

INSIDE

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Make the
**KETTLE
MORaine**

your winter sports
training ground

Frank Lloyd Wright's
other legacy — gardens

Salute the Lake Michigan
champions of conservation

Fall in love with fishing

See us at the Wisconsin
Garden Expo in February.

Back in the day

Of Christmas trees, long, long ago

Kathryn A. Kahler

Like everything else, holiday traditions have changed a lot since my childhood. For our family, picking out a Christmas tree meant hiking into the woods near our home. A far cry from today's perfectly shaped cultivars, the naturally-grown, long-needled pines we dragged back home had irregular branches and gaping holes. The purpose of decorating was to fill those gaps with as much stuff as possible. Younger siblings pasted strips of red and green construction paper into seemingly miles of chains, while those who could be trusted with darning needles, strung sturdy thread through popcorn and cranberries. The much awaited final step, of course, was the tinsel. Back then, the dazzling, pencil-thin strips were actually made of metallic foil and great care was needed to hang it piece by piece to look like real icicles. The process always began with great precision, then lapsed — along with our attention span — into flinging handfuls in the air in hopes it stuck to the tree.

As holiday decorating has changed, so has the Christmas tree industry. In the early 1900s, most Christmas trees in American homes were cut from naturally reseeded forests. Gradually, entrepreneurs realized it made more

sense to plant trees than to harvest them from forests, and tree farms sprouted across the country. Consumers became choosier, preferring the perfect pyramids achieved by shearing to the more natural trees of the past. Now, over 350,000 acres of land in the United States are devoted to Christmas tree production in all but five states.

According to the National Christmas Tree Association (NCTA), Wisconsin ranks fifth in production and the most common species grown include balsam fir, Douglas fir, Fraser fir, Scotch pine and white pine. The central sands region of the state is home to the largest concentration of Christmas trees, grown in huge tracts of 50,000 trees or more.

That's where the Kirk Company — centered in Tacoma, Wash., but with plantations across the northern United States and Canada — began purchasing deserted farms in 1953, eventually spanning more than 10,000 acres in its "Wautoma plantation." These photos from November 1964 show workers loading trees onto trucks and boxcars for shipment to markets in the Midwest and beyond.



DOROTHY CASSIDAY

A trimmed Christmas tree in 1939.

As the Christmas tree industry evolved, the market for natural trees declined due to oversupply and a rise in popularity of artificial trees. Statistics kept by the NCTA from 2006 through 2012 show a decline in real tree purchases (28.6 million to 24.5 million) and an increase in artificial trees (9.3 million to 10.9 million).

The real versus fake debate flares up this time every year and each side has its merits. Artificial trees are convenient, come with their own lights and don't shed needles. But real trees can be cut locally and aren't made overseas. Best of all, they have that unmatched aroma that pairs so well with fresh baked apple pie and cinnamon. It's your choice, but maybe this is the year to start, or bring back, a family tradition.

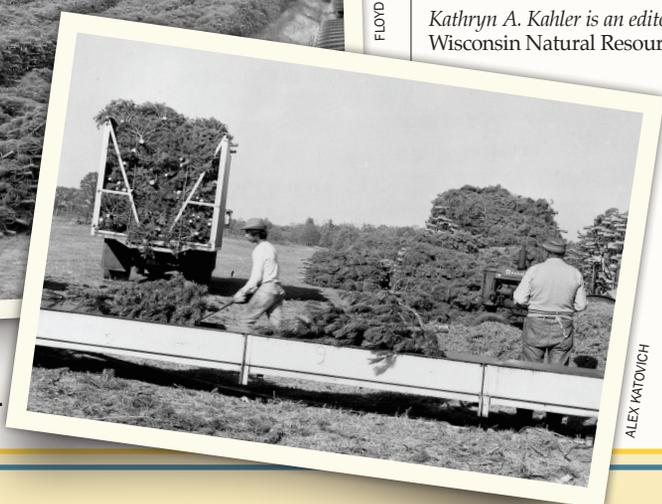
Visit christmastrees-wi.org to find a tree farm near you, lace up your boots, head out and cut your own!

Kathryn A. Kahler is an editorial writer for Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine.



FLOYD HOWARTER

Box cars wait to be loaded with Christmas trees at the Kirk-Minnesota Christmas tree operation near Wautoma in 1964. About 150,000 trees are pictured awaiting shipment.



ALEX KATOVICH

Christmas trees harvested near Wautoma in 1964 about to be dumped by a truck to the conveyor. Trees were tied and readied for rail shipment.



MIKE MCFADZEN

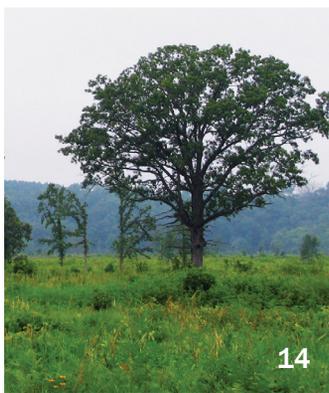
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MIKE MCFADZEN



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Mike McFadzen

BACK COVER: Sandstone cliffs and frozen waterfall at Pine Hollow State Natural Area in Sauk County. **INSET:** The icy, blue view looking out from behind the waterfall. For more information, or to order a guidebook to State Natural Areas for \$18.00 (postage paid), contact the State Natural Areas Program, Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation, DNR, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707 or visit dnr.wi.gov and search "SNA"
Thomas A. Meyer, DNR

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Hoarfrost hangs over the mostly forested terrain in the Kettle Moraine State Forest.

The Kettle Moraine State Forest has the cure for cabin fever

MAKE IT YOUR WINTER SPORTS PLAYGROUND.

Story and photos by Mike McFadzen

Work had taken most of my day, but with excellent snow conditions and a full moon, I wasn't about to waste a perfectly good ski outing. Woody, my 50-pound yellow Lab mix, knew he was in for an evening adventure, as I ditched the khakis and dressed in cold weather ski garb.

It was 15 degrees out when we unloaded at a nearby snowmobile trail. Marginal snow conditions for sledders would make for a perfect evening ski. Woody charged down the trail with me on my fat waxless skis. I caught and passed Woody on a long rolling downhill. We both enjoyed our evening ski in the heart of the Kettle Moraine. Pets are not allowed on groomed ski trails but are allowed on snowmobile trails that also may be used for skiing. Pets should be on a leash no longer than 8 feet.

The snow was falling at the rate of one inch per hour with 4 inches already on the ground and more on the way. Winter storm warnings were posted but I knew there was time for a quick ski



A group of hearty skiers take a break while skiing the Ice Age Trail near the Parnell Tower. Be prepared for big hills with sharp turns when venturing off trail in the Kettle Moraine.

KETTLE MORAINES AT A GLANCE

outing. I barely made it to the Greenbush Recreation Area trails in the Northern Unit as bowed roadside trees formed a tunnel from several days of accumulating snow. It wasn't long before I heard trees cracking, collapsing from the weight of the heavy, wet snow.

I was surprised to see head groomer Jeff Welsch making corduroy in these difficult conditions with the trail groomer. I warned him about the conditions, but he shrugged it off as usual. I found out later he had to chainsaw his way out to make it home. Another good winter at Greenbush!

The Kettle Moraine State Forest is divided into two large and three small units, which spread across a hundred miles. The kettles are one of southern Wisconsin's most popular recreation areas with well over 2 million visitors annually.

It's all connected by the Kettle Moraine Scenic Drive. The route stretches 115 miles, from Elkhart Lake in Sheboygan County to Whitewater Lake in Walworth County. The drive takes in all five forest units and is close to almost all natural features the forest offers. How's that for planning?

This mostly forested and undulating terrain makes a great place for a cadre of outdoor sports. This area is unique in the Midwest, containing landforms such as kettles, kames and eskers. The distinctive geology was caused by the receding glaciers over 10,000 years ago, which created depressions called "kettles." These kettles range in size from tiny potholes to large lakes. Some of the best known formations of the ridged moraine area are Holy Hill, Lapham Peak and infamous Dundee Mountain, with its numerous reported and published UFO sightings.

