



Summer 2024

[friendsofmaplewoodstatepark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmaplewoodstatepark@gmail.com)

<https://friendsofmaplewood.org>

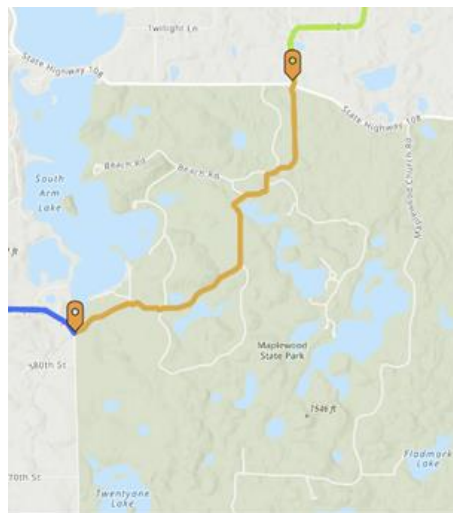
# The Maple Leaf

## **Worth the wait! The Heart of Lakes Trail route through Maplewood State Park construction begins.**

The early stages of construction of the Maplewood segment of the Heart of the Lakes Trail have begun with trail corridor marking and survey work, equipment placement, and some initial brushing and tree removal along the 3.8-mile trail construction corridor.

After an intense study by multiple stakeholders, the route through the Park was approved in early spring. The Maplewood trail, which connects the Pelican and Perham segments of the HOL Trail, is the last section needed to complete the thirty-two-mile trail. Most of the ten-foot-wide trail was completed in 2022.

A standout feature of the trail is its mesmerizing natural environment, and protecting that natural environment was part of the challenge in the approval process. "Otter Tail County worked closely with our partners in the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to create a corridor that not only provided the most visually appealing trail connection through the State Park but to create a trail corridor that minimized the impact to the environment and habitat ecosystems within the Park," said Kevin Fellbaum, Parks and Trails Director of Otter Tail County.



(continued page 2)

## **SUMMER EVENTS**

**Fishing** techniques & strategies with fishing guide Ross Hagemeister – Tuesday, June 4, 6:30 p.m.

**Horse health** and training with Dave Gilbertson – Friday, June 7, 6 p.m.

**Music** – Journey of Faith – Sunday, June 16, 10 a.m.

**Watercolor** World – Watercolor painting with Adam Satterlie – Tuesday, July 23, 10 a.m.

**Music** — Retro Junction—Four-piece band performs blasts from the past - Thursday, August 8, 4 to 6:30 p.m.

**Music and Laughs** – This foursome is talented and fun – Thursday, August 22, 7-8:30 p.m.

**Fishing** muskies, walleyes, and bass with fishing guide Brady Baxter – Saturday, August 24, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

