



# SPRINGS

Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy Newsletter

## Photo Contest Results Announced *All First Place Winners Featured in 2011 Phenology Calendar*

We received many wonderful entries - all taken in the Pheasant Branch Conservancy! Congratulations to Michael Knapstein, the 2010 grand prize winner, with his image Majestic Fredericks Hill! Mr. Knapstein won \$100 and his image is featured on the 2011 phenology calendar cover.

Winning photographs were exhibited at Middleton Art and Framing for the entire month of December. All first place photos are still on the Friend's website for viewing. A winner's reception was held in early December where pho-



**Trees Adult First Place: *Sunset Tree* by Annette Knapstein.**  
For a complete list of winners and their images visit our Web site: [www.pheasantbranch.org](http://www.pheasantbranch.org).

tographers, contest sponsors, judges, and Friends members mingled over light refreshments. Over 100 Friends attended.

We'd like to thank our sponsors for making this contest possible: Clicks by Colette, Middleton Art and Framing, and the Picture Salon.

The contest was such a great success that we're going to do it again next year, watch the website for details: [www.pheasantbranch.org](http://www.pheasantbranch.org)

## Annual Meeting Scheduled for Jan. 26

*By Lou Reilly*

The annual meeting of members of Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy, Inc. will take place on Wednesday, January 26, 2011 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Middleton at 7 p.m. The purpose of the meeting is to elect directors for 2011, review the financial statements for the current year and present the proposed budget for 2011. Preceding the business meeting will be an optional dinner and social hour.

*Evening includes dinner, board elections and a talk on the bats of Pheasant Branch.*

After the business meeting, Middleton High School seniors Ismat Bhuiyan and Alyssa Beck will present their independent study findings on bat monitoring in the Pheasant Branch Conservancy. Following the MHS presentation, a short talk on bats and the white-nose syndrome will be presented by Jennifer Schehr of the DNR Bureau of Endangered Resources.

*More information will be mailed to current members, so watch your mailbox.*

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**Protect. Restore. Enjoy.**



## FROM THE EDITOR . . .

Dear Friends,

It has been an exciting fall for the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy! Restoration and education efforts continue to grow. Our first ever photo contest received many wonderful entries and the winners were displayed for the entire month of December at Middleton Art and Framing. Thanks to the members who came out to the "Photographer Meet and Greet" on December 3rd, it was a wonderful event.

Our membership grew to over 450 members, all thanks to your support of our 2011 membership drive! It's because of your support that we continue to grow and progress. Truly, you make a difference in the Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

The New Year brings changes to our board of directors. Three members, Jim O'Brien, Lou Reilly and Rod Miller, will be finishing their terms on the board. These vacancies leave the president, vice-president and secretary officer seats open.

We are still accepting nominations for new board members for 2011-12. If you are interested in becoming more involved, please consider nominating yourself! To nominate or learn more about the board, please contact us at [office@pheasantbranch.org](mailto:office@pheasantbranch.org) or talk to any current board members.

The elections will take place our annual dinner and meeting on Wednesday, January 26th at the Hilton Garden Inn. I hope to see you all there!

Finally, we still have 2011 Phenology Calendars available. Order online today at [www.pheasantbranch.org](http://www.pheasantbranch.org) - get yours before they're gone. I hope you get out to enjoy the Conservancy this winter.

Sincerely,

Joleen Stinson  
Sprints Editor

## OUR BOARD

President  
*Jim O'Brien*

Vice President  
*Lou Reilly*

Treasurer  
*Hagen Hedfield*

Secretary  
*Rod Miller*

Board Members  
*Stefanie Brouwer, Brian Butler, Martin David, Bruce Froehlke, Ben Grawe, Susan Gruber, Dale Klubertanz, Dawn Meyer, Joleen Stinson, Deb Weitzel, Dan Wisniewski*

Sprints Editor  
*Joleen Stinson*

Sprints Layout & Design  
*Jeffrey Potter*

Illustrations/Photos  
*WI DNR, Herb Garn, Susan Gruber, Dawn Meyer, Coleen Robinson-Klug, Annette Knapstein, Joleen Stinson, Stephanie Williams*

Send Newsletter Ideas to:  
[office@pheasantbranch.org](mailto:office@pheasantbranch.org)

