



SPRINGS

Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy Newsletter

Generous Donations and Strong Community Support for Creek Corridor Restoration

By Lyman Wible, FOPBC Board Member and Governance Committee Chair

We continue to be amazed and heartened by the show of community support for restoration of the creek corridor following the flood of August 20, 2018. Donations have come from members, non-members, schools, social clubs and groups, foundations and businesses. They have come in as cash and checks as well as in-kind services by a long list of supporters. The board is now deciding how best to apply these monies.

Prior to the flood, the Restoration and Management Committee was fundraising for a truck, tools, and more hours for Park Coordinator Rob Schubert. The campaign was well underway when the

flood occurred. That initial campaign exceeded its goals early on! After the flood, donations for restoration continued to arrive but dramatically increased. As we expanded the effort, new donors and old supporters amazed us with more unsolicited donations. Momentum built as individuals, local groups, schools and businesses saw opportunities to direct benefits toward restoration.

Preliminary Results

- Over \$140,000 (and counting!) has arrived for 2018 (not including normal paid membership revenues)
- This is about 4 times the donation amount for a normal year
- About \$30,000 of this came from “events” as opposed to direct donations

- About a fourth of the cash came from business or philanthropic organizations and the balance from personal donations
- And our membership has grown by over 15% since the flood

And it wasn’t just money. Many wanted to host community events and sweat-equity came from everywhere for example:

- Capital Brewery and Prairie Café sponsored events
- Ron Endres donated 100% of the sales of his handmade prairie seed necklaces
- Middleton High School Theater Club took donations at the play “Our Place”

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Annual Meeting focuses on Restoration of the Creek Corridor and Watershed Protection

By Stefanie Brouwer, FOPBC Board Member and Watershed Committee Chair

The theme of the 2019 Friends annual meeting is “Restoration of the Creek Corridor and Protection of the Pheasant Branch Watershed - Current Realities and Future Plans.” The January 19th event features two keynote speakers: Laura Hicklin, Director Dane County’s

Land and Water Resources Department and Matt Amundson, Director of Public Lands, Recreation and Forestry for the City of Middleton. A “State of the Friends” presentation will be given by board Vice-President John Daly.

Laura Hicklin’s presentation will focus on

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FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Dear Friends,

The big story for the Conservancy was the damage caused by the August 20th historic flood. While the devastation was terribly sad, the outpouring of support from the Friends members, local businesses and the community has been heartwarming. So my theme for this column is GRATITUDE.

I am grateful for Dane County staff for their trail restoration efforts within a few days of the flood. I am grateful for the extensive work the City of Middleton staff has done to make the paths through the Conservancy safe for visitors and volunteers. I am grateful to the hundreds of volunteers during the City of Middleton clean-up days. The City also deserves a lot of credit for swiftly assessing damage and for applying for federal emergency management (FEMA) funds. While the City has not heard how much FEMA money they will receive, they have heard that Middleton qualifies for federal flood damage relief funding.

I greatly appreciate the efforts of all of our business sponsors. Special thanks are due to the Prairie Café and Bakery and the Capital Brewery for hosting extraordinarily successful fundraisers.

The Kromrey Middle School Student Council deserves a shout-out for mobilizing students to raise over \$1005. The Middleton High School drama club also deserves credit for raising over \$1,500 in a special one -night play. I am grateful to all individual donors who substantially increased their giving to the Friends this year. Ron Endres deserves a special note of thanks for making and selling prairie seed necklaces and donating all of the proceeds to the flood damage fund. Finally, I am overcome with gratitude for our very hardworking board members who spent countless hours organizing, supervising volunteers, educating members of the public about the damage and of course doing non-stop fundraising.

While the flood certainly dampened our spirits and inflicted great damage, I am confident that we will rebuild, restore and replant. The Board looks forward to being involved in a collaborative planning process as the City of Middleton considers options. I am sure the Friends will find the backing within the community and the support from Dane County and the City of Middleton to ensure that the Conservancy remains a treasured high quality natural area right in the midst of our community.

Lloyd Eagan

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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: _____

Street: _____

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Membership Level:

memberships purchased after 9/1 apply to following calendar year

- \$10 Student
- \$25 Individual
- \$40 Family

Additional Giving Opportunities:

- \$100 Friend
- \$250 Benefactor
- \$500 Steward
- \$1,000 Hero

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Restoration
- Education
- Watershed
- Development & Marketing
- Special Events (such as "Prairie Chase" Run/Walk)
- Board Member



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

New Board Members for 2019

By Lyman Wible, FOPBC Board Member and Governance Committee Co-Chair

Hans Hilbert

Hans Hilbert, a 2002 Graduate of Middleton High School, holds a degree in Land Use Planning from the College of Natural Resources at University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

Hans grew up adjacent to what is now the Bock Forest. He spent many hours combating invasive species with other FOPBC members and helped early board members create the first Friends website.



