

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



Number 46

Spring/Summer 2011

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## National Trails Day - June 4, 2011

The Friends of the Red Cedar Trail and Hoffman Hills along with the Wisconsin DNR will be sponsoring many activities for National Trail Day from 10:00-2:00. The Depot Visitors Center (near Riverside Park) will host all the events. The trail, always free for walking will also be free for biking for the day. Simple Sports and Bad Cat Bicycles will be at the trail head to give your bikes a quick tune-up and safety check. Lunch will be available.

Lots of fun activities are planned for the day. Cookies, lemonade will be available from 10:00-2:00. About 10:15, Sandra McNaughton will conduct a workshop on nature photography. Bring your cameras and walk down the trail with Sandy to snap pictures and receive tips on improving your pictures of nature. She will talk about color, texture and line, show you how to frame your picture and how to get great results with your point and click camera. The Raptor Center from the University of Minnesota will again bring eagles and other birds of prey around 11:00. They will be there for you to ask questions and gather information about the birds until about 1:00. Jim Swanson, the voyageur from the 1700s, will bring his canoe and discuss the importance of the rivers in the history of the state. See what a voyageur needed to survive the weather and rivers of Wisconsin. Jim will be set up from 10:30-12:30. About 11:30, join Bill Dingwall to dissect an owl pellet and talk about owls and their habits.

To finish the day, Penny and Val (from the DNR) will help us become better protectors of our natural resources. They will lead us on a hike, work from the Naturalist books and have resources to take home. DNR representatives will be on hand to answer any questions. This family event is fun for everyone. If you can, call a board member and volunteer to help out or bring your friends down to the trail and join in the fun.

**Annual Meeting - September 8, 2011**

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills will be held at the Depot at 6 PM on Thursday, September 8. More information will be forthcoming later in the summer.

<b>Trail manager's Report</b>	<b>DNR</b>
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The Red Cedar State Trail is alive with Spring wildflowers! We hope to see you out on the trail! Everyone is looking forward to the National Trails Day on June 4th. We are also looking forward to June 5th ! On State Park Open House Day, no admission stickers are required on vehicles entering state parks, forests and recreation areas, and trail passes are not required for bicyclists using state trails that normally require a trail pass. A special thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers who have taken time out of their busy personal schedules to help us accomplish our goal in providing a high quality recreational experience

Please welcome our two new employees, Drew Hawley and Valerie Johnson. Drew will be working on the properties in the maintenance capacity and Valerie is with Visitor Services. She will be spending most of her time on the Chippewa River State Trail. She will also be doing some informal, mini nature presentations. Feel free to say "hello" and introduce yourself to them.

**Drew Hawley**

Since graduating from Baldwin-Woodville in 2000, he has lived in Ely, Minnesota and Moscow, Idaho. He has an Associate degree in Wilderness Management and Bachelors in Conservation Social Science. He is extremely passionate about the outdoors. His interests include hunting, fishing, mountaineering, and horticulture, rock climbing, canoeing, backpacking, cross-country, skiing, and snowboarding.

**Valerie Johnson**

Valerie graduated last May from UWEC with her second degree, a Bachelor of Science in Biology. Her first is a Bachelor of Science in Psychology; career goal being that of a Naturalist with the Department of Natural Resources. She has done volunteer programs at Lake Wissota State Park and Beaver Creek Reserve. Valerie has also put in volunteer hours at the Chippewa Moraine Ice Age Center.

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**President's Report****Doug Voy**

The Friends group has had a rewarding spring volunteer season this year. On Earth Day 30 Menomonie high school students and teachers walked the trails at Hoffman Hills to pick up sticks, move fallen trees, cut overhanging branches and toe-tripping roots. Thank you to Mariah Karis, student, and Audric Buhr, advisor, for arranging the outing. On Arbor Day, 30 Menomonie Middle School students walked the Red Cedar Trail for a cleanup of fallen branches. Teacher Lisa Tevares and 15 students helped cut buckthorn and cleaned up around the Depot Visitor Center.

On May 14<sup>th</sup> the Optimist Club, with assistance from the Youth Optimist Club of Menomonie Middle School and the Friends planted 300 Bur oaks at Hoffman Hills. John Taylor did a terrific job of planning and organizing the project, including acquiring the trees, laying out the planting pattern and arranging for the holes to be pre-drilled. Thank you to Don Schley for donating funds for this project as well as drilling the holes for the trees. Dennis Spader did a great job of organizing volunteers. Diane Simon is much appreciated for providing lunch for the volunteers. Tim Fasbender, maintenance for the DNR, helped out by providing a water tank and a 4-wheeler for watering the trees after planting. This has been a terrific project and a great tribute to Dick Hoffman, who passed away earlier this year, and who donated the land for this great outdoor recreation facility area.

