

Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills Newsletter



Number 71 - Winter 2022

In This Issue

Candlelight Ski	1
Trail Manager's Report	2
Treasurer's Report	3
Web/Facebook Report	3
President's Report	4
Vice President's Report	5
Dues Reminder	6

Board of Directors

Bill Kryshak, President
Ellen Ochs, Vice-president and
Membership
Deb Challe, Treasurer
Joe Hagaman, Webmaster and
Newsletter Editor
Vicki Ebensperger
Abraham Smith
Deb Benoit
Avigdor Edminster

DNR Representatives

Dave Hladilek
Calvin Kunkle
Penny Thiede-Klish

Website:

redcedarhoffman.org



FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2022

6 to 9PM at the Depot Trail Head
in Menomonie

- Ski the Red Cedar Trail and see the ice wall
- Walk the Stokke Trail (snow or no snow)
- Snowshoe at Riverside Park

Ski rentals available in advance from Stout Adventures.
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 around the glowing bonfire. **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, ConAgra/Swiss Miss, and Mayo Clinic Health System.

Website: redcedarhoffman.org
or call 715-232-1242

Welcome to a new year! 2021 has been quite an ordeal but let's hope that 2022 is finally the year we get back to somewhere close to normal. Park staff were very busy for the summer spending time cleaning out plugged ditches between miles 1-3 and 9-11 as there were multiple landslides that occurred in these areas during the year from heavy rainstorms. Landslides are just a normal occurrence as the picturesque cliffs that are adjacent to the trail naturally erode. Of course, park staff are always busy cleaning up downed trees along the trails from storm damage. Even into December, staff and volunteers cleared over 20 downed trees at Hoffman Hills and the Red Cedar Trail from the unusual derecho that blew through the area. The pine thinning at Hoffman Hills was completed in September. Some areas of the pine plantation were well overdue for a harvest and the more open canopy will allow new trees to regenerate the forest. This will bring more tree diversity into the forest and give the other pine trees room to grow even larger. We are also hoping to go back and do some buckthorn control to give the young trees a chance to grow above this invasive plant. DNR staff did install a deer exclusion fence at Hoffman Hills near the Hawk Ridge Trail. This fence will be up for about 5 years to demonstrate how deer browse effects forest health. In a few years you should notice a considerable difference in height between tree saplings inside the fence that are not being browsed compared to ones being continually munched on outside of the fence.

Also, I have a plenty of volunteers to thank for this year. Allison Falkner completed her Eagle Scout project in October by establishing a new pollinator garden by the Depot Visitor Center and installing new signage. That area will be a great learning tool for visitors to understand the importance of reestablishing native plants to support our pollinator populations. I want to thank Andersen Logistics that did a trail cleanup day in November by pulling buckthorn and picking up garbage between Irvington and Downsville. Of course, our winter groomers have been hard at work getting the ski trails groomed. Please thank Bill Kryshak, Dave Gorman, and Dave Challe if you see them out grooming. Bill Kryshak and Dave Challe spent a considerable amount of time cleaning up from the December storm. Again, I can't say this enough, but our parks and trails wouldn't be what they are without volunteers and the community support we receive.

I hope every has a safe new year! Get out and enjoy the great parks and trails we have in the Menomonie area.

Treasurer's Report

Deb Challe

2021 was a busy financial year for the Friends of the Red Cedar Trail! Income from memberships saw a nice boost, with individual memberships showing a 26% increase over last year, and business memberships going up 65%. We really appreciate those contributions as they're our main source of revenue. Proceeds from trail pass sales was down 30% from 2020, but we still managed to earn \$555 through online sales.

The biggest impact on the FRCT financials was the establishment of a Grooming Equipment Account to fund the cost of a new grooming snowmobile. That account has grown substantially over the year with income from the following sources:

Dunn County Cooperative Grant.....	\$1,500
Rotary Grant.....	\$500
Optimist Club Donation.....	\$500
Transfer from HH/RC Grooming Account.....	\$2,820
Individual Donations.....	\$7,193
Business Donations.....	\$2,642

TOTAL.. \$15,155

There have been many generous donors and we thank everyone who is helping us meet the goal of purchasing that snowmobile!

