

Action Action

Spring!

(If you don't mind the weather)



Looking as if they have shoved off a dead Viking, the Harbormasters contemplate the committee boat adrift on Launch Day.

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The Ice Cream Social featured the newest member of the Hueston Woods Nature Center – a cougar! Park Manager Mark Lockhart took HSA members to look in on the not so little fella.

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Featured Family! The Brewsters give us a look inside their sailing lives in this month's family feature.

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Opening Day Approaches For 2013 Sailing Season

Spring has not made up its mind yet, but the calendar says "GO! This Sunday is the first in the Spring Series and although temperatures won't be as warm and fuzzy as we would like, it doesn't look like a bad day with temperatures in the 60's and only a small chance of precipitation.





Park Manager Mark Lockhart narrates the story of “Timber”, the Nature Center’s new member.

Acton Action

Hueston Woods State of the Park Address Delivered – with Ice Cream

When you come to the park this season, you will no doubt notice that things have changed. Park Manager Mark Lockhart is upbeat about the changes and looking to the future.

There is no word yet on the proposed move from 10 horsepower limit on motors. That will come later this spring, but sailors and other boaters will notice the return of the dredge, which has already started its work. Water levels are up to normal, and the dredging will reestablish a good channel to the lake proper.

Repairs to the dam are also in the near future and, according to Lockhart, it looks as if it might happen this year. The plan is to build a cofferdam in front of the existing one and rebuild. Ramp improvements are also slated for

completion by July 1 using a wildlife grant.

The park’s three naturalist vehicles have been “wrapped” and sport a new look to go along with the remodeling of the Nature Center now being conducted by a group called Friends of Hueston Woods.

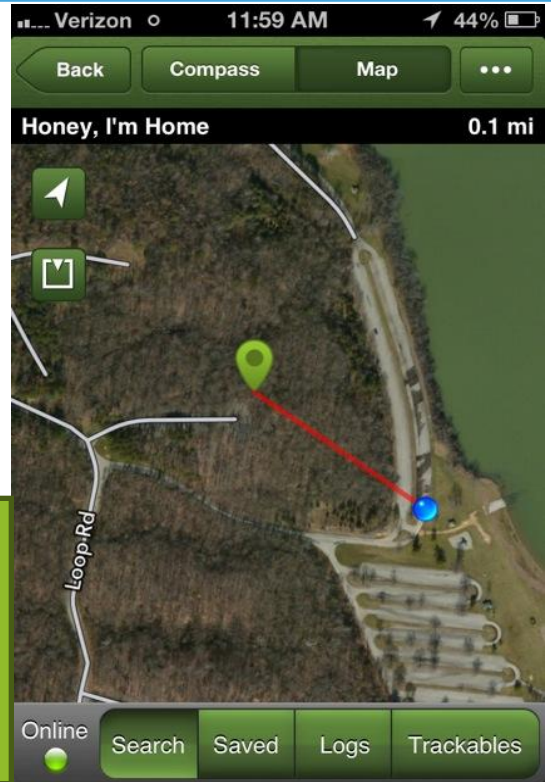
A short trip to the “class A” campground will reveal one of the most dramatic changes, at least in that area. The park has begun cutting down ash trees there that are infected with the emerald ash borer. They have also taken down a restroom near the HSA junior camp site, so the whole area will be like looking at another campground. Be prepared for a shock.

Lockhart also spoke about
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Onlookers vie for position as “Timber” stalks an oblivious neighbor in the pen next door. High drama at the Nature Center.

This week’s mystery picture: What is this geocaching picture showing?



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Your Invitation to Sail

Want to get in a sailboat soon? It isn't hard. HSA has boats and skippers who are available to you right away. All you have to do is contact us and we will get you in a boat.

There are often skippers looking for someone to crew for them. There are others who want to teach you how to race or just how to sail.

Ben Ainslie is the British sailor who has won more Olympic medals than any other sailor. Here's what he said about it. "People think it's either a very expensive sport or it's just far too complicated -- and really it's neither," said the Englishman, whose family moved to Cornwall on the south-west coast of the UK when he was young. At the grassroots level you can go down to a sailing club and you can just get into a dinghy and borrow a boat or start sailing and crewing for someone else and get into it for very little money."

the creation of a visitors' bureau using funds from a special Preble County source. Lockhart said, "Advocacy is more important than ever, not just of your particular interests, but the park's interest in general. We need a solid, proactive advocacy group to support parks."

