



Winter 2017-18

President's Message

The 2017 year closed and it was a busy one. The Friends grew in numbers, and we had a nice growth in revenue. One donor alone, paid for the materials to re-deck and repair Bridge 3. We always appreciate the donations of time and money. It represents love for the Bridges and the Road. You may have noted that we did an October membership drive, and decided to forego a year end appeal. We all get too many appeals that time of year.

The Friends have money in the Endowment fund which we hope continues to grow. We allot only a small sum for expenditures, knowing that if we have a big problem with a bridge or the road; it will be very expensive, and very hard to get money quickly from the DNR. They have contributed money and expertise all along, but state money is stretched.

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
FRIENDS OF MCGILVRAÿ ROAD
PO BOX 2976
LA CROSSE, WI 54602-2976

Who's Who in the Friends of McGilvray Road

Board of Directors

Nancy Hill	Mike Howe
D.A. Ferguson	Pat Caffrey
Linda McMullin	Jay Fernholz
Butch Kleinsmith	Ruth Scholze
Herbert Grimek	

Officers

President - Nancy Hill
Vice President – Ruth Scholze
Treasurer - Pat Caffrey
Secretary - Ruth Scholze
Media - Linda McMullin

Check out our website and connect with us at <http://www.7bridgesrd.org>

Join us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofMcGilvrayRd>

The Friends have new members on the Board, and it's a great pleasure to have new talents and perspectives as we continue into our 29th year.

Two major building projects have been accomplished ... late in the year, but WOW. The ford at Bridge 1 is in. Its completion meant we could get equipment in to do two major projects. The road has been lowered, and Bridge 3 is restored with new stringers and a lovely new deck. It may look like a small bridge, as it has only one arch... but it's really 3 spans.



New ford



Lowered Trail



New Deck

These 2 projects are each unique. The road lowering, which may protect the bridges from pent up flood water, is a very labor-intensive project, done first by lots of planning with the DNR and Friends, with permits and plans. Then the trees were cut and stacked waiting for removal. That is one reason the ford was SO useful.

The tree removal is Pat Caffrey's story: he cut trees, stacked wood and moved brush to one side to dry. Then, load after load of trees left via the new ford. I think he could tell you how many loads, how many tons. Finally, very recently, that brush has been burned. Amazing.

The second project, Bridge 3, too, is a Pat Caffrey story. He is an engineer, and knows when he sees structural issues. He knows how to estimate and find the materials, often at a good price and appropriate to the age and needs of the bridges. The fact that he also likes to bring these projects to fruition is a blessing for us. Late in 2017, the water subsided and work began... and was completed.



In order for anyone to operate a chain saw on DNR property, one must take and pass a chain saw safety course. Last September the Friends sent two new volunteers to a two day training course. We now have some newly certified, but hardly novice chain saw operators. Butch Kleinsmith and Roger Ziegler live very near the Bridges and will help with the tree work.

Mike Howe will continue working with the mowing, as does Pat. This coming year, it should be easier to maintain the trail, as the seeded areas should be established and there is the ford!

I believe you can see the extreme value of our volunteer workers. I have no real idea how we would have gotten the bridges decked, road lowered, trail maintained if it were not for a group of fantastic, expert volunteers.

I hope you all can help with letting us know when there are issues on the Road, help with keeping the trail nice and help spread the word to others. Best of all, maybe you have ideas how the Bridges and Road can be used in ways we haven't thought of. It is my belief that the Bridges will last into the next generations if there are lots of people who love them.

Lastly, we are starting to plan for a 30th year of Friends celebration in 2019. Please share ideas with us, and join in.