Northern Kettle Moraine

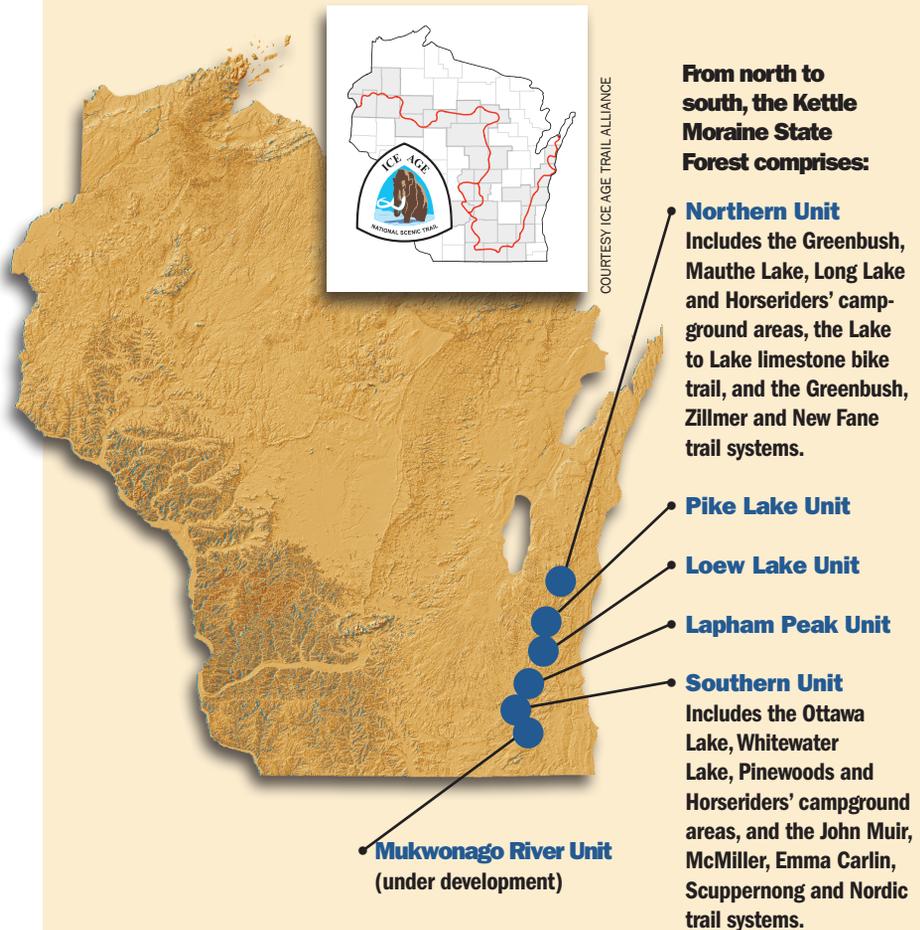
The 30,000-acre Northern Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest is 50 miles northeast of Milwaukee. The Greenbush and Zillmer groomed ski trails in the Northern Unit both have heated shelters and cater to thousands of skiers annually. An expansive trail system offers over 130 miles of skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, biking, horseback riding and snowmobiling. For an overview of the area's unique glacial features, visit the Henry S. Reuss Ice Age Center located west of Dundee on State Highway 67.

The silent sports crowd loves Greenbush with its myriad of trails. It's a snow-

The Kettle Moraine State Forest totals more than 56,000 acres in southeastern Wisconsin, spanning intermittently along glacial terrain between Glenbeulah (Sheboygan County) and Whitewater (Walworth County).

The forest includes five separate units with one additional unit under development near Mukwonago. In all, the forest has nearly 100 miles of cross-country ski trails, 75 miles of off-road biking trails (including 30 miles of first-class single track), 130 miles of equestrian trails, 150 miles of snowmobile trails, 250 miles of hiking trails and 750 campsites.

One way to see it all is on the 115-mile Kettle Moraine Scenic Drive, or trek along the Ice Age National Scenic Trail and camp at one of the backpack campsites.



For more information about the different units of the Kettle Moraine State Forest, go to dnr.wi.gov and search "Kettle Moraine North," "Kettle Moraine South," "Lapham Peak," "Pike Lake," "Loew Lake" or "Mukwonago River."

shoer's dream to connect the various systems through the Ice Age or equestrian trails, both which run the length of the forest. Be aware when the snowmobile trails are posted open. Greenbush also provides 9 kilometers of challenging single track bike trail, which make for an excellent snowshoe or fat bike experience in winter. You'll be shoeing

alongside huge eskers and kettles with 40-foot drops.

A thriving cross-country ski scene is led by the Northern Kettle Moraine Nordic Ski Club. The club recently completed a \$25,000 trail renovation, which brought the trails up to national standards. Greenbush's 2-kilometer Brown Loop is lighted for cross-country skiing,



The Greenbush recreational shelter is a four-season handicap-accessible shelter. The shelter was built and donated to the state by the Northern Kettle Moraine Nordic Ski Club.

which makes it a perfect trail for the local youth ski program. Skiers joke that the heated Greenbush shelter typically becomes the largest day care center in the county on a snowy weekend. There also is a sledding hill right out the door.

Long Lake and Mauthe Lake Recreation Areas are very similar to state parks with camping, good swimming and paddle sports access.

There's good-natured banter between staff at the two larger units, each claiming to be the better state forest.

"The Northern Unit is the largest and best," laughs Property Superintendent Jason Quast. "You can't beat the cross-country skiing and fall hiking."

"It's nice if you have several days to explore," Quast says.

Southern Kettle Moraine

The Southern Unit is located south of a line between Milwaukee and Madison, offering over 22,000 acres of glacial hills, kettles, lakes, prairies and forests. The forest headquarters is 3 miles west of the village of Eagle on State Highway 59.

The most popular groomed trails for cross-country skiing are the Nordic ski trails located on County Highway H. Back-country skiers have many options including sections of the Ice Age Trail, John Muir trails and others. Snowshoe use is growing and very visible on the Emma Carlin trails.

Nine State Natural Areas are contained in the forest, as well as the Scuppernong River Habitat Area, which is the largest wet prairie east of the Mississippi River.

Another top attraction is Paradise Springs located on State Highway 67, where you can see a spring bubbling up through the sand at the rate of 3,000 gallons per hour.

With so many trail offerings, it's hard



Back-country skiing takes you off the beaten path.

to pick a favorite. For a short and scenic snowshoe try the Lone Tree Bluff Nature Trail. It is one of the few areas where the Niagara Escarpment pokes above ground in southern Wisconsin.

Lapham Peak

Lapham Peak is located 20 miles west of Milwaukee near the city of Delafield. An active Friends organization has concentrated on the cross-country ski scene, which includes the development of a heated shelter, a 2.5-mile lighted ski trail, snow-making equipment and a thriving

youth ski program. Don't miss the observation tower, which provides a commanding view of the glaciated countryside.

Pike and Loew lakes

The Pike Lake Unit is located adjacent to the city of Hartford and the Loew Lake Unit is less than 10 miles south of there. Pike Lake is the more developed of the two, with a popular 32-site campground, a swimming beach, picnic areas, several miles of hiking and skiing trails and an observation tower. Loew Lake is a rustic respite offering hiking, kayaking, fishing and other silent sport activities.

Ice Age Trail

The Ice Age National Scenic Trail meanders more than 60 miles through the Kettle Moraine, connecting all five units and providing stunning vistas, prairie displays and arboreal tunnels through climax forest. Backpack campsites are available for long-distance hikers. Designers managed to place the trail in some of the most scenic areas of the forest.

"The Kettle Moraine offers a surprisingly wild feel for a place so close to the metro areas of southeast Wisconsin and northern Illinois. It's wonderfully accessible, well maintained and provides a high-quality trail experience within a short drive of millions," explains Mike Wollmer, Executive Director of the Ice Age Trail Alliance.

Partnerships are key to the forest's future

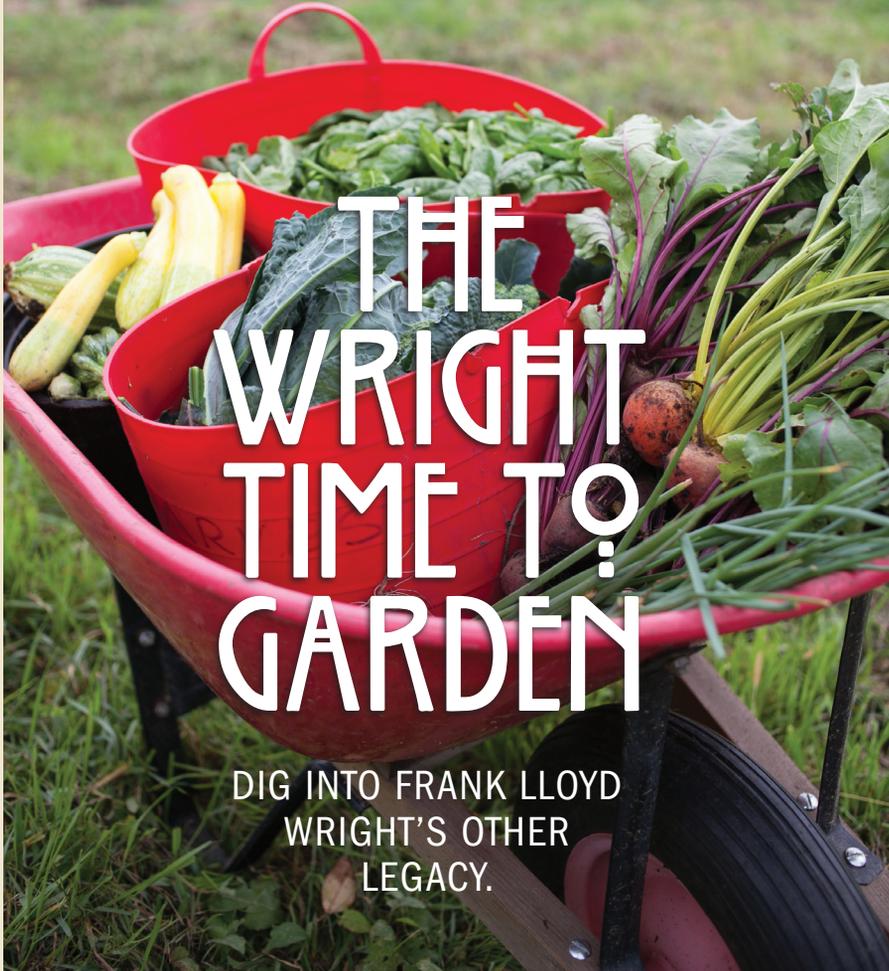
The kettles get millions of visitors annually and continued growth puts increasing pressure on one of the busiest recreational forests in Wisconsin. The demand for events such as skiing, running, biking and adventure races is also growing, adding additional challenges for staff and property.

