President Chris Holicek Outlines Friends Activities

After the colder than usual spring in Fish Creek everyone has been eagerly waiting for warmer weather. I hope all of you will be able to visit the park this spring and summer.

The first spring activity for the Friends will be to help with the Door County Half Marathon on May 4th, which is held entirely within the park. Our participation in everything from parking to handing out water and cheering on the 1800 runners/walkers is one way we raise funds for the park.

When you are in the park this summer please visit the Nicolet Beach Shelter building which was built with funds from the Friends, PGA (Peninsula Golf Association), the Nicolet Beach Concessions group and the Knowles Matching Stewardship Grant. It is a lovely place for a picnic, to read a book, or just relax by the beach.

The Friends also funded the development of a new Friends logo this spring. Thanks to Pat Keenan for all her time and effort on this project. Please look for our new logo this summer; it appears in the banner of this newsletter! This year the walkway at the Nature Center will undergo major improvements funded by the Friends and the Knowles Grant. We are also funding Ron Preston, a Native American, who will be presenting a special program July 20th.

Finally, the Friends and the PGA will sponsor our first Golf Outing September 8. Funds raised from this event will help to install flush toilets at the Nature Center.

The Friends Board of Directors is continually looking for ways to raise more funds for additional park projects. Adding new members is a great help. We are very appreciative that you chose to join the Friends and hope you might spread the word. As a Friends Member or Business Friend perhaps you know someone whom you could ask to join us in supporting the park by becoming a new Friend. It is now possible to join at our website www.peninsulafriends.org. Thanks for considering!

Above all, thanks to all of you for financial support and the many volunteer hours you have given to help the park. I hope you will find enjoyment in Peninsula’s beautiful natural surroundings this spring and summer.

Spring is the time to renew your annual membership!
Dear Friends,

Spring is a time for reflection, renewal and change at Peninsula State Park. A long winter season is slowly coming to an end and signs of spring continue to emerge. If we had no winter, spring would not be so pleasant! The park staff continues to reflect on our very busy winter use season and our preparation for the buildings and grounds as campers will soon be setting up in the park. Staff, Friends and volunteers continue to embrace change and feel renewed as we begin to reflect on our progress this past year and look forward to many new exciting ventures in 2013.

The park is still faced with permanent staffing vacancies but we continue to work diligently to fill the positions. In fall, 2012, we added a full time Facility Repair Worker, Ted Huber, to our maintenance department. Ted is a resident of Suamico and is responsible for building maintenance and cleaning. He will certainly be busy since Peninsula has just under 100 buildings and he will also be leading and training the summer cleaning staff. Please welcome Ted to Peninsula State Park! The park is also actively in the process of hiring full time rangers.

The Friends of Peninsula State Park continue to be involved in many exciting projects. The Friends Group secured a 2012 Stewardship Grant to furnish the Nicolet Beach Shelter and to fund Bat Condos, which were constructed this past winter with the help of park and school staff, volunteers and the Gibraltar High School Ecology Club. The condos are built, and a spring installation has been planned for the park service area and Welcker’s Point Picnic Area. The Nicolet Beach Shelter received three new park benches last fall; and a new bulletin board, picnic tables and bike racks are scheduled to be installed this spring. The Friends received a Knowles-Nelson Stewardship grant for 2013 to replace the White Cedar Nature Center walkway. Park staff is working with a DNR Landscape Architect to improve this area and hope to kick off the project this year. We continue to work with our Friends Group to enhance the park in so many ways. Your continued support allows the Friends to raise funds for educational and operational needs that provide opportunity to our visitors.

