

# *The Friends of the Fox*

## *Quarterly Newsletter*

FALL 2015



### Friends of the Fox at the FRNSA 10th Anniversary Celebration

The Fox River Navigation Systems, FRNSA, 2015 was a huge success. The “Amazing Event” group coordinated facility such as registration, food prep, media, technology set-up, and presentation agenda. Brunhilda Courtney, of Friends of the Fox, was responsible for contacting community city planners and administrators. Needed were conceptual drawings of both recent and future development plans for properties located along the Fox River.

way, Friends of the Fox, and Stadmueller and Associates.

Participants who donated their time and talents were; Greg Keil and Kevin Engelbert – Menasha, Mrs. Karen Hawkness – Appleton, Ms. Donna Koebe- Village of Little Chute, Bob Jakel and Bryce Kreycarek – Kaukauna, Scott and Amy Thompson – DePere/Green Bay.

Fox River Navigation Systems Authority displayed the Rapide Croche



Transfer Station and Split Rock Studios out of Minneapolis-St. Paul displayed the Resource Center. Fox-WI Heritage Parkway, with Candice Mortara and Susan Marjenkar at the helm, display of the Little Chute House

Villages, communities, and organizations participating were; City of Menasha, City of Appleton, Village of Little Chute, City of Kaukauna, City of DePere, FRNSA, Fox-WI Heritage Park-

restoration and river memorabilia was well received. “Moving through History with Friends of the Fox” display was arranged by John Forster and set up by Dick Abb and Brunhilda Courtney. A fish line dis-



posable container, constructed by Chris Bloh, FOF Treasurer, is one of FOF's up and coming projects. Cheryl Williamson of Trivola Designs had the Grand KaKalin Kaukauna project specs and kiosk.

**Thank you** Steve Lockhart for donating the two table easels, we will put them to good use, and Diane Schbach of Menasha Marina for lending us the boat platter. My thanks go out to all my exhibitors and friends for supporting me at the event. You are all deeply appreciated. Cheers to all of you!

Brunhilda Courtney  
Friends of the Fox

# *Fox - Wisconsin Heritage Paddle*

## 14th Annual Appleton Lock Paddle Highlights

The Appleton Lock Paddle sponsored by the North East Wisconsin Paddler and the Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway took place on Saturday, September 26th, 2015. A total of 169 boats, plus two 25 foot wooden canoes, and rescue boats participated. Rescue boats were provided by the Outagamie Sheriff's Department and Appleton Fire Department.

Departing from Lutz Park, David Peck, President of the Friends of the Fox, manned the stern of one of the 25 foot canoes. Other paddlers were FOF board members and friends who proceeded to paddle the 6.5 mile course. A big round of applause to Dick Abb, FOF board member, at 86 years young, was the oldest individual in the group this year. And a thanks to the Sheriff's Department boat, who rescue a man who rolled from his kayak. It is always reassuring to have their participation and

watching out for family and friends on the paddle.

We encountered many beautiful and interesting views along our journey. All in one lock; the wide variety and colors of the kayaks, standing boards, and canoes were breathe taking. Many marveled at the housing units such as Eagle Flats and River Heath. The "Refuge," formerly Monte Alverno's property, covers over 500 feet of Fox River frontage. The Appleton Sewage treatment plant domes resemble a botanical garden. There are countless waterfront homes with big stunning gardens that are always plentiful to admire. Three eagles and geese flew overhead. The mallard ducks simply enjoyed swimming in the clear water below dock #4.

Our trip concluded with singing a few songs. After three hours on the waterway we were happy to be on land to fully enjoy the 72 degree weather. Con-



cluding our journey, Sunset Park in Kimberly was a beautiful spot to end a perfect paddle.

Many thanks to David Horst for arranging and transporting the Fox-WI Heritage Parkway canoe. Friends of the Fox enjoyed it very much this paddle.

Brunhilda Courtney  
Friends of the Fox

## AIS Bridge Snapshot Day 2015

We did it again! Despite the rain and fog, teams of volunteers set out to look for invasive species throughout the Winnebago system. For the second year we had rendezvous sites in Winneconne, Fond Du Lac, Chilton, Green Bay, and Appleton. We collected many non-native faucet snails, a banded mystery



snail, the first found in Lakeside Park, and confirmed other invasive plants and animals which we knew were in the system.

