Dear Friends,

Summer and fall seasons have come to a close and the park is preparing for winter once again. I am trying to remember the warm, hazy days of summer, but since there were so few it appears to be hard to recall. Cool July nights, warm campfires, fireflies, bats overhead, frogs calling from Weborg marsh and songbirds tend to linger in my thoughts.

Once again, Peninsula State Park welcomed over one million visitors this year. Park staff, volunteers and Friends worked very hard tending to our customers by providing rewarding experiences and opportunities at the park. Please be sure to thank our Friends, staff and volunteers for a job well done! Soon the park will retreat into a blanket of white, a very peaceful time to spend in the woods, a time for rest for our abundant resources.

This year, many projects were completed including the final installation of the two bat condos, one at Welcker’s Point and the other near our general maintenance area. Thanks to Kathleen Harris, volunteers, the Interpretive and Maintenance Teams, for coordinating this work. The bat monitoring device “ANABAT” recorded many species of bats at both locations, informing us that bats are already making these condos their new homes.

The Friends also supported the park with the purchase of new invasive species control equipment, a DR Brushmower; funds for two LTE positions. including a seasonal Park Naturalist and an Invasive Species Coordinator. Friends also funded invasive species control work; matched funds for Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grants as well as a Friends of Wisconsin State Parks Affinity Grant. For the second year Friends, along with the Peninsula Golf Association, coordinated another successful Peninsula Golf Classic.

**WHITE CEDAR NATURE CENTER RENOVATION**

This year, the Friends were awarded the first phase of a Knowles – Nelson Stewardship Grant to initiate needed renovations to the White Cedar Nature Center. The grant, first of three phases, will help fund the design of the site plan to add flush toilet facilities and additional display and work space at the nature center, as well as utility upgrades.

Marc Isaksen Designs is the architect the Friends have contracted to design the addition, with DNR approval. The design plan will help the Friends determine construction costs for the renovation project. Initial ground breaking took place in October as we tested soil from various areas around the nature center to determine site conditions for a year round bathroom facility. (cont.)
(renovation cont.) In mid-November we will have our first “draft” design plan on which to provide comment before receiving a final plan to share with everyone before the new year! The Friends are currently working on applying for Phase 2 of the Stewardship Grant, which will help fund the construction of the project.

We look forward to kicking off a capital campaign and will need Friends and volunteers to help raise additional funds for this important project. Funds may also be used to provide additional areas for outdoor improvements such as an observation deck, outdoor playscape and prairie restoration. If you have interest in joining the Friends in this capital campaign please contact me at kelli.bruns@wi.gov or stop at the park anytime. We are very excited to have the support of the Friends to improve the White Cedar Nature Center. Please visit the Friends website (www.peninsulafriends.org) or stop by the park office and nature center for additional information. We are grateful for your continued support!

Throughout the year, staff will be actively working on new projects to continue to enhance our park infrastructure. Upcoming Master Planning for Door County State Parks is still scheduled to begin this year or in early 2015. Park management has also begun the process to develop an Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and Beech Bark Disease (BBD) Management Plan. This plan will provide detailed information regarding ash and beech composition in Peninsula State Park, handling ash tree mortality in upcoming years in the park's high priority areas such as campgrounds, designated use areas and trails, and use of the proper tools to manage EAB such as education, monitoring trees, and other cultural, biological and physical controls.

Please consider attending a Friends of Peninsula State Park Board meeting to find ways you can become more involved with all our efforts. Future Board meeting dates will be posted on the Friends of Peninsula State Park's website at peninsulafriends.org. Thank you for your continued support!

Annual President’s Report for Friends of Peninsula State Park

Last October I attended the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks gathering at Horicon Marsh. This was the first Summit Meeting in which board members attending shared their concerns about Friends groups. For the most part, all Friends groups had similar comments which included how to raise money, how to keep existing members and attract new members, and how to increase our presence on social media. In spring I attended the Northeastern Summit Meeting where the same issues were discussed.

