



December 2016 News Update



Photo by Barry Kalscheur

Winter officially begins next week...but it sure feels like winter has arrived at Pope Farm Conservancy! We hope you're having a wonderful holiday season so far! The recent snowfall has made for excellent cross country skiing conditions. The trails around the outer perimeter of the Conservancy will be groomed courtesy of the Blackhawk Ski Club. A big thank you is in order! The lower parking lot off Old Sauk Road will remain open all winter for your cross country skiing, sledding and snowshoeing enjoyment! Just a reminder...all foot traffic and snow shoes should be used on the side of the groomed trails and not directly on it. Thanks!

What's New?

Sunflower Seed Sale...Sold Out!!!



On December 3rd, for the first time ever, the FOPFC sold the Sunflower seeds grown at Pope Farm Conservancy to the public. The Friends sold a total of 5,400 lbs. of seed in 3 ½ hours. There was an incredible response to the sale. Thanks to all of you for your support, and thanks to the Town of Middleton for letting us sell the seed out of the Conservancy parking lot. The Friends had a great time selling the seeds, and the farmer was very pleased.

Why did the Friends sell the Sunflower seed this year?

They did it primarily to help the farmer cover his costs. In the past, the farmer has sold the sunflower seeds to a local wholesaler, who in turn sells the seed to a regional retailer, who then sells the seed for bird feed. But this year, the retailer had “single sourced” the seed, which left the farmer holding the seed and in a quandary. So, the FOPFC board made the decision to purchase the bagged seeds from the farmer and sell them directly to the public at our cost plus a handling fee for labeling, etc.

Our goal in this project was to help the farmer out and to help cover his costs. We did this successfully, and it will help keep Sunflower Days viable in the future.



Bald Eagle Spotted at PFC

We have a new addition to Pope Farm Conservancy... a bald eagle! The farmer saw it in mid-November when he was doing some harvesting, and then one of our members sighted it in the trees again a week later. It's the first time we know of that eagles have been seen in the Conservancy.



Thanks to Ed Boswell for sharing his photo (above).

PFC Photo on Display at the Smithsonian

This remarkable photograph (below) was taken by Sunil Gopalan during Sunflower Days in 2015. It made a short list with some other very talented photographers from over 20,000 images submitted from 51 countries, and it hangs in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. To learn more about how Sunil shot this photo at Pope Farm Conservancy go to:

<http://www.sunilphotos.com/?p=1451>

Thank You, Sunil!



Indigo Bunting on Sunflower

Upcoming Meetings

You are encouraged to attend the following meetings to just observe, offer your viewpoints, or join these committees if you are interested.

Education Team Meeting

When: January 17th, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Where: Town of Middleton hall, 7555 W. Old Sauk Rd, Verona, WI (across from the conservancy)

We will attempt to finalize the German Immigration story so that we can begin building the visuals necessary to use for the interactive tour. We will then begin to work on the conservation and preservation story of Pope Farm Conservancy. These are great meetings! We hope you'll stop by.

Events Team Meeting

The January meeting is TBD. The Events Team will be discussing FOPFC events for 2017. What tours will we offer? What events will we pursue? This is a great opportunity to offer your thoughts, and to see how the team works. Consider joining this great group of people who have fun giving back to the community. Please contact Debbie at

Volunteers Needed

We continue to post volunteer opportunities in our newsletter because we need more administrative help, but we have had little response. Please consider giving back a few hours a month to make Pope Farm Conservancy the best it can be. Most of this can be done from your home, and we will train you. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Administrative Support

We need a couple volunteers to help the Board with membership and marketing communications, records, and financial information. If you can spare a couple hours a week or even a few hours a month, your help would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Mel Pope at mel@popefarmconservancy.org to learn more about this volunteer opportunity.

Volunteer Coordinators

We are looking for two or three volunteers to help us recruit and coordinate volunteers for Sunflower Days 2017. Sunflower Days is enjoyed by thousands every year, and a strong volunteer effort is essential to the success of this event. The time commitment for this volunteer coordinator position is approximately 5-10 hour/week in the weeks leading up to Sunflower Days (mid-late July 2017). As you may recall, there are over 100 volunteers shifts to fill, so we need help calling members and past volunteers to start filling shifts. If you are interested in talking about this position, please contact Mel Pope at mel@popefarmconservancy.org.

