



SPRINGS

Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy Newsletter

PBC Creek Corridor Severely Damaged by Storm

By Matt Amundson, City of Middleton Director of Public Lands, Recreation and Forestry and Stefanie Brouwer, FOPBC board

On Monday, August 20th and Tuesday, August 21st the City of Middleton and surrounding areas received 11-13" of rain in a 12-hour period of time. This rainfall flooded the Pheasant Branch Creek corridor creating significant damage to trails, bridges, trees and creek banks. Specific impacts include:

- Creek banks were significantly eroded; further rains could result in further damage
- Approximately 250 trees were downed and must be removed
- Creek created a new channel in some areas that needs to be restored to the original configuration

- Majority of the trail is gone with the asphalt piled in sections
- All 6 bridges in the corridor have been moved off their resting locations and have sustained enough damage that they will all need to

likely be replaced

- Fiber optic line from Clark Street School to the Middleton Police Department was exposed and will need an appropriate contractor to properly restore.



Jim Bachhuber, FOPBC board member and hydrologist with the consulting firm Brown and Caldwell, puts the event in perspective with the following information (source NOAA Atlas 14 rainfall data for Middleton WI):

1. According to Channel 47, 11.63" of rain were reported in Middleton.
2. Most of this rain fell between ~ 5:00 pm - 11:30 pm (about 6 hours)

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Give More to Restore Campaign

By Lyman Wible, Development and Marketing Committee Chair

In light of the recent devastating storm damage in the City of Middleton portion of the Conservancy (see pictures pages 1 and 7), our "Give More to Restore" appeal will now be focused on fundraising to assist in clean-up and restoration efforts in the Conservancy. With strong community support, we can help the city with its Conservancy restoration planning and implementation following

this challenging disaster.

Our organization was delighted to find that a strong response from donors allowed us to fulfill the September 30 deadline match challenge for the truck and park coordinator by September 1! By Sept. 11, gifts totaled almost \$16,000 from 47 donors, in addition to the \$5,000 more to be allocated by the board. Even before the storm, our supporters

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Protect. Restore. Promote.



FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Dear Friends,

The recent flooding has certainly made its mark on our wonderful Conservancy. The worst of the damage occurred in the Pheasant Branch Creek corridor in the City of Middleton. The Friends are working closely with the City of Middleton to keep people OUT of the closed portions of the Conservancy. At the time of this writing, the creek corridor is unsafe. Trees are still falling. They soaked up a lot of water during the recent record-breaking rain event, so they are top heavy and the same rains undercut their roots. In addition, the floodwaters are contaminated by urban and rural runoff and are bacteriologically unsafe. The trails and bridges in the creek corridor between Parmenter St and Century Ave have been totally washed out. City staff is working on their top priority – getting contractors into the corridor to remove trees. The second priority will be to make the area safe for volunteer work crews. The Friends will continue to work with the City of Middleton to help coordinate clean-up efforts when the time is right. In the meantime we ask for your patience. Fortunately, the county portion of the Conservancy fared pretty well and remains open for your enjoyment.

On the topic of dogs in the Conservancy, Dane County has changed the way it manages the area of the Conservancy under county jurisdiction. While Parks staff did not make a recommendation to the Park Commission or the County Board at this time to ban dogs, they did carefully consider the impacts that unleashed dogs are having in Pheasant Branch Conservancy. The county is no longer mowing firebreaks that have evolved into trails. They installed signs alerting people to ground nesting birds and they have stepped up enforcement of the existing restrictions that relate to dogs in the Conservancy (dogs are allowed on a six-foot leash.) While we remain concerned about the impacts unleashed dogs can have on nesting ground birds, other animals and humans, we think that the management changes made by Dane County have made a positive difference. Our volunteer work crews are seeing many fewer dogs off leash when they are out working. The Friends of Pheasant Branch intends to remain engaged on this topic and will continue to reinforce the importance of keeping dogs on leash so that all creatures in the Conservancy can thrive.

Lloyd I. Eagan

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Stefanie Brouwer and Joleen Stinson

Illustrations/Photos
Matt Amundson, L. Crane, Susan Gruber, Stacey Marion, Colleen Robinson, Joy Schmidt, Mark Warshauer, Lyman Wible

Send Newsletter Ideas to
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Is your Membership Current?
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Please Visit our Website
www.pheasantbranch.org

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

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

Give More to Restore Fall Fundraiser

By Lois Sater, Development and Marketing Committee

You are invited to the “Give More to Restore” fall fundraiser to benefit the Pheasant Branch Conservancy on Friday, October 12, from 6:00-8:00 pm at the Prairie Café, 3109 Pheasant Branch Rd., Middleton.



The ArtisanS Duo

Dan Erdman, owner of the Prairie Café and Erdman Enterprises in Middleton, has generously offered to host this benefit event to help the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy restore the Conservancy and manage the impact of the August 20th storm.

The ArtisanS, the duo of Jeff Helmuth and Randy Hunt, will provide background music. Food and drinks will be available for purchase. City of Middleton staff will brief us on the status of repair and restoration efforts to date.

We especially hope our members will be able to join us along with the residents of nearby Middleton Hills who have enthusiastically supported our work in the Conservancy. Donations to the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy “Give More to Restore Fund” may be made at the door the evening of the event or

anytime by going to pheasantbranch.org and clicking on “Donate Now” under the header “Give More to Restore.”

We hope to see you on October 12!



Donate through your IRA and Save on Income Tax

By Holly Sledge, FOPBC Treasurer

The following has been adapted from the February 12, 2018 Forbes article on charitable giving through IRAs.

