

FRIENDS OF THE RED CEDAR STATE TRAIL NEWSLETTER



Number 28

05

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Candlelight Ski - Big Success

The 2005 Candlelight ski drew an estimated 300 plus people. This year the weather was very cooperative, as opposed to in recent years, when the weather was not very cooperative. The skiing was also made particularly enjoyable by the timely arrival of fresh snow. Those who skied along the luminary lighted trail for about a mile were treated to the sight of the spectacular illuminated "ice wall" revealing its brilliance.

After the ski or walk, everyone enjoyed the hot chocolate provided by Swiss Miss and the warmth of the bonfire.

Many took the time to browse around the Depot Visitor's Center looking at the various displays, etc. Also, the opportunity was available to purchase a 2005 trail pass.

Many thanks to all who made the 2005 Candlelight Ski such a success.



PRESIDENTS COLUMN BETH ALEXANDER

It's been a long time since the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail have had a Newsletter! Our board has been very fortunate to add three new members in April. Voted in at our April meeting were Jane Butsic, Barb Gorman and Dale Seppa. Jane is a long time Menomonie community member, very active biker and skier on the Red Cedar Trail and Hoffmann Hills, and ongoing volunteer. Jane has brought our board some excellent ideas to improve the work we do. Barb is also an avid skier and long time user of the trail. Dale Seppa and his wife moved to Menomonie, in part, because of the wonderful times they experienced on the Red Cedar Trail. Dale has been an active volunteer and is currently re-creating this newsletter to share with all of our members. These new folks have been a great inspiration to the rest of us and we are very happy to welcome them!

The entire community of Menomonie rallied an incredible effort to fight the budget cuts proposed by the DNR last winter that would have so negatively affected the Red Cedar Trail. I'd like to extend a special Thank You to the neighborhood of "Dog Town". These folks wrote letters, attended meetings and spread the word all around town in an effort to save our resources. Their efforts definitely impacted the final decision.

On these very positive notes, I am looking forward to a great year for all of us in our continued enjoyment of the Red Cedar State Trail. We are still looking for volunteers and Board members so we can continue this work. Anyone interested in joining us is welcome!

SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE FRIENDS OF THE RED CEDAR STATE TRAIL

Regular Meetings ---First Thursday of the odd months (Jan., March, May, etc.)

Time: 7 P.M.

Place: Leisure Services Center (Senior Center), Menomonie

Annual Meeting ----June 07, 2005

Place: Best Western Conference Center, Menomonie

Time: Social hour: 6:30 P.M. – Complimentary hors d'oeuvres and cash bar

Meeting and Program: 7:00 P.M.

Program: Birds of the Wetlands

Speaker: John Bates, Naturalist

John Bates is the author of five books, and a contributor to three others. He's worked as a naturalist for 16 years in Wisconsin's Northwoods leading botany, birding, canoeing/kayaking, biking, hiking, snowshoeing, and skiing trips. He lives in Manitowish, Iron County, with his wife and youngest daughter.

TREASURER'S REPORT TOM KILGORE

With no large projects in the works during 2004, our expenses were less than our revenues and as Martha Stewart says: "That's a good thing!" Those total expenses were \$1,273.20 with the three largest expenditures being:

1. The annual meeting at Best Western costing \$320.45
2. Postage and Post Office Box rent of \$290.80
3. Kenny Salway, annual meeting speaker with costs of \$246.00

Our three main revenue sources are the sale of trail passes, memberships and sale of items at the depot. This year, donations came in third ahead of the depot item sales. These revenues amounting to \$4,434.70 are from:

1. Trail passes bringing in \$2,164.70,
2. Memberships totaling \$1,690.00,
3. Donations of \$550.00
4. Books and patches sold totaled \$30.00 (T Shirt and other item sales of \$683.00 were not received until 2005 so are not in the '04 Revenue.)

In detail, 655 annual Trail passes and 2,873 daily Trail passes generated our pass revenue. A donation from the Estate of the late Ruth Wold of \$500.00 and a Birthday donation of \$50.00 from the children of O.K. Hedlund summarize that total.

Under memberships, our one "Larger Corporation" was Sanna Dairy / Conagra, with 3M as our single "Intermediate Business." We had 3 members under the "Small Business" category, those being Cedar Corporation, Miller Real Estate and Trailhead Sports. We greatly thank these businesses for their support and urge you to support them in return. A new bike shop has replaced Trailhead Sports and we will seek trade "support" with them also. We would like more support from the local Hotel / Restaurant businesses so if you have the opportunity to urge them to join us, please do so!

Also, I would like to thank the other members who made up the 44 units as individuals, family's, lifetime and contributing memberships.

