



FRIENDS *of the*
BLACK RIVER

A Citizens' watershed
conservation organization

Reading the River



Volume 21 Issue 2 ~ Summer 2024

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What's happening here?



For the answer to what's happening in the photo, see page 6.

President's Greetings

We are experiencing another unusual year. This winter was too warm for winter sports most of the time. The very warm weather and very dry conditions may have worried some about a possible

dry spring. But now we've been getting some rain almost every other day. As far as the weather goes, it's hard to know what is normal. I'm sure we'll have a

Greetings, continued on page 2

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 2024

Thursday, July 11: Clark County paddle, Snyder Lake, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday, July 13: Paddle in the Park, introduction to paddling, Lunda Community Park fishing pond, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Tuesday, July 16: Prairie wildflower walk, (rain date—Wednesday, July 17), 6 p.m., site to be determined, meet at Theisen's to caravan or carpool to site

Saturday, August 24: Annual River Cleanup, water and land options available. Meet at 8 a.m. at Al Young Park. South 2nd St., Black River Falls. *Please RSVP*

Wednesday, September 13: Monthly meeting, Cody Kamrowski of Wisconsin Wildlife Federation

Wednesday, October 11: Annual meeting, topic to be determined

Wednesday, November 13: Monthly meeting, topic to be determined

Tuesday, December 3: Movie night

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. The community center is located at 405 State Highway 54, Black River Falls.

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 page and website, Black River Area Chamber of Commerce's calendar of events, broadcasted on WWIS and WCCN Radio and published in the Banner Journal and Clark County Press.

Upcoming Paddling Events

Thursday, July 11: Clark County paddle, Snyder Lake, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday, July 13, 11 a.m.—1:30 p.m., Hatfield whitewater release to Halls Creek

Saturday, July 13, 4 p.m.—6 p.m.: Kayaking and stand-up paddle boarding on the Lunda Community Park pond, *RSVP not needed*

Saturday, August 10, 11 a.m.—1:30 p.m.: Hatfield whitewater release

Saturday, September 14, 11 a.m.—1:30 p.m.: Hatfield whitewater release

RSVP is requested for Hatfield whitewater releases

Contact Jeff Polzin at 715-896-5534 to confirm details and RSVP



**DUE TO VARIABLE STREAM CONDITIONS,
ALL DATES AND TIMES ARE TENTATIVE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

Greetings, continued from page 1

good crop of bugs coming soon.

Friends of the Black River will continue with our programs this summer with a prairie walk in July and a river clean-up in August. So now is the time for warm weather sports.

Get hiking, biking, boating, fishing or whatever you do to stay active and enjoy life.

Have a good summer.....

Steve Rake
FBR President

Neillsville company supports FBR-CC in honor of Earth Day



The FBR Clark County Chapter recently received funds donated by Atmus Filtration Technologies of Neillsville in honor of Earth Day. The company held an apparel sale with the proceeds being donated to the Clark County United Way with the funds earmarked for Friends of the Black River – Clark County Chapter.

Atmus Filtration Technologies is a global leader in filtration solutions for on-highway commercial vehicles and off-highway vehicles and equipment. It designs and manufactures advanced filtration products that enable lower emissions and provide superior asset protection.

Pictured are Clark County Chapter Chairman Adam Marciniak (second from left) who accepted a check presented by Kris Schmidt of the Clark County United Way May 14. Representatives of Atmus Filtration Technologies of Neillsville were Autumn Marg (far left) and Lance Willson (far right).

Earth Day cleanups held in Jackson and Clark counties

The Jackson County and Clark County FBR Chapters held cleanups April 20 in their respective counties. About twelve people volunteered for the Jackson County Cleanup. The crew removed three recliners, three mattresses and a hot tub from identified sites. The Black River Falls Rotary group cleaned up along State Hwy 12. Organizers report the trash and illegal dumping situation appears to be better overall.