**Please Visit Our Website!**  
[www.pheasantbranch.org](http://www.pheasantbranch.org)

## YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE: DONATE TODAY!

**YES!** I want to help protect, restore and promote Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Memberships:** (Effective 9/1/10)

- \$10 Student  
 \$25 Individual  
 \$40 Family

Please send your membership and payment to:

FOPB  
P.O. Box 628242  
Middleton WI  
53562-8242

**Additional Support:**

- \$50 Contributor  
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 \$250 Guardian  
 \$500 Steward  
 \$1,000 Conservator  
 \$1,000+ Benefactor

Or pay securely with Visa or Mastercard:

Name on the Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Winter 2010

Clip & Mail Today!

# Board of Director Nominations Sought

## *Perhaps you could fill one of three open positions?*

Each January, the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy elects new members to the Board of Directors. According to the FOPB by-laws, we are limited to 15 board members elected for 2 year terms. Approximately half the Board comes up for election each year. Typically, most board members who have completed a 2 year term volunteer for another 2 year term, but there are usually a few vacancies to fill. This year, we have three open seats.

Nominations to the Board of Directors for the FOPB are open until our annual meeting, Wednesday, January 26, 2011. Any member of the FOPB in good standing may nominate any other member in good standing. You may nominate yourself. Nominations should be emailed to [office@pheasantbranch.org](mailto:office@pheasantbranch.org), or mailed to Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy, Inc, P.O. Box 628242, Middleton, WI 53562-8242.

Nomination information should include the name, address, phone number and/or email address of both the nominator and the nominee; a statement of willingness to serve if elected; and a short background statement.

The particular skills and needs for the board are a mix, including but not limited to: scientists, lawyers, writers/editors, educators, fundraisers, those with interests in finances and restoration, and a geographical balance. It is the job of the Nominating Committee to work towards achieving a balance in board member skills. The short background statement from each nomination, along with plenty of time for follow up communication, greatly aids in getting the best possible FOPB board nominees.

**We would like to thank departing board members for their years of service:**

**Jim O'Brien** first attended a Friends meeting in 1995, shortly after the group began to organize. He found himself winning a City Council seat the following year. For the next eight years he worked to protect the integrity of the conservancy. His efforts helped the city purchase two privately owned parcels which intruded into the conservancy and which most residents assumed were part of it. He left the board while serving on the council only to return in 2004. He has served as Friends president the past five years. He also did a stint as secretary during his earlier stay on the board.

**Lou Reilly** served on the board for four years and is leaving the Vice President position. He has been an active member, administering the phenology calendar sales, planning annual dinners and chairing the membership committee, among many other responsibilities.

**Rod Miller** is finishing his fourth year on the Board and has served as Secretary for the past two years. One of his major contributions to the Friends was the Donor Recognition plaque for the Bock Forest. Rod coordinated having the plaque made and actively helped coordinate the event when it was unveiled. He was involved in the Fun Raisers at Capitol Brewery and worked at the desk for the first two events. His is also chair of the new Governance Committee and as such has been working to identify new members for those leaving the Board and will make recommendations for new officers.

## Friends Take Part in Forestry Field Day

*By Dawn Meyer*

The Friends of Pheasant Branch participated in the second annual Forestry Field Day, which was held at the John C. Bock Community Forest on Saturday, November 6, 2010. The free public event, sponsored by the Middleton Public Lands Department, featured demonstrations of tree climbing and pruning, horse logging, wood milling and timber stand improvement. It also included horse-drawn wagon rides through the Bock Forest narrated by a restoration ecologist.

Those who attended the event, including many families with children, clearly enjoyed



**Horse-logging demonstration at the John C. Bock Community Forest.**

it. It was educational, informative, entertaining and occasionally thrilling. From the arborists scrambling up the trees to the professional chain saw demonstration to the beautiful world champion Percherons pulling logs from the forest, there was something for everyone. The horse-drawn wagon rides were a big hit with “kids” of all ages.

The Friends were pleased to be part of Forestry Field Day, and we commend the Public Lands Department for hosting this incredible free public event. We urge you to be there next year and promise you will not be disappointed!



