



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 2020

www.friendshv.org

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

Hidden Valley as Urban Habitat

At first glance, Hidden Valley has seemed quiet this summer. The familiar sounds of scouts at day camp, work day volunteers and Trails Day participants were absent as many of us stayed home due to the COVID-19 quarantine. That quiet served to remind us of another important role the camp plays for our community—that of an urban habitat.

Hidden Valley started when it was on the west edge of Lawrence, and as the city expanded, the Camp has worked hard to maintain habitat for the original inhabitants of this land: the plants and animals of Hidden Valley. There was a commitment from the start to only plant native plants so that a healthy range of wildlife could find refuge and continue to thrive. This also provides humans the opportunity to witness and safely interact with the natural world first hand. We will be highlighting a plant and animal in each newsletter to celebrate our status as an urban wildlife area; be sure to check out the Friends of Hidden Valley link below that greatly expands what we cover here. The website's monthly guide shows you what you can see at the camp throughout the year, and provides a place for uploading your own photos of things you see too: <https://www.friendshv.org/photo-log>

Compass Plant

There are many species of the sunflowers, and while our state flower is an annual, most sunflowers are perennials. One of the first to bloom in late July/early August is the compass plant. Found in the restored prairie on Flagpole Hill, in spring this plant sends up a rosette of large deeply lobed leaves that orient themselves to the north and south in order to maximize morning and afternoon sunshine exposure while minimizing the effects of the desiccating south winds of summer. This allowed people on the prairies to orient themselves even if they didn't have compasses. The plant shoots up a flower stalk that can be up to 12 feet tall in summer and grows 6 – 30 flowers along the stalk. Seeds are produced by the yellow ray flowers around the edge and not in the middle, unlike the annual sunflower, but the plant can live up to 100 years old!



Opossum

The opossum is one of the most extraordinary animals at Hidden Valley. "Opossum" is derived from the Native American word meaning "white animal". About the size of a cat, it's nocturnal and prefers woodlands close to streams or water. Opossums are the only mammal north of Mexico with a prehensile or grasping tail and our only native marsupial, related to kangaroos and koalas. They give birth to undeveloped offspring and suckle them in a pouch of skin while they develop. Breeding season is from early February through late September and average nine joeys in a litter carried in the mother's pouch for two to three months before climbing on her back. Only one in ten live to adulthood, but then, only live two years. When threatened, opossums can feign death and emit a putrid-smelling green fluid from anal sacs to discourage predators. The

opossum will consume about anything edible: insects, rodents, fruits, berries, carrion, garbage and snakes. They are immune to snake bites and rabies. They also limit the spread of Lyme disease as they kill and eat most ticks that feed on them. Want to learn more? Check out: <https://nhpbs.org/wild/opossum.asp>

Major Projects Completed by Friends and Donors

Thanks to many supporters, several big items were completed this spring and summer. The very important Mary's Meadow Bridge replacement was made possible thanks to a large donation by Jeff and Mary Weinberg, and supplemented with the Merc Change program. Our single gravel road, significantly impacted by large rain events, was redesigned with larger ditches and culverts and a bigger turn and parking lot at the cabin, with funds from Friends and the Merc Change program. These projects better prepare us for the future. The Fireplace project was finally completed through the KRIZ grant, the B4B fundraiser and Friends funding. Friends also funded the repair of several water line leaks and leaking hydrants. It takes a lot to maintain a 40-acre urban wilderness camp, and **we couldn't do it without all of you!**

... I get a rush of excitement whenever I am there.

Photos: New bridge in Mary's Meadow and water line repair near Arcalooka



Annual Recognition Awards

Four Troop Rewards and one Mariana Remple Recognitions Award were presented Monday, May 4, 2020. Due to the quality and number of applications received, the Recognitions Committee agreed to honor more than one troop per age level. Look for some of the girls comments from the award applications, scattered through this issue.



Junior Troop 5606

JUNIOR TROOP 5606

Troop 5606 was very busy at Hidden Valley this year. They visited the camp 6 times, three of them being work days. They mulched trees, planted saplings, raked biochar, pulled weeds from brick patio, cleared foxtail grasses and collected seeds from the pollinator garden, just to name a few things.

JUNIOR TROOP 1599

Troop 1599 attended a work day in March.

Girls worked in staggered family groups pulling a very invasive plant, garlic mustard, as part of their Bronze project.



