

'Round the Reserve



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First Issue

Thank you for becoming a charter member of the Friends of Schmeeckle Reserve! Please enjoy this first issue of the Friends newsletter, one of your membership benefits. It will be delivered every March, July, and October.

From the Friends Board President

Welcome to the first edition of the Friends of Schmeeckle Reserve newsletter.

Its aim is to keep folks informed about news and activities at this "island of green" in our community.

Many of you reading this newsletter are already Friends of Schmeeckle Reserve. We invite others to join and become part of a team of citizens working to protect, enhance and expand this remarkable 280-acre natural area.



Bill Berry

See President, Page 7



Friends Board members Bill Berry, right, Barbara Dixon, middle, and Dixon's husband Alan C. Smith promoted the Friends at the spring Candlelight Hike Festival.

Friends of Schmeeckle launches

From the seed of an idea that germinated more than 30 years ago, the Friends of Schmeeckle Reserve is now a reality.

Schmeeckle Reserve, a UW-Stevens Point natural area established in 1977, has always been open to the public. The Reserve's connection to the community will continue to grow through the Friends of Schmeeckle Reserve.

The Friends officially launched in April at the Reserve's spring Candlelight Hike Festival. Since then, 65 individuals and families have joined the Friends, generously donating over \$6,500 in membership revenue and contributions to support the organization.

The Friends' mission is to support the work of and advocate

for the Reserve by engaging community members. The Friends will accomplish its work through programs and outreach; land management and acquisition; and fundraising.

A board of directors began meeting in November 2013 to develop the Friends. Board members developed a vision for the group, bylaws, financial procedures, and marketing materials.

The Friends hosted its first event, a Volunteer Day on June 14. About 50 volunteers spent a Saturday morning pitching in at the Reserve.

The Friends also sponsored the spring Candlelight Hike Festival — attended by more than 800 people — and will sponsor future Hikes, which are held every spring and fall.



Neal Wisinski, left, and Mark Tolsted unloaded woodchips to be spread on trails at the June 14 Volunteer Day.

Friends host first Volunteer Day

More than 45 volunteers pitched in at the first Friends of Schmeckle Reserve Volunteer Day on June 14. Community members and Friends board members tackled three different projects.

One group removed invasive species such as buckthorn and honeysuckle from the woods by the visitor center. Others pulled weeds from the flower beds.

Another group spread a fresh layer of woodchips on 600 feet of trail along the north side of the Lake Loop Trail and the Moses Creek Trail.

A third group sampled for invasive earthworms for Great Lakes Worm Watch, a citizen science project hosted by the University of Minnesota-Duluth. Board member Dr. Alan Haney, professor emeritus, led the group.



Friends board members Jackie Meyers, front, Jerry Lineberger, middle, and Alan Engebretson, back, checked in volunteers.

The group poured a mixture of water and ground mustard powder on sample plots in the woods. The mustard water irritates worms, bringing them to the surface. The worms were preserved and sent to Great Lakes Worm Watch for identification and data for their research.

Thanks to all who pitched in! We hope to see you at the next Volunteer Day in September.

Upcoming Events

Friends of Schmeckle Reserve Fall Volunteer Day

Trail maintenance, invasive species removal, and tagging monarch butterflies for Monarch Watch

Saturday, Sept. 13

8:30 a.m. to noon, with free lunch

Registration: Register by Sept.

8. Call 715-346-4992 or e-mail

schmeckle@uwsp.edu

Friends of Schmeckle Reserve Annual Member Meeting

Tuesday, Sept. 30

5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Visitor Center Meeting Room

5:30 p.m. : Social time and

refreshments

6 p.m.: Recap of inaugural year;

treasury report, and board

member election

6:30 p.m.: Guest speaker

Information: 715-346-4992 or

schmeckle@uwsp.edu

Nature Programs

September through December and

February through May

Programs presented by UW-

Stevens Point students in the

environmental education and

interpretation capstone course.

Programs presented on a range of

natural and cultural topics; offered

both inside and outside.

Information: E-mail schmeckle@uwsp.edu

to receive a brochure.

Candlelight Hike Festival

Sponsored by Friends of

Schmeckle Reserve

Friday, Oct. 24

6 to 9 p.m.

Information: 715-346-4992 or

www.uwsp.edu/schmeckle

Candlelight Hike goes back to the Ice Age

More than 800 community members explored prehistoric Schmeckle Reserve at the spring 2014 Candlelight Hike Festival, sponsored by the Friends of Schmeckle Reserve.

Visitors walked torch-lit trails, made Stone Age snacks and crafts, and engaged in hands-on Discovery Stations.