The Re-decking of Bridge 3

photos by Nancy Hill and John Papenfuss



Redecking Bridge 3

By John Papenfuss 1/23/18

John Papenfuss , Roger Ziegler, and Pat Caffrey started out on November 29 of 2017. The main part took the better part of five days and completed the new decking on December 8. No snow and brisk air actually made for enjoyable working conditions. It was actually quite a lot of work, but with Pat's lead and the three learned to work as a team made the work go pretty fast. Some joking, conversation, and



wisecracks were also part of the project. The new treated sixteen foot planks were guesstimated to be about seventy pounds and the old replaced ones about halph of all that. Care was taken so as not to bang someones head while handling the boards. Roger took the old good boards off our hands for a home project. Linda or Nancy wanted to exactly what the “stringers” are. They are planks that go lengthwise with the bridge and set on top of the steel support beams of the bridge. Some were good enough to reuse and some had to be replaced and then the sixteen foot deck planks were fastened on top of the stringers. The deck planks go on width wise. Nancy asked about hikers passing by. They all walked around using the access construction road. Most stopped and talked a bit and some had dogs to pet. Pat noticed the far main twelve by twelve wood beam that holds up the bridge and sets on the three post-pilings was rotted out. Pat jacked the bridge up, cut the bolt fasteners, and dropped off four smaller beams and a plank to replace the old beam. John showed up to help on December 28. All was completed that day. John would have liked to pitch in better, but had a torn meniscus which has since healed well. Pat says this completes all of the work on the bridges for now. John noticed that Pat and all he has been involved with the bridges has accumulated a selection of tools, generator, heavy duty pickup truck, and tractor with bucket. He has his own construction company so to speak. I wonder what he might call it. Pat and Company, McGilvray Construction, Caffrey Construction or who knows.

Snowshoeing Near McGilvray Rd.



Excerpted and revised from an article by R. Staszewski in the Winter 2000 edition of Horton's Clips.

It was about five years ago that we had at least three feet of snow. The temperatures were hovering around 20 degrees F. and the sky was a beautiful wintry blue, bright and sunny. After dressing warmly, I jumped into my truck and headed for McGilvray Road. I parked at the side of the road , as the parking lot was not plowed. After strapping on my 1942 standard military issue snowshoes, I headed out and tramped my way past the first bridge where I exited the road and entered the woods on the right.

As the snow was about 3 ½ ft. deep, I sank into the while stuff about 6 inches. I had a feeling of great power over the snow like one can go anywhere with no problem. As I went deeper into the woods, I was thankful that I had bear paw style snowshoes. These are oval with no tail on the back. They are

made for excursions into thick bushy woods and are easier to handle there.

As I neared the open field north of the 4th bridge, I saw otter slide trails in the snow. These were oval in cross-section and about 8 to 12 inches deep. They crisscrossed the open field and most ended at the water's edge. It would have been a glorious sight to have seen at least one otter sliding five or six feet down the bank and 8 to 10 feet on the ice to the water's edge! You could see where they then turned around and headed back to do it again.

I headed north from that point until I came close to a large beaver dam. There were frozen over holes that the beavers used to enter and exit the water below the dam. I just missed seeing a beaver except for the end of its tail as it disappeared through a hole in the ice.

With the vision of otters and beavers in my heard, I started back to the parking lot, taking back some great memories.

Winter Tree Identification

By Herbert Grimek

Although deciduous trees are more difficult to identify in the winter, a comparison of a number of characteristics with published keys usually allows for an accurate identification. The overall shape and branch structure is readily visible. A few trees when mature have a characteristic shape and branch arrangement. For example a mature American Elm often assumes a vase shape. Many species of trees, however, have a very similar overall appearance, and trees that grow under crowded forest conditions rarely have the opportunity to develop their classic mature shape.



The bark offers a more definitive means of identification. The pattern of ridges and valleys, as well as the color of the bark varies greatly between the various species. Identification by means of the bark, however is not foolproof. The bark of closely related species is often very similar, and the appearance of the bark



often changes as the tree matures. The bark of young trees is often lighter in color and smoother than that of mature trees.



Perhaps the most definitive way of identifying trees in the winter is by the arrangement and the characteristics of the buds on the twigs. Keys have been devised so that most trees can be identified to genus and species by careful examination of the buds and twigs. The identification process can often be expedited by careful observation of the tree and its surroundings. Often there are old leaves, fruits, nuts or seeds still on the tree, or on the ground immediately below.

Editor's note: Thanks to John and Herbert for their interesting and informative articles. If any of you would care to share experiences or knowledge in related topics of interest to Horton's Clips readers, please sent them to friendsofmcgilvrayroad@gmail.com or to Friends of McGilvray Road, PO Box 2976, La Crosse, WI 54602-2976. Thank you!