

**Friends of the Boyne River, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 186, Boyne City, MI 49712**

***Boyne River Bulletin,***  
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## **President's Message**

*O.K., the calendar still says it is winter, but as I write this, the weather is summer. We are on our way to another day of temperatures in the upper seventies and clear blue skies. The signs of spring are clear; trees and shrubs are budding, the grass is greening, the finches at the feeder are changing into their yellow plumage. So, I hope you can get out and enjoy this early taste of summer.*

*The Friends of the Boyne River have started a new project. Thanks to our Stewardship Chair, Nancy Cunningham, the Boyne City Commission has approved our proposal for the Boyne River Nature Area along the Boyne River. You may recall we previously attempted to establish this nature area but were unable to get approval.*

*Nancy has been relentless in her efforts, so please offer her a word of thanks.*

*We still need some help with editing the quarterly Boyne River Bulletin and a redo of the web site. If you would like to help with either of these areas please let a board member know.*

*Thanks, - and enjoy the weather.*

*Carl*

(Note from your editor – Please, think of someone who could help the FoBR with either the Website or the Bulletin. As Carl mentions, I am Stewardship Chair and I enjoy that. I am also the temporary editor of the *Boyne River Bulletin* and although it also has its rewards, doing both jobs is too much!)

## **Coming Events**

**April 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting** (7:00 p.m., Boyne District Library Community Room)

Alex Wolff will come and talk about making his hand made, custom, bamboo fly rods. He makes the rods with equipment that he has made for just that purpose and will explain how he does it and talk about fly fishing in general. He will be speaking just before opening day, so this should be special to all of you who fish as well as those of you who appreciate making things with your hands.

**May 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting** (7:00 p.m., Boyne District Library Community Room)

Gus Uhlich is leaving his environmental legacy by growing an ancient tree species in Northern Michigan. Come and hear how he does this. He will explain all about his project as well as providing handouts and invitations to visit his property.

**June 27<sup>th</sup> Meeting** (7:00 p.m., Boyne District Library Community Room)

**Yes, this is a change in the schedule!** The Library has already arranged for this speaker: PBS-featured, Michigan author, Doc Fletcher. He will present his hour long "Paddling Michigan's Hidden Beauty" program; a photographic journey down rivers selected from his canoeing and kayaking books. Find out what makes each of these rivers uniquely fun. Histories of riverside towns along the way are also shared. At the end of the program there will be a drawing for a "free canoe or kayak trip" and Doc will sign and sell copies of his books.

## **Along the Boyne**

*(There are a lot of things happening along the Boyne River this early spring!)*

**The Kirtland Plant:** I attended the City Commission meetings about the Kirtland Pellet Plant to represent the FoBR and to hear about the problems. The City Commission listened to everyone speak, visited some of the people's homes to see or hear what the problems were for themselves, and is trying to solve the problems. Because the pellet plant has a conditional permit, the problems have to be taken care of. The City Commission has set up a committee that represents all the people concerned and their job is to hire an expert to solve the problems of the noise, smell and particulate coming out of the stacks. According to the Petoskey News-Review of Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, the Committee has so far, received responses from two companies of experts. The DEQ has also run tests on what is coming out of the stacks. The authority that manages the Industrial Park is the EDC (Economic Development Council) and the LDFA (Local District Financing Authority). The EDC and the LDFA will be paying for the experts.

If there is a problem with the river becoming polluted from particulate falling into it, we will know. It will show up in the monitoring. The Tip of the Mitt Watershed's Stream Monitoring Program that I talked about last month will show any problems that occur. If you want to help with that program, call me (231) 582-9373 or Kevin Cronk (231) 347-1181. Ed and Diane Strzelinski lead the Dam Rd. & North Branch monitoring team. I lead the Old City Park & South Branch team. We will be doing the spring monitoring on May 19<sup>th</sup>, we can always use more help - and its fun.

**The City of Boyne City has agreed to purchase riverside property.** The City has agreed to purchase two pieces of riverside property from the DNR. This is property that the DNR no longer wants to own and has asked the City if they want to purchase it at the bargain price of \$16,000. During the Commission discussion of why they were purchasing these properties, the reason given was that future projects might occur that could take advantage of riverside property owned by the City. It is interesting that, right after the Commission had that discussion, the next item on their agenda was the FoBR

wanting to improve a piece of riverside property – the Boyne River Nature Area. I have attached an aerial map to show where these two properties are and where the Boyne River Nature Area is. The long narrow piece of property is land-locked. You have to cross the river or get permission from the surrounding land owners to get to it. The square piece of property touches State St. (M-75), a little past Suzie Dickow's house but before the big curve. When you drive out State St., look for the lots that are not built on and the Conservancy Sign on your right. Either the empty piece of property before the Conservancy or the property after the Conservancy is now the City's. All the property along there is rugged with very little land that is level with the road and with quite a embankment plus a gully going down to the river.

