



# The Chinquapin

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Spring 2009

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

## NATURE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

If you would like to become a Royal Oak Nature Society member for the 2008/2009 season (September 2008-August 2009), please fill out a membership form (page 5) and mail it to us along with your check or give the form and check/cash to a Nature Society board member. **If a family membership, please list all of your family members.**

A membership entitles you to have our newsletter, "The Chinquapin", mailed to you four times a year. The mailing begins with the Fall 2008 issue and ends with the Summer 2009 edition. Your membership will help to cover the cost of printing and mailing of our newsletter and will also assist in funding educational programs that we provide.

Non-members are still welcome to come to our monthly speaker programs as well as our nature walks. Those programs and walks are, and always will be, free to anyone who enjoys learning about nature.

Donations are tax deductible.

## More of With the Help of Eagles

by Bob Muller

As stated before, there are only a handful of Society members that provide labor for the work of maintaining, improving and adding to our trail system in both parks. Much of that work is done in the form of Eagle Scout projects. From 2002 through 2007, we had seven Eagle Scout projects that were completed in our two nature parks. During 2008, we surpassed that number with eight. In the fall issue of the 2008 Chinquapin, I wrote about three Eagle Scout projects that have helped the Nature Society improve Tenhave Wood's trail system. "More of With Help of Eagles" will focus on those other five

The article in the Fall 2008 Chinquapin failed to mention the first Eagle Scout project of 2008. It was done in February by Josh Eggart of Troop 1085. Josh and his crew cleared a monstrous fallen beech tree off the Sandbar Trail. Then they used it to line a new trail built from the Sandbar Trail to the fence off of Normandy where a new turnstile was going to be installed. Two of these log sections were calculated to weigh 16,000 pounds each. It was quite a feat to move them without equipment. The turnstile was just installed this past December.

In early August, Tyler Jeloneic from troop 1601, managed his project. When the Sassafra trail that was built as an Eagle Scout project in 2002, we believed that the trails should be three feet wide. This is the normal width of hiking trails. Tenhave Woods is a teaching park and when you have a group of twenty or more on a nature walk, a three foot wide trail does not allow the group to gather around an item the naturalist is talking about. Therefore, Tyler and his crew widened the trail to between five and seven feet. The original trail was also lined with very

small three and four inch diameter sticks which had mostly disappeared during the past seven years. Tyler's crew relined the trail with large logs that will last a decade. The new width has made this trail very usable on our nature walks.

The Eagle Scout Project of Jacob Vertel of Troop 1610 was to build Crawfish Pond in Cummington Park. The project began in August and wasn't completed until December. This started with the cutting of dead ash and elms and a few silver maples out of the pond site along Meijer Drive. Along with the large trees were hundreds of small saplings. After felling, the area had to be cleared. The trees were cut into logs and then were stacked outside of the pond area. Those logs will be used to line trails. All of the small branches were moved and put into piles. They will be used to make brush piles for wildlife habitat. All together, there were six cutting and six hauling days. The area had to be cleared before October 18, as that is when the excavator was coming to start digging. The excavator pulled stumps and dug the pond, the city hauled away a huge pile of stumps and Jacob's troop returned, moving tons of dirt to build dry trails. The excavator had to come back later and grade an area next to the pond so that it could be used for teaching and create a parking pad off Meijer Drive that would facilitate bringing in the supplies needed for teaching pond life programs. On the day we dug the pond, it was only about six feet in diameter and two or three inches deep, when a damselfly landed in it and laid its eggs. Life had already discovered this newly built pond. By December 29<sup>th</sup>, the pond had filled

(Continued on page 2)

## SMOKE FREE FUNCTIONS

The Nature Society Board of Directors has adopted a resolution that all of our programs are smoke free including all functions of the Royal Oak Nature Society (indoors or outdoors). We are committed to protect the health of everyone who attends any of our programs.



## DIRECTOR POSITION OPENING

The **Fundraiser Director** coordinates and organizes the Annual Spring Fundraiser and other fund-raiser programs approved by the board.

The **Education Director** provides outreach and liaison to outside individuals, groups and schools to promote environmental education..

If you are possibly interested in volunteering for either of these positions, please contact Ted Vickers at either 248-549-5366 or [naturesociety@ci.royal-oak.mi.us](mailto:naturesociety@ci.royal-oak.mi.us)

*(“More of With The Help of Eagles” cont’d from page 1)*  
with water to its maximum depth.

Like the Sassafras trail, the Swamp Trail and east half of the Scout Trail were only three feet wide and the original trail lining was disappearing. Early in November, Mike Henning of Troop 1085 began his project of relining and widening those trails. Both trails are now clearly visible and usable today for teaching, thanks to Mike.

