President’s Column
by Mark Madsen

In this introductory column as the new president of Johnson County Heritage Trust, I thought I would begin by introducing myself. I am Mark Madsen. I arrived in Iowa City in 1988 with my wife Judy, my son Tom, and my daughter Heidi. I am a medical physicist and professor in the Department of Radiology at the University of Iowa and I became involved with JCHT about five years ago. I have been on the board of directors for the past two years. Actually, the first member of the family to contribute to JCHT was Tom, who from an early age was enthralled by wild plants. Tom performed many plant surveys on the JCHT properties and I am still often best known as Tom’s dad.

When I was growing up in eastern Wisconsin, I was a bird watcher, and that is a pursuit that I have re-embraced since moving to Iowa. While Eastern Iowa has wonderful plant diversity, it is also a great place to observe animals and insects, as well as birds. Unfortunately, the available habitat for a wide variety of species continues to diminish. That is why the mission of JCHT, to preserve our natural heritage through protection and management of land and water with significant environmental value, is so vital if the native flora and fauna of this unique area are to thrive, or even survive.

The past leaders of our organization have done and continue to do a magnificent job in finding, protecting, and managing some of the best remaining natural areas in our locality. There still is much to be done, however, and many challenges exist. The current political climate seems to place little value on the environment and it is unlikely in the short term that the state or federal government will devote significant resources to land conservation. This makes the commitment to our mission even more important. In the coming year, with your help, our past and present leaders will continue to strive to protect and restore more natural areas. We will also reach out to the community, and through education and our successes, will demonstrate the incredible value associated with conserving these irreplaceable resources in perpetuity.

In closing, I want to invite all of you to share your ideas and concerns about JCHT with me, Tammy Richardson, or any of the board members. The best way to contact me is through email at mark-madsen@uiowa.edu.
Executive Director’s Report
by Tammy Richardson

What an eventful spring it continues to be here at JCHT! Maybe you’ve witnessed the Johnson County Heritage Trust exhibit making the rounds at the Iowa City Public Library, Hills Bank, Kirkwood in Iowa City, Active Endeavors, or at the Earth Day Fair at the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center? We also held a very successful partnership with Active Endeavors and Patagonia. Thirty-nine pair of footwear were sold in a two-week period, with JCHT receiving $10/pair from each Active Endeavors and Patagonia. JCHT also received $5.00 from each Earth Day t-shirt that Active Endeavors sold. Thank you to Mark Weaver for involving our organization in that promotion!

The 28th annual Prairie Preview proved to be very successful with an informational panel discussion and approximately 230 attendees and 35 exhibitors. A very nice and productive alumni meeting was held along with an inspirational 33rd annual meeting. Congratulations to Dan Black for being selected this year’s Conservation Award recipient! Thank you all for supporting these events!

Our first official audit is also behind us. I’m very glad to report that we passed with flying colors! We are also seeking sponsors for Family Day events as well as the “Under a Cider Moon . . . A celebration of Autumn” event to be held Saturday, October 22.

As you know, I am Johnson County Heritage Trust’s only employee . . . I am amazed daily at your continued contributions to this organization. I thank my lucky stars EVERY day for the wonderful and dedicated volunteers that serve this organization! What a great team we make!

I would like to take a moment to thank those outgoing board members that have served the JCHT Board of Directors so well: Casey Kohrt, Steve Semken, Jane McCune and Dick Schwab. A special thanks to Dick Schwab for his patience, guidance and leadership for the past six years of board service which lead to his presidency. It has been a true joy working with you!

Welcome and congratulations to our newly elected Board members: Brenda Nations, James Fluck, Chris Mottinger and Eadie Fawcett Weaver. I very much look forward to working with you all, as well as our new President, Mark Madsen.