Available in the Depot Visitor Center

100% Cotton T-Shirts.....\$10 - \$18
 Red Cedar Trail Patches.....\$5
 The Red Cedar Suite.....\$7
 Wisconsin State Park Passports .. \$15

Sales benefit the Friends of the
 Red Cedar State Trail

Trail Pass Fees

Daily.....\$4
 Annual.....\$15

- Required for all Wisconsin state trails.
- Same fee for residents and non-residents.
- Available at Depot, DNR office, businesses, and self-registration stations on the trail.

TRAIL MANAGER'S REPORT **JIM JANOWAK, DNR**

There are always so many things going on that it is usually hard to decide what to highlight but this year is different. Everybody is asking about..."The Budget". I have tried to write a succinct summary of the state's budget process several times to help give an understanding of what's happening but every time it has ended up too long and convoluted. Suffice it to say that even though Hoffman Hills, Red Cedar State Trail and Chippewa River State Trail were on the chopping block (along with many other properties throughout the state) the Governor has made it clear that he wants all parks and trails to keep their funding and staff. So we are in the clear...right? Well no, not exactly, but probably. The final state budget won't be decided until this summer. However right now it appears that there is enough support in all "camps" that we will continue to operate pretty much as we have in the past...at least for the next couple of years.

One of the most important reasons for that statewide support is all the local support and activism. I know many individuals, service groups, city and county officials and the Chamber have been contacting local legislators and the Governor's office with their respective concerns on the importance of these recreational properties to our quality of life as well as the economic impact in our area. I have received calls and seen letters that demonstrated how much our elected officials are concerned and supportive of keeping these properties maintained and available for the community and our visitors now and into the future. If it wasn't for the public outcry it is quite likely that the DNR would have had to cut funding as proposed and "explore alternate operational opportunities". I know that there are times when it seem like the public cannot convey messages to our state's leaders in a way that gets through to the desired outcome. That was not the case this time. The message was heard very clear. So I would like to thank you all for your interest and concern. And please be sure to thank our representatives that spoke up for these concerns.

Well another season is under way and the crew is back. We have already repaired the washouts south of Downsville and have started to grade and roll the trail surface. And we need to tune up the new parking lot and rest area in Irvington. Have you seen it yet? A couple of new volunteer projects include a rest area by a small waterfall south of mile-marker 11 and a Volunteer Trail Patrol. Other ideas and leaders are always welcome. Thanks again for all the help last year and especially the active involvement the last few months.

THE DEPOT VISITOR CENTER HOURS OF OPERATION

May 1 until Memorial Day, Labor Day through October
Saturday - Sunday 9 A.M. – 5 P.M.

Memorial Day through Labor Day
Weekdays10 A.M. – 4 P.M.
Saturday - Sunday & Holidays 9 A.M. – 5 P.M

GUEST COLUMNIST**HARLYN LARSON**

Wisconsin is recognized as a leader in the development of hike/bike trails. There are currently at least sixty trails with additions made every year as individual communities add to the system.

While we have all these trails, there are only some twenty recognized “destination” trails, those that people plan for and take a specific trip to visit. We all go to ride the Elroy-Sparta, the Sugar River, or the Wild Goose trails; and, of course, our own Red Cedar is the focus of several thousand bikers every summer. It’s the many “lesser” trails, often with great scenery, fun riding, and nice communities that are well worth seeking.

Black River Falls has one of my favorite rides. Starting just to the left of the visitor center, this 4.1-mile trail is cut into a wooded hillside with some nice rest areas, sharp corners, and a paved surface. The second half of the ride is through recreation areas, on streets, and into the downtown area.

While too short to justify a “destination” trip, it is worth the stop if you are in the area.

Across the river, the Hastings, Minnesota, city trail offers a fun three/four hours as you ride past historical areas, in parks, on streets, along the river, on top of a major dike, and up into the newest residential development.

Every bike rider in the country takes at least one trip to the Granddaddy trail: Elroy-Sparta; but few take the adjoining Omaha and Hillsboro trails. The 12-mile Omaha runs north from Elroy to Camp Douglas on I-94. The Elroy end is a long grade up to the highest point on the trail, an 875-foot-long old railroad tunnel that opens to a rest area that is one of my favorite spots in the entire state trail system. In the fall, it is just plain beautiful. From this point, the trail has a long downgrade to the small town of Hustler. Its center is a combination store, coffee shop, post office, etc. I spent most of one rainy afternoon there and had a great visit with the owner/operator/town philosopher. The trail from Hustler to Camp Douglas is flat, somewhat boring, but with a few scenic views.

The Hillsboro trail is 4.3 miles running between Union Center and Hillsboro. A county developed and maintained trail, it was in very poor condition but has been upgraded each year. A number of bridges, some wetlands and other views keep the rider’s interest. I like to start at Elroy, early morning, ride the “400” trail down to the junction, and then over to Hillsboro for breakfast. A couple of small town restaurants provide good eating.