The last project of 2008 was done in December by Ed Goetz of Troop 1610. When we added the Lexington turnstile and entrance trails, we added some fill dirt to make this entrance dry in the winter and spring. We missed several areas. Ed directed his troop to correct these oversights. A major part of the Pond Trail should have been named the River Tail, as water up to six inches deep flows down it into the pond in the spring. This area of trail was abandoned and relocated though drier ground, ending near the bird feeder and the Goodwin Trail. This part of the relocated Pond Trail is also a great area for wild flowers and will be a fantastic area to walk through in the spring.

This project con-

cluded the service of local Eagle Scout candidates and their crews to our parks for 2008. An unbelievable amount of work has been done by these fine young men. Thanks go out to the scout leaders who thought enough of them to give their time in executing these projects. Without these Eagle Scout projects, the Nature Society would have accomplished only a little of what has been done to improve the parks. These projects are the reason why we named a trail in Cummington, the “Eagle Scout Trail” and one in Tenhave Woods, the “Scout Trail”.

We will look back on 2008 as a fantastic year of the Boy Scouts volunteering their services to us. We are already working with three more boys on helping them plan their Eagle Scout projects for 2009.



Troop 1085 working on the Swamp Trail

## HISTORY OF A PIECE OF LAND IN NORTHERN ROYAL OAK

Shortly after being formed in 2001, the Royal Oak Nature Society became interested in the history of the land ownership of Royal Oak’s nature parks (Cummington Park and Tenhave Woods). Some questions we asked were “Why hadn’t these pieces of land been developed and why were the forest never clear cut?” Since Tenhave Woods was found to be part of just one farm and Cummington Park was made up from several farms, we decided to research Tenhave Woods first.

In 1824, the Cromwell Goodwin family became one of the first settlers of this area. They came here from East Bloomfield, New York, which is about 20 south of Rochester. They owned the land bounded by 13 Mile Rd, Nor-

mandy Rd, Crooks and a north/south section line 1/2 mile east of Crooks. Cromwell’s son, Samuel, purchased the north half of this land from his father in 1831. Seven & one-half acres of that land (part of Tenhave Woods) lied along the eastern edge his property. The eastern part of Tenhave Woods (15 acres) was originally purchased from the US Government by Tom Finn in 1824. Then it was sold to James Johnson in 1831 and then to Cromwell’s son, Samuel, in 1834. At that point, Samuel owned all of the land that now known as Tenhave Woods. Tenhave became his woodlot. In the 1860’s & 1870’s, Samuel sold his land to his son, Volney. After Volney died in 1902, the land was sold several times until

*(Continued on page 4)*

**ALL SPEAKER PROGRAMS AND NATURE WALKS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO EVERYONE.  
PRE-REGISTRATION IS NOT REQUIRED**

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE A CHANGE IN OUR GENERAL MEETING/ SPEAKER PROGRAM VENUE\*\***

*Our monthly general meeting/speaker programs are now held at the **Royal Oak Middle School** (formerly Dondero High School). The school is located at 709 N. Washington, between 11 Mile Road & Catalpa (11 ½ Mile). The meeting/program will be held in the "Gathering Place" or auditorium, both of which can be reached via the school's south-east entrance. Reference our Fall 2008 issue for a map showing the location of the school & entrance. At our monthly Wednesday meetings from September to June, we present speaker programs that are usually slide shows focusing on various natural history topics. If you watch nature programs on PBS or the Discovery channel, this is better because you can meet with the speakers afterwards and ask questions. The general meeting begins around **7:25 pm**, with the speaker program following several minutes later.*

**"A Bewildered Naturalist Goes West"** is being presented on **March 4<sup>th</sup>**. Don and Joyce Drife spent time this past summer exploring Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks. These two parks contain a flora very different from that of Michigan, as well as spectacular scenery and wildlife. When Don, Nature Society Botanist, goes west, he confesses that he does not know all of the birds and maybe only 20% of the plants. Sometimes he admits that he cannot place the plants even in the correct family. Don says, "In Michigan it is rare to find a flowering plant that I can't place at the least into the correct genus. Out west, I am bewildered by many of the things that I see. I spend more time with a plant key in a day than I will in a year in Michigan. It was great fun as I identified in 10 days, 350 species of plants that I had never seen before!" Come join Don as he leads an exploration of the natural history of these two spectacular National Parks.

