



Tracks & Trails

Glendalough State Park • Battle Lake, MN • Summer 2019 • #97

Youthful Stewardship

Jay Anderson, August 2019

During the past few years, Walk for Glendalough participants have witnessed the enthusiasm and involvement from a growing number of young people. In fact, a few area students have become annual award recipients for pledges they have raised for the Walk. This creates a great sense of optimism among DNR professionals and the Citizens Advisory Board members.

In 2009, Courtland Nelson from the DNR Commissioner’s Office told board member Dan Malmstrom that a bike trail in Glendalough would be unlikely, as the state would direct its limited resources to state parks close to large population centers and schools. State officials were intent on using its state parks as gateways to teach, experience and instill a sense of conservation stewardship among youth to ensure Minnesota’s resources would be in good hands for generations to come. Clearly, an admirable objective.

Fortunately, the Glendalough bike trail did become a reality, along with trails in the city of Battle Lake, and a Safe Routes to School trail connecting to Battle Lake High School. Eight area school districts now use Glendalough for academic and recreational programming.

A leader among those schools is Battle Lake. One of its students – let’s call her a “Glendalough Champion” – is Megan



Youth Story continued on page 2

Sunset Lake Trail Cleanup

Sheryl Olson and Dan Malmstrom, May 2019

Sheryl Olson and Dave McRoberts have been visiting Glendalough State Park for many years, often with their friends and family. Recently during the 2019 Walk for Glendalough, Sheryl approached a board member and asked if it was acceptable for volunteers to do group service projects within park. She referenced an area of the Sunset Lake Trail that caught her eye.

The board member directed her to Park Manager Jeff Wiersma who gave Sheryl an enthusiastic response. Ironically, Jeff had received several public complaints over the years about that dump site along the trail, but a cleanup project had never risen to the top of the long priority list in the park and had remained unaddressed. Jeff saw this as a perfect volunteer project, and welcomed the group to clean up the area, as long as they wore proper clothing, gloves, and followed safety guidelines.



Dave and Sheryl decided to combine their annual weekend with friends in a Glendalough yurt with the down and dirty cleanup of an old dump area that appeared to date back to the 1920s.

During the cleanup, the group found fencing and old livestock bridles. They discovered a license
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Hodenfield. Megan has received top honors for several years at the Glendalough Walk for the donations she has raised. Recently, she responded to several questions about her motivation to support Glendalough State Park.

What motivates you to be the biggest youth money contributor to Glendalough State Park year after year?

To me it's a fun challenge to see how much I can raise, but of course there are the prizes that are fun to try and win. It's really fun to have the challenge of seeing how much money you can raise; I've found that people can be really generous. I like the Walk because it celebrates Earth Day and the beginning of spring.

Why is the park important to you?

I've lived in Battle Lake my whole life and I've been going to Glendalough ever since I can remember. It's our favorite swimming place, especially because Annie Battle Lake is a heritage lake and it's very quiet with nothing motorized allowed. If you look closely in the contact station, you'll see a photo of me when I was little and tagging butterflies.

I like Glendalough and all state parks because the land is protected from people who want to cut down and harm nature. It's a safe place for plants and animals to thrive without a lot of interactions from people. It is wild, like the way it would be without us polluting and killing everything.

What would you like to tell other young people that might motivate them to be involved in fundraising with the park?

What I would tell other youth is that it is a fun challenge to try and raise as much money as you can and it's even more fun to get a team together and see who can raise the most money. Last year I went around with a friend to raise money and it's a great motivator to raise money with friends and have lots of fun at the same time. This year I was by myself when I went out to raise money, but I still had a lot of fun trying to meet my goals.

What would you like us to do with money donated to the park?

They always use the money for important things in the park. In the past I have liked to participate in the programs they've had like archery and butterfly catching. I think it would be cool to spend the money on things that help preserve the park and the animals that live in it.

