



HOLLIDAY NATURE PRESERVE ASSOCIATION

Volume 18 Number 2

www.hnpa.org

Spring 2008

Join our 20th Rouge Rescue

Our 20th Rouge Rescue takes on June in the Newburgh Road section. This area offers a lot of great opportunities for ambitious volunteers of all ages.

Here are a few of the projects planned:

- ◆ Remove trash and building from the woods and creek.
- ◆ Improve several soggy upland trails.
- ◆ Mulch and care for trees planted during previous projects.
- ◆ Work in the creek.

We no longer remove log jams but, instead, practice an



environmentally friendly policy called woody debris management (WDM). In WDM, fallen trees are arranged to reduce shoreline erosion and provide instream habitat.

There are also vandalized structures on site: a pavilion

and a restroom. Wayne County Parks has pledged to remove the pavilion and is evaluating the future of the restroom.

We are glad to again have Bob Patterson represent the City of Westland. Bob and the city have been our partner for many years providing equipment, people and supplies.

Please come and spend three or four hours with us and invest in your nature preserve. More information is available on the Friends of the Rouge Web site at www.therouge.org.

HNPA's Mission

Holliday Nature Preserve Association (HNPA) is a group of volunteers dedicated to the William. P. Holliday Forest & Wildlife Preserve in Westland, Livonia and Canton, Michigan.

The Preserve consists of 500-plus acres of forests and wetlands that runs along tributaries of the Rouge River.

The HNPA seeks to nurture a greater appreciation of this unique natural resource by hosting walks and conducting maintenance improvement projects in conjunction with Wayne County Parks.

Our activities are free and open to everyone. Find out more at www.hnpa.org.

Come to a Holliday celebration



HNPA celebrates its 20th anniversary with a **picnic on Sunday, July 20** and everyone is invited!

We will meet for food and fun at the pavilion across from Nankin Mills. There are restrooms and plenty of parking.

We are also offering our

first-ever end-to-end walk beforehand for those who want a challenge before their bratwurst (and are faster than the mosquitoes).

More details coming in a special mailing.

We plan to have a great time. It's a celebration 20 years in the making and your support has made it possible.

Winter walks revisited



At high noon on Jan 27, we started our series of sectional end- to-end walks.

We lucked out this day, no blizzard or wind chill. Six HNPA regulars started at the

new Ellsworth bridge and went all the way to Wayne Road -- and back.

We usually don't go that far in the winter, but the walk was easy, except for all the fallen ash trees across the trail. The Preserve once held a large

number of ash trees. The emerald ash borer killed them and that has caused the tree canopy to collapse. What a startling change from just a few years ago.

We saw a few woodpeckers and even some "snow fleas." These tiny creatures can sometimes be found atop the snow in winter, as if someone sprinkled pepper over the snow.

If you pick up a handful of snow you can see them jump. HNPA's Bill Craig checked out Wikipedia when he got home for info on the fleas. He found that snow fleas *Hypogastrura nivicola*) are species of springtail, a leaf litter decomposer. They are about 1-2 millimeter long and get there nickname from ability to "spring" about. They don't bite or live on people or pets.

Our next walk in Feb., went from Cowan to Wayne Bridge and back. Again, this was longer than our regular walks.

The weather smiled on us again with sunny mild (30°) weather. Only trouble we had was that Ice covered many of the slopes. We enjoyed a variety of birds, some sleeping raccoons, checked out the animal tracks and took a close look at trees such as the

Shellbark and Shagbark Hickory.

We met many people along the trail. Many of them were walking dogs, some off leash. We sure could use "NO DOGS ALLOWED" signs! People need to remember Holliday is a nature preserve and not a

dog park.



The March walk was warm and a dozen people took part as we walked the Newburgh section.

It was a pleasant walk with a **BIG SURPRISE**: We have (or at least had for a time) a **BEAVER** in the Preserve enjoying young willow trees along the Tonquish Creek.



