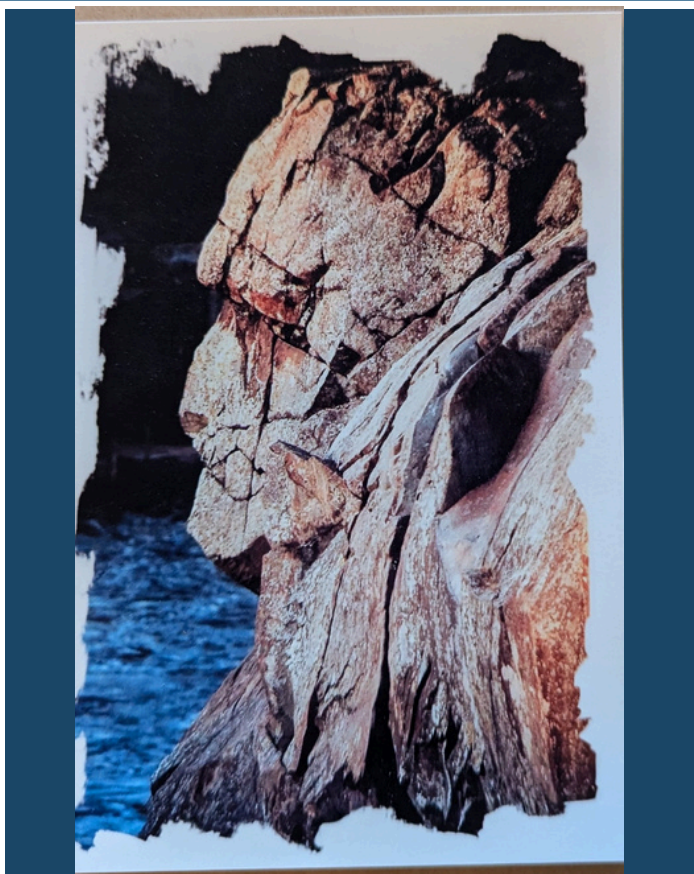




# FRIENDS OF

## *Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks*



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Set the Date for September 20th for a day of celebration at Interstate Park
- Program and Events schedule
- A Message from Board President Dani Mortenson
- Superintendent Matt Densow's Park Report

### A Wonderful Year at Interstate Park

What a fantastic year it has been so far at Interstate Park! We hope your summer was filled with adventure, discovery, and plenty of chances to enjoy Wisconsin's incredible state parks. Whether you hiked a new trail, took in a breathtaking view, or joined us for a community event, 2025 has already been a year to remember.

The Friends of Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks are proud to have sponsored a wide variety of programs and events this year—and we're thrilled to share that every single one has been a success. From historical reenactments and guided hikes to family-friendly festivals and nature programs, each gathering has helped connect visitors with the beauty, history, and spirit of our parks.

We've seen children light up with curiosity during nature walks, families discover new traditions at seasonal celebrations, and visitors from near and far gain a deeper appreciation for the unique landscapes that make Interstate and Straight Lake Parks so special. Behind the scenes, our volunteers and supporters have worked tirelessly to make all of this possible, and we are deeply grateful for their energy and dedication.

And the year isn't over yet! As we celebrate all that has been accomplished, we are also looking forward to one of the most exciting milestones in our history—the 125th Anniversary of Wisconsin Interstate Park. On Saturday, September 20th, we invite you to join us for a day filled with special programs, family activities, and a few surprises, as we honor the rich history of the park and look ahead to its future.

Together, we are not only preserving our parks, but also creating meaningful experiences and lasting memories for everyone who visits. We can't wait to celebrate this incredible milestone with you!

# Celebrating Interstate Park 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## Events, Activities and Programs



### Wisconsin Interstate Park

#### 125th Anniversary Celebration – September 20

**9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Park Bus Tour**

Multiple stops along the way to explore Interstate Park's highlights.

**9:30 – 11:30 a.m. Nature Journaling & Learn to Rock Climb**  
(Beach Area)

**10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Pothole Trail Guided Hike**  
Hiking Stick Decorating with the Ice Age Trail Alliance

**10:30 – 11:40 a.m. Social Gathering (Ice Age Center)**

**10:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.. Through Anna Belle's Eyes**

An interactive photo exhibit & film excerpts and discover who Anna Belle Rideaux, former owner of the Silverbrook "St. Croix Valley Country Club" was.

