, we have 63 years to share with you! If you have young girls, a representative from Girl Scouts will be on hand to talk about the organization and how to join. Day Camp, beginning the following Monday, will be all set up, adding to the excitement of learning what Hidden Valley has to offer.

There will be many ways to explore the natural wonders we offer at our 40 acres of hidden wilderness! Guests can hike on their own, go on a scavenger hunt, or join one of our many guided tours, ranging from bird watching to wildflower walks and natural history. More details will follow on our website and Facebook page, as well as Jayhawk Audubon's.



*Join a guided tour or set out on your own on the trails and visit exhibits*



*Guests of all ages enjoyed activities at the wetland last year, including using nets to catch tadpoles and viewing aquatic insects under magnifying glasses.*



## **Co-Sponsored by**

Jayhawk Audubon Society: <https://www.jayhawkaudubon.org/>  
and on Facebook: [facebook.com/Jayhawk-Audubon-Society](https://www.facebook.com/Jayhawk-Audubon-Society)



Friends of Hidden Valley: <https://www.friendshv.org/>  
and on Facebook: [facebook.com/friendsoflawrencehiddenvalley](https://www.facebook.com/friendsoflawrencehiddenvalley)

## **Thanks to our Partners**

Douglas County Conservation District • Monarch Watch • Kansas Biological Survey



National Trails Day: <https://americanhiking.org/national-trails-day/>

# Hidden Valley in the Era of COVID-19

“Social distancing, self-isolation, abundance of caution”....all very common phrases now in our everyday lives. So what does this mean to a place like Hidden Valley? Quite a bit, as it is turning out. Girl Scout troops have been told to cease troop activities through the end of May, and colleges have sent their students home. Therefore, all service projects by GS and KU students, as well as our big April 18 workday have been cancelled. This represents the loss of nearly 500 hours of volunteer service this spring alone, with routine maintenance and many special projects all on hold.

One positive note is that the Honeysuckle Warriors have been able to continue their work, as social distancing is quite easy within 40 acres, and all seem to appreciate the opportunity to get outside and do something worthwhile. We work in our own areas, and there is no reason for us to get close to one another. Much of their other volunteer opportunities have dried up, since keeping a safe distance is too difficult for many non-profit situations.

## Volunteers are Still Welcome at Hidden Valley Camp!



We are now seeking individuals and family groups (those that live together), that would like to get outside for fresh air, exercise, and a sense of doing something worthwhile, to contact us for their own service project. The camp manager and a few board members are available to meet individuals and small groups one at a time to explain a specific project and get you going, all at a safe distance. From our workday alone, we have about 10 distinct project areas representing 100s of different chores...something for all ages and abilities! We hope this can provide families a welcome change to their home-stay routines, while helping us keep our camp the best it can be.

If you are interested, please email Durand at [durandi@sunflower.com](mailto:durandi@sunflower.com) for more details and to sign up for a specific time slot. We will tailor the jobs according to your ages and amount of time desired. It can be scheduled for weekdays or weekends. Most projects can be done in an hour or less, although we can certainly provide more! We will also be receiving a shipment of saplings to plant in mid April.

## Other Ways to Help Us Out

We'd like to take this time to remind you of other ways you can continue to help us. Of course, keeping up your membership is of vital importance. If you are shopping at Dillons' please keep in mind that you can designate Friends of Hidden Valley to receive a small percentage of your total through their Rewards' program. We also have an Amazon.Smile account for your on-line shopping. For details on how to set up these accounts, please visit our website: <https://www.friendshv.org>

**And, please remember to shop at the Merc in May and say “round up please!” at the checkout stand!**

