

May, 2005

Highland Discovery Hikes

The meadow around us was foggy and mysterious, making me feel like I was somewhere in Northern Canada or Maine. The rain had stopped and left everything glistening and new. I had arrived late, so I approached quietly, a little nervous, listening to Deb Bell talk about Haven Hill and some of the history of the area we were going to hike. Then we were off, about 20 of us, hiking through the damp forest and paths that surrounded a beautiful lake. On the bridge we saw a black and brown water snake, its mouth stretched wide around what appeared to be a frog. Later, we saw swans, spring flowers, birds and various animal tracks. For some reason I had thought we were going to hike up the hill to see the old log cabins I had once ridden to on my horse, so I was a little surprised when we hiked around the lake. Still, I had never been on this trail, and part of the fun was not knowing where we were going or what we might see.

Our next hike will be Sunday, June 13th around Dunham Lake, one of the best-kept secrets in Highland. We'll hike through the greenbelt, a wooded parkland that almost completely surrounds the aqua blue lake. Bring your dog (on a leash of course) and swimsuit for a dip in the water afterwards! We'll meet as usual at 3:00 p.m. at Highland Station House then drive over to the main beach. We'll hike rain or shine but don't be late like I was as we'll leave at 3:15 sharp!

Future Hikes:

July 17th Canoe Trip on Pettibone Lake
August 14 Alderman Lake
Sept. 18 Dodge 10 Park
Oct. 16: Teeple Lake Final hike and cookout

Sparks in the Park:

It is hoped that thousands of residents and friends will attend Sparks in the Park this year. When is it? All day Sunday, June 26th. There will be pancake breakfasts, bands, kid's activities and, of course, the fireworks. We will have a booth with all kinds of information about the Highland Conservancy. We are looking for volunteers to help pass out literature and talk with people who stop by the booth from 5 until 10pm. Call Jim Lloyd to sign up for a "shift" or for more information: 248-887-3952

What is the Highland Conservancy and what can I do to help?

The Highland Conservancy started one year ago when concerned Highland citizens decided it was time to preserve our rural character, natural areas and open spaces before they were gobbled up by development. With the support of Oakland Land Conservancy, White Lake Cares, the Nature Conservancy and other conservancy groups, we have been working to identify land for various levels of protection and conservation. A key focus is

to connect existing parks and open spaces to provide interconnected habitat for wildlife. Another goal is to connect multi use trails and parkland thus protecting some of the pristine areas of Highland and surrounding areas for future generations to enjoy.

Some of our current initiatives include:

- Facilitating the development of conservation easements, corridors and green spaces in Highland.
- Educate the public on preservation and care of Highland's fragile resources.
- Partner with other conservancies and organizations to create interconnected parks, trails and greenways.
- Partner with neighborhood associations to preserve and protect their common open spaces.
- Work with developers and the township to create guidelines for protecting land and habitats.
- Assist in the stewardship of land held in conservancy.
- Work with Highland Township to develop a conservation plan that is linked with other compatible uses such as parks, recreation, trails and equestrian needs.

A small committed group of citizens has been working to achieve these and other goals. We could use your help in continuing this important work.

We meet the second and fourth Thursday of every month at 7pm at the Highland Station House (the old library across at 205 Livingston Road across from the Fire Station). We welcome visitors and we encourage you to come see what we are doing. My excuse used to be that I was too busy. I had work, cub scouts, swimming lessons, and karate for my kids, workouts, and a horse to ride. Then I realized if somebody doesn't do something and quick, I'll be living in a place like Southfield or Birmingham. I moved to Highland for its lakes, trails and wide-open spaces. Developers are coming at us on all sides. We need YOU and whatever you can do to help us save Highland. So come to a meeting, email or call me. And thanks for your support! Katheryn Krupa 248-887-4643
artfingers@juno.com

“Each of us has a responsibility to be good stewards of our environment. Highland Township’s Conservancy is a great way to fulfill that responsibility.” Triscia Pilchowski, Highland Township Supervisor