



2nd Annual Saskatchewan Trails Day a Great Success!

By Katie Doke, STA Summer Intern

The Saskatchewan Trails Association (STA) organized the 2nd Annual Saskatchewan Trails Day on Saturday, June 6, with great success. Various communities throughout the province celebrated the event, which aims to raise awareness about the benefits of recreational trails and to encourage people to use the provincial trail system.

In total, 14 recreational groups, non-profit organizations, and individuals held special events on Saskatchewan Trails Day and the following day, Sunday, June 7.

The community of St. Walburg celebrated the official opening of the new section of the Trans Canada Trail in the area. A short program was held to acknowledge sponsors and to dedicate the observation platform to the memory of Joe Schmitz.

In the towns of Shaunavon, Denare Beach, and Coteau Beach, community walks were held on sections of Trans Canada Trail or on nearby trails, followed by picnics and barbecues. In Weyburn, a walk took place along the town's Signal Hill Trail, Red Coat Trail, and part of the city's historical sites, for a total of 10 km. Chico Hills Farm near Marcelin opened up its 20 km of winding trails to the public.

Several communities linked their own community events with Saskatchewan Trails Day. The Whitmore Park area of Regina held the 3rd Annual Community

(continued on page 2)



Saskatchewan Trails Day Officially Proclaimed in Saskatchewan

The 2nd annual Saskatchewan Trails Day was officially proclaimed in the province by Minister Dustin Duncan of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport at a media conference on Friday, June 5. Curt Schroeder accepted the official proclamation from the Minister on behalf of STA. Also in attendance were: Candace Phelps, Vice President of Tourism Saskatchewan; Louis Browne, City of Regina Councillor; Clive Craig, S.P.R.A. Board Member; and Chris Brewer, CEO of the Saskatchewan Snowmobiling Association.



(continued from page 1)

Walk in Memory of late city counselor Mike Badham at 1:30pm. The Saskatoon Farmers' Market promoted their Get Fresh and Get Green initiative on Saskatchewan Trails Day. The initiative encourages people to use green modes of transportation when coming to the market.

A summer version of Ness Creek's moonlight trail walk, near Prince Albert National Park took place at 11:30 p.m., along the area's beautiful 16 km trail system.

Birding was the word of the day in Preeceville, Saskatchewan, where the Kelsey Ecological Society held a tour of Anne Laurie Lake and other routes, allowing participants to discover the many species that make the area their home.

The Saskatoon Snowmobile Club held an event to prepare for the next snowmobile season, which featured yard and sign maintenance, general clean-up, and touch-ups at the warm-up shelter near Hague.

The SaskTel Mendel Art Gallery caravan celebrated Saskatchewan Trails Day. The caravan was set up in the parking lot with free art-making with a trails theme.

Two Saskatoon organizations featured trail activities with aims to raise money for a cause. The Saskatoon office of Osteoporosis Canada held a campaign to raise money for healthy bone education programs in the province. Participants were asked to purchase a footprint for \$5 and write a trail adventure story on it, for potential prizes. The footprints will be displayed at the Market Mall in Saskatoon until November.

The Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada (CCFC) held the 13th annual pledge-earning Heel'n'Wheel-athon in Saskatoon's Friendship Park. The day's activi-

ties included a BBQ, silent auction, kids' games, live music, magic, and a walk along both sides of the South Saskatchewan River. The proceeds of the day went to aid in medical research for Inflammatory Bowel Disease.

All of the organizations that registered an event for Sask Trails Day were entered into a draw for \$1,000, with the requirement that they submit a Trails Day activity report. The organization that was drawn for the prize was the Town of Shaunavon.

As part of Saskatchewan Trails Day, the inaugural Saskatchewan Trails Magazine was distributed in the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix* and the Regina *Leader-Post*. The magazine featured the winning entry of the Saskatchewan Trails Day Short Story Contest, a story by Lisa Koshinsky about the trails at Pike Lake Provincial Park. Also in the magazine were profiles of Saskatchewan's trails, information about the Saskatchewan Trails Association, and details about available trail building grant programs.



Curt Schroeder accepts a June is Recreation & Park Month flag from Clive Craig of S.P.R.A. at the official announcement of Saskatchewan Trails Day.



Pike Lake Provincial Park
Photo Credit: Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport

Saskatchewan Trails Short Story Contest Winner

By Lisa Koshinsky

Congratulations to Lisa Koshinsky and her family for submitting this story to the Saskatchewan Trails Association's Short Story Contest. She wins \$500 for her story about the trails in Pike Lake Provincial Park, near Saskatoon.

Our family would like to tell you about a trail we really enjoy.

We love the Pike Lake Nature Trail located at Pike Lake Park just outside of Saskatoon. We first walked this trail with the Young Naturalists Society in the spring of last year. During this time, we first go to Pike Lake and do pond dipping and see what spring water creatures are moving about.

When we do pond dipping we have a container of water from the lake that we put the creatures into and then look at them briefly and then we gently return everything back to the lake again. This is an exciting thing to do with people of all ages because you can see mosquito larval, fairy shrimp, dragon fly nymphs, minnows, water walkers, frogs, water beetles and many other water creatures. After everyone has seen the tiny things living in the larger lake we walk over to the nature trail on the other side of the park.