Hans Hilbert

From 2007 to 2017

Hans served on the Middleton City Council where he worked with city staff, developers, and community members to ensure that the continued growth of the city would have a positive impact on the surrounding natural resources.

Hans is employed by the Dane County

Planning and Development Department with a focus on land use and development that has a direct impact on the waterways and wetlands of Dane County.

Jim Loving

Jim Loving is a native Minnesotan, but retired here in Middleton 8 years ago. Jim graduated from St. Thomas University in



Jim Loving

history, and he spent his career focused on human services. He has worked as a lobbyist in Saint Paul - for the Knowledge Learning Corporation, and for the Nature Conservancy.

He has volunteered in restoration and management work for FOPBC since moving here. He also volunteers with

the Holy Wisdom Monastery and with Habitat for Humanity. He lives in Conservancy Condominiums with his wife Marilynn.

Peter Witucki

Peter Witucki grew up in Easton PA. He holds a BA in Animal Behavior from Franklin & Marshall College, and MS in Geography from UW-Madison. Both his graduate and undergraduate work examined human-wildlife conflict in and around protected areas in East Africa, emphasizing the importance of local stakeholders in ensuring the success of conservation



Peter Witucki

initiatives.

Peter is a stay-at-home father of two, and is very active in community affairs. He was a key member of the FOPBC Action Team for organizing the 2018 Friends' Prairie Chase run/walk event.

Intergenerational Art Project

By John Daly, FOPBC Vice-President and Accessibility and Use Committee Chair

In 2014 some magic happened for some elementary school 4th grade students and seniors from the community. The magic occurred when young children and older adults, who had never met before, established relationships and collaborated to create pieces of art. The theme of this project was nature and the focus was the unique environment of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

It is time for the magic, again! For several years now, the Education Committee of the Friends of Pheasant

Branch Conservancy have been asked to coordinate another intergenerational art project. Specifically, the interested participants are 4th grade students and teachers and art staff of North Side Elementary School along with the residents and staff of Attic Angels Place.

The tentative plans include pre-activities (pen pals, exchange visits between Attic Angels Place and to North Side School), a joint field trip to the Conservancy (students, staff and older adults) and final art projects.

A goal will be to have these projects

displayed in the community in May and June. Some possibilities include: district schools, Attic Angels Place and local businesses (i.e. Prairie Café and Common Ground Cafe) and in the community (public library, senior centers).

Members of the Education Committee applied for a grant from the Middleton Endowment to support the project. At the December meeting of the Middleton Chamber of Commerce monthly breakfast, this grant was awarded to the Friends.

Let the magic begin!



NATURALIST NOTEBOOK:

News of Nature in the Conservancy

By Dale Klubertanz,

The Winter Browns of Pheasant Branch Conservancy

The many shades and shapes of brown in the autumn landscape have darkened in the cool and wet of early winter as a vast, hidden underground web of life has fallen fast asleep. The once green and many-colored summer remnants now glisten in the occasional rain and ice, still and subdued but for the wind and sun passing through translucent leaves of grass and exposed tree branches. But with the fading of blooms and blades of summer-green, followed by the bursts of autumn's orange, red and yellow, the dried Conservancy flora now rests in elaborate and intricate brown tapestries, diverse and pleasing to those who have come to see Nature's artistry.

The changing canvases of native plant communities have rendered wetland, prairie, savanna and woodland in rich hues of hushed earth tones. The soil has been laid bare of its bounty to reveal the coffee-colored ground. In another late-season stroke of a brush, winter has brought into play, with its distinct sensibilities, a natural and elemental expression of design. It is no surprise this universal set of elements finds itself reflected in human artistry and, in turn, naturally appealing to the Conservancy stroller.

Here, everywhere, there is common language and order holding within it the visual components of color, form, line, shape, space, texture, and value. It is expressed in the sweeping, open, white-tinged brown, fine-lined fields of grasses, sedges and cattails, made orange and golden in the sun and bringing a sense of unity to the diverging landscape. At closer

inspection, a myriad of stiff fibered, black-brown stalks with stems and wide-open receptacles offers contrast and a collective dark, craggy appearance to the Conservancy's creation. Woodland trees

*"Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better."
~ Albert Einstein*

in shades and textures of bark brown colors dominate dancing shapes as their empty, unadorned branches fill the air against the blue-grey sky.

