



Volume 18 Issue 4 ~ Winter 2021

In this Issue

President's message	1
Adopt-A-Highway cleanup	1
Upcoming events	2
Winter hikes	2
Supporting FBR's mission	2
Cloud formation program	3
Mississippi migration cam program	4
How to support FBR	5
Membership form	5

The Friends of the Black River
PO Box 475
Black River Falls, WI 54615
www.friendsoftheblackriver.org
Info_fbr@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor
Pat McKnight
pmcknight@centurytel.net

Board of Directors

President
Steve Rake
(715) 284-2087

Vice-President
Mitch Wester
(715) 284-9637

Secretary/Treasurer
Yvonne Mair
(262)470-1000

Members of the Board

Sue Bitter
(715) 896-1632

Adam Marciniak
(715) 610-7529

Jeff Polzin
(715) 896-5534

Pete Segerson
(715) 333-2033

Staffer
Pat McKnight
(608) 526-9873

Volunteers clean up



FBR members (l-r) Jeff Polzin, Steve Rake and Brady Palmer were part of a group of volunteers who cleaned up along County Highway K the last week of September.

FBR has been picking up trash along the highway east of Black River Falls twice a year through the Wisconsin State Transportation Department's Adopted-A-Highway program. The program helps reduce litter on Wisconsin highways enhancing the environment and beautifying Wisconsin's roadsides.

President's Greetings

Happy Holidays from myself and the board of FBR. Hope you are well and remain that way. Holidays generally mean family get-togethers and renewing contact with old friends. But of course this is no normal holiday with Covid still spreading across the country. So be safe and careful with your celebrations. We will not have a meeting in January and hope to resume meetings in February.

I'm hoping for snow so we can participate in winter activities. Whether you hike, ski, skate or snowmobile, make plans to go out and get some good winter exercise. There will be some snowshoe activities that we will promote next month.

Hopefully, we will be able to resume our monthly programs this year. Thanks for your participation with our organization.

Have a safe winter!
Steve Rake
FBR 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 for 2022

Wednesday, January 12: No meeting

Wednesday, February 9: Program about latest developments in cranberry production

Wednesday, March 9: Wild rice research in Wisconsin

Meetings subject to change. For up-to-date announcements of future events, check messages sent to your email in-box.

Announcements about FBR activities are also posted on FBR's Facebook pages and website, Black River Area Chamber of Commerce's calendar of events and broadcasted on WWIS and WCCN Radio and published in the Banner Journal and Clark County Press.

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

Wintertime activities in Black River Falls area

Winter hikes and sledding are planned for January and February.

This is the second year JIA is holding its Winter Wonderland Triple Snowshoe Challenge. The three on-your-own-schedule hikes listed at right will have a snowshoe course marked out at different local parks. Participants can snowshoe or hike the courses anytime during the three weekends from 10 a.m. Friday to Sunday at 3 p.m.

There will also be a candlelight events at the state forest and Skyline Golf Course.

Saturday, January 8, 5K snowshoe race/hike, meet at Wazee Beach parking lot, 10 a.m.,

Friday-Sunday, January 14-16, start at East Arbutus boat ramp parking lot to access marked 3 mile trail, 10 a.m.

Friday-Sunday, January 28-30, start at Skyline parking lot to access marked 2-3 mile trail, 10 a.m.

Friday-Sunday, February 11-13, marked 3 mile trail, meet Wazee swim beach parking lot, 10 a.m.

More information about the above events can be found on JIA's website www.jacksoninaction.org, by emailing jacksoninaction12@gmail.com or by calling Kathleen at 715-299-0870.

Candlelight hikes and sledding

Saturday, January 22, Skyline Clubhouse candlelight ski, snowshoe hike and sliding hill, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Saturday, February 5, candlelight ski or snowshoe hike, meet at Black River State Forest Smrekar Lodge parking lot, 1 mile loops. Event includes bonfire and cocoa. 5:30-8:30 p.m. Warming house not open.

Volunteers are needed to help with set up before the candlelight events and take down afterward.

