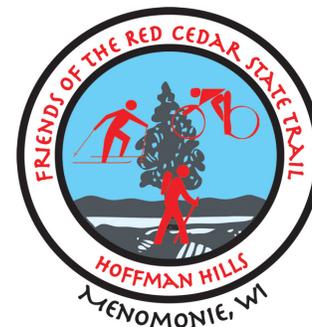


Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills Newsletter



Number 60 - Summer 2017

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NATIONAL TRAILS DAY - JUNE 3, 2017

The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills have a great day planned for **National Trails Day, Saturday, June 3, 2017, from 10:00 a.m. to noon.** Activities are planned at the Red Cedar State Trail, Depot Visitor Center. The trail, always free for walking, will be free for biking on June 3, 2017. Fishing is also free at Riverside Park. Free cookies and lemonade will be provided.

The DNR will have a booth set up in the Depot, the Girl Scouts will again provide the supplies for folks young and old to make a bird feeder, Mayo Clinic will be available to conduct free bike helmet checks and, geo-caching will be available from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Some units will be provided, or bring your own. Fishing poles and lures will be provided for the free fishing, or you can bring your own.

New this year, will be a fun scavenger hunt of, "how many bird nests can you find?" Local wildlife photographer, Jen Grant, will lead this fun hunt. The hunt will end at approximately mile 1 of the trail, with a photography shoot of eagles and other birds, in the "Watch What Flies By," presentation. Jen's activities start at 10:00 a.m., and she will be available until noon.

The Chamber of Commerce will have the Depot staffed and DNR staff is available to answer any questions. Trail passes, annual dues as a Friends' member, and t-shirts can be purchased.

Although the activities end at noon, everyone is encouraged to get out and enjoy a walk or bike on the Red Cedar State Trail and to enjoy a hike at Hoffman Hills. Looking forward to seeing everyone out enjoying National Trail Day on the Red Cedar State Trail.

Wet and cold! Pretty well describes our spring so far. Recent heavy rains have flooded many sections of the Red Cedar Trail for the latter part of May. The bridge replacement project at Dunnville Wildlife Area has stalled out since the road is flooded. As I'm writing this newsletter there's been more complaints of flood damage all the way to Eau Claire on the Chippewa Trail. DNR staff will be assessing damage as soon as possible and repairing what we can. Besides repairing the trail from the floods and replacing a bridge near mile 13 we will be working to replace many degraded and plugged culverts all along the trail system this summer. Expect temporary delays as this work continues. We also have a project to update our hand pump drinking fountain at the Hoffman Hills main parking this summer with a pressurized drinking fountain. Hopefully we will have that in place by early June for our visitors to enjoy!

Volunteers have been busy on both properties this spring already. Another 100 oak trees have been planted by volunteers of the optimist club and UW-Stout at Hoffman Hills in the west field. We also had a group of students from Menomonie install tree shelters to protect all these young trees. The students really enjoyed spending time outdoors and breezed through installing all the shelters we had. We had a little extra time afterwards so we checked some of the other plantings. The oak trees in the first field that was planted back in 2010 were big enough we decided to actually remove shelters from some of the trees. This is a great sign that the savanna is really taking off. The prairie plants are really taking off too with many different types of prairie wildflowers coming up. You can also see some new flowers planted around the rest rooms at Downs ville, which really improves the look around there. Make sure to plan a day trip on the trails to enjoy the hard work of our volunteers and staff, and to see your investment in these properties as a Friends member.

I want to send out a big thanks to our volunteers for their generous time in these projects!

We would like to thank you for your support of the two beautiful properties that we are blessed with. I hope everyone has had a good spring and has been able to get out on either the Red Cedar Trail or Hoffman Hills as they are exploding with new growth after the rainy spring we have had. It continues to amaze me how on every trip down the Red Cedar Trail or on a hike around Hoffman Hills a person sees things that they had not seen previously even though they use the trails regularly. I have skied the Red Cedar Trail in the winter for over 30 years but living out in the Cedar Falls area we tended to ride bikes and walk out there. Early last summer we moved to town and biking or walking the Red Cedar Trail is a now a daily event for us. What struck me as I was thinking about what to put in this report was how much the Trail changes with the seasons and how each season offers a different, wonderful experience. The wildlife, vegetation and the river itself seem to change as we roll from one season to the next and each day gives you something new to see.

With our move it also gave me a perspective of how many people use the Red Cedar Trail year long and while I always knew that the number was high in the summer and winter, I had no idea the number of people that use it in the fall and spring. On fall or spring days you will see a slight decline from our peak summer season however I think the walkers make up for a few less bikers so again it is slight.

