

# The Cherokee Marsh News

*The newsletter of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh*

## 2012 Annual Meeting Will Feature Dane County Parks Naturalist Wayne Pauly

Save the date - our annual member meeting will be on January 21, 2012 at 10 am. Our featured guest will be Dane County Parks Naturalist Wayne Pauly, who will share his stories and pictures in a special presentation of his "Prairie Lore and Plant Stories."

As the Parks Naturalist, Wayne works with hundreds of volunteers each year to restore prairies in Dane County's parks, including Yahara Heights County Park at Cherokee Marsh. But Wayne is also a master storyteller with a treasure trove of tales about prairies, their plants, and the people who have lived and worked on the land.

Preceding Wayne's talk, we'll have a short member meeting to elect directors for 2012-2013.

If you need further enticement to attend, we'll also have free refreshments, door prizes, and a chance to bid on a framed, original, nature-themed cartoon donated by local cartoonist and Friends member P.S. Mueller.

Everyone, including members and non-members, is welcome to attend this event.

### Saturday, January 21

10:00 - 10:30 am - member meeting to elect directors for 2012-2013.

10:30 - 11:30 am - Prairie Lore and Plant Stories with Dane County Parks Naturalist Wayne Pauly.

11:30 - 11:45 am - Door prizes and silent auction.

### Lakeview Branch, Madison Public Library

2845 N. Sherman Ave.

(in the Northside Town Center, next to Pierce's Market)



*Wayne Pauly takes a break during a seed-scattering event at Yahara Heights County Park.*

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## It's Never Too Early...

# To Renew Your Membership in the Friends of Cherokee Marsh!

You can show your support for Cherokee Marsh and the Friends of Cherokee Marsh by renewing your membership this December.

Your member dues provide the resources to help protect, preserve, and restore Dane County's largest wetland. And just as important, your membership helps to demonstrate public support for protecting the marsh.

We depend on and rely on your support.

### Is My Membership Up for Renewal?

All memberships expire on December 31. If you joined the Friends after June 30, 2011, your membership is paid through December 31, 2012. For everyone else, it's time to renew. If you're not sure when you joined, contact us at [info@CherokeeMarsh.org](mailto:info@CherokeeMarsh.org) or 608-241-5828.

As a member, you'll receive our newsletter six times a year and will know that you're helping to protect and preserve a healthy marsh.

### How to Renew

Renewing now saves the time and expense of sending reminders. A member renewal form is on the last page of this newsletter and also at [www.CherokeeMarsh.org](http://www.CherokeeMarsh.org)

### New This Year! Renew Online

You can now renew your membership online. See the website for details.

### A Friends Membership Is a Perfect Gift

If you know someone who loves Cherokee Marsh, consider giving them a gift membership to the Friends this holiday season or as a birthday gift.



## What We Did This Year

*Jan Axelson*

In 2011 we continued to be busy advocating, educating, providing hands-on help, and of course having fun.

### Advocating

We advocated to protect land and water quality in the Cherokee Marsh watershed by supporting public land purchases, effective stormwater management, and groundwater protection in talks and correspondence with elected officials and City and County staff.

We supported other local groups whose activities benefit Cherokee Marsh by becoming organizational members of the Wisconsin River Alliance and the Natural Heritage Land Trust.

We advocating to acquire land for preservation by writing letters of support and gathering support letters from other groups for the Natural Heritage Land Trust's grant applications for land acquisition in Cherokee Marsh.

We supported continued land acquisition and management of natural areas with our comments on the City of Madison's and Dane County's Parks and Open Space Plan updates.

### Educating

We donated \$500 to provide transportation for hands-on, outdoor, science education in Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park through the Madison School District's Naturalist program.

We co-sponsored and helped promote activities in the marsh and on surrounding lands including paddle tours and walks focusing on birds, wildflowers, and butterflies.

We sponsored a presentation on the Fish of Cherokee Marsh by DNR Fisheries Biologist Kurt Welke.

We increased awareness of Cherokee Marsh while tabling at the Northside Farmers Market and the Clean Lakes Festival.

### Providing hands-on help

We celebrated Earth Day by planting shrubs and scattering seed for an oak savanna restoration in Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park with help from "Triple M"'s Green Team.

We co-sponsored and helped promote volunteer activities including helping with a prairie burn, removing invasives, and collecting and planting seeds in prairie, oak savanna, and wetland.

We sponsored a trash pickup as part of Dane County's Take a Stake in the Lakes days.

### We had fun!

We enjoyed our Marsh Madness social hour and get-together at JJ's Top of the Swamp.