Beginning with the 2018 tax year, many individuals and couples will see fewer financial benefits because the standard deduction will be more than their itemized deduction, including things like charity and mortgage payments. While most people give to make a difference, tax strategies can play a role in their decision making as to timing and amount of a donation.

The IRS allows anyone aged 70.5 or older to donate money from their IRA account directly to a charitable organization (known as a QCD or Qualified Charitable Deduction) without that gift counting as taxable income.

If you or your spouse meet this age requirement, you can transfer up to \$100,000 a year without paying any tax on that transaction. Even better, any money you transfer via one of these distributions reduces the amount you must take in RMD's (required minimum distributions). For example, if you have an RMD of \$25,000, you could directly contribute \$5,000 to the Friends of Pheasant Branch resulting in only \$20,000 of your RMD being taxable to you.

A further benefit of this strategy: it helps reduce your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) which determines how much of your Social Security is subject to income taxes. Your AGI also determines if you will be subject to the Net Investment Income Tax, and the amount of your Medicare premiums in the following

year. So, lowering income can indirectly reduce other costs.

Most brokerage firms will assist you with these transactions - you provide the name, address, and other pertinent information for the charity. From there they will either disburse the check directly or send the checks to you to pass along. There are no IRS limitations on how many or how small the distributions may be to your favorite charities, so it only depends on your brokerage firm and any limitations they may have.

Items to note:

- A QCD does not qualify for a charitable deduction
- Tax reporting: Presently, there is no special coding on the 1099-R form

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NATURALIST NOTEBOOK:

News of Nature in the Conservancy

By Dale Klubertanz,

The Bur Oaks of Pheasant Branch Conservancy

Soon autumn will turn the prevailing green to golden and russet brown, slowly undoing the splendors of summer, the sylvan leaf, fading purple and yellow bloom and the blade of tall standing grass each noting the sweep of changes over the land. This annual rendering is unveiled in all the familiar cycles of nature, marked by formations of clamorous geese, stop-over crane flocks and the turning of woodland trees clothed in brilliant colors that rival and contrast the muted earth tones of Conservancy prairies. Yet evidence of another more longstanding, age-old rivalry between forest and prairie covers the rugged savanna of Frederick's Hill, lines the edges surrounding the springhead and shades the now empty farmstead site with huge, deeply lobed, dark-green leathery leaves. They clutter the ground with clusters of acorns bearing a thick coat, donning a unique bur-like fringe. For this the tree is named.

Across the grasslands of Pheasant Branch Conservancy stand the iconic bur oaks with their long, horizontal, bendy branches, and massive crowns. History has found a reliable witness in their sturdy, persevering character and a capable warrior in advancing the forest in a give-and-take battle with the prairie at the woodland's edge. The ancient back and forth quarrel over marginal lands is as old as the evolution of the prairie itself, feuding and fending even before the glaciers arrived and fighting on in the path of their departure. Long periods of drought conditions have favored the prairie's expansion, lengthy intervals

of moisture tipped the climate to the advantage of the forest.

The bur oak's mighty root system reaches deep under the thick, grassy prairie sod and soil in a grand mirror image of its own trunk and branches. As pioneer and colonizer, here it holds fast

"Thus, he who owns a veteran bur oak owns more than a tree. He owns a historical library, and a reserved seat in the theater of evolution. To the discerning eye, his farm is labeled with the badge and symbol of the prairie war."

~ Aldo Leopold

in competition with the prairie grasses for water. Still, the seedling is highly vulnerable to fire and climate extremes as it spends much of its early years first developing itself underground in a dense network of roots, before becoming the giant above land, it will someday be. It is fire set by early human communities and by lightning storms that has kept the seedling and woodland at bay. Although, as the bur oak ages, its bark becomes

prairies. As the land was cleared of trees for crop and grazing, the bur oak was left to reside on habitat of little use to agriculture, save to provide shade for the cows. In a brief time easily enumerated, the "prairie wars" of countless yesteryears have been forever altered.

Now the bur oaks of Pheasant Branch Conservancy stand as a living testament to a time when the ancestral tie between prairie and forest was dynamic, relational and part of long evolutionary undertakings. To the discerning eye of a visitor, as the shifting seasonal wind animates the crooked-y branches of the bur oak and autumn paves the path with its yellow-brown leaves, the Conservancy might too consider itself as "labeled with the badge and symbol of the prairie war." Perhaps within the reaches of a remnant woodland bur oak's acorn, this legacy will again play itself out among the tall prairie grasses of a newly restored prairie, each ready to embrace its own history as a warrior.



Biocontrol of Leafy Spurge

By Susan Gruber, Project Coordinator

Many years ago, Guerden Coombs released leafy spurge beetles at Pheasant Branch Conservancy. Despite some initial success, over the years the beetles disappeared. Another release of spurge beetles was attempted four years ago with unknown results.

These releases of leafy spurge beetles is an example of an invasive species control method referred to as 'biological control' or often simply 'biocontrol.' Over the past few years, two varieties of flea beetles have been introduced into some sections of the conservancy as a method of controlling the invasive species leafy spurge. Plants like leafy spurge were brought to the US but their natural predators were left behind. Biocontrol introduces the natural predator to keep these invasive plants in check. There are no mechanical controls for this noxious weed and herbicide control is expensive and only effective for small infestations.

Last year in conjunction with a workshop put on by Dane County, Lars Higden, Dane County Naturalist and Botanist, encouraged Pheasant Branch to attempt biocontrol again. In 2017, we purchased beetles for 3 releases of 100 beetles and marked the location of each release site with an orange painted stake. With

the help of Anne Pearce from UW Extension, we are now monitoring the leafy spurge and attempting to net the beetles in June/July. Thanks to a gift from Diane Ballweg and Ron Endres, we were able to purchase 9 additional releases this



Leafy Spurge flea beetles

year. In early July, Anne, Rob Schubert (County Restoration Coordinator), our 5 interns and Susan, spent a morning releasing the beetles, locating them using GPS as well as putting stakes in to show where to find the beetles next summer. Next year we will purchase another 9 releases, spacing the releases throughout the Conservancy to make sure the beetles are spread across the entire county-owned area.

