

# Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills Newsletter



Number 68 - Winter 2020

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## DNR Representatives

Dave Hladilek  
Calvin Kunkle  
Penny Thiede-Klish

## Website:

[redcedarhoffman.org](http://redcedarhoffman.org)



FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 2020  
6 to 9PM at the Depot

- Ski the Red Cedar Trail and see the ice wall
- Walk the Stokke Trail
- Snowshoe at Riverside Park

Ski rentals available in advance from Stout Adventures and Simple Sports.  
Snowshoes provided free at the event by Mayo Clinic.

After skiing, walking, or snowshoeing, warm up with a cup of hot chocolate provided by Swiss Miss and cookies provided by Kwik Trip around the glowing bonfire. And Lucette Pizza is right next door to enjoy good food afterwards. **It's a fun time for the whole family to experience the joys of winter.**

Event sponsored by the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills, Wisconsin DNR, ConAgra/Swiss Miss, Lucette, Kwik Trip and Mayo Clinic Health System.

Website: [redcedarhoffman.org](http://redcedarhoffman.org)  
or call 715-232-1242

## **Trail Manager's Report**

**Cal Kunkle**

Winter came in like a lion and hasn't stopped roaring!

It's probably one of the earliest ski seasons we've had in a long time. It's been a challenging season so far though, with multiple heavy snow storms to clean up from and to groom after. Luckily, we have a great group of staff and volunteers that have spent a lot of time getting trails ready for the ski season. Altogether we cleared about 70 fallen trees off the Red Cedar Trail and just a couple of trees at Hoffman Hills. Trails are in good condition though, with all the snow this year.

Early this winter we were able to complete the frost seeding at Hoffman Hills with the help of the Menomonie Optimist Club, and the Menomonie Middle and High School. This project completed the seeding of about 5 acres of an oak savanna restoration on the property. We'll be continuing to do habitat restoration work at the property in the future by removing undesirable brush, trees, and continuing to maintain the planted oak seedlings.

We look forward to working with our community partners on trail, habitat, and property enhancements projects this coming year. Thank you all for the support in being Friends members and hope to see you at the Candlelight Ski/Hike/Snowshoe event January 31.

## **Treasurer's Report**

**Deb Challe**

2019 was a solid financial year for the Friends of the Red Cedar Trail. Memberships – our primary source of regular revenue – added exactly \$3000 to the general budget, with 82% of that total coming from area businesses. Overall, membership dollars increased 5% from last year, and we certainly appreciate that funding! Depot trail pass and merchandise sales also provide us with income opportunities and both enjoyed modest gains over last year's earnings, bringing in a combined total of \$1948.

The largest expenditure for 2019 was the application of the \$5000 Conagra Brands Grant toward the installation of two water dispensers along the trail. We also contributed \$1743 to the purchase of a Tidd Tech groomer earlier in the year. Other substantial disbursements covered regular expenses such as brochure/map printing, t-shirt printing, insurance, and the funding of special events.

As of December 31, 2019 there is \$8436 in the operating fund and \$3141 in the Hoffman Hills grooming account for a combined total of \$11,577 in the checking account. This compares favorably with last year's balance of \$10,377.

Don't forget to buy your trail passes and renew your memberships. As always, thank you for your continued support of the Friends.

Happy New Year and I hope 2020 is off to a good start for all of you. The Friends thanks you for your past support of our two trails and I hope you can continue to help us whether by membership, volunteering and if possible, both.

The Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills are off to a great start this winter even with the uneven weather we have had since Thanksgiving. The new piece of grooming equipment that we purchased last year for the Red Cedar State Trail has worked very well and has allowed us to keep the trail in much better shape than in the past. We are continually trying to improve the experience of people using the trail and keeping this in mind we hope to replace our 30-year-old snowmobile as it is time. Hopefully with donations and grants we will be able to accomplish this soon. Hoffman Hills has been in great shape thanks to the efforts of our volunteer groomers and we have some exciting projects coming for that property that we will fill you in on as the year goes by.

Both properties continue to have a tremendous economic impact to Dunn County as we draw visitors not only from Wisconsin and Minnesota but from all over the country. The comments that we receive with how impressed visitors are with the beauty, cleanliness and maintenance of the sites make us proud to be part of the effort to achieve this and I thank you for all you do to make this possible.

