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Newsletter for Whiterock Conservancy

A Nonprofit Land Trust

WHITEROCK, CROSSING A THRESHOLD

Next summer Whiterock will embark on the construction of our long-planned 35 mile backcountry trail! After working to raise funds for five years we were able to leverage a strong show of local support from Guthrie and Carroll County residents, businesses, organizations, and governments in order to secure the final major funding piece, a \$400,000 Vision Iowa Community Attractions and Tourism Grant.

The entire new backcountry trail will be open to walkers and hikers as it meanders among the forested slopes above the Middle Raccoon River. Sixteen miles of the trail will be a winding single track designed specifically for mountain bikers. Another seven miles will be for equestrians. The final twelve miles will be double track shared by all users, including low power vehicles to allow those with mobility restrictions the opportunity to enjoy nature. Trail users will also be able to access nine miles of other existing trails which connect to downtown



Coon Rapids and many more miles of river upstream.

The trail project will not only add many more miles of trail fun to Whiterock but also interpretive signage, wildlife viewing blinds, trail side art, boardwalks over rare wetland seeps,

wilderness campsites, a new equestrian RV campground, trailside prairie restoration, and renovations to the Burr Oak Visitor Center. Clearly Whiterock is crossing a threshold that will allow it to provide access and recreation to tens of thousands more visitors annually in one of Iowa's most beautiful and most rare natural landscapes. Whiterock will be able to engage with all these new visitors to inform them about the value of natural lands and the importance of

sustainable agriculture here and all the way downstream to Des Moines and beyond to the Gulf of Mexico.

While we have many opportunities and plans to continue to improve facilities in the years ahead to attract ever higher levels of visitation and support for our multifaceted mission, this autumn is a time for celebration with Whiterock's staff, board members, neighbors, and supporters. For Whiterock, the future looks as bright and golden as this season's autumn sun and blazing colors.

We thank you for your help in achieving this milestone.

INTRODUCING:

Barbra Jotzke-Torrier



Whiterock Conservancy is pleased to welcome Barbra Jotzke-Torrier as our new Director of Development and Communications. Barbra comes with fifteen years of development experience, most recently as development director for the Iowa Environmental Council.

Barbra grew up in Des Moines and returned in 2007 after spending time away earning degrees in Philosophy and Communications from Valparaiso University, IN and Western Michigan University and beginning her career in Chicago.

"It's an exciting time at Whiterock and I'm thrilled to be working with talented staff and volunteers to protect this beautiful landscape and help Iowans connect with nature. I'm looking forward to meeting more of the guests and donors who make this possible," she said.

Barbra will split her time between offices at Whiterock Conservancy headquartered in Coon Rapids and Des Moines.



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Phone extensions:

x111 Conrad Kramer, Executive Director
x112 Guest Services
x114 Chris Troendle, Land Manager
x115 Barbra Jotzke-Torrier, Director of Development and Communications
x117 April Schultes, Office Manager

WHY I GIVE

Jane Baty was raised on a farm in Boone County. An ISU grad in dietetics, she was a hospital dietitian, and an Assistant Professor in nutrition at Iowa State. She is now a water color artist who paints a variety of subjects from landscapes to abstracts. (See her early fall painting "On the Middle Raccoon" here or on www.janebaty.com.)



John is from Northeast Iowa and also an ISU graduate. He is a retired Air Force pilot, lawyer, and an avid canoeist. Jane enjoys joining John at the Riverside Park landing for the float down to the Main Campground landing. "We've been joined by our children on this stretch and, if the weather is not too hot, we enjoy the walk back to Riverside Park or the Hwy 141 landings."

"We own some farmland which gives us perspective and appreciation for how the Conservancy has pursued and managed the various land formations on the property. It provides enjoyable recreational activities and an educational experience in conservation practices. It is for all these reasons that we support Whiterock Conservancy."

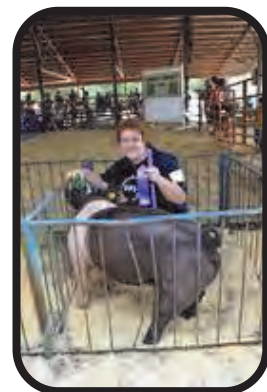
COON RAPIDS BAYARD FFA LEADS THE WAY

Coon Rapids Bayard (CRB) FFA students were busy this past summer raising livestock to exhibit at the Carroll County and Iowa State Fairs. With support from the Whiterock Conservancy, 13 students were able to raise 36 head of hogs, 5 lambs, and too many chickens and ducks to count. "We are extremely appreciative of the support that Land Manager Chris Troendle, has extended to the members of our local FFA Chapter to gain valuable hands on learning experience with raising livestock" stated Jon Wiskus. Wiskus raised 4 pigs and 4 market lambs for his Supervised Agriculture Experience or SAE project.



