

The Cherokee Marsh News

The newsletter of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh

Don't Miss These Events Coming Up Soon

Cherokee Marsh Buffet Dinner and River Tour

June 7 (Monday), 4 pm to 8 pm

Join the Friends of Cherokee Marsh, the Rock River Coalition, local elected officials, Parks staff, marsh researchers, and others for a buffet dinner and paddle in Cherokee Marsh.

Come for the dinner, the paddle, or both. Bring your own canoe or kayak, help paddle one of the provided replica Voyageur canoes, or rent a canoe at the landing. Everyone is welcome to attend.

For more information and a registration form, see page 5.

Informational Meeting on Proposed Wheeler Road Development

June 17 (Thursday), 6 pm

Details on page 2.

Cherokee Marsh Clean-up Event

June 12 (Saturday), 9 am to noon

As part of Dane County's Take a Stake in the Lakes Weeks, the Friends are sponsoring a clean-up event in Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park, South Unit.

We will provide large trash bags, bag ties, and gloves. You will receive a *Take a Stake in the Lakes* T-shirt.

Location: meet at the corner of Wheeler Road and Comanche Way.

This is our group's first formal clean-up event. If you can help, please contact Dick Walker at 608-242-4411 or rdwalker@wisc.edu and tell him the size shirt you would like.

Butterflies of Cherokee Marsh Walk

June 19 (Saturday), 10 am to noon

Details on page 4.



Black Hawk Middle School seventh graders explore the wetlands of Cherokee Marsh on Earth Day with school-district naturalist Ami Rupnow. Photo by Jan Axelson.



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Senior Housing Proposed for Wheeler Road

Informational Meeting: Senior Housing Proposal
Thursday, June 17, 6 pm
Warner Park Community Recreation Center
1625 Northport Drive, Madison

Anita Weier

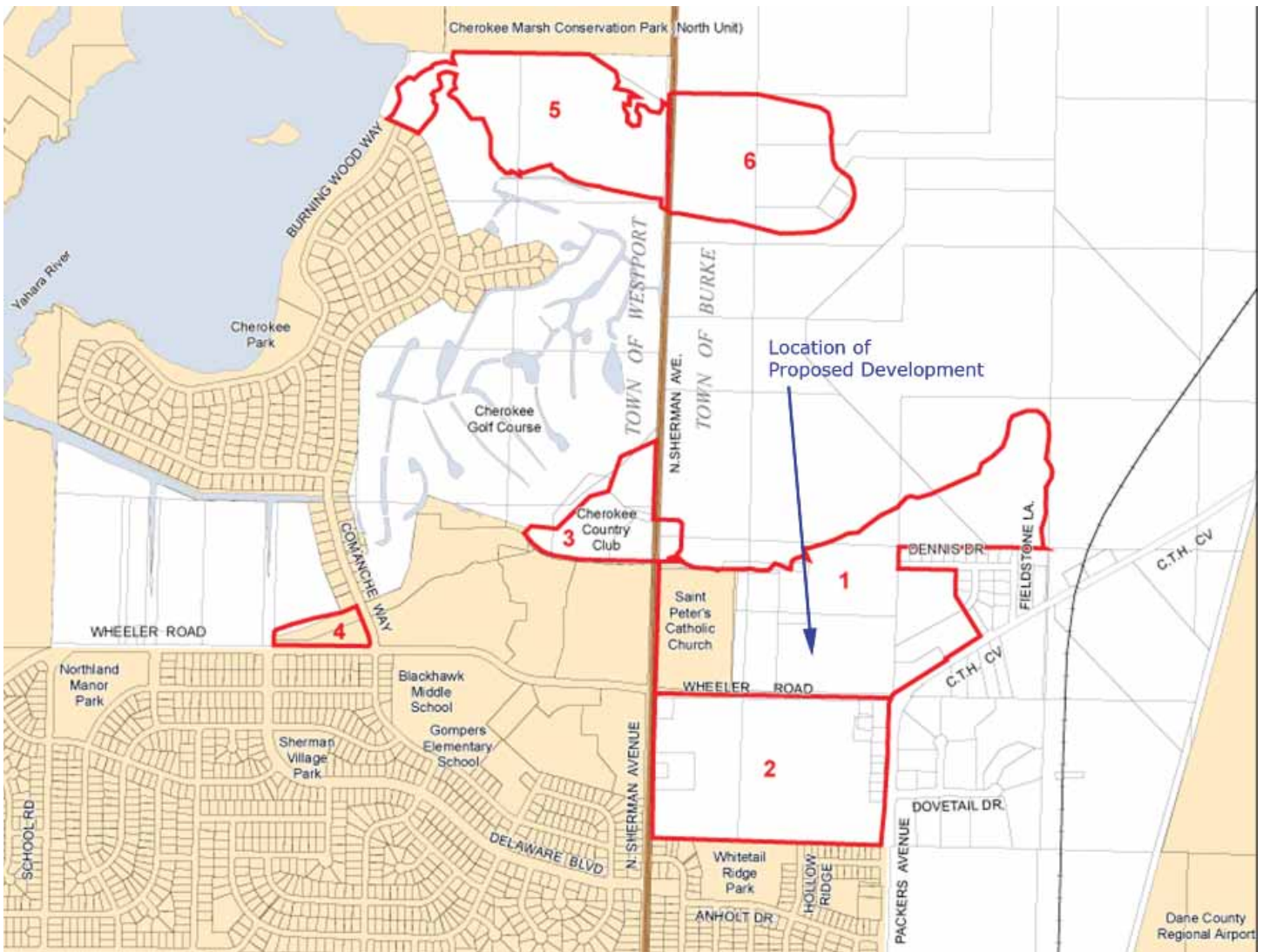
The nonprofit agency Independent Living Inc. has proposed a senior housing facility on a 9-acre parcel on Wheeler Road east of the Cherokee Driving Range. The parcel is north of Wheeler Rd., between N. Sherman Ave. and County HWY CV, and south of the Fifth Addition land recently purchased by the City of Madison to add to the Conservation Park.

