



It's Our Nature

Newsletter of the Fox Valley Sierra Group of the John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club Vol. 13 Issue 1

Fox Valley Sierra Group Programs

February 14, 2013
7:00 PM

Sing with the Wolves

Cindy Mueller, DNR Naturalist-High Cliff, will update us on the wolves in Wisconsin

March 14, 2013
7:00 PM

Turn Oldies Into Greenies

Mary Haller from Goodwill will explain how they recycle and reuse as much possible from donated goods, keeping it out of the landfill, and providing much needed employment for the community.

April 11, 2013
7:00 PM

Traveling the National Parks with family.

Mark Gerbert will share his stories.

May 9, 2013
7:00 PM

FVSG Auction

Howard Johannes auctioneer.
Bring those goodies to share!!

All programs are held at the wheelchair accessible Gordon Bubolz Nature Preserve, 4815 N. Lynndale Drive (County A) in Appleton, Wisconsin and are free and open to the public.

Please join us!

<http://www.bubolzpreserve.org/>

From the Chair

January 2013 Alan Lawrence FVSG

I decided that my column in this newsletter should be about local issues for our Group and Chapter.

First, I want to ask if you've read your copy of the State Chapter's "Muir View" newsletter. It is available online at <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Involve/newsletter.asp> and this link can be found on our group website on our newsletter page.

The cover story is about the 50th anniversary of our John Muir Chapter. A special website (<http://www.SierraW150.org>) has been setup for celebrating our anniversary. Sierra Club's Executive Director Michael Brune will be in Madison in April to help us celebrate our victories and remind us of our tasks for the future. Our Autumn Assembly in October will be organized by the Chapter this year and helps wrap up the year of anniversary events.

Our Chapter has a significant history, and so do some of its members. Jonathan Ela is remembered in the "Muir View" after his untimely death in October. He was a lifetime Sierra Club member and former staffer. He founded our club's Midwest Office. He began his conservation career when he went to work for Senator Gaylord Nelson in 1968. Ten years ago he was appointed to the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board. I don't recall ever meeting Jonathan, but I knew he was a legend who had contributed much to our state.

Our group has its own history and important people. Last year our group celebrated our 30 year anniversary. Dale Schaber, one of the founders of our group has remained one of our leaders. Several other early members, including Sally Peck, also remain active leaders, while others have taken their turns and then stepped down.

Our group, as is the case with all Sierra Club groups, must have a board of directors. We are fortunate to have nine members on our board, also referred to as the executive committee. We are responsible for the various tasks that are necessary for running a group. We make sure we have a location and programs for meetings, outings, newsletters, website, activities, funding, membership, and the public contacts with our community.

