

# GLENDALOUGH TRACKS & TRAILS



Glendalough State Park  
Battle Lake, MN  
Fall • 2015 • #82



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### **Glendalough State Park Advisory Board:**

Steve Nelson, Chair (2016)  
Dan Malmstrom – Vice Chair (2017)  
Kristi Everts – Treasurer (2017)  
Jean Dirckx – Secretary (2017)  
John Christensen (2016)  
Chris Estes (2016)  
Peter Christianson (2018)  
Deb Baker (2018)  
Tracy Kortlever (2018)

### **DNR:**

Phil Leversedge, NW Region Parks and Trails Manager  
Chris Weir-Koetter, NW Region Strategic Manager  
Melody Webb, District Recreation Supervisor  
Kathy Beaulieu, Region Naturalist  
Ben Eckhoff, Area Naturalist  
Cindy Lueth, Region Resource Specialist

### **Glendalough State Park:**

24869 Whitetail Lane  
Battle Lake, MN 56515-9654  
(218) 864-0110

**Jeff Wiersma, Park Manager**

**Glendalough Tracks & Trails**  
is the newsletter of Glendalough State Park  
published quarterly by  
the Glendalough Park Partners

**Kristi Everts** • membership  
**Dede & Jeff Carpenter** • assembly/mailing

## ***New/Renewing Park Partners***

July 29, 2015 – November 1, 2015

### **NEW PARTNERS**

Robert and Delores Lind, Battle Lake  
Patricia Anderson, Wasilla, Alaska  
Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota

### **RENEWALS**

Woodlawn Resort, Blanche Lake  
Dave and Bonnie Stabnow, Nashville, Tennessee  
Carol and Laurel Malmstrom, Henning  
John and Patricia Lindholm, Fergus Falls  
Deb and Doug Baker, Battle Lake  
Della Pribnow, Maplewood  
Edward and Helen Healy, Eastborough, Kansas  
Gary and Benda Davis, Battle Lake  
Robert and Phyllis Narveson, Battle Lake/Lincoln, NE.  
Carrie L. Fisher, Battle Lake

### **MEMORIAL**

In Memory of Ruth Govig of Ottertail Lake

Thank you for keeping your memberships current.  
Please check the date on the address label of your Tracks  
and Trails to check your membership status.  
Send your membership correspondence to:

Glendalough Park Partners/Kristi Everts  
PO Box 901  
Battle Lake, MN. 56515  
khe@arvig.net

If you have a seasonal address change please let us know!  
Our postal permit does not forward the Tracks and Trails.

Next Advisory Committee Meeting  
**Thursday, November 19, 2015**  
7:00 p.m.  
Glendalough Lodge - Open to Everyone



# GSP Advisory Board Minutes

**Minutes • Quarterly Meeting • August 20, 2015**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Steve Nelson with the following directors present: Steve Nelson, Chris Estes, Peter Christianson, Dan Malmstrom, John Christensen, Deb Baker and Kristi Everts. Glendalough State Park Manager, Jeff Wiersma was also present.

## Approval of Agenda

Agenda was reviewed and approved. M/S/C (Christensen / Christianson)

## Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the May 21, 2015 meeting were approved. M/S/C (Christianson / Baker)

## Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report was presented by Kristi Everts, showing a current balance of \$57,364.98. Report was approved. M/S/C (Malmstrom / Nelson)

## Park Manager Report.

### Park Projects

- Outdoor Seating Area. Sod was removed and a layer of gravel was placed on the seating site. Holes for benches will be dug next week with the bench placement to follow this fall.
- Bike Trail. A Bike "Fix-it Station" has been ordered from Dero per the funding from the West Central Initiative grant, with expected delivery in four to six weeks. Previously ordered bike hitches have not arrived yet. "No Motor Vehicle" signs were installed by the County at the south field entrance along County Highway 16.
- Prairie Restoration. Combining and fall seed harvest has begun. It will be another bumper crop.
- Trail Center. Exterior window painting is being completed.

### Jottings

- Regional Parks and Trails employee Margaret Booge has announced her retirement in November. During the Park Partners' early years, Margaret handled all the Walk project funds through the Glendalough gift account. Her expertise over the years has saved thousands of dollars for park projects. Park Partners will send her an appropriate thank-you.
- The Cowles family will be donating an original croquet mallet and ball used at Glendalough for display. A full set of this type currently is valued around \$4,000.
- Attendance continues to remain strong in 2015 at more than 20% above record-setting 2014 figures for day use and camping. With the added use, more things need repair – door latches, water spigots, oarlocks, carts, benches, etc.
- Wasps are particularly bad in the park this summer. Several employees have been stung, and new nests are appearing weekly. The Lodge was treated for a wasp infestation for

the second year in a row.