User partnerships are key to maintaining current offerings. Organizations like the Northern Kettle Moraine Nordic Ski Club have made it possible to sustain and even grow programs. Ski Club President Clark Reinke understands the DNR's position.

"With DNR's cooperation, our club buys the grooming equipment, grooms the trails, developed a lighted ski trail and built a four-season recreational shelter," explains Reinke. "It's a great relationship, everyone benefits." 

Mike McFadzen writes from Greenbush, Wis.

Frank Lloyd Wright wanted to integrate architecture, landscaping lawns, flowers and trees, vineyard and orchard into one organic idea nestled in the hills here at Taliesin in rural Spring Green. Taliesin Preservation, Inc.'s dual mission is to preserve the cultural, built and natural environments that comprise the Taliesin property and to conduct public educational and cultural programming that provides a greater understanding of Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture and ideas.



THE WRIGHT TIME TO: GARDEN

DIG INTO FRANK LLOYD
WRIGHT'S OTHER
LEGACY.

Story and photos by Jentri Colello

Photos courtesy Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation

What better way to spend winter than dreaming of sunshine and dirt? And if anyone has devised a clever plan to speed up winter, it's a gardener.

It's easy to lose sight of local gems after living in the same place long enough. Many Madison natives, for example, are not aware that just 40 miles west of Madison is Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin, a homestead he created with a love that only a country kid from Wisconsin's Driftless Area could have developed. It is here, in this self-proclaimed "Valley of the God Almighty Joneses" where Wright formed ideals that changed architecture forever. He also gardened.

"I saw it all, and planted it all and laid the foundation of the herd, flocks, stable and fowl as I laid the foundation of the house. All these items of livelihood

came back, improved from boyhood. And so began a 'shining brow' for the hill," Wright wrote in his autobiography.

The fertile valley, farmed in the 1840s by his mother's family, instilled a deep emotional connection to nature and his place within it. His values echoed those of transcendentalist writers and local ecologist Aldo Leopold, whose famously coined "land ethic" rang true for Wright. Although the land ethic was less applied in years after Wright passed, a long-sighted restoration project underway may be putting Taliesin's agricultural landscape back on track.

Taliesin's current incarnation has a

modern twist but is every bit as unique as it was decades ago. With an eclectic student body, faculty and staff, Taliesin residents range in age from 1 to 96 years old, and geographically from Texas to Japan. The architecture school makes for an intersection of creative minds, young and old, some who stay year-round and some just for the weekend.

It is difficult to overstate how much the eldest Taliesin Fellows, many in their 80s or 90s, bring to the Taliesin community. They downplay their importance despite having overseen high-profile projects around the world and having personally assisted Mr. and Mrs. Wright for decades. But with a bit of prodding, they share details about life in the 1950s, often during meals held daily in the same dining hall where Wright lectured to apprentices over Sunday breakfast.

During the 1930s when the Wrights began the school, apprentices adopted a way of life that, an approximation of which, is maintained today. Students in the graduate program at Taliesin have been assigned duties in the kitchen, in the theater and in the vegetable garden. Black-tie events inviting community members into Wright's living room still dot the calendar. His birthday is still marked with a big celebration each June, and chefs use his favorite cake recipe.

A typical morning for students may begin with a walk down the same road Wright followed over the hill from Taliesin to Hillside School. They fix breakfast to moving rehearsals of a classical quartet. Powerful harmonies in Taliesin's choir drift from Hillside's cavernous theater to an expansive drafting studio, also called the "abstract forest" for its window placement and a truss system designed to emulate sunlight filtering through a forest canopy.

These features contribute to Taliesin remaining a vibrant community. Wright



To learn more about Taliesin, visit taliesinpreservation.org.



Joe Fabris, a Fellow at Taliesin, tells the story of how they used to pack in as many sweet potatoes and winter squash as they could before they caravanned to Arizona each winter. The idea was to strategically load the veggies first and then the luggage because their luggage would conceal the vegetables from border patrol who apparently required large trucks to disclose contents before entering the state.

would appreciate this, and that certain aspects of the estate’s natural landscape have endured as well. Sandhill cranes send unique calls across the pasture. Barn swallows dip in and out of geometric forms he built, making nests under sand-plaster soffits. Arid prairies remain, hosting native plant species unique to Spring Green’s unglaciated landscape. There is, however, one crucial element of Taliesin that was laid to rest with Wright: a diverse and sustainable approach to agriculture.

Considering how much Wright valued nature in his personal life and for its role in his architecture, foregoing organic land stewardship after he died was a great disservice to the estate.

“For 500 years what we call architecture has been phony...It wasn’t innate. It wasn’t organic. It didn’t have the character of Nature,” said Wright in his 1957 interview with journalist Mike Wallace.

When Wallace inquired about religion and which church Wright attends, Wright said, “I go occasionally to this one and then sometimes to that one.”

His preference was the one we can all find by walking outdoors.

“But my church, I put a capital N on Nature and go there,” he said.

Taliesin in the 1950s

Any of the Taliesin Fellows can provide

a brief history of agriculture on the estate, but Frances Nemtin remembers vividly her time in charge of the fields after Wright asked her and her family to replace a tenant farmer in 1952.

“We took over a big operation — a dairy herd with 30 milking cows. Mr. Wright’s grandson, Eric, took care of the chickens. There were about 400 Rhode Island reds,” she says.

Every few days Nemtin took her children to the hen house to gather, wash and package eggs for Taliesin West.

“We sent 40 dozen per week by train,” she recalls. Cows and chickens were kept at the Midway Barn, while riding and carriage horses stayed up at the main house.

Nemtin loves to recount the years she and her young family cultivated the vegetable gardens. Her eldest son, Brian, led younger kids in garden duties during the summer. There were about 10 children on the estate in the early 1950s, including those from visiting families. Wright’s wife, Olgivanna, established 2-hour work shifts for them so they could harvest vegetables for the Fellowship. Apprentice and abstract artist, Ling Po, oversaw the children’s work time until Olgivanna would invite them in for tea.

Two-hour work shifts required of architecture students assigned to weekly

garden maintenance, are an arrangement carried over from this time. The vegetable garden was located in one section of the historic contours just feet from Hillside Kitchen where the produce was used by Taliesin’s resident chef. As a part of Wright’s legacy, an interdisciplinary curriculum strives to teach a self-sufficient way of life. Basic horticulture skills pair nicely with students’ obligations in the kitchen.

In recent years, the roughly 10,000-square-foot kitchen garden was maintained by hand and without use of chemicals. Shifting annually, the layout incorporated a good deal of flowers and companion planting. Overseen by an in-residence staff member and three architecture students, the garden supplied much of the produce used by the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture. Although the kitchen’s reliance on this plot may shift next year, and students may not have a hand in growing food for Hillside Kitchen, Taliesin’s most recent vegetable garden coordinator hopes it will remain a site for perennial fruit and horticulture education.

Taliesin’s transformation today

When the preservation crew maintains buildings on the estate they refer to records from 1959, the year Wright died. Until recently, however, the land was not managed with the same approach.

“For years it was just corn and beans and a lot of chemicals,” says Gary Zimmer, a local farmer responsible for Taliesin’s recent organic certification status.

Zimmer has introduced big plans to



Edgar Irakiza working in the gardens.

restore all cultivated land on the property to a state that not only meets but exceeds standards of sustainability from Wright's day.

Formerly a teacher and land use consultant, Zimmer founded Midwestern BioAg, a firm committed to teaching sustainable land management skills to conventional and organic farmers. While helping growers obtain higher and more nutrient-rich yields, he advocates for methods that negate use of chemical fertilizers, encouraging a system that works with nature instead of against it.

Responding with concern for environmental issues brought to light by Rachel Carson, Zimmer started down this road by rethinking the farming practices he grew up with and how they contributed to runoff, erosion and waning biodiversity. He spent a good portion of his 30 years in the area establishing Otter Creek Organic Farm, an embodiment of his passion for "mineralized balanced agriculture." Of course this approach to farming by replenishing much and wasting little is not new, but Zimmer aims at reaching both large-scale producers and the increasingly popular two-person farming operations equally.

In addition to being a research center, Otter Creek produces cheese from humanely raised cows and meat from certified organic Angus herds, all grazed a responsible distance from any stream. The soil is kept healthy and the animals too, suggesting that the health of one cannot exist without the other.

