

The Cherokee Marsh News

Dec 2018 / Jan 2019



In this edition

- [Annual member meeting will feature presentation on Wisconsin wildlife rehabilitation](#)
- [Show your support by renewing your membership](#)
- [Deer exclosures, brush pile burning at South Cherokee](#)
- [What we did in 2018](#)
- [Photographers needed!](#)
- [Upcoming events](#)



Photo by Will Anzenberger

Annual member meeting will feature presentation on

Wisconsin wildlife rehabilitation

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh's 2019 annual member meeting will feature a special presentation, Wisconsin wildlife rehabilitation: caring for sick and injured animals, with Jackie Sandberg, Wildlife Rehabilitation Training Coordinator at the Dane County Humane Society's (DCHS) Wildlife Center. Staff and volunteers at the center help over 4,000 sick, injured, and orphaned wild animals every year.

Before the presentation, we'll hold a short business meeting to review the past year, look forward to the year ahead, and elect directors for the coming year.

Everyone, member and non-member, is welcome to attend this free event and enjoy free refreshments and door prizes. (The presentation will not include live animals.)

Sat, January 12, 10 am – 12 pm

Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Dr

We hope to see you there!



Show your support by renewing your membership

The end of the year is approaching, and that means it's time to renew your membership. Your member dues help fund our activities to protect, preserve, and restore Cherokee Marsh, Dane County's largest wetland.

Is my membership up for renewal?

All memberships expire on December 31. If you joined the Friends after June 30, 2018,

your membership is paid through December 31, 2019. For everyone else, it's time to renew. If you're not sure when you joined, contact us at janaxelson@gmail.com or (608) 215-0426.

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

How to renew

Visit our [website](#) to find a member form to mail or to pay online. With either method, you can join or renew your membership and make additional contributions.

Support the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund

When you renew, please also consider including a donation to the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund. The fund pays a yearly dividend to support conservation at Cherokee Marsh. The dividends grow as the fund grows, providing a permanent source of funding for the marsh.

Support hands-on, outdoor environmental ed

We also ask you to consider donating to bring local schoolchildren to Cherokee Marsh for hands-on environmental education. Hands-on learning at Cherokee Marsh introduces kids to wetlands and their importance. The Madison Metropolitan Area School District, in cooperation with Madison School and Community Recreation (MSCR), provides trained naturalist guides, but the classes are responsible for transportation, and many classes struggle to find money to charter a bus. A donation of \$45 buys transportation for 20 kids.

A 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.



Deer exclosures, brush pile burning at South Cherokee

The City Parks crew has installed two deer exclosures – small, fenced areas that deer can't enter – to monitor the effects of deer on plant life. Volunteers will track and compare the species present inside and outside the exclosures. The exclosures are in the woods above the Bonner Ln pond and in the wooded loop at the west end of the park.

As conditions permit, a contractor has been burning brush piles created during restoration work earlier this year at South Cherokee.



What we did in 2018

Jan Axelson

As we look forward to continuing our activities in our twelfth(!) year of stewardship at Cherokee Marsh, here is look back at 2018.

Restoring



To make more room for native grasses and flowers, we removed invasive cattails from a wetland behind the Bonner Rd pond at South Cherokee.

We continued our efforts to remove garlic mustard in Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park and removed invasives and collected prairie seeds with County Parks and Operation Fresh Start at Yahara Heights Park.

At the request of Madison Parks, as part of their efforts to preserve and promote snags (dead, standing trees) as habitat, our volunteers surveyed the snags in the woods behind Lu's Pond in North Cherokee.

Volunteers from the Friends and Dane County helped County staff conduct a prescribed burn of 95 acres of prairie, woods, and wetland at Yahara Heights Park, the largest burn the park has seen in memory.

In partnership with the Department of Natural Resources, we girdled aspen trees and removed brush in the Cherokee Marsh State Natural Area. Although the weather and other time commitments and challenges kept us from our phragmites removal work this year, in 2019, we are committed to continue maintaining the area we have restored.

The Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund, started by us in 2013 and managed by the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, continues to grow and provides a permanent source of funding for conservation of the marsh. In 2018, the fund provided \$1,264 to support the work of the DNR's conservation crew in the Cherokee Marsh State Natural

Area.

We celebrated the arrival of three purple martin nests in the martin “condo” donated by member Mike Rewey, installed on Burning Wood Way, and maintained by member Ellen Barnard.

We continued to watch for chimney swifts at the tower on the corner of Wheeler Rd and Comanche Way. Though we haven’t yet seen evidence that swifts are using the tower, we’ve spotted swifts flying overhead and are hopeful they will soon make use of the tower. The tower-top’s camera captured an owl using the tower as a perch.

Advocating



2018 was a banner year for land preservation at Cherokee Marsh. We supported the City of Madison’s purchase of 31 acres to be added to Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park. The land is north of Wheeler Rd between N. Sherman Ave and HWY CV, adjacent to over 200 acres of City-owned wetland. We supported the protection over 100 acres in two parcels that will be acquired by Groundswell Conservancy and an additional 90 acres protected by a conservation easement. These parcels provide a valuable connection between existing parcels of publicly owned land between the upper Yahara River and Bong Rd and south of HWY 19.

To answer the frequently asked question, “How big is Cherokee Marsh?”, volunteer Doug

Norgord measured Cherokee Marsh as 3595 wetland acres including 2335 acres at Cherokee Marsh and the upper Yahara, 915 acres along Token Creek, and 345 acres on the northeast tip of Lake Mendota. Doug also created two great maps.

After multiple big storm events led once again to wetland losses along the upper Yahara River and flooding downstream, we supported Dane County's renewed efforts to reduce flooding in the Yahara River and its lakes.

We were happy to see construction finally happening for the improved waste-oil dropoff site at South Cherokee. The site's new location will allow for other improvements to the park's entrance area.

Our fundraiser tours with the Natural Resources Foundation raised \$385 for the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund and brought folks from across the state to explore Cherokee Marsh.

Our fundraisers at Ale Asylum and Benvenuto's Italian Grill raised \$338 to support Cherokee Marsh.

We donated \$842 in targeted donations from Friends members and the Benvenuto's fundraiser to bring schoolchildren to the marsh for hands-on, outdoor environmental education.

We joined Dane County's efforts in advocating to keep leaves and grass clippings out of the street.

We talked to folks and shared stories while tabling at the Northside Farmers Market, and we kept you informed with our newsletter, Facebook page, website, emails, and Northside News stories.

Exploring and having fun!



Now in their fifth year, our monthly, guided Bird and Nature outings continue to draw folks from around the city and beyond.

We helped sponsor the annual Bird & Nature Festival at Warner Park, this year with a popular Bats LIVE! presentation.

Other tours we co-sponsored and promoted included two warbler walks, a woodcock walk, butterfly walk, Hayrides and Hikes, and walks led by City Parks staff. Our partners included Madison Audubon Society, Madison Parks, Dane County Parks, and the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association. With the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, we sponsored three fundraiser tours for the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund. Weather permitting, our candlelight walk will be back in 2019.

At our 2018 member meeting, we sponsored a presentation about “herps” – snakes, lizards, frogs, toads, turtles, and more.

We celebrated the digging of a new well and the return of year-round, full restrooms at North Cherokee.

Thanks to a targeted donation from a member, our volunteers enjoyed good food and conversation at a picnic held at a member’s property just north of the marsh.

You make it possible



With your support and participation, we can continue to expand our activities to promote land and water protection, restoration, education, and enjoyment of Cherokee Marsh. If you have ideas for activities or would like to help, we want to hear from you. Call (608) 215-0426, write (janaxelson@gmail.com), or attend one of our monthly meetings.



Meet the director candidates

Our Board of Directors is responsible for planning, coordinating, communicating and managing the activities of our organization. At our annual member meeting, members elect directors for the coming two years.