I am thankful for the support of the Friends of Peninsula State Park and thought it important to share new initiatives:

- The Friends continue to fund the seasonal LTE Naturalist position through all park merchandise sales. (The Friends merchandise committee is always looking for new members to help with this large task.)
- The Friends have worked with the park to begin a tree and bench memorial program. Please visit the Friends website (www.peninsulafriends.org) for more information.
- The Friends continue to support a research grant at the park, and this year a study of the Dwarf Lake Iris will be completed by an undergraduate student which helps to inform management decisions.
- A new capital fundraising campaign is on the horizon as we continue to work towards improvements at the White Cedar Nature Center.
- The Friends will also be hosting a first annual golf event in partnership with the Peninsula Golf Associates to raise funds to support match grant opportunities. The golf event is scheduled for Sunday, September 8th at our very own Peninsula State Park Golf Course. Registration and event information will be available at the PGA website (peninsulagolf.org) as planning has just begun.

Each year the role of The Friends expands, insuring that Peninsula’s amazing natural and cultural resources are enhanced and preserved for generations to come. Thank you for your continued support!

Kelli
Hikers Celebrate the New Year at Peninsula

Approximately thirty hearty hikers gathered to celebrate the New Year by participating in the Park’s 2nd annual First Day Hike. Families and Friends gathered at the Weborg Picnic Shelter at 10 a.m. on a beautiful, crisp morning to hike the one to three mile Sunset Bike Trail and Weborg Marsh Trail, enjoying the quiet beauty of the morning and observing a variety of bird species. Sharing hot cider and cookies back at the shelter and meeting new friends topped off the morning.

As Park Superintendent Kelli Bruns noted, last year over 14,000 hiked over 30,000 miles in state parks across the country when America’s State Parks First Day Hikes were launched on New Year’s Day 2012 in all 50 states.

Candlelight Ski and Hike

At last, the Norse gods were on our side this winter and granted us the conditions for a true Nordic experience – great snow and deep cold! Advanced forecasts predicted wind chills of – 30 degrees for the evening of February 2nd. The day before the event, we debated cancellation out of concern for the Park staff and Friends volunteers who would be outside from 2:30 until 9:00 p.m. preparing the trail and overseeing the ski and hike.

Amazingly, Saturday dawned with sunny skies and no wind, with temperatures climbing into the teens. We were a go! By 2:30 the Friends were setting out the luminaries while Fuzzy Sunstrom and Jeff Pfieffer, our volunteer groomers, put their finishing touch on the trails. As our parking crew assembled in Lot 5, and the hot cider, cocoa and cookies were being set out in the shelter building, we doubted that many participants would brave the ten degree temperature.

At dusk, as we heard the fireworks from the Fish Creek Winter Festival, cars began rolling into the parking lot and hearty skiers and hikers eagerly headed out onto the candlelit trail. With stars overhead and several hundred luminaries lighting the way, they were experiencing a truly magical evening.

We heard nothing but compliments and thanks for hosting the event. Most of the estimated 300 adults and kids who took part expressed enthusiasm for the warmth of the bonfire at the shelter and the fire ring set out at the trail’s halfway point. (Our cold toes were worth every minute of it.)

Friends and PGA Coordinate Golf-Scramble Fundraiser

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! We are pleased to let you know that our very first golf scramble fundraiser will be held September 8 at the Peninsula State Park Golf Course. The Friends of Peninsula, in conjunction with the Peninsula Golf Association, are putting on this golf scramble fundraiser. Profits from the fundraiser will benefit two projects at the Park:

- the renovation of the Memorial Totem pole, located near hole number nine and overlooking the burial site of Chief Simon Kahquados of the Potawatomi nation,
- the renovation of the White Cedar Nature Center, centrally located in the park, to include additional storage, lavatories, and other much needed updates.

More details will be forthcoming but mark your calendars and plan to join us for this exciting and fun event.
Plotting the Elusive Lake Iris in the Park

Dwarf Lake Iris (Iris lacustris) grows only in very special sites near the shores of the Northern Great Lakes. Like a miniature blue flag, the deep blue to purple blossoms first appear in early May. By early June most flowers are faded.

Although some work was done in the mid 1980s to identify colonies of these beautiful plants, exact locations have been lost. Knowing where concentrations and exact locations of Dwarf Lake Iris exist has become very important as the DNR begins developing its Master Plan for the Park. A study related to Peninsula’s lake iris colonies would influence management practices and trail routes, since large colonies are impacted both positively and negatively by the trails.