How Zimmer finds time to travel the world lecturing about farm management

is a mystery until you meet him face-to-face. Five minutes with the bright-eyed man brings an unmatched, contagious energy. He lives for guiding today's farmers in combining the best of their current system with the best of age-old organic practices. His books, his lectures and every casual chat in the field carry the same message: if we care for the soil, the soil will reciprocate.

Zimmer's most recent advancement in the restoration project came one year ago with the arrival of two in-residence farmers from Minnesota.

"Frank Lloyd Wright had an amazing mind that changed the limits of what people thought was possible. Taliesin may be the greatest laboratory for architecture of our time, but I think it can also become one of the greatest laboratories for a better earth," says John Middleton, one-half of the team running Fazenda Boa Terra.

Middleton runs the recently certified organic farm at Taliesin with his Brazilian wife, Lidia Dungue. Zimmer's plan has them transforming the same 15 acres cultivated in 1959, to vegetable production.

The couple was recruited to initiate the first phase of large-scale growing this year, and have so far planted three acres with organic vegetables commonly found in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares. Using aerial photographs and GPS coordinates, Zimmer and the young farmers worked to retrace exact locations of the contours planted by Wright, reportedly the first one in the area to utilize contour strips

for erosion control.

The partners are on the same page in terms of approach. Zimmer's plan has at least one third of the cultivated land resting at all times.

"You can't continually farm it and expect not to burn carbon and damage biology," Zimmer says.

Fazenda Boa Terra and Zimmer strive for minimal tilling with equipment that penetrates the surface just enough to allow water in, and for use of green manure crops like clover, buckwheat and rye, which allow for nitrogen fixation and roots that penetrate depths of the soil strata that many vegetable crops cannot. This prevents compaction and enables nutrients to be drawn closer to the surface for use by successive crops.

A fourth player in this restoration plan is Jerry Kohls, chef and co-owner of the Taliesin visitor center's Riverview Terrace Cafe. Like Zimmer, Kohls' interest in sustainable food systems dates back to a time long before slow food culture became mainstream. Both were involved with a cooking school proposed for Taliesin by respected Madison restaurateur Odessa Piper.

Kohls dreams of great things for the Spring Green area and has wanted to open a restaurant there for over 30 years. The 2014 season was his first and a successful one. Kohls purchases as much produce from local organic farmers as possible.

"In the heart of the growing season we are operating at 80 to 90 percent," says Kohls.

Zimmer and Kohls have plans to continue a partnership so that Taliesin produce and livestock can provide the bulk of the restaurant's needs in the future.

Some are surprised by the amount of effort poured into maintaining Taliesin's on-site community, and some question whether Wright would even go to such lengths to preserve the structures he constructed long ago. After all, when he was asked to choose a favorite design of his, he replied, "The next one."

But when it comes to preserving the health of his land and the greater ecosystem, it seems obvious what Wright would choose for Taliesin.

"Taliesin should be a garden and a farm behind a real workshop and a good home," Wright wrote. 



Farmers working at Taliesin strive for minimal tilling and cover crop (also called green manure) plantings. Cover crops suppress weeds, build productive soil and help control pests and diseases. Plus, cover crops are easy to plant and require only basic care to thrive.

Jentri Colello is a local photographer and was the vegetable garden coordinator at Taliesin through the 2014 season.

Champions of conservation

DNR'S OFFICE OF THE GREAT LAKES AND PARTNERS LOOK OUT FOR LAKE MICHIGAN.

Sherrill Anderson

Recent opinion polls indicate Great Lakes protection and restoration programs are supported by approximately 75 percent of Wisconsin voters, and for nearly 10 years, members of the Lake Michigan Stakeholders (LMS) have been a coordinated "Voice for Lake Michigan" by collaborating and networking with other organizations, governmental agencies, non-governmental groups, tribal nations, universities, citizens and property owners to focus on environmental and economic improvements for Lake Michigan.

An important piece of this collaboration includes working with the DNR's Office of the Great Lakes to promote and protect Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes.

Original organizers of the Lake Michigan Stakeholders held their first meeting in 2005 at Concordia University in Mequon with more than 40 participants representing a wide range of interests. LMS members have varied backgrounds and expertise which facilitates educating and informing members of important issues like *Cladophora*, fish passage, nutrients and more.

Members engage in diverse innovative restoration initiatives throughout the Lake Michigan basin, including beach improvements, transforming an old golf course into prairie, bird and wildlife habitat (see sidebar story), restoring Centerville Creek and Hika Bay in southern Manitowoc County, and turning urban brownfields into lush, diverse habitat with trails and community centers. Member groups are planning for additional projects as well. An annual survey sent to members helps steer the organization's activities and events.

LMS was instrumental in establishing the first Lake Michigan Day, held Aug.

14 at the University of Wisconsin-Manitowoc's Lakeshore Water Institute. Lake Michigan Day 2014 brought together dozens of stakeholders, policy makers and concerned citizens to engage with

one another, highlighting significant opportunities and challenges for continued restoration and protection of Lake Michigan and the broader Great Lakes basin. Participants toured an ongoing restoration of Red Arrow Beach in Manitowoc to stabilize the sand, minimize runoff into Lake Michigan and improve recreational activities.

Lake Michigan Day 2014 also featured the newly formed Lakeshore Water Institute at UW-Manitowoc, serving the lakeshore region both as a tool for educating and engaging youth, and for developing science-based decisions at the local government level. The skills and knowledge attained by the students will better prepare them for further education and for the workplace in both the public and private sectors.

To reward some of these outstanding stakeholder initiatives, an environmental awards program created by one of LMS's partners, the nonprofit Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership, was ex-



U.S.S. Badger car ferry at the Red Arrow Beach in Manitowoc. The dune grasses are part of the city of Manitowoc's restoration of the park to reduce sedimentation and pollution going into Lake Michigan.



The Beach Migratory Preserve hawk tower.



HEIDI DALBERG



OZAUKEE WASHINGTON LAND TRUST



Rose-breasted grosbeak.

JOEL TRICK

FOREST BEACH MIGRATORY PRESERVE TRANSFORMS GOLF COURSE

Conservation groups typically seek out large, high-quality, pristine habitats to protect. But in 2008, the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust (OWLT) saw potential in a 116-acre golf course, Squires Country Club, in northeastern Ozaukee County, for migratory bird and wildlife habitat along the Lake Michigan Flyway. OWLT purchased the land with funding from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, private donations and a mortgage they are still paying off.

The original site consisted of mowed fairways and a few water holes sandwiched between two hardwood forested corridors. The majority of the property is situated about 600 feet inland from Lake Michigan.

The Wisconsin Stopover Initiative played a critical role in the conversion. After evaluating the site, DNR's Kim Grveles, Sumner Matteson and Dale Katsma visited the golf course to assess its potential as a migratory bird preserve. The team encouraged OWLT to focus on restoration of the fairways for migratory songbirds and affirmed their decision to convert ponds to shorebird stopover habitat.

The restored land is now known as Forest Beach Migratory Preserve.

OWLT converted the upland fairways to prairie grasslands and immediately began stewardship activities including invasive and exotic plant control. In 2009, OWLT received a \$456,000 federal stimulus grant to carry out a major restoration.

"The grant allowed OWLT to complete 10 years of restoration efforts in 18 months," OWLT Executive Director Shawn Graff explains. "In partnership with state and local biologists, ornithologists and restoration specialists, OWLT and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service developed a restoration plan designed to attract several migratory bird species."

The transformed preserve now hosts a "patchwork quilt" of habitats that support migratory birds, reptiles and mammals of all kinds, complete with an interpretive trail system.

A large renovated club house provides offices for staff and offers a great event space for conservation partners throughout the region. To learn more about the Forest Beach Migratory Preserve's restoration plans, visit: owl.org.

panded to the Wisconsin Lake Michigan basin. Awards were presented to Shawn Graff of the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust for achievements during his 11-year tenure with the organization, and to Tyco Company of Marinette for their community involvement to clean up toxic waste. Organizers plan to move the annual event around the region.

Through strong leadership and by creating a Lake Michigan Day, LMS is continuing to raise awareness and make a difference for Lake Michigan by bringing together strong partners to restore and protect this outstanding resource. 

Sherrill Anderson is the regional outreach coordinator for the Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership.

ANGLING FOR A NEW ROMANCE?

FALL IN LOVE WITH, AND WHILE, FISHING.

Story and photos by Julie Henning

A survey published by the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) in October 2013 showed that two-thirds of couples have gone boating or fishing with their spouse or significant other.

Sparking a discussion about romance on the water, RBFF created the infographic on the next page to highlight the survey results.

Key findings are light-hearted statistics including the idea that 38 percent of men are impressed by a woman who can bait a hook, and 60 percent of women and 58 percent of men would be game for going fishing on a date.

An affordable and accessible way to add excitement to any relationship, both fishing and boating can be playful, exciting, romantic and relaxing. Fishing activities are as varied and personal as the unique relationship between two people, and how you fish with your significant other is something that evolves over time.