The 2 types of leafy spurge flea beetles included in each release are both small and feed on the fine roots as larvae while adults feed on plant foliage. Flea beetles have achieved excellent control of leafy spurge on many sites. The beetles feed only on leafy spurge so there is no danger in them feeding on native plants or crops. Once established on a site, they reproduce rapidly and spread to other spurge infested areas. Since these beetles are "hoppers", they can spread to other spurge infested areas only if they are not blocked by physical barriers or the absence of leafy spurge. It is estimated that 1 million or more beetles are needed to control leafy spurge at Pheasant Branch Conservancy. As Kelly Kearns from the WI Dept. of Natural Resources said, "Usually they recommend getting a diversity of the control agents and do multiple reintroductions. One release is definitely not enough. You also should not expect to see much difference in less than 2 years."

Given the size of the county section of the Conservancy, it will take many years before we see the full impact of this project. Stay tuned for updates over the next few years as we monitor the leafy spurge and as you walk in the county section on the trails, observe whether the beetles are making a difference.

Capital Brewery Event...

The Capital Brewery has announced a Pheasant Branch Conservancy Restoration Benefit in the Bier Garten on October 20, 2018. It will be one of their October Celebration Events. Watch Facebook and websites for FOPBC and Capital Brewery for details!



Prairie Partner Internship

By Henry Wiedmeyer, *Prairie Partner Intern 2018*

The Prairie Partners Internship is funded through 5 different organizations to hire 5 college interns for restoration work on properties in the Dane County area. Each site is assigned a certain day, and visited by the crew each week at that time. Pheasant Branch was the Wednesday site, so each Wednesday the Interns were led by Rob Schubert and Susan Gruber to manage invasive species, collect native seeds, and learn about conservation and restoration. All of the interns had an enjoyable and enriching summer, and would like to share a little bit about their experiences at Pheasant Branch with all of you.

Dan Joannes:

“Pheasant Branch was a great place to learn lots of relevant techniques for a future in restoration ecology. Every day was something new in a plot of land I have come to care about and appreciate

more every time I arrive. We have done things such as tree felling, which is only safe when taught properly and I really appreciated learning about it in a way where I can build off of if cutting is done in the future. I was lucky to be surrounded by this amazing crew this summer as well, the enthusiasm for learning different plant types, families and the implications of their sites gave me a broader perspective on the prairie ecosystems and their importance in the modern world.”

Tanner Pettit:

“This summer has been one to remember, being a prairie partner intern has been a great honor and I will cherish this experience for a lifetime. Pheasant Branch conservancy and the staff that I worked with there enhanced my experience as an intern tremendously. Most people don’t look forward to working on a Wednesday but for me I couldn’t wait for it. Pheasant Branch is a beautiful place. It is so special because

of the diversity of habitats. The springs, hill, marsh, and of course the prairie make this area one to remember. These great views were paired with two great people, Rob and Susan, from day one they were teaching me and showing me everything they knew. I’m thankful for the laughs we shared and the knowledge I acquired from them. Pheasant Branch is the perfect package; I and the other interns had the opportunity to work with great people on a magnificent landscape. I enjoyed my time at Pheasant Branch, and I will be back in the future. Hopefully the restoration continues on and the place remains as beautiful as it does today.”

Jackson Pertzborn:

“Working with Rob and Susan was truly a pleasure. I’m grateful to have learned from them so much about hands-on land management techniques—ranging from reed canary control methods to chainsaw

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Second Year Master Naturalist Course a Success

By Deb Weitzel, *Education Committee Chair*

When FOPBC offered our second Wisconsin Master Naturalist Course to be held in June, we had a big problem. The course filled up so quickly that potential participants had to go to a waiting list. Arguably a good problem to have! The instructors, Tom Bernthal, Janet Kane, Colleen Robinson and Deb Weitzel, decided to raise the cap from fifteen to twenty participants and even then, course admissions swiftly closed.

We know that folks need to spend more time in nature: that being in nature reduces stress, improves mood,



Class outing to Festge County Park

and improves focus when we return to school or work. It makes people kinder, happier, and more creative. With this in mind our course was centered on trips outside. Participants learned about geology, botany, ecology, wildlife, water and water life, and techniques to best get

the information to the public. We used the Madison lakes, Pheasant Branch Conservancy, Black Earth Creek, Festge Park, Devils Lake State Park and Kromrey Middle School Rain Gardens and forest as outdoor learning sites.

Each student is required to have a capstone project, an ecological endeavor that serves as a transition from training to volunteer service. Rebecca for example is a theater professional and she will use her expertise to work with school districts to introduce students to environmental topics using outdoor plays. WI Master Naturalists need 40 hours of volunteer service each year to maintain their certification.

Flood Damage...

Continued from page 1

1. NOAA reports statistics for rain event recurrence intervals (this is commonly called the “10-year, 100-year, 500-year” etc. event.
2. The 1,000 - year; 6-hour NOAA rain event for Middleton is 7.71”
3. The August 20, 2018 rain event exceeded the 1,000-year event by almost 4 inches or over 75%, a very large event indeed!