Continued page 2

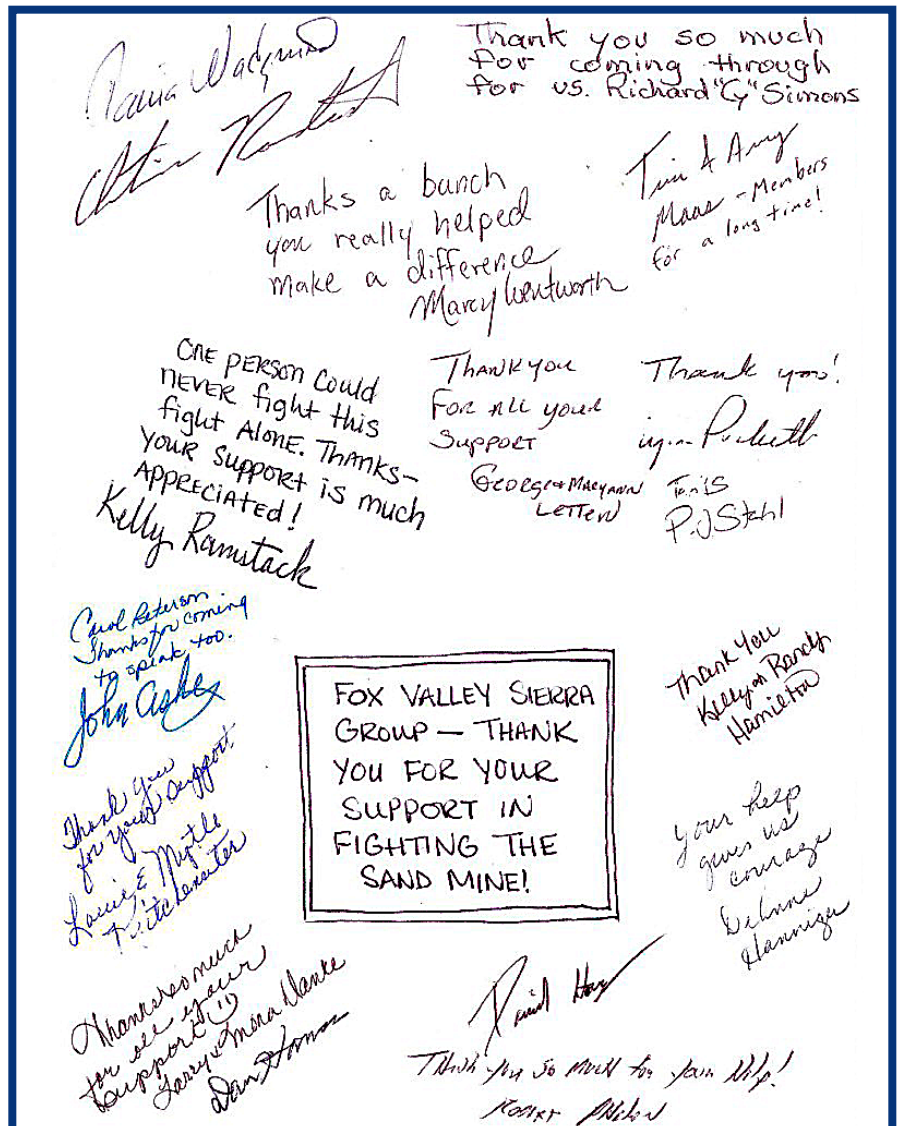
...Chair Speaks

The board gets its members from volunteers who want to do a bit more for Sierra Club than simply attend meetings or outings. Elections are held each December for new board members, a process necessary to ensure that our board represents the 1500 members in our geographic area. While we currently have nine board members the fact is that our by-laws say that we should have 13. Sharing the leadership with a few more members would benefit all of us. Are you interested in helping?

Our group is recognized within our communities, and is frequently called upon to participate in public events, or to help on environmental issues. This past year Kelly Ramstack, one of our members, realized that she and her neighbors needed to do battle with a company that wanted to mine sand in her community. Our group helped to share the message with other Sierra Club members in the area, and to inform community leaders that a larger audience is watching. The goal is not to simply block all mining efforts, but to make sure that business interests carefully consider and balance the environmental issues.

The news media occasionally contacts our leaders for comment on issues. Two years ago a television news crew came to our meeting to interview me about the high speed rail that our governor had rejected. We've been asked about the PCB project in the Fox River. And we were recently asked by a UWGB professor to watch the movie "If A Tree Falls" with his class and help lead a discussion.

One of our projects, unfortunately, for the coming year will be to help the Wisconsin legislature come up with a good mining bill. Two years ago the Gogebic Taconite LLC mining company allegedly wrote a new mining bill, giving itself unreasonable rights, and tried to get the legislation passed. It failed, but essentially the same bill has already been reintroduced. I hope you will all tell your legislators how you feel.



When Sierra Club member Kelly Ramstack learned that a sand mine might be built in her community she helped her neighbors organize and voice their concerns. Our Sierra Club group and the State Chapter have also been involved in their efforts. This card was signed by some of the concerned citizens in gratitude, for our involvement. Notice these comments: "Your help gives us courage", "One person could never fight this alone", and "You really helped make a difference".