Our volunteers were fabulous! Kelly Reyer, from Fox Wolf Watershed Alliance, had nearly two dozen volunteers from the Time Werner Green team, including a professional photographer, to document

the day. What fun! We had a total of 63 volunteers monitoring 68 sites. The number of volunteers was down a bit from last year due to the weather. For information on where the volunteers monitored for AIS, visit the website for the River Alliance of Wisconsin, the sponsor for this statewide effort.

Diane Schauer  
AIS Coordinator, Calumet County



# Our Waterways

## Menasha Lock and Round Goby Update

The Menasha Lock was opened on Thursday, September 29th, for a few hours to allow “stranded” boaters access to Lake Winnebago. Access between Lake Winnebago and Little Lake Butte Des Morts had been cut off since the closure of the



lock just prior to Labor Day weekend. The brief opening was to allow a number of large boats to return to their winter storage facilities. Boats entered the lock and it was closed. After, the water in the lock was chemically treated to ensure that no goby would pass through into the lock during its opening. The end of the regular navigation

season for the locks was October 4th.

Ellen Balthazor,  
FOF Board Member

## Goby Issues: Fall 2015 Timeline & Information

*(Based on an update that Rob McLennan, DNR East District Water Resources Field Supervisor, gave to the Board of the Winnebago Lakes Council on 9/30/2015 as reported by Ellen Balthazor.)*

Before Labor Day, fisherman found, but did not keep, a goby and submitted a photo to the DNR while fishing in the Fox River below Neenah dam; Little Lake Butte Des Morts. DNR staff used two shocking methods, primarily from a barge, in that area but found no goby. Later in that same area a child caught one that DNR verified. They then asked FRNSA to close the lock.

September 3, 2015; Fox River Navigational System Authority (FRNSA) closed the Menasha Lock.

The DNR set traps baited with liver and used nets in attempt to capture gobies but were unsuccessful. They also recruited 13 fishermen to use worms and line from the shoreline. They caught two in 20 minutes but nothing from the dam. There was one credible report from a retired naturalist about catching a goby off the Trestle Trail Bridge. DNR thinks there is a disbursed population in Little Lake Butte Des Morts. They haven't found any in Lake Winnebago, and chose not to use EDNA

sampling in Winnebago due to many false positives.

The DNR said gobies would not have entered through the barrier at Rapide Croche. Gobies might have been used as bait in the Little Lake Butte Des Morts area at one time. Although it is illegal, Great Lakes fishermen sometimes used gobies as small mouth bass bait.

Thursday, October 1, 2015; boats needing to get through the Menasha lock to winter storage were let through on Thursday afternoon. Rotonone, a pesticide that interferes with the fish oxygen supply, was used to exterminate any that may have gone into the lock that day. Boaters had to leave their boats in the lock for about four hours before storing. A check was made to see if any fish were dead, assuming a few blue gill and carp might be killed in the process. The pesticide residue in the closed lock was expected to degrade in four to five days.

What happens now? If gobies are in Lake Winnebago, there would be no reason to keep the Menasha lock closed. The DNR and FRNSA expect to get stakeholders together this winter, but at this point it is not clear who will be making the decision about future



actions. No one knows what the impact of gobies will be if they are in or get into the Winnebago system. They like to migrate up stream creating concern about the sturgeon population. What is known is that gobies have a voracious appetite for nest eggs and that they spawn multiple times during a season. Also, in the Great Lakes, native fish populations have declined in certain areas where gobies are found. However, Rob McLennan, of the DNR, said he remains very concerned, maybe even more so about the sea lamprey getting into the Winnebago system.

Ellen Balthazor, FOF Board Member

# Navigation on the Fox

## Notes From October FRNSA Meeting

The 2015 Lower Fox River navigation lock system saw major increases over the 2014 season in lock usage among other things. Assistant Lock Manager, Luke Green, reported that lockage were 3, 634; an increase of 34% over last year. The number of boats through the locks was 37% higher than last year. The number of passengers saw a 32% increase. Income from lockage in 2014 was \$12,000 and 2015, \$16,000. The Authority sold 12,228 daily lock passes and 3,700 season passes in 2015. Luke also reported that 520 fourth and fifth grade students from four schools and 125 home schooled students toured the locks.

