

FRIENDS OF THE RED CEDAR STATE TRAIL & HOFFMAN HILLS NEWSLETTER



Number 41

Autumn 2009

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The Friends Group sponsors three big events yearly to promote the Trail and Hoffman Hills. They include the National Trail Day, the Annual Meeting and the Candlelight Ski. This past summer, two of those events were held.

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY - JUNE 6, 2009

On Saturday June 6th, The Friends of the Red Cedar Trail and Hoffman Hills sponsored National Trails Day at the Depot trailhead. Unfortunately, Mother Nature did not cooperate and the outdoor activities had to be cancelled. However, for those who did show up, they were treated to two entertaining as well as interesting and educational presentations that were held inside the depot. Three Pieces, the Voyageur (Jim Swanson) presented a program about the life of a voyageur, the experiences of trapping and trading furs and using river transportation. Kenton Whitman, nature author, talked about snakes along the Red Cedar Trail. In addition, he brought along four different snakes (not all were native to the area) that people could see up close and could hold.

The good news for the celebration of National Trail Days for 2010 is that everyone who was going to be part of the event for 2009 has agreed to be at the 2010 National Trails Day.

ANNUAL MEETING - JUNE 11, 2009

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills was held at the EconoLodge Inn & Suites on Thursday, June 11, 2009. The featured speaker of the evening was Richard Gauger from the West Wisconsin Land Trust. Topics of Rick's presentation included the Devil's Punch Bowl, the Keil Birch Creek Nature Preserve and the Red Cedar Cutoff. Prior to Rick's presentation, treasurer Tom Kilgore reported the financial status of the Friends Group. Scott Erickson (DNR) talked on value of volunteers to support the Red Cedar Trail and Hoffman Hills in lieu of the lack of State funding. Barb Gorman told of the efforts of volunteers in support of grooming cross country ski trails at Hoffman Hills and on the Trail. All the grooming was done by volunteers. Awards were presented to Bruce Jordan, Pete May and Paul Peltier. Barb also talked of the support of Businesses by becoming Business Members. Also, the Friends group is always looking for volunteers for various activities and there will be opportunities for volunteers to sign-up.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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DNR ADVISOR

Scott Erickson, Acting Trail Manager
& Park Manager at Lake Wissota State
Park (715) 232-1242

TRAIL MANAGER'S REPORT**SCOTT ERICKSON (DNR)**

Once again we would like to thank all of the wonderful volunteers and friends group members that have contributed to The Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills Recreation Area. A special thank you to Doug Voy for his efforts as volunteer coordinator this year.

The Red Cedar State trail's candlelight ski is gaining in popularity and will be featured in the Rails to Trails magazine this year. We will have a complimentary article at the Depot when it comes out.

Many of you that have visited Hoffman Hills during late summer undoubtedly noticed a logging operation in place. This is a commercial sale of the white and red pine plantation stands that are about 45 years old. The objective of thinning these stands is to remove crowded, diseased and poorly formed trees from the area and to improve the overall health and growing conditions for the healthier trees that remain. In the short term, this project has a dramatic visual impact when you compare the before and after logging scene. In the long term, logging will enhance the aesthetics of the plantation by reducing the unnatural appearance of tree rows. Logging will increase sunlight reaching the forest floor, the growth of underbrush will increase, creating a more natural appearance and benefit to wildlife.

We continue to operate the Trails (Red Cedar and Chippewa River State Trails) and Hoffman Hills Recreation Area with a vacant Manager/Ranger position which puts more demands on existing staff and in many cases less contact with trail users. Consequently we greatly appreciate any effort and work that volunteers can do for us. Thank you all for a great summer season!

DNR Park and Trail Staff - Penny, Sean, Bill and Scott

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S REPORT**DOUG VOY**

The Volunteer Coordinator position has two parts. One is to train and manage the volunteers at the Depot Visitor Center and the other is to coordinate and volunteer maintenance projects at the Red Cedar Trail and Hoffman Hills.

