

## View From the Perch

By Terrence N. Ingram

What good does it do to put up a fight? It seems that even though at the time we win many of our fights, they just seem to come back again and again, no matter how good a fight we had put up the first or second time around. It is very frustrating to have to keep fighting for the same natural area!

I try to keep an ear to the ground so that I will know what is happening to bald eagle habitat and the bald eagle population in general. When I learn about vital habitat that is being affected by some development or activity, I do the best I can to curtail the action, or at least minimize the potential destruction of this essential habitat.

The hardest thing to accept is the fact that we have to constantly be fighting the Department of Natural Resources, or the Fish and Wildlife Service, or the Army Corps of Engineers, the very agencies, which should be on our side protecting the environment. There is so much politics involved with each of these agencies that it is hard to imagine that they are supposed to be on our side.

The hardest thing for us to do is to get them to obey their own rules for the protection of the natural environment. Even the Illinois Attorney General has a real problem getting them to follow their own rules. They don't even have the courtesy to respond to our letters, when we ask them for public hearings, or make an attempt to challenge their decisions.

The only thing we can do is constantly take them to court. Then the only ones who come out on top are the attorneys and our fragile environment is left out in the cold. The only problem is that the natural world that is required for these plants and animals to live in is rapidly getting smaller and smaller, and each year

the water and soil are becoming more and more polluted by the many chemicals which our farmers are using. The chemical companies have such political clout that it is very difficult to prove that they should be reined in before our world is so poisoned that we cannot live here ourselves. Each year we have stronger chemicals which are being used.

Somehow ENF has to find the means to find out how many young eagles are fledged each year. The Fish & Wildlife feels that the bald eagle population is doing alright, so there is no need for anyone to look at the nesting results. Our Midwinter Bald Eagle Count is revealing just the opposite.

Not only are the nesting birds not reproducing well, but the birds don't find the fish they need in the winter along the Mississippi River, which has been their wintering ground for years. So they are forced to move inland to try to find the vital food they need. This forces them into the same polluted environment, which has been death to so many other birds, animals and insects during the summer. Are these same poisons being accumulated in the food the eagles are finding out in the country? No one is looking or even concerned about this issue.

At the present time many of the bald eagle nests which we do have under observation only have one young and in some cases only one adult is left to care for that one young bird. How many of them will be able to live long enough to fly, only time will tell. ENF has a big job ahead! ■



## Army Corps Proposed Dam at Rice Lake

The Army Corps of Engineers has proposed a long dam (levee) along the shore of the Illinois River, between it and Big Lake, Slim Lake and Rice Lake "to protect these Lakes from the annual flooding of the Illinois River". The Army Corps does not seem to understand that these lakes are back water lakes of the Illinois River, formed by the channel changing positions, which is a common occurrence with all mature rivers. Flooding of such backwater lakes has always been occurring and is what makes these lakes so vital to the plants, animals and birds which live there.

The Army Corps says it is just trying to help the Illinois Department of Natural Resources manage these waters for wild-fowl hunting. To do that they have plans to place big pumps in the dam to allow IDNR to pump water into the lakes when it wants and to pump water out of the lakes when it wants.

There are several flaws with such a plan. One of which is finances, which in the State of Illinois is a big issue. When the project is completed the IDNR will be the only party responsible for these big pumps. Right now they don't have the money to properly manage the lake levels, so where will they find the money to operate these pumps in the future?

Another problem is that during construction of this dam they will be destroying the bald eagle roost that ENF and others have worked so hard to save for the past almost 30 years. Cutting down the large trees within this roost would certainly affect the bald eagles wintering in the area.

In the early 80's ENF documented over 55 bald eagles using this roost nightly. The IDNR biologist for the area has approved the destruction of these roost trees, because the Corps plan calls for mitigation of this destruction by planting mast trees

out in the corn field one half mile away. She accepts this mitigation. When questioned about her decision she admits that she has a family and must keep her job. This is at a time when our bald eagle population is already having a problem surviving the winters. It doesn't make sense to add another stress.

ENF and others have asked the Corps of Engineers for a public hearing on this project and to this date have had no response. Because it will be affecting bald eagles and other endangered species, by law the IDNR and the Army Corps should be conducting a public hearing on the issue. Even the Illinois Attorney General has informed the IDNR that a hearing is required by law, and they are ignoring her as well.

So we may be forced to go to court again to fight for habitat that is being threatened by the very agencies which are supposed to be protecting these species and their required habitat. How many times must we go to court to fight for habitat that is owned by IDNR and they are willing to destroy it, or let it be destroyed by another agency? If we go back to court once more it will be the third or fourth time for this very roost.

As ENF has learned in the past the only way to truly save vital property is to purchase it ourselves. Then we can definitely control the use of it.

Eagle Valley was purchased to stop a four lane highway from going right through the length of it. This topic will be one of the important issues that will be addressed by the board at the next board meeting. To be successful in our endeavors, with whatever path the board decides to take, we will definitely need the support of you, our members, especially if we should decide to try to buy land! ■

## Banner Mine Issue

By Terrence N. Ingram

We won the decision from the hearing officer, that the IDNR had been wrong in approving the Banner Strip Mine permit and rescinded that approval. Then the Illinois Attorney General took IDNR to circuit court to sue them for the manner in which they had conducted themselves throughout the whole issue.

