A yellow banner at the top of the page features a map of Wisconsin counties in the background. The text "MAMMOTH tales" is overlaid on the map. "MAMMOTH" is in large, bold, blue capital letters, and "tales" is in a smaller, black, lowercase serif font.

MAMMOTH tales



SUMMER 2024



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S report



LUKE KLOBERDANZ
Executive Director/CEO

The ultimate goal of the Ice Age Trail Alliance is to complete the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. Everything the Alliance does feeds this idea. Protecting land equals space for future Trail. Hiking with 10,000 fourth-graders ensures the next generation continues our work. Hosting an outreach event gains new Trail supporters today. And, constructing new Trail brings the vision closer to reality.

Of course, everyone loves a new segment of Ice Age National Scenic Trail. But, shiny new Trail is only as good as the existing Trail that connects it to the rest of the path.

Last year was an amazing year of Trailbuilding. The 15 new miles of Trail open for public enjoyment is nearly triple what is typically built in one year! And it was great, because it got the Alliance ever closer to its ultimate goal: a completed Ice Age Trail.

As the 2024 Ice Age Trail Crew season unfolds, however, you'll notice a slight shift in focus—from building new Trail to caring for what's already been created. Certainly, three habitat improvement projects over the winter reflect this care. By restoring the landscape on Alliance-owned properties, we're making good on the "scenic" in National Scenic Trail. The three maintenance sweeps taking place this year provide resources and support for chapters to care for the existing Trail as well. And, five of the seven large-scale events planned for the 2024 Trailbuilding season, will focus on repairing, replacing, or improving existing structures and Trail.

That's not to say there won't be any new Trail opened for public enjoyment this year. Because there will be! Thanks to the strength of the volunteer chapters, and with support of Alliance staff, the Ice Age Trail will grow by nearly five miles, which is a typical yearly amount.

Make no mistake, we're not slowing the pace of new miles. In fact, the behind the scenes work of layout, design, and compliance for future Trail is forging ahead more efficiently than ever before. And it's teeing up a banner year of Trailbuilding in 2025.

Soon, the properties you have helped to protect over the years will see new Trail. Gaps will be closed. The Alliance, and its partners, will be ever closer to a fully completed Trail.

But, in all the excitement of new miles, it is important to remember the miles that have existed for decades. The entire route deserves a level of excellence worthy of its National Scenic Trail designation.

Luke Kloberdanz

OUR PARTNERS



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Dave Kinnamon
David Lovejoy
Dave Phillips
Robert Rusch

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Adam Cahow	Warren Knowles
Dick Cates	Terry Kohler
Robert Cromer	Henry Reuss
Tom Drought	Sarah Sykes
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OUR mission

The mission of the Ice Age Trail Alliance is to conserve, create, maintain, and promote a thousand-mile footpath tracing Ice Age formations across Wisconsin.

ON THE COVER:

Fred Nash, Spirit Stick Caretaker for 2024 (along with his wife Marilyn), introduced the Spirit Stick to one of the new Ice Age Trail Crew-built boardwalks along the Hemlock Creek Segment during the May event. Photo by Miranda Murphy.

The Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA) publishes *Mammoth Tales* for its members and friends. Together with the National Park Service, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, local units of government, businesses, and volunteers from around the state, the IATA works to preserve Wisconsin's glacial heritage through the development of the Ice Age National and State Scenic Trail.

The IATA welcomes your comments. Email them to lysianne@iceagetrail.org, call us at (800) 227-0046, or send them to Mammoth Tales, c/o IATA, PO Box 128, Cross Plains, WI 53528.

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A yearly highlight for the Ice Age Trail Alliance staff is the Awards and Recognition Ceremony held Saturday evening during the Annual Conference.

2024 was no exception. Along with our partners at the National Park Service, we got to honor the contributions of members, volunteers, and hikers. Their time and talent in the previous year helped conserve, create, maintain, and promote the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.

The celebration of some of these volunteers continues throughout the Awards Spotlight pages. Read about the recipients of the Spirit Stick, Public Partner, Friend of the Trail, and Trail Steward of the Year. And, be inspired by those who have donated hundreds of service hours to the Trail.



SPIRIT STICK AWARD

This award recognizes long-term dedication and service to the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, carried out in a spirit of cooperation, optimism, and enthusiasm.

The recipient leads by example and inspires those around them. A trailwide award, the Spirit Stick is usually presented to one person each year.

This year's recipients of the Spirit Stick award are **Fred and Marilynn Nash**, a formidable partnership in life and on the Trail. Residing in Weyerhaeuser, they are members of the Blue Hills Chapter in Rusk County.

Over the years, Fred and Marilynn have left an indelible mark on the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. Their contributions are vast and varied, from growing the Chapter into a small but substantial



group to providing shuttle service to hikers. Their passion for the Trail, which grew stronger and deeper by the year, led them to become the Coordinator and Secretary for the Blue Hills Chapter. With these duties, they took on maintenance, signage, and everything else in a small chapter.

While beautiful, the Ice Age Trail route through the Blue Hills is rugged, challenging to access, easy to get lost on, and hard to maintain. Summer's straight-line winds and heavy winter snows often created long hours of Trail maintenance for the duo as they routinely tackle blowdowns. Fred and Marilynn's herculean efforts have upgraded signage and improved and maintained problem areas. Without a large volunteer base to rely on, they orchestrated

Spirit Stick caretakers in 2024: Fred and Marilynn Nash graciously receive the Spirit Stick from Bob Funk, the 2023 recipient of the award. Photo by Dennis Linley.

a plan with Chippewa Moraine Chapter volunteers to help keep the Trail through the Blue Hills open and passable. This partnership has become a yearly event that has expanded into keeping bridges and boardwalks safe and upgrading signage.

It's hard to put a number on dedication, but in Fred and Marilynn's case, it's at least 7,000. That's the number of volunteer hours they've reported, a testament to their unwavering commitment to the Trail. And they didn't just walk the talk; they completed every step, becoming Thousand-Milers on October 4, 2021.

In addition to all the local on-the-ground work, Marilynn served on the Ice Age Trail Alliance Board of Directors for two terms from 2015-2021, including five years as Secretary, where she was known for her meticulous attention to detail.

A decade ago, Fred shared a vision with Alliance staff, a dream to alter the Ice Age Trail route through the Blue Hills. His idea, now known as "The Dreamer Route," was a significant change that alluded to evocatively named places such as Devil's Kettle, Devil's Elbow, and Gundy's Canyon. Then, in 2020, volunteers scouted hundreds of miles, marking an 18-mile flag line. With work scheduled to begin in the fall of 2024, Fred's dream is on its way to becoming one of the largest Trailbuilding endeavors undertaken by the Alliance.

Fred and Marilynn's infectious positivity and unwavering passion for the Trail have endeared them to everyone they meet. Katie Mertz, a REI employee who recently joined the Fred Nash fan club, best summed up their impact. "Fred led our small-but-mighty group on Saturday...what an awesome dude. He made the experience safe, productive, and fun! I'd absolutely love to volunteer again—and would do so in a heartbeat under Fred's leadership!"

For all this and more, Fred and Marilynn have exhibited the hallmarks of Spirit Stick recipients.

Read more about Fred and Marilynn on page 20.



TRAIL STEWARD OF THE YEAR AWARD

This award recognizes a volunteer whose work contributes in an extraordinary manner to Trail management and development, including planning, layout and design, construction, maintenance, or stewardship efforts. It is awarded to one recipient each year.

No volunteer may be more skilled at stonework than this year's recipient of the Trail Steward Award: **Wendell Holl**, who lives in Lodi and is a member of the Lodi Valley Chapter. Thanks to Wendell's guidance, grand staircases, retaining walls, and stepping stones have been expertly constructed all along the Trail—and better yet, he has trained the next generation of stonework experts!

Wendell, a familiar face at Ice Age Trail Crew events for a decade, underwent Crew Leader Skills training in 2014. His quiet, kind, and inclusive leadership style has earned him the respect and admiration of his fellow volunteers. While stonework may be his specialty, Wendell's true gift lies in his ability to make everyone feel valued and appreciated, fostering a sense of belonging within the team.

Volunteers rave about working on his crews and request to work with him, even though stonework is one of the most physically demanding tasks. He quickly teaches the basics of stonework, and by the end of the day, his crews are confidently setting stones, allowing Wendell to focus on the nuances of his section. When new volunteers are unsure if they have the physical strength for stonework, Wendell patiently shows them that with the right tools and leverage, anyone can do the work.

Wendell is more than willing to meet with Alliance staff before a project to scope it out and plan the best path forward. But he's not just interested in large-scale projects. He's also a stalwart volunteer for the Lodi Valley Chapter, willing to lend a hand or wield a chainsaw whenever necessary.



Trail Steward of the Year Award: Wendell Holl is flanked by Chad DuChateau, Director of Trail Operations (L) and Dave Caliebe, Trail Program Manager (R). Photo by Dennis Linley.

RAY ZILLMER AWARD

This award recognizes an individual who has served the Ice Age National Scenic Trail for at least 20 years, markedly elevated public awareness of the Ice Age Trail, and has significantly advanced the Ice Age Trail Alliance's mission.

This year, the Ray Zillmer award is bestowed on **Patty Dreier**, who hails from Stevens Point and is a member of the Portage/Waupaca County Chapter. Patty and her warm, exuberant personality—evident the first time you meet her—is not only passionate about the Trail, but also the greater environment and our obligation to protect it.

Patty has been associated with the Alliance for more than 26 years. First as a Portage County Chapter member, where she won an "In the Mud" award! Then, she began serving on the Alliance Education Committee, and served two stints on the



Executive Director and CEO, Luke Kloberdanz congratulates a beaming Patty Dreier. Photo by Dennis Linley.

Board of Directors, including as its President from 2021 to 2023. She has served on multiple committees including Chairing the marketing committee.

Patty remains incredibly involved with, and extremely devoted to, the organization. Her fingerprints and impact can be found throughout the organization and across the Trail, which she is working on completing.



HENRY S. REUSS AWARD

This award recognizes an individual who works through government channels on behalf of the Trail; influences agencies to take an active role in the Alliance's mission; maintains an ongoing public relationship as an advocate for the Trail, and advocates for legislation to advance the Trail.

Rod Bartlow, a resident of Slinger and a member of the Washington/Ozaukee County Chapter, has been at the heart of the Ice Age Trail Alliance's advocacy work since it began actively engaging Federal, State, and local government officials. In fact, he was a catalyst behind creating the Alliance's Advocacy Committee in 2012.

His ceaseless efforts to gain support for the Trail include yearly visits to Washington DC as part of the "Hike the Hill" contingent; testifying before State Legislative committees regarding a variety of topics and concerns, as well as developing positive relationships with many local municipal and county officials. Few know more about the Knowles Nelson Stewardship Program than Rod. And no one knows more about Unit Status, than Rod.

Henry S. Reuss Award: All smiles, Rod Bartlow (center), receives his award from Luke Kloberdanz, Executive Director and CEO (L), and Kevin Thusius, Senior Director of Land Conservation (R). Photo by Dennis Linley.



PUBLIC PARTNER AWARD

This award honors an individual from a public or government agency who is consistently cooperative and who provides dedicated, above and-beyond service to the Trail.

In addition to the thousands of Alliance volunteers, the Ice Age National Scenic Trail needs partners to make it reality. Partners who will go above and beyond, Partners like former superintendent of the Kettle Moraine State Forest-Southern Unit, **Anne Korman**, who hails from Waterford and is a member of the Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter.

