



A Citizens' watershed conservation organization

# Reading the River



Volume 17, Issue 2~ Summer 2020

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## What's happening here?



To learn the answer, see page 2.

## Greetings from the president

We have been living through strange times the last few months; unfortunately, we are not done with dealing with the COVID-19.

I'm not a fan of on-line meetings, I much prefer face-to-face meetings where we can get together and interact about a topic. Hopefully we will be able to do this this fall.

Meanwhile we are doing some paddles and will have our kayak demonstration at Lake

Wazee on July 12th. Getting out and doing some outdoor activities can really raise our spirits at this time.

We will also be sponsoring a prairie walk in July on the 14th (15th, rain date). We will try to be as safe as possible to try to avoid any possible spread of the virus.

Hopefully you are healthy and doing well.

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 for this summer

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.

**Saturday, July 4, 2020**—Paddle in the Park, Lunda Community Park, will not be held

**Tuesday, July 14, 2020**—Prairie flower walk, site to be determined, rain date—Wednesday, July 15

**Saturday, Aug. 22, 2020**—Annual river cleanup in Jackson County

**Saturday, Aug. 29, 2020**—Annual river cleanup in Clark County

**Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2020**—Monthly meeting, tentative

Send suggestions for future programs by emailing [info\\_fbr@yahoo.com](mailto:info_fbr@yahoo.com).

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.*

## Paddles planned in Jackson and Clark Counties

Paddles are planned for both Jackson and Clark counties. (No cancellations are anticipated at this time.)

### Jackson County:

Lake Wazee kayak instruction, Wazee Park Beach, Saturday, July 12, noon to 2 p.m. Admission to park is required



Jeff Polzin (left) helps a kayaker learn how to upright her kayak by rolling at a past kayaking instruction event held at Lake Wazee. FBR file photo

### Answer to page 1 mystery photo question

A trash bag was filled with garbage with still more trash needing to be picked up in a wetland site near the Black River Walmart. Photo by Tom Teeples

### Clark County:

A paddle will be held Saturday, July 25 starting at Greenwood Park going to Highway O bridge. Paddlers should meet at Greenwood Park at noon.

For more information, contact Dan at [ashtraylullaby@outlook.com](mailto:ashtraylullaby@outlook.com), 715-937-5097, or Jeff at 715-896-5534.

**Hatfield Dam releases:** Saturday, July 11, Saturday, Aug. 8, Saturday, Sept. 12, from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.

For more information on any of the paddles, contact Jeff at 715-896-5534. Paddles are held depending on water conditions.

## Contributions

Since the spring issue, donations to support FBR's mission include:

Eric & Joanne Adsen \$20.00  
Co-op Credit Union \$100.00  
Dan & Rebecca Deetz \$30.00  
Grady Gutknecht \$35.00  
Carl & Rhonda Holmquist \$30.00  
Gilbert Homstad \$50.00  
Dave & Marilyn Hoffman \$30.00

## FBR—Clark County Chapter News

The Clark County Chapter of Friends of the Black River received press coverage in the May 27 issue of the Clark County Press.

The article reported Neillsville Police Chief Jim Man-kowski and Neillsville Alderman Joe Neville informed the Neillsville Common Council of the unabated littering problem occurring near the Black River.

FBR board member Adam Marciniak was instrumental in bringing the matter to the attention of the city's police chief and alderman.

CCP reporter Ryan Spoehr wrote in his article titled, "Trash dumping still a problem along Black River," that Adam found trash near the parking area for the O'Neill Creek and Black River. The illegal littering was near the two boulders installed to keep people from driving their vehicles closer to the river when they would illegally dump their trash.

Items tossed at the parking area were beer bottles and other beverage containers, wrappers, straws, newspaper, sundae cup and other garbage. Adam remarked it ". . . was like we didn't clean up there at all. You can pick things up one weekend and then it can be bad again the next."