We knew they were not doing what they were supposed to do according to their own rules, but they just ignored us and tried to run rough shod over our rights and the rights that the bald eagle and other endangered species are supposed to enjoy in the State of Illinois. They were the big boy on the block and felt they could do anything they wanted. They have found out differently.

Now the Attorney General is taking them to task and they are not responding very well to the facts. The AG has presented them with a settlement offer which

so far they have ignored. So if they continue to ignore her much longer the AG is going to ask the circuit court for a summary judgment of the issue. We will know in another week or two what will happen.

Either way we are hopefully going to have another tool on our side as we try to save the environment for our endangered species in Illinois, including the bald eagle. Whether it comes from the settlement offer, or the summary judgment, the IDNR is going to be forced to follow its own rules and laws in its future operations and dealings with the public.

It still may take several months before we can get the issue settled, but we hope it will be settled before summer is over. I had hoped that when Marc Miller was declared the Director of IDNR that we would see some changes. But I keep forgetting that this is Illinois and our politics don't seem to change no matter who is in power.

## Fox River Power Line

An Illinois Power Company had planned to put a high power line along the Fox River this year. There were several proposed routes, one of which would go along the Fox River edge right past the dam at Dayton, IL. This route would not only destroy some of the mature trees near the river that bald eagles could use as feeding perches as they look for fish below the dam, but the lines themselves would pose a threat to bald eagles colliding into them as they fly through the area.

ENF submitted a 20 page statement to the court and we attended the hearing at the Dept. of Commerce Building in Springfield concerning this issue. The court felt that the material ENF had submitted was adequate and we did not have to testify at the hearing.

We have heard that the judge has declared the route should stay along the highway and stay away from the river itself. We hope the decision will stand and that the Power Company will not appeal this decision.

Plum Island on the Illinois River is just a few miles downstream from the mouth of the Fox River. This island got saved a few years ago by the Illinois Audubon Society through a grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Foundation. The dam at Dayton is just a few miles from the mouth of the Fox River where it dumps into the Illinois River. Anyone who has gone to the Starved Rock State Park across the river from Plum Island during the winter knows there are bald eagles in the area. ■

## Does the President's "Clean Coal" Glibness turn American Citizens Into Acceptable Collateral Damage?

No American leader has done more to advance a clean energy future than President Obama. Nor has any American president done more to invoke a mandate for stricter workplace safety and environmental regulations. And yet, ever since President Obama first visited my native southern Illinois coalfields in 1997 on a golf outing with a fellow state legislator, he has seemingly failed to grasp the staggering human and environmental toll of coal mining and coal burning on our coal field communities—and ultimately, the nation.

Regardless of how cap'n' trade and carbon cap'n' storage schemes pan out in the far-flung future for coal-fired plants, there is one indisputable truth about "clean coal". It will ramp up deadly strip mining and underground coal mining production by an estimated 25-3-30 percent. Clean coal, therefore, are not just words. It's a death sentence for coalfield communities. And every time our president glibly spins "clean coal," he does not simply offend black lung-afflicted and injured coal miners and their families in the American coalfields; he disregards the mounting death toll from "real coal."

Makes you wonder: Does President Obama's glibness, for whatever reason of practicality or politics, turn American citizens into acceptable collateral damage in a confounding defense of our nation's dirty energy policy?

Even a cursory look into the history of coal mining in his adopted state of Illinois—the proclaimed "Saudi Arabia of Coal"—would inform the President that hopelessness in the American coalfields has been wedded to a mind-boggling death toll.

On the president's first trip to the southern Illinois coalfields in 1997, as part of a golf junket, the coal company executives pounded nails into the green to keep the eternal springtime of coal alive. They played the nostalgia trump card, conjuring images of great lines of coal trains and tipples, and huge ranks of coal miners emerging out of the depths of the earth in an endless parade of employment opportunities. They heralded the coming of "clean coal" technology.

But nostalgia, like denial, is a deadly game. No one on that golf course would have paused for a moment, pointed to a landmark a few miles away to the south, and recalled an explosion on the last working day before Christmas in 1951. When mining safety violations were ignored and a buildup of methane gas ripped through the nearby New Orient No. 2 mine and took the lives of 119 miners.

More than 104,000 miners in America have died in coal mines since 1900. Every day, three coal miners still die from black lung disease; over 10,000 miners, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, died in the last decade. In the meantime, the external economic costs of the Black Lung Program has saddled taxpayers with billions of dollars. The injures and deaths caused by overburdened coal trucks continue to pile up.

Miners are not the only Americans to suffer from the dangerous pollutants, including mercury, that filter into our air and water from the mines. According to the American Lung Association, 24,000 Americans die prematurely from coal-fired plant pollution each year. Another 550,000 asthma attacks, 38,000 heart at-

tacks and 12,000 hospital admissions are also attributed to coal-red plants. An Environmental Protection Agency study found that long-term exposure to “particulate matter of 2.5 microns and smaller (Pm2.5),” which coal-fired plants contributed, “shortens the average lifespan by 14 years.”