About 20 volunteers assisted in the Clark County Cleanup, collecting about 10 cubic yards of trash. Items removed from the environment included a large flat screen television, a microwave and six tires along with other rubbish.



FBR Clark County Chapter Earth Day volunteers



FBR Jackson County Chapter Earth Day volunteers

Eclipse watcher shares his history of viewing the phenomenon

Since he was a preschooler, Joe Tope has been viewing eclipses occurring around the country and overseas. His fascination, first nurtured by his father, has continued to grow over seven decades.

A Black River Falls resident since 2014, Tope recounted his experiences in viewing eclipses and stargazing at the May 15 Friends of the Black River meeting. In his program presented in The Hub in the Lunda Community Center, Tope shared photos and actual equipment used in viewing the 1979, 1990, 1992, 2017 and 2024 eclipses.

While he will take in partial eclipses, a total solar eclipse is always a must-see for Tope. A total solar eclipse is when the moon completely blocks the sun's light over one small area on Earth. This year's full moon blocked out the sun as it crossed North America, passing over Mexico, the United States and Canada. Solar eclipses, generally occurring during a new moon phase and happen about twice a year.

The most recent total solar eclipse, April 8, was the latest in Joe Tope's list of viewings; his first was in 1954 when he was a four-year-old living in Sioux City, Iowa. In 1979, he traveled to Lewistown, Montana, with his father to view a total eclipse.

"Evidently, it must have piqued a life-long interest," said Tope. "I have maintained some exposure to sky events regularly, all lifelong."

His father's interest in eclipses and the night sky prompted the elder Tope to make his own telescopes. He adapted the standard telescope to be more user-friendly by mounting it on a movable tripod to get desired angles.

"An eclipse generally lasts around seven minutes," said Tope. "The first contact is beginning of eclipse, second contact is beginning of totality, third contact is end of totality and fourth contact is end of eclipse."

When the rays of the sun aren't blocked by the moon, they out-shine the sun's corona, the outer most atmosphere of the sun. During an eclipse, corona is displayed as streams, loops and plumes.

Among the spectacular displays occurring in an eclipse is the "diamond ring." Happening right before or right at end of totality, a protuberance of light extends beyond the edge of



Dedicated eclipse watcher, Joe Tope, has a tradition of buying T-shirts to commemorate the eclipses he's viewed over the years. However, he currently sports a T-shirt announcing a total eclipse calculated to pass over the Black River Falls area in 2099.

the moon creating a diamond ring appearance. A cluster of smaller protuberances known as Bailey's beads might also be seen.

"These are big deals," said Tope.

To view and photograph the April 8 eclipse, Tope and his wife, Judy, traveled to a small village near Carbon-dale, Ill. There, the couple connected with other eclipse watchers. Tope revealed photos of the eclipse can be captured using binoculars. By placing the lens of the camera against the viewing end of a pair of binoculars, it's possible to take a photo of the various stages of eclipses.

Tope also talked about annular eclipses that only happen when the moon is at the furthest point from Earth during its orbit. Because of the distance from the earth, the Moon appears smaller than usual. When the moon is centered in front of the Sun, it doesn't completely cover the star. This allows a ring of sunlight around the moon's edges called the annulus or "ring of fire."

Speculating whether he'll be able to see a total eclipse in the Black River Falls area, Tope admitted it wasn't likely he or anyone now living will be able to view the spectacle in 2099. However, he's already celebrating the predicted event with a T-shirt promoting the event.

Invasive plant specialist presented program CISMAs

Forming a management area is one of the most effective ways to address the invasive species situation. Invasive plants and animals can create a difficult-to-remedy situation for re-balancing the native environment.

Mackenzie Manicki, invasive plant specialist with Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources, spoke about the how to go about forming an organization to address the problem at the Friends of the Black River's April 10 meeting. The meeting was held in The Hub at the Lunda Community Center.

Manicki's slide presentation outlined the way to form Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs). Because of the magnitude of the invasive species problem, an organization made up of a partnership of governmental entities, utilities, local businesses, private landowners and nonprofits as well as concerned individuals is needed to tackle the problem effectively.