Each year the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks give out Gold Seal Awards. Last year we were selected for "Best View from a Tower," and this year we won the award for "Best Concessions in a State Park."

Our Friends group has three endowment funds established with the Door County Foundation: The Now and Future Fund which covers general operating expenses; the Interpretive Nature Center Fund, established to support the construction/maintenance of the Interpretive Nature Center; and the Research Fund which funds grants for undergraduate or graduate students who wish to do research in the park.

We are always grateful for donations to any of these funds. Donations can be sent directly to the Friends of Peninsula State Park, P.O. Box 502, Fish Creek, WI 54212.

Over the years we have contributed money with matching funds from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant to fund larger projects in the park, including the Nicolet Beach shelter and picnic equipment, the bat condos, the walkway to the Nature Center; and this year we are moving forward with renovations to the Nature Center, which will include improved work space and flush toilets. Printed envelopes for Nature Center renovation contributions are available in the park.
This year we also received an Affinity Grant through the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks which provided funding for summer interpretive and nature education programs. Naturalist programs included healthy campfire cooking, understanding climate change, and learning about the now extinct passenger pigeon. The grant was matched by volunteer hours and funds from the Friends.

We are proud to announce that we hired graphic designer Pat Creed to design our new Friends logo (which appears in the heading of the newsletter).

Thanks to all board members and Friends of the park who have helped with our efforts

Chris Holicek, President

Research Grant Results Summarized

The Friends have established a unique and beneficial opportunity for students and the park by offering the Research Grant. Students who apply for and receive a research grant conduct specific research in the park during the summer.

In 2014, the Friends accepted two final reports from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point students: *Assessment of reptile and Amphibian Communities in Peninsula State Park with Particular Focus on Rare or Endangered Species* by Spencer Siddons, Bradley Steckart, Matthew Rucker and *A Baseline Survey of Iris lacustris (Dwarf Lake Iris) in Peninsula State Park* by Allison Perrigoue. This last study has drawn some outside interest. The US Fish and Wildlife research project on Dwarf Lake studies Iris seed viability, and they believe the plots that Allison set up would be useful for their study. Both final reports do provide the DNR with valuable information in future planning. The public can read these studies at the Park office.

Currently, the Research Committee is in the process of making personal contact with faculty and staff from targeted colleges and universities in the state to promote the research grant opportunities for students. Dan Engelke visited the UW-La Crosse campus in October and reported encouraging meetings. Please consider a donation to our Research Fund to help cover the costs for future grant opportunities to students from Wisconsin colleges and universities!

Peninsula Golf Classic Fundraiser Raises Renovation Funds

The Friends of Peninsula State Park and the Peninsula Golf Associates Inc. held its golf fundraiser outing on August 24, 2014. This event raised money for the renovation of the White Cedar Nature Center located within the park and the Memorial Pole, nestled among the trees on hole 9 at the golf course.

This year, 41 golfers participated in the scramble with awards going to the first place winners in the Men’s, Women’s, and Mixed divisions. Special events took place on certain holes, and raffle tickets were sold throughout, providing opportunities for golfers to win prizes while at the same time, raising money for the park funds.

The local business community, private donors, and sponsors contributed generously; and the success of the event relied heavily on their donations. Specialty items and gift certificates were used for raffle prizes and team awards. Individuals and businesses purchased flags and hole signs for display on golf day, while others generously gave cash. The total profit, after expenses, was $6,034 with Friends receiving 50% or $3,017.

A huge thank you goes out to all the volunteers from both organizations. Everyone worked hard before the event and on golf day. Nothing of this size and scope could have been done without willing volunteers. Their time and energy were the backbone of the event and, ultimately, its success.