From an intimate first date in the confines of an ice shanty, to floating through the lazy days of retirement, we went out and asked anglers about their love lives. Here are some couples who angled for romance and took to it — hook, line and sinker.

When Jessica and Mike Corliss first met, the couple had their love for the outdoors in common.

"We didn't meet fishing but we did have one of our earlier dates out ice fishing," Jessica recalls. "I met Mike on Lake



Nicole Skauge and Chad Theis met in a hunter safety class.

Parkway after work, and we spent the evening eating supper and fishing out in an ice shack. Being in an ice fishing shack is an intimate situation. The main focus is fishing but you are also sharing time with another person in a little shack, walled off from the outside world."

For Chad Theis, of Waukesha, and Nicole Skauge, of Milwaukee, fishing is about teamwork and friendship. The pair met at a hunter safety class and have been enjoying outdoor activities together, including deer hunting and spearing for sturgeon on Lake Winnebago.

Chad notes that any outdoor activity shared by two people can involve the kind of light-hearted competition often found in close-knit families.

"We tease each other and it makes the time pass and makes things fun," he explains. "We also help each other with loading up the gear and getting everything ready."

Tiffany Venne, manager of Dutch's Trading post in Fond du Lac, knows firsthand that fishing is about spending time with the people you love and sharing in the excitement when someone makes a catch.

"Any time you can find something you can enjoy as a couple and spend time together, I think that's great," Venne adds.

One of life's simple pleasures for New Richmond residents Dennis and Ginny Moon, is fishing together. But it means something entirely different to the long-time couple than it did when they were raising two boys. Winding down into their retirement years, the Moons enjoy recreational kayaking and portaging the Boundary Waters by canoe — catching

Tija Berzins and Mike Destree attended sturgeon spearing on Lake Winnebago earlier this year.



Jessica and Mike Corliss love the ice shanty life.

For more information about the RBFF survey, visit takemefishing.org/general/about-rbff/programs-and-materials/newswaves/october-newswaves-2013/.

MAKE SOMEONE FALL FOR YOU HOOK, LINE AND SINKER,

TAKE THEM FISHING OR BOATING - OR BOTH!

33.1 MILLION AMERICANS FISH ANGLERS BY GENDER:
■ 73% MALES ■ 27% FEMALES

88 MILLION AMERICANS PARTICIPATED IN BOATING IN 2012
■ 55.7% MALES ■ 44.3% FEMALES

ADDITIONALLY, FISHING FROM A BOAT REMAINS THE MOST POPULAR ACTIVITY WHILE BOATING, WITH 63% OF PEOPLE TRYING TO HOOK A BIG ONE FROM THEIR BOAT.

1/3 OF PEOPLE IN A RELATIONSHIP PREFER NON-TRADITIONAL DATES LIKE HIKING OR FISHING

■ 32.7% MALES ■ 37.4% FEMALES
(MORE FEMALES PREFER NON-TRADITIONAL!)

WHY?
ADDS EXCITEMENT TO RELATIONSHIP AND FEELS SPONTANEOUS

WHO PREFERS A NON-TRADITIONAL DATE BECAUSE IT ADDS EXCITEMENT TO THE RELATIONSHIP?



85.4%

MEN AND WOMEN AGES 18-29



81.5%

NON-MARRIED COUPLES

2/3 OF COUPLES IN RELATIONSHIPS CURRENTLY BOAT AND FISH TOGETHER

WHY?
RELAXING, PLAYFUL, EXCITING AND ROMANTIC

5 TOP OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES FOR A DATE
BOATING | HIKING | CAMPING | FISHING | BIKING



55.6% OF PEOPLE WOULD GO FISHING OR BOATING FOR A DATE

38% OF MEN SAID THEY ARE IMPRESSED BY A WOMAN WHO CAN BAIT A HOOK

50% OF COUPLES SAY IT'S IMPORTANT THAT THEIR SIGNIFICANT OTHER SHOWS INTEREST IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES SUCH AS FISHING.

DOING GOOD WHILE DATING:



THE FUNDS FROM YOUR FISHING LICENSE AND BOAT REGISTRATION GO TOWARDS THE CONSERVATION OF OUR NATURAL AQUATIC AREAS.



TAKEMEFISHING.org



Sources: Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, National Marine Manufacturers Association.

fish wherever they go.

"Now that our kids are grown, we don't have to worry about having to plan around the kids' schedules, feeding them, or keeping them entertained," Ginny explains. "Fishing is something we enjoy doing togeth-

er. Sometimes I swim around the boat or just sunbathe while Dennis is fishing. For us it is a peaceful activity and we don't have any competition. Dennis actually enjoys watching me have success catching fish. But I think the only way it can be a

'couples' activity is if you both enjoy the sport."

Julie Henning is a freelance journalist from Madison. She enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband, three children and black Lab. Read more of her stories at WisconsinParent.com.

Bringing back “The Bot

DUNNVILLE STATE WILDLIFE AREA IS MAKING A COMEBACK.

Paul Frater

There is a bank on the south side of the Chippewa River where you can look out and see miles of grassland. As you scan the vast expanse of newly re-created prairie and oak savanna, it becomes easier to imagine what most of western Wisconsin once looked like. The grasslands extend for miles and the giant bur oaks reach their branches down and out like great big arms hoisting up hundreds of tiny leaves. This area once looked entirely like this, and at least at this particular place, it is quickly turning back into the beautiful oak openings and grasslands that occupied these river bottoms 150 years ago.

This is the Dunnville State Wildlife Area, located in western Wisconsin along the mighty Chippewa River. It lies 15 miles south of Menomonie and 25 miles southwest of Eau Claire and comprises over 4,000 acres of diverse habitat. Most of the area is floodplain to the Chippewa River, and as you slink down any of the several roads that lead into the wildlife area, you feel as if you are stepping back in time to a place where the river rules.

The locals call it Dunnville Bottoms for good reason. Entering “The Bottoms” for the first time feels kind of like going into the basement when you were a kid. It is dark, damp and mysterious. But once you

get used to it, there is an enormous treasure trove waiting to be discovered.

Various community types exist here, from floodplain forest to backwater sloughs, oak woodlands and mixed hardwoods. But the most dynamic and fastest growing community types being managed are the oak savannas and prairies.

Wisconsin's grasslands

Grasslands are globally imperiled ecosystems and home to many rare and endangered organisms. Before loggers, miners and settlers became established in Wisconsin in the 19th century, this area

consisted mostly of grasslands and oak savanna. Prior to European settlement in Wisconsin, there were over 2 million acres of prairie and roughly 5.5 million acres of oak savanna amounting to 20 percent of the land area of the state. Today, less than 1 percent of that original prairie exists, and less than 1/100th of 1 percent (0.01 percent) of the original oak savanna of this state exists.

The goal throughout a large portion of the Dunnville State Wildlife Area is to convert overgrown forests and shrubby fields back into native grasslands, which will provide habitat for many rare species.

Dunnville's history

Dunnville Bottoms was not always an expansive area dedicated to wildlife and endangered resources, though. The wildlife area was initiated in 1967 and has been managed and expanded by the Department of Natural Resources ever since. Prior to becoming a wildlife area, most of the tractable lands were farmed.

In 1951, requests from the Dunn County Fish and Game Association led the Wisconsin Conservation Department to lease the area for hunting. Shortly after, the Conservation Department began buying land in the area and eventually created the Dunnville State Wildlife Area.

In 2009, the Dunn County Fish and Game Association started an endowment fund with the Natural Resources Foundation, and the Lower Chippewa

Savanna trees are sentinels of The Bottoms. A savanna is generally defined as a plant community where trees are a component but where their density is “so low that it allows grasses and other herbaceous vegetation to become the actual dominants of the community.” (Curtis, “The Vegetation of Wisconsin: An Ordination of Plant Communities”). Savannas are found throughout the world, but the dominant trees differ. In North America, a major type of savanna has oaks as the principal trees.

BILL HOGSETH



River Alliance has since added to it. The fund is invested and each year a small disbursement is made for projects to benefit conservation. This fund can be used anywhere within the Lower Chippewa River Basin and focuses on State Natural Areas. The fund has been able to provide restoration efforts and land acquisition, and thanks to local conservation groups, this area will have funding to protect it for a long time.

The surrounding area also holds an interesting history. The nearby town of Dunnville was once a booming village. In the latter half of the 19th century the Knapp, Stout and Company, a large and influential logging corporation of the day, operated one of its sawmills along the Red Cedar River here. Dunnville was even the county seat of Dunn County for the first five years of its existence. But once Knapp, Stout and Company closed its sawmill, the town quietly faded into the misty bottoms. Today, not much more exists than a few houses and an old church.