In addition, as of December 31, 2021 there was \$10,787 in the Operating Fund and \$2,246 in the Hoffman Hills / Red Cedar Grooming Account for a combined total of \$13,033 in the checking account.

Don't forget to buy your trail passes and renew your memberships. Both can be accomplished via the website: <https://redcedarhoffman.org/> As always, thank you for your continued support of the Friends!

Web/Facebook 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 821 "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: <https://redcedarhoffman.org/>

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

Happy New Year and I hope 2022 will be a good year for all. The Friends thanks you for your past support of our two beautiful 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 got off to a slow start this winter for skiing as the first big storm was quickly followed by record high temperatures which ended suddenly with the tremendous winds. The winds took down a number of big trees on both properties and it took some time for the trails to be cleared. Once that was cleaned up, the groomers did get out and do their best to start getting the trails back in shape. Hopefully we are skiing on good conditions and enjoying the winter as you read this. We were given permission to hold the Candlelight Ski on January 28th which is exciting after last year's cancellation.

As noted previously in our newsletters the grooming of the Red Cedar has been done with a 1991 Ski Doo Alpine which has seen its better days. We started planning for a replacement of the snowmobile over a year ago by writing grants, having our 2021 business memberships go to the grooming account and following up this fall by doing a fundraiser asking people we know ski regularly on our trails. It was very successful as skiers and additional donations from other organizations provided us with the money needed to look for the new snowmobile. As you know many things are in limited supply and snowmobiles are no exception so it is not as easy as just going to a dealer and picking one up. To groom you need very specific machines as we are not trying to go 90–100 MPH, we instead need a machine that can go 10-15 MPH and not overheat. We have a number of dealers searching for our specific needs but the most likely alternative is that we will order one and it will be ready for the 2022–2023 season. We will continue fundraising for both the snowmobile and future grooming equipment as the roller we use is older than the snowmobile. If interested in making a donation the link is noted below and we thank you in advance for a contribution.

<https://red-cedar-trail-and-hoffman-hills.square.site/product/snowmobile/21?cs=true&cst=custom>

The Red Cedar Trail and Hoffman Hills continue to have a tremendous economic impact to Dunn County and the last two years has showed us how important these properties are to our community as we have had a record number of visitors. This is a tribute to the work of our local DNR and the many volunteers that help in their effort. We do need your help to continue with the maintenance and upkeep of the properties as reality is the State of Wisconsin is not increasing park budgets so it is up to us. Sadly, I am convinced “up to us” is going to continue to be the norm and while it is disappointing that additional resources are not coming to parks and recreation areas, the day-to-day solution is that all of us continue to make sure the properties are an integral part of our community.

The last two years have been a little different however our goals have not changed. Our focus will be to continue to help make both properties as user friendly as possible. While we could not hold our annual trail events in 2021, we did have a successful year which was capped off by a great presentation on “The Benefits of Bats in Wisconsin” by Dr. Amy Wray at our annual meeting in November. Hopefully you will be able to join us in November of 2022 as I am confident that once again our guest presenter will do a great job – they always do.

A brave group of hikers completed the annual First Day Hike on the Junction Trail on January 1st, 2022, enduring frigid temperatures and warming up on the way by making new trail friends!

Three board members of the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills plus one stalwart trail groomer gathered at the parking lot and met a Chippewa Falls couple who had seen the Friends' Facebook post there. We were warmed by lively conversation, while one husband-Friends member held the fort at the heated Depot in case of late-comers (There were none.)

It was actually a beautiful day for a walk along that wind-sheltered trail!



Important Dues Reminder for 2022

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/>

**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 2022 (Jan. – Dec.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Email Address _____

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 _____

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**