The project – to be titled Cherokee Prairie Senior Housing --would have 42 apartment units in the first phase. A second phase would consist of more apartments and a third phase would be assisted living. The total, as envisioned

in an application that earned \$39,578 from the city of Madison for a feasibility study, was 148 units - including 100 residential care apartments, 24 assisted living units and 24 memory care units.

The property is now in the town of Burke, but Madison has an agreement to annex properties in that area into the city as they are developed.

To find out more about the project, come to the informational meeting on June 17. (See above for location and time).



The proposed development is north of Wheeler Road, in Subarea 1 of the City of Madison's Cherokee Marsh Special Area Plan. (Map adapted from the City of Madison's Cherokee Special Area Plan.)

The Gradual Destruction of a Floating Island

Virginia Swisher

Heavy rains and high water take a toll on Cherokee Marsh, sometimes causing large chunks of bog to be lifted up and ripped away. They then float up or down the river, sometimes coming to rest along the shore again for some period of time. But the pair of pictures below show that the outlook for these pieces of bog staying intact and later permanently reattaching themselves to the marsh is not good.

In the spring and summer of 2008, a series of very heavy rains caused the levels of the Yahara River to be unusually high, with many shifts and changes in the shore of the marsh. In mid-July of that year, a few days after there had been torrential rains, a substantial island floated into view and came to rest mid-river, near the Cherokee Park neighborhood. The island was approximately 50 feet wide by 75 feet long. In the picture on the left below, a heron a bit left of center provides a reference for its size.

Whereas smaller chunks of detached bog are generally pushed up or down river by wind and water and disappear from view fairly quickly, this particular island looked for awhile like it might become a permanent fixture. However, that first summer one of the residents of Cherokee Park swam under the island from one side to the

other and verified that it was not attached to anything. He also reported that it was not solid enough to stand on. Nevertheless, the island stayed in the same spot for several months, until March of 2009. At that point it was blown further north by high winds.