The Depot Visitor Center at the head of the Red Cedar Trail is a multi-use facility owned by the DNR and leased to the Menomonie Chamber of Commerce for use as a Visitor Center. Volunteers staff the Depot during the week. They sell trail passes and merchandise as well as answer questions ranging from what can be seen along the trail to where to eat or information on other attractions Menomonie has to offer. These volunteers, many of whom have donated their time for several years, are an important part of what makes our trail so popular. I would like to thank each of these dedicated people for their efforts and making my job a real privilege. This year's volunteers included Don Kuether, Ray Barlow, Dennis Weibel, Harry Stai, Tom and Linda Walsh, Jane Butsic, Jan Harvey, and Steve Vandeberg. Weekend staff included Judy Kirk, Sarah Lannon, Josh Grose and Kathy LaPean. Substitutes included Judy Kirk and Steve Cole.

As for the project portion of the job a few of the efforts are as follows. Katie Harrington did a fantastic job of motivating people to help with Garlic Mustard eradication. Volunteers, mostly due to Katie's diligence, took approximately 25 large garbage bags of GM from the trail. Joel Toms spent a couple of mornings helping drop buckthorn on the trail. At Hoffman Hills new turnarounds were cut into the brush for the volunteer ski trail grooming. Thank you to Pete and Julie May, Paul Peltier and Barb Flom. The gazebo at the Depot got power washed and a fresh coat of stain by Jane Butsic and Dale Seppa.

Please contact me if you are interested in volunteering to help out at the Red Cedar State Trail or Hoffman Hills State Recreation Area: Doug Voy, 715-309-9111, dvoy@charter.net

CONGRATULATIONS TO SCOTT ERICKSON

The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills would like to congratulate Scott Erickson on receiving the Silver Medal Ranger of the year award. This award recognizes top rangers across the United States, and seven were honored. Scott joined four other rangers who received the silver award. Scott is the park superintendent for Lake Wissota and Brunet Island State Parks and superintendent of the Chippewa River Trail, the Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills. Whew! Congratulations Scott.

TREASURER'S TIDBITS TOM KILGORE

Treasurer's Tidbits

Membership's collected for 2009 totaled \$2,227.50, down \$300 from 2008.

MEMBERSHIP DETAIL:		<u>'09 Receipts</u>	<u>'09 Mbrs #'s</u>	<u>'08 Mbrs #'s</u>
Sponsoring Members	over \$150			2
Larger Business / Corp	\$150	\$ 1,050.00	7	6
Medium Business	\$75	\$ 375.00	5	5
Small Business	\$50	\$ 250.00	5	7
Half of Business memberships to Hoffman Hills		(\$837.50)	for grooming	
Supporting	\$75	\$ -		2
Contributing	\$50	\$ 250.00	5	3
Family	\$25	\$ 575.00	23	28
Individual	\$15	\$ 240.00	16	11
future year paid	2010 Family	\$ 25.00		1
2009 New Lifetime	\$150	\$ 300.00	2	1
Lifetime	prior years		24	23
2009 Memberships collected	FRCST acct	\$ 2,227.50	87	89
				\$2,527.50

Other Revenue sources were:

Gifts-Heritage Builders \$420, Cardinal FG \$100, Hedlund \$100, and cash \$5.00	\$625.00
pop \$6, 5 books @ \$5, 1 patch @ \$2, and 60 books @ \$2	\$153.00
Chamber-trail passes 528 annual @\$2, 1292 daily @ \$0.40	\$1,572.80
T Shirts, 9 @ \$18, 35 @ \$15, 2 @ \$12	\$738.00

Major Expenses for 2009 have been the payment to the Chamber of Commerce of \$2,000 to fund the Volunteer Coordinator position, \$448.38 for "T" shirts and \$558.44 for trail brochures.

