



SPRINGS

Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy Newsletter

Gerri DiMaggio and the World Unit Jazz Benefit Event at Prairie Café on October 6

By Margaret Lewis, Chair, Development and Marketing Committee

We have a special opportunity to celebrate the mission of the Friends Pheasant Branch Conservancy ~ to restore, protect, and promote the Pheasant Branch Conservancy and watershed for today and tomorrow. This is due to the generous offer by member Dan Erdman to host a benefit event at the Prairie Café from 6:00-8:00 PM on Friday, October 6. Gerri DiMaggio and the World Unit Jazz will provide live music described as a sultry mixture of Brazilian jazz. A cash bar and limited food menu will be available.

A native of Madison, Gerri DiMaggio

studied music and voice at the University of Wisconsin, and jazz studies with the venerated Professor of Bass and Jazz History, Richard Davis. She has been a major presence in the Madison



music scene and was one of the original producers of the outdoor summer jazz series “Jazz at Five.” As she and the band expand their presence internationally, you will want to say you heard them here first—and for a good cause.

One way you can support the Conservancy is to become a sponsor of this event. To join us in celebrating the priceless prairies, woodlands, marshes and springs of the Conservancy, you can make a donation at one of the levels listed here before September 30. Your name will be listed on a board at the event, added to our website and included in our annual report.

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“Make a Memory Days” successful for Seniors and those with Cognitive Challenges

By John Daly, Education Committee member and Chair, Accessibility Ad Hoc Committee

After months of planning by the Education Committee, the outreach initiative to the community’s older adults, known as *Make a Memory Days*, took place over several days in August at the Conservancy. The participant attendance numbers indicate the success

of these events; fifty-two older adults did *make a memory*.

The participant evaluations thanked the Friends for providing a learning experience in nature with several positive outcomes. Participants stated that the multiple-hour event provided them an

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Protect. Restore. Promote.



FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Dear Friends,
Wow! What a summer!

Not only is the Conservancy looking beautiful, it provides key habitat to an increasing number of birds and animals. People often comment on how special the Conservancy is, but they may not know how much work goes on behind the scenes by a relatively small group of volunteers. You probably noticed "Tunes on Tuesday" was back for the second year. In addition, the third "Prairie Chase Walk/Run" provided a fun opportunity for runners and walkers. You may also have noticed the trail maintenance improvements going up Frederick's Hill. Less visible but equally important accomplishments include:

- Wisconsin Master Naturalist Training was provided for 14 Master Naturalists
- "Make a Memory Days" gave opportunities to people with limited mobility to enjoy the Conservancy
- Weekly habitat improvement projects were completed by summer interns, led by Rob Schubert
- Ongoing water quality assessment work continued at three locations in the Pheasant Branch Watershed

We are celebrating our successes with a benefit concert at the Prairie Café in Middleton on Friday, October 6 from 6-8 PM. Come enjoy food, fun and jazz performed by Gerri DiMaggio and the World Jazz Unit. Thanks to member Dan Erdman for hosting this event.

I feel privileged to work with such an extraordinary group. All of these great things happen because somebody steps up to make a difference. So if you are looking for a way to give back, please know we can use your time and talents. We offer a wide variety of ways to get involved including: participating in habitat restoration workdays, monthly stream monitoring, assisting with the fun walk/run, hosting a site at "Tunes on Tuesdays," becoming a Master Naturalist, joining a trail maintenance team, volunteering with K-12 school programs, supporting seniors in enjoying the outdoors and of course helping with fund raising events. I know that most of those currently involved feel that they get more out of these activities than they give. It feels good to make a difference on the ground.

Lloyd L. Eagan

OUR BOARD

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Send Newsletter Ideas to
office@pheasantbranch.org

Is your Membership Current?
The mailing name block on this newsletter includes your membership expiration date

Please Visit our Website
www.pheasantbranch.org

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE: DONATE TODAY!

YES! I want to help protect, restore and promote Pheasant Branch Conservancy!