- Art classes will continue in the Trail Center through the fall.
- If you visit the Lodge area on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon, you may have to park at the boat rental. Parking near the Lodge and Trail Center have been filling up regularly, and early.
- Wild Wednesday naturalist programs have become wildly popular, with all summer canoeing programs full, and many afternoon programs exceeding 50 participants.
- Lightning struck near the Park Office in early August, damaging the phone line from the office to the Park Entrance. Metal junction boxes were blown apart in both locations.
- If you tried to email a state agency on Wednesday, August 19th, you were out of luck. A Microsoft upgrade prevented external emails from being delivered most of the day.
- Fall programs will continue on Friday September 25th. Biking with our naturalist will be held on Sunday, September 27th.
- Glendalough will be the "Host Park" for the 2015 Labor Day ride that is sponsored by the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota. Cyclists from around the state will be camping in the Park and cycling for three days around Otter Tail County and various venues.

## Committee Reports:

### Membership / Promotion

Park Partner membership has eclipsed 270 members, up from 251 a year ago. Gratitude was expressed to Mark Sand and Gravel, Christensen Construction and the Park Staff for donations and work applied to the outdoor seating project funded by Park Partners. The 2016 Walk is scheduled for April 23, 2016.

**History.** No updates to report.

**Education.** Perham and Battle Lake were awarded grants for bikes and a transport trailer for students.

## Old Business

- Outdoor Seating Project. Site preparation has been completed. Placement of benches to occur in late August or early September.
- Trail Signage and Interpretative Kiosks. All signage and kiosks have been placed at various places along the trail and have received positive public responses.
- Defibrillators. All have been purchased and received.
- Trail Center Furniture and Window Coverings. Recommendation brought to the meeting by Peter Christianson for a durable sofa. Approval was made for the purchase of two sofas at \$499/ea. plus tax. M/S/C (Malmstrom/Christensen)
- Bike Racks. Order has been placed with expected delivery in three to four weeks.

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# Glendalough Winter Programs:

**Saturday, December 5th – 9:30am to 11:30am**

## **Woodworking with Nature: Holiday Gifts**

Woodworking with nature is “rooted” in the trees. Trees are marvelous in many ways, from the colors some produce in the fall to the fruits others give us. But have you ever taken a look at all of the things you use every day that come from trees? We will take a look at this and the many other wonders of trees, while putting your creative and craftsmanship skills to work. This is a “make and take” program, so participants will leave with one or more projects they can use as decorations in their own home or give away as holiday gifts.

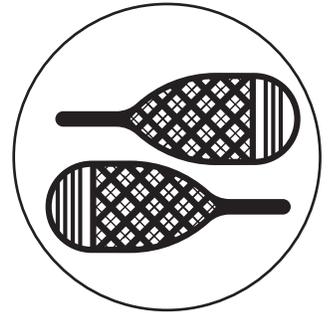
Projects will vary from a couple types of ornaments to natural wood candle holders, so there will be something that interests you regardless of your age. Children must be accompanied by an adult and the cost is \$5/person. Participants are required to pre-register by Monday, November 30th and the program is limited to 15 people. Please call Lake Carlos State Park at (320) 852-7200 to register or for more information.

**Saturday, January 9th – 1pm to 3pm**

## **Snowshoe Along the Creek**

Grab your snowshoes or use a pair of ours and come see the park in the winter. We will hike towards Horse Pasture Slough to see if the creek is open, where you might get a glimpse of trumpeter swans or maybe some otters, ducks, and geese. Join the Naturalist for this winter adventure.

**\*\*\* IMPORTANT\*\*\*** *This snowshoe hike weather dependent, so please check with the park office by phone or on the webpage under “visitor alerts” for information on changes regarding this program.*



**Saturday, February 13th – 6:30pm to 9pm**

## **Candlelight Ski**



Ski the one and a half miles of lighted and groomed trail. Warm up afterwards with some hot cider and a s’more by the fire in the Trail Center. Skis of all sizes can be rented at the park if you don’t have your own, so come join us for a fun evening! Participants over the age of 16 who will be on skis will need a Minnesota Ski Pass. You can purchase a day pass at the event for \$6 or an annual pass for \$20.

