



September 2016

THE OFFICIAL
NEWSLETTER OF THE
FRIENDS OF MCGILVRAY
ROAD
PO Box 2976
La Crosse, WI 54602-2976

PLEASE JOIN US!

The Friends of McGilvray Road Annual Meeting has been scheduled for Monday September 19, 2016 at Drugan's Supper Club north of Holmen

Social time starts at 5 PM and Dinner at 5:30 PM. We will order off of the menu. There will be a short business meeting. Tim Babros of the WDNR will be presenting a summary of what has been accomplished this year. The video of the 25th Anniversary slide show will be available for viewing.

Please RSVP the number to attend to Nancy Hill at **least one week in advance** by calling or texting 608-782-1753 or by email to nfhill@centurytel.net

Who's Who in the Friends of McGilvray Road

Board of Directors

Nancy Hill
Karla Pierson
D.A. Ferguson
Linda McMullin
Mike Howe
Pat Caffrey
Jay Fernholz

Officers

President - Nancy Hill
Vice President - Mike Howe
Treasurer - Pat Caffrey
Secretary - Karla Pierson
Media - Linda McMullin

Check out our website and connect with us at <http://www.7bridgesrd.org>

Join us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofMcGilvrayRd>

GOOD NEWS!

At the Worker Bee Meeting at the Pizza Corral on Monday August 15, Tim Babros , of the WDNR announced that funding has been approved for the construction of a ford at Bridge 1, and for the lowering of the trail between bridges 3 and 4.

These monies will facilitate the continued efforts of the WDNR and FMR to improve the trail and preserve the bridges. A ford across the water at bridge 1 is necessary to enable access to bridges 1, 2, 3, and 4 by heavy maintenance and construction equipment. Given the age of the historic bridges, they have stringent weight limits.

Dwindling State monies cannot cover all of the costs for many of the trail and bridge maintenance and improvements. In these cases the help and resources of the FMR become critical.

In the near future replacement of the deck on bridge 3 is planned. Equipment and materials going to and from bridge 3 cannot be taken over the bridges. Similarly, all bridges will need decks replaced at some point in time.

Concerning Trail Lowering

Years ago, material from the wetland was dredged up and piled between the bridges to create a road that was passable when the surrounding area flooded. Engineers have determined that the road acts as a very large dam and any flood waters are concentrated in the areas under the bridges. Subsequently, the high, swift moving water during floods causes scouring of the bridge abutments and carries floating debris against the bridges. Flood waters also make large scour holes and washouts in the areas of the road where the water spills over. After past flooding, the required repairs occurred frequently enough to make the road too expensive to maintain. This is why McGilvray Road was abandoned as a publicly maintained road and replaced with the present Hwy 35. The present road lowering projects being undertaken by the WDNR and the FMR are designed to allow flood waters to flow over the trail at the lowered locations to reduce damage and preserve the bridges and trails. Lowering of a trail involves much time and effort (pictures from a previous project).

All trees and stumps



must be removed.



Trail is lowered,



gravel added, graded,



seeded, and mulched



New growth



on lowered trail

KIOSK



Thanks to several months of work by a few people, WE NOW HAVE A KIOSK! The informational kiosk, which has been a joint effort by the Friends and WI DNR was installed June 24, 2016. It is located on the south side of the parking lot.

Meet the committee responsible for the Kiosk. From L to R, Linda McMullin - author of the FMR panel and media person, Anna Jahns - author of the DNR panels and DNR Wildlife Specialist, Pat Caffrey - panel editor, FMR

treasurer, and builder of the kiosk frame; and Nancy Hill - panel editor and FMR president.

The committee would like to thank Carrie Stanislawski, Graphic Designer at Graphic Image, LLC in Fountain City for the large amount of design help and advice.

The cost of the project (approximately \$2300) was split between the DNR and the Friends. Special donations to FMR designated for the kiosk covered nearly 90% of the FMR share, including a generous \$500 donation from Seven Bridges Bank (Bank of Galesville). A very sincere **Thank You** goes out to everyone who made this possible!

President's Message

It's such a pleasure to have good news. MEMBERSHIP work has helped us update our records, reach out to new and former members and encourage much appreciated donations. Road work and the

Ford are now just around the corner. We are delighted the DNR has been able to appropriate enough money to work on the Road and Ford. Without these funds we would really have a difficult situation accessing and maintaining parts of the road and bridge. We also have money to update a mower and keep other parts of our project rolling.