Glendalough is our place today, and theirs tomorrow. It is great to know our stewardship is watched and embraced by a future generation. Thank you to our DNR officials and area School District administrators and teachers for encouraging this important investment in the future of Glendalough. "Be the change that you wish to see in the world." (Mahatma Gandhi)

Sunset Lake Story continued from page 1

plate from the 1920s, Pond's Cream and Vicks rub from the 1950s. They found old stoves and a half dozen light bulbs that were unbroken even though the site had been burned. There were tin cans and old Mason jars buried amongst the heavier pieces of metal debris in the pile.



The debris was separated and much of it placed in industrial refuse containers. Park Manager Jeff Wiersma assisted the group with a utility vehicle and trailer to transport the debris.

The volunteer group included Sheryl Olson, Dave McRoberts, Lisa and Tom Wolfe, Bonnie and Rick Denzel, and Dave and Mary Phillippe.

They enjoyed their stay at the yurts and found great fulfillment in contributing to Glendalough's beautification.



President's Remarks

Would somebody please tell me that it's not August yet? Maybe it gets worse as you get older, but this summer has just flown by!

Despite the late spring, visitor count at the park has been great again this year. June attendance was hampered a bit by the weather, but July has more than made up for that. We did have some pretty significant storm damage recently. Every trail had at least one tree fall over it and some power lines were downed. Thanks to all those who came to the rescue and helped with the cleanup, including our six seasonal employees. Jeff reports that he has a great crew this year and hopes they will return next summer. As I write this, we are having "chamber of commerce weather" this week, so the bike trails and campsites will be busy.

If you're at the park, watch for the new e-bike that the staff is using (and I suspect having fun with) this summer. It's equipped with baskets to carry small tools or supplies and

is much quieter and more efficient to get around the park with than the larger gas-powered machines. And everyone has their own spiffy new bike helmet!

Joan Vorderbruggen, Advisory Board member and local architect who did such a great job on the initial Trail Center renderings, met on June 27 with Peter Paulson and Erik Wrede of the DNR. Peter is the Principal Architect and he and Erik will manage the design and construction of our new Trail Center. Their discussions concerning the path forward are evidence once again that the DNR is making a real effort at communicating and partnering with us at the local level.

Finally, you will read more about the potential expansion of Glendalough elsewhere in this newsletter, where I've tried to address some of the questions that have come up since this initiative was announced. What I want to do here, however, is shine a light on the landowner who started this ball rolling some years ago by contacting the Minnesota Land Trust, Reuben Walvatne. Reuben was a friendly, 100% Norwegian bachelor farmer who loved his land. If you stopped to visit him, you'd better have nothing planned for an hour or two, because he loved to talk. With his heavy Scandinavian accent, he would move from politics, to the challenges of keeping deer out of his garden, then pivot to professional tennis results, and then go back to what he had in his root cellar. Reuben was interviewed after he put 49 acres and all his Blanche Lake shoreline into the Minnesota Land Trust about why he would do that. I will paraphrase, but I can just hear him saying this in his heavy accent. "Well, you've got to give the trees some credit for being there." So thoughtful, so generous, and so humble, that phrase is classic Reuben. If he were still with us, he would be so proud that his heirs are exploring with the DNR the possibility of his entire farm being preserved as part of Glendalough State Park. You can rest assured, Reuben, that if this happens we will give your trees credit for being there.

Steve Nelson, President
Glendalough Citizens Advisory Board
stevenbrucenelson@gmail.com

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Jeff's Jottings

by Park Manager Jeff Wiersma



A large tree fell during a July storm, dropping live power lines on the bike trail near the bridge. Park staff stayed late to keep visitors out of the area until Otter Tail Power could make repairs. Park staff removed several fallen trees along the hiking trails as well.

The new Regional Building Maintenance Manager visited the park in June to look at maintenance needs for the park buildings. The largest and most expensive need is a new

commercial water heater for the campground. The water heater is now 22 years old.

Several unconfirmed reports of bites from chiggers or swimmer's itch have been reported though the vast majority of swimmers have had no complaints. Still, it may be advisable to stay out of the long grass and towel off firmly after swimming.

Attendance was very poor in June due to the constant weekend rainfalls. It has rebounded well in July but is still down for the year.