Kelli and John Bruns about to tee-off.
Friends Volunteers Net $3500 Supervising Aid Stations

In recent years, event organizers have made bicycling or running through Peninsula State Park a signature part of their plans. In fact, one event, The Door County Half Marathon and 5K run is held entirely within the park on the first Saturday in May. Last spring 2350 runners took part, bringing revenue to the park through entrance pass purchases, merchandise sales and Friends memberships.

Both the Door County Century and Peninsula Century Bike rides, a week apart in September, also utilize the park. Finally, during the last weekend in October, after the Fall Festivals are over and many merchants are thinking about closing up shop for the winter, the Fifty Mile Run occurs, bringing 2500 team, pairs and solo runners to the county.

The Half Marathon, the Peninsula Century and 50 Mile Run event organizers ask Friends volunteers to help at aid stations—dispersing water and Gatorade for the Half Marathon; and, in the case of the Peninsula Century and 50 Mile Run, snacks, as well. Not only is volunteering fun, but lucrative: Friends receive a $1000 donation for the Half Marathon, $2000 for two rest stops at the 50 Mile Run, and $500 for the Peninsula Century. These monies become a part of the Friends general fund to help where needed in the park.

Fall 50 crew at park aid station.

Butterflies Benefit from Friends Support
Kathleen Harris, Peninsula State Park Naturalist

It’s official! The Nature Center meadow is a certified Monarch Waystation. This habitat meets the criteria put forth by Monarch Watch (www.monarchwatch.org) regarding native species diversity and management practices.

Certification was one component of a grant received from Friends of Wisconsin State Parks, with a match from Peninsula’s Friends group. Monarch tagging supplies, new insect and sweep nets, butterfly teaching supplies and a monarch costume were also purchased with grant funds. The grant also funded supplies for two healthy outdoor cooking demonstrations.

Habitat loss in monarch wintering grounds, climate change, and change in farming practices (fewer places for common milkweed to grow) are reasons why monarch populations are declining. By providing suitable space for milkweed and other native plants, Peninsula’s Nature Center meadow is a positive response to a disturbing trend.

In addition to planting diverse native species, park staff and volunteers have also removed unwanted plants. For about a decade Peninsula volunteers have pulled spotted knapweed from the meadow. It is an allelopathic intruder, which means spotted knapweed releases toxins from its roots, stunting the growth of other nearby plants. Note: Always wear gloves when removing spotted knapweed by hand, pulling the root. Then dispose of the plant in the garbage so seeds cannot disperse. Because of this effort, there is a marked decline in the meadow’s knapweed population and an increase in milkweed. Milkweed is favored by monarch caterpillars.
Help Wanted

Would you like to make an even greater impact through your support of the Friends? Here are some opportunities to apply experience you have, or learn about an area that interests you.

**Merchandising**
- If you have an interest in merchandising, we can use you!
- Sales of merchandise at the Visitor Center and the Nature Center completely fund our summer naturalist and invasive species staff.
- We need help in all aspects of our merchandising program: product selection and ordering, invoice processing, display, annual inventory, and pricing and stocking.
- This is an area with great growth potential—help us to realize it!
- Flexible hours, no experience necessary—just a willingness to help.
- If you’d like to learn more about this exciting opportunity, please contact Cathy Fiorato at 920 839-2419.

**Membership**
- If you have experience with Excel and Word, we can use you!
- Our members are our lifeblood, and we want more of them! Once you’re a member, we hope you continue to renew and enjoy hearing about the activities that hour membership supports.
- Our Membership Committee needs help with processing new and renewal memberships, keeping member records, and handling mailings.
- Flexible hours, no experience necessary—just a willingness to help.
- If you’d like to learn more about this exciting opportunity, please contact Gail Anderson at 920 868-3499.

