



March 2017 News Update

Sunflower Days 2017 Announced

July 29 – August 6 (tentative)

Sunflower Days is tentatively scheduled for July 29 through August 6, 2017, depending on the planting season. The Sunflower Field will return to the top of the hill overlooking Lake Mendota. Last year, approximately 84,000 visitors attended Sunflower Days, and it has become a tradition to many thousands of families.

The Friends have been working on the development of a parking lane. This is necessary in order to increase our ability to park cars in the fields. Re-grind asphalt will be used for the parking lane, and we believe that it will hold up better than soil. We expect over 20,000 cars will utilize the new parking lane this year. The parking lane was approved by the Town of Middleton and Dane County. Construction will begin as soon as the area dries out, and will take 2 days to complete. As always, if it is actually raining, Sunflower Days may temporarily close due to parking concerns.



Ice at Pope Farm Conservancy Stress Trees



Photos by Mike McDowell

Beauty came to the conservancy in late February, but at a cost. These remarkable photos were taken by Mike McDowell on February 25th after the ice storm. A number of trees lost some of their limbs, but it was a breath-taking phenomenon. Thanks to Mike for shooting these photos. Here is the link to some of the other "Ice" photos that Mike took that day: <http://birddigiscoper.blogspot.com/2017/02/ice.html>



Upcoming FOPFC Meetings

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

Events Team Meeting

When: March 21, 2017, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

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

The Events Team will be discussing FOPFC events for 2017, finalizing the public tour dates, and making plans for Sunflower Days. 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.

Education Team Meeting

When: April 25th, 2017, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

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

We will begin be working on the history of farming on the land where the conservancy is today, and researching the stories necessary to use for the interactive tour. We will be looking at the history of the crops, ownership, buildings, non-tillable land, and the stone fence. These are great meetings and always very educational! We hope you'll stop by.

Question of the Month

How will the landscape surrounding PFC change this summer?

Probably the biggest change to the landscape will be the construction of the new 1-million-gallon water tower across the conservancy on Old Sauk Rd. Construction on this project is to begin next month, and be completed in the fall of 2018. The FOPFC helped convince the City of Madison Water Utility Board to do make a slight change in location. This change will keep the water tower out of the photo corridor for Sunflower shots like the photo on page 1. The water tower has been planned at this location for almost 20 years.



More construction will take place immediately West of the conservancy as part of the Blackhawk development, and development will continue on the South side of Old Sauk Rd south to Elderberry Rd.

These projects will be very noticeable from Pope Farm Conservancy. As we see these developments occur, we realize the Pope Farm Conservancy is becoming an oasis for reflection, and a harbor to wildlife.

Photo credit: Madison Water Utility

Goals for 2017

As the FOPFC gears up for an exciting year, we wanted to share our list of goals for 2017. We have a lot to accomplish, and we are always looking for members to join in the fun!

In 2017, we will...

- Offer 10 educational tours/talks that are free and open to the public
- Sponsor Sunflower Days (which drew over 84,000 visitors last year)
- Assist in efforts to preserve the Pope Farm Homestead property
- Manage 4 prairies at Pope Farm Conservancy for the Town of Middleton
- Collect, process, and plant prairie seeds to improve the quality and diversity of the prairies at PFC
- Coordinate volunteer efforts to help control invasive species in the conservancy
- Administer the self-guided tour program that contains 4 different tour/topics
- Assist the State Historical Society with the Educational field trips to Pope Farm Conservancy
- Assist the UW Soils Department to educate the public about Erosion utilizing the new trail at PFC, called "Soil Conservation, Soil on the Move"
- Sell the Sunflower Seeds from the Sunflower crop to help the farmer.
- Research, develop, and install additional signage to share the history of the Land
- Design and help build a parking lane for the Conservancy, to insure parking is available in the future.
- Research and Design the interactive tour project. This long-term program will give the visitor the ability to access "the land and its stories" by handheld devices.

Send us an email at info@popefarmconservancy.org and let us know which project(s) you may be interested in helping out with. Additional volunteer opportunities are listed below.

Call for Volunteers

Please consider giving back a few hours a month to make Pope Farm Conservancy the best it can be. Most of the work can be done from your home, and we will train you! Thanks for your consideration!

FOPFC Administrative Support

As the Friends group has grown, so has the work load for the administration of the FOPFC. We need one or two members to help the Board with general administrative tasks such as membership and marketing communications, data entry and records management, and occasionally running errands. If you can spare a couple hours a week or every month, your help would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Mel Pope at mel@popefarmconservancy.org to learn more.

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). We need help calling members and past volunteers to start filling shifts. Contact Mel Pope at mel@popefarmconservancy.org if you're interested.

Social Media Coordinator

The PR Team is seeking a social media coordinator to manage our Facebook page. This ongoing volunteer opportunity requires a tech or PR savvy individual willing to schedule and post engaging content, communicate with our followers, and promote our events throughout the year. Ideally, this volunteer is someone who visits the Conservancy regularly and can take photos from time-to-time to post on our Facebook page. Estimated commitment: flexible schedule of 1-2 hours per week, generally but not always working from home. If you're interested in helping out, please email info@popefarmconservancy.org.

Friend of the Month

Thank you, Kristie Pope!

Few people know how important Kristie Pope is to the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy. For those of you who do not know, Kristie is the wife of Mel Pope and it is her support that helps make things happen for the FOPFC. Kristie loves being grandma to 7 grandchildren and is a very busy person. Her support to the FOPFC has been terrific and indispensable.

Kristie helps with the members' picnics, provides treats to the FOPFC board meetings once a month, insulated the water tanks for events, spent 8 days at the water table during Sunflower Days, helped put in the rain garden at PFC, her basement is stocked with the FOPFC printing and picnic supplies, and the barn stores FOPFC equipment. She proofreads newsletters, news updates and correspondence for the Friends. She has helped with Heritage Day, and had board meetings in her home for over a year.

The Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy would not be what it is today without the support that has been given by Kristie Pope, and she has truly made a difference at Pope Farm Conservancy! Thank You!



And a happy field of sunflowers to you, Kristie!

Renew Your Membership

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, our annual magazine, 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.

Photo of the Month

Thank you to Barbara Esser for capturing this stunning photo of the ice covering the trees at Pope Farm Conservancy last month.



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!**