When the Obama administration released a previously held 2002 study carried out by the Environmental Protection Agency on the dangers of toxic coal-ash ponds, Charleston Gazette reporter Ken Ward noted; “The EPA estimates that 1 in 50 nearby residents could get cancer from exposure to arsenic leaking into drinking water wells from unlined waste ponds that mix ash with coal refuse. Threats are also posed by high levels of other metals, including boron, selenium and lead.”

Not that our president has ever been unaware of the deadly effects of coal. The dinosaur Fisk Generating Station in his adopted city of Chicago billows out thousands of tons of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, and carbon dioxide emissions, as well as 117 tons of particulate matter that led to hundreds of heart attacks and thousands of asthma attacks every year.

But the president’s disregard for the casualties of coal are part of a historical pattern. The coal industry golf pros surrounding Obama in 1997 most likely didn’t tell the young state senator that their fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers had carried on this same conversation with politicians from Chicago for the past century; that “clean coal” has been sold as a slogan since the 1890s. That by 1905, virtually all southern Illinois mineral rights had been bought up by a torrent of Chicago speculators and coal operators, relegating the region to the vassal status of a supply-and-demand extraction colony subject to the whims of the senator’s own constituents.

No one probably confessed to the fact that the region’s coal industry had peaked in 1918. Over 100,000 miners produced more than 100 million tons in the early 1920-s, a little more than 3,000 miners churned out 30 million tons today.

By the 1930s, according to a government report, those same Chicago coal companies had abandoned the region and left a picture of “almost unrelieved, utter economic devastation.” As one of the most depressed and vulnerable places in the country, the southern Illinois coal-fields had been given over to “hopeless poverty.”

That same sense of hopelessness, of being abandoned by a government beholder to the whims of outside Big Coal companies still resonates today. Out of the 1300 mines that had been opened in the state of Illinois, less than 25 remained by the end of the twentieth century, leaving the federal and state governments with a bill for billions of dollars to clean up the dangerous sites and toxic waste seeping into the region’s watershed. Thousands of fertile farmland acres and lush Shawnee forest have been strip-mined and left to the unmanaged spoils of weeds, foreign grasses, and sterile creeks. Cancer and health problems soar. The coal miners, too, have been abandoned: Their town squares and schools are boarded up; their hard-earned property values have wiped out in the boom bust cycles of a single economy.

This is the real cost of the President’s “clean coal”: rhetoric for American citizens in the coalfields: Dirty coal has remained the merciless king, and the land and its residents must defend themselves against the daily onslaught of the monarch’s extraction for more wealth.

That is a historical crime that deserves a real solution, a clean energy future-not something we should discuss glibly as “clean coal.” ■

*Reprinted from Huffington Post, 2-16-10.*

## First Shipment of 2010 Shrubs Have Arrived

**Apple River)** The Eagle Nature Foundation has received its first 2010 shipment of trees, shrubs and perennials. These 300+ plants of 30 species are available to the general public at its headquarters at 300 East Hickory Street, on Stagecoach Trail at the east edge of Apple River. The plants may be examined during daylight hours any day of the week and are on a self serve basis. The price for each variety of plants is marked on its name sign and the appropriate money can be placed in the mail box on the porch. There is an envelope on the porch beside the mail box with sheets containing further descriptions of all the plants that are in the yard. Please take only one descriptive plant sheet per family.

The choices may be limited as there are only 5 or 6 specimens of most varie-

ties. There may be two or more varieties of each species. These species include lilacs, day lilies, sedums, peonies, viburnums, white pines, blue spruce, junipers, boxwoods, spireas, dogwoods, forsythias, willows, weigelas, potentilla, roses, chokeberry, and abelias as well as eight or ten others. These plants have been donated to the Eagle Nature Foundation by Beaver Creek Nursery near Popular Grove, IL to help ENF raise needed funds for its bald eagle preservation efforts.

When they pick up their plants anyone wishing to help ENF with its preservation efforts may do so by leaving an extra donation in the mail box on the porch. Anyone wishing to become a member of the Eagle Nature Foundation must leave at least an extra \$20 in the box along with their name and address. ■

## Garage Sale—August 6 & 7

ENF is planning to have a garage sale on August 6 and 7 at its headquarters at 300 East Hickory Street, Apple River, IL. Donations for the sale from our members, or from the general public, will be gratefully accepted.

All of the proceeds from the sale will be used to cover the cost for the upkeep for the office. Anyone coming to the garage sale may also get any remaining plants and/or shrubs at half the posted price. ■

## ENF Corporate Sponsor Program

If your business or corporation would like to be a Corporate Sponsor of the Bald Eagle, just send an annual donation of at least \$100 to the Eagle Nature Foundation, 300 East Hickory Street, Apple River, IL 61001. In return your company will receive a beautiful laminated certificate to be framed for your wall, plus your name, address and website will be listed in each of the next four issues of the Bald Eagle News, the next two issues of the Nature News, ENF’s annual report, and have a link to your website on our website. What a great way to let the world know that you want to support our National Symbol and keep it flying to be a symbol of freedom for the enjoyment of future generations! The bald eagle needs your support!