Hundreds of visitors crowded around the campfire for the "Ice Age Olympics" program presented by students in the environmental education and interpretation capstone course. The students



UW-Stevens Point student Ashley Goschey played the part of a cave anchorwoman for the "Ice Age Olympics" campfire program at the spring Candlelight Hike Festival.

portrayed characters from the days of Glacial Lake Wisconsin, competing as a woolly mammoth, mastodon, and giant snail. To see a recording of the program, visit

<http://bit.ly/1xnFijN>

The event is free, but attendees generously donated more than \$800 to the Friends of Schmeckle Reserve.

Welcome Your New Friends!

Thank you to the following charter members for joining the Friends of Schmeckle Reserve!

Paul C. and Patti Adamski
Bill Berry and Nick Schultz
Samantha Birkenkamp
Nancy Bozek
Jim and Sunshine Buchholz
E. John and Mary Buzza
Joseph R. Clark
Barbara Dixson and Alan C. Smith
Richard and Janice Doxtator
Glen and Kristi Drapes & Dani and Ali
Sally Ellingboe
Alan Engebretson
Megan and Troy Espe
Annie Fabina
Nisha Fernando
Josh and Amber Garbe
Nicole Garrity
Mike and Bev Gross
Chris Hamp

Alan Haney
Jeff Heil
Jan and Kathy Hermann
Dave Hillier
Bernard Hlavac
June and Gene Johnson
John and Dori Jury
Ron and Linda Kappell
John and Patricia Kedrowski
Brenda Lackey and Cathy Scheder
Kendra Liddicoat and Brian Barringer
Ann Lindner
Jerry Lineberger
Alex Linton
Dan and Donna Marx
Dieter Marx
Eric Marx
Gretchen Marx
Merle McAuley
Jackie Meyers and Steve Faber
Bridget O'Brien
Don and Tina Peters
Michaela Peterson

Cynny and Jack Porter
Judy Ratkowski
Melissa and Kyle Rickert and
Aidan & Mirabai
James Rogers
Jane Rogers
Chris Schmelling
Tom and Lynda Schrader
Bev Scott
Dan Sivek
Dan Stephens
Guy and Mary Stewart
Carly Swatek
Timothy Taschwer
Chris and Kaila Thompson
Richard and Lois Wetzel
Kara White Janssen
Vern and Mary Winker
Neal Wisinski
Kay Wohlbier
James and Susan Zach
Ron and Donna Zimmerman
Aldo Leopold Audubon Society

Founding board of directors launches Friends group

The founding Friends of Schmeckle Reserve Board of Directors was formed in fall 2013. The board has met monthly to develop the organization. Board members are:

Bill Berry (president): Bill is a long-time Stevens Point resident. A former editor of the Stevens Point Journal, he is a writer and communications specialist focusing on conservation and agriculture. He is also a regular contributor to the Madison Capital Times and other publications. He and his wife, Nick Schultz, enjoy outdoor activities including hiking, biking, kayaking and gardening.

E. John Buzza: John is a practicing attorney in Stevens Point and past president of the UW-Stevens Point Foundation. In his legal and Foundation capacity, John facilitated the acquisition of land parcels that today comprise a large part of Schmeckle Reserve. John is also a director of Green Circle Trail, Inc., a 30-plus mile community recreational trail that passes through the Reserve.

Barbara Dixson (secretary): Barbara visits to Schmeckle Reserve for walking, running, biking, snowshoeing, and grounding in the natural setting. She first visited Schmeckle the day of her on-campus interview in 1985. Since then, as a UW-Stevens Point English professor, she has brought many classes to the Reserve to reflect and write.



Attendees at the first Friends of Schmeckle Reserve board meeting were front, from left, Bill Berry, Nisha Fernando, Schmeckle Outreach Coordinator Megan Espe, Director Ron Zimmerman, and Alan Engrebretson. Back row, from left: Assistant Director Jim Buchholz, Jerry Lineberger, Jackie Meyers, Dan Marx, John Jury, E. John Buzza, Barbara Dixson, and Dan Sivek. Not pictured are Alan Haney and Alex Thomas.

Alan Engrebretson: Alan is a lifelong Stevens Point resident. After being injured in a bicycle accident several years ago and having to use an electric wheelchair, he couldn't participate in the outdoors activities he loved, such as fishing, camping, and hunting. "Schmeckle Reserve has been my savior over the years," he said. "It offers me a place to go on my own and enjoy the outdoors. I can either ride on all the trails available, or just sit and observe the wildlife. I can sit and meditate and enjoy nature at its best for hours on end. Without Schmeckle Reserve my life would not be as fulfilling as it is today."

Nisha Fernando: Nisha, originally from Sri Lanka, is a professor in

the UW-Stevens Point Department of Interior Architecture. She lives near the Reserve and spends a lot of time exploring the natural area and taking photographs of the flora and fauna.