Damage Assessment:

Creek Corridor Initial Assessment				
Tree Removal & Cleanup				\$1,000,000.00
asphalt trail (beltline-Parmenter)	93	lineal feet	\$90.00	\$8,370.00
Parmenter bridge underpass	99	lineal feet	\$90.00	\$8,910.00
reconstruction of base material	8484	lineal feet	\$40.00	\$339,360.00
asphalt trail	8484	lineal feet	\$90.00	\$763,560.00
60' KMS Bridge (8/16)	1			\$37,100.00
65' Parmenter-Park (9/12)	1			\$64,600.00
60' Park-Century (9/09)	3		\$62,400.00	\$187,200.00
60' Park-Parmenter (11/07)	1			\$62,400.00
				\$2,471,500.00

Budget and Funding:

- The City has contingency funds for emergencies and has submitted a disaster assessment to FEMA for federal assistance.
- Insurance will likely cover property damage to bridges and possibly the boardwalks. We are hopeful that FEMA assistance will cover cleanup, tree removals, trail construction and streambank work.
- We currently have 3 contractors working to remove trees from the creek corridor as part of our emergency response to the event.
- All other work to restore the creek corridor including streambank stabilization and path reconstruction will go through a design and bid process similar to other city construction work and funding from FEMA, city funds, grants, and/or donations will need to be secured for this work to move forward.

Fundraising and Volunteer Opportunities:

The Friends are partnering with the city on clean up and restoration of the creek corridor by fund raising, coordinating clean up efforts, and assisting when needed at Conservancy entrances to warn users to avoid damaged portions of the creek corridor. The Friends coordinated the first Clean Up Day on Sunday, September 9th. Nearly 170 volunteers helped clear debris and trash out of the corridor. The Friends will continue to help with volunteer coordination as the City of Middleton identifies appropriate opportunities for volunteer assistance. Please check the Friends website for future opportunities.

1. To donate to the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy for work to restore the Conservancy, creek corridor and trails (contributions are tax-deductible) go to: <http://www.pheasantbranch.org/restorationcampaign.html>
2. To donate to the City of Middleton’s work to restore the Conservancy from effects of the flooding please send a check (with a note to Flood Relief PBC Work) to City of Middleton c/o City Administrator at 7426 Hubbard Avenue, Middleton, WI 53562.
3. Local bird advocate Mike McDowell has started a GoFundMe page (<https://www.gofundme.com/restore-pbc-creek-corridor>) for Pheasant Branch Conservancy/ Creek Corridor native vegetative restoration efforts. GoFundMe is not tax-deductible as a charitable contribution; however, many folks may not be concerned about a charitable deduction on their taxes.



4. Gateway to the Driftless Area (a not-for profit tax-deductible charity) is focusing fundraising on a regional basis to assist individuals and businesses. For more information see: <https://gatewaytothedriftless.com/>.
5. To support individuals affected by the flood, the State Bank of Cross Plains has created a fund to assist victims; more information can be found at <https://info.sbcpl.bank/floods>.

Update on the Dog Policy

By Janet Kane, FOPBC Restoration and Management Co-Chair

The Dane County Unit of Pheasant Branch Conservancy, located in the Town of Springfield, is one of 14 Natural Resource Areas. These areas are lands designated for the protection of a valuable natural environment, wildlife habitat, open space, and/or greenbelt corridor. Recreation at Natural Resource Areas is a secondary objective, with limited to no developed facilities - users are encouraged to enjoy the resource as is.

Dane County requires dog owners to have a valid dog permit and to leash their dog with static leash no more than 6 feet long. Incidents of off-leash dogs increased in recent years, along with concerns for the effect of free-ranging dogs on ground nesting birds and other wildlife. At the end of 2017, FOPBC convened a Dog Policy Action Team to study the issue and surveyed the Friends' membership for their input. In March, the board approved the team's recommendation to prohibit dogs on the grassy trails north of the multiuse trail. The board forwarded the recommendation to Dane County Parks.

Darren Marsh, Parks Director, convened a public information meeting on May 8th at Kromrey Middle School. Park staff outlined the proposal and Friends' representatives provided an overview of the task force work and the reasons for the recommended policy change. Many community members attended, along with several members of the Dane County Park Commission. Each person had an opportunity to speak. Several themes emerged:

- Many individuals and families appreciate and value the Conservancy
- Dog walkers enjoy walking their pets on the grassy trails as well as the multiuse trails.
- There is confusion about the dog policy - some people aren't aware that dogs must be leashed and have a county permit in the Dane County Unit.
- There was not consensus about the impact of trail traffic on wildlife
- People supported closing some trails to dogs to improve wildlife habitat

- Enforcement is crucial for compliance

County officials carefully considered all the comments, in light of the master plan for the Dane County Unit. Signs about ground nesting bird habitat and the County's dog policy were installed, and many trails were closed to improve habitat. With fewer trails, the Park Ranger was able to step up enforcement. Here's the County's statement:

- Dogs continue to be welcome at Pheasant Branch Conservancy consistent with existing dog rules:
 - Dogs must have a valid Dog Permit
 - Dogs must be leashed and restrained by a 6-foot static leash
- Parks staff will increase monitoring and enforcement of dog rules.
- Only designated trails to specific use areas will be maintained.

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Restoration Campaign...

knew how important it is to restore and maintain the Conservancy assets!

Unfortunately, the August 20th event devastated portions of the Conservancy, and more work is needed. Again, the signs of support are emerging each day. In addition to the previously scheduled fall fundraiser on October 12 at the Prairie Café, we have accepted additional offers:

- Capital Brewery will co-host a benefit event Oct. 20 from noon until 6 pm at the Bier Garten in Middleton,

complete with music by the Jimmys and the Madtown Mannish Boys. We will be inviting corporate sponsors for this event!

- Frank Beer Distributing will donate \$1 per case of all Lake Louie Brewing Company sales in Middleton and West Madison in September and October. This program will be publicized through displays, leaflets, posters and other marketing materials.

