



PHOTOS BY LEAH SHAFER

Visitors get a look at one of the new signs planted along the Elizabeth Fries Ellet Interpretive Trail at the Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area.

Ellet Interpretative Trail officially open

Follow the Elizabeth Fries Ellet Interpretive Trail at the Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area and you'll see a series of signs that shine a light into the history and habitat of that scenic area. What can't be seen is all the work that went into bringing such signs to the park.

For Vicki Pellar Price, an Eden Prairie resident and chair of the non-profit group Writers Rising Up, last Thursday's grand opening of the trail was a long time coming.

During the ceremony, supporters and sign sponsors gathered at the Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area to get a trail tour courtesy of the sign designer, Doug Van Valkenburg.

It was all the more sweet for Pellar Price, the main project planner/fundraiser. She's a living example of how persistence can pay off.

In her case, it was about three years of persistence, fundrais-

ing, and research.

"I don't think anyone thought I'd ever finish," she said.

Nonetheless, with informative signs dotting scenic spots of the Richard T. Anderson Conservation area, citizens and those from the city are nonetheless grateful.

"She's really brought something of great value to our park system and she deserves our appreciation for that," said City Manager Scott Neal on Monday.

Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Director Jay Lotthammer gave opening remarks for the dedication.

"This is a great night, especially for this park," he said.

Then, reading a letter from U.S. Rep. Jim Ramstad (R-3, Minnetonka), he said "this trail is a shining example of what can happen when people work together."

"The city is very thankful for Vicki's efforts," Lotthammer added.

— Compiled by Leah Shaffer

Signs on display at Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area

Bottomland Forest sign: sponsored by Bill Clark family of Eden Prairie

Minnesota River Biome, Prairie Sign and Big Woods sign: sponsored by Metropolitan Airports Commission

Oak Savanna sign: sponsored by the Eden Prairie Foundation

The Sedge Meadow sign, Settler's Ridge sign and Minnesota River sign: sponsored by Eden Prairie Lions Club

■ Signs include descriptions of habitats, illustrations of insects and animals that can be seen in each part of the trail; historical facts and quotes from Elizabeth Fry Ellet's book "Summer Rambles in the West."

■ For more information, go to www.writersrisingup.org.



Eden Prairie Lions Club members Dick Howell, left, and Luther Nelson take a look at the Minnesota River Valley sign, the first sign that visitors can see on the Elizabeth Fries Ellet Interpretive Trail at the Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area. The dedication ceremony for the newly planted signs was held last Thursday. The Eden Prairie Lions club donated funding to pay for three signs.



Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Director Jay Lotthammer makes opening remarks during the dedication ceremony.



The signs include tidbits from Elizabeth Fries Ellet writings. Ellet is credited with naming Eden Prairie, when, during a visit to a portion of the Minnesota River in 1852, she wrote about the spot as a "garden spot of the territory."



Visitors including Historical Society president Kathie Cse and former City Council member Jan Mosman walk along the path at the Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area. The area is located just off Highway 212, near the Minnesota River.