A Thank You to Dick Schwab
by John VanRybroek

The Johnson County Heritage Trust has accomplished a lot in the past six years, and it is no accident that these accomplishments occurred during Dick Schwab’s tenure as President of the Executive Board. Here are just a few of the things that Johnson County Heritage Trust has accomplished under Dick’s leadership:

• Acquired Strub Prairie, O’Mara-Newport Woods, and Pappy Dickens Preserve, totaling 48 acres, and two conservation easements totaling over 146 acres, resulting in JCHT protecting a total of over 500 acres.
• Adopted five-year strategic plan
• Created land evaluation criteria
• Developed a strong and diverse board
• Fashioned and followed governance policies
• Instituted use of board calendar
• Secured office space
• Hired staff

Thank you, Dick, for sharing your time, talents and treasure. You have brought a great deal of knowledge and innovative ideas to our organization. Johnson County Heritage Trust is much stronger due to your selfless contributions. Dick, we know we can count on you for your continued support and advice as our organization moves forward.

Johnson County Heritage Trust Upcoming Events:
• 5/22 Family Day at Turkey Creek Preserve
• 5/24, 6/28, 7/26, 8/23, 9/27, 10/25, 11/22 and 12/27 Bluebird Diner “Share the Profits” 5-9:00
• 6/12 and 12/4 Devotay Benefit Sundays
• 9/18 Family Day at Belgum Grove
• 10/22 “Under a Cider Moon . . . a Celebration of Autumn”
Brenda Nations

Brenda Nations became Iowa City’s Environmental Coordinator in 2009 after serving as the City’s Naturalist. Her job focuses on environmental issues facing the City, where she performs a wide range of tasks such as coordinating energy use and reduction for City’s buildings, calculating community-wide and City government greenhouse gas emissions, and assisting in the management of the 800 acres of natural areas within the City. She has written a natural areas inventory of City properties and management plans for City natural areas and created a brochure with the location and highlights of Iowa City prairies, wetlands, and forests. Brenda is a long-time resident of Iowa City where she lives with her husband and two sons.

Chris Mottinger

Chris Mottinger, a native Iowan, was raised on a small farm located near Solon in Johnson County Iowa. Chris, his wife, two daughters and his father currently reside in a lake community on the North shore of Lake Macbride. Chris served honorably in the US Marine Corps, and received his bachelor’s degree and MBA with honors from Western Illinois University and Nova Southeastern University respectively. He is the Founder and Principal of The Mottinger Real Estate Group (The M Group), a Central Iowa real estate brokerage and development firm formed in 1997, and has been involved in the construction, development and real estate industries for over 30 years. The M Group includes several entities involved in the investment, development and sale of residential, commercial, land and farm properties.

James Fluck

James Fluck is retired from the University of Iowa, having worked at Hancher Auditorium for 11 years and then in information technology for 22 years. Jim and his partner, Julie Scott, live in Iowa City with a backyard of ravines and woods that they are working to improve. They became interested in JCHT as an educational and technical resource for their restoration work shortly after beginning the project six years ago. Jim has worked as a volunteer at workdays on several JCHT properties and on a number of the burns conducted by the Trust. Jim and Julie are quietly passionate about preserving natural areas and trying, at least on their own property, to restore the land to a condition more like pre-settlement. Jim intends to bring curiosity, a willingness to learn, and a desire to make a meaningful contribution to his term on the JCHT Board.

Eadie Fawcett Weaver

Eadie Fawcett Weaver is Director of Business Development at the University of Iowa Community Credit Union; a position she has held for the past two years. In her role, Eadie calls on various businesses to make them aware of what the credit union has to offer the business and its employees as well as discuss partnership opportunities. Before working at the UICCU, she worked in broadcast news, most recently anchoring a two-hour morning show on Fox-28 in Cedar Rapids. Eadie has also worked in public relations and sales. She and her husband Mark Weaver started and own “Active Endeavors” an outdoor retail store in downtown Iowa City, now celebrating its 25th year in business, and have two children.
The annual meeting of the Johnson County Heritage Trust (JCHT) was held Friday, April 29, 2011 at the North Ridge Pavilion with 85 people in attendance! The round tables were brightly decorated with flower arrangements provided by Val Cool. We appreciate her willingness to provide table decorations for this annual meeting as well as many in the past, and also her help with Cider Moon. Thank you, Val!