# Naturalist Notebook: News of Nature in the Conservancy

## Autumn in the Conservancy . . .

By Dale Klubertanz

Like this year's early spring, autumn in the Conservancy has offered many warm, wonderful days for strollers to view the changes that come as summer concedes its season-long splendor. The sounds, sights and smells that have filled our June, July and August have given way to a subtle daily migration of calls and color that have shifted inside the natural cycle of life. The creatures and flora that have shared with us this time in these wild communities are taking flight to far off sanctuaries or finding refuge in the soon-to-be frozen grounds of winter.

As the spring peepers once heralded in a prelude to summer with their joyous wetland trills, the ubiquitous cricket, fiddling on combed wings, sounded the crescendo of summer's climax. Its chorus has accompanied such creatures as the barred owl, living high in the lowland forest just off the trail near the double bridges. Unseen, it has called out throughout the summer, receiving an occasional response from an accomplice perched somewhere nearby, as walkers searched the treetops from the path for a sighting with no avail. As the crickets slowly faded with autumn's arrival and the barred owl continued to hoot in the

building silence of the echo-y woods, the owl became one of the last remaining voices of autumn.

Now in November, it hoots within the almost deafening silence left in the absence of those songsters and screechers long gone, arriving or en route southward to sing and regroup in their warm winter homes. Only the ruckus of a few sandhill cranes, hidden and making their own migratory preparation in the marshes, break the quiet that has descended on Pheasant Branch Conservancy. Soon, they too, will join the flocks of geese that have honked their way through the sky in formation, sometimes with occasional holdovers that enliven the wetlands with noisy excitement.

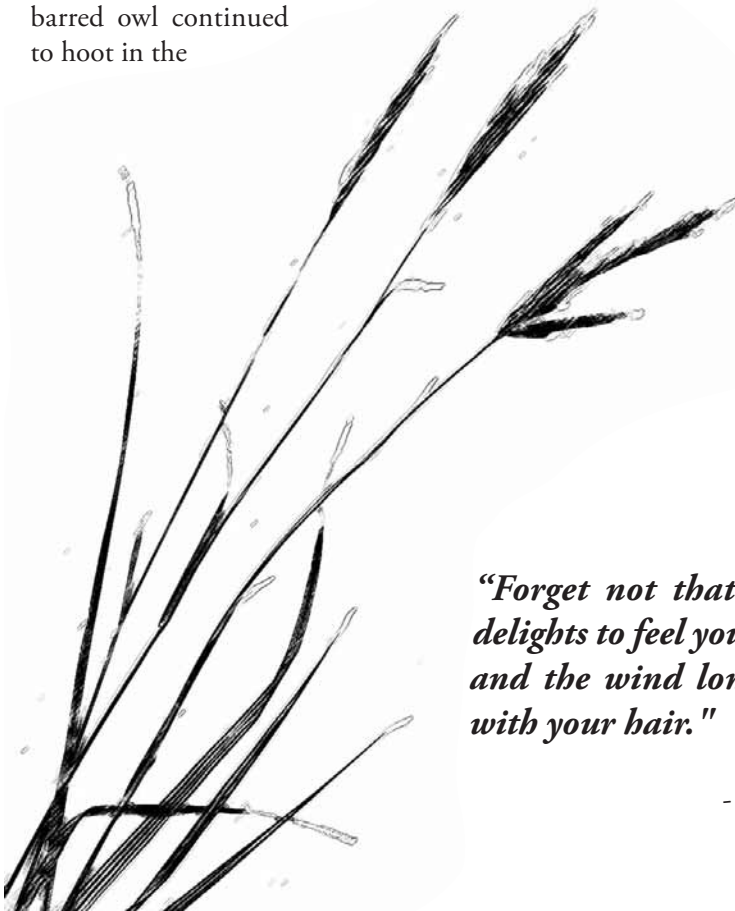
As the purples and yellows of summer have faded, they are seemingly absorbed into the rich tapestry of burgundies and browns held in the dried grasses, sedges, wildflowers and shrubs revealed now in colorful patterns running through the prairies, woods and wetlands. The coarse-textured goldenrods, for a time, transformed the prairies into a yellow-gold backdrop against the russet of tall big bluestem and Indian grasses everywhere, still standing high and dominant. The unveiling of the red-twigged dogwoods in the fall brings brilliance along the edges of the plant communities. These dogwoods will come into their true grandeur against the austere canvas of winter snow. White snakeroot that has been blooming along the edges and paths of the woodland is a sure sign that everything is as it should be. Everywhere the aster's ablazed with autumn's ado.