**11:00 – 11:30 a.m. History of the Wisconsin State Park System**  
(Ice Age Center)

**11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. 125th Anniversary Ceremony**  
(Ice Age Center)

**10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Food Trucks – Beach Parking Lot**  
(available for purchase)

**1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Nature walk to waterfall**  
Meet at Silverbrook Trail head.

**1:30 – 2:00 p.m. History of the Wisconsin State Park System**  
(second session) (Ice Age Center)

**2:00 – 3:30 p.m. Civilian Conservation Corps Program**  
Camp Interstate Shelter

**2:00 – 4:00 p.m.**

Smokey Bear & Forestry Equipment with DNR Forestry

State Natural Area Guided Hike with DNR Natural Heritage

Conservation (Ice Age Center)

**Join us for a full day of history, nature, and fun as we celebrate 125 years of Wisconsin's first state park!**

WISCONSIN'S OLDEST STATE PARK  
**INTERSTATE PARK**  
125 YEARS SINCE 1900

# President and Park Superintendent Updates

## President's Message



It has been a bountiful year at the park as I expect it has been in your gardens at home. As our summer comes to a close, we can look ahead to cooler fall days and the valley ablaze in vibrant yellow, orange, and red. A perfect time to go for a hike, paddle, or drive through the park. Stop and check out projects we have completed most recently: CCC Camp Interpretive Trail and Signage, Silverbrook trail signage, demonstration pollinator garden at the interpretive center. A visit to our gift shop brings fun new opportunities like our new penny press machine featuring park scenes, new clothing designs and some great 125th Anniversary items like handmade pottery mugs and prints of Emily Anderson's Interstate Park Series paintings. If you've been looking for opportunities to volunteer at the park, please let us know and we will help you find a perfect opportunity. If you happened to have missed Nancy Beck's CCC Camp Presentation in August, here's a link to the recording of it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ar8aAvuKFY>

**Dani Mortenson, 2025 Board President**

## Park Superintendent's Message

It seems like the end of summer comes faster every year, and it always hits home when I get informed of the last day for our seasonal staff. We had an excellent crew who worked hard and accomplished a lot for us. Luckily, we still have a few seasonal staff members that will be able to help us into the fall.

For those of you who had not heard, Arik, our Park Manager, left in June to go back to Willow River. However, I can announce that Hannah Cross will be our new Park Manager starting on August 24. Hannah has been our Park Ranger since 2022 and she has been working here since 2019. Please congratulate her when you have the chance!

Another big piece of news is that reconstruction of the Horizon Rock Shelter has begun. The mason has started cleaning the building and will work on completing the tuck pointing. Once the mason is finished, reconstruction of the support logs and roof can begin. The project is expected to be completed by the end of October. Thank you to the Friends for your support of this project!

Finally, I want to invite all of you to help us celebrate our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on September 20<sup>th</sup>. This will be a free admission day at the park with lots of great activities planned throughout the day. The main ceremony will occur from 11:45am to 1:00pm. Please note that there will be no parking at the Ice Age Center on that day if you wish to attend. There will be buses providing pick up and drop off service at several locations in the park so plan accordingly. I hope to see you there!



**Matt Densow**  
Park Superintendent



# Summer of Fun at Interstate Park



## A Season of Celebration at Interstate Park

This summer was filled with discovery, laughter, and connection at Interstate Park. Highlights included our Voyageur reenactment, which brought the fur trade era to life with songs, stories, and birchbark canoes. Nature enthusiasts enjoyed guided bird hikes, mushroom walks, and the art of nature journaling—each offering new ways to observe and appreciate the natural world.

Families joined us for Mother's Day and Father's Day gatherings, while treasure-hunters took part in a lively Geocaching program. Our 5th Annual Ice to Water Race was another standout, with over 70 participants and plenty of cheering from friends and family. June's Free Fun Weekend also welcomed visitors of all ages with fishing, free admission, and a full schedule of activities.

