



A Citizens' watershed conservation organization

Reading the River



Volume 17, Issue 4 ~ Winter 2020

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What's happening here?



To learn the answer to what's happening, see page 3

Greetings from the president

It's been an exasperating year. With the arrival of the virus much of our economy has shut down. Sports were delayed and changed to modified schedules unlike anything we've seen before. Hopefully we are looking at a better year next year.

But I want everyone to know that our organization will continue to exist. We won't have monthly meetings this winter but will have some outdoor activities such as hikes. This spring our outdoor programs will definitely happen.

With the high numbers of the vi-

rus that are spreading, I hope you are taking it seriously and avoiding risky behavior.

We all would like to get back to normal and hopefully with the vaccines coming out, we will see the virus slow and eventually be controlled. Wouldn't it be nice? We can then enjoy indoor dining at restaurants and normal holiday gatherings again.

So Happy Holidays and a hopefully better year ahead.....

Steve Rake
President

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 people to attend in person. Check your email for messages or log onto the FBR Facebook page or website for updates.

With the level of interest shown by the turnout for the December hike at Skyline Golf Course, Friends of the Black River is planning to hold a snowshoe hike in January. When plans are finalized, they will be posted on FBR's social media and sent to local media outlets.

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.

FBR—Clark County Chapter News

Pumpkin contest raises funds for FBR-Clark County

Drescher BP Station, located on Division Street in Neillsville, donated \$240 to the Friends of the Black River. The donation was raised through a guess-the-weight-of-the-pumpkins contest organized by Mike Struensee.

A couple large pumpkins weighing 282 pounds and 285 pounds were donated by Nick Klimpke. People wanting to win \$25 gift cards from the business made a donation and submitted a guess.

Mike has become very active with the Clark County FBR Chapter. He arranged for a backhoe to help with the river cleanup held in August.



Littering continues despite cleanup efforts

Incidents of illegal dumping were discovered by Adam Marciniak at the intersection of Hill Rd. and River Ave. in Neillsville. The trash included deer carcasses, a bag of fish guts and bloody newspaper and a Schwan's bag of untouched frozen foods. This sort of illegal littering seems to indicate the effort to rid Clark County of litter and illegal dumping will need a concerted effort to get the greater community on board with preserving the environment.



River landing in city receives major upgrade

A popular river landing in Black River Falls was recently renovated through the coordinated efforts of the Friends of Black River and project partners.

Cormican Landing, a part of the city's park system located west of Al Young Park at the southern end of the city, was the second landing to receive a facelift this fall. Friends of the Black River coordinated with private individuals and personnel from public agencies to get the project done.

"That area gets a lot more use than people think," said Steve Peterson, BRF Parks and Recreation Director. "Almost every day and many times all day long vehicles are parked there while individuals go fishing along the Black River. We also get a lot of canoe users leaving from that area to head down the river."

According to Peterson, the landing has lacked improvements for some time.

"Sorry to say but, we have not been able to budget anything for that area in our outlay

program for the past few years," said Peterson. "So having the Friends of the Black River stepping up and doing this is a real boost for the Parks and Recreation Department as well as city residents."

Peterson and employee David Dobson arranged to haul the crushed road base with the loan of the street department's small dump truck and loader.

Along with the city's parks and recreation and street department staff hauling rock and

gravel to the site, other materials and labor were provided by the Jackson County Highway Department who donated used guard rail posts, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources who supplied breaker rock and rebar pins and Keith Cormican who donated his expertise with a skid steer loader.

FBR members doing hand labor included Jeff Polzin, Mitch Wester, Furman Newby and Pete Segerson. The volunteers created four terraces with the guard rail posts that were then filled with the gravel.

"With the work done, it is going to be a treat to see how the public reacts to this big improvement," said Peterson. "It is going to be a much safer access point for users to enter and enjoy the river. I believe we will see an even larger amount of use to that area now."



A work crew check over the results of their work improving Cormican Landing in the city of Black River Falls. The makeover was accomplished through a collaboration of FBR volunteers, a private individual who provided labor and equipment and from government agencies providing personnel and material donations.



Cormican Landing, located west of Al Young Park at the southern end of the city of Black River Falls, received a makeover Oct. 21. Photos by Pete Segerson

Answer to Page 1 mystery photo question

A skid steer loader operated by Keith Cormican helped with hauling rock and gravel to Cormican Landing during the Oct. 21 renovation of the river access located in Black River Falls.

FBR holds hike on Skyline trails



A sizeable number of hikers turned out for a hike on the trails at the Skyline Golf Course in Black River Falls December 13. Sponsored by Friends of the Black River and led by Jeff Polzin, the hike was a safe and healthy activity for folks to enjoy the outdoors. Organizers are planning another hike for sometime in mid January. Photo by Sue Bitter

FBR receives thank you

Shana Mendelson, Youth Outreach Director for the Friends of Atwater in California, offers a virtual environmental club for youth where they research animals and nature.

One of the members, ten-year-old Mariah, found FBR's website.

Mendelson said the young conservationist found lots of information and enjoyed learning about watersheds.

"She thought we should let you know that we appreciate it, and with everything going on, it feels like a good time for gratitude so I told I'd send her thank you note," said Mendelson.

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.

Contributions since the summer newsletter

Linda Scharenbrock of Clark County Chapter donated \$50 in addition to her Cornerstone membership

Nyla Musser and Greta Gerrard donated \$15

Paul & Barb Hanson \$150 in honor of Jeff Polzin and Matt Hinton.

Katie Detert — \$10

Richard Jaeger - \$50

Joanne Adsen - \$70

Amy Krohn - \$50 in honor of Gene Krohn's December birthday

Renewals for 2021 are now being accepted. Membership categories can be found on the membership form on page 5 of this newsletter. The address to send your new membership or renewal is also on the form.

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.