"I feel that we are losing our knowledge of raising livestock, something that has been passed down from one generation to the next for hundreds of years. FFA Members today live in town, on acreages, or large grain farms and they do not have the valuable experience of caring and managing a

livestock enterprise" commented Jim Heithoff, Coon Rapids-Bayard FFA Advisor. "I would not have been able to experience the raising and showing of hogs at the fair without the facilities at Whiterock, I live in town and do not have buildings of my own," commented Bryce Dagit who is now the treasurer of the CRB FFA Chapter. This is the second year that FFA projects have been raised at the Whiterock facility.



The highlights of the animals shown by CRB FFA members at the Carroll County Fair were:



Marissa Donahue –Purple in medium weight gilt class, Spencer Winnett– Reserve Champion Gilt and stood first and second in two classes, Jerome Boblett– won Grand Champion Duck, three of the top ten market hog pens were from the chapter. Jake Andersen stood second in a market barrow class. Jon Wiskus and Marissa Donahue earned blues for their market lambs and breeding ewes standing second in one class. Jon Wiskus and Marissa Donahue also earned blue ribbons at the Iowa State Fair with their lamb and swine projects raised at the Whiterock FFA Facilities.

BEEKEEPING AT WHITEROCK

Gary Olsen, from Audubon, Iowa, is currently working on a beekeeping project at Whiterock. Each Spring he opens up the hives by removing the protective covering which helps them to keep warm. The hives are checked for activity, general bee health, and to see if there's any leftover honey which was not used by the bees to keep them nourished during the winter months. After this check, the hive is given a supplemental jar of sweetened water in case there is not yet enough pollen for the bees to feed themselves. Once the season is complete he harvests the honey, again leaving some behind for their winter needs. The hives get covered to protect the bees and the cycle starts again.



Why does Whiterock like to have bees on the land? Honeybees are important pollinators of many flowering plants including nearby crops; sometimes up to as far as four miles away from their hive. This pollination is essential for good yields for some flowering crops, largely common fruit and vegetables. Other research suggests pollinators help more traditional row and forage crops and current ISU research is looking into the benefit of pollinators on soybeans. But with the colony collapse disorder and other problems, the number of active hives has generally decreased. Whiterock provides responsibly placed hives on the land to provide habitat to honeybees and help the pollination for our own and our neighbor's crops.

To see more beekeeping photos visit our website and look for the beekeeping project!

<http://whiterockconservancy.org/projects.html>

CALL FOR BURN VOLUNTEERS

Welcome to the fall 2013 burn season! Are you interested in helping conduct prescribed fire on timbers, savannas and prairies in the Whiterock Valley, southeast of Coon Rapids? If you want to be a volunteer or have a name to suggest, call or email Chris Troendle, Land Manager at Whiterock Conservancy: 712-684-2964 ext. 114 or landmanager@whiterockconservancy.org.

We hope to conduct about 20 different burns this fall on Whiterock property and on adjoining landowner properties. Some of the burns will be quite large and we will need all the help we can get, especially on weekdays. As always, the burns are subject to weather and we cannot always provide firm and timely notice. We hope to get started in early November and we will be burning until the snow flies.



Thanks for your help and we look forward to seeing you soon!



1390 Highway 141
Coon Rapids, IA 50058

Fall 2013



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YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Whiterock Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit land trust established to protect and steward more than 5,000 acres of irreplaceable Iowa river-valley land. Your gift is extremely important to Whiterock because it provides resources that make an immediate impact. Whether you make an annual, monthly, tribute or memorial contribution — your gift supports Whiterock's efforts to create a rich natural and farmed landscape to be enjoyed by both nature and people along the Middle Raccoon River Valley.

GIVING IS EASY

Donate online — call our office — or use the provided envelope - make a gift today and help Whiterock achieve lasting land management results benefiting nature and providing visitors with a unique experience.

Monthly Giving - your monthly gift will help to expand the scope, scale and pace of our restoration and conservation efforts by providing a stable flow of support.

Memorials and Tributes - recognize someone special, commemorate a milestone or celebrate a special occasion, such as an anniversary, retirement, wedding or birthday by making a tribute gift. When you honor the memory of a loved one by making a memorial gift to Whiterock Conservancy, you'll have the satisfaction of knowing your gift will help protect one of Iowa's rarest ecosystems.

Matching Gifts - Many employers will match your donation - meaning your gift will have twice the impact on our efforts to preserve, restore and protect vital habitats and unique species. Check with your employer.

Thank You for Your Support!

If you prefer to receive your newsletter electronically, please let us know at april@whiterockconservancy.org.