**Music** – Award-winning folk, jazz, and blues performer Nita Velo – Saturday, September 14, 3:00 p.m.

**Leaf Days** – September 27, 28 and October 4-5

**Check our Facebook page for updates and details about each event.**

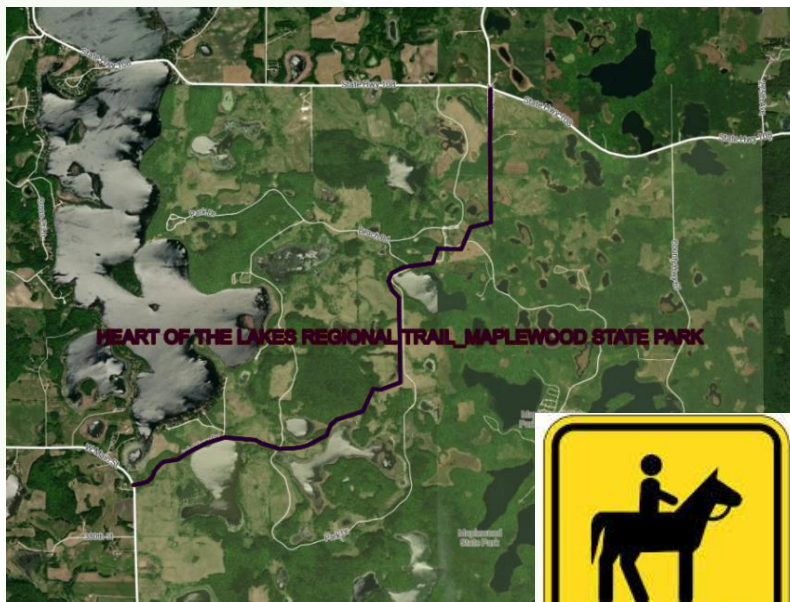
## **Friends of Maplewood Mission**

The Mission of the Friends of Maplewood is to support and encourage the Park's recreational, interpretive, educational and environmental activities through leadership, volunteerism, program development and fund raising. Founded in 1994.

(HOL Trail continued from page 1)

Sections of the HOL Trail are open to the public, with the Maplewood segment expected to be completed in late 2024. The trail is intended for walkers, joggers, hikers, bicyclists, dog walkers, and inline skating. During the spring, summer, and fall seasons, motorized vehicles will be prohibited except for use by maintenance personnel and law enforcement activities. During winter, snowmobiling is permitted along specific segments of the trail corridor.

However, the new multi-use trail is not intended for horseback riders. "Horseback riders will continue to have their own trail corridors through the State Park," said Fellbaum. "Those segments of horse trail that are used by the new multi-use trail will be replaced with new alignments for the horse trails in the park," said Fellbaum. Horses and bicycles don't mix well, so design considerations include "grade change differences and natural vegetation barriers" that separate the two corridors. "Any crossings of these two corridors will be limited," adds Fellbaum.



The new Maplewood Park segment of the Heart of Lakes Trail is an exciting development for Pelican Rapids, Perham, and surrounding communities. Bike it, walk it, skate it, love it. Nature is waiting for you.

### **It's a Celebration! Friends of Maplewood is a 501(c)3 organization.**

Today, we are celebrating an organizational milestone with the news that Friends of Maplewood State Park has been granted 501(c)3 nonprofit status and officially registered as a public charitable organization by the IRS. The status was effective January 8, 2024. Friends of Maplewood State Park previously had a 501(c)3 fiscal agency agreement under the Minnesota Parks and Trails Council but is now registered as a standalone agency.

"The distinction opens many doors for our organization. The exemption makes us eligible for public and private grants. Donors can deduct contributions they make to us, including bequests, transfers, or gifts to Friends of Maplewood State Park," said Scott Stenshoel, President of Friends of Maplewood. Other benefits include organizational exemption from federal, state, and local taxes.

"We are so grateful for the dedicated efforts of our members, our new Board of Directors, our advisory committee, and the volunteers who share their time and talents promoting Maplewood State Park," said Denise Laymon, Vice President. "Friends of Maplewood State Park's future is so bright, and we are anxious to capitalize on our new status."



---

*Prefer to get the newsletter electronically? Just email us at [friendsofmaplewoodstatepark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmaplewoodstatepark@gmail.com) and let us know!*



## Photographs & Memories - Maple Syrup Days 2024



A new well was installed at the Trail Center/Sugar Shack site in Maplewood State Park this past winter. The well will provide year-round freshwater hydrants for all park visitors.

### **New State Park Interpretive Naturalist position announced at Maplewood / Glendalough State Parks**

The Minnesota DNR has announced a new State Park Interpretive Naturalist position to serve at Maplewood and Glendalough State Parks. The position will provide for the interpretive, environmental education, and recreational activities to promote public awareness, appreciation, and understanding of local natural, cultural/archeological, and recreational resources and their management and to foster natural resource stewardship. The area served by this shared position includes Maplewood State Park, Glendalough State Park, and other surrounding MN State Parks & Trails Units.

This is great news for Maplewood and Glendalough!