Thanks for reading my comments. As leader of our group I welcome your feedback.

Alan Lawrence, 920-730-9515
or alan_lawrence99@yahoo.com

**Next Newsletter Deadline
for submitting materials
March 16th - April thru August Issue.**

Wisconsin conservationists mourn loss of beloved environmentalist Jonathan Ela

November 02, 2012 6:34 pm • RON SEELY | Wisconsin State Journal

Wisconsin's environmental community Friday mourned the death of one of the state's most well-known conservationists and activists.

Jonathan Ela, 67, former chair of the Natural Resources Board and founder of the Sierra Club's Midwest Office, died Thursday of lung cancer.

Friends on Friday remembered Ela not only for his accomplishments on behalf of the environment but also for the civility and humor he brought to what is frequently a confrontational and controversial arena.

"What I'll remember more than anything else," said Todd Ambs, a longtime friend and president of the River Network, "is that he was just an incredibly kind and wonderful human being to his core."

Spencer Black, a former state representative and a colleague of Ela's, wrote in a column last summer that Ela, who was born and raised in Madison, was "at the forefront of the modern environmental movement from before the first Earth Day to the present."

Like Ambs, however, Black mostly remembered Ela's engaging personality, especially his humor. "When things looked grim, as they often do for environmental activists, Jonathan's great wit could always be counted on to bring smiles to the hard-pressed troops," wrote Black.

Ela's resume stretched back to the days when U.S. Sen. Gaylord Nelson was beginning to awaken a national environmental consciousness. Ela was on Nelson's staff. In subsequent years, he would plunge even more deeply into the nation's environmental struggles, frequently on the national stage. He served as political chairman and vice president for politics for the national Sierra Club and directed the Sierra Club's Independent Action political initiative.

Black noted that Ela was largely responsible for pushing the Sierra Club to play a more active role in political campaigns. Ela also started the Sierra Club's Midwestern Office and brought needed attention to many Great Lakes issues as well as threats to the Mississippi River.

Also, Ela served as chairman of the Natural Resources Board, spearheading work on strong pollution controls for mercury and phosphorus.

"He was a tremendous activist and cared a great deal for the planet," said Ambs.

Friends gathered in Madison in July for a picnic to honor Ela's career. The occasion also saw the launch of the Jonathan Ela Activist Fund, created to support lobbying and election-related activities as well as membership building for the Sierra Club.

Community Wide Earth Day Celebration

The Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity ReStore is again sponsoring the Fox Cities Community Wide Earth Day Celebration at the ReStore on April 27, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at 3000 East College Avenue in Appleton, Wisconsin. The Earth Day event is free for the whole family. Come rain or come shine!

Featured at the Earth Day Celebration will be earth-friendly local vendors and exhibitors, children's activities and organic and locally grown food. Participants can attend educational forums being presented during the Earth Day event.

More information will appear in the next FVSG Newsletter. You may also visit the ReStore website as plans develop: www.appletonrestore.org.

We are also asking for people to staff the Fox Valley Sierra Group table during the Earth Day celebration. Contact Dale Schaber at dschaber@athenet.net or 920-739-6041 if you are interested or want more information about volunteering your time at the Earth Day event.

Appleton Earth Day Volunteers Needed!

As usual, Fox Valley Sierra Group members will be participating in and helping to organize some Earth Day events. If you would like to help us with Appleton's Earth Day events, please contact Dale Schaber, 920-739-6041, dschaber@athenet.net

Mining In Wisconsin, weblinks:

<http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Mining.asp>
<http://www.facebook.com/conservationvoters>

Fox Valley Sierra Group **OUTINGS**

February 9, Saturday

Cross-country Ski at Reforestation Camp.

We will be skiing at the Brown County Reforestation Camp north of Green Bay. Hot apple cider will be served afterward!! Rich Krieg, 660-3557, eddyout@gmail.com

February 17, Sunday

Snowshoeing at Mosquito Hill Nature Center, New London.