Stepping off onto the gravel trail from the concrete and asphalt of our busy urban lives, the sand, stone and soil of the Conservancy pathway softly choreograph a rhythm to a walker's stride as it winds through prairie, savannah, wetland and woodland. Once on the trail, with the mix of silence, wind and wildlife filtering into awareness, there is a sound of the slow, steady shuffle of a stroller's feet meeting the gravel, giving voice to a soul-to-sole connection with the land and wilderness.

A conservancy walker moving at a conversational pace can hear and feel this connection in the rhythm of knowing one's place in the wilderness, making peace with the seasons that have passed and surrendering, in turn, to the coming winter. Keeping vigil, we will witness and appreciate its stark sense of wonder.

*"Forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the wind longs to play with your hair."*

- Kahlil Gibran



# What's Happening at the Springs?

By Herb Garn

Some of you have noticed recently that the springs look different. Overall water level is lower now and the springs are more visible. The main spring complex flowing out of the base of a hill at the northeast end of the Conservancy, often called "Frederick" springs, and a second group to the west on a small intermittent tributary are an important source of clean, cool water to the marsh and Lake Mendota. Flow from these springs joins that from the main Pheasant Branch near the middle of the marsh.

A Parshall flume, a structure used to accurately measure the flow continuously with automated equipment, was installed below the springs in 2000 by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in cooperation with the City and operated until 2005. Friends volunteers recorded manual readings from the flume during 2008-09.

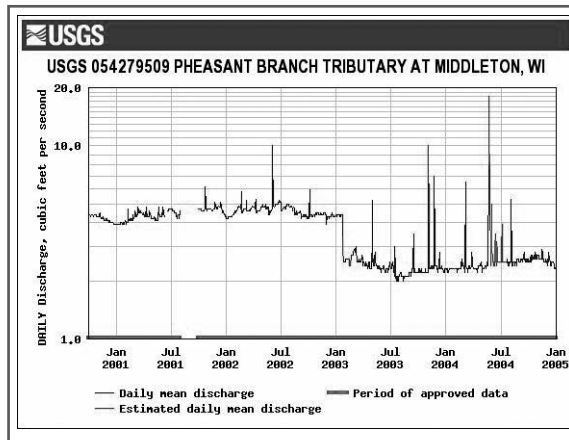
The continuous data from the flume (see graph) show that the large spring complex produced more than 2.0 cubic feet per second high-quality flow year-round to Pheasant Branch Marsh, equivalent to the entire low flow of the main fork of Pheasant Branch. Also visible in the graph is the effect of disconnecting and filling a drainage ditch that contributed flow from the west springs to this channel. The Friends, in conjunction with many partners, completed a two-part project in 2003 to restore a portion of wetland in the Conservancy, filling this ditch and redirecting the flow to a new meandering channel through the marsh.

The flume was no longer functioning and was removed by the USGS in October 2010. Removal of the flume lowered the water level by 3/4 foot behind the flume, exposing the springs again. Also, over most of this summer, water was backed up into the marsh from the high water level of Lake Mendota, which covered the springs. The lake level finally receded during October, which was very dry. Although the flume is gone, manual measurements of flow at "Frederick" and the "west" springs are con-



tinuing (photo). Flows recently were 2.9 cubic feet per second (1,290 gallons per minute) and 1.75 cubic feet per second (786 gallons per minute) respectively. These are currently above-average flows because of the greater than normal precipitation the past several years, including this year. The comparable average flow for Pheasant Branch, measured at the USGS Parmenter St. gaging station, is about 2.0 cfs, so together these springs contribute more than twice the base flow of the creek.

The groundwater contributing area for the springs is in the North Fork Pheasant Branch watershed, and flow of the springs could be affected by urban development in the recharge area or by pumping from additional municipal wells, according to a study by J. Steurer and R. Hunt, U. S. Geological Survey, 2001. Model simulations assuming 50 percent development of the North Fork watershed resulted in eliminating base flow in Pheasant Branch and decreasing flow from the Conservancy springs by 26 percent.