## More than 800 people attend Maple Syrup Days!

People have been making syrup from the sap of maple trees for hundreds of years. Maplewood State Park has abundant maple trees, so making syrup makes sense. Minnesota has four predominant native maples that grow large enough to tap for syrup: red, sugar, silver, and boxelder maples. The sugar maple is the favorite for syrup makers because its sap is the sweetest.

To celebrate this natural resource, Friends of Maplewood Maple Syrup Day was held on Saturday, April 13, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The day started with a pancake feed from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Event Center in Vergas, Minnesota, hosted by the City of Vergas. From there, folks were invited to Maplewood State Park for demonstrations on making maple syrup at various stations and at the Sugar Shack.



Kids love to learn how maple syrup is made. The process starts with learning how to tap trees.

As part of Maple Syrup Days, Friends of Maplewood hosts a series of demonstrations for students and other organizations where attendees can participate in the various stages of syrup-making. Because nature decides when the sap will run, the demonstrations allow us to teach about making syrup anytime. More than 450 students from Underwood, Frazee, Pelican Rapids, Fergus Falls, Detroit Lakes, and Perham attended this year. John Nordstrom, Friends of Maplewood volunteer, coordinated the scheduled events.

### 2024 Spring Educational Classes – Maple Syrup Demonstrations

Perham Group
Underwood 6 <sup>th</sup> grade
Day Habitation, Community Living Services, Fargo
Frazee 4 <sup>th</sup> graders
Detroit Lakes, Rossman 4 <sup>th</sup> graders
Pelican Rapids 5 <sup>th</sup> graders
Fergus Falls Adams 2 <sup>nd</sup> graders



Bob Hanson explains the maple syrup process inside the Sugar Shack.

## 2024 Memorials

### IN MEMORY

Jerri Baker  
Marilyn Fischer  
Delores Godel  
Dick Nord  
Bud Andrews  
Herb and Eileen Kohler  
Evar, Laura and Glen Fladmark  
Violet Stephenson

### IN HONOR OF

Phil and Lill Hagen  
Connie Michealson  
Family  
Westby's, Past and Present  
Grandchildren

### 2024 FINANCIAL DONATIONS

Dave and Joan  
Ellison  
Dennis and Lisa  
Ouren  
Tom Colman  
Tom H. Carlson & Lisa Cape  
Don & Sue Kunelius

### GIVEN BY

Ron Baker  
Rod Mittelsteadt  
Dale & Elizabeth Michealson  
Gloria Nord  
Helen Miller  
Sue Kohler  
Robert & Mary Bowers  
Clint Stephenson

### GIVEN BY

Kristen and Rehak Scott  
Dale and Elizabeth Michealson  
Mark and Jackie Scott  
Ann Westby  
Mike and Linda Westby

### THRIVENT CHOICE

If you are a member of Thrivent, you can direct your Choice dollars to the Friends of Maplewood State Park. We appreciate it!

To make a donation in honor or in memory of someone, scan the QR code below or visit our online payment system at <https://form.jotform.com/241023977604153> If you prefer, you can fill out the form on the back of the newsletter and send it with your check to Friends of Maplewood State Park, P.O. Box 259, Pelican Rapids, MN 56572.



### Friends of Maplewood Board of Directors

Scott Stenshoel, President  
Denise Laymon, Vice President  
Stu Peterson, Treasurer  
Angie Stevenson, Secretary  
Lynn Carlson  
Judi Engebretson  
Ruth Holmgren  
Jerry Pederson  
Linda Today

## Horse Camp Improvements Made!

You might remember when horse camp was nothing more than a wide-open field. Camping was a free-for-all with only the strong surviving. Since then, many improvements have been made, and many are on our list.

Last year, additional gravel was hauled to improve the road in and out of the horse camp and the main road that runs through it. Archeological studies must be completed before we can move dirt, alter the terrain, or trench for water and electricity. “But we were able to bring in some gravel to minimize the drop-offs on some sites and widen and level roads to make it easier for horse trailers to access campsites,” said Jerry Pederson, Friends of Maplewood. Campsite signs should be installed by the time horse camp opens. State Park personnel are hoping to add gravel to the tie sites and fortify those that need it.