**Peninsula State Park – Wish List**
- Automated External Defibrillators - AED's for the park office and nature center
- Bluebird camera and monitoring equipment for the nature center
- New grills, bike racks and picnic tables at various locations throughout the park
- Bat Houses - various locations throughout the park
- Nature center campfire seating - improvements
- Interpretive Nature Center Fund - Endowment contribution
- For Now and for the Future - Endowment contribution
- Peninsula State Park Research Grant Fund - Endowment contribution
- GPS units - handheld for educational programs/staff use
- New wall mounted TV for park office meeting room
- Taxidermy Work
- Natural structure (play or art) along the White Cedar Nature Trail
- Spotting Scope for the nature center
- Additional large fire ring for special events
- Grocery Store Gift Cards for Cook-outs
- One-inch Wide Foam Paint Brushes
- Paper Plates
- Pony Beads
- Bird Seed, Suet
Hello Peninsula Volunteers & Nature Lovers!

1. The 90-minute video, created by the Fish and Wildlife Service, will be of special interest to those who teach about bats (hopefully, that is everyone!). As with other on-line videos, you can skip the sections that are not of interest to you. [http://nctc.fws.gov/resources/knowledge-resources/video-gallery/education-outreach.html](http://nctc.fws.gov/resources/knowledge-resources/video-gallery/education-outreach.html).

2. You can support Friends of Wisconsin State Parks by choosing **AmazonSmile** then selecting **Friends of Wisconsin State Parks**. Go to [Smile.amazon.com](http://Smile.amazon.com) first, then you may browse or shop at AmazonSmile. The Amazon Smile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to the customer’s selected charitable organization.


Do you know the state organization, Friends of Wisconsin State Parks, has directly supported Peninsula’s interpretive program? This past year, the park and its Friends group received a $1,000 matching grant! We purchased new butterfly nets, monarch tags, monarch curriculum, healthy outdoor cooking supplies, and more. Please consider our state friends group through **AmazonSmile**.

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**2015 Winter Events Planned**

Save these dates to enjoy winter in Peninsula State Park:

**Thursday, January 1st, 10 a.m. to noon.** Celebrate the New Year with a **First Day Hike**. Meet at the Weborg picnic shelter at 10 a.m. Join the Friends on a three mile hike along the Sunset bike trail and Weborg marsh. Come back to the shelter to enjoy a cup of hot cider or cocoa around a warming fire.

**Saturday, January 17th, 10 a.m. to noon.** Peninsula State Park and Friends 6th **Annual Family Ski and Snowshoe**. Join Friends and families for a leisurely ski or snowshoe on the golf course and light refreshments. Meet at shelter building near parking lot 5, Highland Rd.

**Saturday, February 7th, 5:30 -8 p.m.** Peninsula State Park’s **Annual Candlelight Ski/Hike**. Enjoy the enchanting one-mile candle-lit loop, campfire and light refreshments. Meet at shelter building near parking lot 5, Highland Rd.

Watch for updates on our website: peninsulafriends.org or call Park Office (920) 868-3258
Winter Wear and Holiday Gifts Available at Park Office

Now is the time to get ready for winter weather and holiday gifts for everyone on your list, including yourself. You will find a large selection of shirts, sweatshirts, fleece jackets and a colorful array of fleece hats and billed caps in eight colors. Be sure to look at the wide selection of books we have assembled: guide books of native flora and fauna, historical books about the Park and early settlers, and of course, enjoyable books for children. Plush critters will make any child smile.

Annual vehicle stickers for 2015 go on sale December 1st. They are a welcome gift for everybody on your list.

Stop by Park headquarters and get your holiday shopping done! And don’t forget to take advantage of your 10% discount on all merchandise throughout the year by mentioning your Friends membership.

Give a Friends Membership this Year

Looking for something special to give to a friend, co-worker, student, fellow camping friend? How about giving that someone a membership to the Friends of Peninsula State Park. They will enjoy being a part of an organization dedicated to supporting the programs and activities that Peninsula State provides to well over a million visitors each year, as well as receiving spring and fall newsletters and a 10% discount on all merchandise offered at park headquarters and the White Cedar Nature Center.

We will send the recipient a card telling them of your thoughtful gift.