**"Everglades"** is being presented on **April 1<sup>st</sup>**. This program is a compilation of three separate visits to Everglades National Park by Roger Bajorek, a retired naturalist from Stoney Creek Metro Park. He explored its wonders on foot, by canoe and by mountain bike. More than 350 species of birds, 300 species of fresh and saltwater fish, 40 species of mammals, and 50 species of reptiles live within Everglades National Park. Join us and learn about the amazing bird-life as well as alligators and crocodiles along with the wonderfully adapted vegetation.

**"Gardening for Butterflies and Hummingbirds "** is being presented on **May 6<sup>th</sup>**. Joe Derek, Farmington Hills Naturalist, has been a friend of the Nature Society from the beginning. He was one of our first three speakers and part of a trial program to see if the public would be interested in attending speaker programs put on by us. He has a National Wildlife Habitat in his backyard and uses it to attract birds and butterflies to the area around his home. Joe, who has been interested in butterflies for his whole life, now has the ability to watch and study them all summer right at home. Come and learn about Joe's methods, so this coming summer you can start building your own butterfly garden.

**"Crawfish Pond, Cummington Parks New Vernal Pond"** is being presented on **June 3<sup>rd</sup>**. In mid October of 2008, we excavated a new vernal pond in Cummington Park. The area was a small cattail marsh before Meijer's drive was built. Before the excavation, it was a swamp forest of silver maples, dead elms and dead ash trees. While we were still digging, a damselfly landed and laid her eggs in the pond that was only a puddle. The manmade pond has now gone through the winter and most of the spring. Come and join Bob Muller, Nature Society Naturalist, on a voyage of discovery and see what changes have occurred. Has the seed base held the seeds of wet land plants from decades ago? What beside our pioneer damselfly has discovered the pond? Will amphibians find their way to it; we haven't seen any in the park for many years?

**COMPLETED TURNSTILE PROJECT**

Our Tenhave Woods Turnstile Project can now be officially called completed. The turnstiles that were once located next to the soccer fields and the northwest corner of the park off of Normandy, have been moved to the Lexington side (fall of 2007) and the northeast corner off of Normandy (fall of 2008). These two new locations are now the new entrances into the park. The newly purchased and installed turnstiles which are setup to be exit only, replaced the ones that were moved to new locations. For the time being, the new entrance off of Normandy does not have a sidewalk leading up to it. The old entrances into the park were very wet during the spring. The goal of the Society from the beginning of its existence, was to move the entrance turnstiles to dryer ground.



Normandy "Exit Only" Turnstile

**MEMBERSHIP  
RENEWALS & NEW  
MEMBERS**

The Royal Oak Nature Society would like to thank the following individuals/families for either recently becoming new members or renewing their membership.

- Andrew & Geaneen Arends
- Roger Bajorek
- Ann Bobiney
- Margaret Bresnan
- Helen & Connie Cost
- Karl, Mary Ann & Joe DeLisle
- Patricia Derocher
- Darlene Ellis
- Ruth Hart
- Katherine & Larry Howell
- Melville Kennedy
- Donna Kuchapsky
- Jim Langhammer
- Joan Larson
- Stephanie Lusic
- G. Mayer; Patty Mogk
- Leslie & Ila Schonberg
- Jeanne Servis
- Ken Taylor & Ruthann Bajorek
- Kathleen Thomson
- Thomas Wallenmaier
- Mark, Donna, Lola Weatherwax
- David & Jackie Wiltse

**PROBLEMS IN THE  
PARK**

If you are near or in one of our two nature parks (Tenhave Woods or Cummingston Park) and see or hear suspicious or unlawful behavior, please help by calling the Royal Oak Police Department's non-emergency number, 248-246-3500 and inform them of the problem.

**DOGS**

Dogs are not allowed in either of our nature parks.



**NATURE WALKS**

**CUMMINGSTON PARK:** Park & meet at Leafdale & Torquay  
**TENHAVE WOODS:** Park in lot at Marais & Lexington Blvd.  
 Meet at Lexington Entrance (300 feet east of parking lot).  
 For the Owl Hoots, park & meet at the Marais/Lexington Blvd lot

*Wearing boots while in the parks is recommended in the winter & spring months. Using insect repellent and dressing appropriately is advised from late spring to the end of*

“Owl Hoot” is being held on **March 5<sup>th</sup>** (Thursday), **March 10<sup>th</sup>** (Tuesday), & **March 18<sup>th</sup>** (Wednesday) beginning **8:00 pm** at **Tenhave Woods**. During all of our scheduled Owl Hoots, we will walk into Tenhave Woods attempt to lure in or have screech & great horned owls answer tape recordings of their calls.