The presence or inclusion of invasive species can also affect the health of colonies.

The park staff set identification of these colonies as a high priority for the 2013 Friends of Peninsula State Park Research Grant proposals. The Friends received an application for just such a grant from Allison Perrigoue, a junior in biology from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. She will start her research next month. In addition to locating and recording locations, Allison will measure the moisture, sun, and soil acidity on these concentrations. Her work will continue throughout the summer.

Invasive Species Work Continues

Even though there is still snow on the ground as I write this it will soon be spring and time to once again begin the Battle of the Invasives! With good weather we should be able to start spraying garlic mustard in early May. If there is anything good about garlic mustard the fact that it emerges earlier than most other native species is a positive. This allows us to spray it without harming the plants we would like to see thrive. We usually have a window of 3 to 4 weeks before we have to stop spraying. If the weather is warm enough we will also find second year plants that we can pull at the same time we are spraying. We will continue pulling until such time as the second year plants set seeds. When we can no longer work on garlic mustard we will switch over to pulling, cutting, and treating honeysuckle. Over the past five years we have made great progress in the park. With proper treatment the plants we cut and remove do not reseed or re-bloom. The upside to this is an obvious difference in park landscape. It feels good to be able to see the long term fruits of our labor.

This year we will be changing the day that we meet to do invasive work. We will be meeting each Wednesday between 9:00 a.m and 11:00 a.m. I will be sending out an email each week letting everyone know where we will be working. I encourage everyone to get involved whenever you are available. Given the scope of the job we face there is no possibility of having too many workers. I can’t say “Thank you” enough to everyone who has helped in the past and I look forward to having new people join our team. If you have any questions contact me: Email kemps99@msn.com or call (608) 963-8705.

Gary Kemp
Invasive Species Coordinator
Volunteers Are “Backbone” of 7 Special events, Plus 2 Weekly Activities

Volunteers are the very backbone of many of the activities that take place in the Park. Now is time to turn our attention to the needs of our park during this upcoming year. The Friends of Peninsula Park will play an integral part in making the visitors’ Park experience informative and fun.

The park provides enjoyment in many ways such as hiking, biking, camping, skiing, snowshoeing, boating, swimming, bird watching, and golfing. Our park is counting on us all the more to preserve the things we love. Volunteers will also benefit in many ways such as:

• making new friends
• having fun
• getting exercise
• making a difference
• trying something new
• sharing a skill
• challenging yourself
• preserving the future of the Park
• receiving satisfaction in seeing a job well done
• knowing that you are appreciated

You can probably think of some special reasons of your own.

Some of the events we need volunteers for include the Half-Marathon, new Golf Fund Raising event, Spooktacular, Fall 50, First Hike, Family Ski/Snowshoe, and Candlelight Ski/Hike.

Other ongoing volunteer activities are staffing the Nature Center on Monday of each week from May through October and invasive species control every Wednesday during the growing season. (Remember: pulling just one garlic mustard plant, which can produce hundreds of seeds per plant, helps to preserve the native vegetation of Peninsula Park.)

We hope that you will consider giving the park some of your time and talents this year. No matter how much time you can contribute, your help will make a difference and is appreciated. If you haven’t volunteered before we would love to have you join us for some fun and fellowship. If you have any questions, need information, or would like to volunteer please e-mail me at kemps99@msn.com or phone 608-963-1916.

Michelle Kemp
FPSP Volunteer Coordinator

New at Peninsula in 2013

• Electric service has been provided to 62 new camp sites, and all electric sites have been upgraded to 50-amp service. One hundred and sixty-five of Peninsula’s 469 family campsites are now electric.

• At Nicolet Beach, the old retaining wall has been removed, replaced with an accessible boardwalk and two cordwalks to provide beach access for those less mobile. Plantings of native grasses and shrubs will stabilize the beach and improve water quality.

