

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



Number 74 - Spring 2023

**Snake Discovery  
educational program**



**bike helmet  
GIVEAWAY** (while supplies last!)

courtesy of  
Dunn County Health  
Department &  
Community Health  
Foundation




Come and celebrate  
**National Trails Day**  
at the  
**Red Cedar State Trail**

**Saturday, June 3, 2023**  
10:00 - 12:00

**\* Snake Discovery at 10:15 \***

Depot Visitor Center  
824 Hudson Road  
(train location: Menomonie Public Library)

**FREE fun for all!**

Sponsored by  
Friends of Red Cedar State Trail  
<https://redcedarhoffman.org/>

**Bookmobile**  
courtesy of  
Menomonie  
Public Library




**FREE  
mini bike  
tune-up**  
courtesy of  
Simple Sports

**fishing**



**crafts  
and  
activities**




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## DNR Representatives

Dave Hladilek  
Calvin Kunkle  
Penny Thiede-Klish

## Board of Directors

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

**Website:** [redcedarhoffman.org](https://redcedarhoffman.org)

Hello Friends,

Whew, what a spring we've had so far! It felt like old man winter just wouldn't let go and then suddenly it was summer. Finally, it's starting to feel a little more like a normal spring in May. Spring has been very busy with new folks coming on board, staff repairing flood damage and opening trail facilities.

We have one new person that was hired in April. Please welcome Michelle Bem who will be working part time at the Depot doing visitor services and working maintenance during the week. There was some spring flood damage by Dunnville Road near mile 12-13. About 200 feet of trail was washed out including Dunnville Road. The trail and road have been repaired with a little more finish grading to complete. We had to haul about 12 dump truck loads of limestone screenings to repair the trail washouts. Besides the flood damage there was also a culvert just south of Menomonie that caved in this spring and thankfully the Dunn County Highway Department helped us out to replace it. The trail was also graded and packed after the damaged portions were repaired. Another spring project that was completed was getting the Downsville rest area and the drinking fountain at Hoffman Hills opened for the year.

Now that we have our maintenance staff on for the summer and most of the spring cleanup work done, we'll be working on a list of things to catch up on for the summer season. We still have a little grading work to complete especially at the area we repaired by Dunnville Road. We have some signage to replace along the trails, bridges to repair, cleanup from the winter storms, and some picnic tables to repair and paint. Some of this work will get mixed in between our normal mowing and trimming routine throughout the summer, which we still have to catch up on.

We may have a couple development projects starting this year on top of our routine maintenance work. The stream crossing near mile 1 ½ is in the process for replacement. That crossing has been damaged many times over the years due to flash flooding events. A new design will hopefully alleviate the issues with the flash flooding that is prevalent in that area. We may also get some funding to replace the windows and entrance door at the Depot. The windows and the entrance door are original to the building which was built in the early 1900's. New windows and doors will match the existing features but will be much more energy efficient. This will be a big improvement not only to the efficiency of the building but to its appearance as well. The Friends had replaced the other entrance door on the west side a few years ago and that will stay as is.

I want to extend my appreciation to all our volunteers who helped with the spring cleaning and the folks that help in the visitor center in the summer. Thanks so much for what you do for the trails!

I hope that you all had a nice winter and hopefully the summer will go well for you also. Thank you for your continued support of the Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills Recreation Area.

We had a successful ski season that included the annual Candlelight Ski. The weather cooperated, if you are a winter outdoor enthusiast, as temperatures were reasonable with light winds. Volunteers greeted over 400 visitors to the trail that evening who enjoyed skiing, snowshoes and walking on the candlelit trails, ending their night with a cup of hot chocolate provided by Conagra. Thanks go to all who help make this event a success.

The new snowmobile was everything we had hoped for and allowed us to groom the Red Cedar State Trail more frequently while being a much safer option for the groomers. We continue to groom Menomonie to Irvington with two classic tracks and a narrower skating lane as over 90% of the skiers on that part of the trail classic ski. From Irvington to Downsville, we groom with one classic track with a much wider skating lane. Next ski season the plan will be that we also roll and pack from Downsville to Hwy Y to allow skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, and skijoring on that stretch.

Hoffman Hills got a bit of a late start due to the storm in December coinciding with the breakdown of our gator. Thanks to Calvin and the DNR for repairing the gator and a big thanks to Dave Challe for leading the cleanup efforts from the storm. Conditions were great once we got up and running, again thanks to Dave for all of his work.

The annual National Trails Day event is scheduled for 10:00 to noon on Saturday June 3<sup>rd</sup> and will include crafts, a reptile exhibit, free fishing, etc., so we hope you can attend. If the weather does not cooperate, we will be holding the event at the Menomonie Public Library and we will inform you of that on our various social media options.

Looking forward to our summer plans, a major project for us is the repair of the gazebo located at Trailhead with a cost of \$4,500. We have received a matching grant for 50% of the project costs and with your support the Friends will cover the other 50%. As noted in other sections in the newsletter, the Depot will be staffed throughout the summer to help visitors enjoy the trail and get information on our community. Finally, we hope to offer a program on foraging this fall and we will keep you updated on that.

We continue to do what we can to support our wonderful properties, making them as user friendly as we can. Again, thank you for your support and have a great summer.

## Vice President's Report

Ellen Ochs

Good news! Our Trail Depot can be open 7 days a week this summer, starting the Monday after Trails Day, to sell passes & T-shirts and give out helpful information. DNR will staff the weekends, & we have some of our wonderful tried and true Depot volunteers plus a miraculous 5 new faces to cover Mondays through Thursdays this summer, keeping the depot open from 10am to 4pm (two 3-hour shifts per day.)

The difference between a dark and shuttered Depot and a Depot with an open door, attended by a friendly face, is huge! Our contribution of time matters. Give a round of applause for our newbies AND our experienced volunteers – stop in and say hi! Visitors make the time more fun!

We could still use one or two more helpful Trail Friends. So if you'd like to help out as an occasional substitute, contact Ellen Ochs ([ellenbochs@yahoo.com](mailto:ellenbochs@yahoo.com) or 715-235-0412

## Treasurer's Report

Deb Challe

Our Treasurer, Deb Challe, is traveling so I will give a summary as of **March 31st**. Memberships have increased recently after a letter went out as a reminder and we thank you for your support. As mentioned in the past, with online sales and purchases made at the Chamber of Commerce office, 80% of the cost of a pass is submitted to the DNR, the remaining 20% comes directly to our organization -- a reminder of the value of buying your passes through the Friends of Red Cedar!

Summary of account balances:

Operating Cash:	\$12,759.32
Hoffman/Red Cedar Grooming:	<u>\$3,119.87</u>
Total funds:	\$15,879.19

## 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 over 1000 "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.

## Friend of Tourism Award

The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills were fortunate enough to be the recipient of the 2022 Friend of Tourism Award presented by Explore Menomonie. The award was presented by Tammy Simon and Grady Richardz from The Menomonie Chamber of Commerce at their annual banquet held on May 17th at the UW Stout Student Center. Vicky Ebersperger and Deb Benoit attended the banquet and accepted the award on behalf of the Friends group.



## Important Dues Reminder for 2023

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 2023 (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 \_\_\_\_\_**