

# Muscatine County Conservation Board 2013 At a Glance

## A Message from Conservation Board Member Jenny Paetz

What an exciting year for the Muscatine County Conservation Board! A new bridge and a new park are now available for outdoor enthusiasts.

First, Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area now has a new bridge for safe entrance to the park. After years of decreasing weight limits and learning how to adapt to the limited use a new bridge is now open. Thank you to the Board of Supervisors for their support and financial help. The campgrounds, which are a major attraction, can now handle the larger campers coming for a weekend of outdoor activities.



The staff is continually working on projects at Saulsbury – keeping the trails, fishing areas, hunting areas and campgrounds in top notch shape. As a Board we will be looking into some projects that were proposed, but put on hold because of limitations from the

old bridge. The new bridge has a few finishing touches to complete in the spring, but otherwise is ready for use.

Thanks to the wonderful donation of 435 acres from W.G. Block and a park planning design from Shoemaker-Haaland, Deep Lakes Park is now a reality! After committee meetings, public planning meetings, and many Conservation Board discussions a vision for the park was produced. The design considers how to protect the unique environment while opening the area for outdoor activities. The lakes have been named, parking areas created, rock piles moved, and cleanup continues. Thanks to Curt Weiss' grant writing skills a boat ramp was one of the first major projects. Now fisherman, canoeists, and kayakers can now access Lake Chester.



Franklin 5th graders tried out the park last May for a year-end field trip. We canoed the lake and marveled at the clear water. The kids could look down and see the fish and enjoy the wildlife. Fishing was also enjoyed. The fish were able to escape, but the kids still had fun and learned about fishing from Al Wagner, a very busy volunteer.



Deep Lakes Park has endless possibilities for conservation activities. Each year the Conservation Board will work on a major project and our

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## 2013 CONSERVATION BOARD

Chairperson	Larry Wolf
Vice-chairperson	Dave Jones
Member	Mike Hartman
Member	Jenny Paetz
Member	Deb Elliott

## 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.

skilled staff will continue cleanup and smaller projects. The project list is extensive. Another boat ramp is being planned as well as joining together some lakes for easier access. A swimming beach and hiking trails have been discussed. Deep Lakes Park offers an opportunity to develop an area for everyone's enjoyment from rock hounds to fisherman to bird watchers. Please check out Deep Lakes Park this spring and watch as the area develops.

Muscatine County Naturalists, Dave Bakke and Michelle Berns, continue to bring nature into the classroom as well as take students and adults outside to learn. Through the use of field trips, classroom visits, and public presentations the goals of conservation education in Muscatine County are being reached and growing.

The exhibits at the Environmental Learning Center are always evolving and updating with the use of technology. Stop by to visit and view the displays. While you are there you will meet Jill Ziegenhorn. She will be at her desk greeting everyone and managing the office including all the many responsibilities of paying the bills, creating an annual report, scheduling, finding a costume for the Halloween

Hike, and on and on. Thank you Jill for keeping us informed and organized.

The Conservation Board would like to thank Mike Hartman for ten years of work on the Board. Mike and his family have been active supporters of projects and activities and will be greatly missed, but I have a feeling they will still be around to help! A welcome is extended to Jim Goedken, who is coming back on the Board with his good ideas and various skills.

Wow!! – Our Muscatine County Parks offer so many activities and areas to visit. Stop by the Environmental Learning Center or visit our website and check out all we have to offer for the outdoor enthusiast!!

## Projects

Listed below are some of the larger projects undertaken in 2013.

- Forming a steering committee to come up with a plan for future development at Deep Lakes Park then hiring a firm to create a master plan.
- Adding more hard-surfaced trail in Discovery Park.
- Hauling tons of trash and scrap metal out of Deep Lakes Park.
- Constructing parking lots in Deep Lakes Park.



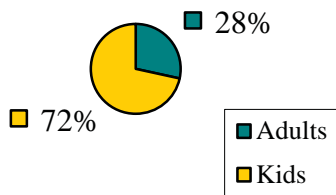


## Environmental Education Programs

In 2013, Conservation Board Staff gave 687 programs to 11,929 people. Of those 11,929 people, 2,008 were participants in fishing, aquatic education, and shooting sports programs funded by a grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Program participants ranged in age from toddler through senior citizen.

In 2013, almost three-quarters of the programs were presented to children ranging in age from 18 months through high school. More than half of the programs were given at the Environmental Learning Center and Discovery Park.

### Environmental Education 11,929 people served in 2013



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

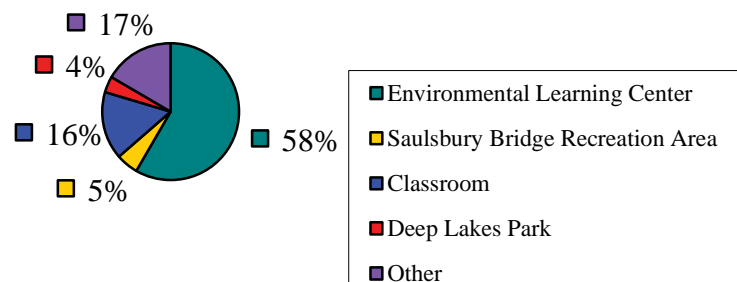
Some of the weekend programs held were Canoeing & Kayaking, Holiday Nature Crafts, Fishing, Reptiles & Amphibians, Fly Tying, Storytelling, and Monarch Butterfly Tagging.

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

- 33rd Annual Kids Fishing Seminar & 6th Annual Fishing Derby - 180
- 25th Annual Halloween Hike - 255
- Hunter Education Classes - 123
- Summer Nature Camps - 146
- Toddler/Preschool Camps - 120
- Eagle Watch - 155



### Environmental Education 687 programs given at various locations in 2013





## Muscatine Youth Conservation Corps

In the summer of 2013 the Conservation Board hired seven youth ages 16-18 and two crew leaders for the Muscatine Youth Conservation Corps program.

The youth worked on outdoor conservation and recreation projects for the City of Muscatine and the County Conservation Board. Projects consisted of planting, watering, and mulching trees, staining picnic tables, stacking firewood, doing flood cleanup, and replacing tennis court fencing.

They also spent a day canoeing on the Cedar River, and banding geese with the DNR.

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



## Grants

An Outdoor Skills Grant was received from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to hire staff to coordinate and present fishing, aquatic education, and shooting sports programs in Muscatine County.

A Water Recreation Access Grant was received from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to construct a boat ramp on Lake Chester at Deep Lakes Park.



## Cooperative Programs

In 2013, 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
- Musser Public Library
- Young Professionals Network
- Muscatine Community Y
- Muscatine Parks & Recreation
- Muscatine Arboretum Association
- City of Muscatine
- National Wild Turkey Federation
- Quad City Chapter of Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association
- Muscatine Chapter of Izaak Walton League
- Boy Scouts/Eagle Scouts
- Girl Scouts



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