### Looking Ahead

The fun continues into fall with two major events. On September 20, we'll celebrate Interstate Park's 125th Anniversary with historical displays, food, games, and family-friendly programs. Then, on October 11, our annual Fall Celebration will showcase the beauty of the season with hikes, nature activities, and hands-on programs. The Raffle drawing will also be held that day.

### Thank You

None of this would be possible without our members, volunteers, park staff, and community partners. Your support ensures that Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks will continue to inspire and delight for generations to come.

# Naturalist's Corner



Another too-fast summer is coming to an end! This year has been filled with 115 fun and exciting programs creating lasting memories for over 3,000 visitors. Over the course of the 170 hours of programming this year, visitors have learned to paddle on the Lake O' the Dalles with Bob Whaley, searched for macroinvertebrates during Freshwater Critters, learned about fish and bees at Katy Scharfenberg's Nature Storytime, celebrated important events with Art and Sandy Anderson, discovered the amazing adaptations of owls, and so much more! Enjoy your last weekend of summer with A Pothole Trail Guided Hike, 125 Years at Interstate Trivia, Pests or Pals, and our final Paddling in the Park event all happening Labor Day weekend. Plan your fall with a visit to the park on September 20<sup>th</sup> to celebrate Interstate Park's 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and enjoy the fall colors and activities during our annual Fall Celebration on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Look forward to our annual winter programming, such as our First Day Hike and our Candlelight Night. Finally, our naturalist program is able to make an impact on thousands of people each year because of the support from the Friends of Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks. Thank you for helping us to foster appreciation and stewardship of our parks!

-Maia Lieske, Natural Resource Educator at Interstate Park



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*Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks*

## Annual Meeting

**October 9<sup>th</sup> at the Ice Age Center 5:30**

**with the Program starting at 6:30**

Join us at the Ice Age Center in Interstate Park for a special gathering of Friends. Dinner will be provided by Sir Smokes A Lot, with cake from Dick's Market served afterward. This is a wonderful opportunity to reconnect, share updates on recent park developments, and enjoy time together.

This year's program will feature Alex Bouthilet as our guest speaker. Alex will share insights on prescribed burns, pollinator habitats, and the fascinating relationships between animals and their environment.

**We look forward to seeing you there!**



# Be a part of something bigger!

## Whether through donations, membership, or volunteering, your support makes a lasting impact.

*All members and donors will be acknowledged in our Annual Report, to be published at the end of the year.*

### Every gift—big or small—helps protect and enhance Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks!

|                              |                                                        |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Name _____                   | Friend - \$10/yr. <input type="checkbox"/>             |
| Address _____                | Family - \$20/yr. <input type="checkbox"/>             |
| City, State, Zip code _____  | Good Friend - \$25/yr. <input type="checkbox"/>        |
| Email and Phone Number _____ | Best Friend - \$100/yr. <input type="checkbox"/>       |
|                              | Best Friend Life - \$250/Life <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                              | Corporation - \$500/Life <input type="checkbox"/>      |

|                     |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Enclosed Membership | \$ _____ | <b>You can also sign up online with PayPal at:</b><br><a href="https://friendsofinterstateandstraightlakeparks.org/membership/">https://friendsofinterstateandstraightlakeparks.org/membership/</a> |
| Enclosed Donation   | \$ _____ |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Enclosed Endowment  | \$ _____ |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

**Please Send To: Membership, Friends of Interstate Park, PO Box 703, St. Croix Falls WI 54024**

## Legacy Giving Corner: Leave a Lasting Impact

For 125 years, Wisconsin Interstate Park has been a beloved natural sanctuary, offering stunning landscapes, outdoor adventures, and rich history. Help preserve the park's beauty and legacy for generations to come through legacy giving.

By including Wisconsin Interstate Park and the Friends of Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks in your estate plans, you create a lasting impact that supports conservation, educational programs, and visitor experiences for years to come. Whether through a bequest, trust, or other planned gift, your generosity will help preserve these special places.

To explore legacy giving options, contact Heather Logelin at the St. Croix Valley Foundation (715-386-9490) or email [info@scvfoundation.org](mailto:info@scvfoundation.org).