In her tenure at the Southern Unit, Anne brought ongoing support to the local chapters. And, constantly supported the Ice Age Trail through the properties she managed. She was always willing to write letters of support for more Ice Age Trail land acquisitions! And when it came to figuring out logistics for a project, or training—an answer was only one Anne call away.

Although she retired in 2023, Anne remains committed to the Ice Age Trail—by volunteering and working on becoming a Thousand-miler.

Public Partner Award: Deserving recipient, Anne Korman, graciously receives her award. Photo by Dennis Linley.

National Park Service Awards continued on page 24.

The "In the Mud" award recognizes volunteers who consistently come to workdays and dive into the dirty work of building and maintaining the Trail. They epitomize the bedrock volunteer spirit driving the progress toward completing it. These award recipients are recognized at: IceAgeTrail.org/InTheMud or use the QR code.



Nothing captures the imagination quite like hiking the entirety of a long-distance path like the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. This year's Thousand-Miler class submitted completion reports before April 1, 2024. These award recipients are recognized at: IceAgeTrail.org/2024TMClass or use the QR code.



For a complete list of honorees, visit: IceAgeTrail.org/Awards or use the QR code.



YEARS OF SERVICE AWARDS

The following individuals have been a constant presence in support of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, providing a foundation of continuity in our volunteer ranks, and we thank them.



50 YEARS OF SERVICE

This year marks an important milestone for one special volunteer. Rib Lake resident, historian, and former Taylor County District Attorney, **Bob Rusch** celebrates 50 Years as an Ice Age Trail Alliance volunteer.

And, oh, what a volunteer he has been. Bob first began laying out and building Ice Age National Scenic Trail in Taylor County with professor Adam Cahow in 1974. He scouted possible routes for the Ice Age Trail from Wood Lake into Lincoln County. By 1976, Bob had convinced the Rib Lake Jaycees to get involved in Trail building! In 1985, he established the High Point volunteer chapter and served as its first coordinator for 11 years.

As the years progressed, Bob would become a member of the Alliance board of directors, establish Timms Hill (the nation's only Scenic Side Trail), become the Alliance's first conservation buyer, work out the first landowner easement for the Trail, complete 26 "Ice Age Trail 50" endurance runs, negotiate with multiple landowners to reconnect the Rib Lake Segment, and cut the ribbon on that segment in October of last year.

Bob is a fervent researcher and historian. He's written books about Taylor County and guides to the Trail, and he founded the Rib Lake Historical Society. He, and his wife Ann, are ardent supporters of the Alliance, donating: money to support land purchases and some of their own land to host the Trail.



50 Years of Service Award: Bob Rusch celebrates 50 years as an Ice Age Trail Alliance volunteer on the Rib Lake Segment. Bob conceived of the Timms Hill National Side Trail and worked tirelessly to build it and have the Department of the Interior certify it. Photo courtesy of Bob Rusch.

20 YEARS

- Andrew Bent**, Dane County Chapter
- Jon Bishop**, Dane County Chapter
- Vicki Christianson**, Chippewa Moraine Chapter
- Barbara Delaney**, Indianhead Chapter
- Lisa DeLaney**, Washington/Ozaukee County Chapter
- Don Erickson**, Superior Lobe Chapter
- Sue Munger**, Washington/Ozaukee County Chapter
- Gail Piotrowski**, Central Moraines Chapter
- Nancy Schulz**, Central Moraines Chapter
- Richard Semrow**, Waushara County Chapter
- Mary Skalecki**, Chippewa Moraine Chapter

- Jennifer Stehley**, Trailwide
- Steve White**, Chippewa Moraine Chapter
- Pat Witkowski**, Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter
- Barbara Wollmer**, Trailwide

10 YEARS

- Michele Amacker**, Dane County Chapter
- Gerald Anderson**, Langlade County Chapter
- Bruce Berres**, Lakeshore Chapter
- Lyle Buettner**, Waushara County Chapter
- Dale Cardwell**, Superior Lobe Chapter
- Barbara Ceder**, Indianhead Chapter
- John C. Elliott**, Trailwide

- Dale Fanney**, Lodi Valley Chapter
- Doug Galaszewski**, Trailwide
- Wendell Holl**, Lodi Valley Chapter
- Paul Keber**, Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter
- Rita Keber**, Waukesha/Milwaukee County
- Mary Lutz**, Dane County Chapter
- Kenneth Manthei**, Rock County Chapter
- Kathleen Mcgwin**, Marquette County Chapter
- James Mooney**, Trailwide
- Donna Piotrowski**, Portage/Waupaca County Chapter
- Cynthia Sesolak**, Blue Hills Chapter
- John Stupak**, Chippewa Moraine Chapter
- Patricia Theis**, Baraboo Hills/Heritage Chapter
- Mark Walker**, Portage/Waupaca County Chapter
- Cheryl Whitman**, Indianhead County Chapter

A sunny afternoon along the newly donated easement. Photo by Becky Wadleigh.

Wisconsin's Woodstock

BECKY WADLEIGH, LANDOWNER ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST

At the end of April, Don “Ratt” and Jane Anderson became the latest “Trail host” landowners to permanently protect land hosting the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. They donated a permanent Trail easement on their property, ensuring the Ice Age Trail route is there for future generations to hike. In doing so, they get the Alliance ever closer to a long-term goal: permanent protection of the Ice Age Trail.

For many years, a section of the Iola Ski Hill Segment crossed their property through a handshake agreement with the Ice Age Trail Alliance. Handshake agreements are non-binding, non-contract, trust-based arrangements. They were used commonly in the 1980s and 90s to establish brand-new Trail sections on private property. Today, they account for about 41 miles of Trail throughout the state.

The Andersons' easement protects a small corridor surrounding the 1/6-mile section of Trail crossing their property while allowing them to maintain ownership of the land. This means, the Andersons can use the land, sell it, and pass it on to their heirs with no effect on the Trail.

The Andersons purchased their property in 2007. Don and Jane, both Wisconsin natives and UW-Stevens Point graduates, met later in life during a paddling trip on the Flambeau River. Deciding to purchase a property together, they established a set of criteria: They wanted something private, with a decent amount of acreage, ideally on

a dead-end road. The property at the end of Stoltenberg Road had only been on the market for a few days when they started their search, and they knew right away it was perfect.

When Don and Jane found their property, they were vaguely aware of its history. Not only had it hosted the Ice Age Trail, but it was also the site of Wisconsin's very own Woodstock: The People's Fair, aka Iola Rock Fest. This music festival drew an estimated 85,000 people through the small town of Iola (population: 900) to the then 201-acre property during the summer of 1970.

The Peoples' Fair took place from June 26 to 28 and featured well-known artists of the time, like Buffy Saint Marie, the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, and Taj Mahal. A stage was erected in the old cow pasture northeast of where the Andersons' house currently stands. At the time, the only structure on the property was a barn where a single water truck was stationed for thirsty festival-goers. Just north of their house is a pond where folks skinny-dipped and swam.

Don and Jane still find relics of the festival on their property, like fire rings, old bottles, and jewelry. Embracing the property's history as a festival site, they celebrated significant Rock Fest anniversaries, holding a small music festival called Pine Camp on the property.

Since purchasing the property, the Andersons have worked hard to be good

stewards of it, removing invasive species and reforesting old fields with native trees. Just recently, with their kids and grandkids, they planted more than 200 trees and shrubs throughout the property to benefit wildlife.

When asked about their motivation to host the Ice Age Trail, Don smiled and answered, “Having the Trail there makes it fun. I go out and hike every day.” The Andersons share many of the same sentiments as other Trail Host landowners: They enjoy helping others enjoy the outdoors, and it makes them proud to be part of something bigger.

The generosity and partnership of landowners like the Andersons is crucial to the continued enjoyment of the Ice Age Trail. Thanks to Don and Jane, the Trail will have a permanent path on this special property for generations to come.

To read more about Wisconsin's Woodstock or hippies, motorcycle gangs, and rock n' roll in Central Wisconsin use these QR codes:



SCAN ME



SCAN ME

Becky works with the Alliance as part of a shared position with the North Central Conservancy Trust, where she is the Outreach & Development Coordinator.



Vision and Patience: A Former Landowner's Story

LYSIANNE UNRUH, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

In March, Howard (Howie) and Petra Inderdahl sold 28 of the 40 acres they own in the Town of Scandinavia to the Ice Age Trail Alliance. In the process, they helped protect more than ¼ mile of future Ice Age National Scenic Trail in Waupaca County.

The property, tucked between Skunk and Foster Lakes State Natural Area—land owned by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)—and County Highway V, will eliminate the current Ice Age Trail road walk. Since it is adjacent to public land, the acquisition also increases the acreage available for recreation and ecological restoration, which was also important to Howie.

"I first called the DNR since they own Skunk and Foster, but they weren't on the same timeline, so then I called the Alliance," said Howie. "I knew that if I sold to either of these organizations, the land would still be like it was mine, meaning I could still use it. And thinking of it that way made for an easy decision."

The Inderdahls purchased the property in 2002. Howie, who had grown up in Scandinavia, was eager to relocate his family to the area after living in Florida and North Carolina. He attended an auction of a retiring farmer, hoping to buy 10 or 20 acres, and ended up with 40 instead! A few years later, Howie and Petra built a house and mowed a trail to the creek.

The Inderdahl children played in the woods, and Howie took up hunting and fishing. He was in the deer stand near the creek when he realized brook trout spawned in the fall—the sound of splashing water and a colorful school of fish glinting in the sun caught his attention. "It was so fun to watch them," he said.

"Having a creek run through the middle of the property is so neat," said Howie.

It was also an attraction for the Alliance. "The parcel preserves more than 1,200 feet along the banks of Sannes Creek, a trout stream running through the property," says Kevin Thusius, Senior Director of Land Conservation for the Alliance. "Protecting the stream and adjacent 11 acres of wetlands is essential for keeping the creek crystal clear."

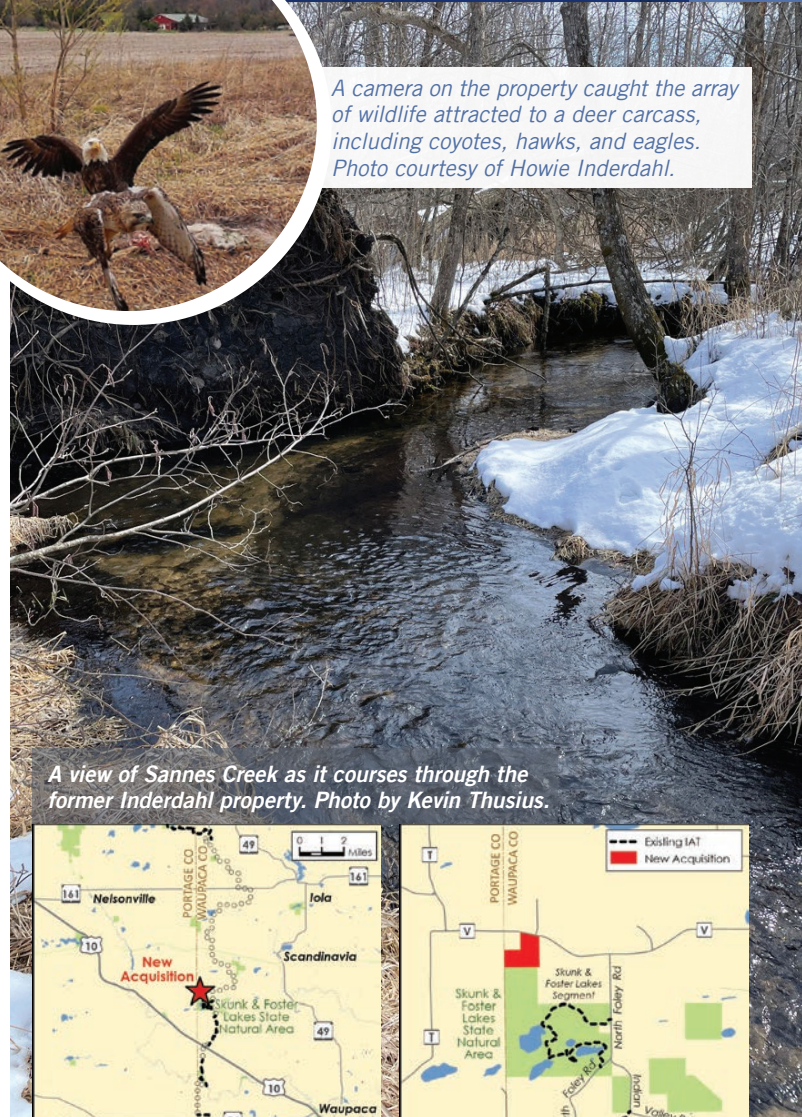
Howie also mowed a walking path so he and Petra could access the neighboring DNR land. Over time, the path became increasingly difficult to maintain. Now, Petra drives her car to one of the nearby lots to access the State Natural Area and the Ice Age Trail that crosses it.

