



## July 2017 Newsletter

### Upcoming Events

#### **Geology Tour & The Glaciers at PFC (Rescheduled)**

Thursday, July 20th, 6:00 – 7:30 pm  
Host: Eric Carson, Geologist and Assistant Professor, WI Geological and Natural History Survey

Unfortunately, the Geology Tour on May 10th was rained out... for the third year in a row! So, this tour has been rescheduled for July 20th, from 6:00 – 7:30 pm. Geology is one of the crucial stories of the land at Pope Farm Conservancy, and we thank Eric Carson for rescheduling. Pope Farm Conservancy has many geological features. Learn how the glacier made this Conservancy the way it is. View the terminal moraine, walk three recessional moraines and stand where three different water-sheds come together (overlooking the city of Madison). And find out where the rocks came from that were used to build the iconic stone fence! This tour will be a fascinating look back in time. *All FOPFC tours are free and open to the public. No registration is necessary. We will meet in the lower parking lot by the Old Sauk Road entrance.*



#### **Sunflower Days: August 12-20, 2017**

Sunflower Days will be a bit unusual this year. The first planting was unsuccessful; however, we will see some sporadic blooming from the 1st crop, mainly on the west end of the field. This will occur before our scheduled Sunflower Days event. The second planting was more successful, but due to cool wet weather, the crop will not be as spectacular as other years. This is what farming is all about. There will still be plenty of Sunflowers for photo opportunities, and the peak blooming for the majority of the field is projected to be during Sunflower Days from August 12th-20th.

Part of the field will need to be “sculpted”, meaning that the weedy areas (on the east end) will need to be cut down to produce the best photo opportunities.



## Volunteers Needed for Sunflower Days!

The FOPFC sponsors Sunflower Days for the enjoyment of the general public. It is free and provides smiles to thousands of visitors. Along the way, it serves to increase the awareness of Pope Farm Conservancy so that more people will enjoy the land and its stories.



The Friends also use this event as our primary fundraiser. First, we need to pay for the expenses created by Sunflower Days like insurance, signage, parking paint, and the list goes on. Secondly, we are trying to raise funds to improve the quality of the prairies at PFC, involve the community to help to maintain the conservancy, and work on developing more educational opportunities for people of all ages.

**To achieve these goals, we need many volunteers over the 9 days of Sunflower Days!** There are over 100 shifts to fill during this 9-day event that comprises about 400 volunteer time slots. Please, please, please, we need your help!! The shifts are usually 2 hours in duration, and we will train you. Snacks and water will be provided. It really is a lot of fun!

### Volunteers shifts include:

- **Main Table**: Will include water sales, Souvenir Sales and information. We will send information to volunteers so that questions can be answered. You will be a goodwill ambassador for the conservancy and share in the excitement and happiness of Sunflower Days. Each day shifts will be: 10:00 a.m-12:30 p.m., 12:30-2:30 p.m., 2:30-4:30 pm, 4:30-6:30 p.m., 6:30-8:30 p.m. (2 volunteers will be needed for each shift)
- **Donation Tables**: These tables will have a donation jar, and information about the Sunflowers. As a goodwill ambassador, you will help greet visitors on their way to visit the Sunflower field. We will provide further information so questions can be answered. This is a critical part of the FOPFC fundraising effort! Each day shifts will be: 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 12:30-2:30 p.m., 2:30-4:30 pm, 4:30-6:30 p.m., 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- **Parking**: We really need help here! We have spent a great deal of time designing the parking areas so that people can self-park. However, we need many volunteers to monitor overflow conditions and help redirect traffic to other areas if necessary. FOPFC membership is not required to be a parking attendant. Please help us by recruiting your friends, family, neighbors, etc. Each Day shifts are 2 hours long from 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Please see schedule online.

To sign up online, go to <http://signup.com/go/CSZEBnr> and select the shift(s) you like. If you prefer not to sign up online, please contact Anna Abbott at [anna@popefarmconservancy.org](mailto:anna@popefarmconservancy.org).

## **The Middleton Cross Plains Areas School District (MCPASD) Field Trips**

The MCPASD field trips for the fourth graders have become a wonderful tradition both spring and fall. Over the past 11 years, thousands of students have enjoyed the experience that is the subject of this article. Thanks to the State Historical Society, the UW Geology Museum, the naturalists that work with the School district, the MCPASD, the Town of Middleton, and the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy. A special thanks to Cynthia Shaw for writing the following article.



### **Middleton 4th Graders Visit Pope Farm Conservancy to Take Learning Outside the Classroom**

*By Cynthia Shaw*

The sounds of laughter and the curiosity of 4th graders from the Middleton Cross Plains Area Schools filled Pope Farm Conservancy over three days in late May when they visited to complete their studies of Wisconsin History. As part of the Educational programming of Pope Farm, the Middleton Cross Plains Area School District created a curriculum specific to the conservancy which is taught in 4th grade and includes Wisconsin History.

Students from each of the six elementary schools spent a half a day learning more about the history of Wisconsin and the history of Pope Farm Conservancy. During their visit, they rotated through six stations spending 20 minutes at each. As part of the Geology study, Richard Slaughter from the UW Geology Museum shared a picture vision of which animals lived 13,000 years ago as the Ice Age was ending, also sharing how fossils were created and then found for many years after the Ice Age was completed. He shared how the land was changed due to the pushing and shoving of the ice and how it created the hills and valley we can see as we visit today.

At the Rock Identification station, the students were challenged to locate as many types of rocks as they could in the beautiful stone wall which stretches through the conservancy. Students



gathered around the beautifully illustrated signs in the circle at the top of the hill to expand their knowledge of the Ice Age by talking about how far the ice actually reached across what is now known as Canada and the U.S. and how thick it would have been.