There are many volunteer opportunities this summer, please contact me if you are interested in helping with watering the Oak Savannah at Hoffman Hills, eradicating Garlic Mustard and Buckthorn or helping out at the Depot Visitor Center.

National Trails Day is June 4<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 2pm so please stop by and see the birds from the U of Minnesota Raptor Center and the other activities planned.

Thank you for all your efforts in keeping our local natural resources an enjoyable experience for all.

**Treasurer's Report****Bill Kryshak**

The membership renewal cards went out this week and we hope for a good response. The member list will be available at the Annual Meeting, so send your renewal now to make the list!! Our current membership consists of 2 "Contributing," 14 "Family," 5 "Individual," and 1 new "Lifetime" member. As of April 30th we have \$7,247.39 in our operating cash account and are holding \$2,238.50 for grooming at Hoffman Hills. Our Grant account has a remaining balance of \$124.00 and our Burr Oak Savanna/Hoffman Hills account has a balance of \$14,481.75. This account is growing due to a major contribution from Don and Nola Schley along with contributions from numerous others in memory of Dick Hoffman.

**Webmaster Report****Joe Hagaman**

The Friends website use has increased over the past year. So far in 2011, the page views per month have been averaging 1500 to 2000 for about 15,000 total visits in the past year. Check it out for yourself at <http://redcedarhoffman.org/>. You will find all sorts of information that will help you enjoy our two premier recreational destinations in the county. For you on-road bikers there is also a page showing the Dunn County Bike Routes just developed this past year.

# Oak Savannah Planting at Hoffman Hills



More pictures can be found on the Friends website: <http://redcedarhoffman.org/>

## What is an Oak Savannah?

From Wikipedia

The oak savannas of the Midwestern United States form a transition zone between the Great Plains to the west and the broadleaf and mixed forests to the east, which were the eastern savannas prior to European settlement. Oak savannas are found in a wide belt from northern Minnesota and Wisconsin, down through Iowa, Illinois, northern and central Missouri, eastern Kansas, and central Oklahoma to north-central Texas, with isolated pockets further east around the Great Lakes. The World Wildlife Fund divides the oak savannas into two ecoregions, the Upper Midwest forest-savanna transition and the Central forest-grasslands transition, distinguished by the predominant tree species. The bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) is the dominant species in the north, while the dominant tree in the south is usually the black oak (*Quercus velutina*), although the chinquapin oak (*Quercus muhlenbergii*) is also common. The dominant grass species is typically the little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*). Oak savannas, because of their mixture of grassland and oak forest, typically are inhabited by more species of plant and animal than grasslands, temperate forests, and sometimes understory jungles, combined! The most dominant animal in Midwest oak savannas is, when it comes to the food chain, the coyote. When referring to populations, the most dominant animal is typically gray, brown, or gray-brown squirrels, and/or white tail deer.

### History

Before European settlement, the oak savanna ecosystem was part of a fire ecology. Fires, set by lightning or Native Americans, ensured that the savanna areas did not turn into forests. Only trees with a high tolerance for fire, principally certain oak species, were able to survive. On sandy soils, black oak (*Quercus velutina*) predominated. On rich soils bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) was the major tree in central North America. These savanna areas provided habitat for a many grazing animals, including American bison, elk and white-tailed deer.

European settlers cleared much of the savanna for agricultural use. In addition, they suppressed the fire cycle. Thus surviving pockets of savanna typically became less like savannas and more like forests or thickets. Many oak savanna plant and animal species became extinct or rare.

### Restoration

In the 1970s, conservation began in the ecological restoration and land-habitat preservation of the surviving areas and regions of oak savanna. This includes grazing timing, restoration replanting, controlled burns, and basic land acquisitions and conservation easements for nature preserves to protect their space needs. Hoffman Hills is now part of the restoration effort.



Fourteen year old oak savannah in Minnesota.

**Nature Valley Grand Prix Bike Race****Barb Gorman**

The Nature Valley Grand Prix bike race is returning to Menomonie on June 18, 2011. Last year's race was filled with fun events and this year's race will be just as exciting. A family fun ride is being planned and as details are confirmed, the information will be posted on the FRCST/HH web page. Downtown Menomonie will host several booths and fairs. The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills will be present, selling t-shirts and providing informational brochures. Bike tours, races for the biking enthusiasts, and tours of cultural and historical sites are being planned. Hope to see everyone at the race!

