

NEWS FROM FRIENDS OF  
**POPE FARM**  
**CONSERVANCY**

Volume 3, Issue 2

PRESERVING THE LAND AND ITS STORIES



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

## Celebrating the Friends

BY MEL POPE

As we celebrate our 5th anniversary, it is a time to look at all of our accomplishments with pride. These things could not have happened without you, our members.

When the Friends started 5 years ago, a few people who had a passion for Pope Farm Conservancy (PFC) outlined what a friends group could do to enhance and protect the Conservancy.

We defined the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy's mission as:

"To contribute to the enrichment of Pope Farm Conservancy as a community and educational asset. We strive to protect and preserve the balance of the Conservancy's unique natural, agricultural and historical features and volunteer as stewards to promote our passive conservancy."

Since that initial meeting, here are just some of the amazing things accomplished by the Friends in the last 5 years:

- Achieved 501 C (3) nonprofit status
- Added the rain garden
- Added the Paddock Oak Savanna
- Manage four prairies for the Town
- Purchased UTV and tools for prairie management
- Obtained three grants
- Hosted over 50 free educational tours
- Hosted Sunflower Days for hundreds of thousands of people—free to the public
- Hosted Sunflower Days without a major safety incident
- Developed self-guided tours for public
- Monitored trails in the Conservancy
- Developed partnerships and relationships with:
  - Middleton Cross Plains School District
  - Wisconsin Historical Society
  - Wisconsin Geological & Natural History Survey
  - UW-Madison Soil Science Dept.
  - UW-Madison Agronomy Dept.
  - Max Kade Institute
  - Clark St. Community School
- Developed vision for long-term use of the Homestead site with:
  - Groundswell Conservancy
  - Aldo Leopold Nature Center
- Advocated for protecting the tranquility of PFC
- Successfully petitioned to move water tower
- Instructed high school students on vegetation survey
- Tagged Monarch butterflies
- Collected and processed seed for PFC and Town (saving \$\$\$)
- Held 25+ seed collection sessions
- Developing an interactive tour project for public
  - Clark St. School film, research project
- Developed interest for the "Soils on the Move" trail w/UW Soils Dept
- Developed new signage at PFC Civilian Conservation Corps Spillway, and Paddock Oak Savanna
  - Coordinated the addition of two amphitheaters
  - Did engineering to recommend erosion control on trails
- Sold Sunflower Days seeds for farmer
- Contributed greatly to the garden shed
- Engineered & funded parking lane
- Became a member of the Prairie Partner program to share summer interns with the following:
  - Madison Audubon (Goose Pond)
  - UW Lakeshore Nature Preserve
  - Groundswell Conservancy
  - Madison Audubon (Goose Pond)
  - UW Lakeshore Nature Preserve
  - Pheasant Branch Conservancy
- Started an "Adopt a Plant" program
- Took over Native American portion of MCPASD field trips
- Assist with Native American and Interpretive garden display
- Donated over 20,000 hours of volunteer work
- Recruited 600+ members over 18



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Michelle Bartman—Administration Advisor  
Jerry McAdow—Counsel Advisor

### FOPFC Mission

Our mission is to contribute to the enrichment of Pope Farm Conservancy as a community and educational asset. We strive to protect and preserve the balance of the conservancy's unique natural, agricultural and historical features and volunteer as stewards to promote our passive conservancy.

### Purposes

- Advance and facilitate educational opportunities and interpretive programming in the Pope Farm Conservancy for students and the general public.
- Preserve the balance of wildlife habitat, historic, geologic, agricultural, environmental, and scenic features of the Pope Farm Conservancy.
- Protect natural landscapes and grass trails, wildlife and their habitat, and the general public's tranquil enjoyment of the Pope Farm Conservancy as a passive conservancy free from commercial activity; motorized vehicles and bicycles; dogs; and organized sports that require athletic fields or open space.
- Through volunteer activities, support the Town of Middleton in the maintenance, improvement and general enrichment of the Pope Farm Conservancy as an educational and community asset.
- Solicit gifts, funds, endowments, and bequests to support these purposes.