Currently, there are 14 CISMAs in Wisconsin. Their geographic areas can cover one county or span several. Having a regional organization acknowledges that invasive species are difficult to confine.

"CISMAs are critical partners for tackling the invasive species issue," said Manicki. "CISMAs facilitate cooperation and coordination among a variety of stakeholders with the common purpose of working together to help heal our landscape. They are also excellent resources for landowners looking for more information on invasive species, including how to control them."

Andy Ellingson, former president of FBR and supporter of forming a local CISMA, pointed out, "They (invasive species) don't stop at county lines; it's not only what's on your property."

The benefits of forming CISMAs include the ability to pool resources, provide structure and consistency, educate the public, increase outreach and promote collaboration. Such organizations also are more likely to qualify for funding opportunities.

Starting a CISMA often results from someone who's willing to spearhead the effort.

"Someone who is driven and enthusiastic about organizing a group and move the group



DNR invasive plant specialist Mackenzie Manicki has participated in control burns as a means to eradicate non-native plants.

toward organization," said Manicki. "Who will hold public meetings and build awareness and convey the importance of cooperatively tackling the issue."

Going forward with organizing will mean inviting possible partners, organizing and running meetings and following up on activities and other action items. As the organization sets manageable goals, it should work toward creating a long-term relationship with partners.

Among other priorities should be setting down management responsibilities, developing an annual operating plan, creating an inventory and map of known invasive species infestations and educating partners in the resources available to the organization and in control techniques. The organization's members also often serve as "boots on the ground" in eradicating invasive species in their regions.

When forming a CISMA, those involved with the organizing might want to consider hiring a coordinator. However, there are advantages and disadvantages to filling the position. "A coordinator is not necessary for the success of a CISMA, but can be a great benefit," said Manicki.

See CISMA, continued on page 6

FBR holds annual spring wildflower hike



Hikers participating in the May 11 wildflower walk saw a number of native wildflowers such as (clockwise beginning upper left) dwarf ginseng, hepatica, trillium and partridge berry.



Answer to page 1 photo question:

Hikers participating on the annual spring wildflower walk enjoyed pleasant weather as they located various spring plants along the trail off Pettibone Pass.

FBR member and law enforcement host Cops & Bobbers event

At the first Cops & Bobbers event held June 1, approximately 40 area youngsters learned about casting



Photo by Emily Hyneck

and catching from local law enforcement and corrections officers, including a couple K9 officers. Officers from the Department of Natural Resources, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Wisconsin State Patrol and Jackson Correctional Institution as well as game warden Vong Xiong engaged in some friendly competition to see whose fishing partners could reel in the most bluegills, crappies, walleyes and bass from Lee Lake in Millston. FBR member Shaun Lescher shared his expertise in casting with the kids while Shaun's wife, Carolyn, and Beth Hammond manned the entry tent and prizes. The Jackson County Wildlife Fund provided a hot dog lunch and Great Lakes Cheese supplied string cheese.

CISMA, continued from page 5

The benefits would be having someone who can dedicate time to coordinate the group and its work and to have consistency in leadership. The staff person can support the organization in educating the public, serving as the contact person, organizing work days, etc.

Among the challenges to having a staff person is acquiring funding for salary, setting up office space,

etc. There would also be the need for someone to guide and supervise the employee/contract person.

Along with advising in the formation of CISMAs, Manicki does education and outreach related to invasive species and helps coordinate invasive species teams and partners as part of her position in the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation of the Wisconsin DNR.

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 to preserve and care 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. Renewing members do not need to submit a membership 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)

- ☐ Free Youth (up to age 18)
☐ \$20.00 Individual
☐ \$25.00 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.

Memberships are being gratefully accepted for 2024!

We depend on your support to keep Friends of the Black River a strong effective protector of the watershed.

We want to keep this newsletter coming to your e-mail or mail box!

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