FRNSA CEO, Robert Stark, reported

that the Menasha Lock remains temporarily closed because of the Round Gobby situation. When asked if the DNR has found additional gobies, the DNR representative on the FRNSA Board reported that there had been a false report of gobies being found the week before last. The fish had been misidentified. Stark said he expects discussion of the issue to continue this winter.

Regarding the Rapide Croche transfer station, Stark said FRNSA did submit a response to the DNR's December 8, 2014 letter requesting additional information. FRNSA has not yet heard back from the DNR. FRNSA has applied for a \$650,000 grant from

the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the prevention of aquatic invasive species. Grant monies could be used in the construction of the transfer station.

Ellen Balthazor,



## About the Fox River Navigational System Authority: DePere Lock Keeper House

### De Pere Lock Keeper House

This restoration project evolved from a partnership between the Fox River Navigational System Authority (FRNSA) and a group of local businessmen. The result is a beautiful, refurbished structure that is leased out to a local coffee shop.

From Fox River Navigational System Authority (FRNSA) Website: [www.foxriverlocks.org](http://www.foxriverlocks.org)





# Heritage Parkway

## Making the Fox River a Regional Brand for our Communities

Is the Fox River the key to a regional brand? So often we hear from visiting site selectors and prospective real estate investors that the Fox Cities has a lot going for it, but we are too divided. The Fox Cities communities need to be more aggressive together about sharing the wonderful attributes of our communities – a strong work ethic, great schools, low cost of living, and high quality of life. One weakness that keeps coming up is our lack of a consistent brand.

Perhaps this brand opportunity is something that has been here all along, but we just haven't taken it into account. Some say we are patchy, but I like to say that we are a group of unique communities along the Fox River, and the river is where our livelihoods began. Big city culture mixed with small-town charm and natural beauty is what makes the Fox Cities one of the most desirable places to live in the country. The Fox River is what connects us to our past and future.

The Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway (FWHP) is a local not-for-profit organization (formed in 2009) that has already made great progress in promoting the historical and recreational features of the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers. Their mission is to "preserve, promote and celebrate our river heritage while promoting vibrant and connected riverfront communities." Part of their strategy is to get people back on the river. In the past several years, they have created accessible boat launches, created interpretive and directional

signage brought in national riverfront planning specialists and promoted paddling safety and recreational events. The following two new projects are gaining momentum to bring more tourism and generate interest in the Fox Cities as a destination.

1. The Lock House at Little Chute (200 Mill Street) – With the help of many volunteers, contributors and strong support from the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office, a former lock-tender house is being restored to its 1930s glory. When it opens next summer, visitors can rent the house, similar to renting a cottage at a campground. Visitors will be able to experience what it was like to be a lock-tender in the 1930s. Everything from the antique furnishings to the lock-tender logbook on the desk, this authentic house will draw tourists and school children from around the state. "To our knowledge, there is no other opportunity to rent a cottage along the Fox River, and definitely not one that helps you step back in time," said Candice Mortara, FWHP Executive Director. "Whether people arrive by bike, boat, or car; they will be able to walk to the Heritage Parkway trail, the Little Chute Windmill and nearby restaurants and coffee shops." A Move-in Party is scheduled for Oct. 24 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. and a Sneak Peek Party is planned for November 20. For more info, see the FWHP website at [www.heritageparkway.org](http://www.heritageparkway.org).

2. The Parkway Paddling Adventure – Thanks to a generous donation from the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region, the FWHP has acquired two large 8-passenger canoes that will provide guided tours on the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers next summer. Many of the tours will begin at the Little Chute Guard Lock next to the newly renovated Lock-tender House.

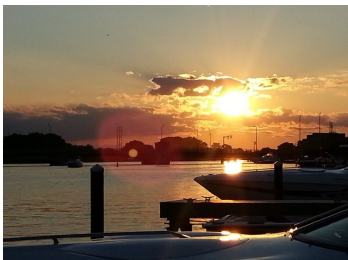


The tours will feature historic reenactors representing the fur trade era, local historians, or environmental experts. "This is a great way to get people on the river and learn about our history, the present-day efforts that have been made, and what we need to do to ensure our water quality keeps getting better," said Mortara, "or just paddle and enjoy the sights and sounds of nature."