Please let the businesses you do business with know about this program and urge them to be a Corporate Sponsor. You as a member can help us all year long by spreading the message about what we do. With your help we can win our fight. ■

## How Dairy CAFOs Destroyed Washington's Yakima Valley

By Matthew Alschuler,

Raised on a family dairy in Missouri, for 49 years Helen Reddout operated a commercial cherry orchard in Washington. She regularly testifies on the invasion of rural areas by industrial operations that abuse the land and threaten the rural life style that we currently enjoy in NW Illinois. She's the president of a grass roots environmental group that won a landmark federal case against industrial agricultural facilities.

After her husband's death in 2004 Helen and her youngest son took over the operation of the 180 acre orchard. Born in southwestern Missouri, Helen spent her teenage years on a small dairy farm, later graduated from Central Washington University, and retired after 25 years of teaching.

Currently, Helen speaks throughout the US about the dangers of air and water pollution generated by industrial dairy operations, leads an educational program about the human health problems caused by these pollutants, testifies at legislative hearings, and works with local and national organizations to promote environmental preservation.

As a farmer and community activist, Helen is a strong supporter of sustainable,

socially responsible family farms.

Helen is the co-founder and acting president of CARE (Community Association for Restoration of the Environment), a grassroots group founded in 1997 by residents of Washington's Lower Yakima Valley in response to the devastating impact of newly constructed factory dairies.

In addition to winning a landmark federal court case which helped improve the regulation of factory farms under the Clean Water Act, CARE monitors local air and water quality, conducts public education programs, and successfully forces factory dairies in the Yakima Valley to comply with environmental regulations.

As a result of her untiring efforts to protect human health and the environment, Helen was honored as an "Environmental Hero: by the Washington Environmental Council in 2001. ■

Reprinted from the internet.



## ENF Endowment Fund

Terrence N. Ingram, President of the Eagle Nature Foundation is pleased to announce that ENF has taken steps to ensure a secure future for the organization and the future of the bald eagle by setting up an Endowment Fund. This fund is open to receive gifts, or bequests to the Foundation. All donations to this fund are tax deductible and the principle will be left untouched, with only the interest used for the organization's operating budget. Once we build the Endowment Fund, ENF will be able to be more aggressive about once again preserving eagle habitat through land contracts. The Endowment Fund presently has a few hundred over \$1,000. Your donations are urgently needed if we are to make this truly a fund we can live on!

## Rice Lake Rehab

By Jeff Lampe

BANNER—As a duck hunter I'm almost satisfied with plans to improve Rice Lake State Fish and Wildlife area. Same would be true if I was a tree-hugger. As a taxpayer? Not so much. Seems like all we do in government anymore is spend money. But lofty price tags are what you get when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers marches into town. And since the state of Illinois shows no sign of addressing the needs of its aging neglected waterfowl sites, the proposed \$11.7 million Rice Lake rehabilitation is the best available option.

For that price tag (an amazing \$1.2 million of which has already been spent on studies), Rice Lake gets a new pump, new transmission ditches, new levees and more than 400 acres of tree and prairie plantings. Work could start in August and would likely stretch over four years according to Marvin Hubbell, a regional manager for the Corps who discussed the project at an open house last week in Banner. His comment about project length drew a catcall from Danny David of Mapleton, part of a mostly camo-clad crowd of more than 70. "I hope I'm still alive," said David, 83. That's a legitimate worry for many associated with this project. Since discussion started in 1987. That the plan came to fruition suddenly is cause for concern in the eyes of some observers—as are worries about losing trees, the impact on eagles and osprey and the state's long-term ability to maintain the 6,800 acre site.

To me the tree argument holds no water. To repair and build levees, the Corps expects to cut down 4.8 acres of silver maples, cottonwoods and green ash trees. In exchange, the project calls for planting 352 acres of mast-producing trees on Duck Island, along with 57 acres of prairie

over a Native American burial site. We've got plenty of junky silver maples and cottonwoods along the Illinois River and precious few hardwoods, which once dominated the area and provide food for all sorts of critters.

And don't get me started on those who squawk about eagle habitat. The river is lined with eagle habitat. More to the point, while eagles and ospreys do nest on or near Rice Lake, no active nest sites will be impacted.

As to the state's ability to maintain Rice Lake, who knows? The Department of Natural Resources already has a long list of repairs they can't handle at state waterfowl sites.

In many cases, those needs hamper a site's ability to fulfill its mission. That's certainly true at Rice Lake, where summer floods make managing for waterfowl very difficult. An inability to keep out even small rises in the Illinois River means moist soil plants seldom gain a foothold. In years the plants do survive, waterfowl and shorebirds flock to Rice Lake in impressive numbers.

The Corps' plan would increase the odds of that happening by helping managers get water on and off Rice Lake, Big Lake and Goose Lake within two weeks. Fish would also be able to escape into the Illinois River during draw downs, which is not the case right now.