The island came to rest again not far up the river, and it has stayed in the same spot since that time. The picture below, taken on April 19, 2010, gives an idea of what is happening to the island, over time. It should be noted first that the pictures are not comparable, in two ways: one, in July, 2008, the island and the marsh on both sides of the river were covered with tall grasses, making them look more substantial; two, the island is now sitting at a point where the river is wider. Despite these differences it should be apparent that the island is now much narrower, and it is gradually being whittled away by the action of the wind and water. This wearing down of the bog has happened even though, in comparison with 2008, the weather has not been particularly severe, and the water level is currently about three feet lower than its maximum in 2008. In short, even without storms, water erodes, and it looks like this island will disappear altogether before very long.



The floating island arrived near the Cherokee Park neighborhood in mid-July, 2008. Photo by Daniel Gómez Ibáñez.



By April 19, 2010, the island was much reduced in size. Photo by Daniel Gómez Ibáñez.

Counters Tally Sandhill Cranes in Cherokee Marsh

Jan Axelson

On the cold morning of April 17, I joined four other volunteers rising before dawn to count sandhill cranes in Cherokee Marsh. We covered three areas.

Paddling the upper Yahara River, Dennis Tande and Mary Manering counted 12 cranes. In the northern portion of Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park's North Unit, Daniel Gómez Ibáñez and Virginia Swisher counted 25 cranes. In

my area, the southern portion of the North Unit, I counted 13 cranes. The actual number of cranes was likely less than our combined total of 50 because some cranes were likely counted in multiple areas as they flew about.

Our count was part of the annual 2010 Midwest Crane Count conducted by the International Crane Foundation. Since the 1930s, the estimated number of sandhill cranes in Wisconsin has increased from 25 to over 10,000.

Events Calendar

Cherokee Marsh Buffet Dinner and River Tour

June 7 (Monday), 4 pm to 8 pm

Location: Nau-ti-gal Restaurant and School Rd. boat landing.

See page 5 for details and a registration form.

Cherokee Marsh Clean-up Event

June 12 (Saturday), 9 am to noon

See page 1 for details.

Informational Meeting on Proposed Development

June 17 (Thursday), 6 pm

Location: Warner Park Community Recreation Center
See page 2 for details.

Butterflies of Cherokee Marsh

June 19 (Saturday), 10 a.m. - noon

Led by conservation biologist Kathy Kirk. Observe a variety of butterflies as they take nectar from wildflowers and learn about their identification, behavior, and life-style. Bring binoculars if you have them. Long pants and a hat recommended. This is a joint tour with the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association, Madison Audubon Society, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, and the Friends of Cherokee Marsh.

Location: Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park North Unit. Meet in the parking lot at the north end of Sherman Ave.

Save the Dates

Check our website and future newsletters for details about these upcoming events.

Wildflowers of Koltes and Westport Drumlin. August 12 (Thursday), 6 pm. Sponsored by Good Oak Ecological Services and the Madison chapter of Wild Ones.

Canoe Cherokee Marsh Ecological Restoration. August 15 (Sunday), 7 am. Bring your own canoe or kayak. Sponsored by Madison Audubon, Madison Parks, and the Friends of Cherokee Marsh.



Read past and current issues of this newsletter on our website at www.CherokeeMarsh.org.

Friends Notes

Our Thanks

Thank you to Janet Ballweg, John W. Feuerbach, Jr., MaryJo Moubry Feuerbach, Kay H. Rutledge, and Jeffrey R. Stevens for their generous donation of \$150 to the Friends in honor of George F. Hartman, who passed away in January. George studied under Aldo Leopold, loved the outdoors, and frequently fished in the lakes in and around Madison.

In Memory

We were sad to learn of the passing this spring of Nan Cheney, a former Cherokee Marsh naturalist guide, Friends director in 2008-2009, and long-time activist for social-justice and environmental causes. We enjoyed working with Nan and will miss her enthusiastic support of our activities.

