



NATURISTE NOTES



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Affiliated with the
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What's Happened Lately?

The coldest months of the year, January and February, saw many visitors at Drakes Ridge. Although there weren't any events scheduled, we still got together, played games, socialized, and ate many good meals together, while keeping warm in the clubhouse. We did get out a lot to work on the grounds, and enjoy peeks of warm sunshine when they did come. The first weekend of March was our Season Launch Rocket Party, we did launch our spring season, but our Rocket Party was postponed, due to snow, until summer season opening on May 11th. For Spring Equinox we honored our founder, Ellyn, with an afternoon meal and a celebration with fresh chocolate chip cookies, even though she couldn't join us in her spring tradition here at Drakes Ridge. We all gathered again in March for March Madness and enjoyed game food and game snacks, although there weren't any games on that anyone was interested in, we still enjoyed getting together with good food, and good friends.



What's Happening Next?

Drakes Ridge currently has open check-in hours on weekends only until summer season opening on May 11th, open weekdays by appointment only (and to full members) until then.

April 12th - 14th- Spring Fling Weekend

Mad Hatters Tea Party

Nature Hike/Spring Trail Maintenance

April 27th- Hot Tub Install Party Weekend

May 10th-12th- Summer Season Launch Rocket Party

May 17th-19th- Newcomers Weekend

You Deserve a Thank You!

A special thank you goes out to all the contributors to our Spring Grounds Project Fundraiser. It is a special opportunity to take ownership in our retreat, and many of us are taking advantage of that opportunity. This project was not a real exciting one, but is very much needed and will facilitate growth in the immediate future. You all will be reaping the rewards from your contribution for years to come.

Gold Star Contributors

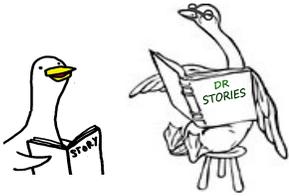
Bob and Dencil	David and Sheila
Karin	Larry and Alice
John and Debbie	John R.
Rob	Norm
John V.	Joe and Sherry
Mark and Sherrie	Doug S.
Dan W.	Mike A.
Wren and Dorcas	David J.
Sheila	
Anonymous Building Fund Can Donations	
Logging Proceeds	

Then there is all the hard labor put in to make Drakes Ridge the best Midwestern nudist retreat. Bob and Dencil are always working on something at their place. Dencil is networking in Louisville, entered the online list of events, planned Newcomers Weekend, burned brush, and helped with tree felling and clean up. Bob, has been helping a few site holders improve their sites, has helped with clubhouse clean up, help build the wood shed, helped a lot with tree felling, clean up, and splitting. Karin has been dubbed Mother Drake and always makes sure we eat regularly and very well. She also keeps the clubhouse and restroom clean for us, and also has helped with brush clean up and log splitting. Dirk and Debbie have also helped a lot with the tree work, splitting and stacking firewood especially. They have also, loaned us their log splitter, brought us a new wheelbarrow, and a few repair parts.

Debbie and John have been planning their cabin renovation. John has helped pick up a lot of brush and wood, and helped build the new wood shed. Debbie has cooked us a lot of food, brought a lot of kitchen necessities, and helped with event planning. Sheila has raked up her site, helped with brush clean up and event planning. Steve S. helped with brush clean up. Larry and Alice have been working hard on their new cabin, making a very cozy home away from home. Larry also helped with tree felling and stump grinding. Norm donated a tablet for check in, hauled firewood, towed the 12-1/2 ton lift, and has been working hard on his cabin renovation. Sherrie has been helping with the help party dinners, event planning and brought some prizes.

Mark has burned a lot of brush, has insulated his cabin, and brought a lot of food and treats. Mark also always makes sure we have a warm campfire after the sun goes down. Joe and Sherry also have been working hard on their cabin renovation. Sherry has helped with cooking and kitchen cleanup. David cut down five of the biggest trees with the rented lift. He also trimmed a couple and helped clean up the mess. Jaci has helped with event planning. Sharon has been working on the calendars, event posters and recovering documents that we lost in a computer crash. Wren helped with cleaning up brush and building the new tool shed. David J. also helped with brush and wood clean up. Thank you all, and anyone not mentioned, for getting your hands dirty down at The Ridge, it's what helps make it a special place.