New and improved levees would also hold out water up to 14 feet at Havana, halting about half of the floods that now plague Rice Lake. While some would like to see larger levees and even more protection, the cost and environmental damage required would be too great. "Is this a perfect plan? No. But from an environmental standpoint it's a lot better than what we've got," said Bill Douglass, site

manager at Rice Lake. "This will help us get the water off in a timely fashion and put the water back on in a timely fashion. That's the key to management for waterfowl and shorebirds. "This is the opportu-

nity we have to make a significant difference for a major backwater of the Illinois River. There are very few left and they're not working as is." ■

Reprinted from Prairie State Outdoors, 1-31-10.

## Homes Appeals Judge's Decision to Allow MegaDairy

Warren, IL - On February 16, attorneys for HOMES filed papers with the Illinois Appellate Court, 2nd Judicial District, requesting reversal of Judge Ward's questionable decision and to enter a permanent injunction against operation of the Traditions industrial agricultural facility in Jo Daviess County.

Previously, attorneys for Traditions LLC filed an appeal asking that Judge Ward's original preliminary injunction be dissolved. Although it was automatically dissolved when Judge Ward ruled against HOMES and the environment on December 15, 2009, these lawyers, who represent the Wisconsin Dairy Board, hope to sue for the legal fees spent during this trial as well as lost profits claims to be \$16,000 per day. HOMES has responded to this outrageous claim by filing a Motion to Strike it pursuant to the Illinois Citizens Participation Act, which bars and condemns such claims for damages as an "abuse of the judicial process.

HOMES' Citizen's Participation Act Motion seeks to invoke the "utmost protection" against defendants' effort to bury them under an avalanche of monetary damages and asserts that the corporation's appeal was filed simply to harass private citizens trying to protect themselves and to cause HOMES supporters to needlessly spend large sums of money defending themselves.

Since the facility still doesn't have all of the state permits required to finish construction it could not have been operational

during the time frame that these lawyers are claiming lost profits.

The Appellate court has set the following schedule, HOMES final brief is due May 25, Traditions has until June 29 to respond, and HOMES has until July 13 to reply. The entire case will then go in front of the three justice appellate court panel for consideration. These dates may be extended should either side ask for, and receive, an extension from the court.

The court could take from six to eight months to rule on this case, so a final ruling is not expected until Spring 2011.

For more information about HOMES and to help support our cause, visit: [www.StopTheMegaDairy.org](http://www.StopTheMegaDairy.org)

HOMES (Helping Others Maintain Environmental Standards) is a 501(c) tax exempt, pro-agriculture group of farmers and citizens dedicated to protecting family farms, rural communities, human health, and the environment by promoting sustainable agriculture and conserving our natural resources. ■



## ENF Board Expanded

**Apple River)** The Eagle Nature Foundation (ENF) expanded the size of its Board of Directors to 11 members at ENF's annual meeting on March 27 at the Klehm Arboretum in Rockford. The board had consisted of only seven persons for the past many years. Concerned with the uncertainty about the status of the bald eagle and its declining population, the board felt they needed to have more persons involved in ENF's effort to find the cause of the decline and to reverse this trend before it becomes too late. So the decision was made to expand the board to eleven persons. Each of these members serve for a three year term, so each year three or four directors must either run for another term, or be replaced.

Directors elected this year with the expansion in numbers include: Richard

Briggs, Orangeville, IL; Thomas Gerard Holland, Apple River, IL; Terrence Ingram, Apple River, IL; Jean Kaitis, North Aurora, IL; Edward Kinsel, Champaign, IL; and Beth Neary, Lake Zurich, IL. The officers elected for the coming year include: Terrence Ingram, President; Joe Lukascyk, 1st Vice-President; James Ronnerud, 2nd Vice President; Beth Neary, Secretary; and Thomas Gerard Holland, Treasurer.

The Eagle Nature Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization devoted to preserving the bald eagle and its endangered habitat as well as other endangered species. Membership is open to all members of the public who are concerned with these same issues. More information about the organization can be found on ENF's website, [eaglenature.com](http://eaglenature.com) ■

## Honeybees—An Endangered Species?

**Apple River)** Will honeybees become our nation's next endangered species? This was a question that was presented by the nationally known Master Beekeeper, Terrence Ingram, during the Eagle Nature Foundation's Annual Meeting, as he provided a very informative program on "Honeybees—Nature's Wonder". His power point presentation on the life of the honeybee gave listeners a close up look into the world of the honeybee and the many problems that honeybees face. Front and center of their enemies are the many pesticides that affect the bees as they pollinate our many crops and flowers. One governmental study has identified over 120 different pesticides that were found within different parts of the beehives; in the honey, honey comb, pollen, propolis and royal jelly. Most of these have a very adverse effect on the life of a honeybee.

The Eagle Nature Foundation's Annual

Meeting and Fund Raising Luncheon was held at the Klehm Arboretum in Rockford on March 27. Honored guests at the Luncheon were the many past Directors of the organization who are responsible for the work that has been accomplished by ENF over the past 40 years and their spouses. Each Director who made an appearance was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for their past service.

During the Award Ceremony Certificates of Appreciation were also submitted to the people and businesses who had supported our Fall Eagle Fest and ENF's other activities in 2009. Life membership certificates were presented to new life members.