Brown is associated with earthiness, representing simplicity, health and reliability. From the Old English brún, "used for any dusky or dark shade of color", it has always been important to artists who have used browns to fashion subtle changes and contrasts from light to dark, allowing artists to convey a sense of realism and reflecting nature's own canvas. Its many hues (yellow, orange or red), combined with luminance or saturation, provide for the wide range of browns found in the Conservancy landscape. Browns are made by mixing primary colors, first blue with yellow to make green and then green with red. This seems an apt approximation of Nature's pallet as it moves through the cycle of seasons.

Ten days following mid-winter's coming of the solstice, a silent, magical snowfall descended upon nightfall on the eve of the approaching New Year. Snow clung to the windward edges of trees

and covered the ground as the winter browns receded into the darkening white intimate space of the Conservancy woodland. A dark brown deer stood on the path watching an approaching hiker and then disappeared into the outlines of brown-black trees, fading into obscurity just beyond the trail. Gaggles of geese in battalions brought in on the northwest wind gathered and raised a ruckus in the Pheasant Branch Creek wetlands, a proper solute to the arrival of the new year.

Just as the "sun stood still" for an instant during the December solstice, the Conservancy seemed to rest on this wintry night, just before the New Year's arrival. Perhaps it is the peaceful moment aroused by Nature's artistry in the final hours of a passing year that can afford the necessary refuge and solace during troubled times brought on by human concerns and endeavors. Hopefully, on such a path home from a snowy woodland, when the natural world stood still for an instant, one may understand everything a bit better.



Focus on Protecting and Sharing Nature

By John Daly, FOPBC Vice-President and Accessibility and Use Committee Chair

The Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy's Accessibility Ad Hoc Committee has planned and implemented several successful activities, program events and various initiatives designed to support citizens and neighbors who have been unable to fully experience nature at the Conservancy. A grant from the Bader Philanthropies Inc. has allowed the Friends to provide this support since 2017.

When the members of this committee opened a dialogue about reaching out to underserved populations in the community and surrounding areas, one of the first suggestions was to form active partnerships with various organizations. The committee's success the past few years has been linked to the establishment of several collaborative partnerships. These organizations have provided advice, guidance and volunteer hours to support the goals of this ad hoc

committee.

This past year, the Make a Memory program events focused on individuals with dementia and their care partners. "Joy", a video documentation of these events, is being produced to share various lessons learned from these events with other environmental and dementia friendly groups. Last year's video can be viewed on the website. An updated video will be completed in March 2019. It will be posted on the Friends website and distributed as DVD gifts to the various community collaboration partners. It will also be a key part of the final report to Bader Philanthropies Inc.

In 2019, the Accessibility Ad Hoc Committee will have a change in status and a new title. The Friends' Board of Directors has voted to make it a standing committee. Membership on the Accessibility and Use Committee will include two board members, as well as other community citizens recruited by the committee chair. This committee

will be responsible for advising and representing the Board on accessibility and use issues related to the Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

The Accessibility and Use Committee views an on-going dialogue with the city and the county as essential. Some potential projects are listed below:

1. Mapping—development and printing of quadrant maps with designated rest areas (existent and new benches or boulders) and the estimated distance between them
2. Signage - modification of trail signage to include simplified and standard language; possible inclusion of QRC codes
3. "Slow Walks" – short walking loops for those with limited mobility and/or dementia in the Conservancy and city parks.

Contact John Daly the Accessibility and Use Committee Chairperson for further information. jhdaly@charter.net

Grant From Chapman Foundation

By Lloyd Eagan, FOPBC President

In October 2018 David Hilton of Middleton contacted me and informed me of two potential grant sources: one with his company, Electronic Theater Controls (ETC) and the other with the Chapman family foundation. Since the fall due date for ETC's grant process was too tight for us to meet, we decided to wait until Spring of 2019 to apply. However, we did immediately prepare a detailed grant request and sent it off to the Alvah H. and Wylene P. Chapman Foundation headquartered in St. Petersburg, Florida.

We would not have known about this funding opportunity without David Hilton's help.