### Contact Us

**Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy**  
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info@popefarmconservancy.org



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### THE WHITE BARN

Inside the iconic White Barn that graces the views from the Pope Farm Conservancy, remnants of the busy farm operations that once took place here are still visible. It's a different view than most people see, but one with an important story to tell about the land.



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### EVENTS CALENDAR 2018

All FOPFC tours are free and open to the public. No registration is necessary.  
More info: [www.popefarmconservancy.org](http://www.popefarmconservancy.org)  
Contact: [info@popefarmconservancy.org](mailto:info@popefarmconservancy.org)



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### FRIENDS CELEBRATE 5-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

In 2018, the Friends are celebrating their five-year anniversary with nearly 600 members from 335 households.



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### SAVANNAH SPARROWS

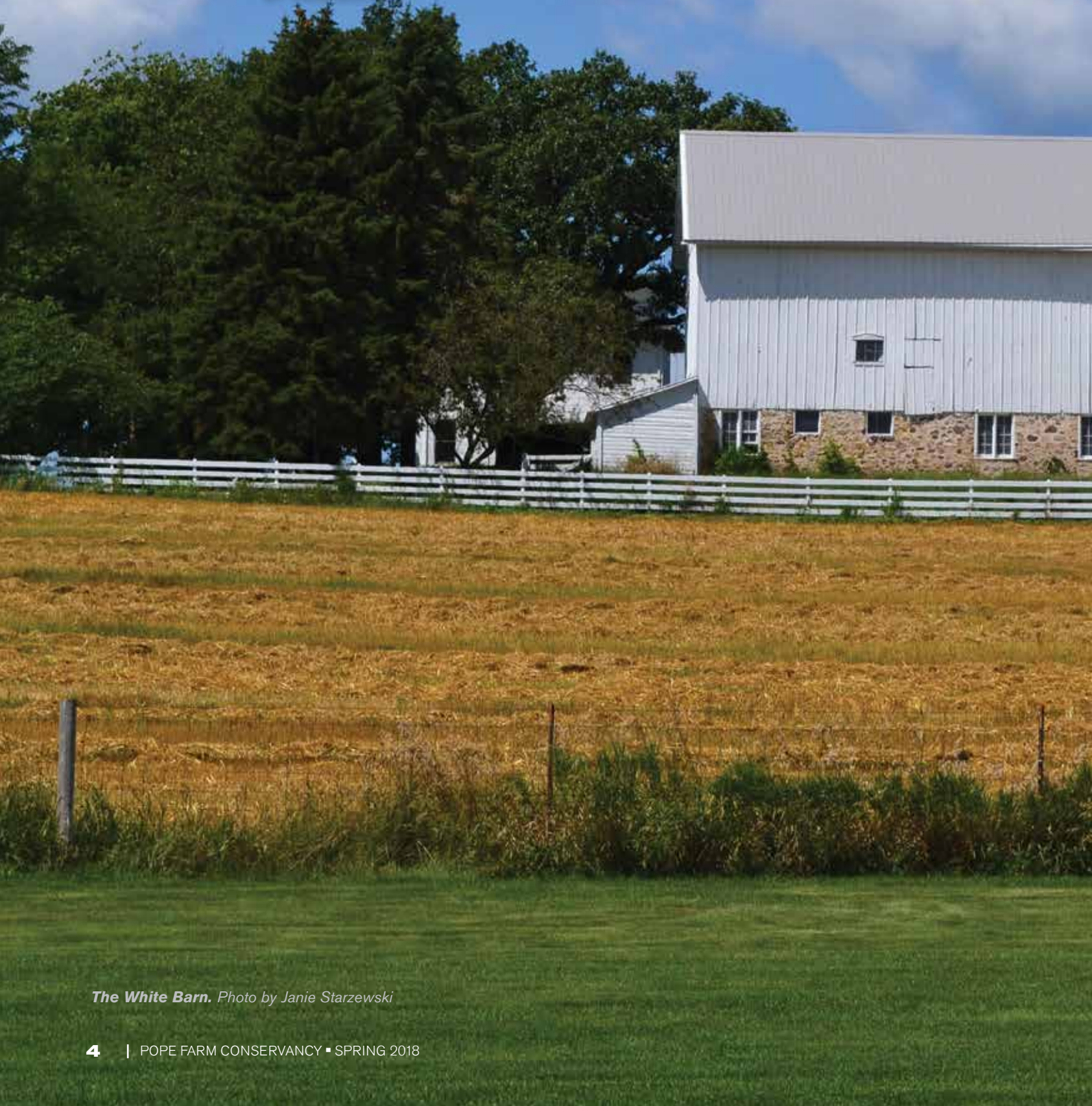
Savannah Sparrows return to Pope Farm Conservancy in early April and stay until late August or early September.