Winter brings frozen wetlands and that means a chance to see lowlands of the Wolf River not usually accessible. They turn into frosty wonderland trails and are a pleasant, easy trek on snowshoes. Meet in the Nature Center building for about a 2 hour hike. Bring a sandwich for lunch afterwards in the Nature Center if you'd like. Leader will bring hot chocolate. Fee: Donation for trail use (snowshoe rental additional). Leader Nancy Brown-Koeller, 715-853-6625.

April 6-7, Saturday-Sunday

Canoeing Robinson and Morrison Creeks near Black River Falls.

Class II rapids; Car Camp. When the water is up in the spring, these two small, scenic creeks are a lot of fun. Although the Robinson has a couple of drops, they can be portaged. Trees often need to be portaged as well. As always, we'll pick up spring thaw trash as we go, leaving the streams in better shape for those who follow. Wet/dry suit required for this early season trip. For details, contact: Phillip Johnsrud, 715-445-4777, johnsrud@tds.net

April or May

Garlic Mustard Pulling.

Pull garlic mustard at High Cliff State Park and at Memorial Park in Combined Locks, Wisconsin. All depends on the weather and on how fast the garlic mustard grows. Call early to be put on the garlic mustard pullers list and to be contacted about specific dates and times. Contact Dale Schaber, 920-739-6041, dschaber@athenet.net

May 4, Saturday

Paddling down the Wolf River, Shawano

Every spring, an estimated 3,000 female sturgeon travel up the Wolf River to lay eggs, some as far as the Shawano Dam. We will travel down the Wolf River and try to see some of the great creatures as swim past us. Ron Bruch-approved trip! The sturgeon spawn when the water reaches a certain temperature so there's no guarantee that we will be at the peak or if they will be gone but it will be an interesting trip either way. Easy paddling on flat water through wildlife area and farm land. About 3 hours. (Note: no take-outs or stops along the way.) Canoe rental available in Shawano. Leader Nancy Brown-Koeller, 715 853-6625.

May 18, Saturday

Ice Age Trail Work Day in Waupaca County.

Our Fox Valley Sierra Group will be doing minor trail maintenance on the Ice Age Trail in Waupaca County on May 18. We will begin work on the trail at about 9:30. Tools will be provided. However, if you wish to bring any pruning tools, etc., feel free to do so. Do bring a lunch, water, work gloves, sturdy work shoes, and mosquito and tick repellent. We will stop for ice cream mid afternoon. For head count purposes, location to meet, ride consolidations, and information, contact Darrel Ruechel, FVSG IATA coordinator, 920-993-0903, r7Dairl@yahoo.com

Get outside and join us on one of our outings this winter and spring! They are a great way to meet other outdoor enthusiasts. Outings are open to members and non-members alike. For more details and in order to participate, sign up at one of our general meetings or contact the outings leader directly.

Skiing at Bubolz Nature Preserve

I am fortunate to live only four miles from the Bubolz Nature Preserve, so it is relatively easy for me to take advantage of the opportunities at the 775 acre preserve in northwestern Appleton. I look forward to winter skiing opportunities on their network of trails. I enjoy exploring the variety of peaceful settings: open field, thick cedar forest, and winter deciduous forest.

Years ago I became a dues-paying member of Bubolz partly because I could then ski for free, and equipment rentals were discounted. If you live nearby please consider becoming a member. Help protect this treasure.

-Alan Lawrence



Bill Baurecht and Helen Bannan-Baurecht are FVSG members and are Sierra Club national outings leaders. They are offering two national outings in California this summer and thought we might be interested.

Mountain Medley, Tahoe National Forest, California - Trip number: 13244A

We will sample the best of the Tahoe-Donner basin, both natural and cultural. We'll hike to splendid High Sierra ridges and lakes and enjoy one another's company; we'll have time to take photographs, eat lunch with a view, swim, and relax. We'll learn the part the Donner Pass area played in history of the West, and sail along Tahoe's shoreline in a classic 40-foot motor launch. We'll have two evenings out -- one for a Shakespeare play under the stars on the shores of Lake Tahoe, the other for dinner at a lakeside restaurant in Tahoe City.

