

Friends of Spruce Woods Inc. (FOSW)

Summer 2024—Newsletter



SPRUCE WOODS ARBORETUM

*An Arboretum is a living library of woody plants.
In our case, a specialized selection of trees and shrubs native to
Spruce Woods Provincial Park.*

In partnership with the Management and Staff of Spruce Woods Provincial Park we started planting an Arboretum in 2019. We have continued adding trees and shrubs, temporary signage, and an accessible walking path.

Our main focus is to educate and to inspire a life long love and respect of trees.

Interpreter-led tours and teacher based activities follow the school curriculum.



**Friends of Spruce Woods Inc.
would like to extend our gratitude and thanks to**



Brandon Area Community Foundation

In November of 2023 we were awarded a Grant of \$3,000 from Brandon Area Community Foundation. This support will allow us to complete the original planting design and add to the canopy around it. With this support we have doubled the number of trees planted to 90-plus with 38 species represented.

This allows us to move forward with Interpretive Signage and a Group Seating Area.



Thank you!

IN MEMORY

Kevin Johnson

November 8, 1963—October 26, 2023

It is with profound sadness that we said "Happy trails" to our dear friend; Friends of Spruce Woods Board Member and Equestrian Director, Kevin Johnson. His charismatic personality and big smile was a bright spot on our board and he will be greatly missed.

Kevin was a neat guy with a good soul, he had so many goals and ideas and we'll do our best to fulfill his vision.

Kevin and his wife Kerry were our Equestrian Campground Hosts for 2023 and they did a phenomenal job.

Rest peacefully our friend.



Bench installed in Memory of Rosalie Sigurdson



Rosalie Sigurdson, long time supporter of Spruce Woods Provincial Park and one of the originating pioneers of the Friends of Spruce Woods is being remembered with the installation of a bench at the end (near the Interpretive Centre) of our soon to be opened Storybook Walk.

Rosalie enjoyed the outdoors and being close to nature. She was indeed a 'Special Friend of Spruce Woods Park.'

EQUESTRIAN CAMPGROUND

Kathy and Rod Noel, 2024 Equestrian Campground Volunteer Hosts



We are happy to welcome Kathy and Rod to our team! They started in May; so many of you will already have met them. When they are at the Equestrian Campground they will have their sign out at site 11. Let them know if you have any questions or suggestions.

Trees Planted at Equestrian Campground



One project that Kevin had started was to plant some trees to provide shade for the horses. At the end of June, twelve large Manitoba Maples were planted at the Equestrian Campground.

A big shout out and thanks to **Alfred Santos & Eleanor Sigurdsson** for their contribution towards the trees. Thank you to Park Staff for the hard work of planting and now, regularly watering, to give them the best chance of survival.

Welcome to all those taking part in
The Spruce Woods Endurance Ride, August 24 and 25, 2024.
*(Just a heads up—the Equestrian Campground will be very busy; so,
not the weekend for anyone wanting a quiet getaway).

Upgrades are in the works.

- New hitching rails have been installed; six at the Equestrian Campground and two at Canoe Landing Campground.
- Old fence posts and fencing have been replaced on the large pen at the Equestrian Campground with phase 2 to continue next season with some more corral upgrades.

GIFT SHOP



The hard-working ladies who run the Gift Shop and act as our unofficial ambassadors.

Chloe is our fantastic Summer Staff-person and Ann, right, is the Gift Shop Manager and Chair of Friends of Spruce Woods.

Check out all the unique items offered, many by local Artisans who only sell their goods through our Gift Shop.

Delivery can be arranged and etransfer is available though the year when we are closed.

Clothing, Giftware, Jewelry, a large selection of Books, Toys, Pillows, and much more!
New stock arriving regularly.

Be amazed (and join the many who are doing their early Christmas Shopping here)!

DARK SKY DAY

Dark Sky Day *Special Event*

Friday, August 16

Location: Visitor Centre

Join Park Interpreters and the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada to discover the night sky at Spruce Woods, Manitoba's only designated Dark-sky Preserve!



Solar Observing and Astronomy Crafts 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Drop by this afternoon for a close look at our sun and make your own star craft to take home.