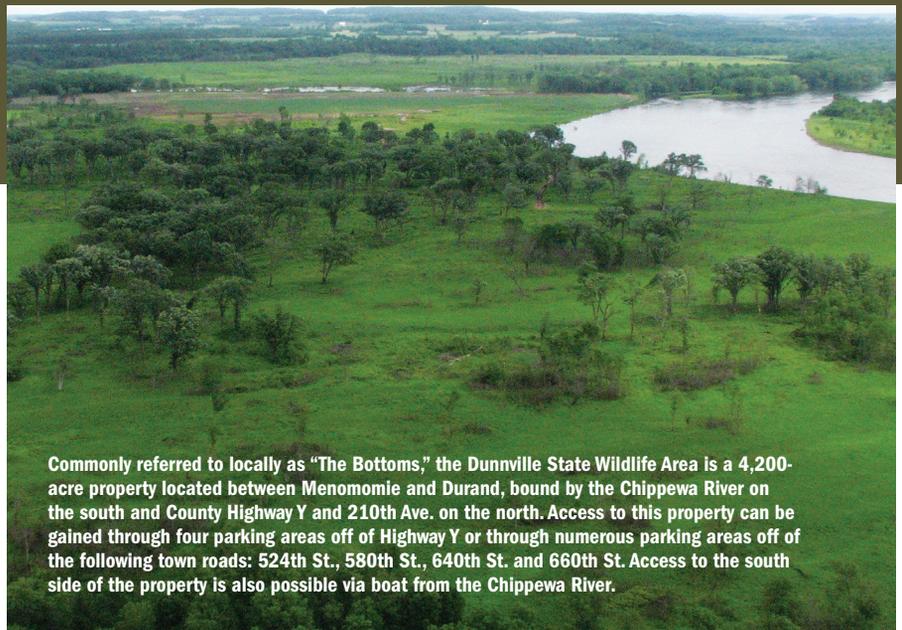
Eastern meadowlarks nest here.

HERBERT LANGE



Quail, while rare, may be found in The Bottoms.

HERBERT LANGE



Commonly referred to locally as "The Bottoms," the Dunnville State Wildlife Area is a 4,200-acre property located between Menomomie and Durand, bound by the Chippewa River on the south and County Highway Y and 210th Ave. on the north. Access to this property can be gained through four parking areas off of Highway Y or through numerous parking areas off of the following town roads: 524th St., 580th St., 640th St. and 660th St. Access to the south side of the property is also possible via boat from the Chippewa River.

JESS CARSTENS

A landscape-scale perspective

Perhaps the most captivating aspect of the Dunnville Bottoms, though, is its current management strategy and goals for future management. Much of the area has been converted back into grassland through prairie plantings of the old agricultural fields, but the future of this property holds great potential for wildlife and endangered resources through its dynamic landscape-scale management design.

Typically, grassland managers create and maintain prairie and savanna areas by taking a planted field or oak woodlot, usually 20 to 200 acres, and burn and mow it to impede brushy growth and invasive species. However, Dunnville State Wildlife Area property managers Jess Carstens and Chad Mogen, swapped this traditional line of thinking for an alternative restoration mode.

They brought in loggers and whole-tree chippers to clear out areas of standing trees between parcels of grassland. In this way, they turned many scattered grassland plots into a few large expanses, creating a matrix of prairie and oak savanna. This landscape-scale restoration has several advantages, from increased efficiency for prescribed burning, to a continuity of spatial attributes for wildlife like grassland birds.

There is still much work to do, fueled by a persistent DNR effort to hand-cut trees in certain areas, dispose of brush left behind by loggers and constantly monitor cut-over areas for tree re-sprouting and growth. Additionally, much time has



JESS CARSTENS

Prescribed burning is one management tool.

been invested in prescribed burning to keep these grassland areas open and diverse. Cumulatively, these tasks have accounted for thousands of hours of work and made a great impact.

Unfortunately, this success has also made it easier for people to illegally get off-road with a vehicle. Visitors coming to Dunnville Bottoms to enjoy and appreciate the hard work that has been done here, are reminded to obey all signs and rules for the protection of the wildlife area. This includes staying on maintained county roads and parking within designated parking lots.

What "The Bottoms" has to offer

Dunnville Bottoms has a lot to offer the everyday traveler. It is best known locally for hunting, but has all kinds of little-known appeal for other outdoor enthusiasts.

Hunters will find deer, turkey, duck,

Continued on page 19

Good reads on a cold night

HIGHLIGHTING WISCONSIN'S NATURAL TREASURES.

Natasha Kassulke

Put down the tablet. Stash the smartphone. It's a good time of the year to go tech-free and get your hands on books that will take you outdoors without needing a coat.

"Up North: Reflections, Moments and Memories"

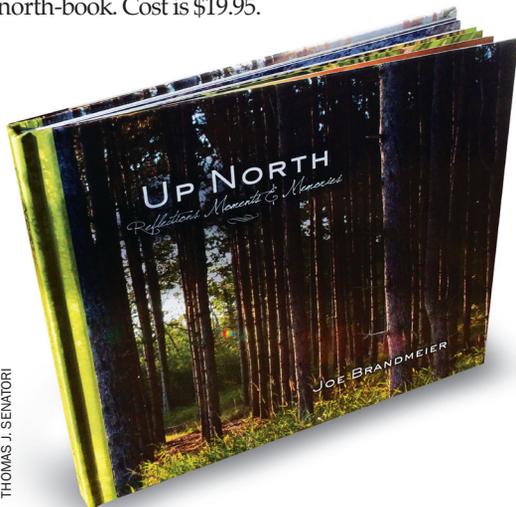
Photographer and producer Joe Brandmeier shares stunning scenes from Wisconsin's Northwoods in his book, "Up North: Reflections, Moments and Memories" (Tristan Publishing, Inc.).

The book teems with images of the north inspired by the author's time growing up in northern Wisconsin and more recent vacations to the family's cabin in the Nicolet National Forest. Allow yourself time to linger over the photos, which are paired with fitting quotes from great minds like John Muir and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

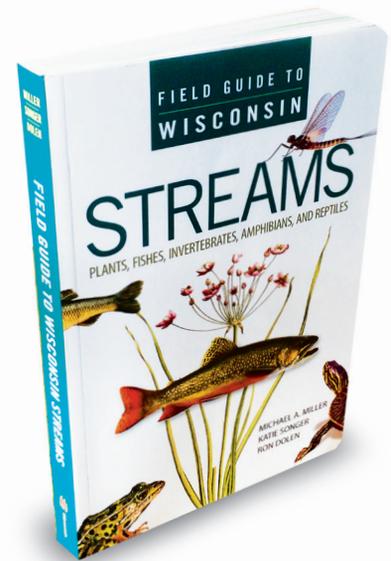
Feel winter's solitude with double-page photo spreads of snow-covered forests. Spring's awakening is captured with up-close pollinators on flower petals and lakes so clear that the reflection of sky and trees on them plays tricks with your mind. Summer radiates through spectacular sunrises and sunsets. The Northwoods' true colors show themselves in Brandmeier's fall photos.

Loons, bears, an eagle, a squirrel and white-tailed deer all make appearances. This book belongs on the coffee table year-round as a reminder of the awe captured in the quote the author includes from Jeffrey Brandmeier, "I never feel more alive and at peace than I do when I am Up North. It's therapeutic. It's a feeling like Christmas. The feeling I wish I could feel throughout the entire year."

Learn more at joebrandmeier.com/book/up-north-book. Cost is \$19.95.



THOMAS J. SENATORI



THOMAS J. SENATORI

"Field Guide to Wisconsin Streams: Plants, Fishes, Invertebrates, Amphibians, and Reptiles"

Stream ecologists Katie Songer, Ron Dolen and Mike Miller, have pooled their talents and pulled extensively from the expertise of dozens of other biologists and ecologists, to present a comprehensive lesson on Wisconsin stream life in "Field Guide to Wisconsin Streams: Plants, Fishes, Invertebrates, Amphibians, and Reptiles."

This guide is a one-stop-shop for identifying plants and animals encountered in Wisconsin streams. Crayfish, mussels, reptiles and amphibians join stream plants, fishes and invertebrates. More than 1,200 images illustrate the species along with distribution maps and more. Compiling the guide was a massive team effort.

"After Mike Miller asked Katie Songer and me in 2009 to develop a fish pamphlet to improve DNR stream survey data, Katie and I quickly designed and created a comprehensive pamphlet on all fishes found in Wisconsin streams," recalls Dolen. "But we realized that it could be so much more. A more comprehensive guide could help anyone who spends time in streams — the 'eyes' and 'ears' of streams, such as DNR stream survey crews, Water Action Volunteers who monitor their local streams, and anglers — to protect streams and improve the early detection of aquatic invasive species."

Songer, the lead editor, managed communication with contributors worldwide. Songer and Dolen co-authored drafts of the sections on invertebrates, fishes, plants and crayfish, provided major edits to all sections, selected and/or acquired most of the book's images and created all distribution maps. They also leaned heavily on the expertise of others like DNR fisheries researcher John Lyons, primary author of the fish section, and conservation biologist Lisie Kitchel, who wrote the mussels section. Other DNR scientists wrote the amphibians and reptiles sections. Miller contributed major edits to the invertebrate section and also wrote the book's general introduction and the introduction to the fish section.

Miller has been fascinated by streams since he was about 8 years old, spending much of his free time playing in and along a small stream flowing by his house in Plymouth. He is an avid fly fisherman and enjoys taking groups streamside to teach them about stream ecology.