Please honor these strong commitments

to the Conservancy by donating today in an amount of your choosing. Every donation counts! Thank you!

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Creek Corridor Volunteer Clean Up Day

On Sunday September 9, 2018 the Friends coordinated a clean up event for the city that drew over 180 volunteers young and old to help restore the creek corridor following the flood of August 20-21. Volunteers gathered at the Park Street and Century Avenue entrances and worked along side city staff and FOPBC members Mark Warshauer (Board Member) and Janet Kane (R&M Committee.) Volunteers encountered 2



areas (one on the southeast side of the creek and the other on the northwest side) that clearly were old “dumps” containing all manner of trash, rusted metal and glass. Great progress was made that day. Thanks to all who participated.

More volunteer efforts will be announced in the future, please watch our Facebook page and website.

Restoration Interns...

Continued from page 6

mechanics—as well as about restoration career paths and how to best pursue them. It’s really wonderful that we interns were able to receive these lessons in such an awesome place as Pheasant Branch all while lending a hand to preserve its function and beauty. I’ve emerged from this internship feeling more certain about my future and better prepared to serve natural ecosystems going forward.”

Siena Muehlfeld:

“Working at Pheasant Branch was the highlight of my weeks as a Prairie Partners intern. Rob and Susan are a delight to work with, and every week we had the opportunity to learn new field techniques, which made working there not only fun but also incredibly rewarding. I was impressed by the wide variety of tasks we were assigned, from releasing leafy spurge beetles as a biological control to mowing reed canary grass and sweet clover with brush cutters. Pulling watercress in the spring, planting seeds and plugs of rare plants, and collecting seeds in the wetland were a few of my favorite activities at the conservancy. We also had the opportunity to learn chainsaw safety and operation, which is a skill that will help me long into my career in wildlife management! At the end of my workdays at Pheasant Branch, I was either soaked in sweat or water from



Interns and Rob Schubert releasing flea beetles

the springs (apparently your leg CAN get sucked in), but I always had a big smile on my face, a happy stomach from Susan’s delicious snacks, and a feeling of pride because I knew that my work made a difference for the Conservancy. It was a privilege to work on a piece of land as beautiful and well-managed as Pheasant Branch, and I can’t wait to go back and visit so that I can continue to see the positive changes being made by dedicated professionals like Rob and Susan, future Prairie Partners interns, and hard working groups of volunteers.”

Henry Wiedmeyer:

“Without being too swayed by the weekly treats that Susan provided, I can say Pheasant Branch was probably my favorite site to work at. It’s a beautiful

area to be in, and I feel lucky that my summer employment allowed me to work outdoors in such amazing areas. Each site set up special education days where experts or professionals from our career path showed up to teach us about an area of study, as well as provide us with advice on how to work towards the jobs that we want. On top of that, learning the approaches of the different land managers on how to impact each site was invaluable; each supervisor had similar problems but took different approaches to solve them. The knowledge I gained through this summer will benefit me greatly in the years to come, and the friends and connections I have made will stick with me too. I can’t say enough about how great this internship was.”

The experiences from this summer will help guide the interns as they pursue their future career goals. It is the generosity of the 5 organizations coming together that allows this program to keep running. Thank you to Friends of Pheasant Branch, Groundswell Conservancy, Friends of Lakeshore Nature Preserve, Madison Audubon Society, and Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy for this incredible experience. We all hope this Internship continues to impact students in the natural resource professions well into the future.

Make a Memory 2018 Events

By John Daly

In past newsletters, the Friends' Accessibility Ad Hoc Committee has reported on activities, program events and various initiatives designed to support a number of our citizens and neighbors who have been unable to fully experience the Pheasant Branch Conservancy. A grant from the Bader Philanthropies Inc. has allowed the Friends to provide this support.

Members of the Accessibility Ad Hoc Committee represent a variety of service organizations, other non-profits, government entities, the Aging and Disability Resource Center, the City of Middleton Public Lands, Recreation & Forestry, Dane County Parks Department, Friends' board members, senior living/residential communities, Alzheimer's Alliance, Dementia Friendly Coalition of Middleton, memory cafes and senior centers in Middleton and Waunakee.

This month's article will review the 2018 activities and program events with the reader. Future newsletter articles will focus on initiatives and projects being considered by the Friends Board of Directors in conjunction with the City



Above: FOPBC President Lloyd Eagan and Vice President John Daly spoke to Make a Memory Day participants

Below: Make a Memory Day wrapped up with lunch at Common Ground



of Middleton Public Lands, Recreation & Forestry and the Dane County Parks.

In June and July 2018, there were four program events. Each designed for the populations targeted in this, the second year of the Bader Philanthropies Grant for senior citizens, those with limited mobility and individuals with dementia and their care givers/care partners.

Grandparent Day/Trail Days – Orchid Heights Park on June 2nd

In collaboration with the City of Middleton Public Lands, Recreation & Forestry Department

Limited Mobility Day – Creek Corridor on July 10th

A “slow walk” event for those restricted to the use of a walker or wheelchair

Senior Day – At 4-5 locations in the Conservancy on July 10th

Topics included Watershed, Effigy Mounds, Birding, Prairie Flora and Grasses at 4-5 locations in the Conservancy

Dementia Friendly Day – July 30th

Based on the recommendations from the

continued on page 11...

Historic Flooding Impacts Crane Camera Operation

By Kaya Freiman, ATC Corporate Communications

Earlier this year, a solar-powered, wireless streaming video camera was installed to capture a picturesque view of the Pheasant Branch Creek, the wetlands, and activities of the thousands of Sandhill Cranes that call this place home.