We led hikes for Madison Parks' Hayrides and Hikes event in the Conservation Park.

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With your support in the coming year, we can continue and expand our activities to promote land protection, education, and enjoyment of Cherokee Marsh.

If you have ideas for Friends activities or would like to help, we want to hear from you. Call, write, or attend one of our monthly meetings.

# Meet the Director Candidates

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh Board of Directors is responsible for planning, coordinating, communicating and managing the activities of our group. At the annual member meeting (*see page 1*), the members elect directors for the coming two years.

The board usually meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 5:30 pm at the Lakeview Branch of the Madison Public Library, 2845 N. Sherman Ave. All meetings are open to members and the public. To confirm the time or request an agenda, or if you're interested in joining the board or helping out on a committee, contact Jan at [info@CherokeeMarsh.org](mailto:info@CherokeeMarsh.org) or 608-241-5828.

Directors serve 2-year terms, with half of the terms expiring in even-numbered years and the other half in odd-numbered years. Directors Timothy Baker, Janet Battista, Dana Erlandsen, Lesleigh Luttrell, and Justin Sargent are in the middle of their terms and thus aren't up for re-election.

Here are statements from the five announced candidates for the five open positions in January's election. The terms of the directors elected will end at our annual meeting in January, 2014.

## Jan Axelson

I believe the Friends perform an important role as a voice for Cherokee Marsh. In the coming years, I want to continue to work to increase awareness of the beauty and importance of the marsh, to preserve and restore public lands in the marsh, and to protect the ecosystem in the face of development in the watershed.

Since moving to Madison's North side eleven years ago, I've spent many hours walking, paddling, birding, and skiing on the marsh's public lands and waters. In my "day job," I work as a writer, publisher, and webmaster, and I enjoy using my skills to benefit the marsh.

## Lydia Mauer

After growing up in Des Moines, Iowa along its muddied rivers and flooded creeks, it was a wonderful sight for me to see the beauty and the great variety of recreational usage Madison's lakes and the Yahara River had to offer and, in 2001, I decided to make Madison's northside a home for my two children and myself. I have been paying attention to and felt inspired by the advocacy efforts of individuals and groups protecting and preserving Cherokee Marsh and the upper Yahara River watershed. FOCM, Midwest Environmental Justice Organization (MEJO), Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters (WLCV) and Capital Region Advocacy Network for Environmental Sustainability (CRANES) are groups I've seen work to improve and protect our waterways and communities. As a FOCM board member, I look forward to using my skills and experiences in community advocacy and organizing

to work with individuals, groups and municipalities to advance FOCM's mission and to have some fun.

## Muriel Simms

When I lived on the South side of Madison thirty years ago, my interest in purchasing, protecting, and preserving land for the welfare of neighborhoods began. A group of South side neighbors and I successfully lobbied for land that is now Kenneth Neville Park, named after a Madison African American pioneer family. I have not lost that interest which is why I helped co-found and currently serve as a Friends board member since 2005. The Friends have dutifully and diligently worked to inform the community about the marsh and have provided opportunities for others to treasure the marsh as we do. I want to continue to be a part of the Friends' efforts.

## Dick Walker

I have lived in Madison for over 45 years, on Lake Mendota for over 26 of those years and the last 5 years in the Cherokee Marsh area, albeit off the water. I have always been concerned about the health of the lakes of the area and know that they are affected greatly by the health of Cherokee Marsh and other sources of water north of the lakes and the cities around those lakes. I should like to continue to be a part of an organization whose primary interest is in the Marsh's well being, however that interest is expressed.

I feel that the Marsh and the areas surrounding it need to be protected against any further abuse and FOCM is one voice to be heard for its well being and long term survival.

I became a printmaker, taking my first art classes shortly before retiring from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1995, where I served on the faculty for over 30 years. What started as a way to become more knowledgeable about prints, which I had collected for many years, turned into a learning process of production and preservation. Still active today while serving on several boards and other volunteer activities.

*(continued on page 4)*



The new mowed paths in the North Unit of Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park are temporary firebreaks for use in upcoming prescribed burns.

## Director Candidates (continued)

### Dorothy Wheeler

I have a lifelong interest in protecting the environment, I won my election to the county board in 2004 by emphasizing my desire to keeping our urban environment as clean as possible and I kept my promise to do just that. My voting record as recorded by the Sierra Club was 100% on environmental issues. I still want to keep working on this important goal and I feel that being on the board of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh gives me the opportunity

to continue to support a cleaner environment for the enjoyment of generations to come. I like helping to protect the habitats of the wildlife that live and thrive in the marsh as well as in the uplands adjacent to the marsh. I like knowing that protecting the marsh helps filter the water that goes into our lakes keeping them cleaner. All of the lakes in the Mendota chain need the marsh to protect their waters so the marsh is a treasure in our midst. I like feeling that I have a small role in protecting it.