Directors Update

The Friends welcome four new directors to our board: Timothy Baker, former and now returning directors Janet Battista and Sheri Harper, and Dorothy Wheeler, who has transitioned from advisor to director. Directors Steve Ackerman and David Clutter have resigned from the board due to schedule conflicts. Thanks to Steve and David for their service and welcome "aboard" to Timothy, Janet, Sheri, and Dorothy.

Friends of Cherokee Marsh

PO Box 3390

Madison WI 53704

info@CherokeeMarsh.org

www.CherokeeMarsh.org

To protect, preserve, and restore the beauty, value, and health of the Cherokee Marsh and upper Yahara River watershed.

Directors

Jan Axelson (President)

Timothy Baker

Janet Battista

Dana Erlandsen (Treasurer)

Sheri Harper

Justin Sargent (Vice President)

Muriel Simms

Dick Walker

Dorothy Wheeler (Secretary)

Advisor (non-voting)

Don Hammes

Send Your Legislator Down the River

Monday June 7, 2010

Nau-ti-gal Restaurant - Cherokee Lake and Marsh

Organized by the Rock River Coalition

Sponsored by UW-Extension, Department of Natural Resources, Friends of Cherokee Marsh & Rutabaga Paddling Sports



The Cherokee Lake and Marsh in Dane County is the location of this year's Send Your Legislator Down the River paddle and town hall meeting. The event will start at the Nau-ti-gal Restaurant where we will enjoy a picnic dinner (indoors) and conversations with legislators. Afterwards, we will drive to the School Road boat landing on Cherokee Lake and Marsh. We will put-in and take-out at the same boat landing, so shuttling will not be necessary. The paddle will be approximately 4 miles in length and is expected to take about two hours.

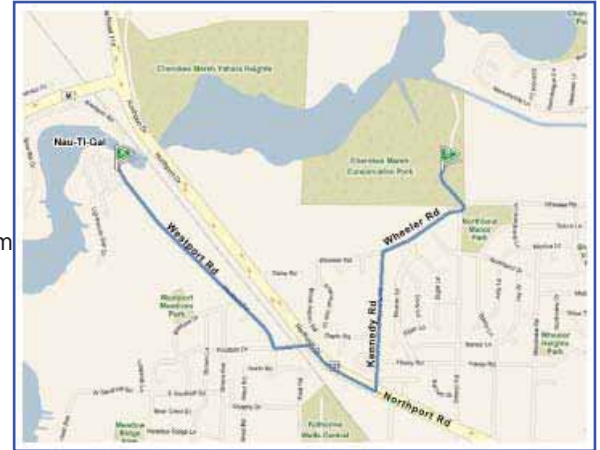
Participants are encouraged to bring their own canoes or kayaks for the paddle. Others can rent canoes or be a paddler on one of the two 25 foot-long Voyageur replica canoes (space for up to 14 people). Paddles and life jackets will be provided for canoe rental and for the Voyageur canoes.

Russ Hefty, the Conservation Resource Supervisor with the City of Madison Parks, will be our special guest during the paddle. Russ will share his work on various restoration efforts to restore wetlands in the Cherokee Marsh. The work accomplished has included planting aquatic plants to protect the sedge marsh from erosion caused by wave action.

Regardless of weather, the dinner and roundtable will be held.

Agenda

- 4:00 - 6:00pm Registration
- 4:00 - 5:30pm Buffet picnic dinner served
- 4:45 - 5:30pm Welcome and River Town Hall Meeting: a chance to talk to your local elected officials and state legislators.
- 6:00 - 8:00pm Paddle Cherokee Lake and Marsh



A) Cherokee Marsh, canoe launch site.
B) Nau-ti-gal Restaurant 5360 Westport Rd

More information on Cherokee Marsh can be found in the Yahara Waterways Water Trail Guide (<http://www.danewaters.com/articles/guideDownload.aspx>) & on the Friends of Cherokee Marsh website (<http://cherokeemarsh.org/>).

