

SAINT JOHN'S  
**Arboretum**

**2008 Annual Report**  
**July 1, 2007 — June 30, 2008**



Photographs by Arboretum Staff

**Our Mission**

- **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**

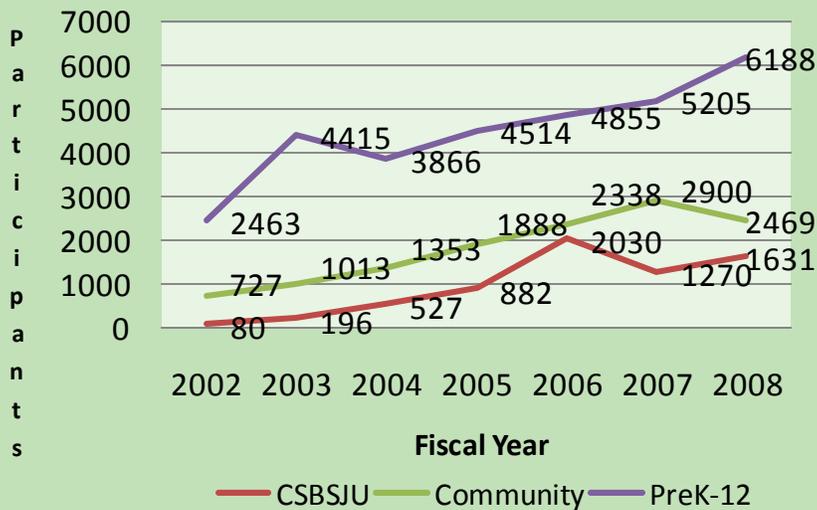
**Our Vision**

**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:

- K-6 graders from Lincoln Elementary in St. Cloud participated in three field trips to the Arboretum this year. In the fall, each grade level studied an environmental education topic such as insects or MN biomes. In the winter, each grade chose between winter animal signs or maple syruping. On the third trip, the students completed a service learning activity relating to what they learned in the fall (i.e. planting prairie plants to attract insects).
- Arboretum student staff organized monthly showings of episodes of the award winning BBC *Planet Earth* series. The nature documentary offers a 'definitive look at the diversity of our planet' and each showing was followed up by a discussion led by a CSB/SJU professor.
- The annual Maple Syrup Festivals drew in the largest combined attendance ever! Over 900 people attended the two days of festivals and enjoyed tapping demonstrations, sugar shack tours, and (of course) ice cream with hot maple syrup!
- To accommodate the growing interest in the maple syrup operation, the sugar shack was expanded to more than double its size. Special thanks to Walter Kieffer, OSB, Bill Mock, Steve Saupe and all the others who helped with the expansion.



## Advisory Council

### General Members

Terri Barreiro  
 Alison Binsfeld  
 Mike Brown  
 Scott Daninger  
 Bruce Dickau  
 Kari Dombrovski  
 Tom Haeg  
 Greg Miller, OSB  
 Janette Monear  
 Bob Russell  
 Stephen Saupe  
 Larry Schwietz  
 Jim Tingerthal, OSB  
 Tom Wicks  
 Chuck Wocken  
 Bruce Wollmering, O.S.B.

### Student Members

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

Photograph by Rachel Peterson



Young tree-planters at the Arboretum.

# Land Stewardship and Conservation in FY 2008

The Arboretum promotes conservation and stewardship within the community through educational programming and modeling sustainable practices. Some of our annual habitat restoration efforts include sustainable logging, tree planting, prairie burns, invasive species management, and a controlled deer hunt for population control.

## In the Prairie

The new 12-acre High Gemini prairie was established on farm land bought in 2003. 7 species of grass and 44 different forbs were seeded. The land is on a high hill overlooking W. Gemini Lake and Flynttown.

Students and staff burned 2 prairie units including an adjacent neighbor's.

We persist in the battle against **invasive species**. Burns through small wooded units help control European buckthorn, and staff and volunteers dig, pull, and spray other invasive plants including spotted knapweed, wormwood, and curldock.

Photograph by Cassie Herbst

## Timber Harvest

**Pulp & firewood: 163 cords**  
(6,023 ft<sup>3</sup>)

**Saw logs: 34,000 board ft.**  
(14,975 ft<sup>3</sup>)

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

**Percent of max. allowable harvest completed: 39%**

Saint John's forests were recertified by the Forest Stewardship Council as "well-managed" following a comprehensive review required every 5 yrs.

