

DNR: Aztalan State Park celebrates 75 Years

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Friends of Aztalan State Park invite the public to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Aztalan State Park at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 8. The celebration will include speakers, tours, cake and free park admission.

Seventy-five years ago this month, the site of the ancient Middle-Mississippian town known as Aztalan became a Wisconsin state park. Located outside of what is today Lake Mills, Aztalan is the grounds of this ancient community that thrived between A.D. 1050 and 1250 and is an important archaeological site for understanding human history in Wisconsin.

Through archaeological study, historians have found evidence of a community surrounded by walls that included a residential area, a plaza, a communal food storage area, ceremonial mounds and agricultural fields. Historians have also found evidence of stone structures in the Crawfish River where Native people trapped fish for food.

In 1964, Aztalan was dedicated as a [National Historic Landmark](#). Today's caretakers of the 172-acre Aztalan State Park seek to balance resource protection, site access, interpretive opportunities, compatible recreational activities and careful development and preservation. It is a place to respect, explore and celebrate the history and mystery of one of Wisconsin's first farming communities.

[Aztalan](#) is one of several Wisconsin state park properties celebrating milestone anniversaries this year. [Tower Hill State Park](#) in Spring Green celebrated 100 years in July, [Kinnickinnic State Park](#) in River Falls celebrated 50 years earlier this year and [Natural Bridge State Park](#) in North Freedom and the [Sugar River State Trail](#) in

Green and Rock counties both celebrate 50 years this October.

EVENT DETAILS

WHAT: Aztalan State Park's 75th Anniversary Celebration

WHEN: 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 8

WHERE: Aztalan State Park

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

10:30 a.m.: Comments by dignitaries, including James Skibo, Friends of Aztalan board member and Wisconsin State Archaeologist.

12:30 p.m.: Attendees can take a tour of the community's more significant areas with Rob Nurre, impersonating Increase Lapham, an American author, scientist and naturalist, and Robert Birmingham, co-author of *Aztalan: Mysteries of an Ancient Indian Town*.

2:30 p.m.: Bill Quackenbush of the Ho-Chunk Nation will talk about the history of the Ho-Chunk in the area. Visitors can also view historic pots from the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Attendees will receive free park admission and cake.