



Dear Friends of Perch Lake,

It is once again time to renew your support. FOPL has moved from a membership model to a subscription model. What that means to you is that 100% of your donation is now tax deductible as opposed to only the amount over the membership fee under the old model. New and renewing subscribers will receive a bookmark of the scene on this year's letterhead taken and donated by Linda Jameson; great-granddaughter of the Davidsons.

FOPL's annual meeting will be Saturday, May 9 at 10:00 a.m. in the park. Meet at the playground pavilion or the equipment shed in case of inclement weather. Bring a picnic and make a day of it.

It has been a productive year for FOPL and the park. FOPL had a presence at Earth Day activities, St. Joseph Fall festival, and once again had a brat roast fundraiser at RJ meats. Be sure to thank them for providing this venue. Fortunately, the building fund for the Learning Center has not suffered the same fate as our retirement accounts and has now grown to just under 55,000\$. We thank the St. Croix Community Foundation for their wise stewardship.

Volunteer divers and park staff are making headway against the Eurasian Milfoil at the swimming beach. There are 3 dives scheduled to continue the effort: April 25, May 16, and June 20 from 9a.m. to noon each day. FOPL will be providing a thank-you feast following the May 16 dive. The local dive rescue teams as well as at least two local scout troops will be involved. People willing to help feed or donate food/cash for a meal for these dedicated folk please contact FOPL president Donna Seim at dmdseim@aol.com. Jim Traegar has volunteered to supply the meat. St.Croix Scuba will be providing a lunch following the other 2 dives as well as free air and gear rental for volunteer divers.

The Hudson YMCA once again held a swim meet at the park, and likely will do so again this year. Swimmers expressed their appreciation of the milfoil control. There will also be a triathlon in the park June 27 organized by Vicki Ostendorf proprietor of Trifitness in White Bear Lake. Watch their web site for info. www.trifitnesswbl.com

A portion of the proceeds will go to FOPL. Volunteers will be needed.

Last spring the Prairie Enthusiasts arranged for a controlled burn of the main portion of the prairie. FOPL volunteer photographer Linda Jameson documented the burn as well as the glorious bloom later in the summer. Watch the prairie kiosk for pictures. If our dry weather abates in time, the St. Joseph fire department will burn the sides of the main entrance road this spring.

Over the winter, the County received a grant to continue to remove more of the planted pines in the prairie restoration area on the hill to the North of the down entrance road. The harvested pines are being processed for biofuel. The newly revealed view is spectacular. Go to www.friendsofperchlake.com to view old photographs of what the hills surrounding the lake looked like when they were in their native Oak Savannah prairie. Pine lovers don't despair; the ski club trail pines will not be part of the restoration.

Jessie Herrman joined the staff as the new site manager last September. Please welcome her warmly. Jess has organized an unprecedented number of scout, conservation, and school groups from Hudson, New Richmond, and Somerset areas to do park clean-up and buckthorn removal.

Speaking of schools, the 2nd and 3rd grades from E.P. Rock, in Hudson will be coming to the park for field trips. FOPL's: History of Homesteading presentation has again been requested by the teaching staff. In previous years students from Houlton, Hudson, and Somerset have given it rave reviews.

Your generous contributions have permitted the friends group to continue to provide free park brochures for distribution to visitors to the park. We look forward to your continued support.

Sincerely.

Donna Seim
FOPL President