FEATURE

# THE WHITE

BY MEG GORES



*The White Barn. Photo by Janie Starzewski*

# BARN

AT THE POPE FARM CONSERVANCY



Sunlight streams in between the old barn boards on this chilly spring morning. Inside the iconic White Barn that graces the views from the Pope Farm Conservancy, remnants of the busy farm operations that once took place here are still visible. It's a different view than most people see, but one with an important story to tell about the land.

## THE WHITE BARN'S HISTORY

Built in 1914, the White Barn is part of the original homestead built by the Brumm family, owners of the farm from 1914 until 1959. The 15 acres along Old Sauk Road also include two dwellings, a garage and outbuildings. Charles and Lena Brumm, and later their sons Elmer and Clarence, farmed the middle section of today's Conservancy and Blackhawk Ski Club land. In honor of the Brumm family, an amphitheater designed to be used as an outdoor classroom stands on the Conservancy today.

The White Barn's spacious interior contains five large bays. High overhead, heavy black hooks are part of a pulley system that was once used to lift and transport straw and hay across the barn. The material was then lowered through a trap door down to the beef cattle or sheep housed below.

The barn's lower level was home to livestock and functioned as the center of operations for the farm. This is where the Pope family, which purchased the farm in 1959, raised beef cattle and Hampshire sheep—a breed named for its birthplace in Hampshire, England. By the 1960s, the Pope Farm Hampshires had garnered a world-class reputation as champions.

A major activity that took place in the White Barn was sheep shearing. As the photos demonstrate, this was a job that required physical strength, coordination and skill.

After Pope Farm became a conservancy in 2000, the Town of Middleton asked Art Pope if the sheep could continue to graze on the land, helping to control vegeta-



*Yearly freezing-and-thawing makes the barn boards contract in the uninsulated structure, letting wind through the cracks. Photo by Greg Wagner*



*Shearing sheep required a combination of skill and strength. Photo by Winfred Byrd*



*Art Pope and his prized Hampshire sheep. Photo by Jeff Martin, JMAR Foto-Werks*

*Looking out to the Conservancy from inside the lower level of the White Barn. Photo by Greg Wagner*



*The White Barn, built in 1914. Photo by Kim Upton*

tion on the trails. Visitors in those days were often treated to the sight of sheep “manicuring” the trails.

When Art Pope decided to sell his flock, he made sure his beloved Hampshires would be in a place where he could still visit them. The University of Wisconsin-River Falls purchased the animals, using them for their own sheep breeding program, which continues to grow.

### THE WHITE BARN TODAY

The barn is no longer involved in agricultural production, but it’s the source of a scenic vista enjoyed by thousands of visitors and Friends to the Pope Farm Conservancy every year. For many people, it’s hard to think of the Conservancy without thinking of the White Barn.