Family Service and Fun Exploring Marin County, California - Trip number 13220A

Share your community spirit and your love of the outdoors with your family this summer, in beautiful Marin County. Just a short drive from the traffic and congestion of San Francisco lies a land of historic dairy farms, a 2,500-foot mountain, dozens of trails, a lagoon where harbor seals lounge on sandbars and egrets and herons feed, and an island rich with California history and spectacular 360-degree views. Our trip includes two California state parks and focuses on some highlights of the Golden Gate National Recreation area, which is home to 53 species of mammals, 250 birds, 20 reptiles, and 11 amphibians. Each day of our trip will be different, as we explore the possibilities offered in this varied landscape. Days of recreation—hiking local trails, visiting a lighthouse and swimming an ocean beach—will alternate with two days of service featuring work projects within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

For complete details and photos of these outings, and many others all over the country and world, see <http://content.sierraclub.org/outings/>

Bill Baurecht, baurecht@uwosh.edu
Helen Bannan, bannan@uwosh.edu
Oshkosh, Wisconsin • Home phone: 920-231-2948

Many of us enjoyed learning a little about the history of logging and the Navarino Wildlife Area from our guest speaker in November, Tim Ewing, the naturalist at Navarino Nature Center. While not a Sierra Club Outing, there are a couple of events at NNC that sound very interesting and are worth mentioning here.

Owls of Navarino Nature Center, Navarino Friday, Feb. 15, 2013.

Time: 6:30 pm

Walk / snowshoe while listening / calling to owls and other wildlife. Fee: NNC members \$2, Non members \$5, Families \$12

715-758-6999

www.navarino.org

Snow-snakes* and Snowshoes Winter Open House

Saturday, February 16, 2013.

Time: 9am - 1pm

Navarino Nature Center will be holding an open house. There will be outside winter games of snow-snake, snow-golf and others. Inside board games and crafts. Snowshoe hike and skiing. Snowshoe rentals available (\$2, under 16; \$4 for ages 16 and up.)

715-758-6999

www.navarino.org

*These are not the snow-snakes that most cross country skiers have been tripped up by on the trail. Who knew "snow-snake" was a real Native American (Iroquois, Potawatomie, Oneida and others) medicine game! Held during the winter to get people out and socializing, the "snake" is actually a wooden rod that is polished and decorated. It is thrown down at trench usually made by dragging a log through the snow. Individuals have 3-5 snow-snakes and throw them down the trench. The longest slide wins.

NATURE CENTER ACTIVITIES, LOCAL EVENTS & CLASSES

Call or check their web sites for many fine activities, events and classes.

- Brillion Nature Center (920) 756-3591 www.brillionnaturecenter.net
- Bubolz Nature Preserve (920) 731-6041 www.bubolzpreserve.org
- Heckrodt Wetland Reserve (920) 720-9349 www.heckrodtwetland.com

- Ledge View Nature Center (920) 849-7094 www.co.calumet.wi.us/departments2.Impl?dept_id=70
- Mosquito Hill Nature Center (920) 779-6433 www.mosquitohill.com
- Navarino Nature Center (715)758-6999 www.navarino.org
- Ridges Sanctuary (920) 839-2802 www.ridgessanctuary.org
- Woodland Dunes Nature Center & Preserve (920)793-4007 www.woodlanddunes.org

Bakken Flaring

Alan Lawrence FVSG Chair

We have all seen night sky pictures of the earth, easily revealing cities because of the light. This picture also reveals a patch of light, nearly as large and bright as Chicago in western North Dakota. It is not the light of a city. It is the light produced by flaring (wasting) natural gas.

