

Friends of McGilvray Road

Horton's Clips

December 2014



Season's Greetings!

2014 marks the 25th anniversary celebration of Friends of McGilvray.

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

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

Who's Who in the Friends of McGilvray Road

Board of Directors

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

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Officers

President	Nancy Hill
Vice President	Mike Howe
Treasurer	Pat Caffrey
Secretary	Karla Pierson
Webmaster	Linda McMullin
Horton Editors	Chris Sanders Greg DeBoer

Note from the President

It's that time of year again.

It's the season of catching up with family and friends, enjoying delicious food, taking part in festivities, and reflecting on days come and gone. As we look back on 2014 and everything that transpired, I can't help but be thankful for so many things. One of those is the Friends of McGilvray Road and its historic bridges.

This has been an amazing year for the bridges. Through the efforts of Friends' members, volunteers, and cooperation/coordination with DNR, we have been able to successfully complete projects that will help maintain and, more importantly, preserve the bridges for years to come.

Working on projects including historical structures that are within remote areas comes with all sorts of challenges. One of those being the whimsical weather 2014 brought to Wisconsin. That didn't sap the persistence, grit, and talent of Pat Caffrey in taking down trees or Mike Howe in getting them removed and, lastly, the sculpting of the lower road by Steve Gabrielson. While Steve did bid on the project, much of that time was volunteered just the same as Pat and Mike's were.

The project was made even more complicated by the habitat, changes in water flow, materials in/out, and access needed to do work. I want to give a shout out to our friends at DNR who, through their efforts, made this possible. While they are too numerous to name, I want to give special mention to Lori Wienke, Anna Jahns, Tim Babros, and Gordon Stinson. We simply couldn't have done this without them. Thank you!

Lori helped us with permits, negotiations, and signs. She also helped with public relations and understanding of the project. She has since moved on to Eau Claire; we send our best wishes with her.

Anna has assumed Lori's position and has been invaluable in getting additional permits and signs as well as getting the slash burned in spite of high water and other challenges.

Tim has been crucial in doing paperwork, bringing creativity to the table, and coordinating aspects of the project most of us did not think about. His understanding of the financial side of the coin has been critical to our success. Finally, his ability to get people to work together to get the job done has been invaluable too.

Gordon, who is a DNR engineer, helped with the specifics behind getting a road lowered to allow water (in case of floods) to flow over. Care must be taken to ensure the wildlife is not affected and he has been instrumental in this.

The project has been a success: the road lowering permits water flow. The trail now appears to be a natural part of the woods. The grass has taken root and is helping with erosion control. Most importantly, water can easily flow over the road during floods, taking pressure off the bridges themselves. We hope the weather after hunting season will permit re-decking of Bridge 1.

As we now look toward 2015, we set resolutions for the days to come. As President, I want to focus on getting our members and the public engaged in events on the trail. Also, we hope to see a successful conclusion to our effort to improve the trail and bridges. We want to be transparent in our financial aspects, sharing this information with DNR and Friends. Behind the scenes, the Endowment Committee works on grants and manages the financial contributions of the members and public. We want to encourage more involvement of the public as members and participants in this organization.

While the end of 2014 draws near, there are many more stories to tell. We would love to hear about it! Linda McMullin takes care of our website. Chris Sanders and Greg DeBoer edit Horton's Clips (welcome aboard!). Both groups will love to have you share our news with members and the public. We also welcome your ideas, concerns and feedback.

Sincerely,

Nancy Hill



Trail Reconstruction



This fall was working on the trail between bridges 4 and 5. The pictures above show Steve Gabrielson's crew beginning work on removing stumps from the trail for it to be lowered. Below, you can see when it was complete. They applied grass seed afterwards.





They added about 30 to 40 yards of river rock to Bridge 5's abutment. It is estimated to be about 35 feet deep in the middle of the river channel. Yikes!