Special Stories



The Cabbage Patch Nudist!

I was nine years old when World War II ended, 10 years later I was a soldier in Germany. Wurzburg, where I was stationed was still rebuilding, many buildings stood without roofs and windows, the outside walls pockmarked with bullet holes and shrapnel damage. The surrounding area however were beautiful hillsides covered with vineyards. The Main River (pronounced mine) flowed through the city and Marianburg Castle watched over it all from a High Ridge.

The following year, May 1956, I experienced my first social nudist encounter at a family-type camp near the French Spanish border while on leave. Soon after returning to the Army routine I was dining alone in a crowded Gasthaus downtown enjoying bratwurst, sauerkraut, spicy mustard, and a glass of the local Wurzburger beer when two couples came in looking for a table. I invited them to join me, which they did. That was the start of a lot of sign language and Americanized German on my part and much butchered English by my new friends. However, we managed very well and had many laughs along the way.

One couple was in their late twenties and the other nearly 40. The older couple were farmers near a tiny village some miles from Wurzburg, the younger couple were their neighbors. The young man was a laborer on the farm and the young girl was trying to finish her schooling and attain a degree. They were interested in me, there wasn't much to tell them since I entered the Army just after graduating high school, but I did relate to them my nudist adventure in May. This interested them and they revealed the existence of a nudist group that all four of them belonged to. The club or group held their meetings at the older couples Farm which was, for the most part, isolated from eyes that might not approve. Their barn and barn loft was used for meetings, shelter, and wet weather, overnight camping. They invited me to visit and they hinted that there were a few members my age and that I only needed to contribute a Mark or two at each visit, or bring food, or usable items. Things were cheap, for example, I could take a girl on a date with a dinner and a drink, take in a movie with a treat during the movie, and have a couple drinks at a Gasthaus before taking her home, and the total expenses would be around four Marks or \$1.

On my first visit I took a large wedge of cheese, a box of saltine crackers, 3 quarts of beer, and a small bottle of schnapps. I hopped on my bicycle and pedaled my way to a wonderful experience. A tree-lined lane led up to the house, then around to a huge barn that was not visible from the main road. The farm land itself was acres and acres of cabbage! There were huge heads of cabbage that were destined for a kraut processing business later in the fall. Nude folks of all ages were having a go on the scaled-down soccer field. The farmer's wife took my sack of goodies to a table in the barn, the barn was fresh-smelling, and no animals had lived in it for many years. In the loft you could see where people had marked off their territory with belongings and mattresses. On the ground floor the graineries and stalls showed signs of being campsites, some with pictures on the walls and some with bookshelves.

Continued,

There were washer pitches, a bow and arrow range, with stuffed straw targets, no swimming or fishing lake, but there was a communal shower with a raised platform for quick drainage. I was introduced to a young lady with raven black hair. I later invited her to accompany me on the hayride planned for that night. We also enjoyed the bonfire that night, roasting bratwurst and other types of sausages that I had no idea of their contents, however, they were tasty. There were lovely pastries, cobblers, and breads. I even sampled a tangy blood pudding spread on a homemade bread, it was quite good, but I wasn't ready for a steady diet of it and returned to the sausages! :-). The hayride was quite nice, buried in the straw with the girl, both of us young and happy, listening to the others singing, and the occasional moo's from the two large milk cows used to pull the wagon. The ravages of the war were visible on some of the people, shrapnel and bullet wounds, and burns as well, one man was missing an arm, I was told later that he had been a Searchlight operator and a bomb had exploded close by. However, there was no talk of war; everyone was there to enjoy their lifestyle, which was nudism.

There were nearly 40 nudists there that weekend and over the years I was in Germany I visited dozens of times. I even joined in the fall cabbage harvest, I helped cut and load the beautiful heads onto wagons, ox carts, trailers behind old tractors, and onto a few trucks. The harvest went well, with the ladies preparing lovely meals, most of the ladies worked in the fields as well. Nudists and non nudists alike joined together in the harvest celebration where everyone wore clothes. There was dancing, music, and a local band played during the festivities. They played a special song for me! "Back Home Again in Indiana"!

