



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.

Summer 2019 www.friendshv.org <https://www.facebook.com/friendsoflawrencehiddenvalley/>

New and Improved Trails Day Brings on the Crowds!

After making several changes to our Trails Day, the annual event drew 114 visitors to Hidden Valley Camp on June 1st. We took out the work portion and moved the guided hikes to morning from 9 am to noon, before summer temperatures could soar. We added activities and exhibits to educate and entertain young and old alike, and enlisted several experts to lead themed guided hikes. The success of the event was made possible through these changes and the involvement of 14 volunteer coordinators and guides.

Jill Baringer (FHV board chair and avid Audubon Society member) first led a bird hike through the woods, followed by Jim Bresnahan, (our “resident photographer” and Audubon president) discussing nature photography. Durand Reiber led a wildflower walk to look over native plants of the prairie, butterfly garden and many pollinator gardens, while Ken Lassman (author of “Wild Douglas County”) led an enthusiastic group to observe the many wonders of nature that can be found when you slow down and look close enough. Gwen Macpherson lead a biochar tour for those interested in this new, yet ancient product that sequesters carbon while improving soil health. Meanwhile, several other board members led shorter guided tours to various places of interest, explaining the long history of Hidden Valley. All guests could choose from a variety of nature scavenger hunts to fill out as they walked the trails.

First stop on many tours was Flag Pole Hill to learn about the prairie and view the active bluebird box and bee hotel, as well as a Day Camp unit site set up. Next up was the Memorial Butterfly Garden and a chance to view the plans for the new shelter fire place, or put in pieces of a custom-made puzzle depicting our Hidden Valley map.



Environmental Art was on stage at the Gathering Place, where kids could draw items of nature, create leaf rubbings and simple clay animals such as snails, or get a nature tattoo.



The wetland was a constant draw, thanks to the challenge of catching tadpoles and many tiny frogs jumping about. Pamphlets helped to identify larvae dug out of the mud, or aquatic insects in glass viewing containers.



KU graduate students were stationed in the yurt of Dogwood Forest, on hand to discuss nature exhibits and field trips they offer, and to view their large habitat posters. Kids could also climb the tower or tree house to blow bubbles from high above.

After the tours, guests milled about Redbud Shelter viewing more exhibits, snacking on trail mix and talking with board members and other guests.

Everyone enjoyed their time exploring this unique wilderness in the city. We are excited about plans for next year, and hope to collaborate with other organizations to offer even more opportunities to explore the natural world of Hidden Valley.



Day Camp 2019: A Wonderland of Activities

“Girl Scouts in Wonderland” day camp took place during two weeks of nearly perfect weather in June. About 580 campers, aides and volunteers participated in traditional activities such as fire building, knot tying, and stream walking while also trying new activities such as croquet kickball and shooting with a sling shot. Girls learned to cook over an open fire and particularly relished savory coke chicken and Black Forest dump



cake baked in a Dutch oven. After transforming grocery bags into whimsical, works-of-art for the head, scouts enjoyed refreshments during the Mad Hatter’s Tea Party. Older campers ziplined and honed their archery skills along with listening to the sounds of nature during night hikes and tent camping over-night. Each week-long session concluded with blasts of cold water from the visiting fire trucks and a closing flag ceremony. Director Lysette DeBoard has devoted many years to fine-tuning day camp so that it is a truly wonderful experience for the hundreds of campers who attend every year. The very capable and experienced Jessica Hensley will take over as director next year. Many thanks to them, and nearly 200 adult volunteers and teenaged-aides who make camp happen every year.



Top: Scouts anxiously await their turn to conduct the Flag Ceremony. Bottom: the assembly line of daily dishwashing after campfire cooking. Left: Girls will always find the best nature play! A leaning hedge tree at Emerald Forest is perfect for climbing and sitting!

“Hidden Valley makes me happy because I like nature and wildlife”.

Service to Hidden Valley Rewarded by Friends

Friends of Hidden Valley Troop Rewards of \$50.00 each were given to four Girl Scout troops at the Leaders’ Appreciation Night on Monday, April 15, 2019. These rewards serve as incentive for girls to learn about and provide maintenance and stewardship services for their camp. Rewards are based on percentage of troop members participating and number of Hidden Valley work days and service projects completed. Sometimes the girls will add comments about their experiences at Hidden Valley when sending in the applications. We hope the best part is the FUN!

