Dear Friends,

Winter at Peninsula State Park has finally come to a close after a full season of recreational activity. The park staff and trail grooming volunteers worked diligently to provide our guests with safe park access and great trails to ski and hike. We were able to experience the snow and cold of a “true” winter season at Peninsula, and now we are looking forward to warmer days with campers returning and the smell of campfires in the air! Please be sure to thank our staff and volunteers for a winter job well done!

Welcome spring! Although we look forward to many exciting projects that will be occurring this year; as always, we will be focusing on how we can become better “stewards” of our natural and cultural resources. Personally, I have spent time reflecting on a Rachel Carson (1907-1964) quote that reminds me how spectacular Peninsula State Park is and how important sustainable natural and cultural resource management is to protect the future of park lands.

One way to open your eyes is to ask yourself, “What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?”

I am sure many of you became a “Friend” of Peninsula State Park because you share the desire to care for Peninsula and provide support. The Friends of Peninsula State Park continue to provide funding for many exciting efforts. The Friends have secured Knowles-Nelson Stewards hip Grants which have made the Nicolet Beach Shelter and furnishings possible, as well as, two bat condos located at Welcker’s Point and the shop area respectively. At present a Knowles-Nelson Grant will help us replace the White Cedar Nature Center walk way.

This year, the Friends were awarded a three phase Stewardship Grant to initiate much needed renovations to the White Cedar Nature Center building. The first phase, which is available this year, will help fund the costs of the site plan to add flush toilet facilities and additional display and work space. The first phase also includes utility upgrades as needed. The completed site plan (available for the public to view later in 2014) will help us determine our construction costs for the renovation project as well as provide additional ideas for outdoor areas. We are very excited to have the support of the Friends as we embark on these improvements to the White Cedar Nature Center.
Bruns cont.
The Friends of Peninsula State Park continue to fund the seasonal Naturalist and Invasive Species Coordinator positions through park merchandise sales. They continue to support research grant opportunities at the park and work on invasive species removal each week during the summer season. Many of the Friends’ committee members spend countless hours assisting the park behind the scenes, working on newsletters, financials, purchasing, fund raising and special event coordination. This year, Friends helped secure new trail mowing equipment and portable tanks for invasive control. They provided financial support for the Park Naturalist attendance at the Regional National Association of Interpreters Workshop. The Friends will continue to host the Peninsula Golf Classic with the Peninsula Golf Associates. Funds raised at last year’s event went to the White Cedar Nature Center renovation project. The golf event is scheduled for Sunday, August 24th at our own Peninsula State Park Golf Course. Registration and event information will be available on the PGA website (peninsulagolf.org) so be sure to “Save the Date” for a day of fun in the park!

Throughout the year park staff will be actively working on new projects to continue to enhance our park infrastructure. Upcoming Master Planning for Door County State Parks is scheduled to begin in 2014. Please consider attending a Friends of Peninsula State Park Board meeting to find ways you can become more involved with all our efforts. We are always looking for additional Friends and volunteers! Please visit the Friends website (peninsulafriends.org) or stop by the park office or nature center for additional information. We are grateful for your continued support.

Kelli

President Chris Holicek Calls Friends to Support Park Endeavors

Welcome Spring! After a long winter it is lovely to drive through the park on a nice spring day! Thanks to the Friends who provide financial support and to those who volunteer to participate in various projects in the park.

One major goal is to eradicate invasive species. Please consider helping us out by volunteering with the invasive team headed by Gary Kemp. The team meets on Tuesday mornings. If you are interested, contact Gary at kemps99@msn.com.

Please note that Friends members receive a 10 percent discount on all merchandise. Consider buying items at Park Headquarters or the Nature Center for family and friends, and you will be supporting educational programs at the park which are financed through merchandise sales.

We just received our 2014 matching Stewardship Grant for phase 1 of the Nature Center Renovation. This will be a three phase project over several years. Please consider donating to the Nature Center Renovation fund. Donation envelopes are available in the park. We would appreciate it.

