

Spring 2026

friendsofmaplewoodstatepark@gmail.com

<https://friendsofmaplewood.org>

218-731-1079



The Maple Leaf

Member Highlight-Don Perrin

Don Perrin fondly remembers going on hunting trips with his father at Maplewood State Park, both before and after it became a park. "I was quite young back then, but sitting on the hillside overlooking the valleys and listening to the hunter's gunshots is an experience I still cherish."

Perrin has been a Friend of Maplewood for twenty years. "When I was very young, I cross-country skied here. During COVID, I often hiked here. It was great to get away and appreciate nature and the quiet of the park."

Perrin recalls attending Maplewood Church, and afterward, people would hike. Today, Perrin often hikes the south loop of the park. "In fact, I went hiking last night," he said. Perrin volunteers during Leaf Days and at maple syrup events. Looking ahead, Perrin, like so many, believes a new visitor center is important. "It would be nice to have a place to shop for items about Maplewood. I would also like to see a restaurant within the park."

"It's great to have the park close to Pelican Rapids. And the new bike trail is a wonderful addition." Perrin is the pharmacist at Pelican Drug and is a long-time member of the community.



Maple Syrup Day 2026

Maple Syrup Day 2026 at Maplewood State Park on April 11th was fun despite the chilly 'Minnesota Spring' weather. Outdoor enthusiasts, families, and kids bundled up to learn about the maple syrup process. The event started at 10:00 am, but people began arriving by 9:30 am, eager to learn and ready to listen to the



Friends volunteers as they visited each station. From identifying maple trees by their "opposite branches", to seeing the evolution of tree taps, to feeling the weight of carrying sap buckets, and the highlight of exploring the Native American methods of using fire, a carved-out log, and rocks!

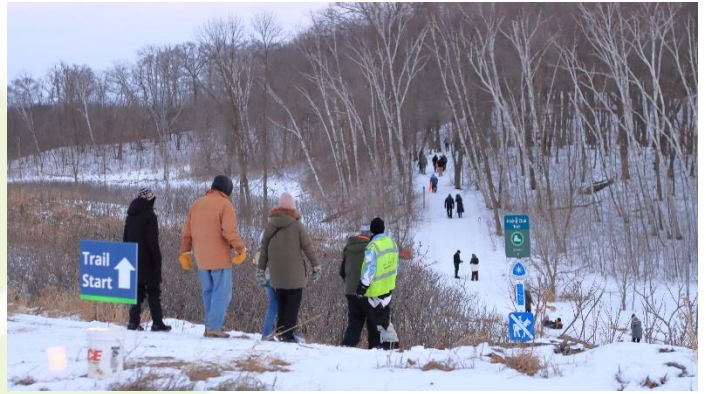


(continued on page 6)

Candlelight Trek

On February 28th, the Friends of Maplewood and the DNR team were excited to host our annual Candlelight Trek, which drew about 400 people!

Despite the chilly weather, our spirits were warm, the chili was hot, and the treats were delish. Folks said the trails were great, noting how well-maintained they were for walking, snowshoeing, or skiing, making for an enjoyable experience in the beautiful winter landscape.



We sincerely thank all the dedicated volunteers who helped make this event possible. Your hard work and commitment are what make our gatherings fun and memorable. Most importantly, we'd like to thank all our guests who braved the cold to enjoy Maplewood State Park. We treasure this event and look forward to seeing everyone again next winter!



Roll That Beautiful Maple Syrup

The maple syrup was really rolling at Maplewood State Park this spring. The team of “sons”, along with others, tapped 150 trees and produced over 1500 gallons. Brian Nelson is heading up the group with help from Jeff Pladson, Bob Hanson, Tom Carlson, Dennis Albright, and Rollie Golay.



MAPLE SYRUP SCHOOL EDUCATION



Each spring, the Friends of Maplewood offer free maple syrup education to schools, mainly grades 4–12. Kids learn to identify maple trees, tap trees, collect sap, and make maple syrup, as Native Americans did. Schools send one grade at a time, staying busy all day with morning lessons, lunch with ice cream and syrup, and a hike up Hallaway Hill. The first session is on April 24, with more until May 18, involving students from several schools.

If you're interested, have questions, want to volunteer, or would like to arrange a visit, contact John Nordstrom at nordlake7@hotmail.com or 218-841-7673.



WANTED! MAPLEWOOD STATE PARK ARTIFACTS

Indian artifacts, wood carvings, pictures, letters, and items from schools, churches, and early settlers are just the beginning of the Maplewood State Park memorabilia collection that Cliff and Phyllis Knutson hope to expand about our wonderful park.

