

HORTON'S CLIPS



Winter 2019

President's Message

30th anniversary

The Friends of McGilvray Road, Inc. was organized thirty years ago in 1989 with a commitment from the Department of Natural Resources. The Friends group continues to dedicate itself to this backyard treasure. In celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Friends of McGilvray Road can you think of 30 things to do at this historic landmark? I have listed some ideas to get you started. Enjoy!

- Go bird watching
- Walk your dog
- Hike the road
- Fish
- Hunt
- Stroll with your senses (look-listen-smell-touch)
- Enjoy the changing seasons
- Gather nature items with your kids (snake-skin shedding, deer antlers, pinecones, leaves, catch bugs) (Continued)

**THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE
FRIENDS OF MCGILVRAY ROAD
PO BOX 2976
LA CROSSE, WI 54602-2976**

Who's Who in the Friends of McGilvray Road

Board of Directors

Pat Caffrey	Mike Howe
D.A. Ferguson	Butch Kleinsmith
Jay Fernholz	Linda McMullin
Herbert Grimek	Ruth Scholze
Nancy Hill	

Officers

President - Ruth Scholze
Vice President – Herb Grimek
Treasurer - Pat Caffrey
Secretary - Nancy Hill

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

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

- Gaze at the stars/moon/planets
- Celebrate the sunrise and sunset
- Take photos
- Write a nature journal or create a nature book
- Go on a scavenger hunt (learn poisonous plants first)

Deteriorating Bridges

Early in January, Pat Caffrey went out to inspect the bridges to determine which might need new decking in the coming year. He reports that decking on Bridges 2 and 4 are deteriorated and need to be replaced in the near future. While doing these inspections, Pat discovered a significant corrosion issue on some of the steel 7" deck stringer I-beams on Bridge 4.



The worse corrosion is on the stringers in the area above the first cross beam west of the east abutment. Here there are holes rusted completely through in the web of the beams as seen on the photos here. When the ice becomes sound enough to provide safe support a more thorough inspection of the rest of the stringers can be made. The corrosion does not affect the structural integrity of the main bridge, but these beams are the support for the bridge deck. As the bridges were originally designed to handle truck traffic, the present state of the bridge supports should provide pedestrians safe use until repairs can be made.

Most of the corrosion could have occurred during the extended period from when McGilvray Road was closed to through traffic in 1948, or after 1973 when even local vehicles were banned until restoration started around 1990. As Bridge 4 was located on the lowest part of the trail, it was most likely to be submerged during large floods and, therefore it is likely that debris accumulated on the bottom flanges

of these beams. Debris retains moisture and creates acidic conditions from decomposition thereby significantly accelerating corrosion. The more recent flooding likely removed some of the accumulated rust scale, thereby exposing the holes.



It is anticipated that, given the present use of the Bridges for pedestrian traffic, the underpinnings of Bridge 4 can be rebuilt with treated wood and both Bridges 2 and 4 can be re-decked for approximately \$15,000. This cost estimate is very low as all the labor would be provided by FMR volunteers. It is hoped that this work can be completed in 2019 and/or 2020. The proposed repair method needs to be approved by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Wisconsin Historic Preservation Officer before any work can be done. The steel stringers that could be replaced with treated timber are under the deck of the bridge and only visible

from directly beneath the bridge, so the historic appearance of the bridge would not be affected.

Trail closures

The Friends has created a dry land bypass around Bridge 2, so the trail can remain open during the re-decking of that bridge. A significant amount of water flows under Bridge 4 so there is no possible bypass around it. As a result the trail will not be accessible beyond that point when work is in progress. This is estimated to be a three week period.

Dead Tree Removal

On December 18, 2018, Anna Jahns and another employee from the WDNR, Butch Kleinsmith, Mike Howe, and Pat Caffrey from the Friends formed a work party and brought down dead trees next to the beginning of the trail leading down to Bridge 1.





The trees were cut, stacked and the logs were removed. Mike Howe brought his tractor and chipper and the branches were cleaned up by chipping. Most of the trees were oak killed by oak wilt.