To: name ____________________________________________________________________________

address _______________________________________________________________________________

email ________________________________________________ (optional)

From: name ________________________________________________

address _______________________________________________________________________________

Membership level: Individual $25 Family $40 Life $300

Make check payable to: Friends of Peninsula State Park
Mail to: Friends of Peninsula State Park
PO Box 502
Fish Creek, WI 54212
Friends of Peninsula State Park Board Meeting – October 28, 2014

The meeting was called to order by President Chris Holicek. Board members present were Michelle & Gary Kemp, Cathy Fiorato, Bill Schaars, Dan Engelke, Gail & Nick Anderson, Brian Fitzgerald. Also present were Superintendent Kelli Bruns, Ass’t Superintendent Erin Brown and Rich Gnadt.

The minutes of June 10, July 23 and August 16 were approved as written.

Slate of Board Officers: The following slate of officers was approved:
President: Chris Holicek
Vice-President: Bill Schaars
Secretary: Gail Anderson
Treasurer: Gary Kemp

Treasurer’s Report: Reports from August 31 and September 30 were presented. One notation from September 30: proceeds from Golf Classic, $3,017, to be moved to the Nature Center Renovation Fund.
Both reports were approved as corrected.

Superintendent’s Update: Kelli Bruns reported the following:
- 2013 Stewardship fund of $4,500 for Nature Center paver stones. Extension will be requested.
- 2014 Stewardship Grant – Soil surveys have been conducted. We do have suitable sites for in-ground septic system. Meetings ongoing with architect and DNR personnel.
- 2015 Stewardship Grant application due November 15th for Phase 2 of Nature Center Renovation Project. Will cover most of cost of construction. Match request will ask for $20,000 grant, to be matched by Friends
- EAB and BBD Updates. Emerald Ash Borer and Beech Bark Disease are present. Kelli is working on management plan for Peninsula. Going to request $9,000 to fund a LTE in the spring to work for three months to draft and complete an Emerald Ash Borer and Beech Bark disease Management Plan for Peninsula State Park.
- Affinity Grant of $1,500 to fund outdoor cooking programs and monarch tagging will be closed out since they have been completed.
- 2015 Bench and memorial tree inventory - Chris Milligan created new tracking spreadsheet to use for prospective donors and also for bench replacement needs. Nick and Gail will work on it this spring with other volunteers.
- Nicolet Bay Concessions won 2014 Gold Seal Award from FWSP for “best concession at a Park”
- Facebook contest for 2015 – Chris will work with Nick Meiers.
- Friends bulletin board at Nicolet beach shelter needs to be updated.
- Friends Agreement with DNR - Kelli will meet with Chris and Gary to discuss. All board members are urged to look over DNR agreement and Friends bylaws.
- Little Free Library – will discuss at November meeting. Need to add this Land Use Agreement to be reflected in Friends Agreement with the DNR.
- Friends of Gibraltar, Vinnie Chomeau offering new family outdoor fitness/food programs each week. Friends might be able to help with future activities.
- Golf Course tree removal due to damage of Imprelis fertilizer in progress. Replanting/design also in progress.
- Nicolet Beach - new plantings have to be relocated at the beach to less high use areas in front of swim area. Shelter plaque in progress.

Committee Reports

Invasives – Gary Kemp reported that due to poor weather and lack of volunteers, much remains to be done. He noted that using line-cutters against garlic mustard seemed to work well. He will not be available until June next year. An Invasives LTE needs to be on the job much earlier than this year. Invasives LTE Brenna Decker was excellent this summer. Jason Wilke provided contract work in spring.

Golf Classic - Dan Engelke reported that there were only 41 participants this year, even with moving the date to August. Total revenues were $6,034 with PGA and Friends each receiving $3,017. Dan reiterated the immense amount of work required to produce it. Businesses were very supportive. He suggested they be contacted to ask for Friends support in the future. Thanks to Dan and Jean for their excellent guidance and work.