More information about the candlelight events can be obtained by texting Jeff at 715-896-5534 or sending an email to info_fbr@yahoo.com.



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 bylaws.

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 af-

fect 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

Support of our mission is greatly appreciated

Cloud formations and weather topic of November program

Clouds are part of everyday life, yet few folks give them much thought until rain or snow falls from them. However, the various cloud forms are a constant source of information for sky watchers.

One professional sky watcher is Jeff Boyne. The meteorologist with the La Crosse National Weather Service presented a program about clouds at the Nov. 10 Friends of the Black River public meeting. Those attending the program expanded their knowledge of clouds they likely didn't get in their fifth-grade science classes.

Originally from Michigan, Boyne has worked for the NWS for over three decades and is currently at the La Crosse office.

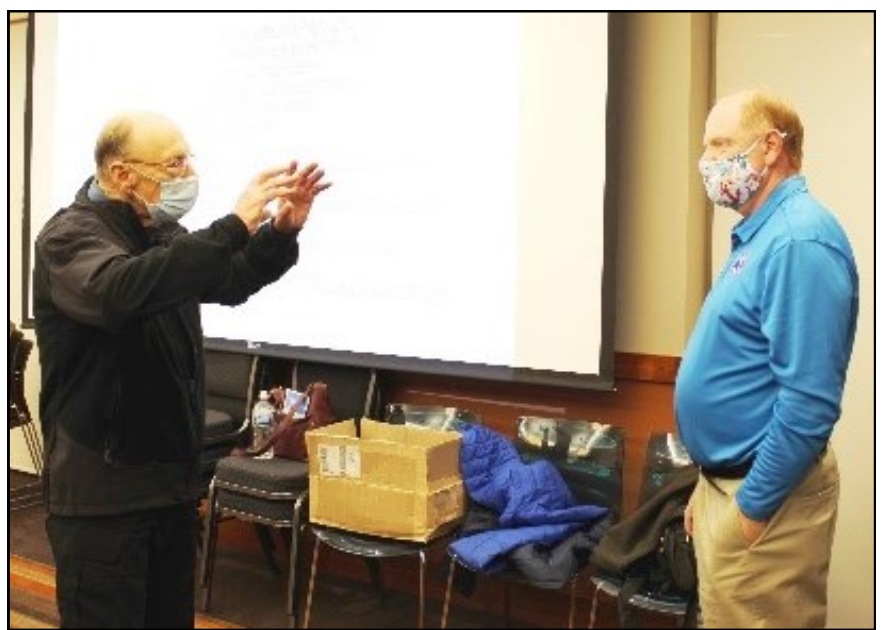
Clouds are made up of water molecules collected around air-born particulates such as dust or ash. At lower levels in the atmosphere, the water molecules are usually liquid, but in the higher altitudes, they'll turn to ice.

A myriad of terms define the wide range of cloud shapes. They can have the wispy look of cirrus or the puffy appearance of cumulus clouds.

"The cumulus clouds look like cotton balls but can weigh as much as 500 pounds," said Boyne. "That's equal to 100 elephants. The cumulonimbus can develop as a single cell, a multi-cluster or a supercell."

Clouds are active and the life in the clouds comes from the movement of air. Warm air, known as an updraft, rise within the clouds. When the air cools, it falls and in the right conditions, will bring precipitation with it.

Along with the more generally known names for the various types of cloud formations such as cirrus, cumulus, nimbus and stra-



Friends of the Black River member Rollie Lee (left) discusses cloud formations with National Weather Service meteorologist Jeff Boyne at the November meeting.

Photo by Pat McKnight

tus, other terms of Latin origin used to label clouds and their various parts include lenticularis, congestus or fluctus, to name a few.

More common terms used to identify cloud varieties can be shelf, rolling and tuba. Tuba is the term used by weather scientists for the swirling clouds most know as tornados. The term is used because tornados look like the funnel section of the brass instrument. While a tuba shaped cloud dropping toward the earth from a supercell is considered a serious matter, a horizontal bank of rolling clouds might look dramatic, but they don't create the same level of concern.