With the hiring of a new Buildings and Grounds Worker in mid-July, the park staff is finally complete until college students return to school in late August. Fortunately, the staff has done a fantastic job working together and accepting some occasional overtime to keep the park running smoothly when we have been short on employees. It is a great staff that I hope will return next season.



Park Projects

Electrical Re-route – Now complete, this project has made it safe for demolition of the carriage house and laundry building to proceed at some point. As a bonus, an electrical meter was able to be removed, reducing the park's electrical bill.

Bike Trail Loop Completion – Unfortunately, this project was again overlooked for FRTP grant funding. Some design work should continue with the limited 2017 grant funds, however. We will try again for additional funding during the 2020 grant cycle.

Trailhead Building – Chief architect paid a visit to the building site in June.

Lodge Parking Lot – New concrete curbs were installed along one side of the main parking area. Boulders will be installed in the overflow area to the north of the turnaround, at which time all the temporary ropes will be removed.

Yurt Service Road – Class 5 gravel is being purchased to level off the emergency parking/ turnaround site on the yurt service road. The plow truck often gets stuck on the slope there in slippery winter conditions.

Campground Cart Path – Additional gravel is being purchased to raise and improve the cart-in path so it drains better after rains and snowmelt.

From St. Paul

Glendalough Boundary Expansion

The bill to expand Glendalough's statutory boundary passed the legislature and was signed by the governor. Negotiations to purchase the additional property will proceed when funding becomes available, if the seller is willing. This will continue to be a long process.

Division of Parks and Trails Safety Program

If you overhear PAT staff talking about a "wig", they're not talking about something you wear on your head. What they are talking about is PAT's Wildly Important Goal (WIG) of reducing accidents and injuries by 50% during this calendar year. Whether that goal is achieved remains to be seen, but field staff have taken to the program enthusiastically, with safety foremost in everyone's mind.

Rangers on E-Bikes

In the interest of lowering fleet costs, several parks around the state, including Glendalough, have been outfitted with a Radwagon, an electric-assist bicycle capable of carrying cargo. Park staff have taken to the new e-bike for patrol and quick jaunts to the campground and trail center.

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Park Expansion Q & A

Steve Nelson, July 2019

By now you've likely heard about several exciting projects being undertaken at Glendalough. The new Trail Center, an upgrade and addition to the bike trail, and a proposed park expansion have all been featured in recent articles of Tracks & Trails, in conjunction with stories in various area publications. These are all moving forward on their individual tracks, and we anticipate they will come together at some point to greatly enhance your Glendalough experience.

What I would like to focus on in this issue are the questions I've gotten (dare I say rumors I've heard?) concerning the proposed park expansion.

The DNR was approached by the heirs of the original landowner to determine their interest in acquiring the 152-acre property that encompasses 2217 ft of shoreline in the SW corner of Blanche Lake and is contiguous to Glendalough State Park. It also encompasses 723 ft of the Blanche Lake inlet shoreline. Following a tour of the property, the DNR confirmed their interest in the land as a unique natural resource which would add to and complement Glendalough State Park.

Before negotiations could commence, the statutory boundaries of Glendalough had to be modified to include

the property, which was accomplished in the last MN legislative session. This is a promising first step, and there is reason for optimism that this expansion will happen. However, this project will compete with others on the DNR Parks & Trails Division priority list, and funding needs to be finalized.

As with most projects, there are lots of questions raised and rumors circulated. Being a full-time resident of Blanche Lake and the President of the Glendalough Citizens Advisory Board, I'm at ground zero on this one. As such, I will attempt to address three of the questions/rumors I've been presented with recently.

1. Will there be a new public landing built on this property?

NO. The previous landowner had the foresight to put 49 acres of this property into the Minnesota Land Trust some time back. That commitment includes all shoreline bordering both Blanche lake and the inlet from Glendalough. A quote from the Trust document states that "no alteration or change in the topography or the surface of the property is allowed by the easement. This includes no ditching, draining or filling and no excavation or removal of soil or other material."