Another way to support us is to attend or volunteer to work at our second Golf Classic on August 24.

Again, our continued thanks for all you do! Have a great spring and summer in the park! I hope to see you there!

Memorial Benches and Trees Benefit Friends, Nature Center

2013 Donations Summary:

- Two sugar maples were planted on Eagle Bluff Lighthouse grounds, also a bench was donated – used PayPal account from Africa!

- Ten benches were purchased as memorials and placed on the Lighthouse grounds, Sven’s Bluff, trails, and Tennison Bay Kayak Launch.

- Nine new LIFE members joined the Friends of PSP, and this provided funding to the Nature Center Endowment.

2014 - Four benches and one bur oak have been scheduled for installation already!
Friends Volunteers Tackle Invasives

As we kick off another year of invasive control efforts in the Park I look forward to a successful season. Each year we see the fruits of our labor by the reduced population of both garlic mustard and honeysuckle. To ensure continued progress we will need a vigorous effort on the part of our dedicated volunteers. I am hopeful that you will find time to join the team.

This year, in addition to our spraying and pulling efforts, we are going to try a technique which utilizes line trimmers to cut the plants down before they go to seed. By doing this we can prevent new seeds from taking hold and producing future generations of garlic mustard. The early results of this procedure have been encouraging.

Following our work with garlic mustard we will continue our efforts to reduce the large quantities of honeysuckle throughout the park. Due to its dense growth it inhibits the movement of wildlife and reduces views across the landscape. Our efforts involve cutting the bushes and then chemically treating the stumps to prevent re-bloom. Another challenge with honeysuckle is the disposal of the cut plants. Due to their bulky mass it can be difficult to get rid of the cut plants.

Again this year the Friends have been able to fund the LTE position of Invasive Species Coordinator. It is our hope that we will find a candidate for the position. The amount of work that a full time person can accomplish greatly enhances what we are able to do. In addition to working alone, the coordinator can provide educational opportunities through scheduled work groups. Having someone with a good working knowledge of invasives is beneficial to helping both staff and volunteers understand how best to deal with them. Also, the coordinator is vital to monitoring both new areas of concern and ongoing progress in areas that are being worked.

Once again I would like to invite anyone who would like to help make a difference in the park to join us each Tuesday from 9:00AM to 11:00AM. Each week we send out an email to let everyone know where we will be working. If you have any questions please email me at kemps99@msn.com or call me at (608) 963-8705.

Friends Volunteers Needed

We hope that you will consider giving the Park some of your time and talents this year. What you do is very important. Volunteers are the very backbone of many of the activities that take place in the park.

This year we are looking for volunteers to assist at the Half-Marathon, Golf Fund Raising event, Fall 50, First Hike, Family Ski/Snowshoe, and Candlelight Ski/Hike. No matter how much time you can contribute, your help will make a difference and be appreciated.

If you haven’t volunteered before we would love to have you join us for some fun and fellowship. I will be emailing periodic updates on upcoming activities. If you have any questions, need information, or would like to volunteer please e-mail me at kemps99@msn.com.

Michelle Kemp
FPSP Volunteer Coordinator
Next time you’re hiking, riding, or skiing down the trails of Peninsula State Park, take a moment to thank volunteers like Freddie Bexell.

The Swedish import has been putting in his own time improving the park’s trails since moving to Sister Bay nearly 15 years ago. A passionate cyclist, Bexell has raced in the Wisconsin Outdoor Racing Series, and when he’s not running the kitchen at Al Johnson’s Swedish Restaurant, he works with the many silent sports events in Door County.

In addition to serving as the route director for the Ride for Nature and Peninsula Century Ride, he manages the concourse at the Door County Half Marathon and is the assistant course director for the Door County Triathlon. He also works with the annual MS Walk and the Door County Silent Sports Alliance.