**West Wisconsin Sustainability Fair****Margy Hagaman**

Sustainable Dunn announces the West Wisconsin Sustainability Fair, Sat. July 16, 8 AM - 2 PM at the Dunn County Fairgrounds, 620 17th St., in Menomonie. This is the third year for a sustainability fair in the community. Coinciding with the Farmers Market, the Fair will host exhibitors from business, government, and non-profit groups, and will offer speakers, workshops, music, energy efficient vehicles, a photo contest, and a tour of the Cedar Falls Dam. For information about having a booth, contact the e-mail below. There will be continuous music provided by local musicians, including Patrick Pesek-Herriges, The Cutaways and Yata's original water song sung by Heather Jerrie.

Speakers will focus on water issues with an emphasis on the Red Cedar Watershed. Karl Hokanson, who was recently hired to coordinate developing a plan for the watershed, will address some of the issues and challenges. Menomonie's Mayor, Randy Knaack has invited mayors and elected official from up and down the watershed to have a roundtable discussion to share successes and challenges in river communities. Other presentations will be on rain gardens, wetlands, shoreline restoration and research on blue-green algae. Anyone wanting to enter a photography contest dealing with water is welcome. Come and shop at the Farmers Market, talk with friends and neighbors, and learn more about sustainability in Western Wisconsin. As more detailed information becomes available, it will be on the Sustainable Dunn website (<http://sustainabledunn.org/>) or you can e-mail [mrhagaman@gmail.com](mailto:mrhagaman@gmail.com).

This year's theme, The Year of Water 2011, will feature a photo exhibition. Entries in the Photo exhibition may be brought to the Fairgrounds on Friday, July 15 between noon and 4 p.m. There is no entry fee.

***Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills Meeting Schedule*****Everyone is Welcome****Regular Meetings ---First Thursday of the months of Jan., March, May, Sept., and Nov.****Time: 7 P.M.****Place: Leisure Services Center (Senior Center), Menomonie****WEB Site: <http://redcedarhoffman.org/>**

**Thank You****Barb Gorman**

So many people continue to give of their time to maintain and improve the Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills. This past winter was a challenging time for the groomers. Skiers were most happy with the amount of snow Mother Nature provided, but it often was a grooming nightmare. The volunteer groomers put in long hours to keep the trails pristine and so many people were out enjoying the fruits of their labor. Many thanks to the groomers: Bill Kryshak, John Wesolek, David Gorman, Chris Ryder (he got the grooming started by spending hours packing the snow), Bruce Jordan, Jerry Porter, Kim Wentworth, Roger Magnuson, Craig Wilm, Dan Gainey, Dan Haug, Erin Endlsey, and Sean Bujold. A thank you also to the many who contributed their ideas and time to work on the problem of trying to groom "with too much snow": Bill and Jane Butsic, Jim Tenorio, and Mike Schmidt. A thank you also to Korey Maves. He helped Chris Ryder and another groomer at Hoffman Hills. In addition to helping pack snow, Korey was a human cushion softening the fall of another groomer, preventing a tumble over a ridge. It was a successful ski season thanks to all of these folks.

The Candlelight Ski on January 28, 2011 saw a large turnout of folks enjoying skiing, snowshoeing or hiking. Many thanks to the DNR staff, Swiss Miss, Jane and Bill Butsic, depot volunteers, Bill Kryshak, Jim Tenorio, Pete May, Paul Peltier, John Wesolek, Dennis Weibel, David Gorman, Bruce Jordan, Doug Voy, Katie Harrington and Dale Seppa. It was a great night. Enough about winter since it seems to be lasting right through spring . . .

The planting of Burr Oaks for the Oak Savanna project has seen an incredible consortium of volunteers. The Oak Savanna project has been exceptionally well organized by the Optimist Club. Numerous individuals and community clubs have given of their time to plant trees, dig holes, mark groves, bring shovels, provide meals, make stakes, paint stakes, donate trees and participate in the Savanna vision. The Menomonie Middle School Optimist Club was a particularly hard working group that assisted other volunteers.

Thank you also to the volunteers and students who assisted with projects on Earth Day and Arbor Day. It won't be long and the wonderful volunteers will be back at the Depot providing services throughout the summer months. The FRCST/HH is fortunate to have so many dedicated volunteers. Thank you all!