Name: _____

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memberships purchased after 9/1 apply to following calendar year

- \$10 Student
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Additional Giving Opportunities:

- \$100 Friend
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Volunteer Opportunities:

- Restoration
 Education
 Watershed
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Please send your membership and payment to:
FOPBC
P.O. Box 628242
Middleton, WI 53562-8242

Watershed Committee Helps with Successful “Leaf Free Streets Campaign”

By Stefanie Brouwer, Chair, Watershed Committee Chair and Christal Campbell, Dane County Stormwater Education Coordinator

Leaves in city streets are harming our lakes and rivers! In efforts to improve water quality in the lakes and rivers of the Yahara Watershed, leaf management has become an important focus area for Dane County, the Clean Lakes Alliance, local municipalities, water advocacy groups and friends groups. In fall 2016, the FOPBC Watershed Committee partnered with Dane County and the City of Middleton for a successful “Leaf Free Streets Campaign.” In planning the campaign, Dane County considered several candidate municipalities but decided on the City of Middleton because it met two vital criteria: neighborhoods with a large number of mature trees on terraces and a willing friends group - FOPBC - to do door-to-door visits and observational surveys. The intent was to study whether the behavior of city residents could be changed around the issue of leaf removal.

Without leaf removal, phosphorus (P) leached from leaves in the fall (October-November) can contribute as much as 60% of the annual P load from urban areas. Leaves are highly leachable when wet and up to 88% of P in leaves can be leached within 24 hours of soaking. This “leaf tea” flowing into storm sewers is rich (about 80%) in dissolved P. Loads of total and dissolved P in the fall can be reduced by over 80% with an active leaf

removal program.

The study was carried out in two city neighborhoods - Elmwood and Hubbard



Do your part by raking leaves out of the gutter in front of your home

avenues west (pilot area) and Hubbard Avenue east (control area.) The goal was to enlist the help of residents in the pilot area to remove leaves from streets in front of their homes prior to predicted rain events. Residents were sent an informational letter, flyer and pre-stamped commitment postcard. They were asked to complete and return the commitment postcard, sign up to receive text or email alerts prior to a forecasted rain event (50% or greater chance of 1/4 inch rain fall) and remove leaves from the street before the rain. Optional requests included reporting back once

action was taken using the “Adopt a Street Tool” and posting a sign in the terrace as a reminder to neighbors. No information was sent to residents on the control area.

Members of the FOPBC Watershed Committee made door-to-door visits to homes in the pilot area in September and left information packets for residents not at home. Rain events occurred in October and committee members conducted observational surveys in both the pilot and control areas. This required two steps: recording the volume of leaves in the streets both before and after rain events. After the survey stage, residents in both areas were sent a follow-up questionnaire.

Participation in the pilot was very successful: in the pilot area, 39% participated in leaf removal and 59% returned the follow-up questionnaire. In the control area, 36% returned the questionnaire. Based on the success of this pilot and two others (Village of Deforest and Friends of Lake Wingra), Dane County and the Clean Lakes Alliance (CLA) have partnered to create a leaf free streets web site (<http://www.ripple-effects.com/Leaf-free-Streets>), video, door hangers and messaging for local municipalities to use to spread the message and explain actions that residents can take to keep our waters clean.

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Gerri DiMaggio Benefit Event...

You would be listed as a Conservancy...

Friend with a \$100 contribution.

Benefactor with a contribution of up to \$250

Steward with a contribution of up to \$500, and

Hero with a contribution of \$1,000 or more.

Checks can be sent by Sept. 30 to:

FOPBC
P.O. Box 628242
Middleton, WI 53562

Or you can donate any amount at the door. All contributions are welcome including your volunteer hours of prairie restoration. Annual memberships may also be renewed at the event.

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NATURALIST NOTEBOOK: News of Nature in the Conservancy

By Dale Klubertanz, reprinted with permission of the author

Prairies by their own natural essence, one of color, texture and smell, make the summer more wondrous and immeasurable. Forests foster the cool-green intimacy we seek as refuge from busy urban lives. The blue water streams and sedge-lands that welcome the winged wetland wildlife in spring, nurture families of fowl in summer and then see them off to far away places in fall, play out the wild, natural lifecycles of our daily lives. The re-emerging oak savannas of Bock Forest and Frederick's Hill will come to illustrate the common ground among these magnificent plant communities and model the blending of diversity found in long-abiding natural relationships between creatures and plants alike.

Patrons of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy have the good fortune of glimpsing of what the native environments and ecosystems in Dane County might have looked like in 1835, prior to European settlement. Prairies everywhere were all dressed up in summer and gloriously in play as fellow communal plants and animals on a long 10,000-year-old journey. Throughout southern Wisconsin, savannas of oak trees and prairie flowers filled the transition zones

between prairies and eastern forests. Still, even then, there were already parts of these communities that had disappeared, such as the American bison, the last one east of the Mississippi River shot here in Wisconsin in 1832. The loss of parts of age-old plant and wildlife relationships found in these deeply-rooted plant communities represent the first tinkering of ecosystems, which have long since come tumbling down. These long-abandoned missing parts have been

"The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant, 'What good is it?' If the land mechanism as a whole is good, then every part is good, whether we understand it or not. If the biota, in the course of aeons, has built something we like but do not understand, then who but a fool would discard seemingly useless parts? To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering."