"Rolling clouds look more ominous than they really are," said Boyne.

Another unusual cloud formation Boyne presented were castellanus formations that have

protrusions on top of shelf clouds having the look of castles in the sky. The mamma forms present as pouches on the undersides of a variety of cloud shapes ranging from cirrus to stratocumulus.

Other features forming in cloud banks can look like stacks of pancakes or berets topping a towering puffy mountain.

Among the more unusual and striking cloud formations are Mother of Pearl clouds. Found in the planet's Polar Regions in the winter, the clouds take on the look of iridescent abstract paintings. They tend to locate in the upper atmosphere at altitudes of 50,000 to 150,000 feet.

Other fairly rare formations are fluctus clouds. The clouds rise out of a base cloud in curled shapes similar to the large waves sought by surfers.

Mississippi migration cam program presented

A video streaming project on the Mississippi River gives continual viewing of migrating waterfowl using Lake Onalaska as a layover. The Mississippi River Flyway cam project was the topic of the program presented at Oct. 13 Friends of the Black River meeting.

John Howe, director of the Raptor Resource Project, spearheaded the effort to install the camera to record the birds migrating along the Mississippi River as well as the other wildlife making their homes on the river. He presented a history of how the project came about and showed photos and videos captured by the camera during his presentation.

Howe grew up on top of a bluff on the Minnesota side of the Mississippi River near La Crosse and developed an appreciation for nature early in life. As an RRP volunteer, he helped start the Great Spirit Bluff Falcon cam installed on his family's property in 2011. Other projects he's been involved with include the Decorah Eagles, Decorah North Eagles and Wisconsin Kestrels.

Howe also directed outreach projects with filmmakers and media organizations including Iowa Public Television's "The Eagles of Decorah; National Geographic WILD's "Land of Lakes;" Sustainable Driftless Inc.'s "Decoding the Driftless" and the BBC/PBS Nova documentary "Eagle Power."

In addition to the peregrine falcon nest, the camera records the migrations on the river from the bluff. But, Howe wanted to get closer to the action on the river.

"My camera got good footage, but not good enough," said Howe, "and I wanted to get rid of the highway noise."

Each fall and spring, migrating birds stop at Lake Onalaska to refuel and rest. In the fall, the greatest numbers of birds gather in mid-November and stay in the region until the river freezes up. In spring, small flocks may be



Raptor Resource Project Director John Howe (left) discusses the Mississippi Flyway cam with FBR guest Bill Rakestraw at the October meeting. Howe spearheaded the project to install a live cam in Lake Onalaska to stream waterfowl migrations on the Mississippi River.

Photo by Pat McKnight

seen in late March as they migrate to their breeding grounds on the tundra in Canada and Alaska.

Taking the idea of putting up a camera at river level to the Upper Mississippi National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and the RRP board, Howe got the green light when he assured the refuge his group would be responsible for monitoring and maintaining the camera. Other partners in the venture are the Brice Prairie Conservation Association, Riverland Energy Co-op and Explore.org.

"It took 10 people to set it (camera equipment) up," said Howe. "There're two 25-foot poles that hold the camera and sound system on one and the solar panels and battery box on the other."

Now operational, the camera provides continuous viewing of migrating birds and other river wildlife through RRP and Explore.org websites. The birds showing up on the camera's footage include bald eagles, American white pelicans, sand hill cranes, Caspian terns, cormorants, tundra swans and various species of ducks, gulls and other waterfowl.

The raptor and waterfowl websites connect over one million educators, researchers and enthusiasts annually.

Two volunteers help monitor the camera varying the views from close-ups to distant shots. They captured a sighting of a black bellied whistling duck. Considered an accidental visitor, the colorful duck was far beyond the species normal range. The ducks generally live along the east and west coasts of Mexico, gulf coasts of Texas and Louisiana. The ducks can also be seen throughout Florida and generally travel only as far north as Arkansas.

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 and 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.

New and renewing 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 make 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 _____

Phone _____

Email _____

___ Jackson County Chapter

___ Clark County Chapter

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.