We saw plenty of evidence

(photo at left), but no sighting of this chisel-tooth rodent as we walked along Tonquish Creek.

On the trail back, we saw several deer, a few black-phased gray squirrels and even a groundhog sleeping in a tree! Yep, groundhogs climb trees; you just don't see many sleeping out on a limb. Usually, it's raccoons we see snoozing in the trees.

Scouting the preserve

Report on a Cub Scout hike at Newburgh

In early January Bill Craig, president of the HNPA, teamed up with Cub Scouts from Coolidge Elementary.

Cub leaders Ken and Lesia McQuade arranged a walk in the Preserve on Newburgh Road behind Randazzo's. This area usually has deer, and we were hoping to spot a big eight-point buck.

pings, scrapes, prints and areas where the deer had laid, they never spotted any of the elusive whitetails (although one keen-eye Cub did spot some snow fleas).



we had hot chocolate and cookies. What a fun way to spend a winter's day!

Note: Organizations that wish to schedule a guided hike in the Preserve should e-mail their request to Hollidayassociation@hnpa.org. Because we are a small volunteer organization, not all requests can be granted. All groups are invited to join our regularly scheduled walks and activities.

A large group of Cubs, their siblings and parents entered the Preserve on the trail that had recently been cleared by Eagle Scout, Joey Petriches.

The Cubs searched for animal tracks, shed deer antlers and neat stuff that boys like to find in the out-of-doors.

Unfortunately, although the Cubs spotted deer drop-

Even without deer there was plenty to see and do, including trees to climb over, trails to run down and nature's wonders to enjoy.

Afterwards





Thanks to our supporters

Since last newsletter, the following people have kindly renewed their memberships, made donations, or have become new members. Thank you all. HNPA appreciates your support.

Patrick Bussey
Matt Best Family
Nancy Butka
Tom & Madeline Carpenter
Thomas Clough
Margret Converse
Jim and Liz Cook
Doug DiMeglio
James Gilbert
Jim Flanigan
Marilyn and Thomas Gould
Sally Green
Ruth Hart
Fred and Celeste Hoitash

Maria Jagadics
Violet Janowski
Jordis Johnsen
Gary Kieltyka
Gayle Larson
Georgia McDaniel
John and Gayle Mendler
Robert and Denise Miotto
Bill and Shari Muller
Dorothy Mundle
Richard Nicholas
Susan and Russell Nye
David and Susan Ostafinski
Joseph Peruski

Valerie Przywara
Zlatko and Zlata Rauker
Jessie Mae Sanderson
Larry and Chris Snowden
Elaine Shipe
Virginia Stanch
Michelle Tencza
Jennifer and Ati Tislerics
John and Marina Wagatha
Charles & Catherine Walls
Van Wicklin Family

Can we count on you, too?

Membership in the Holliday Nature Preserve Association **runs Jan. 1—Dec. 31** and is only **\$5 per year**. Your support makes it possible for us to **publish three newsletters** a year, **host**

a Web site and **hold clean-up projects** that help maintain the Preserve.

If you have not yet done so, please take a moment to support your HNPA by using the form below.

Funds received will be used to benefit the Preserve.

You may also earmark any additional contribution to extend your membership.

Be Part of HNPA!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Address 2: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____ + _____

\$ _____ Enclosed

If more than \$5, should additional funds be used as: () **Donation** () **Extend membership**
Please make check or money order payable to the *Holliday Nature Preserve Association* and mail to:
HNPA, P.O. Box 52104, Livonia, MI 48152

Tree Logging Update

In our last newsletter, we included an article and photos concerning serious encroachment in the Preserve. We included several photos of the actions of a homeowner who had taken to cutting trees and installing playground equipment in the Preserve.

Once we became aware of the problem (and it's one of the most blatant we have seen), our organization did what we have always asked you to do in these matters: Contact Wayne County Parks who has the responsibility of ensuring Holliday Nature Preserve continues to serve as a sanctuary for plants and animals.