Junior Troop 1599



Cadette Troop 5607

CADETTE TROOP 5607

Troop 5607 attended the November work day. Their application included the girls comments about what they liked about Hidden Valley. We truly liked them all and shared a few to the right.

CADETTE TROOP 7611

Troop 7611 attended one work day.



Cadette Troop 7611

MARIANNA REMPLE RECOGNITIONS AWARD

Ruby Hoffer

Ruby Hoffer is a member of troop 7611. She has camped at Hidden Valley and been an Aide at Day camp. Ruby is currently working on her Silver Award, and will use her award money toward a Girl Scout trip to Rocky Mountain National Park this Summer.



Ruby Hoffer

Work Day Becomes Work Days During Covid-19

Hidden Valley Camp is so lucky to have so many supporters, including those who contribute hours of "sweat and tears"! Our very important April workday and other service events such as the KU Big Event and Girl Scout projects had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 safety Restrictions on the number of people that can gather. However, working with families and individuals, the Camp Manager was able to get many needed projects accomplished over the last several months, and participants seemed very happy for the opportunity to get some outdoor time with a purpose. Here is a partial list of what was accomplished: Ken Lassman sharpened all of our shovels, Stuart Beals used his carpentry skills on the Brookside Bridge and the yurt ramp, Tom Guber cut back several damaged trees, and Alex Weston who performed some carpentry work on another bridge, and burned brush for an afternoon. Twenty-five families of Girl Scouts and FHV Friends also worked on their own service projects that included invasive wildflower removal, cleaning of fire rings, weeding and planting in the pollinator gardens, laying rock at a new hydrant, seeding bare areas, sanding splintered benches, and more. Twelve GS families came at staggered times to plant 25 walnuts in a grove established near the zip lines, overseen by six board members. Additionally, two teens have requested summer service as well. GS senior Maya Sabatini and Boy Scout Nicky Johnson, will both be contributing routine maintenance such as watering plants, mulching, and removing invasive plants. The Honeysuckle Warriors also continued to assist with weekly events through June. Thanks to all the families too numerous to mention and everyone else that has assisted!



Families volunteering throughout camp.

... Meet new girls and try new things.

Merc Grant



Friends of Hidden Valley received an astonishing \$6,412. in donations from the May "Roundup" program at the Merc! Thank you to the Merc for their commitment to our community, and to all the wonderful people who shopped at the Merc and rounded up for Hidden Valley in May. This generosity is already making an impact at camp.

AmazonSmile is another way for you to support Friends of Hidden Valley. If you have an Amazon account, you may use the same account for Amazon Smile. Go to smile.amazon.com to sign-up and select Friends of Hidden Valley as the charity of your choice. Then shop as usual, looking for the Amazon Smile logo in the top left corner of the screen to assure that Friends receives. 0.5% of your purchase. Pennies add up and help!



Calendar of Events

Precautions intended to minimize the impact of the COVID-19 Virus remain in place. 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.

- ◇ September 12 Work Day– Watch for details as we decide how to safely structure this event.
- ◇ Annual Meeting—There will be no in-person meeting this year. Watch for an annual report.

*I enjoy staying
the night
outside.*

Vandalism Hits the Camp Again

Once again, vandals struck our paradise, attempting entry into almost every building. They succeeded in tearing off an entire door, kicking in another, damaging three others, and making messes. However, nothing was stolen. Thankfully, volunteers jumped in, and although troublesome and time consuming, repair costs will be minimal. Police confirmed our suspicions...the work of kids, probably from the neighborhood, gaining access through the fence and woods. Through our Hiking Patrol, we have determined the time frame of mischief to be between late Saturday afternoon of June 13 and early Monday morning. Anyone with information is encouraged to contact us or the police. We have lots of community service opportunities!

Volunteer Stuart Beals repairs the vandalized door to the composting toilet.



Hiking Patrol



A sunny, calm Thursday was perfect for a hiking getaway. Mowers and weed eaters greeted me, so I hightailed it to what I think of as “the back 40,” the western edge of the camp. While strolling there, I had a thought, “Goats! Could we rent some goats to trim meadows and munch honeysuckle? Their emissions are relatively harmless or, at least, mostly biodegradable. Do they really eat tin cans?” How the mind wanders when walking in the woods! The camp looks great, greening up everywhere. Birds singing. Frogs croaking. All buildings were secured and water spigots off.

-Nancy

Thanks for hiking and sharing!

*I look
forward to
being a rookie
aide.*

**Friends of Hidden Valley, Inc.
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