**Above: Herb Garn uses a current meter to take manual measurements of spring flow into Pheasant Branch Marsh.**

**Below: Continuous flow data measured below the springs, October 2000 - December 2004, in Pheasant Branch Marsh (source: U. S. G. S. <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/wi/nwis/sw>).**

In July 2008 the City of Middleton constructed a new municipal well adjacent to Mendota County Park, and pumping from this well began on an intermittent basis in May 2010. This new well also has the potential to decrease the flow of the springs and intercept groundwater flow from the north into Lake Mendota. In 1900, many springs existed around the south and west shore of Lake Mendota but are now dry because of the effects of urban development and pumping from water-supply wells.

Decreasing groundwater discharge to the marsh is a concern because it deprives it of high-quality water for dilution and a reliable water source for maintenance of plant communities and aquatic life. Thus it is important to establish a baseline record of the spring flows for future evaluation of possible changes. Financial assistance for this effort is provided by a DNR River Protection Planning Grant awarded to the Friends of Pheasant Branch in 2010.



# EDUCATION CORNER: Conservancy Days Program News

## Plan Ahead for Outdoor Education in 2011

By Colleen Robinson Klug  
**Conservancy Days 2011**

Every third Thursday, starting in March. To subscribe for monthly email reminders, email Colleen at [education@pheasantbranch.org](mailto:education@pheasantbranch.org) and request to be put on the list. All ages welcome. Please join us for the free events!

### Thursday, March 17

Celebrate birds! There are over 200 species that use the essential habitat Pheasant Branch Conservancy offers. Let's see how many we can find, hear, and even learn from. Birds are amazing teachers about wildlife, weather, metabolism, and physics. Come see why!

### Thursday, April 21

An Awakening Landscape. Whether you've walked in the conservancy a hundred times or never before, you won't want to miss this stroll. As spring settles in we'll take a bird's eye view as well as close inspections to discover what is happening in the conservancy.

Conservancy Day programs were a hit for the third year in a row in 2010, although attendance was way down for winter months. Due to that and budget constraints, the 2011 Conservancy Day programs will run for 8 months rather than 12; March through October. Over 400 people enjoyed these events in 2010 for free. We are grateful for the memberships and donations that make these offerings possible. Whether you have or have not contributed before, please consider doing so for Conservancy Days in 2011 so we may continue these valuable events. Memberships and donations can be given in person at the events or online at [www.pheasantbranch.org](http://www.pheasantbranch.org).

### Kids for the Earth Field Trips for Schools

We've just completed another record autumn in terms of classroom requests for field trips in the conservancy! Kids for the Earth is truly making a difference in our community for getting students out of the classroom for hands-on learning. 300 stu-



*Above & Below: Kid's for the Earth Field Trips with Colleen Robinson Klug. Look for more great trips in 2011.*



dents joined us this autumn alone. Now that we have field sessions linked directly to curricular units we need more naturalists to lead the groups who are interested for 2011. If you or someone you know are interested in being a paid naturalist to lead field stations, please contact Colleen immediately. We offer full lesson plans and all of the materials plus observation and training sessions. Spring field trip requests are already coming in and we could use the help!

### Professional Development Series

In autumn 2010 ten teachers joined our annual Conservancy Bus Tour and gained professional development hours to boot! The topic was sustainability. What is sustainability and how does the conservancy fit into a vision of a sustainable community? What is the role of sustainability education, if any? Our bus tour only skimmed the surface of these questions...preparing for our upcoming spring series:

### Sustainability in Education

**Thursdays from 4 – 8 p.m.**

**March 31, April 7, April 14**

Location to be announced.

Register by contacting Colleen or online at:

[www.mcpsd.k12.wi.us/prodev.classlist.cfm](http://www.mcpsd.k12.wi.us/prodev.classlist.cfm)

The City of Middleton and the Middleton Cross Plains Area School District each have sustainability committees. This is a topic we are interested in and dedicated to in our area. This series will explore sustainability in education and how the conservancy plays a role. How and where do we teach about sustainability? How and where does the conservancy fit with other places, businesses, and organizations in a sustainable community? The series will challenge us to look more “whole-istically” at our resources and opportunities in the district rather than seeing them as separate and distinct entities. Sustainability requires such a view and we'll put it into practice as we discuss these issues.