~ Aldo Leopold

difficult and sometimes impossible to recover.

The corn, hayfields and farmland that until recently surrounded the wetlands, remnant woodlands and grasslands within Pheasant Branch Conservancy are now also gone. They have been reclaimed by caring individuals with newly found hope and understanding of what has been lost and needs to be recovered, for its own sake and our own true survival. These past human agrarian endeavors made use of an indiscriminant tinkering with ecosystems without regard for the hard-won complexities of interworking parts

and relationships. This tampering often severed the community bonds linking creatures, trees and plants, inviting in exotic plants from afar, not interested in community, especially old ones.

The ghost of the "buffalo" is somehow instilled in the genetics of the prairie remnant, in the rugged savanna oak tree, in how the tall red-green grasses grow high over the yellow August goldenrod and purple asters of September that turn autumn into russet gold. They, as with all the lost towering mega fauna, will be invisible to the visitor dazzled by the present-day splendor of the Conservancy. The prevailing beauty can obscure how farm fields once covered the land around the springs and under Frederick's Hill, they themselves carved from ancient prairies.

Thoughtful hands and minds are now restoring these Conservancy lands, using genetic codes found in the timeworn seed worked out through millennia, by plant, creature, soil and water. We are fortunate for this understanding, and for dedication and benevolent tinkering of these sacred prairies, woodlands, wetlands and savannas, for it is with them we belong and learn about our own native, wild and sacred natures.

Wisconsin Master Naturalist...

Continued from page 10

the Conservancy. In his presentation, he demonstrated an app that can be used to do fungi ID through crowdsourcing. The Friends will be adding the fungi survey to the website, along with flora

and fauna. Each student had an amazing Capstone project that will make a difference in the Conservancy and other natural areas either in the area of education

or restoration and management. The instructors are planning to offer the course next June as well. Check out www.wimasternaturalist.org or the website in spring for updates on the next training.

Diversity and Resilience in the Flora of the Conservancy

By Janet Kane, Co-Chair, Restoration and Management Committee

One of the primary management goals in the Dane County Unit of the Conservancy is native plant diversity. Invasive plants threaten natives and can establish monocultures, limiting the food and shelter that is needed to support many species of insects, birds, and other animals. Diversity is a rough index of the health of an area.

Burning is a primary management tool. Each fall, R&M members meet with County Parks staff to prioritize burn areas and get cost estimates from burn contractors. Once the Friends' budget is set for the year, we identify the areas to be burned, given the available budget. Burning is especially helpful in knocking back woody invasives like non-native honeysuckle and buckthorn. After a burn, volunteers walk the area and remove any brush that evaded the fire.

There are more invasives than we have resources to control, so priorities are essential. We target species that can take over a prairie, like crown vetch, birds foot trefoil, and reed canary grass. Crown vetch is often planted along roadsides and trails for erosion control. Birds foot trefoil is the plant with the bright yellow flowers that's common along streets and in lawns. So far, these two species are well controlled in the Dane County unit, but each year we find invaders, especially along the trails and parking areas. These transportation corridors bring in seeds on tires and shoes. Reed canary grass is spreading in the Conservancy. Small, isolated patches can be addressed, but bigger areas need to be seeded so desired plants can grow in place of the grass. This year we did not have enough seed to effectively manage areas of reed canary grass.

Another invasive, leafy spurge, is restricted throughout the state. This year

we're taking a biocontrol approach. In partnership with Dane County Parks, volunteers released beetles that feed exclusively on the leaves and roots of this invasive plant. We plan to collaborate with UW researchers to evaluate the beetles' survival in the Conservancy over the next year. Others using this approach report that it's not easy to notice the beetles' effects until the third year. We're watching!

In managing invasives, it's tempting to start in the middle of a dense patch – but that's not the recommended approach. The first task is to survey an area to find isolated, new invaders and remove them. This requires many hours of walking through the prairie – and volunteers do much of this work. It's a great walk!

It also helps to have volunteers who report and map the location of invasives. Several R&M volunteers attended a workshop on using the GLEDN app. This app is linked to EDDMapS, so reports of invasives are aggregated, and any interested person can look at what's been reported at a specific site. GLEDN users need an ID and password, but everyone can check EDDMaps to see reported invasives.