Companies are making fast and easy profits drilling for oil in the Bakken Oil Fields. Mineral rights on public lands



are typically leased inexpensively, since it is in the public interest to harvest our resources. The problem is that there is also natural gas in these fields and nobody wants the gas, so it is wasted and burned.

Recent fracking technology for natural gas has produced a glut in supplies, and lowered prices. Consequently, in remote areas many companies find it cheaper to burn off gas that emerges in new oil fields rather than build pipelines and facilities to collect it. In North Dakota, producers can flare natural gas for one year without paying taxes or royalties on it, and ask for an extension due to economic hardship associated with connecting the well to a natural gas pipeline.

This results in good profits for the oil companies, but poor return for the public. We own the resources and should not be satisfied to see them wasted. Drilling on some lands should be saved until the resources are valuable enough to be carefully used.

Last year The Christian Science Monitor reported, "The United States is flaring so much natural gas into the atmosphere - burning it as oil-field waste rather than extracting energy from it in power plants - that it now leads the world in the growth rate at which it is trashing that energy source."

Oil producers in North Dakota are flaring roughly one third of gas reserves in the state, enough natural gas to heat half a million homes. (In contrast, in Norway, natural

gas production facilities are required to be built before oil production can commence.)

Worldwide this is a big problem. It is estimated that five trillion cubic feet of natural gas were flared (or worse, vented without burning) in 2011. This is roughly equivalent to 25% of US natural gas consumption and dumped 360 million tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, the equivalent to the exhaust of 70 million automobiles, according to the CS Monitor article.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/2012/0713/Thanks-to-North-Dakota-US-waste-of-natural-gas-grows-rapidly>

Enjoy Books?

Green Bay has a "Green Book Club." They meet about four times a year to discuss some great environmental books. Their current selection is "Thin Ice" by Mark Bowen. This book is a high adventure story about how some heroic scientists are working atop the world's highest mountains to unlock the secrets of climate change. If you purchase this book at "The Reader's Loft" in Green Bay be sure to ask for the "Green Book Club Discount." The group's upcoming meeting will be at "The Attic" (in Green Bay) at 6:30 P.M. on March 13. Stop in and join the discussion!

Recycle gently used T-shirts for a good cause

"The Sewing Bees" from St. Martin Church in Cecil make diapers for children in Haiti from unwanted T-Shirts. The group started in the fall of 2011 and has also made pillow case dresses (over 200!). The clothes and diapers are delivered by Muffy and Dr. Kevin Culhane, who work through a group from Green Bay, Friends of Haiti. The gently used T-Shirts can be printed or plain; colored or white; cotton or cotton blend.

A friend of mine started "The Sewing Bees" and I would be happy to pick up donated T-shirts at Fox Valley Sierra Club meetings.

Nancy Brown-Koeller. If questions, nbk04@sbcglobal.net

Stay up-to-date on the latest environmental news, outings, programs and events by checking out our website at <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/foxvalley>.

[Follow FVSG on Facebook and Twitter.](#)

- On Facebook, search for "Fox Valley Sierra Group" then become a fan.
- Find us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/FVSierraClub>.



Charlie Paine being awarded the Merit Award from the John Muir Chapter at the Autumn Assembly.

Donations to Bubolz

For more than 30 years our group has had a strong relationship with the Gordon Bubolz Nature Preserve. It is our meeting location and it is a source of inspiration for the outdoors. Our group helps Bubolz with various projects, including their Romp in the Swamp fundraiser, buck-thorn removal, and passing the hat for donations at our December holiday party. Generous Sierra Club members donated \$565 to Bubolz at our December meeting. Thank you.

This Earth Day, JOIN Sierra Club

the world isn't waiting, why are you?