Research Endowment - Dan Engelke contacted UW La Crosse and met with three faculty members who are very interested in our program. He plans to meet with other schools, UW Green Bay and UW Steven’s Point in particular. Vinnie Chomeau has contacted Northland College and Kathleen Harris has already contacted UWGB. Research committee will meet Nov. 10th. We currently have $6,000 to spend on research grants.
Merchandise Committee – Cathy Fiorato reported that she and Gail need more help to handle all the ordering, stocking, handling remittances etc that are involved. We are putting a “help-wanted” ad in the fall newsletter. Inventory will be taken on Oct 27th. Jo Schaars, Chris Holicek, Pat and Jim Arnold will help. Kelli will contact Patti Loosen, FWSP, as to how to handle possibly hiring somebody.

Fall 50 Annual Race - Bill Schaars and Gary Kemp reported that all went well with the two aid stations. It is now a nationally sanctioned race, which brings excellent attendance and publicity to Door County. There were 2,500 runners, including both teams and solo runners. The Friends made a total of $2,000 for the two feed stations.

Membership – Gail Anderson reported that membership totals are about the same as last year, but down slightly. Will have to discuss membership and the value of brochures etc at a future meeting. She also suggested that it might be helpful to open our board meetings to any interested Friends members/general public in order to recruit more help with board/committee work and membership. There is a great need to engage the local population, especially families. Discussion to be held at Nov meeting or later.

Newsletter - Jo Schaars is putting together the fall newsletter. SHE ASKED ALL TO PLEASE GET THEIR ARTICLES/PHOTOS TO HER ASAP. She also said she will do the spring 2015 newsletter but that will be her last one. Thank you, Jo, for all the work and talent you have utilized to create the past newsletters!

Trails – Brian Fitzgerald reported that groomers need more help maintaining the ski trails that are now used. He is in contact with WisCorps which has a sliding fee of $5,000-$7,000 to work on trails. Might be feasible if we could get a matching grant from somebody. Roger Pronschinske, a Park employee, has offered to volunteer for the first two weeks in November on trail work. Also Mark at Pro Tree would be willing to do work. A motion was made and seconded to pay $1,600 to Roger Pronschinske and up to $1,000 to Mark at Pro Tree for trail work. Motion Passed.

Other Business
1. Erin Brown reported that Lot 5 needs a new information center. She has looked into products and suggested one costing about $1,500. Motion made and seconded to allot up to $1,500 for new information center. Motion Passed.

2. Kelli Bruns said the DNR Master Plan for all of Door County will hopefully be underway in 2015.

3. Smile.amazon or FWSP/smile.amazon will donate .5% of purchase price to customer’s selected charitable organization.

Winter Activities offered at the Park – Mark on your calendar.

Thursday, January 1st - First Day Hike. 10 AM – noon. Meet at Weborg Shelter

Saturday, January 17th – Family Ski and Snowshoe. 10 AM – noon. Meet at parking lot 5 at shelter.

Saturday, February 7th – Candlelight Ski/Hike. 5:30 – 8 PM. Meet at parking lot 5 at shelter.

Naturalist’s Report – Kelli handed out a report of the many excellent programs Kathleen Harris has presented this year and other projects completed.

The next board meeting will be Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at 9 AM in Park office.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gail Anderson
Secretary
Thank You Friends 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
Baylake Bank
Bay Property Services of Door County
Ecology Sports
Ephraim Visitor Information Center
Fish Creek Kite Company
Gibraltar Grill
Great Northern Construction Inc.
Hat Head
Hide Side Boutique & Corner Store
Homestead Suites

Julies Park Café’ & Motel
Nelson Shopping Center
Nicolet Bay Concessions
Nor-Door Sport & Cyclery
Peninsula Pacers
Spielman Kid Works
Thomas/Pfeifer Insurance
What Next?
Wild Tomato Wood-Fired Pizza & Grille
Wilson’s Restaurant 7 Ice Cream Parlor