To find out more about invasives, check out these

resources:

Fact sheets on invasive plants: <http://fyi.uwex.edu/wifdn/learn/invasive-species-i-d-and-impacts/#terplant>

EDDMapS: <http://www.eddmaps.org/distribution/>

GLEDN app: <http://driftlessprairies.org/gledn>

Field Guide to Invasive Plants in Wisconsin: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/>

Thanks to volunteers, summer interns, contractors and county employees who help to control invasives at Pheasant Branch Conservancy– and thanks to all those who support the Friends with financial contributions that make this work possible.

MANAGEMENT OF INVASIVE PLANTS IN WISCONSIN

A3924-21

Crown-vetch (*Securigera varia*)

Brendan Panke and Mark Renz

Ecological threat:

- Invades open areas of varying soil types. Spreads into natural areas from roadsides where it was planted for erosion control.
- Fixes nitrogen, which alters soil conditions for other plants.

Legal classification in Wisconsin: Not regulated

Leaves: Pinnately compound, alternate, 2–6" long, with 11–25 oval leaflets occurring in an odd number.

Flowers: Spring to middle summer. Pea-like, ranging in color from pink or lavender to white. Flowers are clustered in flat-topped umbels of 14–20 flowers on long stalks growing where the leaf meets the stem (axils).

Fruits and seeds: Slender, pointed seed pods 2–3" long, each containing 3–7 narrow seeds.

Roots: Reproduces vegetatively by rhizomes that grow up to 10' long.

Similar species: Crown-vetch is distinguished from other plants in the legume family by compound leaves with an odd number of leaflets, leaves and flower stalks arising from the main stem, and flat-topped umbels.

Non-chemical control Removal

Effectiveness in season: 70–90%
Season after treatment: < 50%

If all perennial tissue (rhizomes) is removed, populations can be eliminated. This can be difficult, especially in medium to fine soils. A pitchfork or other tool can be used to loosen the soil around the plant to make removal easier. Removal of shoots alone will suppress established populations, but the frequency and length of period necessary to reduce populations is not known. If flowers are present, bag material and dispose of in a landfill or burn it to avoid potential for seed spread.

UW Extension Cooperative Extension

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2017 MHS Photography Contest

By *Deb Weitzel, Chair, Education Committee*

The Friends have been collaborating with MHS photography teachers for four years. In a nutshell, MHS students learn about nature photography from their instructors, Holly Stoenner and Peter Ludt, take photos in the Pheasant Branch Conservancy, and then enter the FOPB photo contest with up to 5 images.

Professional judges Tom Crozier, Diane Hammer, and Tim Mulcahy judge the photos separately by semester. The awards reception in May honors the winning photographers. Select photos may appear in the 2018 FOPBC Phenology Calendar, so stay tuned for the calendar slated to be published in October. Check out the Friends website; pheasantbranch.org or local outlets will carry the calendar as well. Or pre-order your calendar on page 8.

The importance of this project goes beyond service learning..

Margaret Krome in the WI State Journal in 2014 wrote...

“Industry leaders have been increasingly insisting that the nation must ramp up its educational training in science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM), so that graduates have the sophistication and training to meet emerging societal and industry needs. Interestingly, science educators say that

multiple studies show environmental education to be an exceptionally effective pathway for engaging students in these



Above: Kalli Acker's "purple flower"
Below: Phoebe Tuite



subjects and stimulating the curiosity and excitement so critical to scientific inquiry. Test scores are improved for these students as well.”

And the winners are...

Semester one - honorable mention

Autumn Delaney
Grace Gerrard

Gillian Ginsberg (2)
Caitlyn Moyer
Carley Ross (2)

Semester one - third place

Katelyn Dummer

Semester one - second place

MaKayla Hart

Semester one - first place

Katelyn Dummer

Semester 2 - honorable mention

Kalli Acker
Kiva Grote-Hirsch
Allison Houghton
Lucas Kostecki
Diana DeGroot
Josh Kuhn
Phoebe Tuite
Rachel Zander

Semester 2 - third place

Phoebe Tuite

Semester 2- second place

Lucas Kostecki

Semester 2 - first place

Lucas Kostecki

Thanks to the following donors - the Picture Salon for \$100 checks for the two first place winners and the Original WI Ducks Inc. for Boat, Duck, and Jet Boat tickets for the two second and two third place winners.