In reality, the barn and the homestead are not a part of the Conservancy and are privately owned. There are no plans for change at this time. But because it’s been a part of the landscape for so many years, it’s difficult to visualize what the land would look like without the White Barn. The artist’s rendering here gives an idea of how the viewing corridor might change if the land were to be developed, rather than preserved.

The Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, hopes to sustain the historical view. The Save the Barn team (part of FOPFC), has been meeting for several years on how the land could be used to enhance the Conservancy’s educational mission. If the FOPFC is to be successful in its efforts, a funding source would need to be identified.

Next time you are in the area, take some time to enjoy the scenic view of the old White Barn and recall the important role it’s played in the lives of two farm families and the Pope Farm Conservancy for more than 100 years.



*Newly sheared sheep from Art Pope’s flock at home in the White Barn. Photo by Winfred Byrd*

## SAVE THE BARN!



*This graphic interpretation shows the view from the Pope Farm Conservancy with development in place of the current barn and homestead.*

# 2018 EVENTS POPE FARM CONSERVANCY CALENDAR

## MAY



### Archaeology Tour at Pope Farm Conservancy Thursday, May 10th, 2018

6:00 - 7:30 pm

Speaker: Dr. Amy Rosebrough, Archaeologist with Wisconsin Historical Society

Dr. Amy L. Rosebrough will lead a guided walking tour of the archaeology of Pope Farm Conservancy, from ancient Native American hunting sites to erosion control structures dating to the Great Depression. Artifacts from Wisconsin's past will be available to examine and explore, and pre-Contact-Era hunting and gardening techniques will be demonstrated.

## JUNE



### Geology Tour at Pope Farm Conservancy Thursday, June 7th, 2018

6:00 - 7:30 pm

Speaker: Eric Carson, Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey

Join Eric Carson, glacial geologist with the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey, on a unique geology tour at Pope Farm Conservancy. Eric will give us the history of the Conservancy's fascinating geological features, such as the terminal moraine and the three recessional moraines (which you will be able to walk). Enjoy the spectacular view where three watersheds meet, overlooking the city of Madison. Eric will even reveal where the rocks came from that were used to build the Conservancy's iconic stone fence. Don't miss this fascinating look back in time!

### Bees and Pollinators Talk at Pope Farm Conservancy Tuesday, June 12th, 2018

6:00 - 7:30 pm

Speaker: Susan Carpenter, Outreach Specialist at the Native Plant Garden of the UW-Madison Arboretum

Pope Farm Conservancy provides a quality habitat that supports a wide range of pollinators, including butterflies, moths, beetles, flies, wasps, and most importantly, bees. Join Susan Carpenter for a fascinating talk about the diversity, life histories, habitats, and roles of Wisconsin pollinators, and how you can protect and promote them in your own garden and landscapes.



### Birding Tour at Pope Farm Conservancy Saturday, June 16th, 2018

7:00 - 8:30 am

Mike McDowell, local naturalist, birder and nature photographer

Bird-watchers and nature lovers, grab your binoculars and join Mike McDowell on an exciting birding excursion through Pope Farm Conservancy. Come see how the prairies and restored oak savanna at Pope Farm Conservancy provide habitat for numerous bird species, including bluebirds, indigo buntings, eastern wood-pewee, wild turkey, and great crested flycatchers at different times of the year. Bring binoculars if you have them, wear comfortable walking shoes, and dress for the weather. If you are in need of binoculars, please contact Mike at (800) 289-1132 or [mmcdowell@eagleoptics.com](mailto:mmcdowell@eagleoptics.com).



Bryan Palchik

## JULY



### Prairies & Oak Savanna Tour at Pope Farm Conservancy Saturday, July 14th, 2018

9:00 - 10:30 am

Speaker: Mike Anderson

Join Mike Anderson on a beautiful scenic tour of Pope Farm Conservancy's six different prairies and a restored Oak Savanna. Come hear the story of how crop fields and bare ground were restored to two of the world's rarest and most biologically diverse ecosystems. This is your chance to ask prairie restoration and management questions and learn to identify native plants. It's a great learning opportunity for the whole family!

