



A Citizens' watershed
conservation organization

Reading the River

Volume 17, Issue 3 ~ Fall 2020

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What's happening here?



To learn the answer, see page 3

Greetings from the vice president

We're starting off fall with some beautiful weather. I feel so lucky to get outside and do activities. Hunting season for birds and bow hunting deer should be in full swing. My son-in-law got a six-point buck already, so he's all excited.

With the great growing season we've had, the farmers should be busy harvesting, so they don't have to share most of their crop

with the hungry wildlife.

Our cleanup crew would welcome any help on the Hwy. K Cleanup at 8:30 on Monday, Sept. 28th. We will meet at the Intersection of Hwy. 54 and K. It looks like we could be short-handed, so if you can help out for a few hours we would appreciate it.

Greetings, continued on page 4

Vision

The Friends of the Black River is a citizen-led organization that is a well-informed, respected, active contributor to projects and decision-making enhancing the river and its watershed.

Mission

The Friends of the Black River will foster community appreciation, understanding, and sustainable use of the river and its watershed by hosting educational and enjoyable programs, events and conservation projects and by promoting wise decision-making when issues affect the health of the Black River Basin.

Upcoming meetings and events

Due to the COVID-19 situation, the presentation schedule has been suspended until gatherings are again considered safe for attendees. Check your email for messages or log onto the FBR Facebook page or website for updates.

Monday, Sept. 28, 2020—Adopt-A-Highway cleanup, County Highway K and State Highway 54 East, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 14—Annual meeting, to be held at the shelter at Lunda Community Park, 6:30 p.m. A yearend report and elections to the board of directors will be held.

Announcements about FBR activities are posted on FBR's Facebook page and website, the Black River Area Chamber of Commerce's calendar of events and broadcasted on WWIS and WCCN radio.

Monthly meetings are free and open to the public. Unless indicated otherwise, the Wednesday evening programs are held at 6:30 p.m. in The Hub meeting room at the Lunda Community Center.

River landing receives major upgrade

Through the combined efforts of the Friends of the Black River, town of Irving, Jackson County Highway Department and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, a popular river landing recently received a major upgrade.



FBR board members Mitch Wester (left) and Jeff Polzin raked out gravel Sept. 10 on the newly constructed terraces at the David Hansen Memorial Landing in the town of Irving. FBR board member Pete Segerson assisted with project coordination.

The Sept. 10 renovation of the David Hansen Memorial Landing in the town of Irving included placing four yards of three- to six-inch breaker rock as the base and then topping the base with 15 yards of three-quarter inch road-base gravel.

Recycled guard-rail posts donated by JCHD were used to create four terraces leading down to the river. Two boulders were placed at the top of the slope to prevent vehicle access, which could damage the terracing.

The town provided a rubber tire loader for handling the gravel and FBR volunteers provided project coordination, chainsaw work and other labor.

In addition to individuals and small groups using the landing, various Jackson County businesses benefit from the river access.

"It's a popular put-in," said Jeff Polzin, FBR board member. "Campgrounds and canoe rental places use the landing as a drop-off site for their paddlers. It's about half-way between Black River Falls and Melrose."

The landing became a public access through a conservation easement agreement between the Mary Hansen family and West Wisconsin Land Trust. It's now monitored by Landmark Conservancy, which was formed in 2018 when WWLT merged with Bayfield Regional Conservancy.

Since being dedicated for public use in 2006, the landing has received yearly maintenance, generally provided by the town, but this is the first time it's received a significant makeover. Two benches installed at the landing also receive new tops and the picnic table is slated to be renovated and reinstalled next spring.

To reward the volunteers, Mary Hansen served the workers a picnic lunch.

More photos of the project can be viewed on the FBR Facebook page.

FBR—Clark County Chapter News

The Clark County Chapter held its second river cleanup August 29. Chapter chair, Adam Marciniak, reported 16 volunteers came out at 8 a.m. to Listeman Park and were assigned a section of the river.



Trash removed from an illegal dumpsite was ready to be hauled away. Nearly 12 yards of the rubbish was removed with the help of an excavator and crew of volunteers.

Half the group did cleanup on land and the other eight patrolled on the water.

The effort resulted in a ten-yard dumpster getting filled about three-quarters of its capacity. The cleanup also included removing twelve yards of trash from a targeted illegal dumpsite.

Unwanted Contributions

Adam Marciniak reported finding litter in the Hill and River roads area only three days after the Clark County Chapter's August 29 cleanup.

Along with alcoholic and other beverage containers, the trash included a broken fishing pole. Adam commented, "It's not so much that I found a broken kid's fishing pole; it's the thought that some adult just taught their kid when something breaks you just throw it in the woods."