The Friends Need Your Help

By *Ron Biendseil, Chair, Governance Committee*

The Conservancy is seeking new board members for 2018.. We are currently planning several new and exciting initiatives for the coming year, including

- Developing a new and improved website
- Providing more staff support for

- the Conservancy
- Providing services to special populations
- Increasing our linkages with the business community
- reating a more stable financial foundation for the organization
- Developing partnerships with groups similar to ours

And, of course, we will continue our work

to protect, restore, promote, and preserve the Watershed and Conservancy.

We are especially interested in talking to younger people who might consider being on a committee or on the board.

If you are interested in considering serving on the board, please contact me at: rbied44@gmail.com or call me at 608-712-6831.

FOPBC and City Work Together to Remedy Slippery Boardwalks

By Lyman Wible, Governance Committee

The City of Middleton is studying ways to reduce injuries associated with slick boardwalk surfaces on the southern end of the Conservancy, a trail section used by many every day. Slick algae or moss formation on the boardwalks is a problem where moisture remains in shady areas with low levels of air circulation and sunlight penetration.

A series of falls on the boardwalks have left some Conservancy users with serious injuries, including broken shoulders, collarbones, and femurs. The Board had heard of these over the past two or more years and encouraged the City to seek solutions. Aware of the hazards, the City tried improved signage to warn users and tested rubber boards and other technical solutions to the challenge.

As the Director of the Middleton Public Lands, Recreation & Forestry Department, Matt Amundson was open to ideas when Mark Warshauer chose this problem as the focus of his Capstone Project - the final challenge to each Master Naturalist student in the training offered by the Friends this past summer. Warshauer had experience with surface materials, and he chose to pursue this as an opportunity to help users enjoy the Conservancy without undue concern for the possible slips and falls that threaten

us all as we age.

In July, Education Committee member John Daly joined Mark Warshauer in his presentation to city officials Matt Amundson and Mark Wegner, Assistant Director of Field Services and City Forester. He proposed the use of plastic "friction strips" as a technical fix. Mr. Warshauer even offered to donate a financial gift to the City to assist.



Mark Warshauer and city employee Dennis Hellenbrand install friction strips

Director Amundson accepted the ideas Warshauer offered for the Marina Drive boardwalk leading down to the main trail boardwalk and extended the ideas to apply to all problem spots on the boardwalk, if

proof of concept and proof of practice can be achieved. The department has chosen to test the friction strips at this site against these concerns:

- Effectiveness for reduced slippage
- Serviceability over time
- Durability in place, in preventing possible wet-rot in the boards directly under the strips
- Ease of installation
- Rumble-strip problems for bicyclists
- Trip hazards if surface mountings project far above the boards themselves
- Other user feedback
- Costs to the City

"We are eager to hear from trail users so we know how this test installation is performing," said Amundson. If a one-year field test shows how these strips can be best used or combined with other solutions, the City would reportedly expand their use to other moist, dark, and dangerous portions of the boardwalks in the Conservancy.

This is one of the many benefits flowing from the Master Naturalist training course, in addition to the stated and desired result of training enthusiasts to deliver professional environmental education to our members and other visitors.

Leaf Free Streets Campaign...

Continued from page 3

The city, county, CLA and others are working hard to keep streets leaf-free to protect our waters, but they can't do it alone.

Join us in keeping streets leaf-free this fall!

1. Safely **remove leaves** from the street in front of your home before

it rains.

2. **Follow City of Middleton guidelines** for leaf collection or recycle leaves on your property www.ci.middleton.wi.us/360/Leaves-and-Garden-Waste
3. **Sign up to receive Leaf-free Streets Rain Alerts** this fall (October 1-November 30). Alerts will be issued 1-2 days before a significant rain

event reminding you that it's time to remove street leaves.

To learn more or to sign up for Leaf-free Streets Rain Alerts visit www.ripple-effects.com.

Putting in a few minutes before the storm can have Ripple Effects on our waters all year long!

2018 Phenology Calendar

By Margaret Lewis, Chair, Development and Marketing Committee

This fall the Friends will again publish their annual phenology calendar, ready for the holidays and the New Year. It is much anticipated by some, while others are discovering it for the first time on the Friend's website or at the various local retailers who make it available in their stores. The order form will be available on our website in October.

The pages of the calendar are full of phenology and fun. Phenology is defined as "the study of cyclic and seasonal natural phenomena, especially in relation to climate and plant and animal life." It is filled with color and illustrations tailored to open up a world of exploration with the wilderness. Each month comes with a list of what plant and wildlife species are emerging in the Conservancy. There is space to mark day-to-day observations, changes

and discoveries while walking along the paths.

