

Friends of
**BENDIX
WOODS**
County Park
&
**SPICER
LAKE**
Nature Preserve



Interpretive signage fabricated from our fundraising efforts in '05 & '06. This project still has more to be done!



Current evaporator pan we would like to replace.



Park Interpreters teach students how to tap a tree during the maple syrup season.

November 6, 2009

Dear Friend of Bendix Woods & Spicer Lake,

At our last Friends meeting, we reflected about this year and talked about next year's needs. Your generous donations in our past end-of-the year fundraising efforts have brought about many accomplishments you can be proud of. Most recently we have established a transportation grant for South Bend schools to utilize when attending an Interpretive program at either Bendix Woods or Spicer Lake, we have raised funds for interpretive signs for Spicer Lake, Bendix Woods and the sugar bush at Bendix Woods and a new water garden at Spicer Lake. The precious time you have spent volunteering for interpretive programs, especially during the maple season is a huge contribution for the parks too. Your volunteer efforts, this year, allowed the interpretive staff the help they needed to serve a very large number of spring visitors and also made possible the best maple syrup season in several years. Volunteers contributed 1,148.65 hours for maple and spring programs alone. **We are very grateful for your past donations of time and money and hope you will be able to help us again for next year.**

We have 3 areas where we would like to dedicate our end-of-year fundraising activity and hope you can assist in our efforts. Due to staff shortages and reductions, your donations will help fund part-time interpretive staff to provide school and public programs during the maple syrup season. We also would like to replace the aging maple syrup evaporator pan for the Sugar House. In addition, we hope to add to the sugar camp interpretive signage at Bendix Woods County Park to enhance visitors' experiences when they come to the park.

You might wonder why the park department depends so heavily on its volunteers and public contributions. As a Park Board member I know how tight county money is. The park department has been mandated to cut expenses and staff every year since I joined the board in late 2005. And they were making cuts before then. In 2010 we were asked again to make additional cuts. Please let your County Council representative and County Commissioners know the parks are important to you.

We have a county park system we can be proud of. We receive 262,000 visitors per year, including 15,000 school children and home schooled children that are involved in interpretive programs. We know many people in the area are facing hard times, but if you are able, we hope you will help complete another successful year by donating time, money or items for your county parks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Marge Riemenschneider". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Marge Riemenschneider, President
The Friends of Bendix Woods & Spicer Lake

P.S. Your contributions help St. Joseph County Parks continue its outstanding tradition of parks and programs for the community.