*All certification information can be found on the Arboretum web site.*

We continue to **upgrade trails**, including sections of the Pine Knob and Chapel trails.

Photograph by Cassie Herbst



## Tree Planting

6520 red and white oaks

1000 white and Norway pines

3500 black and white spruce

1000 tamaracks

200 future Christmas trees

Photograph by Tony Peroutky



## Special Funding in FY 2008

Funding Source	Balance 7-01-07	Additions	Expenses	Balance 6-30-08	Purpose
Individual Memberships/Special Gifts	\$0	\$21,492	(\$21,492)	\$0	Arboretum general expenses
Environmental Ed Program & Events	\$22,520	\$30,825	(\$29,161)	\$24,184	PreK-12, CSB/SJU, Community education
Xcel Energy Foundation grants	\$0	\$15,000	(\$0)	\$15,000	Bussing for preK-12 students
Laird Norton Foundation grants	\$2,428	\$0	(\$1,335)	\$1,093	Avon Hills Initiative
Initiative Foundation	\$5,000 (+\$5,000 SJU match)	\$5,000	(\$4,232)	\$10,768	Avon Hills Initiative
Environmental Education Endowment in memory of Father Paul Schwietz	\$46,047	(\$664)	(\$1,044) interest only	\$44,339	K-12, Community and CSB/SJU environmental educ.
L&M Schwietz Abbey Endowment	\$199,695	\$5,200	(\$10,012)	\$194,883	Abbey-related land stewardship activities and environmental educ.
Charles Edison Fund	\$0	\$10,000	(\$0)	\$10,000	Activates 7-1-08 for EE fellows
Bailey Foundation	\$0	\$5,000	(\$0)	\$5,000	Activates 7-1-08 for bussing preK-12 students
SuperValu Foundation	\$0	\$3,600	(\$0)	\$3,600	Activates 7-1-08 for bussing preK-12 students
Legislative Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR)	\$0	\$337,000	(\$0)	\$337,000	Activates 7-1-08 for work with the Avon Hills Initiative
Central MN Community Foundation	\$3143	(\$236)	(\$0)	\$2907	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, Collegetown, 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 year:

- The Arboretum was awarded \$337,000 from the Legislative Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) to continue education and outreach on conservation issues in the Avon Hills.
- The AHI helped craft and support a new forestland tax classification that was co-authored by Reps. Larry Hosch and Larry Haws and written into law this year.
- The Avon Hills Conservation Area is a new category in the Stearns Co. Comprehensive Plan. The new category recognizes the Avon Hills area as a “priority for natural resource protection, as well as its high amenity value for very low-density residential use.”



Photography by Emily Franklin

Schmid Lake in Avon Township.



Photography by Cathy Heyne

Students participate in the MN Master Naturalist class on the prairie.

## 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 2008—620

Total Members (households) in FY 2007—460

Total Members (households) in FY 2006—434

Total Members (households) in FY 2005—276

### Saint John's Arboretum Staff

Thomas Kroll, *Arboretum Director/Land Manager*

Sarah Gainey, *Assistant Director/Environmental Education Coordinator*

Jenny Kutter, *Department Coordinator*

Cassie Herbst, *Environmental Education Fellow*

Jenni Polisenio, *Environmental Education Fellow*

7 CSB/SJU Student Naturalists/Land Laborers

18 CSB/SJU Student Naturalist Aides

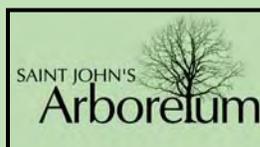
### Highlights in FY 2008

- A successful year of fundraising, receiving several grants and increased membership.
- The expansion to the sugar shack will make syrup season in FY09 sweeter than ever.
- Completion of the new High Gemini prairie restoration.
- Hiring a full-time department coordinator jointly with the Environmental Studies department.

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 2009 and Beyond

- Continue to assess our EE programming and begin our “Drive to Quality” campaign.
- Acquire a donated truck and tractor to replace old equipment.
- Build a new hiking/biking trail connecting Saint John's campus to County Rd. 51.



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