His commitment to making Door County a better place to ride, especially off-road, is un-matched.

Bexell helped organize a Door County Bike Summit several years ago, bringing state cycling experts and trail building experts to Door County. Working with Bridget Brown, the trails leader for the Department of Natural Resources, Bexell arranged a training session for Door County volunteers, then put those lessons into action building a new section of single-track in the park.

“We don’t go in and just hack away,” he says. “We stake out a line, and you have to consider things like water runoff and spring melt when you build.”

When building a trail up a hill, for instance, a smart builder will cut the trail in at an angle, rather than go straight up the hill. That way water doesn’t run down the center of the trail and carve a groove. By cutting it in, the water runs off the side, keeping the trail stronger for the long haul.

“Most of the trails in the park are old horseback trails,” Bexell explains. “So they go straight up the hill and you end up with puddles of standing water at the bottom. That’s not the way we do it anymore.”

In addition to arranging volunteer work days in the park, Bexell has worked with other cyclists and trail user groups to create proposals for long-term trail planning. It’s a thankless task, in which results are often not seen for a decade or more as ideas make their way up the state flagpole, but he knows how vital it is in a time of severe budget cuts.

“The cuts to the park staff have been ridiculous,” he says. “They barely have enough people to clean the bathrooms, so they need all the help they can get maintaining the trails.”

When Al Johnson died in 2010, Bexell started a trails fund in his memory at the Door County Community Foundation, hoping that over time he’ll be able to help Peninsula reach its full potential.

“It’s a great place to ride as is, but it has the potential to be one of the great places for mountain biking in the state,” he says.
Golf Classic Fundraiser Planned for Peninsula State Park

Set aside **Sunday, August 24, 2014**, the date for the second Annual Peninsula Golf Classic fundraiser! Last year marked the first golf fundraiser sponsored by the Friends of Peninsula State Park and the Peninsula Golf Associates. After all was over, the Friends made several thousand dollars and everyone had a great time. And why? Because we played some fun golf with friends, ate great food at Nicolet Beach, had a chance to win some neat prizes and helped to support the plans for the Nature Center remodel. What made it even better was everyone got to do all this at a price that was far less than if you were to pay for each item separately.

Similar to last year’s event, the Golf Classic will need the efforts of volunteers to help plan for, work at, and clean up afterwards. If you could help with this fundraiser, please let us know. Keep in mind, this is a fundraiser to support Peninsula State Park. All the profits stay in the park! So, save the date now, **8/24/2014**, and plan on joining us for this fun, worthwhile event!

Support Friends through Purchases at the Park

Add fashionable Peninsula Park shirts and caps to your wardrobe! They’re available in a full range of sizes and a variety of designs and colors. Also, we have added fleece hats and jackets for adults.

The **Like to Hike** pin available this year features the bald eagle with its wings spread wide. And while you’re hiking, you might want to have one of our distinctive, rustic hiking sticks.

We also have a great selection of field guides for beginners and pros, nature cookbooks, and books for children of all ages. Take home one of our adorable plush animals, as a reminder of the wildlife you’ve seen in the park.

**Friends receive a 10% discount** on all merchandise purchases, and all of the profit from sales of merchandise at the Nature Center and Visitor Center goes to support the work of the Friends of Peninsula State Park.

Happy Hikers Greet the New Year at Peninsula

Thirty hearty hikers and volunteers began the New Year with an invigorating third annual **First Day Hike** hike along the Sunset Bike Trail and Weborg Marsh Trail. A cold, crisp morning was ideal for enjoying the quiet beauty of the park and observing a variety of bird species. Later, warming up back at the Weborg Picnic Shelter, hot cider and cookies were shared by all enthusiastic participants.