The camera, which is located on City of Middleton property, stopped operating the evening of August 20, when heavy

rains caused flash flooding for much of the area. The camera is a partnership between American Transmission Co., the City of Middleton and the Friends of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

“We recognize that the Conservancy and our community sustained significant damage,” said Kaya Freiman, Friends of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy member and ATC employee. “We hope to repair the camera so we can continue to help provide a unique view of this special area.”

The camera is located parallel to a multi-use trail in the Conservancy. Prior to flood damage, the camera operated from 7 am to 7 pm. ATC will work with the City and the Friends to access the camera as soon as practicable and assess damage and evaluate repair options.

The Conservancy camera includes a solar panel with backup battery and wireless modem installed in a box located approximately four feet above-ground on the pole.

Bock Forest Restoration celebrates 10th Year

Highlighted by volunteer contributions, biodiversity

*By Stacey Marion, Adaptive Restoration LLC
Restoration Ecologist*

The summer of 2018 marked the 10th year of restoration activities at the John C. Bock Community Forest. Once an overgrown buckthorn thicket, this parcel now is a flourishing landscape with 19-acres of restored prairie, oak savanna and oak woodland. Thanks to an annual John C. Bock Foundation grant secured by the Friends, significant volunteer efforts, and matching funds from the City of Middleton, we've been able to advance the ecological restoration activities at the forest.

Active prairie, oak savanna and oak

woodland restoration over the last decade has included removal of invasive brush and non-oak woodland trees, seeding of native species, removal of invasive and non-seeded weeds and prescribed burning. The city, with help of the Bock Community Gardeners, nursed and transplanted over 100 oak saplings and other native shrub species to create the oak savanna portion of the restoration. The restored prairie and oak savanna portions of Bock Forest, originally seeded in 2010, now support over 80 species of wildflowers, grasses and sedges. Each year, more insects and birds call Bock Forest home!

Throughout the last 10 years,

coordination between the City of Middleton, Friends and volunteers have played an instrumental role in the success of Bock Forest. This past year was no exception!

Restoration activities in 2018 include:

- Removal of invasive brush and non-savanna species in the Bock Forest woodland, promoting growth and regeneration of oaks and establishment of native understory vegetation. This work follows several years of gradual removal of non-desirable brush and trees.

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Accessibility Next Steps...

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2017 Make a Memory Day participants and requests from the Dementia Friendly Coalition of Middleton, a new initiative was planned for 2018 - "Dementia Friendly Day". Some key points include:

- 30 individuals with dementia and their care givers/care partners from area communities, Attic Angels Haven, memory cafes in Middleton & Waunakee
- 15 Volunteers (cart drivers, presenters, hosts) - Aging and Disability Resource Center, Memory Cafes, Alzheimer's Alliance, Dementia Friendly Coalitions, tiered living facilities, Department of Justice - "Silver Alert"
- Luncheon and Reflection song-writing activity at Common Ground Cafe
- Video footage collected for documentation in a new video



Watershed Committee members presenting at the Springs

and possible use with future grant applications

The participants and volunteer evaluations rated these events as excellent. The following comments are representative of those who were engaged in these Make a Memory events this year.

With such careful planning by the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy, we had a very special and appreciated visit. We have never

been in the Conservancy since we moved into Middleton Glen in January 2014. What a blessing to have neighbors and an organization like the "Friends", who make it possible for us to access such community and neighborhood resources.

The variety of experiences you provided was wonderful! The whole event was calm, casual and informative. I was surrounded by smiles and laughter from all of the participants and volunteers.

This was really nice - we do not often get out in nature and experience the true beauty of it. Very impressed with the hard work of those who planned this well-organized event with a fun ending activity and good lunch at the Common Ground Café.

If you would like further information about these program events or the work of the Accessibility Ad Hoc Committee, please contact John Daly at jhdaly@charter.net.

Gardening with Native Plants and Native Pollinators

By Emil Haney and Wava Haney

Since its inception in 2010, the Bock Community Garden (BCG) has devoted some space to native plants amongst the 80 or so individual plots with domestic vegetables and flowers and common areas with fruit trees, berries and a children's garden.

An integral part of the Bock Community Forest (BCF), the one-acre BCG is located in the extreme Southeast corner of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy. An important part of its mission is to involve gardeners in the restoration and maintenance of the BCF. Gardeners work closely with the City of Middleton staff in charge of the Conservancy and community development as well as members of the Adaptive Restoration LLC team that oversees the restoration process in the BCF.

As gardeners, we are naturally concerned about the critical role of pollination

to ensure the fruition of many of our crops. Fortunately, we are surrounded by about 15 acres of evolving prairie and oak savanna plant communities with diverse native plant species and



associated native pollinators. Given the BCG's unique location and mission, gardeners not only enjoy the services of abundant native pollinators but also have an up close and personal opportunity to learn more about the complex interdependent relationship of

native plants and their native pollinators.

As gardeners, we've also been concerned about the apparent diminishing prominence of honey bees in providing this ecological service to our crops and orchards. While many native bees, beetles, butterflies, moths, wasps and other pollinators visit our garden plants in pursuit of pollen, nectar and other insects for predation, they aren't always compatible with our hybridized, high-yielding vegetables and fancy flowers. In contrast, native pollinators evolved with native plants over eons of time to local or regional growing conditions, especially climate and soils. Sadly, many of our native pollinators

are also in trouble for the same reasons as our state's official insect, the honey bee—disease, pesticides, invasive plants, monoculture and climate change.

We hope the BCG can serve as a model

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Changing News...

As we publish this newsletter edition, we have never been more aware of rapidly changing news. Details are changing almost hourly as we learn about the damages, the restoration needs and methods, the financing and the volunteer opportunities that will emerge - so please stay alert for these emerging aspects!

Charitable Donations...