# GET OUT THERE: Field Trips & Volunteer Opportunities

## Conservancy Work is On-Going!

By Susan Gruber

Who said things would slow down in the fall? We have been “busy as beavers” and have had “lots of help from our friends”. Thanks to all of the people and groups that have come out in all kinds of weather to cut sumac, honey suckle, buckthorn and everything else woody that doesn't belong in an Oak Savannah. Thanks to the Operation Fresh Start program and the MANY volunteers they brought with them from WIPFLI. Thanks to the University of Illinois lab school students who joined us. We had over 200 volunteers working with us the last week of September. Thanks to the regulars who show up in all kinds of weather....Tom, Ruth, Allen, Emil, Wava, Guerdon, Brian, Amy, David, Lisa, Peter, Judy, Doug, Joleen, Middleton High School students .... and on and on. They make the Conservancy beautiful for others to enjoy. I know I have missed many but these are the regulars.

We are working with the city on projects in the Bock Community Forest. Due to an anonymous donation to the Friends, the city is designing a boardwalk to prevent the continuing erosion of the trail along Pheasant Branch Road. This should be of benefit to all that use the trail.

We are looking forward to some new grants to continue the restoration in the wetlands and burns in the spring. Our regularly scheduled monthly workdays

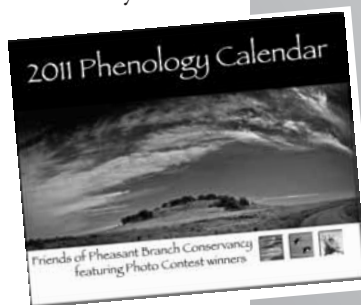


**United Way “Day of Caring” volunteers helped Friends members collect prairie seeds this autumn.**

will take a break in January and February, but we'll be back in March. Have you seen the signs and wish that you could join us? Let me know and I will add you to our workday “reminder” email list - [sgruber42@gmail.com](mailto:sgruber42@gmail.com). (See sidebar for schedule.) They are always weather dependent so if it is sub zero or raining/snowing we cancel. We relish the day and enjoy the work/company and the enhanced beauty of the Conservancy.

Your support and membership is what helps us do our restoration and management work in the Conservancy. The growing number of regular volunteers suggests that there are many people who really care about the Conservancy for more than recreational purposes. If you run, walk, stroll, bird watch, or whatever, could you spare an hour or so helping care for this very special place?

See you in the New Year!



## Winter Work Parties

Many volunteer hours have been given to keep this urban space as natural as possible. Please join us this winter!

Meet at the Pheasant Branch Dane County Parking lot (fire number 4864) 1.2 miles north of Century Avenue on Pheasant Branch Road unless instructed otherwise. Additional work days are periodically scheduled. Contact Susan Gruber at [office@pheasantbranch.org](mailto:office@pheasantbranch.org) or give her a call at 836-3848 if you would like to be added to our email list to receive a reminder of work sessions. Volunteers are notified via email and signs along the trail.

Join a fun group of hard-working people to care for this very special place.

**Wednesdays, 9:00 am – noon**  
**March 2, April 6**

Brush cutting, seed spreading, etc.

**Saturdays, 9:00 am – noon**  
**March 19, April 16**

Brush cutting, invasive removal, etc.

## Phenology Calendars Still Available!

If you are looking for a gift for a nature lover, this is it. The cover photo is the winner of our photo contest. Pictures from other category entries are included. There is a limited supply left, so order today by going to our Web site - [www.pheasantbranch.org](http://www.pheasantbranch.org).

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FRIENDS OF PHEASANT BRANCH CONSERVANCY, INC.  
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Middleton, WI 53562-8242

*To receive a paperless newsletter or be removed  
from the mailing list, please contact:  
office@pheasantbranch.org. Thank you!*

**Seeking Board Members**  
Details inside, page 3 . . .

**PHEASANT BRANCH CONSERVANCY**  
**Winter/Spring Events 2011**



**Connect with Nature in Your Community**

**January**  
26th – Annual Meeting (page 1)

**February**  
Take a Break and Enjoy the Conservancy!

**March**  
2nd, 19th - Work Party Days (page 7)  
17th – Conservancy Days (page 6)

**April**  
6th, 16th – Work Party Days (page 7)  
21st – Conservancy Days (page 6)

**Visit Us Online at:**  
**[www.pheasantbranch.org](http://www.pheasantbranch.org)**

**Brought to you by:**  
**The Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy**