

# The Friends of the Fox Quarterly Newsletter

Friends of the Fox Mailing: P.O. Box 741, Appleton, WI 54912-0741

Summer 2009



Inside This Issue

# Discovery

## President's Message

*"Forests, lakes, and rivers, clouds and winds, stars and flowers, stupendous glaciers and crystal snowflakes - every form of animate or inanimate existence, leaves its impress upon the soul of man."*

*Orison Swett Marden*

Our first Annual Upper and Lower Fox Clean-Ups ended with some nice piles of garbage! Thank you to all who came out and lent a hand - what a great community we live in! Our next volunteer project for the summer involves constructing the portage trails. If you are interested, please give our office a call (920-707-2065), and be a part of the beginning of the Fox-Wisconsin Water Trail!

Besides this wonderful community work, FOF is taking the next big step on the path toward the creation of the Heritage Parkway. The Feasibility Study for the Heritage Parkway is complete ..... huray!!!

The study was quite an effort, took a lot of hard work but in the end it produced an impressive document. You are invited to view the document on our home page of our website at:

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

The next step is to submit the study to the

National Park Service and our Congressional Delegation. Both have happened just prior to publishing this newsletter (see page 2, Feasibility Study) - and both are milestones!!

FOF is asking for your help. We are putting out a **Call to Action: Please take a moment to call Senator Kohl's Milwaukee office and request that he sponsor the Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway.** The number is:

**1-800-247-5645.**

**Thank you!**

The review process will take months, so while we wait to see if we will be awarded National Heritage Area status, we will continue working while keeping you informed. As

always, thank you for your membership! None of this work would be possible without your support!

**Candice Mortara, President,  
Friends of the Fox**



## The Loss of our Dear Friend - Nile Sweet

Nile E. Sweet, age 87, of Oshkosh, passed away peacefully at his home on April 1, 2009.

Nile was a steadfast supporter and past board member of FOF. Nile was known for his enthusiasm, sense of humor and warm smiles. Nile proved to be not only a friend to the river but a close friend to many of us.

Friends of the Fox would like to offer our warmest condolences to Nile's family and friends. Nile will be greatly missed by us all!

Feasibility Study

Marquette and Joliet:  
River of Discovery

Special Donations

Board Re-Election &  
Thank-you

FOF Awards

Repair Work on  
Lower Fox Dams

Fox River Video Links

Volunteer Opportunities

Warm Welcome to Our  
Newest FOF Members



# Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway

## COMPLETION OF THE HERITAGE PARKWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY



### "HERITAGE PARKWAY" FEASIBILITY STUDY



**WE ARE SO EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THROUGH THE VERY HARD WORK OF A TEAM OF DEDICATED INDIVIDUALS, THE FEASIBILITY STUDY HAS BEEN COMPLETED!!!**

Friends of the Fox (FOF) and East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC) have prepared this study to provide the public, the National Park Service and the U.S. Congress information about the resources in the Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway and their feasibility to become a National Heritage Area.

Much hard work went into the preparation of this Feasibility Study. Primary Contributors included:

**Helen Young**, Staff, FOF

**Candice Mortara**, President, FOF

**Trish Nau**, GIS Coordinator, ECWRPC

**Pete Hensler**, Board Member, FOF

We would like to especially thank East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and their staff for their determination and dedication towards completion of the study:

**Eric Fowle**, Exec. Director, ECWRPC

**Ed Kleckner**, Principal Planner, ECWRPC,  
Board Member, FOF

**Tom Baron**, Planner, ECWRPC

...And many others, throughout the years, that

have put their valuable time and effort into making this become a reality.

**WE COULD NOT HAVE COMPLETED OUR TASK WITHOUT YOU!! THANK YOU!**

**NEWS UPDATE:** On June 23rd we met with staffers from our U.S. Congressional Delegation, representing four Congresspersons and two Senators. The Feasibility Study was presented and reviewed. They were enthusiastic about the project and our progress to date, and will be taking the study for examination. FOF will be contacted by August 1st with details regarding their sponsorship of pertinent legislation.

This is a milestone, and we have every reason to celebrate how far we have come! Stay tuned!