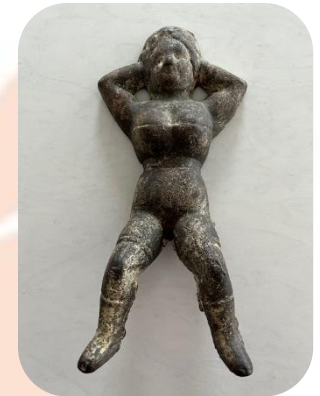
“We are hoping to collect a variety of historical artifacts about Maplewood,” said Cliff Knutson. “Such a collection could be displayed when a Visitor’s Center is built.”

Although there is no immediate plan for a new Center, that doesn’t stop Phyllis and Cliff from getting a head start by collecting items. “We are looking for artifacts that reflect the people who once lived on the land that is now Maplewood State Park.”

Cliff and Phyllis will record donations, including the donor’s name, address, and phone number. Each item will be photographed, logged into an inventory, and a receipt will be provided to the donor. All items will be stored in a secure location.

If you have items of interest you’d like to donate, please contact Cliff and Phyllis. You can reach them at 218-736-7480 or at 23378 Sophus Anderson Road, Fergus Falls, MN 56537.

Wood carvings like this deer by Ellis Wagstrom, a former park resident, are included in the collection.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY, SATURDAY, MAY 2 -- 9 A.M. TO 2 P.M.

We are looking for volunteers to help with horse trails and at horse camp. The DNR is coordinating this event. Lunch will be provided, but bring your own water to stay hydrated. Our “To Do” list includes:

- ❖ Clear branches and widen trails.
- ❖ Remove and replace the fence around the water hydrant at the horse camp.
- ❖ Remove old barbed wire from trails.
- ❖ Add gravel on washed-out horse trails.
- ❖ If corral panels for horse camp are approved, then fill and level pads for corrals.
- ❖ Materials and tools will be provided, but please wear long sleeves, long pants, safe shoes, and gloves.
- ❖ Please register at the ranger station when you arrive.

Friends of Maplewood Misson

The MISSION of the Friends of Maplewood State Park 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.

SUMMER EVENTS!



Thursday, June 18, 2026—10:00 AM *Don Delgreco* (retired park ranger) will be available for art demonstrations. His photography and painting showcase his view of how art offers a unique and fresh perspective on nature. He will be painting a landscape celebrating the beautiful early summer of Maplewood State Park. Join him at the Josh Hanson Memorial Shelter to view some of his work and learn how to express your own art by painting a nature landscape. The class is free, and all materials will be provided.

Friday, July 17, 2026—7:00 PM—*Off the Hook* is a group of local musicians who like to have fun while entertaining with a variety of music, including a mix of folk, country, classic rock, gospel, and bluegrass. Musicians and vocalists include Lee Brenna, Laura Hagen, and Tom and Suzi Ladwig. We are looking forward to seeing you at the Josh Hanson Memorial Shelter. Bring a lawn chair and enjoy a fun summer evening of music.



Thursday, August 13, 2026—4:00-5:30 PM, LREC Picnic, there will be a guest appearance by *Tia Thysell*. Tia is a local, small-town country gal who loves to entertain others around a bonfire with her self-taught guitar and vocals—playing country music for all eras, from the Bellamy Brothers to Kelsea Ballerini, but her main passion is covering female artists of the late 90s and early 2000s.

Saturday, September 19th, 2026

From 3:00 to 4:30 PM, music will be provided by Aimee Nordlund, who is a musician from Fergus Falls, MN. She is a piano teacher, choir director, pianist and vocalist. She is also the Minister of Music at Grace Lutheran Church of Erhard. She enjoys lifting others' spirits with song, especially at the Fergus Falls Veterans Home, where she sings monthly. Aimee performs a wide variety of music, from folk to gospel, from Johnny Cash to Judy Garland. She loves a sing-along and believes that music is better together!



LEAF DAYS—OCTOBER 3 & 4, 2026



There will be many activities over Leaf Day weekend, so be sure to mark your calendars. More information will be made available as we get closer through email, Facebook, and the Pelican Press. One of the highlights will be music by the *Barn Cats* on Saturday, October 4, 2026, who play old-time fiddle music; reels, waltzes, and polkas; upbeat tunes from the back porches, front parlors, and Saturday barn dances of an earlier era. Much of what they carry on is Appalachian music from the crooked roads of the rural south. They will bring those home-grown traditions and techniques to the waltzes, polkas, and reels of our Midwestern roots.

