

November 2020 News Update

Embracing the Ebb

“The season when to come, and when to go, To sing or cease to sing, we never know.”
- Alexander Pope (No known relation!)



Photo by Aaron Leist

Why is it that November always has a way of silently sneaking up on us, to catch us by surprise? Surely, we have learned the sequence of the months by now? After October comes, say it with me, November! Yet, suddenly, as the English poet Thomas Hood sullenly observed over two centuries ago, there’s “no shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees, no fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds.” Instead, we see silvery gray shafts revealing a familiar landscape stripped of all pretense. If you visit the Conservancy in late autumn, you’ll quickly realize that November’s beauty radiates from within.

Ah, November. It brings its cold days and early evenings. The October corn harvest has been completed. After producing nearly 24,000 pounds of food, the bustling Forward Garden has closed up shop in deference to Old Man Winter who never misses his visit (and frequently overstays his welcome.) Once again, the fires are lit and the hearthside beckons. The month begins with All Soul’s Day, a remembrance of all those we have loved and lost and slowly it unfolds to the season of thanks and sharing with others. It’s the time of year to bask in our bounty of riches and reflect on all that we are grateful for.

Pope Farm Events Update

2020 Events Recap

This year has been challenging in so many ways and on so many levels. This was especially true for the Friends of Pope Farms Events Committee. They had to rethink virtually everything they had planned for the entire year, with the emphasis on the word virtual. Rather than call it a year, the Committee was determined not to surrender to the pandemic and per their usual, brilliantly figured out what could work instead.

The end result was two highly successful fall presentations that lent themselves to a virtual format; Monarchs Habitat and Migration and Native American Spirituality. Interestingly, these events had a much greater impact than they could have had in 'normal' times. With the capability of Zoom technology, it was possible to host up to 100 people rather than the typical 20-30 in person, on site. Weather was not a concern and the sessions were recorded for those unable to 'attend.'

Watch the recording of the Monarch Talk here:

<https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/events/monarch-talk/>

Watch the recording of the Native American Spirituality Talk here:

<https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/events/native-american-spirituality-and-care-for-the-earth/>

While not all events can be done virtually (and this solution has its limitations for sure), the Events Committee plans to build on its success for 2021 as it maps out the events calendar for next year.

Do you have ideas for event topics and/or presenters that would be a good fit for a virtual format?

Please send your thoughts to Martha Zydowsky at mzydowsky@charter.net or better yet, participate in the next Events Committee meeting in November. On-line, of course. More info at the end of this newsletter.

Pope Farm Elementary School Teachers Tour

And for another event worth noting: On October 14th, staff from the Pope Farm Elementary School visited the Conservancy to learn more about this magical spot outside their doorstep.

Tour guide Mel Pope highlighted various features of the Conservancy, its rich history, and answered their questions. Masks, social distancing, high winds, and chilly weather made for a couple of fast moving, but interesting presentations. The staff is very enthusiastic about infusing the Conservancy into their teaching and looking forward to the future when they can bring their students out to enjoy the land and learn more about nature's ways.

Right: Pope Farm Elementary School Staff at Pope Farm Conservancy



Upcoming FOPFC Meetings

Our Education and Events Teams are now hosting their monthly meetings online via Zoom. We welcome you to participate in these meetings from the comfort of your home.

Education Team Meeting – ONLINE

When: November 17, at 6:30pm

Where: Online via Zoom - Email Doug Piper (dlpiper0413@gmail.com) to get the meeting link.

Discussion topics: Continuation on the history project and updates on plans with the school as available.

Events Committee Meeting- ONLINE

When: November 9, at 6:00 p.m.

Where: Online via Zoom- Email Martha Zydowsky (mzydowsky@charter.net) to get the meeting link.

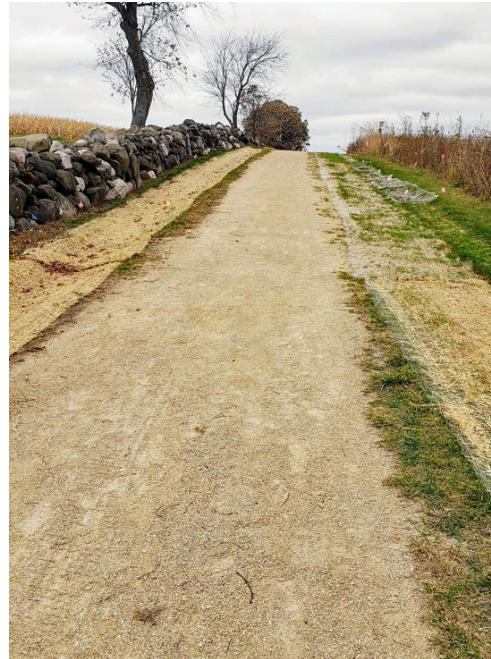
Discussion Topics: Planning the Events Calendar for 2021

On the Land Updates

Stone Fence Trail



July 2020: Repairs in progress



Oct 2020: Construction Complete

Back in July, we reported on an erosion project on the Stone Fence Trail. It has been completed! You may recall the orange cones that marked a particular stretch on the hill next to the stone fence. This area had been hard hit by erosion for quite some time. Addressing this erosion was critical because the structural integrity of the stone fence was in jeopardy. Friend member Jim Bolitho partnered on all facets of the work with the Town of Middleton to complete the project. The FOPFC were able to offer funding to help pay for the work due to other expenses not incurred because of the pandemic. It's been a win-win and we're grateful to all who made it happen.