Sadly, the only action we have gotten so far is inaction. This has allowed the tree loggers to get away with the damage they caused. The trees were cut down and now have been hauled out.

We understand that this is not a major crime and HNPAA isn't asking for someone to be arrested, prosecuted or even asked to make restitution. We do however feel it needs to stop and that



the people on the street be instructed on what activities are prohibited in the Preserve. And at the very least, the playground equipment needs to go.

Instead of talking to the homeowners or even sending a letter, Parks instead forwarded a report to the Sheriff's Department. When HNPAA President Bill Craig visited the Sheriff's office on Henry Ruff, he was told they would investigate – if case load allowed.

We don't even think the Sheriff needs to be involved. But if the Parks Department is



not going to help then the Sheriff needs to step in.

Inaction tells other adjacent homeowners that they can do whatever they want in the Preserve.

- ◆ Want a Christmas tree? Cut one down in the Preserve.
- ◆ Your kids want a fort? Why build one in your backyard when there are 500 acres to build in.
- ◆ Want to clear out the undergrowth to give you a cleaner look out your window? Get out the chainsaw and go to work. No one will stop you.

We're exaggerating here. Thankfully, most neighbors are good stewards and understand the value of having a nature preserve in their backyard. However, the Parks Department needs to step up to their responsibility. We provide millions of dollars every year in millage money. We're only asking them to invest 42 cents in a stamp and letter to the responsible homeowners. We are in need of advice. What do you think we should do next?

On a brighter note: Newburgh trail restoration

Boy Scout Jonathan Van Wicklin and his parents joined us on one of our walks to find out where the trail between Newburgh and Hix Road is—or at least used to be. Most of the trail had

washed away or was covered with fallen trees.

As part of his Eagle project, Jonathan obtained permission from Wayne County Parks to replace some missing bridge planks

and re-establish the trail.

He should have the project done by the time you receive this newsletter. We appreciate Jonathan's efforts in improving the Preserve and its trail system.

Spring 2008 walks

Early signs of Spring

Saturday, April 19, 10:00a.m.
Meet at Hix Park. (Hix north of Warren Road)

We will continue our series of sectional hikes by heading east to Newburgh Road. Eagle Scout Jonathan Van Wicklin has made the trail easy to find. We often see deer in this section. The area does contain some low wet sections.

Wildflowers and tall trees

Saturday, May 10, 10:00 a.m.
Meet at Hix Park. (Hix north of Warren Road)

This time we head west. We will go all the way to the railroad tracks in Canton. This will complete the sectional end-to-end series.

Note: At two hours, this will also be our longest walk of the spring. You may want to bring water.

Rouge Rescue

Saturday, June 7, 8:30 a.m.
Meet at Newburgh (North of Warren Road) Families, groups and individuals are invited to spend a half day taking part in this annual event.

Last year, nearly 90 people took part. There will be t-shirts and refreshments for participant. See Page one and story below for details.

HNPA calls on county for help

Group hopes Parks will demo structures before Rouge Rescue

How many citizens of Westland and Canton know that within the borders of their city is a gem: Holliday Nature Preserve, home to a wide variety of wildlife such as deer, fox, blue herons, great horned owls and maybe even a beaver. Plus assorted

birds and flowers nearly unmatched in the region.

How many citizens of those cities also realize that within this

Preserve are two dilapidated structures that are unsightly and, at least in one case, dangerous.

They are old (1960s era) picnic pavilion and comfort station covered in graffiti.

These structures stand (and for the pavilion the term is used loosely) in the



Newburgh section of the Preserve.

Although the comfort station is secured, we are working with Wayne County Parks and the City of Westland to get both structures demolished before Rouge Rescue begins.

Leaving the structures up would be unfair to the volunteers who are going to work hard on improving the Preserve and for the citizens of Westland who have to put up with such structures in their city.