Marble paper weights were presented to people who had made large donations in 2009. Corporate Sponsor Certificates were presented to those businesses which have become Corporate Sponsors to date. ■

## Nature Art and Essay Contests Announced

**Apple River)** The Eagle Nature Foundation has just completed its plans for two school student contests for its Fall Eagle Fest to be held at the University of Wisconsin/Platteville Campus on Sept. 25, 2010. These two contests each have two divisions, Junior High School and Senior High School. The contests are open to students from public schools and private schools, as well as home schooled students. There is no fee to enter either contest.

The Nature Art Contest will accept up to 16" x 20" entries of crayon, pencil or watercolor mediums. The subject matter must be nature oriented, with a preference to being eagle related, but that will not be a criteria for the judges to use in their decision making. All entries must be postmarked by Sept. 13 at the latest, so all entries can be judged before Eagle Fest. Winning students must personally be at Eagle Fest on Sept. 25 to be eligible to receive any awards. The top 20 entries in each Division will be on display Sept. 25, during the Fall Eagle Fest.

Entrants in the Bald Eagle Essay contest must address the question "Is It Impor-

tant to Preserve the Bald Eagle in the Wild?" in 500 words or less. The top four winners in each division must orally present their essays to the public during Eagle Fest for the final judging. Entries must be postmarked by Sept. 13th at the latest, so all entries can be prejudged to select the top four entries in each division.

The awards are the same for both contests and for both divisions: 1st place-\$100, 2nd place-\$50 3rd place-\$25 and 4th place-\$10. In addition, the first place winners will each get a trophy and the school he or she represents will receive a plaque and \$50. The top four winners in each contest and each division will receive a special t-shirt to wear during Eagle Fest.

Because the Eagle Fest mailing deadlines are so close to the beginning of the school this fall, teachers may wish to enter their best students from this spring. Each school is limited to two entries from each school in each division in each contest.

Complete rules for each contest may be received by writing to ENF, 300 East Hickory St., Apple River, IL 61001, or calling 815-594-2306 or checking our website at [eaglenature.com](http://eaglenature.com) ■

## Junior Eagle Club

Many people are not aware of our lifetime Junior Eagle Nature Club Program. For just a modest one time membership of \$6.50 a child or adult may become a lifetime member of the Junior Eagle Nature Club.

This lifetime membership includes a laminated membership card; a laminated membership certificate; an 8X10 inch colored nature print of your choice from the following list:

1. Flying Bald Eagle
2. A loon and babies
3. Mountain lion cub
4. Black Bear cub
5. Snowy Owl
6. Wolf pups;

plus a packet of information about the bald eagle and other environmental issues; and the knowledge that you are helping preserve the natural world for the enjoyment of future generations.

This lifetime membership is something that would make a very nice Christmas or birthday present for that young person who is interested in the natural world. Where else can you get so much for so little?

In the past whole school classes have joined. During the past few years we have not had many children join. Let your family and friends know of this club and get their children to join as lifetime members!

## Where Eagles Dare to Live Becomes Pasco Tourist Attraction

By Jodie Tillman

**HOLIDAY**—Andrea Webb has stood by the side of Baillies Bluff Road for five hours at a time. She bundled up in a parka during the winter, sweated during the recent heat wave and stood her ground during a rainstorm one afternoon, mascara running down her face. "I looked like Alice Cooper that day," she said. No matter, Webb, a photographer, has been transfixed for the last five months by a thing of natural beauty: High up in a dead, bone-white pine tree, on land owned by Progress Energy, is a nest where a pair of eagles have raised their two babies.

Birders and other experts say the nest, which is between the entrances to Anclote Gulf Park and Anclote River Park, is highly unusual, because of its visibility to the public: Most times eagles' nests are either hidden from view on private property or else located deep in the woods. "It's a rare and unique opportunity for people interested in birds to observe the entire breeding cycle of the eagles," said Dave Bruzek, lead environmental specialist for Progress. "You can observe their courtship behavior, their nest building behavior, their egg laying, their rearing of the young."

With little fanfare, the nest near Progress' Anclote Power Plant has become an accidental tourist attraction as dozens of motorists sometimes park along the side of the road to catch a glimpse of the iconic birds. Visitors include everyone from locals checking in on the familiar pair to birding enthusiasts who learn of the nest on websites and made the stop part of their Florida trip. "I've seen them from the beginning," said Mick Wellin, an Indiana snowbird who stopped by to see the eagles one last time Monday before heading

home. "It's been a fabulous adventure."

This nest is thought to have been the October-to-May home to the same pair of eagles for seven years. Eagles typically have a strong fidelity to their nests, even after they've been gone up north for six months. But the eagles most passionate admirers also fear danger lies ahead next year: Both to the humans and the birds.

The potential danger to humans? Traffic. Some days dozens of cars are parked on the side of the road, most of them on the opposite side. But when those people cross the road, they might walk right into the path of on-coming motorist in the 45 mph zone. It looks like a football game," said Webb. "People with hundreds of thousands of dollars in (camera( lenses.)"

So last month, Webb and Barbara Walker of Clearwater Audubon Society pitched an idea to the Pasco County Tourist Development Council: How about putting up signs and building a scenic pull-off area near the nest on nearby county-owned property?