*Thank you for being a steward of Wisconsin Interstate Park and Straight Lake State Park's future!*

# Board of Directors and Park Staff

## Friends of Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks 2025 Board of Directors

🌿 Dedicated to Preserving and Enhancing Our Parks 🌿

### Executive Board

- ◆ President: Dani Mortenson – [dani.mortenson@yahoo.com](mailto:dani.mortenson@yahoo.com)
- ◆ Vice President: Art Anderson – [acaenator@gmail.com](mailto:acaenator@gmail.com)
- ◆ Secretary: Derek Anderson – [derekanderson06@gmail.com](mailto:derekanderson06@gmail.com)
- ◆ Treasurer: Sandy Anderson – [sanand56.sa@gmail.com](mailto:sanand56.sa@gmail.com)

### Board Members

- ✓ Barb Ceder – [barbara.ceder@gmail.com](mailto:barbara.ceder@gmail.com)
- ✓ Kirby McDonald – [Kirbymcdonald1@gmail.com](mailto:Kirbymcdonald1@gmail.com)
- ✓ Kathy Scharfenberg – [kathyscharfenberg299@gmail.com](mailto:kathyscharfenberg299@gmail.com)
- ✓ Kevin Rogers – [kjrogers1208@hotmail.com](mailto:kjrogers1208@hotmail.com)
- ✓ Carol Wickboldt (Membership Chair) – [carolwickboldt@gmail.com](mailto:carolwickboldt@gmail.com)

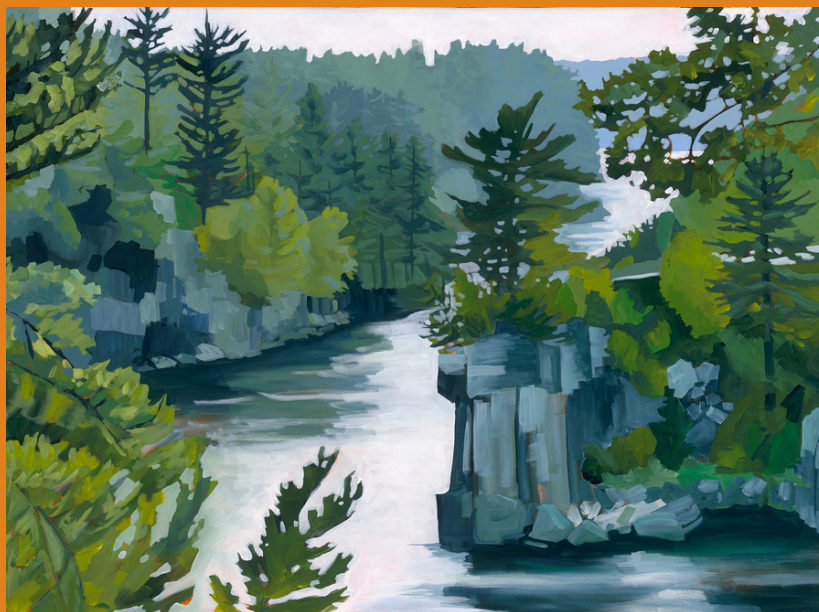
### Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks Staff

Park Superintendent: Matthew Densow – [matthew.densow@wisconsin.gov](mailto:matthew.densow@wisconsin.gov)

Park Manager: Hannah Cross – [hannah.cross@wisconsin.gov](mailto:hannah.cross@wisconsin.gov)

Natural Resource Educator: Maia Lieske – [maia.lieske@wisconsin.gov](mailto:maia.lieske@wisconsin.gov)

🗣️ The Friends of Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks is a volunteer-driven organization committed to supporting the parks through conservation efforts, educational programs, and community engagement.



By local artist Emily Anderson

# 125th Anniversary Raffle



**Grand Prize**  
**4' x 6'**  
**Pothole Trail**  
**River View**  
**Photograph**



**FRIENDS OF**  
*Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks*

**Raffle Tickets \$20**

**ONLY 200 Tickets will be sold**

**Drawing to be held Oct 11<sup>th</sup> 2pm Ice Age Center**  
**Need not be present to win**

**Second Prize: 11' Pelican Kayak & Fishing Rod**

**Third Prize: \$120 Riverwood Canoe Certificate**

**Fourth Prize: Specialty Custom Canoe Paddles**

**Sponsored by the Friends of Interstate and Straight Lake State Parks**

**Please purchase Raffle Tickets at Gift Shop located in the Ice Age Center**