Dinner: Hamburgers, cheeseburgers and chicken breasts sandwiches, pasta salad, potato salad, chips, desert and beverage. Beverages will also be provided for the paddle.

Send Your Legislator Down the River - 2010 Registration Form

Please make checks payable to the Rock River Coalition. Send signed forms and payment to Rock River Coalition, ATTN SYLDR, 864 Collins Road, Jefferson WI 53549.

Registration can also be done on-line at <http://www.rockrivercoalition.org>. Payment through PayPal.

For questions call Marie at 920-674-7297 or email marier@jeffersoncountywi.gov

Name(s) _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone _____ email _____

adults attending RRC Member _____ @ \$13 \$ _____
 # adults attending not RRC Member _____ @ \$18 \$ _____
 # attending age 6-12 _____ @ \$11 \$ _____
 # attending age 5 or under _____ @ \$ 7 \$ _____

Rent spot in canoe (Maximum \$10/canoe no charge for youth not paddling or under 5 years.) _____ @ \$ 5 \$ _____
 Late registration fee (after May 31) \$ 5 \$ _____
 RRC membership (category _____) \$ _____
 T-shirt, short sleeved _____ @ \$15.00 \$ _____

Total enclosed \$ _____

I would like a vegetarian dinner
 I will only be at the River Town Hall Meeting & dinner
 I/We have a canoe/kayak which we will use,
 Names of others sharing canoe _____
 I/We have an extra space in our canoe
 I/We would like a space in the Voyageur Canoe (if space available)
 I/We have an extra canoe we will bring
 I/We would like a spot in the jon boat/motor boat (if available)

I am an elected official representing _____

In consideration of the "Sponsors" (as defined below) accepting this registration, I, the undersigned entrant, intending to be legally bound, do hereby agree not to sue and hereby waive and release all sponsors, governmental bodies, organizations, officials, elected officials and individuals associated with the 'Send Your Legislator Down the River' canoe and motor boat event (the "Event") and each of their respective officers, directors, employees, heirs, personal representatives, successors and assigns from any and all claims, actions, damages or injuries suffered or incurred by me or which arise out of my participation in the Event, unless caused by the willful misconduct of any of the Sponsors. I hereby agree to the use of my voice or picture or any other record of the Event for any purpose whatsoever. This release applies to and binds the undersigned entrant, his/her heirs, personal representatives, successors and assigns and is for the benefit of all of the Sponsors. This registration is invalid unless signed by the entrant. If entrant is under 18 years of age, the parent or legal guardian of the entrant must also sign the form.

Participant: _____ Age (if under 18): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (under 18): _____

Parent/Guardian (printed): _____ Date _____

One hold harmless clause must be signed for each person attending. More forms on reverse. Extra forms will be available at the event.

Membership Form

YES! I want to be a Friend of Cherokee Marsh.

Your contribution of time, talent, or funds will help preserve and restore the crucial wetland ecosystem of Cherokee Marsh. We sponsor and promote activities and events such as:

Planting native species, collecting seeds, and controlling invasive species.

Wetland educational events and opportunities.

Paddle outings, hikes, and cultural events.

Individual \$15

Osprey \$100

Family \$25

Sandhill Crane \$250

Mallard \$50

Great Blue Heron \$500

Additional donation \$ _____

Memberships are per calendar year. Memberships paid after June 30 are valid through the current and following year.

In addition to my contribution, I can also help with

Field work Publicity Tours Education Board/Committee work

Other _____

Name _____

Family member(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Include your email address to receive our newsletter. We won't sell or distribute your email address.

Don't publicize my financial support.

Please mail this form and payment to:

Friends of Cherokee Marsh, PO Box 3390, Madison WI 53704

Thank you for joining us in our effort to protect this valuable resource!

www.CherokeeMarsh.org

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh are dedicated to protecting, preserving, and restoring the beauty, value, and health of Cherokee Marsh and the upper Yahara River watershed.