

Muscatine County Conservation Board 2011 At a Glance

A Message from Conservation Board Member Jim Goedken

Hello, my name is Jim Goedken. I am a member of the County Conservation Board and have been asked to write an introduction to the review of the accomplishments of the Muscatine County Conservation Board for the year 2011. I am privileged to be a part of this organization and its facilities.

The staff and facilities provide for an enrichment of our lives and improved quality of life. In the past year, this organization has provided

- canoes and kayaks that can be rented for a float down the Cedar River. Jack Shuger Memorial Park provides a perfect launch spot for a leisurely float back down to Saulsbury Park.
- a scenic and natural venue along the Cedar River to have a family reunion or wedding using the large air conditioned and recently re-carpeted lodge as a base for shelter, food preparation, dining and bathrooms.
- an area for primitive tent camping that is reasonably private.
- an area to RV camp with electric hook-ups, water, bathrooms, showers, and firewood. It also has 670 contiguous acres to explore along the Cedar River.

- areas to hunt mushrooms in the spring and game in the fall at Cedar Bluffs and Richardson Wildlife Area in the southwest part of the County.
- fly tying lessons followed a few months later by a trout fishing experience at Discovery Pond.
- an edifying and surreal evening walking a moonlit trail marked by hundreds of jack-o-lanterns with stops to hear short skits about our environment performed by local talent.
- fishing, hunting safety, and marksmanship classes.
- paved walking trails with shelters and bathrooms nearby.



- a nature center with exhibits, aquariums, terrariums and hands-on displays.

- environmental education programs presented most every month to our school children. Many months there are more than 40 programs touching as many as 600 children.



I could go on and on, but just type “muscatinecountyconservation” in your web browser and see the whole picture. It presents a complete assessment of the scope of the activities and facilities provided by this organization. I think the website mirrors the organization as being well organized, thorough, crisp, and to the point.

The Learning Center is open seven days a week with half days on Saturdays and Sundays This is a phenomenal achievement considering the size of the staff. I have enjoyed quite a few afternoons taking my grandchildren through the Learning Center and walking the trails in the park.

continued on page 2

2011 CONSERVATION BOARD

Chairperson	Jenny Paetz
Vice-chairperson	Larry Wolf
Member	Dave Jones
Member	Mike Hartman
Member	Jim Goedken

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Muscatine County Conservation Board is to preserve and enhance natural areas and resources in Muscatine County for the use and benefit of the community; to preserve sufficient natural habitats in Muscatine County; to ensure the survival of native plants and animals; to acquire, develop and manage land for public hunting, fishing, camping and recreation; and to promote public appreciation and responsibility for the environment through education.

continued from page 1

Look over the list of accomplishments of 2011. I applaud the Director and Staff for their work and care in doing a good job. I thank the County Supervisors for their part in funding of this activity.

An organization like the Conservation Board is part of the local community. It needs the support of the community to continue.



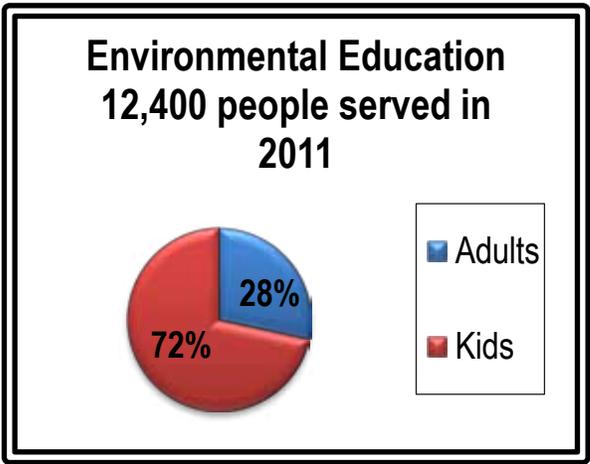
After spending a day showing members of a local 5th grade class how to canoe, I had one of the best rewards. A young man, after climbing out of the canoe and running towards the bus with half a clam shell said, "This is the best day EVER." I felt like a member of the community.



Projects

Listed below are some of the larger projects undertaken in 2011.

- Construction of a fishing dock on Heron Hideaway Pond in Discovery Park. The project was done by the Muscatine Youth Conservation Corps.
- Construction of new stairs at Jack Shuger Memorial Park in Moscow. The project was coordinated and completed by Eagle Scout Jack Rabedeaux and Boy Scout Troop 151 with the Muscatine Youth Conservation Corps installing the railings.
- Installation of new carpeting and flooring in Saulsbury Lodge.
- Planting 30 trees at Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area. Trees were planted by Muscatine Branching Out and the Muscatine High School FFA with funding provided by an Iowa DNR grant.
- Purchasing a new housing for the amphibians so they can be on display at the Learning Center. Funded by the Muscatine County Conservation Foundation.
- Clearing invasive honeysuckle from around Heron Hideaway Pond making it easier to access for fishing. The project was coordinated and completed by Eagle Scout Drew Mathias and Boy Scout Troop 153.