Continued from page 3

- that you took a QCD.
- As many individuals now have a combination of ROTH and regular IRAs, it is worth noting that this is not a strategy for ROTH IRAs. While in certain circumstances, ROTH IRAs may be eligible for a QCD,

it generally does not make sense as most distributions from ROTH IRAs are not taxable income.

To make a Qualified Charitable Donation to the Friends:

1. Contact your IRA plan administrator to make a gift from your IRA to

the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

2. Provide Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy name, address (P.O. Box 628242 Middleton WI 53562-8242) and Federal Tax ID# (EIN: 39-1838491)

Dog Policy Update...

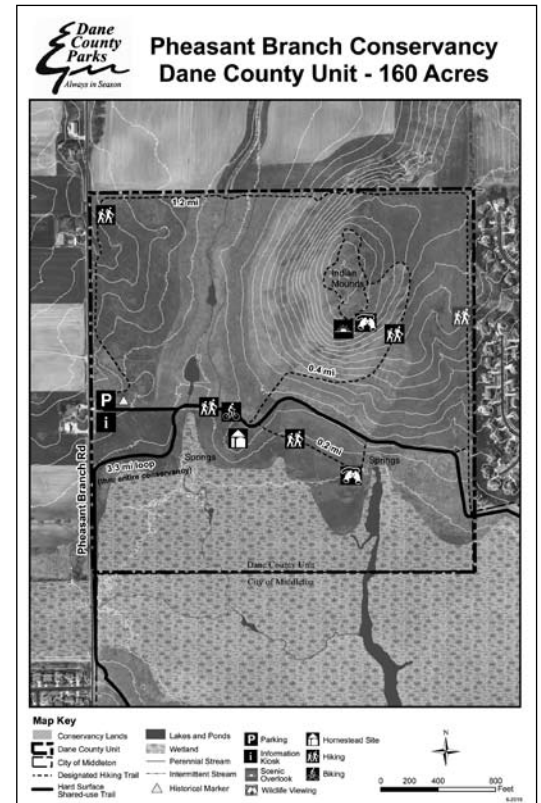
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- Firebreaks and vegetation access paths that were developed for activities such as prescribed prairie burns or prairie plantings, will no longer be maintained.
- A firebreak and trail will be maintained around the perimeter of the prairie and adjacent to private lands.
- Changes to recreational access and vegetative management may occur in the future.

The City of Middleton also had growing concerns about off leash dogs. Dogs that are leashed and have a current license are welcome in Middleton Parks and Conservancies, though some narrow trails through sensitive areas restrict dogs and/or bikes (check the signage). This year Middleton created a new ranger position to help educate park

users on dog policy compliance. Through his work, there is a better understanding in the community about the need to follow the rules to keep everyone safe.

As our community continues to grow, and more people learn about the Conservancy, pressures increase on conservancy users as well as land, the vegetation, and the many species that live in or pass through the area. The Friends mission continues to guide our work: To Restore, Protect and Promote the Pheasant Branch Conservancy and its watershed for now and for future generations.



Native Gardening...

Continued from page 12

for attracting and nurturing native pollinators. Although we aren't always successful, we rely only on organic gardening and orcharding methods to prevent and control disease and insect pests. We encourage gardeners to plant a wide diversity of vegetables, herbs and flowers. And we leave several relatively undisturbed areas with overwintering residues to provide habitat for ground nesting bees.

Our most common pollinators appear to be bumble bees, of which there are up to 20 species in Wisconsin. In many ways, they seemed to have evolved as perfect pollinators with their flurry coats, long tongues, buzz pollination ability, and long day and long season activity. Like honey bees, they are communal or social bees living in complex colonies. They gather both pollen and nectar to

sustain their new annual populations, which die off except for the queen. If she successfully survives the winter in her underground quarters, she will start a new colony the following spring in a dry cavity such as an abandoned rodent den or under plant residues.

This year, we worked in cooperation with Dane County UW-Extension to create a demonstration native pollinator garden with interpretative signage in the center of the BCG. In late May, we received 120 plugs of 16 native plant species selected to complement existing native plants and provide a continuous source of pollen, nectar and waves of color that attract pollinators throughout the growing season and provide an appropriate habitat for many native pollinators with different needs. For example, an assortment of milkweeds

for monarch butterfly larvae and a nest box for mason bees, one of the more common of our many solitary bee species.

The plugs ranged from early bloomers like penstemon and spiderwort to late bloomers like asters and goldenrod along with 3 species of native grasses. They were planted in a grid of one foot squares adjacent to an existing native plant bed that contained about an equal number of other native species, such as rattlesnake master, pale purple coneflower and mountain mint. Identification signs for all 16 species were designed to include information such as height, flower color, blooming times, major pollinators and appropriate soil conditions.

The BCG is open to the public during the daylight hours. Come visit us!



EDUCATION CORNER:

Kids for the Earth Program News

By Anne Boucher, FOPBC Education Coordinator

Rain Garden work at Kromrey Middle School Continues

Kromrey Middle School (KMS) sixth grade students are continuing as stewards in the rain gardens surrounding their school with full support of teachers and administrators. This opportunity to better understand their local environment is an important aspect of the new Environmental Education stipulation established by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

A new group of sixth graders will learn about natural areas that they see every day and how their actions related to these areas benefit the local ecology as well as the local human environment. As environmental educators, we are pleased to be involved with projects like this. Such projects help students develop a sense of place. This sense of place will enable them to understand the interconnectedness of the human and natural environments. Something that is crucial as we raise the next generation of the members of our community.

The rain gardens in the parking lots at the school provide a service by trapping storm water and allowing the water to sink into the ground. This provides an important level of protection to the Pheasant Branch Creek corridor located in the Conservancy behind the school. In light of the devastating floods that

occurred in August, the need to maintain the rain gardens is crucial.