FRIENDS OF THE RED CEDAR STATE TRAIL & HOFFMAN HILLS MEETING SCHEDULE
Everyone is Welcome
Regular Meetings ---First Thursday of the months of Jan., March, May, Sept., Nov.
Time: 7 P.M.
Place: Leisure Services Center (Senior Center), Menomonie
WEB Site: <http://redcedarhoffman.org/>

CROSS COUNTRY SKI CORNER**BARB GORMAN**

This fall at times seems to have a winter flavor to it . . . must mean ski season will soon be here. Last winter provided an outstanding ski season, in part, because of adequate amount of snow, and because of the outstanding grooming of the ski trails. Bruce Jordan, Ron Piffner and Dan Haug are the groomers for the Red Cedar State Trail. A core group of volunteers has formed to groom at Hoffman Hills. The grooming at Hoffman Hills last winter was superb. The foundation of the Hoffman Hills grooming volunteers is from MAMBA- Menomonie Area Mountain Bike Association. MAMBA members spent many hours this past summer building mountain bike trails at Menomin Park. This fall, MAMBA members did clearing at Hoffman Hills to improve the turnaround areas for the grooming equipment. Additionally, another core group of volunteers are organized to step in and groom the Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills.

It is difficult to convey exactly how much time, effort and energy groomers put in to ensure users have a quality trail. A few examples: the 2009 Candlelight Ski had the new feature of a snowshoe trail. This trail was groomed by Paul Peltier and Pete May. Bruce Jordan groomed the Red Cedar State Trail for the Candlelight Ski. The day after the Candlelight Ski, Paul groomed the Red Cedar State Trail to clean up the rough spots. At Hoffman Hills, dozens of extra trips are made around all the trail loops, not to just pack down the snow, but also to set the tracks and do the finishing work. Pete May spends his Mondays off from his bike store to groom at Hoffman Hills. It has been exciting to see all the groomers not just do the grooming, but to develop ideas that improve the trails for all skiers to enjoy. Their time and commitment is appreciated. And, as always, no hiking/walking on the groomed ski trails. Hiking and walking have separate trails available at Hoffman Hills and north of Highway 29 at the Red Cedar State Trail.

BIKING**BARB GORMAN**

Although Mother Nature is transitioning from summer to fall (and moving closer to winter as it is snowing as this is being written!), several exciting projects occurred this summer to improve biking on the Red Cedar State Trail and in Dunn County. The first improvement was the paving of County Road D from Irvington to Highway 25. This project added paved shoulders to the road and posting of signs along the route identifying biking and walking sections. What a difference this improvement has made. Many users of County Road D have commented about the quality of this improvement. The project provides a safe link for cyclists and walkers as a passage from the Red Cedar State Trail to Menomonie. Mully Brenden, Dunn County Highway Commissioner and the Dunn County Highway Committee (Richard Creaser, Wally Smetana, Richard Johnson, Jerry Prochnow, and Dan Fedderly), were instrumental in accomplishing this project. The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills thanks them for their work. The idea to improve County Road D was started by several users of the Red Cedar State Trail and County Road D. Margy Hagaman worked tirelessly to have the projected completed. One person can and does make a difference.

The initial idea of improving County Road D to be a safe passage for bikers and walkers from Irvington to Menomonie expanded to Dunn County forming a bike and walking committee. This committee met for several months and included county board members, representatives from the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail, interested citizens, avid bicyclists, and several Dunn County staff. The committee developed a bike plan that was adopted by the Dunn County Board of Supervisors. The bike plan includes a map of bike routes and this map is posted on the web site for the Dunn County Planning Office. Additionally, a printed map of Dunn County bike routes was produced and has been distributed to several businesses in Menomonie and Dunn County. The printed maps were done in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce. The bike plan will affect future road repair and construction as consideration for bike lanes will be given when a road is repaired. Many people worked on the plan and maps. Bob Colson, Dunn County planner, spent many hours coordinating meetings, gathering information, and developing the plan. There are numerous people to thank for the help and the worthwhile product, and Bob is definitely one of them.