“We know there are a lot of improvements that equestrian campers want,” said Pederson. We continue to push for those and provide resources where we can.” Maplewood Park has over twenty miles of trails, making it some of the best horseback riding in the state.



## Don Del Greco, Park Manager, announces new Assistant Park Manager to Maplewood

Please join us in welcoming Riley Finnegan as the new Maplewood State Park Assistant Manager. Riley started his new assignment on January 3, 2024, and we are very fortunate to have him on our Division of Parks and Trail, Region 1, and District 1 Team.

After four years in the U.S. Navy, Riley attended Minnesota State University Mankato and graduated in 2019 with a Recreation Parks and Leisure Services, Resource Management Degree. During college he started working for Parks and Trails at Flandrau State Park. In 2023 Riley also served as a Specialist Intermediate at Sakatah Lake State Park, bringing with him a diverse background of experiences and knowledge.

"I am excited to start working at Maplewood State Park! I have heard nothing but good things about the park and its staff. I have been with the DNR since 2018 as a Park and Trails Associate. Most of my time has been spent at Flandrau State Park. My favorite part of working for the DNR was working with a fantastic crew on an iconic and wonderful nature play. I enjoy hiking, fishing, scale modeling and reading. This position is a fantastic opportunity for me and I am thankful for everyone who has helped me get to this place in my life and career." – Riley Finnegan

Please join us in welcoming Riley to his new position. Riley started his new position on January 3, 2024.

## We Take Pride in Our Park

Welcome to the Friends of Maplewood State Park. Our organization consists of members who enjoy and appreciate this great natural resource.

Our goal is to work with park management on various projects and events so that you





### **Record Crowd for Friends of Maplewood Candlelight Trek**

We weren't sure if people would come. No snow, no go? And what to do about using real candles in the dry weather?

But the trek must go on, and it was a record-setter. "We were thrilled when the cars started lining up as early as 4 pm," said Steve Toso, volunteer. "And they just kept coming!" Around 1,100 people from a wide swath of the area came to participate in the one-mile walk around Cataract Lake lit by 150 lanterns. "The lanterns were new for us this year," said Toso. "We borrowed 144 from another park and I brought six of my own. That gave us a good chance to see how they worked."



It was a heartwarming evening for adults, young people, kiddos and leashed dogs of every size and shape, all coming together to make the one-mile trek around Cataract Lake a night to remember. The sunset was a breathtaking backdrop to the shared laughter and joy, and all enjoyed the chili and treats.



**JOIN FRIENDS OF MAPLEWOOD – OUR NEW ONLINE ENROLLMENT AND PAYMENT OPTION IS AVAILABLE**

To renew your membership, become a member, or donate to the Friends of Maplewood, scan the QR code below or join online through the following link: <https://form.jotform.com/241023977604153> . **The link will open to our Friends membership, donation, and payment form.** If you prefer, you can mail in your membership form with a check. We owe our success to the dedication and volunteer efforts of our members like you. Your contribution matters.



**FRIENDS OF MAPLEWOOD**

**2024 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE**

Send application to: Friends of Maplewood  
PO Box 259  
Pelican Rapids, MN 56572

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: FRIENDS OF MAPLEWOOD STATE PARK**



**Choose one:** ☐ I am a new member. ☐ I am renewing my membership for 2024.

**Choose one:** ☐ Single \$10 ☐ Couple \$15 ☐ Family \$30 ☐ Lifetime \$500

☐ I am interested in hearing more about volunteer opportunities! **(check if interested)**

Name

Address

City State Zip

Phone  email

Additional Donation in MEMORY OF

Additional Donation in HONOR OF

Friends of Maplewood is a 501(c)3 organization.

[friendsofmaplewoodstatepark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmaplewoodstatepark@gmail.com)

<https://friendsofmaplewood.org>

**Friends of Maplewood State Park  
PO Box 259  
Pelican Rapids, MN 56572**