Though sports has dominated the debate over how to spend tourism money in recent years, Pasco County has long had an "It's Only Natural" theme in its tourism materials. Because the county is listed on the Great Florida Birding Trail, Pasco has been featured in birding magazines that generate inquiries from visitors, said Eric Keaton, tourism manager.

Keaton said officials from various agencies would need to meet and figure out how the pull-off area might work, noting that a bike trail is also planned to one day link the Holiday parks. He said the eagles might be something Pasco could promote. The county has about a dozen known eagles nests, according to the Flor-

ida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. "So far, so good," he said. "It's hard to turn away from bald eagles."

And it's the eagles for whom many fear most deeply. That's because the tree that has held the estimated 800-pound nest is nearing its end.

Volunteers have spent this season running out to the scene after heavy winds, their hearts dreading the possibility of seeing a collapsed tree and a nest—with the eggs or flightless fledglings—on the ground. "This may be the most watched nest in Florida," said Walker.

Bruzek, the Progress Energy environmental specialist, worries, too. The company is weighing its options for what it can do once the eagles clear out this month.

One option is to relocate the nest to a platform structure. An alternative is to build a similar nest—sticks woven together, filled in with ground materials and lined with soft grass—and erect it into a nearby tree that's in better shape. Then Progress would ask state wildlife officials for a permit to remove the original nest, so that the eagles wouldn't have that option, he said, "and we'd risk watching the nest fall down."

But it's a risky proposition; the eagles might come back, not find the nest to their liking and go somewhere else. "So yeah, I fully appreciate those folks want a nest they can sit and observe. But I can't guarantee that," he said. "We're talking about a wild animal that we have no control over their behavior."

Webb and Walker say they understand

that possibility, too. They said that even if the eagles decide to go somewhere else, the spot is good for other bird watching, including osprey and the red-headed woodpecker that was checking out the eagles' nest Monday while the raptors had gone to lunch. Another eagles' nest, which is hard to observe is located at nearby Key Vista park.

Webb, who moved to north Pinellas last year when her husband changed jobs, said she'd never been much of a bird-watcher. She had just been going to local parks with her camera to take nature shots when someone asked her if she'd seen the Anclote eagles. "You gain a sense of peace watching the birds," she said. "When you see them, you're just hooked on watching."

As if on cue, she suddenly spotted someone coming in for a landing: It was one of the juveniles, coming back to the nest from the water. There he is there he is!" she said. She pointed her camera and addressed her subject: "You're so beautiful." ■

Reprinted from the Internet, May 7, 2010.

### **Volunteers Needed for Fall Eagle Fest!**

ENF needs more volunteer workers for our Fall Eagle Fest on Sept. 25 in Platteville, WI. We need people to act as greeters, to help with the auction, to work as clerks in ENF's store, as well as to be available to answer questions at all of ENF's membership, information and field trip booths. If you would be available to help out this day, please call the office, **815-594-2306**.

### **ENF Loan Portfolio**

ENF operates with a 5% loan portfolio to cover our operating expenses. If you have a minimum of \$500 invested in a CD, or other savings account, which is not receiving 5% annual interest, seriously consider a loan to ENF. Call the office for a copy of our loan agreement. These loans are secured by a lien on ENF's assets, which includes a home equity loan (ENF office is the collateral). If you would like more information, please call the office, **815-594-2306**. At the present time we are looking for a total loan of \$1000 or two \$500.

## **2010 Shrub Sale**

Within eight weeks ENF had taken in almost \$3,000 for the first batch of shrubs we had received from Beaver Creek Nursery. For an average we have received over \$300 per week ever since we received this first load of shrubs and are still receiving over \$100 per week.

We plan to go back and pick up another load of donated plants, trees and shrubs on June 8. Many of these excellent quality plants are on display at the office until they bloom, and then people stop in and snap them up. It seems that many people don't know or can't image what they will look like, and have to wait until they bloom to see how beautiful they are.

This donation of shrubs is through the generosity of Roy and Sarah Klehm. Their family has been donating shrubs and plants to the Eagle Nature Foundation for the past 30 years.

Most of the landscaping plants at the

office came from them which a person cannot miss when he or she visits the office. Only a few of these plants were original and had been present in 1954 when the office was originally purchased by the Ingram family. Almost all of the landscaping trees and shrubs which we had around the Nature Center at Eagle Valley had been donated by the late Chuck Klehm, Roy's brother.

These plants have become an annual fund raiser for ENF and are being used by many people in Northwestern Illinois, Southern Wisconsin, and Eastern Iowa to beautify their homes and yards. There is no way we can truly express how much the donation of these plants mean to ENF. They have made it possible for the organization to remain viable throughout the summers, when our other activities are at a minimum and cash flow would otherwise be non existent. ■

## **Board Member Needed**

During ENF's annual meeting on March 27, the Board of Directors was expanded to include 11 persons. Since then Jean Kaitis has had some medical problems develop in her family and she feels she will be unable to give us the time that is needed to be a good board member.