## AUGUST



### Pope Farm Conservancy's Annual Tour Tuesday, August 7th, 2018

6:00 - 7:30 pm

Speaker: Mel Pope, FOPFC Chair

Join Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy chair Mel Pope on a fascinating exploration of the conservancy, including its unique history, geology, prairies, soils, glacial features and 20 different vegetative plots. Mel will share the stories of the people who lived and worked here, from Native Americans to German immigrants to the Civilian Conservation Corps. Along the way, you'll see a breathtaking 360-degree panoramic view of Lake Mendota, the Capitol, Black Earth Creek valley and the terminal moraine. This extraordinary tour is one you definitely won't want to miss!



**Nature Photography at Pope Farm Conservancy**

**Saturday, Aug 18th, 2018**

**8:00 - 9:30 am**

*Speaker: John B. McComb, wildlife/outdoor photographer, instructor and photo group/nature guide*

Join us for a beautiful nature photography hike at Pope Farm Conservancy. We will meet at the top of the hill for introductions and a short talk on basic photography composition in nature and wildlife. We will find many subjects to photograph at the conservancy, including insects and pollinators, birds, rolling landscapes and fields of crops and prairies. Bring your photo gear – this should be an excellent shoot! Depending on the weather, be prepared for mud/wet trails and insects. Good shoes or boots and long pants are recommended.



Matt Haynor

**Friends' Annual Party – Brunch with a View**

**Saturday, Aug 18th, 2018**

**10:00 - 11:30 am**

*Speaker: Mel Pope, FOPFC Chair: Vision of the future at Pope Farm*

This year marks the 5th anniversary of FOPFC, and what better way to celebrate than with a delicious brunch among "Friends." We hope you'll join us for our annual gathering on top of the hill at Pope Farm Conservancy. This is a great chance to hang out and celebrate another wonderful year of friendship and fun. Mel Pope will be recapping the FOPFC's accomplishments over the years and discussing our vision of the future at Pope Farm. The brunch is open to all FOPFC supporters. We invite you to bring your family and friends, too. No registration necessary. Please bring a dish to pass. We will provide beverages and tableware.



**SEPTEMBER**



Bryan Palchik

**Migrating Birds at Pope Farm Conservancy**

**Sunday, Sept 9th, 2018**

**7:00 - 8:30 am**

*Speaker: Mike McDowell, local naturalist, birder and nature photographer*

We invite you along on a leisurely walk through the Conservancy with birding expert Mike McDowell. This is your chance to witness the fall flight behaviors of the bird population at the conservancy. You will learn techniques to help you enjoy identifying and observing birds in their preferred habitats. Please bring binoculars if you have them, wear comfortable walking shoes, and dress for the weather. If you are in need of binoculars, contact Mike at (800) 289-1132 or [mmcdowell@eagleoptics.com](mailto:mmcdowell@eagleoptics.com).



**Monarch Butterfly Tagging at Pope Farm Conservancy**

**Sept 2018**

**Exact Dates - TBD**

In early September, visitors to Pope Farm Conservancy can often see hundreds of migrating monarch butterflies in the prairies and oak savanna. This year, the Friends hope to continue their Monarch Butterfly Tagging Project with the intention of capturing, tagging and releasing monarch butterflies at Pope Farm Conservancy as the insects migrate southward. This is all part of a nationwide effort to better understand these incredible butterflies and perhaps give us clues as to why their populations are in decline. We are hoping to purchase additional tags this year and invite members to help us with the tagging. Be sure to check our monthly news updates for more information or contact Curt Caslavka at [curt@popefarmconservancy.org](mailto:curt@popefarmconservancy.org) for more information.