• Peninsula is participating in a water audit funded in partnership with the Wisconsin DNR and a Coastal Management grant.
Enjoy New Events, Old Favorites at Peninsula in 2013

Whether it’s immersing yourself in Peninsula’s beautiful landscape or sharing a nature-based activity with a child, this year’s program offerings fit the bill. Peninsula’s professional naturalists and experienced teacher-volunteers pride themselves on delivering quality activities. Listed below are tentative 2013 special events and weekly offerings. Go to www.wiparks.net weekly for complete program postings, or stop by the Nature Center to pick up a schedule. Most programs are free and open to the public but a state park vehicle sticker is required. Donations appreciated.  

NC=Nature Center   TBA=Time to be Announced

JUNE

Wacky Wednesday June 12. 10 AM – 2 PM. NC. Wacky UnNature Trail, meet Madame Bomba, earn goofy prizes. Silly family fun!

Celebrate Birds Saturday, June 15. 10 AM – 3 PM. Visit our booth at Fyr Bal in Ephraim!

Peninsula Digs Reading! Tuesday, June 18. 10 AM – 12 Noon. NC. Lively activities will promote a positive reading vibe. Free books for participants. Supported by Edgewood Orchard Galleries, Fish Creek.

Learn to Camp Wednesday & Thursday, June 19 & 20. Lakeshore Group Camp. Drop-in for camp cooking, crafts, lore. Let us help your family experience camping without the hassles. Program schedule TBA.

JULY

Bike Rodeo Tuesday, July 2. TBA. Kids will learn about bike safety by pedaling an obstacle course. Prizes, light refreshments.

Gettysburg Address & Flag Raising Wednesday, July 3. 10 AM. NC. Smokey Bear at Peninsula today.

Wacky Wednesday July 10. 10 AM – 2 PM. NC. Wacky UnNature Trail, meet Madame Bomba, earn goofy prizes. Silly family fun!

Star Gazing Saturday, July 13. TBA. UW-Madison PhD students teach identification, lore of the night sky.

Peninsula Digs Reading! Tuesday, July 16. 10 AM – 12 Noon. NC. Lively activities will promote a positive reading vibe. Free books for participants. Supported by Edgewood Orchard Galleries, Fish Creek.

Native American Dance with Ron Preston Saturday, July 20. Honor Song at dawn. 10 AM – 12 Noon Family Programs. Evening Campfire. TBA.

Talking Tombstones Tuesday, July 23. 10 AM – 12 Noon. Blossomburg Cemetery. Door County history comes alive.

AUGUST

Peninsula Digs Reading! Saturday, August 3. 10 AM – 12 Noon. NC. Lively activities will promote a positive reading vibe. Free books for participants. Supported by Edgewood Orchard Galleries, Fish Creek.

Bike Rodeo Tuesday, August 6. TBA. Kids will learn about bike safety by pedaling an obstacle course. Prizes, light refreshments.

Archery – Try It! August 9, 10 & 11. NC. Drop-in. Learn the skill of bow and arrow. TBA.

Star Gazing Sunday, August 11. TBA. UW-Madison PhD students teach identification, lore of the night sky.

Learn to Camp Wednesday & Thursday, August 19 & 20. Drop-in for camp cooking, crafts, lore. Let us help your family experience camping without the hassles. Location and program schedule TBA.

Beautiful Bats Saturday, August 17. 10 AM – 12 Noon. NC. Evening bat watch. TBA. Peninsula welcomes Bat Conservation of WI. Supported by a Door County Community Foundation grant.


Smokey Bear at Peninsula! Saturday, August 31.  

Events Cont.
SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER
Star Gazing Sunday, October 4. TBA. UW-Madison PhD students teach identification, lore of the night sky.
Smokey Bear's Spooktacular Forest Saturday, October 12. TBA. Candlelight Family Event.

Renew Your Friends Membership for 2013

Friends annual memberships are up for renewal each spring (exception being those who joined after November 1 of last year). Please fill out the renewal form and return it with your check. New this year, you can now renew online by going to our website www.Peninsulafriends.org and clicking “membership.” Please consider upgrading your membership to become a Life Member or donating to one of our endowment funds. Friends members now receive a 10% discount on all merchandise sold at the Nature Center or Park Headquarters.