Jessica Hensley’s Brownie troop 5606 worked four work days with a special project in October. **Jenny Gleason and Jackie Stancil’s Junior Troop 5607** worked a HV work day and set up a geocache trail at HV. Girls learned to use a GPS and a compass. **Margaret Milburn’s Cadette Troop 7494** did a variety of independent service projects, including stream restoration. **Jaime Hay’s Ambassador Troop 7579** worked a work day and an independent project of hanging lights in the yurt to brighten rainy days and overnights.

Right: Girls of all ages receive FHV Troop Rewards.



Southern Shade Addition and Fireplace Project

Construction work has begun this summer at Southern Shade Shelter. The project consists of a 10-foot addition and fireplace at the west end of the existing shelter. Wood shake roofing will be replaced with fire-resistant fiberglass composition shingle roofing. The new limestone-clad fireplace will allow for cooking, fire-making, and firewood storage under the roof, which will expand opportunities for outdoor gatherings, especially during inclement weather. The project is expected to be completed by this fall and will cost roughly \$49,000.

Project committee members include Cindy Riling, Durand Reiber, Jeff Bandle, Marcia West, and Jackson Clark. The general contractor is Mar Lan Construction, with project manager Kevin Markley. The fireplace contractor is Bob Sweeney of Sweeney Masonry, while Karl Ramberg will carve a special commemorative stone. Special thanks are due to architect Mike Myers of Hernly Associates who generously donated his time and skills in the creation of the design and the construction drawings, and Jackson Clark for guiding the committee through the process.



Board members Cindy Riling, left, and Jill Baringer tend the Hidden Valley table.

Every Day is Earth Day for Hidden Valley!

On Saturday, April 20, 2019, the City of Lawrence hosted the 19th Annual Earth Day Celebration. Events included a parade hosted by KU Environs, South Park tree identification tours hosted by the Parks & Recreation Department and live music at the Gazebo. There were 55 exhibitors, including Friends of Hidden Valley, and 7 local food vendors.

The purpose of the Earth Day Celebration is to gather community members to connect, discover, and celebrate local organizations and businesses who support a healthy, sustainable environment. At the same time, the Celebration engages event goers with fun activities and exhibitions.

After a brutally cold winter, the gorgeous weather drew large crowds. Friends of Hidden Valley attended to provide information about the importance of our natural greenspace, membership and volunteer opportunities, as well as Trails Day and other upcoming events and projects.



Hidden Valley was the recent recipient of a grant awarded by the Great Plains Biochar Board Initiative. Member Ken Lassman, pictured right, was on hand and demonstrated how to make a simple biochar cookstove.

Green is the New Black Biochar Grant Update

summer with all sorts of experiments, workshops, and educational outreach as part of the Great Plains Biochar Initiative Grant. Our April 5th "Green is the New Black" workshop brought over 20 interested individuals for an afternoon of demonstrations, lectures and a tour (top right). Melinda and her son Jude (pictured lower right) are spearheading a planting experiment while Durand is working on erosion control on stream banks and the use of biochar on our trail system (which held up well during Day Camp). Other committee members have been busy experimenting with biochar as a pollutant filtering system in our streams. Many educational signs have been installed, and every workday or tour has included information on how and why one would want to produce or purchase the biochar for themselves. Stay tuned for our results on all these experiments!

The Biochar Team, consisting of Gwen Macpherson, Margaret Townsend, Ken Lassman, Melinda Black and Durand Reiber, has been busy this spring and



Save These Dates!



**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 9 AM-NOON:
FALL WORKDAY & MONARCH BUTTERFLY TAGGING**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 6-7:30 PM: ANNUAL MEETING
& RECOGNITIONS : THEME— LIGHT MY FIRE!**

RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE BEGINS IN THE FALL FOR 2020

Guidelines: Memberships run the calendar year from January 1 through December 31. Members must be current as of September 1 to vote in the annual elections. Memberships received after September 1st will be applied to the full following year.



**Conservation projects and environmental stewardship opportunities
abound year round at Hidden Valley Camp.**



The Spring Workday held on April 27, in conjunction with the KU Big Event, brought in 83 hard working volunteers, including these KU students. A primary task was to plant over 100 native saplings, using our own biochar to improve growth and survivability.

Older Girl Scouts renovated the rocks around a muddy water hydrant during Day Camp. They removed the rocks, spread gravel, then carefully replaced the rocks, thereby creating a drier and more pleasing area.



**Friends of Hidden Valley, Inc.
PO Box 442073
Lawrence, KS 66044**