Our board usually meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 5:30 pm at the Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Dr. All meetings are open to members and the public. To confirm the time (occasionally we reschedule) or request an agenda, or if you're interested in joining the board or helping out on a committee, contact Jan at (608) 215-0426 or janaxelson@gmail.com or any of our other directors.

Directors Jan Axelson, Mary Binkley, Jim Krause, Paul Noeldner, and Anita Weier are in the middle of their 2-year terms and aren't up for re-election.

Director Dana Erlandsen resigned from the board this year due to scheduling conflicts. Dana had been with us from our early years, and we will miss her energy and her thoughtful and informed contributions to our discussions. Dana's activities with us included serving as treasurer, presenting our annual year in review, and helping out with events. We are delighted that Dana will continue to volunteer with us.

Here are statements from the slate of five continuing candidates for five positions with terms that will end at our member meeting in January, 2021:

Timothy Baker

I enjoy Cherokee Marsh as a great place to walk and explore nature with my wife, Beth, and two small children, Della and Dorothy. Long interested in Cherokee Marsh as an obviously important component of the lakes and wetlands system that defines the Madison area, I joined the FOCM board in 2010 amid concerns about the health of the marsh, especially in the face of potential development. I view the FOCM as the primary advocate for the acquisition and protection of valuable public lands and for the health of the marsh ecosystem. I am especially interested in helping people learn about native plants, birds, and aquatic life. I serve on the City of Madison Committee on the Environment and enjoy a variety of outdoor activities including birding, fishing, hunting, and native plant restoration.

Janet Battista

I am a founding member of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh. The Friends have been influential in resisting new development encroaching on the marsh, in bringing Madison school children to experience the marsh, and in supporting efforts to restore the many native ecosystems within the marsh. I hope to continue on the board to try to maintain and extend these achievements.

Russ Hefty

I developed a love of nature thanks to my parents who shared their love of plants and birds with me. We took family vacations to see Yellowstone National Park, Grand Tetons, Devil's Tower and other remarkable places that sparked my interest in conservation. As a teenager my first conservation action was salvaging native prairie plants from a nearby stone quarry, and transplanting them in our yard. A conversation between my parents and Wayne Pauly at the Dane County Fair led me to volunteering at the Madison Audubon's Goose Pond Sanctuary near Arlington. This eventually led to me becoming the first college student intern at Goose Pond Sanctuary.

I received a Horticulture degree with an emphasis on natural resources from the UW and started work for the City of Madison as a season conservation ranger in 1980. From 1991-2016, I was privileged to lead Madison's conservation parks as the Conservation Resource Supervisor. Cherokee Marsh has always been one of my favorite parks as it offered the opportunity to restore native plant and animal communities on a large landscape scale like no other place in Madison. I have led efforts to save the peat wetlands along the Upper Yahara River for the past 15 years. More recently we've worked on restoring a large oak savanna / prairie complex and our efforts were rewarded when red-headed woodpeckers nested there for the first time in decades.

In January 2016, I retired from the City of Madison Park Division after 34 years of service. Serving on the Board of Directors of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh has allowed me to stay involved in protecting this very special resource.

Lesleigh Luttrell

I would be honored to continue to serve on the Friends of Cherokee Marsh board. Our mission to protect, preserve and restore the Marsh and the upper Yahara watershed is more important than ever. The worth of wetlands in mitigating flooding is becoming more appreciated in our community; the beauty of the Marsh year round is available to everyone who joins our first Sunday walks and to students who go on field trips to the Marsh with transportation paid for by the Friends. The Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund provides annual support for restoration work. I am pleased to have played a small part in helping to further these goals and plan to continue working on them over the next two years.

Mary Manering

As a Madison native and a 38 year resident of the Cherokee Marsh area, I am pleased to submit my name as a candidate for the Friends of Cherokee Marsh Board of Directors for another two year term.

