

Dickinson County Conservation Board

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OKOBOJI---“The Dickinson County Conservation Board has done it again.

“They have taken a major recreation step in the Iowa Great Lakes, not unlike the creation a number of years ago of a winter recreation park called Horseshoe Bend, southwest of Milford.

“This time, they have all the bases covered, with the new park providing spring, summer and fall recreation for young and old alike. And like Horseshoe Bend, the park is unique to northwest Iowa.”

This was the introduction to an Okoboian article dated May 26, 1988, regarding the opening of Kenue Park.

“Kenue Park, derived from an Indian name for War Eagle, is comprised of 40 acres of giant oaks and native grasses. It was previously used as pasture land for the County Care Facility Farm. When the farm ceased operation, the Dickinson County Conservation Board received a management agreement from the County Board of Supervisors and began construction of a park on the tract,” the article continued.

It has been 28 years since Kenue Park opened, and the park today is even more unique than it was back then.

The 70-acre park, located at 2279 170th St., Okoboji, includes three different native Iowa habitats --- a restored tallgrass prairie, a wetland and an oak savanna --- with plenty to see and do.

Take a walk along mowed trails encompassed by big bluestem, compass plant and pale purple coneflowers. While you’re there, pull out your GPS-enabled smartphone and try to find the four Ranger Rick geocaches hidden amidst natural surroundings.

Continue past the 55-foot telephone pole that is topped with a large box, where osprey make their home April-September. From the observation tower on the other side of the wetland, you can get a good look at the entire east side of the park, including the two rehabilitated trumpeter swans swimming in the wetland. For an even closer look at those majestic birds, you can also take the trail right down amidst the reeds to a floating dock.

In the summer, Pollinator Paradise is open with its exhibits on butterflies, bees and plantings. Explore the gardens outside to see native plants in bloom and get an idea about which ones would work in your own yard.

In 2016, the Dickinson County Conservation Board will be working on the nature playscape located just west of the nature center in Kenue Park. This outdoor playground features stumps and logs for climbing, an underground tunnel and a teepee, with even more fun to be added.

Just past Pollinator Paradise is the glacial kame, a hill made of sediment left behind when the glaciers receded in the area. At the top, take in the scenic view of Kenue Park, Brooks National Golf Club and the Okoboji Gold Disc Golf Course. The 18-hole professional level disc golf course has both amateur- and professional-level tees and is open to the public year round.

If you're looking for a place to bring a picnic lunch, take a seat at the picnic tables at the west end of Kenue Park and then relax in the porch swing overlooking the area.

Mid-June through August, don't forget to visit the Westport Schoolhouse and take a step back in time to see what life was like for students in one-room country schools.

Whenever you have the urge to get outside and just enjoy nature, Kenue Park is the perfect place to spend your time walking, watching wildlife and soaking in the beauty of the world around you.

With eight parks and even more public areas, the Dickinson County Conservation Board has a variety of gems for the public to explore to help foster an appreciation of the natural world. Learn about each of these parks at www.dickinsoncountynaturecenter.com and see a new series of Youtube videos on each park, coming out periodically in 2016. Check out the Kenue Park video on the DCCBnaturecenter Youtube channel.

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