Adam advised he saw the remains of a campfire in close proximity to buildings such as the city's wastewater treatment plant. "If the grass caught fire, it wouldn't take much for it to spread and then losing the water treatment

plant and those other buildings."

Alderman Neville was quoted in the article, "If we could just ask those people who are going down there, 'Please pick up after yourself' because the last thing we want to do is get that closed off to the public. If we can't clean up for ourselves, then we have to take different action."



An office chair was first found in a little eddy in Neillsville and pulled out. Before it could be properly disposed of, it was thrown back in the river again. It was found a second time a little further down-stream.

## FBR members do Earth Day Cleanup during sequestration

Due to the Stay-Safer-At-Home order and calls for social distancing, the FBR Board encouraged members to mark Earth Day by arranging to do trash cleanups on their own.

Responding to the call, the team of Tom and Teresa Teeples cleaned up the wetland area along State Highway 54 west of the Black River Falls Walmart. They picked up eight bags of trash and three bags of recycling. The litter made the site terribly unsightly. Tom says their efforts made the site 100 percent cleaner, but advises it will need monitoring.

"We de-bagged (plastic) that is no good for man nor beast out of it," said Tom.

The wetland still had standing water in it and the Teeples saw waterfowl enjoying the cleaner habitat.

Others reporting Earth Day Cleanup activities were Chuck and Nancy Nibbe along with their dog Chancy. The team picked up five bags of garbage at the intersection of State Highway 54 and County Highway K as well as a short distance on Highway K. Nancy reported Chancy wasn't too happy about having to stop every couple feet as she kept pace with her owners.



FBR member Tom Teeples collected litter along State Hwy 54 near the Black River Falls Walmart Supercenter. He and his wife Teresa picked up eight bags of trash and three bags of recycling. Photo by Teresa Teeples

## FBR holds spring wildflower walk



Fourteen hikers practicing social distancing turned out for the annual FBR spring wildflower hike. To help the walkers learn about the spring wildflowers, Jeff and Sue Polzin placed identifying tags near the various species found along the trail. Photo by Sue Bitter

## Former FBR president fights invasive species

Past FBR President Andy Ellingson spent time marking Earth Day removing invasive species on his property in the town of Albion and his family's other properties located in Jackson County. Andy has researched and received extensive training on invasive plant eradication.

The Safer-At-Home order has given Andy time to focus on removing the unwanted plants include the invasive burning bush.

"Many don't realize what burning bush is, or the nuisance it poses," Andy reports. "I try to encourage neighboring landowners to assist by tackling invasives on their property. Until pointed out, many aren't even aware what may be growing on their property. But when it gets bad enough, they will find out, and then they may feel it's too late. People should start by either working on fringe areas, or in the case of some plants, remove the female plants at the right time of year while ensuring not to spread the seeds."



Burning bush

Burning bush can be found with footholds throughout the Northeast and Midwest. Very adaptable, the plant tolerates both full sun and full shade, grows in a variety of soil conditions, with a high salt tolerance. It's a prolific seed producer, with high viability. Na-

tive browsers such as whitetail deer don't find it palatable. When native herbaceous plants are crowded out by the invasive, the result is fewer plants to feed the deer, which means greater browse damage to plants the deer favor.

In addition to the name burning bush, the plant is known commonly as burning tree, winged burning bush, burning euonymus, winged wahoo and winged spindle-tree.

Scientific names of burning bush varieties are *Euonymus striata*, *Celastrus alata*, *Celastrus striata*.

If allowed to spread unchecked, invasive plants such as burning bush invade forests, open woods, forest edges, pastures, prairies, roadsides habitats, eventually becoming the dominate vegetation.

Following his battle with burning bush, Andy plans to take other invasive species.

"While I have plenty of things I'd rather be doing, it (invasive eradication) keeps me off the couch, and I get exercise in the process," said Andy. "In a few months I will proceed with my annual battle against buckthorn."

For more information about invasive plants, visit the link on the Department of Natural Resources website: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/>.



Andy Ellingson

## 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.