If you are interested in volunteering with set-up, lighting or take-down of candles please call the park as well (218)864-0110

**\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*** *This event may be canceled or changed at the last minute, due to poor weather or wind conditions on the day of the event. Please check with the park office by phone or on the webpage under “visitor alerts” for information on changes regarding this program.*

## **Contact the Park for More Information:**

Phone: (218) 864-0110

Email: [glendalough.statepark@state.mn.us](mailto:glendalough.statepark@state.mn.us)



# Jeff's Jottings

by Park Manager Jeff Wiersma



- Low levels in the creek had the beavers busy building a dam north of the Annie Battle Lake Trail hiking bridge. Sentence-to-Service crews had to remove the dam multiple times.
- Special thanks to Bob Koltes for his donation of an old seed cleaner to the park.
- Pheasants are a common sight along the park road this fall.
- To date, overall visitor attendance at Glendalough is up 13% since last year, and camping attendance is up 23%.
- We have had some issues with vehicles on the bike trail, especially after dark. If you encounter one, please get a license plate and report it to the park office.
- Park is ready for winter. Don't forget that the lodge is a great place to have a Xmas party or XC-ski party, and a winter discount.

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## Chairman's Message

What a great season! Lots of hits, a good number of home runs and a winning record. Good weather, great attendance by enthusiastic fans and lots of optimism as we look ahead to next year. No, I'm not talking about the Minnesota Twins, although I certainly could be (My apologies if the Twins aren't your team, but I'm the scribe here so I get to pick). I'm talking about the summer season at Glendalough. Here in the best outdoor stadium in the state it's been a banner year!

For the first time since the park was established nearly 25 years ago annual visitor attendance will surpass 70,000. That figure represents only those who arrived by motorized vehicle, and doesn't even count all those who biked or hiked into the park. Camping was up 20% for the year. Paddle boards, canoes and boats were rented at a record pace, and even the fish cooperated by providing many campfire meals. The cabins and yurts were full from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and as soon as the snow hits they will be booked every weekend for cross-country skiing. And if you spent any time in the park this summer you saw how busy the bike trail was with riders, joggers, walkers and roller-bladers. It was gratifying to see all the young children on bikes, riding in strollers and snuggled into backpacks on the trail. It's never too early to enjoy the Glendalough experience!

Park staff hosted nearly 1000 guests at two dozen naturalist programs this past summer, with topics like beginning camping, canoeing, fly fishing and bird watching to name just a few. My grandkids especially liked the one about toads, frogs and turtles. While somewhat weather-dependent, many programs had 50-plus attendees, with one exceeding 90. In addition to the public naturalist events, local high schools, scout troops etc. took advantage of Glendalough's outdoor classroom. There were even art classes held in the Trail Center two days a week, so watch for that again next summer. Special events included our annual Walk for Glendalough fundraiser in April, fall color shuttle tours and a fall color group bike ride. The Minnesota Parks & Trails Council used the park as their home base for their annual Labor Day Weekend Bike Ride. But the most important special events were the visits you and yours made to the park to enjoy the Glendalough experience first-hand. And don't forget that Glendalough also has a winter season, with camping, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing being some of the most popular activities.

Glendalough Park Partner memberships also reached a new high this year, with your donations funding park improvements like a new outdoor seating area, eight new pedestal grills, a bike fix-it station, defibrillators and 12 bike hitches that will be installed along the bike trail near viewing areas and walking trails. As we look forward to the 2016 summer season we welcome your suggestions on where to focus our attention and dollars to make our park even better. The Minnesota state park system and the City of Battle Lake are 125 years old next year. Coincidentally, 2016 will also be the 25th anniversary of Glendalough as a state park, so watch for information about related summer events.

Finally, I want to welcome Tracy Kortlever, who was elected to the Glendalough advisory board at our last annual meeting. In keeping with my opening reference to the Minnesota Twins Tracy could be considered a rookie on our team. However, Tracy's father Les Estes managed Glendalough for many years both before and after it became a state park, and she grew up living in it and caring for it. Tracy's understanding of the park's history and appreciation for it will be an invaluable asset to our board. And thanks as well to retiring board member Pat Rademacher for his service on behalf of this wonderful natural resource that we all enjoy. Pat and Tracy embody the dedication and commitment that all of your board members have in preserving and enhancing the Glendalough State Park experience for you and all of its visitors.

Steve Nelson  
Chairman  
Glendalough State Park Citizens Advisory Board





# Historic Glendalough



*October 18, 1956 – Battle Lake Review*

## Richard Nixon Makes Visit To Glendalough at B. Lake

Vice President Richard Nixon and his campaign tour party spent a short week end near Battle Lake, when they were guests of John Cowles, publisher of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune at the Glendalough Game Farm, north of Battle Lake.