Possible Burr Oak Thinning



If you spot activity within the oaks, the Township is contemplating thinning the burr oak trees on the southwest line of the Conservancy. This will help to improve the health of the remaining trees there, and fall is the correct time to prune oaks.

Forward Garden Harvest

Farm Manager Matt Lechmaier reports that the Forward Garden season ended with about 24,000 pounds of food donated from 31 different crops grown on the 3.5 acres at the Pope Farm Homestead. This included about:

- 4,300 pounds of tomatoes
- 754 pounds of tomatillos
- 1308 pounds of broccoli
- 4,426 pounds of cabbage
- 251 pounds of kale
- 921 pounds of melons
- 57 pounds of onions
- 5,006 pounds of peppers
- 1,837 pounds of winter squash.

They also lightly processed broccoli, cauliflower and green beans into 686 individual 10-ounce microwavable steamer bags. Equally noteworthy was the fact that almost 300 community members assisted with the production efforts between April and October for a combined 2,033 hours volunteered! Wow - terrific first year!

Signage Removed for Winter

Remember that old song “Signs. Signs. Everywhere are Signs.” Well, maybe not! If you wonder why the interpretive signs are missing, the Town of Middleton plans to remove them for the winter. This is done to protect them from the elements. No worries...they'll be back next year.

Finally, here's a quick...

Winter Information Reminder



Above: Cross country skiers on the Blackhawk Prairie trails, Feb 2018

Pope Farm Conservancy is open from sunrise to sunset year-round. The Blackhawk Parking lot off Blackhawk Road is typically closed through the winter months, so we recommend parking in the lower parking area off Old Sauk Road. Once the snow flies and accumulations begin this winter, visitors are welcome to come and enjoy winter activities; snow shoeing, cross country skiing, hiking, and sledding. If the trails are groomed, please walk off to the side of the trail so it remains intact for the cross-country skiers. Thank you for your cooperation!

"History of the Land" Project Status

If there's one thing we've learned about pandemics, it's that they are good for getting at those projects that require heavy lifting or have sat on the back burner for a while. This includes the History of the Land Initiative. Two components of this initiative, the Geology of the Land and The Civil Conservation Corps/Erosion stories have made significant strides over the last few months. Both of these topics will be in production with a multimedia company by the end of the year. The end product will be dynamic educational videos that tell stories about the land that is Pope Farm Conservancy today.

And last but not least, the History of the Land narrative has now been completed and is currently being edited and proofed. The result is a 225-page document that will be available on our website (in PDF format) by the end of the year. Good winter reading!

FOPFC Logo Merchandise for Sale

Now available for the Holiday season!

The Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy has a new online store with apparel and merchandise! Thanks to Bonfire.com, we are now selling a number of products with our unique logo printed on them. Products include t-shirts for all ages, sweatshirts, hats, tote bags, and mugs. When you place an order, your items will be printed and shipped directly to you or a friend. A portion of every sale will go directly to the FOPFC to help us preserve and protect the Conservancy and provide educational opportunities for all ages. Visit our online store today at <https://www.bonfire.com/store/fopfc/>



If you have questions, please email Janie at janie@popefarmconservancy.org.

Give the Gift of FOPFC Membership

The holidays are right around the corner, and it's time to start thinking about the perfect gift for your loved ones. When you give a gift membership, your friend or family member will be welcomed into the conservancy's community of dedicated individuals committed to enhancing the educational opportunities at Pope Farm Conservancy, preserving the balance of its wildlife habitat and historical features, and protecting its scenic landscapes and tranquility for the enjoyment of the public.



As a FOPFC member, the gift recipient will receive:

- A personalized card announcing your special gift, delivered via USPS
- Monthly email updates on the Conservancy
- Updates on upcoming events, public talks/tours, and volunteer opportunities
- Our semi-annual printed magazine, filled with stunning photos, as well as informative and insightful articles about PFC's history, educational programs, and its many plants and animals

To give a gift membership, you may either:

- Complete the Online Membership Form: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/membership/>. Be sure to select "Gift Membership" under 'Membership Type'. Online payment is fast & secure.
- Download the printable Gift Membership Form: https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/FOPFC_Gift_Membership_Form-2017.pdf and mail your completed form and check (payable to Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy) to FOPFC, 10333 Blackhawk Rd, Middleton, WI 53562.

Questions/Comments? Please contact Lee Pray at info@popefarmconservancy.org.

Photos of the Month



Left: Afternoon hike – by Bill Rittman

Below: Red-tailed Hawk – Photo by Jim Stewart



Autumn Sunset – Photo by Aaron Leist

Connect with FOPFC Online

Website: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfPopeFarmConservancy>
Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/groups/fopfc-photos>

Renew Your Membership: <http://www.popefarmconservancy.org/membership>

**Thank you for supporting the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy!
Our journey is ongoing, and YOU are part of it!**

COVID-19 Operations Updates:

Pope Farm Conservancy remains open to the public 7 days a week, year-round, from sunrise to sunset.
We encourage all visitors to practice social distancing to stay safe while enjoying the conservancy.

The FOPFC is fully committed to moving forward, carefully and cautiously, and this includes monitoring the latest information from the CDC and other relevant sources, to make sure we error on the side of safety and health for everyone in all aspects of the activities associated with the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy. All of our meetings and events will be conducted virtually until further notice.