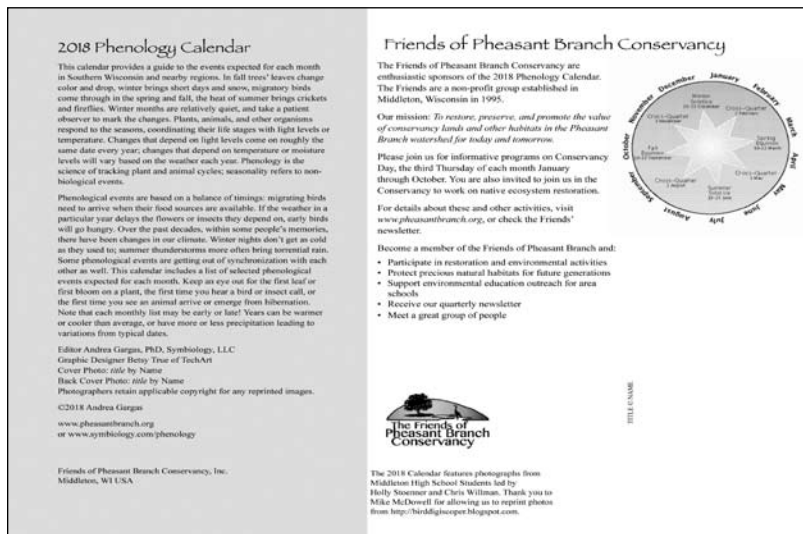
From January to December, the pages are packed with information "dedicated to understanding the natural world, especially the small stuff... from the farthest reaches of the universe to the microbes under our feet" (A. Gargas).

At the center of the calendar's design, theme and material is creator Andrea Gargas, a biologist (mycologist) and former UW-Madison professor. Each year, Andrea turns her talents as both

artist and scientist to fashion a new edition of the phenology calendar.

She draws from a diversity of subject areas that include mammals, birds, fungi, reptiles, insects, geology, astronomy, photography, weather, history, restoration ecology - even mathematics and physics. Betsy True, a local scientific illustrator and graphic designer, extends her expertise in a final tweaking of colors, text, photos and illustrations.

Alongside the pages of phenology are photos illustrating the essence of each season taken by Middleton High School students. Board member Deb Weitzel has worked closely each year with teachers and students to inspire young photographers and writers to capture the Conservancy through their personal art and writing. The student's creations become a central hallmark to each year's calendar.



2018 Phenology Calendar Order Form

Name: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Calendars are \$15 each, including shipping

Number of calendars: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Please send this form and payment to:
Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy
P.O. Box 628242
Middleton, WI 53562-8242

Make a Memory Days...

Continued from page 1

opportunity to recall childhood outdoor experiences; an awakening of the senses (smell, touch, hearing); and, a personal challenge to get outside more often and enjoy the uniqueness of this special place.

The *Make a Memory Day* events invited older adults, individuals with cognitive challenges and those with limited mobility to the Conservancy. The Education Committee recruited and trained naturalists



Master Naturalist Michael Niebauer provided transportation and information about the Conservancy for residents of Middleton Glen and Attic Angels

to lead tours into the Conservancy with the use of large golf carts and the new city-owned all-terrain wheel chairs. Media coverage from the Middleton Times Tribune (8/3/17), the Wisconsin State Journal (8/18/17) and WORT Radio captured the positive experiences of the participants and the volunteers.

One can usually measure a program's degree of success by the percentage of returned evaluations. Research states that a 30% return of feedback forms is good. The participant response for these *Make a Memory Days* was over 63% and that was within a few days of the events. The participants thanked the Friends for providing a special day outside.

Here is a sample of the post-event comments.

I was in awe of the Springs (my first visit). Frederick Hill could pose a challenge for me, but I might try it with my daughter or granddaughter this fall. Because of vision problems I really appreciated the assigned naturalist who could identify and explain plants. On my own I wouldn't be able to read the signage. Our group rather enjoyed the rain. We laughed and booted all the way back to the bus. Thanks

for the great experience, though limited, and the delicious lunch. I'll take a rain check anytime.

This was a great experience! I wish it would happen on a more regular basis. The light exercise and suggestions to use the Conservancy for recreation is a good idea.

All of the residents who participated in the event have been raving about the experience for the past few days. They want more!