**Business Memberships**

**Barb Gorman & Bill Kryshak**

**The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills continues to be fortunate with the memberships of several Dunn County businesses. All memberships are important to the Friends' group as this support helps to improve and sustain the two beautiful nature areas. Businesses have shown an extra commitment to help the Friends and become members. Please support the business members of the Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills.**

**2011 Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills Business Members**

**Bad Cat Bicycles**

**State Farm Insurance, Jackie Hunt**

**BOMAC Vets Plus**

**McCoy Development**

**Cardinal Glass FG**

**Menomonie Farmers Union Co-op**

**Cedar Corporation**

**Phillip M. Steans, S.C.**

**ConAgra/Swiss Miss Foods**

**Phillips Plastics Corporation**

**Dr. Dan Wood, DDS, S.C.**

**Wal-Mart Distribution Center**

**Gary Welsh Construction**

**Xcel Energy**

**Gentle Dental Care, Dr. Lisa Joyce**

**3M Corporation**

**Heritage Builders, Inc**

**Thank You Friends' Business Members**

*The Depot Visitor Center Hours of Operation*

**May 1 until Memorial Day, Labor Day through Oct.**

**Memorial Day through Labor Day**

**Weekdays .....Closed**

**Weekdays .....10 A.M. – 4 P.M.**

**Saturday - Sunday ..... 9 A.M. – 5 P.M.**

**Saturday - Sunday & Holidays .. 9 A.M. – 5 P.M**

**Please Note: The Depot is closed from November until May.**

**Dues Reminder**

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. As a reminder, dues can be paid by using the form on the last page of this newsletter and mailing to the address indicated. As a dues paying member, you will receive a membership card, newsletters and information on Friends activities.

Thank You for your support.

**Interested in Volunteering**

The Red Cedar State Trail and Hoffman Hills are indeed treasures that we locals enjoy as well as the many visitors that they attract. With State Funding cut-backs for trails, the role that volunteer groups play is becoming increasingly important. There are a number of opportunities available where help is needed. Some of the opportunities include eradicating invasive species, working on exhibits, gardening at the depot, repairing bird houses, trail projects, working in the depot, becoming a trail ambassador, or helping with special programs such as the Candlelight Ski and National Trails Day. If you are interested, or have any questions regarding volunteering, contact any of the board members. You will be rewarded knowing that you had a hand in preserving and maintaining these resources. The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills would like to thank all of you who have volunteered in the past on various projects. Thank You.

**Donation Information**

The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail/Hoffman Hills have always been blessed with the willingness of its members and the community to volunteer their time and help with projects.

Also, from time to time, many have chosen to make special monetary gifts. For those wishing to make special monetary gifts, they can be sent to our mailing address: FRCST, P.O. Box 628, Menomonie, WI, 54751. Money received by donation for specific purposes will be subject to approval of the Friends Board of Directors before it is expended for the specific purpose. A Life Time Membership would be provided to a donor for any memorial donation of \$150, or more. In the case of memorial funds, a minimum contribution of \$250 is required for the addition of a plaque. The Friends express our thanks and appreciate the generosity of all donors.

**Merchandise Available in the Depot**

New T-Shirts are this year:

- Green Short Sleeve ... \$15
- Blue Long Sleeve ..... \$18

In addition, there are previous years T-Shirts in orange, gray, beige in some sizes.

Books

- Critters of Wisconsin. \$5. This is a small book with great pictures of mammals and birds commonly seen in Wisconsin. This book is great to carry in your pack or to give to a child.
- The Red Cedar Suite \$5. This book is by Menomonie's Jerry Bowker and Robert Schuler. The beautiful black and white photos by Jerry are enhanced by the poems by Robert.

For \$15.00 you can purchase the Wisconsin State Park Passport Book. This is a fun souvenir for the state park visitor. You put stamps from each state park in the book as you travel around the state.

Menomonie Water Bottles are available for only \$1.00.

Sales benefit The Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills.

<u>Trail Pass Fees</u>	
Daily .....	\$4
Annual .....	\$20
<p>Pass purchase required before using trail for biking or skiing.            Pass is good for all Wisconsin state trails.            Use self-registration stations on the trail.            Same fee for residents and non-residents</p>	

*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

Everyone is welcome to  
attend meetings of the  
Friends Group.  
(See Schedule on Page 4)



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*Friends of the Red Cedar State Trail & Hoffman Hills*

## Join Today!

(or renew your membership)  
Dues for 2010 (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"/> \$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    |  |

Special Contribution to the CC Ski Grooming Fund \_\_\_\_\_