2. Will there be 20 motor home campsites complete with cement pads built on this land?

NO. The original Management Plan established for Glendalough in 1993 calls for a "primitive" theme that emphasizes wildlife observations/interpretation, canoeing, the Heritage Fishery on Annie Battle Lake, bicycling and cross-country skiing. This does not include motor home or individual drive-in campsites. Even if this were to be considered at some point, and there is no reason to believe it will be, the DNR would consider the overall needs of the five-park district that Glendalough resides in. Two of the parks in that district, Maplewood and Lake Carlos, currently have between them 192 drive-in campsites. There are also many public and private campgrounds in this district. There is no need for additional spaces at Glendalough. In any event, if the property is purchased by the State of Minnesota, there will be public comment opportunities as use is considered.

3. Will Otter Tail County or Everts township lose funding if tax revenue from this property is eliminated?

NO. To compensate counties and townships, and in some cases school districts for the loss of tax base, the legislature created a program called PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes). Each year the State Department of Revenue sends an annual payment to local units of government from the state's General Fund to compensate for the loss of tax base from state ownership of land. The Office of Legislative Auditor has concluded that PILT payments on DNR-acquired lands are generally higher than property taxes on similar private land. I have seen the projections

for this property, and based on preliminary estimates, the PILT payments to our local units of government will be significantly higher than anticipated tax revenue.

Finally, I often get positive comments about the partnership between Battle Lake and Glendalough, and how beneficial that is to the city. There are lots of reasons why Battle Lake is thriving, from good leadership, a quality business community and school, great restaurants and location in the heart of lake country. Glendalough is a significant contributor to the vibrancy of Battle Lake and the surrounding area as well. We had over 84,000 visitors this year, and by the state's calculation the local economic impact was \$2,321,959. Any way you calculate it, whether it be from a natural resource perspective, recreational or educational opportunities, or financial contributor, Glendalough is a great investment. Thank you for the part you play in our mutual success!

Steve Nelson, President
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Not in Kansas Anymore
Historical article published in the Topeka Tinkling

Kansas lovers of wild life would get a big thrill out of a visit to the Glendalough game farm at Battle Lake, Minnesota. The farm was established and is maintained by Frederick E. Murphy, publisher of the Minneapolis Tribune "to spread the gospel of conservation of wild life and true sportsmanship." The 800-acre farm is located in the heart of the Ten Thousand Lakes region and is one of the most beautiful and interesting spots in the Northland.

When Mr. Murphy learned that Senator Capper was vacationing at Alexandria, Minn., he invited him to visit the game farm, only fifty miles away. The Senator did so, accompanied by Mrs. Sessions, Mrs. H. B. Hogeboom and yours truly. The superintendent, David Severson, happened to be in town when we arrived, so Mrs. Severson, a charming young woman, took us in charge and showed us the whole works. It was a great sight.

First we stopped at the duck yard containing a small lake surrounded by wild rice, lily pads, reeds and sand beaches. There we saw 4,000 wild ducks basking on the beaches or swimming in the lake. It was perhaps the largest number of mallard ducks ever congregated in one flock. They were as tame as farm yard ducks.

Mrs. Severson told us that it takes twenty bushels of grain a day to feed the ducks in addition to the wild rice and other natural food they find in the lake.

The ducks are all hatched in the big hatchery on the farm.

When the hunting season opens and the guns begin to roar, most of them hike for the Gulf of Mexico, via the Mississippi Valley. Usually about a thousand stick at the duck yard and winter there. From these they get enough eggs in the spring to hatch another four or five thousand ducklings, which makes the duck crop sort of self-perpetuating.

Next, Mrs. Severson took us to the seventy-acre pheasant field, which held 8,000 young pheasants, mostly ring necks. However, they raise many other kinds, including Silver, Melanistic, Mutant, Mongolian, Chinese, Formosan, Lady Amherst, Reeves and Golden, with bright, colorful plumage, beautiful to behold. These pheasants are liberated the same as the wild ducks, and the country for miles around is stocked with them. Sportsmen are limited to three in a daily bag, and the pheasant season is short so the pheasants really have a chance for their lives. It is a common sight to see them playing along the highway as you motor along,

Next, we were taken to the turkey pens in a big field where we saw 8,000 bronze turkeys being grown for the market. They were in eight pens, 1,000 to the pen. It takes about forty bushels of grain a day to feed them. They are marketed thru one agency - the North American Creamery Company, of Alexandria, which operates a big poultry department, also. The turkeys are the only crop marketed off the farm and Mr. Murphy strives to make them pay for the upkeep of the place. If they fall short it's just too bad for Mr. Murphy. He has to dig down in his jeans for the rest.