Newsletter and Social Media Contributor

We are looking for members who are interested in contributing an article or photo for our monthly news update, biannual newsletter or Facebook Page. If you're interested in helping out, please email info@popefarmconservancy.org.

Questions of the Month

Why are Sunflowers grown at PFC?

It is difficult to grow sunflowers in the climate and soil here in South Central Wisconsin. People seldom grow sunflowers commercially in this area because it is far more profitable to grow corn and soybeans. At Pope Farm Conservancy, the farmer is asked to grow 7 different crops (corn, soybeans, alfalfa, timothy, wheat, oats, and... sunflowers), and in turn, he receives a reduced lease rate on the land. Over the last 9 years, the farmer has actually lost money on the sunflower crop. However, he does make money on the more profitable crops at the Conservancy, and that makes growing the sunflowers possible. The farmer also does things to the Sunflower field, to his expense, to make the field more attractive, i.e. cutting out areas for photo opportunities and mowing down parts of the field that are not growing well. Consequently, PFC has had stunning Sunflower fields over the years that have been an attraction to tens of thousands of people. The farmer's seed supplier has gone out of business, and he is currently researching where he can get the type of seed he needs to plant in 2017.

If you have a question for us, please send it to info@popefarmconservancy.org and we will try to answer it

Friend of the Month

Thank you, Bob Wink!

Bob Wink has been a very active volunteer for the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy. Bob is part of the Logistics team that helped with the event flow of Sunflower Days. Long before the event was being held, Bob made measuring devices to help lay out the signage. He spent time putting up the directional signs around the Conservancy so people would know where to park and where to go. When he was done with the signage, Bob was one of the Supervisors who helped direct parking during those hectic Sunflower days. In addition, Bob has volunteered to help in the prairies on numerous occasions, going after invasives, and helping with seed collection. Recently Bob volunteered to become an FOPFC board member to head the corporate donations and sponsorship team. Bob Wink has truly made a difference at Pope Farm Conservancy.



And a happy field of sunflowers to you, Bob!

Photo of the Month

The Sunflowers were harvested at Pope Farm Conservancy on November 15th, 2016. It was the last crop to be harvested this season.



Photo by Janie Starzewski

Thank you, Supporters!

As the year comes to a close, we'd like to take this opportunity to thank our members, donors, and dedicated volunteers for all your support and hard work this year. What we've accomplished together is quite amazing! You can read all about the FOPFC's 2016 accomplishments in our upcoming newsletter, which will be mailed out in January. In the meantime, we want to wish a very safe and happy holiday season! And we look forward to the many exciting events and projects to come in 2017.

If you would like to make a year-end contribution, please send a check via mail (FOPFC, 10333 Blackhawk Road, Middleton, WI 53562) or submit your donation online at <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/donate/>. All donations are tax-deductible.

Thanks again for your continued support!

Winter Membership Drive

Gift Memberships Available!

To gift a membership to a friend or loved one, simply download the printable Gift Membership Form at https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/FOPFC_Gift_Membership_Form.pdf and send the completed form along with a check (payable to Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy) to FOPFC, 10333 Blackhawk Rd, Middleton, WI 53562.



Renew Your Membership Today!

Just a reminder...you can now renew your membership securely online using a debit or credit card. Click on the button to the right or go to <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/membership/> to renew your membership today! If you have already renewed your membership, THANK YOU! As a member of FOPFC, you will continue to receive monthly updates on the Conservancy, bi-annual newsletters, notification of education tours and special events, and invitations to help us in our volunteer efforts. Memberships are good for one (1) calendar year from the last date of your previous membership. We hope you enjoy being a part of our community.

Connect with FOPFC on Facebook

Are you on Facebook? It's a great way to share your pictures and stories with others who "like" Pope Farm Conservancy.

<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfPopeFarmConservancy>



Thank you for joining the
Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy!
Our Journey Begins and You are part of it!