A HAPPENING AT MENOMIN PARK**DALE SEPPA**

Recently, I took a walk in Menomin Park. I have walked in that park many times but had a special reason for my latest walk. I had heard from Pete May that he and a number of others were busy creating trails for mountain biking and snowshoeing. After walking the new trails, I decided to talk to Pete regarding the genesis of this project and future plans.

In November of 2008, seven people formed a group called "Menomonie Area Mountain Bike Association" (MAMBA). The goal was to find an area where they could lay out a system of mountain bike trails that could also be used for snowshoeing. The intent was not only to provide mountain biking and snow shoeing opportunities for the citizens but also to promote tourism. The charter members of this group are Paul Peltier, Pete May, Steve Brown, Randy Eide, Mark Vinall, Sean Bujold and Phil Motley.

In April, the group approached the Dunn County Facilities Committee about using Menomin Park for this project. The Facilities Committee Board endorsed this project especially since Menomin Park is the most under-utilized park in the county. It is primarily used by walkers; many walking dogs. The Facilities Committee is to be kept informed about progress of the project. So work began on the creation of the trail system under the leadership of Trail Coordinator, Paul Peltier. The members have used their own tools and in some cases have bought additional tools. They have also provided materials and have had some donated for signage. No tax payer money has been used. The trails are being built to the standards of the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA). This involves designing trails which are sustainable and minimize any effects of erosion, etc. Currently, one mile of single track trail has been built and is useable. It is expected that another mile will be completed by winter.

Menomin Park has about 5 miles of mowed hiking trails. These new trails are layed out so that there will be minimum interference with the hiking trails. In the winter, many people use the current hiking trails for snowshoeing. They will now have additional trails that provide a different prospective.

Obviously, a lot of "sweat-equity" has gone into this project. In addition to the seven charter members, other people who made significant contributions are Jerry and Kim Porter, Brian Braun, Brian LaVoy, Kim Wentworth, Ron Welch and Jane Brakken. Also, a number of UW-Stout students have been involved.

These new trails will provide an excellent complement to biking on the Red Cedar State Trail and snowshoeing at Hoffman Hills.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

As a Member of the Friends Group, periodically, you receive a Newsletter by mail. This provides you with news, activities and up-coming events related to the Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills. You will still periodically receive newsletters by mail; however, less often. The Friends Group has a WEB site which is updated in a much timelier manner. <http://redcedarhoffman.org/>

We have decided to make more use of this WEB site by also not sending out paper copies of every newsletter, and instead, informing you by postcard when an issue of the newsletter has been added to the WEB site. Current plans are to mail paper versions twice a year: at the beginning and at the middle of the year. You are encouraged to explore this WEB site as there are a number of items of interest.

BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP BARB GORMAN & TOM KILGORE

The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills continues to be fortunate with the memberships of several Dunn County businesses. All memberships are important to the Friends' group as this support helps to improve and sustain the two beautiful nature areas. Businesses have shown an extra commitment to help the Friends and become members. Please support the business members of the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills:

BOMAC Vets Plus Inc

Menomonie Farmers Union Co-op

Bad Cat Bicycles, Pete May

The Medicine Shoppe

Dunn Energy Cooperative

Xcel Energy

Gentle Dental Care, Dr. Lisa Joyce

ConAgra/Swiss Miss

Heritage Builders Inc

Dr. Dan Wood, DDS

3M Corporation

Gary Welch Construction

Simple Sports, Rory Fedderson

Cardinal Glass

Main Street Framing, Julie Kuehl

Red Cedar Medical Center

State Farm Insurance, Jackie Hunt

Phillips Plastics, Skip Swanson

Thank You Friends' Business Members

THE DEPOT VISITOR CENTER HOURS OF OPERATION

May 1 until Memorial Day, Labor Day through Oct.

Memorial Day through Labor Day

WeekdaysClosed

Weekdays10 A.M. – 4 P.M.