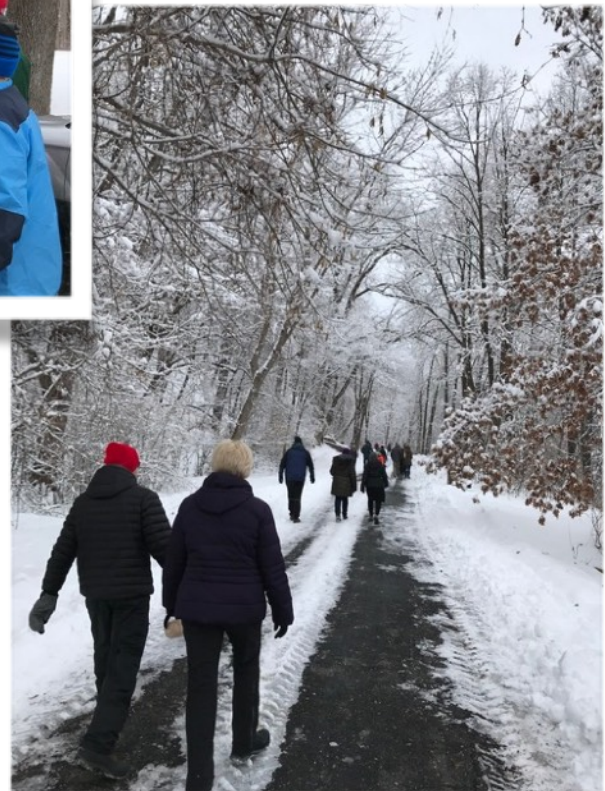
Our focus will be to continue to help make both properties as user friendly as possible. 2019 was a great year for the group as along with our partner the DNR we helped host the First Day Hike on January 1 and the National Trails Day gathering – both very successful. As I mentioned in the last newsletter although we had a record snowfall in 2019 we did not have the Candlelight Ski as the snow came starting the day after it had been scheduled but based on current trail conditions and the forecast I am confident that this year's event on January 31<sup>st</sup> will be held and successful – I hope you can all come out and enjoy a fun night. Volunteers continue to help at the Depot throughout the summer which allows the many people who visited the trail to get their questions answered, purchase trail passes and walk away with that personal touch which helps bring them back. UW-Stout Professor Julia Chapman was our guest presenter at our annual meeting held in November and she talked about the importance of old-growth forests. Julia did a great job and had the crowd interest based on the number of questions that she was asked. We also want to thank the Raw Deal which allowed us to host the event at their location.

A special thanks to Calvin, Penny and the rest of the DNR staff for all they do for the Red Cedar Trail and Hoffman Hills. It was a very special year in that Calvin was named Outstanding DNR Land Manager by the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks Group and this was so well deserved. On a bit of a sad note for us he also was promoted to park manager of Lake Wissota State Park and the DNR will be looking to fill his position in the next few months. Until the position is filled Calvin is still overseeing both of our properties along with his new duties so we have not missed a beat.

I will end by thanking everyone for your support and asking for your continued support to help us with our mission. I wish you all the best in 2020.

We opened the New Year with another **1<sup>st</sup> Day Hike**, and it was a great success! We had nearly double last year's turnout, with about 40 hikers on the Stokke Trail, and 10 skiers on the Red Cedar, led by Seth Mahoney, and the conditions were very good! Of course everyone was happy to stop afterward at the Depot for hot chocolate and cookies! What a wonderful way to spend January 1<sup>st</sup>! Come on down next year!

Of course we are already laying plans for the **summer season** at the Depot. We have great volunteers but could always use a few more. We recruit and train volunteers to staff the Depot on weekdays, Monday through Thursday, from Memorial Day to Labor Day (The DNR has been staffing the weekends and holidays). Training includes how to accept credit and debit cards for payment at the Depot, by means of a donated iPad & a HotSpot! We make it work, which is much appreciated by the public! Three hour shifts, - and a fun Volunteer Recognition Picnic in September. - please contact me ([ellenbochs@yahoo.com](mailto:ellenbochs@yahoo.com)) if you are interested in this opportunity!





# Friends of Wisconsin State Parks

*Preserving, Promoting, Protecting and Enhancing State Parks, Forests, Trails, and Recreational Areas*

## 2019 HERO AWARD Winners:

### \*Outstanding DNR Land Manager Awards:

#### Calvin Kunkle

Calvin has been a dedicated DNR land manager and has a great working relationship with the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail and Chippewa River State Trail. Through his efforts, he brings community support for the trails, community volunteers, integrates the trails with local events and leads projects like new trail construction, signage & reroutes and supports the Adopt a Trail program and works on trail enhancement projects. Often his work involves meeting with multiple user groups and keeping everyone updated on the progress of the project.

Most recently, Calvin spearheaded the initial inspiration, then the coordination, development and final layout of a new Chippewa Valley Trails system map involving 24 different representatives. Thank you, Calvin for all of your hard work and support!



**Elizabeth and Calvin Kunkle**

**\* Cal was recently honored as one of two Land Managers by the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks at a ceremony in Wausau in November.**

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 578 "Likes", up by almost 200 over the previous year. Previous newsletters are also on the site and a listing of all the board members.

Friends website: [redcedarhoffman.org](http://redcedarhoffman.org)

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

## **Important Dues Reminder for 2020**

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.

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

Type to enter text

**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**



# Join Today!

(or renew your membership)  
Dues for 2020 (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 \_\_\_\_\_**