“Beginning of Spring Nature Walk” is being held on **March 28<sup>th</sup>** (Saturday) **2:00 pm** at **Tenhave Woods**. Spring has just started to show some of the changes we will see in the next few weeks.

“Early Spring Wildflower Walk” is being held on **April 11<sup>th</sup>** (Saturday) **10:00 am** at **Tenhave Woods**. The spring explosion is happening. Come take a look at the dramatic changes that happens this time of year.

“Spring Wildflower Walk” is being held on **April 19<sup>th</sup>**(Sunday) **2:00 pm** at **Tenhave Woods**. We will be looking for Trillium, blue & yellow violets, spring beauty, Wood Poppy, jack-in-the-pulpit, & wood anemone and more.

“Pond Life” is being held on **April 25<sup>th</sup>** (Saturday) **10:00 am** at **Tenhave Woods**. We will be sampling the vernal pond for what is living in it. We will have viewing trays to examine what we find. For those interested small aquarium nets will be available for you to catch your own pond life and have us identify. Come and learn about the interesting aquatic wildlife of

*(Continued from p.2 “History of a Piece of Land”*  
 Joseph Folta, a Detroit priest, became the owner in 1908. In the 1924 the land was sold to Charter Oaks, a land development company that was going to make the property into a subdivision (Arlington Heights). But with the Depression right around the corner, it never got developed. Later on, the land was turned over to the State of Michigan because of unpaid taxes. In the

Dragonfly Pond.

“Spring Wildflower Walk” is being held on **April 25<sup>th</sup>** (Saturday) **12:00 noon** at **Tenhave Woods**. We will be looking for Trillium, blue & yellow violets, spring beauty, wild geranium, jack-in-the-pulpit, spice bush, & wood anemone and more.

“Nature Walks & Other Programs” will be held on **May 2<sup>nd</sup>** (Saturday) at **Tenhave Woods**.

**9:00 am: Bird Walk--** Join us for a look at the resident birds and some that are just passing through.

**10:00 am: Wildflowers--** Spring Wildflowers – Looking for wild geranium, foamflower, jack-in-the-pulpit, trillium, & wood poppy and more.

**11:30 am: Pond Life--** See April 25<sup>th</sup> “Pond Life” program description.

**1:00 to 4:00 pm- Open House--** Come and check out the nature park, as we will have several programs running continuously throughout the afternoon.

“Pond Life” is being held on **May 16<sup>th</sup>** (Saturday) **2:00 pm** at **Tenhave Woods**. See April 25<sup>th</sup> “Pond Life” program description.

“Late Spring Nature Walk” is being held on **June 16<sup>th</sup>** (Tuesday) **7:00 pm** at **Tenhave Woods**. Find out what is happening in the woods in late Spring and beginning of Summer.

1940’s the State turned the land over to the City of Royal Oak.

To learn more about this fascinating story about Tenhave Woods and the land where Royal Oak High School is now located, please go to our website & link on to “HISTORY OF A PIECE OF LAND IN NORTHERN ROYAL OAK”.

## Royal Oak Nature Society's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser

**WHEN:** April 24<sup>th</sup> (Friday), 2009

**WHERE:** Royal Oak Elks Club (2401 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street at Stephenson Hwy, Royal Oak)

**TIME:** 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

**TICKET COST:** \$10 advance; \$12 at the door

**WHERE TO PURCHASE TICKETS:** Speaker programs, nature walks, any Nature Society board member or just send a check by mail.

**MAILING CHECKS:**

- Write check out: \$10/person
- Payable to the "Royal Oak Nature Society"
- MEMO: Annual Fundraiser
- Mail check to:
  - Royal Oak Nature Society
  - 1600 N. Campbell Rd.
  - Royal Oak, MI 48067

Ticket (s) will be waiting for you at the door

**ACTIVITIES:** Silent auction, 50/50 raffle, and an awards ceremony.

**PURPOSE OF FUNDRAISER:** To raise money for Tenhave Woods, Cummington Park & Worden Park East improvement projects.

**AS A ROYAL OAK NATURE SOCIETY SUPPORTER, WE COULD USE YOUR ASSISTANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING:**

- Know of a business that would donate light refreshments or desserts
- Know of someone or a business that would donate items used for our auction such as goods, services or gift certificates

**IF YOU CAN HELP US OUT OR NEED FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT US AT:**

- Phone: 248-246-3380
- E-mail: [naturesociety@ci.royal-oak.mi.us](mailto:naturesociety@ci.royal-oak.mi.us)
- Website: at [www.ci.royal-oak.mi.us/nature](http://www.ci.royal-oak.mi.us/nature).