Despite shrinking staff and more demands on remaining personnel, Lockhart was enthused about the many horizons that show promise. Through what he called "strategic staff hirings", the park has beefed up its presence on Facebook and seen high interest in the few positions that come open.

Lockhart says a stable budget and self sufficiency by 2015 are his immediate goals while still maintaining "excellence in customer service... and continuous improvement".

Lockhart also cited \$7500 in remodeling the golf course to improve appearance and customer experience; a second shower house in the campground; new work on aged infrastructure; firewood collection program success; an upgraded exhibit area in the nature center; and many other "wins".



The Brewsters!



Geocaching! With Mike and Them

When all the ice cream was scooped, it was time to head for the great outdoors. After a personal tour of the cougar exhibit, some of the party turned to geocaching.

The group as a whole searched out six geocaches within a half mile of the park office. Winning approval as the best geocache was the one hidden on the new covered bridge over Four Mile Creek. (You'll never find it without help – ingenious placement!)

After trekking on trails, parking lots, and bridges, Kevin and Megan DeArmon ended up tied for most finds with two apiece.

The award this year for finding the ONE the Stratton/Gunters could not unearth was Charlie DeArmon with his sharp eyed grab of the “Bluebird of Happiness”. Jerry Brewster has been dethroned!



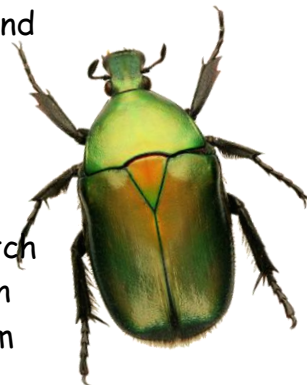
The Brewsters Go To the Lake!

Family Sailing Anecdotes From the Featured Family

"On one great steady wind day, we decided to take an extra long sail away from the docks. Darrilynn and I exchanged turns at the helm and the kids enjoyed jumping / falling off the boat, swimming and climbing back in.

Because the winds were good, the number of power boaters was down. This turned out to be unfortunate because we had sailed over a mile from the launch ramps without a motor and didn't expect the wind to completely die..We drifted for a while waiting for the wind to return (which it never did) before I began paddling. After about an hour, a power boater came near enough for us to ask for a tow."

"We had joined the Caesar Creek club (CCSA) and occasionally crewed for Hobie sailors. About the time that we purchased the Capri 14.2, the club reorganized into a social club and only had a few handicapped fun races a year (usually in Sept and Oct). The first time I decided to participate in the fun race, I invited my father, Walter, to crew. Walter had no experience racing and very little experience sailing. It was a cold, but very windy day in October. We got out on the water early and practiced our tacking. When the horn sounded we were first to the line on the pin end and built a big lead as we approached the windward mark. Unfortunately a big gust hit us in the middle of a tack only a less than 100 ft. from the windward mark. The boat turtled, but we were able to right the boat and recover, but not before the entire fleet sailed past us. Now we were soaking wet and freezing cold and had to decide if we wanted to try to catch the fleet. We decided to sail to shore, change into dry clothes, and return to the course in time for the second race. Unfortunately, we didn't inform the race committee, so they started the second race sequence just as we shoved off from the docks. Needless to say, we were dry and warm, but we could not get to the starting line or catch the fleet."



"The Saturday after sailing camp, Darrilynn wanted to show off her new found skills. She offered to take her friend, Becky, out for a leisurely sail. I helped them launch and waited on shore. About a hour later they both returned being towed by a power boat. Apparently, Becky had fallen overboard and could not get back into the boat and Darrilynn could not sail the boat with Becky dragging in the water."

The Brewsters Celebrate Jerry's Birthday last season at the lake. From left to right, Jerry, Darrilynn, Issac's torso and Brianna's right arm.



This was the scene at yours trulys just a month and a half ago on March 6. I was out in the barn getting the boat ready.