It is important to me to be involved in activities to improve the health of the marsh in order to provide necessary habitat for wildlife and recreational opportunities for those who treasure everything the marsh and neighboring lands have to offer. My commitment to the environment is demonstrated by my participation in a number of organizations including: 24 years as a naturalist with the International Crane Foundation, water quality monitor with the Rock River Coalition, former naturalist with the Madison Metropolitan School District leading tours at Cherokee Marsh, kestrel nesting box monitor with the Madison Audubon Society and assisting with the restoration of prairies and savannas in Dane County. I welcome the opportunity to be a Board member of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh to further my goals to protect and improve the Marsh and to be involved with efforts to expose more people to the Marsh and the importance of the natural world in our lives.

We have one new director candidate. Because our bylaws require half of more of the directors' terms to end in even-numbered years, the new candidate will serve an initial 1-year term that ends at our member meeting in January, 2020.

Sheila Leary

I've lived on the shore of Cherokee Lake for eighteen years. I am a native plants gardener, president of the Madison Herb Society, and recently became a Wisconsin Master Naturalist. I am retired from a career in university press publishing, where I worked in marketing, development, and as press director. I grew up in northwest Wisconsin surrounded by two lakes, a woods, a swamp, and a bog.



Photographers needed!

Your photos can help show folks in Madison and beyond how special Cherokee Marsh is. The Friends and the Northside News are seeking good photos of Cherokee Marsh.

If you would like to see your photos in **this newsletter and in other publicity for the Friends**, we would love to hear from you. Send to info@cherokeemarsh.org.

An upcoming issue of the [Northside News](#), mailed to all Northside Madison households, will feature photos of Cherokee Marsh and other natural areas on the Northside. Send your photos to submissions@northsidenews.org.

A good place to capture photos is at our monthly Bird and Nature Outings and other events; see the calendar below or [on our website](#). Especially needed are photos that show families and kids enjoying the outdoors in and around the marsh. Photos with recognizable children require verbal permission from a parent or guardian for public use.



Upcoming events

[See full calendar](#)

Bird and nature outings

Sun, Jan 6, 1:30 pm – 3 pm, A Natural New Year with Naturalist Guide Paul Noeldner
AND
first Sunday of EVERY month, year-round, ALWAYS 1:30 pm – 3 pm

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park, North Unit, 6098 N. Sherman Ave. Follow N. Sherman Ave. north to the parking lot at the end of the gravel road. ([map](#))

Family-friendly bird and nature walks led by naturalist guides and other local experts.

Sponsored by Madison Parks and the Friends of Cherokee Marsh. Questions?
Contact Paul Noeldner at (608)-698-0104 or paul_noeldner@hotmail.com

[Madison Parks Bird and Nature Outings page](#)

Annual member meeting

Sat, January 12, 10 am – 12 pm

Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Dr ([map](#))

Learn about Wisconsin wildlife rehabilitation, learn about recent and upcoming activities, elect directors for 2019 – 2020, and enjoy refreshments and mingling with other Friends members. See above in this newsletter for more details.

Candlelight walk

Sat, January 26, 2019, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park, North Unit, 6098 N. Sherman Ave. ([map](#))

Tour the marsh by candlelight, then warm up with free hot cocoa by the fire. Three lighted loops, arrive anytime, walk at your own pace. Bring your own snowshoes or wear appropriate winter footwear. This event will take place with or without snow cover but may be canceled if conditions are icy or otherwise unsafe. Check our [website calendar](#) for cancellation information.

Board meetings

Wed, Dec 19, 5:30 pm – 7 pm

Wed, Jan 16, 5:30 pm – 7 pm

Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Dr ([map](#))

Members and the public are welcome at our monthly board meetings. Occasionally we reschedule, so contact us to confirm: (608) 215-0426, janaxelson@gmail.com

Receive notices about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities

Our newsletter comes out six times / year. You can also sign up to receive timely notices and reminders, including announcements for last-minute events and volunteer opportunities that don't make it into the newsletter.

[Sign up](#) to receive notices about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities.

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