The above are just a few of the many short trails accessible to Menomonie riders. Have you ridden the 1.5-mile trail out of Carson Park in Eau Claire? Start across the road from the ball stadium, out to Menomonie Street, then northeast, meandering along Half Moon Lake and Luther Hospital. Just north of I-94 in Minnesota is the St Croix trail. It runs from a ball field on the east side of Hwy 95 to the Afton city hall. From here you can take an extension down to Afton and the marina. This trail has little to recommend it, except that it is part of what will someday be a trail from Hastings to Stillwater, and you can then say “you rode it when.”

Outside our area are several lesser known trails of special note. Make a point to check out and ride the Green Circle trail in Stevens Point. This 24-mile route takes the rider on city streets, in parks, and through a major forested area. It is well marked except when a sign has been removed for construction.

Take your bike with you when you go to a Packer’s game. The Fox River trail in Green Bay is something to experience if you want to see what big money will do. Developed after years of controversy, it has the best surface I have ridden, with many other features not found on other trails. It is worth the ride just to view some of the houses.

(Con’t on Page 6)

GUEST COLUMNIST (CONT) HARLYN LARSON

The BATS trail out of Boulder Junction is just plain fun. It is a narrow, blacktopped, 11-mile ride cut out of the woods with corners, hills, and road crossings that will keep your interest. The Friends of the Red Cedar Trail are fortunate to have the Red Cedar, Old Abe, Chippewa, Cannon River, and other trails at hand. Each outing on these provides a new experience with rivers, wild life, other riders, or the weather. Take advantage of the many biking/hiking opportunities that make life in Wisconsin the best there is.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Position: Project Coordinator

Location: Red Cedar State Trail/Depot Visitors Center

Reports to: President of Friends of Red Cedar State Trail (70%)

Executive Director, Menomonie Area Chamber of Commerce (30%)

Position Requirements and Qualifications: Experience in the hospitality and tourism industry or experience in customer service/marketing. Must possess excellent organizational, oral and written communication skills, and have the ability to manage time and volunteers. Must also have above average knowledge of the Red Cedar State Trail as well as other assets of the Greater Menomonie Area that appeal to visitors. Must be creative and possess computer skills using Microsoft Word and Excel.

Primary Responsibilities:

- 1. To develop, plan, coordinate and implement activities and programs as directed by the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail. Increase Friend member's participation in trail projects and other activities of the organization.**
- 2. Must also be able to work within the requirements of the Greater Menomonie Area Chamber of Commerce as it relates to visitor services at the Depot visitor center. This position also has frequent contact with the DNR Manager of the Red Cedar State Trail.**

Secondary Responsibilities:

- 1. Attend monthly Board meetings of the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail.**
- 2. Identify with Friends members and the DNR projects to improve the Red Cedar Trail for visitors.**
- 3. Coordinate and participate in Friends work projects.**
- 4. Perform other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the president of the Chamber.**
- 5. Physical Requirements: Must be able to walk 3-5 miles; Must be able to lift 30 pounds.**

If interested in this position, please contact the Menomonie Area Chamber of Commerce Office, 342 East Main, Menomonie

WELCOME

New this year, next to the Depot, is Brickyard Cyclery. Brickyard Cyclery is a full service bike shop (sales, service, rental). Also, refreshments (candy, snacks, soda, etc.) will be available. During the summer biking season, they will be open 7 days a week; currently, the exact hours are being worked out.

In the preliminary stage, are plans to be a ski shop during the winter ski season.



On The Trail

Oh, ho, Spring is here,
 'tis time to get our bikes in gear.
 The whole world beckons,
 A time to ride
 A trail is waiting, lets go, side by side.
 The birds above urge us along,
 By singing their sweet melodic song.
 Bright sunshine splashes amidst the trees.
 Leaves all a'flutter as they catch that breeze.
 Our day is beginning in perfect style,
 As we head onward mile by mile.
 The pedals keep moving faster and faster,
 We better slow down to avert a disaster.
 A spot to rest now comes into view,
 A good, cold drink, a snack or two.
 And then onward, down that trail, what fun,
 A day rolls by, the day is done.



The Happy Biker

Charlie Brown:

"Sometimes I lie awake at night and I ask, 'What can I do to keep my life from going by so fast?' Then a voice comes to me that says, "Try slowing down at the corners".

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



Don't forget to get your annual trail pass

Mark your Calendar
Annual Meeting/Program
Tuesday, June 7, 2005
(See Page 2 for Details)

FRIENDS OF THE RED CEDAR STATE TRAIL

Join Today!

(or renew your membership)
Dues for 2005 start January 1st

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

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 | |

Annual Memberships Include:

- Membership Card
- Newsletters
- Information on Outings
- 10% discount on Merchandise

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