We provided the foundation with

background information about the catastrophic flood, how it affected the Conservancy and City of Middleton, the possibility for FEMA assistance and the role of the Friends. We explained that the grant would support restoration of the Pheasant Branch creek corridor, a vital outdoor environmental classroom, a destination for recreation and a location for spiritual rejuvenation and quiet contemplation. We also explained that the Friends have pledged to help the City of Middleton with this effort in a variety of ways. For example, the Friends launched a very successful fund raising effort in fall 2018.

In the grant application we detailed the benefits of the creek corridor and Conservancy for education, recreation

and healing. We also described our Friends organization and what we bring to the table. Our case must have been convincing, because in December 2018, the Friends received a \$7,500.00 check from the Alvah H. and Wylene P. Chapman Foundation for flood damage reduction in the Pheasant Branch Corridor! This indeed is fabulous news and we will work closely with the city to determine the best use for all of the flood relief funding we have received. I greatly appreciate the heads up from David Hilton. While it wasn't a guarantee for funding, his sponsorship played a key role in informing us of the grant opportunity and in receiving support for our application.



EDUCATION CORNER:

Kids for the Earth Program News

By Deb Weitzel, FOPBC Board Member and Education Committee Chair

Thinking about taking a Master Naturalist Course?

FOPBC will again be offering a WI Master Naturalist Course in June. Last year the course filled quickly and resulted in a full roster with a waiting list. Don't delay in reserving your spot.

Don't know about WI Master Naturalists? Well then, "Listen Up!" The training is part of a statewide effort to promote awareness, understanding and stewardship of Wisconsin's natural resources. Graduates become part of a network of informed citizens dedicated to conservation education and service within Wisconsin's communities. The 40 hours of training will get participants outside into the Conservancy and other

natural areas from Lake Mendota to Devils Lake while exposing them to current environmental issues from experts in the field. A capstone project is a course requirement. For more details, visit <https://wimaternalist.org/volunteer-course>

Class meeting dates are June 20-22, June 28-29, and July 13. Sign up today!!

FOPBC Photo Contest winners to be showcased at Prairie Cafe

Did you know that most of the photos

in FOPBC Phenology Calendar result from a photo contest with Middleton High School art students? These budding photographers are in Holly Stoenner's classes and during their nature photography unit take wonderful images of the Conservancy. Professional judges will choose the winners in May and those photos will be on display at the Prairie Cafe, Middleton Hills in June. An advanced art student (yet to be determined) will do the show in May. Stay tuned for an announcement on our website.

So plan an outing in May and June to take in the art on display at the Prairie Cafe. Plan on coming hungry - there is a delicious selection of breakfast and lunch items for you and friends to enjoy!



Generous Support

- Kromrey Middle School made us their philanthropy project for the year
- In-kind donations of food came from individuals, multiple grocers and several restaurants

Clearly donors want us to use the money to restore the corridor, trees, channel, bridges, vegetation and walkways of this beloved resource. According to the city, the damage assessment is at almost \$4 million dollars. And proper restoration will involve many factors:

- Current estimates for reimbursement are based on past experience, and may not reflect current-day prices
- Planning, review and design will be required
- Some trails and bridges will need to be replaced
- Vegetation and re-stabilization of

- stream banks will be needed
- Information and education about the city's and community's response will be needed

The City of Middleton and Dane County are the owners and managers of the property and we the Friends are simply volunteers, advisers and advocates. We will follow our established policies and principles as we take accountability for the generosity of the community. Our general policies identify supporting principles:

- Managing gifts responsibly and transparently
- Retaining mission-driven decision-making (not swayed by personal preferences of donors)
- Respecting sound principles of ethics and conflict of interest
- Ensuring open and responsible

- budgeting
- Maintaining open communications

The Board is taking the following steps:

1. Accepting and acknowledging each donation with gratitude
2. Holding the donations in trust and in secure accounts
3. Watching, waiting, listening, and engaging in the public discussion about restoration
4. Identifying the needs and priorities for use of these monies

As members you can help by monitoring the public processes, expressing your reactions about emerging designs, and informing the board about your opinions on this vital restoration. Your board is eager to hear your opinions and ideas. Thank You!!

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GET OUT THERE: Restoration Volunteer Opportunities

By Jim Loving, R & M Committee Chair

In this traditional time of year to give thanks, the Restoration and Management (R & M) Committee is very thankful. In 2018 you, our very generous donors, were spectacular in your contributions. Your support is funding our effort to increase annual hours for our Park Coordinator, Rob Schubert, up to 1000 in 2019. Not many years ago it was less than half that amount. Plus, Rob will have use of a pick-up truck. A vehicle has been on our wish list for some time and we will be purchasing a used truck from Dane County. The county continues to be very supportive of our work in Pheasant Branch Conservancy. These are both major milestones in our collective efforts to improve the Conservancy.