These rain gardens are a living laboratory for students right out their front door. They provide the opportunity for a range of environmental science lessons in the field for the students. Naturalists from the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy will support and guide students in their exploration. Lessons this fall will include discovering what rain gardens are, how they function, native and non-native plant identification, learning about restoration techniques, ecology of native plants, and learning about data collection in the field.



The students provide a tremendous service to the school with their hands on work. Approximately 275 students will work in the gardens to remove aggressive and invasive plants, plant native plants, and seed areas of the gardens as part of their lessons. This results in about 200 hours of work in the fall and about 500 hours of work in the spring that district maintenance staff do not need to perform. The students' efforts help to preserve biodiversity, reduce the need for herbicides, and improve the function of the rain gardens.

The school district is providing resources for purchasing the tools that are needed for this work. The Free Native Plants for School and Community Projects, sponsored by the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department, provided

about 250 plants for use in the restoration efforts. A local native seed expert, Ron Endres, collected and donated all the seeds needed for this effort.

The community is truly supporting these 11 year old students as they take on stewardship of these gardens. Every day they pass the school they will remember and take pride in the difference they made. They will be connected in a new way to the place where they live.

Conservancy Days

Where: Kromrey Middle School (KMS) Room 510 or in the Conservancy

When: 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm on the 3rd Thursday of every month. January through November.

Upcoming Topics:

- Oct 18 Dane County Humane Society - Wildlife rehabilitation program
- Nov 15 Climate Change - Bob Lindmeir
- December No Program

RSVPs are appreciated to conservancyday@pheasantbranch.org.



GET OUT THERE: Restoration Volunteer Opportunities

By Janet Kane, FOPBC Restoration and Management Co-Chair

Regular Restoration Workday

The last regular workday of the year is October 20. Most likely we'll do seed collecting. Meet at the County Parking lot at 4864 Pheasant Branch Road. We work from 9 am to noon with a mid-morning break for refreshments. Let us know at restoration@pheasantbranch.com if you are planning on it so we have enough equipment and snacks.

Volunteer Appreciation

Immediately following the regular restoration workday on October 20, we will host a volunteer appreciation event.

Volunteers, please watch your email for details.

Storm Damage Workdays

When the damages from the flooding in the creek corridor have been cleared, we'll work with the city on more volunteer workdays. These may not get much advance notice – but join us when you can. To get notifications of upcoming workdays, send an email to restoration@pheasantbranch.org asking to be added to the restoration list.

Dane County Parks Seed Collecting

Fall is a beautiful time of year to be out in the prairie! The colors are changing and prairie seeds are ripening on the

stem. Join Dane County Parks for a fall harvest on the prairie as they collect seeds around the County at different parks each week. Seeds are collected to plant and enhance lands in other natural areas for pollinators, wildlife, and land restoration.

No prior experience is needed. All tools and training will be provided.

Go to <https://parks-lwr.dane.com/> and click on “Volunteer Opportunities” in the box on the right side to see the full seed collecting schedule or to RSVP.

Bock Forest...

• Prescribed burn followed by seeding: In late April, restoration crews burned Bock Forest's prairie and savanna areas. The following month, we overseeded the Bock prairie and oak savanna with members of the Friends of Pheasant Branch and Madison Audubon's Prairie Partner interns (employed by the FOPBC). Overseeding is the process of seeding into an area that has previously been seeded; this process enhances diversity and competition of a prairie, improving habitat quality and increasing resilience of the prairie to weeds and weather events (e.g. draught, flooding). The overseeding was made possible by a generous 49-species seed donation from Dane County Parks, a value of over \$6,000. Additional seed provided by city staff was collected from nearby Middleton conservancies.

growth and establishment of native prairie, savanna and oak woodland species.

Over 750 volunteer hours were contributed to Bock Forest, Pheasant Branch Conservancy in 2018 thus far. On June 21, the City of Middleton hosted 160 volunteers from Lands' End. The event was coordinated by city and Clean Lakes Alliance with assistance from Adaptive Restoration. These enthusiastic volunteers contributed 640 hours of buckthorn clearing and weed pulling

in the Bock Forest oak woodland, the fenceline along the Pheasant Branch Conservancy Southeast Trail, and in Orchid Heights prairie. Other volunteer contributions include 100 hours of weed management in the Bock prairie and savanna by the Bock Community Gardeners.

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Lands' End volunteers remove invasive buckthorn

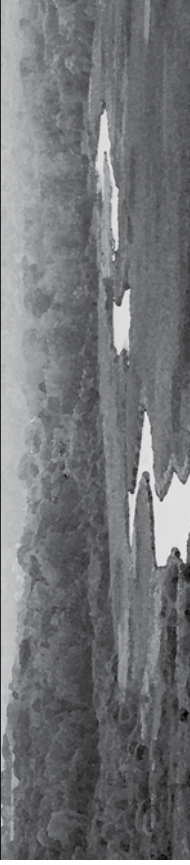
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*To receive a paperless newsletter or be removed
from the mailing list, please contact:
office@pheasantbranch.org. Thank you!*

PHEASANT BRANCH CONSERVANCY FALL 2018 EVENTS



CONNECT WITH NATURE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

OCTOBER

- 12 - Prairie Café Fall Fundraiser (page 3)
- 18 - Conservancy Day Program (page 14)
- 20 - Restoration Workday & Volunteer Appreciation (page 15)
- 20 - Capital Brewery Restoration Benefit (page 5 & 8)

NOVEMBER

- 15 - Conservancy Day Program (page 14)

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Capital Brewery Restoration Benefit on October 20... see details on page 5 & 8!