

## 2007 Annual Report July 1, 2006 — June 30, 2007



Photographs by Arboretum Staff

### The Mission of Saint John's Arboretum:

- Preserve native plant and wildlife communities of the Arboretum lands
- Provide opportunities for education and research
- Model practices of sustainable land use
- Make accessible a natural environment that invites spiritual renewal

### Our Vision:

Saint John's Arboretum celebrates the unique beauty and richness of God's creation in central Minnesota and fosters the Benedictine tradition of land stewardship, education, and environmental respect.

# Environmental Education and Community Outreach

Saint John's Arboretum is committed to providing environmental education opportunities to its neighbors, students and the surrounding community. Highlights from this past year include:

- Offered a Minnesota Master Naturalist Course which graduated 18 adults ready to serve as volunteer Master Naturalists in the areas of citizen science, program support, stewardship, and education/interpretation.
- Celebrated the Arboretum's 10th Anniversary with events for Arboretum members and the CSB/SJU community.
- Organized Earth Week activities on the CSB/SJU campuses, including tours of the woodshop and physical plant, a bike/walk/roll to class day, and a compostable cookout.
- Provided environmental education programming to 28 elementary schools in the St. Cloud district and the surrounding area.
- Installed a new orienteering course in the oak savanna with the help of a Saint John's Prep student working on his Eagle Scout project.
- Hosted over 200 people for a Conservation-Based Development Conference featuring author and conservation planner Randall Arendt.



Photo by Arboretum Staff

Students help maintain the prairie.

## Advisory Council

### General Members

Terri Barreiro  
 Alison Binsfeld  
 Mike Brown  
 Scott Daninger  
 Bruce Dickau  
 Kari Dombrovski  
 Tom Haeg  
 Janette Monear  
 Stephanie O'Keefe  
 Bob Russell  
 Stephen Saupe  
 Larry Schwietz  
 Tom Wicks  
 Chuck Wocken  
 Bruce Wollmering, O.S.B.

### Student Members

Erin Moore  
 Sean Suter

*Students serving on the advisory council come from the CSB/SJU senates and will rotate on an annual basis.*

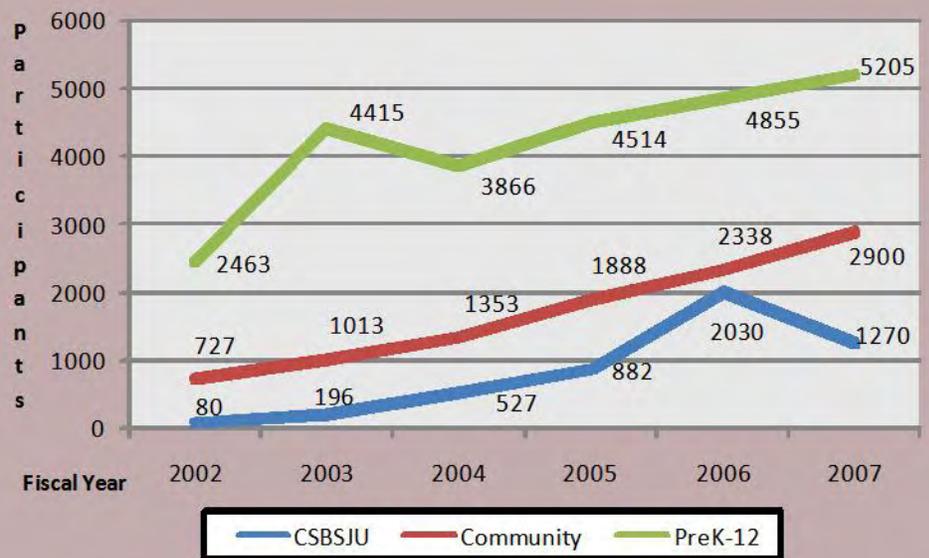


Photo by Rachel Peterson

Arboretum members and friends on a wildflower walk.

# Land Stewardship and Conservation in FY 2007

Benedictine environmental stewardship and conservation are at the heart of the Arboretum's mission. Designated a natural arboretum in 1997, its goal is to restore and preserve Central Minnesota's increasingly rare native habitats. The Arboretum promotes conservation and stewardship within the community through educational programming and ongoing support of the Avon Hills Initiative. Stewardship is also demonstrated through our habitat restoration efforts such as sustainable logging, tree planting, prairie burns during the spring and fall, and a controlled deer hunt for population control.

## Timber Harvest

Pulp wood, pallet logs, and firewood harvested: **158 cords**

Saw logs harvested: **16,000 board feet**

Total value of harvest: **\$20,000**

Annual allowable harvest: **53,683 ft<sup>3</sup>**

Percent of annual allowable harvest completed: **34%**

In the spring of 2002, the Forest Stewardship Council certified the forests of Saint John's as "well-managed." Certification requires that the health of the entire forest ecosystem, the productivity of the land, and the social aspects of the forest meet international standards. This year, Saint John's completed the last of the 22 conditions required to improve our stewardship and maintain certification.