This all happened over 60 years ago, nudism was alive and well near a little village in rural Germany where cabbage was king! The scars of war were everywhere, but these people had survived, and wanted to be free of the past, free to enjoy life, and as much as possible, to be free of clothes! Nothing is more natural than a group of people of the same persuasion gathering together and enjoying their lifestyle, especially if they're nudists.

By longtime Drakes Ridge member Jim K.

The special stories section is a section for friends and members of Drakes Ridge to share their stories. Please email submissions to info@drakesridge.com.

Membership and Attendance Report

This time last year we thought we were going to have a record breaking 2018 summer season, we were right, and we are thinking the same way this year. We have already started off with record setting winter attendance in 2019. We have had 10 to 20 visitors almost every weekend so far, with a few new guests checking us out. We even signed up a new member, say thank you to David J. He has been a guest for ten years, inspired by the recent growth, he decided to become a full member in hopes of attending more often this year. Never before have we taken reservations this early for the summer season, we now have five Cabin/RV reservations for this summer, including a couple from England renting a cabin for a week. We have been flirting with the 80 member mark for almost a year now, it looks like we may get over that number this year.

Grounds and Facilities Report



It has been a very productive winter for grounds work, thanks to many helping hands. It took us three years to reclaim tool town, but with our increased attendance, we are about to finish one of the biggest of our repair projects, the Spring Grounds Project, in just a few months. We have taken down well over a hundred trees, including renting a lift and having David take down the largest, and most dangerous trees. We ground 21 stumps, many of us have split and stacked firewood, we all have piled brush, the first section of the woodshed is ready, and we have started selling cedar logs. Next is some final chain sawing and clean up, filling the woodshed, building more wood shed sections, and the back hoe will be arriving 4/17 for a full seven days of brush and debris removal, earthmoving, and spreading the gravel base, which will be a great time to have extra hands on site. We have enough building funds to get us that far, but we need contributions to fix the driveways and lay a lot of finish gravel. We have now raised \$3299 of the \$6300 needed. We have had 24 contributors so far, if just 76 more of us can contribute just \$40 we can buy the gravel we need. We just have two weeks left of this fundraising campaign and our Springs Grounds Project.

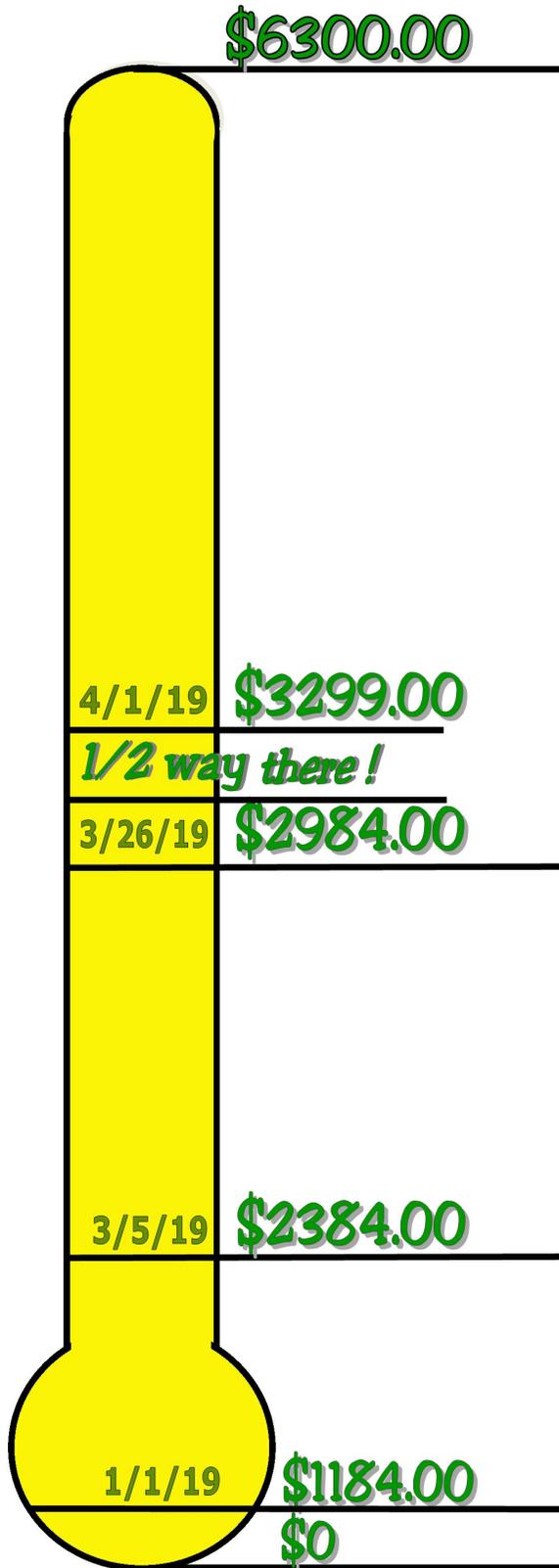
So, please contribute to our Spring Grounds Project Fund with \$40 -\$175. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated, will go a long way, and we'll see and feel the impact all summer long, and for years to come. Support Drakes Ridge whichever way is easier for you, mail a check to 9641 Drakes Ridge Road, Bennington, IN 47011, go to drakesridge.com/help-us-grow, call 812-427-3914 with your card number, bring cash, or gift your change jars. This is how Drakes Ridge grows while keeping fees low, and it's more fun and engaging, so thank you for your gifts and contributions.

