

Historic Hoosier Hills

RESOURCE, CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT, INC.

Newsletter

Phone 812-689-6410 ext. 5 www.hhhills.org Fax 812-689-3398



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An Inn Finally Possible at Versailles State Park

After fifteen years of effort, the Inn Project Committee of Historic Hoosier Hills has finally seen its work bear fruit. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of State Parks was given approval by the Natural Resources Commission to release and advertise a prospectus seeking private developers who would bid on building and operating an inn at Versailles State Park. The ad is running in seven southern Indiana newspapers three times in the month of August, with a closing date for bids of November 5, 2001.

The request for proposals calls for a 100-room facility with meeting rooms for 250 and 3 – 5 smaller breakout rooms. It also specifies a 150 seat dining room. The request indicates that consideration will be given to proposals with state-of-the-art telecommunications capabilities in the rooms and conference facilities. At a minimum, this includes a fax-modem line in each room and a two-way audio/video teleconferencing capability in the conference facilities.

With the great growth in the tourism industry in southeastern Indiana in recent years, the inn is badly needed. The region is still short on motel rooms, especially in the central part, although new motels and the resorts connected with the three riverboats have helped. For southeastern Indiana to be a tourist destination where we can keep visitors for longer stays, there has to be adequate motel and hotel accommodations.

This project started with an idea that one person – Ruth Rowland – presented to the Tourism and Recreation Promotion Council of Historic Hoosier Hills back in 1986. The Tourism Council was looking at ways of increasing tourism visits by attracting motor coach business. The groups identified the need for more motel rooms, and Ruth suggested DNR be approached to see if they would build an inn at Versailles. She was appointed to chair a subcommittee to talk to DNR, and so it started.

Over the years the committee has grown and changed members, but it has stayed committed to its goal of getting an inn at the park. Current committee members are: Ruth Rowland; Marianne Wiggers with Southeastern Indiana REMC; Randy Haymaker with Hoosier Energy; Ripley County Commissioners John Little and Chuck Folz; and Historic Hoosier Hills Coordinator Gary Conant. Past members who were very active were Leroy Corya, former General Manager of Southeastern Indiana Rural Telephone Co-operative, and Richard Heupel with Hoosier Energy. A very active key supporter of the committee is State Representative Cleo Duncan who has been involved with the project as long as she has been a

state representative. She has made contacts and set up meetings at Indianapolis which have resulted in getting the effort to this point.

The next big hurdle will be to see how many proposals are submitted, so DNR can contract with a developer to get the project underway.

Red Wolf Sanctuary Has Two New Employees



Thanks to a grant from the Dearborn County Convention Visitor and Tourism Bureau, two new employees have been hired to help Paul Strasser operate and grow Red Wolf Sanctuary.

Angela Foreman has been hired to help full time, and according to Paul, the two of them have already completed three sides of a new wolf pen in the first week Angela has been on board. Mistie Lippert was also hired recently as a part-time employee – both live in the Friendship area and have extensive previous experience volunteering at Red Wolf. Mistie is currently a senior at Northern Kentucky University majoring in biology. The two staffers work

under Paul's direct supervision while Historic Hoosier Hills handles payroll and administrative responsibility for the employees.

The positions were created to provide much-needed help on a daily basis to help Paul care for the dozens of animals he has and also to help with construction of new fencing and cages. Once the fencing is complete, Red Wolf can qualify for federal permits that are needed to keep certain endangered species and allow Paul to charge admission to the facility to generate revenue for operating expenses. The funding will cover the positions for a period of one year.

Board of Directors Approves New Project Committees, High Speed Rail Policy

The Historic Hoosier Hills Board of Directors approved two new requests for Historic Hoosier Hills support at their July Board meeting. The Oldenburg Business Association requested help with restoration of the Oldenburg Town Hall, asking for help finding funding to repair and restore the century-old building, making the upstairs more useable and handicap accessible. Another request from the "Friends of the Muscatatuck River" Steering Committee sought Historic Hoosier Hills support for their efforts to clean up the Muscatatuck River and help educate the public about the importance of clean water.

In other business, the Board adopted a position statement on High Speed Rail Service in Southeastern Indiana. The position came from discussion after the Board's Annual Meeting in April that had guest speaker Dennis Hodges with the Indiana High Speed Rail Association. Hodges presented a program on the Midwest High Speed Rail Service proposal, and specifically what the proposal holds for southeastern Indiana.

The Board shares a concern that southeastern Indiana will be bypassed as the proposal now stands. While rail service is proposed to run from Chicago to Indianapolis and on to Cincinnati and Louisville, there are no stops planned in our region. The position policy supports high speed rail service but urges inclusion of stops on the Indianapolis to Cincinnati line and the Indianapolis to Louisville line. The statement also encourages southeastern Indiana business and economic development organizations to be involved in the planning process and make the region's needs heard. High speed rail service can be a very positive asset for southeastern Indiana if it is planned properly and the needs of our region are included.

Funds for the Future....The Historic Hoosier Hills Endowment Fund

Planning for Tomorrow Today *by Louise Markel, Executive Director, Community Foundation of Madison and Jefferson County*

The thought of taking off into the woods or on a road trip without a compass or map for directions might be alarming. You would have little or no control over your course or the outcome of your journey.

In a similar way, if you have no plan for distributing the assets you have worked a lifetime to earn, the same uncertain results can hold true.

A will is the foundation of an estate plan. Without a will to outline the distribution of your assets, the state will determine who will receive your belongings.

With a will you have a great opportunity to direct gifts not only to your loved ones, but also to your favorite charities, perhaps through a permanent endowment in your county's community foundation. Grants made in your name from your endowment, which is permanently invested, would forever benefit your charities. (It's a good idea to let the community foundation know how you want your endowment used so that they have a record of your intentions.)

A will can be changed, altered or amended at any time. A change in financial circumstances, the birth of children or grandchildren and other events can be easily and inexpensively be accommodated by a codicil to your will.

An up-to-date will can bring great peace of mind. And you will feel great pleasure to know that after you are gone, your favorite charities will benefit from your generosity.

If you have any questions about charitable giving, please contact your local community foundation.

This information is not intended as specific legal advice. Consult your attorney when considering any legal matter. State laws which govern wills and contracts vary and are subject to change.

Historic Hoosier Hills RC&D

The Historic Hoosier Hills Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc. prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326 W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720 5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Historic Hoosier Hills RC&D Council meets on the 4th Monday of every other month. The Executive Committee meets on the 3rd Friday of every other month that the Council does not meet. All meetings are open to the public. Anyone wishing to attend will certainly be welcome.

Mission Statement:

“Serve as a catalyst to empower local people to solve the overall economic and natural resource problems of the area, and to properly develop, utilize, and conserve our natural and human resources.”

Vision Statement:

“Workable economic climate in harmony with natural resources developed to their full potential for a higher quality of life.”

Officers & Staff

Council President – Lilian Carmer
1st Vice-President – (vacant)
2nd Vice-President – William Corning
Treasurer – Raymond West
Secretary – Barbara Corning
RC&D Coordinator – Gary Conant
RC&D Assistant – Phyllis May
Proposal Writer – Barbara Jachimiak