Environmental Learning Center

In 2011, approximately 4774 visitors (not including people who participated in our programs) came to the Environmental Learning Center to view the exhibits.

A new cage for the live amphibians was added to the display area. Staff also spent time changing and/or upgrading existing exhibits in the Environmental Learning Center.



Environmental Education Programs

In 2011, Conservation Board Staff gave 731 programs to 12,400 people. Of those 12,400 people, 3,227 were participants in fishing and aquatic education programs funded by a grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Program participants ranged in age from toddler through senior citizen.

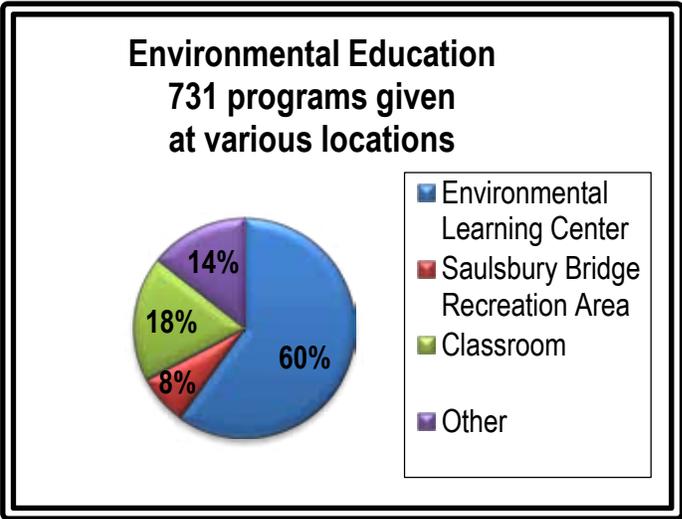
In 2011, almost three-quarters of the programs were presented to children ranging in age from 18 months through high school. More than half of those programs were given at the Environmental Learning Center and Discovery Park.

Nature hikes, fishing, canoeing, Native American games, survival, animals, weather, habitats, and geocaching were just a handful of the many programs presented to participants.

Some of the weekend programs held were Reptiles & Amphibians, Canoeing/Kayaking, Geocaching, Holiday Crafts, Wild Cats of Iowa, Fishing, and Monarch Butterfly Tagging.

Below is a list of some of our larger programs with their attendance.

- **31st Annual Kids Fishing Seminar & 4th Annual Fishing Derby** - 164
- **23rd Annual Halloween Hike** - 297
- **Hunter Education Classes** - 121
- **Summer Nature Camps** - 132
- **Toddler/Preschool Camps** - 152
- **Tagged Trout Release** - 97





Muscatine Youth Conservation Corps

In the summer of 2011 the Conservation Board hired eight youth ages 16-18 and two crew leaders for the Muscatine Youth Conservation Corps program.

The program is funded entirely with donations from local industries, businesses, organizations, government entities, and individuals.

The youth worked on outdoor conservation and recreation projects for the City of Muscatine and the County Conservation Board. Projects consisted of building a fishing dock at Discovery Park, building a footbridge at Weed Park, installing rails on the stairs at Jack Shuger Memorial Park, pouring a sidewalk to the rose garden in Weed Park, and caring for tree and shrub plantings.

They also spent a morning banding geese with the Iowa DNR and canoed on the Cedar River.



Grants

Several grants were received from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to hire staff to give and coordinate fishing, aquatic education, and shooting sports programs in Muscatine County.

A Trees for Kids & Teens Grant was received from the Iowa DNR and used to plant trees at the Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area. Many of them were planted in the main campground.

A Fish Habitat Stamp Grant was received from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to stabilize shoreline around Discovery Pond. This project was started in 2011, and will be completed in 2012.



Cooperative Programs

In 2011, the Conservation Board partnered with many other groups for various programs and projects.

- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- Iowa State Extension Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Monsanto
- Mid-American Energy
- Musser Public Library
- Young Professionals Network
- Muscatine Community Y
- Muscatine Parks & Recreation
- Muscatine Arboretum Association
- City of Muscatine
- Muscatine Branching Out
- Friends of the Old Barn
- Eagle Scouts
- Muscatine High School FFA



Muscatine County
Conservation Board
PO Box 109
Muscatine, IA 52761
(563) 264-5922



conservation@co.muscatine.ia.us
www.MuscatineCountyConservation.com