Profile: Pat Caffrey

Pat Caffrey is one of our many volunteers and we are so blessed to have him on our team! Pat was born and raised in Superior, WI, attended 2 years of college in that area and then transferred to Madison where he received his Masters in Civil and Environmental Engineering. He spent a year working on researching the environmental impact of solid waste disposal. He visited 72 landfills and many dumpsters looking at waste from multiple factories and businesses to determine how much waste would be generated in the future. Afterwards, Pat moved to La

Crosse and went to work for the Public Works Department, rising to Director. After 30 years, he retired and now volunteers as a Friend.



Pat says our President, Nancy, twisted his arm but we suspect he would have said yes anyway. He has done it all at the bridges: cutting trees, re-decking, repairing abutments on #2 using solid from trail grading as fill and hauling in rip rap. He

keeps the weeds and brush under control. While clearing trees and brush throughout the winter, Pat earned the right to claim he had poison ivy in every month of the year! He also sits on our board and the Endowment Fund committee.

Beyond Friends of McGilvary, Pat is on the board of the Friends of Perrot State Park and the Coulee Region Humane Society. Additionally, he serves as President of the Mississippi Valley Conservancy board and, previously, the Eco Park board. Besides cutting wood, Pat enjoys bird watching. At the 2013 Christmas Van Loon Wildlife Area Bird Count, he found robins, red headed woodpeckers, flickers, eagles, and white throated sparrows that had stayed the winter. While working out there, he took time to watch otters and beavers still busy at work.



Our hats off to Pat Caffrey, one of our "go to" guys and all around great Friend!

Did you know?

The Friends of McGilvray Road has a web site. It has been updated and expanded over the last few years and has everything you need or want to know about the McGilvray Road trail and the Friends.

To find our web site you can by typing in "McGilvray Road" in any search engine (Google, Yahoo Search, Bing, etc). You can also enter in: <http://www.7bridgesrd.org> in the address bar of your favorite Internet browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, etc.).

Here you will find pictures and information about McGilvray Road including:

- Directions and maps on how to get there.
- Pictures of the bridges, the trail, and Friends at work on them; the Anderson Klafke prints, floods, and various flora and fauna found along the trail.
- Tips for visitors including information about maintenance, closures, and flooding.
- A short history of McGilvray Road, the bridges and the Friends that saved them.
- Statistical information about each of the bridges.
- Friends' organizational information such as by-laws, meeting minutes, and newsletters.
- Membership information and forms for joining, making a donation or paying dues. Paypal is accepted.
- You will also find information about contacting us by mail or email.

In addition to the web site, our site administrator, Linda McMullin, has recently begun work on a Facebook page. The page will soon contain ongoing news about the trail, the bridges, and the Friends. You can use the "find friends" box at the top of your Facebook page by typing in: Friends of McGilvray Road.

Please let us know if you have any corrections or suggestions for improvement by sending an email to: mcmullinda@gmail.com. Happy surfing!



25th Anniversary

On September 15th, members got together to celebrate our 25 years of working to save and restore the McGilvray Road and its bridges. We walked the trail, listened to a bagpipe serenade by Alex McGilvray, and then had dinner and other activities at Drugan's Supper Club.



MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS

In 1989, the Friends of McGilvray formed a volunteer organization and created a partnership with the Wisconsin D.N.R. to restore six historically significant bridges of McGilvray Road, located in the Van Loon Wildlife Area, La Crosse Country, Wisconsin.

Membership dues and contributions provide FMR a means of

- Funding for safety and maintenance of the six bridges and trail.
- Conducting educational walks and community awareness programs.
- Distribution of newsletters, publications, and trail maps.
- Providing a volunteer base.

Friends of McGilvray Road is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

Membership Fees

\$25.00 Annual Individual

\$100.00 Annual Corporate or Business

\$200.00 Lifetime Patron

Visit our website at <http://www.7bridgesrd.org> to download our membership form or send a check made out to 'Friends of McGilvray Road' along with your name and address.

Friends of McGilvray Road
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*** Please keep us informed on your e-mail address as that is the best way to share this newsletter without incurring any additional expenses. If you are getting this newsletter via mail, it might mean that we do not have your e-mail address on file. Please send it to theblonde2@centurytel.net (Karla Pierson) and we will add it to our list. Thanks!

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