Alan Haney: Alan came to Stevens Point in 1988, where he was dean of the College of Natural Resources and professor of forestry until 1998, after which he continued to teach and do research until he retired in 2005. Alan is a forest ecologist with expertise in community forest community structure, ecological restoration, and ecological stability. Alan regularly taught field courses that used Schmeckle Reserve

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as a laboratory. In 2008, he and a former student surveyed migratory birds that used Schmeeckle as a stop-over habitat in their migration.

John Jury: John is past executive director of student development at UW-Stevens Point, now retired and living in Stevens Point. "We have watched Schmeeckle's growth since its earliest days, and when we visit for our walks, we feel like we are visiting an old friend," he said.

Jerry Lineberger: Jerry, of Plover, is a retired UW-Stevens Point University Centers staff member. Hiking, snowshoeing, and biking in Schmeeckle Reserve were important pleasures to his late wife, Susan, and the Moses Creek portion of the Reserve is especially meaningful to his family.

Dan Marx: Dan came to Stevens Point 1965 to attend the university. After moving away, he and his wife, Donna, moved back to Point to raise their family. Almost 40 years later, Donna retired from teaching and Dan retired from UPS. They enjoy frequent walks in the Reserve. "Over the decades the Reserve has been alternatively a source of inspiration, a place of solace, an incubator for our growing children's curious minds, and recently a fresh air rehab facility during a long injury recovery period," Dan said. "No matter the season, the Reserve is part of our family history and tradition."

Jackie Meyers: Jackie works at the Stevens Point Area YMCA as a Pilates personal trainer and class instructor. "Having worked in the fitness industry for more than 30 years, I have a great appreciation for Schmeeckle Reserve as a place for everyone of any age to experience body, mind, and spiritual wellness," she said. Jackie and her husband were the first residents in the new Schmeeckle Trails subdivision, bordering the Reserve. "We feel very fortunate to call Schmeeckle Reserve our 'back yard,'" she said.

Dan Sivek (treasurer): Dan lives in Stevens Point and is professor emeritus of environmental education in the College of Natural Resources. He is an artist who works in wood, acrylic, oil, and graphite. In addition to art, he enjoys birding, biking, kayaking, walking, reading, and traveling with his wife, Tina. His early memories of Schmeeckle Reserve were as a college student athlete, running wind sprints on what was then Reserve Street (now the Granite Parkway trail).

Alex Thomas: Alex, a junior at UW-Stevens Point, majoring in biology and wildlife. He serves as the student representative on the board. He became interested in Schmeeckle as soon as he arrived on campus and has loved being out on the trails ever since. "Schmeeckle is a huge asset to the students and to the UWSP campus and I am one of many students who owe a portion of their education to having Schmeeckle as a resource and a tool for learning," he said.

From the Friends liaison

In late summer 2011, I arrived as the new graduate assistant at Schmeeckle Reserve. Before my first day was over, Ron Zimmerman, the director, shared with me his plan for my master's thesis. He said that from his first days on the job in the 1970s, he believed that the Reserve would benefit from a Friends group to more fully connect the natural area to the community.

For two years I explored the idea of developing a community-based organization or program to support the Reserve. For my research, I conducted a survey and focus groups. I was impressed by how personally invested community members had become in the Reserve over its three-plus decades. When I graduated in 2013, I was hired on to develop the Friends of Schmeeckle and to work with volunteers.

My role as a liaison to the Friends is to support the organization and board and to communicate the Reserve's needs and goals to the Friends.

Not many people get the opportunity to make their master's thesis a reality. Being part of the launch of the Friends this year has been especially gratifying, and I can't wait to see what the group accomplishes on behalf of my favorite natural area.



Megan Espe

Reserve director honored with top UW award

Ron Zimmerman, hired as the first director of Schmeckle Reserve in 1979, received the University of Wisconsin System's highest honor for academic staff this year.

The UW Board of Regents honored Zimmerman in March with the Academic Staff Award for Excellence.

Zimmerman has developed a world-class outdoor environmental teaching laboratory and community nature reserve. Schmeckle Reserve has grown from 127 to 280 acres, and welcomes 200,000 visitors annually. He created the Schmeckle Reserve Visitor Center in the 1980s.

Zimmerman co-founded the nationally recognized environmental interpretation program in the College of Natural Resources. He co-authored "The Interpreter's Handbook Series," training manuals that are used worldwide by universities, parks, nature centers and zoos.

He has collaborated with community members and state organizations, including the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame, housed at the Schmeckle Reserve Visitor Center; the Green Circle Trail, headquartered at the Reserve; and Moses Creek, which was restored through a 2010 Wisconsin Department of Transportation project.