"It's going to be awfully convenient to have the Ice Age Trail go through the property and connect up to the DNR land," said Howie. "And it will be wonderful to have experts build it and people able to maintain it."

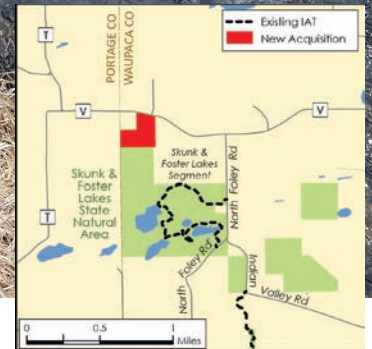
...it will be wonderful to have experts build it and people able to maintain it.



A camera on the property caught the array of wildlife attracted to a deer carcass, including coyotes, hawks, and eagles. Photo courtesy of Howie Inderdahl.



A view of Sannes Creek as it courses through the former Inderdahl property. Photo by Kevin Thusius.



To sell their land to the Alliance, the Inderdahls had to go before the County Board to get the land rezoned, changing it from an Agricultural Enterprise District to a Public Recreation and Forestry District. The former "preserves land for agricultural uses in areas where soil and other conditions are best suited to cultivation and livestock." The latter allows land use to include "public outdoor recreation, parks, and open space."

The process took 13 months to complete instead of the County Board's original 3-month estimate. "We extended our agreement with the Alliance twice, but we finally got it done," said Howie.

Good things come to those with a vision and lots of patience. Howie hopes the land management plan includes wildflower plantings and habitat improvements to encourage and support the pheasant population. He's sure hikers will enjoy the property's varied terrain: wetlands, mixed hardwood forest, and rolling glacial topography.

The property is not yet open to the public. It awaits boundary markings, and the Ice Age Trail route must be created and blazed. New Trail will be announced in the future.

A wooded view of the former Krueger property. Photo by Kevin Thusius.

The "Golden Spike" Connects a Unique Area

KEVIN THUSIUS, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF LAND CONSERVATION

In my position with the Ice Age Trail Alliance, I have overseen the protection of thousands of acres of land, for many miles of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail over the past couple of decades. From small, narrow easements to wide swaths of beautiful landscapes, and from landowner donations to multi-million-dollar purchases, the variety has made my job fun and challenging.

Preserving Significant Glacial Geology for Future Trail

There are also opportunities that make my job exciting. For example, in the mid-2000s, while working on the corridor plan for the Ice Age Trail's route through Manitowoc County, aerial photos and topographical maps revealed 1,200 acres of hilly, forested landscape in and around the 160-acre Walla Hi County Park. Once proposed as a state park, the property highlights the steep slopes and rocky soil of classic kettle moraine geology.

It's a continuation of the interlobate moraines' story, which features prominently in the Kettle Moraine State Forest-Northern Unit, just 10 miles south. This unique landscape formed when two enormous ice sheets, the Green Bay Lobe and the Lake Michigan Lobe, made contact. Streams flowing in this "interlobate" area deposited large amounts of glacial debris, leading to the high, hilly hummocks loved by hikers for their long views and heart-pounding climbs.

Another bonus of the steep slopes and rocky soil comprising the greater Walla Hi area is that they made farming impossible, resulting in a landscape chock-full-of mature oaks and maples, creating a park-like setting in the clear understory. So, once the DNR, NPS, and Alliance completed the Trail corridor plan through the county, we started knocking on doors in the greater Walla Hi area (within the Schleswig Township) in an effort to preserve significant glacial geology and protect stunningly beautiful land for future Trail.

Stakeholder Support Crucial to Success!

By luck, or spectacular intervention, we found a great supporter in the former Town of Schleswig Chair and neighbor, Dennis Salzman. Dennis played a crucial role in introducing us to the neighbors. His recommendation to meet with the Brownrigg-Heier family led to our first land protection in the area in 2015: a 136-acre land donation, one of our largest ever. This was followed by a 40-acre purchase in 2016.

Then, after acquiring two easements, which connected Lax Chapel Road to Walla Hi County Park, we built 2.3 miles of Trail through the park in 2017, aware that our ultimate goal was to extend the Trail further north. But, then momentum stalled. The area map looked like a checkerboard, with Alliance-owned properties scattered between Rockville Road and county park boundaries. It took until 2022 to acquire

another 80 acres, but a significant gap remained. One more property was needed to create an uninterrupted, connected corridor.

Securing the Golden Spike

Imagine our elation when, in 2023, the Krueger family decided to sell their long-held property. Eleven years of conversations yielded the proverbial golden spike: a 60-acre property linking the original Brownrigg-Heier acres to the Walla Hi County Park.

The Alliance now owns 316 acres in the greater Walla Hi area. The land and the adjacent 160-acre county park offer the highest quality canvas for future Ice Age Trail, loop/spur trails (and possible dispersed camping area) for exploration and enjoyment. These uninterrupted acres will benefit from a cohesive management plan, promoting healthy habitats for native plant and animal species.

The Trail layout and design process comes next, followed by compliance, and finally Trailbuilding. It will take some time, but when the ribbon is cut, and the Trail is ready for your boots, it will be an experience worthy of National Scenic Trail designation.

The property is not yet open to the public. It awaits boundary markings, and the Ice Age Trail route must be created and blazed. New Trail will be announced in the future.





Land Stewardship with Changing Climate in Mind

CLAIRE FINUCANE, PROPERTY STEWARD

Wisconsin boasts a rich tapestry of 16 distinct ecological regions, each with a unique habitat and natural community. The 1,200-mile Ice Age National Scenic Trail weaves through these diverse landscapes, from expansive prairies to dense northern hardwood forests teeming with native flora and fauna. Some miles traverse land owned and managed by the Ice Age Trail Alliance, which has 39 preserves in its mission to protect land for future Ice Age Trail.

These preserves (which total more than 2,900 acres) provide a Trail corridor and play a critical role in safeguarding the natural ecosystems and scenic beauty. As 1 of over 40 land trusts in Wisconsin, the Alliance protects these landscapes in perpetuity, which can be daunting as the climate changes. In recent years, the Midwest has experienced unprecedented extreme weather, including heavy rain, floods, and drought. In Wisconsin, words like “derecho” entered our vocabulary after high winds felled vast swaths of trees along the Trail in places like Langlade County and the Kettle Moraine State Forest-Northern Unit.

Scientists predict Wisconsin’s average temperature will continue to rise, with the state’s climate becoming similar to that of Southern Illinois or Missouri. Increased fluctuations in precipitation will result in a generally wetter climate, and winter moisture will be rain instead of snow. These changes are expected to negatively affect ecosystem function and biodiversity. As a result, land management plans must consider struggling regions and implement practices to allow plant and animal species to recover from and adapt to a changing climate.

The Alliance Responds to a Changing Climate

Each time the Alliance protects a new property, staff develops a land management plan. Going forward, with support from the Land Trust Alliance Climate Grant Program, these plans will include adaptive land management strategies which consider potential impacts, challenges, and opportunities of a changing climate. The ultimate goal is to create suitable conditions for natural ecosystems to function and flourish.

To design targeted actions that support ecosystem adaptation and resilience in the Alliance-owned preserves, staff will use the Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science (NIACS) adaptation model and the U.S. Climate Mapping for Resilience and Adaptation (CMRA): two crucial tools for understanding the potential risks, changes, and strategies in this process.

Habitat resiliency will look different across the 1,200 miles of land the Trail travels. For instance, increasing species diversity, or the amount and abundance of different species, may mean drought-tolerant native plants are introduced to preserves in southern Wisconsin. For those in the north, it may mean planting trees and prairies, which once thrived only further south.

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A leafy summer view of Long Lake from the Straight River Preserve. Photo by Claire Finucane.

Native Seed Collection Efforts Enhance Habitat

STEVE PENCE, LAND RESTORATION SPECIALIST

Spring through fall, restored native prairies offer beautiful blooms. With its dainty bell-like flowers, columbine offers pops of red in spring. Graceful, yellow coneflowers sway among grasses in summer. And in the fall, the majestic blazing star, with its lavender-colored puffs, towers above other blooms.

Native plants like these, gracing your hikes along the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, are not a stroke of luck, but point to the intentional efforts of Ice Age Trail Alliance staff and volunteers. Through its Habitat Improvement Program, the Alliance is actively increasing the presence of native plant species on Alliance-owned preserves. This diverse array of plants supports an entire food web, creating a robust and resilient ecosystem benefiting pollinator species like bumble bees, butterflies, and even hummingbirds.

Planning Identifies Plants and Properties

Looking a year or two into the future, staff identifies properties that need a native plant boost. Then, they determine the types of native seeds required based on the area's ecosystem. For example, if a species grows well in full sunlight, it does not make sense to collect, clean, and plant its seed in a shady woodland where it won't thrive.

Collecting and Cleaning Seeds

After that, the process of collecting the seeds is straightforward, but requires careful observation and manual labor. Desired plants within Alliance preserves are monitored to know when the seeds are mature. Then, they're hand-picked. This process involves cutting off the tops of the plants to remove seed pods or spent flower heads. One person or 110 school-aged kids can participate, making seed collection a great opportunity for community involvement and education. Afterward, volunteers empty the

A student with MG21 harvests lead plant seeds, removing the seed heads with a set of clippers. Photo by Alliance staff.

bags of collected plant material into large containers—round, plastic, kiddie swimming pools are ideal—to dry it out.

Alliance Seed Shed Supports a Native Seed Nursery

In 2023, grant funding (awarded from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program) to the Alliance and its local U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service partners addressed the need for, and high cost of, propagating native plants on both public and private land. The Alliance purchased, assembled, and tested seed processing equipment—a hammer mill and a fanning mill—at its “Seed Shed” established on the Alliance-owned Marshview Preserve near Lodi, Wis.

Now, plant material gathered during seed collection events are kept in the Alliance seed shed until it’s time to clean and separate the seed from the debris. The hammer mill breaks up the debris and seed pods, freeing the seeds. Then, the material is run through the fanning mill to separate the seed from the chaff. This process leaves clean seeds ready to be planted on the landscape.

Each machine has specific settings to clean the seed, depending on the seed type. Some species, like Culver’s root, have tiny seeds that look like dust. It takes about 800,000 Culver’s root seeds to make up an ounce. Compare that to a compass plant seed, about the size of your pinky nail; it only takes 660 seeds to make an ounce.