The Pike Lake Nature Trail takes about an hour to walk, and much longer when you are pond dipping. The trail is wood chipped and for walking only, no bikes, or horses. After you first enter the forest you come along to a wooden board walk. This board walk

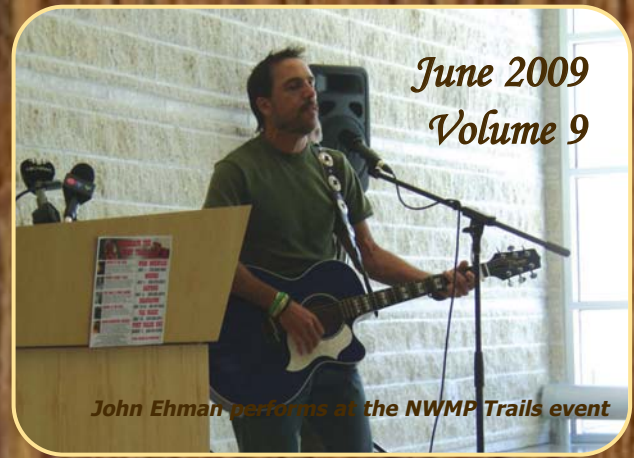
is a perfect place to listen to frogs and to do some more pond dipping. It is neat to compare the creatures that live in the two different water areas.

Following along the trail you come to a small natural spring area where many different plants grow. As you continue, you reach the area that is no longer part of the forest but is a natural sand dune area. The plants and trees that grow here are much different than from the forest area. You can see cactus and lots of poison ivy. There are many deer and rabbits in the area.

The trail is great because you can walk at your own pace and investigate several different habitats in a short one hour hike. Our children, aged 6 and 8, really love to walk and explore the Pike Lake Nature Trail.

We have also been fortunate to walk the Pike Lake Nature Trail during the winter. It is a completely different experience to walk it through snow. There are many black-capped chickadees that are willing to be hand fed if you wait patiently with bird seed on your outstretched hand. This is a thrilling thing to do, the birds are so light and quick with their tiny claws perched on your hand. Also walking the trail in the winter lets you see places where the deer have laid down to sleep, and you can find many other tracks in the snow.

Pike Lake Nature Trail is a neat trail to discover with your family during any season.



John Ehman performs at the NWMP Trails event

Historic Trail to be Celebrated in Six Saskatchewan Communities

Between July 1 and August 2 this summer, the communities of Wood Mountain, McCord, Val Marie, Shaunavon, Eastend and Fort Walsh National Historic Site are hosting celebrations recognizing the significance of the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) Trail that ran from Wood Mountain to Fort Walsh between 1875 and 1912.

Everett Baker, the first President of the Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society (SHFS), placed historic markers on the Trail in the 1950s and '60s and the Society continues to maintain the Trail markers today.

The Rural History and Culture Association (RHCA) is partnering with the SHFS, historical associations in five communities and Fort Walsh National Historic Site to stage the festivals, which are receiving major financial support through the Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport's Building Pride program.

A trail ride from remnants of the original NWMP Trail into each community precedes each celebration. Festival components include dramatic storytelling by actors portraying NWMP Officer James Walsh and Sioux Chieftain Sitting Bull, a presentation from award-winning historian Garrett Wilson, Everett Baker's historic pictures of the Trail, First Nations cultural performances and concerts from Saskatchewan singer/songwriters. Celebrations close with campfires featuring local storytellers and singers.

Details about each festival are available at:
www.rhcask.ca/nwmp-trail/



To announce the NWMP Trail festivals, a media conference was held at the RCMP Heritage Centre on June 25. At the conference were (from top): Tommy-John Ehman, a festival performer; Geordie Grassick, portraying James Walsh; and Finn Andersen, Executive Director of the Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society, holding a trail sign.



June 2009

Volume 9

McKell Wascana Conservation Park
Photo Credit: Ducks Unlimited Canada

Two Parks with Trails Recognized at Provincial Awards Ceremony

The 2009 Saskatchewan Municipal Awards were recently presented at a ceremony on May 22, 2009 in Regina. At the ceremony, two parks with recreational trails were recognized by the program for their work in preserving the environment.

The annual Saskatchewan Municipal Awards are designed to celebrate the innovative achievements of our province's municipal governments in five categories: economic development, regional partnerships, environmental stewardship, community development and municipal service excellence.

The 2009 winner of the Environmental Stewardship award was the City of Regina for its work in developing and preserving the city's only remaining grassland area. The Town of Mossbank was named runner-up in the same category for its innovative development at the Old Wives Lake Nature Area.



Photo Credit: Town of Mossbank

Located in the southeast corner of Regina, the McKell Wascana Conservation Park is the city's last prairie grassland and home to numerous birds and wildlife. The native prairie park is providing a place for Regina residents to experience and learn about the ecology of the Regina plains and wetlands. It features a newly constructed amphitheatre, a floating dock for pond dipping, and will soon have over 3 km of mowed trails. The official opening of the park will take place in the fall of 2009.

The Old Wives Lake Nature Area will have its grand opening on August 8, 2009. The Town of Mossbank recently completed the nature area's trails, constructed a viewing area, and placed interpretive signs along the pathway. The area's 2 km trail loop takes visitors on a journey to discover the local birds and vegetation.

The Town of Mossbank has had a long tradition of preserving and protecting the Old Wives Lake area, which is a crucial environmental habitat that is home for 500,000 shorebirds stopping in on their way to the Arctic each year. It is the fourth largest saline lake in North America, a designated Migratory Bird Sanctuary, and part of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network.

Left: The Old Wives Lake Nature Area features many beautiful resting places, including the viewing tower and picnic area. From the tower, Old Wives Lake can be seen in the distance, backed by the blue hills beyond.