Arrangements for Nixon's visit here had been arranged for some time in advance, and it was thought that it might also be possible for him to attend church at First Lutheran here Sunday morning. However, previous speaking engagements in Ohio Sunday afternoon and evening made it impossible for him to remain for church. Needless to say, there were a few disappointed people who had planned to catch a glimpse of the vice-president in public that morning, but his tour had been arranged so that even he had nothing to say about being able to remain.

The Nixon party was escorted from Alexandria where he had made a speech Saturday. Mr. Nixon spent a few leisure hours wandering about the game farm, observing the propagation of game birds, and the farm crops and livestock. Although he is not a duck hunter, Nixon was very appreciative of the opportunity to observe the hatching and raising of ducks, pheasants and other game birds and animals.

Taking advantage of the warm October weather, he did avail himself of the chance to take a swim in Annie Battle Lake Saturday evening, a pleasure in which he seemed to delight.

Sunday morning the party, together with a group of dignitaries, also guests at Glendalough for the week end, embarked for Alexandria again, to meet the 4-engine plane which is carrying the vice-president on his tour of the country for campaign speaking.

The urgency and seriousness of the campaign and the affairs of state are very apparent in this young man. A candid Review photo of Nixon, taken at some distance with a telephoto lens, shows that all was not joviality and light-heartedness on his week end stop, as he constantly walked about the grounds, more often alone than not, or in the company of one of his advisors.

The whirl-wind stop gave him what seemed little time to relax, but his attitudes and appearance showed that the pause in his now daily routine was a welcome respite.

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## The Mystery of Lake Emma

Lake and stream levels are always a concern at Glendalough. When the water is high, wind and waves can quickly erode lakeshore edges, and spring ice can push up huge ice ridges which dislodge trees and other vegetation. Strong currents from high water can change stream courses and make canoe and kayak navigation difficult or even dangerous. When the water is low, sandy beaches expand at the cost of the sand blanket underfoot in the deeper portions of swimming areas. Low water causes streams to dry up, making passage impossible through Glendalough's "chain of lakes". Without flowing water, these streams will also freeze in winter, eliminating a source of drinking water for Glendalough's wildlife.

In my almost eighteen years at Glendalough, I have seen a wide range of water levels, but where you used to see fluctuations from year to year, it now is not uncommon to see extremely high and extremely low water levels in the same season. This wreaks havoc with docks and fishing piers, and is problematic for paddling sports and even fishermen, who find that their favorite fishing holes no longer produce. From our own observations, we have learned a few simple things about the water cycle from when we were kids: When you get a lot of rain or snow during the year, water levels go up, and when you don't, water levels go down. Seems simple, right? Up until I came to Glendalough, I always thought so. Then I encountered the mystery of Lake Emma.

When I started at Glendalough, Lake Emma was a maze of cattails and small open water spaces. Wild rice patches were declining, but ducks were still plentiful. Trails on the west and north sides of Emma were dry and passable, even for a pickup truck. (I should point out that this was not a drought period, as other park lakes were at what I would consider normal levels.) As the years went by, Glendalough's lakes continued their ups and downs, all but Emma which only seemed to go up. A decade later, Emma was an open expanse, almost devoid of ducks at times, particularly during nesting season. Trails, if not raised, became soggy and filled with cattails. Lake Emma's hydrology seemed to mock common logic. Even though, historically, Lake Emma had been dry enough for farmers to cut hay on its bed, now it seemed impervious to drought.

I still do not have a full explanation for Lake Emma. Maybe there are springs in the lake that delay Emma's response to drought? Maybe the old wells in Lake Emma's bed, once powered by windmills to help fill the lake in the 1930's, were not properly sealed? Or, maybe, it just has to do with differences in the water cycle due to Emma's location? Climate change has resulted in more and more of our precipitation events occurring in large doses. During heavy rains, no more than 30% of the water actually infiltrates the water table. The rest is used by plants or runs off directly into surface waters. Is the land around Emma better able to absorb these rains, resulting in more infiltration? Perhaps a hydrologist would have an easy answer. For me, it is still a mystery.



# PARK PROJECTS

## FROM ST. PAUL:

- Parks and Trails experienced record attendance this year and temporarily ran out of annual park stickers at their warehouse in October.
- Despite record attendance this summer, Parks and Trails is again facing budget challenges for the current year. Some parks may see a reduction of services, and many positions are being held open to save funds to meet the current budget. Impacts to Glendalough include the elimination of the two intern positions that assisted the Area Naturalist, which will likely mean a decrease in park interpretive programming.