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone (_____) _____
 Email _____

Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.
 Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX

Cardholder Name _____
 Card Number _____ Exp. Date ____/____/____

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!

| Membership Categories | Individual | Joint |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Special Offer | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 | |
| Standard | <input type="checkbox"/> \$39 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$47 |
| Supporting | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 |
| Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$175 |
| Life | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1250 |
| Senior | <input type="checkbox"/> \$24 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$32 |
| Student/Limited Income | <input type="checkbox"/> \$24 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$32 |

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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SIERRA CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Welcome New Members

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Algoma | Casco | Torstein Hansen | Dick Kubichek | Rosemary Smith | Cynthia Remington |
| John Rybski | Combined Locks | Rebecca Heide | Luxemburg | Pickett | Sally Wiley |
| Diane Steffen | Crivitz | Benjamin Heide | Manawa | Pine River | John Yount |
| Appleton | Phyllis Gottschalk | Dennis Lotto | Marinette | Plainfield | Suamico |
| Margie Arpin | DePere | Eric Morgan | M Shaffer | Ronda Hoffman | Kathryn Corio |
| Norman Christnacht | William Leonhard | Charles Nordell | Cliff Tebo | Pound | Suring |
| Tom Cody | Pamela Page | Debra Peterson | Markesan | Alex Hamilton | Townsend |
| Bill Hanley | Renae Peters | Brenda Pulvemacher | Menasha | Princeton | Washington Island |
| Dorothy Hartford | Randal Rake | Karissa Singleton | Barbara Siemiller | Elaine Leon | Donna Benson |
| Caroline King | Anne Sylvester | Angela Smet | Jill Stumpf | Ripon | Waupaca |
| Paul Kirk | Egg Harbor | Douglas Sterk | Neenah | Kim Grasee | Mary Grist |
| John Lewis | Robert Landry | Richard Vogels | Kateline Brietzke | Julie Mellahn | Cheryl Holmes |
| Patricia McConnell | Ellison Bay | Christopher Wagner | David Dunn | Scandinavia | Dave Kropilnicki |
| Brad Norcross | Tim Kay | Green Lake | Rich Fahrenkrug | Richard Haug | Butch Siegel |
| Linda Norcross | Daniel Schaulis | Celest King | Sandra Kranner | Seymour | David Towne |
| Mandy Quick | Amy Dwyer | Hilbert | K Klanderma | Sister Bay | Waupun |
| Penny Robinson | Eldorado | Hailey Gatza | Ernst Schlieter | Shawano | Janet Bloedow |
| Carla Salmon | Diane Schroeder | Kathy Gatza | Pamela Verhagen | Jay Balke | Wautoma |
| David Savides | Endeavor | Kimberly Ninedorf | KWismer | John Gurney | Westfield |
| Kay Schwebs | Ephraim | Hobart | Neshkoro | Betty Marvin | Dorothy Shelton |
| Lynn Van Vreede | Florence | Hortonville | New London | Sherwood | Weyauwega |
| Mike Wettstein | Fond du Lac | Kingston | Robert Lardinois | Brian & Emily Miller | Duane Beyersdorf |
| Mike Zampaloni | Tom Hintze | Kaukauna | Oconto | Gregory Short | Jimmy Butzlaff |
| Karen Zimmerman | Forestville | Seong Graham | Donald Reed | Joyce Short | Carol OBright |
| Michelle Zuleger | DoanId Eytcheson | Keshena | Oneida | Shiocton | Wild Rose |
| Baileys Harbor | Fremont | Christin Narloch | David Hansen | Sister Bay | James Emrich |
| Mariah Goode | Green Bay | Kewaunee | Oshkosh | William Surbaugh | Shelley Maginnis |
| Berlin | Constance Albert | Kathleen Phillips | Kathleen Fenrich | Sobieski | Winneconne |
| Jerry Harrington | Pat Colwitz | Little Chute | Cheryl Hansen | Sturgeon Bay | William Schlapman |
| Black Creek | Anthony Eife | Kathy Reynebeau | Joann Kitzman | Gregory Kaufman | |
| Tara Huebner | Keith Halverson | Little Suamico | Timothy Mckeon | | |

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Of The John Muir Chapter Of The Sierra Club

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