



Northern Prairie Star

Fall

Water's Edge Nature Center-Kossuth County Conservation Board

2011

New Modern Bath Facilities Are Open for "Business" at Siems Park



On July 29th the bathroom building arrived at Siems Park, was unloaded from the flatbed trailer by crane, and placed on its permanent resting spot. The building was prefabricated in Chipewewa Falls, Wisconsin by a company called Huffcutt Concrete Inc. It is made entirely from concrete and steel and is comprised of two unisex bathrooms. Each bathroom

contains a flush toilet, sink, and shower with hot and cold water. There is also a utility room in between the two bathrooms. It came with all of the fixtures, plumbing, and electrical equipment preinstalled. The total weight of the building exceeded 71,000 pounds.

To prepare for the arrival of the building, a septic system needed to be installed nearby. Electricity, water and plumbing for the waste water was also put in by local contractors prior to the arrival of the building.

Once the building arrived, all that needed to be done was to set it in place and make all of the connections.

Having the bathrooms open has already increased the use of the park by campers. During the first three weekends that the facility was open, the campground was full or nearly full. To have that happen on a non-holiday weekend this late in the summer was a rarity before the installation of the modern bathrooms.

This project was made possible because of generous donations and assistance from the Whittemore Gun Club, and the Kossuth County Road Dept. The project also was approved and funded by the Kossuth County Board of Supervisors.



KCCB Gets New Critter

KCCB acquired a new critter this summer. Our new Three-Toed Box turtle decided to sit down with us to talk about his life: past, present and future.

KCCB: Well Mr. Box Turtle we sure are tickled to have you at our nature center have you enjoyed your time here so far?

Box Turtle: Actually I find Water's Edge Nature Center to be a great place to inhabit. All of the staff and community have been very nice to me and I always have a full belly.

KCCB: What have you been eating lately?

Box Turtle: I tend to eat whatever is in season. My diet doesn't differ too much from yours. I'm an omnivore so I eat a little of everything. Lately I've been eating strawberries, peaches, bananas, apples, blueberries, grapes, worms and tomatoes. All the good stuff!

KCCB: That all sounded great except for the worms...

Box Turtle: Worms are an important part of my diet and are a great source of vitamins. I love them in all their slimy goodness.

KCCB: All right, well what else do we need to know about you?

Box Turtle: First off, I like to take a bath everyday. The only difference between your bath and mine is I like to poop in my bath.

KCCB: hmmm....

Box Turtle: But anyway, I guess you should know that I'm not really native to Iowa. My home is in the southern United States, Missouri to Louisiana to Texas and Florida. I was found at Ledges State Park in Boone, Iowa and it was pretty obvious I didn't belong there. Through a series of e-mails and a lengthy car ride I found myself a new home with KCCB.

KCCB: What makes you different than most turtles around here?

Box Turtle: Well first off, I'm a terrestrial turtle. That



Our new Three-toed Box Turtle soaks up some sun on a warm afternoon.

means I live on land. Like I said earlier, the only time I go into the water is take my daily bath....

KCCB: And we know what happens in **your** bath...so anyway...

Box Turtle: So anyway, since I live primarily on land I have a few features on me that make me different than your everyday water turtle. First, my shell is a lot higher and more domed than aquatic turtles. My feet aren't webbed either, I'm built to cruise the land. When I really want to move I can go about a quarter mile per hour!

Perhaps my coolest feature is my hinged shell. This allows me to completely close up inside my shell. Aquatic turtles can suck their limbs and heads inside their shells but if you look closely you can always still see parts of them. I can go completely inside my shell and with my hinge close my shell up tight so all you see is shell. This helps when animals like raccoons or coyotes try to eat me. They have a tough time prying me open.

KCCB: That is so cool! You are by far one of the coolest turtles I've ever met!

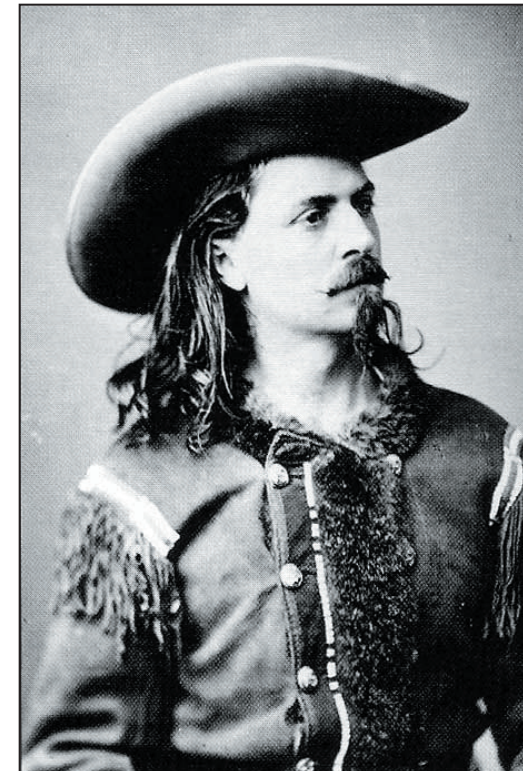
Box Turtle: Yeah I get that a lot! But hey, I'm looking forward to meeting a bunch of school kids this year both in their classroom and here at the Nature Center. Stay cool everyone!