## PARK PROJECTS:

- Outdoor Seating Area – Benches were installed. More gravel is needed and a platform for speakers needs to be built.
- Bike Trail – Bike hitches and fix-it station for bikes have been received, but are not yet installed.
- Prairie Restoration – Combining and fall harvest is complete. Woody stem removal is taking place on the wet prairie in the old golf course area of the Beaver Pond Trail.
- Boundary Posting – Signs were installed on the northeast corner of Glendalough where firewood was illegally harvested last fall.
- Wellhouse – Spigot was replaced on picnic area well, and modifications were made to structure for easier access for maintenance and repairs.
- Trail Center - Trail Center needs the old vinyl floor tile replaced. This may be a long process due to the need to properly dispose of this old asbestos tile. Stay tuned...
- Signage – New park signs are being ordered for park roads and use areas, where needed to replace rotted or outdated signs.

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(continued from page 3)

- Labor Day Bike Ride. Chairman Nelson requested board volunteers to assist with the events and the visiting cyclists. Steve Nelson, Peter Christensen, and Dan Malmstrom were previously enlisted.
  - Board Retreat. Discussion occurred around a possible board retreat to expand awareness of the Park history, trails, amenities, and future projects. Further discussion at the next meeting.
  - Blanche Lake Dock. Discussion about a prospective dock's value to Blanche Lake property owners and resort guests that could access the Park via water, and for other park visitors to have viewing access to Blanche Lake from within the Park. Dave Radford – archeologist – will review the site for assessment in late August or September.
  - Park Partners Website. No progress made. An idea was considered for a Park Partners link on the Network Battle Lake or MoreThanATrail.com sites, as that may serve the membership and promotional purposes without the management and cost of a separate website. Lisa Malmstrom will be asked to review options for a website.
  - Croquet Lawn site. Proceeding with fall planting. Further discussion and planning at the next meeting.
- M/S/C (Malmstrom / Christianson)
- Compact Tractor Auger. Recommendation was made by director Estes to purchase an auger with a PTO attachment for the Park's tractor given the frequency of need. Board approved the purchase of an auger up to \$1500. M/S/C (Christianson / Estes)
  - Novel Glendalough Gift. Board discussed the preference to stock a novel gift that would be unique to Glendalough for key contributors, dignitaries, and for at-large public purchase. An idea of a small plasma or laser cut metal replica of the Glendalough entrance / kiosk insignia received considerable favor. Dan Malmstrom agreed to ask Lisa Malmstrom to determine the options for such an item that would be suitable as a desk, coffee-table, or bookshelf display. This would be in addition to the current gift item of a framed Glendalough map print.
  - Participation by the Glendalough Park Partners and Board in community events. Example of participation in the Wenonga Days Parade was briefly discussed. Tabled until the next meeting.

**Adjournment.** There was a motion to adjourn the meeting. M/S/C (Malmstrom / Christianson). Next meeting is scheduled November 19, 2015.

## New Business

- Pedestal Grills. Recommendation was heard from Park Manager Jeff Wiersma regarding the need for new grills in the Park. Requests have been made for grill upgrades to the DNR over the years and have not been funded. Board approved the purchase of eight (8) new grills at \$250/each.



**Thank you,  
Park Partners!**

**To Renew or to Become a  
Glendalough Park Partner:**

Choose one of the following levels:

Park Pal ( \$10 )

1 year subscription to Tracks & Trails

Supporter ( \$25 )

1 year of Tracks & Trails + magnet

Donor ( \$50 )

1 year of T & T + Commemorative Walk T-shirt

circle size: S M L XL 2XL

Patron ( \$100 )

1 year of T & T + Glendalough History DVD

Benefactor ( \$500 )

1 year of T & T + Glendalough print

No Gift Desired (check box)

Send your tax-deductible contribution to:

**Glendalough Park Partners**

**PO Box 901**

**Battle Lake, MN 56515**



Glendalough Park Partners  
PO Box 901  
Battle Lake, MN 56515

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Non-Profit Org  
US Postage  
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Battle Lake, MN  
Permit # 47

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# SAVE THE DATE



## Walk for Glendalough April 23, 2016

Join our annual fundraiser!

**9:00 until Noon**

*Coffee, walking, friends, prizes and lunch  
make it a great day!*



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**Glendalough State Park • Battle Lake, Minnesota**