Success Across 63 Alliance-Owned Acres

During 2023, the Alliance’s first year with the seed processing equipment, more than 70 native species of seed was collected, cleaned, and planted on 63 acres of habitat, including prairie, savanna, and wetlands. The efficiency and effectiveness of the new equipment provided a significant boost to Alliance restoration efforts. In some cases, this added diversity to an established habitat; in others, it was the first planting to establish a new prairie!

Seeds are planted by volunteers of all ages who toss (broadcast) handfuls of seeds into the areas where they are needed most. This work occurs in late winter or early spring to mimic the natural process. When seeds drop from plants in the fall, spring’s melting snow draws them into the soil. The seeds’ size determines the depth to which they sink for future germination.

Get Involved!

Seed-collecting (and seed-planting) events offer excellent opportunities to learn about habitat restoration while doing work to benefit native ecosystems.

Keep in mind, seed harvesting is weather-dependent and sometimes happens on short notice. Seed collection typically starts at the end of June and runs through the fall when most seeds have matured.

To volunteer for this type of habitat improvement work, contact Steve Pence, the Alliance’s Land Restoration Specialist at: steve@iceagetrail.org.



Steve Pence, Land Restoration Specialist, uses the new seed cleaning equipment to process batches of seed. Photo by Kevin Thusius.

VIDEO

Watch a volunteer broadcast seed across a field awaiting an infusion of native prairie plants at IceAgeTrail.org/BroadcastingNativeSeed or use the QR code. Video by Maura Hanley.



SCAN ME



Small Crew. Big Accomplishments.

Expert Assistance Spruces Up Beloved Polk County Segments

ICE AGE TRAIL ALLIANCE
COMMUNICATIONS TEAM



SEGMENTS MAINTAINED:

Trade River, Straight Lake & McKenzie Creek

Polk County | May 7 – 10

Participants: 30

Volunteer Hours: 677

PROJECT PARTNERS

- Indianhead Chapter members
- The National Park Foundation

To view project photos,
visit [IceAgeTrail.org/
MaintenanceSweep
PolkCounty](https://IceAgeTrail.org/MaintenanceSweepPolkCounty)
or use QR code.



SCAN ME

JOIN US

JOIN THE MAINTENANCE SWEEP CREW IN LINCOLN COUNTY, JULY 30 – AUGUST 2.

This project will focus primarily on structure repair, tread improvement, corridor clearing, and signage updates throughout the beautiful and rugged Northwoods Chapter. Come ready for other Trail maintenance work too!

Learn more and register now by visiting: [IceAgeTrail.org/
Maintenance-Sweep-
Lincoln-County](https://IceAgeTrail.org/Maintenance-Sweep-Lincoln-County) or use QR code.



SCAN ME



BEFORE



AFTER

The first Maintenance Sweep event in 2024 crossed many items off the Indianhead Chapter's to-do list.

"The successful event helped us catch up on multiple Trail maintenance needs, including repairs to several areas with poor drainage and a reroute which included rock work," said Randy Surbaugh, an Indianhead Chapter volunteer and project lead.

In 2016, Ice Age Trail Crew volunteers tackled improvements along the Trade River and Straight Lake segments. Still, eight years had passed since the last Alliance-led event in the county. Despite the Chapter volunteers' efforts to adopt and maintain segments, many projects required expert assistance. The volunteers who stepped up for the three-and-half-day event brought their expertise, a sense of community, and shared responsibility.

"It was everything we hoped Maintenance Sweep events would become," said Lisa Szela, Volunteer Support Coordinator for the Ice Age Trail Alliance. "A nice synergy formed as chapter volunteers worked side-by-side with and learned from some of the best trailbuilders around."

Naming long-time Alliance volunteers, Szela added, "Folks like Wendell Holl and Dave Ditlefsen led a stonework crew, Bob Funk was the structures guru, while Rob Fisk taught trailbuilding basics, breaking down key concepts."

Randy readily agreed, "The Maintenance Sweep Crew provided much appreciated expertise and training for local volunteers.

We took full advantage of Alliance Trail Team members and experienced volunteers to get advice on other tread and structure problems, which we can now move up on our need-to-address list."

Besides ordering great weather—mild spring temperatures and lots of sunshine—the chapter rolled out the yellow carpet, providing hearty, home-cooked meals and an ideal location for base camp. This support fueled a productive environment, resulting in an impressive list of accomplishments:

- A 900-foot reroute along the **Trade River Segment** moved the Trail away from perennially wet tread and off of old structures. Volunteers learned how to safely move a 600-pound rock while building stone steps and retaining walls. Crews repaired several structures, while others improved water flow by installing drainage dips along a mile of Trail.
- Crews repaired stonework and improved drainage along a ½ mile of the **Straight Lake Segment**.
- The **McKenzie Creek Segment** also received attention with treadwork repair and fresh blazing.

"On our own as a chapter, the repairs required so many work days that we would not have been able to complete all of them this year. Now, they are done," said Randy. "Plus, I learned a new word: deburming."



*Trailblazers from left to right:
First Row: Ben Bartley, Miranda Murphy, Jessica Brooke.
Second Row: Seth Taft, Laura Kaiser, Erika Segerson-Mueller, Lisa Szela.
Last Row: Molly Jennerman, Allie Lessard, McKenna Olson, Zak Michiels.
Not pictured: Katie Cervenka and Maddy Flynn. Photo by Maura Hanley.*

Trailblazers:

Keeping Volunteer Passion Going Strong

MIRANDA MURPHY, OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

Retirees are the heart of the Ice Age Trail Alliance's volunteer base. At the same time, it is important to prepare the next generation of volunteers so they can step into leadership roles once those folks step back. And the best way to cultivate future volunteer passion is to introduce the next generation to the Alliance's mission through robust and tailored volunteer opportunities.

The desire to keep the volunteer passion going across generations is what spurred Lisa Szela, Volunteer Support Coordinator, and I, Miranda Murphy, Operations Assistant, to propose the idea of the Trailblazer program. Based on our own experience, young adults want to volunteer, but are busy launching their careers. So, ideally, volunteer activities for young adults offer networking and career building opportunities. The Alliance offers plenty of both. There is a wide-ranging community of chapter volunteers, board members, and Trail enthusiasts with whom to network. And, participation in its numerous initiatives like community outreach, Trail development, land stewardship, and advocacy, offers skill-building opportunities. In turn, we hope the Trailblazer program will help ease concern about leadership succession within the Alliance's volunteer chapters and Trail Crews.

By Fall of 2023, the program's framework was in place and the application period was opened by announcing it on social media. Expecting no more than 20 applicants, Lisa and I were shocked by the level of interest. Nearly 50 people applied by December's deadline. With so many amazing submissions, it was challenging to whittle candidates down to the 11 young adults, ages 21 to 35, who were selected for the program's inaugural year. You may have met some of them already. Many Trailblazers attended the Annual Conference in April, jumping right into networking with long-term volunteers and staff and sharing their ideas.

The 2024 Trailblazers cohort includes representatives from all regions of the Trail (north, central, southern, and eastern Wisconsin) and came with a range of experience and familiarity with the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. After a couple brief orientation and brainstorming meetings, Trailblazers were asked to select areas of interest and create projects that focus on expanding young adult engagement with the Trail. They've eagerly stepped up. So far, the range of projects have included assisting in Alliance fundraising efforts, taking a lead role in planning community outreach events, and creating teams to support chapters throughout the state.

For example, one Trailblazer, McKenna Olson, worked with Sarah Driscoll, the Alliance's Institutional Giving Manager, to coordinate a fundraising event for the Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter at Indeed Brewing at the end of May. She capably dealt with event logistics and promotion. Trailblazers Zak Michiels and Ben Bartley have worked with Lisa and Riley Dupee, Field Operations Specialist, to start a volunteer crew dedicated to supporting chapters with Trail work this summer.

Building and finding a community can be difficult as a young adult without a structure like school to foster those relationships. The hope is that the Trailblazers program can bring together likeminded individuals and grow that community. If this sounds like something you, or someone you know, might be interested in, keep an eye out this Fall for the 2025 cohort application announcement.

Questions? Email trailblazers@iceagetrail.org.

Thanks to the Derse Foundation
for supporting the 2024 Trailblazers.

THANKS



TRAIL COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHTS:

Three Communities Join the Ranks



Hatley: A Hiker Hangout Boasts Essentials

The Village of Hatley offers hikers the essentials, beginning with the Hatley Hangout, a bar and grill on Clark Street. The nearly nine-mile Ringle Segment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail begins (or ends) a block away on Curtis Avenue, so it's easy to fortify or replenish calories lost to hiking. A Subway sandwich shop, a Frosty Freeze (summertime!), and a Dollar Store round out the amenities, along with a gas station and convenience store.

"The Ice Age Trail continues to grow in popularity along with an increased interest in hiking," says David Narloch, Hatley Village President. "Our geographical location to the Trail, along with our population growth, will be a win-win situation for both parties working as a team to promote each other's amenities."

In addition to hosting a Trail access point for the Ringle Segment, the Plover River meanders through Hatley's northwest side. The village also boasts a section of the crushed gravel, multi-use Mountain Bay State Trail, which travels along an abandoned Chicago and North Western Transportation Company rail line.

Hatley Community Garden members dispensed with a boring fence, creating a fun and quirky one, sure to inspire!
Photo by Amy Lord.

Hatley, located in east-central Marathon County, is in an area once known as "the Great Pinery of Northern Wisconsin". Land grants issued by President James Buchanan to two white settlers in the late 1850s formed the town's footprint. Twenty years later, the Lake Shore Traffic Company (later named the Chicago and North Western Transportation Company) built a rail line through the growing village. A post office (still in service today) soon followed.

Then, in 1888, a businessman established the first sawmill, the site of which is presently a ballpark. At the time of its incorporation, in 1912, the village's population was mainly composed of immigrants from eastern Poland. However, a Canadian lumberman named Matthew Wadleigh named the town after his hometown: Hatley, Quebec.

To explore all that Hatley offers, visit: villageofhatley.org or use the QR code.



SCAN ME

For its Trail Community application, the Village of Hatley received grant funding from the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin's James & Susan Lundberg Fund.

A beautiful sculpture graces the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum's front lawn. Photo courtesy of Visit Wausau.



Greater Wausau: Wisconsin's Outdoor Basecamp

Discover the Greater Wausau area of central Wisconsin—a unique fusion of urban sophistication and natural beauty spanning Wausau, Rothschild, Schofield, Weston, and Rib Mountain. This area offers cultural and historical richness, economic vitality, and exceptional recreational opportunities. Wausau, the region's heart, is nestled along the Wisconsin River and Rib Mountain, provides a picturesque backdrop to its vibrant downtown buzzing with an array of shops, eclectic restaurants, and cultural landmarks.

Outdoor adventurers will find a year-round paradise here, with activities tailored to each season's unique charm. Nearby Ice Age National Scenic Trail segments—Plover River, Dells of the Eau Claire, Thornapple Creek, Ringle, and White Cedar—offer hummocky topography and dramatic scenery created by the glaciers of the last Ice Age. Enjoy saunters along the volunteer-built Trail featuring expertly crafted tread, stone staircases, and numerous boardwalks.

“As Wisconsin's Basecamp™, becoming an Ice Age Trail Community enhances our efforts to draw visitors, residents and future residents into enjoying all our outdoor rec resources and cultural amenities,” says Tim White, Executive Director of Visit Wausau.