Halloween Hike Set for October 15



Mark your calendars for our annual Halloween Hike scheduled for Saturday, October 15th at the Water's Edge Nature Center. Hikes will start at 7 p.m. and leave the nature center every 5 minutes. This is a free family event open to all ages. The theme for this years hike is 'Animal Babies.' Join us for popcorn, cider and a night of entertainment along the trails at Smith Lake.

KCCB WELCOMES BUFFALO BILL PRESENTATION



This is a Boomers and Beyond program which are designed for "boomers" or older but anyone is welcome. The program will take place on Thursday, October 20 at 1 p.m. It will be presented by Roy Behrens of the University of Northern Iowa, at Water's Edge Nature Center and is preceded by an optional lunch at 12:15 p.m. There is a \$7.00 fee for lunch and pre-registration is required by Monday, October 10. To register call 515-295-2138. The planned menu is: pulled pork sandwiches, baked beans, pasta salad, chips, lemonade and coffee. You do not need to pre-register if you wish to attend only the presentation.

William F. Cody (1846-1917), better known as "Buffalo Bill," was born near Le Claire, Iowa, in Scott County, just north of Davenport. By the end of his life, he had become what some have called "the most famous American in the world." He had been a Pony Express rider, an Army scout, a buffalo hunter for the railroad, and the founder and central attraction of Buffalo Bill's Wild West show, which traveled throughout the U.S. and in Europe for thirty years. This talk is an overview of Cody's life, both tragic and heroic. It was tragic because of the role that he played in the near extinction of the American Bison (he himself is said to have shot nearly 3000 buffalo in eight months), and, even more deplorable, in the subjugation of Native Americans. If his life was heroic, it was because of his later support of the rights of Native Americans, his friendship with many of them (most notably with Sitting Bull), and his link with such colorful characters as Annie Oakley and Wild

Bill Hickok. As a Wild West performer, it is thought that Cody probably played to a collective audience of more than 50 million, including at various Iowa towns. This is a fact-paced and entertaining 45-minute talk, illustrated by projected vintage photographs, film clips and animated graphics.

This program is funded by Humanities Iowa, a private, non-profit state affiliate of the National Endowment for Humanities. Humanities Iowa has been a cultural resource for Iowans since 1971 and offers many cultural and historical programs and grants to Iowa's communities. This program is also funded, in part, by a grant from the Iowa Community Cultural Grant program administered by the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs.

Hunter Safety Class a Hit

This past August the KCCB sponsored a Hunter Safety Education class with 36 students participating. The students attended 12 hours of class, which included an outdoor field day on the final night. The field day provided the students an opportunity to experience live firing on a variety of weapons. All the students attending passed the course and now will be able to obtain an Iowa Hunting license. Thanks to all the instructors and volunteers who assisted with the class.



A student learns how to cross a fence when hunting.

Thank You

- 1) Mike Robinson of Humboldt for donating deer antlers
- 2) Irene Ricke for donating a bench displayed at Smith Lake
- 3) Ruhnke Family for donating a bench displayed outside the nature center
- 4) Kossuth County Road Department for assisting with various projects on county areas
- 5) Hunter Safety Instructors and Volunteers; Scott Ertelt, Bob Smith, Phil Shelenberg, Rick Adams, TJ Herrick, Mike Denny, Jeremy Thilges, Bill Thilges and Dave McCann.

KCCB Says Goodbye to Anthony Smith



This summer visitors to the lake may have seen a new face running the mower, cleaning the campground or helping with a fishing program. Anthony Smith, an Iowa Lakes Community College student served as our summer intern. Anthony is an avid outdoor man, enjoying hunting and fishing. He is currently studying Animal Ecology. With his hours completed and college back in full swing we said goodbye and good luck to Anthony. We wish you well in college and in all future endeavors!

Portraits of Kossuth Photography Contest Winners

The KCCB once again held its Portraits of Kossuth photography contest at the Kossuth County Fair. First place went to Ashton Nyman of Lone Rock with her entry entitled "Call Park in the Fall." Richard Miller won second place. While Carol Merrill won third place. Both Richard and Carol are from Algona. Stop by the Nature Center to see the winning entries!



Iowa State's Insect Zoo Visits