Park Superintendent Kelli Bruns noted that when the First Day Hike program was launched three years ago, over 14,000 hikers participated, hiking over 30,000 miles in state parks across the country. The program has increased in size every year since.
Annual Candlelight Ski and Hike

The frigid conditions for this February 1st Ski/Hike were identical to last year’s, with advanced forecasts almost causing us to cancel. However, this year we had in our favor great snow with no ice or wind.

Our hearty volunteers found it much easier to light the nearly three hundred luminaries without the wind snuffing them out. The ample snow allowed our trail groomers, Jeff Pfeifer and Fuzzy Sunstrom, to set perfect tracks on the one mile loop. At dusk, they had a cozy bonfire crackling at the halfway point.

Another bright feature this year was the addition of a generator-powered flood light at the parking area. Participants thanked the parking crew for making it easier to see as they stepped into their skis and snowshoes. We thank the park staff for providing the added lighting and especially Jeff Lange, Park Maintenance Superintendent, for setting it up. We also were awed with Jeff’s creative “ice candles” which he strategically placed around the area.

As always, we received compliments and thanks from the approximately 350 skiers, snowshoers and hikers who enjoyed the candlelit trail and hot cocoa and cookies around the campfire.

A hearty thank you to the nearly 40 volunteers who groomed the trail, set out the luminaries, helped with parking, baked cookies and greeted participants while handing out cocoa and cider. It is always a magical evening.

Going Green...Do it for Future Generations

While many environmental problems are already here and are already significant, we all know that it’s our kids and grandkids who will likely be living through the worst of them. Going Green is one of the biggest gifts we can give to those who will inherit the future.

Paper usage in many parts of the world is on the rise. Expanding production and pulp wood harvesting threatens some of the last remaining natural forests and the people and wildlife that depend on them. The world’s paper hunger also significantly contributes to climate change.

The Friends of Peninsula Park are dedicated to those things that protect and preserve our Door County treasure for future generations. It is up to us as an organization to lead by example. As you renew your membership for 2014, please be sure to check whether you want to receive both updates and newsletters via email. If you want to continue receiving your newsletter through the mail, you must indicate that as well. Lifetime members who wish to continue to receive newsletters through the mail, please call Gail Anderson (920) 868-3499. Our fall newsletter will be mailed only to those who have indicated their wish to receive a paper copy.

Also, in the interest to provide information, we hope you will use our QR code to find updates and other items of interest.

We hope you will join the Friends and others in Going Green.
Woodland Habitat Management & Restoration at Peninsula

Beautiful woodland trails define the Peninsula experience. DNR Foresters are collaborating with park staff to maintain forest health in the park through tree plantation thinning, monitoring forest pests, and invasive species control.

Peninsula has over two dozen evergreen tree plantations. Periodically removing some trees (thinning) maintains tree vigor and opens up the forest canopy. Increased sunlight reaching the forest floor benefits native tree seedlings, shrubs and wildflowers. In 2014, visitors will see thinning in the plantations scattered throughout the park, including Tennison Bay Campground (last thinned in 2001) as well as along the Highway 42 corridor. Orange paint marks will identify trees to be removed. Tennison Bay will be marked shortly before cutting.

Scotch Pine, a non-native species once planted for Christmas trees, windbreaks, and soil erosion control, will also be removed. Red paint boundaries will encircle these areas. The thinning/harvest area in 2014 will total 72 acres, 2% of the total park area.

For several years and again in 2014, DNR foresters will monitor for Emerald Ash Borer presence by erecting purple traps. Thus far, this invasive insect has not been detected in Peninsula.

Beech Bark Disease (BBD) is present in Door County and the park. BBD is caused by an exotic scale insect and a Neonectria fungus. The tiny scale insects stick thin, sap-sucking mouthparts into the bark of a tree and secrete a white wool-like wax from glands on their sides, which gives them protection from predators. The fungus follows, invading where the insects’ mouthparts were stuck into the bark. The combination of insect and disease kills the tree.