And Rib Mountain State Park, a prominent feature, offers hiking trails and breathtaking views and, in winter, transforms into Granite Peak Ski Area, one of Wisconsin's premier ski destinations. The Nine Mile Forest Recreation Area, another highlight, provides trails for cross-country skiing, mountain biking, and snowshoeing.

The renowned Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, famous for its Birds in Art exhibition, and the Grand Theater—a historic venue that hosts Broadway shows and local productions—are cultural cornerstones. Dining options range from cozy cafes to upscale restaurants, offering a mix of local and international cuisines. Discover a world of flavor and fun at our local breweries and distilleries, featuring an array of delicious drinks and lively live music! Plus, find the perfect place to stay with our wide range of accommodations, tailored to fit any taste and preference.

To explore all that Greater Wausau offers, check out: visitwausau.com or use the QR code.



SCAN ME

Greater Wausau received grant funding from the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin for their Trail Community application through the Marvin & Ruth (Rudie) Schuette Fund.

Courtesy of the Algoma Chamber of Commerce



Algoma: Friendly Algoma Welcomes You

Nestled on the shores of Lake Michigan and spread out along the banks of the Ahnapee River, Algoma invites lingering along your Thousand-Mile journey. Especially on hot summer days, its lakeside location creates a refreshing “cooler by the lake” sensation.

Stroll the beautiful sand beach and boardwalk, relax with a glass of wine from a historic winery, or grab a cold one from the local brewery. Spend time browsing delightful shops—everything from antiques to art, bird feeders to books, clothing to camping gear, and more! Add a few more steps by taking a Historic Algoma Walking tour to learn about the gorgeous Victorian-style homes, hotels, and shops, then and now. Our many notable restaurants offer delicious pre- and post-hike nourishment.

Make the most of your visit! Plan an extended trip and stay in one of our unique lodging establishments or nearby campgrounds so you can enjoy a day on the water. Catch your limit on Lake Michigan with one of Algoma's world-class charter fishing services, or enjoy a thrilling paddle on the Ahnapee River by kayak, stand-up board, canoe, or swan paddle boat.

Immerse yourself in Algoma's vibrant arts community: Embark on a self-guided tour of 17 murals (16 of them are outside!) and explore the 11+ art galleries and studios showcasing a variety of mediums from oils to glass to clay. On the first Friday of every month, art galleries and many shops open their doors for special exhibits, artist and author talks, demonstrations, and hands-on activities, sparking creativity and imagination.

Enjoy weekly summer Concerts in the Park, which take place on Thursday evenings at Heritage Park. Come for the Shanty Days Festival to celebrate our rich fishing history and Lake Michigan, or fly a kite during the Soar on the Shore kite festival—both events happen in August. Friendly Algoma is waiting to show you around.

When you're ready, head on your way. The Algoma Segment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail meanders through downtown and follows a scenic boardwalk along Lake Michigan before connecting with the Ahnapee State Trail. Head north on this crushed gravel path, which offers calming views of the Ahnapee River. Bird lovers will want to bring binoculars.

For a complete list of upcoming events and places to visit, visitalgomawi.com or use this QR code.



SCAN ME



Mark (green hat & red shirt) and Alison (yellow hat & blue shirt) flank their family who volunteered in honor of Lon Crane. Photo courtesy of Alison Radigan.

Fond Memories and Trail Workdays Bring Generations Together

LYSIANNE UNRUH, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

When your childhood home is along County Line Road separating Waukesha and Washington County, and your father loves spending time outdoors, chances are, you'll grow up tromping through the woods. But not just any set of woods. If your dad heads south, your fond memories will include ambling along the Monches Segment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. And the Loew Lake or Pike Lake segments will feel like home if he strikes out toward the north.

Alison Radigan (nee Crane) remembers many wonderful summer afternoon hikes, wandering through the dappled light with her father, Lon Crane, a pharmacist, who found peace in nature.

"Dad may not have even known the Ice Age Trail Alliance existed," said Alison,

"but he loved being outside, and the Ice Age Trail was nearby."

After Lon died in 2014, the family searched for beneficiary organizations for his memorial gifts. The Alliance emerged as an ideal option for a man who'd enjoyed spending time hiking the Trail near his home. After discovering the Alliance, Alison became a member, honoring the memory of her father. She even attended a few chapter meetings with her then fiancé, Mark Radigan.

In 2015, two days before the first anniversary of her father's death, Alison and Mark married. This timing led Alison to think about a way to include her father in the celebration. She contacted Pat



Lon Crane. Photo courtesy of Alison Radigan.

Witkowski of the Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter about hosting a work day on the Monches Segment. Pat eagerly agreed to orchestrate the event, select a project, and bring the tools.

Introducing my kids to a place my father loved was so special.

"I wanted to channel the energy of our wedding day into something that would also bring us close to my father—to have him be part of the experience," said Alison.

"So, what better way than to spend time on the Trail, where he had loved to hike, and give back to something that had brought him so much joy."

Pat remembers about 20 people from the wedding party helped spruce up an overgrown area near the bridge. "Everyone from Grandma to aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews participated—it was a family event."

continued on back cover



Welcome Bix Firer!

I am thrilled to join the Ice Age Trail Alliance as the Director of Philanthropy! I was born and raised in Milwaukee and took my first backpacking trip on the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. I now have the pleasure of closing this circle and supporting the Ice Age Trail and the community, which sparked my passion for the outdoors and connecting people to the natural world.

For the last decade and a half, my career has focused on connecting communities to our public lands and life-changing experiences in the outdoors. Early in my career, I guided rock climbing, paddling, and backpacking trips for young folks in Wisconsin, Colorado, and Wyoming. I was lucky to spend my twenties exploring the Upper Midwest and the Rocky Mountains while helping my students learn to love being outside and develop their land ethics. I worked as the National Program Director for Big City Mountaineers, connecting youth to wilderness experiences and building a community of support for our work. Since leaving Big City Mountaineers, I have worked in higher education, directing outdoor education programs in Idaho and Alaska. With the recent birth of my first child and this fantastic opportunity with the Alliance,

I knew it was time to head home to continue this work in Wisconsin.

The Director of Philanthropy role combines my favorite aspects of work: building relationships and getting people outside. I look forward to getting to know the amazing community surrounding the Alliance and doing the vital work of supporting the chapters and projects that make the Ice Age Trail possible. Over the next year, I am eager to get to know as many of you as possible, visit our chapters and supporters to see firsthand the crucial work you are doing, and hear how I can support you.

In my free time, I am passionate about getting outside. I love to backpack, run, canoe, fly fish, and spend time in the field with my dogs, my wife Emma, and, as of March, our son Angus. We love to garden, cook, and forage and are excited to return to the land of wild ramps and morels.

We look forward to visiting new Trail segments and revisiting old favorites. My family will be relocating from Anchorage, Alaska over the next few months, and we look forward to calling the Driftless area home.





A merry, badge-earning Brownie troop donned NPS bandanas for the photo with their intrepid hike leader, Marilynn. Photo courtesy of Marilynn Nash.

Fred and Marilynn Nash

Fred and Marilynn Nash, 2024 Spirit Stick award winners and long-time Blue Hills chapter leaders, agreed to an interview, sharing about what motivated their 16 year-involvement with the Ice Age Trail Alliance.

How and when did you first discover the Ice Age National Scenic Trail?

Fred Nash: In 1981, after I had returned from three years in Berlin, Germany, I was walking through the woods about a mile east of my Uncle's house (where we now live) when I found a trail. I was perplexed but pleased to learn it was a National Scenic Trail, as I had hiked more than 100 miles on the Pacific Crest Trail in 1970.

Marilynn Nash: I remember seeing roadside signage for the Ice Age Trail and reading local news articles inviting people to volunteer at a Mobile Skills Crew (now Ice Age Trail Crew) event. And in the 1990s, while on a Blue Hills Felsenmeer hike guided by Adam Cahow, I spoke with a group of ladies who were section-hiking the Trail.

What prompted you to get involved with Ice Age Trail Crew events?

F: In 2007, we saw signs for an event at Murphy's Flowage and checked it out. When we learned there would be another project at the exact location in 2008, we started then.

M: After retiring in 2007, my husband and I returned to Wisconsin. I had time to participate in new activities. Since I also enjoyed hiking, I decided to try trailbuilding, especially after a news article about it piqued my interest.

What about the first Ice Age Trail Crew event had you returning?

F: The camaraderie and a shared mission/goal. It seemed very well organized. Many people were just so welcoming. My first crew leader (some guy named Wollmer) encouraged me to become a crew leader, which I did in 2009.

M: I kept returning because everything about the projects was a high-quality experience, from the work itself to time in base camp. I enjoyed the featured evening entertainment, such as a local bagpiper/professor, or when a local restaurant presented a fish boil in the parking lot. The large, hot meals served from the camp kitchen and campfire chats were also appealing. We were also wholeheartedly welcomed by Mike and Barb Wollmer and Pete and Trish Englund.

What aspect of Trail work do you enjoy the most, and why?

F: Trail layout and design because I get to see the land before the Trail is put in place and then see the Trail put in place.

M: I like to work on tread because it gave me something to contribute to the Trail once I learned how to do it.

Why did you decided to become Yellow Blaze Club members?

F: Just becoming more aware of the various aspects of the Alliance, spurred by Marilynn becoming a Board Member.

M: At first, I didn't know much about the Yellow Blaze Club, but once I learned what it was, it aligned with our desire to support a quality organization.



Tell us why you (Marilynn) accepted a seat on the Board of Directors? And what about that experience was meaningful for you?

M: I was invited to serve on the board several times. Finally, I took the request seriously. Then, I asked questions, thought it over, and discussed it with Fred. Once I determined that I could contribute something to this role, I agreed to serve. I enjoyed integrating things I'd learned from being an Ice Age Trail Crew member into my board service.

What encouraged you to become Thousand-Milers?

F: A love of the outdoors and hiking. I had hiked a couple hundred miles of both the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail. I had planned to hike only some of the Ice Age Trail, but I had completed 170 miles by 2019. Then, in the summer of 2020, I had minor surgery, and my doctor encouraged me to walk. Since this was also the early days of COVID-19, and with our travel plans on hold, we traveled around the state hiking segments and fulfilling doctor's orders.

M: I became a Thousand-Miler because I love to hike. It also gave me a sense of accomplishment.

What influenced your decision to take on Chapter leadership?

F: When we went to our first chapter meeting, only a few people were present, and the chapter needed a treasurer, so I volunteered. The Chapter Coordinator asked me to take his place a few years later.

M: When the former Chapter Coordinator asked Fred to take the position, we discussed it. Since there wasn't anyone else to do it, it made sense for Fred to step up.

Tell us about the challenges you faced as Chapter leaders?

F: The small number of members with very few active members. For a few years, it was just Marilyn and I.

M: My biggest challenge as Secretary of the Blue Hills Chapter (and other duties) was finding time to do it, although none of the activities were challenging.

What have been your most significant accomplishments and sense of reward as Chapter leaders?

F: The membership growth, however small, has been rewarding, along with having new chapter members volunteering locally and at Ice Age Trail Crew events.

M: It's been helping keep the chapter in existence. But I am also proud of the proposed Blue Hills reroute that Fred continues to facilitate.

Since you've retired from Chapter leadership, what are your hopes and dreams for the people who took on this important task?

F: I would like to see the chapter continue to grow, both in membership and level of activity/volunteering. It was time for new vigor, for someone to step in and take us to the next level.

I appreciate the generosity of fellow Alliance volunteers and the acceptance of people of all ages and types.

We needed someone with new ideas, who was more tech-savvy, and who had social media skills. I believe Cory is doing a great job. Of course, completing the reroute will be a point of great satisfaction.