Ron Zimmerman, left, received the Academic Staff Award for Excellent from UW Regent Drew Petersen in March in Madison.

Entrepreneurially, Zimmerman developed a cedar sign shop and provides interpretive consulting services nationwide. Both businesses support the Reserve and the interpretation program.

Researching the need for expanded educational programs

By **Carly Swatek**

Environmental education means different things to different people. For a science teacher, it may mean placing probes in a nearby lake or stream to explore water quality.

A Girl Scout leader may want her troop to travel through various habitat types to earn a hiking badge. A community member may have a very different goal, perhaps more rooted in leisure.

Keeping these perspectives (and more!) in mind creates a challenge in providing programs that meet the needs of a variety of nature

center visitors — especially when staff and budgets are limited.

As the graduate assistant at Schmeckle Reserve, my master's research aims to assess the needs of various audiences in the Stevens Point area for expanded environmental education programming at the Reserve. The Reserve offers environmental interpretation programs during the spring and fall semesters. They are presented



Carly Swatek

by students in the university's environmental interpretation capstone course. However, increased demand from outside groups has caused the Reserve to assess whether to expand programming.

For my research, I'm exploring existing environmental education programs in the Stevens Point area and surveying target audiences to determine the feasibility of expanded programming that will benefit the Reserve and its visitors.

Swatek is a master's student in environmental education and interpretation at UW-Stevens Point and will graduate in May 2015.

Intern working to better understand trail users

By Erika Jensen

While Schmeeckle Reserve's primary mission is to preserve and restore the natural environment, the Reserve also provides recreational opportunities for the public. In managing for recreational use, it's important to know how many people use the trails, what activities they are engaging in, and to know what they think of their experiences.

As the trail recreation intern, my responsibility is to gather this kind of information for both Schmeeckle Reserve and the Green Circle Trail.

There are three ways I collect trail-user data. The first is by using trail counters. Have you noticed the large brown-capped PVC pipes along the trails? These are actually casings for our infrared trail counters. These devices, which are not cameras, count each passing person's heat signature and tally how many people visit the trails each day. This gives us a good look at the number of people visiting the Reserve and which trails are most popular.

Another way I collect

information is through direct observations. You'll probably see me sitting alongside the trails this summer, gathering information such as the activities visitors are participating in.

Finally, one of the most useful kinds of information is visitor survey responses. When I'm out on the trails, I offer surveys to the people I pass. The surveys are optional, but the responses gathered are useful to Schmeeckle's managers. The surveys give visitors an opportunity to share how they feel about Schmeeckle Reserve, how often they visit, what concerns they have, and ways that their experience could be improved.

Together, these three data collection methods give Schmeeckle staff a good idea of visitors' needs and how to best to manage for that.

So if you see me out on the trails, feel free to stop and ask questions about my research or let me know any comments and concerns you have about the Reserve. Your feedback is appreciated and essential to help make Schmeeckle Reserve a better place for everyone to enjoy.



Erika Jensen, a UW-Stevens Point College of Natural Resources student majoring in forest recreation, is serving as the trail recreation intern this year for Schmeeckle Reserve and the Green Circle Trail. She collects data from infrared trail counters that are hidden inside PVC pipes along the trails.

President, From Page 1

The Friends of Schmeeckle Reserve was recently formed to achieve these goals. We support Schmeeckle through programs and outreach, land management and acquisitions, and funding and resources. In all these activities, we seek to complement the support Schmeeckle receives from UW-Stevens Point and the

College of Natural Resources.

We plan to have plenty of fun along the way, whether we're hosting popular community events, assisting with work days, or telling the story of this great resource that's here for all of us to enjoy.

For more information on the Friends of Schmeeckle Reserve, check out our website at www.uwsp.edu and click on Get Involved, friend the Reserve on Facebook, or call 715-346-4992.

And stay tuned. We're just getting started.

FRIENDS OF Schmeckle Reserve

How to Join

- **Online:** www.uwsp.edu/schmeckle
Click on "Get Involved"
- **Mail this form and a check made payable to Friends of Schmeckle Reserve to:**
Friends of
Schmeckle Reserve
2419 North Point Drive
Stevens Point WI 54481
- **Walk In:** Sign up at the visitor center
- **Call:** Schmeckle Reserve,
715-346-4992

2014 Charter Membership Information

Member Names: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Newsletter delivery preference: E-mail Mail

Annual Membership Level

- Student — \$10 (Any grade level)
- Seeker — \$25 (Individual)
- Trekker — \$50 (Family/Household)
- Adventurer — \$100
- Trailblazer — \$250
- Explorer — \$500
- Other Amount: \$_____

Contributions to the Friends of Schmeckle Reserve Inc. are tax-exempt.

This is a gift membership.

Gift donor's name, phone, and email:

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