The Friends group had a good year while trying to meet our mission of supporting the Red Cedar Trail and Hoffman Hills. The Candlelight Ski on the last Friday of January was very successful as we had enough snow to make skiing and snowshoeing a fun time for everyone and the people who walked along the river said it was beautiful. Soon we will have our annual event for National Trails Day and hopefully a nice sunny day will greet us.

You will see a bike pump located at the Depot and another in Downsville which were made possible by a grant from Rotary Club of Menomonie. We will be having a short program on August 23rd at 5:30 PM to thank Rotary and all are welcome. You will also see a new door on the Depot which will allow easier access to our volunteers who continue to do a great job helping our many visitors. Hoffman Hills has many exciting changes happening which you can read about in Calvin's DNR report.

We once again thank you for your support whether it is with memberships, volunteering or promoting our properties in other ways. As always if you can let others know how joining the Friends group helps us keep the Red Cedar Trail and Hoffman Hills maintained at the level we have come to expect, we greatly appreciate it. Enjoy the summer.



Donor Tree in Depot to honor local business sponsors and members.



New bike pumps located at the Depot and Downsville

Vice-President's Report

Ellen Ochs

Memberships keep our organization going, and part of my job on the board is keeping tabs on membership renewals. We've begun a drive to sign up business members, and if you want to see which businesses support the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills, check out our web site! We also are in the process of mounting a list of business sponsors on the interior wall of the Depot at the Trail Head -should be finished soon!

But we don't want to fall behind with individual and family memberships. We rely on you - have you renewed your membership for 2017? Does our new "green" emphasis on emailing the newsletter serve you as well or better than the old snail mail copy?

Starting Memorial Day weekend, the Depot on the Red Cedar Trail will be open daily all summer, selling trail passes, bottles of cold water, a new selection of "Friends" t-shirts, and other items. We help staff the Depot with Volunteer Friends, working 3 hour shifts. I work with Penny Thiede-Klish to coordinate these wonderful people. Be sure to thank them when you see them, and enjoy the new displays Penny has brought in.

Recruiting next summer's volunteers is already on our minds. How about you? Parks and Trails are suffering from funding cuts, and these volunteer services really help - and it's fun to do! The Friends get a percentage from our sale of trail passes, which we use towards upkeep and improvements to the Trail and Hoffman Hills. Think about joining us Depot Volunteers!

Webmaster Report

Joe Hagaman

Check out the Friends website for more information about two of Dunn County's favorite recreational areas. The website averages 200 to 300 unique visits per month and our Facebook page has 258 "Likes" - 70 more than last year. Previous newsletters are also on the site and a listing of all the new board members.

Friends website: <http://redcedarhoffman.org>

Friends Facebook Page: search for Friends of the Red Cedar Trail and Hoffman Hills and click the "LIKE" button.

The success of this year's business membership drive was reflected in a substantial increase in contributions. As of May 20, 2017 our receipts for business memberships and donations totaled \$1900, compared to \$200 last year at this time. Half of that total is diverted from the general fund to the Hoffman Hills grooming account. Individual memberships are down, however, with \$610 collected so far -- approximately \$400 short of last year's receipts at this date. Individual donations offered in addition to membership were \$153 to the general fund and \$110 to the Hoffman Hills grooming account. Thank you, generous members! Our general operating balance is currently \$2430.56 and the Hoffman Hills Grooming balance is \$5258.87, for a total operating balance of \$7689.43.

Our 2014 Stewardship Grant -- a matching grant with the DNR -- has already provided funding for striping the Depot parking lot, remodeling the inside of the building, and purchasing a new sandwich board for event information. In April of 2017 the balance of the funds were used to replace the Depot door. Now that payments for all jobs have been submitted we will be closing this grant, resulting in reimbursement of \$1080 for expenses. This will raise our total operating balance to \$8769.43.

The Bike Station Grant was also closed recently. \$1215 of this \$1250 grant went toward the two bike pump stations, and the remaining \$35 was applied to the cost of signs recognizing the Rotary Club as the grant provider.

Continued support of the Hoffman Hills Oak Savannah will be provided by the Oak Savannah account, which has a balance of \$1663.85. This amount, combined with our total operating balance and anticipated Stewardship Grant reimbursement, gives us approximately \$10423 in total funds available.

Concurrent with National Trails Day on Saturday, the Chippewa Valley Nature Festival will be offering additional activities of interest to nature lovers. See the website at:

<http://www.chippewavalleynaturefestival.com> for a schedule of all activities.

Important Dues Reminder for 2017

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 and National Trails Day. As a reminder, dues can be paid by using the form on the last page of this newsletter and mailing to the address indicated. You can also go to the Friends website and join on-line with your debit card.

<http://redcedarhoffman.org/membership/>

**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



Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills

Join Today!

(or renew your membership)

Dues for 2017 (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"/> \$20 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Small Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Large Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Student | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Sponsoring Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Lifetime | |

Special Contribution to the CC Ski Grooming Fund _____