M: I am very grateful that new volunteers agreed to step into the coordinator, secretary, and treasurer roles, bringing fresh perspectives to chapter leadership.

What about the Alliance's mission/people/culture fueled your passion for the Trail?

F: Because everyone is united in a common goal, camaraderie is alive in all areas: Ice Age Trail Crew events, chapter interactions and activities, the hundreds of Thousand-Milers, meeting other Yellow Blaze Club members, and so on.

M: I appreciate the generosity of fellow Alliance volunteers and the acceptance of people of all ages and types. What also stands out is the thoughtfulness and quality with which organizational leaders built the Alliance. I feel privileged to have gotten to know so many of the people who persevered in the early years. We would not have the organization we have today without them.



Fred Nash ready to pass a board forward along a lumber brigade for a new Ringle Segment structure. Photo by Dave Caliebe.



Kettle Lakes: Up-Close and Personal by Canoe

DAVID HENNING, GUEST WRITER AND MEMBER OF
THE CENTRAL MORAINES CHAPTER

Among Wisconsin's unique natural wonders, its lakes rank high. Almost all of them (more than 10,000) are kettle lakes, formed when massive glacier ice was buried in sand and gravel or till and then melted away. The sediment above the diminishing ice blocks collapsed into the void, creating holes, or kettles. Lakes commonly formed in the depressions, especially those lined with clay or in areas with a high-water table.¹

The Ice Age National Scenic Trail ambles past numerous kettle lakes, especially in Northern Wisconsin, borrowing segment names from many of them: Straight Lake, Pine Lake, Grassy Lake, Bear Lake, East Lake, Jerry Lake, Wood Lake, and so on. Depending on how adventurous you are, you may have dipped a toe or more into one of these bodies of water. Or perhaps you've pitched your tent near a mirror-like one, enjoying loon calls and frog choruses. But if you're like most of us, you've admired the glittering water from afar, catching but a glimpse through a leaf-obscured view.

Seeking a more personal connection with these kettle lakes, my wife, Glenda, and I discovered Washburn County's Birchwood canoe unit. This hidden gem offers two primitive paddle and portage routes through heavily forested and rolling topography. This area, about six miles north of community of Birchwood (and the Ice Age Trail's Tuscobia or Hemlock Creek segments) via County Highway T and Birchwood Fire Lane, features a superabundance of undeveloped kettle lakes.

So, in 2023, with our canoe in tow, and a few hours to spare, we spent a beautiful September day enjoying the pristine kettle lakes along the Sawmill Lake Primitive Canoe/Kayak route in the Birchwood canoe unit (the Loyhead Lake route is also an option). We found it extraordinary to experience a chain of beautiful, undeveloped lakes right here in northern Wisconsin, something similar in feel of the Boundary Waters or Quetico. After only a couple of portages, we could imagine ourselves deep in the heart of the Canadian wilderness instead of on a kettle lake just a few miles from the Trail. The solitude was lovely. We encountered only one canoe and its passengers on Sawmill Lake and no one else on the other lakes.

While there is a boat ramp on the opposite side of Sawmill Lake, Glenda and I started our five-lake kettle loop from the Sawmill Park campground (25 rustic sites) to Fawn, Beartrap, Mallard, and Otter lakes. We soon spotted the portage to Fawn Lake on the south end of Sawmill Lake. Portages were initially marked with a white-topped post, but some have disappeared over the years. Several, though, have posts with nice hand-painted woodcuts depicting the lakes and portages and contain a "you are here" dot. Canoe landings are generally tiny, and only a single craft can unload or launch at a time.

Glenda Henning portages her trusty canoe between Sawmill and Fawn Lake. Photo by David Henning.

¹ Mickelson, D.M., Maher Jr., L.J., & Simpson, S.L. Geology of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. University of Wisconsin Press, 2011.



Our experience on the water was absolutely terrific, but portaging offered challenges. The small, deep kettle lakes, separated by steep ridges, led to short (generally less than 100 yards), but vertical—uphill and downhill—portages between them. For example, the portage to Beartrap Lake ended in a jumble of three huge trees felled by overly ambitious beavers. As we searched for the portage to Mallard Lake— attractive and most remote on the route—we discovered paths to Telstar and Tadpole Lakes, also in the vicinity. (These can be a side trip, but you must return to Mallard to continue the route.) Luckily, the portage to Otter Lake was easy to find, but its sign wasn't!

If you have the time and desire to experience even more kettle lakes up close and personal, just a mile further north lies the Loyhead Lake Primitive Canoe/Kayak route. It's a longer loop with six lakes and seven portages. In general, the lakes are smaller and the portages a little longer. Still, the lakes are just as undeveloped and pristine as the Sawmill loop, except for the north end of Loyhead Lake.

So, if your feet need a break from hiking the Ice Age Trail (in Washburn or Barron counties, or nearby), take a half or whole day to immerse yourself in that most beautiful glacial feature—kettle lakes.

To learn more about the Washburn County's Birchwood canoe unit, visit: co.washburn.wi.us/departments/forestry/canoeing or use this QR code.



Sawmill Canoe Portage Trail route courtesy of Washburn County Forest.



Dave and Glenda Henning are retired health professionals from Marshfield. They enjoy all the silent sports, especially canoeing, biking, cross country skiing, and hiking. They discovered the Ice Age Trail while camping in a park close to a segment. After a friend invited Dave to work on the Jerry Lake Segment, they joined the Alliance. Dave's sister, Karen McArdle, got them interested becoming Thousand Milers. They've now passed 800 miles.

A peaceful view of Mallard Lake from the bow. Photo by Glenda Henning.



6,000-HOUR AWARD

6,000-Hour Award recipients, proudly wear their vests and pose with National Park Service staff. From left to right: Dan Watson, Volunteer Coordinator-NPS; Katherine Frauen, Trail Manager - NPS; Bill Welch, Lodi Valley Chapter; Dennis James, Rock County Chapter; Jerome Converse, Walworth/Jefferson County Chapter; John Kolbe, Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter; and Eric Gabriel, Superintendent-NPS. Photo by Dennis Linley.



National Park Service Awards

VOLUNTEERS IN PARKS (VIP)

Volunteers for the Ice Age Trail Alliance are eligible to participate in the National Park Service Volunteer-in-Parks (VIP) program. Any Alliance volunteer who reports his or her service hours (and keeps their volunteer form current) is on the path to recognition through the National Park Service's VIP awards program. Hours accrue, year over year.

In 2023, the Ice Age Trail benefited from 100,666 service hours donated by 1,990 volunteers. Of that number, 220 Trail volunteers earned National Park Service recognition milestones, ranging from 100-to 6,000-hours of volunteer service.



SCAN ME

For a comprehensive list of all awards and those recognized, please visit: IceAgeTrail.org/Awards or use QR code.

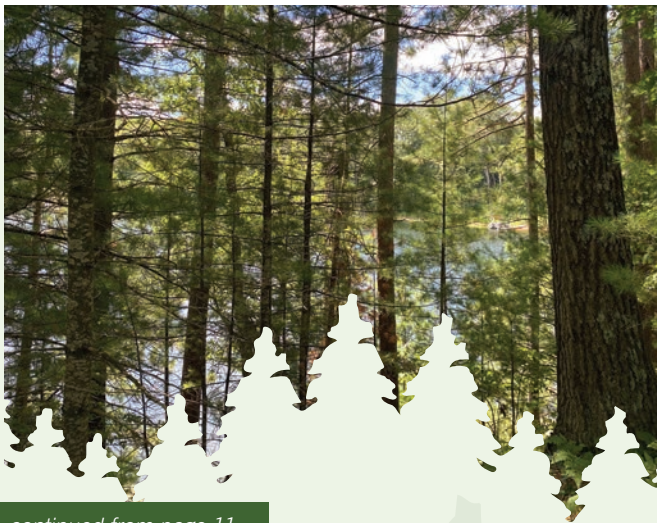


4,000-Hour Award recipients, display their Presidents Lifetime Service Award. From left to right: Darrel Ruechel, Portage/Waupaca County Chapter; Ruth Sommers, Portage/Waupaca County Chapter; Gerald “Buzz” Meyer, High Point Chapter; Barbara Johnson, Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter; and Theresa Werner, Trailwide.

Not pictured: Nanette Del Monaco, Indianhead Chapter; Bob Held Superior Lobe Chapter; and Bob Rusch, High Point Chapter. Photo by Dennis Linley.

3,000-Hour Award recipients, happily donned the jackets they received. From left to right: Dean Paynter, Rock County Chapter; Patty Dreier, Portage/Waupaca County Chapter; Barb Ceder, Indianhead Chapter; Ann Green, Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter; and Patti Herman, Lodi Valley Chapter.

Not pictured: David Earles, Dane County Chapter; Jerry Krause, Central Moraines Chapter; and Ron Schwilk, Trailwide. Photo by Dennis Linley.



continued from page 11

Straight River’s Land Management Plan Supports Climate Adaptation

The management plan for the Straight River Preserve on the Straight River Segment of the Trail in Polk County is an excellent example of habitat improvement goals that support climate adaptation. In Northern Wisconsin, invasive plant and animal species are predicted to thrive with potential rise in temperature, decreased snowfall, and intense precipitation patterns. Some native species accustomed to snow cover and cooler temperatures will struggle.

With this in mind, the Preserve’s management goals include increasing habitat resiliency, increasing species diversity, protecting water quality, and improving wetland structure. Actionable steps include:

- Acquiring funds to support removing invasive species from Straight River’s river banks (the riparian zone).
- Stopping the spread of invasive species with regular inspections by boots-on-the-ground staff and volunteers. Early detection allows for immediate removal, reducing invasives’ long-term impact.
- Reducing soil erosion and runoff near wetlands by planting native plants to control erosion and support native critters.

The Alliance hopes to hold the land for future generations by applying climate-resilient and mitigation-focused management techniques, allowing them to revel in Wisconsin’s unique (and well-adjusted) ecological beauty.

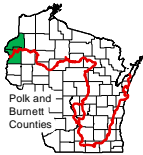
Be Part of the Solution: Get Involved

The Alliance and its chapters hold habitat improvement events throughout the year. These events focus on boosting native species and supporting habitat resiliency by removing invasive species and collecting/planting native seeds. To learn more and participate, visit: IceAgeTrail.org/events or use QR code.



SCAN ME

CHAPTER highlights



INDIANHEAD CHAPTER

Co-Coordinators: Barbara Ceder (715-410-8069, barbara.ceder@gmail.com) and Cheryl Whitman (715-371-0048, cheryl_whitman@yahoo.com)



SUPERIOR LOBE CHAPTER

Coordinator: Sue Greenway (612-723-0354, smgreenway1@gmail.com, SuperiorLobeChapter@iceage-trail.org)



BLUE HILLS CHAPTER

Coordinator: Cory Wiese (715-568-2613, BlueHillsChapter@iceage-trail.org)

In February, the Blue Hills Chapter hosted a Snowshoe hike with the Superior Lobe Chapter. Even with a limited amount of snow, everyone had a great time. Our annual meeting brought about a leadership change with Fred and Marilynn Nash stepping down after nearly 15 years of service as Chapter Coordinator and Secretary. They will turn their attention to the “Dreamer Route” project to re-route the Trail through the Blue Hills. New officers include Cory Wiese, Cindy Sesolak, and Carol Burnham.