RUNNING WILD TRAIL RUN-JUNE 13, 2026

The course navigates through Maplewood State Park. There are two trail run options: the 7K Trail Run and the 1-Mile LIFE Hike. Wee Run Wild & Kid's Run Wild are 200-yard dashes run on the beach of Lake Lida. The event is hosted by the Health Resources Center.

MAPLEWOOD STATE PARK UPDATE FROM RANGER BILL ANDERSON

Projects:

Bass Lake Access Project: The project has been pushed back to late summer/fall.

Glacial Edge Trail: Tree clearing began in March. The construction contract has not yet been bid out, pending an agreement with DNR. We expect the County to begin construction this year.

Horse Camp Conceptual Design: Jeff Jelinek's class at NDSCS has completed its initial 2D drawings. Jerry Pederson and I reviewed thirteen different designs, provided feedback, and the next step is to create 3D renderings.

Visitor Center: We met with the FOM board and the Parks & Trails Deputy Director, Phil Leversedge, on March 17th. Phil described the steps in the process to move the project forward. Once the DNR Commissioner gives approval for the pre-planning to begin, it will be a 5-10 year effort.

Office Update: The park has been authorized to expand workstations in the park office. This will help us accommodate new staff and improve existing workspace facilities.



Program Updates: Maple Syrup Production: Production is in full swing. Maple Syrup Day was on April 11.

Volunteering: Picnic Shelter Gardens: Park staff will be able to do some spraying this spring if all goes as planned. Before any new plantings, we will need to obtain approval of the proposed plant list, including the sources of plant materials.

•Horse Pass Projects: The park has submitted requests totaling over \$60,000 for:

- 7 corrals for the equestrian campground
- New trail mower
- Gravel and ballast rock for trail improvements
- Trail designer for sections of Beers Lake trails

Entrance Sign: Besides the garden and painting, solar lights will be installed on the entrance sign this spring/early summer. This is funded through energy conservation and light pollution initiatives.

Equestrian Volunteer Workday: Tentatively scheduled for May 2. Tasks include installing new fencing around the water spigot, preparing for corrals, brushing the entrance road, removing barbed wire, and performing general spring cleanup. No background check is required, and you do not need to be a member of Friends of Maplewood. Volunteers must register at the ranger station on the day of the event. Materials will be provided; volunteers should bring gloves and personal protective equipment such as boots, masks, and goggles.

Asks: The DNR is working with Friends to see the Sugar Shack open to the public more in the summer and fall months. We are considering providing food that uses maple syrup products on a few Saturday mornings or early evenings. Please contact Bill at 218-560-5532 if you are interested.

New Phone Number for Maplewood State Park: 218-560-5530

MAPLE SYRUP DAY (continued from page 1)

The Sugar Shack was a busy place, not just because it was toasty warm, but because the evaporation stove was continually stoked as we boiled sap collected the previous day. This was more than just a demonstration-- we were actually boiling the sap collected from the maple trees in the park. The sweet smell in the air helped tell the story of how the water is boiled out of the sap to prepare it for bottling. Midway through the event, another 170 gallons of sap collected by the Friends volunteers that morning were added to the Sugar Shack for processing.



It was exciting to be part of all the steps of the maple syrup process ... from seeing the trees with plastic tubing lines dripping into buckets, to the best part ... tasting the maple syrup drizzled on ice cream, and served up in the Trail Center by the Friends of Maplewood. Thank you to everyone who participated in this special Maple Syrup Day!



Friends of Maplewood New Phone Number: 218-731-1079

Have you had a question about Friends of Maplewood but didn't know where or who to call? Well, here's some exciting news! WE HAVE A PHONE NUMBER and we're as giddy as a Spring Peeper! (If you don't know what a Spring Peeper is, this little frog is one of the first creatures to become active in the spring, often starting their calls in March.)

Meet Kim Nelson, the face behind the phone. Kim will also keep track of membership, coordinate volunteers, write grants, keep up with procedures and policies for a 501c(3) organization, and conduct fundraising.



We Take Pride in Our 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 and your family can enjoy the park year-round.