The Education Committee has shared in previous newsletters that the origin to this

program was "Senior Voice." Research says that successful planning of a learning experience must involve from the start the ideas, interests and the needs from the learners themselves. In 2015, the Senior Advisory Council was formed to help the Education Committee and the Friends in their planning. The guiding question to each of the groups' quarterly meetings has been... *"In what ways can the Pheasant Branch Conservancy be a part of your daily lives?"*

The council's inputs has provided guidance in the planning and design of program events like *Make a Memory* but also in a review of materials (print, website, etc.), concerns with

the infrastructure, as well as membership services and opportunities.

In 2016, the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy Education Committee was awarded a \$20,000 grant from Bader Philanthropies. This two-year grant covers various projects in 2017 and 2018, and has four components:

1. Programming for older adults, individuals with memory loss and those with limited mobility;
2. Critical review of current materials;
3. Analysis of the Conservancy infrastructure; and,
4. Capacity of the organization to reach out to target populations in the community

Note: For further information about the Make a Memory Days or to learn more about how you can get involved with the Education Committee programs and/or the Senior Advisory Council, please contact John Daly (jhdaly@charter.net).

Tunes on Tuesday 2017

By Colleen Robinson

Beautiful weather favored "Tunes on Tuesday" evenings this summer. Up to 75 people a night came out to stroll the Conservancy and enjoy acoustic music performed by local musicians. Music was enjoyed at Orchid Heights Park, the Springs, the Homestead site, and at the big oak at the base of Frederick's Hill. Tunes dates for 2018 are June 5, 12, 19 and 26.



Happenstance performs at Tunes on Tuesday



EDUCATION CORNER:

Kids for the Earth Program News

Education Committee offers Wisconsin Master Naturalist Training

By Deb Weitzel, Chair, Education Committee

In June, FOPBC combined elements of environmental education and restoration and management to produce a Master Naturalist training taught by Colleen Robinson and Deb Weitzel from the Friends Education Committee with Janet Kane and Tom Bernthal from the Restoration and Management Committee. Many of the class participants were from Dane County, but a few were from further away - Milwaukee, River Falls, and Fall River! This 40-hour course requires that participants volunteer an additional 40 hours to maintain their Master Naturalist certification. We are hoping that many of these volunteer hours will be spent in the Conservancy.

In early February 2017, Colleen, Deb, Janet and Tom attended a "Train the Trainer Workshop" at Schlitz Audubon Center in Milwaukee. They

were inspired, and decided to offer the workshop to the community in June. The course took common themes from the area and threaded them throughout the field trips and speaker topics. The class started with a presentation by Eva Lewandowski about citizen science programs, and ended with Susan Carpenter's presentation on pollinators and pollinator monitoring. Nutrient management, especially phosphorous, was discussed as news of blue green algae in local waterways broke. Invasive

plants and animals such as honeysuckle, buckthorn, spiny water flea and New Zealand Mud Snail were experienced and discussed in the field with experts from the DNR. A trip to Devils Lake and the International Crane Foundation pieced together the geologic history of the area with threats today due to invasive species, habitat loss and climate change. FOPBC Watershed Committee members Stefanie Brouwer and Herb Garn presented PowerPoints on the Pheasant Branch Creek and watershed focusing on hydrology, stormwater management techniques past and present, natural and cultural history, and environmental challenges.

The course finished with each student presenting the Capstone project that they designed. Examples included



Master Naturalist training participants identify macroinvertebrates

Claudia Lewis who put together a self-guided walk that educates the public on the water features of the Conservancy. She recently led a field trip for physically challenged adults into the Conservancy using her field trip guide.

Marti Allen, a MCPASD bus driver, put together a hands-on learning unit about hummingbirds to teach in September to students on her bus prior to dropping them off at Park School. She will be continuing with a different bird species of the month throughout the school year. She is encouraged to do an in-service for other bus drivers who would also like to do "environmental education on the bus."

Mark Warshauer researched ways to

CONSERVANCY DAYS

Conservancy Days for 2017 are wrapping up with two interesting programs. Details are available at www.pheasantbranch.org. If you plan to attend, RSVPs are welcome. Send an email to education@pheasantbranch.org. If you would like monthly email updates of upcoming programs, send an email to education@pheasantbranch.org, as well.

October 19, 6:30-7:30 PM: **Ticks!!** Learn what you need to know in high tick seasons about staying safe, aware and healthy in the midst of these stealthy creatures. Speaker: Ryan Larson Location: Kromery Middle School, Room 510

November 16: **Otters and other Small mammals of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy.** Speaker: Dreux Watermolen, WDNR. Time and location to be determined.

deal with slippery boardwalk areas, and recommended installing fiberglass strips to provide traction. As a pilot test, the City of Middleton has installed 24 strips on the boardwalk that enters the Conservancy from Marina Drive. In spring, the success of the program will be evaluated.