In March, Chapter members gathered to plan for the Ice Age Trail Crew (IATC) event along the Hemlock Creek Segment. We focused on project support: cutting/building frames, camping logistics, and getting materials to the work sites. We followed this meeting with productive work days during which Chapter volunteers assembled 110 frames ahead of the project. IATC volunteers built four boardwalks and two bridges in May, replacing worn-out ones. They also repaired four still-functioning boardwalks along the segment. All this effort was in preparation for the IATC event in October to kick off work for the “Dreamer Route” project.

The Chapter is excited that the Village of Weyerhaeuser has applied to become an Ice Age Trail Community, a timely happening with more Ice Age Trail Crew events in the area.

—Cory Wiese



CHIPPEWA MORAINES CHAPTER

Coordinator: Vicki Christianson (715-827-0379 text only, ChippewaMoraineChapter@iceage-trail.org)

In the fall, Chapter volunteers rerouted a section of the Ice Age Trail along the Chippewa Moraine Segment. They moved the Trail off a forest road/logging road onto a new path traveling high above two lakes. Hikers will be sure to enjoy the bench installed at a scenic viewpoint between the two lakes.

In 2024, the Chapter took over maintenance of the Trail traveling through the Chippewa Moraine National Scientific Reserve, bringing nearly 10 miles of additional Trail under the Chapter’s care. Trail Adopters readily signed up to monitor new sections and do minor Trail cleanup.

Chapter members also support Think Outside by leading hikes on the Ice Age Trail (the Chippewa Moraine Segment) and interacting with the students as they explore the Obey Ice Age Interpretive Center.

The Chippewa Moraine Chapter holds monthly hikes from May through October. Join us! Visit the Alliance’s Event Calendar to learn more about our upcoming hikes: August 4 (First Sunday hike), September 1 (First Sunday hike), October 5 (Parade of Colors hike), and October 12 (Hike and Meet Monty, a Mammoth Hike Challenge event).

—Vicki Christianson



HIGH POINT CHAPTER

Co-Coordinators: Buzz Meyer (715-748-5627, gtmeyer@charter.net) and Lee “Butch” Clendenning (715-415-6713, leeclendenning1@yahoo.com) or HighPointChapter@iceage-trail.org



NORTHWOODS CHAPTER

Coordinator: Ruby Jaecks (715-551-1118, brjaecks@outlook.com)

In February, the Northwoods Chapter hosted a successful guided Snowshoe hike despite lacking snow and not needing snowshoes. We changed our usual route in the Underdown Recreation Area, from across bogs and lakes to higher ground. Participants enjoyed a considerable campfire, apple cider, hot chocolate, and cookies.

Volunteers could get out early to check out their segments for maintenance needs this spring, making sure the Trail was ready for the hiking season.

Bruce and Ruby had the privilege of meeting and shuttling a couple from Germany who were hiking the Ice Age Trail. They chose the Ice Age Trail above all the other National Scenic Trails because they wanted a less crowded hiking experience, and Wisconsin’s remote wilderness provided just that! They truly enjoyed their choice.

—Ruby Jaecks

Ruby Jaecks offers a Trail Angel shuttle to “The Germans” Nick Noether and Nicole Schaeffer. Photo by Bruce Jaecks.



LANGLADE COUNTY CHAPTER

Coordinator: Melinda Nelson and Brian Nelson, (Langladecochapter@iceage-trail.org)

Chapter volunteers Sam Picone, Jacki Lundt, Sara Pitterle, and Melinda Nelson staffed a booth at the Antigo School Forest’s Winterfest, speaking with kids and their families about Ice Age Trail segments in Langlade County. In addition to learning about the Trail and coloring some pretty awesome mammoths, the children enjoyed a scavenger hunt, a taco lunch, hiking, and a raptor presentation by the Raptor Education Group, Inc.

This summer, chapter members will mark new spur trails along the Kettlebowl Segment to guide hikers to the Kent Hill Tower (the sixth tallest point in the state) and the Big Stone Hole (a geological feature). Chapter volunteers Tom Sieracki, Curt Denavan, Melinda Nelson, and Brian Nelson instigated this effort to highlight wonderful views and landscape features, enhancing the hiker’s experience along this segment.

—Melinda Nelson

An attractive display and a smiling Langlade County Chapter volunteer greets Winterfest attendees. Photo by Melinda Nelson.





CENTRAL MORAINES CHAPTER

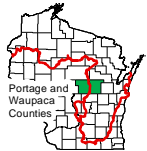
Coordinator: Chuck Schwartz (715-851-8720, CentralMorainesChapter@iceage-trail.org)

Two winter hikes fostered camaraderie despite iffy conditions. January's icy First Day hike attracted more than 40 participants with familiar and fresh faces navigating the Thornapple Creek Segment. Then, expectations for snow and solidly frozen ground during March's Winter hike gave way to unexpectedly spring-like conditions. Hikers, again including many new faces, enjoyed unseasonable warmth and the beautiful and sometimes challenging terrain on the Plover River Segment. Join us for Ice Age Trail Crew events along this segment, July 17-20 and August 14-18.

Our chapter leaders and community supporters put in tremendous effort to complete two Ice Age Trail Community applications—one with the Village of Hatley and another with the Greater Wausau Area. (Read about these Trail Communities and what they offer on page 16-17.) We extend a huge 'Thank You' to the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin for their generous grants supporting both Trail Community applications. Stay tuned for exciting ribbon-cutting events!

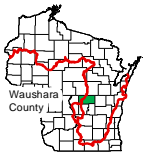
Please mark your calendars for October 12, our annual Hike-A-Thon that Chapter volunteers have been busy planning. Prepare to be "spooked" at this year's Halloween anticipatory event!

—Gail Piotrowski



PORTAGE/WAUPACA COUNTY CHAPTER

Coordinator: Debbie Krogwold (715-677-4974, wdkrogwold@wi-net.com)



WAUSHARA COUNTY CHAPTER

Coordinator: Randy Lennartz (920-787-2333, randylennartz@outlook.com)

The winter that wasn't, kept us guessing. Will we get some snow, or won't we? In the end, it didn't matter. Thanks to a great bunch of volunteers, we hosted several successful events.

Despite the lack of snow, our 26th annual Candlelight Snowshoe event drew a good crowd. Free for all, it featured live music, a variety of food, our popular Rustic Raffle, and a surprise visit from Monty.

The Blue-Ribbon Kids Day event returned after four Covid years. This Family Resource Fair brought together 40 exhibitors and nearly 1,000 kids and parents for a morning of learning, information, and fun. Our booth included maps, brochures, bean bags, and crayons. Big Monty and Mini-Monty were a hit.

—Randy Lennartz



MARQUETTE COUNTY CHAPTER

Coordinator: Jeff Frazer (608 369-0339, morgmule@yahoo.com)

In January, the Marquette County Chapter hosted a very successful First Day Hike at John Muir County Park. More than 60 people (and a few canine friends) happily hiked on the first day of the new year.

In January, Steve Pence, Land Restoration Specialist for the Alliance, led a volunteer crew in clearing and burning brush at the Alliance-owned Muir Preserve. These efforts were in preparation for an Ice Age Trail Crew event to be held October 23-27, where volunteers will build a boardwalk and a loop trail.

—Pam Bowe



Marquette County Chapter First Day Hike participants gather for a selfie with Chapter Coordinator, Jeff Frazer.



BARABOO HILLS/HERITAGE TRAIL CHAPTER

Coordinator: Debby Capener (262-930-9713, BarabooHillsHeritageChapter@iceage-trail.org)

Winter wind storms brought down several trees, keeping Trail maintenance volunteers busy cutting and clearing. A badly eroded section of the Merrimac Segment also requires attention, leading to discussions about re-route options with the Alliance's Trail Team members.

In April, as hosts for the Annual Conference, Chapter members helped staff the registration area, led hikes, and stepped up wherever we could to assist Alliance staff. Our chapter's display board debuted at the conference, thanks to Annette Martiny. We plan to use it well during summer's many community outreach opportunities.

—Debby Capener



A Baraboo Hills/Heritage Trail Chapter volunteer attends to Trail maintenance after a windy winter. Photo by Kelsey Fisk.

◀ A Waushara County Chapter volunteer captivates an audience with Ice Age Trail stories. Photo by Randy Lennartz.



LODI VALLEY CHAPTER

Co-Coordinator: Amy Onofrey (608-213-9855) and Mandy Crary (608-235-7747), LodiValleyChapter@iceagetrail.org

The Lodi Valley Chapter is pleased about the Lodi School District's designation: the first Ice Age Trail K-12 Campus! We're excited to help develop this innovative program. Chapter members and Alliance staff plan to work closely with the District to integrate the Ice Age Trail into the curriculum across grades, including high school. We expect numerous opportunities for student involvement as they participate in Trail maintenance, conservation practices, and educating others about the Trail.

Chapter members assisted with several hikes on Lodi Valley segments in conjunction with the Annual Conference. It was a great opportunity to introduce Trail enthusiasts to the recently completed loop trail on the Gibraltar Segment and offer a preview of a new section along the Lodi Segment. During one of the hikes, fifth graders from the Lodi Charter School, stationed at spots along the way, gave short presentations explaining landscape features and their Ice Age Trail Campus involvement.

Monthly Tyke Hikes and Full Moon Hikes are popular, including a luminaria hike with more than 75 people. Plans are underway to participate in the Susie the Duck Day Parade in August.

—Patti Herman



Students from Lodi's Ouisconsin Charter School present during the Annual Conference's Lodi Segment hike. Photo by Kelly Anklam.



DANE COUNTY CHAPTER

Co-Coordinator: Bob Kaspar (608-239-0168, bobkaspar@sbcglobal.net) and EJ Temme (608-630-4775, ej.temme@gmail.com), or DaneCoChapter@iceagetrail.org

During the late winter and early spring, the Dane County Chapter's Prescribed Burn Crew conducted an impressive 25 burns at 13 different sites along the Ice Age Trail in Dane County, burning more than 1,283 acres of prairie, oak savanna, and oak woodlands. We burned in Alliance-owned preserves and assisted the DNR in burning oak savanna, prairie, and marsh within the Lodi Marsh State Natural and Wildlife Area. We also conducted several burns for Dane County Parks on Dane County Ice Age Trail land. Stewardship work happens every weekend and many weekdays throughout the year, thanks to the tremendous work of our stewardship volunteers.

Speaking of volunteers, 48 Dane County Chapter volunteers received awards at the Annual Conference, celebrating the hours donated and years spent building and maintaining the Trail in Dane County. We extend special thanks to Andrew Bent and Jon Bishop for their volunteer service spanning 20 years. We also recognize the 3,000 service hours donated by Dave Earles and the 1,000 service hours donated by Barry Owens. Two of our newer volunteers, Jenny and Chris Temme, recently passed the Chapter's kiosk maintenance mini-course.

—Bob Kaspar

Smiling volunteers, Jenny and Chris Temme, are ready to maintain Dane County Chapter kiosks. Photo by Bob Kaspar.



ROCK COUNTY CHAPTER

Coordinator: Dennis James (608-302-1885, RockCoChapter@iceagetrail.org)

In 2023, Rock County Chapter volunteers contributed 3,542 hours to Ice Age Trail stewardship and promotion. It was our best year to date, which we hope to exceed in 2024!

At the Annual Conference in April, chapter volunteers received awards recognizing their dedication to the Trail. In the Mud: Cathy and Josh Erdman; 10 Years of Service: Ken Manthei; 100 Hours of Service: Michael Palmer, Don Saunders, and Michele Schroeder; 250 Hours of Service: Ken Manthei; 500 Hours of Service: Dave Keber and Tim Rutter; 3,000 Hours of Service: Dean Paynter; and 6,000 Hours of Service: Dennis James. Plus, we celebrated a strong class of Thousand Milers: Twila Claas, Carol Tyriver, Don Tyriver, and Lucy Mollet.