Saturday - Sunday 9 A.M. – 5 P.M.

Saturday - Sunday & Holidays .. 9 A.M. – 5 P.M

Please Note: The Depot is closed from November until May.

DUES REMINDER

The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills is a non-profit support organization dedicated to enhancing the recreational and educational opportunities by sponsoring, promoting and funding many activities as well as participating in projects that help to maintain and improve the Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills. The Friends group derives its funding from dues paid by individuals and businesses, donations, grants and a percentage of trail pass revenues. These funds provide resources for interpretive programs, volunteer workdays and community events such as the Annual Candlelight Ski. As a reminder, dues can be paid by using the form on the last page of this newsletter and mailing to the address indicated. As a dues paying member, you will receive a membership card, newsletters and information on Friends activities.

Thank You for your support.

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING

The Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills are indeed treasures that we locals enjoy as well as the many visitors that they attract. With State Funding cut-backs for trails, the role that volunteer groups play is becoming increasingly important. There are a number of opportunities available where help is needed. Some of the opportunities include eradicating invasive species, working on exhibits, gardening at the depot, repairing bird houses, trail projects, working in the depot, becoming a trail ambassador, or helping with special programs such as the Candlelight Ski and National Trails Day. If you are interested, or have any questions regarding volunteering, contact any of the board members. You will be rewarded knowing that you had a hand in preserving and maintaining these resources. The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills would like to thank all of you who have volunteered in the past on various projects. Thank You.

DONATION INFORMATION

The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills has always been blessed with the willingness of its members and the community to volunteer their time and help with projects.

Also, from time to time, many have chosen to make special monetary gifts. For those wishing to make special monetary gifts, they can be sent to our mailing address: FRCST, P.O. Box 628, Menomonie, WI, 54751. Money received by donation for specific purposes will be subject to approval of the Friends Board of Directors before it is expended for the specific purpose. A Life Time Membership would be provided to a donor for any memorial donation of \$150, or more. In the case of memorial funds, a minimum contribution of \$250 is required for the addition of a plaque. The Friends express our thanks and appreciate the generosity of all donors.

Merchandise Available in the Depot

New T-Shirts are this year:

Green Short Sleeve ... \$15

Blue Long Sleeve \$18

In addition, there are previous years T-Shirts in orange, gray, beige in some sizes.

Books

Critters of Wisconsin. \$5. This is a small book with great pictures of mammals and birds commonly seen in Wisconsin. This book is great to carry in your pack or to give to a child.

The Red Cedar Suite \$5. This book is by Menomonie's Jerry Bowker and Robert Schuler. The beautiful black and white photos by Jerry are enhanced by the poems by Robert.

For \$15.00 you can purchase the Wisconsin State Park Passport Book. This is a fun souvenir for the state park visitor. You put stamps from each state park in the book as you travel around the state.

Menomonie Water Bottles are available for only \$1.00.

Sales benefit The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills.

Trail Pass Fees

Daily\$4

Annual\$20

Pass purchase required before using trail for biking or skiing.

Pass is good for all Wisconsin state trails.

Use self-registration stations on the trail.

Same fee for residents and non-residents

FRIENDS OF THE
RED CEDAR STATE TRAIL & HOFFMAN HILLS
P.O. Box 628
Menomonie, WI 54751

Don't forget to get your annual trail pass

Everyone is welcome to
attend meetings of the
Friends Group.
(See Schedule on Page 3)



FRIENDS OF THE RED CEDAR STATE TRAIL & HOFFMAN HILLS

Join Today!

(or renew your membership)
Dues for 2009 (Jan. – Dec.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____

Annual Memberships Include:

- Membership Card
- Newsletters
- Information on Activities

**Make checks payable to:
Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail
P.O. Box 628
Menomonie, WI 54751**

Check One:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Small Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Medium Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150 Large Corporation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Supporting | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$150 Lifetime | |