The hatchery, electrically operated, has a capacity of hatching 32,000 pheasants, and 16,000 ducks and turkeys at one time. The brooder houses take up a lot of space on the farm. Twelve men are kept busy looking after things.

There is also a deer park of a hundred or more acres of heavily wooded land and it contains from twenty-five to fifty deer a season. These, too, are liberated - all except a few for stocking up.

Facing the big lake is Mr. Murphy's summer camp. It sits in a clump of trees stretching for two or three city blocks on a lawn that looks as smooth and green as a parlor rug. There is a central home where the guests are fed, and eight cottages, each with sleeping accommodations for four people. Also a big recreation building housing a standard bowling alley and billiard room; and innumerable garages and other farm buildings all kept in regular city style. While Mr. Murphy entertains guests by the score at weekends during the summer and is a gracious host, his heart really centers in the enterprise to propagate game and thus encourage the development of a program for the care and conservation of wild life in his state. And he is doing it on a big scale.

GSP Advisory Board Minutes

Minutes • Quarterly Meeting • May 16, 2019

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President Steve Nelson at the Lodge in Glendalough State Park.

Member attendance: Steve Nelson, Tracy Kortlever, Chris Estes, Peter Christianson, Park Manager Jeff Wiersma, John Christensen, Dan Malmstrom, Joan Vorderbruggen, Sarah Govig and DNR Parks/Trails Partnership Consultant, Arielle Courtney.

Review/Approval of Agenda

The agenda was reviewed and approved.
(Malmstrom/Christianson)

Review/Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and approved as written. (Christianson/Kortlever)

Treasurer's Report

Peter Christianson presented the treasurer's report for time period January 1, 2019 through May 16, 2019. Highlights include: General Fund balance of \$58,093.51 and Long-term Project Fund balance of \$115,833.37. Net income from The Walk for Glendalough: \$13,380. The report was reviewed and approved. (Vorderbruggen/Kortlever)

Park Manager's Report

See Jeff's Jottings in the Spring 2019 Tracks and Trails. Jeff shared that the State of Minnesota has approved monies to use toward upgrading the Glendalough cross-country ski rental equipment. A budget of \$2,500 has been approved and will be split between money from the State and Park Partners. Jeff will investigate options for purchasing replacement equipment. Chuck Carpenter, District Recreation Supervisor, has planned an event on May 18, 2019 for the New Americans Group from Moorhead, Minnesota. The group will be participating in multiple activities in the Park such as biking, archery and fishing. Dan Malmstrom will assist Chuck with activity coordination. A new intern will be arriving in the Park on May 18, 2019. Jeff reviewed the group service project completed by Sheryl Olson, Dave McRoberts and friends. See Sunset Lake Trail Cleanup article in this issue of Tracks and Trails.

Other DNR Staff Reports

Arielle Courtney, DNR Parks/Trails Partnership Consultant, reviewed the priorities of the Department. They include expanding support and promoting Parks and Trails with external partnerships in local communities, like health care systems, libraries, regional Friends Groups and making cross-cultural contacts.

Committee Reports

Membership

Tracy Kortlever updated the Board on the status of new/renewal memberships and memorials given to the Park since the last meeting.

Projects

Outdoor Stage: Jeff Wiersma is working with the State engineers on the building specifications for the stage. Peter Christianson will work with Jeff to finalize the best option and Jeff and Chuck Carpenter will coordinate approval of the plan with the State.

Trail Center Entrance: Joan Vorderbruggen will assist in updating the entrance to the current Trail Center.