So, membership growth is a major reason to celebrate. We need to continue to expand our fan base in order to sustain the projects and recruit people willing to share the load of volunteer projects. I'm hoping we are welcoming and inclusive to people who wish to be "just members" or those who like being more active in the many tasks we face. If you have just a little time to spare, help whack weeds in the parking lot and around the abutments. You don't need a special clean-up date for that.

If you have more time and interest, we have projects that we could use help with... some physical and some not so much. Distributing brochures is a very interesting project. We could use someone to supervise that. So please contact someone on the Board and lend a hand. Taking photos or sending a paragraph or article to Linda will really help. We like to have current perspectives and new ideas. And those articles might be about many different interests. We also need board members.

And then there is the CONSTRUCTION! Patience is not a 21st century strong point. I suspect patience didn't come easily to Horton when the bridges were installed. Floods and bugs, and who knows what else delayed his work. Now we are trying to wait calmly through the period for letting bids for our projects. Then we cross our fingers that we have good construction weather. And we squeeze the work between the needs of the animals and the hunting seasons.

There is tree removal and some brush burning that you'll see. Also, the area that was lowered by Br 5, will be lowered slightly further to achieve the initial goal. The Black River is high as I write this, but it rises and falls dramatically. A long lovely autumn would really help.

I hope you are pleased with the new KIOSK! Your donations helped make this possible. It's a good educational tool, and builds support for the wonderful combination of architecture and wildlife area. I believe that spreading the word about the Bridges and Road helps insure their long-term care and continuance. It will take the next generations and their love and energy to continue our work.

September brings our Annual Meeting. Come mingle and eat. Then join the short meeting and enjoy the presentation by our DNR partner, Tim Babros. He knows that area so well. He is responsible for a huge amount of our success. Come and make some friends with other Friends. We'd love to see you!

Nancy Hill

WORKER BEES

Here are some pictures from one of our planning sessions!



Tim Babros, DNR



Anna Jahns, DNR



Steve, Pat, Jay,



Mike, Nancy, Linda

The WDNR/FMR Worker Bee Meetings are attended by a few of our volunteers who have expertise in various fields.

Jay Fernholz-landscape, trees, flowers and vegetation.

Pat Caffrey-loves to cut trees, clear brush, repair parts of the bridges and redeck as many as needed. Pat is our most valued Treasurer.

Linda McMullin-does our website, Facebook page, and now the newsletter. She provides great ideas about promoting our bridges.

Steve Gabrielson-an awesome grader, excavator and lots of knowledge of all things construction.

Anna Jahns-the lady in the green sweatshirt, is our DNR liaison who was explaining what the new kiosk will look like after the designer gets it and was showing us what might need to be done. She camps, hunts and does permit paperwork like nobody else!

Tim Babros-is our DNR representative and one really nice guy! He has led our group through lots of floods and repairs and has gotten so much done. We couldn't have done it without him.

Mike Howe-Vice President and owner of MCS Computers. Mike is always available for hauling, chopping, and burning wood. When we have trees that need to be taken out before they can cause damage, Mike, along with Pat, is authorized by the DNR to cut and haul the wood out of the bottoms. As a business owner, he keeps us aware of budgets and spending.

Last but not least is Nancy Hill. The present leader of this pack has been heavily involved since 1989, or earlier, and is still coming up with lots of ideas and projects. She never quits; and that is good for the bridges and trails.

Our group meets sometimes once a month, and now that our WDNR leader, Tim, is thinking of retiring, we need to get everything done before he leaves us! The Spring flood this year was gentle on us so we can now concentrate on placing a ford at bridge 1, more trail lowering between 4&5, some reseeding and removing a deteriorated culvert. Whew! Something all the time. Thanks to the donations and volunteers, we have people that are willing to dig in and keep those beloved bridges safe and secure.

Karla Pierson

DID YOU KNOW?

Your State Taxes do not pay for the daily maintenance of The McGilvray Road hiking trail. The property is owned and managed by the WDNR as part of the Van Loon Wildlife area; but trail maintenance, such as mowing, brush clearing and weed trimming, is done primarily by only TWO and sometimes THREE men - all members of the Friends group. Whatever would the trail look like without their efforts? Thanks guys!!!

The Friends have been paying for new bridge decks and lately ONE person has been repairing and replacing bridge decks. The Friends have also helped with the cost of trail lowering and other maintenance items. We make a difference!