Evening Amphitheatre Presentations

- Solar System Fun for Kids 7 p.m. - 7:45 p.m.
- Aurora Presentation 7:45 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Laser-guided Sky Tour and Night Observing 8:30 p.m. - 11 p.m.

Explore the Spruce Woods night sky on a laser-guided constellation tour, followed by stargazing through high-powered telescopes.

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM

By Paige Savard, Senior Park Interpreter



2024 Interpretive Team.
Alison (Interpreter),
Dylan (Green Team),
Anna (Interpreter),
River (Interpreter),
Becca (Green Team), and
Paige (Senior Interpreter).
Missing Rayne and Preston.



Preston,
Green Team

2024 has been a phenomenal year for the Spruce Woods interpretive team. In addition to two new interpreter positions, they had all previous positions filled with passionate individuals. They have been busy putting on exciting and varied programming for the public and schools, reaching thousands of Park users this summer alone. Check out our Friends of Spruce Woods Facebook page for programming updates, or go visit the Interpreters in the Visitor Centre daily from 10 am—4 pm.



Rayne,
Green Team

Criddle/Vane Homestead Event Saturday, August 17, 2024

The Criddle & Vane families are Manitoba Pioneers well-known for their contributions in the fields of science, art, sports, and culture, as well as their somewhat eccentric lifestyle.

6 pm—8 pm Food, Entertainment & Wagon Rides

8:30 pm—9:30 pm Candle-lit Cemetery Tours

9 pm—11 pm Stargazing with Royal Astronomical Society

Bring a chair, flashlight, warm clothes, & your appetite! Located between Shilo & Wawanesa
For more information, please call 204-827-8850 or email ParkInterpretation@gov.mb.ca

***“2004, Twenty years ago - Charlotte Oleson, Cliff Cullen, Stan Struthers, and Margaret Criddle cut the ribbon to open the Criddle/Vane Park.”
From the Baldur-Glenboro Gazette, August 15, 2024 issue.***

Labour Day Weekend 2024

Visitor Centre

Open Daily 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Explore the interpretive exhibits at the Visitor Centre and chat with a Park Interpreter to plan your park adventures. Be sure to stop in at the Friends of Spruce Woods Gift Shop!



Astronomy Talk and Star Gazing *Amphitheatre Presentation*

Friday, August 30 9 p.m. - 11 p.m.

Location: Visitor Centre

Listen in on our 20-minute presentation about the wonders of the night sky at Spruce Woods, Manitoba's first Dark-sky Preserve. Then have a look through our telescope to observe the stars and planets. Explore the interpretive exhibits in the Visitor Centre before or after enjoying the dark sky views.

Spirit Sands *Guided Hike*

Saturday, August 31 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Location: Spirit Sands Trailhead

Join a Park Interpreter for a 3 km hike to the iconic sand dunes, discovering the diverse ecosystems, flora, and fauna of this special place. *Bring drinking water, sunscreen, and wear sturdy footwear.*

Bat Chat *Amphitheatre Presentation*

Saturday, August 31 7 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Location: Visitor Centre

Join guest Kaleigh Norquay from the University of Winnipeg Bat Lab, to discover the mysterious creatures who fly in the night sky. After the presentation, try and catch a glimpse of one of Spruce Woods' bat species as we embark on an exploratory walk nearby.



Skink Safari *Family Program*

Sunday, September 1 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Location: Meet at the Winter Recreation Area, to drive 8 km to the safari location

Come along on an exciting adventure looking for skinks! We'll meet up with Dr. Pamela Rutherford, local skink researcher from the Brandon University, to delve into the fascinating world of the northern prairie skink, Manitoba's only lizard! *Meet up with Park Interpreters at the Winter Recreation Area, then drive your own vehicle in our convoy to the safari location. Bring drinking water and wear sturdy footwear.*



Save our Skinks *Campfire Talk*

Sunday, September 1 7 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Location: Visitor Centre

Join skink expert Dr. Pamela Rutherford for an engaging campfire all about Spruce Woods' most famous reptile, the northern prairie skink. Enjoy an evening of storytelling, learn about skink habitat, and more! *Bring a mug for hot chocolate.*

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Or go to our website: www.friendsofsprucewoods.com
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Thank you for taking an interest!