## Building a Prairie: One (Handful of) Seed at a Time at Yahara Heights County Park

*Alex Singer*

On the “other” side of the Yahara River is the county-administered Yahara Heights/Cherokee Marsh Natural Resource Site, also known as Yahara Heights County Park, an under-explored (for me at least) combination of wetland, woodland and in-the-process-of-being-restored prairie that includes over 3,000 feet of water frontage providing a wildlife habitat preserve, fish spawning grounds, and a water sedimentation area for Lake Mendota.

I first visited by bicycle, using the parallel route of Green Rd/Westport Rd rather than attempt the now much more bike-friendly HWY 113/Northport Dr, and entered via Riverview Dr and Caton Ln. Owners of canines are familiar with the 20-acre dog park off of Catfish Ct, a well-maintained area with wood-chip paths and a couple of water access points, and though the entry gate is found at the parking lot, there’s a rough stile at the far east end to continue your visit into the rest of the park. Fishing folk and paddle boaters can follow a path from the same parking lot to a launch dock, which is also accessible from 113 if you want to drop off the boat first.

Once over the stile, you pass into the main 350+ acre park, between cornfields leased to farmers and the edge of a steep slope to the water with views across the river on the right and toward some rather grand houses to the left. While the fields are headed toward prairiehood at the rate of one parcel a year, begun about four years ago, even now they play a wildlife role since in late November I observed two pairs of sandhill cranes gleaning. Much of the waterside strip has been altered for the better via brush and tree clearing, a process that continues into the thickets of buckthorn and honeysuckle to reveal oak savannah and remnant sedge meadows along the marsh, and which can be better appreciated sitting at one of the many benches. Much of this labor is thanks to volunteers Jim Hughes and “Tread” Treadaway, while the prairies are the result of their and countless other volunteer hours collecting and sowing seeds, mowing trails and planting trees.



*Yahara Heights County Park has several scenic overlooks of the Yahara River.*

(See [The Cherokee Marsh News of Oct/Nov 2009](#)).

Noting the varying diversity of the prairie plots, and checking for bluebirds at the multiple boxes along the way (I saw several males feeding under the eye of a red-tailed hawk), you reach the series of paths through the woods and down to the waterfront. You pass an Indian mound, an unusually long (228 ft) panther, sadly overgrown, and once at the water spy a thick carpet of American lotus planted to mitigate erosion by catching sediment. In between, crane your neck northeastwards for a lengthy view upstream, and then enjoy exploring the various sometimes mossy paths, coming across a giant oak or hickory here, a spring outlet there, and even a whimsical sign or talisman provided by involved neighbors. Look for the small interior wetland, wood duck box included, before heading back toward the parking lot via the uppermost path for a sweeping view over the prairies, fields and wetlands, picking out landmarks in the South Unit of Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park and beyond.

# Friends President Jan Axelson Wins a North Star Award

*Dana Erlandsen*

The Northside Planning Council presented Jan Axelson, Friends of Cherokee Marsh President, with a North Star Award on November 11, 2011, for her invaluable work and leadership in preserving the marsh. Other recipients included Wild Warner, Joshua Lydick, Mary Schumacher, Judy Kreft, Mary Hill, Virginia Davis, Sue Gleason, Margaret's Fund, and the Madison Mallards. The North Star Awards are presented to those leaders or volunteers who have made substantial contributions in making Madison's Northside a great place to live.

Jan accepted the award by thanking the members of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh: "It is the people who join the Friends of Cherokee Marsh who make all this possible. I couldn't have achieved anything without their support."

Jan is one of the founders of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh, and she has worked on numerous occasions to support public purchase of surrounding wetlands to help preserve the marsh.

Those of you who have attended Friends activities may know that Jan is the first to step up to organize lobbying efforts, staff Farmer's Market tables, recruit speakers, suggest projects, and organize hikes, cleanups, seed-gathering, and other activities at the Marsh. She is knowledgeable, persuasive, and extremely effective.

Not only is Jan a skilled organizer, but she is a talented writer and publisher as well. Jan has written, edited and produced the Friends of Cherokee Marsh newsletter for years. She also keeps our web site attractive and up to date, with plenty of interesting content garnered from her hikes, paddles and observations of the marsh..