Short Term Projects

- Help site holders
- Take trash to dump
- Repair bridge
- Skirt pool deck
- Install hot tub
- Organize clubhouse storage
- Update site signs
- Change out spigots
- Rebuild volleyball fence
- Build entrance arch
- Upgrade outdoor lighting

Medium Range Large Projects

- Build remote bathrooms
- Remodel bath house
- Remodel clubhouse
- Remodel smokehouse
- Add rental units and RV sites
- Upgrade Drake Lake
- Upgrade sport court
- Upgrade pool



GOAL

Fundraiser FOR BUILDING FUND

SPRING GROUNDS PROJECT

March Plans

- take down a few remaining large dead trees
- remove all brush and stumps
- prepare for logging cedar trees from the sunning area
- build about 5 new parking spaces
- complete two new RV spots
- lay gravel on driveways
- build firewood storage
- cut, split, and store firewood

Fundraiser Donations

- \$40 per person = minimum accomplished
- \$175 per person = many *additional* projects

Examples:

- * widening the entrance
- * building a clubhouse retaining wall
- * clearing new RV spots
- * expanding the lake
- * sunning area logging
- * smokehouse relocation and renovation
- * dry well creation
- * more gravel!

Make Note

- 6 Saturday Help Parties/Free Dinners on Spring calendar
- Couple of weeks w/rental equipment on site

This will be your chance to come out and put your name on one, or more, of the projects we'll be doing to help make Drakes Ridge the best nudist retreat ever!

Rollover from 2018 Bldg. Fund

START



Office Report

We made it through tax season with no tax bill, and all shareholders should have received their tax forms. The office projects have been put on hold while we have been working on the grounds project, but there are always plenty of opportunities to help in the office, and some projects will get more attention once we get through the grounds project.

Office To Do List

- Update website
- Promote, promote, promote
- Streamline customer service and membership
- Build DR museum (starting with photos)
- Plan events
- Organize computer files
- Make map and plan grounds
- Procure prizes and DR merchandise
- Complete event calendar

Contributor Reports

Many of us are getting excited about how Drakes Ridge is growing and are making plans to help. Kirk is waiting for the weather to break to get back to staining his cabin, and he is on-call to help with tree removal. Joe and Sherry, Sherrie, Mark, Bennett, Jeff, Bob and Dencil, Norm, Ron, and John and Debbie, all have to plans to make updates to their cabins. Larry and Alice have spent a couple nights in their new cabin, but still have some work to do. Dirk and Debbie also hope to be building a cabin this year. Dirk has left his log splitter to help with firewood. Charlie has offered trailering service for our equipment rental. Debbie will be bringing a laptop for the office. Dencil is planning on working on our POS system. Sharon will be helping get the 2019 calendar completed. Norm is planning the bridges for the trail for easier trail maintenance, and for easier hiking. Is there anything you are planning to do for Drakes Ridge that we can list here? Please go to drakesridge.com/help-us-grow to help the building fund for Drakes Ridge, or mail a check to the office. All your volunteer efforts and building funds contributions are very much appreciated.