Long-term Planning

Trail Center: Steve Nelson updated the Board on the March 1, 2019 meeting with the State DNR and Project Manager, Eric Reed, regarding the status of the proposed new Trail Center. The DNR will utilize the existing architectural plans designed by Joan Vorderbruggen as a springboard. Their assigned architect will contact Joan and coordinate next steps. The project has been assigned a project number by the DNR.

Steve Nelson attended a DNR Round Table in Fergus Falls on April 17, 2019 led by Sarah Strommen, the new State DNR Commissioner. The meeting included a discussion of State and regional budgets and project priorities.

On May 17, 2019 Steve Nelson will attend a Friends Group regional meeting in Itasca State Park.

Walk for Glendalough: Tracy Kortlever updated the Board on the highlights of this year's event and reviewed the donations received. The net contributions to date by 2019 Walk participants total \$13,380.

Old Business

No new updates from Galloping Goose Rental.

Jeff Wiersma is planning a future Board retreat. No date scheduled.

New Business

Fireplace andirons for the Lodge: Peter Christianson and Jeff Wiersma are researching where to purchase the best equipment. \$500 has been approved by the Board for the purchase.

Cross-country ski equipment: See Park Manager Report above. A suggestion was made to update the existing Glendalough DVD. Tracy Kortlever and Jay Anderson will research options. Peter Christianson and John Christensen made a motion to authorize \$100 to purchase business cards for members of the Board who may need them. Lisa Malmstrom will assist in the design of the business cards.

Friends Group Regional Workshop at Itasca State Park on May 17, 2019. Steve Nelson will attend.

Dog refuse container and bags are now available in the Park. Joan Vorderbruggen and Dave McRoberts from Lakeland Mental Health Center are coordinating to offer future Forest Bathing opportunities.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

(Christianson/Malmstrom). The next quarterly meeting will be August 15, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at the Lodge in Glendalough State Park.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Govig, Secretary



Glendalough State Park Advisory Board:

Steve Nelson – President (2019)
Dan Malmstrom – Vice President (2020)
Sarah Govig – Secretary (2021)
Peter Christianson – Treasurer (2021)
Tracy Kortlever (2021)
John Christensen (2019)
Chris Estes (2019)
Jay Anderson (2020)
Joan Vorderbruggen (2020)

DNR:

Gary Hoeft, NW Region Parks and Trails Manager
Melody Webb, NW Region Parks and Trails Manager
Chuck Carpenter, District Recreation Supervisor
Kathy Beaulieu, Region Naturalist
Ben Eckhoff, Area Naturalist
Cindy Lueth, Region Resource Specialist

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Jeff Wiersma, Park Manager

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Tracy Kortlever • membership

New/Renewing Park Partners

May 2, 2019 – July 15, 2019

Marcy Fogard, Battle Lake
Sandra Salisbury, Dilworth
Mark Soutor, Henning
Taryn Weum, Minnetonka
Clinton & Vynnette Perkins, New Brighton
Clarence & Lorraine Bladow, Richville
Benda Davis, Battle Lake
Tim & Grace Stoebe, Battle Lake
Sarah Govig, Richville
Doug & Deb Baker, Clitherall
Thomas Hintgen, Fergus Falls
Hugh Veit & Margaret Fitzgerald, Fargo ND
Barbara Beckmann, Moorhead
Jack & Susan Donelan, Fergus Falls
John & Lois Cline, Battle Lake
Margaret Wolfson, St Louis Park
Don & Judy Loe, Stillwater
Charles & Louise Reeve, Battle Lake
Jeff & Mary Jo Skogen, St Louis Park
Homer & Esther Saetre, Battle Lake
Gerald & Bernice Davis, Wahpeton ND
Jackie Estes, Battle Lake
Helen Momsen, Spencer IA
Lucy Spiekermeier, Wahpeton ND
Holiday Haven Resort & Campground, Battle Lake

Memorial / Honor

Marna Brown from Lee & Judy Rosenquist

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
PO Box 901
Battle Lake, MN 56515

Next Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, August 15
7:00 p.m.
Glendalough Lodge - Open to Everyone

Thank you, Park Partners!

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Choose one of the following levels:

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circle size: S M L XL 2XL

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Benefactor (\$500)

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Glendalough Park Partners
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