Photo by Laura Scott

A compass plant blooms on the prairie.

The Arboretum planted 3000 red oaks, 1000 white and Norway pines, 3500 black and white spruce trees, 1500 tamaracks, and 400 future Christmas trees. On the prairie, we planted 180 Maximilian sunflowers and 180 blazing stars. Needle grass was also sown on the prairie. Students and staff burned 3 prairie units on our property. We also burned a small woods unit for buckthorn control. We upgraded parts of the Pine Knob and Chapel trails. We acquired a tractor for our use from the Abbey. Two student workers were added for field work, including ski-trail grooming. Aggressive work by Dan Vogel has nearly eliminated the invasive spotted knapweed.

## Special Funding in FY 2007

Funding Source	Balance 7-1-06	Additions	Expenses	Balance 6-30-07	Purpose
Individual Memberships/Special Gifts	\$0	\$18,190	\$18,190	\$0	Arboretum general expenses
Environmental Ed Program & Events	\$0	\$51,937	\$29,417	\$22,520	PreK-12 education
MN Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund through the MN DNR	\$0	\$3,338	\$3,338	\$0	Busing for preK-12 students
Xcel Energy Foundation grants	\$4,700	\$0	\$4,700	\$0	Busing for preK-12 students
Laird Norton Foundation grants	\$3,837	\$0	\$1,409	\$2,428	Avon Hills Initiative
Initiative Foundation	\$0	\$5,000 + \$5,000 SJU match	\$0	\$10,000	Avon Hills Initiative
Environmental Education Endowment in memory of Father Paul Schwietz	\$35,510	\$10,537	\$1,000 (interest only)	\$46,047	K-12, Community and CSB/SJU environmental education
L&M Schwietz Abbey Endowment	\$174,654	\$25,041	\$8,372 (interest only)	\$199,695	Abbey related land stewardship activities and environmental education
Central MN Community Foundation	\$2,718	\$425	\$0	\$3143	Environmental education

# Avon Hills Initiative

Since May 2004, the Avon Hills Initiative (AHI) has been lead by local residents committed to preserving the rural and natural character of roughly 50 square miles of land in Avon, St. Joseph, Collegeville, and St. Wendel Townships. The organization works through education, community organization, and local governments to increase awareness of land development pressures facing the Avon Hills.

This spring, the Avon Hills celebrated the addition of a second DNR-Scientific and Natural Area with the dedication of part of the Schellinger farm as the Avon Hills Forest—south unit. The total SNA acreage in the Avon Hills is now 353 acres.

In June, the Arboretum sponsored a workshop on innovative land uses for residents and policy makers. Over 200 attendees heard Randall Arendt speak about how 80% of the land in rural areas can be permanently preserved as development proceeds and landowners are able to sell valuable parcels.

The Initiative Foundation of Little Falls awarded and SJU funded the Arboretum \$10,000 to work with the AHI to further the goals of preserving the rural character of the land, protecting natural areas, and promoting economic productivity.



Photo by Cassie Herbst

A female common whitetail dragonfly rests near Lake Sagatagan

## Membership News

Our work could not continue to be successful without the generous financial and volunteer support we receive each year from our members. Thank you again to all of our members who generously donate their time and energy to the Saint John's Arboretum.

- Total Members (households) in FY 2007—460
- Total Members (households) in FY 2006—434
- Total Members (households) in FY 2005—276
- Total Members (households) in FY 2004—220

### Saint John's Arboretum Staff

- Thomas Kroll, *Arboretum Director/Land Manager*
- Sarah Gainey, *Assistant Director/Environmental Education Coordinator*
- Rachel Peterson, *Writer/Office Coordinator Fellow*
- Cassie Herbst, *Environmental Education Fellow*
- 8 CSB/SJU Student Naturalists/Land Laborers
- 15 CSB/SJU Student Naturalist Aides
- 3 CSB/SJU Student Interns



Photo by Arboretum Staff

The sun sets over Wimmer pond

### Highlights in FY 2007

- Received \$10,000 from the Initiative Foundation for the Avon Hills Initiative
- Increased connection to CSB/SJU with the establishment of our first Environmental Education fellowship
- Received outside grant writing assistance which enabled an increased amount of grant applications

We would like to extend sincerest thanks to all of our donors. Your contributions allow us to continue our work and allow for growth of our programs. We would also like to thank our special partners, Saint John's Abbey, Saint John's University, and the College of Saint Benedict for all of their work and continued support of Saint John's Arboretum.

### Goals for FY 2008 and Beyond

- Further incorporation into the Environmental Studies Department
- Assessing staff workloads to ensure highest quality work in highest need areas
- Formal evaluations of programming to ensure goals of our EE programs are being met
- Complete 5 year recertification of forest management to forest stewardship land standards