After a delicious meal, the meeting was called to order by outgoing President Dick Schwab. Lorie Reins-Sweere gave the financial report and was recognized with a bouquet of flowers by Sharyn Reitz, her co-treasurer, for all her hard work. They reported on the first official audit, conducted this year. It was good to hear that we passed without any issues.

Next, Tammy Richardson, Executive Director of JCHT, talked about some of the highlights of 2010 and goals for 2011. One goal is a membership of 1000 people; currently we are 638 members strong! Another important goal is to continue with plans for capacity and accreditation.

Dick Schwab thanked the following retiring board members for their service: Steve Semken, Publicity Chair; Jane McCune, Secretary; Dick Schwab, President and Casey Kohrt, Property Manager and Chairman of the Land Acquisition and Protection committee. Mark Madsen, newly elected President of JCHT, thanked Dick Schwab for all he has done as board member and President. He announced the formation of the Schwab Fund for Conservation Education in honor of Dick for sharing his time and talents (and so much more!) with the Johnson County Heritage Trust. There was a roaring applause and standing ovation for Dick!

New board members were elected. We welcome Brenda Nations, James Fluck, Chris Mottinger, and Eadie Fawcett Weaver to the JCHT Board. Thank you for serving!

Next it was time for the property managers to report on accomplishments and goals for the eight parcels of land owned by the JCHT. Thank you to the following: Wayne Petersen and Dan Black, speaking for Belgum Grove; Don Bolin, speaking for Big Grove; Gene Szymkowiak, speaking for Hora Woods; Liz Maas, speaking for Newport-O‘Mara Woods and Pappy Dickens Preserve and Strub Prairie; Terry Dahms, speaking for Shimek Ravine; and John Van Rybroek, speaking for Turkey Creek. Casey Kohrt and Mark Vitos were not available to speak but also serve as property managers. We appreciate all that the property managers do to preserve, restore and manage these parcels of land!

The Conservation Award was presented to Dan Black who has served as board member and property manager of Belgum Grove (along with Wayne Petersen). Dan unselfishly served JCHT for years and has assisted with the transformation of Belgum Grove and has aided tremendously with “Bringing Iowa Back to Belgum Grove.”

We want to thank Dick Sjolund, long-time member and Nature Photographer from Solon, for providing the conservation award as well as one of the silent auction pieces. These were AWESOME as usual! Others who provided items for the silent auction included Bruce Gardner and Mark Madsen, who each donated two tickets to the viewing of the “Ghost Bird” at MacBride Auditorium. Mark also donated a handcrafted bat house and an overnight stay at the Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, and Richard Grimlund donated a beautiful, hand crafted cutting board. Thanks so much for your contributions!

Thanks to the bartenders, Terry Dahms and Dan Black, to Robin Butler for designing the annual meeting invitations, to Connie Mutel for being present with her new book, “A Watershed Year: Anatomy of the Iowa Floods of 2008.” We also are indebted to the set up and clean up crews: Sharyn Reitz, Barbara Beaumont and Kurt Hamann, Dan Black, Mary Kroninger, Val Cool, Tammy Richardson, Liz Hall, Don Bolin and all the others who pitched in to help.
“The True Joy in Life”
By George Bernard Shaw

This is the true joy in life, being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one. Being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it what I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live.
I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

Fund Raiser
Iowa City retailer Active Endeavors partnered with outdoor company Patagonia and recently donated $800 to Johnson County Heritage Trust raised through a recent sales promotion. The mission of JCHT is the preservation and enjoyment of natural land in Johnson County. Pictured are Dave Nerad, Active Endeavors manager; Tammy Richardson, Johnson County Heritage Trust Executive Director and Mark Weaver, Active Endeavors owner.

Prescribed Burn at Belgum Grove a Success
By Wayne Petersen

A prescribed burn was conducted at Belgum Grove on Saturday April 2, 2011 on a reconstructed prairie. The keys to a successful burn are:

- Good firebreaks.
- A well equipped burn crew.
- A good burn plan.
- And good weather.