Dolen gravitated towards water when he was just 7 years old and caught a catfish that seemed almost as big as he was. Songer grew up hiking the forests and streams around Portland, Ore., and worked there as an environmental educator before joining the Peace Corps. She and Dolen met as volunteers in Tanzania. This year they moved to Portland, where they look forward to exploring the streams of the Pacific Northwest.

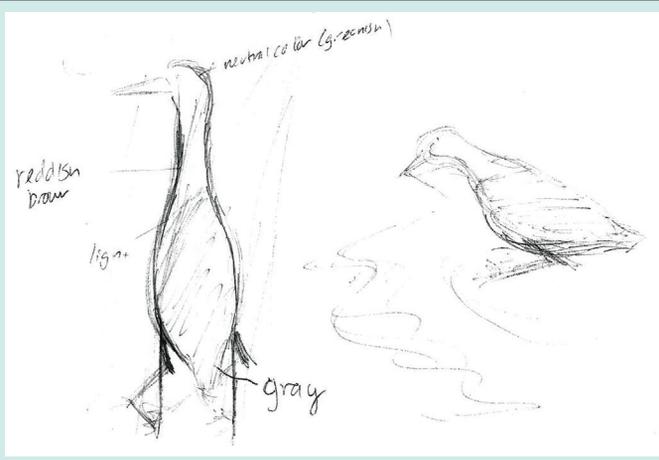
"Streams are the souls of the landscape, reflecting how we treat the land and connecting all of us together," Dolen says. "Streams deserve a full book, and this should be a good read and tool for those interested in the subject."

Learn more at uwpres.wisc.edu/books/4887.htm. Cost is \$29.95. The book is priced to cover the production cost. Neither the Department of Natural Resources nor the DNR authors receive any revenues from its sale.



Natasha Kassulke is editor-in-chief of Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine.

Write



WHAT'S THIS BIRD?

I caught a glimpse of this bird flying into a marsh-like area [Holler Park near Mitchell Field]. Its coloring was very much like a mallard drake — bold solid colors. However, it was less graceful flying than a duck and when I saw where it had landed, it was skinny enough to blend in with the reeds. Its back was a dark charcoal and a light line separated its body and neck. The neck was a much lighter color. It landed on a rail (so I think its feet were separated), and then landed on a concrete slab in the middle of the pond. From there it sat for five to 10 minutes shifting its position. At times it was wide enough to look like a duck and it hid its long legs in a low crouch. It had a short stubby tail. This was a bird that was made for quick, fast movements for catching fish. For in this polluted pond it saw a fish and snagged it with its beak. The fish was quite big (4 to 5 inches long),

which looked unmanageably big for him. He then flew off with an awkward flight. What was this?

*Danielle Jaeger
Menomonee Falls*

From your great description, we believe that what you saw was a green heron. Depending on the behavior they are engaged in, they can look hunched and duck-like, or taller and heron-like. Thanks for the illustration (seen above).

HOGWEED HAS NATIVE LOOK-ALIKE

Regarding "Slaying the Godzilla weed: Giant hogweed is noxious" (June 2014), Mr. Schabel states that "there are no comparable native herbaceous plants in the northern hemisphere..." He overlooked the similar, but native cow parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*) which is fairly common in moist, shady areas in Wisconsin.

*Dave Grant
West Bend*

HOUSEHOLD DUMPS A PROBLEM TOO

I enjoyed the important article on illegal burning ("Illegal burning only stops with education," August 2014). The article gave both a good summary of the problem and possible alternatives for disposing of waste. Living in a rural area as I do, there is another area of waste disposal that seems to be exceedingly common and

gets little to no attention. That is disposing of household, maintenance and farming waste in a homemade dump on individual properties. I believe it is an all too common practice to throw all manner of waste in the "ditch" in the "back 40" or behind the barn. Not only is this a common practice that has gone on for years, but also continues on a regular basis. These dumps are usually located in a ravine or ditch that are natural drainage routes for rain and snow-melt ultimately flowing into streams and groundwater. I would be interested to learn if this practice has been studied and attempts made to educate people about this poor method of out-of-sight disposal.

*Tom Roberts
South Wayne*

DNR staff from the Air, Waste, and Remediation and Redevelopment Division provided this response: *What you're referring to is the household waste exemption in Wisconsin State Statute Chapter 289. To paraphrase, the exemption states that it is legal for property owners to bury or dump household*

garbage on their own land. This exemption only applies to waste generated by a single household on that property. While we do receive approximately 150 residential open dumping complaints every year, the department currently has to let the complainants know that it is legal for owners to dispose of household garbage on their own land. However, the department does believe that waste is better managed through reuse, recycling or disposal at a regulated solid or hazardous waste facility for a variety of reasons, especially the potential health hazards of disposing of waste materials directly on land.

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH WISCONSIN NATURAL RESOURCES MAGAZINE

Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine recently launched the e-newsletter "Previews and Reviews" to keep our readers informed about upcoming stories and past articles. To sign up to receive this e-newsletter and other email updates, please email your request to dnrmagazine@wisconsin.gov.

COMMENT ON A STORY?

Send your letters to: Readers Write, WNR magazine, P.O. Box 7191, Madison, WI 53707. Or email letters to dnrmagazine@wisconsin.gov. Limit letters to 250 words and include your name and the community from which you are writing.

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KAYLEIGH ORESHACK

Traveler

Get cozy at the Seth Peterson Cottage at Mirror Lake State Park.

Story and photos by Paul A. Biedrzycki

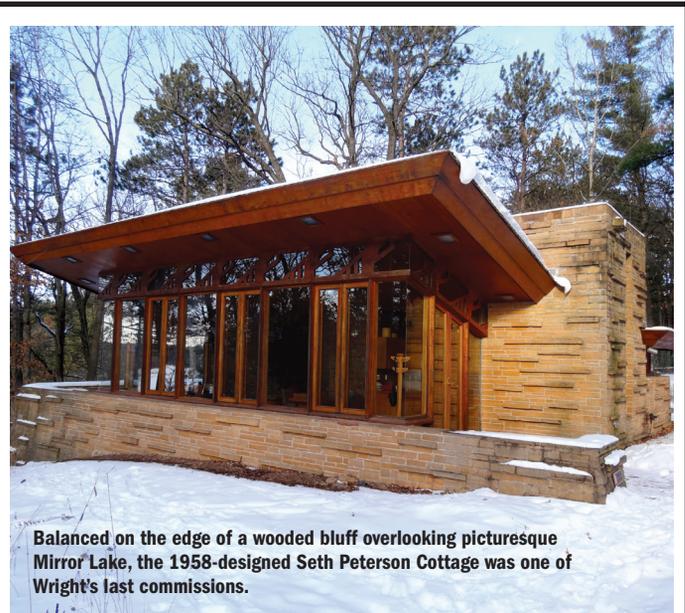
A brief 2-day retreat for my wife Mindy and me at the Seth Peterson Cottage at scenic Mirror Lake State Park last January was blissful. The solitude and rich reflection provided the necessary respite we both craved after a hectic holiday season with family, friends and coworkers, replete with parties and the usual overabundance of gifts, food and, of course, requisite good cheer.

The Seth Peterson Cottage, perched high on a wooded bluff overlooking an arm of Mirror Lake, represents one of the last commissioned designs of world-renowned architect and Wisconsin native son Frank Lloyd Wright. Although he died before its construction was completed, the cottage is considered a prime example of Usonian design — Wright's vision of affordable and functional housing for the post-Depression middle class. As such, it exudes a simplicity and beauty evident in its clean construction lines, strategic window placement, attention to natural lighting and use of locally available building materials such as sandstone.

The cottage was originally commissioned by Seth Peterson, a young, aspiring architect enamored with Wright who vigorously pursued an apprenticeship at Wright's studio-school at Taliesin.

Tragically, Peterson died prior to seeing completion of the cottage and it was sold after his death. The state acquired the property in the mid-1960s after it sat neglected for almost two decades, and it is currently managed by the nonprofit Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy. While it has undergone major repairs, it retains the original architectural vision, both interior and exterior, in virtually every respect.