Clark County chapter hosts paddle



A group of paddlers enjoyed sun and fun during the FBR Clark County Chapter's July 11 paddle.

A July 11 paddle on the Black River sponsored by the Friends of the Black River Clark County Chapter was well documented by a drone in the sky as well as paddlers on the river.

Kayakers taking part in the paddle experienced rapids as well as quieter waters during their paddle in river.

More photos and the YouTube video of the paddle can be viewed on the Clark County Chapter's Facebook page.

Answer to mystery photo question

Paddlers get ready to launch their kayaks into the Black River at the start of the Clark County July 11 paddle.

FBR holds annual prairie wildflower walk



Leading the July 15 prairie walk, prairie habitat restorer Steve Humphrey pointed out the various plants blooming on a restored prairie.

Although the initial date of the annual prairie walk was rescheduled due to weather, a good number of walkers turned out for the July 15 rain date.

As he has done in the past, Steve Humphrey led the walk on land being restored with native plants to pre-European settlement times.

Humphrey pointed out the various plants blooming on a restored prairie and explained their place in the prairie habitat.

Hikers were rewarded with the prairie plants in full bloom. Some of the flowers included bee balm, blazing star, black-eyed Susan and cone flower.



Photos by Sue Bitter

Supporting FBR's mission

Charitable contributions received by the Friends of the Black River will be used to support the goals outlined in the FBR by-laws.

Those goals are:

- Educate members and the public about the ecology of the Black River watershed and threats to its health
- Promote sustainable use and recreation on the Black River and its watershed
- Increase public awareness and membership
- Promote sound decision-making when issues affect the health of the river and watershed
- Support the protection and improvement of the Black River and its watershed for the benefit of the general public
- Develop a working relationship with local officials and collaborate with conservation organizations
- Promote improved health of the river and watershed through conservation projects and education
- Purchase land or easements for conservation purposes

Information about how to help FBR with its mission can be found on page 5 of this newsletter.

Greetings from the vice president, *continued from page 1*

If you know Mary Hansen, please thank her for donating the use of a piece of her property as a landing on the Black River. Giving Jeff Polzin and Pete Segerson a hand there last week, we did some major fill and fixing on the river access.

The next annual meeting will be at the Lunda Park, so we have the ability to social distance. Unfortunately, we won't have food this year, but hope to supply beverages. Our plan is to have board elections and a summary of this weird year. We hope to see you there.

Smile and enjoy our great area!

Mitch Wester
Vice President

Since it's unlikely FBR will be holding other public meetings for the rest of the year, new memberships and renewals for 2021 will be accepted at the annual meeting.

Ways to support FBR's mission

You can help support the mission of the Friends of the Black River by remembering FBR in your will, with memorials or honorariums. Checks can be made out to Friends of the Black River and contributions should be sent to PO Box 475, Black River Falls, WI 54615. Thank you.

FBR sincerely thanks our members and other supporters for their continued dedication to FBR's mission to preserve and enhance the sustainable use of the Black River and its watershed.

Memberships always welcome

Memberships help Friends of the Black River continue its mission of preserving and caring for the Black River.

Show your support for that mission by renewing your membership.

If you are renewing your membership, you do not need to send in a membership form unless there's been a change in your contact information.

Please help us stay current

Please help us keep in touch by letting us know your new e-mail and/or postal addresses when they change.

Send your e-mail address changes to info_fbr@yahoo.com

Become a new member by filling out the membership form below and mailing it with your membership dues to the mailing address listed on the form.

Support your watershed - Join the Friends of the Black River

- ☐ **Enroll me as a member**
☐ **I would like to give this membership as a gift**
(Card will be sent to recipient)

Occasion _____

Your name _____

Membership Categories (check one)

- ☐ \$1.00 Youth (up to age 18)
☐ \$15.00 Individual
☐ \$20.00 Family
☐ \$30.00 Business
☐ \$50.00 Cornerstone Member

I would like to give an additional contribution in the amount of \$ _____

I'm interested in serving on a committee:

- ☐ Land Preservation and Advocacy
☐ Fundraising and Membership Recruitment
☐ Programming
☐ Clean ups and Special Events
☐ Landings
☐ **I am interested in becoming a board member**

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Address _____

___ Jackson County Chapter

___ Clark County Chapter

Phone _____

Email _____

Return registration form and checks payable to:

Friends of the Black River
PO Box 475
Black River Falls, WI 54615

Please check here ___ if you would like to receive a receipt.

**Memberships are being gratefully
accepted for 2021!**

We depend on your support to keep Friends
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We want to keep this newsletter coming to
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