### **The Boyne River Nature Area project has been approved by the City Commission.**

The back edge of the Industrial Park is a steep, tree covered hillside that drops down about thirty feet to the Boyne River. In the far back corner, there is a ravine that goes down that hillside and leads to a wetland that extends from 100 to 200 ft to the Boyne River. This is where the Boyne River Nature Area will be. The property belongs to the City and isn't platted as business space.

There will be signs by M-75 directing people to the Boyne River Nature Area. The entrance to the Nature Area will be on the level top area of the Industrial Park and have a big sign. It will also have a small parking area and a bike rack. If money allows, we can build a raingarden there to collect any rain water off the parking area, help with erosion in the ravine and to make the space look beautiful. We plan on improving the ravine with small logs, wood chips and some gravel to make walking up and down it easier. (Volunteers will be needed with this part of the project!)

At its bottom, the ravine connects to an narrow pathway that runs along the base of the hillside, parallel to the river and ends in a half of a mile where the City's property ends. The City has already placed posts and a sign at the top of the ravine to keep motorized vehicles out of the area.

From the edge of the pathway, the ground drops down about five feet to the wetland. We will build stairs from the pathway down to boardwalks that will curve across the wetlands to the river. We plan on building three sets of stairs and boardwalks. (You will notice that I haven't said anything about volunteers at this point. That is because I have a carpenter all lined up to do this. He is the one who has given me estimates of costs so that I can make a budget for Grant Applications). The boardwalks will be floating ones in order to cause a minimum amount of disturbance to the wetland. Where the boardwalks meet the river, we will build small decks with benches for sitting and viewing the river. The boardwalks and stairs will meet MDEQ criteria – this is a wetland and they have to give us a permit. The County Drain Commissioner will probably also have to give a permit.

Money permitting, we will print a booklet to publicize the Boyne River Nature Area. It will show the Nature Area's location and layout. It will also explain the importance of wetlands. You will notice that "money permitting" statement. Right now, I am writing grant applications – lots and lots of them. Grant writing will probably take all spring and I won't know until late June, mid July - or even later, if the applications are successful. So, don't look for any announcements that we have started the project until late summer or even next spring. Please be patient and cross your fingers that the grants come in

with good news and that we have enough money to do this project.

It is a wonderful project. We will be preserving a wetland from any future development that might occur and preserving the wetland will protect the river. We will be building access to a wetland for educational purposes. Students, visitors to our area and residents will all be able to see what a wetland really is and learn how it is important to the health of the Boyne River and to the environment. We will be building an area that demonstrates to the public and local governments that more riverside property should be preserved because it is environmentally and recreationally important. And, we will be building access to an area that is perfect for just observing nature - a serene and peaceful place with a beautiful view of the river as it flows quietly past.

### **Along the Boyne in Riverside Park** by Marie Sheets

At Riverside Park on a recent morning, the grass was greening, trees budding and birds calling. The Boyne, sparkling under sunshine, flowed well. Branches overhead stirred in the breeze. The pathway, mown last fall, is still discernable and can still be followed. This is a wild preserve; an interesting route to take. Enjoy yourself.

### **Friends of the Boyne River Marie Zoberski Scholarship**

Do you know of any student from Charlevoix County or the Watershed Area of the Boyne River who is beginning or has started college studies in an environmental field? Now is the time for them to apply for our scholarship. **The deadline is April 11, 2012.** Please contact: Dick Cunningham, Scholarship Chairman, 622 W. Michigan Ave, Boyne City, 49712, (231) 582-92373, for an application.

### **Master Naturalist Program**

Our March speaker was Cydney Steeb who told us about the Master Naturalist Program. If you didn't get an opportunity to come and listen to Cydney, you missed a good presentation. Some of our FoBR members have taken the classes, enjoyed them and learned a lot. Don't let knowing that you will miss a class stop you. You can take the class that you missed next year. I have copied the brochure so you can read it and if you are interested, sign up. The deadline is April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Call Cydney at (231) 439-8977 or [cydneysteeb@macd.org](mailto:cydneysteeb@macd.org)

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