This summer, the Chapter will assist the Milton Library with a Trailtessa event and install kiosks at the Milton Library and Riverside Park in Janesville. We will also help the Janesville City Parks Division perform major renovations and improvements along the Devils Staircase Segment. We will also support JP Cullen employees in their volunteer efforts to improve signage at the Janesville School Outdoor Lab. (Also, we extend a thank you to JP Cullen for their lumber donation for Chapter use along the Trail.) Along with ongoing stewardship and Trail maintenance, we'll place 'You Are Here' Signs at key points along our segments.

—Dennis James



A team of Rock County Chapter volunteers move stacks of lumber donated by JP Cullen for use on future structures. Photo by Dennis James.



WALWORTH/JEFFERSON COUNTY CHAPTER

Coordinator: Andrew Whitney (262-949-0286, andywhitney1@yahoo.com)

With the continuing popularity of our Weekly Walks, a number of regulars posed the idea of a print calendar detailing upcoming events. Thanks to Doug Richter (itinerant photographer) and Andy Whitney (Chapter Coordinator), a limited-edition calendar was distributed at the New Year's Day hike hosted by the Walworth-Jefferson County Chapter.

Later in January, our yearly indoor workday focused on preparing a display commemorating the Chapter's 30-year anniversary for unveiling at the Annual Conference in April.

In February, the Chapter again participated in a "Mini Maker Faire" in Elkhorn, where our hands-on exhibit allowed attendees to make and customize hiking sticks. With nearly 70 sticks crafted, the activity was as popular as ever. A heavy snow squall encouraged attendees to turn a Full Moon hike into a Friday Night Fish Fry, instead. Luckily, March's Moonlight hike proceeded without issue.

Specialists from the DNR were featured speakers at our well-attended March and April meetings. They addressed invasive plant and forest management activities. Both topics relate to what Chapter volunteers encounter while maintaining Trail sections located in the Southern Kettle Moraine State Forest.

—Vince Lazzaroni



WAUKESHA/MILWAUKEE COUNTY CHAPTER

Co-Coordinators: John Kolbe (414 588-3448, jrkolbe@outlook.com) and Barbara Johnson (414-964-7635, barbjuh@hotmail.com)

Winter storms caused significant damage along the Trail in Waukesha County, including taking out a chunk of the Monches Segment bridge. While lack of snow cover prevented burn projects from moving forward, Chapter members kept busy throughout January cleaning up after winter's ravages. Also, in January, we hosted an Alliance-sponsored Habitat Improvement Project in the Hartland Marsh. Fifty volunteers slogged through slush to cut away buckthorn, honeysuckle, and other undesirables in the first of many projects planned for this area, to make the marsh and its environs an inviting place for native flora and fauna.

True to its name, our March Trail Improvement Day vastly enhanced the Eagle Segment. Fifty-five volunteers turned out for the event during which a 196-foot boardwalk was re-decked and upgraded with kick rails, a 12-foot bridge got a makeover, a scenic overlook was cleared, and many old signposts replaced.

Our April Trail Improvement Day saw nine crews, each with up to six volunteers, head into the heart of the Scuppernong Segment. Under the expert leadership of seasoned Chapter members, crews spruced-up worn-out tread, added trail-plumbing, yanked and trimmed scraggly and unwanted vegetation.

The annual Segment Stewards Soiree also took place this spring. At this appreciation gathering, volunteers collaborated and networked on best practices for monitoring their section of the Trail, enjoyed a meal together, and heard from guest speaker Lisa Szela, Volunteer Support Coordinator for the Alliance.

—Christi Lee



WASHINGTON/OZAUKEE COUNTY CHAPTER

Coordinator: Steve Stangler (414-719-2568, stevestangler@gmail.com)

One of the perks of West Bend being a Trail Community is the eagerness with which civic/community organizations assist our Chapter with Trail maintenance. A recent example: the Kettlebrook Church Youth Group helped with our eradication efforts against Autumn Olive, an invasive species found in Ridge Run Park. And coming up in late May, Hartford High School will assist us along the Loew Lake Segment as part of their Day of Service.

Four of our chapter sawyers spent a chilly, windy mid-April day clearing brush and trees from the banks of a small un-named stream in preparation for a long-awaited bridge. The span will open up a new section Ice Age Trail in the northern part of Ridge Run Park, thus eliminating a lengthy walk on city streets. We anticipate birders enjoying wetland views from the bridge. Our chapter has been anxiously waiting for this "trail magic" to happen for nearly 10 years!

—Paula Klima



LAKESHORE CHAPTER

Coordinator: Cheryl Gorsuch (920-860-1061, LakeshoreChapter@iceagetrail.org)

Exciting news! Algoma has now joined the prestigious ranks of an Ice Age Trail Community, a feat made possible by the dedicated efforts of Cathy and John Pabich.

In April, Emmett Gorsuch (age 8) and Cheryl Gorsuch attended the World Migratory Bird Day in Algoma to raise awareness about the Trail. We staffed a table displaying the Chapter's information panel and maps. Many local residents knew about the Ahnapee Trail but were unaware that the Ice Age Trail shares a portion of it. We hope this will change with Algoma's Trail Community designation, increased signage, and yellow blazes along the route through town. Also, in April, Jim Powers attended the Random Lake Conservation Fair at Random Lake High School, another outreach opportunity to promote the Trail.

An exciting boost in local awareness may come from the short videos we create with Josh Viste, Kewaunee County Tourism Coordinator/Public Information Officer. The videos will highlight the Trail as it travels through Kewaunee County, and we will film the first one at Bruemmer Park. The videos will be available on the Kewaunee County website.

Let's give a big round of applause to our Lakeshore Chapter members who were honored with NPS and Alliance service awards at the Annual Conference. We're proud of our Chapter's commitment to creating and maintaining the Trail in our region.

The Chapter also hosted a Trailtessa event: Be a Twilight Explorer. Despite a drizzle, 13 women enjoyed a night hike serenaded by the sound of spring peepers and rain dripping on leaves. A participant said, "It was wonderful to be on the Trail at night in the company of other nature-loving women. The vibes as we walked through the field were awesome: a perfect mix of joyful comradery and quiet introspection."

—Cheryl Gorsuch



January 1 — May 13

YELLOW BLAZE CLUB

The Yellow Blaze Club recognizes members who support the Alliance with unrestricted gifts of \$1,000 or more annually. Thank you to all our Yellow Blaze Club members:

David & Kathy Adam
Francisco Aguilar & Elizabeth Ross
Bernard Alberg
Ross Ament & Connie Ellis Ament
Eloise Anderson
James Anello
Jeff & Judy Archibald
Linda & Jim Arshem
Carrie & Mark Asplund
Valerie Bailey-Rihn & David Rihn
John Bak
Rodney Bartlow
Greg "Ole" Bauer
Natalie Beckwith
Craig & Karen Benson
Woody & Tena Benson
Jim & Sharon Billmeyer
Laura & William Bird
Leah Bitar
Alastair Boake & Nancy Vrabec
Willie Boucher
Gary & Jean Britton
Sue Bronson
Brock & Lynn Brownrigg
Nancy & Lou Bruch
Dave & Barbara Bryce
Sarah Caccese
Maggie Carrao
Michael Cavey
Debbie Cervenka
Dana & Patricia Chabot
Mary Cieslewicz
Kathy Claude
Virginia Coburn
Ellen & Michael Comiskey
Victoria Connors
Ann Conroy
Jerome Converse
Susan Cook & Karyn Graham
Shelly & James Culea
Aga & Mark Dahms
William Davies & Mary Ross
Judith Derse
Karl Dickson
Nicole Diedrick
Angela Divjak
Dr. Charles Dorgan
Patty & Tom Dreier
Stephen Drew & Brenda Hein-Drew
Debra & Edmond Drewsen
Ellen Drought
Christopher Dunn
Dean Dversdall
Dale & Melinda Egeberg
David Eisch
Gerald & Signe Emmerich
Joanna & Dale Fanny
Gordon & Judith Faulkner
Kathy Fleege
Michael & Yvonne Fort
Catherine Frandsen
Randy & Carol Franke
Charles & Anne Frihart

Bob Funk
Pamela & Gary Gates
Dan & Virginia Geraghty
Dorothy Gertsch & Dale Beske
Mark & Linda Glasser
James Golz
Patrick Gray
Greenbush Trail Runners
Susan Greenway
Kristin Griffith
Robert & Marietta Hance
Dr. Kurt Hansen
Stuart Hansen & Erica Eddy
Jack Hansen & Joan V. LeGare-
Hansen
Gail Hanson
Paul & Philia Hayes
Joe Hebda
Peggy Hedberg
Deb & Tom Heier
Karen Ann Helwig
Patti Herman & Bill Welch
Chad & Kristin Hietpas
Kristin Hill
John Hillmer
Stephanie Hoff
Ellen Hohenfeldt
Lori & Eric Holen
Chris Hornung
Michael & Dawn Hourigan
Kathy Hoven
Karen & Steve Huser
John & Judith Hutchinson
Colin & Colleen Hutt
Dawn & Jay Jaehnke
Dennis James
Dan & Paula Jarzemsky
Kris Jensen & John Mesching
Nancy Jesse & W. Paul Menzel
Douglas Johnsen
Barbara H. Johnson & Ann Green
Mary Jones
Arliss Kelsey
Marcy & Nathan Kempf
Kristi Kenyon & Gary Wensing
Tess Kieselhorst
Mark & Lisa Killingsworth
Darcy Kind & Marc Vitale
David & Karen Kinnamon
Ed & Star Ann Klobberdanz
Luke Klobberdanz & Letha Kelsey
Susan Knopf
John R. Kolbe
John & Sarah Komenda
Jerry Krause
Paul Kraynek
Sarah Krebs
Cynthia & Scott Kuenzi
Jeffrey Kuesel
James La Charite
Leah Lalor
Bob Lange
Meg & Peter Layton

Michael Lebwohl
Tom Leifheit & Amber Kiggens-
Leifheit
Leon & Liz LeVan
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TRAIL terminus

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“We cut back undergrowth. I remember hauling a lot of brush,” said Alison, laughing. “And Pat was so great, too. Her good energy helped make it a fun day.” Alison fondly remembers the two Ice Age Trail bandanas that Pat gave to her and Mark as a wedding gift, which they wore hiking during their honeymoon in Hong Kong and Thailand.

Although Alison and Mark moved out of state after their wedding, they’ve remained committed Alliance members—fond memories underpinning their support. Fast-forward to 2024. As the tenth anniversary of her father’s death approached (along with her ninth wedding anniversary), Alison, who now lives in North Carolina, reached out to Pat about organizing a repeat workday event. Once again, Pat agreed.

This time, though, the work day along the Monches Segment included Alison’s three children, ages 5, 3, and 8 months old. Plus, Alison’s sister had a set of 2-year-old twins. “Pat was so wonderful, finding ways

to get all the ages involved,” said Alison. “Our boys had so much fun painting a wooden post brown and hauling sticks. Pat even found something for the twins to do—washing off one of the large informational signs.”

▶ “Once again, I felt so close to my father,” said Alison. “Introducing my kids to a place my father loved was so special. It was fun to spend time together, working with our hands and imagining him alongside us. What a gift.”

Photo 1: Alison supervises her eldest’s efforts to wash a sign while his sister looks on.

Photo 2: The Radigan boys haul sticks as part of their workday efforts.

Photo 3: Alison with her youngest. Photos courtesy of Alison Radigan.