President's Report



I had to put on a different hat this past winter, a hard hat I should say, to solve one of the biggest needs we had here at Drakes Ridge, some major reforestation. Honestly, I was trying to ignore it, because I knew it was going to take a lot of resources that we didn't have yet, and I have plenty of other projects I want to do. Some of the large dead ash trees would not be ignored though, so I started getting quotes on felling trees, it was expensive. I decided to determine what it would take to carry out the reforestation ourselves, and went to You Tube University for Tree Removal Training. Then there was the equipment needs. Charlie and Dirk happened to each donate neglected chainsaws right on time, which were tuned up, retooled, and have cut a lot of wood for us. The club did purchase a pole chainsaw which has also been put to good use. We also rented a 60 foot boom lift, thankfully David showed up the same day the lift arrived and used his professional experience to meticulously drop the biggest trees. Norm has been using his ATV and trailer, Dirk has been using his splitter, and many others have been using their hands, to help split and stack firewood, and pile and burn brush. Bob, Wren, and John helped build the new wood shed, which is ready to start filling up with firewood. A road was built to access a new place to dump tree brush and debris, which will also serve as screening from the road. We also rented a stump grinder and ground 21 stumps into saw dust.

So, we managed to remove a couple of hundred trees, including the costliest ones for about half the cost of having about four or five large trees only dropped. We also sold some cedar trees that were in the way, and are now set up to log more cedar trees from our new sunning area and future expansion areas, without hiring out the work. We are also all set up to fell, clean up, split and store the approximately 30 dead ash trees that are still out there in our future expansion areas. Now, I am really looking forward to putting on a different hat, again, I should say hard hat. I have a backhoe arriving on April 17th for a week of earthmoving, gravel spreading, and brush cleaning, come on out and join the fun. Drakes Ridge is really going to be looking good in a couple weeks, just in time for the sunny nude summer season.

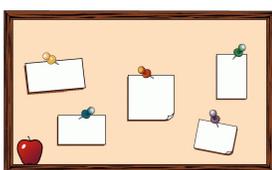
Weather and Nature Report

It never dried out here at camp in the summer of 2018, and has been very wet here since then, but now that warm weather is here, it has actually started to dry out around here. We have been focusing our grounds work on the camp area, but our trails need attention after the wet winter. We have a Nature Hike and a Trailkeepers Meeting on the schedule so we can all go together, which is much more fun, and work together to clear the trails and start building the trail bridges.

All the birds are happy spring is here and have been singing to let us know. We have heard owls, pileated woodpeckers, geese, hawks, turkeys, doves, and many other birds signaling that spring is here. Either that or, they have been yelling at us for cutting down so many trees.

Real Estate Report

We recently added another permanent site holder, and are now up to 26 permanent site holders, with room for more, right now. Larry and Alice had a pre-built cabin delivered, have built a deck, and started painting. Mike's cabin is now owned by the club, but the club is in the middle of negotiations to move Jeffrey in. Jeffrey is Mike's son. There is one club owned cabin for sale, lease, or rent. Paige and Betty's cabin at site #45 is the only member owned cabin currently for sale. There was a second 30 amp RV rental site added and we will be working on improving other RV sites and building another rental cabin soon.



Bulletin Board

There is a correction to be made for the January Newsletter. Joe was the winner of the 2018 Chili Cook-off.

Please contribute to the building fund, in the office or at drakesridge.com/help-us-grow. Funds will be going to the current Spring Grounds Project. The more donations we get, the faster we can get things done. Thank you in advance for all your contributions.

The Bulletin, AANR's monthly magazine, which members receive through their AANR membership, is always looking for articles to publish. If you have the writing bug, write a story about nudism and get it published, so it can be shared with the rest of the nudist world. See the ad in most any Bulletin for more information.



Upcoming Local Community Events

Hoosier Theater Film Series- Saturday, April 13th, at the Historic Hoosier Theater in Vevay Indiana-

The acclaimed Christian drama, *Can Only Imagine*, will be shown on the big screen at 7 p.m., tickets are \$3. Call 1-800-HELLO-VV for information.