We had all of the above going for us on April 2…except for maybe the good weather. Winds were out of the northwest at about 10-15 miles per hour, which is at the upper limits. We had 50 acres of combustible reconstructed prairie to our south and a field of dry corn residue to our east. But with the 20 foot wide firebreaks and the well equipped crew, we decided to ignite. We started a backfire on the east end of the field and dragged to the north and south, then along the south edge of the field to the west. After a good black line was established, a headfire burned from the north and from the west onto the blackened area.

The crew consisted of Dan Black, Bob Peiffer, Mark Muller, Jim Fluck, Wayne Petersen, Linda Petersen, Pat Schmidt and Mike Feagler. The burn went perfectly and was well documented by photographer Dick Sjolund.

Ignition! We had two – 4 person crews. Each crew had one person dragging the fire line with a drip torch or rake, one person with a flapper, one person with a leaf blower and one person with a water tank.
Prescribed Burn at Belgum Grove a Success
By Wayne Petersen

A prescribed burn was conducted at Belgum Grove on Saturday April 2, 2011 on a reconstructed prairie. The keys to a successful burn are:

• Good firebreaks.
• A well equipped burn crew.
• A good burn plan.
• And good weather.

We had all of the above going for us on April 2…except for maybe the good weather. Winds were out of the northwest at about 10-15 miles per hour, which is at the upper limits. We had 50 acres of combustible reconstructed prairie to our south and a field of dry corn residue to our east. But with the 20 foot wide firebreaks and the well equipped crew, we decided to ignite. We started a backfire on the east end of the field and dragged to the north and south, then along the south edge of the field to the west. After a good black line was established, a headfire burned from the north and from the west onto the blackened area.

The crew consisted of Dan Black, Bob Peiffer, Mark Muller, Jim Fluck, Wayne Petersen, Linda Petersen, Pat Schmidt and Mike Feagler. The burn went perfectly and was well documented by photographer Dick Sjolund.

Ignition! We had two – 4 person crews. Each crew had one person dragging the fire line with a drip torch or rake, one person with a flapper, one person with a leaf blower and one person with a water tank.

Headfire roaring with the wind at its back.

The headfire meets the backfire.

Dan Black on the blackened earth after the burn is completed.

More photos are available at http://web.me.com/rsjolund/Site/JCHT-Belgum-Burn.html.

Johnson County Heritage Trust Appreciates Our 2011 “Under a Cider Moon . . . a Celebration of Autumn” Sponsors:
Blazing Star - $10,000 level
(Your name could be here!)

Lady Slipper - $5,000.00 level
Dick Schwab and Katherine Burford
River Products Company

Shooting Star - $2,500.00 level
(Your name could be here!)

Sunflower - $1,000.00 level
Adams & Baumbach Associates
Blank & McCune The Real Estate Company
MidWestOne Bank
Neumann Monson, P. C.

Aster - $500.00 level
Dickel Construction Company
Tom and Becky Gelman
Hills Bank
MidAmerican Energy
Quality Care Storage Company
Total Tree Care of Iowa City

Johnson County Heritage Trust Appreciates Our 2011 “Family Day” Sponsors:
Sunflower - $1,000.00 level
(Your name could be here!)

Aster - $500.00 level
(Your name could be here!)

Phlox - $250.00 level
Jay Proffitt Construction
City Carton Recycling

Coneflower - $100.00 level
A. W. Ambrisco Insurance Inc.
Mark, Judy, Tom and Heidi Madsen
Maxwell Construction
Native Landscaping Services
Scheels All Sports
University of Iowa Press
Become a fan of JCHT on Facebook … Johnson County Heritage Trust fulfills its mission through the generosity of its members and donors. Every gift to the Trust is respected and appreciated. Please think of JCHT for not only lifetime gifts, but also as a part of your testamentary planning. A gift to JCHT is a gift to your children and community.

Pick a membership level and renew (or become a new member).

- Student Member ____ $10
- Regular Member ____ $30
- Family Member ____ $50
- Sustaining Member ____ $50
- Sponsor ____ $100
- Benefactor ____ $250
- Heritage Keeper ____ $500 or more