Maplewood State Park

39721 Park Entrance Road, Pelican Rapids, MN 56572 – 218-560-5530
https://stateparks.com/maplewood_state_park_in_minnesota.html

FRIENDS OF MAPLEWOOD - LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS

Albright Kay & Dennis
 Anderson Bruce & Kathryn Ronningen
 Anderson Kathryn & Bruce
 Anderson Susan & Norm
 Babler Judy
 Backstrom Steve & Barb
 Baker* Alberta* B. & Dr. Richard*
 Bell Bank Diane Hansen
 Brinkman Mary L.
 Christianson Johanna & Jim
 Christianson Junelle & Steve
 Coldwell Bankers
 Colman Thomas
 Deckman Mollie & Don
 Del Greco Bonnie & Don
 Dokken Brittany & Mark
 DuBord Pat & Dick
 Duncan Georgia & Mel
 Eisinger Nancy & Larry
 Evenson Connie & Brian
 Evenson Kathryn & Bernard Nordmann
 Fergus Falls Garden Club
 Fjestad Sharon L. & Ed
 Flaig Joyce & Ron
 Frazier JoAnn & Brent
 Greenagel Dr. Joe & Becky
 Haarstad Mike & Linda
 Hanley Yvonne
 Hanson Kathy & Bob
 Holmgren Ruth & Van
 Hovland Jeanne & Jim
 Hovland Pam, Steve, Lawrence
 Jameson Ed & JoAnn
 Jensen Judith
 Jones Marti & Sam
 Jordahl Roland
 Jorgensen Phyllis & Gary
 Knoke Tiffany & Keith
 Knopf David & Diane
 Knutson Phyllis & Cliff
 Koski Wendy & Gene
 Krekelberg Pat & Chuck
 Kundsén Jim & Ellen
 Laymon Denise & Brian
 Lenthe Susan
 Lindholm Patricia & John
 MacFarlane Bill & Jasmin
 Martin Pat & Norma
 McRoberts Dave

Morical Terrill & Darlene
 Musacchia Tom & Polly
 Nelson Lloyd P. & Donna
 Nettetstad Paulette & Chet
 Nichelson Katie & Vance
 Nordstrom Bonnie & John
 Perham Rotary Club
 Perrin Don
 Peter Jeff & Dawn
 Pladson Jeff & Beth
 Red Horse Riders Saddle Club
 Rolfson Jan
 Ronningen Alma & Marvin*
 Shipp Hebe & Jim
 Sjostrom David & Deb
 Smemo Suzanne
 Smestad Richard & Jennifer
 Solum Joy & Dan
 Sprague Steve & Annette (Knudsen)
 Spriggs Lisa & Mark
 Spriggs Nicholas & Annika
 Spriggs Tyler & Rachael
 Staebler Betty & Jon
 Stenshoel Stephanie & Scott
 Stephenson DeeDee & Cary
 Stoll Eugene & Marion*
 Stotesbery Cyndy & Phil
 Stutsman Monica
 Swenson Pam
 Tabbut Judy & Paul
 Underwood Lions Club
 Vergas Lion Club
 Vergas State Bank
 Weckwerth Dr. Dave & Mimsi
 Wieser Father Stanley
 * Deceased



2026 SPRING FINANCIAL DONATIONS

Keith & Lorraine Langseth
 Sandford & Carol Emery
 Lisa & Dennis Ouren
 John & Bonnie Nordstrom
 Dave & Joan Ellison
 Cliff & Phyllis Knutson
 Tom Colman
 Don & Sue Kuneluis
 Paul & Barb Haberman
 Jennifer Story
 Pamela Westby

IN MEMORY OF

Mardell Lindstrom
 Ervin Ohman
 Marilyn Fischer
 Jerri Baker

GIVEN BY

Robert Lindstrom
 Iris Ohman
 Galen and Sharon Vaa
 Ron and Cheryl Baker

IN HONOR OF

Peter Wasberg

GIVEN BY

Bill & Jasmine MacFarlane

* Deceased

3 Ways to Join or Donate to Friends of Maplewood

1. Scan the QR code and choose the membership and payment option that works for you.
2. Click on this link to access our membership form and payment options.
<https://form.jotform.com/241023977604153>
3. Complete and return this application with a check **payable to Friends of Maplewood** and mail it to PO Box 259, Pelican Rapids, MN 56572.



Choose one: I am a new member. I am renewing my 2026 membership.
AND/OR I want to donate.

Choose one: Single \$10 Couple \$15 Family \$30 Lifetime \$500
 Corporate \$250 I am interested in information about a planned gift.

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

I prefer to receive my newsletter electronically OR in the mail **(choose one)**



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 <https://friendsofmaplewood.org>

Cut here and return to Friends of Maplewood at PO Box 259, Pelican Rapids, MN 56572