Our committee welcomes two new members. Chris Kubiak and Hans Hilbert are joining us in 2019. We want to thank two departing committee members. Jane Cummings Carlson and Tom Klein have both served the committee for many years and helped tremendously to move the R & M Committee forward in our work. Tom is responsible for the wonderful Friends website information on flora and fauna. Check it out (www.pheasantbranch.org/prairies.html).

Annual Meeting

Dane County's restoration and protection efforts in the Pheasant Branch and Yahara watersheds, which benefit the Pheasant Branch Conservancy. In addition to her administrative duties, Hicklin is heavily involved in efforts to preserve natural areas and create recreational opportunities through land acquisition. Matt Amundson's presentation will focus on the city's efforts to restore the

Some of you may have seen the fall burn in late October and most of you have probably seen the results. Hopefully in conjunction with our strategic spring burn plans we will see continued improved benefits. At this time we are also planning for two burns in 2019. The work led by Rob Schubert our Park Coordinator has continued after our fall burn. He has also scheduled winter workdays for: February 2, February 16 and March 2. These workdays will be from 12 to 3 PM. Work will consist of cutting brush in the wetland and burning piles. Wear sturdy boots and warm winter gear. No experience needed! RSVPs are appreciated for these winter workdays to Schubert.Robert@countyofdane.com.

Our R & M Committee organization is also changing. Really, most of the same people are simply changing hats. We have task forces for specific areas and leaders to head up those task forces. If you have interest in specific task forces please let us know. These are:

- Workdays – Mark Warshauer and Paul Slota
- Interns/Prairie Partners – Susan Gruber
- Erosion Control – Herb Garn
- Wetlands – Tom Bernthal
- Bock Forest – Emil Haney

damaged creek corridor. Amundson has worked in the park and recreation field for 25 years in Wisconsin and Iowa and has been with the city since 2016.

The annual meeting will take place once again at Asbury Church Fellowship Hall, 6101 University Ave. Madison (just east of the junction of University and Century Avenues) with registration starting at 8:30 AM. A catered hot breakfast will be

- Volunteer Development and Outreach – Janet Kane

Jim Loving will be the R & M Committee chairperson and join Pam Shannon, Mark Warshauer and Hans Hilbert as a Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy Board member from the R & M Committee.

Our 2019 plan for workdays is also changing. We are planning two “regular” workdays in April, May, September and October. They are planned for the first and third Saturdays. This better coincides with typical workload needs and allows for easier scheduling of special workdays typically in the summer and affiliated with employers or organizations. We will continue to benefit from help provided by the Operation Fresh Start crew. This crew is a major contributor to winter workdays.

We're looking forward to increased opportunities to work with the City of Middleton for post flood recovery efforts and other work to improve that portion of this unique urban landscape. Some portions of the Conservancy sustained significant damage, but the Conservancy as a whole did help moderate flooding and protect homes and businesses.

Continued from page 1

served between 8:45 – 9:15 and includes scrambled eggs, bacon, cast iron skillet potatoes, sliced fruit, assorted pastries and coffee. The program will begin at 9:15 and speakers will be introduced at 9:40.

The registration fee is \$20. Online registration closes on January 14, but you may sign up at the registration table in the reception area the day of.



The Friends of
Pheasant Branch
Conservancy
P.O. Box 628242
Middleton, WI 53562-8242

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

We are amazed by the community's support for the storm damage restoration fundraising. THANK YOU! See page 1 and 6...



Resolution #1: Renew Friends Membership
(Finally – A New Year's resolution I can keep!)

As we celebrate the New Year,
we are thankful for so many good Friends!

**PHEASANT BRANCH CONSERVANCY
WINTER 2019 EVENTS**

CONNECT WITH NATURE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

JANUARY

- 17th - Conservancy Day Program
- 19th - Annual Meeting (page 1)

FEBRUARY

- 2nd - Winter Restoration Workday (page 8)
- 16th - Winter Restoration Workday (page 8)
- 21st - Conservancy Day Program

MARCH

- 2nd - Winter Restoration Workday (page 8)
- 21st - Conservancy Day Program

APRIL

- 6th - Regular Restoration Workday (page 8)
- 18th - Conservancy Day Program
- 20th - Regular Restoration Workday (page 8)

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.pheasantbranch.org

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