



2005 Annual Report July 1, 2004 — June 30, 2005



Photograph by Grace Brogan

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 continues its commitment to provide opportunities for environmental education to all students of nature. This year's highlights include:

- Continued growth of our preK-12 environmental education program through partnerships with **five new schools**
- Created **new on-site curriculum** as well as pre and post-visit resources for kindergarten and first grade
- Co-sponsored the first ever Avon Hills Initiative Conference, **"Shaping the Future of the Avon Hills"**, which educated 145 community members on topics from conservation easements to nature writing
- Brought together over **300 members, students, friends, and neighbors** during the 2005 Maple Syrup Festivals in February and March.
- Incorporated a **Bees and Pollination** series which included an indoor lecture, outdoor prairie field visit, and bee-hive installation session this past spring.
- Continued to foster our relationship with CSB/SJU, **increasing student and faculty utilization** of the Saint John's Arboretum for the third year in a row
- Employed **20 student workers and 4 interns** who worked as naturalists, naturalist aides, writers, web editors, and provided office support



Environmental Education Coordinator, Sarah Gainey (center) with two CSB/SJU students on the floating boardwalk.

Photograph by Michael Crouser

Student Participation at Saint John's Arboretum

Grades K-8

Fiscal Year 2005: 4,387 participants
Fiscal Year 2004: 3,525 participants
Fiscal Year 2003: 4,135 participants

Grades 9-12

Fiscal Year 2005: 127 participants
Fiscal Year 2004: 341 participants
Fiscal Year 2003: 280 participants

CSB/SJU (Classes, Special Projects)

Fiscal Year 2005: 882 participants
Fiscal Year 2004: 527 participants
Fiscal Year 2003: 196 participants

Community (workshops, seminars)

Fiscal Year 2005: 1,888 participants
Fiscal Year 2004: 1,353 participants
Fiscal Year 2003: 1,013 participants



A load in the wagon, Maple Syrup Festival, 2005

Photograph by Michael Brogan

Special Funding in FY '05

Funding Source	Funding Used in FY '05	Funding Balance on 6/30/05	Purpose
Individual Memberships/Special Gifts	\$16,550	\$0	Arboretum general expenses
Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund through the MN DNR	\$4,500	\$0	Busing for K-12 students
Xcel Energy Foundation	\$2,500	\$0	Busing for K-12 students
Laird Norton Foundation	\$1,304	\$0	Avon Hills Initiative
Environmental Education Endowment in memory of Father Paul Schwietz	\$0	\$26,275	K-12, Community and CSB/SJU environmental education
L&M Schwietz Abbey Endowment	\$0	\$159,784	Abbey related land stewardship activities and environmental education
Central Minnesota Community Foundation	\$0	\$2,473	Environmental education

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 and Saint John's University, for all of their work and continued support of the Saint John's Arboretum.

Benedictine Stewardship and Conservation

Environmental stewardship and conservation are at the heart of our mission. Designated a natural arboretum in 1997, we seek to restore and preserve Central Minnesota's increasingly rare native habitats.

Ongoing stewardship activities include habitat restoration efforts such as sustainable logging, tree planting, prairie burns during the spring and fall, and a controlled deer hunt for population control.

We are also actively involved in the management of invasive species such as European Buckthorn and Absinth Wormwood which out-compete native plants and degrade native habitats.



Photograph by Emily Franklin

CSB/SJU student volunteers work diligently on the prairie garden

FY 2005 Planting

Red oak—3,000	Norway Pine—1,000
White pine—1,500	White Spruce—500

FY 2005 Timber Harvest

Cords harvested (pulp, bolts and firewood): **139**
 Saw logs harvested: **31,000 board feet**
 Total value of harvest: **\$25,268**
 Percent of allowable harvest completed: **34%**

In order to retain our green certification under guidelines set by the Forest Stewardship Council, we must harvest our timber sustainably, which means not harvesting more than 100% of our harvestable trees. The harvest this year focused on improving the overall health of the forest. An emphasis was placed on assuring older oaks will withstand defoliation when gypsy moths arrive in 5-15 years.



Photograph by Arboretum staff

Brilliant fall colors at Saint John's Arboretum

Arboretum Advisory Council

General Members

Terri Barreiro
 Alison Binsfeld
 Mike Brown
 Kari Dombrowski
 Bob Ellenbecker
 Tom Haeg
 David Hartwell
 John Kulas, O.S.B.
 Stephanie O'Keefe
 Scott May
 Janette Monear
 Stephen Saupe
 Larry Schwietz
 Tom Wicks

Ron Wienhold
 Chuck Wocken
 Bruce Wollmering,
 O.S.B.

Student Members

CSB Representative-
 Abby Johnstone
 SJU Representative-To
 be announced

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



Photograph by Christopher Brenny

A busy pollinator on a flowering common milkweed plant.

Avon Hills Initiative

In 2003, Saint John's Abbey and University forged partnerships with the Nature Conservancy, local landowners, and community members to begin discussing ever increasing land development pressures in the area and to determine if support existed to preserve the natural and cultural histories of the land.

Since May 2004, the group now known as 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.

In March 2005, AHI held its first ever conference, "Shaping the Future of the Avon Hills", which targeted landowners and residents of the four townships. The day long conference was broken into four sessions in which attendees could choose from a wide range of topics. AHI is planning another, smaller session for spring of 2006 focusing on environmental/conservation overlay districts.

AHI continues to initiate meaningful dialogue between stakeholders relative to land development pressures, in order to preserve the rich cultural history and natural beauty of the land for generations to come.

For more information visit:

<http://www.csbsju.edu/arboretum/avonhills>



Photograph by Emily Franklin

Summer on Schmid Lake in Collegeville Township, June 2005

Membership News

Our work could not continue to be successful without the generous financial and volunteer support we receive each year from our members. We strive to improve our programming in the next fiscal year by lightly surveying our members in order to learn how to better accommodate their needs and interests. 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 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*

Emily Franklin, *Writer/Office Coordinator Fellow*
8 CSB/SJU Student Naturalists/Land Laborers
15 CSB/SJU Student Aides

Accomplishments in FY 2005

- Establishing the Environmental Education Endowment in memory of Father Paul Schwietz and **reaching our initial goal of \$25,000** to support continued programming efforts in environmental education
- **Expanding our staff** by adding a full-time fellowship position. This enabled us to hire Emily Franklin (CSB '04) as our first full-time writer/office coordinator
- Completion of the **Strategic Plan for 2005-2010** which outlines new goals and steps to complete these goals
- Expanding **opportunities for CSB/SJU students** including student naturalists, student naturalist aides, student interns, and volunteers

Challenges for FY 2006 and Beyond

- As our programs grow, our **staff needs** to continue to expand as well. Securing an additional full-time environmental educator is highly desired in order to better serve our growing audiences
- Continued control and **management of invasive species** such as absinth wormwood and European buckthorn
- Development of **additional curriculum** for our older student audiences including grades 7-12.



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