

Take the Rock River Trail: grand opening is June 3

By Greg Farnham
Submitted by the Rock River Trail Initiative



The grand opening of the Rock River Trail is planned for Saturday, June 3, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., at the Rotary River Center, 1160 S. Riverside Drive, Beloit. Events are being held in both Beloit and South Beloit, IL and other river communities. The opening coincides with National Trails Day and all trail events for the day will be highlighted on the National Trails Day website at nationaltrailsday.americanhiking.org.

The Rock River Trail Initiative was established seven years ago to create a system of recreational trails encompassing the Rock River in Wisconsin and Illinois. Today the Rock River Water Trail is recognized as a National Water Trail by the National Park Service.

In addition, the Rock River Trail offers a scenic and historic road route for touring the river corridor by car or motorcycle. Also available are designated routes for biking, hiking and horse-

back riding, and an air route that links the ten airports along the river in both states. A brochure titled "The Art Route of the Rock River Trail" was recently published and the delicious Rock River Chocolate Trail was just completed. Details on all elements of the Rock River Trail are available at www.rockrivertrail.com

National Trails Day is organized by the American Hiking Society and held annually on the first Saturday of June. It is the only nationally coordinated event designed to unite all muscle-powered trail activities with a shared goal of connecting more people to trails and creating trail advocates and stewards. Events take place in all 50 states, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico.

The public is invited to the Rotary River Cen-

ter in Beloit on June 3 for the "cutting of the ribbon" to officially open the Rock River Trail and then participate in one of the many trail activities following the ceremony.

There will be a canoe/kayak paddle, a bike ride, an automobile road tour, a nature hike and a horseback trail ride in the Beloit and South Beloit area to celebrate the grand opening. There will even be an aerial flyover by private planes from the Beloit airport. View the outdoor art and sculpture and grab some chocolate to enjoy on the trail.



Many activities await you on the Rock River and the Rock River Trail. (Photo by Therese Oldenburg submitted by the Rock River Trail Initiative)



The shoreline even welcomes you to the Rock River Trail. (Photo by Therese Oldenburg submitted by the Rock River Trail Initiative)

Celebrate Independence Day with BJSO's sweet sounds

Adapted from press release from BJSO

The Beloit Janesville Symphony Orchestra (BJSO) will present its annual Independence Day concerts on July 3-4.

First up is a July 3 concert at Janesville's Courthouse Park at 6:30 p.m. Then, on July 4, the orchestra will play at Beloit's Riverside Park at 7:30 p.m., followed by fireworks (Beloit location only).

These are free family-friendly concerts. Bring your own chairs. Food vendors will be on site at both locations. Alcohol is prohibited.

The BJSO, conducted by Music Director Dr. Rob Tomaro, presents its traditional July Pops concerts honoring servicemen and women and celebrating the anniversary of our nation's independence. Enjoy classics such as the Armed Forces Salute, God Bless America, the Star Spangled Spectacular, The Stars and Stripes Forever and The 1812 Overture. The BJSO Summer Chorus, directed by Ellen Knutson and Cheryl Licary, will perform with the orchestra.

This year, BJSO's special guest artist will be Stephanie Klett, Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Tourism. Klett, a

Beloit native, is a trumpet player and has played with the BJSO in the past.

Also, two middle school students from BJSO's Conducting Kids program will be conducting the orchestra during both concerts.

The BJSO, now in its sixty-third year, is the professional symphony orchestra of Rock County. Beginning as a volunteer community orchestra in 1953 at Beloit College, it has grown into a respected regional orchestra in Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

The mission of the BJSO is to serve as a major cultural and educational resource to southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois by providing a rich variety of symphonic music and related cultural activities to the citizens, schools and other institutions in the area.

Music Director, Dr. Rob Tomaro, is also active in area school systems, bringing his original educational programs "Composing Kids" and (this year's new addition) "Conducting Kids" to area middle schools.

Founded by Lewis Dalvit in 1953, the BJSO baton was passed on to Dr. Crawford Gates in 1963 and then to Dr. Robert Tomaro in 1999.

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