Membership dues and donations are an extremely important source of funding for the Friends to support Peninsula State Park. With your monetary help, the Park will continue to be a leader in providing educational experiences and recreational opportunities to well over one million visitors each year.

Future Newsletters Will be Sent Electronically

In an effort to be considerate of our environment, future Friends newsletters will be sent via email unless you notify us that you prefer to continue getting newsletters through the mail. Please be sure to indicate your wishes on the renewal form in this newsletter or contact Gail Anderson, Secretary, at 920-868-3499, or email: gnanderson@wildblue.net.

Thank You Business Members

Our Business members continue to generously support the efforts of the Friends and Peninsula State Park. Please give them your support and a big thank you.

A Peninsula Park-View Resort
Bay Shore Outfitters
Baylake Bank
Door County Kayak Tours
Ecology Sports
Ephraim Visitor Information Center
Fish Creek Kite Company
Gibraltar Grill
Gravity Trails LLC
Great Northern Construction, Inc.
Hat Head
Hide Side Boutique & Corner Store
Homestead Suites
Julies Park Café & Motel
Nelson Shopping Center
Nicolet Bay Concessions
Nor Dor Sport & Cyclery
On Deck Clothing Company
Parkwood Lodge
Peninsula Pacers LLC
Spielmans Kid Works
The Cookery Restaurant & Wine Bar
The Main Course
Thomas/Pfeifer Insurance
What Next?
Wild Tomato Wood Fired Pizza & Grille
Wilson’s Restaurant & Ice Cream Parlor
Spring finally arrives on Sunday, April 28th!

- Families hand-feed birds at the Nature Center.
- Visitors climb the tower with calm winds and sunshine.
Friends of Peninsula State Park – 2013 Membership Renewal

Please renew your membership and consider making a donation to one of the Friends worthwhile endowments funds.

I am renewing my membership _____, a new member ____, making a donation ______.

Membership level: Please circle membership level.

Individual $25   Family $40   Individual Lifetime $300   Business $150

Additional Contribution Opportunities

For Now and the Future Fund
Peninsula Research Fund
The Interpretive Nature Center Fund
General donation (including ski trail group)
Total Enclosed.

Please make check payable to Friends of Peninsula State Park.

* You can also renew using PayPal by going to www.Peninsulafriends.org/membership.

The Friends is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. All dues and donations are fully deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Please circle any changes in your contact information.

Name______________________________________________________________
Address : summer_______________________________________________________________________________________(dates)

winter__________________________________________________________________________(dates)

Phone________________     E-mail____________________________________________________

_______ I would like to receive e-mail updates about Peninsula State Park and the Friends.

_______ I would like to receive future newsletters via email.

_______ Please continue to send newsletters by mail.

Volunteer Opportunities: Circle those areas that are of interest to you.

Board and committee work       Educational programs
Nature Center volunteer       Trail maintenance
Invasive species control       Bird and plant surveys
Cross Country Ski Group       Historical research & archives
Candlelight ski, Family snowshoe Merchandise
Trail/ski

Mail this form along with your check to: Friends of Peninsula State Park,
PO Box 502, Fish Creek, WI 54212-0502.

Visit our website: www.Peninsulafriends.org
Friends of Peninsula State Park
P.O. Box 502
Fish Creek, WI 54212-0502

Friends of Peninsula State Park Board of Directors

Chris Holicek, President
Bill Schaars, Vice President
Gail Anderson, Secretary
Gary Kemp, Treasurer
Nick Anderson
Bob Bultman
Dan Engelke
Cathy Fiorato
Michelle Kemp

Peninsula State Park Staff

Kelli Bruns, Superintendent
Erin Brown, Assistant Superintendent
Jane Barnowsky, Finance/Visitor Services
Kathleen Harris, Naturalist
Vacant, Ranger
Vacant, Ranger
Ted Huber, Facility Repair Workder
Jeff Lange, Facility Repair Worker
Chuck Smrz, Utilities Specialist