### Nature Society Open House

A few weeks after our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser, be sure to come and join us for our 2009 Open House (Saturday, **May 2<sup>nd</sup>**) at **Tenhave Woods** from **1 to 4 pm**. Check our website for more information. In the morning, there will be a scheduled bird walk, wildflower walk & pond study program.



Heartfelt Thanks to Perry Gentner For Making  
Our Vernal Ponds Become a Reality



### Royal Oak Nature Society Membership Form

Please make checks out to: **Royal Oak Nature Society**  
MEMO: **Membership**

Mail completed form & donation check to:  
**Royal Oak Nature Society**  
**1600 N. Campbell Rd.**  
**Royal Oak, MI 48067**

Names (individual/family members): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

1 year membership rates (September-August)

- Individual: \$5     Family/Supporting: \$10 & up

Donations are tax deductible

### NATURE SOCIETY TEAMS

Please contact us if you would like to become actively involved with one or more of our teams:

**Stewardship:** Maintains a trail system and enhances the overall park experience at Tenhave Woods & Cummingston Park.

**Communications:** Publicizes organizational activities to the general membership and public through various mediums and performs any other forms of communications required by the board.

**Education:** Provides outreach and liaison to outside individuals, groups and schools to promote environmental education.

**Fundraising:** Is responsible for the fund-raising efforts of the Nature Society, which includes the coordinating and organizing of the Annual Spring Fundraiser & other fund-raiser programs approved by the board.

**Programming:** Is responsible for setting up the speaker programs, workshops and all of the nature programs within Cummingston Park and Tenhave Woods.

**Ways & Means:** Investigates means of grant solicitation and then follows through accordingly.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Tim Turner (248-320-4819)

Vice President: John DeLisle (248-585-9002)

Treasurer: Jeanne Sarnacki (248-246-3380)

Stewardship: Cummingston: Don Drife (248-528-0479) & Tenhave Woods: Dena Serrato (248-542-2820)

Communication: Ted Vickers (248-549-5366)

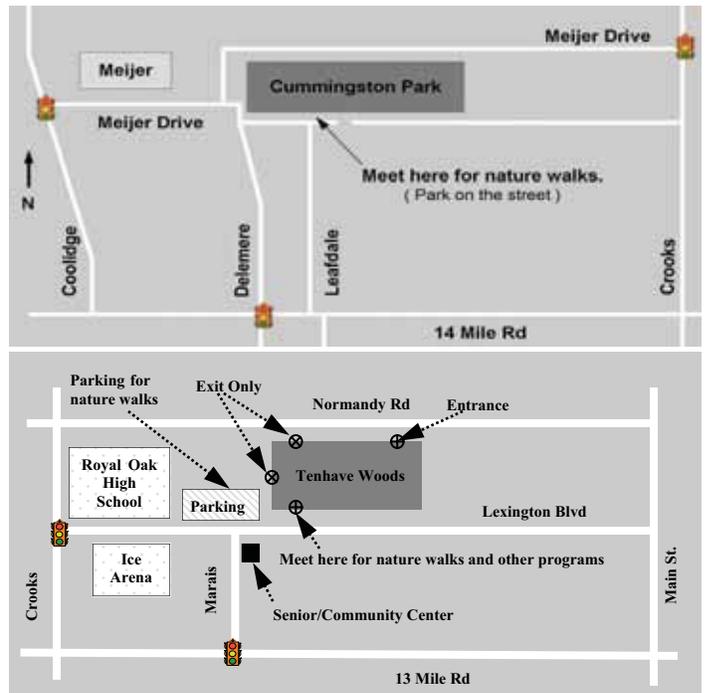
Education: Ted Vickers (acting)

Fundraiser: Open

Ways & Means: Helen Cost (248-549-9423)

Newsletter: Ted Vickers                      Engineer: Richard Stoll

## Our Nature Parks & Senior/Community Center



To locate and print out Tenhave Woods & Cummingston Park trail maps, please go to our web site (listed below under our tree logo), link on to "Park Locations" and then "Map for park trail locations"

*The Royal Oak Nature Society is a nonprofit education and stewardship group working within the city of Royal Oak's two nature parks, Tenhave Woods and Cummingston Park. Our mission is to foster awareness and usage of these two natural areas. We accomplish this by providing stewardship for the continuing improvement and maintenance of them plus we offer a wide range of natural history educational programs.*

The Royal Oak Nature Society  
1600 N. Campbell  
Royal Oak, MI 48067  
248-246-3380  
nature.society@ci.royal-oak.mi.us  
www.ci.royal-oak.mi.us/nature



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