**Prairie Seed Collection at Pope Farm Conservancy**

**Sept & Oct 2018**

**Time: 9:30 - 11:30 am**

**Dates: Saturday, Aug 25; Saturday, Sept 8; Friday, Sept 21; Saturday, Oct 13**

Every summer and fall, the FOPFC Prairie Team hosts a series of Prairie Work Days. Volunteers are needed to help collect prairie seed and/or remove invasive species (weeds). This can be a great project for individuals or groups! Volunteers enjoy getting off the trails and wading into the prairies and they always learn something about wildflowers and native prairie plants. Each session lasts about 2 hours. No previous experience is necessary. We recommend wearing gloves, long pants and footwear that covers your feet entirely. We provide tools, or you can bring your own. We will meet at the top of the hill, near the upper parking lot off Old Sauk Road.



**All tours take place at Pope Farm Conservancy**  
**7440 Old Sauk Rd, Verona, WI 53593**

**All FOPFC tours are free and open to the public. No registration is necessary.**

**More info:**  
**[www.popefarmconservancy.org](http://www.popefarmconservancy.org)**  
**Contact:**  
**[info@popefarmconservancy.org](mailto:info@popefarmconservancy.org)**

ANNIVERSARY

# FRIENDS OF POPE FARM CONSERVANCY CELEBRATE 5



In the spring of 2013, a group of dedicated volunteers formed the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy (FOPFC), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, ending the year with a total of 207 members. In 2018, the Friends are celebrating their five-year anniversary with about 600 members from 335 households.

The mission of the FOPFC is the same today as it was back in 2013: to enhance educational opportunities at the Conservancy; to preserve the balance of wildlife habitat and historical features; and to protect the Conservancy's scenic landscapes and tranquility for the

enjoyment of the public.

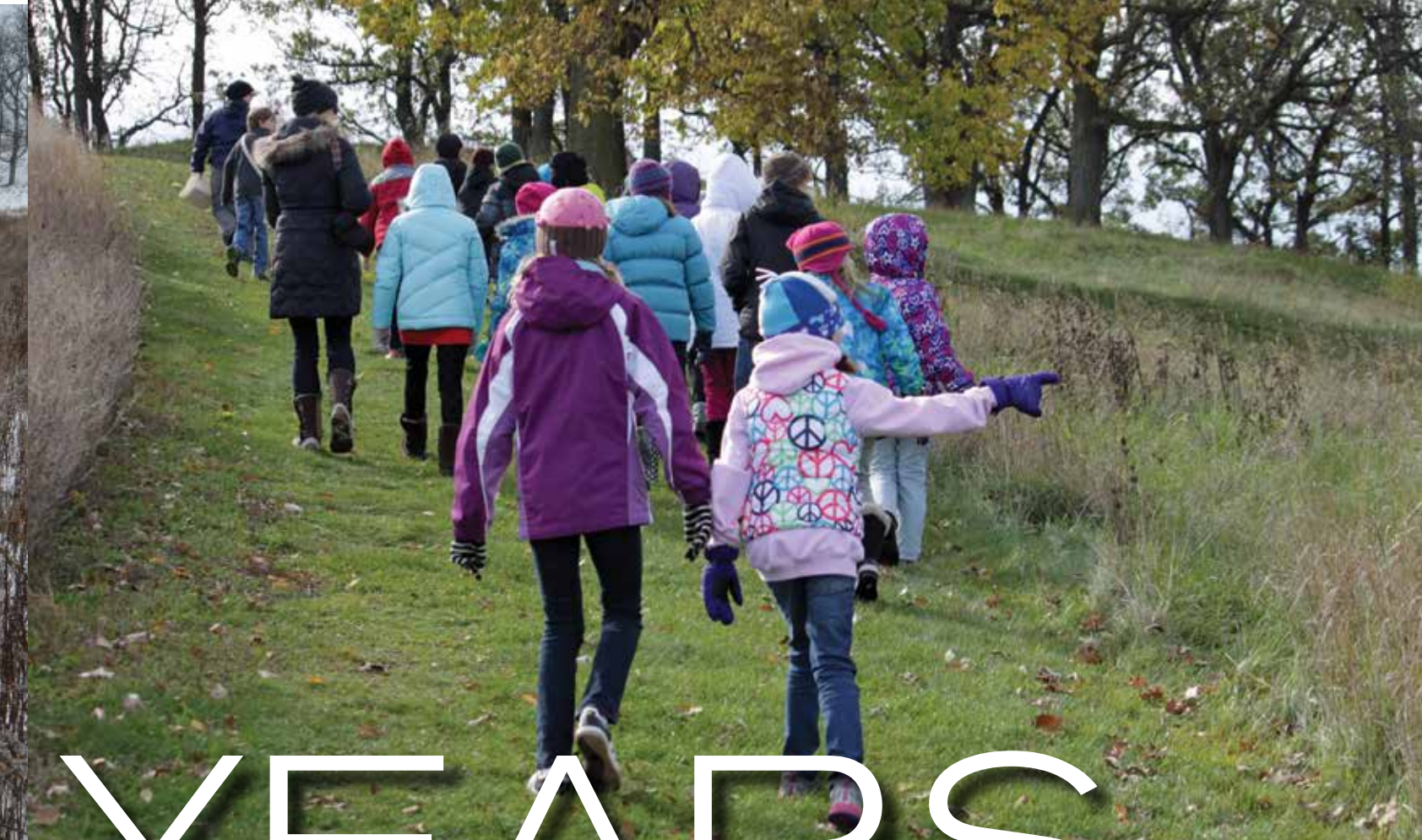
To fulfill their mission, the Friends have taken on a wide variety of projects over the past five years. For example, they have installed a rain garden, planted prairies in cold December weather, obtained grants to fund restoration efforts, collected and cleaned seed, hosted speakers, tours and events such as Sunflower Days, developed self-guided tours, led school field trips, managed restored areas, monitored the condition of trails and picnic areas, and much more.

