

# NEWSLETTER

## Quarterly Update: Winter 2023



**SD GFP Mission:** We serve and connect people and families to the outdoor through effective management of our state's parks, fisheries and wildlife resources

### Newsletter Content:

- Note From the Director
- Note from the Friends of The Outdoor Campus Sioux Falls
- Note on Region 3 Wildlife
- A Look Back...at the Fall of 2023
- Campus Updates
- Programming Highlights
- Winter Program Booklet
- Upcoming Special Events
- Volunteering
- Concluding Notes

# David Parker

SF Campus Director



“We love that the Campus/Sertoma Park groomed trails got so much use because of the amount of snow we got this last year. With that, we did want to remind the public about trail etiquette with groomed trails. Check out the visual below to see where foot traffic versus skiing traffic should be. Thanks for being respectful of all users!”

## Etiquette on Trails



**FOOT  
AND  
SNOWSHOE  
TRAFFIC**  
AVOID GROOMED  
CLASSIC LANES.

**SKATE  
SKIING**  
STAY IN THE  
MIDDLE. AVOID  
GROOMED  
CLASSIC LANES.

**CLASSIC  
SKIING**  
GROOMED  
CLASSIC  
LANES



# Notes from The Friends of The Outdoor Campus SF

WOW! What a year for the Outdoor Campus.

First, Dave Parker, director, and staff plus the interns deserve a big thank you for all they did.

- They offered 815 classes to over 18,337 participants.
- They offered a give away of outdoor equipment. Over 637 people attended and got free items. All items were donated by outdoor enthusiasts.
- They expanded mentoring by adding another volunteer mentor, continued the Hunting 101 Deer program, and added a mentored youth pheasant hunt.

Second, 2 people joined the Friends of the Outdoor Campus Board, bringing the board to 13. We welcome Jamie Simko and Emmett Keyser and are grateful they are willing to give of their time and expertise.

Third, the Friends Board in cooperation with the SD Parks and Wildlife Foundation are just shy of raising 3 million dollars for our match to complete the addition.

Finally, the Friends of the Outdoor Campus Board hopes to finalize the process to establish an endowment with the Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation by the end of the year.

Thanks to all who helped the Outdoor Campus this year.

Hope you had an enjoyable Thanksgiving and have a joyous Christmas and New Year.

## Members of the Board are:

Jan Nicolay  
Brian Klatt  
Tim Kromminga  
Amanda Oines  
Ryan Brown  
Royce Merritt  
Cheryl Ulvestad  
Eric Kurtz

Jeff Scherschligt  
Kathy Anderson  
Eric Olson  
Derek Maassen  
Emmett Keyser  
Jamie Simko  
Kristina Coby  
Kip Rounds  
David Parker



Board Chair

**Jan Nicolay**

FRIENDS OF THE



**OUTDOOR  
CAMPUS**

— SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA —





# SD GFP Region 3 Wildlife Division

With winter almost upon us, staff at the Outdoor Campus in Sioux Falls are reminiscing about the memorable year we had. We experienced world-class upland bird opportunities, phenomenal big game hunting, and record-breaking walleye fishing! We are incredibly fortunate to live in a state with so many folks as passionate about the outdoors as we are. This past year was filled with many first-time outdoor experiences, memories, successes, and challenges. As we look forward to another changing season here in South Dakota, we also look forward to another year of spending time in the outdoors with some really great people. We hope to see you soon here at the Outdoor Campus to help us enjoy the next outdoor adventure! Here's to wishing everyone a great winter and happy holidays!

**Kip Rounds**

Region 3 Wildlife Supervisor



Photo by Travel South Dakota





# A Look Back at Fall 2023



During the month of August on Thursdays, the Campus partnered with South Dakota Trapping Association (SDTA) to offer a 4-part comprehensive trapping class. Each Thursday in August students came to learn from SDTA staff about the how-to's of ethical trapping. Classes included: Trap and Snare ID/Rules and regulations, Trap Preparation, reading signs and landowner permission, and fur handling.

## Youth Pheasant Hunt



The Outdoor Campus led a youth pheasant hunt on November 5, 2023! The hunt was a huge success with lots of wild birds being seen and plenty of shots taken!



## Hunting 101



Each fall the Campus is busy with not only classes, but also with supported hunts via our Hunting 101 program. This year we were able to partner with the Dakota Grey Ghost Chapter of the Mule Deer Foundation to offer 10 Disabled Veteran Hunts!

# Campus Updates

New Staff Member!



**Jeff Merkle**  

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**Nights and Weekends  
Manager**

Hello, my name is Jeff Merkle, and I am the new Nights and Weekends Manager at The Outdoor Campus. I love being at the Campus, helping people learn to love the outdoors. When not at the Outdoor Campus, I am at Augustana University, where I work as the Director of Accessibility Services, and as the Internship and Employment Coordinator for the Augie Access program. I live in Sioux Falls with my wife Jean, and our rowdy Labradoodle, Macey. All 3 of our children live and work in Sioux Falls, and I am very excited about my new role at The Outdoor Campus. I look forward to seeing you soon!