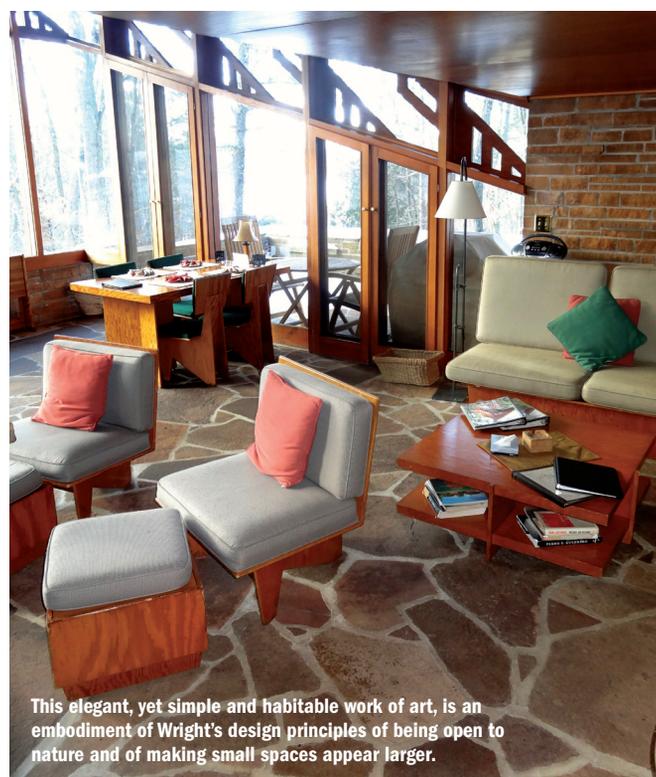
At a little less than 900



Balanced on the edge of a wooded bluff overlooking picturesque Mirror Lake, the 1958-designed Seth Peterson Cottage was one of Wright's last commissions.



The central focus of the living space is a massive stone fireplace with expansive views of the surrounding forest and Mirror Lake.



This elegant, yet simple and habitable work of art, is an embodiment of Wright's design principles of being open to nature and of making small spaces appear larger.

square feet, its efficient use of space across entryway, kitchen, dining area and living room, along with an impressive two-story ceiling and vaulted overhang, enhance the cottage's feeling of spaciousness. A large, centrally-located fireplace serves as centerpiece to the floor plan and was heartily engaged during both our evening stays. The bedroom, (albeit small by today's standards) was quite adequate, as was the small utilitarian bathroom directly adjoining, complete with a well-functioning shower stall.

The experience of staying in this historic residence was both humbling and awe-inspiring. It represented the antithesis of modern living in typical urban and suburban settings today where family rooms approach the size of small gymnasiums and 70-inch LED flat-screen televisions and synthetic trim dominate the interior landscape and décor.

In contrast, the compact design of the cottage along with generous use of natural wood and stone, while not luxurious, was aesthetically pleasing and generated a feeling of warmth and comfort that authentically spoke of home. In many ways, our exposure to the cottage redefined our thinking of contemporary residential housing necessity and quality of life.

We could see the surrounding winter landscape unobstructed from several vantage

points throughout the cottage during daylight and nighttime hours. The scene was equally relaxing, inviting reverie under varying lighting scenarios.

Of particular entertainment was the variety of native birds that endlessly visited a feeder located a few yards from the front of the cottage, along with a scavenging black squirrel that stood in stark contrast to the white blanket of snow cover.

The Seth Peterson Cottage is conveniently located in close proximity to cross-country skiing and hiking trails that my wife and I availed ourselves of on both days, given optimal snow and weather conditions during our visit.

Rental canoes and kayaks are available through Mirror Lake Rentals at the Mirror Lake State Park boat launch.

The availability of these types of outdoor recreational activities, along with a truly transformational stay at this landmark, cemented our conviction to plan another visit in the near future. It also fundamentally underscored, as well as validated, once again for us the sheer beauty that is Wisconsin's natural resources regardless of the season. 

Paul A. Biedrzycki writes from Milwaukee, Wis.

To learn more about camping at Mirror Lake State Park, visit dnr.wi.gov and search keywords "Mirror Lake."

Overnight rentals of the Seth Peterson Cottage can be arranged through the Sand County Service Company in Lake Delton. Call (608) 254-6551 or visit sandcounty.com.

The cottage is also open for public tours the second Sunday of each month from 1 to 4 p.m. Admission is \$4 per person. Tours of 10 or more should call (608) 254-6051. If you are unable to attend an open house day, a video is available for viewing at the Mirror Lake State Park office during business hours. Visit sethpeterson.org for more information.

What's cooking?

CRANBERRY CREAM CHEESE BARS

(PAST WISCONSIN STATE FAIR WINNER)

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 ½ cups quick oats
1 cup chopped almonds
½ cup dried chopped cranberries
1 can whole cranberry sauce (14 to 16 ounces)
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1 can sweetened condensed milk

Drizzle (optional):
½ cup powdered sugar
1 tablespoon milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9-inch by 13-inch pan. In a small sauce pan, cook the cranberry sauce, 2 tablespoons of sugar and cornstarch over medium heat. Bring to a boil and boil for one minute. Remove from heat. Stir in almond extract and cool.

Beat butter and brown sugar together. Gradually beat in flour and oats. Stir in cranberries and almonds. Put two cups of the mixture to the side. Press remaining mix into the pan and bake for 15 minutes. Cool slightly.

In a small bowl, beat the cream cheese and milk until smooth. Pour over the hot crust. Swirl the cranberry mixture over the cream cheese. Sprinkle with the remaining crumb mixture.

Return to the oven and bake for 25 to 30 minutes longer. Cool completely on a metal rack and then cut into bars. If you wish, drizzle with melted chocolate or the powdered sugar drizzle to decorate. To make the drizzle, combine the powdered sugar and milk. Whisk and then drizzle.

This recipe is from the Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association. Visit wiscran.org for more information and to find additional recipes to satisfy your cranberry cravings at the holidays.

Bringing back "The Bottoms"

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pheasant, rabbit, squirrel, dove and some limited ruffed grouse hunting opportunities. Quail have also been seen here, but are rare.

Great birding opportunities also exist. Over 1,000 acres of prairie and savanna are home to grassland songbirds including Henslow's sparrows, clay-colored and grasshopper sparrows and meadowlarks. Red-headed woodpeckers have been found nesting in one of the savannas and a Swainson's hawk was spotted there. There is a host of warblers that stopover in the floodplain forests during spring migration, as well as a myriad of waterfowl along the Red Cedar and Chippewa rivers and numerous backwater sloughs.

While birding last spring, nine duck species and two grebe species (including the state endangered red-necked grebe) were spotted. Additionally, biologists Bill Hogseth and Jeanette Kelly started a bird monitoring research project in this area in 2010. Volunteers have helped with these surveys and recorded seeing the state threatened Bell's vireo, bobolinks, dickcissels, lark sparrows and black-billed cuckoos.

Dunnville State Wildlife Area also offers an opportunity to just get outside and enjoy nature. The Red Cedar State Trail is a great rails-to-trails path extending from Menomonie all the way through Dunnville where it continues across the Chippewa River to junction with the Chippewa River State Trail that runs from Durand to Eau Claire. This is an excellent trail for hiking and biking, and portions of it are groomed for cross-country skiing. There are also hunting paths throughout the wildlife area that are walkable throughout most of the year. These paths can offer some exceptional and rare wildlife and plant sightings.

The Chippewa River provides swimming opportunities and sandbars that are open to camping. A tranquil canoe or kayak ride down the Chippewa River is a great way to access these sites. Lastly, several State Natural Areas (SNAs) exist within the Dunnville State Wildlife Area. Many are remnant or restored high-quality prairie sites with rare plant and animal species.

In fact, the Lower Chippewa River Valley, which runs from Eau Claire to the Mississippi River and encompasses Dunnville Bottoms, contains over 2,000 acres of remnant or original prairie amounting to roughly 25 percent of all remnant prairie in the state!

Dunnville State Wildlife Area and the associated SNAs contain rare prairie and savanna species such as leadplant, wild-indigo, various milkweeds, fame flower and numerous prairie grasses.

It's worth the visit and the effort to bring back "The Bottoms." 

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Wisconsin, naturally

PINE HOLLOW STATE NATURAL AREA

Thomas A. Meyer
State Natural Areas Program



Notable: Of the many ecological gems in the Baraboo Hills, Pine Hollow is among the most lovely and diverse. This State Natural Area, owned by The Nature Conservancy since 1964, features a wooded gorge cut deeply into the sandstone and quartzite bedrock on the south flank of the ancient Baraboo range. Cliff walls up to 80 feet high and a large, overhanging rock ledge that once served as shelter for Native Americans, add geological interest to the preserve's scenic qualities.

Hemlock, yellow birch and red maple grow on the floor of the cool ravine, while the uplands support a forest of red and white oaks. Large white pines perch on the rim of the hollow. Ferns, liverworts and mosses — including the rare *Bryoxiphium* sword moss — cling to the moist cliff faces. Also look there for the rare Sullivan's coolwort, an interesting member of the Saxifrage family, growing in the rock fissures.

During especially cold winters, water seeping through crevices in the cliff face creates huge icicles and a striking 15-foot high frozen "waterfall." The ice appears an appealing blue, owing to the preferential absorption of the red end of the light spectrum. Return to the natural area after snowmelt to enjoy the variety of spring wildflowers, including several types of native orchids. Birders may encounter Canada warbler, Louisiana waterthrush, Acadian flycatcher and other species of birds that require large blocks of forest in which to breed.

How to get there: From the junction of County Highways PF and C in Leland (Sauk County), go east on County Highway C for 2.9 miles, then north on Pine Hollow Road for 1.5 miles. Park on the road shoulder and walk due west into the preserve. Be advised that there are no hiking trails and the slope down into the hollow is steep and rocky. Visit dnr.wi.gov and search "Pine Hollow" for a map and more information.