The tagline for Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway is "Connecting us All." They have shown us that the Fox River tells an important story that helps tie us together as a regional destination.

Studies show that building a stronger connection between people and the places they live drives economic growth. Creating connected, vibrant communities and recreational opportunities improves quality of life, which will then attract talented workers and new businesses. Our communities need to recognize that wealth (economic and otherwise) also comes from happier, healthier, better connected people.

Renee Torzala, VP & Principal  
Stadtmueller & Associates



# Protecting the Fox River

## Reel In & Recycle!



Chris Blohm, FOF member,  
with Orville and Oscar

Friends of the Fox have initiated a project to build recycling bins to collect monofilament fishing line along the shoreline of the Fox River. Since 2007 the BOAT U.S. Foundation Monofilament Fishing Line Recycling Program's network of more than 2,000 recycling bins has helped recycle 5,200 miles of fishing line! Left in the water this old line is a hazard to birds and marine life. These bins, installed at the water's edge, make it easy for anglers to recycle used fishing line and keep it out of the water. Friends of the Fox will be using plans from the Boat U.S. Foundation to build bins this winter to install them next spring and summer. Remember to reel in that line and look for those bins, recycle!

Ellen Balthazor

FOF Board Member



## 2015 Fox River Watershed Cleanup

The 2015 Fox River Watershed Cleanup was held on April 25, 2015 at locations throughout northeastern Wisconsin. The event was coordinated by the Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance. There were over 450 volunteers of



all ages cleaning up trash along our waterways at about 35 locations in our area. Volunteers started their morning by going to one of four rally locations where they were given t-shirts, supplies, and instructions. Rally leaders also provided information about our Fox-Wolf Watershed and things that we can do at home to help reduce pollution from storm water runoff. In total, 302 bags of trash, 166 chunks of Styrofoam, six tires, one bicycle, one 5-gallon bucket, and a 55-gallon drum

was removed from our watershed! Other strange items removed include a message in a bottle, a shopping cart, a couch, a 15-foot tarp, and several televisions. Cleanup volunteers put in a lot of effort and really made a difference in the area to help clean up our waterways. Great job this year, keep on cleaning for a clean environment!

Kelly Reyer, Fox-Wolf

Watershed Alliance Member

For more information on Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance, visit [www.fwwa.org](http://www.fwwa.org).

Link to the Oshkosh Northwestern story: <http://www.thenorthwestern.com/story/news/local/2015/04/25/fox-river-cleanup/26366287/>





# *The Friends of the Fox*



Discover

## *Our Mission & Purpose*

*The Friends of the Fox is a non-profit advocacy group established to preserve and develop the environmental, cultural, economic, and quality of life assets offered by the Fox River.*

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**FRIENDS OF THE FOX  
PO BOX 741  
APPLETON, WI 54912-0741  
VISIT: [WWW.FRIENDSOFTHEFOX.ORG](http://WWW.FRIENDSOFTHEFOX.ORG)**

We would love to have you become a member of the Friends of the Fox. We are very passionate about working together to preserve and develop the cultural, historic, environmental, economic, and quality of life assets offered by the Fox River. We invite you to make a commitment to our organization and/or join our team. Together we can enhance the most valuable resource in Northeastern Wisconsin ... the Fox River System.

To find out how you can help further and for more detailed information on where your contributions go please visit our website or call using the contact information above.

When you choose to become a member you are sure to always have the latest information on our efforts. We will send you our quarterly newsletter as well as periodic email updates. Please fill out the membership form on the following page and mail it to our office along with your donation. Thank you for your interest and generosity!



ReDiscover  
the Fox!



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**Yes! I'd like to become a member of Friends of the Fox!**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CORPORATION

(if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP LEVELS** (tax deductible)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 per year      \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 per year      \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 per year  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$500 per year      \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000 per year

***Thank you!*** For uniting with Friends of the Fox, allowing our vision to become a reality. Together we can enhance this wonderful valley and protect our many resources for the future.

**\*\*We** at Friends of the Fox desire to maximize the effect of your contribution. In order to save postage and mailing costs we encourage you to receive your newsletter and updates via email. We will not share your email address with other organizations nor send you unnecessary correspondence. If you prefer to receive paper newsletters please check here \_\_\_\_.