In woods threatened by BBD where beech is a dominant species, foresters recommend cutting beech trees so that native trees can grow and reproduce. Beech with BBD pose a safety hazard, since infected trees can snap and fall. Over 95% of trees infected with BBD will die, but hope lies in potentially resistant trees. Very light infestations are present at Peninsula, but there is no doubt BBD will have significant impacts on the park’s beech-maple forests. DNR foresters and Peninsula staff are joining forces to guide future BBD management. Questions? Visit the Nature Center or go to https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestHealth.

Peninsula Naturalist Kathleen Harris was lead instructor for Door County’s inaugural Master Naturalist class. Twenty-two people attended the seven-week UW-Extension class.
Peninsula State Park Nature Programs

Friday, May 9  Birding at Weborg Point 8:00-10:00a.m. Meet at Weborg Shelter. Park at day-use lot. Bring binoculars of you have them. We’ll watch for warblers and other migrants while on a leisurely walk.

Saturday, May 10  Nature Center open 10:00a.m-4:00p.m. What’s wrong with being a skunk? 11:00-11:20a.m. at the Nature Center. Learn a few scent-sational facts about an underappreciated Wisconsin mammal. Nature talk suitable for all ages. Kids can stay to crafty a skunk paper bag puppet. What’s Blooming? 1:00-2:00p.m. Meet at Tennison Bay boat launch, in the campground. Are you surprised to learn that Peninsula’s campgrounds feature scads of wildflowers? Because of people, deer avoid campgrounds and so don’t munch on blossoms. Join the naturalist for an easy walk, watching for trout lilies, bellwort, lady’s-slippers and trilliums. Binoculars optional.

Friday, May 16  Bat Workshop 8:00-8:45p.m. at the Nature Center. Optional field work using ANABAT follows. Geared for adult and older youth, this workshop features bat ecology, news about white-nose syndrome, and ANABAT instruction. This survey tool enables citizens to detect and record bat species.

For more information about these and other programs available in May contact: (920) 854-5976.

Thank You to Our 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  Homestead Suites
Bay Property Services of Door County  Julies Park Café & Motel
Bay Shore Outfitters  Nelson Shopping Center
Baylake Bank  Nicolet Bay Concessions
Cookery Restaurant & Wine Bar  Nor Dor Sport & Cyclery
Door County Kayak Tours  On Deck Clothing
Ecology Sports  Parkwood Lodge
Ephraim Visitor Information Center  Peninsula Pacers LLC
Fish Creek Kite Company  Spielmans Kid Works
Gibraltar Grill  Thomas/Pfeifer Insurance
Great Northern Construction, Inc  What Next?
Hat Head  Wild Tomato Wood Fired Pizza & Grille
Hide Side Boutique & Corner Store  Wilson’s Restaurant & Ice Cream Parlor
Friends of Peninsula State Park – 2014 Membership Renewal

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

I am renewing my membership______, a new member______, making a donation________.

Please indicate level of membership.  *Annual memberships run from May 1 to April 30*

______$25 Individual, _____ $40 Family, _____ $300 Individual Life, _____ $150 Business, _____ Other

Additional Contribution Opportunities

__________ For Now and the Future Fund  
__________ Peninsula Research Fund  
__________ Nature Center Renovation Project  
__________ Trail Improvement Fund  
__________ General donation
__________ Total Enclosed.

Please make check payable to Friends of Peninsula State Park.
*You can also renew using PayPal at www.Peninsulafriends.org/membership.*

Name_______________________________________________________________________________________

Address ____________________________________________________________

winter (October – April) if different__________________________________________

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 that interest to you.

Invasive species work  Candlelight ski & Family ski
Board/committee work  Educational programs
Nature Center volunteer  Trail maintenance
Peninsula Golf Classic  Bird and plant surveys
Historical research & archives  Special events (ski events, projects)
Fundraising/Grant writing  Merchandise

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

Friends of Peninsula State Park is a 501(c)(3) non-profit tax-exempt organization.

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

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