# Campus Updates

#GivingTuesday



## Giving Tuesday

The South Dakota Parks and Wildlife Foundation is participating in Giving Tuesday this year. The focus of their efforts is to raise funds for the Campus Expansion project. Their goal is to raise \$2,500 through donations from the public for Giving Tuesday.

If you are interested in supporting this effort, start following them @sdparkswildlife to learn all about this effort and how you can give!



# Campus Updates

## Casting for Recovery

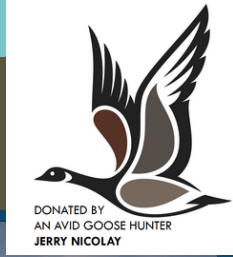


Over the weekend of September 15-17th, several GFP Outdoor Campus Sioux Falls staff helped partner with Casting for Recovery to put on the first ever retreat in South Dakota. The purpose of Casting for Recovery is to “provide healing outdoor retreats for women with breast cancer, at no cost to the participant.” The event was a huge success and the Campus was honored to be able to help with this initiative.





# Campus Updates



## Goose Trailer



In our Fall 2023 Newsletter we mentioned the addition 2 Loaner Field Goose Decoy Trailers, 1 in Sioux Falls at The Campus and 1 in Brookings at the Brookings County Outdoor Adventure Center.

Check out these great shots from folks who have gotten to take these out and use them in the field! Just a reminder, these are FREE To check out, just call either location to reserve the trailer and get out hunting!



# Campus Updates

## Campus Expansion Update



The Campus Expansion project is poised to start in the Spring of 2024 with groundbreaking on the 60-yard outdoor archery range. This range will be open to for both Campus Programming as well as public use at no charge to the user. It will include targets at fixed locations as well as accessible lanes with adjustable distance targets.



Campus Winter 2023 Programming

# HIGHLIGHTS



## Predator Calling

This program is hosted via Zoom, host by the Campus and features some of the Departments Wildlife Damage Specialists. Come prepared to learn from the best about tips and tricks for calling and hunting predators with a focus on coyote hunting. The date for this program has yet to be determined, so watch our Facebook Page to learn when the program will be.

Learn more about our Programming <https://gfp.sd.gov/east-programs/>



## Conservation Special Event!

February 15, 7:00-8:30 PM

The Campus is hosting the screening of Green Fire - Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time.

After viewing the film, there will be reading and reflection on one of Leopold's essays led by Kenna Hammons, an Aldo Leopold Foundation alumnus.

# Winter 2023 Programming Booklets

## Deer Processing - Hind Quarter Break-Down

December 9 from 1:00-3:00 PM

Learn about what cuts of meat make the best steaks, roasts, burger, and how to use and package as much of the animal as possible without waste.



Check out these Classes!



## Ice Fishing with the Littles

January 16 from 10:00-11:00 AM

This shortened class is perfect for parents, grandparents, and babysitters with younger kids. We keep to the basics and fun!

Our Winter 2023 Program Booklets is out! You can swing by the Campus to pick up a hard copy or you can check them out online:

<https://gfp.sd.gov/east-programs/>

Registration is open and spaces are filling fast!



Need Help? Give us a call at 605-362-2777  
Or  
Give the Kalkomey Help Desk a call at 1-800-684-9541



South Dakota

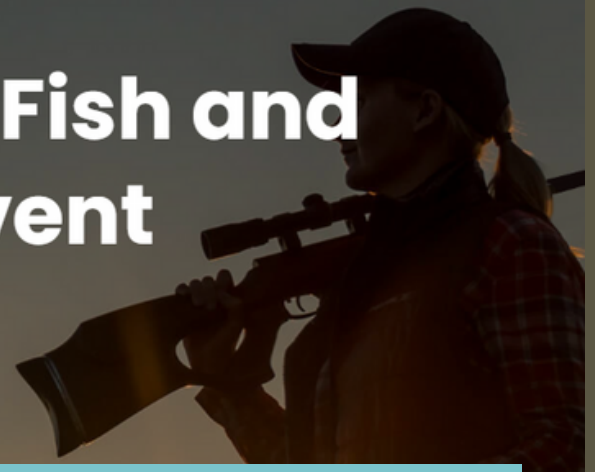
EVENTS

Programs

Login/Register >>

using mySD

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks: Educational Event Management



Have you registered through our new Kalkomey registration system?

To register, go to: <https://southdakota.storefront.kalkomey.com/em/programs>



# Campus Volunteers

**Thank you! Those are the first words that come to mind when I think about the volunteers who work at the Campus! We have volunteers who help with our front desk, creating giveaway items, helping with programming, teaching, and mentoring new hunters! Each one of our volunteers give so much to the Campus and are such a crucial part of our work! Even prior to the Campus starting in 1997, volunteers were busy helping get the facility ready to open!**

**So again, I want to echo a hug thank you to the folks who give so much, our volunteers!**

**David Parker**

**SDGFP Outdoor Campus SF**







# OUTDOOR CAMPUS

— SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA —

## 25 Years of Programming 25 Years of Growing



If you want to give to the Campus Expansion, to help us continue growing in the next 25 years go to:

<https://www.parkswildlifeoundation.org/projects/outdoor-campus-sioux-falls-expansion>