Friends members have also establi-

shed working relationships and partnerships with many groups and organizations, including the Town of Middleton, the State Historical Society, the Blackhawk Ski Club, the Audubon Society the Aldo Leopold Nature Center, and the UW-Madison.

## WHY THEY VOLUNTEER

Long-time Friends cite different reasons why volunteering at the Conservancy means so much to them. "I found Pope Farm Conservancy as a place to get outside and enjoy nature, a getaway in the midst of all the



# YEARS



development,” says volunteer Anna Abbott. “When I learned of all it has to offer—the history, geology, farming practices, preserving prairies, and the focus on education for future generations, I was motivated to become a part of that.”

Working with the Friends group, Anna has developed friendships with others who feel the importance of preserving all the Conservancy has to offer. “How amazing to be a part of spreading Mr. Pope’s vision for everyone to appreciate this treasured property!”

Other Friends, like Barbara Esser,

find satisfaction in being good stewards of the land. “I enjoy the walking paths, vistas, seasonal changes and tranquility of the conservancy and joined the Friends to be a steward of the land,” she says.

“There is always a surprise for me at Pope Farm Conservancy,” Barbara notes. “Sometimes it’s as big as a rainbow, as small as a woolly bear caterpillar, as secretive as a badger, as fleeting as migrating monarch butterflies, or endangered as a rusty patched bumblebee....” Barbara enjoys meeting and learning from other

FOPFC members who share her passion for this unique and special place.

Volunteer Curt Caslavka made his first trip to the Conservancy in 2008 at the request of Mel Pope. “Mel asked Arlys and I if we would be interested in setting up a bluebird trail at Pope Farm,” says Curt. “After hiking the Conservancy and seeing its beauty for the first time, the trail seemed like a great idea.” Curt and his team built 20 bird houses, placing them along trails throughout the Conservancy. Since then, FOPFC volunteers have monitored the boxes weekly during the breeding season.

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ANNIVERSARY



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