

ECIMN Alumni Meeting Minutes April 14, 2022

Mary Kauffmann-Kennel welcomed everyone and highlighted upcoming events:

- May 14, 9am-12noon, work day at Elkhart Environmental Center, invasive plant removal. Lunch provided.
- July 14, 6:30pm, ECIMN Alumni Meeting, Waterford Mennonite Church in Goshen, John Jay Smith leading wetlands walk.
- Oct. 13, 6:30pm, ECIMN Alumni Meeting, Scout Cabin in Nappanee at Derksen Farm & Wetlands, speaker TBD.
- Nov. 10, 6pm, Schrock Pavilion at Shanklin Park, Goshen. Potluck and awards.

Dennis Badke gave a short history of the Elkhart Conservation Club. It was started in 1929 and the current cabin was built in 1980. Membership is \$25/year per family, which includes keys to the gates and walking the trails anytime. Contact Dennis if interested.

Committee Updates

Melanie Helmuth (melaniehertzler@gmail.com)

- Goshen Arbor Day Celebration - Friday, April 29, 4:30-7:30 at the county courthouse. Volunteers are needed a few days before to bag saplings. The day of the event, volunteers are needed for setup, help during the event, and teardown. Sign up sheet in back or contact Melanie.
- IMN Work Day on May 14 at Elkhart Environmental Center. Lunch provided. Sign up sheet in back or contact Melanie.
- Rieth Interpretive Center needs volunteers to help decide on plants for their water feature and help with planting. Contact Melanie.

Krista Daniels (kdaniels@elkhartcounty.com or 574-875-7422)

- One volunteer needed to weed and trim flower beds at Elkhart County Parks administration building throughout the year. Location is 211 W. Lincoln Ave, Goshen. Contact Krista.
- Volunteer(s) to bake and bag 300 dog biscuits for Dogapalooza event on May 14. All ingredients and supplies provided. Contact Krista.
- 5-6 volunteers needed for Bonneyville Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, May 7. Two shifts available: 7-9:30am or 9-11:30am. Free breakfast included. Contact mill manager Courtney Franke at cfranke@elkhartcounty.com or 574-312-4943.
- One volunteer for Butterfly Network Monitoring to complete surveys at Boot Lake Nature Preserve and possibly Cobus Creek County Park this summer. Training is required. Two upcoming trainings to choose from: May 13 (virtual), 11am-1pm, Kalamazoo Nature Center, cost \$8, or May 6 (6-9pm) and May 21 (1-4pm) in person in Angola. More info: <http://naturecenter.org/michiganbutterfly/> Contact Krista if interested.
- One to three volunteers needed to help plant garden near the parking lot at Boot Lake Nature Preserve. Date TBD, but will be late June. Contact manager Boot Lake manager Sherry Bowen at sbowen@elkhartcounty.com or 574-364-0680.

Carole Mitchell

- Will be at ECIMN table at Arbor Day Celebration. Has enough volunteers at this point.

- Will be at Michiana Master Gardeners' Tour hospitality center on June 26 from 9am-2pm. Location is Trinity Church on Jackson. Set up is at 8am. IMN will be with Soil & Water Conservation District. Contact Carole if interested (bluebirdhill@hotmail.com)

Elma Chapman

- Newsletter deadline is Tuesday, April 19.
- State gathering will be in Indianapolis the weekend after Labor Day. More details to follow.

Field Trip, Anyone?

If you are interested in helping plan a field trip for the group, please contact Mary Kauffmann-Kennel (marykk@gmail.com)

Dennis Badke introduced our speaker, Jessica Merklng, urban wildlife biologist for Division of Fish and Wildlife, IN DNR. She spoke on Living with Wildlife in our backyards.

After Jessica's talk, Steve Shantz presented a short and very interesting book review of the book *Sprout Lands: Tending the Endless Gift of Trees* by William Logan.

Annual nature themed book exchange then took place, amidst socializing and snacks.

26 attendees plus speaker.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Zook