**FOF invites you to access the Feasibility Study on our website homepage at:**

**[www.friendsofthefox.org](http://www.friendsofthefox.org)**

or type the following address into your address bar to access the study directly online:

**<http://tinyurl.com/fox-wi-heritage-parkway-fs>**



*It is with rivers as it is with people: the greatest are not always the most agreeable nor the best to live with. Henry Van Dyke*



## MARQUETTE AND JOLIET: RIVER OF DISCOVERY

In June of 1673, Father Jaques Marquette and explorer Louis Joliet entered the Fox River from the bay of Green Bay. The pair was commissioned by France to seek a route to the Orient via the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers. At this time, the Fox River was part of the Upper Louisiana region of New France. Half a continent away, the population of the English colonies had swelled to nearly 200,000, however, the Upper West remained largely unexplored by Europeans.

Upon entering the Fox River, Marquette and Joliet encountered a landscape sculpted by ice and inhabited by native cultures dating back tens of thousands of years. In his journal, Marquette noted the varied landscape, plants, animals, and people he encountered. **"We left this bay to enter the river that discharges into it; it is very beautiful at its mouth, and flows gently; it is full of bustards, ducks, teal, and other birds, attracted thither by the wild oats, of which they are fond."**

On June 7<sup>th</sup>, he described an encounter with the Mascouten, who lived in a large village located just west of present-day Berlin. The Mascouten told the explorers of a great river, which they called the "Meskousin" that flowed near the backwaters of the Fox River. With the help of two Indian guides, Marquette recorded a portage of 2,700 paces, from the Fox to the Wisconsin River. Located in the present-day City of Portage, this was the only land the explor-

ers would have to cross on their journey from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River.

The pair arrived at the Mississippi on June 17<sup>th</sup>, and continued their journey until reaching the Arkansas River in July, whereupon Marquette traveled back to the Mission of St. Francis Xavier in Green Bay, and Joliet returned to Quebec. Joliet related their many discoveries. Most importantly, they had been the first Europeans to find a direct route through the continent, from Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico.

*It would have been impossible for Marquette and Joliet to know what would be unleashed by their travels. However, as the chronicles of American history unfolded, their journey, along with those of other French explorers, resulted in the opening of the American west, the proliferation of the fur trade, and eventual European settlement of the Fox River valley. Today, the Fox River remains one of the most important water routes in the development of the United States.*



Wisconsin Historical Museum Painting Collection  
[www.wisconsinhistory.org/topics/marquette\\_joliet](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/topics/marquette_joliet)

## SPECIAL FINANCIAL DONATIONS

A Donation of \$500 from Nile's Family "In Memory of Nile Sweet"

A Donation of \$200.00 "In Memory of Nile Sweet" from FOF members--Willis and Mary Ammentorp

A Donation of \$3000 to "Unlock the Fox fund" from the Green Bay Boating Club

**Friends of the Fox would like to Thank you for your Generous Gifts!**



# 2009 Annual Meeting

## BOARD RE-ELECTION AND THANK-YOU

Friends of the Fox would like to extend our sincere thanks to all who contributed to making our 2009 Annual Meeting a **HUGE SUCCESS!** We all enjoyed the special message from our keynote speaker, Justice David Prosser and would like to thank him for his contribution to the evening. It was an informative evening and was enjoyed by everyone who attended.

Board elections were held and the following members were re-elected for a three year term:

Ellen Balthazor  
Bill Bush  
Brunhilde Courtney  
Ed Kleckner

Steve Lockhart

### We welcome you back!

We are very thankful for our generous benefactors, donors and friends. Without them our organization would not be capable of providing opportunities to fund special projects relating to establishing a Fox-Wisconsin Waterway.

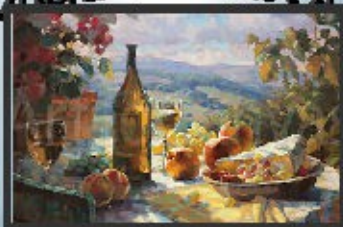
We especially would like to thank Jay and John Supple for donating the use of their most beautiful facility, *"The Wave"*. Your generosity is overwhelming. Friends of the Fox also extends our sincere thanks to Tom, Nancy, Bob and Mary Aykens for providing the beautiful flowers for our

Annual Meeting, as well as other Friends of the Fox events. The color and beauty of the floral arrangements sets a festive mood and is very much appreciated by everyone involved. We could not have this celebration without all of your help. Friends of the Fox thanks each and every one of you from the bottom of our hearts.

We especially thank all of the donors listed below for their generous gift of time, talent and resources. Please know that you are very much appreciated for the many blessings you have contributed to Friends of the Fox.



## THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS BENEFACTORS, DONORS AND FRIENDS!!



Dick Abb – FOF

Bob Aykens – Memorial Florist – FOF

Ellen Balthazor – FOF

Mr. and Mrs. Bongenshultz – Atlas Coffee Mill  
Café & Boutique

Bill Bush – FOF

Jin and Brunhilde Courtney – FOF

Susan Draves – Gannett Wisconsin Newspaper

Christine Felties – LMT

John Forster – Advisor FOF

Foxley's Gallery Ltd.

Kristen Hanna – "The Wave"

Peter Hensler – FOF

Tom Jensen – Badger Liquor

David Kapszukiewicz – Artist

Harlan Kiesow – CEO FRNSA

Ed Kleckner – East Central Planning & FOF

Kathy Koene – WHBY 1150 AM Radio

Sue Lauers – "The Wave"

Steve and Betty Lockhart – FOF

Shari Manney – Newsletter and Invitations

Larry Medema – FOF

Candice Mortara – President FOF

Jack Nelson – FRNSA & FOF

Marilyn Orvedahl – FOF

David and Kay Peck – FOF

Justice David Prosser – Featured Speaker

Dan Reinhold – FOF

Russ Reiser – Guitarist

Diane Schback – Menasha Marina

Sue Schrampler – FOF

Sara Schrampler and Friends, Brigitte, Michelle  
& Andrea – Wine Pourers

Jay and John Supple – "The Wave"

Tom Unrath – West Marina

Karin Whealon – FOF



# Friends of the Fox Awards

Page 5

## DARE TO DREAM...DREAMS BECOME REALITY

Three awards were presented at the Annual meeting. John Forester was pleased to present Justice David Prosser with the Friends of the Fox Visionary Award. Please see our Fall 2009 newsletter for an extended article on Justice Prosser's contributions.

Jack Nelson, Board Member, was recognized for his many years of distinguished service and his involvement in founding FOF. Brunhilde Courtney, Board Member, received a surprise award for her long and distinguished service to the FOF. A plaque recognizing their contributions and achievements were presented to Jack and Brunhilde at the Annual Meeting.

**Jack Nelson's extraordinary service to the State of Wisconsin and all its citizens was recognized with a commemorative plaque by the FOF at its 2009 Annual Meeting.**



Jack Nelson, Professional Engineer (PE) was a "Founding Director" of the Friends of the Fox when the organization formed in 1985. Because of his ex-

tensive experience and work with C. R. Meyer Company, Oshkosh, Jack was intimately acquainted with the locks systems of the Lower Fox River and the dams which facilitated operation of the seventeen lock system between Green Bay and Menasha.

Jack joined forces with Bill Kellett, John Forester, Frank Shattuck and Ob Smith to reverse the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1984 plan to put the lock system in a "caretaker status" for want of commercial usage of the locks and to abandon the locks and Corps presence on the Lower Fox River.

Jack, along with the FOF, the State of Wisconsin DNR, Mead and Hunt and a select few others, notably Carol Roessler, Justice David Prosser, Senator H. Kohl and Representative Petri was very instrumental in refuting the Corps "216 Plan"

which sought to fill in the locks and ignore the Corps responsibility for water management and control of the Lake Winnebago watershed.

Jack's hundreds of pro bono hours of engineering analysis and wealth of on-site river, dam and lock experience proved the viability of the current plan now being executed for the State of Wisconsin by the Fox River Navigational Systems Authority (FRNSA). He was appointed to that authority by Governor Doyle and serves as one of three representatives from Winnebago county.

Jack visualized early on the tremendous potential for a Wisconsin Heritage Parkway and how the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers could together form a historic recreational river pathway and tourist attraction. The restored, operational lock system is the backbone of the Heritage Parkway.

**Brunhilde Courtney has been on the Friends of the Fox Board about 28 years. Brunhilde has served on the board in many capacities and is always willing to help wherever she is needed. Brunhilde's smile and enthusiasm are contagious!**

She has dedicated countless hours and amazing attention to detail to

make our Annual Meetings and other events successful. They would not be as professionally run without her planning and execution skills.

Brunhilde also takes care of the Menasha Locks Tenders porch, working with area communities to fill it with their river information.