Brief 2018 financial update

per Pat Caffrey, and summarized by Nancy Hill

At the end of 2018 The Finance/Endowment Committee (D.A. Ferguson, Pat Caffrey and Jay Fernholz) met with President Ruth Scholze to discuss the performance of FMR's investments in 2018 and make recommendations for the coming year. Our adopted policy states the 20% of realized income (interest, dividends and realized capital gains) should be designated as an addition to the principal of the endowment, while 80% would remain available for FMR projects approved by the Board.

2018 realized earnings were \$8,085.29 (dividends and capital gains as reported by Vanguard). 20% of Realized Earnings, equal to \$1,617,06, was designated as endowment principal, bringing the principal to \$89,679.02.

Between endowment earnings and checking FMR has about \$65,000 available to spend between Vanguard investments and checking, more than any currently known needs. This balance provides important insurance for any significant bridge or trail repairs that may arrive in the future, especially for projects requiring a contractor with heavy equipment.

Donations in 2018 exceeded expenses by about \$5,000 and the balance in the checking account on 12/31/2018 was over \$7,000. Bridge #4 will require structural repairs and re-decking (see photos above) at an estimated cost of \$7,000 to \$10,000 in 2019, and Bridge 2 also needs re-decking at an estimated cost of \$6,000, so in 2019 spending will almost certainly exceed income.

We spent about \$1,000 on business expenses, printing, and supplies. Our total income was just over \$6,000 which included memberships of \$1,800, the sales of books, printed cards, etc. of \$350, and the End of Year appeal of nearly \$4,000. Your generosity has had a wonderful impact on our work. Thanks everyone!

Nancy's note... Because we are only able to have the results that we have shown over the last few years, we send thanks all our donors, and to the tireless donation of skilled volunteer time by many Board and Member folks. This includes the careful management of our money by the Finance/Endowment Committee.

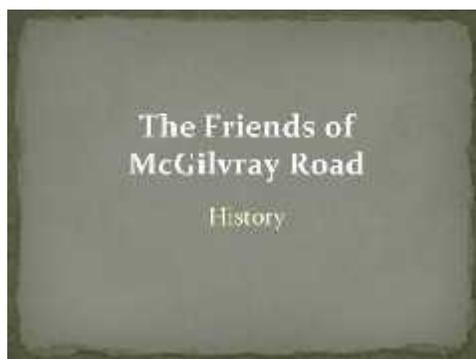
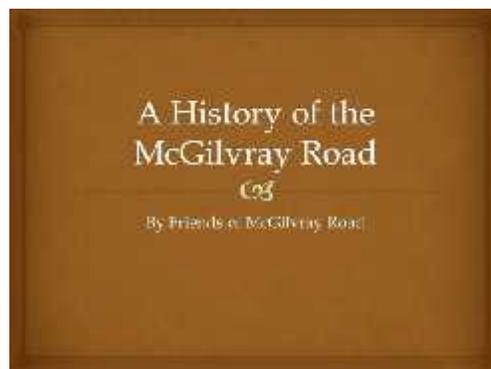
And we never forget the WDNR and their invaluable friendship, professionalism and dedication!

Coming Events

May 1, Preservation Month:

To commemorate the 30th anniversary of the creation of the Friends of McGilvray Road, Nancy Hill and Linda McMullin will present a slide show of the history of McGilvray Road at the Holmen Area Historical Society's meeting, 7:00 PM at the Holmen Village Hall.

The first half of the presentation will cover Alex McGilvray's immigration from Scotland up through the deterioration of



the bridges and trail, and the subsequent closing of the road. During the second half, Nancy and Linda will talk about the Friends' efforts to preserve these historic landmarks and reclaim the trail. This will include the restoration of the bridges and trail by the WDNR and the Friends, up to and including recent maintenance projects.

Paintings of the bridges by local artists Art Anderson and Mike Klafke will also be displayed.

“The Last Bridge Home”

June 5, Movie Night, 6 pm, Holmen Library Community Room:

“The Last Bridge Home (2003).” This independent film, created for Trempealeau County local television, is a heartfelt reminder about the sacrifices of our POW MIA service members and their families. Locations such as **the McGilvray Bridges** and the Mississippi River at Trempealeau are featured as are local musicians, John Smith and Ashlee and Katrice Hewitt. A song was written for the film by Justin Vernon, who has gone on to win multiple Grammys as Bon Iver. The film includes local actors, such as Steve Kiedrowski, who will speak briefly about the making of the film.