Alden Dirks, who recently moved to Madison to start a master's program in Agroecology, did a survey of fungi in

continued on page 4...



GET OUT THERE: Restoration Volunteer Opportunities

By Janet Kane and Forrest Weesner, Co-Chairs,
Restoration and Management Committee

Upcoming Workday Opportunities— Join in!

How to get involved? Get on the list!

If you are not regularly receiving workday announcements by email, the best thing you can do is add your name to the restoration mailing list. Let us know by email. It's easy to remember: restoration@pheasantbranch.org.

Monthly Workday, Saturday, October 21, 9 am - noon. The last regular workday for the year will finish up some tasks from the 2017 “to do” list, and we’ll likely also collect valuable seed for new restoration projects. We meet at the mowed event parking area at the Homestead site.

Special Workdays, Ongoing. Rob Schubert, Pheasant Branch Park Coordinator, invites volunteers to special workdays running September through October. These workdays focus on targeted projects that need to wrap up before November. Members of the restoration e-mail list, will get information on these special workdays. Sign up!

County Work Day, Thursday, October 12, 9 am – noon. A special seed collecting workday at Pheasant Branch Conservancy on Thursday, Oct. 12 from 9 am to noon. It’s a great opportunity to meet volunteers from throughout the county. For this County sponsored event, contact Rhea Stangel-Maier, at stangel-maier@countyofdane.com.

Prairie Partners Summer Intern Crew

The five-member, summer natural areas intern crew is a big reason why the prairies look as good as they do. Rob Schubert, our Park Coordinator, supervised the team, and Susan Gruber, past R&M

Chair, provided history, enthusiasm, and treats! The interns get valuable training on native plants, landscape management, ecosystems, and functioning of public-private partnerships. Friends volunteers contributed educational programs: Amy Rosebrough, Caring for Indian Mounds; Lloyd Eagan and Herb Garn, Monitoring Water Quality; and Tom Bernthal,



Above: Erosion Task Force working on trails

Below: Summer intern crew



Wetlands Ecology. The summer program ended with a lunch hosted by Friends’ board members.

This year’s crew included Caleb Burst, Alex Gail, Emily Jorgensen, Kaitlyn Kozak, and Kristia Farrell. All were students or 2017 grads of UW-Madison and UW-Stevens Point. It was a great crew!

Erosion Task Force

“Team Erosion”, led by Herb Garn, takes on projects to preserve Conservancy trails. This year they have installed recycled steel mesh to stabilize the soil on steep sections of the trail and maintained steps installed in earlier years, like the Big Springs trail. We’re optimistic that the seed will sprout and take root this fall and hold the mesh in place through the winter. Thanks to Herb and the volunteers Jack Handley, Steve Broeckert, Paul Slota, Mark Warshauer, Tyler Gatti, Jim Loving, and Forrest Weesner

New Resources for Restoration and Management Work

Keeping needed tools and supplies on hand for restoration work at the Conservancy is a challenge. For the last few summers, the county has kept a small trailer at the Homestead site for the intern program during the summer months. This year we are purchasing a larger trailer to provide more storage and a protected workspace. It will be tall enough so we’ll no longer be hitting our heads! It can be kept onsite, April through October.

A generous donor funded new equipment for the trailer, including 2 brush cutters, a chain saw, and associated safety equipment. If you are “handy”, we are need volunteers to help outfit the trailer shelves and storage bins.

One of this year’s goals was to improve practices related to herbicide use. In the spring, several R&M volunteers attending herbicide training, sponsored by Dane County Parks. We were also awarded a grant from the Dane County Environmental Council to purchase a secure job box for herbicide storage. We’re continuing to refine procedure to make our practices even safer and more effective.

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*To receive a paperless newsletter or be removed
from the mailing list, please contact:
office@pheasantbranch.org. Thank you!*

Mark your calendars for our benefit event featuring Gerri DiMaggio and the World Unit Jazz on Oct 6!

PHEASANT BRANCH CONSERVANCY FALL 2017 EVENTS



CONNECT WITH NATURE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

OCTOBER

- 6th - Gerri DiMaggio Benefit Event (page 1)
- 19th - Conservancy Day Program (page 6)
- 12th and 21st - Restoration Workday (page 7)

NOVEMBER

- 16th - Conservancy Day Program (page 6)

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.pheasantbranch.org

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