**Thank you for all you do Brunil!**





# River Information

## REPAIR WORK ON THE LOWER FOX RIVER DAMS

You will likely see some repair work on many of the dams along the Lower Fox this year. To ensure the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) commitment to public safety, the Corps is performing a risk analysis of all its dams across the country. The USACE has implemented a new rating system to prioritize dam safety deficiencies in order to best allocate funding, called Dam Safety Action Classification (DSAC). This classification uses a scale from I to V, with I representing the highest risk dams.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, operates and maintains nine federal dams on the Lower Fox River, between Lake Winnebago and Green Bay for a variety of purposes including navigation, water supply, flood control, and recreation. Of these nine dams, five were rated as DSAC II (Urgent), one was rated DSAC IV (Marginally Safe), and the reports on the last three are pending but expected to be rated DSAC IV.

The five dams that received the DSAC II rating (Urgent) are the Upper Appleton, Cedars, Little Chute, Rapide Croche, and De Pere dams. These five dams received DSAC II ratings due to concerns with cracking at the gate anchorages, which raises the risk for gate failure. The cracks have been monitored by

Corps staff since the 1970s, and are not showing signs of rapid progression.

The sixth dam, Little Kaukauna



Dam, received a DSAC IV (Marginally Safe) rating. For the remaining three Lower Fox River dams—Menasha, Lower Appleton, and Kaukauna—the screening process was completed, and with results pending, are expected to result in DSAC IV ratings. However, these ratings are being reviewed to ensure consistency in the rating process and are not considered final yet.

The Detroit District is preparing an Interim Risk Reduction Measures Plan in response to the analysis reports, which were released on February 10, 2009. The Plan will define actions to be taken at the DSAC II dams to reduce the risk to an acceptable level until a permanent repair is implemented. The

Detroit District is also actively seeking funding to permanently repair the dams as soon as possible. The interim actions being consid-

ered include, sealing concrete cracks, replacing gate arm bolts, increasing dam monitoring, reviewing gate operational procedures, and updating hydraulic studies.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is committed to transparent and honest communication with the media and public and will continue to update af-

ected communities as the plan develops.

Again, know that the cracks found on the dams have been present since the 1970's, have been continually monitored, and have not grown in size. There is no imminent danger of failure and no need for worry, repairs will take place in 2009.



For further questions, call the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Detroit District Public Affairs Office at 313-226-4680 or go online and check their website at:

[http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/\\_kd/go.cfm?destination=Page&Pge\\_ID=2295](http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/_kd/go.cfm?destination=Page&Pge_ID=2295)

IF YOU ARE RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER AND ARE NOT A MEMBER,  
PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING.

TO JOIN, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

[www.friendsofthefox.org](http://www.friendsofthefox.org), Click On: [How to Join](#)

OR CALL US AT: 920-707-2065



# Community Projects

Page 7

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**TOGETHER.....**

WE ARE Making a Difference This Year By Donating Just ...

WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE...

AND WE HAVE.....

**WON'T YOU JOIN US??!!**

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TO VOLUNTEER FOR A FUTURE WORK EVENT OR FOR MORE  
INFORMATION: PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

[www.friendsofthefox.org](http://www.friendsofthefox.org)  
OR CALL US AT: 920-707-2065

Mr. & Mrs. Erik and Jenny Hanson  
Mr. & Mrs. Todd & Ellen Needham  
Mr. Lee Krans  
Mr. Jeff Buchta  
Mr. David Magruder  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim & Marilyn Overdahl  
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis & Mary Hultgren  
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Mr. Bob Sigman  
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Mr. Gene Wulf  
Mr. Thomas Konetzke  
Ms. Kathleen McGwin

Neenah  
Appleton  
Appleton  
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Menasha  
Fond du Lac  
Menasha  
Appleton  
Montello  
Appleton  
Appleton  
Neenah  
Neenah  
Menasha  
Montello

Ms. Kathleen Isaacson     Appleton

**WARM WELCOME TO FRIENDS OF THE FOX  
NEWEST MEMBERS**

Mailing P.O. Box 741  
Appleton, WI 54912-0741



### **Our Mission and Purpose**

The Friends of the Fox is a not-for-profit advocacy group established to preserve and develop the environmental, cultural, historical, economic and quality-of-life assets offered by the Fox River



## **FRIENDS OF THE FOX AND EAST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**



### **“HERITAGE PARKWAY” FEASIBILITY STUDY**



**WE ARE SO EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE** that through the very hard work of a team of dedicated individuals, the Feasibility Study has been completed. Please view more details on the Study on page 2.