Students then continued their learning by heading to the American Native Garden. They learned this garden represents foods that were eaten, AD 1000, which are very different from what we plant and eat today. Each student planted a single corn seed to assist with this year's planting of the garden. In the Archaeologist section, they learn how meticulous the work is to discover and preserve ancient ruins as well as how people would have created tools from stones, hunted animals for food as well as skins to use for housing and trading with others.

Finally, students participated in a Spring Collection game where they were challenged to make decisions about the resources gathered in the spring after a long winter where much of their food was depleted. If students choose well, they would survive until the new harvest was ready or they would perish. Staff from the State Historical Society and Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy Education Committee joined together with district naturalists to provide this educational experience presented to the students. We thank them for their time and expertise.

## Pope Farm Gardens

*By Cynthia Shaw*

The rain has subsided enough to allow volunteers to tackle the weeds in the two gardens at Pope Farm Conservancy, allowing young vegetables to take root and to flourish. We have also had to do some re-planting due to weather conditions. If you are visiting, stop by and take a look at the gardens.



The Mecklenberger's Garden represents food that would have been grown by the early Euro-American settlers in this area. Families would grow foods that could be stored through the long winters. The Heritage Garden represents Native American farming from AD 1000. Gardening was simple and corn was a new popular food at that time. Parallel ridges and swales were the method used by Native Americans to grow squash, goosefoot (a relative of quinoa), tobacco, gourds, and sunflowers. The ridges were built to enhance the fertility of the soil. Enjoy the sights of gardening of years gone by.

## Fall Seed Collection Announced

Registration is now open for summer and fall prairie seed collection sessions. We need your help to increase the diversity of prairie plant species at Pope Farm Conservancy and improve the overall quality of our prairies. Seed collection will take place on the following days:

- September, 2nd (Saturday) 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
- September, 15th, (Friday) 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
- October, 7th, (Saturday) 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
- October, 21st, (Saturday) 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

[Sign Up Online](#) or email Curt Caslavka at [curt@popefarmconservancy.org](mailto:curt@popefarmconservancy.org) and let him know which session(s) you would like to attend.

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## Upcoming FOPFC Meetings

We welcome everyone to attend the following meetings to observe, offer your viewpoint, or to join these committees if you are interested.

### Education Team Meeting

**When:** Tuesday, July 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 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.

### Events Team Meeting

**When:** Wednesday, August 2nd, 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 focusing on Sunflower Days - finalizing all the details for the BIG event. This is a great opportunity to see how the team works. Consider joining this great group of people who have fun giving back to the community. We will begin 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.

## Past Events

### **Birds of Pope Farm Conservancy Tour - June 17th, 2017**

Mike McDowell led a wonderful walking tour for about 40 of us on a beautiful Saturday morning at Pope Farm Conservancy. Mike is amazing, and shared his knowledge as he identified many birds in the Conservancy. Mike's tours are always popular, and we thank him for sharing his wealth of knowledge.

*Photo by Lee Pray*



### **Prairie Savanna Walking Tour - July 8th, 2017**



*Photo by Janie Starzewski*

Thirty people enjoyed a beautiful and informative walk through the Pope Conservancy prairies Saturday, July 8th. The walk was led by restoration ecologist, Mike Anderson, who identified native prairie plants and explained some of the challenges of managing the prairies. The prairies are very showy right now, at the height of their bloom. Thank you, Mike, for a wonderful tour and for all you do throughout the year to help make the prairies at Pope Farm Conservancy beautiful.

### **Weeding in the Sunflower Field – July 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>**

A BIG thanks to all the volunteers who came out (on short notice) to pull weeds in the Sunflower Field on July 8th & 9th. The late planting, cool weather, and an excess of rain has helped promote the weeds in the Sunflower Field. It was a daunting task, but we managed to dig out most of the Giant Ragweed on Saturday, and we pushed back the weeds growing around the sunflowers on Sunday. Thanks so much to all who helped. Your efforts will surely make a difference!

*Photo by Barbara Esser*





## **Question of the Month**

**Question:** Why is there so much construction activity across the road from the Conservancy?

**Answer:** The City of Madison has begun construction of the Blackhawk Water tower across Old Sauk Rd. This water tower will be 170' high and have the capacity to store one million gallons of water. After the foundation is complete, you should see it rise about 4' a day until completion.



## **Friend of the Month**

**Thank you, Mary Collet!**

The rain garden at PFC is always beautiful. This does not happen without a great deal of effort. Unbeknownst to most people there is one person who makes it her mission to maintain the rain garden. Mary Collet is that person, and for the last several years, Mary has taken the responsibility to work on the rain garden and has made it what it is today. We want to thank Mary for all she has done, and for keeping up this beautiful garden for all to enjoy. Mary, you have made a difference at the Conservancy!



**And a happy field of sunflowers to you, Mary!**

**Photos of the Month**



"Golden Finch - Female"

*Photo by Bryan Palchik*



"Golden Sunset"

*Photo by Sunil Gopalan*

What do you love most about Pope Farm Conservancy? Send us a picture of your favorite PFC feature, and we'll share it with our membership. Email your photos to [info@popefarmconservancy.org](mailto:info@popefarmconservancy.org). Thanks!



### **Renew Your Membership**

**Just a reminder...**you can now renew your membership securely online using a debit or credit card. We also accept check by mail. Go

to <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/membership/> to renew your membership today! If you have already renewed your membership, THANK YOU for your support.

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 Online**

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

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

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/friendsofpopefarmconservancy>

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