The next board meeting will be held in Dixon on June 26. At that time our board must replace Jean with another member, as the first item of business at that meeting. Our By-Laws state that the board cannot conduct any business without having a full complement of board members.

With that in mind we are looking for an ENF member who will volunteer to serve as a board member until ENF's annual meeting in March, which is only three board meetings. Anyone interested in filling this vacant position please contact ENF's office to let us know.

Our Board of Directors meets four times a year with the future meetings for this year listed on the inside of the back cover of this issue. Board members are also urged to help with our many activities as much as possible and to help promote the many projects that ENF conducts. ■

A bequest to the **Eagle Nature Foundation, Ltd.** is a unique and precious way to preserve the natural environment for both the bald eagle and man for many generations. Through bequest giving, your concern for wilderness, wildlife preservation, and endangered species extends far beyond your own lifetime. Your bequest can state whether the funds should go into our Endowment Fund, or could be used for our present programs.

For a copy of our Bequest Facts" today! Call **815-594-2306**.

## 2011 ENF Bus Tours

The Eagle Nature Foundation has developed its schedule for the 2011 bus tours as presently known. There may be more tours developed during the next few months, depending on what the board of directors decides during their next two board meetings.

Our present plans are to once again offer three Bald Eagle Bus Tours to visit 5 historic bald eagle wintering communities near the Mississippi River. These tours are each four hours in length. They will each leave from Stoney Creek Inn in Galena, IL at 8 am on selected Saturdays in January and February and will return by 12 or 12:30 pm. They are presently scheduled for January 15, February 12 and 26, 2011.

The cost for these tours is \$85 for adults and \$60 for children under 17. If the tour is paid by check or cash, the discounted rate is \$75 for adults and \$50 for children under 17. ENF members will receive an additional discount of 10%. The seats are not reserved until ENF has received the money through cash, check, credit card or Pay Pal from our web site.

During past eagle tours participants have observed from 30 to 350 bald eagles during a single tour. The past few years these tours have been observing fewer and fewer immature eagles, which reflects what is happening to the whole Midwestern bald eagle population. Mr. Ingram recommends people to see the bald eagles while they are still plentiful.

Once again ENF has scheduled a Wildlife/Historical Bus Tour to Nebraska to see historical sites and enjoy the annual migration stopover of Sandhill Cranes in central Nebraska. This four day tour is scheduled for March 14 to 17, 2011. The cost of the tour is \$850 per person, or \$750 per person double occupancy, which includes the cost of the tour bus and guide, three nights in motels, entrance fees to all sites visited, as

well as some meals. A tour participant will be responsible for five meals during the four days. A cash or check discount rate of \$750 per person and \$650 dbl-occ is available, plus the 10% membership discount.

There is an extra fee of \$35 per person if he or she wants to have a morning space reserved for them in the Audubon crane blind near the Platte River. (This early morning viewing of the cranes leaving their roosts is highly recommended by the people who have seen this in the past.)

A deposit of \$400 is required for a person to book a seat on this tour, with the remainder due by Feb. 16, 2011. We will accept only the first 30 persons who send in this deposit. It will be refunded by ENF if the tour is cancelled by ENF. This tour was cancelled in 2010, because we never had enough persons registered by Feb. 9.

This tour leaves the Stoney Creek Inn at 8:00 am on March 14 and returns to Stoney Creek by 6:00 pm on March 17.

This bus tour visits the Pioneer Museum, Fort Kearney on the Oregon Trail, Pioneer Village, Steamboat Bertrand, Great Platte River Road Archway Monument, Hasting's Natural History Museum, DeSoto Wildlife Refuge, Nebraska's Rainwater Basins, Crane Meadows, Rowe Sanctuary and the Lain Nicolson Audubon Center, as well as an evening walk to a bridge over the Platte River to see the cranes coming into their nighttime roosts. Each site we visit has a gift shop for getting souvenirs for the visit.

Tour guide for all of these tours is Terry Ingram, Exec. Dir. of ENF, who guided tours over 45 years. During all of the tours Mr. Ingram will pointing out any birds of prey and other birds and wildlife that may be seen along the way and he will discuss the habitats that are being used by this wildlife as well. It should be an enjoyable trip for all. ■



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## ENF Bumper Stickers

ENF has just developed some bumper stickers as a new fund raiser. These bumper stickers are either white or bright orange in color. The price for either of these bumper stickers is 50¢ each. The plan is that school classes, wildlife clubs, or anyone who wants to promote the bald eagle and our nation's need to preserve the bald eagle's threatened habitat may order the number of bumper stickers they feel they can sell, and when sold send the proceeds back to ENF.

When we first attempted this over 30 years ago, schools in many states sold these stickers. At that time we must have sold close to 20,000 of such "Save An Ea-

gle" bumper stickers. School students from Arizona to Vermont sold these stickers. I remember I went to one school in Kansas which had sold over 2000 of these stickers which had asked for a school presentation when they presented the organization with the check.

That offer is still good today. Any school or organization, which sells enough stickers, or makes a donation of \$500 or more, will get a free eagle presentation.

ENF members will receive a free bumper sticker when they renew their membership. You might indicate with your membership dues whether you would like a white or orange version of this sticker. ■