

# 2013

## Annual Report



The Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy works through three principal committees - Restoration & Management, Education and Watershed - supported by three administrative committees - Governance, Finance and Development & Marketing. We depend completely on the generosity of our friends - for which we are more grateful than we can say. Here is a brief report on the committee work of 2013.

### *Development and Marketing Committee*

Memberships and contributions reached an all-time high in 2013. The response to our annual appeal was very strong, as were memorial gifts. We were honored to receive these donations, especially those on behalf of beloved former Friends. Our first-ever local business appeal generated \$1,100, and

hopefully raised awareness of the Friends in this community. Follow-up efforts, including personal visits to targeted businesses, are planned for 2014. Other successful fundraisers included an appeal to Woodcreek Condo residents by Ann Peckham, Friends co-founder and former board member, and an insert placed in the Middleton Times Tribune.

Have you noticed the Friends new logo and look? It incorporates our full name, as well as the elements associated with the Conservancy and our mission - Frederick's Hill, the springs, a burr oak tree and a crane. To date the logo has been incorporated into a new brochure, our stationery and the newsletter.

	2013	2012
Income from Memberships and Contributions	\$80,028	\$40,322
Number of Members	470	419

Our popular phenology calendar also has a new look this year, incorporating photos and poetry from Middleton high school students. With expanded sales to 8 organizations, including 6 local retailers, the calendar is making a profit vs. breaking even. It continues to be a great marketing tool for the Friends.

At last - The Friends facebook page was introduced in July of last year. Our page features upcoming programs and events, current activities and other happenings in the Conservancy. We invite you to keep in touch by "liking" us and sharing your Conservancy stories.

<b>Balance January 1, 2013</b>	<b>\$98,445</b>
<u>Income</u>	
Unrestricted Contributions	58,458
Contribution to Endowment	975
MCPSD Ecology Club	500
Contribution for Spring Burn	500
Memberships	21,570
Calendar Sales	3,041
Annual Meeting & Silent Auction	2,557
Other Income	<u>3,355</u>
Subtotal	90,956
<u>Grants</u>	
Bock Foundation	15,000
REI	5,000
Pheasant Branch Water Monitoring	1,927
Aquatic Invasive Species Implementation	15,023
DCEC	<u>1,700</u>
Subtotal	38,650
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$129,606</b>
<u>Expenses</u>	
Administrative(annual meeting, postage, printing)	5,858
Core Expenses (insurance, accountants' fees)	6,656
Madison Community Foundation	975
Fundraising Program	2,158
Education Support	20,478
Restoration & Management Support	20,634
2012 Bock Forest Restoration Grant Work	15,000
AIS Planning & Implementation Grant Work	21,320
2012 & 13 REI Grant Projects	11,462
2010 Water Monitoring Grant Project Work	1,235
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$105,776</b>
<b>Balance December 31, 2013</b>	<b>\$122,275</b>

### *Governance Committee*

Our rapid growth over the last several years has challenged the board to keep up. As part of the strategic planning process, the Governance Committee is focused on board structure, as well as processes, procedures and practices to help us run more efficiently and effectively. While committee work is not always glamorous, it is essential to the current and future operation of the Friends.

Key accomplishments for 2013 include:

- A final list and timetable of required policies, procedures and practices per the Strategic Plan
- New policies, procedures and practices, including records retention, advocacy, conflict of interest, board self-evaluation, job descriptions and new board member training/materials
- A more structured process for recruiting new board members and an ongoing roster of candidates
- Board redesign work, including benchmarking and workload analysis

## *Education Committee*

During 2013 the education committee expanded efforts and outreach with the Middleton Cross Plains Area School District by offering increased learning opportunities for K-5, middle school and high school students. The high school service-learning program, focused on biology curriculum, was enhanced with a new literacy support class and increased opportunities for photography and advanced composition. We co-sponsored grant projects such as a middle school water-quality monitoring project and an intergenerational art project that links seniors, 4th grade students and the Conservancy.

Participation in our Kids for the Earth field trip programs increased 30% for K – 5th grades, 20% for high school level classes, and 150% for non-MCPASD classes, including two trips for schools more than 10 miles from Middleton. We sponsored guided walks to introduce teachers to the Conservancy and our education programs, one for new teachers and one during the new school-year orientation for all teachers.

In 2013, we created a new partnership with the senior citizen communities in Middleton, Madison and Waunakee. This resulted in expanded Conservancy Day Programming that was very well attended by this audience.

Activity directors at these senior venues are now strong partners who advertise our events through their newsletters and websites. Directors have also discussed other ways to support the connection among seniors and the Conservancy in 2014, such as displaying poetry from our high school service learning projects.

The Education Committee also had a significant role in the launch and maintenance of the Friends Facebook Page, the organization's first social media tool, which generated 200 hundred "likes" in less than six months.

## *Restoration and Management Committee*

In 2013, the Restoration and Management Committee was involved in a variety of activities. Volunteer days were conducted twice a month. Invasive plant management – targeting species such as giant ragweed, burdock, buckthorn, sumac, mulberry, sweet clover and bird's foot trefoil - was carried out in prairie and wetlands according to the county plan, as was seed collecting, cleaning and storing. Committee members attended a joint meeting with county and city officials to

discuss priorities for 2013.

The committee participated in the prairie partnership intern program. This included interviewing, fiscally supporting, mentoring and supervising 5 interns for 10 weeks (one day/week). The committee also supported a county employee (Tom Klein) as coordinator for fieldwork in the Conservancy. Priority areas of the prairie were burned, in collaboration with the county and a contractor hired for

planning and implementing the burn.

In cooperation with the Education Committee, R&M members participated in planning for and executing service-learning days with Middleton High School teachers and students. They also worked together to plan and host a summer celebration event at the Conservancy to highlight restoration accomplishments.

## *Watershed Committee*

The mission of the Friends, founded in 1995, is "to restore, protect and promote the Pheasant Branch Conservancy and watershed for today and tomorrow." However, over the years, focus on the 26-square-mile watershed receded due to the many issues, demands and threats involving the 500-acre Conservancy. As a result of the board's strategic planning process in late 2012, a watershed committee was created in January 2013. The committee's charge is to help the Friends understand, support and advocate for the Pheasant Branch Watershed

by identifying and prioritizing resource needs and finding ways to address them effectively through appropriate action.

In 2013 the committee wrote the advocacy policy, which was approved by the board in December 2013. Committee members began investigating the types of data already existing for the watershed and identifying other stakeholders in the watershed. We reviewed state and local plans involving resource management of the watershed and networked with some of our watershed

partners including DNR, Dane County Land and Water Resources Department, the River Alliance, and the Dane County Watershed Network. We created an informational archive in Dropbox containing technical documents on water quality from local, state and federal agencies; planning documents; and news articles. Recognizing the need for effective working maps, we started creating data-specific maps of the watershed with the help of a GIS expert. These maps will enable us to target pockets of resource need, such as recharge areas or sensitive vegetation areas.