## Wish List

We're looking for an A-frame, sandwich-board-type sidewalk sign that we can set up on volunteer days and at other events to let people know who we are. If you have such a signboard or are handy and can make one, let us know at [info@cherokeemarsh.org](mailto:info@cherokeemarsh.org) or 608-241-5828.



*Madison Northside alder Anita Weier (right) presents a North Star award to Friends President Jan Axelson. Photo by Justin Sargent.*

Anita Weier, who presented the award to Jan and was among those nominating her, said that Jan's work for the environment is not limited to Cherokee Marsh. "She also works hard to protect Madison's lakes and to make people aware of developments and laws that could hurt our environment," Weier said.

Margaret Mead famously said: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Both the Friends of Cherokee Marsh and Madison' North Side are lucky to have the thoughtful commitment of Jan Axelson to making Cherokee Marsh and the North Side a better place.



*The DNR conducted an extensive prescribed burn in Cherokee Marsh on November 17. This view is from County HWY CV.*

## Events Calendar

### Annual Member Meeting / Prairie Lore and Plant Stories

See page 1 for details.

## Record Natural Events on a Phenology Calendar

*Phenology* is the study of the timing of natural events. Personal phenology observations might include the year's first sighting of a robin, bloom times of favorite wildflowers, or any natural events you want to remember and compare from year to year.

To help in recording observations, the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy have published a 2012 Phenology Calendar. The calendar features photos from a photo contest and includes a checklist for seasonal animal and plant events, weather data, and nature notes.

**If you buy the calendar through the Friends of Cherokee Marsh, half of the \$15 price goes to benefit our group.**

To order a calendar, contact Dick Walker at [rdwalker@facstaff.wisc.edu](mailto:rdwalker@facstaff.wisc.edu) or 608-242-4411. The calendars make great gifts!

## Needed: Art by Kids with Outdoor Themes

The League of Conservation Voters is collecting kids' art that shows what young people like to do outside and why they love Wisconsin's outdoors. The artworks will be in a display at the press conference announcing the Wisconsin Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights, which affirms each child's right to grow up healthy and have access to a clean and safe outdoor environment.

Young people 18 and under are encouraged to participate in the art display. **Submit art by January 4th to:**

Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, Attn: Matt Dannenberg, 133 S. Butler St #320, Madison, WI 53703.

The press conference is January 5 at the State Capitol.

For more information, contact the League of Conservation Voters at 608-661-0845 or

[www.conservativoters.org](http://www.conservativoters.org)

Keep in touch!

Email group

[www.groups.yahoo.com/group/cherokeemarsh](http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/cherokeemarsh)

Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/friends.of.cherokee.marsh](http://www.facebook.com/friends.of.cherokee.marsh)

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[www.facebook.com/groups/cherokee.marsh](http://www.facebook.com/groups/cherokee.marsh)

## Experimental Structure Intercepts Sediments

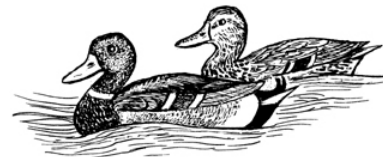
UW researchers Chin Wu and Khurran Khan, PhD. candidate, have been studying the movement of sediments in the upper Yahara River at Cherokee Marsh.

This fall, in cooperation with the WDNR and Madison Parks, the team installed an experimental, temporary "floating bog interceptor" (FBI) along the north shore of Cherokee Lake. The interceptor blocked wave action and changed the direction of flow in the area.

Preliminary data collected suggests that during a short time period, the FBI has played an important role in capturing sediments.

See the preliminary report, which includes photos of the project, at:

[www.cherokeemarsh.org/news.html](http://www.cherokeemarsh.org/news.html)



### Friends of Cherokee Marsh

PO Box 3390

Madison WI 53704

[info@CherokeeMarsh.org](mailto:info@CherokeeMarsh.org)

[www.CherokeeMarsh.org](http://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 (Vice President)

Dana Erlandsen

Lesleigh Luttrell (Treasurer)

Justin Sargent

Muriel Simms

Dick Walker

Dorothy Wheeler (Secretary)

#### Advisor (non-voting)

Don Hammes

# 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.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Osprey \$100           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$25     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sandhill Crane \$250   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mallard \$50    | <input type="checkbox"/> Great Blue Heron \$500 |

- Additional donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Additional donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in honor of \_\_\_\_\_
- Additional donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

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

In addition to my contribution, I can help with

- Field work    Publicity    Tours    Education    Board/Committees

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Family member(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Second Email \_\_\_\_\_

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](http://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.

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh is a Federal tax-exempt charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.